Gender equality is not only a basic human right, but its achievement has enormous socio-economic ramifications. Empowering women fuels thriving economies, spurring productivity and growth. Yet inequalities remain deeply entrenched in every society.

UN Women is the United Nation’s organization dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women. A global champion for women and girls, UN Women was established to accelerate progress on meeting the needs of women and girls worldwide.

In its second country profile, UN Women in Pakistan presents its programing priorities for 2014-2017 as:

- Strengthening coordination and accountability of the UN system’s own commitments on gender equality and women’s empowerment
- Expanding women’s leadership and participation in decision making at all levels
- Enhancing women’s economic empowerment, with focus on the poorest and most excluded women, ensuring they benefit from development
- Preventing violence against women and girls
- Engaging women as peacebuilders and mediators in peace and security, and humanitarian actions
- Governance and national planning fully reflect accountability for gender equality commitments and priorities

A comprehensive and dynamic set of global norms, policies and standards on gender equality and women’s empowerment is in place and is applied through action by the Government and stakeholders at all levels

Integrated within each of these priorities is data and research, and evaluations.

(Continued on back page)
In building ownership and strengthening linkages across national and local machineries for women, the Inter-Provincial Ministerial Group (IPMG) on Women’s Empowerment during their 8th session held in Karachi, Sindh on 30 January 2014, agreed to institutionalize the IPMG and its secretariat within the National Commission on the Status of Women.

The IPMG is the only inter-provincial coordination forum having potential and effectiveness in supporting gender equality and the empowerment of women in line with the country’s national and international commitments.

The IPMG comprises of Ministers of the Women Development Departments (WDDs) from Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab, Sindh, and Pakistan Administered Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan, respective Secretaries of WDDs, Secretary of the Ministry of Law, Justice and Human Rights and Chairpersons of the National/Provincial Commissions on Status of Women.

After passage of the 18th Constitutional Amendment in 2010 and devolution of women’s development affairs, there is an even stronger need to support the provincial and local governments, specifically the women machineries to set strategic priorities and develop/implement plans for ensuring gender equality and the empowerment of women.

3. Punjab passes the PCSW Bill to empower local women

The Government of Punjab passes a Bill providing for the establishment of the ‘Punjab Commission on the Status of Women’ as a medium to empower local women, expand opportunities for their socio-economic development and eliminate all forms of discrimination against them.

This is a first ‘watchdog body’ for the province and the Bill, passed on 12 March 2014, resonates the commitment of IPMG members on the need of setting up Provincial Commissions on the Status of Women. Through this Bill, the Commission will, amongst other factors:

- Examine policy, programmes and other measures of the local government to materialize gender equality, women’s empowerment and their representation and political participation and assess implementation
- Review local laws, rules and regulations affecting the status and rights of women and suggest repeal, amendment or new legislation to eliminate discrimination, safeguard and promote
- Develop and maintain interaction and dialogue with individuals in society for collaboration and action to achieve gender equality
- Facilitate and monitor implementation of instruments and obligations affecting women and girls to which Pakistan is a signatory
The President of Pakistan on commemorating the 103rd International Women Day (IWD) stressed on collaborative efforts by the government and civil society to “change social mindset that hinders the effective implementation of pro-women laws” whilst speaking at an event jointly organized by UN Women, the Ministry of Law, Justice and Human Rights, and Aurat Foundation. Civil society activists from all parts of the country and people from all walks of life expressed their resolve to continue their struggle for equal status of women. President Mamnoon Hussain said that the government is committed to provide all support to women and realize that there could be no development without women participation in development. “We want women to become an active part of mainstream economic activities.” he said.

Speaking on the occasion, Federal Minister for Law and Justice, Senator Pervaiz Rasheed said the main hurdle in the empowerment of women is the patriarchal structure of the society which portrays men as rulers. “The pro-women legislation is there. Civil society is also putting in all effort. The only missing link is the will of people to grant space to their women and have faith in them,” he pointed out.

Ms. Khawar Mumtaz, Chairperson National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW) demanded the government to recognize women home based workers as part of the formal workforce. “It will increase our ratio of women participation in labour market which is one of the lowest in the region,” she said. The Chairperson also elaborated on the efforts of the Commission to get a comprehensive law passed by parliament on acid crimes and domestic violence.

Barrister Zafarullah Khan, Federal Secretary for Ministry of Law, Justice and Human Rights, said that protection of women rights is the priority of the government. He said the government respects its international commitments with regard to women and children and is planning to introduce special cells at both the federal and provincial level to monitor the implementation of international commitments.

