



# Gender Equality & Women's Empowerment Policy



Women Development Department  
Government of Sindh - 2019

## Contributors

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2019-2020

This Publication was developed through a partnership between:

The Women Development Department, Government of Sindh

and

UN Women Pakistan

Supported by:

US Department of State, Bureau of International Narcotics & Law Enforcement Affairs

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Immense gratitude is extended to all the stakeholders, experts, and grassroots activists from Mirpurkhas, Hyderabad, Sukkur and Karachi divisions, who gave their valuable inputs and feedback, and contributed their time, energy, ideas, inspiration and experiences to this policy document.

## About this Document

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This document sets out Sindh Government's vision, mission, policy objectives and recommended actions, to advance Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE) across the Province, pursuant to the Government's Constitutional obligations and political commitments.

The Sindh Women's Development Department (WDD) has led the process of the formulation of this Policy, which has been drafted in consultation with and consensus from a wide range of Government and non-Government stakeholders. It is informed by a thorough review of key official and unofficial documents relating to gender equality, women's empowerment, and women's machineries at the provincial, national and international levels, and a detailed review of relevant Government laws, structures, rules and regulations, policies, roadmaps, and (multi)sectoral development plans that carry gendered dimensions, as well as international commitments, recommended regional best practices for women's machineries in promoting gender responsive legislation, policy planning, mainstreaming, financing and analysis.

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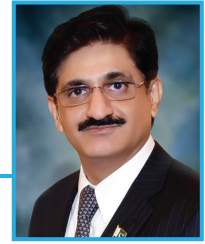
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## Message from the Chief Minister, Sindh

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The Government of Sindh is committed to the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment with the ratification of key international human rights instruments. The Constitution of Pakistan also recognizes the principle of non-discrimination, which is further supported by numerous laws and sectoral policies applicable across the country. With the introduction of Sindh's Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Policy, the provincial government reiterates its commitment to creating a peaceful, democratic, gender-just and prosperous society, where women and girls are equal and empowered citizens.

The Government of Sindh, in line with the principles of its political leadership, has taken a lead role amongst all provinces in passing legislation to ameliorate the status of women and girls of all ages, as captured in this document. The provincial legislative framework provides a strong basis for initiating and continuing sectoral reforms related to the distinct and intersecting elements of women and girls' social, political and economic rights. Many sectoral plans and policy frameworks also refer to gender as a central theme in their background analyses, proposed inputs and outcomes.

With these essential building blocks in place, laws and sectoral plans need to become better integrated, and a coordinated gender mainstreaming outlook needs to emerge in all operational arrangements of the government across the province. In order to address persisting inequalities in the areas discussed in this document, it is critical that all government actions be planned, executed, reported and reviewed in a manner that reflect substantive investments, barriers and progress made in improving the lives of women and girls. Towards this end, the Government of Sindh is committed to developing and institutionalizing systems of participatory, inclusive, proactive, capable and transparent governance that guarantee meaningful representation to diverse groups of women and girls.

I congratulate the Women's Development Department, Government of Sindh for leading and supporting the process of consultations and consensus-building with a wide range of government and civil society stakeholders whose inputs shaped this policy. In particular, I thank UN WOMEN for its commitment to supporting policy reforms with regards to gender equality and women's empowerment; the Sindh Commission on the Status of Women, for its assistance in harmonizing shared plans for future actions pursuant to this policy, and the officers and staff members who toiled to bring this report to reality.

It is my great honor and privilege to launch this policy and it is my hope that it will be used for further developing specific targets and financial forecasts for accelerating gender equality and women's empowerment efforts. I extend the highest level of political and administrative commitment to realizing the goals and ambitions of this policy and look forward to continuing institutional collaborations in the coming months and years for realizing the vision enshrined in the body of this document.

**Mr. Murad Ali Shah**  
Chief Minister,  
Government of Sindh

## Message from the Minister, Women's Development, Sindh

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The Women's Development Department (WDD), Government of Sindh was established as cell within the Department of Planning and Development in 1979, with the mandate to promote gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE). After a series of departmental mergers, the Department gained its independent functions in 2003, including the mandate to formulate public policies and laws to meet the needs of women, promote women's rights, and develop projects that improve the living conditions of women in the province.

The fact that Sindh has been at the forefront in terms of affirmative action on women's rights cannot be disputed. The political leadership of Sindh has time and again shown its commitment to aligning legislation and government actions to meet the special needs of women and girls, which is observable in the passage of some landmark legislation between 2018 and 2019, including the period it took to develop this Policy. The Sindh WDD was also the first Department to notify a provincial *Women's Empowerment and Development Policy* for the Government of Sindh in 2013.

Five years following the passage of the 2013 Policy, a review of WDD's performance in 2018 suggested that while there was advancement in pro-women and transgender legislation, many stated objectives had suffered policy evaporation. There were no agreed terms between the Sindh WDD and other government Departments to ensure timely and effective coordination; to evaluate the gender differentiated impact of public policies; to ascertain why women and girls continued lagging behind despite the setting up of various mechanisms; and to measure what the Government of Sindh was doing as a whole to improve gender equality. The absence of an implementable GEWE policy was quickly identified and the process of policy landscaping initiated to update what needed to be done. The new Policy needed to have commitment and support from the highest government office in the province if gender was to be mainstreamed, and it needed to lay out roles and responsibilities of different government entities in consultation with stakeholders, against which progress could be systematically tracked.

This Policy document draws from and aligns with various sectoral plans and legislative frameworks applicable in Sindh and is a statement of intent to identify sector-specific and cross-sectoral linkages and required actions for achieving GEWE across Sindh. It is based on province-wide consultations with eighty government departments and civil society groups and spells out the overall vision, mission, strategic objectives and recommended actions for the Government of Sindh in pursuing GEWE as per international, Constitutional, national and provincial obligations and commitments.

I am very thankful to UN Women Pakistan for their continuous support to the Sindh WDD, this time for revising the provincial Gender Equality and Women Empowerment Policy through a lengthy and participatory process of engagement. I would also like to thank civil society partners for their valuable inputs through numerous workshops and meetings. A special thanks is extended to the Sindh Commission on the Status of Women Chairperson and its members, for sharing feedback that helped shape this Policy.

I hope with the updated Policy, both government Departments and officers of WDD will be guided in their work for actively supporting much-needed institutional reforms that further the agenda of GEWE in Sindh and reduce inequalities through better targeted and reported public sector programs.

**Syeda Shehla Raza**

Minister, Women's Development Department,  
Government of Sindh

## Message from the Secretary, Women's Development, Sindh

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Prior to the 18<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment, the Ministry of Women's Development was the main body for coordinating and reporting on women's rights issues between the Federal and the Provincial governments. The said Amendment gave wide powers to the provinces for promulgating laws and framing policies under the overall guidance of the Constitution of Pakistan, and its international obligations. In the absence of a Federal coordinating body on Women's Development, these tasks fall onto the Federal Ministry and Commission of Human Rights, and the Women's Development Departments (WDD) and Commissions on the Status of Women across the country.

Institutional strengthening for achieving gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE) is the *raison d'être* of women's machineries around the globe. A large chunk of the overall work of such machineries, whether Departments, Commissions, Parliamentary Caucuses, or Gender Units, involves guiding and facilitating the rest of government on how to pursue GEWE strategically and incrementally through coordinated actions and targeted information gathering and sharing. This is important as gender concerns cut across social, political and economic spheres, which should be reflected as such in public sector planning and related fiscal proposals and reports.

To achieve the goal of gender equality and empowering of all women and girls, Sindh has taken the initiative of reformulating its provincial 2013 *Women's Empowerment and Development Policy* and devised an indicative action plan for more effective and visible gender mainstreaming efforts across the whole of government.

The new Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Policy, 2019, as contained in this document is driven by the desire to encourage moving away from pigeonholing gender in social programs attached to public spending packages, and instead for the Government to use gender concepts to inform the design of such plans across all sectors in the first place. The new Policy recognizes that women and girls' needs must be addressed for the differentiated groups they constitute, for example, by age, location, socio-economic status, profession, caste, race/ ethnicity, migratory status, education, disability, religion, and marital status, and that statistical and reporting tools become more sophisticated and genuinely inform public policy and implementation at every level. I offer my felicitations to the Chief Minister, Sindh and the Women's Development Department, in pursuing and achieving this important milestone and I hope that with the province-wide adoption of this Policy, the Government of Sindh will move towards creating a more gender-just society. Together, we can ensure that a supportive and enabling environment exists for women and girls for their full access to and participation in governmental and fiscal decision-making processes, that ultimately impact their lives.

I am thankful to UN WOMEN for their unstinting support over the entire duration of the Policy's formulation and I extend a special thanks to Ms. Sarah Zaman, for undertaking the task of policy review and development from start to finish. I look forward to working with concerned government Departments, officials and development partners towards better planning and improved tracking of the results of our collective efforts for ensuring GEWE across Sindh.

**Ms. Alia Shahid**  
Secretary, Women's Development  
Government of Sindh

## Message from the Chairperson, Sindh Commission on the Status of Women

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Pakistan is a proud signatory to many conventions and treaties on the status and rights of women. Women's rights have been supported by every government, however, they need a better managed and planned approach for effective implementation of our vision. This gender policy is a comprehensive document with overarching and ambitious recommendations. It is my hope that this policy will effectively address the key issues being faced today for the protection of women's rights.

Institutional strengthening is the most significant factor in a government's ability to counter violence and provide social protection to vulnerable segments of the society. The Women Development Department needs to work on a war footing to overcome systematic violence against women, and to be able to provide structural support to women and girls. In such a scenario, government structures need to be financially strengthened and offices need to be outfitted with competent staff and necessary equipment to take measures that improve equity. In order to compensate for historical and social disadvantages that prevent women from operating on a level playing field, institutions need smart strategies and systematic support. A thorough provincial policy is therefore the need of the day.

The Commission is happy to have been a part of the process of the formulation of this policy and is delighted to see it in its final form. As is evident from the document, a lot of effort has gone into the policymaking, and it is my hope that this Policy will increase gender equality in Sindh.

I applaud the efforts of the Women Development Department, Government of Sindh and the support of United Nations Women in the preparation of this document and congratulate all stakeholders whose hard work made it possible.

**Ms. Nuzhat Shirin**  
Chairperson,  
Sindh Commission on the Status of  
Women

## List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

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### Government Departments and Institutions

ARZUD	Auqaf, Religious Zakat and Ushr Department
ASPD	Agriculture, Supply & Prices Department
BCSW	Balochistan Commission on the Status of Women
BoR	Board of Revenue
BoS	Bureau of Statistics
BWDD	Balochistan Women's Development Department
CPA	Child Protection Authority
CD	Cooperative Department
CED	College Education Department
C&LGA	Civil and Local Government Academy
DCJCC	District Criminal Justice Coordination Committee
DLEC	District Legal Empowerment Committee
ED	Energy Department
ECC&CDD	Environment, Climate Change & Coastal Development Department
ECP	Election Commission of Pakistan
ET&NCD	Excise, Taxation & Narcotics Control Department
FnD	Finance Department
FdD	Food Department
F&WLD	Forest and Wildlife Department
Health	Health Department
Home	Home Department
HRD	Human Rights Department
HSSD&SHD	Human Settlement, Spatial Development & Social Housing Department
I&AD	Information & Archive Department
I&CD	Industries and Commerce Department
ID	Investment Department
IPCD	Inter-Provincial Coordination Department
ISTD	Information, Science & Technology Department
KPCSW	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Commission on the Status of Women
L&FD	Livestock & Fisheries Department
LD	Law Department
LG	Local Government
LG&HTPD	Local Government and Housing Town Planning Department
LPAHRD	Law, Parliamentary Affairs and Human Rights Department
MaD	Minority Affairs Department
MoHR	Ministry of Human Rights (Federal)
MoWD	Ministry of Women's Development (Federal)
NCSW	National Commission on the Status of Women
NHA	National Health Accounts
NIPS	National Institute of Population Studies
NIPA	National Institute of Public Administration



P&DD	Planning & Development Department
P&SD	Printing and Stationery Department
PCCWD	Provincial Commission for Child Welfare and Development
PCSW	Punjab Commission on the Status of Women
PHE&RDD	Public Health Engineering, Rural Development Department
PITE	Provincial Institute of Teacher Education
PITE	Provincial Institute of Teacher Education
PPHI	People's Primary Health Initiative
PPRA	Public Procurement Regulatory Authority
PSCD	Public Service Commission Department
PWD	Population Welfare Department
PWDD	Punjab Women's Development Department
RD	Rehabilitation Department
SBTE	Sindh Board of Technical Education
SCCWD	Sindh Commission for Child Welfare and Development
SCSW	Sindh Commission on the Status of Women
SED	School Education Department
SEC	Securities and Exchange Commission
SEF	Sindh Education Foundation
SEPA	Sindh Environmental Protection Agency
SGA&CD	Services, General Administration and Coordination Department
SHCC	Sindh Healthcare Commission
SHRC	Sindh Human Rights Commission
SJA	Sindh Judicial Academy
SMTA	Sindh Mass Transit Authority
SPDMA	Sindh Provincial Disaster Management Authority
STEDA	Sindh Teacher Education Development Authority
STEVTA	Sindh Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority
SWD	Social Welfare Department
SYAD	Sports & Youth Affairs Department
WDD	Sindh Women's Development Department
TMTD	Transport and Mass Transit Department
U&BD	Universities & Boards Department
WDD	Women's Development Department
WPC	Women Protection Cell

## Other Abbreviations

ADP	Annual Development Plan
BuM	Bait-ul-Maal
BISP	Benazir Income Support Program
BPfA	Beijing Platform for Action
CBO	Community-based Organization
CPR	Contraceptive Prevalence Rate
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Violence Against Women

CNIC	Computerized National Identity Card
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DC	District Commissioner
DFID	Department for International Development
ECE	Early Childhood Education
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GER	Gross Enrollment Ratio
GEWE	Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment
GMIS	Gender Management Information System
GSP	Generalized System of Preference
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ILO	International Labor Organization
LSBE	Life Skills Based Education
PDHS	Pakistan Demographic & Health Survey
PSDP	Public Sector Development Plan
RoB	Rules of Business
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MPI	Multi-dimensional Poverty Index
NADRA	National Database and Registration Authority
SMC	School Management Committee
SEMIS	Sindh Education Management Information System
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematic
SUCCESS	Sindh Union Council and Community Economic Strengthening Support Program
TVET	Technical and Vocational Training and Education
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific
UPR	Universal Periodic Review
VAW/G	Violence Against Women and Girls
WB	World Bank
WHO	World Health Organization

# 1. Policy Background

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## 1.1. Women's Machineries for Furthering Gender Equality & Women's Empowerment

Equality between women and men is constitutionally guaranteed in 139 countries and territories across the world. It is part of a global social contract, whereby individual nation states assume responsibility for ensuring procedural, reparative, distributive and, in some cases, transformative justice at different levels of society, and for taking affirmative action with regards to gender equality and women's empowerment.

The BPfA (Beijing Platform for Action), 1995, a landmark charter of demands for gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE), specifically mentions "institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women" as one of 12 critical areas of concern.<sup>1</sup> The Platform states that, *"In order for the Platform for Action to be implemented, it will be necessary for governments to establish or improve the effectiveness of national machineries for the advancement of women at the highest political level"*.<sup>2</sup> By extension, Provincial and local women's machineries are central stakeholders in supporting GEWE policies and related vertical programs of the Federal Government.

A common mandate for women's machineries across the globe includes promoting the implementation of the BPfA including Pakistan. Paragraphs 201 and 202 of the BPfA state:

*"Para 201: A national machinery for the advancement of women is the central policy-coordinating unit inside government. Its main task is to support the government-wide mainstreaming of a gender-equality perspective in all policy areas.*

*The necessary conditions for an effective functioning of such national machineries include:*

- 1. location at the **highest possible level in the government**, falling under the responsibility of a Cabinet minister;*
- 2. institutional mechanisms or processes that facilitate, as appropriate, decentralized planning, **implementation and monitoring with a view to involving non-governmental organizations and community organizations from grassroots upwards**;*
- 3. sufficient resources in terms of **budget and professional capacity**;*
- 4. **opportunity to influence development of all government policies.***

*Para 202: In addressing the issue of **mechanisms for promoting the advancement of women**, governments and other actors should promote an **active and visible policy on mainstreaming a gender perspective in all policies and programs** so that before **decisions are taken**, an **analysis is made on the effects on women and men, respectively.**"*

The BPfA also recommends<sup>3</sup> the following necessary conditions for an effective functioning of such women's machineries:

- Location at the highest possible level in the Government, falling under the responsibility of a Cabinet minister;
- Institutional mechanisms or processes that facilitate, as appropriate, decentralized planning, implementation and monitoring with a view to involving non-governmental organizations and community organizations from the grassroots upwards;
- Sufficient resources in terms of budget and professional capacity;
- Opportunity to influence development of all government policies.

Contrary to the popular view that the purpose of women's machineries is to serve women directly, the BPfA emphasizes that all ministries and agencies have the shared responsibility for pursuing equality between

women and men. Instead of having a “*separate government within government for women*”, women’s machineries are chiefly responsible for “... *policy advocacy in support of a more consistent response throughout government to the needs and priorities of women and well as men*”.<sup>4</sup>

A joint 2016 report by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific containing government perspectives on implementing BPfA over 20 years, suggests that the institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women in Asia and the Pacific are usually tasked with performing the following functions<sup>5</sup>:

- a) formulating policies, legislation, strategies and action plans;
- b) implementing programs and projects;
- c) raising awareness, disseminating information and building capacity;
- d) delivering services;
- e) promulgating gender mainstreaming across government;
- f) providing advice to public sector entities;
- g) liaising with, and coordinating, government and civil society stakeholders;
- h) conducting needs assessments and research; and
- i) monitoring and evaluating initiatives and compliance with national and international gender equality commitments.

A separate UN Women Regional Consultation report suggests that the following roles and functions are commonly observed by women’s machineries in South-East Asia:

- coordinating, facilitating and monitoring policy formulation to ensure the incorporation of women’s empowerment perspectives across all departments;
- facilitating the exchange and sharing of experiences,
- information and best practices on promoting substantive equality;
- developing the gender competency of stakeholders to influence engendering of policies, programs and projects; and
- lobbying for increased measures and resources to address gender inequality.

A substantive portion of women’s machineries’ work relates to gender mainstreaming and gender budgeting, where a ‘**mainstreaming gender**’ perspective, according to one description is the “*process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programs, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women’s as well as men’s concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programs in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetuated*”.<sup>6</sup>

Sharp and Elson (2008) define **gender responsive budgeting** as “... *strategies for assessing and changing budgetary processes and policies so that expenditures and revenues reflect the differences and inequalities between women and men in incomes assets, decision-making power, service needs and social responsibilities for care*”.<sup>7</sup>

According to the UN Women report on East-Asian national women’s machineries<sup>8</sup> such institutions commonly struggle with issues pertaining to data collection, lack of cooperation by stakeholders, issues of capacity, lack of or weak general government accountability towards GEWE, fiscal constraints, and cultural impediments that reinforce or justify gender imbalances within countries.”

Bell et al (2002) have noted that the following political, institutional and financial **constraints** are commonly faced by such entities, which limits their effectiveness:

- conceptual shifts in the discourse on women in development and gender in development (between welfare and equality objectives and practical needs and strategic interests);

- unclear roles;
- locational instability;
- ineffectual focal points (including both mechanisms adopted, and persons designated to operationalize such a mechanism, and to create linkages with other ministries and departments);
- underfunding;
- insufficient links with NGOs;
- bureaucratic resistance;
- lack of autonomy;
- inadequate human resources; and
- lack of a strong mandate.<sup>9</sup>

The Department for International Development (DFID)'s 2002 gender manual for policy developers and practitioners further notes that the following **impediments** commonly impact overall government efforts towards enhancing GEWE:

- Action to promote gender equality, when included, is too often vague, and not backed up with appropriate monitoring indicators;
- The donor voice in advocating gender equality goals is inconsistent;
- Commitments to gender equality at the national level are subject to 'policy evaporation';
- Equity outcomes are not achieved unless they are explicitly stated and operationalized through well thought out procedures.<sup>10</sup>

The DFID manual provides useful tools for adapting training and information packets for policy makers and practitioners to pursue GEWE as a goal and using gender mainstreaming as a strategy in different areas of public policy and practice).

Research conducted by UNESCAP in 2016 further indicates that many women's machineries across Asia remain marginalized, lacking the political support and financial and human resources necessary to influence national policies, budgets and programs related to women's empowerment. At an official level, the most recent official report of the Fifth periodic report<sup>11</sup> submitted by Pakistan under article 18 of CEDAW Convention in October 2018, contains very little information on the effectiveness of and challenges faced by women's machineries across Pakistan and how shortcomings may be rectified.

## 1.2. Women's Machineries Across Pakistan

Following the 18<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment in Pakistan (2010), 18 Federal Ministries and 47 subjects including women's development were devolved to the Provinces, requiring them to integrate national laws and international human rights Conventions within their respective policies and provincial legislative frameworks. The Ministry of Women's Development (MoWD) was abolished as the federal executive body, which would otherwise serve as the central/ national coordinating body, reporting also to Regional Commissions and global treaty bodies on GEWE.

With the abolishment of the Federal Women's Ministry in 2011, additional functions fall onto provincial women's machineries, with guidelines and support for reporting on international commitments falling under the purview of the Federal Ministry of Human Rights (MoHR).

The following executive and oversight women's machineries are established across Pakistan:

- Four Provincial Women's Development Departments (merged with Social Welfare, and Special Education departments in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa);
- Three Provincial Commissions on the Status of Women (none in Balochistan- the Balochistan Women's Development Department - BWDD has drafted and submitted a bill for the constitution of Balochistan's

Commission on the Status of Women to the provincial cabinet, which was passed as an Act in 2017 – currently, the Commission’s Rules of Business are being formulated and the Chair and staff are not yet notified);

- One National Commission on the Status of Women; and
- Five Women’s Parliamentary Caucuses – National (2008); Punjab (2009); KP (2013); Sindh (2014), and Balochistan (2017).

### 1.3. National and Provincial Gender Equality & Women’s Empowerment Policies, Statutory Provisions and Bodies

In terms of Provincial machineries on women, there are three specifically dedicated to women’s development in Punjab, Balochistan and Sindh, while in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Azad Jammu & Kashmir, Women Empowerment Cells are merged with the Departments of Social Welfare and Special Education.

Since 2009, the following laws have awarded legal status to women’s machineries in Pakistan:

- National Commission on the Status of Women Act, 2000;
- The North-West Frontier Province Establishment of a Commission on the Status of Women Act, 2009 (later Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Commission on the Status of Women Act, 2009, amended 2016);
- Punjab Commission on the Status of Women Act, 2014;
- Sindh Commission on the Status of women Act, 2015; and
- Balochistan Commission on the Status of Women Act, 2017.

The **National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW)** prepares and implements a **three-yearly action plan**. The current implementation framework is bifurcated by three thematic areas: Voice; Violence against Women; and Women’s Economic Empowerment, which are further broken into subsets of strategic objectives, emphasizing institutional strengthening, networking; monitoring and tracking; and awareness-raising. Strategic actions undertaken in any given year by the NCSW revolve around building a strong institutional base; promoting/ facilitating legislations and policies; monitoring implementation; advocacy; networking; undertaking and encouraging research and developing regional forums/ platforms. The Chairperson of the NCSW has Ministerial powers and is also a member of the parliamentary standing committee on human rights, a forum for raising critical issues concerning women at the highest level of government.<sup>12</sup>

**Khyber Pakhtunkhwa’s (KP) Women Empowerment Policy Framework, 2015**, implemented chiefly by the KP Women’s Development Cell purports to mainstream gender issues in development across public and private sectors. It prioritizes needs of poor women in rural and urban areas and organizes actions or Policy Prescriptions along the same lines as the Sindh 2013 Policy: Economic, Social and Political rights and development for and of women.

The Government of **Punjab’s Women Empowerment Package, 2017**, was revised in 2017 (previous revisions in 2012, 2014 and 2016), and the **Punjab Women’s Development Department** developed a provincial **Women’s Development Policy in 2018** which arranges actions against Constituency Strategies, reflecting BPfA’s critical areas of concern in seven policy domains, namely:

1. Women’s Political Empowerment and Rights-based Governance;
2. Women and Education & Skill Development;
3. Women and Health;
4. Women, Poverty Reduction and Economic Empowerment;
5. Gender-based violence;
6. Women and Climatic Change; and
7. Women and ICT (not media).



The Punjab WDD is tasked with coordinating provincial policies on gender reform and women's development, collecting quantitative and qualitative data on the status of women, and partnering with key line departments and civil society organizations to facilitate women's access to legal and justice systems. Notably, the **Punjab Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW)** has developed a dedicated **Gender Management Information System (GMIS)**<sup>13</sup> for tracking Violence Against Women (VAW) and coordinating state response. It also fulfils executive functions in some cases such as setting up of women's incubators for small start-ups, amongst various other special initiatives, and by demonstrating replicable service and engagement models for scale-up by the Government.

**Balochistan's Gender Policy Action Plan, 2016-2020**, is in the process of revision ahead of its expiry in 2020, in consultation with key line departments and stakeholders. Balochistan does not have an independent Commission on the Status of Women.

At the national and provincial levels, other than the NCSW, the Provincial WDDs and Women's Commissions, there are formal oversight committees such as the Senate's, and National and Provincial Assemblies' **Standing Committees on Human & Women's Rights**. These Committees seek information against international, national and provincial commitments and reserve powers to call for explanation and data related to human rights and public policy matters.

In addition to standing committees, there are **regional offices and Departments of the Ministry of Human Rights** and **regional offices of the National Commission on Human Rights (NCHR)**.

An **Inter-Provincial Ministerial Group** comprising Ministers and Secretaries of Provincial Women Development Departments, Chairpersons, National and Provincial Commissions and MoHR was also constituted in 2010, which is meant to coordinate gender policy efforts and programs across provinces. In addition, **National and Provincial Treaty Implementation Cells**, and **Provincial SDG Units** have been set up as part of the national SDG architecture, operating under Provincial Planning and Development Departments and supported by the Federal Planning Commission. These have been operationalized at an accelerated pace between 2017-19 after a hiatus following global adoption of the UN Sustainable Development Goals in 2015. The Planning Commission has taken extensive support from the UNDP (United Nations Development Program) and more recently, the World Bank (WB), in terms of setting performance indicators for each target under the SDGs, and domesticating select IAEG (Inter-Agency Expert Group) global and regional indicators for measuring progress toward the post-2015 Agenda.

For CEDAW implementation, there are **provincial CEDAW Committees** that are functioning variably at the provincial levels. These are mainly coordinated by provincial WDDs, with meeting minutes posted online, albeit inconsistently, by concerned WDDs.

A **Women's Empowerment & Development Policy of the Government of Sindh** was notified by the **Sindh Women's Development Department (WDD)** in 2013 under a caretaker set up in the run-up to the general elections the same year.<sup>14</sup> Despite an impressive resume of legislative actions since 2013, including the notification of the Sindh Commission on the Status of Women (SCSW), the absence of an implementable gender equality and women's empowerment Policy is identified as a crucial missing link by policy makers, implementers and human rights activists across the province. This document is an effort to bridge this gap.

The **Sindh Commission on the Status of Women** was notified vide an Act of the Sindh Assembly in May 2015<sup>15</sup>. The commission is an independent statutory body, which was established and made functional after a two-year delay in 2017. The Commission developed and recently launched its first three-year Strategic Plan, 2018-2021, which prioritizes three key strategies for the upcoming period:

- Examining Sindh laws, rules, regulations, policies and programs to enhance socio-political and economic empowerment of women;
- Ending violence against women and girls; and

- Institutional strengthening of the Commission.

The full list of Commission Powers and Functions are provided in Annex 3 at the end of this document.

#### 1.4. Sindh Women's Development Department

The present-day Sindh Women's Development Department's (WDD) structure has evolved out of a process of organizational shifts with the Department starting as a cell or sub-section of the Provincial Planning & Development Department in 1979, three years after Pakistan ratified CEDAW. In 1994, it was notified as an independent Department and seized to be a sub-section of another Government entity for a few years.

Four years later in 1998, it was again merged with Social Welfare at the Secretariat level. In 2001, the Directorate of Women Development was abolished, and a Women Development Wing was established under Directorate of Social Welfare, with control handed over to the Population Welfare Department.

Finally, in 2003 a separate Women Development Department was re-established in Sindh and the Department took its present shape with a functioning Directorate in Karachi, along with a Minister and Secretariat, and staff of about 170 persons across Sindh, a vast majority being male.

