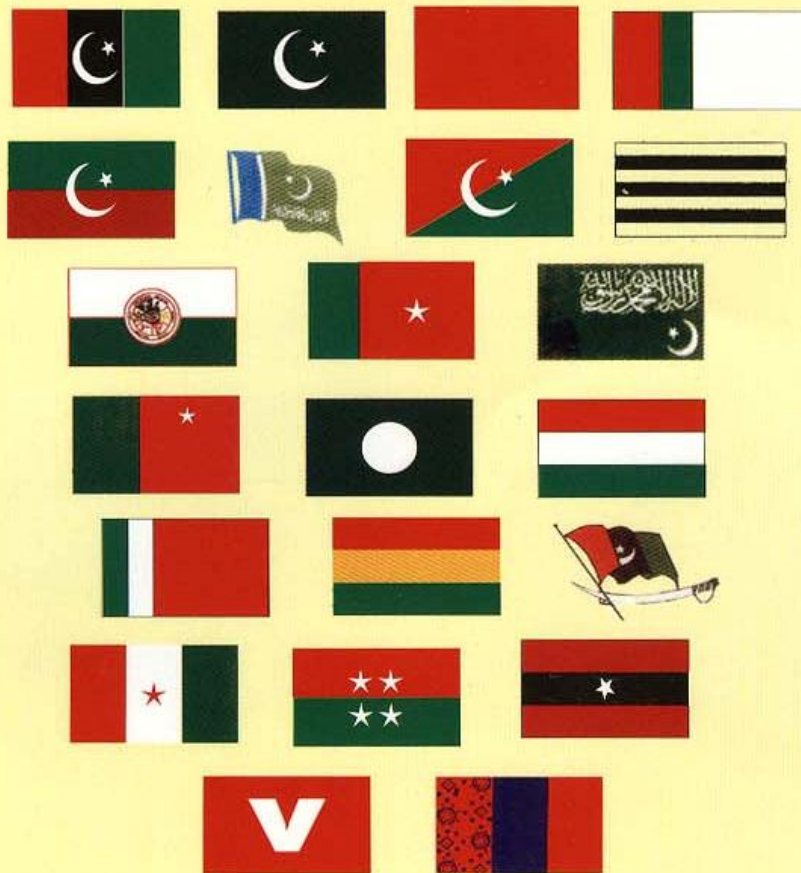


MANIFESTO SUGGESTIONS FOR WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

(FOR POLITICAL PARTIES)



Aurat Publication and Information Service Foundation

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INTRODUCTION

Over the past few decades there has been an increasing recognition of the situation of women's inequality at all levels – social, legal, political and economic. There has also been a growing awareness that this situation cannot be effectively reversed unless concrete and holistic measures are taken at all these different levels to redress the problems. But none of this can become possible unless there is a genuine political will and commitment at the highest policy-making levels towards women's empowerment, as well as a clear agenda of what needs to be done to make this a reality.

This document, based to a large extent on the recommendations of several recent governmental and non-governmental reports, and encompassing a wide range of strategies and concrete measures, seeks to provide such an agenda. The suggestions contained in it were primarily meant for political parties to include in their election manifestos, as an initial indication of their party's commitment to the cause of women's empowerment, and were sent to them in May 2002. But as our previous experience has shown, unless the issues are placed high on the priority list of party agendas and are fearlessly pursued regardless of whether the party forms the government or sits in the opposition, this is rarely enough. We, therefore, also see this document as a basic checklist for civil society, not only to assess how far political parties and candidates contesting general elections have committed themselves to the cause of women's empowerment, but also to assess their performance in the post-election period. We also believe that it is a document which prove useful for all policy and planning institutions and organisations, both in terms of providing general guidelines, as well as setting clear directions for implementation. As ever, we hope that the issues addressed in the document are treated with the seriousness and commitment they deserve.

We would like to acknowledge that this document has been prepared with the help of and substantial input from several concerned civil society organisations and committed individuals.

Aurat Foundation

July 2002

GENERAL

- Strive towards the creation of a just and humane society, based on values and principles of respect for human rights, democracy, and equality of all citizens, regardless of their race, religion, class, caste, gender, ethnicity or language.
- Make special efforts to secure the equal rights and status of all citizens, including women and minorities, and other disadvantaged groups, through: repealing all discriminatory and oppressive laws; taking strict action against discriminatory practices and customs; and undertaking affirmative measures for their empowerment in society.
- Promote a culture of peace and tolerance through: a mass-awareness campaign for inculcating values of peace and tolerance; consolidating peace movements and undertaking peace initiatives; promoting non-violent resolution of all conflicts; disbanding of all militant bodies; strictly screening and taking strong action against all nurseries of religious, sectarian, xenophobic and ethnic hatred; and creating a safe social and physical environment for all citizens, particularly the vulnerable sections of society.
- Review and re-structure all macro-economic policies and programmes, particularly those linked to the policies of international financial institutions and WTO, for their impact on poverty; and the elimination of all such policies and programmes which negatively impact the poor.
- Commitment to uphold State obligations under all International Treaties, Conventions and Declarations relating to human rights, to which Pakistan is a party; and to ratify other critical instruments e.g. the Optional Protocol on CEDAW.

POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND REPRESENTATION

To ensure women's effective participation and representation at all levels of political and public life, in particular at the decision-making level:

- Reserve overall 33 percent seats for women in all elective bodies (including the National and Provincial Assemblies, Senate and Local Government Bodies), and ensure that the reservation cuts across all categories within these bodies, e.g. Minorities, peasants, workers, technocrats etc.
- Ensure that elections to the seats reserved for women in the National Assembly, Provincial Assemblies and Local Government are direct and constituency-based.
- Amend electoral rules to provide that only those political parties which allocate 33 percent of tickets for general seats to women are allowed to contest elections.
- Amend the Political Parties Act (1962) to make it mandatory for all parties to have

a minimum 33 percent female membership, as well as a minimum 33 percent representation of women in all party committees, including the central and provincial executive committees.

- Amend the Constitution to ensure that legislators are free to vote according to their conscience in all matters not specifically covered in their party charters and manifestos, and that women legislators are further free to vote according to their conscience in all matters regarding women's rights and development issues.
- Update electoral rolls, systematically and immediately, to include all eligible women, and issue ID cards to all potential women voters as a priority, especially in remote, rural and tribal areas.
- Institute a system for collection and compilation of gender-disaggregated data with respect to voter turnout in elections.
- Develop systems and mechanisms to facilitate all women candidates contesting general seats, including but not restricted to: the creation of a financial pool to support women candidates; reduction of election sureties; provision of effective public transport facilities during elections; and establishing effective monitoring channels to ensure the implementation of laws relating to election expenses.
- Ensure that strict and prompt action under the law is taken against all parties, groups, bodies, candidates and individuals who seek to restrain or disallow women from exercising their right of franchise or contesting elections.
- Empower the Election Commission to immediately declare elections null and void in constituencies where a substantial number of women have been prevented from freely exercising their right of franchise or contesting elections, or there is large-scale non-participation of women in voting.
- Amend the Constitution to ensure that Local Government is given recognition and protection as a third tier of government.
- Ensure effective representation of women in all key policy/decision-making bodies and forums, including the Election Commission, Law Commission, economic/planning sector bodies, superior judiciary, advisory task forces etc.
- Ensure immediate implementation of the existing quotas of women in the civil services and subordinate judiciary as a first step.
- Enhance the minimum quota for women in the civil services to 10 percent in all sectors and grades including all government, semi-government and autonomous bodies: 15 percent women in National Pay-scales 20 and above, and in public and private sector organisations and institutions.
- Ensure women's effective and equitable representation and participation in local government institutions and advisory committees established for developmental programmes e.g. the Poverty Alleviation Programme, Kushhaal Pakistan Programme, etc.
- Ensure equal representation of women in all committees instituted at the local level for maintenance and monitoring of public programs such as School

Management Committees, Rural Water Supply and Sanitation, Public Safety Commissions, etc

LEGAL RIGHTS

To ensure the human rights of women and to eradicate all forms of discrimination against them, immediate action will be taken to:

- Repeal blatantly discriminatory and derogatory laws e.g. the Hudood Ordinances, Qanoon-e-Shahadat and Qisas and Diyat provisions incorporated in the Pakistan Penal Code.
- Reform all personal status laws to ensure equality of status, as well as women's financial security and rights in accordance with current socio-economic realities, and to expedite the process of justice in the family courts.
- Amend the Citizenship Act to remove all remaining discriminatory provisions.
- Remove all discriminatory provisions in the Pakistan Penal Code; amend the law to recognise marital rape as a penal offence and impose a more severe punishment for rape of a minor wife; and recognise a woman's right to abortion, in line with the recommendations of the approved report of the Commission of Inquiry on Women (1997).
- Eliminate contradictory provisions in law regarding the legal age of children, especially in criminal laws, and make necessary administrative and legal changes as required under the Child Rights Convention.
- Reform all other laws discriminatory to or adversely affecting women, in accordance with the recommendations of the Inquiry Commission Report of 1997.
- Amend the Constitution to ensure that: absolute equality of rights is reflected in the Fundamental Rights chapter; the provisions for non-discrimination and affirmative action are strengthened; and all provisions of the Constitution will be interpreted to accord with the fundamental rights provisions.
- Review the Council of Islamic Ideology to assess the impact of their recommendations on women and take appropriate action where necessary.
- Abolish all parallel legal and quasi-legal systems to ensure a uniform, integrated judicial system in the country, including the abolition of the Federal Shariat Court.
- Develop a legal framework to ensure compliance with international conventions/instruments relating to human rights signed, ratified or acceded to by Pakistan, in particular the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