Ms. Sangeeta Thapa, Deputy Representative, UN Women, while paying gratitude to women who had struggled against oppression and discrimination, shared that “International Women's Day is a day to recommit ourselves to working harder for gender equality together, as women, men, youth, communities and leaders of nations. It is a day that reminds and motivates us to keep on moving with our endeavors, achievements and challenges, striving towards a common goal for a gender just society which is free of violence, discrimination, inequality”. She laid emphasis on “effective implementation including monitoring and tracking of the gender equality laws and policies” that had been passed to safeguard the rights of women”.

4. A Call to Change Social Mindsets on 103rd IWD
Gender Equality in National Planning

Since their adoption more than 13 years ago, substantial progress has been made in Pakistan in meeting many of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), however progress is uneven and not sufficient enough, particularly for women and girls.

Some Successes

◊ Passage of 6 pro-women laws at the national level on harmful traditional practices, acid throwing, sexual harassment, women in distress and women protection
◊ Appointment of Ombudspersons at the federal level and in Punjab and Sindh for tracking and implementing the anti-sexual harassment laws at the workplace and public places
◊ Adoption of domestic violence laws in Balochistan and Sindh, and in the Islamabad Capital Territory
◊ Introduction of land allotment measures for women in Punjab and Sindh, where in Sindh 70% of beneficiaries are women
◊ According to official statistics about 22% of Pakistani females over the age of 10 now work, an increase from 14% a decade ago
◊ A historical 45% turnout of women voters during the 2013 General Elections

The Challenges

Poverty, Labor Rights and Land Rights

Pakistan is facing development challenges in tackling poverty and hunger. Women’s lack of ownership and access to agricultural land is a key obstacle in this regard. More than 60% of women are engaged in the agricultural sector and are responsible for growing and managing food yet less than 2% own land and other natural resources. Despite there being a law on right to inheritance, women can only own and access land via husbands and brothers indicating that they depend on these relationships for their economic survival.

Though there has been a breakthrough in women joining the workforce, the informal sector remains a neglected area, over 70% women are economically active mainly in home based piece rate work, brick kiln work and other services and casual labour. The sector is a major contributor to the economy of Pakistan but there are no laws and policies to regulate or recognize the work, to provide decent wages and protect workers especially women.

Education

According to the Pakistan Economic Survey 2012-13, the overall literacy rate is 58%, 2011-12 figures indicate literacy rate for men is 70% while for females it is 47%. The gender discrepancy in education is due to large number of absenteeism and drop outs of girls from schools especially in rural areas. Other factors are socio-cultural beliefs, gender discrimination, poverty and child labour. Early age marriage is a contributing factor in this situation; the Pakistan Demographic Health Survey (PHDS) shows one out of six girls aged 15-19 years is already married (2006-07). Another cause of limited investment in girls’ education is economic dependency of girls.

Maternal Mortality Rate

Mother and child health has been one of the flagship programmes of public health, registering a significant decline in its Maternal Mortality Rate. According to the Pakistan Economic Survey, 2011-12, from 500 maternal deaths per 100,000 in 1990, maternal mortality has reduced to 260 deaths per 100,000. The slow progress is due to but not limited to lack of pre-natal care especially in rural areas, lack of nutritious diet, and lack of awareness and education on sexual and reproductive health and rights.

The 8 MDGs

Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education
Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women
Goal 4: Reduce child mortality
Goal 5: Improve maternal health
Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability
Goal 8: Develop a global partnership for development
Violence Against Women and Girls

The previous factors impeded by crimes of violence against women and girls in Pakistan is one of the major impediments to women gaining social and economic opportunities and exercising their rights. Women and girls continue to face sexual violence including rape/gang rape, sexual harassment, honor crimes, domestic violence, acid violence, dowry violence, early and forced marriages, trafficking for sexual exploitation and other forms of verbal, psychological, emotional, physical and sexual abuse. It is acknowledged that women and girls who face multiple forms of discrimination are exposed to increased risk of violence.