A lot of effort and financing appears to have gone into securing independence and undertaking structural development of WDD over the past five years. Major infrastructural projects were undertaken to give effect to the Provincial GEWE Policy, 2013 that are functional at varying levels, as discussed below:

- At present, the WDD has **notified field offices and officers** in multiple districts, with Coordination Officers present across at least 15 districts.<sup>16</sup>
- There are currently 15 **complaint cells** and 4 **Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Crisis Centers** for women across Sindh, run by WDD. After the 18<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment the Crisis Centers which were under the control of Ministry of Women Development were handed over to WDD in Sindh. These were re-activated after a few years of dormancy and are now functioning in Karachi, Hyderabad, Shaheed Benazirabad and Jacobabad. These provide temporary shelter/accommodation (up to 72 hours) and psychosocial counseling to women escaping violence and in emergencies situations, and provide medical/first aid, free legal assistance/ legal aid in liaison with relevant law enforcement and protection agencies.<sup>17</sup>
- A **Women's Display Center is planned for district Sanghar**, which will integrate services provided by a **Women's Complex** under one roof.<sup>18</sup>
- **Day-care Centers** are two fully functional day-care centers for working women in Karachi, including one at the Women's Development Directorate and semi-functional similar set-ups in 3 other districts, i.e., Hyderabad, Larkana and Mirpurkhas. Their day-to-day running is managed in partnership with local community organizations and NGOs.
- **Safe houses** for women under the Social Welfare Department (SWD) are operational in a few districts under the supervision the respective District Commissioners. In district Jacobabad, the Women's Crisis Centre is also working as a local safe house. In other districts, these are managed collaboratively with existing WDD and SWD district set-ups
- To provide economic support to women artisans/ home-based workers/ entrepreneurs of Sindh and to strengthen women's participation in the economy, the WDD used to offer **interest-free loan facility**. The aim of the scheme was to provide financial support to women to setup their own business and improve their socio-economic status. The WDD, in collaboration with Sindh Bank offered up to Rs. 50,000/- loan facility to women in different districts of Sindh. For this purpose, an Endowment Fund totaling Rs. 131.56 million has been allocated, where women can pay back in 36 easy installments after a rebate period of 3 months. Till now, loan facility has been provided to nearly 200 women across Sindh.<sup>19</sup> Currently, the WDD is exploring ways to relaunch this initiative after a hiatus of 2-3 years where no loans were provided. **In terms of micro-financing**, a partnership with the First Women's Bank Limited (FWBL) which was pursued by WDD from 2009 till 2013 and mentioned in the 2013 provincial gender Policy, was discontinued thereafter though it is noted to have produced good results.

- The WDD has taken custody and management of a **Women Development Complex** in Sukkur, which envisages providing various social, educational, cultural activities and health facilities to women under one roof. Funds have been released to the Works & Services Department for the Complex’s construction and renovation and the Department in working out ways to fully operationalizing the Complex to provide said services and facilities.
- To safeguard the rights of women prisoners, the WDD has established a **Skill Development Center** and a **Computer Institute** at the **Women’s Jail**, Central Jail, Karachi. This program is running in collaboration with the Legal Aid Society under a public-private partnership. The Center extends basic literacy and handicraft courses for women and includes a day-care learning center for children incarcerated with their mothers.
- In 2017, a provincial **Helpline, 1094**, was established and functionalized to respond to VAW cases, offering legal counseling, mobilization of legal and medical assistance and providing referral services. At the moment, the set-up is housed within Karachi’s Women’s Compliant Center.<sup>20</sup>
- A **Provincial Gender Mainstreaming Working Group** was established and notified some time ago following the notification of the 2013 Policy (exact date unknown), which is currently defunct. Instead, the provincial coordination committee on domestic violence (formed after the passage of the Sindh Domestic Violence Act, 2013), is the coordination mechanism which brings together several provincial government Departments.
- A **Planning and Implementation Monitoring Cell** has only recently been approved (29 September 2017) and is yet to be activated by WDD. The broad functions of this cell may emerge as this Policy is used to further develop progress and performance indicators.
- In terms of availability of high-quality, timely and reliable **data** disaggregated by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics (SDG 17.18), the WDD relies on the Sindh Bureau of Statistics, and does not have a data mechanism in place other than information on cases collected through newspaper reports or the police in special cases. The district Crisis Centers and Complaint Cells, however, gather information on VAW/G cases from local authorities which are filed with the WDD Directorate in the form of periodic reports. There is no central system for collating data on gender indicators for analysis of data collected by relevant agencies. There also appears to be no coordination with the Gender Crime Center that collects data on VAW along the lines of standardized indicators introduced by NCSW in 2015/16; and no “*review & consolidation of data and statistics pertaining to social determinants of inequities in health*” seems to have been undertaken, as stipulated in the 2013 Policy. Further, no systematic studies have been undertaken/commissioned by WDD to assess the extent of gender mainstreaming, budgeting and responsiveness in provincial policies or any other matter beside.
- For **advocacy** related to women’s rights, WDD continually undertakes activities to highlight specific women’s rights issues and for marking important days (Pakistan Women’s Day, International Women’s Day, 16 Days of Activism, Rural Women’s Day, etc.). There is no evidence to suggest that advocacy is planned collaboratively with other government departments (e.g., Departments for Planning, Statistics, Health, Education, etc.) except perhaps the Departments of Law and Labor, which are lobbying arenas for the WDD itself for pro-women laws being developed.
- In terms of **research** and evidence generation, no independent study has been commissioned by the WDD related to women’s social, political, economic or legal rights, which could further lead to the development of policy interventions and advocacy strategy against each proposed solution being advocated.
- Finally, apart from lending assistance to the Federal MoHR in compiling country reports against CEDAW, BPfA and other international human rights instruments, conventions and treaties, the WDD is less connected with and relatively unaware of **regional and global** UN fora and intergovernmental processes on sustainable development, such as the Asia Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development and the global High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. As a provincial entity, it remains isolated from international agreements and ministerial declarations that call for strengthening accountability, improving gender data and analysis and harmonizing governmental approaches within and across countries.

#### 1.4.1. Sindh Women's Development Department Structure

Both the WDD Secretariat and Directorate are located in the capital city of Karachi, and the overall staff strength is of 174 persons across 15 Districts in Sindh out of 29. There is a structure existing at every divisional headquarter city at present and other mechanisms mentioned in list above

#### 1.4.2. Sindh Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Budget<sup>21</sup> and Financing

Overall, WDD's budget was 0.08% of the total provincial budget of the Sindh Government, for the financial year 2018-19. With the average national South-Asian allocation at less than 1-2%, WDD lies well below this average range, at less than 0.1%.

Over the past fifteen years, WDD's Annual Development Plans have gone from more specific activities to very broad budget heads, specifically in two areas:

- Implementation of Gender Reform Action Plan (GRAP); and
- Advocacy for women's empowerment in Sindh.

Implementation of GRAP has been the largest budget head in terms of area of investment and a regular feature in the ADPs over the past 15 years. It also remains a largely underutilized head, as per budget summaries acquired from the Government. In the Summary report for 2017-18, the total utilization of GRAP budget stood at 15%. In 2019 (prior to approval of this Policy and under new leadership), GRAP has been discontinued by the WDD. In the upcoming period, greater emphasis is laid on promoting women's financial inclusion through innovative programming, e.g., by linking up with the Women on Wheels initiative, which seeks to enhance women's mobility and access to public spaces.

#### 1.4.3. Functions of the Sindh Women's Development Department

According to the **Sindh Government Rules of Business, 1986 (amended up to 2019)** notified to the Services and General Administration Department, the Sindh WDD has the following **functions**:

- Formation of public policies and laws to meet special needs of women;
- Protection and promotion of women's rights, gender equity and equality in the public sector in particular, and society in general;
- Discharge of responsibilities with regard to status of women and girls;
- Development of projects for providing special facilities for women such as strategic initiatives, innovations and special equalizing projects;
- Coordination of women's welfares programs with other concerned departments and agencies at District and local level for making conducive and safe work environment for working women and conducting research/surveys in the regard;
- Improvement of working conditions of female labor both in urban and rural areas;
- Promotion of cottage industry with special preference to participation of women in such industry;
- Maintenance of a database of all women parliamentarians, councilors and members of civil society organizations working on gender issues;
- Setting up of community/ *mohallah* schools and training centers for women on the basis of self-help community development;
- Setting up of advisory legal centers to provide legal aid to women and to review laws considered to be discriminatory against women and formulate recommendations in respect thereof;
- Implementation of National Women's Welfare Policy as applicable to the Province of Sindh;
- Service matters, except those entrusted to the Services, General Administration and Coordination Department.

Post 18<sup>th</sup> Constitutional amendment, with the Federal Ministry for Women's Development permanently dissolved; a few additional functions were assigned to WDD. These include:

- Development of projects that provide socio-economic uplift of women;
- Research on violence and trafficking of women with respect to assisting and ameliorating their conditions;
- Development of a strong database on professional women with an aim to facilitate their employment;
- Creation of strong linkages with provincial line departments for gender mainstreaming, and supporting donor agencies, civil society organizations and initiatives working towards women's empowerment.

Prior to the **adoption of the 2013 Policy**, WDD further redefined its role to include the following:

- To ensure that women's interests and needs are adequately represented in public policy formulation by various organs and agencies of the government;
- Registration and assistance of Women's Organizations; and
- To promote and undertake training and research on the conditions and problems of women.

## 2. Scope and contents of Sindh Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Policy, 2020-2030

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This Policy extends to the entire province of Sindh and may remain applicable over a period of 10 years, from 2020-30. It applies to all Government servants, staff, workers, partners and suppliers across the Province of Sindh, as notified by the Services and General Administration Department (latest amended, 2019). The Policy may be reviewed after a minimum of three years in terms of continuing priorities and progress made against targeted areas. Based on the indicative actions plan provided ahead, yearly plans may be drawn, and commensurate finances and resources sought with a view to improve gender financing, mainstreaming, outcome monitoring and impact assessments by all Government Departments across Sindh. Shorter-term goals and related action and evaluation matrices and guidelines may be developed by the WDD based on the Actions Framework, commencing with the first year's plan and a three-year plan.

At an operational level, the WDD will be the custodian and lead coordinating body for implementing this Policy, guided by the MoHR and supported by Provincial Sindh Commission on Status of Women (SCSW) as well as the National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW).

## 3. Policy-setting process

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This Policy has been developed based on five divisional-level, multi-stakeholder consultative workshops with government officials, non-government organizations, civil society workers, community-based organizations and grassroots activists across Sindh, between September 2018 and August 2019. In order to develop an understanding of the challenges towards achieving gender equality and women's empowerment in the context of Sindh, key informant interviews were held with gender experts, academia, grassroots organizers, heads of Women's and Human Rights' Commissions, and international donors and development agencies across Pakistan. A total of 80 government and non-government, commissions and donor organizations participated in discussions and policy-setting exercises (details provided in Annex 1).

The contents of this Policy are based on and informed by the following:

1. The Sindh Government Rules of Business, 1986 (amended up to 11 November 2019);
2. Provincial laws related to thematic constituencies (human rights of women, poverty, health, education, gender-based violence, etc.) – Annex 2;<sup>22</sup>
3. Federal laws related to gender equality, women's empowerment and human rights – Annex 2;
4. Provincial multi-sectoral and sectoral policies and plans related to thematic constituencies – Annex 2;
5. Regional and global commitments by the Government of Pakistan, related to gender equality, women's empowerment and human rights;
6. Strategic plans and policy documents of women's departments and commissions across four provinces, where they exist – Annex 2;
7. Sindh Women's Empowerment and Development Policy 2013, progress reports and Annual Development Plans, from 2003 to 2018;
8. In-person and telephonic interviews, including but not limited to the leadership of women's machineries: the Sindh Commission on the Status of Women; National Commission the Status of Women; Punjab Commission on the Status of Women; and the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Commission on the Status of Women;
9. Telephonic interviews with subject experts and international donor agencies; and
10. International and regional literature (mostly UN) related to challenges and best practices for advancing gender equality and women's empowerment and the role of women's machineries<sup>23</sup>, and official national and civil society reports.



## 4. Provincial Policy: Vision, Mission, Policy Objectives and Thematic Areas

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### Vision

A peaceful, democratic, just and prosperous Sindh where women and girls are equal citizens and participants in decision-making from the home to the national and international levels, are able to lead a life free from violence, discrimination, exploitation, neglect and abuse, and enjoy the full range of their social, political and economic rights.

### Mission

Promoting and advancing gender equality and women's empowerment by enacting sector-wide and sector specific reforms and mobilizing necessary legal, administrative, financial and institutional measures that strengthen women and girls as equal citizens across the province of Sindh.

### Provincial Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Policy Objectives

1. **Safeguarding gender equality and the rights of women and girls by adopting sound policies, practices, and enforceable legislation** and ending all forms of gender-based discrimination, violence, exploitation, abuse and neglect with specific focus on the rights of rural women, urban poor women, minority women, women with disabilities, elderly women, women in disaster prone and conflict areas, internally displaced women, women in vulnerable situations and the girl child;
2. **Mainstreaming gender** by promoting and undertaking gender-responsive planning, budgeting, reporting, strategy development, implementation and review at the provincial, district and sub-district levels across Sindh;
3. **Safeguarding and expanding investment in women and girls and closing the gender gap** in civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights including the right to development, by harmonizing and adequately resourcing (multi) sectoral programs, schemes and projects that directly contribute to women's uplift and/ or remove barriers to gender equality and women's empowerment;
4. **Creating strong, just, participatory, transparent, effective and accountable institutions and mechanism(s)** for full and effective implementation and protection of Constitutional, National and Provincial commitments and international obligations with regard to gender equality and women's empowerment;
5. **Strengthening partnerships, alliances, coordination and collaboration mechanisms for gender equality and women's empowerment**, mobilizing support for strategies, pooling expertise, generating knowledge, building capacities and ensuring transfer of technology and financial resources needed to promote gender equality and women and girls' empowerment within and between the Provincial and Federal Government, legal systems, and support structures.
6. Ensuring effective implementation of and reporting on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (**CEDAW**), the Beijing Platform for Action (**BPfA**), International Conference on Population and Development (**ICPD**) and its Plan of Action (**PoA**), the Sustainable Development Goals (**SDGs**), and other International human rights covenants, conventions and treaties that advance gender equality;
7. **Closing the gender data gap** by improving data gathering, organizing and analysis for the purpose of informing specific and intersecting public policies that impact gender equality and women's empowerment, and institutionalizing sex-disaggregated data collection and monitoring and reporting across provincial departments and survey instruments in order to measure gender equality and women and girls' empowerment outcomes against inputs and resources;
8. Taking **affirmative action** to target patriarchal mindsets, gender stereotypes, specific behaviors, attitudes and (customary) practices that are detrimental to the rights of women and girls and/or promote discrimination, and streamlining local preventive, educative, remedial and support systems and mechanisms; and

9. **Mobilizing domestic resources**, including through local and international sources, to achieve the objectives of the Provincial GEWE Policy.

### Priority Thematic Constituencies/ Domains for Sindh's GEWE Policy

In line with Pakistan's commitments under different national and provincial laws, normative and instrumental human rights frameworks, and international obligations to advance GEWE, the Objectives and Strategies of the Government of Sindh are set against the following Thematic Constituencies or Domains:

- 1) Human rights of women and the girl child;
- 2) Feminized poverty and social protection;
- 3) Health and related services;
- 4) Education and lifelong learning;
- 5) Political and public life;
- 6) Power and decision-making;
- 7) Economy and productive work (including economic empowerment, skill development, participation in productive activities, gainful employment, unremunerated care and (domestic) productive work);
- 8) Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Media, and Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics (STEM);
- 9) Gender-based violence and access to justice;
- 10) Environment & climate change; and
- 11) Strengthening institutions and mechanisms and ensuring policy coherence for advancing Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE).

The Policy Domains are based on Pakistan's Constitutional guarantees and international commitments under the Beijing Platform for Action, 1995, as expressed in its Critical Areas of Concern<sup>24</sup>, and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Certain domains have been consolidated in order to synchronize them with regionally and globally recommended domains for organizing data and measuring advancement within and between each theme.

The following section lays out the Objectives and Strategies for each thematic domain, and identifies responsible institutions, as per their respective mandates, notified functions, rules of business, and/ or relevant (multi) sectoral policies of concerned Departments.

The 11<sup>th</sup> thematic constituency of domain, 'strengthening institutions and mechanisms and ensuring policy coherence for advancing GEWE', aims to strengthen public and private institutions and mechanisms by removing systemic barriers to GEWE, ensuring policy coherence across sectors, fostering coordination amongst stakeholders, lobbying for and mobilizing resources and their exchange, enhancing stakeholder competency to advance GEWE, and institutionalizing gender-disaggregation in planning, research, survey and review data, detailed in Section 9 of this document.

## 5. Constituency Objectives and Strategies

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### A. Human rights of women and the girl child

Over the past five years, there have been multiple pieces of legislation, policy regulations, and interagency implementation frameworks that have significantly improved the de jure status of women, girls and gender minorities in Pakistan. These have been developed to fulfill Constitutional obligations and domesticate international obligations ranging from the Universal Declaration on Human Rights (UDHR), Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA), Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination and Women (CEDAW), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), International Convention on Population and Development (ICPD) and its Plan of Action (PoA), the International Labor Organization (ILO) conventions, and until more recently, the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). A number of legal and policy provisions take up the recommendations of the Universal Periodic Reviews related to gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE).

Despite these efforts, the net impact on the de facto status of women and girls remains limited and unevenly achieved. Pakistan remains the second-worst country in the world in terms of gender parity, with a global ranking of 148 out of 149 countries according to the Global Gender Gap Index 2018 report released by the World Economic Forum (WEF).

The BPfA makes clear that securing the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by women and girls is central for achieving GEWE. The Platform for Action calls on Governments to:

- ensure equality and non-discrimination under the law and in practice;
- promote and protect the human rights of women through the full implementation of all human rights instruments, especially CEDAW; and
- achieve legal literacy.

To achieve these, there is a need to strengthen financial and programmatic implementation effectiveness, continuing legal reforms to remove both de-jure and de-facto discrimination, and close the gender gap between the enjoyment of equal rights at the systems and cultural levels, for sustainable and equitable development and peace, harmony and prosperity for all.

In terms of safety and security of person, freedom from discrimination, and access to fundamental rights, the Constitution of Pakistan provides for fundamental rights and non-discrimination on the basis of sex. While there are various sub-national and national laws protecting the rights of women, girls and gender minorities, they continue to lead vulnerable lives and face systemic barriers to their empowerment. Various laws relating to child marriage, domestic violence, so-called honor-killing, rape, acid burning, forced marriage, and sexual harassment have been introduced over the past decade to address the issue of absence of specific legislation and policies (see Annex 2). Their consistent and effective application, however, is common gap as women and girls' access to justice remains steeped in a culture of impunity. Where legislative protections do exist, implementation mechanisms are either unwritten, ambiguous, overlooked, underfunded or unimplemented.

Women who engage with the formal justice mechanisms routinely face partial treatment, social persecution and pressure to compromise, risks to safety and security, non-availability of services, absence of coordination between services, and pervasive service provider bias and incompetence. Access to justice is further reduced as women remain largely unaware of their rights, lack information on or access to particular services, expect an unfavorable response from law enforcement agencies, and/or face stigmatization, ostracization and backlash. These problems are compounded based on women and girls' location, age, marital status, ethnicity and other social identities.

In Sindh, child marriage continues to take place with the highest recorded number of cases provincially. An estimated 9.3% girls are married under the age of 15 years, while women and girls belonging to religious minorities are particularly vulnerable to forced marriage and conversion with an estimated 1000 Christian and Hindu women/ girls forcibly converted in Southern parts of Sindh in 2018 (Umerkot, Tharparkar, Mirpurkhas, Badin, Karachi, Tando Allahyar, Kashmore and Ghotki).<sup>25</sup> Attempts to legislate on the issue of forced marriage has suffered many setbacks with the latest example being **Criminal Law (Protection of Minorities) Bill** rejected by the Sindh Assembly in October 2019. Earlier in 2016, the Sindh Assembly had passed the **Forced Conversions Bill** under which no person under 18 years could convert to Islam even of their own will. Other measures stipulated in a 2014 Supreme Court<sup>26</sup> judgement related to right to freedom of religion such as curricula reform to promote religious and social tolerance, creation of a national council for minorities, and a 5% job quota for religious minorities remain largely implemented. Further, there is lack of uniformity in both national and provincial laws related to family and marriage rights for minorities and no clarity in the law in situations where women/girl are moved to another jurisdiction outside Sindh, where the minimum age of marriage is lower at 16 years for girls.

Pakistan ranks at 8<sup>th</sup> (out of 167 nations) on the Global Slavery Index 2018. According to the Global Slavery Index Report (2018), 3,186,000 people are living under bonded labor in Pakistan. The province of Sindh promulgated the **Sindh Bonded Labor System (Abolition) Act** in 2016, which criminalized child sex trafficking and forced labor with strict penalties for offenders, and constituted **Vigilance Committees** (consisting of elected representatives of the area, representatives of the District Administration, Bar Associations, Media, recognized Social Services and Labor Department of the Government of Sindh), to identify and rescue bonded laborer across Sindh. Prosecution, according to some reports remains low, and convictions negligible in such cases.

The responsibility of preventing inter-country **trafficking** is the remit of the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) which has recently launched an Integrated Border Management System at all immigration check posts, and a 24/7 helpline for complaints and support to cases of trafficking.<sup>27</sup> The impact of this system is not yet observable.

A large portion of **women prisoners** across Sindh hail from Karachi, and there are an estimated 37 children (Karachi, Hyderabad, and Larkana) that have been incarcerated with their mothers and kept in jails. There is currently no legislative protection or related mechanism to cater to children incarcerated with their mothers, and for women on death row.

Closely related to fundamental rights as citizens, the overall **civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS)**<sup>28</sup> needs improvement. Streamlining women's access to CRVS systems and enhancing gender disaggregation within CRVS generated data are vital to various development processes including those related to health, social security, literacy and education, law and order, identity and different forms of citizen services.<sup>29</sup>

As human rights often intersect in terms of underlying factors and outcomes (for people and governments concerned with public policy issues around human rights, respectively), it is essential to address women's access to CRVS systems, and to integrate such systems fully across a range of actors collecting data. There has been some progress within the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) to link CRVS to health and social protection programs in Pakistan, but the database is not easily accessible for non-health and social protection related policy makers and practitioners.

**Policy Objective A: Adopt and strengthen policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels and ensure that Constitutional, Provincial and International commitments are fully adhered to, honored, and complied with by all Departments of the Government of Sindh.**

## Policy Strategies & Responsible Institutions

- I. Notify the sector-wide Provincial Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Policy (this document) from the office of the Chief Minister, Sindh, fixing responsibility on all executive and oversight bodies in terms of their roles and responsibilities in protecting, promoting and achieving gender equality and women's empowerment – **Chief Secretary and Chief Minister, Sindh**
- II. Ensure that the Constitutional rights of women and girls are translated and reflected in all Government laws, rules, policies, programs, schemes and related institutional mechanisms – **Services and General Administration & Coordination; Law, Parliamentary Affairs and Human Rights; Planning & Development; Finance; Women's Development; Sindh Commission on the Status of Women**
- III. Develop a participatory framework (in collaboration with the Women's Parliamentary Caucus) for bringing legislative proposals to the provincial assembly by members and others, including support for formulation of rules of business on matters concerning the human rights of women and girls – **Women's Development; Sindh Commission on the Status of Women**
- IV. Ensure effective implementation of all laws and rules applicable in Sindh pertaining gender-based violence and violence against women and girls, inter alia: <sup>30</sup>
  - a. The Protection Against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act, 2010
  - b. Anti- Women Practices Act (Criminal Laws Second Amendment), 2011
  - c. Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act, 2013
  - d. Child Marriage Restraint Act, 2014
  - e. Criminal Law (Protection of Minorities), 2016
  - f. Anti-Rape Act (Criminal Laws Amendment), 2016
  - g. Anti-Honor killing Act, 2016
  - h. Acid Control and Acid Crime Prevention Act, 2016
  - i. Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2017
  - j. Sindh Hindus Marriage (amendment) Act, 2018**Home; Investigation and Criminal Prosecution services (under Services and General Administration & Coordination); Forensics/ DNA labs, Medico-legal Sections; Appellate Courts; Shelter homes and Crisis Centers; Women's Development; Protection Cells; Safe Houses; Helplines; Complaint Cells; Provincial Ombudsman; Local Government & Housing Town Planning**
- V. Standardize the age of adulthood for girls at 18 years across all statutes applicable within the territory of Sindh – **Law, Parliamentary Affairs and Human Rights; Women's Development; Sindh Commission on the Status of Women**
- VI. Fully implement the Sindh Bonded Labor System (Abolition) Act, 2016, in line with commitments under ILO Conventions 29 and 105 – **Labor & Human Resources**
- VII. Legislate and develop/ streamline mechanisms for regularization of *bhatta* women workers in consultation with relevant departments – **Women's Development; Labor & Human Resources**
- VIII. Speed up efforts to universalize and standardize free-of-cost basic documentation and registration for women and girls: birth, national identity, vote, marriage, property & inheritance, death and divorce. Issuance of such documents can be facilitated through regular, well-advertised visits of mobile teams to local communities – **NADRA, with Local Government; Election Commission; Board of Revenue**
- IX. Review all provincial laws, rules and regulations, prejudicial to the legitimate interest and rights of women, and suggest accordingly in term of replacement, amendment, addition, consolidation, or

legislation afresh essentially needed to eliminate discrimination, safeguard and promote the interest of women and achieve gender equality before law in accordance with the Constitution and obligations under international covenants and commitments<sup>31</sup> – ***Sindh Commission on the Status of Women; Sindh Commission on Human Rights; Law, Parliamentary Affairs and Human Rights***

- X. Coordinate and document (quantifiably) all departmental policies having gender impacts directly, or indirectly, with respect to the services under the control of respective departments to enable better tracking of projects and investments on GEWE, in close consultation with the Women's Development Department and the Sindh Commission on the Status of Women – ***Services and General Administration & Coordination; Planning & Development***
- XI. Sponsor, steer and encourage research, collection and collation of data and/ or rapid assessments/ evaluations to generate information and analysis on specific issues concerning women and girls, for the purpose of informing public policy on advancing gender equality and women's empowerment. Create opportunities to facilitate sharing of related evidence – ***Women's Development; Sindh Commission on the Status of Women; Planning & Development; Inter-Provincial Coordination Department***
- XII. Review and strengthen existing tools for monitoring, and revise/update where necessary such tools, related to the implementation of BPfA, ICPD, ICESCR, ICCPR, UPR, ILO, and the SDGs (with gender as a cross-cutting theme across all goals in the SDGs including Goal 17 - addressing structural barriers, building capacity and data) – ***Ministry of Human Rights; Department of Human Rights; Sindh Commission on the Status of Women; Women's Development; National Commission on Human Rights; Sindh Commission on Human Rights***
- XIII. Develop a provincial Plan of Action (both short- and medium-term) in consultation with all stakeholders on implementing CEDAW concluding observations after Country Review in 2019, and Beijing +25 review at the 64th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), 2020 – ***Women's Development; Sindh Commission on the Status of Women; Ministry of Human Rights***
- XIV. Create/ Strengthen a multi-stakeholder inter-agency working group on CEDAW implementation and ensure that representatives from the Departments of Finance, Planning & Development (all wings) are part of the core group, along with civil society and other stakeholders. Institutionalize mechanisms for regular interactions, engagement opportunities, and release of related information to public – ***Women's Development; Ministry of Human Rights***

## B. Feminized poverty and social protection

A vast majority women and girls' do not have access to resources, gainful and decent employment, living wage and public goods and services, and are susceptible to ill-health, violence, restrictive social mores, and the exploitation of their labor.

Pakistan's first-ever official report on Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) survey, which was previously published in the Economic Survey, was launched by the Ministry of Planning, Development and Reform in 2016.<sup>32</sup> According to 2016 MPI report, nearly 39% Pakistanis live in multidimensional poverty, with the highest rates of poverty in erstwhile FATA and Balochistan. Between 2004 and 2015, Pakistan's MPI underwent a decline, with national poverty rates falling from 55% to 39%. However, the report notes that progress across different regions of Pakistan is uneven and poverty in urban areas is 9.3% as compared to 54.6% in rural areas. Disparities exist across and within provinces and the 2016 MPI shows that poverty levels have increased in several districts of Balochistan and Sindh in the past decade.<sup>33</sup>



The MRI report identifies three main **drivers of poverty** which affect women disproportionately: educational deprivation (42.8%); living standards – water, sanitation, walls, overcrowding, electricity, cooking fuel, assets, and land and livestock (31.5%) and healthcare - ante-natal care, full immunization, access to health facilities, and assisted deliveries (25.7%).

The national **gender pay gap** of 26% is higher than the global gap of 22.9%, and women's average earnings are estimated to be 60% of what men earn for the same work. Among the four provinces, Sindh has the highest incidence of poverty amongst women at 45% with a mean poverty score of 20.26%. Poverty is reflected and further exacerbated by women and girls' low asset base, especially in rural areas of Sindh, where landholdings vary greatly between men and women. Additional deprivation is imposed by inadequate employment opportunities, household size and compositions (high child and elderly dependency ratios) and inadequate access to basic amenities and services especially health, education and social protection. Food insecurity is also markedly high amongst women-headed households as compared with households headed by men<sup>34</sup>, while 35% of women-headed households do not meet the Minimum Dietary Diversity of Women (MDD-W) based on 10 food groups, as compared to 29% of men-headed households in Sindh.

