



ACHIEVING GENDER EQUALITY IN PUBLIC OFFICES IN PAKISTAN



Achieving Gender Equality in Public Offices in Pakistan

Shirin M. Rai, Nafisa Shah and Aazar Ayaz



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANP □	Awami National Party
CDD □	Community Development Department
CGA □	Country Gender Assessment
DCO □	District Coordination Officer
DSP □	Decentralization Support Program
DTCE □	Devolution Trust for Community Empowerment
EDO □	Executive District Officer
FANA □	Federally Administered Northern Areas
FATA □	Federally Administered Tribal Areas
FGD's □	Focus Group Discussions
FPSC □	Federal Public Service Commission
FWCW □	Fourth World Conference on Women
GDI □	Gender Development Index
GDP □	Gross Domestic Product
GEM □	Gender Empowerment Measure
GOP □	Government of Pakistan
GRAP □	Gender Reform Action Plan
GSP □	Gender Support Programme
HIV/AIDS □	Human Immunodeficiency Virus / Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
ILO □	International Labor Organization
LG □	Local government
MDG □	Millennium Development Goals
MDGR □	Millennium Development Goal Report
MMA □	Mutihidda Majlis-e-Amal
MPA □	Member of Provincial Assembly
MQM □	Mutahidda Qoumi Movement
NHDR □	National Human Development Report
NGO □	Non Governmental Organization
NWFP □	North-West Frontier Province
PCO □	Public Sector Organization
PIDE □	Pakistan Institute of Development Economics
PIHS □	Pakistan Integrated Household Survey
PMLN □	Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz
PMLQ □	Pakistan Muslim League Quaid-e-Azam
PoA □	Programme of Action
PPC □	Pakistan Penal Code
PPPP □	Pakistan Muslim League Parliamentarian
PRSP □	Poverty Reduction strategy Paper
PSLMS □	Pakistan Social And Living Standards Measurement Survey
SHG □	Self-Help Groups
SP □	Superintendent of Police
UC □	Union Councilor
UN □	United Nations
UNDP □	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF □	United Nations Children's Fund
WPS □	Women's Political School
W3P □	Women's Political Participation Project

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Shirin M. Rai
September 2007

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report addresses the critical issue of achieving gender equality in public life in Pakistan. The report takes a three pronged approach to assessing strategies towards achieving gender equality in public office in Pakistan:

1. **Quotas as a catalyst** – does improving the presence of women in public offices lead to different outcomes in terms of policy, implementation and evaluation?
2. **Quotas in context** – what socio-economic, political and cultural environment is needed in order for quotas to be effective?
3. **Quotas as part of a bundle** of policy initiatives needed towards furthering gender equality in public offices.

The report assesses whether quotas have led to women's empowerment in Pakistan by examining how

- ↘ formal political participation is mediated by the strength of women's movements within different countries.
- ↘ whether quotas for women are adequate to address the basic needs of women, whatever their class, ethnicity or religion.

The report is based on a total of 125 interviews and the number of participants in focus group discussions totalled 100. The Report suggests that while quotas are important in addressing the exclusion of women from the public political sphere, they can only form one part of a multi-faceted strategy for empowering women, which must also involve a redistribution of socio-economic resources within societies. Both these are crucial if we are to assess whether quotas in Pakistan are and can become measures of women's political empowerment.

This report shows that the quota system introduced to increase the presence of women in public life has achieved some success:

- ↘ Large numbers of women have been inducted

into public life at the local level

- ↘ Increasing numbers of women are present in Provincial Assemblies and the National Parliament
- ↘ Local governance is benefiting from women councillors' work, especially in bringing women's concerns to political institutions
- ↘ There has been some increase in the number of women in the bureaucracy at all levels
- ↘ Leadership roles are increasingly being performed by women in political institutions

However, the report has also demonstrated that quotas alone can not address gender inequalities and considerable challenges remain before those working for gender equality and achieving gender balance in public life:

- ↘ Quotas need to be embedded in a democratic culture and a socio-economic context where women's work in both public and private spheres is valued.
- ↘ Quotas need to be supplemented by other strategies that focus on transforming the public space within which women and men perform their public roles through education, media campaigns and developing gender equality networks.
- ↘ Education and training need to reflect the goals of gender equality for both men and women and for all state actors in their curriculum, pedagogy and personnel.
- ↘ Gender mainstreaming needs to be transformative rather than simply integrationist through an agenda setting focus that cuts across policy making and implementation mechanisms such that macro-economic and social policy are not treated separately and together address the contextual shifts needed to empower women.

The report provides recommendations for both state and non-state actors towards achieving gender equality in public life in Pakistan.

INTRODUCTION

MDG Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women

Since the Fourth World Conference on Women 1995 strong linkages have been made between women's role in development and their participation in the political institutions of the state. The link between economic and political empowerment is key to enhancing the equal participation of men and women in decision-making. The argument is that economic and political resources need to be accessible to both men and women in order to address inequalities between them. In 1995 at the Beijing Conference, 189 governments including Pakistan committed to "take measures to ensure women's equal access to and full participation in power structures and decision-making" and to "increase women's capacity to participate in decision-making and leadership." To achieve these objectives, they pledged to "establish the goal of gender balance in governmental bodies and committees, as well as in public administrative entities, and in the judiciary, and in all governmental and public administration positions." Pakistan also became signatory to the Convention for the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1996 and in so doing accepted obligations concerning women's political rights under the Convention's Article 7. In particular, Pakistan government's commitment to women's participation in formulation and implementation of government policy has allowed it to pursue vigorously a quota strategy for enhancing women's participation in political institutions. The link between access to power structures, participation in decision-making and achieving a gender balance between men and women was also clearly made in the Platform of Action, at the Beijing Conference. With the evolution of international gender discourses on equality between men and women in public life, the aspirations of the Beijing Conference found space in most development documents produced by international organisations and national policies. The clearest expression of this came in the enunciation of the eight UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2000 one of which is gender equality. Gender equality is defined in the Millennium Development Goals Report (2005) as "...a human right..., [which] means, equal control over resources and equal representation in public and political life" (p.14). While the term gender balance presupposes some ideas of equality, it does not necessarily focus on equality as a human right which includes both, representation in public life as well as equal access to public resources.

Box 1: Pakistan's CEDAW Obligations

Pakistan acceded to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) on 29 February, 1996, being the 174th State-Party. Ministry of Women Development (MoWD) is the designated national focal machinery for its implementation.

CEDAW covers 30 Articles, of which 2 - 16 signify legal obligations of a State-Party (summarized):

- ↳ Condemn discrimination against women in all forms and adopt measures necessary for eliminating them in realization of the rights recognized in the Convention
- ↳ Affirm & Initiate appropriate measures, including legislation to ensure full development and advancement of women, ensuring equality with men
- ↳ Submit Follow-up Assessment & periodic Implementation Reports, and such other Reports as may be required

Source:

<http://www.pakistan.gov.pk/ministries/women-development-ministry/media/Brief.pdf>

Box 2 : UN MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS (MDGs)

- Goal 1: □ Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
- Goal 2: □ Achieve universal primary education
- Goal 3: □ Promote gender equality and empower women
- Goal 4: □ Reduce child mortality
- Goal 5: □ Improve maternal health
- Goal 6: □ Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
- Goal 7: □ Ensure environmental sustainability
- Goal 8: □ Develop a Global Partnership for Development

The burden of the argument in this report is that gender balance in public life can only be effective if equal rights to public resources go hand in hand with equal representation in public institutions and decision-making processes.

Pakistan not only signed the Beijing Conference commitments, but also supports the implementation of MDGs, most clearly in its recent Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper *Accelerating Economic Growth and Reducing Poverty: The Road Ahead* (GOP, 2003): “The proposed strategy also focuses on attainment of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for sustainable development and poverty reduction.”

Research Framework

This Report suggests that all the eight MDGs have to be examined from a gendered perspective if the goal to promote gender equality and empower women is to be realized. Gender mainstreaming, one of the key methodologies as well as policies, to achieve the cross-cutting gender visibility is a formal policy now adopted by many institutions and some governments. It implies incorporating gender awareness into all levels and aspects of policy-making, not only those directly concerning the position of women. The argument here is that gender mainstreaming can be effective only if it is promoted together with special measures introduced to directly address the gender gap between men and women in society. Either strategy

is incomplete without the other. The report takes this principle as key to its approach as well as its argument in favour of quotas as a policy to address the gender equality between men and women in public life. It suggests that unless women’s political participation is embedded in an enabling socio-economic development environment, it can not achieve its ambitions for gender equality and therefore gender balance in public life.

The report thus takes a three pronged approach to assessing strategies towards achieving gender equality in public office in Pakistan:

1. □ **Quotas as a catalyst** – does improving the presence of women in public offices lead to different outcomes in terms of policy, implementation and evaluation?
2. □ **Quotas in context** – what socio-economic, political and cultural environment is needed in order for quotas to be effective?
3. □ **Quotas as part of a bundle** of policy initiatives needed towards furthering gender equality in public offices.

This approach is distinctive from a number of excellent studies that have looked in detail at the form and structure of representation of women in parliaments and in the bureaucracy.¹ It views quotas as a catalyst, which fast tracks women into public life, “representing a shift from ‘equal opportunity’ to ‘equality of result’².”

The shift is not only in policy, but also in discourse. The debate on quotas can

- ↘ generate an awareness of the issue of women's under-representation in public life
- ↘ filters into other areas of discussion about gender inequality³ such as
 - i. □ institution strengthening
 - ii. □ the need for transforming gendered public ceremonies, rituals, processes and spaces.
- ↘ strengthens the perception of women not only as targets (objects) of policy making but also as leaders (subjects) engaged in transforming policy.

By contextualizing quotas in socio-economic as well as political arenas, this study addresses

- ↘ issues of intersectionality, in particular of gender, class, ethnicity and space (rural/urban)
- ↘ the nature of the political system within which quota policies are shaped and implemented.

By treating quotas as part of a bundle of policies needed to address gender imbalances in public life rather than as a stand alone special measure the report will be able to assess what other strategies, particularly gender mainstreaming, are needed in order for quotas to deliver on their promise.

The report assesses whether quotas have led to women's empowerment in Pakistan by examining how:

- ↘ formal political participation is mediated by the strength of women's movements within different countries.

- ↘ whether quotas for women are adequate to address the basic needs of women, whatever their class, ethnicity or religion.

Based on the evidence collected, the Report suggests how the current provisions to improve women's representation might be strengthened in order to achieve gender equality in public life.

Organisation of the Argument

The Report is organized into five chapters. In line with its argument about embedding quotas in their context, Chapter 1 examines the historical, socio-economic and political context within which quota debates and provision have taken shape and are being implemented. Chapter 2 analyses the various provisions put into place by the Government of Pakistan as well as political parties to enhance women's participation in public life. Chapter 3 assesses whether the provisions outlined in Chapter 2 have been effective and Chapter 4 outlines and assesses the experiences of women in public life in Pakistan and the challenges they face. In Chapter 5, we recommend conclusions and the way forward.

The key research questions about whether current provisions to improve women's participation in public life are addressed by examining the following criteria:

Table 1: Assessing Effectiveness of Quotas

Criteria □	Variables
Procedures □	1. □ regular meetings held □ 2. □ agendas circulated □ 3. □ consultation on agendas □ 4. □ voting on specific issues – party political, cross party, male-female

¹See for instance *Inquiry Report on the Status of women employment in the Public Sector Organisations and S. Zia, and F. Bari Women's Participation in Political and Public Life*

²Drude Dahlerup, 2006, *Women, Quotas and Politics*, Routledge, p.9

³Sometimes, these debates also generate a backlash against quotas, as has been the case in India where the Bill to introduce a quota at the level of national parliament has been repeatedly sidelined for the last decade (see S.M Rai, 'Democratic Institutions, Political Representation and Women's Empowerment: The Quota Debate in India' *Democratization* 1999, Vol.6, No.3; pp. 84-99).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ budget allocation
Accessibility of Constituents □	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. □ Where do they meet the constituents? □ 2. □ Who do they meet – male-female, upper/lower caste, minorities? □ 3. □ How often do they see their constituents per issue?
Types of Issues Addressed □	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. □ Major issues taken up by male and female representatives □ 2. □ Who brings up what issues? In what ways – formal and informal? □ 3. □ Do female members of Govt. and opposition parties bring different issues of women? □ 4. □ What issues are they best placed to resolve? □ 5. □ What issues are most difficult to address? □ 6. □ The number of times women representatives initiate discussion on specific issues? On the budget? Suggest a specific policy?
Resources □	<p>Distribution of Resources: □</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. □ Budgets and levels of funds made available to representatives □ 2. □ Control over resources for male and female representatives □ 3. □ Resource management – how do they account for resource spending? Who holds them accountable for the spending? □ <p>Informal Resources: □</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4. □ Influence (party political? Class/caste?) □ 5. □ ‘corruption’ – through thekas/tenders etc.
Satisfaction Levels of □ Representatives □	<p>With the System:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. □ Kind of devolution? What powers, modalities are needed to improve the system? □ 2. □ Remuneration: honorarium for local councilors □ 3. □ Training of male and female representatives □ <p>With Representatives: □</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. □ Party politics – a constraint on representatives’ efficacy? 2. □ perceptions of effectiveness of male and female representatives as leaders – by men and women □ 3. □ Levels of corruption among male and female of □ representatives □ 4. □ Levels of access and consultation by representatives
Satisfaction Levels □ Constituents □	

Research Methodologies

To achieve the objectives of the research study, multiple research methodologies, both primary and secondary, are employed. A total of 125 interviews were conducted during the study and the number of participants in focus group discussions totaled 100⁴.

Primary data collection was done for getting collective perception and opinions through

- i) Semi Structured Interviews: Semi structured interviews were conducted with the individuals from bureaucracy, parliamentarians, academics/scholars/practioneers,

international organizations, civil society organization; based on some leading key questions.

- ii) Semi-Structured Focus Group Discussions (FGD): Semi structured FGDs with minimum 10-15 participants each were also conducted. With female and male councilors in 1 selected district having rural/urban divide in each province; 1 FGD each with Students' and Citizens' Group based on some leading key questions (Annex-B).

The target groups/actors interviewed for this research include:

Table 2: The Interviewees: State Policy Makers/Actors	
Federal <input type="checkbox"/>	Provincial
1. Senators & National Assembly Members <input type="checkbox"/>	1. Provincial Assembly Members
2. Standing Committees on Women Development <input type="checkbox"/> Senate & National Assembly <input type="checkbox"/>	2. Provincial Public Service Commissions
3. Ministry of Women Development <input type="checkbox"/>	3. Ministry of Local Government
4. National Reconstruction Bureau & DTCE <input type="checkbox"/>	4. Department of Women and Social Welfare
5. National Commission on Government Reform	
6. National Commission for Status of Women	
7. Establishment Division	
8. Federal Public Service Commission	

⁴See Annex 1 for more information regarding the interviewees and the schedule of work

Table 3: Interviewees: Non-State Policy Makers/Actors

Political Parties	Bureaucracy
Executive Committee level of PML-Q, PPPP, PML-N, MQM, MMA, ANP	Federal & Provincial and local government Bureaucrats- Female & Male
Local Government Nazims & District Councilors- Female & Male	Civil Society Academicians, University Students & Other Marginalized Groups, Civil Society Organizations & International Organizations

The reason for picking the above sample was to look at the issues and gather recommendations on achieving gender equality in public offices in a more holistic way. It also presented a good mix and representative sample of all the stakeholders. The sample also reflected the different geographical areas of Pakistan – all four provinces, which show considerable variation in their approach to gender equality, were covered as well as the capital city of Islamabad.

The Report suggests that while quotas are important in addressing the exclusion of women from the public political sphere, they can only form one part of a multi-faceted strategy for empowering women, which must also involve a redistribution of socio-economic resources within societies. Both these are crucial if we are to assess whether quotas in Pakistan are and can become measures of women's political empowerment.

Chapter 1

Quotas In Context: Mapping The Numbers Game

1.1 The Progress of Pakistani Women⁵

The 'Progress of South Asian Women' UNICEF Report, 2005 outlines the achievements and challenges before women in Pakistan. Covering the broad spectrum of the MDGs, the Report suggests that the government of Pakistan has initiated many policies to address inequalities between women and men, but challenges remain.

1.1.1 Girls in Schools

Primary education has been made compulsory through legislation⁶. However, as the Pakistan Social And Living Standards Measurement Survey

(2004-05) suggests, significant challenges remain in improving the levels of education, especially in addressing the inequalities between male and female enrolment and drop-out rates and adult literacy rates etc.. In the field of education, "the Government of Pakistan has taken a number of steps to reduce the gender gap in education such as special incentives are offered for girls (free textbooks and stipends). Efforts have been made to sensitize parents and increase the participation of local communities. Addressing some of these concerns the Government of Pakistan raised the expenditure on education from 2.7 percent to four percent of GDP. Funds allocation for the Higher Education Commission has already been increased from Rs. 600 million to Rs. 14.1 billion⁷.

Table 4: Net Enrolment Rate At The Middle Level (Age 10 . 12) - By Province & Region

Region and Province	Middle Level Enrolment Rate (Percent)								
	1998-99			PIH 2001-02 PIHS			2004-05 -PSLM		
	Male	Female	Both	Male	Female	Both	Male	Female	Both
OVERALL	19	13	16	17	14	16	20	16	18
Punjab	21	16	19	18	18	18	21	19	20
Sindh	20	13	17	15	12	14	20	15	18
NWFP	16	7	11	16	8	12	20	11	16
Balochistan	11	6	9	11	4	8	10	7	8

Source: Pakistan Social and Living Standards Measurement Survey (2004-05)

⁵This section is largely based upon the Progress of South Asian Women, UNIFEM Report, 2005

⁶UNIFEM Progress of South Asian Women Report, 2005

⁷<http://southasia.oneworld.net/article/view/123177/1/>

NOTES:

1. \square Net enrolment rate: [Number of children aged 10 - 12 years attending middle level (classes 6 - 8) divided by number of children aged 10 - 12 years] multiplied by 100
2. \square Numerator of NER: Raised sum of all individuals aged 10 - 12 years who report currently attending middle level.
3. \square Denominator of NER: Raised sum of all individuals aged 10 - 12 years who respond to the relevant questions.

Table 5: Adult Literacy Rate

	1999	2002
Female	27.9	28.5
Male	57.5	53.4

Source: HDR, 2002 and 2004

The gender differences in literacy rates are prevalent across Pakistan. However, there are also differences within the provinces on account of cultural and social contexts, economic development and policy priorities. The research carried out for this Report in Sukkur, Sindh revealed administrative distortions and unequal access of men and women to services. Women's access to services was far behind that of men's whether in education and health. Part of the reason was lack of infrastructure accessible to women, cultural values that restrict women from going out to seek help, restrictions on mobility etc, and also at the same time dearth of women teachers, women doctors and other women field officers. The matter was exacerbated by the rural-urban disparities within district, making the rural women at the furthest end of the spectrum. For instance, the total boys' enrollment in schools is 70,520 and girls' enrollment is 49,520. In the entire district, out of a total of 1,107 schools, there are only 194 schools for girls. And in Taluka Salehput with a population of 100,000 only 145 girls are enrolled in girls schools! The total boys' enrollment is 6611 compared with 1004 of the girls, eighty per cent of who are studying in the boys' schools. Whereas the number of boys'

Box 3: Gender Disparities in Education in Balochistan

Only ten percent of rural women receive schooling in Balochistan

SIBI, 5 Sep 2006 (IRIN) - Amna, Qudisia and Areeba look no different to other Pakistani schoolgirls. The trio of nine-year-olds with neatly braided hair and pressed uniforms giggle at a private joke as they walk through the gates of their school in the town of Sibi in Balochistan Province.

However, in the context of Balochistan, Pakistan's least developed province, they are unusual: they are among the very few girls who go to school. Balochistan's female literacy rates are among the lowest in the world, with most girls not enrolled in a school. The province's literacy level - 37 percent - lags behind that of Pakistan's three other provinces and the national average of 53 percent.

Analyst Syed Fazl-e-Haider, a columnist with the Dawn English weekly newspaper based in the capital, Islamabad, estimated last month that the rural literacy rate in the province stood at no more than 23 percent. The literacy rate for Balochistan's women was estimated at 20 percent, with only 10 percent of rural women receiving schooling. The Society for Community Support for Primary Education in Balochistan, an NGO, estimated that the female literacy rate in rural Balochistan increased from only 1.5 percent in 1992 to 8.9 percent in 1998.

[The World Bank has set up] the Balochistan education support project...⁸⁵The project has helped provide a US \$22 million loan to set up community schools targeting girls. But observers said there were numerous challenges to bringing the province level with other parts of Pakistan. Social attitudes were a problem but the ongoing conflict between the Pakistani military and local tribes was also detrimental.

Source:
www.un-instraw.org/drevista/hypermail/alltickers/en/0421.html

schools are 113, there are only 5 girls' schools. Whereas there are 104 male teachers in this taluka, there are only 2 female teachers.

1.1.2 Health

In the area of health, there has been growing commitment to public health issues and to women's health issues. Although the figures in Table 6 have changed since 2004 (particularly in

the field of education, where higher resource commitment to education expenditure has meant that Pakistan now spends 4 per cent of its GDP on education) these still indicate that if Pakistan's MDG aspirations are to be met there is urgent need to change the priorities in public spending. Pakistan spends the most in South Asia on the military as percentage of its GDP, which it can ill afford given its MDG commitments.