VIOLENCE

To combat all forms of violence against women (including domestic violence, 'honour' killings, custodial violence, sexual violence and harassment, public humiliations, and prostitution and trafficking of women):

- Enact special legislation on domestic violence, and ensure that all cases of domestic violence against women and children are registered and prosecuted.
- Enact special legislation on child sexual abuse, and undertake measures for sensitive treatment of victims in police-stations, hospitals and courts.
- Enact legislation to ensure proper investigation in women's burn cases, and make it mandatory for doctors in hospitals to immediately report female burn cases and other alleged/suspected domestic violence cases to the police.
- Amend the law relating to sexual harassment to include all forms of sexual harassment and enhance the penalties; and make it mandatory for employers to respond to and monitor incidents of violence and harassment in the workplace.
- Amend laws relating to prostitution and trafficking of women, recognising women as victims of these practices, and undertake measures to rehabilitate or repatriate victims.
- Amend the Pakistan Penal Code to ensure that 'honour' killings are treated as qatl-i-amd; and remove all provisions which allow perpetrators of 'honour' killings or other forms of violence against women to get acquitted or receive minimal sentences.
- Strictly monitor incidents of violence against women by State agencies, set up special complaint cells for reporting such incidents, and take severe exemplary action against offenders.
- Establish support structures (shelters, crisis centres, legal aid and counselling centres, and burn units etc.) all over the country for female victims of violence and forced prostitution.
- Establish guidelines for all shelters to ensure that they are not run as sub-jails, but as institutions where women can voluntarily take refuge and leave; ensure proper management, security, protection and resources for shelters; and link the shelters with other legal aid, counselling, and other services and programmes.
- Establish crisis centres for women at the district level, with effective support and referral systems, as well as a 24-hour help-line for women victims of violence.
- Set up citizen-police liaison committees (CPLCs), with equal representation of women, at the mohalla/village level to provide protection for women and register cases of domestic violence; and establish mechanisms for their coordination with public safety commissions and other relevant committees.
- Establish special units for medico-legal support to women victims of violence at

- all civil hospitals; ensure adequate training, orientation and facilities to police/medical staff of all medico-legal units; and increase the number of female doctors.
- Facilitate public safety committees and CPLCs to: liaise with patient welfare societies for legal, psychiatric and financial help to victims of violence; visit women confined to police lock-ups and prisons; maintain records on the condition of the victims/prisoners; and collect data on cases of rape and adultery.
- Immediately operationalise the existing human rights funds with the Ministry of Law, Justice and Human Rights, as also the fund for women in distress and detention, and make them easily and immediately accessible to women requiring financial assistance.
- Expand, upgrade and train the female police force, including gender-sensitisation training, and establish women's cells in all police stations in a phased programme.
- Improve the condition of women's prisons and provide effective state counselling services for women prisoners.
- Organise gender-sensitisation training on violence against women for members of law-enforcement agencies, the judiciary and medico-legal units; and make gender-sensitising a regular part of their training programmes.

ECONOMY AND POVERTY

To address the multi-dimensional impact of poverty, particularly on women, and to ensure that economic policies and planning address gender concerns, steps will be taken to:

- Review existing macro- and micro-level economic policies, analysing and developing gender-sensitive economic growth indicators, and re-structuring to make them more appropriate to the needs of women and other disadvantaged citizens.
- Review structural adjustment programmes for negative impact on women, and restructure and/or develop compensatory measures.
- Compile gender-disaggregated data and research on women and poverty issues to enable informed policy-making, planning and programming for women.
- Ensure that the First Women's Bank retains its women-focused development mandate, and strengthen its management and integrated services systems.
- Ensure that other development banks such as the Khushali Bank, SME Bank and the Aga Khan Micro-Finance Bank effectively implement their gender-focused policies.
- Take affirmative action to accord priority to low-income women in disbursement of funds and provision of social services; and revise social safety nets, including Zakat, to make them gender and poverty focused. .
- Address other dimensions of poverty, including bonded labour (e.g. female brick

kiln workers and rural peasant women) and the sexual exploitation of women in poverty (commercial sex workers and trafficked women/girls).

