



# Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Women Empowerment Policy Framework



**Social Welfare, Special Education & Women Empowerment Department  
and  
Provincial Commission on the Status of Women  
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa**



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## **VISION**

**Empowerment of women so that they can realize their full potential and participate fully in development.**

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## **GOAL**

**The empowerment of women of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, in all spheres especially social, cultural, political economic, legal, and personal life**

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# 1.POLICY OBJECTIVES

## 1.1 Social Empowerment

- a. To provide access to quality health care to all women in rural and urban areas covering mental health, occupational health and safety, sexual and reproductive health with a focus on adolescent sexual and reproductive health, and Maternal, Neonatal and Child Health (MNCH) and family counseling.
- b. To reduce the gender gap in quality educational attainment by enhancing women's literacy rates, improving academic and professional attainment levels of girls, revise existing curricula to make them gender sensitive and enable equal access to technical education guidance and training.
- c. To review the role of women in society for understanding their contribution and taking positive steps to promote their recognition.
- d. To take affirmative action through advocacy for targeting patriarchal mindsets, societal attitudes and customary practices by building and strengthening partnerships of government with private sector, civil society and women's organizations and media.
- e. To ensure women's citizenship rights including CNIC, birth and marriage registration, social security and right to vote and encourage civic documentation to ensure women's protection and safety nets throughout their entire life; from birth, national identity, marriage, separation, divorce, work and career, remarriage, and in disaster situations.

## **1.2 Economic Empowerment**

- a. To create employment and income generation opportunities for women in the formal and informal sector in accordance with fundamental labor rights; including enterprise development, skill training and capacity building, access to credit and markets for both urban and rural women.
- b. To remove inequalities and imbalances in all sectors of socio economic development and ensure women's equal access to and control over resources.

## **1.3 Political Empowerment**

- a. To encourage equal participation of women in all political processes and to increase women's representation in all elective bodies and governance structures.

## **1.4 Legal Empowerment and Access to Justice**

- a. To strengthen the legal systems to eliminate all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls under the pretext of cultural, parallel and informal judicial systems particularly in their daily lives, livelihoods and mobility.
- b. To ensure equitable laws and policies and their effective implementation for women and girls along with presence of affordable legal systems.

## 2. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Women's Empowerment Policy is based on the principles of:

- i. Non-discrimination and gender equity.
- ii. Priority to the poor women in rural and isolated areas, minority women; girls and women in vulnerable situations and circumstances.
- iii. Recognition of the value of women's worth and work and their contribution in all spheres of life Women as equal partners in development and agents of change in economic, social and political processes
- iv. Multi-sectoral and inter disciplinary approaches for women's development, with horizontal and vertical linkages at every level.
- v. Mainstreaming gender issues in all sectors of development and inclusion of these in the private sector as well
- vi. Development of gender sensitive laws and policies to ensure elimination of harmful traditional and social practices.
- vii. International commitments including UDHR, CEDAW, CRC, ICESR, ICPD, ILO, CAT, ICCPR and other human rights conventions and commitments.
- viii. Existence of a vibrant and proactive civil society.
- ix. Responsible government system and people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for gender mainstreaming.

### **3. GOVERNANCE AND INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR POLICY IMPLEMENTATION**

The overview and monitoring of the Provincial Policy Framework for Women's Empowerment will be the responsibility of the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for which it shall set up the relevant mechanisms. The Social Welfare, Special Education and Women Empowerment Department (SW, SE & WED) has the mandate for women's development/empowerment in the province however, the policy cuts across the mandate of many Departments, more importantly the Departments of Education (Higher and Elementary), Population Welfare, Health, Agriculture, Labor and Industries, Planning and Development, Finance etc. The following measures will be undertaken for gender mainstreaming in general and implementation of the policy framework in particular:

- 1) The overall implementation of the policy shall be overseen by Gender Mainstreaming Committee (GMC) The Committee will ensure gender mainstreaming across all governance streams with particular focus on resource allocation particularly through gender responsive budgeting at provincial, district and sub-district level.
- 2) A Gender Mainstreaming Working Group (GMWG) will be set up for ensuring effective implementation of the Women Empowerment Policy and developing synergies among all stakeholders in the province including the civil society.
- 3) The Women Empowerment wing of the SW,SE&WED shall be empowered through human and financial resources, capacity building and technical assistance.
- 4) The Provincial Commission on Status of Women (PCSW) shall be made financially & administratively autonomous to play effective role to be able to have better leverage with the government in taking up women's rights issues and keeping an overview over the

measures taken by the government. Its advisory role to the government on matters relating to legislation and assessment of programmes for women would be more meaningful as an autonomous body reporting directly to the Chief Minister. The District Committees on the Status of Women shall be made fully operational and engaged to feed local knowledge into review of policies, programs, legislation and overall administrative arrangements.