Table 6: Priorities in Public Spending

	Public Expenditure on Health (% of GDP)	Public Expenditure on Education	Military Expenditure (% of GDP)
	2001	2002	2002
Bangladesh	2.3	1.5	1.1
Bhutan	5.2	3.6	
India	4.1	0.9	2.3
Maldives	5.6		
Nepal	3.4	1.5	1.4
Pakistan	1.8	1.0	4.7
Sri Lanka	1.3	1.8	3.1

Source: UN HDR 2004

A key health indicator for women is the antenatal care that they receive. The picture in Pakistan, though improving, is still worrying especially in the differences between urban and rural areas, and between provinces.

Table 7: Key Indicators: Antenatal Care: Tetanus Toxoid (% Married Women Aged 15-49)

	1998-99 PIHS			2001-02 PIHS			2004-05 PSLM		
	U	R	T	U	R	T	U	R	T
OVERALL	66	31	39	69	38	46	67	41	51
Punjab	85	38	45	73	46	53	72	54	62
Sindh	72	23	40	68	30	43	68	34	48
NWFP	54	26	29	59	31	35	58	40	45
Balochistan	41	9	13	39	12	17	46	17	25

Source: Pakistan Social And Living Standards Measurement Survey (2004-05)

1.1.3 Combating Violence Against Women

Many new initiatives and laws have been introduced to counter the violence against women which renders them unable to participate in public life:

- ✧ Pakistan's Penal Code now recognizes honour killings as premeditated murder under Section 302 (April 2000)
- ✧ The National Policy for Development and Empowerment of Women (2002) was promulgated to promote women's participation while declaring zero tolerance towards violence against women and girls
- ✧ A Code of Conduct for Gender Justice at the Workplace was proposed in 2002 to address the issue of sexual harassment
- ✧ The Prevention and Control of Human Trafficking Ordinance was promulgated in 2002 and the National Gender Reform Action Plan (GRAP) 2005-2009 was approved in May 2005.
- ✧ The Women's Protection Act was enacted by the National Assembly of Pakistan on 15 November 2006 to amend the Hudood Ordinance laws. The new law moves rape to the Pakistan Penal Code from Hudood Law, which required testimony of four witnesses to crime. While procedural changes were made to make it more difficult for bringing false accusations of sex outside of marriage (zina).
- ✧ 'The Prevention of Anti-Women Practices'(Criminal Law Amendment) Bill, 2006, was tabled in the National Assembly (the lower house of the parliament) in December. It calls for abolition of customary practices like giving women away in settling

disputes, forced marriages and marriages with the Holy Quran.

These measures and initiatives have been the result of long struggles waged by Pakistani women's groups against masculinist interpretations of Islamic traditions. It took enormous courage to lift the veil of silence that had been evoked in the name of culture.



**SILENCE IS
VIOLENCE**

In our research, one form of violence against women that was repeatedly discussed was that of verbal abuse. Women even in very high public offices, and specially the most active ones, complained that they were subjected to verbal and/or media harassment. In Sindh, Sassui Palijo spoke of this experience: "I have been a victim of personal attacks. There were a series of articles in a newspaper about my dress and appearance, and personal life, which caused me a lot of mental distress. I gave them a legal notice and then they stopped⁸."



A Pakistani woman protests against gender inequality and violence in Lahore.

⁸Interview, Sassui Palijo, Member, Sindh Assembly, 19 October 2006

1.1.4 Women's Representation in Public Life

In order to increase women's representation in public life, the Government of Pakistan has developed institutional arrangements at the federal and provincial levels:

- ✎ A **National Commission on the Status of Women** was set up in 2000, with the objective of 'the emancipation of women, equalization of opportunities and socio-economic conditions amongst women and men and elimination of all forms of discrimination against women'.
- ✎ The **Ministry for Women's Development** has taken on a more policy oriented and advocacy role, a shift away from being project focused.
- ✎ A **National Policy for Development and Empowerment of Women** has been in place since 2002, which aims at gender equality and social, political and economic empowerment of women.

As the table below shows, because of its quota policies, women's representation in Pakistan's parliament is the highest in South Asia.

Table 8: Women in Power and Decision making in South Asia

Countries □	Female legislators, senior □ officials and managers. □	Seats in the Parliament held □ by women, 2004 (% of total) □	
	(% of total) □	Lower House	Upper House
Bangladesh □	8 □	9.7 □	—
Bhutan □	9.3 □	9.3 □	—
India □	17.47 □	8.8 □	10.3
Nepal □	— □	5.9 □	15
Pakistan □	— □	21.6 □	17.0
Maldives □	15 □	6.0 □	—
Sri Lanka □	4 □	4.4 □	—

Source: UNDP, HDR 2004

As Reyes points out, the “unprecedented number of women elected to district, tehsil and union councils in these elections following the adoption of a 33 percent quota by government opened up

not only an enormous political space but also a strategic opportunity for women to make a difference in setting and implementing the agenda of local governments⁹”

⁹Socorro L. Reyes, 'Quotas for Women for Legislative Seats at the Local Level in Pakistan' in International IDEA, 2002, Women in Parliament, Stockholm (<http://www.idea.int>). This is an English translation of Socorro Reyes, Wan Azizah, "Kuota Kursi Legislatif Tingkat Lokal bagi Kaum Perempuan di Pakistan," in International IDEA, 2002, *Perempuan di Parlemen: Bukan Sekedar Jumlah*, Stockholm: International IDEA.

Table 9: Country-wide State of Number of Seats, Filled in all tiers of Local Government Election - 2005 (as of March, 2006)

Zila Council □	Punjab□	Sindh□	NWFP□	Balochistan□	Total
Women Councilors□	1,321□	410□	354□	226□	2,311
Tehsil/Town Council □	Punjab□	Sindh□	NWFP□	Balochistan□	Total
Women Councilors□	1,342□	481□	372□	270□	2,465
Union Council □	Punjab□	Sindh□	NWFP□	Balochistan□	Total
Women Councilors□	13,486□	4,192□	3,450□	2,211□	23,339
Grand Total□	16,149□	5,083□	4,176□	2,707□	28,115
Percentage□	57%□	18%□	15%□	10%□	100%

Source: Local Government Data

At the same time, the figures for women's participation in other sectors are not so high, alerting us to the importance of quotas as a strategy for addressing gender imbalance as well as gender inequality in public life.

Table 10: Women Workers in the Organized Sector□

	Female administrators and □ managers (% of total) □		Female professional and□□□ technical workers (% of total)□	
	1998 □	2002 □	1998 □	2002
Bangladesh□	4.9 □	8.7 □	34.7 □	25.0
Maldives □	—□	15.4 □	— □	40.2
Pakistan □	8 □	8.7 □	25.1 □	25.6
Sri Lanka □	17.3 □	4.0 □	27.2 □	49.2

Source: HDR, 2004

Quotas must address local contexts, as well as the sector of employment. For example, in services such as education and health, a ten per cent quota is redundant because the segregation of work means that women are over represented in some of these areas and almost non-existent in others. Further, even in sectors where there is a good presence of women, a much larger number than that was required in order to fulfill demand for their services. If these areas are seen to be important indicators of women's ability to participate in public life, then quotas in political institutions need to be supplemented by ensuring increased participation of women in educational, health and security institutions.

In our research in Sindh, this issue was highlighted by the Leader of the Opposition as well as the Deputy Speaker of the Sindh Assembly. Both said that gender issues, women's increased representation, or presence of women was of little relevance because the Assembly was not able to its job, as it should in a working democracy. In four years, the assembly had only passed four bills - that too some amendments in the existing legislation. All 12 bills that were submitted by a lady parliamentarian, had never come up for discussion, and had not even been handed over to the house committees for scrutiny. "About effectiveness of quotas, it is true that the ladies are

active and performing. But what good is an assembly for, if you can not legislate? This assembly has only passed four bills in four years and they were amendments," said the Leader of the Opposition. If we are to judge women's participation in public life, not only their numbers in these institutions but also the quality of institutions themselves become moot. Weak, corrupt and unaccountable political institutions can not encourage democratic functioning either by men or women.

1.2 Pakistan's Political Economy and Governance – Issues for Gender equality in Public Life

According to the Human Development Report, in 2006, the HDI for Pakistan was 0.539, which gave Pakistan a rank of 134th out of 177 countries with data. Pakistan ranks almost at the bottom on Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) and Gender Development Index (GDI). In the report on Pakistan's progress on MDGs, it is stated that "Pakistan's overall track record in promoting and delivering gender equality is a weak one" and notes that the "share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector has remained unchanged at around 9% over a period of 10 years"¹⁰.

Table 11 : Pakistan's Human Development Index 2004

HDI value□	Life expectancy□ (years)□	Adult literacy rate□ (% ages □ 15 and older)□	Combined primary,□ at birth secondary and □ tertiary gross enrolment □□□ ratio (%)	GDP per capita□□□ (PPP US\$)□□□
□	□			
1. Norway (0.965)□	1. Japan (82.2)□	1. Georgia (100.0)□	1. Australia (113.2)□	1. Luxembourg (69,961)
132. Comoros (0.556)□	121. India (63.6)□	114. Morocco (52.3)□	156. Papua New Guinea (40.7)□	122. Cambodia (2,423)

¹⁰Pakistan Millennium Development Goals Report, 2004, Government of Pakistan, p. 20

133. Lao People's Dem. Rep. (0.553)	122. Kazakhstan (63.4)	115. Mauritania (51.2)	157. Côte d'Ivoire (39.6)	123. Ghana (2,240)
134. Pakistan (0.539)	123. Pakistan (63.4)	116. Pakistan (49.9)	158. Pakistan (38.4)	124. Pakistan (2,225)
135. Bhutan (0.538)	124. Bhutan (63.4)	117. Côte d'Ivoire (48.7)	159. Senegal (38.1)	125. Angola (2,180)
136. Ghana (0.532)	125. Bangladesh (63.3)	118. Nepal (48.6)	160. Sudan (36.7)	126. Guinea (2,180)
177. Niger (0.311)	177. Swaziland (31.3)	128. Mali (19.0)	172. Niger (21.5)	172. Sierra Leone (561)

Source: HDR, 2006

According to the World Bank, Pakistan's economic situation has moved rapidly from a position of great vulnerability to one of strong growth in the last five years. Throughout the 1990s the growth of Pakistan's GDP was less than 4% per annum, as a result of which "per capita real income grew by only slightly more than 1% per year, leading to an increase in poverty to 32%"¹¹. During this period, "the debt-servicing burden of total public debt as a percentage of government revenue increased from 19.6 percent in 1980 to 60.3 percent in 2000"¹². It was noted that "The NHDR/PIDE Survey 2001 shows that the poor are not only afflicted by a high frequency of illness but

also, the high cost of medical treatment constitutes a major factor in pushing people into poverty"¹³. Declining growth rates and high debt servicing charges during the 1990s eroded the social fabric of the country. As the NHDR notes, "The adverse health and socio-economic status of poor women is accentuated as marginal households with given incomes bear the burden of a large number of children. In Pakistan high fertility rates, high population growth rates, ill health and poverty are linked in a vicious cycle". The key issue of whether Pakistan will be able to meet its MDG targets remains an open one (see Table on the following page).

¹¹World Bank Pakistan Country Overview 2006, <http://www.worldbank.org.pk/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/SOUTHASIAEXT/PAKISTANEXTN/0,,contentMDK:20131431~menuPK:293059~pagePK:141137~piPK:141127~theSitePK:293052,00.html>

¹²Akmal Hussain, Pakistan National Human Development Report 2003 Poverty, Growth And Governance UNDP, <http://www.un.org.pk/nhdr/>

¹³Ibid.

Table 12: Millennium Development Goals : Achieving Targets

	1990	1995	1998	2001	2004	
Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger						
Income share held by lowest 20%			..	..	..	..
Malnutrition prevalence, weight for age (% of children under 5)			..	..	..	39
Poverty gap at \$1 a day (PPP) (%)	..	..	..	..	..	..
Poverty headcount ratio at \$1 a day (PPP) (% of population)	..	..	..	..	..	..
Poverty headcount ratio at national poverty line (% of population)	..	..	..	..	..	..
Prevalence of undernourishment (% of population)	..	..	26	..	..	24
Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education						
Literacy rate, youth total (% of people ages 15-24)		64	..	..	..	74
Persistence to grade 5, total (% of cohort)	..	..	..	64	..	72
Primary completion rate, total (% of relevant age group)	64.1	..	..	..	..	77.8
School enrollment, primary (% net)	..	..	..	75	..	80
Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women						
Proportion of seats held by women in national parliament (%)	10.6	..	10.0	11.1	..	12.3
Ratio of girls to boys in primary and secondary education (%)	73.2	..	81.0	80.8	..	85.0
Ratio of young literate females to males (% ages 15-24)	73.5	..	..	..	..	80.8
Share of women employed in the nonagricultural sector (% of total nonagricultural employment)	22	20	22	22	..	23
Goal 4: Reduce child mortality						
Immunization, measles (% of children ages 12-23 months)	58	64.9	55.8	59.2	..	63.5
Mortality rate, infant (per 1,000 live births)	94	90	..	84	..	80
Mortality rate, under-5 (per 1,000)	147	136	..	128	..	122
Goal 5: Improve maternal health						
Births attended by skilled health staff (% of total)	32.2	..	..	..	..	40.7
Maternal mortality ratio (modeled estimate, per 100,000 live births)	..	..	..	683.9	..	..
Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases						
Children orphaned by HIV/AIDS	..	..	..	..	..	..
Contraceptive prevalence (% of women ages 15-49)	..	..	..	..	..	40
Incidence of tuberculosis (per 100,000 people)	177.0	..	..	..	..	224.2
Prevalence of HIV, female (% ages 15-24)	..	..	..	..	..	..
Prevalence of HIV, total (% of population ages 15-49)	..	..	..	..	..	2
Tuberculosis cases detected under DOTS (%)	..	..	..	..	..	43.8

Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability					
CO2 emissions (metric tons per capita)	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	..
Forest area (% of land area)	27	..	..	25	24
GDP per unit of energy use (constant 2000 PPP \$ per kg of oil equivalent)	4	4	4	4	4
Improved sanitation facilities (% of population with access)	21	..	..	..	38
Improved water source (% of population with access)	64	..	..	..	75
Nationally protected areas (% of total land area)	..	..	..	..	7.7
Goal 8: Develop a global partnership for development					
Aid per capita (current US\$)	13.3	13.1	10.1	10.4	14.7
Debt service (PPG and IMF only, % of exports of G&S, excl. workers' remittances)	24	23	17	11	9
Fixed line and mobile phone subscribers (per 1,000 people)	6.1	10.6	16.9	31.3	71.0
Internet users (per 1,000 people)	0.0	0.2	0.9	4.9	24.3
Personal computers (per 1,000 people)	..	1.7	3.1	5.3	11.2
Total debt service (% of exports of goods, services and income)	22	22	17	11	10
Unemployment, youth female (% of female labor force ages 15-24)	..	..	..	..	..
Unemployment, youth male (% of male labor force ages 15-24)	..	..	..	..	..
Unemployment, youth total (% of total labor force ages 15-24)	..	..	..	..	..
Other					
Fertility rate, total (births per woman)	4.7	4.3	4.1	3.7	3.7
GNI per capita, Atlas method (current US\$)	355.9	334.9	368.8	390.7	507.0
GNI, Atlas method (current US\$) (billions)	619.1	649.8	760.7	854.5	1172.1
Gross capital formation (% of GDP)	21.1	23.6	20.8	21.8	26.6
Life expectancy at birth, total (years)	56.1	57.2	57.7	58.4	58.8
Literacy rate, adult total (% of people ages 15 and above)	48.3	..	..	..	61.5
Population, total (millions)	1739.4	1940.3	2062.8	2187.1	2311.7
Trade (% of GDP)	28.9	35.7	35.8	39.5	49.9
Figures in italics refer to periods other than those specified.					

Source: World Development Indicators Database, September 2006

1.2.1 Women's Contribution to the Economy

This is significant also because the Report makes a direct co-relation between women's employment and the family's economic health: "The number of earners in a household is one of the major determinants of the income level and the

probability of falling below the poverty line... The number of earners in a household is one of the major determinants of the income level and the probability of falling below the poverty line"¹⁴. In Pakistan, despite a marked improvement, women's economic activity rate as percentage of the male rate is the lowest in South Asia.

Table 13: Women's Economic Activity Rate for South Asian countries

Country	Rate (%) 2002	Index (1990=100)2002	As % of male rate
Bangladesh	66.6	101	76
Bhutan	57.1	100	65
India	42.4	105	50
Maldives	65.4	100	80
Nepal	56.8	101	67
Pakistan	36.3	127	44
Sri Lanka	43.3	108	59

Source: UNDP, *Human Development Report, 2004*, Table 27, "Gender inequality in economic activity," pp. 229-232.

This difference is particularly noticeable between the boundaries of poor and extremely poor, rather than in the category of 'non-poor' where other social dilemmas keep women from making a contribution to the family income.

Table 14: Contribution of women in total earned income

Average of Sample	Extremely Poor	Poor	Non-Poor	Total
All Pakistan	0.04	0.05	0.04	0.05
Urban	0.01	0.03	0.07	0.02
Rural	0.06	0.06	0.04	0.06

Source: NHDR/PIDE Survey 2001.

Where women have taken a strong role in heading households, they have shown themselves both competent and happy to do so.

¹⁴Ibid.

Table 15: Women’s Status in Employment in Pakistan (Percent of Total)

Year	Wage/salary earners	Own-account workers	Contributing family workers
1990	22.6	24.8	33.1
1995	12.9	13.5	16.8
2000	-	61.7	50.1

Source: ILO, 2003, Key Indicators of the Labour Market, Table “Status in Employment,”

While the government had, as outlined above, responded to the demands made by the Pakistani women’s movements and international commitments towards gender equality through the National Plan for Women and other measures, the lack of importance given to gender mainstreaming and to issues of governance as part of these strategies meant that the severe pressures of the economy on gendered inequality were not mediated by these plans. As the MDG Report of Pakistan notes, “The objective of mainstreaming gender concerns into the overall planning, implementation and sectoral programming framework for improving women’s status continues to be a major national challenge. Women are more adversely affected by the incidence of poverty on account of their weak position, weak educational background, low participation in economic activity and inequitable access to productive resources. The situation of rural women in Pakistan is worse than that of their urban counterparts”¹⁵. Under pressure from international financial institutions as well as from political unrest in the country, a wide-ranging programme of economic reform was initiated at the start of the new millennium.

Box 4: Gender, Livelihoods & Resources In South Asia

In Pakistan, there has been substantial migration of men to work in West Asia or elsewhere. Prior to this, women had supposedly no role in managing agriculture and other non-domestic activities. After substantial male migration, all this has changed (Lefebvre 2001). There are, of course, conflicts in this change, for instance, between older male relatives and the younger wives. But there are considerable changes through these conflicts. Women in the Neelum-Jhelum Valley areas play a substantial role in managing the household agricultural and other non-domestic economic activities. Other accounts also point out that women in Pakistan are quite comfortable and even happy with their new management roles and responsibilities. When men return after many years’ absence, women do not easily or willingly give back the management roles to them.

Source: Govind Kelkar and Dev Nathan; *Fifth South Asia Regional Ministerial Conference, February 2005, Islamabad, Pakistan, 3-5 May 2005*

¹⁵Pakistan Millennium Development Goals Report 2004, p. 21

1.2.2 Pakistan's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper and Addressing Gender Gaps

The programme for economic reform is outlined in the Pakistan PRSP, as having four key elements:

- a) Accelerating economic growth while maintaining macroeconomic stability.
- b) Improving governance.
- c) Investing in human capital.
- d) Targeting the poor and the vulnerable¹⁶.

Under this programme, and informed by Pakistan's commitment to the MDGs, the PRSP also addressed the issue of female poverty, employment and access to productive resources as part of a gender mainstreaming approach in contrast to the previous welfarist approach towards addressing women's unequal status in society.

An area that the three reports do emphasize is that Pakistan's economic recovery can take place only if it is able to reform its governance structures. Of the four pillars of Pakistan's forward looking strategy outlined in its PRSP, one is "Improving governance and consolidating devolution, both as a means of delivering better development results and ensuring social and economic justice". In particular it focuses on civil service reform in order to produce a flatter governance structure, merit based recruitment and promotions, skills development and "performance based compensation". The World Bank Overview gives prominence

Box 5: Addressing Iprsp Gaps: Employment, Gender and Environment Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women

The Government takes the view that poverty reduction efforts must address the gender dimension in order to deal with poverty meaningfully. The government at the Beijing Platform announced gender mainstreaming as a policy for Action. The Government realizes that gender mainstreaming will need a shift away from the traditional reliance on social welfare measures. Women need to be empowered for equitable access, and this requires removal of the social and economic constraints that have hampered their access to and use of resources.

Under new initiatives, the MTFD 2005-10 specially focuses on economic empowerment of women along with social and political empowerment. Government supports the gender responsive budgeting and is committed to implement it. A three-pronged approach is to be taken. In the first stage, the MTFD will ensure the incorporation of women's concerns in existing national development programmes, e.g. recruiting, training and placing in rural areas women agricultural and livestock extension workers to work along with their male counterparts to impart information and training on the technological advances in agriculture and livestock; and to promote rural, agro-based industrial development. These initiatives are taken to increase the opportunities for women in agricultural sector along with creating employment opportunities in the non agriculture sector.

Secondly, short-term social protection measures are to be instituted to deal with endemic poverty. The Zakat, Bait-ul-Mal, Social Welfare, Food Support and other such programmes, are under review. The Government will ensure that women's concerns and needs are incorporated at the conceptual and design stages of these exercises.

Thirdly, for longer term measures, particular emphasis is to be laid on the macro-economic policy framework to "engender" it; a gender-sensitive budgeting framework for the PSDP and the ADPs under the MTFD; along with an enabling legislative environment, e.g. enforcement of minimum wages and social security benefits under labour laws for women workers in agriculture and non-formal sectors, and equal wages in the organized formal sectors of the economy. An amount of Rs 4.17 billion has been earmarked for under taking programmes/activities for women's social, economic and political empowerment.