In terms of **formal work**, even though women are nearly 48% of the population of Sindh, their contribution in the formal labor force is only 27%, which varies significantly between urban and rural locations. Women workers in the informal economy are excluded from employment benefits and formal protection programs and forced to rely on family and informal systems for support that further push them towards chronic poverty and rising debt. Women in the formal sector are also frequently denied minimum wage across all major industries and occupational groups due to a lax or indifferent labor inspection regime. A national survey for instance, found that women in elementary occupations earned only 52% of the minimum wage level across all major industries.<sup>35</sup> Further, despite women and girls' low asset base, there are presently no tax credits for working women or women-headed households that apply to income, purchase of major assets (vehicles, land, and property) and childcare. The recently launched ILO Handbook on Fiscal Space for Social Protection provides a good starting point to reconsider minimum floors and universal social protection for all<sup>36</sup>, and possibly reorganizing the MPI and PSLM surveys to reflect this information accordingly, by proximate indicators or otherwise.

In a more recent development, under the **Sindh Employees Old-Age Benefits (Amendment) Act, 2018**, the Sindh Employees Social Security Institution (SESSI) has to allow eight types of benefits to all secured employees: sickness benefit, maternity benefit, death grant, injury benefit, disablement pension, disablement gratuity, survivors' pension, death grant in case of death while in receipt of injury benefit or total disablement pension. Most of these benefits are paid either at the rate of full salary of the secured employee, or as percentage of the full salary. However, because of continuing debate over minimum wage, SESSI has been unable to pay benefits to secured workers at the actual minimum rate, which can range from Pak Rupees 15,000 to Pak Rupees Rs20,000. Further, the law does not presently extend to those working in the informal sector despite changes to provincial Industrial laws.

In 2018, the Sindh Planning & Development Department also prepared and rolled out a **Poverty Reduction Strategy**, applying different determinants and strategies to address rural and urban poverty. The Strategy relies heavily on strengthening participatory mechanisms for poverty reduction and for the socio-economic uplift of women through Joint Development Committees, Local Support Organizations and Community Organizations, and Village Organizations. It also extends the poverty scorecard survey to identify women at the lowest bands of poverty across all districts of Sindh. The Strategy is informed by the successes of the European Union funded **Sindh Union Council and Community Economic Strengthening Support (SUCCESS)** program (2015-2021), which employs a 'multi-dimensional, integrated and holistic approach based on the principles of Community Driven Development to tackle poverty'. The program worked exclusively with the women of Sindh and undertook extensive social mobilization of women down from the settlement level up to the Union Council. Presently, community groups are run and led by women in eight districts across Sindh including Tando Allahyar,

Tando Muhammad Khan, Matiari, Sujawal, Dadu, Jamshoro, Larkana and Kambar Shahdaskot in collaboration with different rural support programs and has shown tremendous potential for scale-up.

Further, the **Sindh Agriculture Policy, 2018**<sup>37</sup> aims to halve the number of poor and eliminate extreme poverty, defined as incomes of less than US\$1.25 per day; end hunger and ensure access by all people, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round; end all forms of malnutrition and address the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women and older persons; and double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, in particular indigenous women, women in agriculture, women family farmers, and women in forestry and fisheries by 2030. The policy builds on a series of background studies in the areas of macroeconomic development; poverty and gender; climate change; value chain enhancement; resource use efficiency; nutrition; and fiscal space utilization. Four Departments are made responsible for achieving these outcomes through combined efforts, including the Agriculture, Supply & Prices Department, the Livestock & Fisheries Department, the Forest and Wildlife Department, and the Planning & Development Department. On 02 May 2018, the Chief Secretary Sindh, notified the formation of a **Sindh Agriculture Policy Implementation Commission**, binding concerned Government Departments, farmers and the private sector, to oversee the preparation of and review progress in strategies and action plans for implementing Departments; to appoint and supervise a Change Management Unit to assist the process of practice change; to mobilize resources (including technical and financial) for smooth Policy implementation; and undertake necessary communication to enhance feedback and stakeholder knowledge.

The **Sindh Differently Able Persons (Employment, Rehabilitation and Welfare) (Amendment) Act, 2017**,<sup>38</sup> recognizes a wide range of rights and the establishment of necessary systems for greater disability inclusion and representation across Sindh at all levels. An earlier version of the Act (2015)<sup>39</sup> also stipulated the constitution of a cross-sectoral Council which has been maintained in the current law, whereas the 2017 amendment raises the quota for persons with disabilities from 2% to 5% for all Government, commercial and industrial establishments in which the number of workers employed at any time during a year is not less than one hundred.

To protect women and girls from disproportionate poverty and general deprivation, the province of Punjab has notified and **Social Protection Authority**<sup>40</sup>, which is empowered to review, evaluate, harmonize and suggest improvements in provincial welfare and social protection related legislation, policies, and interventions by concerned all Government departments. Presently, there is no such mechanism in Sindh, and the government can consider setting up a similar authority in the province to extend a coordinated, comprehensive and effective social protection plan for women and girls, and other gender minorities. A plan may also be chalked out involving the **Sindh Child Authority**, the Sindh Child Protection Council, **District Child Protection Units** and **Adolescent Friendly Centers** in Sindh, to extend a range of services and protections to young and adolescent girls. The **Benazir Income Support Program** (BISP) recipients in Sindh could be further supported through business incubation, and asset transfer (BISE), and direct cash with business coaching (DC-SU) programs, and women and girl's access to **Ehsaas** and its allied programs (e.g., **Sehat Sahulat** for subsidized health services; the **Kafalat** and **Tahafuz** programs, the **National Poverty Graduation Initiative** and Ehsaas **Bila Sood Karzay** under Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund, etc.) may be further streamlined for poverty alleviation amongst women and girls.

For poor **older women** who are vulnerable to neglect, dependency and abuse, concessions and essential services may be provided in accordance with the **Sindh Senior Citizen Welfare Act, 2016**,<sup>41</sup> including the setting up of a cross-sectoral and multi-departmental **Senior Citizens Council** created to give effect to the Act. With the passage of the Act, concerned Departments are also tasked with establishing and operationalizing homes for the elderly in every district of Sindh and collect data on senior citizens at the UC Council level, which are yet to materialize.

**Policy Objective B: Adopt sound legislation, policy and action frameworks for protection against feminized poverty, at the provincial, district and sub-district levels, and accelerate and streamline investment in social protection for women and girls.**

## **Policy Strategies & Responsible Institutions**

- I. Give effect to the Sindh Poverty Reduction Strategy and Community Driven Local Development (CDLD) Policy, 2018, by strengthening participatory mechanisms such as Joint Development Committees, Local Support Organizations, Community Organizations and Village Organizations, and extending the poverty scorecard survey to identify those (especially women) at the lowest bands of poverty across all district of Sindh – ***Planning & Development***
- II. Halve the number of poor and eliminate extreme poverty – defined as incomes of less than US\$1.25 per day; end hunger and ensure access by all people, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round; end all forms of malnutrition and address the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women and older persons; and double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, in particular indigenous women, women in agriculture, women family farmers, and women in forestry and fisheries, pursuant to the Sindh Agricultural Policy,<sup>42</sup> by 2030 – ***Planning & Development; Forest & Wildlife; Environment, Climate Change & Coastal Development; Agriculture, Supply & Prices; Livestock & Fisheries; Food; Board of Revenue***
- III. Extend social protection for the rehabilitation of displaced and trafficked women and girls – ***Sindh Provincial Disaster Management Authority; Social Welfare; Rehabilitation***
- IV. Promote the welfare of the freed women and girl child bonded laborers by securing and protecting the economic interests of such bonded laborer so they do not suffer any occasion or reason to contract any further bonded debt. Ensure adequate resources, authority and means to Vigilance Committees (consisting of elected representatives of the area, representatives of the District Administration, Bar Associations, Media, recognized Social Services and Labor Department of the Government of Sindh), as in the Sindh Bonded Labor System (Abolition) Act, 2016 – ***Law, Parliamentary Affairs & Human Rights; Home (District DC); Rehabilitation***
- V. Implement fully, the Sindh Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2018, for the full range of rights recognized therein, and establishment of necessary systems for greater disability inclusion and representation across Sindh, at all levels – ***All government and private sector entities (overseen by the Rehabilitation and Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities Departments).***
- VI. Ensure that girls and women with disabilities receive government support and services by actively encouraging inclusive policies, systems, services and infrastructure across Sindh, as per Disabilities Act, 2018 – ***Rehabilitation; Social Welfare (Employment & Rehabilitation Cell for Disabled Persons); Sindh Child Protection Authority; District Child Protection Units; Planning & Development; Finance; Services and General Administration & Coordination***
- VII. Graduate Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) recipients in Sindh through BISP’s business incubation, and asset transfer (BISE), and direct cash with business coaching (DC-SU) programs, and support women’s economic empowerment through Ehsaas and its allied programs including the Sehat Insaaf Card – ***Social Welfare; Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Division (PASSD); Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal (PBM); Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF); Auqaf, Religious Zakat & Ushr; Education & Literacy; Health; Planning & Development; Sindh Technical Education & Vocational Training Authority; Women’s Development***

- VIII. Establish a provincial Social Protection Authority along similar lines as the Punjab Social Protection Authority<sup>43</sup>, empowered to review, evaluate, harmonize and suggest improvements in provincial welfare and social protection related legislation, policies, and interventions by concerned Government Departments – **Law, Parliamentary Affairs and Human Rights; Social Welfare with other Cabinet Ministries; Chief Secretary**
- IX. Review achievements of the Sindh Child Authority, Sindh Youth Policy Adolescent Friendly Centers, and District Child Protection Units to support and lobby for the development of a multisectoral plan for the protection of children, specifically girls, along with concerned departments and the Sindh Child Protection Council – **Sindh Commission on the Status of Women; Women's Development; Sindh Child Protection Authority; Home; Health**
- X. Expand safety net coverage to women in formal and informal employment through the Provincial Employees Social Security Scheme, Sindh Employees Old Age Benefits Institution, and Benevolent Funds, to include women workers in the informal sector, migrant workers, self-employed women, and contributing family workers (both agriculture and non-agriculture) – **Labor & Human Resource; Social Welfare; Agriculture, Supply & Prices; Industry and Commerce**
- XI. Lobby for extension of tax credits for working women that apply to income, purchase of major assets (vehicles, land, and property) and childcare<sup>44</sup> – **Women's Development; Sindh Commission on the Status of Women; Board of Revenue; Finance; Excise, Taxation & Narcotics Control**
- XII. Ensure that concessions and essential services are provided to elderly women, in accordance with the Sindh Senior Citizen Welfare Act, 2016. Strengthen the cross-sectoral Council created to give effect to the Act – **Social Welfare; Board of Revenue**
- XIII. Establish and operationalize homes for the elderly in every district of Sindh; collect data on senior citizens at every UC Council, as per the Sindh Senior Citizens Welfare Act, 2016 – **Social Welfare; Planning & Development; Finance**

## C. Health and related services

According to the Pakistan National Health Accounts (NHA), 2012-13<sup>45</sup>, Pakistan dedicates about 2.75% of its total Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to health and allied services. Out of the total health expenditure, an estimated 33% is made by the Government whereas private expenditures constitute 66% of the total. Of these, the NHA report suggests that 91% of all health-related expenditures are borne by households or constitute **out-of-pocket (OOP) expenditure**, which is remarkably high compared with other Asian counties. A range of health and allied services are not yet universalized (including both coverage and access) across Sindh, particularly those relating to women and girls' sexual and reproductive health.

Overall, Sindh has a total of 648 hospitals (including government, departmental, private and local bodies) with a bed capacity of 30,126<sup>46</sup> for a population 5,294,0983 (approximately 1,757 patients per bed, as of 2019). The sheer unavailability of services remains a serious concern, despite progress made in recent years. The Sindh MICS 2014 indicates that almost 80% ever-married women received antenatal care from a skilled provider in that year, which marks a significant improvement since 2003-4 (42%). Although Sindh had the highest urban-rural difference in facility-based deliveries across all provinces (78%) in 2013-14, the overall ratio of institutional deliveries shows an upward trend since 2006.

To address the issue of child malnutrition and maternal health, Sindh passed the **Protection and Promotion of Breast Feeding and Child Nutrition Act, 2013**. It has also legislated (2014)<sup>47</sup> and set up an independent **Sindh Healthcare Commission**, tasked with checking malpractice and improving the overall quality of healthcare services in the province. There is little evidence to suggest that the Healthcare Commission is able to fulfil all its stipulated functions other than checking for and curbing quackery in Sindh. Post Abortion Care (PAC) and

Post-Partum Family Planning (PPFP) have, however, been integrated into Sindh's health policies and the Government has endorsed and adopted the national guidelines for uterine evacuation.

The Pakistan Demographic & Health Survey – PDHS – 2017-2018, suggests that Sindh still has a high fertility rate of 4 children per married woman, and an alarmingly low contraceptive prevalence rate (CPR) of 30.9%, significantly lower than national average of 35%. A marginal improvement has been noted from 29.5% in 2015. The PDHS 2017-18 further notes that across Pakistan, there is a strong desire among 44% of currently married women to limit childbearing, while 16% report wanting to delay childbearing. This signifies a high unmet need for limiting the size of families and a clear mismatch between women's needs and services made available, accessible and affordable to them.

Various studies suggest that though there are many problems persisting in the supply chain of FP commodities and services, cultural norms and traditions, child marriage, misconceptions and myths, and provider bias are major contributing factors to the persisting lack of access to FP. As child marriages still often follow the onset of puberty amongst girls, the reproductive age for girls starts earlier than 15 years, which is less systematically tracked and responded to. Abortion remains criminalized (whether forced or induced) and remains common practice for lack of access to FP. Because of stigma and lack of access to service/products and counseling information, abortions are often performed in sub-optimal medical conditions or attempted at home causing severe complications and fatalities. There is no provision in law that allows for abortion in non-life-threatening circumstances such as rape, incest, or contraception failure and unwanted pregnancies. Fistula amongst women remains a concern, with very few Government facilities and specialists to cater to cases across Sindh.<sup>48</sup>

Unintended pregnancies are common especially amongst rural and unmarried women, latter being completely overlooked by current policies.<sup>49</sup> Worryingly, at the current rate of population growth and a massive youth bulge within it, the Population Welfare Department estimates that the 13 million women of reproductive age (15-49 years) in 2015 in Sindh currently are estimated to increase to 15 million by 2020<sup>50</sup>, creating more candidates requiring full access to a range of sexual and reproductive health services.

In the public sector, the Population Welfare Program; Lady Health Worker Program; Maternal, Neonatal, and Child Health Program; and the Peoples Primary Health Care Initiative (PPHI) have mandates to deliver FP services. Reproductive health related services are also dispensed by basic health units (BHU), rural health centers (RHC), Family Welfare Centers (FWC) and Maternal and Child Health Centers (MCHC). In the private sector, FP services are provided by private clinics of general practitioners, maternity homes, private pharmacies and shops. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) make up 7% of the private sector, which excludes donor funding.<sup>51</sup>

Under the Family Planning Summit (FP2020) commitments and the **Sindh Population Policy, 2016**<sup>52</sup>, Sindh aims to increase the CPR to 45% by the year 2020, guided by a **Costed Implementation Plan on Family Planning, 2017**<sup>53</sup> (with a dedicated implementation Cell), as well as the **Standards for Family Planning Services, 2017**<sup>54</sup>. A low CPR, however, remains a matter of grave concern, especially as progress remains too slow against FP2020 indicators and the stated policies of the Government. These need better marketing, 'motivational services', service- provider and -seeker interaction, and tracking for bottlenecks, lack of access and obstructions.<sup>55</sup> In this regard, the role of FWCs and their Advisory Management Committees are crucial to consolidate.

Although Pakistan's overall Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR) and Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) have reduced over the past decade, particularly between 2014 and 2018, progress has been slow and uneven. For instance, the MMR remains higher for mothers with pre-school or no education (139 deaths per 1000 live births), and the IMR is higher in districts facing chronic food and water insecurity, shrinking access to livelihood and adverse effects of climate change.

According to the Sindh Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS)<sup>56</sup> 2014, Sindh has an under-five infant mortality rate of 104 per 1,000 live births. Rural-urban differentials within Sindh show that while the city of Karachi has a rate of 62 deaths per 1000 live births, district Larkana has 142 deaths per 1000 live births. Locational



differences are also noted based on the mothers' educational and socio-economic status. The MICS further notes that more 40% children under five years of age are underweight across Sindh, whereas 17% are classified as severely underweight. Almost half of children under five years (48%) are stunted or short for their age; about one-quarter (24%) children are severely stunted; and about 1% children are overweight or obese. According to the National Nutrition Survey (NNS) 2018 report, Sindh has the highest number of underweight children in the country, and women of reproductive age (15-49 years) are more undernourished than in other provinces. The report also specifically identifies adolescent girls as bearing a double burden of malnutrition in the province.

The opportunity cost of malnutrition to GDP in Pakistan is an estimated 3%. Malnutrition is more common amongst women in general, and highest amongst women of childbearing age. Research shows that micronutrient deficiencies that are commonly found amongst rural women exact a toll on their health and productivity, with Vitamin A, Iron and Zinc deficiencies being most frequently recorded. Poor diet and malnutrition particularly amongst younger women who are disproportionately at higher risk of malnourishment, increases their vulnerability to violence and the chances of morbidity.

The causes of malnutrition amongst women in rural Sindh, as elsewhere in Pakistan, are complex and include poverty, poor quality drinking water, poor diets, poor sanitation and hygiene, inadequate infant and young child feeding and rearing practices, child and early marriages, low birth spacing and lack of access to FP, limited years of or no-schooling, and lack of access of medical facilities (especially for girls). Although many studies in Sindh show a strong link between agricultural practices and nutrition, the negligible number of women extension workers across Sindh, who can otherwise guide and facilitate women farmers on production and consumption benefits of more nutritious foods, and help raise incomes for the purpose of buying more and better food items to supplement poor nutrition and dietary intake, constitutes an opportunity lost. Expanding the number of government women extension workers in agriculture, livestock and poultry, forestry, fisheries and water and irrigation work along with consummate support and facilitation can help reach more women and girls with relevant messages related to healthier eating and cultivation practices.

With regards to mental health, Sindh has passed provincial legislation, the **Sindh Mental Health Act, 2013**<sup>57</sup>, but the **Mental Health Authority** stipulated in the law has not yet been notified. It also remains unknown, how Government policies in this matter will aid in destigmatizing mental health issues and provide for related support in suicide and domestic violence cases, for instance.

Violence against women and girls also carries significant health and financial costs. Women medico-legal officers, who interact with and examine cases of interpersonal violence against women and girls, are best placed to offer screening for suspected domestic violence cases and facilitate a host of health services required by victims of violence. As an indication of neglect, there are currently only 4 women medico-legal officers (WMLOs) posted in Karachi, with a teeming population of over 23 million women and girls, and roughly 8-9 WMLOs posted for the whole of Sindh. Although more positions have recently been created and approved by the Public Services Commission, they remain vacant, and medico-level services have not devolved to district and tehsil levels as per the **Sindh Health Sector Strategy, 2012-2020**. There is also no existing health-based response package for cases presenting gender-based violence (GBV) and violence against women and girls (VAW/G), or a coordinated prevention program.

**Policy Objective C: Ensuring provision of universal quality healthcare to all women and girls and removing gender-based barriers to access to sexual and reproductive health services and information for women and girls as agreed in the Program of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA), the London Summit, 2012, and the outcome documents of their review processes.**

## Policy Strategies & Responsible Institutions:

- i. Fully implement and monitor the Sindh Population Policy, 2016, the PWD Costed Implementation Plan (CIP) on Family Planning, the Sindh Standards for Family Planning Services, 2017 and related actions for impact, lessons, and to inform further action in matters concerning women and girls' reproductive health – ***Population Welfare (monitoring with Services and General Administration & Coordination; Planning & Development; and Sindh Commission on the Status of Women)***
- ii. Fully implement and assess results of the Sindh Health Sector Policy, 2012-2020 to “maximize efforts to improve health status of the people in Sindh in congruence with international and national commitments and in response to Sindh's contextual need”, by “enhancing the stewardship role of Department of Health for steering the public and private sector towards desired health outcomes” – ***Health***
- iii. Launch special training and extension programs for rural households on production and consumption benefits of more nutritious foods including fruits, vegetables and livestock products, and to raise incomes for the purpose of buying more and better food items to supplement subsistence – ***Planning & Development; Agriculture, Supply & Prices; Manpower & Training Department (under Labor & Human Resources)***
- iv. Increase the ration of women extension workers – ***Planning & Development; Agriculture, Supply & Prices; Services and General Administration & Coordination***
- v. Support the implementation of the Sindh Population Policy, 2016 by raising community awareness of the Policy components across all projects being undertaken by respective Departments. Assess the effectiveness of the Communications Strategy in this regard – ***Health; Population Welfare***
- vi. Review and consolidate data and statistics pertaining to health particularly information on the social determinants of health<sup>58</sup> for women and girls and the proposed schemes and special initiatives to address them – ***Health; Population Welfare; Planning & Development; Sindh Commission on the Status of Women; Women's Development***
- vii. Universalize birth registration – ***LG&HTPD; Health; NADRA***
- viii. Strengthen and fully operationalize the Provincial Health Commission in Sindh, to fulfil its mandate in its entirety – ***Health***
- ix. Operationalize a system to track and monitor gender inequalities in access to health service delivery in the lesser developed regions of the province especially for underserved sections and locations – ***Health; Planning & Development***
- x. Dramatically increase the number of women medico-legal doctors across Sindh on a priority basis by creating new positions and filling vacant positions and establish forensic units and medico-legal sections at DHQs and THQs, as per the Sindh Health Sector Strategy, 2012-2020 – ***Health; Services and General Administration & Coordination; Public Service Commission***
- xi. Institutionalize mechanisms to ensure recruitment and retention of female health workers and operationalize transparent systems for their promotion and advancement to decision-making positions – ***Health; Population Welfare; Services and General Administration & Coordination; Public Service Commission***
- xii. Develop and notify a comprehensive health-based response package for cases presenting gender-based violence and violence against women and girls, and operationalize the package across all basic, secondary, and tertiary level healthcare facilities across Sindh. The UN Essential Services Package



Guidelines<sup>59</sup> may be considered for adoption/ adaptation in this regard – **Health; Women's Development; Sindh Commission on the Status of Women**

- xiii. Gradually increase the antenatal care coverage to at least two visits across all districts of Sindh – **Health**
- xiv. Ensure substantial increase in health financing in order to support health services, recruitment, training and retention of health workforce – **Health; Provincial Assembly (through Chief Secretary and Women's Parliamentary Caucus)**
- xv. Notify Sindh's Mental Health Authority, as per the Sindh Mental Health Act, 2013 – **Health; Sindh Assembly**
- xvi. Recognize and deal with the health impact of unsafe abortions as a major public health concern in the presence of low contraception prevalence, and promote post-partum family planning measures across Sindh – **Health; Population Welfare**
- xvii. Reduce gender parity in food security and malnutrition for women and girls in the province through targeted and high-impact interventions across Sindh – **Health; Food and Agriculture; Forest and Wildlife; Environment and Climate Change & Coastal Development; Livestock and Fisheries; Planning & Development; Board of Revenue**
- xviii. Review implementation of the recommendations of the Multi-Sectoral Action for Nutrition Program and the Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF), 2016, to assess programs that seek to improve women and girl's access to nutrition and improve their food security – **Sindh Commission on the Status of Women; Women's Development**
- xix. Sharpen the focus and documentation of results of the Minimum Service Delivery Standards regime in primary, secondary and tertiary healthcare for women and girls across Sindh – **Health; Sindh Healthcare Commission; Planning & Development**

## D. Education and lifelong learning

In terms of global ranking, Pakistan stands at the 177<sup>th</sup> position out of 182 countries in universal education. Free and compulsory education till age 16 years is enshrined in the Constitution of Pakistan (article 25A) and the province of Sindh was the first to pass the **Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2013**<sup>60</sup>, to improve the overall educational situation across the province. It was followed by a set of rules of business to streamline implementation.

According to the Pakistan Social and Living Measurement Survey (PSLM), 2014-15, the total adult literacy rate in Sindh is 56%. Within this, huge gender parities remain with 67% adult literacy rate amongst males and 43% adult literacy amongst females, indicating a 1% increase for women since 2007, and 2% drop for males from the same baseline year. The PSLM 2014-15 is instructive in that the overall education trends concerning girls' education show a continuous deterioration over a range of indicators between 2007 and 2015 in Sindh, while many indicators have remained stagnant. At the primary level, Sindh's Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) for female students has declined to 69% from 2014-2015, as compared to the 71% in 2012-2013.<sup>61</sup> Similar declines have been reported at mid-level education with the latest figure placed at 48% (2014-2015), as compared to 49% in 2012-2013. Transition rates are low between primary, middle and secondary education specifically for girl, although there is a few points' improvement in girls' primary school drop-out over this period.

In 2014, Sindh launched its **Education Sector Plan, 2014-18**<sup>62</sup>, covering a wide range of proposed improvements to the education sector, and with gender equity as a cross-cutting priority area in all related interventions. It sought to increase access to quality Early Childhood Education (ECE), primary and secondary education, eliminate social exclusion, enhance transitions, promote social cohesion and provide greater opportunities for access, participation and learning to marginalized groups, particularly girls. It aimed to improve the quality of

learning outcomes by strengthening the teaching/ learning processes, improving the quality of teachers through merit-based selection and recruitment; improving accountability, establishing a competency-based system of educational professional development, and improving equity in resource allocation achieving fiscal sustainability in educational expenditure. The Policy reached its expiry at the end of 2018, and a new sector plan for education is expected to be launched for a five-year period, from 2020 to 2024.

While the Education Sector Plan was in place, 2016-17 statistics and SEMIS (Sindh Education Management Information System) records from Sindh suggest persisting unavailability of basic schooling facilities such as drinking water, electricity, washrooms and boundary walls in rural areas despite better presence of School Management Committee (SMC), especially in rural Sindh. A vast majority of both urban and rural schools, however, are without 'advanced' facilities such as laboratories, libraries and playgrounds, while some districts in Karachi are worse off than other districts in the province.<sup>63</sup> Inequalities across a spectrum of social rights have been acute in peri-urban and district borders for many decades.

While there are many factors behind low literacy rate amongst females including distances, conveyance, missing facilities, sexual harassment, lack of female teachers, social and cultural norms, early-age marriage, or need for contributing family workers, one factor is the sheer dearth of educational facilities and female instructors in Sindh that specifically cater to females. From a total of 41,131 primary institutions, only 5,711 are for females, and from a total of 2,329 middle level institutions, only 593 are for females. Of the total 1,696 secondary institutions in Sindh, only 488 enroll girls, whereas 73 middle level institutions and co-education. The starkest gender parity is at the level of higher secondary education with a total of 291 institutions, of which, only 76 enroll females. At the highest levels of education and technical learning, men also greatly outnumber women teachers. The **Sindh Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority Act, 2010**<sup>64</sup>, has also made slow progress in diversifying its technical programs for women beyond the more conventional sectors of employment for women such as transport, power and energy, civil works, disaster reconstruction, mechanical work, tourism, auto industries, etc.

High illiteracy is major impediment to women and girls' empowerment, and the correlation between education, family size, health, productivity and growth is universally recognized. Various largescale public education sector programs as well as those supported by international development partners have, however, focused more on enrollment, specifically on girls' primary enrollment over the years, with less focus on enhancing successful transition to secondary and higher education, and systematically addressing the root causes of non-attendance. There are programs that incentivize and subsidize girls' education, and their successes and challenges need to be better understood, along with better monitoring, identification, documentation and redressal of challenges and barriers, including those faced by SMCs in achieving their annual school improvement plans.

Sindh adopted its **Early Childhood Education (ECE) Policy**<sup>65</sup> in **2014**, the principles of objectives of which were earlier enunciated in the **Sindh Education Sector Policy, 2009**. In this respect, data shows that 17.8% of children are enrolled and attending an early childhood education program across the province, and a vast majority is going without. While there are no gender differences in this figure, geographic location and socio-economic differentials are observable: 30.7% children are attending ECE programs in urban areas compared to 6.8% in rural areas: Larkana district notable has the lowest ECE attendance, at 5.5%. Sindh also announced its **Non-Formal Education Policy**<sup>66</sup> in **2017**, to boost adult literacy and lifelong learning, and to create a link between formal and non-formal education in secondary education. The Policy seeks to eradicate gender and ethnic gaps in access to education and ensure universal adult literacy across the province. Recently, a budget has been allocated to support policy implementation.

In terms of technical education and vocational training (TVET), there is presently only 1 technical institution for females with an enrollment of 350 students, 6 female polytechnic institutions with an enrollment of 476 students, and 100 female vocational institutes and schools with an enrollment of 2,682 students in Sindh. TVET options for women and girls involve stereotypical work sectors, with no to little opportunity for specializing in

non-conventional sectors. Skills trainings for rural youth and women in on- and off-farm activities and enterprises are limited in scope, and support for implementing effective interventions, for example in homestead-scale poultry rearing, kitchen gardening and aquaculture remain underfunded, erratic or donor dependent. Sindh also has no certification systems specifically for teachers to address quality issues across education and skill learning programs despite the passage of the **Sindh School Education Standards and Curriculum Act, 2015**.<sup>67</sup> While women and girls increasingly studying Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects across Pakistan, their share in the STEM sector remains low<sup>68</sup> (discussed in more detail under ICT, Media and STEM).

