

**PAKISTANI WOMEN IN CONTEXT:
A COMPANION VOLUME TO THE
PAKISTAN COUNTRY GENDER ASSESSMENT**

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A Compilation of Four Papers By:

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Abstract

The Pakistan Country Gender Assessment (CGA) has identified constraints to improving the capabilities of women in the broad dimensions of health, education, the legal environment, and participation in the labor force and other aspects of the public sphere. Within these dimensions are specific contexts that present conspicuous challenges to women, and thus require more in-depth examination. In this companion volume to the CGA, papers by local experts provide valuable insights into how gender issues play out in the contexts of a) rights and protections in the legal and political arenas, and b) sustainable environmental development. These topics were identified through discussions with local institutions and academic, development and legal practitioners from Pakistan.

First, “Violence against Women and Impediments in Access to Justice,” written by Zia Ahmed Awan with assistance from Lawyers for Human Rights and Legal Aid (LHRLA), examines the issue of violence against women in great detail. The paper offers the historical perspective and discusses the criminal justice system and the victimization of women in this system. It also addresses the role of the legal system in this context and various attempts to reform it.

In “Family and Juvenile Law,” Justice Majida Razvi details the legal aspect of issues that relate to women in Pakistan. Her paper highlights various rules and clauses in Pakistani law regarding women and children that require reconsideration with a fresh approach. It also points out lacunae in the legal system and suggests means of remedying them.

Rukhshanda Naz’s “Training of Women Councilors in Pakistan: A Review” reviews and analyzes the impact of training programs initiated by NGOs and government organizations for newly elected councilors from all over Pakistan. The report gives informed suggestions on how women can be empowered through their involvement in local government and how this can effect change in attitude in a patriarchal society.

Finally, “Women and Water: Issues of Entitlement, Access and Equity,” by Simi Kamal, presents a powerful argument for how gender disparities distort access to land and water. Using the concept of the ‘water web,’ Kamal explains the interrelation of gender roles and the use of environmental resources, and suggests how to initiate gender mainstreaming to reduce disparities in this context.

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