Source: *Accelerating Economic Growth and Reducing Poverty: The Road Ahead (Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper)*; *Pakistan Millennium Development Goals Report 2005*, pAZ.32 <http://www.undp/publication/PMDGR05.pdf>

¹⁶GOP, *Accelerating Economic Growth and Reducing Poverty: The Road Ahead (Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper)* Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper Secretariat, Ministry of Finance, December 2003

to government initiatives in the area of “far-reaching structural reforms to privatize public sector enterprises, strengthen public and corporate governance, liberalize external trade, and reform the banking sector”, and the NHDR to the relationship between NGOs and in particular women’s groups and devolved local governments.

The World Bank estimates that because of the far-reaching structural reforms by the Government of Pakistan, it has moved from a deteriorating macroeconomic situation to a rapidly improving one. In 2004/05, GDP grew by over 8%. Public debt has fallen to 55.4% of GDP in 2005-06. Social and poverty-related expenditures have been raised from 3.8% in 2001/02 to 4.8% of GDP in 2004-05. However, the Pakistan Millennium Development Goals Report 2004 is pessimistic about the impact of this improving economic environment on achieving MDG Goal 3 on women’s empowerment, although the Government of Pakistan is more optimistic “ If, however the MTDG target is achieved, then achieving the MDG target becomes more likely. Given the recent dynamics in women employment, the achievement of MTDG and MDG target on women’s share in wage employment in the non-agriculture sector is a distinct possibility”¹⁷.

Further, despite these commitments and achievements, however, a close study of the three documents referred to above shows that the disconnect between macro-economic analysis and policies resulting from this analysis and gender mainstreaming continues.

1.2.3. Mainstreaming Gender in Economic Analysis

All three documents, the NHDR, the World Bank

Pakistan Country Overview and the GOP PRSP fail to demonstrate an integrated, mainstreamed approach to gender inequalities; in each, gender issues are discussed separately. This is despite a commitment to doing so, through the Gender Responsive Budgeting Initiative (GRBI) which should, according to the Government contribute to Pakistan’s PRSP commitments in the following way:

- ✧ Improving governance, (a) by making it clearer to government officials, legislators and the public what government is doing and why and (b) by increasing participation in the policy and budget processes;
- ✧ Investing in human capital, by promoting the utilization of all the potential human resources in the country, without gender bias; and
- ✧ Targeting the poor and vulnerable, by focusing on those who most need government assistance and are least able to provide for themselves, whether because of gender, location, poverty or other characteristics¹⁸.

However, a close reading of the Annual Report (2006) reveals that there are few tangible policy shifts that have resulted from this initiative, the bulk of the activities being focused on general awareness raising seminars, study trips and a continuing women-focused approach as an add-on to the existing priorities. In each of the above documents discussed therefore - the NHDR, the World Bank Pakistan Country Overview and the GOP PRSP - poverty and health indicators include figures for women (but not for men and male children) as symptomatic of Pakistan’s poverty and health issues rather than integral to a gender analysis of that poverty. While valid in themselves, these figures tell us little about

¹⁷Millennium Development Goals Report 2005 <http://www.un.org.pk/undp/publication/PMDGR05.pdf> , p. 32

¹⁸Gender Responsive Budgeting Initiative (GRBI), Annual Progress Report, 2006 <http://www.grbi.gov.pk/documents/apr2006.pdf>

- 1.□ the causal issues, which perhaps include privatisation of services that in other parts of the reports would be seen as a major policy initiative to tackle poverty and ill-health; or
- 2.□ how gender mainstreaming can effectively shift macro-economic policies and legal frameworks to address gender inequality not only in terms of a welfare approach – providing targeted services to women, for example.

Gender mainstreaming is an important way of addressing these silences. There are, however, different approaches to gender mainstreaming, and attention must be paid to the way in which these translate into policy formation and implementation. Gender mainstreaming can be integrationist – focusing on including women in policy analysis on grounds of equality between men and women; agenda setting – focusing on reversing gender blind policies and setting new conceptual agendas for policy analysis; transformative – focusing on not only a mainstreamed agenda setting, but also the struggle for an inclusive public sphere which will allow both women and men to equally communicate, debate and participate in decision-making and that as a result the interests of both will be articulated,

translated and mainstreamed in policy making. Our approach to gender equality in public life suggests that without this transformative perspective policy-making and implementation remain stunted and are able to address gender inequality only superficially.

1.3 Political Culture and Political Participation

“Unfortunately the psyche of the whole culture and the attitudes have not been changed by the policy...There are other problems of women. For instance, security, accommodation, mobility, that stops women from coming out in large numbers for recruitments in public offices”¹⁹. As the Fourth World Conference on Women (FWCW) Platform for Action under the critical area of concern on ‘Women in Power and Decision-making’ outlines, “The low proportion of women among economic and political decision makers at the local, national, regional and international levels reflects structural and attitudinal barriers that need to be addressed through positive measures”. Thus Goal 3 of the MOGs includes the following aspects:

- ↳ Ensuring gender equity and equality, and the empowerment of women depends in part on overcoming

Box 6: What is Gender Mainstreaming?

Gender Mainstreaming is a globally accepted strategy for promoting gender equality. Mainstreaming is not an end in itself but a strategy, an approach, a means to achieve the goal of gender equality. Mainstreaming involves ensuring that gender perspectives and attention to the goal of gender equality are central to all activities - policy development, research, advocacy/ dialogue, legislation, resource allocation, and planning, implementation and monitoring of programmes and projects.

Source: Office of the Special Advisor on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women; <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/gendermainstreaming.thm>;

¹⁹Interview, Dr.Zehra, Chairperson National Commission on Status of Women , 25th September, 2006, 10.30am

- cultural, social and economic constraints that limit women's access to education, as well as providing universal access to reproductive health education and services that allow them to protect their health, control their fertility and develop their full potential in all aspects of public and private life.
- ↘ Removing social, cultural and family barriers to women's equal social, economic and political participation, and combating violence against women are essential.
- ↘ Reproductive health and rights – such as the right to decide on the number, timing and spacing of children, free from coercion and violence – are central to women's empowerment and gender equality, and to women's enjoyment of other human rights, including to education, health and full participation in political, economic, social and cultural life²⁰.

This suggests that there is a need to reframe women's contribution to the economy, specifically challenging the patriarchal prejudices which are reflected in the Hudood laws (see Box 22) that make it impossible for them to access resources, particularly land and makes them vulnerable to violence and marginalization, and to take measures to transform the public space such that it becomes less dangerous and uninviting for them live and work in.

1.4 Leadership and Gender Equality

One important way of shifting the political culture in public life is to see women participants not only as recipients of policy affects but also as leaders of their communities, working towards gender equality. Leadership qualities involve imagination, creativity, strategic thinking and an ability to negotiate and form alliances and to inspire others

²⁰<http://www.unfpa.org/icpd/implementing.htm>

Box 7: Gendered Leadership

Leadership is a process by which a person influences others to accomplish an objective and directs an organization in a way that makes it more cohesive and coherent. This concept is different from exercising power over others to accomplish tasks.

- ↘ Leadership is based upon authority, which can be both institutional (by virtue of the position that one occupies) or normative (because of one's abilities to lead).
- ↘ Innovation and trust are needed for leadership as well as a democratic practice of listening to others. These qualities are not inherent in leaders, they have to be learned.
- ↘ A focus on learning to lead takes the focus away from traditional masculine notions of leadership, which were often associated with Max Weber's outlining of charismatic authority as opposed to judicial/legal authority invested in individual leaders.
- ↘ Heroic models of leadership thus need to be questioned as the models of leadership if women's more associational style is to be accommodated in the study of leadership qualities.
- ↘ Finally, leadership has to be accountable to be effective.

to share the leader's vision for change. Political leadership cuts across both political participation and political representation by focusing the attention on the processes by which individual political actors can be influential in shaping political agendas, taking the lead in articulating these and participating in their translation into policy. The study of political leadership has to be made at different levels. Local women elected to village councils can be counted as leaders in their communities, just as the prime minister of a country, the leader of a national movement or of a public organization. Political leadership is relational – it places people in relation to others inside and outside movements, institutions and organizations simultaneously and therefore requires different skills of communication, networking and leading in different contexts and in different ways.

In Pakistan, there have been many women leaders at all levels of politics and from all sections of society. Benazir Bhutto was the youngest female prime minister, and the first and only woman to hold the office in Pakistan. At the provincial level, many women from different backgrounds have been members of the Assemblies. For example, in the Sindh Assembly members ranged from a middle class political worker like Raheela Tiwana, to women from largely elite political families, like Shazia Marri, daughter of Rais Ata Mohammad Marri and Sassui Palijo, who was a scion of a family deeply involved in leftist movements in the sixties, to Saeeda Malik, who considered herself a technocrat and was an influential surgeon. Here, the impression that women filled in for political families did not hold true, as political workers too had a presence and so did technocrats. While cultural norms can come in the way asserting leadership, women do succeed in developing their own style of leadership: "People listen to authority and I make sure that they listen to me. If you have a grip on things no one can take you lightly. My working style is also not typically bureaucratic. I

have always believed in teamwork, and I make myself accessible to the section officers. I ensure that there is movement of files in my office and I set time frames" said Mehtab Akbar Rashdi, Secretary Inter-provincial Coordination, Sindh. As we will see below, women have not often been able to challenge the gendered models of leadership; they have had to work with these to show their abilities to access and survive in the public sphere. This, as our interviews reveal, often leads to extra pressures on women to prove their abilities in a male world by working longer hours, through self-censorship, to erase their own personality by wearing no jewellery or colourful clothes and even to accept levels of harassment, in order to be seen to be fitting in with a male working culture. This has also meant that often they have been either reluctant to take up the cause of women's rights or have not been very effective in doing so.

In order for leadership to be legitimate, it also needs to be accountable. Accountability can be defined as the requirement for representatives and representative organizations to answer for the exercise of their powers, listen to and act upon criticism or requirements made of them where appropriate and accept (some) responsibility for failure, incompetence, or deceit. Accountability has three bases, all of which have particular significance for women's leadership:

- ✧ Normative – leadership does good. In this context a normative approach would be that women bring a different style of politics to the public sphere. In this context the accountability of leaders could be discussed in terms of access that women's movements have to them and how carefully and openly communication between the two is carried out.
- ✧ Pragmatic – good leadership is inclusive. This would imply that state leaders engage in

Dialogue with women's groups because without them they lose a strong support base that they could utilise in their negotiations with party or state bosses.

- ↳ Efficiency – good leadership is efficient. Therefore, the support of women's movements and groups increases the legitimacy of leaders, which allows them to be more effective in agenda setting discussions as well as in securing support for special measures for enhancing women's presence in public life.

Leaders benefit from connections between the local and the national/regional and global networks. One of the best examples of this would be the way in which local and national women's groups prepared for and mobilized to lobby country representatives to the Beijing Conference and have continued to monitor the Beijing +5 and Beijing +10 processes. Pakistan women's groups have been active in these fora but as the evidence presented above shows, there is still a long way to go before gender equality becomes a reality in Pakistan. Women's presence in leadership arenas has resulted in attention being focused on their training needs. The Women's Political School is one such leadership training organization that is helping women at all levels, but in particular at the local levels to develop their skills and confidence.

Sensitivity to political, economic and social contexts of measures towards achieving gender equality in public life remains critical to their effectiveness. In the next chapter we critically examine these measures.

Box 8: Women's Political School

The Women's Political School (WPS) project, under GSP has been designed to sustain the gains of the Women's Political Participation Project (W3P) which was pioneering effort to train and nurture over 36,000 newly elected women councilors at the district, tehsil and union council levels. It was jointly supported by the Government of Pakistan, the Norwegian Government and UNDP and ran from February 2002 to March 2004. The 'Women's Political School' has the following remit:

GOAL

The overall goal of the Women's Political School (WPS) project, in line with national objectives and international commitments, is that of working towards the attainment of gender equality in the political sphere.

PURPOSE

The project purpose is empowering women in public office so that their issues and concerns are raised in the policy agenda and are addressed through public policy.

OUTPUTS/OBJECTIVES

The more specific outputs of the Women's Political School (WPS) project are as follows:

1. □ A holistic and integrated capacity development programme for women councillors delivered;
2. □ Adequate and reliable support networks and systems for women participating in political processes facilitated and strengthened; and

Institutional capacities of relevant training organisations/institutes, governmental departments and civil society strengthened.

Source: <http://www.un.org.pk/undp/gender/gen-proj.htm>

Chapter 2

Quota Provisions to Achieve Gender Equality in Public Offices

Pakistan is a federation with four constituent provinces - Punjab, Sindh, North-West Frontier Province (NWFP) and Balochistan including Islamabad Capital, Federally Administered Northern Areas (FANA) and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA)²¹. As mentioned in the Introduction, the levels of economic and social development in the provinces vary considerably.



Pakistan has a parliamentary system of government and Constitution provides a power-sharing formula. The federal legislature comprises the National Assembly and Senate, referred to as the Lower and Upper Houses of Parliament respectively. Quota provisions have been introduced as special measures to address the

gender inequality in public life at all the three levels of government – national, provincial and local.

2.1 Effectiveness of Quotas

It is often argued that increased representation of women through quotas will have direct, tangible outcomes which will be good not only for women but also for the political system in general:

1. □ Equality between men and women will engender general social equality;
2. □ Because women are more hard working, their increased representation will improve the work of legislative bodies;
3. □ Because women are less corrupt their inclusion will lead to good governance;
4. □ Because women are more problem-solving in their approach to politics, their presence in public office will reduce adversarial politics in favour of a more inclusive approach.

In this study we examine whether these arguments are valid and hold up to scrutiny. We then examine alternative argument that some women's groups and feminist theorists have outlined:

- ↳ simply that half the population of a country can not be justifiably excluded in a democracy.

²¹ The socio-economic conditions of these areas are diverse, with Punjab and Sindh as economically most advanced.

- That the barriers to their participation can be both formal (state law) and informal (social norms) – reinforcing each other in gendered hierarchies - and both have to be challenged. That is, both the form of politics and its content. The question of form includes, a) the demand to be among the decision-makers and b) the demand for participation and a share in control over public affairs. In terms of content, it includes being able to articulate the needs, wishes and demands of various groups of women.

We suggest that while quotas are an important strategy for addressing the gender imbalance in public offices, other enabling measures also need to be taken in order to encourage women to access and participate in public life and to continue to work in it for the long term.

This can only happen when strategies address both, issues of recognition of different status of women and men in Pakistani society and that of redistribution of material and cultural resources so



that women are able to secure the foundations of their choice to enter public life.

Understanding quotas in context is thus to explore the political, economic and social landscape within which they unfold. Without the understanding of these contexts, quotas can only be focused on increasing numbers. Going ‘beyond numbers’²² requires a more nuanced and context specific approach.

Before we examine the current quota policies and their impact, we outline the evolution of this policy to indicate that although this policy has gained international prominence fairly recently, a quota policy has been a long standing strategy to address gender inequality in Pakistan.

2.1 Historical Context

The first quotas were part of the British administrative regime in South Asia. At the time of its founding, the Pakistani state had to negotiate its identity between what it means to be Islamic on the one hand and on the other to be a modern nation-state that treats all its citizens (including women) equally and therefore provides them with a political framework within which they can all be represented. The economic legacy of colonialism and the continued struggle of the post-colonial Pakistani state to address issues of modernization and development were also critical in framing the problem of women’s empowerment. The historical legacy of colonialism also led to different political systems being established. In Pakistan, after a brief interlude, the military became a dominant force in political life, though it was challenged in different periods by democratic forces. This posed questions for state-civil society relations, the relative strength of various state institutions and the modalities of working within these as well as the nature of party politics.

²²A. Karam (ed.) , 1998, *Women in Parliament: Beyond Numbers*, Stockholm, Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance

2.1.1 Three Phases of the Quota Debate

We can identify three distinct phases in the quota debates that have led to different provisions of quotas in Pakistan. Phase One was that of constitution making after the achievement of independence in 1947. Here, debates on citizenship and the position of the state in society marked the period:

- ✧ The recognition of women's exclusion and the symbolic importance of this exclusion for an Islamic Republic led to quotas for women but was not accompanied by a comprehensive approach to provisioning for the basis of women's wider socio-economic needs.
- ✧ Reservation of seats for women in the national and provincial assemblies, senate and local government was agreed in the First Constitution of 1956 at a minimal level of 3% at both levels. Women were always elected on reserved seats through indirect election.
- ✧ The revised Constitutions of 1962 and 1973 also provided reservation of seats for women at similarly low levels of 2.75%, and 5% respectively in the national and provincial assemblies.

The insignificant number of reserved seats combined with indirect mode of election on women's reserved seats together with a failure to address the socio-economic and religious basis of women's exclusion proved a failure in terms of mainstreaming women in politics and providing opportunity to play an effective role in politics.

The Second Phase of quota politics for women began in the 1970s and '80s. This of course, is also the time when international organisations such as the UN were beginning to recognise the importance of women in public life. In 1985 the number of reserved seats for women in the Pakistan national assembly was raised to 20 (10%) for the period of 10 years or three general elections

whichever came earlier. In Pakistan, women's mobilisation came in the context of the enactment of the Hudood legislation. Pakistani women have struggled to find a voice that allowed them to be both secular citizens as well as Muslims. A mature women's movement responded by organising rallies against the legislation and by demanding equal representation. High profile causes such as the Zainab Bibi case continued to bring women's groups together to protest against violence against women and to insist upon institutional provisions to address women's marginal position in society. Women only police stations, pressures on political parties to have more women on their lists and a lobbying of the media to report atrocities against women made for the background for arguments for higher representation of women in political institutions. Efforts to fulfill commitments in international treaties and conventions to promote women's free, equal and full political participation are summed up in

- ✧ the Report of the Commission of Inquiry for Women (August, 1997),
- ✧ the National Plan for Action (September 1998), and
- ✧ the National Policy for Development and Empowerment of Women (NPDEW) (March 2002).

The Third or the current Phase can be characterised by several key elements. Pakistan has had to develop an economic strategy (outlined in its PRSP) to address major challenges under conditionalities from international institutions. It has also felt the crushing burden of refugees on its Afghan border and in terms of security, tensions between the two have ebbed and flowed leading to increasing military spending at a time of retrenchment of social spending. At the international level, the 'third wave' of democratisation has led to pressures on military regimes to democratise on the one hand, and the 'war on terror' has led to pressure on President

Musharraf to participate in this ‘war’ on the other. Discourses of constructed modernity (democratic and liberalising regimes) and fundamentalism (Taliban, al-Queda, jihad) have formed the backdrop of the country’s complex and at times difficult engagements with globalisation. In policy terms, the introduction of the National Gender Reform Action Plan marks this phase.

2.1.2 Gender Reform Action Plan

The only policy on gender equality in public office is the Gender Reform Action Plan which was perceived as a project and still is. It is housed in the Women Development Department and was funded by the Asian Development Bank. Gender Reform Action Plan is a part of Decentralisation Support Programme (DSP) and targets to reverse gender gaps in policy and power at a structural level. It is a comprehensive and radical policy reform that seeks to remove distortions in public life. GRAP promotes four central policy reform areas in gender and governance:

- i. □ improved women's representation and participation in political and administrative structures.
 - ii. □ a policy shift from social welfare to social development, and from women's development to gender equality.
 - iii. □ restructuring of institutions and procedures dealing with gender and social development issues including the MOWD, NCSW and WDDs.
 - iv. □ planning and budgetary processes that narrow the gender gap in public expenditure and service provision
- There are four independent GRAPs in each of the provinces, and a National GRAP that oversees the working of the rest.

Table 16: Gender Reform Action Plan

Women’s political participation

- 20 per cent elected offices at the provincial and national level.
- 33 per cenat the local level

Political Party reforms

- Enhancement of women’s wings in political parties
- 33 per cent women in elected party offices

Electoral Reforms

- Induction of women in election commission, improving registrations of women voters and enhancing women’s voter profiles

Women’s employment in the public sector

- Appointment of 2 Federal Secretaries, at least one member in the service commissions should be a woman.
- Ten per cent in the Federal Public Service commission
- Twenty per cent of the officers at local level should be women.
- A series of steps should be taken to increase women at the 17 grade level, so as to have a multipronged approach to clear backlog as well, for instance, recruiting and promotion of women against 50% vacancies in BPS 17 and 18, 9-11 and 4-6.

Institutional restructuring

- Amendment in government’s rules of business at all levels incorporating quota regimes.
- Strengthening of Ministry of women’s Development, gender focal points in key ministries.

Policy and fiscal reforms

- Gender mainstreaming, budgeting, development of gender disaggregated data.
- Bringing gender perspectives in budgeting , finance, and planning, incorporating impact of budget on women at all stages of budgetary development.

Sources: Government of Pakistan, DSP;
<http://www.decentralization.org.pk/grap.asp#6> ;
Asian Development Bank<http://www.adb.org/gender/practices/governance/pak003.asp>

While the aspirations of the Plan are laudable, its implementation depends on stakeholders taking ‘ownership’ of the Plan. In our fieldwork we noted that Local Government Secretaries had a vague knowledge of the plan, but Additional Secretaries were ignorant on the issue. Some of the issues raised in our interviews about GRAP are as follows:

- ✧ GRAP was a huge and ambitious project. Asian Development people gave the technical assistance but now it may run into implementation problems.
- ✧ The capital cost was to be borne by the donors but the government had to do the recurrent costs, and there is a fear the financial resources may not be committed by the already financially stretched provincial governments.
- ✧ Currently the work is going on to change the rules of business, and changing nomenclatures etc. There is a provision for Gender Resource Centres in the federal GRAP money. But there is concern whether these measures might not be cosmetic.
- ✧ The elected representatives generally did not have a fair idea of what GRAP was. In addition, women parliamentarians did not have a clear idea of the Gender Reform Action Plan, which would lead to issues of ownership of the Plan.

