Call for Action
UN High Level Panel on Women Economic Empowerment
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<td>AusAid</td>
<td>Australian Aid</td>
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<td>CM</td>
<td>Chief Minister</td>
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<td>DFID</td>
<td>Department for International Development</td>
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<td>DG</td>
<td>Director General</td>
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<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Product</td>
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<td>HBW</td>
<td>Home Based Worker</td>
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<td>HLP</td>
<td>High Level Panel</td>
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<td>ILO</td>
<td>International Labour Organisation</td>
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<td>IMF</td>
<td>International Monetary Fund</td>
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<td>IT</td>
<td>Information Technology</td>
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<td>MTDF</td>
<td>Medium-Term Development Framework</td>
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<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organisation</td>
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<td>ODI</td>
<td>Overseas Development Institute</td>
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<td>P&amp;D</td>
<td>Planning and Development Department</td>
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<td>P&amp;SH</td>
<td>Primary and Secondary Healthcare</td>
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<td>PBIT</td>
<td>Punjab Board of Investment &amp; Trade</td>
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<td>Punjab Commission on the Status of Women</td>
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<td>PDCF</td>
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<td>SDG</td>
<td>Sustainable Development Goals</td>
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<td>TEVTA</td>
<td>Technical Education &amp; Vocational Training Authority</td>
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<td>United States Agency for International Development</td>
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<td>VAWC</td>
<td>Violence Against Women Centre</td>
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<td>WDD</td>
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Preface
Women Economic Empowerment plays a fundamental role in overcoming gender disparity and ensuring that no woman is left behind, which addresses the larger gaps in economic opportunities both across Pakistan and globally. The UN High Level Panel provided a platform, which I used to engage with global leadership and galvanise political will at a provincial and national level to scale actions and champion initiatives within Punjab. The Government of the Punjab under the institutional leadership and personal guidance of the Chief Minister, Mr. Shehbaz Sharif, has been forthcoming in its efforts towards social equality campaigns and the creation of economic opportunities across multiple departments.

The Call for Action Campaign that I introduced, revived initiatives for women empowerment and economic justice; created close synergies between stakeholders; mentored girls and women; and played a role in gender sensitisation and overcoming gender stereotypes. I have been able to represent not only Pakistan, but women, on many different platforms over the last year and this has only strengthened my opinion that with the right outlook and enabling environments to increase visibility and support voice, women can relentlessly pursue their passion, empower themselves, give back to society and create a lasting global impact.

The Call for Action report demonstrates the status of commitments and the potential for collaboration between public private sector players; a partnership between governments, the social sector and companies in reshaping perceptions, breaking gender stereotypes and driving change as a strong case to bridge the nexus between gender inequality, gender parity and business profitability. As a Deputy Member for the UN High Level Panel on Women Economic Empowerment, I have been fortunate to witness and engage eminent officers, economic experts, academics, political institutions and business representatives creating linkages and long term partnerships which improve service delivery, promote women’s leadership and create equal opportunities across Punjab.

Working closely with Ms. Fiza Farhan who believes that the key to economic empowerment is social entrepreneurship among our youth and women and tackling adverse norms, has been inspiring. The Government of the Punjab’s commitment towards women economic empowerment to accelerate gender equality, poverty eradication and sustainable economic growth has been unwavering, and is visible through its interventions in bridging the gender gap, through economic opportunities, legal protection, political voice and physical security.
Key Message

Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif
Chief Minister, Punjab Government of Pakistan

The Government of the Punjab is committed to women’s economic empowerment and realising the full economic potential within the region. I am a strong proponent of the women empowerment agenda and believe that providing an enabling and safe environment for women to participate in the economy will pave the way for unprecedented success and development. We have taken bold and sustainable actions that impact our present and future overcoming gender inequality and tackling adverse norms to create a more inclusive and enabling society, particularly for the generations to come.
The Punjab Women Development Department believes that empowerment of women is of utmost importance for the economic and social progress and development of the Punjab province, as well as Pakistan on a whole. Many initiatives are being taken in line with the vision of Mr. Shehbaz Sharif, strengthening the role of women across sections of society and their empowerment in political, economic, social and legal spheres.

We are promoting women entrepreneurship, property ownership, employment, decision making, education and vocational training. We are hopeful that with these measures and priorities we would soon be able to achieve substantial women empowerment in Punjab.

Hameeda Waheed-ud-Din
Minister, Women Development, Punjab

Empowering women economically is important for families, communities and countries to develop sustainably. Despite the Government’s commitments on gender equality, Pakistan’s ranking in the area remains one of the lowest in the world. UN Women Pakistan provides technical advisory services to the Government and civil society partners to implement women’s empowerment agenda in the country. UN Women’s main objective in the women’s economic empowerment area is to empower women to fully participate in economic life across all sectors and at all levels of economic activity, specifically focusing on the informal workers (women HBWs) and socially excluded women.

We strongly believe that women’s economic empowerment is critical to achieving both the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Planet 50/50 by 2030. We need to work together to provide leadership and take sustained actions that improve economic outcomes for women at the national and international level.

Fauzia Viqar
Chairperson, Punjab Commission on the Status of Women

Jamshed M Kazi
Country Representative, UN Women, Pakistan

There are many challenges for the women of Pakistan, from ignorance of basic rights and freedoms, to low educational attainment, restrictions on mobility, violence against women and girls and denial of participation in decision making. National commitment to women’s empowerment and opportunities created by global attention to women’s growth has however, begun to provide an impetus for women’s participation in public life and economic growth here in Pakistan and the world over.