Related to access to quality education, it is important to focus not just curriculum and textbooks but also the content and method of delivery. According to gender analysis of school curriculum conducted by UNESCO in 2004, significant gender bias is found across 3 of 6 subjects in close to 200 textbooks taught across all provinces. Female figures were found underrepresented and misrepresented while the language in many coursebooks were found to perpetuate stereotypes and bias against women and girls.<sup>69</sup> Sindh has recently rolled out a **Life Skills Based Education (LSBE)** program for Grades 6 to 9, and teachers' trainings are currently underway across Sindh. LSBE is also integrated in the Sindh Non-formal Education Policy, 2017, which targets both out-of-school children and adults without education.

Where Sindh lags far behind is in terms of ensuring inclusive education for all, especially for children with disabilities. Schools and other learning institutes continue to be disability unfriendly, despite the focus on inclusive education in the **Sindh Education Policy, 2009-2018** (expired last year), and the formation of a dedicate Department for the Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities.

Further, in 2017, the Gender and Child Cell of the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) has also launched the **Pakistan School Safety Framework, 2017**.<sup>70</sup> Under the *School Preparedness and Risk Reduction Intervention 3: Physical and Psychosocial Protection* of the framework, schools are instructed to 'take pains to foster an environment for children that protects them from violence exploitation and abuse', and to ensure skills and mechanisms that help identify children with special emotional and physical needs' and 'respond to acts of violence'. This framework opens up many avenues to identifying and responding to cases of sexual harassment and abuse, including amongst girls and teachers. It is not yet clear how effective the framework has been in addressing these and other safety issues discussed therein.

#### **Policy Objective D: Reducing the gender gap in educational attainment and lifelong learning.**

##### **Policy Strategies & Responsible Institutions:**

- i. Ensure all education management policies including teacher recruitment, school rationalization, and in-service capacity-building safeguard the rights and concerns of girl students and female teachers – ***School Education & Literacy College Education; Universities & Boards; Services and General Administration & Coordination***
- ii. Design and implement programs for 100% enrollment and maximum retention of girl students at all levels of school education in urban as well as rural areas – ***School Education & Literacy; Planning & Development; Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities***
- iii. Input into the Sindh Education Sector Plan, 2020-24, and suggest strategies to close the gender gap in education and ensure successful transition of girls from primary to secondary education – ***Women's Development; Sindh Commission on the Status of Women, with other stakeholders***
- iv. Monitor impact of the Sindh Education Sector Plan with a focus on girls' access to primary and secondary schooling, retention and life-skilled based education – ***Education & Literacy; Sindh Commission on the Status of Women***

- v. Initiate trainings and related certification systems (specifically for teachers) to address quality issues across education and skill learning programs in the province, in pursuit of the Sindh School Education Standards and Curriculum Act, 2015 – ***Education & Literacy; Sindh Teacher Education Development Authority (STEDA); Provincial Institute of Teacher Education (PITE)***
- vi. Increase the share of female science, engineering, manufacturing and construction graduates at tertiary level – ***School Education & Literacy; Sindh Board of Technical Education; Sindh Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority***
- vii. Create learning opportunities and an enabling work environment to promote women and girls' participation in unconventional sectors (e.g., STEM, law enforcement & justice, transport, power & energy, disaster, mechanical work, tourism, auto industries, etc.) – ***School Education & Literacy; Sindh Board of Technical Education; Sindh Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority***
- viii. Lobby for inclusive education for all, that integrates the needs of children with disabilities, especially of girls, as noted in the education Policy 2009 – ***Women's Development; Sindh Commission on the Status of Women***
- ix. Design and deliver affirmative action targeting education and skills development for out-of-school girls with a special focus on poor households and lesser developed districts of Sindh – ***Education and Literacy; Sindh Board of Technical Education; Sindh Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority***
- x. Continually stock-take and audit various affirmative actions (subsidies, voucher schemes, free books, transport, etc.) that are put in place for improving girls' access to school-based education; up-scale efforts that show positive results for enrollment, retention and transition to higher education – ***School Education & Literacy; Sindh Commission on the Status of Women; Women's Development; Planning & Development***
- xi. Develop a standardized training module and reference manual on life-skills based education for mass training of teachers across Sindh; notify LSBE teachers' training as mandatory across schools providing compulsory education till age 16, and design, implement, monitor and continually improve focused efforts for gender sensitization of teaching staff, contents of learning material and methodologies for removing barriers to learning for girls – ***School Education & Literacy; Health***
- xii. Ensure priority availability of basic facilities for female teachers and girl students (boundary walls, separate washrooms, latrines, transport, clean drinking water, etc.) in all government-run schools – ***School Education & Literacy (School Education and College Education Departments); Planning & Development; Finance***
- xiii. Ensure timely completion of School Improvement Plans developed by School Management Committees, as per the Rules of Business of the Sindh Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2013 – ***School Education & Literacy, Social Welfare; Planning & Development; Finance; Services and General Administration & Coordination***
- xiv. Provide skills trainings for rural youth and women in on and off-farm activities and enterprises, and support for implementing effective interventions, for example in homestead-scale poultry rearing, kitchen gardening and aquaculture – ***Planning & Development; Livestock & Fisheries; Agriculture, Supply & Prices; Forest & Wildlife***
- xv. Engender TVET educational curricula including for knowledge and competency development across all major training and teaching institutes – ***School Education & Literacy; National Institute of Public Administration; Sindh Board of Technical Education; Sindh Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority; Directorate of Curriculum, Assessment and Research; Directorate of Human Resource and Training; Sindh Text Book Board; Medical Training Institutes and Teaching Colleges, Sindh Judicial Academy, etc.***

- xvi. Initiate trainings and related certification systems (specifically for teachers) to address quality issues across education and skill learning programs in the province, in pursuit of the Sindh School Education Standards and Curriculum Act, 2015 – ***School Education & Literacy; Sindh Teacher Education Development Authority; Provincial Institute of Teacher Education; Directorate of Human Resource and Training; Accreditation Board/Service Delivery Commission***
- xvii. Enhance gender balance and maximize female participation in teachers’ training (including in TVET) and professional development programs implemented by local as well as provincial governments – ***Sindh Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority; Services and General Administration & Coordination***

## E. Political and public life

The **Elections Act, 2017**<sup>71</sup> provides a legislative framework for the inclusion and participation of women, persons with disabilities, and transgender persons in political processes. The Constitution of Pakistan recognizes women's political role and has fixed a quota of 33% for women in Parliament. Women have a right to vote, stand for elective bodies and hold public office at par with men. The Election Act, 2017, provides that all constituencies with less than 10% women’s vote be automatically declared null and void (Section 9 of Election Act). All political parties must also give 5% tickets to women candidates on general seats.

Currently, women head only two of the 34 National Assembly Committees and 10 of the 52 Senate Committees. There are 20 women senators out of a total of 104, and four federal ministers out of 28.<sup>72</sup> Not only do otherwise prominent women politicians rarely get important positions and ministries, and they rarely hold key decision-making positions within Government Departments, despite the 10% quota for women in public service. Discussions in the field across Sindh suggest that political parties often do not meet the 5% women general seat nomination requirement or relegate unlikely-to-be-won seats to women candidates.

More recently, the Sindh Government in a first, has announced a fixed 5% employment quota for transgender persons in all Government Departments. At present, there is no mechanism in Sindh to ensure that these job quotas are filled across grades in Government job, there are no quotas for persons with disabilities in political processes (only in jobs across government, commercial and industrial establishments), and no distinction by gender in the quotas for religious minorities.

According to the ECP, a record 175 women contested for the 272 general seats in the National Assembly in the 2018 General Elections; of these 130 were contested from the Sindh. Reports also reveal that Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa elected more women lawmakers as compared to other provinces. A total of 464 women contested assembly seats (compared to 419 in the 2013), of which 289 were party candidates and fewer women were returned than in 2013. Currently, there are 31 (18.5%) women lawmakers in the Sindh Assembly, out of a total of 167 members. There are only 2 women ministers in a 19-member cabinet (Health and Women’s Development), only 4 out of 30 standing committees are chaired by women, while out of the 9 special assistants to the Chief Minister, 2 are women.<sup>73</sup> Ratna Bhagwandas Chawla from Jacobabad was the first Hindu woman to be elected to the Senate on from Pakistan People Party in March 2006. In addition, Suman Kumari has become the country’s first Hindu woman to have been appointed a civil judge in Kambar-Shahdadkot, Sindh, her native district. Recently, Krishna Kumari from Nagarparkar, Sindh, was selected as a candidate for a 2018 senate seat by the Pakistan People Party.

At the level of local governance, the **Sindh Local Government Act, 2013** spells out special measures with regards to strengthening women’s knowledge, participation and representation in decision-making from the lower to the highest electoral offices across Sindh. Presently, there is insufficient data related to these provisions, and the quality of women’s political participation in local government is relatively less understood and addressed. This includes the participation of elected women representatives in local bodies’ decision-making mechanisms such as House Committees and Monitoring Committees at the district and tehsil levels.



The **Sindh Youth Policy, 2018** also mandates 5% seats for young people, including girls in local bodies and their involvement in decision-making at the municipal and provincial levels. The policy also talks about reviving student unions to promote pro-peace, women-friendly, student-centered activities on campus, and providing youth entrepreneurship through trainings at incubation centers, creating market linkages and fostering partnership with educational institutions. As the youth policy was passed recently, it requires both an implementation framework and a monitoring and review mechanism, covering both inputs and outcomes of the Policy for the youth in Sindh, including young women and girls.

In terms of cross-party coalitions, the **Women's Parliamentary Caucus (WPC)** was formed in the national assembly in 2008, which was followed by Provincial Assemblies over successive years: Punjab in 2009, KP in 2013, Sindh in 2014 and Balochistan in 2017. The women's caucuses provide an arena for forging cross-party consensus, and to discuss, formulate and proposed laws to improve the status of women in conjunction with other women's machineries and groups. Generally, across Pakistan, caucuses lack administrative support to function effectively, remain susceptible to party influence, and are sometime unable to drive consensus with the house on women's issues. Recent examples include the forced marriage bill in Sindh, the domestic violence bill in KP, and the national proposed Bill on child marriage. In the recent past, however, women's caucuses have successfully seen through the passage of many key legislations across provinces, with Sindh faring better than others.

A big part of political life concerns citizenship status and over 12.2 million eligible Pakistani women are currently not registered as citizens, or as voters. After a decline in women registered voters between 2008 and 2013 in Sindh and Balochistan, subsequent registration derives to correct the imbalance had not dramatically increased the number of women voters by 2017, even if a record number of women contested the elections. According to the Free and Fair Election Network (FAFEN), out of 11.9 million adult women in Sindh province, 2.2 million still do not possess a Computerized National Identity Card (CNIC), rendering them ineligible for casting their vote, or participating in public life. The National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA)'s facilitation coverage extends to 24 out of 27 districts in Sindh.<sup>74</sup>

Women's participation in public life generally, including in politics, is affected by a host of other factors that lie well beyond electoral systems and quotas. It also concerns their participation in economic and social life. Women's access to public spaces is deeply affected by their access to drinking water, sanitation and hygiene facilities including the availability of toilets, safe transportation and working environment, and freedom from restrictions that discourage women from claiming public space and participating in decision-making. To address these issues, it is essential to provide safe, quality and affordable transportation for women and girls in order to remove basic barriers to their mobility, improve their access to public services, and boost participation in economic, political and generally, in public life. It is also incumbent upon the Government to curb sexual harassment and intimidation of women and girls in politics and in public spaces.

**Policy Objective E: To establish gender balance in governmental bodies and committees and public administrative entities: setting specific targets and implementing measures to substantially increase the number of women with a view to achieving equal representation of women and men; reforming electoral systems that encourage political parties to integrate women in elective and non-elective public positions in the same proportion and at the same levels as men; protecting women and girls' right to engage in political activities and to freedom of association; and making public spaces safe for women.**

## **Policy Strategies & Responsible Institutions**

- i. Lobby for amending the Provincial Assemblies Allocation of Reserved Seats for Women and Non-Muslims (Procedure) Rules, 2002, to ensure fair presentation of women in politics – **Women's Development; Law,**

***Parliamentary Affairs and Human Rights; Services and General Administration & Coordination; Sindh Commission on the Status of Women***

- ii. Advocate active implementation of the Sindh Local Government Act, 2013, with special regard to measures to strength women’s knowledge, participation and representation in decision-making from the bottom up. Improve reporting and data related to these measures – ***Sindh Commission on the Status of Women; Women’s Development; Local Government***
- iii. Ensure increased and effective participation of elected women representatives in local bodies’ institutions as per statutory quota including House Committees and Monitoring Committees at the district and tehsil levels – ***Local Government***
- iv. Ensure compliance with and adherence to jobs and capacity building quotas for women workers and government employees as per approved policies and legal provisions – ***Services and General Administration and Coordination; Public Service Commission***
- v. Strengthen and promote effective participation of women in the political processes by fast-tracking and universalizing issuance of CNIC and voter registration, making voting booths safe and accessible for women, raising awareness of women’s political rights, and taking other policy measures to maximize women voters’ turnout in all constituencies across Sindh – ***Election Commission of Pakistan; National Database & Registration Authority (with District Voter Education Committees, District Election Commission offices, and District Administration)***
- vi. Strengthen the Office of the Women’s Parliamentary Caucus in the Sindh Assembly – ***Chief Secretary; Law, Parliamentary Affairs and Human Rights; Women’s Development; Sindh Commission on the Status of Women***
- vii. Support representation and decision-making of women in political processes and parties through voter education programs, providing trainings, mentoring, and networking opportunities including between women Union Councilors and representatives of women’s parliamentary committee members, and other decision-making bodies within the government. Do the above across party lines – ***Local Government and Housing Town Planning; Sindh Civil Services and Local Government Academy; Women’s Development; Sindh Commission on the Status of Women, with the Election Commission of Pakistan and Local Government bodies***
- viii. Take affirmative action to increase women’s political representation through and within political parties by engendering their political mandate; strengthening women’s wings; and engaging political parties for increasing women’s vote banks – ***Women’s Development***
- ix. Track women Union Councilors across party lines for their representation and inclusion in political processes and local government structures – ***Local Government and Housing Town Planning; Women’s Development; Sindh Commission on the Status of Women***
- x. Ensure that at least 5 percent seats are filled by young people, including girls, in local bodies and their involvement in deliberative and decision-making processes at the municipal and provincial levels, as per the Sindh Youth Policy, 2018 – ***Local Government and Housing Town Planning; Sports & Youth Affairs***
- xi. Increase the number of and improve women and girl’s access to public toilets, and WASH amenities across Sindh as per the Sindh Strategic Sector Plan for Drinking Water, Sanitation and Hygiene, 2016-2026 to support school enrollment and labor force participation – ***Local Government & Housing Town Planning; Public Health Engineering & Rural Development; Health; School Education & Literacy***



- xii. Provide safe, quality and affordable transportation for women and girls in order to remove barriers to their mobility, improve their access to public services, and boost participation in economic and public life – **Transport and Mass Transit Department; Sindh Mass Transit Authority**

## F. Power and decision-making

Increasing women and girls' ability to exercise informed decision-making in all matters and across the life cycle is central to their empowerment and building safe, prosperous, sustainable and equitable societies. The power to act in one's own interest is based on many social, economic, political and ecological factors and central to them is women and girls possessing the knowledge, means, resources, and the ability to successfully access, navigate, negotiate with, influence and ultimately change power structures that keep them behind. The participation of women and girls in active decision-making, both at home and the public domain are central to equitable and sustainable development, and there can be no policies for women without women. To have gender-based inequality in decision-making means preventing nearly half the population from contributing to and claiming a stake in society as full and equal citizens.

Available indicators of women's access to power and decision-making positions in the public sphere in Pakistan paint a dismal picture. For instance, while the proportion of women in **managerial positions** across Pakistan has marginally increased from 0.3% in 2012-13, to 0.5% in 2018, their representation in forums where decisions (concerning them) are made, remains critically low. A recent survey<sup>75</sup> by Women on Board in Pakistan in 2018 found that there were only 41 women chairpersons, 10 chief executive officers, 11 chief financial officers in over 500 listed companies; only 11% of nearly 4,000 directors across were women.

The overall female enrolment in the **Civil Service Academy of Pakistan** was 40% in 2017, and though provincial quotas exist for women in **civil administration**, they are frequently not met. The Government of Sindh increased the **quota** for women to 25 % but women still only make up about 16-17%. Women are also fewer in number as one moves up towards senior positions (Basic Pay Scales for grade 19 and upward till 21).

In terms of **judiciary**, the courts do not stipulate a fixed quota for women. Overall women comprise 5.8% of all judges across Pakistan, with Sindh being an exception with the highest ratio of female judges at 20%. Across Pakistan, there are only 6 (7.3%) female judges amongst 82 High Court judges, while there are no female justices in the Supreme Court, the Federal Shariat Court, or the Islamabad High Court.

In law enforcement, the Sindh Police announced increasing women's quota from 2% to 5% in 2017, and further doubled it to 10% in 2019. However, women comprise only 5% the total provincial force, suggesting that even the earlier quota has not been met.

To increase women's share in decision-making positions in the formal and corporate sector, the Pakistan Securities & Exchange Commission (SECP) issued the **Listed Companies (Code of Corporate Governance) Regulations, 2017**<sup>76</sup>, requiring at least one woman to be appointed to its Board of Directors, and to nominate at least one female executive every year under the Directors' Training program from the year starting June 30, 2019. Generally, at least one study<sup>77</sup> suggests that the SECP has not introduced any proper mechanism to check and correct companies' compliance with the non-financial aspect of the code, and there is no proper tool in place to gauge if the companies are complying with the Code. Companies' compliance with the non-financial aspect of the code usually remains on paper only, and the **Code of Corporate Governance** has no observable effect on company performance.

In Pakistan, women enjoy the same constitutional right as men to acquire, hold and dispose of **property** (including both movable and immovable assets). Under different civil laws including the **Contract Act, 1872**, the **Transfer of Property Act, 1882**, and the **Registration Act, 1908**, women also have the same right as men to transfer, sell, mortgage and contract any terms on their property.

Women's **access to and ownership of physical capital** remains low across Pakistan, impairing their ability sustain economic, health-related, social, and environmental shocks. In 2013,<sup>78</sup> Pakistan's overall ratio of

women-headed households was 11%, an increase from 9% in the previous PDHS. The increase in female-headed households has been more evident in rural than urban areas across Pakistan, mainly due to out-migration of men. Despite this, national data suggests that amongst all ever-married women in Pakistan, 89% do not own a house and 96% do not own land, only 2% of women are sole homeowners.<sup>79</sup> A 2016 national baseline survey on gender perceptions by the Asia Development Bank (ADB) indicates that only 54% of women claim a share in inheritance compared to 71% men.<sup>80</sup>

Currently, laws in Pakistan do not recognize co-ownership of marital property despite women's labor (paid or unpaid) and opportunities forgone in the purchase and cultivating of the husband's estate.<sup>81</sup> The current tenancy laws in Sindh also push women towards becoming unpaid domestic laborers within their homes. The **Sindh Tenancy (Amendment) Act, 2013**, does not align with the internationally agreed Food and Agriculture Organization's Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests, which aims to combine efforts towards achieving sustainable livelihoods, social stability, housing security, rural development, environmental protection, and sustainable social and economic development through regulations across different forms of tenure, including public, private, communal, indigenous, customary and informal.<sup>82</sup> It also continues to discriminate against women and minorities in terms of how it defines and operationalizes tenure.

There is also a need to urgently amend **inheritance laws** to promote women's land registration and land title certification, regardless of their marital status and domicile, in order to correct gendered imbalances in land management, administration and transfer across Sindh, and to better respond to cases of inheritance deprivation and related violence amongst women across Sindh. So far, the **Anti-Women Practices Act, 2011** (forced marriage and inheritance deprivation) has had no impact in curbing property related violence in women and girls, or better protecting their share where they may be deprived or there are other (male) contenders. Property related suits also drag on for years in courts due to the overall weaknesses in land administration and gender bias in land transfer and within the judicial system.

**Policy Objective F: End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere, ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in personal, political, economic and social life, and undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic and productive resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with Constitutional guarantees, provincial laws, and international commitments.**

### **Policy Strategies & Responsible Institutions:**

- i. Amend inheritance, property ownership and tenancy laws to promote women's land registration and land title certification, regardless of their marital status and domicile, in order to correct imbalances in land management, administration and transfer, particularly in rural parts of Sindh – ***Women's Development; Law, Parliamentary Affairs & Human Rights***
- ii. Increase the percentage of women in law enforcement with powers to register and investigate cases and carry out search operations and arrests, especially in cases involving women and girls – ***Home; Services & General Administration and Coordination; Public Service Commission***
- iii. Increase the ratio of women judges, prosecutors, lawyers, protection officers<sup>83</sup>, military officers, diplomats and foreign service officers – ***All Departments; Services & General Administration and Coordination***

- iv. Increase the ratio of women in decision making positions in public and private sector; officially recognize and/ or incentivize organizations and associations employing a greater number of women – **Labor & Human Resources; Social Welfare; Securities and Exchange Commission**
- v. Invest in programs aimed at enhancing leadership in young girls to ensure equal participation in leadership in schools, tertiary educational institutions and youth parliaments – **School Education & Literacy; Collage Education; University & Boards**

## G. Economy and productive work

Economy and productive work concerns policies related to women and girls' economic empowerment, skill development, participation in productive activities, decent and gainful employment, unremunerated care work and (domestic) productive work.

The Government of Pakistan has ratified 36 Conventions of the ILO, including 8 Fundamental Conventions; 2 of 4 Governance Conventions (Priority); and 26 of 178 Technical Conventions. Of these, 31 are in force, 1 Convention has been denounced, and 4 instruments abrogated. Related to women and work, Pakistan has ratified ILO Conventions 100 (Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951); 111 (Discrimination - Employment and Occupation - Convention, 1958), and 189 (Domestic Workers Convention, 2011). The Conventions on Home Work (177) and Sexual Harassment (190) have not yet been ratified, but there are legislative frameworks that protect women against economic and sexual exploitation related to work (for example, the Federal **Sexual Harassment at Workplace Act, 2010**, and the Sindh Home-based Workers Act, 2018).

A vast majority of women worker across Pakistan are working under vulnerable, informal, discriminatory, unpredictable and exploitative terms and conditions. The crude overall labor force participation rates in Sindh is 30.2%, with a 49.4% male participation and a dismal 8.6% female participation. Employment in Sindh (across the industries of agriculture, manufacturing, construction, wholesale and retail, trade, transport, storage, communication, community/social and personal services) is estimated at a total of 14.4% with only 1.79% female employment rate.<sup>84</sup>

The **Sindh Union Council and Community Economic Strengthening Support Program – SUCCESS** (2017) found that women are engaged in numerous economically productive tasks, but the wages received by women is less than men, or remain unpaid as such labor is considered part of housework, informal, and thus not recorded as economic activity in official records of the government.<sup>85</sup> Women in Sindh are primarily employed in agriculture and labor-intensive work. They play a major role in Sindh's agriculture sector, and their share has been increasing rapidly due to the outmigration of men. A number of tasks, such as weeding, livestock rearing, and local food processing and conservation, are now mainly done by women. This is in addition to routine chores, which include fetching water for household use, sometimes over long distances. One of the most onerous tasks done by women in Sindh is cotton picking where hard physical effort is combined with long hours and unhealthy working conditions, mainly resulting from pesticides used and related residue on cotton.<sup>86</sup>

The Labor Force Survey 2017-18 shows that around 72% of Pakistan's overall non-agricultural employment is in the **informal sector**. Women comprise a majority in the informal sector comprising 77.7% of rural informal non-agricultural workers, and 61.5% of informal manufacturing workers. More females (36.4%) than males (5.9%) work as contributing family workers across Pakistan. About 4% of agricultural women workers are able to access work related loans and women borrowers comprise only 13% of all borrowers across the country.

Informal work involves contractual, piece-rate based, and seasonal employment, and the protections and benefits of formal work do not extend to them. The Supreme Court of Pakistan, in a landmark judgement of December 2017, declared the third-party contract system 'unconstitutional' and in 'violation of fundamental rights'.

The **Sindh Home-based Workers Act, 2018**<sup>87</sup>, is the first legislative framework in Pakistan that seeks to establish a home-based workers' Council to identify, register and regularize and increase the induction of home-based

women workers in the formal workforce in Sindh. The Council falls under the administrative control of the Labor and Human Resources Department comprising of employers, contractors, workers and their Unions, and a **Home-based Workers' Fund** is to be established for giving any financial assistance to workers, along with other social benefits and grants. One such benefit is to establish health counters in each district and arrange mobile health counters providing health facilities to home-based workers at their doorstep. So far, few of these mechanisms are operational and the law requires a strong implementation, monitoring and review mechanism (including appropriate allocation of resources and expertise), to carry out is ambitious albeit long-awaited agenda.

**Unemployment** rate for females in Sindh is 0.23 million with a greater portion (0.17 million) hailing from urban areas. The largest city of Sindh, Karachi, is estimated to have a female labor force participation of only 27%. A recent study that looks into migration, urbanization and spatial anxieties across ethnicities in Karachi discusses how these factors shape women's agency, mobility and determine women's access to the market, economic opportunities and the public sphere.<sup>88</sup> It also suggests that women's agency to participate in economic activities differ significantly across different areas of the city, and a singularizing economic policy is unlikely to work. Various economic schemes and plans that have been launched to boost economic participation of women and girls across Sindh, for example, the **Youth Business Loan Scheme**, that reserves 50% loans for females, and the Sindh Government's **Landless Hari's Project**, whereby 70.6% of land titles were given to women farmers<sup>89</sup>, need to be better assessed for impact on boosting women's economic empowerment.

In terms of protections for formally employed labor, Sindh has made a number of strides. The **Sindh Employees Social Security (Amendment) Act, 2016**, amended 2018, introduces a scheme to provide for employees or their dependents in the event of sickness, maternity, employment injury or death, *iddat* and for matters ancillary thereto. Payouts are based on 6% of the lower wage limit as currently prescribed by the Government (presently based on minimum wage defined under the **Sindh Minimum Wages Act, 2015 (Act No. VIII of 2016)**). The 2018 Employees' Social Security Act amendment Section 39(2) of 2016, specifies prenatal confinement and post-natal medical care under maternity benefits for women employees. In terms of employment related injuries and death, Sindh also has the **Sindh Occupational Safety and Health Act 2017** that applies to women workers in the private and public sectors, and its rules of business (RoBs) and review mechanisms are yet to be framed. Currently, the law also does not extend to informal sector workers.

The **Sindh Companies Profits (Workers Participation) (Amendment) Act, 2017**,<sup>90</sup> binds all companies having over 100 employees and involved in industrial work to establish Workers' Fund (as recently established under the **Sindh Workers Welfare Fund (Amendment) Act, 2018**<sup>91</sup>, which allow workers to share in company profits based on net profits attributable to a company's business, trade, undertaking or other operations in Pakistan. The 2017 Act also constitutes a Board of Trustees to oversee smooth functioning of the fund pooled through company and voluntary workers' contributions, and for all sums paid out by the Fund to be exempt from income tax.

The **Sindh Industrial Relations Act, 2013**<sup>92</sup> applies to all persons employed in any 'establishment' or industry, including fishing and agriculture, and in a first, recognizes workers right to organize, unionize and undertake collective bargaining. The law stipulates the mandatory inclusion of women at all levels of such actions, including in the executive and office bearer capacities of labor unions. The definition of 'establishment' is wide, and includes 'any office, firm, factory, society, undertaking, company, shop, premises or enterprise in the Province of Sindh', which employs people 'directly or through a contractor for the purpose of carrying on any business or industry and includes all its departments and branches...'. At present, the law lacks a rigorous monitoring and review system, that looks at compliance in women's cases (including producing related gender-disaggregated data), and the law's effectiveness in helping workers, specifically women, to organize and negotiate better terms and conditions of employment. In particular, the labor market regulation and inspection regimes need to be made more responsive to the peculiar needs of female workers and include a greater number of women across all inspection teams, particularly for tracking conditions of women employed at elementary and junior levels.

The Sindh government has also enacted the **Sindh Maternity Benefits Act, 2018**<sup>93</sup>, which includes the establishment of day-care facilities at the premises of every organization and department employing 10% or more women, stipulates mandatory nursing breaks and in the event of maternal death, the employer to pay 10% of the monthly salary for the number of years the female employee has worked for the organization to her legal heirs. As the law passed last year, compliance remains to be seen.

Every female employee as defined under the **Sindh Shops and Commercial Establishment Act, 2015**<sup>94</sup>, i.e., ‘any person employed whether directly or otherwise, about the business of an establishment for the owner or occupier thereof, even though he receives no reward or remuneration for his labor, but does not include a member of the employer's family’) is also entitled to maternity leave as ‘defined under the Maternity Benefit Ordinance, 1958’. As the text of the Shops and Commercial Establishment Act predates the Sindh Maternity Act, 2018, the latter has an overriding effect on the Ordinance, and therefore is applicable across Sindh. Due to recent passage of the maternity benefits Act, however, its monitoring and review mechanisms remain undefined.