- Ensure that all poverty alleviation programmes specifically address the needs of women and girls with disabilities.
- Increase women's access to ownership and control of assets, particularly government distributed land and property, through the registration of title-deeds of all state-land allotted for lease or housing schemes, jointly in the names of husband and wife, and in case of female headed households to the woman.
- Recognise and address the special needs of female-headed households through: ensuring equitable allocation of all public and private land/housing programmes, credit, education, vocational skill training and affirmative action in employment.
- Register property inherited by women, particularly in the rural areas, in their names and strictly enforce inheritance laws; ensure that inheritance cases of widows and orphans are taken up on priority basis by courts and settled expeditiously.
- Introduce legislation to ensure that a woman's share in all property and assets acquired by the spouses after marriage (excluding her inherited property, marital gifts and other dues from her husband) is legally recognised and secured for her in case of divorce or death of husband.
- Change pension rules to ensure that widows get the full pension of their husbands; and the shares of sons and daughters in pensions or other financial schemes entered into by their parents are equal in all respects.
- Ensure allocation of a minimum 33% of Local Government funds for women's development.

EMPLOYMENT

Enunciate a national employment policy focusing on women workers in the formal and informal sectors and ensure that measures will be taken to:

- Improve data collection on women's labour force participation through accessing information about women's multiple activities within or outside the home, and through the use of female enumerators who directly collect information from female respondents.
- Create a national database on women's employment.
- Extend the legal cover of an adequate minimum wage, acceptable working hours, and health and maternity benefits to women in the informal and agricultural sectors, as well as to casual, temporary, contract and price-rate workers.
- Review the existing employment laws and practices to ensure equality of opportunity and non-discrimination against women; and establish the institution of an Equality Ombudsman to redress cases of discrimination, harassment and

victimisation of women workers. Until the establishment of the Equality Ombudsman, establish special units in Industrial Relations Boards for dealing with these functions.

- Strictly enforce existing labour legislation provisions; and increase the recruitment of women in Labour Inspectorates to monitor the working conditions of women workers.
- Enforce corrective measures for minimising occupational health hazards for women in the industrial sectors.
- Make it mandatory for employers to respond to and monitor incidents of violence and harassment in the workplace.
- Undertake affirmative action to encourage women's participation in formal sector employment through: special measures to recruit qualified women at all levels; phased enhancement of the minimum quota for women in the public sector; flexibility in regulations pertaining to age for entry or re-entry into government service; and incentives of day care facilities/crèches at larger workplaces.
- Set up working women's hostels, at affordable or subsidised rates, in larger cities and towns, to be situated in safe areas with public transport facilities; and improve the conditions of existing facilities.
- Increase women's employment opportunities by encouraging rural-based industries and enterprises, especially those that absorb women; and increase women's linkages with productive sectors like industry and agriculture..
- Provide training and credit and facilitate marketing procedures for women micro-entrepreneurs through specially designed schemes.
- Establish small business/career guidance centres at the district level starting with the existing infrastructure, e.g. polytechnics, vocational institutes, girls' high schools and colleges, etc.
- Create formal linkages between educational and training institutes for women; and support expansion for training facilities for women on the basis of location-specific assessment of market demand..
- Re-activate employment exchanges for women and disseminate information on job opportunities.
- Improve access to credit by introducing special windows for lending to women at all banks, simplifying the loan application and sanctioning procedures, hiring female field staff to extend the outreach of financial institutions, using alternatives to land and asset-based collateral. Loans to be made on a much lower mark-up and on more relaxed conditions.
- Provide back-up services for credit-programmes, including training in marketable skills, improved access to raw materials and markets, formation of women's organisations and cooperatives, and collaboration of these agencies with NGOs.

AGRICULTURE

Recognising that agriculture is the backbone of the economy, and 67.5% women live in rural areas, of whom 73% work in agriculture and make a major contribution to the national economy, affirmative actions will be instituted to incorporate women's concerns into the objectives of agricultural and rural development through the following measures:

- Incorporate rural and agricultural women's concerns currently largely omitted - in macro-level policy and planning documents, including the current Rolling Plan (up to 2004), Tenth Five-Year Plan and longer-term Perspective Plan; Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper and in the worldview of the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock.
- Count agricultural women's contribution in national accounts GDP, through a redefinition of "work" in national statistics, to disaggregate the remuneration for agricultural work done by women as "unpaid family helpers" or "informal sector workers".
- Carry out land reforms and impose progressively-scaled agricultural income tax, ensuring that peasant women benefit equally with men from the revenues.
- Redistribute available arable state land to landless peasants, ensuring that half the recipients are women, or women are joint title deed holders with men within a household or family unit. Where there are women-headed households, they will have sole title deed to state-distributed land and housing initiatives under various poverty-reduction and agricultural development programmes.
- Utilise Zakat funds to provide rural women with viable investments, e.g. livestock: goats, sheep, cattle and poultry farming, or sericulture, horticulture aquaculture, instead of the traditional "sewing machines" for "destitute women".
- Promote rural agricultural women's participation in needs assessment and design stages.
- Create employment in agro-based industries, physical infrastructure and markets, to (a) create remunerated employment opportunities for women, and (b) reduce male rural-urban migration, which increases women's triple burden of unremunerated work, e.g. house repair, water, fuel, fodder, food preparation, storage, preservation, livestock, dairy and traditional handicrafts production.
- Ensure that female and male agricultural workers are paid equal wages - and women are paid directly; prevent women's displacement due to mechanisation and switching to less labour-intensive technologies by the rich large landholders.
- Provide low cost and accessible credit (through group guarantees, cooperatives, savings associations); incentives and agricultural inputs (certified seeds, organic fertilizers, etc.) for women peasants and landholders to grow food crops; breeder stock for livestock and dairy farming; participate in agro-industrial