Provincial Punjab Commission on the Status of Women is working to promote women’s empowerment; remove discrimination against women in laws, policies and programs and; expand opportunities for socio-economic development of women. The Commission has undertaken legislative and policy review, advocacy and awareness efforts contributing to legislative amendments.

Fauzia Viqar
Chairperson, Punjab Commission on the Status of Women

Jamshed M Kazi
Country Representative, UN Women, Pakistan

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Executive Summary
Inaugurated on March 15, 2016, the UN Secretary-General’s High-Level Panel on Women Economic Empowerment was announced to respond to gender gaps in economic opportunities by unlocking potential hampered by norms, discriminatory legislation and limited or inaccessible resources and services. The panel included influential leaders and diverse experts from the government, private sector, academia and civil society to drive partnerships and present action oriented recommendations which would drive sustainable and inclusive economic growth, promote gender equality, increase female leadership and accelerate poverty eradication. By providing a platform to create linkages and strategic partnerships, the panel’s objectives included driving advocacy and promoting good practice activities beneficial to the entire society.

As a member of the UNHLP, Ms. Fiza Farhan had the opportunity to partner with global leaders and galvanise political will to scale actions towards women economic empowerment. She presented her five commitments to the esteemed Chief Minister of Punjab, to not only prioritise and identify solutions but move beyond advocacy into action.

1. Formalisation of skilled Home Based Workers (Informal Economy)
2. Improved Participation of Women in the Public Sector (Formal Economy)
3. Investment in Gender Sensitive Infrastructure and Capacity Building
4. Private Sector Engagement to recognise Gender Profitability
5. Investment in Academia to provide Counselling and Mentorship to Female Students

The Call for Action Campaign was launched in partnership with the Government of the Punjab to improve gender equality in the public and private sector both, creating a unique nexus between economic, social, legal and political empowerment. Strengthening of gender responsive infrastructure in the public sector, establishment of a Task Force on Women Empowerment, the Women Empowerment Package for 2016, the Punjab Gender Parity Report and legislation offering protection from violence against women were some of the significant initiatives demonstrated. The Campaign also emphasised that the key to strengthening women empowerment and economic justice is to understand that the provision of education, skills training and jobs opportunities would not be sufficient and sustainable without a positive change in adverse norms and the elimination of negative societal barriers.

This report highlights some of the key initiatives implemented to accelerate development and economic empowerment of women through policy reform, legislation, access to opportunities, political participation, education and health. These policies, programmes and institutional mechanisms have been categorised and summarised under 6 overarching themes.

1. Reforming Discriminatory Laws and Enacting Legislation Empowering Women
2. Protection of Women against Domestic Violence
3. Improving Leadership and Representation of Women in the Public Sector
4. Promoting Female Participation in the Public Sector (Formal and Informal Economy)
5. Advocacy and Awareness of Rights
6. Education and Training for Enhanced Capacity Building
7. Establishment of Female Friendly and Women Centric Infrastructure
The United Nations Secretary-General’s High Level Panel on Women Economic Empowerment was launched in March 2016 to respond to the larger gender gaps in economic opportunities and outcomes, unleashing economic potential throughout the world. By bringing together influential yet diverse leaders and experts from the government, private sector, academia and civil society, the panel’s objectives included presenting action oriented recommendations, in line with the SDGs and Planet 50/50, to drive sustainable and inclusive economic growth; promote gender equality, female leadership and accelerate poverty eradication.

Following the first High-Level Panel meeting in March, Ms. Fiza Farhan launched the ‘Call for Action Campaign’ in partnership with the Government of the Punjab and UN Women in Pakistan, engaging key players to promote economic, social, legal and political empowerment for women in both rural and urban settings. Within a few months, Ms. Farhan was able to galvanise the political will of the Government of the Punjab to not only drive empowerment initiatives, but also create a platform for multiple departments working together in the form of a Task Force which she was the chairperson for.

The campaign was framed around five commitments, each signifying the importance of stakeholder engagement in achieving powerful initiatives to economically empower women.
The Government of the Punjab

Pakistan is the sixth populous country in the world with some of the poorest economic, health and gender indicators across a population of 189 million people, continuing to grow at an alarming annual rate of 2.075% (The World Bank, 2015). The Government of the Punjab, which caters to almost 50% of the total population within the country, is dedicated to its vision of building a healthy and equitable community, particularly for women who constitute 48% of the population (Punjab Gender Parity Report, 2016: iii).

Upon Ms. Farhan’s return from the UN inaugural meeting, she met with the Chief Minister of Punjab, Mr. Shehbaz Sharif, and highlighted the importance of gender protability which could be achieved through concrete scalable women centred initiatives. This ‘Call for Action’ presented three key actions, calling on the public and private sector, government departments, media partners and the academic sphere.

The CM’s commitment to women empowerment was evident through initiatives such as the constitution of the Punjab Women Economic Empowerment Committee (PWEEC), the announcement of the Women Economic Empowerment Package 2016 to achieve gender parity, and the creation of a Task Force on Women Empowerment. This Task Force included eminent officers of Public Sector departments such as the Secretary, Women Development; Secretary, School Education; Secretary, Primary & Secondary Healthcare and DG, Special Reforms Unit (Previously Special Monitoring Unit - Law & Order, Chief Minister’s Office) among others.

Chaired by Ms. Farhan, the purpose of this body was to facilitate the coordination of Women Empowerment Initiatives, scaling up activities and awareness campaigns, across relevant frameworks; including but not limited to the Pakistan Women Entrepreneurship Programme, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women and the Sustainable Development Goals. It aimed to create linkages and partnerships on a local and international level, drive advocacy and promote good practice activities to the UN and other international agencies relevant to women’s economic empowerment beneficial to the entire society.

