

**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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Table of Contents

Section One

<u>Violence Against Women and Impediments in Access to Justice</u>	8
By Zia Ahmed Awan and LHRLA Team	
A- Background	9
i- A Historical View of Violence Against Women	9
ii- The Issue of Violence in the Subcontinent	9
iii- A Global Issue	10
B- Present Situation	11
i- Poverty and Violence Against Women	11
ii- Cases of Violence Against Women in Pakistan	11
iii- Cases of Violence Against Men in Pakistan	12
iv- Abuse of Women	13
v- Prevalence of Domestic Violence	13
vi- Socio-Customary Practice of Karo Kari/Honor Killing	15
vii- Apprehensions on Honor Killing Bill	15
C- Violence Against Women and Media	17
D- Phenomenon and Issues of Violence Against Women	19
i- Legal System	19
ii- Jails of Pakistan	19
iii- Discriminatory Laws	21
E- Criminal Justice System and Victimization of Women	23
i- Role of Police and Prison Officials	23
ii- Torture under Detention	24
iii- Excerpts of Some Newspaper Reports on Police Torture	25
iv- Poor State of Women Police Stations and Jails	26
v- Police Complaints Authority	27
F- Gaps and Loopholes in the System	28
i- Delays	28
ii- Release of an Accused Female on Bail	28
iii- Absence of Witnesses	29
iv- System's Negative Impact	29
v- Non-Availability of Documents	30
G- Pakistan's Law and Justice Sector Reform Experience	31
i- Access to Justice Program	31

H- LHRLA's Initiatives for the Protection of Women	33
i- Madadgaar	33
ii- Legal Empowerment of the Populace Project	34
iii- Biggest Network of Service Delivery Organization	35
iv- Positive Steps Taken by the Government	36
I- Recommendations	38
i- Laws	38
ii- International Protocols & Conventions	38
iii- Judiciary	38
iv- Police	38
v- Women Police	39
vi- Legal Aid	39
vii- Jail & Remand Home	39
viii- Allocation of Resources	39
ix- Women Commission on the Status of Women	39
x- Crises Centers	40
xi- Civil Society Organizations	40
xii- Donor Agencies	40
List of Tables:	
Table 1: Cases of Violence Against Women in Pakistan	11
Table 2: Cases of Violence Against Men in Pakistan	12
Table 3: Total Prison Population in Pakistan	19
Table 4: Under Trial Female Prisoners	20
Table 5: Convicted Female Inmates	20
Table 6: Some Prominent Government and Non-Governmental Partners	35
List of Case Studies	
Case Study 1: Woman Burnt Alive	14
Case Study 2: Effects of News Reporting on a Survivor of Domestic Violence	18
Case Study 3: A Letter to the President of Pakistan	21
Case Study 4: Condemnation on Police Brutality at Gizri Police Station, Karachi	25
Case Study 5: A Woman's Ordeal at the WPS	26
Case Study 6: Victim Denied Bail due to Bureaucratic Delays	28
Case Study 7: A Gang Rape Case	33
List of Annexures	
Annex 1: Sources of Human Rights	41
Annex 2: Statistical Review of the Madadgaar Help Line Services	42
Bibliography	45

<u>Training of Women Councilors in Pakistan: A Review</u> By Rukhshanda Naz	46
A- Background	47
B- Development of the LG System: An Overview	51
i- Pre-Independence Era	51
ii- Post-Independence Era	51
iii- LBs Elections 2000-2001	53
C- Constraints to Effective Political Participation	55
i- Issues Relating to Lack of Knowledge about Laws and Systems	55
ii- Issues Relating to Lacunas of Laws and Rules	56
iii- Issues Relating to Lack of Applications of Laws and Rules	57
iv- Issues Relating to Lack of Cooperation by Men Colleagues	57
v- Issues Relating to Social, Cultural and Gender Biases	57
vi- Issues Relating to Lack of Administrative Support	58
vii- Issues Relating to Financial Discrimination in Allocation of Funds and Implementation of Schemes	58
D- Training Programs for Women Councilors	60
i- An Overview of Training of Women Councilors in Pakistan	60
ii- Initiatives taken by the Government in Selected Areas	60
iii- Training of Women Councilors by International Organizations	62
iv- Training of Women Councilors by NGOs	65
E- A Critical Review of Training Conducted by NGOs and Government Institutions	72
F- Impact of Civil Society and Intervention of Government Institutions	74
G- Recommendations	76
List of Tables:	
Table 1: Women in Local Government: A Province-wise Comparison	48
Table 2: Local Bodies By-Elections 2004	49
Tables 2a: LG elections in NWFP; 2b: LG elections in Punjab; 2c: LG elections in Balochistan	49
Table 2d: LG elections in Sindh	50
Table 2e: Districts where No Elections were Held on Women Seats	50
Table 2f: Seats for Women in LG Election	50
Table 2g: Total No of Women Councilors in LG Elections	50
Table 3: Progress Made So Far	62
Bibliography	77