- 5) Effective gender mainstreaming within government shall be ensured particularly through implementing the Gender Reform Action Plan.
- 6) Gender disaggregated data collection will be undertaken through developing linkages with public & private institutions at all levels and with academia and research conducting entities. All administrative departments and financial institutions shall collect data and follow gender sensitive Planning, Research, Implementation Monitoring and Evaluation (PRIME) mechanism.
- 7) The “Provincial Women Parliamentary Caucus” shall be strengthened with particular focus on capacity enhancement of women parliamentarians for leading the development of strategic policy papers and strategy dialogues, generating dialogue with other parliamentarians and ensuring engendering of party mandates.
- 8) All Provincial administrative departments shall formulate time bound Action Plans to translate policy into a set of concrete actions through a participatory process in consultation with the Provincial Commission on the Status of Women, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The plans shall reflect the following:
  - i. Measurable goals to be achieved by 2017
  - ii. Setting indicators



- iii. Identification and commitment of resources
- iv. Responsibilities for implementation of action points
- v. Structures and mechanisms to ensure efficient monitoring, review and gender impact assessment of action points and policies
- vi. Introduction of a gender perspective in the budgeting process.

## **4. POLICY PRESCRIPTIONS**

### **4.1 Economic Empowerment**

The provincial government recognizes the need to empower women and to mainstream them in the development process for ensuring sustainable development and moving towards a society based on equity and non-discrimination. The following key policy measures shall, therefore, be undertaken:

- 1) Facilitating an environment for women's participation in economic activities in rural and urban areas with special focus on urban slums, through increased access to and control over resources.
- 2) Reserving minimum of 20% to women in all Govt. loans, services & products.
- 3) Developing institutional mechanisms for women's equitable access to social safety nets.
- 4) Strengthening women's easy access to micro-credit facilities, enhancing agriculture subsidies and extension services, livestock development, marketing at local and international level.
- 5) Supporting women Micro Enterprises through measures including relaxing Regulatory Provisions.
- 6) Ensuring Small Enterprise (SE) & Medium Enterprise (ME) policies especially facilitate women entrepreneurs at all levels.
- 7) Supporting measures for facilitating economic empowerment of women home based workers, rural women, women with disabilities, widows, single and divorced women, minority women and marginalized women.
- 8) Increasing and strengthening women's presence, positions and roles as employers and workers;

- 9) Ensuring equitable measures for women's participation in the formal sector including gender sensitive human resource policies, equal remuneration for equal work, flexi hours, crèche, paternity and maternity leave and opportunities of livelihood which also accommodate women oriented work patterns.
- 10) Strengthening women's knowledge and awareness raising to be able to take financial decisions in an informed manner and promoting women's financial literacy through grass roots interventions for overcoming barriers in accessing financial resources.
- 11) Ensuring formulation, review and implementation of gender sensitive legislation and policies for employment and labor in formal and informal sector in line with ILO convention and in consultation with Provincial Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW).
- 12) Upholding and ensuring women's right to inheritance, dower, assets and resources.
- 13) Promoting effective utilization of existing institutional mechanisms providing financial and related benefits to women with particular focus on First Women Bank Limited (FWBL) or any other bank.
- 14) Raising awareness of women and communities regarding economic rights and existing legislation.
- 15) Value chain development through sectors of women enterprise development and entry points of women specific tasks.
- 16) Taking measures to review acknowledge & make interventions to facilitate the role of women as producers in the agriculture and allied sectors, i.e. horticulture, livestock including small animal husbandry and poultry etc.
- 17) Promoting greater involvement of women in unconventional fields including in science & technology, information technology etc.