Within the 36 ILO Conventions, Pakistan has also ratified the following two relating to the special treatment for women and adolescents in the occupational safety and health context: C45: Underground Work (Women) Convention, 1935; C89 Night Work (Women) Convention (Revised), 1948; and C90 Night Work of Young Persons (Industry) Convention (Revised), 1948

Article 2 of the ILO C45 stipulates that women should not be employed in underground work in any mine. Young workers, below the age of 17 years also can't be employed in any part of a mine unless they present a certificate of fitness on a prescribed form by a qualified medical practitioner. For safety reasons identified under ILO C89 and C90, the Sindh labor laws also limit the employment of women and adolescents at night and regulates ages of employment.<sup>95</sup> The **Sindh Prohibition of Employment of Children Act, 2017**<sup>96</sup>, defines an adolescent as a person between ages 14 and 18 years (less than), and a child as a person aged less than 14 years. A workplace may include both industries, factories, and charitable/welfare organization, and the law stipulated the setting up of a Provincial Coordination Committee on Child Labor to advise Government on appropriate legislative, administrative and other measures for eradication of child labor as per international instruments, and to set the minimum age for the purpose of employment in the Province. While the law does not specify any special provisions for adolescent girls in employment, the law is to be read in tandem with the provisions of the Payment of Wages Act, 1936; Sindh Minimum Wages Act, 2015; Sindh Employees' Social Security Act, 2016; Sindh Workers Compensation Act, 2015; Sindh Employees' Old-Age Benefits Act, 2014 (amended 2018); Sindh Terms of Employment (Standing Orders) Act, 2015; Mines Act 1923; Sindh Factories Act, 2015; and Sindh Shops and Establishments Act, 2015 (assented to in March 2016) as applicable to the adolescent workers.

In terms of redressal mechanisms for labor laws' violations, designated labor courts adjudicate on matters involving industrial disputes and try offences under the applicable Industrial Relations laws (in Sindh's case, the **Sindh Industrial Relations Act, 2013**). The informal sector does not fall under the remit of labor courts across Sindh and instead, disputes involving only home-based (and not all informal sector workers) are to be mediated through district **Arbitration Committees** under the Sindh Home-based Workers Act, 2018. These Arbitration Committees are to work under the protection of the Inspector of Factories (Labor) of the respective district where a dispute arises. For women in the formal sector, court proceedings are costly, and can get protracted for years. Women judges and lawyers also do not frequently practice in labor courts, constituting systemic anomalies that need to be corrected.

According to the **Pakistan Standard Classification of Occupations, 2015**, one of the requirements to be classified as skilled worker, falling in the Skill Level 1 (out of 4, with 4 denoting the most skilled) requires workers to have completed primary education. This classification, as is currently used, disregards the skillfulness of many women workers (especially home-based and informal sector workers) in the absence of



primary schooling. It exposes women to labor exploitation, unprofitable pay bargains and increases work insecurity, and needs to be amended in consultation with all stakeholders.

In Sindh, there is also no policy or legislation to protect women against employment discrimination in terms of public procurement services, or one that sets **quotas in all government contracts for women-owned businesses, including suppliers**. Further, in the absence of legally binding directives on dedicating a specific share of net profits towards **social responsibility for the corporate sector**, it is also presently difficult to say how, on what scale and to what effect, companies and private entities are mainstreaming gender in their work and policies and contributing to GEWE.

**Policy Objective G: To create equal employment and income generation opportunities for women and girls in the formal economy, recognize and address women's unpaid labor and contributions to the household and the national economy, and support women and girls to earn a decent living wage and have opportunities for gainful employment, free from harassment and exploitation.**

### **Policy Strategies & Responsible Institutions:**

- i. Lobby and seeks stakeholder inputs for devising a province-wide gender inclusive economic empowerment policy, including consideration for ILO Conventions, specifically Conventions 100 (Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951); 111 (Discrimination - Employment and Occupation- Convention, 1958), 189 (Domestic Workers Convention, 2011), 177 (Home Work Convention, 1996) – unratified, and 190 (Sexual Harassment) – **Women's Development; Planning & Development; Industry and Commerce; Labor & Human Resource**
- ii. Amend Occupational Classifications for skilled labor as applicable in Sindh which makes women invisible for not having primary education, irrespective of their level of skill<sup>97</sup> – **Labor & Human Resources; Law, Parliamentary Affairs and Human Rights; Women's Development**
- iii. Lobby to amend the public procurement regulations to set quotas in all government contracts for women-owned businesses, including suppliers – **Women's Development; Sindh Commission on the Status of Women; Sindh Public Procurement Regulatory Authority; Services and General Administration & Coordination**
- iv. Set up necessary structures and ensure active implementation of the Sindh Labor Policy, 2018 – **Labor & Human Resources; Local Government; Planning & Development**
- v. Review and where necessary, amend industry policies to extend protection to informal sector women workers, identify gender-based gaps and propose strategies and actions to bridge those gaps – **Industries & Commerce; Labor & Human Resources; Women's Development; Sindh Commission on the Status of Women**
- vi. Amend Tenancy laws to end exploitation and prevent women from becoming unpaid domestic laborers within their homes. Also, amend the Act to align it to the internationally agreed Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests (May 2012) and ensure adequate enforcement mechanisms – **Women's Development; Law, Parliamentary Affairs & Human Rights; Board of Revenue**
- vii. Lobby with the Services, General Administration and Coordination Department to increase and observe strict adherence to women's quota in all public services at a minimum 10% – **Women's Development; Sindh Commission on the Status of Women**

- viii. Enhance the proportion of and improve working conditions for women workers in civil services and administration without discrimination – **All Departments; Services and General Administration & Coordination; Works and Services**
- ix. Lobby for the establishment of daycare facilities at the premises of every organization/ department employing 10% or more women, as per the Sindh Maternity Benefits Act, 2018 – **Women's Development; Sindh Commission on the Status of Women**
- x. Promote and support the First Women's Bank in matters relating to financing women's economic empowerment activities in addition with other entities and programs providing loans – **All departments**
- xi. Periodically implement a comprehensive framework for monitoring gender disparities in key economic growth sectors through well-defined and qualitative and quantitative economic empowerment indicators by employing gender-sensitive research and survey tools and systems – **Planning & Development; Labor & Human Resource; Board of Revenue**
- xii. Set up institutional mechanisms for the implementation of the Sindh Home Based Workers Act, 2018, including for registering and maintaining record of home-based workers through regional, divisional and district-level committees, and Arbitration Councils – **Labor & Human Resources; Services and General Administration & Coordination; Local Government & Housing Town Planning; Finance; Women's Development**
- xiii. Ensure implementation of the Sindh Shops and Commercial Establishment Act, 2015, including the provision for maternity leaves and specified working hours – **Local Government & Housing Town Planning**
- xiv. Institutionalize systems to implement and actively monitor the impact of the Sindh Industrial Relations Act, 2013, which gives workers the right to organize and undertake collective bargaining, and mandates inclusion of women at all levels – **Industries and Establishments falling under the purview of the Sindh Industrial Relations Act, 2013**
- xv. Register and collect data on women home-based workers in accordance with the Sindh Home-based Workers Act, 2018 and the Sindh Labor Policy, 2018 – **Labor & Human Resources; Planning & Development**
- xvi. Boost women's financial inclusion by improving preferential and targeted access to instruments such as interest-free loans, agriculture subsidies and extension services, livestock development, poultry, fisheries and forestry work, general small and medium industries, and marketing facilities. – **Rural Support Programs; Khushali Bank; First Women's Bank Limited; Agriculture, Supply & Prices; Environment and Climate Change & Coastal Development; Livestock and Fisheries; Industries & Commerce; Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund; Benazir Income Support, Ehsaas and allied programs**
- xvii. Stock-take and audit application of Sindh Labor laws and policies for ensuring access of women workers to laid down benefits besides safeguarding against harassment and workplace discrimination. – **Labor & Human Resources; Sindh Ombudsman; Sindh Commission on the Status of Women**
- xviii. Mainstream gender in labor market regulation and inspection regimes to make them more responsive to the peculiar needs of female workers, particularly for women employed at elementary/ junior levels – **Labor & Human Resources; Industries & Commerce; Investment**
- xix. Adopt suitable legislation and strengthen local labor courts to address women's work-related grievances, including for women employed in the informal sector – **Labor & Human Resources; Sindh Labor Appellate Tribunal; Industries & Commerce**
- xx. Monitor and identify systemic gaps in the implementation of the Sindh Occupational Safety & Health Act 2017, for women workers employed in the formal public and private sectors – **Labor & Human Resources; Sindh Commission on the Status of Women; Sindh Commission on Human Rights**



- xxi. Review industry policies and practices especially in the unconventional sectors, to identify gender-based gaps and propose strategies and actions to bridge those gaps – ***Industries & Commerce; Planning & Development; Sindh Commission on the Status of Women***
- xxii. Lobby for legislation or other binding actions on the private sector to contribute funds through Corporate Social Responsibility that are specific to women and girls – ***Women's Development; Sindh Commission on the Status of Women; Industries & Commerce***

## H. Information and Communication Technology, Media, and Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematic

At the end of 2018, more than half the world's population (3.9 billion people) had access to the Internet. Over 80% developed countries were online in 2018, as compared to 45% per cent in developing countries (including Pakistan) and only 20% in least developed countries. In 2016, a global internet usage report<sup>98</sup> suggested that in Pakistan, about 11.7%, females had access to the internet, as compared to 19.7% males, placing it well under least developed countries. While technology is key to achieving/ operationalizing SDG 17 (Means of Implementation), women and girls' access to technological innovations and relevant information remains far behind global and regional figures. For those with access, the internet is also becoming an increasingly unsafe space, particularly for women and girls, with cases of cyber-bullying, threats and harassment Being regularly reported to the FIA.

According to a World Bank (WB) 2017 report<sup>99</sup>, women make up less than 18% of Pakistan's science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) professionals. According to the Pakistan Council for Science and Technology, Research and Development 2013-14 survey, the number of women in STEM was less than 10%<sup>100</sup>, signifying a possible improvement (different surveys). The WB report suggests however, that women are still less likely to enter and more likely to leave tech-intensive business roles as more than half of women working for science, engineering, and technology (SET) companies ultimately quit their jobs for reasons related to hostile work environments or extreme workplace pressures; that women account for less than a third of those employed in scientific research and development in 2013; and that among the top 20 tech companies, only 11% of senior management were women in 2014 across Pakistan. There are a number of initiatives by the private sector to improve women and girls' access to STE and ICT, with a mix of different media, and the Women Engineers Pakistan<sup>101</sup> has come up as a network of female students and professional women in STEM to encourage female participation and their inclusion in businesses and the education sector. In Sindh, STEM statistics are not readily available.

In terms of access to media and related technology, only 14.5% women aged between 15 and 49 years reportedly read a newspaper or magazine, 9.1% listen to the radio, and 66.8% watch television. About 29.4% do not have any regular exposure to these three media types. Differences in these percentages are noted based on age, location, education and socio-economic status. About 3.5% of women residing in Sindh's urban areas are exposed to all media types as compared to only 1% of women from rural areas (Sindh MICS, 2014).

Women and girls also have less representation in media organizations. No policies exist or apply to regulate media organizations to ensure that a certain percentage of women and girls are hired, that they are not forced to take beats involving soft news, and that they are including in all tiers of decision-making, including editorial.

Apart from main-stream media, women and girls find it easier to access social media such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. In Pakistan, so far, no survey fully depicts the causes behind women's limited access to information through technology. Various sociology studies suggest a strong cultural barrier, which discourages women's access to and use of technology to access and transmit information. Studies are also needed to assess the viability of scheme targeted at women using social media to connect them with markets, suppliers and each other. This causes a tremendous lost opportunity for women in productive work, including in agriculture, small to medium enterprises, and generally in both the formal, and informal economies.

**Policy Objective H: Enhance the use of enabling technology, information and communications technology, amongst women and girls, and undertake measures to increase women's share and decision-making positions in fields of science, engineering and mathematics, media and communication technology.**

### **Policy Strategies & Responsible Institutions:**

- i. Create incentives for and support in other ways, programs that boost participation of women and girls in accessing and pursuing Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) related learning and employment opportunities – ***Sindh Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority; Planning & Development, Information, Science & Technology; STEM institutes/ departments; Energy***
- ii. Increase safe cellular phone and internet penetration and usage amongst the female population across Sindh. Pursue partnerships with telecommunication companies and internet services providers to achieve this objective – ***Information, Science & Technology; Pakistan Telecommunication Authority***
- iii. Diversify vocational and technical training courses and improve access for and retention of women students and trainers in vocational training programs related to STEM and service management– ***Sindh Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority; STEM institutes/ departments***
- iv. Amend the Defamation Ordinance, 2000, and Pakistan Electronic Crimes Act, 2016, to decriminalize defamation and prevent misuse against victims of violence and abuse – ***Women's Development; Sindh Commission on the Status of Women; Information & Archive***
- v. Review causes behind women's under-representation in media, including in decision-making positions, and make recommendations to improve representation – ***Sindh Commission on the Status of Women; Women's Development; Information and Archive***

### **I. Gender-based violence, violence against women and girls, and access to justice**

According to the 2014 Sindh MICS, 49% of women in Sindh reported that a husband in justified in hitting or beating his wife. About 30% of surveyed women suggested that wife-beating is justified if the wife refuses sexual intercourse to her spouse, or if she serves him a cold meal.

According to the PDHS, 2013-14, the urban-rural differential within provinces regarding attitudes toward wife beating was the highest in Sindh (25% for urban and 59% for rural), depicting higher acceptance amongst women for violence in Sindh's rural areas. According to a report released by Aurat Foundation also in 2014, Sindh ranked the second highest in the number of reported crimes against women with murder, domestic violence, and honor killings being most frequently reported. The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan in another report in the same year (2014) suggested that there was a 33% increase in domestic violence cases from 2008 to 2014 across Sindh.

The PDHS 2017-2018 suggests a reduction in VAW/G experienced by ever-married women aged 15-49 years across Pakistan, where 25% women reported experiencing physical violence in 2017-2018 as compared to 32% in 2013-14. Rural women and girls continued facing more violence than urban females, however, and physical violence was most frequently reported by girls and women aged between 15 and 19 years. In terms of sexual violence, girls were most vulnerable in the 11-15 age cohort.<sup>102</sup> About 56% women never sought help nor talked to anyone about a possible intervention.

According to the 2014 Sindh MICS, nearly 9.3% of women and girls aged 15-49 years reported being married before turning 15, and 31.2% women aged between 20-49 years, were married before age 18. The recorded prevalence of child marriage is highest in Sindh compared to other provinces, at 31%. Interestingly, statistics suggest that 15% of women aged between 20-24 years are also married to a man ten years older to them.

Child marriages of people under age 18 years is a punishable offence in Sindh vide the **Child Marriage Restraint Act, 2013**. These marriages are a violation of an individual's human rights as it obstructs the mental, physical and social development of children and often results in risky pregnancies, maternal morbidity or mortality, domestication, and social control and isolation. Recently research<sup>103</sup> by Shirkat Gah shows that there are numerous reasons for the perpetuation of the practice, including but not limited to lack of awareness of the law, pressure and non-action by local (law enforcement) authorities, and absence of regulation or punitive action and penalties for *nikahkhwans* and nikah registrars who fail to verify age directly from the girls and on the basis of a CNIC.

Precise number of all forms of GBV and VAW/G are difficult to come by. At present, official national and provincial survey instruments only track domestic violence and generally physical or sexual violence, and standard VAW indicators proposed by the National Commission on the Status of Women have not been fully integrated into national statistical instruments. There is no knowing the precise frequency of rapes, so-called honor-killings, acid burns, child marriages, forced and exchange marriages, forced and conversions and sexual harassment cases as there is no single authority carrying out the necessary collection and collation of data. Not all occurrences are officially registered. There is underreporting of cases, and numbers tend to shrink or swell depending on whose data is referred (for instance, the number of medico-legal examinations for rape always outstrip the number of first information reports to the police, which in turn, outstrip and number of convictions handed down). There is no digitalized system for creating and maintaining medico-legal entries; no formal registry of police daily diaries that show what the initial complaint lodged may have been and why a case was investigated/ not investigated; and no information on the ratio of specific GBV and VAW/G offences by convictions handed down by lower and superior courts (annual reports of appellate courts do not provide gender or offence-wise data). In almost a complete absence of data except some reports by NGOs, there is virtually no information on potential hot beds of violence, reasons thereof, and systematic dismissal of cases the level of the police, or courts. Presently, there is also no system for identify trafficking victims among vulnerable populations, including street women/ girl children, refugees, people in prostitution, domestic workers, and brick kiln workers.

The following main national and provincial laws are applicable in the province of Sindh, related to different forms of and mechanisms for cases of GBV:

1. Federal Protection Against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act, 2010;
2. Federal Anti-women Practices Act (Criminal Laws Second Amendment), 2011 – forced marriage and inheritance deprivation;
3. Sindh Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act, 2013;
4. Sindh Child Marriage Restraint Act, 2014;
5. Federal Anti-Rape Act (Criminal Laws Amendment), 2016;
6. Criminal Law (Amendment) (Offences in the name or pretext of Honor) Act, 2016;
7. Federal Acid Control and Acid Crime Prevention Act, 2016;
8. Federal Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act, 2016;
9. Sindh Criminal Prosecution Service (Constitution, Functions and Powers) (Amendment) Act, 2016
10. Sindh Forensic Science Agency Act, 2017;
11. Federal Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2017;
12. Sindh Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Act, 2017 – mandatory DNA in rape;
13. Sindh Hindus Marriage (amendment) Act 2018;
14. Federal Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act 2018; and
15. Sindh Hindus Marriage Act, 2018

All evidence points to women, girls and transgender persons' high vulnerability to violence, and low access to justice. Despite the passage of numerous laws concerning different forms of VAW/G and GBV across Pakistan and specifically in Sindh, the common complaint of non-implementation is continually echoed by both Government officials, civil society groups and activists. The problem of lack of access to justice in violence and abuse cases stems from various structural problems: general lack of awareness about laws, including amongst law enforcement, dearth and non-responsiveness of medical, protection and judicial officers; the non-notification, non-operationalization, non-compliance and non-funding of systems of protection and oversight at the local and provincial levels; low reporting due to stigma and lack of social support; compromises (even in non-compoundable criminal offences) due to social pressure, intimidation and impunity for perpetrators at all levels; lack of coordination between different state services (police, medical, prosecution and protection services); absence of referrals for legal aid, medical assistance and counseling, job placements, permanent housing, documentation, and other needs of victims; absence of rules of business accompanying laws leading to unclear demarcation of roles and responsibilities, and in some cases overlapping and overconcentration of specific types of support, and unavailability/ underutilization of budgets for supporting cases; overall weak and expensive administration of justice; and normalization of violence and silencing and trivialization of GBV and VAW/G and/or its victims.

Apart from these, the police are often poorly trained in interviewing witnesses/ complainants, collecting forensic evidence on-site, and find it difficult to manage costs of investigating cases, especially for forensic and DNA tests. Police are thus also quick to mediate and side with the more powerful. Women medico-legal officers are too few in number, largely untrained and operating without equipment, infrastructure, and notified standard operating procedures. There is only one DNA lab across Sindh (Jamshoro), and Forensic Sciences labs have not been established. Due to difficulties in accessing DNA testing services, the chain of custody of medical evidence is affected, often proving detrimental in court. Medico-legal and forensic doctors, prosecution and the police seldom interact (except a few hours prior to court appearance) and guidance is not forthcoming from prosecution on how a case should be investigated by the police and which evidence to secure (despite special prosecutors in VAW cases recommended by the National Assembly's Standing Committee on Human Rights in 2018)<sup>104</sup>. There are no proper waiting areas in courts, nor are most rape trials held in-camera or statements recorded using video-links<sup>105</sup>; outdated case-law (despite changes in laws) still continues to be pulled in to damage prosecution and defeat the intent and purpose of recent legal amendments; there is no accountability for judges who may overlook the facts of a case in order to adjudicate in favor of an accused, or push towards a compromise; and so on.

In Sindh, the WDD is currently running **complaint cells; Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Welfare Centers, and Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Crisis Centers** for women across Sindh. The Crisis Centers provide temporary shelter/accommodation (up to 72 hours) to women escaping violence and in emergencies situations, and provides medical/first aid, free legal assistance/ legal aid in liaison with relevant agencies. The Social Welfare Department is separately managing 4 **Dar-ul-Amans** (DuAs) across Sindh, that are supported by SOPs notified by the Department in 2015. Evidence from the field<sup>106</sup> suggests not only are DuAs too few in number across Sindh, its notified SOPs are not widely observed: offering rehabilitation services to residents; notifying a provincial committee to monitor progress and make recommendations for improvement; development of an online and confidential database containing information on cases and recording their progress; and arranging legal awareness and socio-educative activities for children and vocational trainings for women in liaison with STEVTA.

As in the provinces of Punjab and Balochistan, Sindh passed its **Witness Protection Act in 2013**<sup>107</sup>, whose schedule of offences includes rape, kidnapping, indecent assault on a child under the age of 16 years, involving the infliction of grievous bodily harm, and other offences referred to in the **Anti-Terrorism Act, 1997** (amended 1999)<sup>108</sup>. The Anti-terrorism law mentions gang-rape, child molestation, and robbery coupled with rape - Section 6c), that specifically relate to crimes against women and girls. The witness protection law in Sindh provides for reallocation, change of identity, accommodation, transportation, financial assistance, etc., to protected witnesses, and mandates the setting up of a **Witness Protection Program, a Witness Protection**

**Board** (which presently excludes Women's Development), and a **Witness Protection Unit** (headed by the Additional Inspector General of Police, CID Sindh). Despite many years since the passage of the law, Sindh is yet to frame the overall witness protection program for Sindh and finalize its rules of business.

In February 2019 the Sindh Cabinet, acting on a 2016 Sindh High Court directive, approved the establishment of **Safe Houses** and **Rescue Centers** in each district. According to an earlier ruling of the Sindh High Court (Criminal Petition No. S-1204 of 2015), providing safe-house(s) at the District/ Taluka level to women 'where a victim's family could safely reside/stay till she is safely sent to her demanded place or she agrees to go with person of her choice whose fitness shall be subject to satisfaction of Deputy Commissioner', is in keeping with the Constitutional rights of women and must be ensured. The Chief Minister Sindh was accordingly directed by the High Court to form and head a multi-department Committee including the Secretaries of Social Welfare, Women's Development and the Sindh Commission on the Status of Women (SCSW) Chairperson, to develop and formalize an integrated system of government-wide response systems for VAW/G victims. The Committee's Focal Person, the Secretary WDD is also instructed to scale up **Women and Child Protection Cells** and Complaint Cells to respond to women and girls' cases, and the Secretary Finance to prioritize the release of approved funds of Pak Rupees 145 million for the establishment of Safe Houses/ Women Protection Cells, and ensure regular release of Pak Rupees 200 million to the **Sindh Child Protection Authority** (on a rotating basis). A timeframe of 3-4 months has been granted to develop a comprehensive protection mechanism for women and girls seeking protection, along with the development of Standard Operating Procedures based on SCSW's recommendations. Further, the judgement instructs every Division to have a dedicated **Women Rescue Police force**, to be headed by a Woman Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP), in coordination with WDD. In this regard, women's police stations across Sindh are also proposed to be converted into Women Rescue Centers, for which the Secretary WDD is charged with taking necessary expert inputs on the proposal, without prejudice to police's overall work.

The WDD operates a **helpline – 1094** – to respond to VAW cases by offering legal counselling, mobilization legal and medical assistance, and onward referral to relevant service providers. At the moment, the helpline remains underutilized for various reasons – divisional consultations pointed out that there is little to no information about the Helpline; insufficient funding and lack of trained staff; low frequency of calls; and lack of coordination at district level which effects referrals via the helpline and undermines its overall utility for both victims of violence and service providers. WDD's Crisis Centers are under review for the development of their standard operating procedures. The Sindh Law Department also has a toll-free **helpline – 0800-70806** – under its Legal Empowerment of People program and through the Sindh Legal Advisory Call Centre (SLACC), which provides callers with legal information and advice on civil and criminal matters and supports crisis intervention in violence cases. The Inspector General's office also has a **Helpline – 9110**. Presently, there is little information on the nature and traffic of callers, the quality aspects of response given, the effectiveness of advice, and systems for follow-ups of cases, specifically for Government helplines operating across Sindh.

The Sindh Law Department also constituted **District Legal Empowerment Committees** (DLECs) in 2011 and **District Criminal Justice Coordination Committees** (DCJCC) in 2018, to identify and support cases that require legal aid, and to arrange lawyers' fees and representation for such candidates. Evidence suggest that although the DLECs were announced many years ago, there is delayed disbursement of funds; low budget utilization (9% in Sindh in 2016); absence of selection criteria for civil society members; lack of awareness about DLECS and their functions/functioning; lengthy selection processes; only 5% women accessing legal aid funds; non-compliance of DLEC monthly meeting and absence of oversight and performance reviews; and difficulties arranging good lawyers due to low fees.<sup>109</sup> Numerous national and local studies also show that at the local level, communities are largely unaware of laws, policy frameworks, administrative processes, and avenues of accountability, which limits their ability to engage with and benefit from existing support systems.

There is a **Sindh Ombudsperson** office looking into cases of sexual harassment, although not many cases have been reported to or decided in favor of the complaint by the authority having taken less than 400 cases in seven years. The **Sindh Judicial Academy** has a training manual for judges (developed 2013-15), which



integrates, albeit conservatively, gender, GBV and VAW, and international instruments such as CEDAW.<sup>110</sup> The Academy undertakes trainings for judges (and in some cases, lawyers), however, multispecialty trainings are not held, either at the Judicial Academy or **Police Training Schools**. The police academy's training manual related to investigation integrates gender to an extent, but not in all aspects related to police work and training. While some of these courses comprise core modules for receiving promotions, training outcomes are not always linked with performance in handling of actual cases.

There is a need to undertake a systematic review of impediments to the implementation of the various laws passed by the Government of Sindh in recent years, including obstructions to women and girls' access to justice and viable means to overcome them. The various implementation mechanisms across existing laws and rules need to be notified (as per case), institutionalized, linked up, capacitated and rigorously monitored for outcomes and deficiencies. Physical access to police stations and medical facilities needs to be ensured along with fixed and regular budgets, procedures, data management, and onward referral and follow-up systems.

Community knowledge and access to systems regarding women's existing rights, related policies, support mechanisms, points of services access, persons in charge and their roles and duties and accountability mechanisms need to be strengthened to maximize outreach, while protection systems need to be better resources and integrated rather than working in silos and without predictable funding. SOPs and training content and pedagogy need to be directly linked with performance and expertise needs to be built up against the new set of laws (e.g., Sindh Forensic Science Agency Act, 2017; the Code of Criminal Procedure (Sindh Amendment) Act, 2017 (mandatory DNA in rape); the Federal Anti-rape Act, 2016; the Pakistan Electronic Crimes Act, 2016; Pakistan Electronic Crimes Act, 2016, the (revived) Police Order 2002, etc.), and regulations and mechanisms (helplines, safe houses, protection cells, etc.) in Sindh concerning GBV and VAW/G.