2.2 Quota provisions

As we have noted above, quotas have become a key strategy for increasing women’s participation in public life. By examining women’s representation in public offices we can explore the following:

- 1.□ Strategies that women employ to **access** the public sphere in the context of a patriarchal socio-political system. These women have been successful in subverting the boundaries of gender, and in operating in a very aggressive male dominated sphere. Could other women learn from this cohort?
- 2.□ The **role that the State can play** in increasing women’s representation through both direct – quotas – and indirect – supporting shifts in public discourse – measures.
- 3.□ The impact of greater women’s presence in challenging and shifting gender hierarchies – whether an increase in numerical presence results in a **substantive presence**.

Under the Conduct of General Elections Order 2002, (Chief Executive’s Order No. 7 of 2002) the number of seats in the Senate, National Assembly of Pakistan and the Provincial Assemblies of Punjab, Sindh, NWFP and Balochistan was increased, considerably improving the number of women in political institutions at the provincial and national levels.

Table 17: Quota Provision in Pakistan

% Women in □	Quota Provision□□		Electoral System
	National□	Local	
Lower House□			
21.1 (2002 Election)□	60 of the 342 (17%) seats in the national assembly are reserved for women (2002 legislation)	33% of the local legislative seats are reserved for women in legislative councils at the union, tehsil (municipality) and district level (2000 Devolution of Power Plan)	Mixed System (First-Past-the-Post combined with lists)

Source: Rai et.al, 2005

2.2.1 Parliamentary quota

Currently, Pakistan has provision for reserved seats for women in its Parliament. Under the provision of Article 51 of the Constitution, sixty seats are reserved for women in the National Assembly out of a total of 342 members (17%). The election procedure for the quota seats is the following: while candidates on general seats compete under the single-member constituency system, women candidates on quota seats are elected through proportional representation system, whereby political parties produce lists of candidates on the basis of the total number of general seats secured by each political party in parliament. “Thus in order of a woman to be elected on a reserved seat in the National Assembly, she must convince her political party that her name should be on the party list of female candidates, but she does not need any direct support from the voters of the constituency”²³ creating a dependency on party elites on the one hand and a legitimacy gap in her constituency on the other.

The province-wise distribution of reserved seats for women allocates Punjab 35, Sindh 14, Baluchistan 3, and NWFP 8 in the national legislature. No seat is being reserved for FATA and Islamabad. The distribution of 128 (17%) reserved seats for women in the provincial assemblies is that Punjab got 66 seats, Sindh 29, NWFP 22 and Baluchistan 11 seats. The Senate or the upper house, consists of 100 seats. Each province has equal number of seats, 14 general seats, and 4 reserved seats for technocrats and 4 for women (total of 22 each). Eight seats are reserved for FATA and 4 for Islamabad. Seventeen seats out of 100 seats of the Senate are reserved for women, 4 for each province and 1 for Islamabad. Proportional representation system of election has been adopted to fill reserved seats for women in the national and provincial assemblies. Each political party got its share in reserved seats for women in proportion to the total number of seats won by them in the general election. In the Senate reserved seats for women were filled indirectly on the basis of parity.

Table 18: Women’s Representation in National Assembly (Number of Seats)

Province/Area	EXISTING			Total	PREVIOUS	
	General Seats	Seats reserved for Non Muslims	Women		General Seats	Seats reserved for Non Muslims
Federal Capital	2	10	-	2	1	
Punjab	148		35	183	115	
Sindh	61		14	75	46	10
NWFP	35		8	43	26	
FATAs	12		-	12	8	
Balochistan	14		3	17	11	
Total	272	10	60	332+10=342	207	207+10=217

Source: Election Commission of Pakistan, <http://www.ecp.gov.pk/content/ParliamentSeat.html>

²³Irene Graff, 2005, *Empowerment, Accountability and Equality, Quotas for women in International law and Pakistani Politics*, Institutt for offentlig retts skriftserie, Oslo, p. 22

Table 19: Women's Representation in Senate (Number of Seats)

Province/Area	EXISTING			PREVIOUS			
	General Seats	Seats reserved for		Total	General Seats	Ulema, Technocrats and other professionals	
		Women	Technocrats and Ulema			Ulema	Technocrats and other professionals
Federal Capital	2	1	1	4	3	-	3
Punjab	14	4	4	22	14	5	19
Sindh	14	4	4	22	14	5	19
NWFP	14	4	4	22	14	5	19
FATAs	8	-	-	8	8	-	8
Balochistan	14	4	4	22	14	5	19
Total	66	17	17	100	67	20	87

Source: Election Commission of Pakistan, <http://www.ecp.gov.pk/content/ParliamentSeats.html>

However, as Reyes points out, the 17 per cent quota was far less than what women's groups had campaigned for. "Women's groups argued that the government ignored the collective voice of women for 30 percent reservation expressed in the national consultation conducted by the Ministry of Women and Development in May 2001 and the National Campaign for Restoration of Women's Reserved Seats in 1998. It also failed to reflect the same recommendation of the Report of the Commission of Inquiry for Women and the National Plan for Action. Eleven political parties

endorsed the 30 percent quota for women in the provincial and national assemblies"²⁴.

In terms of leadership positions, however, there is still a significant gap between men and women – especially at the Federal level. This suggests that women should have a quota not only on the basis of membership but also leadership positions. This view was taken in India, for example, where the 33% quota in panchayats included both membership and leadership positions²⁵.

Table 20: Women on Top? Women in Parliamentary and Governmental Positions

	Women	Men	Total (% women)
Ministers Of State	4	20	24 (16.6%)
Chairmen / Chairpersons Standing Committees	11	35	46 (23.9%)
Parliamentary Secretaries	10	32	42 (23.8%)
Federal Ministers	3	34	37 (8.1%)

Source: <http://www.na.gov.pk/ministry.htm>

²⁴Socorro L. Reyes, 'Quotas for Women for Legislative Seats at the Local Level in Pakistan' in International IDEA, 2002

²⁵See Rai et.al.

2.2.2 Provincial Assembly Quotas

Article 106 of the Constitution provides for quotas for women in Provincial Assemblies along the same lines as at the national level. Under this

provision all four provincial assemblies have the equivalent of 17% quotas for women. The election procedures are the same as parliamentary elections, with similar issues of dependency and legitimacy arising.

Table 21: Women's Representation in Provincial Assemblies (Number of Seats)

Province	EXISTING			Total	PREVIOUS	
	General Seats	Seats reserved for Non-Muslims	Women		General Seats	Seats reserved for Non Muslims
Punjab	297	8	66	371	240	8
Sindh	130	9	29	168	100	9
NWFP	99	3	22	124	80	3
Balochistan	51	3	11	65	40	3
Total	577	23	128	728	460	460+23=483

Source: Election Commission of Pakistan, <http://www.ecp.gov.pk/content/ProvincialSeats.html>

2.2.3 Rural and Urban Local Government Quotas

The rural and urban local government is a three tier government:

- ↳ Union Councils,
- ↳ Tehsil/town Council, and
- ↳ District Council.

“Except for the Union Councils the members of all the other councils are indirectly elected. The elected councilors at the union level form the electoral college for all elections for the tehsil/town and district councils”²⁶. The present military regime of Parvez Musharraf who took over from the civilian government of Nawaz Shareef in

October 1999, took a landmark decision to reserve 33% seats for women in all three tiers (union council, tehsil and district) of Local Government and 17% in the national, provincial assemblies and the senate. The main difference in the last election of local government with others was that it was held under Devolution of Power Plan 2000, which reserved 33% seats for women in all three tiers of local government and 5% for peasants and workers in addition to the general seats. The direct modality of election was adopted for the reserved seats for women at the union council level and indirect method of election at the tehsil and district level where all union councilors were the Electoral College for these reserved seats. The new local government system allowed reservation of two seats for women at the union council level and 10% of the members of District councils or minimum of two seats for women to be elected

²⁶Reyes, Socorro L. Reyes, ‘Quotas for Women for Legislative Seats at the Local Level in Pakistan’ in International IDEA, 2002, p. 2

indirectly through directly elected members of local councils. The present decentralized local government system is officially a non-party system but in reality, the elected representatives have clear party affiliations, which are visible at the time of elections of Nazims and Naib²⁷. Provinces gave representation to women through the reservation of seats at all three tiers (union council, tehsil and district) of local government.

The government changed the local government laws in 2004 to reduce the total number of councilor seats at the Union Council level, from 21 in each council to 13. The proportional representation of special and quota seats, for women, labour and minorities remained the same. However there was a reduction in the number of women in the Union Councils as a consequence, from 36,000 to 28,000 in total (see Table 9, p.12). There are two views on the reduction of seats in the local government seats. First, the one that National Reconstruction Bureau would use is that the reduction in the number of women's quota seats is proportionate, so the percentage of women in the Union Councils continues to be 33 per cent of the whole. They would also point to the great number of vacancies on women's seats to support their argument for fewer but proportional seats for women (See Table, below).

²⁷Fauzia Yazdani, *Women In Politics At Local Government: Barriers & Beyond In Pakistan*

Box 9: Local Government at a Glance: Seats Distribution at the Three Levels

Union Council Level: 21 seats
 8 General Muslim seats (for men & women)
 4 women reserved Muslim seats □
 4 workers & peasant-reserved seats (for men & women)
 2 workers & peasant-reserved for women seats
 1 reserved seat for minorities
 1 Nazim (Council Head) and 1 Naib Nazim (Deputy head)

Tehsil / Town Council: All Naib Nazim of Union Councils become members of Tehsil council □
 1 Nazim and 1 Naib Nazim
 33% seats reserved for women
 5% seats reserved for peasants & workers □
 5% seats reserves for minorities

District Council: All Nazims of Union Council become member of District Council
 1 Nazim and 1 Naib Nazim
 33% seats reserved for women
 5% seats reserved for peasants & workers
 5% seats reserves for minorities

Source: Fauzia Yazdani, *Women In Politics At Local Government: Barriers & Beyond In Pakistan*

Table 22: Statement showing number of vacant seats

S.No.	Province	No. of UCs	Muslim	Muslim	Peasants	Peasants	Minorties	Nazim	Total
			(General)	(Women)	Workers	Workers		Naib		Women	Nazim
1	Punjab	1810	34776	9333	16500	7326	3017	6981	77933
2	Sindh	521	9628	2821	4657	2136	1179	2132	22553
3	N.W.FP	430	7719	1701	4050	1278	72	1687	16507
4	Balochistan	292	4198	1496	2291	1336	282	1085	10688
	Grand Total	3053	56321	15351	27498	12076	4550	11885	127681

Source: Local Government Data

Therefore, if entrance of women in the political system through the quota system was the primary concern, then a proportionate reduction should not make any difference to the role of women in politics. Further, the advocates of this change would argue that the government would have more resources to invest in the women councilors for training, and honoraria, which would enhance quality of women representatives. Much of the debate in our interviews has been on the quality versus numbers game in the quota regime. The second and opposing argument, put forward by those who are concerned about this change in the law is that this would lead Pakistan to further lag behind in achieving the MDG targets and adversely affect the empowerment of the marginalized groups. This view, strongly advocated by civil society organisations, led by Aurat Foundation was that quotas are as much about quantity as about quality – as much about

descriptive as about substantive representation - and the number of women coming out in the public space is a critical change-making exercise. As Naeem Mirza of the Aurat Foundation, noted: “We believe that the numerical strength is also important. Because if the numbers are more, than more women are coming out of the households where there is an endorsement of the male member and that many households are undergoing a change. So numbers then do matter.”²⁸ This argument is strong because it underscores the importance of spatial and socio-cultural changes at the household level; the fact that each woman coming out in the public space changes the nature of public space and eventually that is the key space where the power relations have to change. In terms of impact then quotas are both about proportion and numbers and neither should compromise the other.

²⁸Interview, Naeem Mirza of Aurat Foundation, 3/11/2006

Table 23 : Statistics for Women Candidates in Local Elections, 2005

Total Nominations filed by women candidates □	56,753
No. of validly nominated women candidates Ph-I) □	27,093
No. of Women Candidates Returned Unopposed (Ph-I) □	2,191
No. of Women Contesting Candidates (Ph-I)□	23,956

Source: Election Commission of Pakistan, <http://www.ecp.gov.pk/content/lgstats2005.html>

2.2.4 Quotas in Political Parties ?

Quotas for women in political parties have been discussed in Pakistan but are as yet to be introduced. However, quotas for women in legislative politics have increased the number of women being selected as candidates. So, for example, in “elections, 2002, there were 919 women candidates against a total of 205 seats reserved for women in the [National Assembly] and the four [Provincial Assemblies]. Of all the nominations, the PML-Q nominated the highest number (167) followed by the MMA (158) and the PPPP (146)”²⁹.

Despite the history of military regimes, there are 94 registered political parties in the country³⁰. The political context of military rule, a history of prominent political families’ dominance in political parties and a general lack of political accountability has meant that political parties have not generally functioned in a transparent way. This has effected the selection of women candidates, and therefore their election, their

participation in decision-making and their role in party politics – unless like Benazir Bhutto, they come from elite political families. “In the political party, there is no role of women in the Central Executive Committee. There are also no criteria of putting women there” says a woman MPA from Balochistan, who also holds a party position³¹. In NWFP women on quotas felt that the party controls over their work were often stringent, and they often had to resist this. They also stated that their parties do not guide them, nor is there a culture of dialogue within the political parties.

One way that political parties have responded to this concern about the lack of women in both their membership and organization is to point to the women’s wings of political parties. However, in our research women’s wings of political parties had a mixed response. Some considered these as important spaces allowing women to participate in politics, but others viewed them as ghettos for women. For example, we were told in NWFP that women and men are equal in the manifesto of ANP, so they didn’t have a

²⁹UNDP, 2005, *Political and Legislative Participation of Women in Pakistan: Issues and Perspectives*, p.35

³⁰UNDP, 2005, *Political and Legislative Participation of Women in Pakistan: Issues and Perspectives*, p. 16

³¹Interview, Woman MPA, Balochistan, 31/10/2006

separate wing till recently. The women party leaders explained that because of this women were not active in the party and were not being mainstreamed. Now a women's wing to give women a voice and platform had been set up. "Women have political awareness but due to education and socio cultural norms – understanding of their rights, role and responsibilities is low. In order to overcome these issues ANP introduced women wing. Even in backward areas – it will help in getting women out in the mainstream," says Zahra Khattak³².

One way of ensuring a change in the party system is to increase women's membership of political parties as well as their participation in the functioning and administration of political parties. Seemi Kemal was of the view that political parties had enough mechanisms at their disposal through which they could enhance women's participation. She advocated that manifestoes should be women friendly. She thought that the political positions that parties take in public are liberal but in action, these are vague and non-committal³³.

Political parties are crucial to increasing the participation of women in public life. This is because "Parties are crucial gatekeepers to government office, one of the main channels of political mobilization in a society and a major source of public policy... Voters express party preferences; hence [male domination of politics] is the result of internal party decisions³⁴". Lovenduski argues that it is not that people don't want to vote for women that keeps political parties for including them in party candidate lists, but an inherent sexism that is institutionalized and

supported through the processes through which recruitment and selection of women candidates takes place. Changes to the ethos, procedures and functioning of political parties are therefore an important part of the strategies to increase women's presence in representative politics. These changes are crucial if quotas for women are to be met in a way that brings politically active women into public institutions.

2.2.5 Quotas in the Bureaucracy

The National Commission on the Status of Women recommended that "There is definite need for a clear cut policy on quota reservation" in all cadres and tiers of government³⁵. This is important because the support of the bureaucrats is crucial to the effectiveness of women representatives: "Devolution system should look at the disparity of having women at the administrative level of service delivery where it is an interface of 48% population" said Qasim Zia – PPPP (MPA) Leader of Opposition, Punjab³⁶. The lack of women bureaucrats often reflects the male biases in the bureaucracy: "Bureaucracy is not facilitative or there is enabling environment at the movement –the last DCO was totally against LG system & has spoiled the atmosphere of the district"³⁷. A UC councilor in Punjab pointed out that "The Bureaucracy can not accept that the grass root people are aware of their roles and responsibilities and make them accountable and this is the reason they are not facilitative and try to put obstacles [in their way]"³⁸. As was pointed out by a Tehsil Councillor, this lack of support for local representatives cuts across the gender divide, but is particularly evident vis a vis women: "Here

³²Interview with Zahra Khattak, 11/11/06

³³Interview, Semi Kemal, consultant GRAP, 19/10/06

³⁴Joni Lovenduski, 2005, *Feminizing Politics*, Cambridge, Polity Press, p.57

³⁵The National Commission on the Status of Women, 2003, *Inquiry Report on Status of Women Employment in Public Sector Organizations*, p. xiv

³⁶Interview, Qasim Zia, MPA, Punjab, 18/11/06

³⁷Interview, Jamil Ahmed –Secretary CCB Network, Punjab

³⁸Shah Din UC Councillor, 17/11/06

men councilors are not been respected so how come women councilors can get different treatment?”³⁹.

Although under the National Plan of Action there was a quota of 5% within all occupational groups and grades of public services, the Commission suggested enhancing this further by:

- ↘ “10% in all sectors and grades
- ↘ 15% in BPS 19 and above
- ↘ 15% in key policy bodies, including autonomous and semi-autonomous bodies, advisory boards, banking institutions etc.”⁴⁰.

The Commission’s conclusions highlighted

extensive systemic discrimination faced by women in recruitment, transfers, promotions and institutional support. As the table below shows, despite the outlining of the government’s commitment to address this issue in the National Plan of Action the percentage of female employees in Federal employment is extremely small. Given the security of jobs, the possibility of monitoring employment conditions and the cultural predisposition of families towards government jobs, these figures show little progress for women in this key area of employment. A key finding of our fieldwork towards writing this Report was the inadequacy of transport, child care and washroom facilities for women, making the daily work environment a struggle for them. Our studies in this regard support the Reports findings.

Table 24: Pay Scales and Gender Imbalance in Federal Employment

Basic Pay Scale□	%age of female employees
All scales (BPS 1-22)□	5.4
Officers’ Category (16-22)□	8.7
Other Category (1-15)□	4.9

Source: *The National Commission on the Status of Women, 2003*

Senior bureaucrats in local government in Balochistan, in the planning and development divisions and even senior women bureaucrats argued that women were simply not available for the positions that were advertised. The perception was that women did not come up for interviews, that they did not show up and finally that they simply were not available for the jobs that were being advertised. However, the Balochistan Public Service Commission figures explode this myth with the figures of the women who appeared in

various tests in the past six years. Out of 2779 posts advertised, 8613 women had applied, four times the number, even in the province where women’s literacy in rural areas is as low as eleven per cent. The other perception was that women prefer to be in health and education, where the conditions were favorable for women in terms of postings, and holidays, etc. However it is quite clear from the data of the Balochistan Public Service Commission that most of the recruitment that is carried out with respect to women is only in

³⁹Interview, tehsil councilor, 7/11/06

⁴⁰Ibid. p. 9

education, health and population departments. Only 3 position out of a total of 2779 positions advertised, had openings for women outside these three 'women's departments'. So it is not that these positions are liked, but that they are available for women officers. The need for a quota for women in the bureaucracy at all levels and in all departments – especially in the top echelons of the service – is critical.

Studying quotas in political institutions in context helps us recognize the importance of civil service reform. Without a significant increase in the number of women in public services the effectiveness of quotas for women in legislative institutions suffers – women we interviewed often complained of government offices being hostile territory for them. Civil service reform is therefore necessary for the full realization of both devolution and poverty reduction, as well as to achieve a more focused, results and performance oriented, demand driven, transparent and accountable public administration that is more responsive to the citizenry.

Despite several initiatives to improve the presence of women in public life, the most successful measures have been at the level of local government with 33% quotas for women, with the parliamentary and provincial quotas following. There is still a long way to go before gender equality can be achieved in the bureaucracy and political parties. Given the fact that political parties do not have a quota system and that gender imbalance there is significant, it seems that quotas remain a key strategy to achieve gender equality in public life.

Chapter 3

Quotas As Catalyst: Do Quotas Shift Assumptions? The Impact of Quotas on Public Life

3.1 Perception of Quotas

The acceptance of quotas as a strategy for the empowerment of women by the state, in response to the efforts of women's movements and international organisations, has led to a general acceptance of this framework. This does not, however, mean that quotas are always supported in the spirit of gender equality by those in charge of their implementation. A mixed picture emerges from our research.

3.1.1 The Necessity of Quotas

Most interviewees, of both elected and public office, favored some form of quotas⁴¹. This is interesting because it points to a strong co-relation between advocacy, governmental response and the opening up of a political space within which quotas are seen as legitimate. Political leaders termed these as a necessity, whereas women officers and women representatives were inclined towards the 'justice' and fair play' argument. Nasir Shah, Nazim, Sukkur, Sindh Province, for instance called quotas 'a necessity, and a requirement' for political reasons, since women were half the electorate, A political person has to address that

vote, and what better access than women political workers, politicians, and office-bearers. 'Quotas are and should be used as an entry point for empowerment of women' was a common comment echoed by interviewees⁴². There was strong endorsement for quotas in Balochistan too: the Quetta Nazim said that "Mard duniya dari karte hain, (men engage in networking) but women pay more attention to their work. We say there should be a quota for women in the universities. Some women are very active in the council. We have some educated girls. The quality is good, you see some have also worked in the NGOs." In Punjab, women councilors supported quotas: "Quotas are good way of strengthening women. Socio-cultural norms are obstacles in the empowerment of women – men don't want women to come forward. LG is helping gathering women on one platform. LG 33% quota has brought common women to participate in the mainstream politics" were some of the comments made by women councilors at a Focus Group meeting⁴³. However, there was also some unease about quotas reflected in the predictable concern regarding merit: "When we talk about quotas, quality should not be compromised – first create expertise and efficiency for marginalized groups and then quotas"⁴⁴.