## 4.2 Social Empowerment of Women

### A. Education

Given the low levels of literacy among the females, greater attention shall be given to enhancing female's enrolment and participation rates, quality and universalism of education at all levels of education. Policy measures to address the problems facing the education field shall include:

- 1) To ensure quality education for women by;
  - a) Institutionalizing mechanisms for reviewing and consolidating gender disaggregated data on education with a particular focus on assessing impact of current policy/program initiatives and highlighting the gaps and challenges.
  - b) Focusing primary and secondary education for girls; promote gender-sensitive learning activities, school hours, and teacher training. Teachers should be trained in providing psycho-social support and in treating girls equally and with respect.
  - c) Promoting active participation of communities including girls and women in the design, monitoring, and evaluation of processes that focus on improving girls' access to education, on the quality of education, and on the safety of learning environments.
- 2) Facilitating girls' and women' access to education by
  - a) Developing a strong gender sensitive education sector policy & implementing the constitutional right of education for girls in particular in the remote rural districts and rural areas and urban low income areas and slums.
  - b) Taking a variety of measures to eliminate discrimination against women in education, including in higher education, vocational education & training, provide for continuing education

opportunities such as language and literacy courses, and participation in sports and physical education.

- c) Taking measures to reduce female student drop-out rates.
  - d) Ensuring gender sensitive school infrastructure in line with minimum standards.
  - e) Updating and upgrading technical and vocational trainings and Human Resource policies
- 3) Ensuring universalism by
- a. Undertaking review of curriculum at all educational levels to remove gender stereotyping.
  - b. Taking measures to improve Secondary and non-formal education, introducing literacy courses for women and out-of-school adolescent girls, as they can increase girls' and women's self-reliance and promote school attendance and success for their children.
  - c. Taking measures to promote the participation of marginalized girls such as girls with disabilities, and girls from minority groups.
  - d. Developing strong advocacy mechanisms and community oriented media campaigns for education of females
  - e. Creating mechanisms for effective partnership between government, civil society and private sector at all levels for policy making, implementation of programs and effective monitoring and evaluation for girls education
  - f. Taking affirmative action to support girls in higher education, technical and vocational trainings, professional and technical education including in the fields of Information Technology, Sciences and business studies

## **B. Health**

Health is one of the fundamentals of life and investments in the health sector are viewed as essential pro-poor expenditures. The health care system of KP needs vast improvements in terms of the reach and quality of health services. The following measures will be taken to address issues related to women's health:

- 1) Improving and strengthening health policies and services to make them more responsive to the needs of women of all segments including minorities, old age women and women with special needs.
- 2) Ensuring resource allocation for health sector with a particular focus on pro poor and pro women budget.
- 3) Improving services to decrease maternal and child mortality and morbidity, malnutrition and other disease specific mortalities and improve women's mental health and nutritional status.
- 4) Providing quality health care and gender sensitive & patient centered services at district and sub district level; focus on adolescent sexual and reproductive health, maternal health and infertility; and an effective programme for controlling the spread of Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs) including HIV/Aids and drug abuse & professional counseling and rehabilitation services while dealing with women victims of Sexual & Gender Based Violence (SGBV).
- 5) Promoting reproductive health rights by involving men, women and adolescents and non-coercive measures for family planning and promoting health services as a basic right of people particularly poor, marginalized, minority women and women with special needs.
- 6) Upgrading secondary and tertiary care facilities for focus on adolescent sexual and reproductive health, maternal health and

addressing the spread of STDs and HIV/AIDS & communicable and non-communicable diseases.

- 7) Institutionalizing mechanisms focusing on prevention of diseases through awareness raising, attitudinal change, skills and capacity development.
- 8) Providing quality health cover to mental well being and health of women in line with the recommendations outlined in the Plan of Action (PoA) of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and other related commitments
- 9) Institutionalizing mechanisms to facilitate recruitment and retention of trained female staff of health services. Supporting and enhancing role of community based health care system with a particular focus on Lady Health Workers (LHWs) Ensuring provision of safe drinking water and sanitation needs of the women at par with minimum health & hygiene standards.

### **C. Environment**

- 1) Maximizing the benefit to society of women's concern for a sustainable environment, notably in their efforts to ensure healthy food, clean water and air for future generations due to women's participation in disaster relief and reconstruction process.
- 2) Highlighting and ensuring effective representation of women in natural resource management and disaster relief and reconstruction process as well as conserving their indigenous knowledge.

### **D. Media**

- 1) Take measures for promoting participation and enhancing access of media and new technologies of communication
- 2) Promote a balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women in the media.