**Policy Objective I: Eliminate all forms of gender-based violence and violence against women and girls including harmful practices in the name of culture, custom, religion and tradition, in the public and private spheres, and improve women and girls' access to integrated systems of justice, protection and rehabilitation/ reintegration, by informing women about laws and related processes and existing services, facilitating their engagement with justice systems, undertaking necessary legislative and administrative actions, and building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.**

### **Policy Strategies & Responsible Institutions:**

- i. Pursue necessary legislative and policy measures that improve the status of women and juvenile inmates and under trial prisoners (particularly children incarcerated with mothers through the Committee on the Welfare of Prisoners and in collaboration with other departments and the Provincial Commission for Child Welfare and Development (PCCWD) – ***Women's Development; Prison Department; Provincial Commission for Child Welfare and Development; Home; Child Protection Authority***
- ii. Undertake a systematic review of impediments to the implementation of laws concerning violence against women and girls, including obstructions in women and girls' access to justice. Specifically review the difference the following laws and related administrative arrangements have made in reducing impunity and achieving just outcomes for women and girls:
  - a. Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act, 2013
  - b. Child Marriage Restraint Act, 2014
  - c. Sindh Hindus Marriage Act, 2018
  - d. Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2017
  - e. The Protection Against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act, 2010
  - f. Anti-women Practices Act (Criminal Laws Second Amendment), 2011

- g. Anti-Rape Act (Criminal Laws Amendment), 2016
- h. Anti-Honor-killing Act, 2016
- i. Acid Control and Acid Crime Prevention Act, 2016

***Sindh Commission on the Status of Women; Law, Parliamentary Affairs and Human Rights;  
Women's Development***

- iii. Activate and fully operationalize District Protection Committees and recruit Protection Officers as per the Domestic Violence Act, 2013; Institutionalize systems that ensure rigorous trainings and performance monitoring – ***Women's Development; Finance; Planning & Development; Home***
- iv. Lobby to increase the number and accessibility of women's police stations at the district level, or depute women police officers across all police stations, with the notification of space for women's wings (Reception and interview area), inside each police station. Connect these with District Protection Committees, District Child Protection Units and other bodies with the aim to provide integrated services to violence victims – ***Women's Development; Sindh Commission on the Status of Women; Home***
- v. Increase community knowledge and access to systems regarding women's existing rights, related policies, support mechanisms, points of services access, persons in charge and their roles and duties and accountability mechanisms; Partner with local community groups and civil society organizations to maximize outreach and referrals – ***Women's Development; Sindh Commission on the Status of Women; Sindh Commission on Human Rights; Law, Parliamentary Affairs and Human Rights; Planning & Development; Services and General Administration & Coordination***
- vi. Lobby with Cabinet and Assembly members and the Human Rights Standing Committee, to increase budgets for existing Dar-ul-Amans (DuA), and approve funds for the establishment of divisional level Dar-ul-Amans (later to be scaled to district-level) – ***Sindh Commission on the Status of Women; Women's Development; Social Welfare; Planning & Development; Finance***
- vii. Monitor and strengthen full adherence to SOPs for the DuAs across Sindh, as notified by the Social Welfare Department in 2015 – ***Social Welfare; Sindh Commission on the Status of Women; Services and General Administration & Coordination***
- viii. Improve the administration of justice to make it safer, accessible, comprehensive, integrated, responsive, and effective for women and girls. This would require a range of policy, infrastructural and procedural changes of court systems<sup>111</sup>. Observe adherence to the National Judicial Policy, 2009 (updated 2012), at all tiers of judicial systems across Sindh, to identify reasons for delays and address bottlenecks in administration of justice – ***Law, Parliamentary Affairs and Human Rights; Home***
- ix. Pursue, by effective means, programs and strategies that prevent and respond to sexual harassment against women and girls including harassment in public and private spaces, and e-violence against women (including cyberbullying, cyberstalking, online threats, etc.) – ***Law, Parliamentary Affairs and Human Rights; Information, Science & Technology; Sindh Ombudsman; Labor & Human Resource; Federal Investigation Agency; Women's Development; Sindh Commission on the Status of Women***
- x. Collect, compile and organize data on gender, GBV and VAW/G to determine barriers to women's access to justice and protection, for the purpose of providing relief and suggesting actions to relevant Government Departments, in coordination with Sindh Women's Development Department - ***National Institute of Population Studies; Planning & Development; Bureau of Statistics; Home; Federal Investigation Agency; Criminal Prosecution Service Department (under Services and General Administration and Coordination); Health (including Medico-legal sections, Chemical, Forensics and DNA Labs, Gynecology and Pediatric wards in public sector hospitals); Sessions, Family and Appellant Courts; Sindh Judicial Academy; Social Welfare & Dar-ul-Amans; Capital City Police Office; Helplines; Gender Crime Cells; Crisis Centers, Protection Cells and Safe Houses; Sindh Commission on the Status of Women;***



***Women's Development; Other service providers responding to VAW/G; Gender / Women Studies centers / Departments of Universities***

- xi. Finalize the rules of Sindh Witness Protection Act, 2013, and launch the proposed Witness Protection Program across Sindh extending protection to GBV and VAW/G victims, complainants and key witnesses. Relatedly, develop long-term support programs for victims of violence, abuse and neglect including provisions for subsidized housing, re-location support, functional literacy, life-skills and vocational skill-building and employment opportunities through protection systems for women and girls – ***Law, Parliamentary Affairs and Human Rights; Home; Women's Development; Social Welfare; Services and General Administration & Coordination***
- xii. Standardize response protocols, and scale up medico-legal and forensics services in Sindh, to support litigation in violence against women cases, in line with the Sindh Forensic Science Agency Act, 2017, the Code of Criminal Procedure (Sindh Amendment) Act, 2017 (mandatory DNA in rape) and the Federal Anti-rape Act, 2016– ***Health (for Medical Teaching Hospitals and Chemical & DNA Labs); Home***
- xiii. Integrate gender and national and international commitments into judicial training curriculum through the Sindh Judicial Academy, Bars, and Law schools – ***School Education & Literacy; Sindh Judicial Academy; Law, Parliamentary Affairs and Human Rights; Sindh Bar; Women's Development***
- xiv. Intensify efforts towards identifying trafficking victims among vulnerable populations, including street women/ girl children, refugees, displaced people, people in forced prostitution and labor, and towards their rehabilitation – ***Federal Investigation Agency; Home; Rehabilitation; Social Welfare; Local Government & Housing Town Planning; Board of Revenue***
- xv. Improve efforts to collect, analyze, and accurately report gender-disaggregated data specifically on trafficking, distinct from data on human smuggling – ***Federal Investigation Agency; Home; Local Government & Housing Town Planning***

## **J. Environment & climate change**

Particular steps have been undertaken for the environment and climate change agenda and on the consequences and aftermath of natural disasters on vulnerable populations such as women, children and people with disabilities in Pakistan, even if they are mentioned only a few times across lengthy policy documents<sup>112</sup>. In principle, the **National Disaster Management Act, 2010**, the **National Policy on Climate Change, 2012** and its **2013 Framework for Implementation**, the **Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Policy 2013**, the **National Disaster Management Plan, 2012-2022 (updated 2019)**, and the **Pakistan School Safety Framework, 2017**, acknowledge higher vulnerabilities of women, children, persons with disabilities, elderly, marginalized and remote communities as well as different religious groups, to changing climate. The national policy recommends extending shelter, land and livelihood support to women, and gender mainstreaming climate mitigation measures, it is not clear how gender is being mainstreamed through policy and prescribed actions. The policies and implementation frameworks have been adopted across Pakistan to varying degrees, and there is little information available on increasingly intersecting vulnerabilities of women living in different settings across Sindh that are facing the effects of changing climate, while disaster-related data is mostly not disaggregated by gender.

In Sindh, there are existing legislative frameworks pertaining directly and indirectly to climate change and environment: The **Sindh Environmental Protection Act, 2014**; the **Sindh Fisheries (Amendment) Act, 2011**<sup>113</sup>; and the **Agricultural Produce Markets (Amendment) Act, 2010**. The environmental protection law specifically calls for the inclusion of women and girls in protection, improvement, conservation and rehabilitation efforts, whereas the controversial **Sindh Fisheries (Amendment) Bill, 2015**, has been shelved after it was vehemently opposed and rejected<sup>114</sup> by fishing communities for bringing back contractual system, failing to mention

climate change and disaster risk reduction, and for not addressing other issues such as over-exploitation of resources, rampant use of banned fishing nets and unreported and unregulated fishing.

Climatic events across Sindh in recent years have had a debilitating impact on crop produce, livelihoods and food security, especially in the rural areas. Here, near half the labor force engaged in agriculture and livestock are women. Fishing and farming communities along coastal areas across Sindh report growing sea intrusion due to disappearing mangroves, landfilling and land acquisition from sea, affecting their yield and food and water security. Reduced quality of yield due to disturbed underground aquifers and water tables, is reportedly not only increasing malnutrition across communities but also causing loss of productive and ancestral land, and outmigration. Outmigration usually involves men moving out, leaving women to fend for themselves and their families. Uneven growth, increasing inequality within districts and communities, and outmigration is also likely to lead to more labor-intensive jobs being outsourced to the peripheries, where women in informal labor make up the bulk of the labor force.

The impact of climate change and environmental degradation in urban settings is less understood. A recent study by the Institute of Business Administration and King's College, London,<sup>115</sup> finds the following: domestic water supply is a major source of gendered violence in urban settings; solid waste is a major source of anxiety and community conflict; urban sprawl reduces women's access to health and other services; and women's participation in urban design and planning and neighborhood development is severely limited. Another study suggests that urbanites are at greater risk than their rural counterparts of contracting many diseases.<sup>116</sup> In Karachi alone, there are at least 13 different organizations ranging from the military and federal government to provincial and local organizations competing in the city's planning and management, that "often encroach on each other's jurisdiction, sparking conflict" (Hasan, Ahmed, Raza and Sadiq, 2013). In resource-stressed urban settings, the issues of pollution, smog, heatwaves, and lack of rainfall all contribute to increased costs for public health, services related to which are often found missing in city peripheries.

**Policy Objective J: To improve understanding of intersections between climate change and gender, improve responsiveness towards climate change and promote environment-friendly and natural resources-based management strategies across the province, particularly in disaster prone areas, through climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction initiatives.**

#### **Policy Strategies & Responsible Institutions:**

- i. Build the capacity of state and development agencies in gender mainstreaming in environment and climate change policies, programs and national environmental action plans— ***Planning & Development; Environment, Climate Change & Coastal Development; Agriculture, Supply & Prices; Livestock & Fisheries; Forest and Wildlife***
- ii. Promote women using suitable agriculture practices, including new livestock breeds and seeds, along with modified cultivation, weeding, soil and water conservation, afforestation, crop domestication and animal husbandry practices which reduce emissions and are suitable for weather conditions – ***Planning & Development; Environment, Climate Change & Coastal Development; Agriculture, Supply & Prices; Livestock & Fisheries; Forest and Wildlife***
- iii. Reduce women and girls' exposure to environmental health hazards owing to environmental catastrophes, degradation, contaminants and substances used in agriculture, fishing, and farming industries and in forestry. – ***Sindh Provincial Disaster Management Authority; Environment, Climate Change & Coastal Development; Sindh Environmental Protection Agency; Agriculture, Supply & Prices; Environment and Climate Change & Coastal Development; Livestock and Fisheries; Industries & Commerce; Forest and Wildlife***

- iv. Improve the gender balance in environmental and climate change decision-making bodies, at all tiers of government – ***Sindh Provincial Disaster Management Authority; Sindh Environmental Protection Agency; Agriculture, Supply & Prices; Environment and Climate Change & Coastal Development; Livestock and Fisheries; Industries & Commerce; Forest and Wildlife; Public Service Commission; General Services and Administration & Coordination***
- v. Ensure active participation of women and girls in protection, improvement, conservation and rehabilitation against pollution and ‘green awakening of communities’, as under the Sindh Environmental Protection Act 2014 – ***Sindh Environmental Protection Agency***
- vi. Take necessary steps to protect the rights of displaced women to return voluntarily to their place of origin in safety and with dignity – ***Sindh Provincial Disaster Management Authority; Rehabilitation; Board of Revenue; Local Government & Housing Town Planning; Disaster Management Authority***
- vii. Ensure effective implementation of systems and protocols for addressing GBV during natural disasters and related relief and rehabilitation efforts – ***Disaster Management Authority; Rehabilitation; Humanitarian organizations***

## 6. Key Strategies for Sindh Women's Development Department

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The Women's Development Department, Government of Sindh, will pursue the following broad **Strategies** to support sector-wide implementation and monitoring of recommended actions in the Provincial Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Policy.

- I. Formulate and promote laws, rules and regulations;
- II. Undertake, encourage and support institutionalization of gender-responsive planning, budgeting, reporting, strategy development, implementation and review at all levels;
- III. Promote and support gender research, evidence gathering and independent assessments and evaluations;
- IV. Support gender mainstreaming efforts across Government Departments and oversight bodies;
- V. Monitor and report on provincial efforts to comply with international gender equality and women and girls' empowerment commitments;
- VI. Act for advocating, lobbying, networking and coalition-building;
- VII. Other affirmative action.

## 7. Strategic Objectives of the Sindh Women's Development Department

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In line with its notified functions, the WDD will observe the following Objectives under each of its seven key Strategic Areas:

### Strategy 1: Formulate and promote laws, rules and regulations

**Objective:** To formulate and promote laws, rules and regulations related to the status and rights of women and girls, including through (i) reviewing legislative and policy proposals from all relevant Departments and independent statutory Commissions, in consultation with all relevant stakeholders, (ii) acting to floor new legislation (vide repeal and/ or amendment), and influencing public and private policies to eliminate substantive gender-based discrimination and safeguard and promote the rights of women and girls in accordance with Pakistan's Constitution, National and Provincial laws, and international human rights commitments.

### Strategy 2: Undertake, encourage and support institutionalization of gender-responsive planning, budgeting, reporting, strategy development, implementation and review mechanisms at all levels

**Objective:** To mainstream gender in provincial laws, policies, strategies, development plans, implementation plans and related structures, procedures and mechanisms, including for monitoring and evaluation, to ensure that gender equality and women's empowerment perspectives and approaches are integral to, represented in, and adequately addressed by related Government Departments through their work, and to drive policy coherence for gender equality and women's empowerment across Sindh.

### Strategy 3: Promote and support gender research, evidence gathering and independent assessments and evaluations

**Objective:** Promote research and independent assessments and evaluations on prioritized issues for the purpose of generating evidence and analysis related to gender equality and women and girls' empowerment, and using evidence so generated to advocate and lobby in matters concerning public policy.

### Strategy 4: Support gender mainstreaming efforts across Government Departments and oversight bodies

**Objective:** To support, coordinate and build capacity for gender mainstreaming efforts specifically by (i) enhancing stakeholders' gender understanding and response capacity; (ii) introducing gender planning, reporting, communication and monitoring tools and strengthening related mechanisms (including where gender impact and outcomes are not clearly articulated and/or captured in official material); (iii) building internal capacity (managerial, fiscal, human, technological and systemic) to meet this objective.

### Strategy 5: Monitor and report on provincial efforts to comply with international gender equality and women and girls' empowerment commitments

**Objective:** To monitor and report on provincial efforts to comply with international commitments on human rights, gender equality and women's empowerment, including CEDAW, ICPD; ICESCR; ICCPR; BPfA; UPR; SDGs, and ILO Conventions (specifically, 100, 111, 177, 189, 190).

### Strategy 6: Act for advocating, lobbying, networking and coalition-building

**Objective:** To act for advocating, lobbying, networking and coalition-building for women and girls' legal, economic, social and political rights and gender equality, including by (i) pushing for space at the heart of gender policy and budget development processes; (ii) mobilizing continued support from the highest government offices (including the Cabinet, Assembly Committees, Caucus, Assembly members/ Legislators, Chief Secretary and Chief Minister), Government line departments, non-governmental organizations and civil society organizations (specifically those working on the intersections of gender with other rights and developmental issues); and (iii) coordinating GEWE efforts and pursuing & promoting inclusive partnerships, alliances, and formal coordination/collaboration/ communication mechanisms.

### Strategy 7: Other Affirmative Actions

**Objective:** To take affirmative action by providing and strengthening services and creating/ animating platforms and support systems that link women and girls with service providers, including by (i) setting up and strengthening existing support systems and multi-stakeholder forums; (ii) pursuing scale-up and/ or adoption of effective models in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment, and (iii) creating awareness of Government laws, policies, support mechanisms, and accountability systems in communities, government departments and amongst other stakeholders.

## 8. Indicative Actions Framework, 2020-30<sup>117</sup>

Strategy 1: Formulation and promotion of legislation, rules and regulations (mixed thematic sub-strategies)				
<b>Strategic Objective:</b> To formulate and promote laws, rules and regulations related to the status and rights of women and girls, including through (i) reviewing legislative and policy proposals from all relevant Departments and independent statutory Commissions, in consultation with all relevant stakeholders, (ii) acting to floor new legislation (vide repeal and/ or amendment), and influencing public and private policies to eliminate gender-based discrimination and safeguard and promote the rights of women and girls in accordance with Pakistan's Constitution, National and Provincial laws, and international human rights commitments.				
S. No.	Key Actions	Theme	Lead Agency (ies)	Allied/ Concerned Department(s)
1.1	Finalize and get notified the sector-wide <b>Provincial Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment</b> Policy (this document) from the office of the Chief Minister, Sindh, fixing responsibility on all executive and oversight bodies in terms of their roles and responsibilities in protecting promoting and achieving gender equality and women's empowerment.	Human Rights of Women and Girls	WDD	Chief Secretary; SGA&CD
1.2	Give legal cover to <b>Women's Parliamentary Caucus</b> in Sindh to ensure continued leadership, administrative support and effective functioning and to support the work of various Standing Committees.	Political Participation; Power & Decision-making	WDD	SCSW; LPA&HRD; SGA&CD
1.3	Push through legislation and develop/ streamline mechanisms for <b>the protection of women bhatta (brick kiln) workers</b> in consultation with relevant departments.	Economy & Productive Work; Human Rights of Women & Girls	SCSW	WDD; L&HRD
1.4	Support formulation of rules, implementation systems and evaluation & review parameters for the implementation of the <b>Sindh Home Based Workers Act, 2018</b> , including for <i>registering and maintaining record of home-based workers through regional, divisional and district-level Committees, and Arbitration Councils</i> .	Economy & Productive Work	WDD; L&HRD	L&HRD; SGA&CD; SCSW; LD; P&DD
1.5	Push through legislation and set rules for the identification, registration and protection of <b>domestic workers</b> , as per commitment under <b>ILO Convention 189</b> .	Economy & Productive Work	WDD; SCSW	LPA&HRD; L&HRD
1.6	Amend <b>Occupational Classifications for 'skilled' labor</b> as applicable in Sindh which makes women invisible from the formal workforce for not having primary education, irrespective of their level of skill. <sup>118</sup>	Economy & Productive Work	WDD	LPA&HRD; L&HRD
1.7	Review and, where necessary, amend the <b>Sindh Tenancy Act, 1950</b> , <sup>119</sup> and <b>Sindh Tenancy (Amendment) Act, 2013</b> , for the purpose of ending work exploitation and prevent women from becoming unpaid domestic laborers within their homes. Amend the Act to align it to the internationally agreed <b>Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests</b> (ratified May 2012), and ensure appropriate enforcement and monitoring mechanisms.	Economy & Productive Work; Power & Decision-making	SCSW; WDD	BoR; LPA&HRD; L&HRD
1.8	Identify gaps and lobby for the full implementation of the <b>Sindh Labor Policy 2018</b> (e.g., establishment and operationalization of <i>Minimum Wage Councils, Sindh home-based workers</i>	Economy & Productive Work	SCSW	WDD; L&HRD; SWD



	<i>Boards; provision of social security and old-age pension benefit, etc.), and the Sindh Minimum Wages (Amendment) Act, 2018.</i>	Economy & Productive Work	SCSW	
1.9	Review the <b>overseas workers' policy</b> to remove gender-based discrimination against women and girls travelling abroad for work.	Power and Decision-making	SCSW; WDD	WDD
1.10	Identify gaps in land management, administration and transfer, particularly in rural parts of Sindh and legislate to promote women's <b>land registration and land title certification</b> , regardless of their marital status.	Human Rights of Women and Girls	SCSW; WDD	LPA&HRD; Land
1.11	Amend rules and mechanisms of <b>Family Laws</b> , including those applicable to religious minorities, and amend where necessary, such rules and mechanisms, to improve civil and social rights of women and girls.	Human Rights of Women and Girls	WDD; SCSW	SCSW; LPA&HRD
1.12	Lobby within government for the <b>standardization of the age of adulthood at 18 years</b> across all statutes applicable within the territory of Sindh. Initiate the development of protocols to handle cases involving cross-province migration in cognizable gender-based criminal offences, to address lack of uniformity in law across provinces.	Human Rights of Women and Girls	WDD; SCSW	SCSW; LPA&HRD
1.13	Advocate and coordinate government efforts to <b>universalize basic documentation and registration amongst women and girls</b> : birth, national identity, vote, occupation, marriage, property & inheritance, death and divorce. Pursue affirmative action where possible in this regard to improve documentation ratio for a planned time period.	Human Rights of Women and Girls	WDD	SCSW; LG&HTPD; NADRA
1.14	Lobby for extension of tax credits for working women that apply to income, purchase of major assets (vehicles, land, and property) and childcare. <sup>120</sup>	Social Protection	WDD; SCSW	BoR; FnD; ET&NCD
1.15	Pursue necessary legislative and policy measures to improve the status of <b>women and juvenile inmates and under trial prisoners</b> , particularly children incarcerated with mothers, and women on death row through the <b>Committee on the Welfare of Prisoners</b> , in collaboration with other departments and the <b>Provincial Commission for Child Welfare and Development</b> .	Law & Access to Justice; Human Rights of Women and Girls	WDD	Prison Authority; PCCWD; SCSW
1.16	Undertake <b>review(s) of legal issues and systemic impediments to implementation</b> of the following laws to women and girls' access to justice. Amend laws and/ or get approval from relevant authorities for rules of business, agency-specific standard operating procedures and monitoring and reporting mechanisms (as may be absent) for, inter alia: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <b>The Protection Against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act, 2010</b></li> <li>– <b>Anti- women Practices Act (Criminal Laws Second Amendment), 2011</b></li> <li>– <b>Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act, 2013</b></li> <li>– <b>Child Marriage Restraint Act, 2014</b></li> <li>– <b>Criminal Law (Protection of Minorities), 2016</b></li> </ul>	Law & Access to Justice; Human Rights of Women and Girls	SCSW	WDD; LPA&HR

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Anti-Rape Act (Criminal Laws Amendment), 2016</li> <li>- Anti-Honor-killing Act, 2016</li> <li>- Acid Control and Acid Crime Prevention Act, 2016</li> <li>- Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2017</li> <li>- Sindh Hindust Marriage (amendment) Act, 2018</li> </ul>				
1.17	Review performance of the <b>Sindh Child Authority, Sindh Youth Policy, Adolescent Friendly Centers, and District Child Protection Units</b> to lobbying for the development of a coordinated multisectoral child protection plan, along with concerned departments and the <b>Sindh Child Protection Council</b> .	Law & Access to Justice; Social Protection	SCSW	WDD; CPA; SESYAD	
1.18	Monitor and strengthen compliance with <b>Dar-ul-Aman Standard Operating Procedures</b> across Sindh, as notified by the Social Welfare Department in 2015, specifically in terms of establishing effective programs to facilitate rehabilitation, and integration of women survivors of violence into society upon leaving the shelter and activating the <b>provincial committee</b> for oversight.	Law & access to justice	SCSW	SWD; WDD	
1.19	Lobby with Cabinet and Assembly members to commit resources/ budgets for district-level <b>safe houses/ shelter homes/ crisis centers</b> .	Social Protection; GBV, VAW/G & Access to Justice	WDD	SWD; Home; P&DD; Finance; SGA&CD	
1.20	<b>Review and lobby for upgrading, standardizing and scaling-up medico-legal and forensics systems and procedures</b> in Sindh. Devise a health-based response mechanism for cases presenting gender-based violence, and violence against women and girls, in line with the Sindh Forensic Science Agency Act, 2017, the Code of Criminal Procedure (Sindh Amendment) Act, 2017 (mandatory DNA in rape) and the Federal Anti-rape Act, 2016.	VAW/G & Access to Justice; Health	SCSW; WDD	HD; PWD; Home; Prosecution Services	
1.21	Lobby for legislation and/ or other binding actions on the private sector to contribute funds through <b>Corporate Social Responsibility</b> that are specific to women and girls and GEWE targets. Legislation should address Corporate Social Responsibility conditions to include above minimum wage incomes, day-care centers for women employees, separate toilets and spaces for women employees, inclusive facilities and a safe, free of harassment workplace.	Economy and Productive Work	WDD; SCSW	I&CD; L&HRD	
1.22	Pursue amendments necessary in the <b>Provincial Assemblies Allocation of Reserved Seats for Women and Non-Muslims (Procedure) Rules, 2002</b> , to ensure fair presentation of women.	Political Participation; Power & Decision-making	WDD; SCSW	L&HRD	
1.23	Support the development of a participatory framework for <b>bringing legislative proposals to provincial assembly by members and others</b> , including support for formulation of rules of business (including inputs, on matters concerning women's rights, empowerment, and gender equality.	Human Right of Women and Girls	WDD	SCSW; Chief Secretary; Cabinet & Assembly members; Women's Caucus	

1.24	Amend the <b>Defamation Ordinance, 2000</b> , and <b>Pakistan Electronic Crimes Act, 2016</b> , to decriminalize defamation, prevent its misuse against victims of violence and abuse, and undertake actions to educate users on online safety and security.	ICT, Media & STEM; GBV, VAW/G & Access to Justice	WDD; SCSW	LPA&HRD; ISTD
<b>Strategic Area 2: Undertake, encourage and support institutionalization of gender-responsive planning, budgeting, implementation, reporting, strategy development, implementation and review mechanisms at all levels</b> <b>Strategic Objectives:</b> To mainstream gender in provincial laws, policies, strategies, budgetary layouts, implementation plans and related structures, procedures and mechanisms, including for monitoring and evaluation, to ensure that gender equality and women's empowerment perspectives and approaches are integral to, represented in, and adequately addressed by related Government Departments through their work, and to drive policy coherence for gender equality and women's empowerment across Sindh.				
S. No.	Key Actions	Theme	Lead Agency (ies)	Allied/ Concerned Department(s)
2.1	Monitor the operationalization of registration and regularization systems spelt out in the <b>Sindh Home-based Workers Act, 2018</b> , and provisions related to the <b>induction of women in the formal workforce</b> .	Economy and Productive work	SCSW	WDD; L&HRD
2.2	Identify systemic gaps in the implementation of the <b>Sindh Occupational Safety, Health Act 2017</b> , for women workers in the private and public sectors, in order to frame its rules of business (RoBs).	Economy and Productive work	SCSW	L&HRD; WDD; SCHR
2.3	Review the effectiveness of the <b>Sindh Poverty Reduction Strategy</b> and <b>Community Driven Local Development (CDLD) Policy, 2018</b> , for strengthening participatory mechanisms such as <i>Joint Development Committees, Local Support Organizations, Community Organizations</i> and <i>Village Organizations</i> .	Social Protection; Poverty Reduction	SCSW	WDD; P&DD; Rural Development; LG
2.4	Lobby for <b>inclusive education</b> for all, including for girls living with disabilities, as noted in the <b>Education Policy 2020-24</b> , as per the <b>Sindh Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2013</b> , and related <b>Rule of Business</b> .	Education and Lifelong Learning	WDD; SCSW	SELD; SWD (Employment & Rehabilitation Cell for Disabled Persons); SED; RD
2.5	Work with the cross-sectoral Council set up under the <b>Sindh Senior Citizen Welfare Act, 2016</b> to review effectiveness of systems in identifying and responding to the needs of older women.	Social Protection	SWD	WDD
2.6	Work with various health-related authorities, including the Health Department (and its allied programs), Population Welfare, People's Primary Health Initiative, Forensics agencies, and the Sindh Healthcare Commission (established 2013), and others, to improve data, and provide inputs and feedback into policies and programs, specifically related to sexual and reproductive health and rights, including health-based response to violence.	Health	WDD	Health, PWD; PPHI; Forensic agencies/ Departments; SHCC
2.7	Accelerate measures for increasing the share of females in <b>science, engineering, manufacturing and construction</b> graduates at tertiary level.	Education and Lifelong Learning	WDD	SCSW; U&BD; SBTE; STEVTA

2.8	Lobby for mandatory <b>5 percent seats for young people</b> , including girls in local bodies and involved in decision-making at the municipal and provincial levels, as stipulated in the <b>Sindh Youth Policy, 2018</b> .	Political & Public Life; Power & Decision-making	WDD; SCSW	SYAD; LG; SED
2.9	<b>Develop and support the development of gender competency of stakeholders</b> to influence engendering of policies, programs and projects, through specific tools, trainings and guidelines. Support and continually improve sensitization & skill-building trainings on <b>gender-responsive planning and budgeting</b> for senior and mid-level leadership in government departments, notified commissions, and other oversight and monitoring bodies/ organizations in Sindh.	Institutional Mechanism – Capacity-building	WDD; SCSW	P&DD (Research & Training Wing); SGA&CD
2.10	Mainstream the collection and utilization of <b>gender-disaggregated data</b> in provincial statistical bureaus and Government Departments to address data gaps and improve gender-responsive planning and reporting.	Institutional Mechanism – Capacity-building & Data	WDD; SCSW	P&DD; BoS; SGA&CD
2.11	Review causes behind <b>women's under-representation in media</b> , including in decision-making positions, and make recommendations to improve representation.	ICT, Media & STEM; Power & Decision-making	SCSW	WDD
2.12	Notify periodic and updated release of <b>gender-disaggregated budget summaries and plans, legislation and other official documents</b> pertaining to gender equality and women's empowerment, as public documents through proactive disclosure by all Government Departments.	Institutional Mechanism – Data	All Departments; SGA&CD; P&DD; WDD; SCSW	
2.13	Notify and train <b>WDD Gender Focal Persons</b> (GFPs) on how to promote gender equality in their specific sectors, including but not limited to data collection, organization and management, and engendering public policy planning and budgeting, execution and evaluation. Require GFPs to be of at least Assistant Director level, who are officially notified through their respective departments. Ensure a gender balance in all such capacity-related trainings.	Institutional Mechanism – Capacity-building	WDD	SCSW
2.14	Ensure that the work of Gender Focal Persons is written into their terms of reference and reflected in resource allocation, if such are required.	Institutional Mechanism – Gender mainstreaming	All departments, led by WDD and supported by SGA&CD	
2.15	Revive and strengthen the <b>Provincial Gender Mainstreaming Working Group chaired by WDD</b> , with representation of Gender Focal Persons of all government departments, relevant civil society and private organizations, academia, think-tanks, donors, and other development partners.	Institutional Mechanism – Coordination & Knowledge exchange	WDD, with SCSW	
2.16	Reactivate and strengthen the <b>Provincial Gender Mainstreaming Working Committee chaired by the Chief Secretary</b> , with representation of all provincial secretaries.	Institutional Mechanism – Gender Mainstreaming	WDD	