- entrepreneurship, and come out of their traditional personal debt burdens.
- Ensure the availability of low-cost irrigation water for women farmers.
 - Promote women peasants to join farmers associations and water users associations.
 - Promote the formalisation and unionisation of agricultural workers, both female and male.
 - Recruit and train large numbers of female agricultural extension workers to train women farmers in new methods, technologies and marketing.
 - Promote rural female education by providing access to schools and incorporate rural-agricultural components into the formal education curricula and non-formal adult female literacy training courses.
 - Focus nutrition education on addressing child under- and mal-nutrition, and particularly on intra-family gender-imbalances even where food is available.
 - Provide information to rural women through radio (and where accessible, TV) programmes on agriculture and livestock, fodder, food crops, nutrition, health and hygiene, water and sanitation, and government services and programmes.
 - Inform women about health risks of chemical fertilisers and pesticides (especially for their reproductive organs) and provide access to safe organic fertilisers.
 - Promote women's entry into the forestry sub-sector, by providing credit and land for fuelwood, seedlings (nurseries), fruit orchards, and horticulture followed by relevant agro-industries for processing, preservation and packaging.
 - Promote construction of private or communal latrines for rural women, to reduce health risks and incidents of violence against women.
 - Train female mechanics in hand pumps, community tanks and other water sources produce a cadre of expert female trainers who can train other women.
 - Improve inter-sectoral coordination of line departments to maximise rural development efforts for both women and men.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Recognising the crucial importance of education for the effective participation of women in all development processes, steps will be taken to:

- Substantially revise the 1998 National Education Policy on the basis of the Education Sector Reforms Action Plan (2001-2004), the National Plan of Action: Education for All (2000-2015), and the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (2001-2004), to ensure that the aspirations contained in these documents are recognised and reflected in national policy.
- Raise the budget allocation for education to 5% of the GNP.
- Implement the Compulsory Primary Education Act in the provinces/areas where

legislation has been enacted through a phased approach, starting with areas where facilities are already available; and expedite similar legislation and processes in the remaining provinces, with a special focus on girls' education.

- Lift the ban on the recruitment of teachers and expedite the process of recruitment on the basis of a rational recruitment policy, which takes into account the needs of the school, carries out recruitment locally, makes appointments of female teachers near their homes and provides incentives for female teachers in remote areas.
- Develop a focused programme for girls' enrolment and retention in primary schools
- Develop a higher education policy for girls, focusing on secondary and tertiary school levels, so as to enhance the quality of education for girls and improve their access to other opportunities, including the provision of more facilities and scholarships.
- Improve the quality of teacher training institutions, curricula, methodology and teaching aids; and sensitise and train teachers in gender issues through partnerships with civil society organisations.
- Continue and improve the process of revising textbooks and curricula to remove gender-biased stereotypes and to promote a positive portrayal of women and girls.
- Develop a relevant indigenised curriculum based on the teaching of life skills and suited to present needs, including current development issues relating to women, children and youth rights; human, social and political rights; health, population, environment, narcotics, HIV/AIDS, etc.
- Link formal and non-formal education systems with vocational/technical education and small-scale industry; and restructure the current gender-specific trades project introduced at the secondary school level to make it more locale-specific, and to ensure that it does not marginalise women in stereotyped vocations.
- Improve and extend distance learning through the Allama Iqbal Open University, maximising the use of its facilities.
- Decentralise training centres and the administrative structure of education; and ensure government, NGO and private partnership and linkages in the management and delivery of services, particularly in training.
- Strengthen and revive Women's Studies Centres at Universities as centres of excellence; and promote research and incorporation of women's studies into mainstream subjects.
- Improve the existing infrastructure of schools and training facilities in rural areas for women and girls, and ensure the continuity of programmes initiated.
- Provide special education, training and transport facilities for disabled and disadvantaged women and girls and design follow-up mechanisms to integrate them into mainstream education and vocational skills training programmes.
- Use all the media, especially electronic, to create a favourable environment and

demand for education of girls, and to highlight the impact of traditional gender-biased cultural norms and practices.