## 4.3 Legal Empowerment and Access to Justice

Women face several impediments in the way of enjoyment of their rights. It is imperative to recognize the fact that violence against women is multi-faceted and has many structures and categories. The legal system, the law enforcement system and the media are some of the conduits for facilitating reduction in violence against women. Urgent action is required to start addressing the multiple challenges in this area. Key policy measures to be undertaken are to:

- 1) Eliminating violence against women by
  - a) Redefining violence against women in line with CEDAW article 1 to include violence and discrimination that is disguised in all forms.
  - b) Adopting a zero tolerance policy regarding violence against women by developing statutory/special laws in line with the constitutional rights of women to protect women and girls from becoming victims of violence.
  - c) Ensuring elimination of all existing discriminatory laws and provisions.
  - d) Prioritizing legislation on domestic violence, acid & burn control and internal women trafficking.
  - e) Focusing attention to measures in the public and private domain for implementation of the code of conduct on sexual harassment at work place stipulated under the “Protection of Women against Sexual Harassment in the Work Place Act 2010
  - f) Expanding and strengthening of support services to victims of SGBV. These would include shelters, family protection programs crisis centers, free legal aid centers, counseling, referrals to medical and legal aid mechanisms and rehabilitation.



g) Removing all hurdles hampering the provincial strengthening mechanisms for provincial laws and assessment of programmes and projects for women. In this regard, endowing administrative & financial autonomy to the Provincial Commission on the Status of Women

2) Enforce entitlement rights of women by;

- a) Ensuring mechanisms to facilitate women's citizenship rights particularly in rural areas and urban slums including CNIC, registration of marriage, death and divorce, providing copy of documents to women.
- b) Raising awareness of women regarding importance of CNIC, marriage, divorce, death, inheritance and succession certificates

3) Facilitate women's access to justice by;

- a) Strengthening the institutional mechanisms for prevention and support to victims of violence including raising the number of women in police force, women police stations, gender crime centers and family courts.
- b) Reviewing and revising medico-legal procedures and promoting direct interaction and cooperation of all institutions/departments in this respect introducing one window support systems for legal recourse to survivors of Sexual & Gender Based Violence (SGBV) in hospitals.
- c) Strengthening women's representation in the judiciary, legal system, police, health and medico-legal system in order to facilitate women's access to these services.
- d) Fostering gender responsive police systems to remove unnecessary hindrances in women seeking access to justice for relief from abuses and redress for gender based violence

against them

- e) Ensuring effective timely redress mechanisms at community level including formation of women protection committees, community policing and Alternative Dispute Resolution at Courts
- f) Simplifying judicial procedures to effectively provide protection and improve women's access to justice
- g) Taking measures to ensure women concerns must be given due considerations in Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)
- h) Taking measures to highlight and strengthening women's active participation in peace and conflict resolution in society

#### **4.4 Political Empowerment & Decision Making**

Women's decision making needs to be seen in a broad spectrum and not limited to their representation in legislative bodies alone. Equality in decision-making is essential to the empowerment of women. Some key policy measures required for the greater and meaningful participation of women in politics shall be:

- 1) Removing hurdles to women's political participation by effective implementation of existing legal provisions, and by removing procedural obstacles.
- 2) Strengthening representation and decision making of women in the political processes by providing training, mentoring, supporting and strengthening networks including representation of women in parliamentary committees and other decision making bodies
- 3) Supporting electoral colleges for women at grass roots level enabling them to become active and effective participants in political processes.

- 4) Taking measures to engaging male parliamentarians and politicians in supporting gender equality in decision-making
- 5) Giving full attention to the registration of women voters, especially in the rural areas, and facilitation the issuance of CNIC, creation of a safe and conducive environment for women to vote and other measures to facilitate voting by women.
- 6) Significantly increasing women's political representation through political parties; engendering manifestoes, strengthening women's wings of political parties and engaging political parties for ensuring an increase in women vote bank.
- 7) Mandatory 33% representation of women in decision making positions in the public and private sectors including in political parties as an equity measure.
- 8) Engendering government mechanisms through training, capacity building and gender sensitizing public sector training institutions curricula; i.e. NIMS and NIPA etc.
- 9) Legislation to curb practice of barring women from voting and participation in political process
- 10) Nullifying the results of any constituency having less than 10% turn out of the total female registered voters.