Bringing CSW58 Conclusions into National Planning

The fifty-eighth session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW58) took place 10-21 March 2014 in New York, at a pivotal moment when the international community is accelerating action towards achievement of the MDGs by the target date of 2015; intergovernmental deliberations on the post-2015 development agenda have entered a crucial stage; and Member States (including Pakistan) and all other stakeholders are turning their full attention to the 20-year review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

The priority theme of CSW58, “Challenges and achievements in the implementation of the MDGs for women and girls”, highlighted critical gender equality perspectives that need to be prominently reflected in the global, regional and national development agenda. The Agreed Conclusions will provide Pakistan and all stakeholders with a road map for action:

a) The Agreed Conclusions will be a critical tool/reference as the post-2015 development agenda is being shaped

b) Identified factors that have held back MDG achievement for women and girls, such as persistence of historical and structural unequal power relations between women and men; poverty and inequalities and disadvantages in access to resources/opportunities, and growing gaps in equality of opportunity, discriminatory laws, policies, social norms, attitudes, harmful customary and contemporary practices and gender stereotypes. Other identified factors include: natural disasters; underinvestment in gender equality; lack of systematic gender mainstreaming; and the ongoing adverse impact of the world economic and financial crisis

c) ‘Missing issues’ in the MDGs, or issues not adequately addressed have been identified, such as: violence against women and girls; child, early and forced marriage; women’s and girls’ disproportionate share of unpaid work, particularly unpaid care work; women’s access to decent work, the gender wage gap, employment in the informal sector, low paid and gender-stereotyped work such as domestic and care work; women’s equal access to, control and ownership of assets and productive resources (land, energy and fuel), and women’s inheritance rights; women’s sexual/reproductive health, and reproductive rights; universal health coverage; non-communicable diseases; accountability for violations of human rights of women and girls; and women’s full and equal participation in decision-making at all levels

d) An explicit, extensive and close nexus has been established in the Agreed Conclusions between development and the realization of human rights for women and girls.
UN Women during a visit to Muzaffarabad met with local women (including widows, orphans and disabled) who were receiving skills training from the centers of Women’s Development Department (WDD) of Azad, Jammu and Kashmir on handicrafts making (cutting, sewing, knitting, hand embroidery etc.).

On seeing the marketable products as a prospect for their economic empowerment, UN Women entered into a tripartite agreement between the WDD and the Bank of Azad, Jammu and Kashmir to provide financial support to these skilled informal women workers.


In mainstreaming women in the development agenda of the State of Azad, Jammu and Kashmir and more so vulnerable and marginalized women who are enrolled in training centers of WDD, a loaning scheme has been developed and launched for these women to establish their own business.

The WDD has agreed to give Rs. 3.2 million to the Bank of Azad, Jammu and Kashmir for payment of the mark-up which the Bank has set at its lowest rate of 15%.

Formation of linkages and marketing of products with the local market will be the joint responsibility of the Bank and WDD. This initiative highlights UN Women’s engagement in fostering strategic partnership with the public and private sectors under their corporate responsibility on social welfare.

Photos (this page) © UN Women Pakistan/Bushra Shams
6. “Empowered Women and a Prosperous Kashmir”

UN Women in collaboration with the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, the Nodal Agency of SAARC Gender Information Base (SGIB) in Pakistan, hosted the 7th SGIB Review Meeting on 25-26 March 2014 in Islamabad. Representatives from Member States of SAARC countries including Afghanistan, Bhutan, Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, as well as representatives of SAARC Secretariat and Line Ministries participated in the meeting. Recommendations on the way forward were agreed around the three thematic areas of (a) violence against women, (b) health, including HIV/AIDS and (c) feminization of poverty. SGIB, the (SAARC) Gender Information Base, is a regional process driven by SAARC and Member States.
According to a report by Aurat Foundation on cases of violence against women (January to December 2012), out of a total 7,516 number of reported cases, 167 incidents (2%) took place in Balochistan as compared to 4,766 incidents (63%) reported in Punjab. With a total of 989 domestic violence cases reported, 39 were reported from Balochistan and the highest number again reported in Punjab at 573 cases. Experts share that this high number may be due to the fact that women in Punjab are more able to reach law enforcement and media as compared to women Balochistan, leading to the higher number of crimes being reported in Punjab.

In enacting legislation as a first step to prevent and protect women against crimes of violence, the Provincial Assembly of Balochistan passed the Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Bill on 9 March 2014 despite some lawmakers terming the bill as being in contrast with the tribal norms of society. The adopted legislation follows the pattern of the landmark bill passed on the same issue by the Sindh Assembly in March 2013, the first province to pass a law on domestic violence. Balochistan’s bill defines different forms of domestic violence, including physical, sexual and economic abuse, stalking, harassment, etc. as well as verbal and emotional abuse, although the definition of the latter is not as wide-ranging as that in the Sindh legislation. The Balochistan bill expands the ambit of domestic violence to include violence visited upon domestic servants. Unlike the Sindh legislation, Balochistan’s bill has no direct penalties specified for abuses that are not covered by the Pakistan Penal Code. According to the bill, penalties for crimes under domestic violence are to be decided by the ‘Protection Committees’, although the bill does include penalties for breaching the Committee’s orders.