Monthly meetings of the Taskforce, provide a platform to the different departments to highlight not only their achievements but bring forward the challenges faced and seek collective discourse on the same.

**Action 1**
Engaging Leadership of Punjab Provincial Government

**Action 2**
Engaging Multi-tier Stakeholder Partnerships

**Action 3**
Engaging Mass Media to Promote Awareness and Initiate Dialogue
Partners

Achieving gender parity across sustainable economic growth requires close synergies between the public and private sector; coordination between multiple government departments and development partners; partnerships with influential civil society organisations as well as investments in academia and technology on a local, regional, national and global level.

With the Government of the Punjab at the helm of the campaign, there are many government departments and private sector organisations driving the ‘Call for Action’, mobilising resources, creating strategic partnerships, developing international linkages and catalysing initiatives that will overcome discriminatory action against women and accelerate women’s economic empowerment.

Women Development Department
Established on April 4, 2012, the Women Development Department was proposed under the Punjab Women Empowerment Package 2012 by the Government of the Punjab. Its mandate includes presenting reforms in legal, administrative and institutional spheres, as well as developing new proposals to safeguard women’s rights and transforming the socio-economic status of women.

It is pioneering economic initiatives and promoting leadership opportunities for women through employment quotas and schemes such as the Women Entrepreneurship Financing Scheme with the Bank of Punjab which offers loans for entrepreneurial and commercial ventures such as day care centres, boutiques and vocational institutes.

Punjab Commission on the Status of Women
The Punjab Commission on the Status of Women was established in February 2014 after the devolution of women’s development under the 18th Amendment to the Constitution of Pakistan. As an autonomous body, the PCSW is responsible for oversight of policies and programmes by the Government of Punjab to ensure the empowerment of women and the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women.

The PCSW facilitates and monitors mechanisms and institutional procedures for the prevention of discrimination, redressal of complaints of violation of women’s rights and, promote gender equality by making government functionaries accountable. Most notably this includes the toll-free helpline, the annual Punjab Gender Parity Report, the Gender Management Information System and the inspection of institutions such as Dar-ul-Amans.

Special Reforms Unit
The SRU, previously known as the Special Monitoring Unit on Law and Order, was established in the Chief Minister’s Office in August 2014 to improve the Law and Order sector. Through ground breaking reforms, comprehensive strategies, and implementation mechanisms, the office plays an integral role in eliminating discrimination against women. Notable achievements include transforming policing models and violence against women centres.

Planning and Development Department
The Planning and Development Department of the Government of the Punjab coordinates and monitors development programs and activities of various departments of the provincial government. It is the main agency working with foreign donors and prepares the Medium-Term Development Framework (MTDF) of developmental activities in the province, making it a prominent agent of growth in Punjab responsible for policies around economic conditions and measures.

Labour and Human Resource Department
The Labour and Human Resource Department, Government of the Punjab aims to promote and protect the welfare and rights of labour force and workmen, for greater socio-economic progress. Promoting women economic empowerment, the department is concerned with minimum wages, the protection of informal workers, home based workers and bonded labour.

Punjab School Education Department
The SED is responsible for legislation, policy formulation and planning areas of primary, elementary, secondary and higher secondary education. It oversees the quality of education through curriculum and assessment, as well as through facilities such as libraries and school infrastructure. The department plays a critical role in increasing female enrolment rates and participation in employment, particularly through the adaptation of infrastructure such as more secure boundaries for female bathrooms and classes, as well as safe transportation services.
Social Welfare and Bait-ul-Maal

The Social Welfare and Bait-ul-Maal departments in Punjab are committed to improving the quality of life and promoting effective participation in social change for all citizens irrespective of gender, caste, creed or race. The Social Welfare department aims to mobilise resources for sustainable socio-economic development through multi-sectoral and multi-dimensional approaches, community development and institutional care particularly focussing on socially oppressed and vulnerable groups which include women and children in distress.

Some of the notable initiatives by these departments include Social Welfare Training Institutes, Women Welfare Services and Marriage Grants which provides financial assistance to unmarried women.

Primary and Secondary Healthcare Department and the Population Welfare Department

The Population Welfare Department (PWD) was established following the 18th amendment under which the Ministry of Population Welfare was devolved to a provincial level, while the Primary and Secondary Healthcare (P&SH) Department was created following the bifurcation of the health sector. The two departments aim to create a healthier Punjab with an improved quality of life, particularly for women, through access to essential health services, focussing on reproductive and maternal health. Notable interventions which empower women include family health clinics and maternal and child health care initiatives.

Development Partners

The role of development partners such as the UNDP, ILO and World Bank in addition to other donor agencies which include but are not limited to USAID, DFID and AusAid is critical and transformative. Direct partnerships are visible through funded programmes which advance gender equality and empower women, particularly those promoting economic growth along the agricultural value chains. On the other hand, development partners can also play an indirect role by providing strategic and practical guidance to the private sector on how business cultures can empower and invest in women’s empowerment, such as through the UN Women’s Empowerment Principles.

Private Sector and Civil Society

Businesses and NGOs play an integral role in recognising gender gaps which hamper women empowerment and influencing adequate action to both overcome discriminatory practices and initiate interventions which will advance women economically. Notable actions include increasing awareness of women’s rights through advocacy campaigns and lobbying for legislation amendments; as well as encouraging female participation in the labour market by creating enabling environments which accommodate women, particularly those with care responsibilities through the provision of day-care facilities.