Strategic Area 3: Promote and support gender research, evidence gathering and independent assessments and evaluations				
Strategic Objectives: To promote research and independent assessments and evaluations on prioritized issues for the purpose of generating evidence and analysis related to gender equality and women and girls' empowerment, and using evidence so generated to advocate and lobby in matters concerning public policy.				
S. No.	Key Actions	Theme	Lead Agency (ies)	Allied/ Concerned Department(s)
3.1	Commission, support and promote studies and analyses to collect targeted information (either routine or through specific surveys), with regard to the right to equality and non-discrimination, and for examining deficits in overall governance and sectoral policies and impacts on rural and urban populations and groups of peoples; draw up a short- to medium-term plan for the focus of data and research over the next 5 years.	Institutional Mechanism – Data; and Monitoring & Review	WDD	SCSW
3.2	Maintain a <b>list of CSOs, researchers, and academicians</b> to support data collection and analysis based on needed expertise in concerned sector(s).	Institutional Mechanism – Partnerships	WDD	
3.3	Support the development of the SCSW Gender MIS to track and gather evidence for inputting into sector specific policies and implementation frameworks.	Institutional Mechanism – Data and Monitoring & Review	WDD	SCSW
3.4	Lobby for, encourage, support and propose systems for institutionalizing <b>gender disaggregated data and budget summaries</b> for all Public Sector Development Programs (PSDP).	Institutional Mechanism – Capacity-building	WDD	SCSW; P&DD; SGA&CD
3.5	Develop a <b>database of all gender-based violence, and violence against women and girls' cases</b> reported across Sindh, in coordination and consultation with the Sindh Commission on the Status of Women and relevant government departments.	GBV, VAW/G & Access to Justice	WDD; SCSW; SWD	Health (medico-legal sections, pediatric and gynecology wards); Home (Police and Courts); Investigation and Prosecution Services; SJA, Protection Cells; Safe houses; Shelters; Media monitoring
3.6	Introduce indicators for tracking women's ownership of physical assets, disaggregated by location in official surveys.	Institutional Mechanism – Data	SCSW; WDD	P&DD; BoR



<b>Strategic action 4: Support gender mainstreaming efforts across Government Departments and oversight bodies</b> <b>Strategic Objective:</b> To support, coordinate and build capacity for gender mainstreaming efforts specifically by (i) enhancing stakeholders' gender understanding and response capacity; (ii) introducing gender planning, reporting, communication and monitoring tools and strengthening related mechanisms (including where gender impact and outcomes are not clearly articulated and/or captured in official material); (iii) building internal capacity (managerial, fiscal, human, technological and systemic), to meet this objective.					
S. No.	Key Actions	Theme	Lead Agency (ies)	Allied/ Concerned Department(s)	
4.1	Support the Sindh Commission on the Status of Women and independent machineries at the provincial and national levels to be able to articulate their specific objectives and priorities for gender equality and women's empowerment. Specifically, assist the Sindh Commission on the Status of Women in financial, human resource and administrative matters, at the Secretariat level, for strengthening the discharge of its function.	Institutional Mechanism – Cross-cutting	WDD	SCSW	
4.2	Develop <b>curricula on implementing CEDAW for specific stakeholders</b> such as local government officials, parliamentarians, ombudspersons, etc.	Institutional Mechanism – Capacity-building	WDD	SCSW; P&DD; LG&HTPD	
4.3	Develop checklist(s)/ tools/ guidelines in collaboration with Planning & Development Department, and the Sindh Commission on the Status of Women on <b>gender-responsive planning and budgeting</b> .	Institutional Mechanism – Capacity-building and Monitoring & Review	WDD; SCSW	P&DD	
4.4	Conduct and support trainings on gender mainstreaming, planning & budgeting for stakeholders.	Institutional Mechanism – Capacity-building	WDD	SCSW; P&DD; I-PCD; LG&HTPD	
4.5	Integrate gender and national and international human rights commitments into <b>judicial, medical and police training curriculum</b> .	GBV, VAW/G & Access to Justice	WDD	LPA&HR; SJA; Home; Health	
4.6	Develop a <b>gender specialists' resource pool comprising subject trainers</b> who provide technical assistance to the Department upon request, voluntarily: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Determine criteria for selection of experts, along thematic/ strategic areas</li> <li>– Determine terms of reference for experts in terms of specific contribution requirements.</li> </ul>	Institutional Mechanism – Resource Mobilization	WDD		
4.7	Commission review and development of <b>WDD's systems, procedures, staffing requirements and capacity enhancement</b> plans to carry out its mandate.	Institutional Mechanism – Resource Management and Capacity-building	WDD	SGA&CD	
4.8	Develop key strategic plans (for advocacy, communication and lobbying) and accompanying guiding manuals and <b>SOPs for WDD staff and ensure staff orientation and trainings</b> as means to institutionalize plans and harmonize strategies at all levels.	Institutional Mechanism – Capacity-building	WDD	SGA&CD	



4.9	Prepare and roll out an <b>internal capacity enhancement plan</b> , specific to <b>leadership (advocacy and communication), monitoring, research and data collection, coordination and partnerships, and provincial laws and policies</b> , for every level of WDD leadership.	Institutional Mechanism – Capacity-building	WDD	SGA&CD; P&DD
4.10	<b>Review WDD's existing tools for monitoring and revise/ update where necessary</b> such systems, based on CEDAW Concluding Observations, and as part of the BPfA, ICPD, ICESCR, ICCPR, UPR and SDG commitments (with gender as a cross-cutting theme across all goals in the SDGs, in particular Goal 17 (addressing structural barriers and data).	Institutional Mechanism – Monitoring & Review	WDD	HRD; MoHR; SCSW
4.11	Develop <b>gender budget planning tools</b> – with separate planning and monitoring templates for the rest of Provincial Government; Lobby for their adoption and institutionalization.	Institutional Mechanism – Gender Mainstreaming	WDD; SCSW	P&DD
<b>Strategic action 5: Monitor and report on provincial efforts to comply with international gender equality and women and girls' empowerment commitments</b>				
<b>Strategic Objective:</b> To monitor and report on provincial efforts to comply with international commitments on human rights, gender equality and women's empowerment, including CEDAW, ICPD; ICESCR; ICCPR; UPR; BPfA; SDGs, and ILO Conventions.				
S. No.	Key Actions	Theme	Lead Agency (ies)	Allied/ Concerned Department(s)
5.1	Develop a <b>monitoring framework</b> (for WDD), and reporting mechanisms (from UC to Provincial level) for assessing how Departmental interventions are impacting women and girls, including, inter alia, performance indicators and means to measure impact.	Institutional Mechanisms – Monitoring & Review	WDD; SCSW	P&DD; LG&HTPD
5.2	Activate and strengthen the provincial <b>CEDAW</b> Committee and ensure that representatives from the Departments of Finance, Planning & Development and Statistical Bureaus are included, along with civil society and other stakeholders. Institutionalize mechanisms for regular interactions and timely release of related information and decisions.	Institutional mechanism: Coordination & Knowledge-exchange	WDD; SCSW; HRD; MoHR	
5.3	Create linkages with <b>Provincial and District-level SDG Units</b> and <b>Treaty Implementation cells</b> and concerned officials, for data and tracking progress against the SDGs and other core human rights conventions, covenants and treaties.	Institutional mechanism: Monitoring & Review	WDD	P&DD
5.4	Monitor participation of women in general and local government elections, through systematic <b>monitoring of electoral and political processes</b> . Adopt/ adapt appropriate strategies and indicators for such monitoring, including periodic data collection on women's membership in political parties; frequency of meetings attended; role in deliberations and decision-making; effectuating party policies, etc. Track <b>elected women representatives in local bodies and institutions</b> in terms of nominations as per statutory quota including in <i>house committees, monitoring committees</i> , and other official coordination mechanisms at the district and tehsil levels.	Political Participation	WDD; SCSW	SCSW; ECP; LG&HTPD
5.5	Evaluate the impact of the <b>Sindh Education Sector Plan</b> and the <b>Strategic Plan of the Gender Unit</b> , Education and Literacy Department, with a focus on girls' access to primary and secondary schooling, retention and life-skilled based education, in order to suggest changes in the next Plan.	Education & Lifelong Learning	WDD	SCSW: SELD

5.6	Develop a provincial Plan of Action (both short- and medium-term) in consultation with all stakeholders on implementing <b>CEDAW concluding observations</b> after Country Review in 2019, and <b>Beijing +25 review</b> at the 64 <sup>th</sup> Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), 2020.	Institutional Mechanism – Cross-cutting	MoHR; HRD	SCSW; WDD
5.7	Assist the Ministry of Human Rights, government Commissions, civil society and people's organizations in <b>compiling reports of provincial efforts against international commitments on human rights</b> , gender equality and women's empowerment, including CEDAW, ICPD; ICESCR; ICCPR; UPR; BPfA; SDGs, core ILO Conventions, and others.	Institutional Mechanism – Monitoring and Review	WDD; SCSW	
<b>Strategic action 6: Act for advocating, lobbying, networking and coalition-building</b> <b>Strategic Objective:</b> To act for advocating, lobbying, networking and coalition-building for women and girls' legal, economic, social and political rights and gender equality, including by (i) pushing for space at the heart of gender policy and budget development processes; (ii) mobilizing continued support from the highest government offices (including the Cabinet, Assembly Committees, Caucus, Assembly members/ Legislators, Chief Secretary and Chief Minister), Government line departments, non-governmental organizations and civil society organizations (specifically those working on the intersections of gender with other rights and developmental issues); and (iii) coordinating GEWE efforts and pursuing & promoting inclusive partnerships, alliances, and formal coordination/ collaboration/ communication mechanisms.				
S. No.	Key Actions	Theme	Lead Agency (ies)	Allied/ Concerned Department(s)
6.1	Develop a system of maintaining <b>records of women's organizations</b> across Sindh in coordination with the Social Welfare Department and maintain updated information on those providing services (such as research, legal aid, community awareness, capacity-building, etc.).	Institutional Mechanism – Network & Partnerships	WDD	SWD
6.2	Engage <b>women Union Councilors</b> periodically across party lines for increasing interaction with communities on legislation concerning women's rights issues, and challenges thereof.	Political Participation; Monitoring & Review	WDD	SCSW; LG&HTPD
6.3	Map <b>mechanisms for UC and district-level coordination created by multiple government and civil society committees</b> (e.g. health, social welfare, health education, human rights, etc.), to ensure that women and girls' issues are responded to in a coordinated manner at the local level.	Institutional Mechanism – Coordination	WDD; SCSW	
6.4	Secure nomination for <b>Gender Focal Persons</b> across all Departments (fix responsibility for training and coordination on individual Departments)	Institutional Mechanism – Gender Mainstreaming	WDD	
6.5	Develop a <b>partnership plan and framework for networking and collaborating with civil society organizations</b> on specific GEWE targets.	Institutional Mechanism – Partnerships	WDD	
6.6	Strengthen the Sindh Assembly Secretariat with focus on capacity enhancement of women parliamentarians, development of strategic policy papers, and holding strategy dialogues with a view to engendering party mandates and policies.	Institutional Mechanism – Capacity-building	WDD, with I-PCD	
6.7	Lobby for the establishment of <b>day-care facilities</b> at the premises of every organization/ department employing 10% or more women, as per the <b>Sindh Maternity Benefits Act, 2018</b> .	Economy and Productive Work	SCSW; WDD	P&DD; L&HRD; S&GACD

6.8	Lobby and seeks stakeholder inputs for devising a province-wide gender inclusive economic empowerment policy, including consideration for <b>ILO Conventions, specifically Conventions 100, 111, 189, 177 and 190.</b>	Economy and Productive Work	SCSW; WDD	L&HRD; I&CD; P&DD; FnD
6.9	Lobby for the full implementation of the <b>Sindh Labor Policy 2018</b> (e.g., establishment and operationalization of <i>Minimum Wage Councils, Sindh Home-based Workers Boards; provision of social security and old-age pension benefit</i> , etc.) and the <b>Sindh Minimum Wages (Amendment) Act, 2018.</b>	Economy and Productive Work	SCSW	L&HRD; LG&HTPD; P&DD
6.10	Lobby with the Services and General Administration Department (SGA&CD) to increase/ observe minimum <b>women's quota in all public services at 10%.</b>	Economy and Productive Work; Power & Decision-making	SCSW; WDD	SGA&CD
6.11	Review implementation of the recommendations of the <b>Multi-Sectoral Action for Nutrition Program</b> and the <b>Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF), 2016</b> , to assess programs that seek to improve women and girl's access to nutrition and improve their food security.	Health; Social Protection	SCSW; P&DD	
6.12	Lobby for mainstreaming gender in <b>labor market regulation and inspection regimes</b> to make it more responsive to peculiar needs of female workers.	Economy and Productive Work	WDD; SCSW	L&HRD; I&CD
6.13	Input into the <b>Sindh Education Sector Plan, 2019</b> onward by suggesting and including gender responsive policy guidelines, implementation mechanisms, and review processes that promote and ensure education and lifelong learning for women and girls, in line with the provincial GEWE Policy.	Education and Lifelong Learning	WDD	SCSW
6.14	Lobby to amend the <b>public procurement regulations</b> that set quotas in all government contracts for women-owned businesses.	Economy and Productive Work	WDD	SCSW; PPRA; SGA&CD
<b>Strategic action 7: Other Affirmative Actions</b> <b>Strategic Objectives:</b> To take affirmative action by providing and strengthening services and creating/ animating platforms and support systems that link women and girls with service providers, including by: (i) setting up and strengthening existing support systems and multi-stakeholder forums; (ii) pursuing scale-up and/or adoption of effective models in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment, and (iii) creating awareness of Government laws, policies, support mechanisms, and accountability systems in communities, government departments and amongst other stakeholders.				
<b>S. No.</b>	<b>Key Actions</b>	<b>Theme</b>	<b>Lead Agency (ies)</b>	<b>Allied/ Concerned Department(s)</b>
7.1	Translate, print and widely disseminate <b>copies of the Provincial GEWE Policy.</b>	Institutional Mechanism – Knowledge exchange	WDD	I&CD (Printing & Stationery); P&DD; SGA&CD
7.2	Increase <b>community knowledge and access to systems</b> regarding women's existing rights, related policies, support mechanisms, points of services access, persons in charge and their roles and	Human Rights of Women and Girls; Service delivery	WDD; SCSW; SCHR; LG&HTPD	P&DD; LPA&HR; SGA&CD

	duties and accountability mechanisms – Partner with local community groups and civil society organizations to maximize outreach and referrals.			
7.3	Use <b>traditional and social media</b> to keep gender equality issues visible, to tackle gender stereotypes and myths, and to raise awareness (a communications strategy – including priority themes, content, frequency and medium of communication, press relations, etc. – may be prepared to support the process of effective communications planning).	Power & Decision-making; Service delivery	WDD	SCSW
7.4	Connect with and prepare local government <b>women councilors</b> across party lines and women activists through trainings and networking activities, for improving their inclusion and active participation in political processes from the UC level upward.	Political Participation; Power & Decision-making	WDD	C&LGA
7.5	Develop an interagency, multi-stakeholder plan for streamlining and strengthening existing protection services in <b>response to gender-based violence and violence against women and girls</b> including instituting and/ or lobbying for linking women with government service providers, through the following, among other means: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Women’s complaint cells</li> <li>– Crisis Centers</li> <li>– Dar-ul-Amans</li> <li>– Safe houses</li> <li>– Protection Cells</li> <li>– Helplines</li> <li>– Legal clinics</li> <li>– District Criminal Justice Coordination Committees</li> </ul>	GBV, VAW/G & Access to Justice; Human Rights of Women and Girls	WDD	WDD; SCSW; SWD; Home; Health
7.6	Activate and fully operationalize <b>District Protection Committees</b> and recruit <b>Protection Officers</b> as per the Domestic Violence Act, 2013; Institutionalize systems that ensure rigorous trainings and performance monitoring across Sindh.	GBV, VAW/G & Access to Justice; Service delivery	WDD	Finance; P&DD; Home (Police, Courts, DCJCC); DLCE
7.7	Finalize the rules of <b>Sindh Witness Protection Act, 2013</b> , and launch the proposed Witness Protection Program across Sindh, extending protection to GBV and VAW/G victims and complainants. Develop long-term support programs for victims of violence, abuse and neglect including provisions for <b>subsidized housing, re-location support, witness protection, vocational skill-building and employment opportunities</b> .	GBV, VAW/G & Access to Justice	WDD	LPA&HR; Home SWD; RD
7.8	Convene local and provincial <b>policy workshops and dialogues</b> on a regular basis to discuss and assess the impact of government policies, development plans, and schemes for women, girls and gender non-conforming people, and on challenges and means to accelerate implementation of the Provincial GEWE Policy.	Institutional Mechanism – Knowledge exchange; Coordination; Monitoring & Review	WDD; P&DD; I-PCD; SGA&CD	
7.9	Develop systems and mechanisms of <b>e-commerce</b> that bring women entrepreneurs and women-run small and medium enterprises closer to market, reduce exploitation and reliance on middlemen.	Economy & Productive Work	WDD	I&CD; ISTD

## 9. Governance and Institutional Mechanisms

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Without a coordinating national Ministry on Women's Development, and following devolution of the subject to provinces vide the 18<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment (09 June, 2011), the WDD requires support to carry out its mandate effectively, which involves improving its positioning viz other Departments and assisting other Departments in aligning their policies and practices to match the objectives of the overall Policy. It also needs to be appreciated that promoting and achieving gender equality and women's empowerment cannot be relegated to a single Department of the Government and as such requires deliberate actions from the entire Government machinery and across service providers, civil society, donors and other private entities in terms of information-sharing, coordinating efforts, monitoring and evaluating intervention outcomes, improving gender understanding and building related competencies, and plugging data gaps, among others.

### 9.1. Revised Proposed Functions of Sindh Women's Development Department

Since 2003, the functions of WDD have changed and taken on new dimensions, including the important role of supporting gender mainstreaming.

Based on a review of best practices related to women's machineries, and notified functions of the WDD (under Schedule II, Section 38: Women's Development Department, Distribution of Business Among Departments, Sindh Government Rules of Business, 1986, amended up to 2019), its overall functions may be reformulated as under:

- I. Formulation of public policies and laws to protect and promote gender equality and the rights of women and girls;
- II. Mainstreaming gender in provincial laws, policies, strategies, budgetary layouts, implementation plans and related structures, procedures and mechanisms, including for monitoring and evaluation;
- III. Supporting research, statistics, and data collection related to gender equality and women and girls' empowerment;
- IV. Capacity development and institutional strengthening to achieve gender equality and women and girls' empowerment;
- V. Monitoring and reporting on provincial efforts to comply with international commitments on human rights, gender equality and women's empowerment, including CEDAW, ICPD; ICESCR; ICCPR; BPfA; UPR; SDGs; and core ILO Conventions (100, 111, 177, 189 and 190);
- VI. Coordination & collaboration, partnerships and networking amongst stakeholders for accelerating gender equality and women and girls' empowerment;
- VII. Affirmative action by providing services and linking women and girls to existing support systems and public services.

### 9.2. Information of Provincial Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Policy, 2020-2030

With the passage of this Policy, support for its implementation will start with providing translated (and where necessary, simplified/ abridged) copies to every Government Department in Sindh vide the Services and General Administration & Coordination Department, and the Industry and Commerce Department (Printing & Stationery).

In addition to providing copies, WDD will upload the Policy on its website, and organize briefing sessions with Departments officials to discuss agreed roles, responsibilities and mechanisms (including for and through Gender Focal Persons), for coordination, tracking, acquiring feedback against Policy Goals, Objectives and Strategies, and key indicators, as developed on the basis of the Policy.



### 9.3. Inter-Provincial Coordination Committee and Inter-Provincial Ministerial Group

**Inter-ministerial coordinating committees** are an effective mechanism to overcome bureaucratic resistance and coordinate policy and implementation on gender issues. Such committees usually comprise representatives from a range of Government Departments and non-Government experts and are chaired or coordinated by Women's Departments as the lead government agency. In Sindh, the Departments of Inter-provincial Coordination and Planning & Development have supplemental roles to play in promoting coordination within and between provinces on matters concerning development.

In this regard, the WDD will call and participate in regular meetings in order to further understanding of and influence other departments and civil servants in fulfilling GEWE commitments iterated in this Policy. Ministers can be expected to be reluctant to attend such meetings without additional incentives, for which the highest government office in Sindh will be requested for support. Apart from learning about current sectoral policies and practices and their impact in terms of achieving gender equality and women and girls' empowerment, the WDD will hold regular Inter-ministerial Committee meetings with support from the Inter-Provincial Coordination and Planning & Development Departments, for sharing progress and discussing key challenges and replicable/ scalable solutions for accelerating investments in and progress on gender equality and women's empowerment, gender-responsive planning, budgeting, implementation and assessments. Meetings shall also be used as a venue for reviewing and inputting into sectoral annual plans and public sector schemes/ sub-schemes in order to support effective implementation of and integrated support for the Provincial GEWE Policy.

In this connection, the WDD would immediately notify the **Inter-ministerial Coordination Committee**, as committed under the Sindh Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Policy, 2013.

In addition, the WDD will actively participate in meetings of and otherwise support the **Inter-Provincial Ministerial Group of Women Ministers** (formed in 2011 and hosted by the National Commission on the Status of Women since 2014) to discuss and review provincial and national progress on gender equality and women's empowerment.

### 9.4. Monitoring & Evaluation

Based on the Indicative Actions Framework, a **monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework** will be devised by the WDD, with key performance indicators (KPIs), related budgets and resources, and quantifiable annual targets over the next one and five years. The yearly breakup of activities will be used to further guide the development of annual development plans (ADPs) and mobilize appropriate financing.

Monitoring and analyzing sectoral input and outcome indicators would require an indicator setting/ selection exercise in close coordination with the Planning and Development Department (Monitoring & Evaluation cell, Bureau of Statistics and Research and Training Wing), based on actions and policy objectives prioritized over subsequent years by the WDD.

To ensure transparency and accountability towards all stakeholders, the WDD will ensure proactive sharing and disclosure of information, using both online and offline platforms, and encourage the same in all other Departments as per provisions in the **Sindh Transparency and Right to Information Act, 2017**, and in collaboration with relevant Departments and their functions specific to public and mass communication, such as Planning & Development, Services and General Administration & Coordination, and Information & Archiving Departments.

A dedicated **Communication Plan** may be developed over the first 3-6 months for WDD, to determine the most effective ways to reach out to and involve stakeholders and communicate with a wider audience, specifically women, girls and gender minorities in remote areas.



## 9.5. Gender Focal Persons

To streamline information and responsibility sharing across all Provincial Government departments, **Gender Focal Persons** will be formally notified in every Department, who would be responsible for working closely with the WDD and the Sindh Commission on the Status of Women, to ensure sector-wide coordination, collaboration, planning and reporting on specific Strategic Objectives of the Provincial GEWE Policy. WDD will create opportunities and mobilize financial and technical support for promoting and improving **gender competency amongst notified GFPs**, including on:

- gender analysis for policy development, implementation and impact evaluation;
- gender mainstreaming;
- sex-disaggregated data collection and management of information systems;
- strategic communication, negotiation, advocacy and lobbying; and
- laws, policies and application of CEDAW and other international conventions relating to women’s rights, politics and governance.

Each Departmental **GFP will be responsible for:**

- Reviewing and suggesting against Departmental policy and planning, in line with the Provincial gender equality and women’s empowerment policy framework;
- Inputting into Departmental planning and review processes in terms of possible and actual gender implications and outcomes;
- Supporting integration of gender considerations into Departmental workplans and compiling related reporting;
- Advocating that Departments provide and use gender disaggregated data related to their work;
- Coordinating/ facilitating gender trainings of Departmental staff to ensure that gender is integrated into all aspects of the Department’s functional areas;
- Establishing and maintaining active liaison with WDD on inter-departmental and sector-specific policy matters;
- Collecting, and sharing with WDD, “Policy Compliance” information, on a quarterly basis; and
- Developing close linkages with key Public Institutions, Departments, specifically Planning & Development (all Wings: (i) Monitoring & Evaluation, (ii) Research & Training, and (iii) Bureau of Statistics), Finance, Services, General Administration & Coordination (all Wings: (i) Services, (ii) General Administration, (iii) Implementation & Coordination and (iv) Training Management & Research), and statutory Commissions, to elicit routine exchange of information, improve coordination and cooperation, mobilize and synchronize resources, and optimize utilization against and impact of sectoral Public Sector Development Plans (PSDPs) that directly or indirectly impact gender equality and the status of women, girls and gender minorities.

## 9.6. Gender Financing and Data

Both the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda reiterate that adequate and effective financing is essential to achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls (SDG 5), as well as other intersecting goals and targets. The principle of adequate financing for gender equality is also rooted in the BPfA (paras 345 and 346), and SDG Target 5.c.1 seeks to measure government efforts to track budget allocations for gender equality throughout the public finance management cycle and to make these publicly available. This indicator also measures intent address GEWE by identifying the following three indicators:

- (1) whether the government has programs/policies *and* resource allocations to foster GEWE;
- (2) whether the government has planning and budget tools to track resources for GEWE throughout the public financial management cycle; and
- (3) whether the government has provisions to make allocations for GEWE publicly available.

The UN Secretary General’s report on the 25-year review and appraisal of the Beijing Platform notes that persisting underinvestment in GEWE is having a drag effect across all 12 critical areas of concern, thus slowing down or confounding the results of investments and interventions. Global data also shows that financing gaps for gender can sometimes be as high as 90% with critical shortfalls commonly noted in infrastructure to operationalize national policies and laws. In the interest of better tracking financial allocations for their contribution to, obstruction of, and contravening effects towards GEWE, and to promote a culture of accountability and transparency, the Province Government of Sindh is committed to supporting and **institutionalizing gender disaggregation in government financial accounts, budget proposals and summaries, public sector development programs’ reporting and annual development plans across all Departments, along with improving the production of indicators, and availability of data against intersecting Domains of the GEWE Policy.** For ensuring reliable fiscal support, timely disbursement of funds will be specially looked into to ensure efficient utilization of development funds for the different schemes and programs contributing to GEWE directly and indirectly, and additional resources will be mobilized for addressing emerging areas of concerns.

To streamline the availability and accessibility of gender-disaggregated data, the WDD will support the Sindh Commission on the Status of Women to develop, operationalize and institutionalize its Gender Management Information System (GMIS), and support the Women’s Commission in mobilizing the resources (both financial and technical) it may require in the process of setting-up its GMIS and coordinating with other Departments to develop and maintain corresponding systems of information and communication.

Across Pakistan, there are numerous surveys, research instruments and Government agencies that routinely collect data, and can be referred to under this Policy. These include:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| – Sindh Bureau of Statistics  | – Ministry of the Interior                      |
| – Pakistan Social and Living Standards Measurement, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) | – National Assembly Secretariat                 |
| – Household Integrated Economic Survey (HIES–PBS)                                       | – Provincial Assembly Secretariat               |
| – Gender Crime Cells  | – High Courts                                   |
| – Planning, Development and Reform Division   | – Ministry of Environment & Climate Change      |
| – SDG provincial taskforces   | – State Bank of Pakistan (SBP)                  |
| – Labor Force Survey (PBS)  | – National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) |
| – Ministry of Finance   | – Employees Old-age Benefits Institution (EOBI) |
| – National Education Management Information System (NEMIS)                              | – Insurance companies                           |
| – National Institute of Population Studies (NIPS-PDHS)                                  | – Benazir Income Support Program (BISP)         |
|   | – Ministry of Labor and Manpower                |
|   | – Ministry of Defense                           |
|   | – Ministry of Law and Human Rights              |

For data collected or collated by the WDD, the following will be considered as recourse to a gender-responsive planning, budgeting, implementation and review regime across the Province:

- Develop **methodologies** and benchmark **indicators** for data concerning *access and quality of social sector services* for women and girls across the province;
- Review and where necessary, suggest revisions to Departmental Annual Development Plans (ADPs) and/or their reporting (budget summaries) to reflect **gender-disaggregated information on public sector financing and expenditure**, in close coordination with the Planning and Development (all Wings), and Finance Departments;
- Review and revise, where needed, **official survey instruments** of data collection, after taking stock of provincial and district-based data availability and gaps<sup>121</sup> and additional data that maybe needed to track policy implementation;

- Mobilize and ensure resources for periodic government and private sector **gender audits** by the Sindh Commission on the Status of Women, for the purpose of reviewing legislative and policy effectiveness related to specific sector(s) and intersectoral plans and frameworks. The WDD shall pursue an agreement with the SCSW foremost, to draw up a timed joint action-plan for sectors in need of urgent or long- pending audits and reforms, as identified in SCSW’s **Strategic Plan, 2018-2021** and in this Policy;
- Support **periodic research and knowledge-sharing sessions** with other Government departments, civil society organizations, and grassroots community workers/ activists, international development partners and academia, related to gender inputs, challenges to policy implementation, and outcomes under respective Policy domain(s).