Legislation for the Islamabad Capital territory has only been passed by the Senate in February 2012 which means it has not yet become law.) Bills for the provinces of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab, and Pakistan Administered Kashmir are being developed or deliberated on.

In Pakistan, UN Women remains focused on working closely with authorities to widen access to justice for women and girls, support legal and policy reform, and promote zero tolerance for violence against women.
In Pakistan the national machineries on women right play a critical role for institutional response on:

- ensuring women’s rights are not violated
- ending violence against women and girls (EVAWG)
- effective implementation and monitoring of international commitments

The EVAWG Alliance Pakistan (a national alliance established in 2007 by UN Women and Civil Society Organizations) in collaboration with the Government of Pakistan has put forward key priorities and strategies for effective prevention and responses on ending crimes of violence against women and girls. Key resolutions developed from provincial and national consultations advocate for:

- **Repeal all discriminatory laws** and ensure enforcement of existing pro-women laws and the passage of pending pro-women legislations in all provinces such as Domestic Violence Bill, Comprehensive Acid Violence Bill, Early and Forced Marriages bill, Home Based Women Workers Social Protection Bill, through mutual responsibility and cohesion among all actors for ensuring implementation.

- **Pro-poor spending** such as universal and affordable primary healthcare, and providing free and compulsory education from the age of 5 to 16 years in accordance with article 25 A of the 18th Amendment.

- **Develop a National Strategy or Guidelines on Ending Violence against Women and Girls** from prevention to rehabilitation phase at national, provincial and district levels, using evidence based research. The strategy must: improve comprehensive and universal support services for VAWG victims to increase empowerment of women and girls in particular single, disabled, minority, displaced, indigent and migrant women and VAWG victims including women human rights defenders and women health workers; and undertake effective safety measures and create economic opportunities to secure rights of single women, minorities and differently able persons.

- **Strengthen the criminal justice system** through: sensitization of the law enforcement agencies on dealing with cases of violence against women and girls; reformation of the rules and procedures of police investigation; implementation of the manual on attitudinal change; increasing women in the police force to the government set quota of 10%-currently there are only 0.06%; take serious measures to de-politicization of police.

- **Strengthening the National and Provincial women’s machineries** especially the National Commission on the Status of Women, and establishing Provincial Commission on the Status of Women, Women Development Departments, and all other relevant departments so that they can effectively implement their mandate.

- **Implement human rights standards, international, regional and national laws** related to VAWG and sign and ratify the CEDAW Optional Protocol.

- **Undertake effective measures for women’s right to inheritance and agricultural land and other natural resource that can enhance their livelihood opportunities.**

- **Recognize the importance of reproductive health rights**, there is an immediate need to take measures for providing universal health coverage which is accessible, affordable and prevents maternal and child mortality rates.

- **Adopt holistic, comprehensive, strategic and well-resourced policy/strategy** to ensure the safety and protection of women human rights defenders.

- **Develop a system of accountability** on budget allocations and expenditures to ensure transparency so that the money is spent in the right way.
Pakistan's first ever international Conclave on National Evaluation Capacity Development was hosted by UN Women, UNICEF and UNDP in collaboration with the Planning Commission of Pakistan on 12 March 2014. This event followed a 2-day Regional Evaluation Networking meeting to support and strengthen the spirit of Delivering as One UN and South to South collaborations to share learning, experiences and best practices with evaluation specialists from eight countries in the region. UN Women presented a session on ‘Gender Responsive Evaluation’ to advocate gender responsive evaluations in the national M&E system, and train both civil societies and the ONE UN M&E Group on integrating gender equality in evaluations.

**Purposes of evaluation** include understanding why and the extent to which intended and unintended results are achieved, and what are their impacts on stakeholders. Evaluation is important as a:

- Source of evidence of the achievement of results and institutional performance
- Contributor to building knowledge and to organizational learning
- Agent of change and plays a critical and credible role in supporting accountability

**Role of evaluations:**

- Decision-Making
- Re-engineering
- Participation
- Ownership
- Credibility
Gender equality in evaluation aids understanding of how change happens in gender relations, such as:

Principles for **integrating HR & GE in evaluations** include:

- **Inclusion** - Evaluating Human Rights (HR) and Gender Equality (GE) requires paying attention to which groups benefit and which groups contribute to the intervention under review. Groups need to be disaggregated by relevant criteria: disadvantaged and advantaged groups depending on their gender or status (women/men, class, ethnicity, religion, age, location, etc.) duty-bearers of various types, and rights-holders of various types in order to assess whether benefits and contributions were fairly distributed by the intervention being evaluated.