⁴¹There were differences on this in different provinces, with most civil servants not supporting quotas in NWFP.

⁴²Interview with Secretary Women's Development Department (WDD), Women councilors interviewed in Balochistan were also of the view that quota are important entry points.

⁴³Focus Group Discussion, Punjab, 17/11/06

⁴⁴Interview, Kamran Ali Afzal – Additional Secretary Finance, Punjab, 18/11/06

In NWFP, one of the most difficult environments for a discussion of women's participation in public life, male officers mostly rejected quotas, where as male politicians even when belonging to the MMA supported quotas for women. Similarly female MPAs conditionally supported the quotas as an entry point, a window for middle class women, and as an opportunity. Women activists and women councilors supported quotas unconditionally and definitely. A female officer interviewed also supported quotas but only as an entry point. This is really interesting as it suggests that where a discursive and political space has been opened up through women's activism and where this seemingly translates into votes for political parties and politicians; there is support for quotas and women's empowerment. However, this does not translate into creating an environment in which women can participate in public life without fear. So, while the Minister for Women Development, Kashif Azam of the Mutahida Majlis e Amal government, said "We support representation of women. Both from the sharai point of view, at a personal level and as a party worker⁴⁵," the same government also initiated a public campaign to prevent women's images on the hoardings on streets, and several incidents of blackening or defacing women's images were reported. This negates the principle of women's participation in public life.

For those who supported quotas, the key issue was using these to break the gender segregation so characteristic of Pakistan's public life: emphasis was on women breaking the structured segregation where women were restricted to the inner space of the home, or invisible world. Quotas support women's increased presence in politics as well as ensuring that they have enough support once

there to perform leadership roles effectively. This argument, mostly stressed by the women respondents, was used by women both across political spectrum, and even across bureaucratic spectrum: Hamida Khuhro, Minister for Education, Sindh said that she supports the principle of quotas since "Otherwise women in this society are bypassed completely. It is difficult to get them out. During Zia's time it was very difficult to persuade women to come out. They were hesitant and shy. The thirty three per cent is also a positive necessity. And until male perception changes it is important to keep these quotas in place⁴⁶." Ms Naheed Durrani, a senior civil servant in Sindh, said that women's presence in the public space, transformed such ideologies that barred women from coming out and participating in public life. "There is a socio-cultural argument that says that these factors hamper women's participation in public life. However women's presence in public office can dent this argument. The exposure of these women in the media, promotes the idea of cultural change and the idea that women must come out. Let them be burqa clad if they have to, that is another issue, but they must come out and participate⁴⁷." In NWFP Mariam Bibi also echoes the same – the potency of women's voices when they finally speak: "Women MPAs are talking and that is important. Previously the cultural construct was that women should not even be heard that they should be silent. Now at least they can be heard."

The criteria for assessing the effectiveness of quotas used in this report was set out in the Introduction to this Report (Table 1). Below we use these criteria to make an assessment of the gender based quota regimes in Pakistan.

⁴⁵Interview, Kashif Azam, 10/11/06

⁴⁶Interview, Hamida Khuhro, Minister of Education, Sindh, 19/11/06.

⁴⁷Interview, Naheed Durrani, Additional Secretary, Sindh, 18/11/06.

3.2 Procedures

A combination of intelligence, political commitment and training is required to understand institutional procedures. Often tensions arise when bureaucrats feel that representatives are not cognizant with basic procedures, and political representatives feel that bureaucrats prevaricate by insisting upon procedural details. “Bureaucracy is not facilitative or there is enabling environment at the movement –the last DCO was totally against local government system and spoiled the atmosphere of the district”, said Jamil Ahmed Secretary CCB Network, Punjab.

3.2.1 Working in Institutions

Initially, especially in the Sindh Assembly, women reported that they were confused, but that gradually, they picked up the procedures. This initial hesitation is often commented upon unfavourably by male colleagues, as in NWFP: “The impression of working women is not good. The fifteen women in the council sit quietly. They never raise questions. They hide their face. And then like Phulan devi they get up and leave at the end of the session,” said the DCO of Haripur⁴⁸. In local government, for many women coming to meetings became a problem as a member of the family would accompany them, till they learnt the ways. “For the first year, my mother and my brother would accompany me to the council meetings,” says District councillor Farida Kakar⁴⁹. In the Councils women spend years in silence but some also broke the silence on the way. For instance, in the case of Farida Kakar: “I did not

want people to say, that so and so’s sister was talking in the ijlass and saying this and that. So for four years I did not talk. But now, I just can not stop talking. I just don’t talk in the council; I fight for the rights as well. Women’s Political School trainings had a lot to do with building up my confidence.” Initially there was also confusion in the role of the women’s representatives, says Kashif Azam of the NWFP⁵⁰. “There was a perception that they should only take up women’s issues. So there was confusion for one or two years. But now women contribute effectively to all the current debates, whether it is war against terror, political issues, anything. There is full participation of women. In fact, men tend to use influence with the opposition members, but women strictly stick to their positions. This session, a good number of adjournments were from women, their participation was fifty per cent.⁵¹”

In Quetta, women reported that on occasions they come together proactively on issues that cut across party and gender lines. The first women councillors had brought women together on the issue of the honorarium. “In the last term, we were all united, and we achieved our objectives. We formed a pressure group for our honorarium. Interestingly this group had a lot of men in it as well. The same men who would oppose us, or make fun of us, joined up with us. This became the Quetta City Alliance. And the same Nazim, who was ignoring us, became attentive. We got, as a result of this movement, honorarium for all female councillors and besides development funds from the council. We were also able to organize an All Pakistan tour for the women councillors, this was an exposure visit.⁵²”

⁴⁸Interview, DCO Haripur, 13/11/06.

⁴⁹Interview, Farida Kakar, 30/11/06

⁵⁰Interview, Kashif Azam, 10/11/06

⁵¹Interview, Kashif Azam. 10/11/06

⁵²The government has agreed to start a monthly allowance worth Rs 2000 for women councillors. It would be interesting to see how this affects male councillors and consequently relations between women and men within councils.

**Box 10: Women's Protection Bill 2006
(November 16 2006)**

It was the view of both Khawar Mumtaz of Shirkat Gah and Naeem Mirza of Aurat Foundation, that the passing of Women's Protection Bill would not have been possible without the presence of a critical mass of women in the National Assembly. Briefly the Bill tried to amend the Hudood Ordinances, promulgated by General Zia, in 1979. The Hudood Ordinances replaced the Pakistan Penal Code and brought laws into its fold with serious consequences on civil rights and liberties. For women it was particularly discriminatory. The Women's Protection Bill has shifted the rape jurisdiction back to the PPC thereby the confusion between zina and zinabil jabr is erased. However if four adult male witnesses are available then it would be tried under the Hudood Ordinance. This Bill polarized both the parliament and the political parties deeply into liberal parties who supported the bill and the conservatives who opposed it strongly. Some women parliamentarians were central in the debate to push the agenda of the women's bill. Mehnaz Rafi, the chairperson of NA's standing committee on Human Rights and member of the Pakistan Muslim League spoke out openly for the need for such a bill. From the Pakistan people's Party side, MNA Sherry Rehman also the party's central information secretary, provided impetus from her party's side for earlier party drafts and later formulating the policy in support of the bill.

The passing of the bill, with the support of liberal parties in Pakistan, was historical because it meant that even Islamic laws made timeless and unchanging by the religious factions, could be reversed.

Source: Interview

In NWFP women MPs and MPAs raised important questions. It was accepted by all that women were active as members of both national and provincial institutions. However, the role of MPAs came under critical scrutiny by women members: Farah Aqil Shah asked cynically why Assembly members are called legislators. "None of the MPAs are into legislation. They are only worried about their roads and tube-wells, I am confused. If they want to do nalis (drains) and galis (streets), what is the difference between them and councilors?" Muniba, a female MPA reinforced the viewpoint that male members were not respectful towards women. "They start talking among each other, when we get up to speak. So they do not take us seriously."

An important point was raised in NWFP by Muniba who said that the nature of representation determined the types of issues raised. She said that male MPAs on direct seats were more concerned with the specific issues of their areas. And women largely from quotas tend to take up more general and broad, and dispersed issues of the entire province⁵³.

A very popular argument with male councilors, earlier heard in Pindi, and now reiterated in Sukkur, but strangely never referred to by any women respondents so far, were that women's presence changed things for men, who as a result behaved differently, and used a different language, when women were present. Male councilors believed that men became more civil, more conscious and sensitive, in the presence of women, therefore mixed representations was good for men as well.

3.3 Accessibility

3.3.1 Women make Diligent Administrators

The District Coordination Officer in Balochistan suggested that women in public office at this stage were ineffective: "The number of women in public service is negligible and these women too are just occupying spaces. It is khanapuri (formality).

⁵³Interview, Ms. Muniba, Female MPA

They are only paper pushers. No man can visit them; they also are not accessible to the public so what good are they?" The fact that social segregation might be the reason why men can not approach women officers or the general public was not commented upon, but points to the need for seeing quotas as part of a spectrum of initiatives needed to ensure gender equality in public life.

However, the women administrators who were interviewed by the research team argued that women were better administrators; they were more disciplined, organized and concentrated. They went into details and were meticulous. And they were relatively less corrupt (See Box11). Women have raised issues of accountability, have persistently followed up on certain issues, and have in small contests, made at least Nazims of their Union Councils more sensitive to their concerns. While conscious of the constraints which the local government system placed on them, women councilors in Balochistan claimed that they had made small differences to the lives of their constituents: they had taken problems to the authorities to be solved; they had, albeit in smaller numbers gone to the bureaucracy to get matters resolved, they had called up their nazims to fix drains, water shortages, etc. They had cleared passages of girls' schools from male stalkers. They had taken up all the immediate and everyday problems that would typically be the concern of a councilor and resolved many of them.

Ms. Talpur's thoughts raise important issues for the study of women's participation in public life and, once there, their ability to play a leadership role: personal qualities of individual women as well as collective, ascribed qualities of hard work and discipline of women as a group are juxtaposed with a 'gender neutral' ideology that is endemic in public services; systemic issues of the law and of party support are juxtaposed with social prejudices that lead to her being 'bad mouthed' and

Box 11: Gendered/Identities: "I am no gender. I am Nazim"

Ms Feryal Talpur, who had been elected as Nazim on a general contest and not a quota seat, is serving a second term. Being a Nazim from the opposition, this is no small feat. Speaking about her experience as a female administrator, she said:

"I owe my success, first due to the fact that I was elected, I performed, and my teamwork is very strong. Then the Party was backing me all the way. Then since this is a man's world, I had to think like a man. Just by covering your head you can not run away from situations. The situation at times did get dangerous. For instance, I barged into the court, and took away my councilor who was being arrested. So I had to be a daredevil, and fight it out. Then again, being a woman I could get away from certain things. Being a woman, people respect you, and you have to make the right decision at the right time. I had a team of lawyers to help me, when councilors were arrested or harassed. Then at the local level, availability is very important to masses – in all sorts of situations if you want to get the results.

"I think women are better administrators, more disciplined, organized and concentrated. They go into details. And they are not corrupt. Women I believe are better administrators. They go into details. As for having problems if you are a woman, I don't acknowledge it. However, I am Nazim and I am no gender. If I let this thought of being a woman come in between, I will not be able to work. An officer in my district is changed every six months. But I see it like this, this is my district, and these are my people. If someone cooperates or not, is a different matter. I stay, and I am here to make them work on legal grounds. "They tell me so and so is badmouthing about you. Well I don't give a damn".

Source: Interview

stigmatized for working in the public space.

At the provincial, rather than local level, women MPAs elected on quotas considered the entire province their area of work. They related to many people and many places and took up generalized issues, of broader interest. However they did their field work also. Raheela Durrani traveled widely because she was linked up to her party and she said that women even from far flung areas visited her. For her, women come from all kinds of areas, Noshki, Loralai. Dr Shama took up broader socioeconomic issues of concern but also took up infrastructure related issues of her village and Quetta, because the people visited her. Dr. Shama considers that her constituency is all Balochistan and all women. Spozmai Achakzai was from a specific area, and her family had been contesting and winning elections, and because she was a member of a political family, the people of the area visited her. Female MPAs in NWFP did take up issues and practiced issues based politics and considered the province as their site of political and social work. However, lack of constituency politics limited their access to the public and male space. Because of this, the nitty-gritty of constituency and power politics, the everyday troubles of the people with each other and with officials did not concern the women politicians, but larger broader issues. □

3.3.2 Women Get into Details

The ideas about women going into details came out strongly in the responses of legislator Shazia Marri⁵⁴, whose success at legislations was attributed to her going into small details, checking out facts, so that she could challenge counterarguments more effectively. However this 'going into details' could also be a specific quality of the person concerned rather than a gender attribute.

⁵⁴Interview; Shazia Marri, Member Sindh Assembly, 18/11/06

3.3.3 Women Put Emotions into their work

Emotion was brought out as a positive, negative and also a neutral category. Although a gender stereotype, women themselves brought out the problem of emotion in their public work. While Nazim Nawabshah argued that emotion should be kept out of decision making, women legislators put a positive endnote to emotion, saying that it added a personal edge and experience to the issue of law making, and provided it with energy.

3.3.4 Women Connect the Personal and the Political Intimately

It was observed that women connected the personal and the private with the political perhaps with the advantage of deeply concerned with home, family and relationships in the socio-cultural context of Pakistan. This they saw as an opportunity for them to be effective law-makers. A resolution on special people's rights by Shazia Marri was evolved out of a concern that stemmed from the experience of having a disabled sister. The women MPAs met both men and women, but in particular the access of women became easier.

3.3.5 Quotas lead to conscientization of women

Quotas were also seen to lead to women's conscientization and through this their empowerment. Women councilors, especially those who felt empowered, spoke about quotas as providing women an access route to power. This happened in two ways: first, the large number of councilors – or a 'critical mass' of women - meant that at least this number of women would have had some sense of empowerment. Seemi Kemal called it a silent revolution, and argued that even if women councilors are in many cases simply 'fillers', as in the case of a servant of a landlord being made a councilor, that councilor would still

have an experience that would change her. “There was an intrinsic value to the recruitment of women members at the district level”⁵⁵. Also, the increased numbers of women in public life resulting from quotas led to an increase in women’s confidence to speak up when their rights are violated. A case was cited of Sukkur, Sindh where five women were taken by police, to punish the male absconders. “It is only when we women raised a voice and stayed in the police station till 1 am that the problem was resolved and these women were released.”⁵⁶

Conscientisation of men was also mentioned by male councilors⁵⁷ (but strangely never referred to by any women respondents): that women’s presence changed men’s behaviour who began to use better language, became more civil, more conscious and sensitive, in the presence of women, suggesting therefore that mixed representations was good for men as well. For many women councilors, there was recognition that speaking up in the council although involving social and political risk was a key role that must be played. A woman councilor of Haripur, NWFP said that: “I spoke on women’s problems. They did not like it. They said ye to bahut azad hai. First I felt I should not speak. But then I said if I do not speak then the objective will not be served. So I spoke and I gave my opinion”⁵⁸.

One measure of the conscientization of women can be seen from the fact that despite the disempowering context, the majority of women councilors developed highly critical view of the situation. They expressed a great deal of resentment towards male members of the union

councils who did not make any effort to educate/inform them about the system and involve them in decision-making processes. They blamed the patriarchal system for their exclusion and silencing of their voices in the local system of governance: “Gents do everything and ladies have nothing in their hand. Men listen to us, but they do not do anything. We also feel helpless because people do not come to us, thinking that we are women and we would not be able to help them. Even women do not come to see us...Women should have importance but they don’t... Being women we can not go to the offices. Although we participate in everything. Even if we go, who will listen to us.”⁵⁹

3.4 Issues Addressed

Many respondents agreed that similar kind of issues were raised by both male and female MPAs. However some said that women tend to stress more on the social, general service delivery issues than hardcore political issues. Mariam Bibi, head of Kwendorkor, an NGO working for women’s empowerment, based in NWFP for instance, thinks that there is a slight difference between women and men’s articulation of problems. Women are more concerned with service delivery, water, health and education. However, she also argues at the same time that women MPAs are wired into party roles, and are therefore more political and they tend to follow party lines. Most women had the social welfare approach to politics and could take clearer stands on issues, unlike the men who were limited by the voter patterns and constraints to take positions.

⁵⁵Interview, Seemi Kemal, Consultant GRAP, 19/11/06

⁵⁶Interview, Seemi Kemal, 19/11/06

⁵⁷Heard both in Rawalpindi focus group discussion, and now reiterated in Sukkur, 13/11/06.

⁵⁸Interview with woman councilor.

⁵⁹Mobina Qamar, UC MQM Labour Councillor

3.4.1 Women Raise Policy Issues and Legislation

Women parliamentarians were playing effective roles in raising both policy issues, and in putting concrete proposals for potential law. For instance, Shazia Marri who is the secretary of the Legislative Committee of the opposition in Sindh Assembly has put up a bill for Domestic Violence, a bill for shelter homes, for the disabled etc. At the provincial level, MPAs also raise questions about key issues such as health and education. Spozoni Achakzai, from the Balochistan Assembly said that in the first session she moved a resolution on free education. "And it is sad to say that nothing happens. With free education, despite the resolution, it is not implemented. I also spoke of the mobile hospitals and nothing has happened in this regard⁶⁰." However she thought that male members tend to do more homework than women did. No bills seem to have been introduced by women in the Balochistan Assembly.

3.4.2 Service Delivery

"My dream came true when I was able to get a school for APWA" said Waheeda Qureshi, Councilor Pakistan People's Party⁶¹. Even women councilors who seem to have limited powers and access to service delivery work, had taken up larger issues of service delivery.

The Nazim in Haripur, NWFP rated the district's women officers, especially in health and education, as good officers. The Deputy District Health officer in Haripur, the only woman coordinator for Primary Health Project in the whole province said that even though it was difficult for her to work in her own local area, she stood her ground, and was the best performer in the province on her programme. Iqbal Bano, a councilor in Haripur says that: "I was always interested in social work. And so I wanted to contest the elections.

⁶⁰Interview, Spozoni Achakzai, MPA Balochistan, 1/11/06

⁶¹Interview, Waheeda Qureshi, Woman councilor

Box 12: Participating in Raising Issues at the National Level

The Pakistan People's Party MNA Sherry Rehman has been particularly active in moving legislation for empowerment and protection of women:

1. The **Prevention of Honour Killings Bill** ensures that justice can no longer be privatised for crimes against women.
2. The **Protection and Empowerment of Women Bill 2002**, seeking to repeal discriminatory laws, and provide for mandatory protections for women against stove burnings.
3. The second **Hudood Repeal Bill** was proposed on the National Assembly agenda by 7 Feb, 2006 and was summarily sent to Committee.
4. The **Affirmative Action Bill** for mainstreaming women was also sent to a Committee. This bill provided for representation of women in public office and promote affirmative action for women in all walks of life in accordance with the constitution.
5. The **Domestic Violence Bill**, moved in 2005, came up for discussion in the National Assembly on 8 August 2006. However, there is no action on this bill in Committee, and no-one even knows which committee this was sent to.

Source: www.ppp.org.pk

Box 13: Women Councilors Providing Energy

Farida Kakar took up the issue of gas for the Hanna area, which no parliamentarian of higher profile had taken up: “Women are making a difference because they know the problems better. Their home is affected if the street is not in order, she is involved with children,” she said. “I am from Hanna area, the area where the whole world comes for picnic. One of my dreams is to provide gas in this area. For this I have met Prime Minister twice and even spoke to Saddam Musharraf. Once I took a wagon full of women to Islamabad and did a dharna (sit in protest) and had a press conference. Farida has also got the Fatima Jinnah Award and now plans to contest for the MPA seat.”

Source: Fieldwork

When I was councilor, I set up a vocation centre as my own initiative. I paid the teacher from my pocket, and the Nazim gave me 2 sewing machines and 6 zigzag machines, 6 chairs and a table. Now there are 200 to 300 girls who have benefited from this. This time I have set up a taleem balghan school in the neighborhood. First I went to the DCO, then I went to the MPA, but neither responded. So then, I said I will have to do it myself. Now that is also running successfully.⁶²”

3.5 Competing for and Allocating Resources

By and large women, especially at the union council level, are not consulted in the making of budgets. Women councilors interviewed in Balochistan seemed to be aware of and pursued the day to day neighbourhood problems: Councillor Farah Khalid told how she likes to get up in the mornings and get after the jamadar (janitor) and get him to clean the streets properly. “It is for this reason, that in the area around my street, you will never find things dirty. We are in the opposition so the Nazim does not like it when I ask him to do things, but he does it anyway. I recently got a silai machine out of him⁶³.” Farah Khalid claimed that things had improved since the increase of number of women in the councils. For instance, “the water problem in my area was intense, but now it is less. We are effective, because men can not go into homes, which we can easily. And things like birth certificates or domiciles, we can help. I have helped many people with their birth certificates”.