Punjab Information Technology Board

The PITB is an autonomous body established by the Government of the Punjab, which aims to improve digital literacy and inclusion, effectively improving the IT services and infrastructure in the local economy. The PITB encourages entrepreneurship through its start-up incubators and plays a key role in many initiatives by establishing their digital backbones. By developing websites and apps, the PITB is an integral supporting partner to launch and increase outreach for interventions and strategies that improve women empowerment.
The Punjab Growth Strategy aims to improve real GDP growth rate to 8% and achieve the sustainable development goals by 2018, by recognising a number of women centric sub-objectives such as population welfare, market linkages, health, labour force participation and skills trainings (Punjab Gender Parity Report, 2016: 2). Gender parity which is essential for development and economic empowerment requires a multidimensional approach appealing to policies, legislation, access to opportunities, political participation, education and health.

Effective policies and institutional mechanisms require participation and commitment from several stakeholders across different themes. With the support of the Chief Minister of Punjab and the Minister for Women Development, Ms. Fiza Farhan, in an advisory capacity, has been able to steer initiatives in partnerships with various provincial government departments, to overcome discriminatory practices and promote the social and economic empowerment of women, under the following themes:

1. **Reforming Discriminatory Laws and Enacting Legislation Empowering Women**
2. **Protection of Women against Violence**
3. **Improving Leadership and Representation of Women in the Public Sector**
4. **Promoting Female Participation in the Public Sector (Formal and Informal Economy)**
5. **Advocacy and Awareness of Rights**
6. **Education and Training for Enhanced Capacity Building**
7. **Establishment of Female Friendly and Women Centric Infrastructure**

This section will highlight major initiatives under each section and specifically shed light on some of the key (*) accomplishments.

### 1. Reforming Discriminatory Laws and Enacting Legislation Empowering Women

- **Home Based Workers policy**
- **Domestic Based Workers policy**
- **Anti-Honour Killings and Anti-Rape Bill**
- **Amendment in Inheritance Laws**
- **Proprietary Rights**
- **Right to Equal Pay for Work of Equal Value**
- **Maternity Leave**

**Home Based Workers Policy**

A Task Force was set up under the Punjab Women Empowerment Package to design a Domestic and Home Based Workers policy by the Labour and Human Resource Department. The Home-Based Workers Policy was drafted to protect and promote the rights and benefits of home-based workers, allowing them to avail security, interest-free loans and other benefits especially within the social security network, healthcare and education facilities. The HBW Policy was drafted in July 2015 but gained momentum after Ms. Farhan initiated the Call for Action campaign following her UN HLP representation. A cabinet meeting was called by the Chief Minister Punjab for a review of the policy on June 15, 2016. The approval of the policy is on the agenda for the next provincial cabinet committee meeting, following which the policy will be adopted across Punjab to guide and support provincial governments and local institutions, to protect workers, focussing particularly on women. Moreover, the Sindh Government also approved a Home-Based Worker Policy on January 13, 2017.
Domestic Workers Policy

The Domestic Workers Policy was drafted and approved by the Provincial Cabinet on December 17, 2015. It aims to protect domestic workers by bringing them under the jurisdiction of labour laws and providing them with proper wages and basic benefits, such as health, social security and safety. Some of the major components of the bill included formally recognising domestic workers as labour which would allow timings and salaries to be regulated, the provision of social protection and holidays in line with the labour laws, and protection from abuse and violence at the work place/home. In addition, under this policy domestic workers would be able to form unions. Under the Labour and Human Resource Department, a provincial council was also established to monitor implementation.

Anti-Honour Killings and Anti Rape Bill

The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan reported a total of 15,222 honour crimes and 4,734 cases of sexual violence between 2004-2016, which are largely underestimated and based only on cases that are ‘officially registered’. 987 cases of honour killings occurred in 2015 alone. The Anti-Rape Bill and Anti-Honour Killing Laws were approved by the National Assembly in October 2016 and passed after years of deliberation and opposition by religious fundamentalists. Subsequent amendments to other laws (Pakistan Penal Code, 1860 and Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898) also stipulated that the obstruction of justice or sabotage of investigations by officers would be investigated and punished through fines and imprisonment.

Proprietary Rights

The Punjab Women Empowerment Package included a provision to award joint proprietary rights, with equal share to husbands and wives, under three housing schemes. Rights were given to approximately 90,000 households for the Jinnah Abadi Scheme in rural areas of Punjab, 110,000 households who were residents of Katchi Abadis and approximately 700,000 households were awarded rights for the regularisation of residential occupants of state land in Village Abadis. This is particularly useful in ensuring that the rights and ownership titles of female heirs are protected; especially in matters of domestic disputes, inheritance and the auction or sale of property.

2. Protection of Women against Violence

- **Punjab Protection of Women against Violence Act, 2016***
- **Violence against Women Centres (VAWCs)**
- **Women Protection Authority**
- **Women Safety Smart Phone Application***
- **Punjab Protection against Harassment of Women at Workplace Act, 2012***
- **Harassment Awareness Voluneteer Program**
- **Street Theatre Campaign***
- **Provincial and District Acid Burns Survivors Board***
Punjab Protection of Women against Violence Act, 2016

Spearheaded by the SRU, the Punjab Protection of Women against Violence Act was unanimously approved by the Punjab Assembly on February 24, 2016. The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan reported an estimated 1843 cases of domestic violence against women between 2004 and 2016. This bill institutionalises mechanisms to provide protection through Violence against Women Centres (VAWCs), Protection Orders, Monetary Orders and Residence Orders; and declares all crimes against women a criminal offence in the Pakistan Penal Code. The first Violence against Women Centre in South Asia will be operational in Multan during March. The establishment of 5 additional VAWCs, which are the first line of defence for victims and provide immediate relief and protection, have been approved.