HEALTH AND POPULATION

The two separate Ministries will be merged into one Ministry of Health and Population, with separate Divisions and Secretaries, to promote functional integration of services, coordination and elimination of existing duplication which wastes scarce financial and human resources, and will undertake the following measures:

- Enunciate a strong political commitment to population and health, reaffirming the provision of primary health and reproductive health care for all citizens as a basic human right, and as a national development imperative.
- Formulate a progressive, forward-looking National Health and Population Policy, in a participatory and consultative manner, in line with Pakistan's legally binding ratification of the CRC and CEDAW, as well as its endorsement of the WHO's Health for All goals and the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD).
- Increase financial allocations to joint health and population programmes to a minimum of 5% of the GNP by 2005.
- Increase the pace of defederalisation, decentralisation and devolution of planning, programming and implementing health and population programmes.
- Ensure that the policy and programme focus shifts away from tertiary, urban and curative services to primary, rural and preventive health/RH services. Within these priorities, emphasize girls- and women-focussed services.
- Replace ad hoc, small project-level interventions with a holistic, life cycle approach to policies, plans and programmes for nutrition, basic and reproductive health care for all boys and girls, women and men.
- Establish a National Health Insurance Policy for comprehensive health/RH services, with progressively increasing user charges, on a pro-rated basis for highly-specialised, tertiary, curative, urban health care services. Provide free basic/RH care for women and children at the BHU/FDC/RHC level.
- Ensure the joint provision of basic and reproductive health care, essential and emergency obstetric care, and referral services at all health and population service outlets and also by community outreach workers.
- Expand the community-based female health workers programmes, and strengthen the BHUs, etc. with trained/re-trained medical and paramedical staff, equipment, supplies, medicines, vaccines and contraceptives.
- Increase funds for and numbers of Basic Health Units (BHUs), Rural Health Centres (RHCs), Family Development Centres (FDCs) and Mobile Service Units (MSUs), particularly in the rural and far-flung areas.

- Replace stand-alone vertical programmes (e.g., TB, Hepatitis, Malaria, HIV/AIDS, EPI, FP/PHC-LHWs, FWCs, MSUs, etc.) with horizontally interlinked programmes, to avoid financial and human resource duplication.
- Ensure high quality health/RH services particularly the provision of tested and safe contraceptives, along with information on possible side-effects and a wide array of choices.
- Restructure the medical and paramedical curricula and teaching/training systems to bring them in line with current global advances. Reorganise the testing and certification/specialisation procedures, e.g. Pakistan Medical & Dental Council.
- Use the mass media for refresher training of paramedical staff in basic and reproductive health components, with a particular focus on safe motherhood (reduction of maternal mortality), child survival (reduction of infant and child mortality), HIV/AIDS and nutrition.
- Start regular programmes for information and education with a gender focus, on preventive health/RH, nutrition, water and sanitation through the mass media.
- Promote the involvement of men through both interpersonal communication and the mass media - as partners in RH programmes: as service providers, users of contraceptives, and as partners in planned, responsible and shared parenthood, including child rearing.
- Ensure community participation through village level and union council level PHC/RH supervisory committees.
- Strengthen health/RH and nutrition programmes for special girls and women, with a focus on mental and physical disabilities.
- Strengthen gender disaggregated service statistics, MIS and data systems.
- Institute compulsory health and nutrition monitoring programmes for girls and boys through the primary school system.
- Enact legislation to eliminate quackery (medical practitioners without proper qualifications); ensure a safe blood supply and distribution system; regarding organ transplants and post-mortem procedures; and the rational use, quality, standards and pricing of medicines/pharmaceuticals - and maintaining strict checks and controls.
- Enact legislation to raise the female age of marriage to 18, to promote gender equity (the current age for males is 18 and for females is puberty and 16) and also to promote female education.
- Enact legislation regarding surgical sterilisation and abortion, in line with the recommendations of the approved report of the Pakistan Commission of Inquiry on Women (1997).
- Promote intersectoral linkages with literacy and education, water and sanitation, environment and energy, employment and labour force participation, agriculture and rural development, food and nutrition, rural development and poverty

reduction. This entails cooperation between public, private and NGO/CBO sector programmes.

- Promote action-oriented and operational research at all levels, including multi-sectoral linkages, e.g. the health/RH impact of violence against women and girls. Link Pakistan-specific research to global investigations in health and population issues, e.g. safe contraception.
- Recognise and reduce the existing socio-cultural constraints, through promotion of physical education and recreation as a basic health issue for girls and women.