3.5.1 ‘Women Only’ Focus

District Nazims often tend to patronize District councilors, telling them that they should only present women-focused schemes for funding. Not only do officers want women to bring women’s issues to the councils, they also want to treat all women members as one group with similar interests. The City Nazim of Quetta in Balochistan told us that he has a dispute with women councilors on the grounds that he tells them that they should get together and present a scheme jointly, but they all want separate schemes. Eventually however, he succumbs: “So I have to do what the council decides. I do as they say.” “Women do not have a halqa (constituency), let the nazims look after their halqas, and women should get into social welfare activities.” In Haripur, NWFP there seemed to be a major misconception both with Nazim and with the DCO that women had been elected only so that they should give

⁶²Interview, Iqbal Bano, Woman councilor

⁶³Interview, Farah Khalid, Woman councilor

schemes pertaining to women in a narrow sense like centres for crafts and vocations etc. This made the DCO and Nazim restrict women's funds, and even stop them, for the women were not giving schemes related to 'women.' The DCO Haripur says that the women councilors do not know their role. "They don't want to spend the money on their community but on nalis galis and roads." "I consider these dormant ladies. They have not come up with any schemes although we have asked them," he says.

3.5.2 Struggles over Development Funds

There are a number of instances where women have organized themselves and raised their voices for an equal amount of share and distribution of public funds. Gul Amin Minhas a tehsil councilor from NWFP remembers that she had to fight every inch to access the tehsil funds. "There were twelve women, and we got nothing. So we stood up and asked where we should go. After our struggle we finally got the fund. I gave pavements and water supply schemes." Such struggles now have become a part of the every day world of local governance: "I just read the other day, that in Swat women members walked out of the session. They said 'humen fund nahin mill rahay'" said the Minister for Women development.

Another issue that is critical in terms of distribution of resources is that of development funds. Women MPAs receive their share of development funds. Often male parliamentarians and party office bearers try to claim the women's fund on grounds that their constituency needs are greater than women who have been 'elected' on a quota. However, most women MPAs resist this. "One of our male colleagues said women have come from our votes, so they should give us their funds. Nobody said anything, but I spoke up, and said please we do not want your charity, take back

your funds, but don't insult us by giving us our allocation and then asking us to return it to you. "After that things improved and no one has suggested taking away our money from us."⁶⁴

3.5.3 Lack of Consultation

By and large women, especially at the union council level, were not consulted in the budget making. The Nazims often invited them to the discussion on the budget, but budget making meetings were rare. Males too reported that the Nazim was at his own will whether he wished to share information and resources with them or not. In women's case, this distance was more acute. The women union members especially those elected for the first time, said that at first they had quietly passed the budget, "The Nazim called us during the budget and told us we are putting it in such and such a place and we passed it. I did not raise any questions."

3.6 Satisfaction Levels with the System

Despite the acknowledgement of the difference that women's inclusion in politics has made on the ground, our research also identified some dissatisfaction regarding quotas among women and men politicians. This was as much with the political system within which quotas operate as with the quota system itself.

3.6.1. Devolution

There was dissatisfaction with the way the devolution system was being implemented. As Graff points out, "the union councils both lack authority where they should have it and have overlapping powers with other authorities, which creates animosity and open conflict between different levels of government"⁶⁵. There was considerable competition between provinces and

⁶⁴Maj (R) Fazal Durrani, Chairman, Balochistan Public Service Commission, 2/11/06

⁶⁵Irene Graff, They Give us Respect but no Rights; pp.45-46

districts. The former considered their powers and mandate being curtailed by the local tier. The Chief Minister, according to one elected official said that if districts take everything, what was there left for the provincial government. A point raised by a member of the tehsil council in NWFP was that the law for voting of the Convenor of the house had been changed from secret ballot to show of hands in the election for the Naib-nazim. This had exposed the people who did not vote for the Convenor, with the result that he does not give them any development funds. There are also variations in support for the system between provincial governments led by different political parties, creating imbalances and gaps in local government reforms within a federal framework of governance. The NWFP has had particular issues in this regard, with the MMA and JUI opposing the non-party basis of elections. This means that some political parties have “no political representatives on local levels who require their support”⁶⁶.

Similarly there was a resentment of GRAP funds going directly from the federal tier to the local tier, bypassing the provinces, which it was believed would lead to a breakdown of a system of checks on the funds.

3.6.2 Party Politics

Party group affiliations were the single most important factor in the assembly functions and performances. The parties filtered all political actions of the members. With some it was more than the others. “Since people come through a political basis and not on their individual capacities, women do not contribute as much as they should”, said Ghazala Anjum District Councilor MQM, Sindh⁶⁷. It was rare, in the assemblies for women to support each other across party lines. Most women stuck to their party positions. Several issues raised by opposition women were met with disappointment because women would not vote outside the party guidelines. “But the treasury bench women do not support us, even if it is about women. We discuss everything with our group.” This was supported by Falak Naz, District Councillor Pakistan Peoples Party in Sindh: “Political parties constrain movement and expression sometimes, as many women are bound by their party lines and do not want to speak freely. That is why the council is not working as no one speaks up, about the various problems confronting us”. In the case of the bills

⁶⁶Irene Graff, *ibid.* p. 46

⁶⁷Interview, Ghazala Anjum, District councilor

Box 14: The Two Faces of Pakistani Legislation

The increase in women’s seats in the assemblies for many signaled the onset of a liberal face of politics of Pakistan. However, a simultaneous representation of the Islamic parties, higher than ever before, showed an extreme political divide between conservative and liberal face of Pakistan. This split can for instance be seen in a simultaneous push for passing of the Women’s Protection Bill in the National assembly, which was opposed by the Islamic parties alliance. And at the same time, the push for passing of the conservative Hasba bill, by the same alliance seeking to empower clergy over laws and institutions, in the provincial assembly of NWFP, which is being opposed by the liberal parties.

Women representatives, contrary to what one would have believed are equally divided along party lines. While a significant number of women in the Parliament supported the Women’s Protection Bill, women of the Islamic parties alliance, the MMA opposed it. Similarly while opposition women members opposed Hasba bill women members of the MMA supported it. Both Hasba and Women Protection bill were passed within 3 days of one another, as if to appease both side of the political argument. Interestingly we were conducting interviews in Peshawar and in Islamabad during those days.

Source: Fieldwork in Islamabad

introduced by Sherry Rehman of the PPP, for example, it was suggested that party politics came in the way of her being able to move the bills effectively.

3.6.3 *Interface between politicians and officials*

The interface between elected representatives and the bureaucracy is not always helpful. Officials often treated councilors with condescension and at times with suspicion. In NWFP, for example, although both male and female councilors did go to some officers, this was not often. None of the women councilors interviewed had gone to the DCO, except one. A couple had gone to the EDOs. Councilor Najma Mushtaq said: "I once visited the office of EDO Education, and social welfare officers, but never the DCO".

3.6.4 *Lack of Accountability*

Councilors in NWFP were vocal against the system of accountability. The political processes were being hijacked by lack of accountability, as a culture of kickbacks and commissions had taken over at the local level. For instance councilor Raja Ghulam Ali said that "In the fund that came [to local government] our allocation was Rs.6000 out of which 20 per cent went into [various] commissions. There is no monitoring and no checks and balances. A tube light which costs 45 rupees in the market is purchased for Rs. 85." However, some also blame women as being part of the corruption cycle: "Many female councilors bargained for their votes. And about 80 per cent women took money. They took more money than men", said Yousaf Ayub Khan, the Nazim Haripur, NWFP.

3.6.5 *Male Bias*

Most women politician supported the party of which they were members, but worried about the nature of male bias operating within most parties. This came in the way of their performing their duties, as well as indicating a long term support for gender equality.

Quotas therefore were seen to address the problem of invisible and missing women, challenged their segregation in society, act as an entry point for women in the mainstream, and by enabling a 'critical mass' of women to participate in public life, gave them confidence.

Box 15: The Case of Sexual Harassment of Children in the MMA Government

Farah Aqil Shah tells us that in January 2003 shortly after taking oath, she took up the case of sexual child abuse in a school in Peshawar. This must be a taboo subject, but doubly so, in the conservative government of MMA. But MPA Farah took it up more as a cause, rather than a subject through which political mileage could be made.

"I went after it like an activist. Went into the streets, looked for the children, and convinced the parents. They were all with me. But the teachers gave me a tough time. My husband got threatening letters." The political party she belonged to remained non-committal however. "There was no response from the party. There was neither a shabashi nor even for that matter... This was not easy, to raise the issue of sex in the assembly. Interestingly I got support from some women, but no men supported me. For this I got anonymous letters. From many girls, and they said that I should visit other schools. But for me the whole effort was to bring out an issue that is hushed up. To let parents know that if they are sending their children to school, they also have to be wary.

Source: Interview

3.7 Opposition to Quotas

However, there is also opposition to quotas which builds its arguments on different fronts.

3.7.1 Meritocracy in Danger

One argument is that if women are capable, they should compete on the general seats. The argument for merit based appointments is particularly strong at the higher levels of bureaucracy: “In principle I am against quotas, because it brings in all kinds of people. And people say “han ji khubsurat thi to posting mil gai.” (she was beautiful, therefore she got a posting). Women should get in a regular way”, said Mehtab Akbar Rashdi⁶⁸. “I would support quotas at different levels, but for the top positions we should have merit. The competitive exams should be there for instance. But that is only for 5000 to 6000 people⁶⁹”. In order to demonstrate this argument, the District Coordination Officer in Balochistan suggested that women in public office at this stage were ineffective: “The number of women in public service is negligible and these women too are just occupying spaces. It is khanapuri (formality). They are only paper pushers. No man can visit them; they also are not accessible to the public so what good are they?⁷⁰” The fact that social segregation might be the reason why men can not approach women officers or the general public was not commented upon, but points to the need for seeing quotas as part of a spectrum of initiatives needed to ensure gender equality in public life. In Sindh too, one out of the two female ministers interviewed rejected quotas for women in bureaucracy. She was of the opinion that quotas compromise quality of officers. She also was of the

view that women officers in the education department she was responsible for, were of an inferior quality as compared with men.

Interestingly some women councilors who were also mentors in the Women Political School programme, although supporting quotas, repeated the stereotypes of women councilors. For instance Farida Kakar calls many women councilors elected in the tribal areas as ‘extras’: “I also go out of the district frequently and am disturbed to note that the women councilors are either grandmothers or mothers in law. These women are extras. Once they come out of their reproductive age, they get a special status to sit on a charpai, and just survey the world. So this is what the councilor women are in the tribal areas, extra women⁷¹.”

3.7.2 Consolidating Elitism

Quotas are also opposed because they tend to privilege middle class women: All four women MPAs interviewed in NWFP, for example, came from political families. One was a professional doctor and almost all of them belonged to a politically influential class.

In NWFP we also came across another important issue that seemingly reinforces social hierarchies and undermines the case for quotas. Some officials pointed to the rural/urban divide in NWFP and suggested that there will be women from the cities taking advantage of quota jobs since they would qualify easily and then they will get themselves transferred to the city, which will result in distortions and inefficiencies in the public service delivery in the rural areas.

⁶⁸Interview, Mehtab Rashdi, 17/10/06

⁶⁹Secretary Finance, Sindh, Malik Israr, 17/10/06

⁷⁰Interview, DCO, Quetta, 01/11/06

⁷¹Interview, Farida Kakar

Box 16: Social Profiles of Women in Politics in NWFP

Farah Aqil Shah belonged to a political family, with her husband having a position in the ANP, but belonging to the city of Peshawar. Farah considers herself a social worker and politics as social welfare. She did her schooling from Peshawar P.F. School and Masters in Psychology.

Muniba Shahnawaz, PPPP has done her graduation and been in college and school committees but comes essentially from a political family from the remote area of Chitral where women of her family she married into have dominated politics.

Dr. Sameen Mehmood Jan, PML Q was a professional, a medical doctor – a hematology specialist. She was also an active social worker and seems to specialize in Child welfare and laws regarding child protection. But essentially she also comes from a political family. Her brother in law Saleem Saifullah is presently a federal minister, while her father comes from the armed forces

Dr. Imtiaz Sultan Bukhari of PML N belongs to the middle class but with a long political career. She quit government job to become councilor 1979-83. Member Pakistan Majlis-e-Shoora in 1984 and MPA 1985-88 on PML ticket. She became the vice-president of women wing in PML-Junejo and then President PML-N women wing in 1990, and then came as an MPA on reserve seats 2002.

Source: Fieldwork

3.7.3 Continuing male dominance undermines benefits of quotas

In terms of conscientization, the limitations on women were also considerable: during training for women councilors in Balochistan it was noted that men tried to attend instead of women. “We don’t allow that” said the Women’s Political School mentors, “so now men come with women. In Loralai one man said ‘Hum Pinjra saath rakhte hain’ (we keep the cage with us)⁷².” Men accompany women because they fear that “they may change track, gear or their political loyalties”. Another position against quotas was articulated by Bushra Gauhar, a political and social activist and feminist in NWFP. She felt that the quota for women will further marginalize women’s position by keeping them away from the mainstream politics. Gauhar was of the view that there was a need to bring women into politics through direct elections. She said that the women on quotas do not speak and they do not have a constituency⁷³.

3.8 Leadership and Quotas

As can be gauged from the evidence provided above, women are benefiting from quota provisions, though they are also struggling against social constraints. Working in institutions is often dependent upon the skills and social capital that women bring to their posts – illiteracy, family support and training. Leadership positions within representative institutions pose particular challenges because of accountability issues, which can work both in favour of and against women seeking re-election. From the interviews with both men and women, it becomes clear that women were indeed ‘becoming leaders’ but also needed further support in feeling comfortable in taking on these positions. Perhaps, those most able to grow into leadership positions were those who are literate. These are the women with better social status, who are also better able to take advantage of the training offered by various programmes such as the Women’s Political School; illiterate women find it harder to be integrated into training programmes⁷⁴. However, our

⁷²Interview, WPS mentor

⁷³Interview, Ms. Bushra Gauhar

⁷⁴Irene Graff, They give us Respect but no Rights; p 27

interviews also revealed that the very fact of participating in training programmes run by the Women's Political School and its methodology of involving trained councilors in its training programmes as facilitators can be empowering. Our research also reveals some evidence that women do have different concerns from male politicians, being more focused on 'roads and tube-wells' but that this is not always appreciated. They also seem to be able to bridge the public and private domains – their style of leadership is open to making legitimacy claims for their positions on the basis of their private experience, as well as of their constituents. However, normative bases of leadership are often seen as a sign of weakness. This particularly the case for women MPAs or MNAs and Senators, even though it is clear from our research that women on quotas do take up broader issues while constituency based women and male representatives focus on their constituency needs. In pragmatic terms, women representatives seem to have a more inclusive style of functioning. They themselves are able to reflect upon how participation is enabling them to understand broad political questions but also use their profile to mobilize the voices of women to support their work. Women on quotas also developed their leadership skills in a context where they did not have to compromise on grounds of re-election. This is particularly the case with women in parliament. However, pragmatically, women MNAs, Senators as well as MPA are bound by party discipline. This is a double edged issue – their positions within the party are more secure if they toe the party line; their challenge to party leadership might also bring them public attention which can improve their position within the party. In terms of the efficiency argument the research suggests that despite higher rates of illiteracy than men and without as much

social support, women are being recognized for their courage, diligence and honesty, while they still have a way to go before they are able to effectively use their positions to compete for resources.

Despite the enabling framework of quotas, considerable constraints upon women's agency remain. This is evident from the actual experiences of women in the field.

Chapter 4

Challenges for Women in Public Life

As the evidence provided above suggests, the impact of quotas is mixed. Presently, women are struggling to create space for themselves within the system⁷⁵. The challenges that they face are on multiple counts.

4.1 Challenges for Women in Public Life

In Chapter 3, we suggested that despite an increasing rhetorical acceptance of quotas for women in public life, the effectiveness of quota based representative institutions and politics is not yet very high. In Chapter 1 we outlined three areas within which quotas need to be contextualized – economic, political and cultural – if women are to take up leadership roles in Pakistani public life. Based on our research, in this section we set out the socio-economic and political challenges facing women who access public life with the support of quotas. The research findings support our hypothesis that gaining political equality for women is critical for the effectiveness of measures that seek to achieve gender balance in public life.

4.1.1 Poor MDG Indicators

MDG gender indicators show that women are disproportionately disadvantaged. This distorts their access to public life in terms of rural/urban and class divides, which in turn undermines the democratic message of special measures to achieve gender balance in public life. MPA Shafiq Ahmed says “The basic necessities for girls are not there. Come with me and I will show you fifty girls’ schools with no facilities of latrines. And you see these poor girls knocking neighbours’ doors. The Chief Secretary was saying there is no such thing, but I showed them, the tanks with snakes inside, I showed them places with no toilets⁷⁶.”

The findings of our study reveal that nearly three-quarter of women councilors are illiterate. Even the latest surveys in Balochistan, for example, put the literacy rate among women at ten per cent⁷⁷. The majority of them were from rural background. The social background and profile of the women councilors showed that they had extremely limited knowledge and information about the power and

⁷⁵Bari, Farzana (1997), *Discovering Female Representatives in Local Government*, Unpublished report.

⁷⁶Interview, MPA Shafiq Ahmed, 31/10/06

⁷⁷District Based Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey 2004. Government of Balochistan, Planning and Development Department in collaboration with The Federal Bureau of Statistics and United Nations Children’s Fund.

Box 17: Women Bureaucrats: Challenges in Punjab

We announced 31 grade 17 officers post out of which 21 are females. They were selected on open merit through PPSC, but when they joined there was the issue of mobility – women don't want to be posted outside Lahore... Security issues are also more pronounced as far as females are concerned. Officers should be officers, not male and female. Women are less financially corrupt. But most of the times female officers are terrible bosses for females – they misbehave with female subordinates and have derogatory behaviour towards men also. Men are also prejudiced against working under female officers... Our socio-cultural environment is also a barrier and have seen boundaries placed around women.

Source: Interview with Mr. Mehdi Syed Director General – Social Welfare Department, Punjab 18/11/06

function of local government. The malnourishment rate for children under five years was 43 per cent; infant mortality was high with one of every 6 children dying before their fifth birthday. “There are no jobs. Today our girls are ready to become nurses and serve in Kohlu, there is so much unemployment. Give me a few hours notice and I will bring you a thousand girls without jobs. There is so much poverty, now employment is a necessity.”

4.1.2 Mobility

Ayesha Khan's study⁷⁸, *Female Mobility and Social Barriers* shows that women are severely restricted in their movement and only allowed to go out for certain specific tasks like shopping, accessing health facilities, deaths in the family or visits to relatives. She surveyed women who rarely left their villages and/or homes without permission and avoided using public transport wherever possible.

In our interviews, it also became clear that in terms of power relations at political level, women's increasing mobility as a result of acquiring public office is a key issue with men, who fear the uncontrolled movement of women. Mobility is a key concern

with serving women field officers at the district level. One of the main reasons that led to their underperformance was the problem of transport, as the public transport inhibits their movement. Mobility, especially in Balochistan with huge distances was a key concern, for women in public service. Even in Quetta, with all facilities of transport available, all women medical officer's interviewed said that they faced tremendous difficulties in travel. And councilors in Quetta depended on their husbands, brothers, or sometimes other councilors to venture out. Interestingly the two women councilors who faced resistance from their relatives to contest on the councilors seat, was on the argument of the mobility. “Ye ghoomti hai” (“she roams around”), was the reason cited by a councilor which made her extended family object to her participating in politics. Mobility while essential for participation in public life, is often used in a derogatory way to suggest a low status for women councilors who, in Sindh, were called “Just dais (midwife) - the general perception of women who roam is that they are dais.” So, infrastructural issues blend with discursive ones on the question of mobility for women in public life.

⁷⁸ Ayesha Khan, *Female Mobility and Social Barriers to Accessing Health / Family Planning Services*, for Ministry of Population welfare, GoP, Center for Population Studies, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, and Department for International Development, British Government, July 1998.
<http://www.un.org.pk/undp/gender/mobility.rtf>

**Box 18: Contexts of
Participation : World Bank
Country Gender Assessment
(CGA)**

Restrictions on both physical mobility and access to information for women in Pakistan undercuts their ability to acquire key services and pursue life opportunities, according to the World Bank's Country Gender Assessment (CGA) report... It finds that current restrictions on women's movement outside the home arise from concerns about their security and reputation. By fostering a safer environment, the report suggests, a positive cycle of increased female participation in the world beyond the household can be activated... improvements in gender equality will endure only to the degree that formal institutions reinforce them and society accepts them, the report says. Policies therefore must incorporate long-term measures to create an environment that enables the reduction of gender gaps.

Source:
<http://www.ungei.org/news/ind697.html>, 2006

4.1.3 Lack of Access to and Transformation of Public Space

Lack of access to public spaces is one of the key impediments faced by many women councilors; public offices remain alien environments. This, of course also reinforces the need for women's presence in large numbers in public offices so that a transformation of public space can take place. This inaccessibility affects their work, and their ability to solve problems and to deliver services to their constituents. "Being women we can not go to the offices, although we participate in everything. Even if we go, who will listen to us?" says Mobina Qamar⁷⁹. Only those women who had overcome their inhibitions and did enter public spaces were confident about their roles as problem solvers. In rural and semi-urban districts, such women remain a minority.

Women politicians who step out into the male space feel there are clear problems of access to the male electorate. Saeeda Malik says that men have natural advantages in public life, because of their easy access to and in the public space. The liberty of a man addressing another man is there, whereas

with women, there were cultural, religious, geographical barriers⁸⁰. Even Khuhro, who otherwise felt that her own experience of an even, balanced, no-gender-difference upbringing made her a case apart from other women, also admitted that there were problems of access. "There is only a slight difference - a problem of interaction with colleagues. Men can do those at all levels, backslapping clubbing behavior. But we are excluded from that⁸¹" That, she argues, makes a problem at decision making levels. In the constituency as well, there is a slight problem of access and women can not be as accessible as a man can be, even though the conditions have improved.