Women Safety Smart Phone Application

The SRU in collaboration with the PCSW, PITB and Punjab Safe Cities Authority have developed a mobile application which allows women to contact law enforcement agencies along with their exact geographic location and report any emergencies or harassment incidents for effective action. The phone app also allows women access to the safest routes and locations to get to a particular location as well as contact the PCSW helpline directly for information.
Street Theatre Campaign

The SRU initiated the Street Theatre Campaign which is a grass root initiative, in collaboration with UN Women, targeting both men and women to raise concerns regarding Violence against Women, harassment and discrimination in public and private spaces for women. This was launched in Lahore, Faisalabad and Multan during December 2016.

3. Improving Leadership and Representation of Women in the Public Sector

Recruitment Quota for Women in Public Service Employment
Quotas for women employed in public service (posts BS 1-15) were enhanced from 5% to 15% under the Punjab Women Empowerment Package and Punjab Women Empowerment Initiative in all Government departments and institutions mentioned in the Rules of Business. The PCSW reported that in 2016 the increased target was met by Office of the Ombudsperson Punjab; the Special Education Department; the Administration of Zakat and Ushr Department, and the University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences (Punjab Gender Parity Report: 2016, 151). In addition, the mandatory requirement that selection committees must include at least one female representation for each recruitment (both regular and contractual employment), was reported to have been met by 21 committees across 83 provincial government departments. Continued compliance and increased implementation will be devised and strengthened.

Representation in Boards of Statutory Organizations, Public Sector Companies and Committees
Under various revised legislative policy and interventions by the Labour Department in coordination with the Women Development Department, representation of 33% women in all Boards of Statutory Organisations, public sector companies and committees as well as special purpose task forces and committees has been mandated. By the end of 2016, 12 Boards, 17 Committees and 2 Task Forces across Punjab met this target. In addition to quotas to increase the demand for female representation on Boards, the government, under many initiatives, is increasing the supply for qualified and experienced personnel by building the capacity and leadership skills of women.
4. Promoting Female Participation in the Labour Market (Formal and Informal Economy)

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<td>Establishment of Working Women Endowment Fund to provide Affordable Residential Facilities</td>
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<td>Provision of Scooties for Working Women*</td>
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<td>Distribution of Poultry and Cattle among Rural Women*</td>
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<td>Exclusive Space in Existing Sunday Bazars and Ramadan Bazars for Women</td>
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<td>Women Contractors to run Canteens across Female Educational Institutions*</td>
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Establishment of Cottage Villages in Labour Colonies

Cottage Villages have been established for women in Labour Colony, Defence Road, Lahore. Similar facilities in other colonies are in progress.

Provision of Scooties for Working Women

Under the Punjab Women Empowerment Package 2016, applications for 1000 pink scooters to be distributed at a subsidised rate will be called. This will be a part of the Women on Wheels campaign, which has already trained 150 women motorcyclists in collaboration with the SRU and CityTraffic Police.

Distribution of Poultry and Cattle among Rural Women

Livestock has been distributed among women in Punjab to economically empower them by providing a means for livelihood (6000 Heifers, 6000 sheep and goats). Additional livestock animals will also be provided under the expansion of the initiative to other districts such as Pattoki, Kasur.

Women Contractors to run Canteens

Contracts for approximately 9000 canteens in girls’ schools have been awarded to female owned businesses and/or contractors across Punjab. In addition, 127 out of 214 canteens in female colleges are also being operated by females. The remaining 87 had active contracts which after expiration will also be awarded to women.

Interest Free Loans

Over 480,218 women were awarded interest free loans amounting to Rs. 2.2 billion through the Punjab Rozgar Scheme and the Chief Minister’s Special Employment Scheme. In collaboration with Akhuwat, this PWEP 2016 initiative aimed to provide loans and disbursements to unemployed skilled persons, with preference given to females.

5. Advocacy and Awareness of Rights

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<td>Female Help Desks at 680 Police Stations</td>
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<td>Free Legal Advice and Legal Aid Cell*</td>
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<td>Media Campaigns for Awareness of Legal Issues and Rights</td>
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<td>Gender Parity Report*</td>
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Toll Free Women's Helpline

The Government of Punjab established a toll-free helpline under the Women Development Department, which also hosts women legal advisors and is managed by the PCSW to address inquiries and complaints. Various issues tackled include but are not limited to workplace harassment, gender discrimination, property and inheritance disputes, domestic violence, skills development employment policies (Punjab Gender Parity Report, 2016: 150). It was reported that as of September 2016, the helpline received 45,058 calls approximately which constituted of 29,305 inquiries and 455 complaints.

Free Legal Advice and Legal Aid Cell

Under the umbrella of the Punjab Women Empowerment Package 2016, two focal people, preferably females, from each Prosecution Department have been nominated to provide free legal advice to indigent women at a district level, particularly for civil matters. Legal Aid Cells have further been established in collaboration with bar councils. In 2015, 93,264 cases of Family Law and 10,325 cases regarding Custody and Guardianship were pending in courts across Punjab, emphasising the outstanding need by women for free legal representation (Punjab Gender Parity Report, 2016: vii). As a result, this initiative is a great achievement towards improving legal empowerment and access to justice.

Gender Parity Report

The PCSW has prepared a comprehensive document in the form of an annual Punjab Gender Parity Report, first launched in 2016, which presents information to assist in decision making and policy formulation. This report encourages research and an analysis on women and gender issues by providing a comprehensive overview of the current status of women in Punjab and sex disaggregated data and gender statistics.