<u>Women and Water: Issues of Entitlement, Access and Equity</u>	79
By Simi Kamal	
A- Women’s Entitlement and Access to Water	80
i- Introduction	80
ii- The Water Situation in Pakistan	81
iii- Status of Women and Pakistan’s Commitments	83
iv- The Framework of Analysis – The Gender and Water Web	85
B- Gender Analysis of Water Sector in Pakistan	87
i- Building Theory on Gender and Water	87
ii- Experiences and Interpretation of Realities in Relation to Water in Pakistan	87
iii- Conducting Research and Investigation on the Gender Situation in the Water Sector	88
iv- Pressure of Citizens’ Groups for Gender Equality in the Water Sector	93
v- Strengthening Representative Political and Governance Structures for Gender Parity in the Water Sector	94
vi- Obtaining Stated Political Commitment on Gender and Water	95
vii- Gender Related Rights, Laws, Policies and Planning for Water	96
viii- Securing Resources and Allocations for Gender Initiatives in the Water Sector	99
ix- Location and Sharing of Responsibility for Gender Perspective in the Water Sector – Developing Institutional Framework	100
x- Establishing Codes of Conduct, Norms and Procedures for Gender Related Participation and Decision-Making	101
xi- Developing Methodologies and Technologies for Gender Mainstreaming	103
xii- Capacity Development for Gender Based Interventions in the Water Sector	104
xiii- Gender Mainstreaming in Water Initiatives, Programs and Projects	105
C- Policy Recommendations	110
i- Research and Gender Assessments	110
ii- Gender Budgeting	111
iii- Policy Formulation Processes	112
iv- Proactive Institutional, Participative and Support Structures	112
v- Capacity Building	113
vi- Immediate Actions	113
List of Figures:	
Fig 1: Availability of Water	81
Fig 2: Major Agricultural Activities Performed by Women Farmers	84
Fig 3: The Gender and Water Web	86
List of Tables:	
Table 1: Water Supply to Karachi	82
Table 2: Waste Water Scenario in Pakistan	82
Table 3: Gender Indicators	83
Table 4: Characteristics of Village Water Supply and Collection	89
Table 5: Citizens’ Actions on Women and Water	94

Table 6: Political Participation in the Water Sector	95
Table 7: Gender Analysis of Pakistan Draft Water Policy	98
Table 8: Strategic Gender Actions & their Prevalence in Pakistan's Water Sector	103
Table 9: OPP Drainage Infrastructure	106
Annexures	
Annex 1: Scope of the Paper	114
Annex 2: Gender Chapter from Framework for Action (Pakistan Water Partnership)	115
Annex 3: Example of a Policy on Women Addressing Environment Issues	117
Annex 4: Section on Gender Mainstreaming in South Asia Vision Document	120
Annex 5: Women and Water Network: Goals and Functions	122
Annex 6: Summary of International Agreements Pertaining to Women and Water Signed by Pakistan	124
Annex7: Example of Gender Equity Strategy in a Government Body	126
Bibliography	127

Section Four

Family and Juvenile Laws

By Justice Majida Razvi

131

A- Family Laws

132

i- Introduction

132

ii- Muslim Family Laws Ordinance 1961

132

iii- Legal Aspects of MFLO 1961

134

iv- Lacunas in the Implementation of the Family Laws Ordinance and the Family Courts

134

v- Nikahnama

136

B- Juvenile Laws

137

i- Introduction

137

ii- Juvenile Justice System Ordinance 2000

137

iii- Lacunas in the Implementation of the Juvenile Justice System Ordinance

141

C- Recommendations

143

i- Recommendations in the Family Laws Ordinance

143

ii- Recommendations in the Juvenile Justice System Ordinance

144

iii- Some Other Recommendations

144

List of Acronyms and Words Used Frequently throughout the Report

145