- **Participation** - Evaluating HR & GE must be participatory; stakeholders of the intervention have a right to be consulted and participate in decisions about what will be evaluated and how the evaluation will be done.

- **Fair Power Relations** - Both HR & GE seek, inter alia, to balance power relations between or within advantaged and disadvantaged groups. The nature of the relationship between implementers and stakeholders in an intervention can support or undermine this change.

Examples of **empowerment indicators on HR & GE**:

**Quantitative empowerment indicators**
- Number of cases related to HR & GE heard in local/national/sub-national courts, and their results
- Proportion of women and men in different stakeholder groups in decision-making positions in local/national/sub-national government
- Employment/unemployment rates of women and men in different stakeholder groups

**Qualitative empowerment indicators**
- Extent to which legal services are available to women and men of different stakeholder groups
- Changes in access to information about claims and decisions related to human rights violations
- Extent to which women and men in different stakeholder groups have greater economic autonomy, both in private and public

**Development Assessment Committee (DAC) Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance**:

**Relevance**
Extent to which the objectives of a development intervention are consistent with beneficiaries’ requirements, country needs, global priorities and partner/donor policies.

**Sustainability**
Continuation of benefits from a development intervention after major development assistance has been completed.

**Effectiveness**
Extent to which the development intervention objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved taking into account their relative importance.

**Impact**
Positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by a development intervention (directly, indirectly, intended or unintended).

**Efficiency**
Measure of how economically resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc.) are converted to results.
UN Women in Pakistan 2014-2017: Programme Targets

STRENGTHENING ONE UN COORDINATION ON GENDER EQUALITY COMMITMENTS
1. Address structural and deep rooted issues through strengthened national and provincial government capacities for fulfilling their commitments through legislation, policies and programmes
2. Enhance institutional capacity of stakeholders who are on the forefront for human rights, gender and social justice
3. Integrate human rights of marginalized and excluded populations through enhanced competences of institutions and promote equal opportunities for women, girls and excluded groups to access and use social services; employment and economic opportunities; human security including preventing crimes of violence; and disaster preparedness and response

EXPANDING WOMEN’S LEADERSHIP AND PARTICIPATION
1. Increased number of laws, policies and institutional frameworks to promote gender equality and women’s empowerment
2. Enhanced capacity of machineries for women and institutional change at national and local levels to deliver on international and national commitments to advance women’s right to participate in decision making
3. Increased number of gender responsive measures (mechanisms, processes and services) to promote women’s leadership and participation in politics
4. Generation and production of disaggregated data and statistics for gender sensitive policy making and service delivery

ENHANCING WOMEN’S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT
1. Increased number of national plans, legislation, policies, strategies, budgets and justice mechanisms to strengthen women’s economic and social empowerment
2. Enhanced capacity at national and local levels to better influence economic policies and poverty eradication strategies, and to develop and implement gender responsive services to enhance women’s sustainable livelihoods
3. Enhanced access for informal women workers to social security benefits, enterprise development and income generating opportunities
4. Sex and gender disaggregated data collection mechanisms developed to include contribution of informal women workers

PREVENTING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS
1. Increased number of legislations that prevent and respond to violence against women and girls
2. Enhanced capacity of national and local partners to develop, amend and implement laws, policies and strategies to address violence against women and girls, including availability of quality, survivor focused services
3. Dialogue and collaboration enhanced between duty bearers around efforts to prevent and end violence against women and girls
4. Strengthened and coordinated UN System action to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls

ENGAGING WOMEN AS PEACE BUILDERS AND MEDIATORS
1. Increased number of strategies, plans and frameworks that promote gender equality commitments in disasters and humanitarian response
2. Enhanced capacity of national, provincial and local institutions, civil society and community groups to promote and protect rights of women and girls in disasters and complex emergencies
3. Strengthened gender responsive humanitarian coordination mechanisms, actions and responses
4. Increased regional initiatives to advance women’s role in stabilization and social reconstruction

MAKING GENDER EQUALITY CENTRAL TO NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING AND BUDGETING
1. Enhanced capacity of national and local institutions to develop and implement plans to promote and protect the human rights of vulnerable groups including women, children and religious minorities
2. Strengthen national and local mechanisms to monitor and report on international commitments and agreements on gender equality
3. Enhanced capacity of government officials, gender equality advocates and women’s groups to track gender responsive budgeting