6. Education and Training for Enhanced Capacity Building

- Women-on-Wheels*
- Day Care Workers Training*
- Market Skills Training Programme expanded for 10,000 Rural Women
- Veterinary Training for Women in Livestock and Poultry*
- Technical Training of Workers’ Wives
- Vocational Training for Minority Communities*
- Gender Sensitisation of the Punjab Textbook Board Curriculum*
- Punjab Education Endowment Fund Scholarships*
- Career Development Centre and Counselling Facilities*
- Inclusion of the Punjab Protection against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act and the Punjab Women Empowerment Package in Training Courses
Gender Sensitisation of the Punjab Textbook Board Curriculum
A chapter has been included in textbooks for Classes 9-12 which address the root causes of violence by attempting to change mind-sets. This is further facilitated through the inclusion of the Punjab women empowerment initiatives, gender equality and women issues in the school curriculum.

Punjab Education Endowment Fund
The PEEF awarded scholarships to 53,515 female students during the term 2014-2016 amounting to Rs. 4 billion. In addition, the Punjab Education Fund has awarded education vouchers to over 100,000 female students.

Women-on-Wheels
The Women-on-Wheels campaign empowers women by providing them with the necessary skill-set and the means to increase their mobility and independence through the provision of free motorcycle lessons. The objective of this campaign is to demonstrate that women have an equal right and access to public spaces as men.

Day Care Workers Training
The Punjab Day Care Fund under the PWEI was established to provide funding to entrepreneurs interested in establishing Day Care Centres to facilitate women and to provide trainings in collaboration with the WDD to skilled workforce at the centres. Over 1000 domestic and 88 day care workers were trained by the Punjab Skills Development Fund in 4 training centres, further benefitting women and families.

Veterinary Training for Women in Livestock and Poultry
The PWEI funded the veterinary training of women in livestock and poultry at Tehsil Hospitals of the Livestock and Dairy Development Department, to enhance their role in agriculture. A total of 119,707 rural women were reportedly trained across 33 districts and 3,070 females specifically regarding livestock and poultry (Punjab Gender Parity Report, 2016: 156).

Vocational Training for Minority Communities
TEVTA provided free vocational training to 240 women belong to minority communities in Punjab. This is in addition to the 120,000 women trained by PVTC and the 14,740 rural women trained by PSDF.

Career Development Centres and Counselling Facilities
The PWEP 2016 proposed Career Development Centres in all Public-Sector Women Universities and Counselling Facilities in Post Graduate Colleges. Career Development Centres have been established in 5 higher education institutes across Punjab (2 in Rawalpindi and 3 in Lahore).
7. Establishment of Female Friendly and Women Centric Infrastructure

**Family Court Complex in every District**

Under the PWEI, the establishment of new family court complexes have been approved in the District Headquarters of Punjab. Construction of 10 such facilities have been initiated, while land allocation for an additional 7 districts is in process.

**Working Women Hostels**

In collaboration with the WDD, 16 working women hostels across Punjab have been established over the 2014-2016 period, benefitting over 5000 women. These provide subsidised residential facilities to working women over 12 cities.

**Day Care Centres**

Punjab Day Care Fund (PDCF) has been established to support working women to make workplaces women friendly on a co-finance basis. Establishment of a Flagship Day Care Centre has been approved for the Punjab Civil Secretariat. Moreover, the mandatory provision of Day Care Centres is in process for all public-sector offices (including universities, colleges, hospitals and other organizations) with five or more than five female employees. A total of 55 organisations have been granted funds to setup day care centres.

**Women Friendly Public Amenities**

A scheme for the construction and rehabilitation of baths and toilets for women at public places have been included in the ADP 2016-2017. The construction of separate female restrooms has been initiated at the Punjab Civil Secretariat and will be duplicated across other departments. Along with proper female designated prayer rooms, the Chief Architect Punjab and Chief and Executive Engineers have been ordered to ensure that such amenities and facilities are included in all designs of public buildings.
Way Forward

The Call for Action was a campaign intended on inspiring long term regional commitment for gender equality and women’s economic empowerment. Strategic partnerships and innovative initiatives to promote gender parity, empowerment, advocacy and bridge the existing gaps in the economy are integral elements on how the Government of Punjab will continue its plight for women’s economic empowerment.

Synergies are critical; between and with public offices, private actors, NGOs and the civil society. Advancing gender equality; closing wage gaps; increasing representation in politics and employment; improving access to resources, justice, health and education; and promoting women’s leadership are all powerful drivers of women economic empowerment. Pakistan has taken the first step towards equality and improving the status of women but greater advocacy, capacity building, stronger institutions and positive behavioural change are still urgently required. To continue the momentum of the Call for Action Campaign and empowering women, some of the initiatives proposed and in process include the following:

- **Women Empowerment Package 2017**;
- Formulation of a Gender Audit and Provincial Gender Policy;
- Amendments in Family Laws;
- Scaling up of Existing Initiatives;
- 5% Budget Allocation in the ADP 2017-2018 for Women Empowerment and Gender Equality;
- Increased Provision of Health to empower Women;
- Revised Primary School Curriculum with Character Building subjects to overcome Adverse Norms;
- Establishment of One Window Facilities under the Punjab Women Business Council, PBIT
- Private sector partnerships with UN Women and WDD to promote UN Women Empowerment Principles (WEP) and similar International Standards to achieve Gender Equality. Organisations such as Pepsi Co and Nestle Limited, followed by other leading multinationals, have already demonstrated their endorsement and will be formally adopting the UN Global Compact WEP Agenda.
- Increased Global Partnerships, particularly those aligned and developed through the UN HLP platform. One such example is the Sharjah Delegation to Punjab with regards to the establishment of a Punjab Women Business Council.