Spozmi Achakzai, MPA, mentioned security as a key concern for women who venture out in the public space. She said that at the moment the environment is not secure for women to work in offices. Similarly bureaucrat Sultana Baloch said that she did not see any "safety for women. And that woman should work where there was respect for them⁸²." In extreme cases, women in politics have also had to pay with their lives for challenging gender hierarchies in public spaces.

⁷⁹Interview, Mobina Qamar

⁸⁰Interview, Dr. Saeeda Malik, 18/10/06

⁸¹Interview, Ms. Khuhro

⁸² Interview, Ms. Sultana Baloch, Female bureaucrat, 01/11/06

Box 19: Female Pakistani Minister Shot Dead for 'Breaking Islamic Dress Code'

A Pakistani minister and woman's activist was shot dead by an Islamic extremist for refusing to wear the veil. Zilla Huma Usman, the minister for social welfare in Punjab province and an ally of President Pervez Musharraf, was killed on 7th April 2007 as she was about to deliver a speech to dozens of party activists, by a "fanatic", who believed that she was dressed inappropriately and that women should not be involved in politics, officials said. Mrs Usman, 35, was wearing the shalwar kameez worn by many professional women in Pakistan, but did not cover her head. The attack happened in Gujranwala, 120 miles southeast of Islamabad, where the minister's office is based. The gunman, Mohammad Sarwar, was overpowered by the minister's driver and arrested by police. A stone mason in his mid 40s, he is not thought to belong to any radical group but is known for his fanaticism. He was previously held in 2002 in connection with the killing and mutilation of four prostitutes, but was never convicted due to lack of evidence. "He is basically a fanatic," Raja Basharat, the Punjab Law Minister, said. "He is against the involvement of women in politics and government affairs." A police statement added: "He considers it contrary to the teachings of Allah for a woman to become a minister or a ruler. That's why he committed this action."

Source: *The Times*,
<http://www.timonline.co.uk/tol/new/world/asia/article1414137.ece07.04.07>

In NWFP two very different women, across a vast gap of class and roles suggested that they were able to access the public space only through a strategy of attempting to erase the markers of their femininity and thus transforming gender roles of women to find acceptance in the public space. One was Kulsoom Bibi, a councilor, who says that she got three thousand votes because she 'plays a male role in public space', and the other Gul Begum who survived in male bureaucracy and got top positions, because she "worked like a man"

This strategy however defeats the idea of women accessing the public space as women, and works against the ideology of empowerment of women as women and by transformation of gender roles.

4.1.4 Continued Gender Segregation and Subordination

Continued gender segregation and subordination challenges women who are able to access public office. In the case of women councilors, nearly all were persuaded by their male relatives or other influential men of the community to put their names forward for election. As a result, they continue to confront the traditional mind-set where their male colleagues reject them as equal partners in politics. They are seen as representing only women and they are given the responsibility related to gender specific project and programs. There are frequent complaints by women councilors that they do not receive invitation to the council meetings. They are not consulted in development planning at the district and union council levels. Women from the district councils are not given equal share of development fund as they are perceived to have no direct constituency. The findings of the study showed that 50% of the women councilors attended only one meeting where the election of chairman took place. Afterwards, if there was any matter in which their presence was required papers were sent to their houses for their signature or thumb impression.

In Central and South Punjab, landlords or Chairmen of union councils persuaded women from lower classes rather than women from their own families to contest as it was considered below their honour and dignity that women belonging to their families interact with the masses. In all

cases, women can not choose to contest in elections without the support of a male member of the household. However, there continue to be differences between the rural/urban spaces on this issue. In Rawalpindi, a district free from feudal domination, women related to male councilors and well-off families were asked to become members. The candidates for the Chairmanship of the Council in particular played an instrumental role in this regard because they were also elected through indirect vote of the directly elected councilors. They wanted to secure political support for themselves from women councilors who they encouraged to stand for election on the reserved seats.

4.1.5 Lack of Support Infrastructure

Councilors who came on reserved seats were not offered any honorarium, which makes it difficult for women councilors to spend transportation cost out of their own pocket, as most of them are economically dependent on the male members of their families. Both men and women acutely felt that there was a clear non-recognition of their public role because they had no budgetary facilities. This was especially the case for women, who have often fewer financial resources at their hands. "There should be quotas. But there should also be a budget to go with it. The women of our areas [NWFP] do not get honorarium."

Forty five percent of NWFP councilors attended meetings whenever the Chairman required their presence. In such cases either transportation was provided to them or the chairmen themselves came to take them to the meetings. None of them reported to receive training from the government or non-government sources.

4.1.6 Lack of Training

There is also a lack of training for women councilors. In Sindh, Sukkur, councilors admitted

that so far, no systemic training had been provided for them. In the last term, councilors were given training within a few months. However, now even that one year had gone, there was no attention paid to the training requirements of the members. Since there was no capacity building of new councilors, the roles and responsibilities were being interpreted in ad hoc ways resulting in confusion about their duties and responsibilities.

Given the different contexts within which women and men take up the role of leaders, it is important to study the needs that such a leadership role demands. Perhaps the most important would be that of information. Often women's participation in political institutions is undermined by lack of information on specific issues. The dependence on men, who might or might not be supportive of female leadership roles, decreases the autonomous decision-making power of women. Training thus needs to include access to information in a timely way. In NWFP both male and female members pointed out that no new training had been carried out and they were not provided the updated versions of the LGO 2001. Training also allows women to come together to discuss issues. The space made available for training becomes a political space of interaction, support and networking. States, together with multilateral institutions, need to invest resources in such trainings. Where such initiatives are started, there is also the need to sustain such training and networking possibilities over time. The reach of the Women's Political School clearly needs to be extended.

So, the MDGs of education of the girl child and the PoA goal of greater participation of women in political institutions go hand in hand. As pointed out above, training becomes a key resource for women leaders. There is some evidence that women leaders at different levels of governance institutions are aware of this.

4.1.7 Difficult Political Environment

Lack of institutionalization was pointed out at multiple levels. Councilors complained that they could not get things done in a regular way. The male councilors of Sukkur said that whatever they achieved, or managed to do, was through a network of patronage and contacts, and not through systems. The most critical political concern of the respondents was the relationship of the province with the centre. Balochistan is a 'deprived province', and the respondents largely spoke of unfair treatment from the centre. It was stated by the MPAs in Balochistan that the assemblies were not functioning properly and resolutions that had been passed were neither taken seriously, nor even implemented. The radicalization of politics in Balochistan was a concern both with men and women. Political parties were not playing their role because of the growing tension in the border regions. Devolution is not implemented as it is stated in the law - provincial secretaries continued to affect and interfere with the district affairs. For Nazims, a key issue was administrative uncertainty, frequent transfers and non-cooperation of officers, which hindered service delivery work at the district level.

4.1.8 Family support

Nearly a fifth of the councilors we spoke to told us of at least one family member who was annoyed at their decision to enter the public domain. Interestingly, extended families put more hurdles in women's route to political office than the nuclear family, which was regarded as a key institution of support for women in public life. Most women cited their immediate families as encouraging them and in many cases, husbands, brothers, and sons were instrumental in women's coming into the public space. In the case of Waheeda, a councilor from Sukkur, Sindh, her husband and children were with her, but one of her brothers raised the issue of her 'roaming'. A

councilor from Balochistan told us that even though a year had passed, her in laws were still not supportive of her public profile: "Still my in laws do not like it. They think this is a bad thing and they say why you are here. Today, I am here, my husband has dropped me off, but no one knows."

4.1.9 Ideologies of Honour and Shame

One out of the four women government officials interviewed reported sexual harassment. The cultural ideology of 'hiya' or shame was raised by the male councilors as a factor that inhibited women's participation in the public space, as it inhibited their movements and their voice. Sexual harassment often took the form of male gossip against women in public life. Councilors in Balochistan, like Farida Kakar, talked about how people talked behind her back. Her being single also made it a big problem, as it gives more room for gossip to people. "They say Jawan behan ko chor diya hai. Ghar main nahin rehti (He has left his young sister; she doesn't stay at home). I am sensitive so I go down for a day, and then come out again."

The DCO Quetta spoke of historical reversal, where from a liberal face, the society became conservative, an era especially attributed to General Zia's Islamisation of society. "When I was a boy, there were co-educational schools. In Quetta there were hotels in which girls from good families used to come in the evening and take dinner. There was a liberal atmosphere. The culture of Baloch and Pakhtoon is liberal. Now a reversal of trends has taken place and the conservatism of Zia rule has taken hold in the society. Co-ed institutions are finished. Girls and boys are segregated.⁸³" He forwarded a culture change argument saying that until and unless the culture of conservatism does not change, women's presence in the public spaces and offices will not be a reality.

⁸³Interview, DCO Quetta, 01/11/06

Box 20: Sexual Harassment in Parliament

In the budget session of Sindh Assembly 2006, an allegation of sexual harassment was made by Assembly member Shazia Marri. This was the first public event of recorded harassment in the Sindh assembly in its hundred year history. The disturbing part was that no action was taken by the government on this serious issue. To add insult to injury, other women Members were used to make personal attacks on Shazia Marri. This is her narrative:

“A male colleague used to call me and send me anonymous messages. He would however not tell me his name, when I asked him for it. I reported this to the people of the party.

I am a strong woman. But there are some things that can not be accepted. This harassment did affect me. I sent a message to a member of the minority community and he assured me that he would not do this again.

“However he did not stop. At this session, then, a chit was sent to me that said “keisi ho” that was the breaking point. I registered my complaint with Imtiaz Sheikh. Somebody said just go and hit him. But I said that would not help. And then another chit came, and then I passed this to Nisar sahib and the rest followed. At that point there was sympathy and many women from the treasury also showed concern.

“But subsequently character assassination began and the Chief Minister maligned my character and also used other women MPAs to do that. An MPA who had never spoken a word in the house gave out statements maligning me. A lot of press people called to ask me to give statements but I said that I could not malign anyone. I just cried and asked God to help me. And that was what broke me.

“Eventually as I see it I helped unveil a social evil, and got a lot of support, letters from people I had never met, press, editorials. Even this unpleasant incident helped reveal what working women can go through across all levels. That such social evils even exist within the parliament and the so called safest of places.”

Source: Fieldwork in Sindh

4.2 Leadership Challenges

As has been seen through the narratives of women interviewed, there are many challenges that women face in ‘becoming leaders’. The struggle for survival, poor MDG indicators, poor mobility infrastructure, the fraught nature of the pathways of access and the sustained presence of women in the public space, continuing gender segregation and subordination, the playing out of ideologies of ‘honour’ and shame, the lack of basic education and continuing training and a complex political environment means that women find it difficult to take on leadership roles. When they do, they have to soberly assess the high costs that are attached to these roles both inside their familial as well as the public space. In this context, normative approaches to leadership can be of particular value – conscientization through participation, and a commitment to social transformation can often offset anxieties about personal and social costs of leadership. This in turn, as has been seen above, can lead women to develop pragmatic strategies for coping with the pressures of leadership. Negotiated rather than adversarial politics, developing networks of support within the family as well as in the work environment, with both women and men, and finally, developing a ‘thick skin’ (‘I don’t give a damn’) are important ways in which women leadership qualities are developed and played out. One concern here might be whether some women leaders feel that they have to take on masculine modes of behaviour which might then pose difficult identity issues for them and other women in politics. In terms of efficiency of women leaders, the structural challenges they face can significantly limit them – they ability to travel safely, to access difficult public spaces such as police stations, the higher levels of illiteracy and social subordination that they suffer, all undermine their ability to lead effectively.

If these challenges are to be addressed in order that measures to achieve gender equality in public life can be effective, then what steps are needed? In the Conclusion we set out our recommendations.

Chapter 5

Conclusion: Gender Equality in Public Life: The Way Forward

The research framework adopted by this Report suggested that strategies for the achievement of equality for women in public life in Pakistan needed to be assessed in context. While Pakistan can look to other countries for inspiration, best practice and strategic advice, its own political, social and economic context is fundamental to its policy-making. Comparisons are often odious and misguided. The focus on achievability rather than aspirations means that the Government of Pakistan needs to contextualize its policies, tailor its targets to specific ground realities and to be ambitious realistically⁸⁴.

The evidence provided by our research shows that although Pakistani women have made good progress in some areas of public life, they continue to face significant challenges. The quotas introduced by successive governments have opened up the public space for women and in part, addressed the critical issue of gender equality in public life. However, the socio-economic and cultural challenges before Pakistan continue to be barriers in the further progress of Pakistani women.

Given the evidence provided by our study, we suggest the following recommendations to address these issues.

Recommendations

Priorities for the State

The priorities for the state encompass economic, political and social arenas.

Achieving MDG 3

Achieving targets on health, education and literacy of women and girl children are crucial in achieving gender equality in public life. Without these three targets being met, the other strategies of women's empowerment can only be partially effective. In order to ensure that all women, not just the educated, healthy and literate, enjoy equality in society, the state's priority has to be the significant improvement in the MDG indicators, specifically the goal to 'promote gender equality and empower women'.

⁸⁴In the context of GRBI, for example, the government of Pakistan notes, "More than 60 countries have done GRB work of some sort. However, none of these can provide a blueprint for Pakistan. Firstly, the gender situation differs across countries because it is influenced by history and culture. Secondly, the standard budgets of all countries differ. Similarly, the details of GRB will differ across countries although the overall objective is the same. Pakistan is learning from the experience of other countries, but is developing its own unique approach to GRB". <http://www.grbi.gov.pk/faqs.asp>

Equal opportunity policies

Recruitment and Promotion of women

Increasing women's employment must be the key element in the government's approach to achieving gender equality in public life. As we have seen, there is particular need to address the issue of women's employment in public service over which the government has direct control. In both public service and political life, we have seen that women often do not get the support of senior officers in promotion. They have to routinely work harder than men in order to gain the respect of their colleagues and make a case for their promotion.

- ✎ Attention should be given to the gender balance of recruitment panels, as well as gender training of those serving on these. Due process must be adhered to when making appointments.
- ✎ Recruiting more women should be accompanied by gender sensitive career management programmes through out government services.
- ✎ The social infrastructure needs to be improved together with emphasis on recruiting women, in particular by improving training, sanitary and child care facilities.
- ✎ Equal opportunity policies for recruitment and promotion should be clearly set out, monitored and implemented rigorously.
- ✎ Reporting mechanisms to ensure that equal opportunity policies are being implemented should be strengthened.
- ✎ The flouting of equal opportunity policies should not be tolerated and measures to address this must be implemented.
- ✎ The Federal Public Service Commission (FPSC) should oversee these measures. However, this can only happen if the FPSC is itself gender sensitized through a thoroughgoing gender mainstreaming training programme.

Box 21: Work and Women's Empowerment

"The division of a family's joint benefits is likely to be less unfavorable to women if (1) they can earn an outside income; (2) their work is recognized as productive (this is easier to achieve with work done outside the home); (3) they own some economic resources and have some rights to fall back on; and (4) there is a clear-headed understanding of the ways in which women are deprived and a recognition of the possibilities of changing this situation.

This last category can be much influenced by education for women and by participatory political action.

Considerable empirical evidence, mostly studies of particular localities, suggests that what is usually defined as "gainful" employment (i.e., working outside the home for a wage, or in such "productive" occupations as farming), as opposed to unpaid and unhonored housework—no matter how demanding—can substantially enhance the deal that women get".

Source: Amartya Sen, 'More Than 100 Million Women Are Missing' The New York Review of Books, Volume 37, Number 20; ucatlus.ucsc.edu/contents, December 20, 1990

Gender equality training for both women and men

Providing incentives to women officers to work in rural areas, such as transport, security if required, and/or other benefits.

The key to addressing gender inequalities is not only to focus on the needs of women, but also those of men, not just political representatives but also the bureaucrats, who are critical in sustaining the equality agenda.

- ✎ gender sensitization programmes for women and men at all levels of public life are equally important. Gender can not be seen as a 'women's issue'.
- ✎ appropriate and targeted information should be provided to both men and women about the functioning of political institutions, specific measures and rules through which institutions function and the ways in which these can be used.
- ✎ Specific training programmes should be devised to address the needs of illiterate women so that their confidence, efficiency and sustainability in public life can be enhanced.
- ✎ Training also must address issues of how different state actors support the agenda for gender equality - the bureaucracy supporting the politicians, the local representatives being supported by Provincial and national political institutions and their functionaries.
- ✎ The role of Women's Political School must be extended to provide such training to both women and men at all levels of governance and its work more carefully monitored to meet the standards of gender equality agendas. The National Institute of Public Administration and its affiliates should also deliver gender

mainstreamed curricula for Pakistan's civil service.

Extending the quota framework

Legislation should be introduced by the government to extend quotas at all levels of public life as a mechanism for ensuring a greater presence of women in political parties. This will ensure that wider policies of access will be supplemented by state level quotas, and the greater presence of women because of quotas will support the demand for deepening gender equality policies. The bureaucracy and the judiciary are the two areas of state activity where quotas could be usefully extended.

Ensuring security of public spaces

The state must ensure the safety of its citizens. Access to institutions depends upon accessibility of personnel working there. Women must be able to access public spaces without feeling threatened, marginalized or out of place. If women are fearful of going to the police station then they can not be effective representatives of their constituents in time of need. Without this simple right to security, they can not function effectively in public life.

Training security personnel

- ✎ Gender training of security personnel must be a priority for the state.
- ✎ Legal representatives at all levels must also be provided with gender training to ensure that women in public life feel that they can reach the courts on their own.

Supporting education campaigns

Security is not only an issue for security personnel. It is an issue for society as a whole. Gender segregation of public spaces creates expectations

of presence and absence that are detrimental to achieving gender equality in public life. A routinized presence of women in public spaces in pursuance of their public roles can be powerful symbolic move.

- ✎ Public education campaigns in different media outlets must be funded and supported by the state to challenge such expectations.

Developing economic and political infrastructure and improving access to justice

Strengthening institutions

Political and state institutions have a reputation for corruption. In order for the representative system to be effective in the interest of the many, not the few,

- ✎ State institutions must be held accountable at every level. Those who are corrupt must be punished and be seen to be punished.
- ✎ There should be protection for those who challenge corrupt officers.
- ✎ Institutions set up to support gender equality, such as the National Commission on the Status of Women, should be further strengthened. It should be an autonomous body, which should be supported at the local levels by the institution of commissions at the district level as is the case in India and Philippines. A consultative role is not enough. The Commission should be able to hold other state institutions accountable for gender equality.

Ensuring gender sensitive law and policy-making

Laws are a powerful framework for gender

relations. Laws that are unjust to women should be challenged and repealed. This will take political capital, but like with the Women Protection Act, the state can make significant progress if it exhibits political courage.

Policy makers must keep in mind Pakistan's international commitments to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, to gender equality and the need for gender sensitive policies in all sectors and at all levels.

- ✎ Education for the girl child and for adult women needs to be prioritized and school facilities improved to make the learning environment conducive to development.
- ✎ gender sensitive household satellite national accounts⁸⁵ and gender budgets should be introduced to re-orient economic policy by acknowledging women's contribution to the economy through social reproduction.
- ✎ unjust laws should be repealed at both national and provincial levels.
- ✎ Implantation of laws that challenge customary legal practices should be strengthened through training and education of state personnel as well as community leaders.
- ✎ Together with repealing unjust laws, laws to improve women's economic position in terms of employment, equal opportunity, inheritance etc. need to be strengthened.
- ✎ Legal education and policy advertising through different media should be supported for all citizens, but particularly for young people who are the future of Pakistan.

⁸⁵Household satellite national accounts reflect the value of domestic work to the gross national product. Most countries do not make these accounts despite lobbying by feminist economists and activists (see Catherine Hoskyns and Shirin M. Rai, Recasting the Global Political Economy: Accounting for Women's Work, in *New Political Economy*, September, 2007)

Box 22: Women's Protection Act

After a long consultative process with all stakeholders, Pakistan's National Assembly and Senate approved in November 2006 amendments to a controversial rape law. The new law makes a distinction between Zina (i.e. sex outside of marriage) and rape. Rape is no longer covered under the Hudood Ordinance and is tried under the normal PPC law. In addition, the new procedural changes require that anyone accusing a person of committing Zina would also need to provide four witnesses. False witnesses would be automatically tried for Qazf, without the victim needing to file a separate case. Furthermore, Zina is now a bail able offence where bail can not be refused. However, a controversial clause has 496-B has been added in PPC under which consensual non-marital sex (Zina) has been made punishable by five years in prison or a 10,000 rupees (US\$165, euro129) fine. Under the Hudood Ordinance, Zina and rape would be treated similarly and rape victims could only raise a case under the Hudood Laws, which required testimony from four witnesses to the crime.

Source : Women Protection Act, 2006

Improving mobility of women

Lack of appropriate transportation inhibits women from taking up posts where they might have to travel. It also inhibits families from supporting female members in working in the public sphere. This service needs to be improved as a matter of urgency not only for enabling women to participate in public life, but also for their economic empowerment.

Gender mainstreaming

Gender mainstreaming can work when policy makers and implementers are made aware of the key gender issues and work towards addressing these in order to promote equality between women and men in decision-making.

Gender Budgeting

The gender budgeting initiatives such as GRBI should be strengthened and rigorously implemented with a shift in policy-output based on an understanding of gender roles and social relations in Pakistani society rather than a generalized commitment to the approach.

Ensuring joined up thinking on Gender Mainstreaming

The various government departments need to work together in cross-cutting ways to ensure that gender mainstreaming takes place across issue fields, policy-frameworks, and implementation strategies. Parallel, disjointed work duplicates efforts, treats women's issues as add-ons and restricts the remit of gender mainstreaming.