## 9.7. Capacity-development

### 9.7.1. For Government

As the custodian Department for this Policy, the WDD shall work with the rest of Sindh Government to devise appropriate tools, policy directives, training courses and reporting templates to support the process of Policy institutionalization and track compliance and input-outcome-based analysis against respective Policy domains. For areas of public policy involving multiple actors, both stakeholder-specific and multisectoral/ multi-stakeholder trainings, standardized operational guidelines and reporting toolkits will be pursued.

For promoting a shared understanding of gender-responsiveness in terms of policy-making, implementation, reporting and review processes, trainings sessions will be organized for permanent Secretaries, Cabinet Ministers and heads of Departments, and members of Legislative Assembly(ies) in coordination with the P&DD, I-PCD SCSW and WDD, and protection, investigating and judicial officers and magistrates through Home, Sindh and district Bars and the Sindh Judicial Academy. District and Tehsil level technical staff of different Departments will also be engaged so ensure spread of information concerning the Policy at local levels of governance.

The utility of any toolkit, guideline, directive or trainings course developed by the WDD to aid Government planning, monitoring, reporting and review of public policies will rest on the willingness and ability of public officers to use them effectively. These must thus be prepared in consultation with key government departments and tested for results, effectiveness and implementation challenges early in the policy implementation, and against the stated purpose and desired outcomes of such tools, guidelines, directives and training courses.

### 9.7.2. For Sindh Women’s Development Department staff

In order to effectively implement and where necessary, review compliance and address structural challenges to implementing the Provincial GEWE Policy, WDD’s staff would require knowledge, skills and clear guidelines to carry out their work effectively. In this regard, recruitment and training needs must be assessed to ensure adequate staffing and work-sharing with consummate funding.

In coordination with the Services and General Administration and Coordination, Finance and Planning & Development Departments, the following topics may be considered for different sets of trainings to improve basic gender understanding and implications for policy development, monitoring and review, and related service provision by respective Departments of the Sindh Government:

- gender analysis for policy development, implementation and impact evaluation;
- gender mainstreaming, including sex-disaggregated data collection and management of sector-specific and multi-sectoral information systems;
- indicator development
- strategic communication, negotiation, advocacy and lobbying
- alliance-building and networking;

- provincial and federal laws and policies, and international conventions and agreements relating to women's rights and gender equality; and
- personal development and leadership.







## Annex 1: List of participating organizations and government agencies

### Participating Non-governmental and Community-based Organizations

1. Al-Mehran Social Welfare
2. ARTS Foundation
3. Aurat Foundation
4. Baanh Bali
5. Bolo Bhi
6. CIRM, Hyderabad
7. CMP -USAID Blumont
8. Community Development Foundation
9. CSSP, Hyderabad
10. CSW, Hyderabad
11. Dawn newspaper
12. ERADA, Larkana
13. Goth Seengar Foundation
14. HANDS
15. Insaan Dost Social Organization
16. IRADA, Hyderabad
17. Legal Aid Society
18. Legal Rights Forum
19. LMDO, Sukkur
20. MAGNETS
21. MCTS, Mirpurkhas
22. MPS, Mirpurkhas
23. Nari Foundation
24. National Commission on Human Rights
25. NGOs Development Society
26. NOW Communities
27. NRF, Mirpurkhas
28. Peace Foundation
29. Pehel Pakistan
30. Peshruth Foundation
31. Pirbhat
32. PVDP, Mirpurkhas
33. Radhna, Mirpurkhas
34. Radiant social welfare organization
35. RDA, Thar
36. RDHR, Hyderabad
37. Roshni Development Foundation
38. Rural Development Foundation
39. Rural Development Initiative
40. Sindh Agricultural and Forestry Workers Coordinating Organization
41. Sami Foundation
42. SAP-PK
43. SELD
44. Sehkar Foundation
45. Shanti Association
46. Shifa Welfare Association
47. Shirkat Gah – Women’s Resource Center
48. Sindh Development Society
49. Sindh Rural Support Program
50. SRPO, Mirpurkhas
51. SSSWA, Kashmore
52. Strengthening Participatory Organization
53. Sub Rang Society
54. Sukaar Welfare
55. Suraj Sansar
56. SZABIST (ZABTech)
57. The Change Social Welfare
58. Visionary Foundation Pakistan
59. War Against Rape
60. WDFP
61. Women’s Action Forum (Karachi, and Hyderabad)

### Participating Government Departments

1. Sindh Women Development Department
2. Sindh Commission on the Status of Women
3. Sindh Social Welfare Department
4. Sindh Police (Home Department)
5. Sindh Prosecution Services
6. Sindh Law, Parliamentary Affairs and Human Rights Department
7. Sindh Labor & Human Resources Department
8. Sindh Health Department
9. Sindh Education & Literacy Department
10. Sindh Energy Department
11. Sindh Special Education Department
12. Environment Climate Change & Coastal Development



## Annex 2: List of laws, policies and (multi) sectoral Strategic Plans reviewed for Sindh's Provincial GEWE Policy

### List of Laws and related Rules of Business/ Criminal Procedure Code (where notified) reviewed

1. The Sindh Protection of Human Rights Act, 2011
2. The Sindh Child Protection Authority Act, 2011
3. The Sindh Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act, 2013
4. The Sindh Protection and Promotion of Breast Feeding and Child Nutrition Act, 2013
5. The Sindh Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2013
6. The Sindh Industrial Relations Act, 2013
7. The Sindh Child Marriages Restraint Act, 2014
8. The Sindh Commission on the Status of Women Act, 2015
9. The Sindh Home-Based Workers Act, 2018
10. Sindh Hindus Marriage (amendment) Act, 2018
11. The Sindh Minimum Wages Act, 2016
12. The Sindh Maternity Benefits Act, 2018
13. The Sindh Prohibition of Corporal Punishment Act, 2017
14. The Sindh Prohibition of Employment of Children Act, 2017
15. The Sindh Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Act, 2017 (mandatory DNA in rape)
16. The Sindh Minimum Wages (Amendment) Act, 2018
17. The Sindh Employees Old-Age Benefits (Amendment) Act, 2018
18. The Sindh Employees Social Security (Amendment) Act, 2018
19. The Sindh Workers Welfare Fund (Amendment) Act, 2018
20. The Sindh Forensic Science Agency Act, 2017
21. The Sindh Companies Profits (Workers Participation) (Amendment) Act, 2016, amended 2017
22. The Sindh Senior Citizens Welfare Act, 2016
23. The Sindh Bonded Labor System (Abolition) Act, 2016
24. The Sindh Criminal Prosecution Service (Constitution, Functions and Powers) (Amendment) Act, 2016
25. The Sindh Differently abled persons (Employment, Rehabilitation and Welfare) Act, 2015, amended 2017
26. The Sindh School Education Standards and Curriculum Act, 2015
27. The Sindh Environmental Protection Act, 2014
28. The Sindh Healthcare Commission Act, 2014
29. The Sindh Witness Protection Act, 2013
30. The Sindh Tenancy (Amendment) Act, 2013
31. The Sindh Mental Health Act, 2013
32. The Sindh Peoples Local Government Act, 2013
33. The Sindh Fisheries (Amendment) Act, 2011
34. The Sindh Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority Act, 2010
35. The Sindh Agricultural Produce Markets (Amendment) Act, 2010
36. Federal Protection Against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act, 2010;
37. Elections Act 2017;
38. Federal Anti-women Practices Act (Criminal Laws Second Amendment), 2011 – forced marriage and inheritance deprivation;
39. Federal Anti-Rape Act (Criminal Laws Amendment), 2016;
40. Federal Criminal Law (Amendment) (Offences in the name or pretext of Honor) Act, 2016;
41. Federal Acid Control and Acid Crime Prevention Act, 2016;

42. Federal Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act, 2016;
43. Sindh Criminal Prosecution Service (Constitution, Functions and Powers) (Amendment) Act, 2016
44. Sindh Forensic Science Agency Act, 2017;
45. Federal Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2017;
46. Federal Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act 2018.

**List of Policies and Action Plans reviewed:**

1. Sindh Education Policy 2009;
2. National Judicial Policy, 2009 (updated 2012);
3. Sindh Health Sector Strategy, 2012-2020;
4. Sindh Strategic Sector Plan for Drinking Water, Sanitation and Hygiene, 2016-2026;
5. Sindh Population Policy, 2016;
6. Pakistan Multi-Sectoral Action for Nutrition Program Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF), 2016;
7. Sindh Non-Formal Education Policy, 2017;
8. Sindh Costed Implementation Plan (CIP) on Family Planning, 2017;
9. Sindh Standards for Family Planning Services, 2017;
10. National School Safety Framework, 2017;
11. Sindh Agriculture Policy, 2018;
12. Sindh Poverty Reduction Strategy and Community Driven Local Development (CDLD) Policy, 2018;
13. Sindh Youth Policy, 2018;
14. Sindh Education Sector Plan, 2019;
15. Sindh Commission on the Status of Women Strategic Plan, 2019.

### Annex 3: Notified functions of the Provincial Sindh Commission on Status of Women (SCSW)

- a. Examine the policy, programs and other measures taken or to be taken by Government for gender equality, women's empowerment, political participation, representation, assess, implementation and make suitable recommendations to the concerned authorities;
- b. Review all Provincial laws, rules and regulations prejudicial to the legitimate interest and rights of women and suggest accordingly in term of replacement, amendment, addition or legislation afresh essentially needed to eliminate discrimination, safeguard and promote the interest of women and achieve gender equality before law in accordance with the Constitution and obligations under international covenants and commitments;
- c. Sponsor, steer, encourage research to generate information, analysis and studies and maintain a database relating to women and gender issues to provide knowledge and awareness for Government policy and strategic action for women empowerment;
- d. Develop and maintain interaction and dialogue with nongovernmental organizations, experts and individuals in society and an active association with similar commissions and institutions in other provinces for collaboration and action to achieve gender equality in the province;
- e. Mobilize grants from domestic sources and international sources in order to meet any of its obligation or for the performing of its functions;
- f. Facilitate and monitor implementation of international instruments and obligations affecting women and girls advise to Government in providing opinions and inputs to the Federal Government before accession to any such proposed international instrument, protocol or treat by Federal Government;
- g. Seek and receive information, data and documents from any Provincial or Federal sources or entity in the course of performance of its functions;
- h. Inspect any jail, sub-jail or other places of custody where women and girls are kept and to make appropriate recommendations to the authorities concerned;
- i. Act for advocacy, lobbying, coalition building, networking and as a catalyst for promotion of cause of women to facilitate their participation in all spheres of life including legal, economic, social and political empowerment;
- j. Liaise with the National Commission on the Status of Women and other Provincial Commissions or any other relevant body;
- k. Monitor mechanism and institutional procedure for redressal of violation of women's rights; and
- l. Perform any other functions which may be assigned to it by Government.
- m. The Commission shall, with the approval of Executive Committee as defined Section 14, fix an honorarium or remuneration of advisors, consultants and experts as may be prescribed; and
- n. The Commission shall consider, approve and monitor implementation of the Strategic Plan and the Annual Budget.

## Annex 4: References

<sup>1</sup> The 12 Critical Areas are: 1. Women in poverty; 2. Education & training for women; 3. Women & health; 4. Violence against women; 5. Women in armed conflict; 6. Women & the economy; 7. Women in power & decision-making; 8. Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women; 9. Human rights of women; 10. Women & the media; 11. Women & the environment; and 12. The girl-child.

<sup>2</sup> United Nations, 1995: para 296.

<sup>3</sup> Beijing Platform for Action, 1995. p. 128. Available from:

[https://beijing20.unwomen.org/~media/headquarters/attachments/sections/csw/pfa\\_e\\_final\\_web.pdf](https://beijing20.unwomen.org/~media/headquarters/attachments/sections/csw/pfa_e_final_web.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> OECD (2007). *Gender Equality and Public Sector Capacity Development. Tipsheet # 6: What are Women's Machineries?* Available from <http://oecd.org/dac/gender-development/44896421.pdf>.

<sup>5</sup> Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Asia and the Pacific: Perspectives of Governments on 20 years of Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (UNESCAP, 2015), Bangkok. ST/ESCAP/2726, p. 80. Available from: [https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/B20%20Gender%20Equality%20Report%20v10-3-E%20\(Final%20for%20web\).pdf](https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/B20%20Gender%20Equality%20Report%20v10-3-E%20(Final%20for%20web).pdf).

<sup>6</sup> ECOSOC Agreed Conclusions, 1997/2.

<sup>7</sup> Sharp, R. and D. Elson (2008). *Improving Budgets: A Framework for Assessing Gender-Responsive Budget Initiatives*, in Sri Mastuti and others, eds., *Audit Gender Terhadap Anggaran* (Jakarta, CiBA).

<sup>8</sup> *Summary of Proceedings: Regional Consultation with National Women's Machineries on Strengthening CEDAW Implementation, Monitoring and Accountability* (2016), United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women).

<sup>9</sup> Emma Bell et al (2002). *National Machineries for Women in Development: Experiences, lessons and strategies*. Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, Brighton BN1 9RE, UK.

<sup>10</sup> Derbyshire, H (2002). *Gender Manual: A Practical Guide for Development Policy Makers and Practitioners*. Social Development Division, DFID. Available

from: <https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+http://www.dfid.gov.uk/Documents/publications/gendermanual.pdf>.

<sup>11</sup> Fifth periodic report submitted by Pakistan under article 18 of the CEDAW Convention (submitted 09 October 2018), <http://docstore.ohchr.org/SelfServices/FilesHandler.ashx?enc=6QkG1d%2fPPRiCAqhKb7yhss1YTn0qfX85YJz37palgUBrErgiqrOyw7XMnywFm6fCjGR6PsgkT7A4T6mAHN6R81u%2b4NVr7Wlm6OOiuOly5qAIKqHwqQoBvCCLxiPGvtbi>.

<sup>12</sup> Interview with Chairperson, National Commission on the Status of Women, Ms. Khawar Mumtaz, 17 November 2018.

<sup>13</sup> "The system provides gender disaggregated data on over 300 indicators encompassing key aspects of women's lives. The system is updated periodically with the objective of strengthening institutional response to women issues. The National Commission on the Status of Women is also in the process of developing a GMIS at national level as well as the model is being replicated by other provinces." Pakistan State report to UN CSW, 2018.

The Punjab GMIS is exemplary and if modeled around the same framework for Sindh, can be instrumental in addressing data unavailability or collation issues. The nature of data needed can be determined based on the role WDD intends to play moving ahead with the revised GEWE policy.

<sup>14</sup> Conversation with Anis Haroon, ex-Caretaker Minister, Women's Development Department, Government of Sindh.

<sup>15</sup> Sindh Commission on the Status of Women Act, 2015, available from:

[https://www.af.org.pk/Acts\\_Fed\\_Provincial/Sindh\\_Acts\\_since\\_2002/Sindh%202015/The%20Sindh%20Commission%20on%20the%20Status%20of%20Women%20Act,%202015.pdf](https://www.af.org.pk/Acts_Fed_Provincial/Sindh_Acts_since_2002/Sindh%202015/The%20Sindh%20Commission%20on%20the%20Status%20of%20Women%20Act,%202015.pdf)

<sup>16</sup> Source: WDD Budget book 2019-20.

<sup>17</sup> Taken from WDD's (unpublished) Annual Report, 2017.

<sup>18</sup> Sources at Sindh WDD, 16 October 2018, Sindh WDD Directorate in Karachi.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Sources at WDD, 16 October 2018, Sindh WDD Directorate in Karachi.

<sup>21</sup> According to remarks made by Yamini Mishra, Gender Responsive Budgeting Specialist, UN Women Office for India, Bhutan, Maldives and Sri Lanka, "Budgeting is a process that entails aligning national development plans and goals and human rights commitments with budget policies in a transparent and coherent manner. Budgeting is not only an exercise that seeks to balance income and revenue but

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*one that ought to utilize available resources in an efficient, effective and equitable manner to address needs and achieve aspired development goals. People's access to services and resources are determined by how budgets are formulated. Discrimination can either be reinforced or eliminated by budget policies. Therefore, budget actors are mandated to situate people's rights at the core of their policies".*

<sup>22</sup> As available from the Provincial Assembly of Sindh official website: <http://www.pas.gov.pk/index.php/acts/tenures/en>, and Departmental websites.

<sup>23</sup> Provided in a separate document submitted with UN women, including a Situational Analysis related to gender equality and women's empowerment indicators, and a review of Sindh WDD's performance since 2003.

<sup>24</sup> The 12 Critical Areas of BPfA are: 1. Women in poverty; 2. Education & training for women; 3. Women & health; 4. Violence against women; 5. Women in armed conflict; 6. Women & the economy; 7. Women in power & decision-making; 8. Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women; 9. Human rights of women; 10. Women & the media; 11. Women & the environment; and 12. The girl-child.

<sup>25</sup> State of Human Rights in 2018 report, Human Rights Commission of Pakistan. Available from: <http://hrccp-web.org/publication/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/State-of-Human-Rights-in-2018-English.pdf>, pp 119.

<sup>26</sup> Peter Jacob. 2019. A Long Wait for Justice: A compliance analysis of the Supreme Court's verdict on 19 June 2014.

<sup>27</sup> For other measures taken see <http://www.fia.gov.pk/en/ahtc.php>.

<sup>28</sup> CRVS is defined as the continuous, permanent, compulsory and universal recording and production of vital statistics on the occurrence and characteristics of vital events in accordance with national laws, rules, regulations and policies from time to time in force, including births, deaths, fetal deaths, marriages, divorces, adoptions, legitimations and recognitions.

<sup>29</sup> Civil Registration and Vital Statistics 2013: Challenges, best practice and design principles for modern systems. World Health Organization. Available from:

[https://www.who.int/healthinfo/civil\\_registration/crvs\\_report\\_2013.pdf](https://www.who.int/healthinfo/civil_registration/crvs_report_2013.pdf).

<sup>30</sup> For details, see parallel review of provincial and federal laws related to women: (Advocate of High Court) Maliha Zia Lari, "National Legal Framework Related to Women in Pakistan". UN Women, Pakistan (published)

<sup>31</sup> As per Strategic Plan, undertake systematic review of rules and mechanisms of the Muslim Family Laws Ordinance (MFLO), 1961, and amend where necessary such rules and mechanisms as needed to improve family and civil rights of women and girls.

<sup>32</sup> Multidimensional Poverty in Pakistan report (2016), Ministry of Planning, Development and Reform. Available from: <https://www.pk.undp.org/content/dam/pakistan/docs/MPI/Multidimensional%20Poverty%20in%20Pakistan.pdf>.

<sup>33</sup> <http://www.pk.undp.org/content/pakistan/en/home/presscenter/pressreleases/2016/06/20/pakistan-s-new-poverty-index-reveals-that-4-out-of-10-pakistanis-live-in-multidimensional-poverty.html>.

<sup>34</sup> Integrated Food Security Phase Classification. Acute Food Insecurity Situation in Sindh. Available from: <http://resourcecenter.nhnpakistan.org/phocadownload/INGOs/research/Presentation%20on%20IPC%20Acute%20Analysis-Final%20Results-%2025%20July%202017.pdf>.

<sup>35</sup> Women and Living Wages in Pakistan; Centre for Peace and Development Initiatives, March 2017, <http://www.cpdi-pakistan.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Women-and-Living-Wages-in-Pakistan.pdf>.

<sup>36</sup> Fiscal Space for Social Protection: A Handbook for Assessing Financing Options. ILO (2019). Available from: <https://www.social-protection.org/gimi/RessourcePDF.action?id=55694>.

<sup>37</sup> Sindh Agriculture Policy, 2018. Available from: [http://www.wsip.com.pk/documents/publications/Sindh%20Agriculture%20Policy%20\(2018%20-%202030\).pdf](http://www.wsip.com.pk/documents/publications/Sindh%20Agriculture%20Policy%20(2018%20-%202030).pdf).

<sup>38</sup> Act available from: <http://www.pas.gov.pk/uploads/acts/Sindh%20Act%20No.XXIX%20of%202017.pdf>.

<sup>39</sup> Act available from: <http://www.nowpdp.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Sindh-Act-No.XVI-of-2015.pdf>.

<sup>40</sup> For Functions of the Punjab Social Protection Authority, see <https://pspa.punjab.gov.pk/functions>.

<sup>41</sup> Act available from: <https://sindh.gov.pk/dpt/swd/senior%20citizen.pdf>.

<sup>42</sup> Sindh Agriculture Policy, 2018-2030. Available from: [http://www.wsip.com.pk/documents/publications/Sindh%20Agriculture%20Policy%20\(2018%20-%202030\).pdf](http://www.wsip.com.pk/documents/publications/Sindh%20Agriculture%20Policy%20(2018%20-%202030).pdf)

<sup>43</sup> For Functions of the Punjab Social Protection Authority, see <https://pspa.punjab.gov.pk/functions>.

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Act available from: <http://www.pbs.gov.pk/sites/default/files//NHA%20report%202013-14....pdf>.

<sup>46</sup> Health Profile of Sindh (2017), Bureau of Statistics, Planning & Development Department, Government of Sindh. <http://sindhbos.gov.pk/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Health-Profile-of-Sindh-2017.pdf>.

<sup>47</sup> Act available from: <http://shcc.org.pk/public-docs/SHCC-ACT-2013.pdf>.

<sup>48</sup> In July 2015, a petition was filed in the Sindh High Court on behalf of an obstetric fistula survivor in Karachi, by Dr. Shershah Syed and Tehrik-e-Niswan. The petition sought to hold the Sindh Government accountable for the widespread incidence of obstetric fistula. The petition asks the High Court to order the government to implement the maternal health policies adopted several years ago which would prevent the occurrence of obstetric fistula as well as other maternal morbidities and deaths. The petition also asks the High Court to recognize that the reproductive rights of women are fundamental rights under the constitution.

<sup>49</sup> Notably, see reports by Population Council; Shirkat Gah – Women’s Resource Center; Pathfinder International; Rahnuma Family Planning Association of Pakistan, and Aahung, among others.

<sup>50</sup> Costed Implementation Plan for Family Planning, Population Welfare Department, 2017. Available form: <http://pwsindh.gov.pk/Publications/e-books/CIP%20Sindh-03%2015%2016-final.pdf>.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Sindh Population Policy, 2016. Available from: [http://pwsindh.gov.pk/Publications/e-books/Sindh%20Population%20Policy%202016%20\(Approved\).pdf](http://pwsindh.gov.pk/Publications/e-books/Sindh%20Population%20Policy%202016%20(Approved).pdf).

<sup>53</sup> Sindh Costed Implementation Plan on Family Planning, 2016-17.

<sup>54</sup> Manual of Standards of Family Planning Services, 2017. Available from: [https://services.sindhhealth.gov.pk/healthRest/upload/documents/family\\_planning/FP%20Standards%202017%20Sindh.pdf](https://services.sindhhealth.gov.pk/healthRest/upload/documents/family_planning/FP%20Standards%202017%20Sindh.pdf).

<sup>55</sup> FP2020 Working Group, CIP Cell, Population Welfare Department, Government of Sindh.

<sup>56</sup> Sindh Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, 2014. Available from: <http://sindhbos.gov.pk/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Sindh-MICS-Key-Findings-Report-2014.pdf>

<sup>57</sup> Act available from: <http://www.pas.gov.pk/uploads/acts/Sindh%20Act%20No.L%20of%202013.pdf>.

<sup>58</sup> The social determinants of health (SDH) are the conditions in which people are born, grow, work, live, and age, and the wider set of forces and systems shaping the conditions of daily life. These forces and systems include economic policies and systems, development agendas, social norms, social policies and political systems (World Health Organization). The Government of Canada, for instance holds that the overall determinants of health are the broad range of personal, social, economic and environmental factors that determine individual and population health. The main determinants of health include: Income and social status; Employment and working conditions; Education and literacy; Childhood experiences; Physical environments; Social supports and coping skills; Healthy behaviors; Access to health services; Biology and genetic endowment; Gender; and Culture.

<sup>59</sup> See UN Women’s Essential Services Package for Women and Girls Subject to Violence: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2015/12/essential-services-package-for-women-and-girls-subject-to-violence>.

<sup>60</sup> Act available from: [sindheducation.gov.pk/Contents/Menu/Sindh\\_Bill\\_RTFE.pdf](http://sindheducation.gov.pk/Contents/Menu/Sindh_Bill_RTFE.pdf).

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 "Protection Officer" means an officer appointed by Government under section 21 (of the Act).  
 21.(1) "Government shall, by notification in the official Gazette, appoint a gazetted officer to act as Protection Officer, for the purposes of this Act. (2) The Protection Officer shall possess such qualifications and experience as may be prescribed under the rules.  
 22. It shall be the duty of the Protection Officer –  
 (a) to make a domestic incident report to the Protection Committee, in such form and in such manner as may be prescribed, upon receipt of a complaint of domestic violence and forward copies thereof to the Protection Committee within the local limits of whose jurisdiction domestic violence is alleged to have been committed and to the service providers in that area;  
 (b) to make an application in such form and in such manner as may be prescribed to the court, if the aggrieved person so desires, claiming relief for issuance of a protection order;  
 (c) to ensure that the aggrieved person is provided legal aid;  
 (d) to maintain a list of all service providers providing legal aid or counseling, shelter homes and medical facilities in a local area within the jurisdiction of the court;  
 (e) to make available a safe place of residence, if the aggrieved person so requires and forward a copy of his report of having lodged the aggrieved person in a shelter home to the Protection Committee;  
 (f) to get the aggrieved person medically examined, if he or she has sustained bodily injuries and forward a copy of the medical report to the Protection Committee having jurisdiction in the area where the domestic violence is alleged to have been taken place;

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- (g) to ensure that the order for monetary relief under section 12 is complied with and executed in accordance with the procedure prescribed; and
- (h) to perform such other duties as may be prescribed.”

<sup>84</sup> Labor Force Survey Annual Report 2017-18, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics. Available from:

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<sup>85</sup> Sindh Union Council and Community Economic Strengthening Support Program website:

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<sup>86</sup> Sindh Agriculture Policy, 2018-2030. Pg. 5.

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<sup>88</sup> See Women’s Mobility and Labor Force Participation in Karachi project

<sup>89</sup> Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, Ministry of Finance. Available from:

[http://www.finance.gov.pk/survey/chapters\\_16/12\\_Population.pdf](http://www.finance.gov.pk/survey/chapters_16/12_Population.pdf).

<sup>90</sup> Act available from: <http://www.pas.gov.pk/uploads/acts/Sindh%20Act%20No.XVIII%20of%202016.pdf>.

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<sup>94</sup> Act available from: <http://www.pas.gov.pk/uploads/acts/Sindh%20Act%20No.XII%20of%202016.pdf>.

<sup>95</sup> Occupational Safety and Health Situation in Sindh 2014-15 report. Labor and Human Resource Department), Government of the Sindh; and International Labor Organization, Islamabad. Available from: [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/---ilo-islamabad/documents/publication/wcms\\_566383.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/---ilo-islamabad/documents/publication/wcms_566383.pdf).

<sup>96</sup> Act available from: <http://www.pas.gov.pk/uploads/acts/Sindh%20Act%20No.III%20of%202017.pdf>.

<sup>97</sup> One of the requirements to classify as skilled worker, Skill Level 1 (out of 4, with 4 denoting the most skilled) requires workers to have completed primary education. Pakistan Standard Classification of Occupations 2015, pg 12.

<sup>98</sup> Internet Live Stats (2016): <https://www.internetlivestats.com/internet-users/pakistan/>.

<sup>99</sup> Can tackling childcare fix STEM’s gender diversity problem? World Bank, 2017. Available from:

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<sup>105</sup> Federal Anti-Rape Act (Criminal Laws Amendment), 2016.

<sup>106</sup> Civil society consultations across 4 Divisions of Sindh, Nov-Dec 2018.

<sup>107</sup> Act available from: <http://www.pas.gov.pk/uploads/acts/Sindh%20Act%20No.LI%20of%202013.pdf>.

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<sup>110</sup> SJA Gender Training Manual, 2014.

<sup>111</sup> For instance: (1) The implementation of Criminal Law (Amendment) (Offences Relating to Rape) Act, 2016 require courts to protect victim privacy and shielding victims from further traumatization, including conducting in-camera trials, using screens and

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video links to record testimonies; and (2) Time caps vide the National Judicial Policy and recent VAW/G related laws (specifically rape) require all criminal trials to be concluded within a set period, Both of these have implications for court policies (monitoring quality of prosecution and judgements), procedures, culture (for instance, effectively disallowing assailing of rape victims' character) and actual infrastructure (waiting rooms, audio/visual aids, screens, etc.)

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<sup>115</sup> Anwar et al (2016) *Gender, vulnerability, and violence in urban Pakistan*. Available from: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/301636359\\_Gender\\_and\\_Violence\\_in\\_Urban\\_Pakistan\\_Final\\_Report\\_April\\_26\\_2016](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/301636359_Gender_and_Violence_in_Urban_Pakistan_Final_Report_April_26_2016).

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<sup>119</sup> Sindh Tenancy Act, 1950. Available from: [https://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/sindh\\_tenancy\\_act\\_1950.pdf](https://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/sindh_tenancy_act_1950.pdf)

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This publication has been funded by the U.S. Department of State through the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement. The views expressed in this publication are not necessarily the views of the U.S. Department of State.