Through these initiatives existing schemes will be scaled up or expanded such as the establishment of Career Counselling Centres in all women colleges, increased low cost housing and the additional provision of female friendly infrastructure such as bus stops specifically for women in rural areas. Also, proposed and more challenging, is a 15% employment quota for women in the private sector. Improved service delivery and access of health facilities, through MHUs with basic facilities to screen Breast Cancer and increased Mental Health Facilities at a DHQ and THQ level, will further empower women through better quality of living.

Legislative reform will also oversee amendments to Christian divorce and inheritance laws, as well as raise the minimum legal marriage age for girls from 16 to 18 under the Marriage Restraint Act. Plans to improve processes such as CNIC registration will follow from this. Moreover, the concept of one stop shops will be tailored to act as holistic platforms for women led enterprises, where they will have access to finance through commercial banks, trainings for capacity building and business solutions, skills based trainings as well as legal information and regulatory support.

The Government of Punjab has been able to make great strides in creating an enabling environment for women, providing them with a platform to raise their voice and developing facilities which will allow them to progress economically. With the driving force of the UN High Level Panel which allowed Ms. Fiza Farhan the opportunity to partner with the provincial government and steer the wheel in Punjab, a powerful momentum has been struck. Gender disparities and biases within the economic and legal infrastructure are being identified and acknowledged, which is the fundamental starting point for any reform. The guidance and expertise shared among the HLP has been beneficial to all of Punjab, with the strong partnerships and knowledge networks formed through Ms. Farhan, commitment to many initiatives was revived not only at a grassroots level but from the highest political order within the region, impacting and benefitting millions of women.
Though there has been marked improvement, the journey to achieving gender parity requires all stakeholders to take bold actions that are sustainable and effective. This campaign must be continued, not only through an official capacity but at a personal level. The UN High Level Panel Members will remain steadfast in their passion to inspiring action and progress towards achieving women’s economic empowerment and gender equality by 2030, on a local and international level both, but this will only be effective when other organisations and individuals recognise and pledge to drive women’s economic empowerment.

Pledging her commitment, Ms. Fiza Farhan notes ‘Women’s Economic Empowerment is a powerful tool, one that will lead to unparalleled growth and success, but without a strong inner voice asking you to believe and fight, you will never find the strength to empower yourself and those around you. I have committed endlessly to helping other women and our children believe in themselves and reach their strength, have created a platform to enable their potential and now urge you to take a pledge that you will commit to empowering women. Without the UN High Level Panel, I would not have had the recognition I have received at a global level, or the opportunity to highlight our achievements and reform initiatives with the Government of the Punjab; but by each one of us encouraging one another we can achieve anything and break any glass ceiling in our way. With our strong collective voice and visionary approach, I am hopeful that together we WILL close the gender gap in our country and mentor our women and girls into becoming strong visionary entrepreneurs who will take Pakistan forward.’
Media Gallery

UN High Level Panel Inaugural Meeting, New York, March 2016
Pakistan’s Fiza Farhan appointed Member of the UN’s first-ever High-Level Panel on Women’s Economic Empowerment

Date: 15 February 2016

(PRESS RELEASE)

In an announcement today Ms. Fiza Farhan from Pakistan has been named as Member of the first ever High-Level Panel of the UN Secretary-General on Women’s Economic Empowerment. The establishment of this distinguished panel was announced in January at the World Economic Forum in Davos with Un Women - the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women - serving as its secretariat.

The Panel will provide recommendations for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to improve economic outcomes for women and promote women’s leadership in driving sustainable and inclusive, environmentally sensitive economic growth. It will provide recommendations for key actions that can be taken by governments, the private sector, the UN system and other stakeholders, as well as policy directives needed to achieve the new targets and indicators in the Sustainable Development Goals which call for the economic empowerment of women, and benefits all. The panel is backed by the United Kingdom, the World Bank Group and UN Women.

Growing evidence and recognition by governments and the private sector reveal that women’s economic empowerment has a multiplier effect and boosts whole economies. Research shows that women invest their income back into their families and communities, including in health and education. McKinsey Global Institute estimates that if women in every country were to play an identical role to men in markets, as much as US$28 trillion would be added to the global economy by 2025.

Yet women continue to earn less, have fewer assets, bear the burden of unpaid work and care, and be largely concentrated in vulnerable and low-paying activities. Women spend more than twice as much time on unpaid care and domestic work as men and women on average are paid 24 per cent less than men globally for the same work. Moreover, 75 per cent of women’s employment in developing regions is informal and unprotected. These gaps constrain women’s rights and hinder economic growth and productivity. Significantly scaled up actions and political will are required to ensure that governments, development organizations and others invest in the economic empowerment of women for the benefit of whole societies.

As a Member of the first-ever High-Level Panel on Women’s Economic Empowerment, Ms. will contribute to the Committee’s work in preparing the World Bank's 2017 report: Women’s Economic Empowerment: Accelerating Progress for Inclusive Development.
UN rep rallies for gender equality

SHAHRAM HAQ
LAHORE

The United Nations aims to ensure gender equality across the world by 2030 in a bid to achieve sustainable development goals. Its ‘Planet 50-50 by 2030: Step It Up for Gender Equality’ asks governments to make national commitments to address the challenges holding women and girls back from reaching their full potential.

In Pakistan, Fiza Farhan, who is a member of the first-ever High-Level Panel of the UN Secretary-General on Women’s Economic Empowerment, has accepted the task.

She has managed to form a committee in Punjab to work on legislation to ensure the gender equality in the rural and urban economic settings.

“I am trying to engage multiple departments of the GENDER EQUALITY PAGE 9.

UN rep rallies

Fiza Farhan

We are hopeful that some framework will be shaped soon,” she says.