Box 23: Gender Training Strategies

In order to mainstream this approach in decision-making, different gender training strategies have evolved, which should be employed where appropriate:

- ✎ the Gender Roles Framework, where trainees learn about the division of labor, assets, and returns for effective projects;
- ✎ the Triple Roles Framework, also associated with the Gender Planning approach, where trainees learn about the productive, reproductive, and community demands on women's time and labour burdens and strategies to address these; .
- ✎ Social Relations Framework, where trainees learn about the power relations between men and women in the context of other inequalities such as class and race.

Source: K. Staudt, 2003; 'Gender mainstreaming: conceptual links to institutional machineries' in S. Rai, (ed.), 2003, Mainstreaming gender, democratizing the state? Institutional mechanism for the advancement of women p. 52

Priorities for Non-State Actors

Non-state actors include political parties, women's groups and networks and international organisations working towards achieving gender equality.

Political parties

In a democratic polity, political parties are key political gatekeepers. They represent but also participate in forming political opinion, which is so critical to the transformation of the public sphere.

- ✎ It is imperative that more women are recruited into party politics as party membership is the first step towards participation in formal politics.
- ✎ Women should be recruited at all levels of the party leadership and not just at the level of membership.
- ✎ Strengthening women's wings of political parties, though contested, would be an important strategy towards recruiting more women.
- ✎ Party institutions should be democratized and their procedures of recruitment, selection and policy making should be more transparent.

Civil Society Groups

Greater attention must be paid to ways of engaging women in politics. A shift in perception about the value and nature of politics is needed. The prejudice that most people carry about 'politics being corrupt/dirty' needs to be challenged if democratization of the polity is to go hand in hand with gender equality. For this a focus on the transformation of the public space must be a priority.

Media campaigns

Non-state actors must engage state institutions and the media to campaign for such a transformation. Both women and men must be engaged through the media and training sessions at every level

of government to support a change in the environment in the public sphere so that women's participation in politics is facilitated. Non-state actors should work with both private media corporations and state media departments in these campaigns.

Legal campaigns

Campaigns to make and implement new laws, and to repeal anti-women legislation in order to promote equal opportunities, extend quotas, and challenge inappropriate, particularly violent, bullying and harassing behaviour must be launched and sustained.

Educational strategies

'Civics' is an important subject for education in schools – both private and state schools must be encouraged to address issues of gender inequality through the curriculum and setting gender equality norms in order to generate support for a greater presence of women in the public sphere in the next generation.

Strengthening advocacy networks

The strengthening of institutions and the transformation of the public space can be seen as a consequence of, as well as important for, strengthening advocacy networks. Varieties of such networks already operate in Pakistan and have helped open up political and discursive space for gender equality advocacy. A concern for such networks is what is known as 'NGOisation' of civil society groups – the dependence on the next grant, the next funded project might lead to a disjunction between the developing needs of the society and the articulated needs by the NGOs. This disjunction needs to be internally monitored, while at the same time extending these networks – both within Pakistan as well as regionally in South Asia. Civil society groups – NGOs, SHGs

and informal networks – work best in democratic environments and also help to democratize civil society itself.

Development Agencies

Gender mainstreaming

Joined up thinking as well as multi-institutional approach is needed from development agencies to promote and support the achievement of gender equality. This means that gender equality approach needs to be mainstreamed not only within the parameters of specific programmes, such as UNDP's Gender Support Programme, but across its economic development programmes including data collection and analysis.

Supporting civil society groups

Development Agencies need to continue to support local and national civil society groups in their work as well as attempts to forge bilateral and multilateral networks. Indeed, supporting South Asia based women's rights networks might be particularly useful as policy transfer issues are more likely to be discussed in similar socio-cultural contexts.

This report shows that the quota system introduced to increase the presence of women in public life has achieved some success:

- ✎ Large numbers of women have been inducted into public life at the local level
- ✎ Increasing numbers of women are present in Provincial Assemblies and the National Parliament
- ✎ Local governance is benefiting from women councillors' work, especially in bringing women's concerns to political institutions
- ✎ There has been some increase in the number

Box 24: Succeeding Against All Odds: Rozan Khatoon, the Councillor on the Donkey Cart

Women then had as diverse a presence both at the local and provincial level as their representations. Rozan Khatoon resides in the outskirts of Sukkur among one of the poorest communities of the area. All the four years in the last term and all the year of this term, she says “When I don’t have money, I get a lift on the donkey cart, that belongs to a nephew and get dropped to wherever he is going, to SP office, DCO office. When the donkey cart is not available then I walk all the way.” Rozan is now comfortable with going to the SP office, DCO office. I come every day. I got a new transformer for my area; I got people to leave the land they grabbed, by contacting the police. I even got a police picket for my rural constituency. And there is no one else in my village who does the work that I do. Once my husband was arrested, and I was helped by other councillors. We did a press conference against person involved and got him released”.

Source: Fieldwork

- of women in the bureaucracy at all levels.
- ✎ Leadership roles are increasingly being performed by women in political institutions.
- ✎ However, the report has also demonstrated that quotas alone can not address gender inequalities and considerable challenges remain before those working for gender equality and achieving gender balance in public life.
- ✎ Quotas need to be embedded in a democratic culture and a socio-economic context where women’s work in both public and private spheres is valued.
- ✎ Quotas need to be supplemented by other strategies that focus on transforming the public space within which women and men perform their public roles through education, media campaigns and developing gender equality networks.
- ✎ Education and training need to reflect the goals of gender equality for both men and women and for all state actors in their curriculum, pedagogy and personnel.
- ✎ Gender mainstreaming needs to be transformative rather than simply integrationist through an agenda setting focus that cuts across policy making and implementation mechanisms such that macro-economic and social policy are not treated separately and together address the contextual shifts needed to empower women.

This report has demonstrated our hypothesis that while quotas are critical as catalyst in improving the presence of women in public offices, and that they do lead to new agendas for policy at the level of local governance, they can only be effective if they are assessed in context. The socio-economic, political and cultural environment needs to be transformed in order for quotas to be effective. Therefore, quotas can only be addressed as part of a bundle of policy initiatives needed towards furthering gender equality in public offices.

ANNEX I:

Preparatory Meeting Schedule for Organizing Research

Date	Time	Meetings	Venue
22 September (2006 Friday)	10:00-11:00	Meeting with UNDP: Ms. Faiza Effendi, Chief, Poverty reduction and Gender Unit Ms. Rabia Khattak, Programme officer, Poverty Reduction and Gender Unit Mr. Sajid Baloch, Programme coordinator, Gender Support Programme.	10th Floor, Saudi Pak Tower, Islamabad. UNDP
	11:00 – 02:00	Strategic Planning meeting of consultants	Capital Grande Guest House, H. No. 13, Street 31 Sector F-7-1, Islamabad Tel: +92-51-2822881, 2825656, 2827877
	02:00 – 17:00	Strategic Planning meeting of consultants	Researchers office. House number 15. First floor, Main double road, G9/3. Islamabad
23 September, 2006 (Saturday)	11:00	Ms. Nargis Sethi Joint Secretary, National Commission on Government Reforms	Prime Ministers Secretariat. 4th Floor, Room no 402A. Tel: 051-9201051
	12:00	Ms. Yasmin Masud Deputy Secretary Economic Affairs Division	Block C, Pak Secretariat, Islamabad. Phone number: 9202093
	14:00	Mr. Mehmood Saleem Mehmood Secretary, Ministry of Women development	Ministry of Women Development State life Building, Room No. 110, State life Building No.5, Islamabad Tel: 9206328 -
	15:30	Meeting with Women Councilors	Holiday Inn

Date	Time	Meetings	Venue
	17:30	Meeting with male councilors	Holiday Inn
	20:00	Dinner with Nazims	Holiday Inn
24 September (Sunday)		Discussion on work plan and methodology and report of the meetings held. Discussions with national consultants	Researchers office. House number 15. First floor, Main double road, G9/3. Islamabad
25 September, (Monday)	10:30	Dr. Syeda Arefa Zehra Chairperson National Commission on Status of Women	National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW), House No. 39, Street No. 56, □ F-6/4, Islamabad
	11:15	Mr. Jan Vandermotele Resident Coordinator	Resident Coordinator United Nations 9th Floor, Saudi Pak Tower, Islamabad. UNDP Tel: 2800133 Ext: 2200
	12:00	Ms. Shahnaz Wazir Ali Executive Director Pakistan Centre for Philanthropy	Pakistan Centre for Philanthropy 1 - A, St 14, F-8/3, Islamabad Pakistan Tel:051-2855903-04, 2855078-79
	01:00	Dr. Donia Aziz Member of the National Assembly PML(Q)	43-B, 211 Sehana Scheme II, St.15, Chak Shezad, Islamabad. Tel: 051-2241452 Mob: 0300-8567262 Office/Fax: 051-9202485
	15:00	Mr. Mushahid Hussain Sayed Senator Pakistan Muslim League (Party Affiliation)	Muslim League House 4 Margala Road, F-7/3 Islamabad Tel: 2828073 Fax: 2827870 Mob: 0300-5006056

26 September, (Tuesday)	10:00	Meetings with Aurat Foundation Mr. Sajid Qaisrani	House No. 16, Street No. 67, G-6/4, Islamabad, Pakistan Tel: 51-277547, 277512, 277502
	11:30	Ms. Tahira Latif Senator PML	H.No.329, St-102, I-8/4, Islamabad. Ph:051-9258683, 9259027 Mob:0300-8551940
	13:00	Final meeting with Mr. Jan Vandermotele Resident Coordinator, Mr. Farhan Sabih, Assistant Resident Representative, Governance Unit, Ms. Faiza Effendi, Assistant Resident Representative, Poverty Reduction and Gender Unit, Haoliang Xu, Country Director, UNDP	Resident Coordinator Office United Nations 9th Floor, Saudi Pak Tower, Islamabad. UNDP Tel: 2800133 Ext: 2202

ANNEX II:

Distribution of Target Group for Field Activities

Particulars of Target Group	Islamabad	
	Interviews	FGD
Senators	6	
National Assembly Members	6	
Standing Committee on Women Development (Senate & National Assembly)	2	
Ministry of Women Development	2	
National Reconstruction Bureau	2	
National Commission on Government Reform	2	
National Commission for Status of Women	1	
Establishment Division	2	
Federal Public Service Commission	1	
Federal Bureaucrats- Female	6	
	30	
Political Parties PPPP, PML-Q	4	
Academicians/scholars/practioneers	3	
Civil Society Organizations	3	
International Organizations	3	
	43	
Less Interviews Already Done	-9	
FGDs		
Students		1
Marginalized Group		1
	34	2

Particulars of Target Group	Sindh		Balochistan		Punjab		NWFP	
	Interviews	FGD	Interviews	FGD	Interviews	FGD	Interviews	FGD
Provincial Assembly Members	6		6		6		6	
Provincial Public Service Commission	1		1		1		1	
Ministry of Local Government	1		1		1		1	
Provincial Bureaucrats- Female	3		3		3		3	
	11		11		11		11	
Political Parties MMA, PML-N					4			
Political Parties MQM	2							
Political Parties ANP							2	
Female Nazim & Naib Nazims	3		1		1			
FGDs with Selected District Level Councilors Female & Male		2		2		2		2
	16	2	12	2	16	2	13	2

NOTES:

- 1] WPS Provincial Offices to facilitate FGD with Female & Male Councilors in selected Districts & Meetings with the Government officials
- 2] UNDP GSP to facilitate appointments with the Federal level government officials and Parliamentarians
- 3] UNDP GSP offices to issue letters for appointments with the target group as per the list provided by the consultants

ANNEX III: Schedule of Research Interviews

ISLAMABAD	
Meeting with Ms. Nargis Sethi National Commission for service Reforms 23 rd September 2006	Meeting with Ms. Ysmeen Mahmood Deputy Secretary Economic Affairs Division Government of Pakistan 23 rd September 2006
Meeting with Mahmood Saleem Mahmood Secretary Women Development Division Government of Pakistan 23 rd September 2006	Focus Group Discussion with Women Councilors-Rawalpindi 23 rd September 2006
Focus Group Discussion with Men Councilors- Rawalpindi 23 rd September 2006	Meeting with Syeda Arifa Zehra Chairperson Nation Commission for Status of Women 23 rd September 2006
Meeting with Ms. Shahnaz Wazir Ali Executive Director Pakistan Centre of Philanthropy 25 th September 2006	Meeting with Senator Tahira Latif PML-Q Chairperson Standing Committee on Women 26 th September 2006
Meeting with Senator Mashahid Hussain Secretary General PML-Q 26 th September 2006	Meeting with Justice Sardar Muhammad Raza Supreme Court of Pakistan 26 th September 2006
Meeting with Mr. Naeem Mirza Project Director Aurat Foundation 3 rd November 2006	Meeting with Ms. Amna Baloch Foreign Office 3 rd November 2006
Meeting with Ms. Samar Ahsan Ministry of Women Development 3 rd November 2006	Meeting with Mr. Naeem ul Haq Member National Reconstruction Bureau 3 rd November 2006
Meeting with Mr. Sarwar Bari National Coordinator Pattan Development Foundation 3 rd November 2006	Meeting with Mr. Mutwakkil Kazi Member- Federal Public Service Commission 4 th November 2006
Meeting with Ms. Tasneem Aslam Spokesperson, Foreign Office 4 th November 2006	Meeting with Mr. Daniyal Aziz MNA- PML-Q Chairman, National Reconstruction Bureau 8 th November 2006
Meeting with Ms. Fauzia Wahab MNA-PPPP 13 th November 2006	Meeting with Senator Khurshid Ahmed MMA 13 th November 2006

ISLAMABAD

Meeting with Mr. Shaukat Nawaz Tahir Senior Joint Secretary Establishment Division 14 th November 2006	Meeting with Ms. Samia Raheel Qazi MNA-MMA 14 th November 2006
Meeting with Senator Sadia Abbasi PML-N 15 th November 2006	Meeting with Ms. Nargis Faiz Malik President Women Wing – PPPP Islamabad 15 th November 2006
Meeting with Ms. Saira Karim Senior Joint Secretary-Health 16 th November 2006	Meeting with Ms. Farzana Bari Chairperson, Gender Studies Department Quaid-e-Azam University, Islamabad 16 th November 2006
FGD at Iqra University with Students of DS 16 th November 2006	Meeting with Ms. Tehmina Daultana MNA – PML-N 20 th November 2006

PUNJAB

Meeting with Naib Nazim Kasur & UC Nazim of the District 17 th November 2006	Meeting with District Officers Kasur 17 th November 2006
FGD with Women Councillors Kasur 17 th November 2006	Meeting with Mr. Mehdi Syed DG, Social Welfare Department Government of Punjab 18 th November 2006
Meeting with Ms. Aasifa Riaz Fatiyana Minister Women Development & Social Welfare 18 th November 2006	Mr. Tauqir Ahmed Faiq Secretary Women Development & Social Welfare Government of Punjab 18 th November 2006
Meeting with Ms. Noreen Bashir Deputy Secretary, SEGAD 18 th November 2006	Meeting with Mr. Qasim Zia PPPP - MPA 18 th November 2006
Meeting with Mr. Kamran Ali Afzal Additional Secretary – Budget (Finance) 18 th November 2006	Meeting with Ms. Farzana Raja PPPP - MPA 19 th November 2006
Meeting with Mr. Tariq Sultan Chairman Punjab Public Service Commission (PPSC) 20 th November 2006	Meeting with Ms. Khawar Mumtaz Coordinator, Shirkat Gah 20 th November 2006

PUNJAB	
Chaudhary Haasnat Ahmed Senior Chief P&D Department Government of Punjab 20 th November 2006	Meeting Mr. Sohail Ahmed Secretary Planning & Development Department, Government of Punjab 20 th November 2006
Meeting with Ms. Shaheena Farooqi President Women Wing PML –Q, Punjab 20 th November 2006	Meeting with Ms. Zille- Huma PML-Q MPA & Parliamentary Secretary Planning & Development 23 rd November 2006
Meeting with Ms. Tahira Munir MPA – MMM 23 rd November 2006	Meeting with Mr. Javed Nisar & Ms. Lala Rukh Director & Deputy Director Civil Services Academy 23 rd November 2006
Meeting with Ms. Farkhanda Waseem Afzal Secretary S&GAD Government of Punjab 23 rd November 2006	

SINDH	
Meeting with Muhammad Shafiq Khoso District Coordination Officer, Sukkur 13 th October 2006	Meeting with EDOs Sukkur District 13 th October 2006
Meeting with Mr. Nasir Shah Nazim-Sukkur 13 th October 2006	Meeting with Female Officers Sukkur District Government 13 th October 2006
Meeting with Female Councilors District Government Sukkur 14 th October 2006	Meeting with Male Councilors District Government Sukkur 14 th October 2006
Meeting with EDOs and Women Officers Nawabshah 16 th October 2006	Meeting with Ms. Faryal Talpur Nazim Nawabshah 16 th October 2006
Meeting with Mr. Hashim Laghari Secretary P & D, Government of Sindh 17 th October 2006	Meeting with Ms. Umm-e-Kulsoom Chief Poverty, P & D Government of Sindh 17 th October 2006
Meeting with Mr. Malik Israr Hussain Secretary Finance Government of Sindh 17 th October 2006	Meeting with Mr. Muhammad Subhan Secretary Women Development Government of Sindh 17 th October 2006

SINDH	
Meeting with Ms. Mehtab Akbar Rashdi Secretary Inter-Provincial Coordination Government of Sindh 17 th October 2006	Meeting with DR. Saeeda Malik Ministry of Women Development 18 th October 2006
Meeting with Nasreen Jaleel Naib Nazim, City District Government Karachi 18 th October 2006	Meeting with Mr. Naheed Shah Durrani Additional Secretary, Ministry of Finance 18 th October 2006
Meeting with Mr. Nisar Khuro MPA-PPPP Leader of Opposition Sindh Assembly 18 th October 2006	Meeting with Ms. Shazia Marri MPA-PPPP Sindh Assembly 18 th October 2006
Meeting with Ms. Rahila Tiwana Deputy Speaker, Provincial Assembly Sindh 19 th October 2006	Meeting with Ms. Sussi Pleejo MPA – PPPP 19 th October 2006
Meeting with Ms. Semi Kamal Member National Commission for Status of Women 19 th October 2006	Meeting with Dr. Hameeda Khuhro Minister, Education & Literacy 19 th October 2006

NWFP	
Meeting with Ms. Munibah Shahzadi MPA- PPPP 6 th November 2006	Meeting with Syed Manzoor Shah Secretary P&D Government of NWFP, 6 th November 2006
Meeting with Mr. Zia-ur-Rehman Special Secretary Finance Government of NWFP 6 th November 2006	Meeting with Mr. Yousaf Ayub District Nazim- Haripur 7 th November 2006
Meeting with Women Councilors District Haripur 7 th November 2006	Meeting with Male Councilors District Haripur 7 th November 2006
Meeting with Syed Zaheer-ul Islam District Coordination Officer Haripur 7 th November 2006	Meeting with Mr. Muhammad Umer EDO Finance District Haripur 7 th November 2006
Meeting with Dr. Farhat Yasmeen Deputy District Health Officer Haripur 7 th November 2006	Meeting with Mr. Kashif Azam Chishti Minister of Women Development Department 10 th November 2006

NWFP	
Meeting with Ms. Marium Bibi Executive Director –Khwendo Khor (CSO) 10 th November 2006	Meeting with Ms. Farah Aqil Shah MPA- ANP 10 th November 2006
Meeting with Dr. Samin Mahmood Jan MPA-PML-Q 11 th November 2006	Meeting with Ms. Ali Begum MD Frontier Education Foundation 11 th November 2006
Meeting with Ms. Zahira Khattak President Women Wing – ANP 11 th November 2006	Meeting with Dr. Intiaz Sultan Bokhari MPA-PML-N 11 th November 2006
Meeting with Dr. Najma Sultana Director PME Ministry of Population Welfare Government of NWFP	Meeting with Mr. Hammad Uwais Agha Secretary Local Governmnet Government of NWFP

BALOCHISTAN	
FGD with Women Councillors Quetta 30 th October 2006	FGD with Male Councillors Quetta 30 th October 2006
Meeting with Mr. Muhammad Essa Additional Secretary Local Government Government of Balochistan 30 th October 2006	Meeting with Ms. Shahina Waheed Gender and Development Advisor UNDP, Quetta 30 th October 2006
Meeting with Dr. Irum Research Officer- Agriculture & Livestock Deptt. Government of Balochistan 30 th October 2006	Meeting with Mr. Younas Chingazi Minister for Youth & Sports Government of Balochistan 30 th October 2006
Meeting with Ms. Raheela Durrani MPA-PML-Q 31 st October 2006	Meeting with Mr. Shafiq Ahmed Khan MPA-PPPP 31 st October 2006
Meeting with Ms. Nisar Fatima Deputy District Education Officer-Quetta 31 st October 2006	Meeting with Mr. Raheel Zia Additional Secretary, Women Development Department, Government of Balochistan 31 st October 2006
Meeting with Mr. Sohail Qadeer Additional Secretary – P&D Government of Balochistan , 31 st October 2006	Meeting with Mr. Umer Khan Baber District Coordination Officer- Quetta 1 st November 2006

BALOCHISTAN	
Meeting with Mr. Maqbool Ahmed Lehri Nazim Quetta 1 st November 2006	Meeting with Ms. Spozoni Achakzai MPA- PKMAP 1 st November 2006
Meeting with Ms. Sultana Baloch Meeting with Chairperson Balochistan Text Book Board 1 st November 2006	Meeting with Dr. Shama Ishaque Baloch MPA-National Party 2 nd November 2006
Meeting with Mr. Fazal Durrani Meeting with Chairman Balochistan Public Service Commission 2 nd November 2006	Meeting with Women Health Officers District Quetta 2 nd November 2006



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