ENVIRONMENT

Recognising that women are primary users and managers of natural resources such as water, fuelwood, fodder, food crops, and are also directly and indirectly affected by all environmental activities, the following measures will be taken:

- In line with Pakistan's commitment to Agenda 21 and the National Conservation Strategy (NCS), enable women to play their full part in environmental conservation for sustainable development through development of appropriate macro-level policies, raising the political and economic status of women, and tackling major environmental problems such as pollution, deforestation, desertification, drought and global warming.
- Ensure the participation of women in environmental management both at macro- and micro- levels;
- Assess the impact of macro-economic trends on women in relation to environment and sustainable development;
- Ensure the participation of women in the formulation and implementation of environmental legislation, at both the national and international levels;
- Highlight the role of women in successful environmental projects (e.g. OPP, AKRSP and others);
- Promote a more active role of local bodies in environmental management and its impact on women;
- Promote capacity building programmes for women in order to enable their active participation in primary environmental care;
- Develop case studies on successful integration of gender into environmental programmes and projects; integration of environmental concerns into health programs focusing on women; and assessment of the impact of major natural resource management projects on women.
- Promote the integration of gender and environment issues into the formal and non-formal education systems (e.g., curriculum, textbooks, teachers training and tertiary or specialized education).

- Take appropriate measures to eliminate direct and indirect impact of industrial pollution and environmental hazards on women.
- Ensure that Social Impact and Poverty Analyses are undertaken for all environmental projects.
- Ensure women's increased representation in all environment-related institutions.
- Ensure that women's concerns are incorporated into environmental legal frameworks.
- Explore women's economic empowerment opportunities in environment projects, particularly to reduce their unremunerated agricultural and domestic workload and increase their wages.
- Promote gender and environment capacity development for integration within environmental institutions; capacity building of women to participate in environmental policy-making, planning, programming and project activities.
- Promote increased research and documentation on gender and environment issues, particularly in emerging technical areas like climate change, bio-diversity, and clean energy production.
- Ensure women's participation in the planning, implementation and maintenance of water supplies.
- Incorporate women's concerns in national water policies and strategies.
- Ensure women's participation at all stages of water and infrastructure projects, particularly with regard to resettlement policies.
- Ensure that women are equal partners in all forestry-related policies, programmes, plans and strategies.
- Ensure fifty percent representation of women on forest management committees.
- Ensure that social forestry programmes and the selection of species to be planted is undertaken in consultation with women.
- Incorporate women's knowledge related to forestry and medicinal plants into research programmes of the forestry institutions and widely disseminate the findings.

PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

- Undertake low-cost housing schemes for lease or sale to different levels of lower-income working women, who are functioning as household heads, and their families; to be situated in safe and populated areas with public transport facilities, at subsidised rates or on easy instalments.
- Establish child care/protection centres in cities and towns; and also establish shelters for homeless and low-income women, in addition to the shelters for female victims of violence.
- Provide basic civic amenities (e.g. garbage removal, immunization and insect

control) in all katchi abadis and facilitate the establishment of modern sanitation systems on a self-help basis, modelled on projects such as OPP, to address the serious health hazards and difficult living conditions for the inhabitants, especially women and children

- Allocate suitable space and building funds for women's community centres, recreation facilities and family parks on all housing and physical planning programmes and projects.
- Incorporate women's concerns in prioritisation of small infrastructure schemes; and promote training facilities for women, particularly technical training that will encourage their direct participation/involvement in such programmes and projects.
- Directly involve women from the community in the designing, planning and implementation of all low-cost housing, community development and service projects, to ensure that their interests and concerns are adequately reflected.
- Undertake special measures on a priority basis to provide safe and inexpensive public transport facilities for women in both urban and rural areas, recognising this as a critical factor in facilitating employment for women in urban areas and in accessing health, education and extension facilities in rural areas.
- Ensure the participation of women in the formulation of integrated transport and related policies and strategies, and monitoring its effective implementation.
- Promote targeted government subsidies to finance scheduled transport services to link rural communities to market and economic centres, and educational and health facilities.

INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS

- Strengthen the National Commission on the Status of Women, through ensuring its autonomy, and strengthening its mandate, membership and selection criteria, so as to enable it to effectively fulfil its role in reviewing, recommending, and monitoring the enactment/repeal, formulation and implementation of laws, policies and programs towards achievement of women's equal rights.
- Strengthen the national machineries and institutional structures for women's development at the Federal, Provincial and District levels, including: (a) renewing focus on their advocacy and policy making role; and (b) enhancing their human and financial resources.
- Strengthen the recently drafted national policy for women's development, to ensure that it addresses all prevailing concerns, particularly the issue of discriminatory legislation.
- Ensure that appropriate budgetary allocations are made to implement the national policy and NPA and all women's development programmes. Increase budget allocations and prevent ADP budget cuts to the social sectors. Allocate specific

budgetary resources to all Line Ministries/ Departments for interventions benefiting women.