For Fiza, the key trigger is the informal labour force, which in any case is contributing to Pakistan’s economy but is not paid as deserved.

“Such women are not integrated as formal labour force and often get one-third of the minimum wages, this has made Pakistan the second worst country in gender equalisation,” Fiza says.

Gender equality ratio in Pakistan currently stands at 762 (men: women). The UN representative believes the ratio can easily go up to 40% if rural women working in the informal sector are documented, but the issue is not limited to rural areas. In urban metropolises also, women are facing the same issues though not in the same scale as rural areas.

“During the meetings, in multinational and local businesses, they need to attain a certain percentage of women participation in low, middle as well as high-level decision-making levels, and it is a challenge,” she says. “My aim is to implement UN global compact principles in the corporate sector in Pakistan.”

Though some multinational companies have agreed to sign the CEO statement of Support, an undertaking by business leaders to express support for advancing gender equality, it is a long journey ahead for truly implementing the UN vision in Pakistan towards Planet 50-50.

Citing the example of Norway, Fiza said there were some countries in the world that have already achieved or are close to gender equality.

Pakistan’s ground realities are somewhat different than the developed nations. “The UN will launch its report of gender equality in 2017, and I, as a member and a representative of Pakistan, will submit a demonstrative case study, showcasing the tangible actions achieved towards women’s economic empowerment in Punjab,” Fiza said.

“If Pakistan can even reach an equality ratio of 70:30 by 2030, it will be a major achievement for all of us.”

TED Event, LUMS, Lahore, May 2016
HLP Member Justine Greening (UK International Development Secretary) visits Pakistan. Discussion on “Inclusive and Gender Equal Societies” in collaboration with DFID-UK, Pakistan, June 2016
SEDC Ambassador of Women and Leadership, LUMS, Lahore, June 2016

UN High Level Panel Meeting
LUMS, Lahore, June 2016
UN High Level Panel Meeting, UN General Assembly, New York, September 2016
Punjab Chief Minister steams up women's empowerment initiatives

Date: 21 October 2016

(Press Release)

Punjab, Pakistan – The Government of the Punjab has set up a taskforce to fast-track women’s empowerment agendas, including working closely with UN Women to create policy environment for women informal workers in the province.

Punjab Chief Minister Mian Shalbaz Sharif early this week constituted a provincial taskforce for facilitating the coordination of women’s empowerment initiatives, and scaling up activities and awareness campaigns across relevant frameworks including but not limited to the Pakistan Women Entrepreneurship Programme (PWEIP), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Ms. Fiza Farhan, Member of the UN Secretary-General’s High-Level Panel on Women’s Economic Empowerment has been appointed Chairperson of the Task Force by the Chief Minister of Punjab. The Task Force on Women Empowerment will be led by Fiza and comprise of eminent officers of Public Sector departments such as the Secretary, Women Development; Secretary, School Education; Secretary, Primary & Secondary Healthcare; Members of the Provincial Assembly and Senior Member, Law & Order (Special Monitoring Unit, Chief Minister’s Office) among other key stakeholders from the public sector and civil society.

This Task Force is in line with a ‘Call to Action’ included in the first report of the High-Level Panel for Women’s Economic Empowerment in September 2016, which emphasized the need for increased partnerships and commitments to accelerate progress under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The findings which called on different stakeholders to promote women’s leadership in driving sustainable and inclusive, environmentally sensitive economic growth, recommended key actions by governments, the private sector, United Nations and multilateral organizations as well as the civil society.

In bringing this global initiative to Pakistan, Fiza in partnership with the Government of Punjab and UN Women Pakistan launched the ‘Call for Action Campaign’ engaging...
Women Development Department
“herTalk Campaign” Inaugural Event, Lahore, November 2016
“BeatMe Campaign” by UN Women in Pakistan, December 2017

CM Task Force on Women Empowerment Meeting, Lahore, December 2016
UN High Level Panel Meeting in Dubai, February 2017
My journey to becoming a member of the UN Secretary General’s High Level Panel on Women’s Economic Empowerment has been challenging, albeit a promising and surprising one. The HLP on Women’s Economic Empowerment hopes to present action oriented recommendations, in line with the SDGs and Planet 50/50, to drive sustainable and inclusive economic growth, promote gender equality, female leadership and accelerate poverty eradication. During the inaugural meeting, UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon highlighted the importance of gender equality at a business level, praising my inclusion as a result of the entrepreneurship demonstrated fighting for women’s empowerment through my innovative programmatic interventions at the Kaleh Foundation. Through impact investment as opposed to a charity based approach, the foundation selected and trained a female...

Despite decades of progress towards gender equality and initiatives driving empowerment, the world continues to lag values behind its true economic potential. To those who believe this an issue only relevant to feminists or simply pertinent to social and moral justice, it’s time to accept that the ramifications exist far and wide, impacting each and every one of you, girls and women, boys and men across human development, labour markets, productivity and GDP growth on a global level.

A report by the McKinsey Global Institute found that in a full potential scenario, where all able women participated equally in the economy, there would be an increase of $25 trillion to the annual global GDP by 2025. Not only is that an outstanding 26% rise but it’s approximately the collective size of the economies of the US and China together. The sheer magnitude of the increased economic prosperity is a convincing business case study on how imperative it is to overcome the gender gap and advance women as equally contributing partners in the economy. At the outcome, gender parity is a goal that multiple stakeholders proclaim to be...
Delegation from the Sharjah Women Business Council, Lahore, February 2017

Meeting on Women Empowerment Package 2017, Lahore, February 2017
Call for Action
UN High Level Panel on Women Economic Empowerment