- Ensure women's effective and equitable representation and participation at all tiers of government, and in all representative committees, advisory boards, think tanks, and working groups.
- Include the NCSW and the MoWD as permanent members of important policy and decision-making fora, like the National Economic Council (NEC), Executive Committee of the NEC (ECNEC), Central Development Working Party (CDWP), Planning Commission, and all sectoral committees.
- Establish an inter-ministerial Coordination Committee on Women's Development, at the federal and provincial levels, chaired by the Finance Minister and Chief Minister respectively, to review and assess the progress of various programs undertaken by the line Ministries/ Departments.
- Establish district committees for women's development at the highest district level authority, including nazims, naib nazims, councillors, DCOs, district administrative authorities and representatives of NGOs and community-based organizations to design, coordinate and monitor implementation at the grassroots level.
- Ensure equal representation of women in all committees instituted at the local level for designing, implementing and monitoring of public programs such as those under the Khushhaal Pakistan Programme, Poverty Alleviation Programme, etc.
- Maintain and strengthen GoP-NGOs linkages building upon the Beijing process, to foster a conducive environment for girls' and women's advancement, and for the effective implementation of the NPA, CEDAW and CRC.
- Create an enabling environment for civil society organisations working on advocacy, human rights and women's rights issues through positive legislation and supportive administrative structures.
- Ensure that effective quantitative and qualitative monitoring mechanisms are in place to review progress on the National Policy, NPA, CEDAW, CRC and all other instruments related to girls' women's development.
- Establish the office of an Equality Ombudsman to address complaints relating to all discriminatory practices and sexual harrassment in the workplace.
- Strengthen the Women's Studies Centres, and women's studies programmes at the major universities in Pakistan. Initiate a phased induction of gender issues into other academic disciplines and training curricula.
- Ensure that gender sensitivity is institutionalised at all levels, across all sectors, and monitor its effectiveness and impact.
- Encourage research on women's concerns and improve gender disaggregation in all official documents, statistics and research.

MEDIA

Recognising the immense potential of media as a tool for consciousness-raising, providing relevant information and changing social attitudes, as well as for creating a social environment more conducive to women's empowerment, steps will be taken to:

- Ensure a positive portrayal of women and girls in all forms of media, through increased collaboration between government, media professionals, civil society organisations and women's rights groups and experts in the planning, designing and production of programmes.
- Implement a policy which promotes the image of women as equal citizens of Pakistan, with equal fundamental rights and responsibilities; and which does not project stereotyped images of women or impose dress-codes or retrogressive ideological norms or values on them.
- Ensure a more equitable representation of women's issues from all geographical areas, as well of minority, grassroots, rural, disabled and disadvantaged women.
- Enhance the role of media as a means of information, education and communication on women's real life issues, through specially designed programmes on issues of daily concern to women and girls, as well as on matters which will enhance their knowledge and ability to gain greater control over their lives.
- Ensure sufficient presence of women in policy level decision-making positions of planning and production of media, through the recruitment of women in all media institutions, including the film censor body and arts councils.
- Review and revise the Code of Ethics to ensure gender-sensitive and non-discriminatory treatment of women's issues, through a collaborative effort of government, civil society organisations, women's rights groups and experts, media professionals and progressive citizens; and strictly monitor and implement the code of ethics in the media.
- Develop a strict code of ethics for reporting on cases of violence against women to ensure that these cases are not sensationalised and to prohibit the use of derogatory language; as well as to strictly control the current blatant depiction of physical violence against women on electronic media programmes. .
- Include in a positive manner women's issues and concerns in the curriculum of mass communication departments of all universities, and establish interdisciplinary collaboration between mass communication departments and women's studies centres.
- Establish mandatory gender-sensitisation training courses for all media personnel, including journalists, drama and comedy scriptwriters, producers, directors, actors, comperes, planners and programmers on TV and radio.

- Amend and enforce the Indecent Advertisements Prohibition Act and establish media groups, in collaboration with civil society organisations and women's groups, to monitor advertisements to check denigration of women and their over-commercialisation and exploitation as sex objects.
- Institute performance awards to encourage journalists and radio and television producers working on women's issues.
- Undertake media campaigns on issues of key concern to women (e.g. democratisation of family norms; negative ideological and socio-cultural attitudes, customs and practices; discriminatory laws, policies and practices; and other fundamental rights issues), with the participation of civil society organisations, women's rights organisations, enlightened and progressive citizens and experts, researchers and women from different geographical areas and sectors.
- Ensure that all individuals and groups invited to give their expert views on women's rights issues believe in and are committed to the equality of women and men.
- Remove state control over electronic media and news agencies and give the status of autonomous bodies to TV, radio and government-run wire agencies; and also ensure their fundamental right of freedom of speech and expression.



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