Editorial

Welcome to the fourth issue of quarterly newsletter “The Sisters’ Voice”.

With 2015 ending, the era of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) also came to an end. The year 2016 will see the launch of the “2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” adopted by world leaders in September 2015 at the United Nations. In the words of the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, “The seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are our shared vision of humanity and a social contract between the world’s leaders and the people.”

While Pakistan has not been successful in attaining most of the MDGs including promotion of gender equality, it is indeed very heartening to note that Pakistan is one of the first few countries in the world to roll out the localisation of the SDG process and it is hoped that this localisation process will lead to the attainment of different goals including those aiming at achieving gender equality.

Since more discussion is needed to review and develop gender indicators for monitoring SDGs in Pakistan, our main story highlights the SDGs most relevant to the Sisters’ Voice project.

In connection with our main story, a brief roundup of Pakistan’s performance on gender issues in 2015 and a summary of Global Gender Gap Report 2015 is part of the regular ‘Knowledge Corner’. An update on project activities and celebration of 16 Days of Activism by members of the Sisters’ Voice network are also featured here.

The project team is thankful for our readers’ feedback on the previous issues and we look forward to your support in the future too! Please write to us at camp.sistersvoice@gmail.com

Have a blessed 2016!

Fareecha Sultan
Project Manager
The Sisters’ Voice Project

Update on Project Activities

Women CSOs form a Women Network in Punjab

The first network meeting for the selected CSOs in Punjab, under the Sisters’ Voice project, took place in Lahore on 03 October 2015. The objective of this meeting was to form a network of women-led CSOs in Punjab that could advocate on better implementation of pro-women laws.

The day-long event brought together 19 women from the selected women-led CSOs that work on a diverse range of issues including women’s protection, violence against women, economic empowerment and health etc. After the welcome and brief introductions, the Director Programme, CAMP, Ms. Mariam Khan shared the importance and need for a women’s network in Punjab. The network, it was emphasised, would address issues such as weak capacity and lack of an integrated approach to advocate on pro-women’s legislation.

In order to share information with the network and start creating linkages, Mr. Mohammad Suleman, Director Planning & Evaluation, Social Welfare Department, Government Of Punjab and Mr. Mohammad Usman, Secretary to Punjab Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW) were invited as guest speakers at the meeting. They made presentations on “Women Development & Protection: Steps taken by the Punjab Government” and “Women Development & Protection: An overview from the Punjab Commission on the Status of Women” respectively.

They congratulated the participants on successfully forming the network and assured the CSOs of their full support and cooperation.

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<td>Ms. Samina Khushi</td>
<td>President</td>
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<td>Ms. Hadia Naz</td>
<td>Vice President</td>
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<td>Ms. Irshad Safdar</td>
<td>General Secretary</td>
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<td>Ms. Binish Qamar Dar</td>
<td>Press / Information Secretary</td>
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One representative from each district was also selected for smooth coordination among the network members. They include:

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<td>Ms. Hadia Naz</td>
<td>Lahore</td>
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<td>Ms. Surraya Manzoor</td>
<td>Gujranwala</td>
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<td>Ms. Rani Shamim</td>
<td>Nankana</td>
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<td>Ms. Sumera Rafique</td>
<td>Kasur</td>
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<td>Ms. Naseem George</td>
<td>Sargodha</td>
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<td>Ms. Nazia Latif</td>
<td>Sheikhpura</td>
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It was unanimously agreed that the elected representatives will hold position for a year and shall be replaced if performance is found unsatisfactory.

The concluding session of the day involved group work on developing draft advocacy briefs on the gaps in implementation of pro-women laws. The advocacy briefs are being finalised with support from CAMP and will be used by the network for coordination meetings with policy makers, judiciary, lawyers and other relevant stakeholders.

The next network meeting is planned for February 2016.
**Introduction of Network Members**

**Ms. Samina Khushi - President**

Ms. Samina Khushi is Chief Executive of Oriental Women Organisation (OWO). She holds a Master’s degree in Sociology and has 15 years of experience in the development sector in project management, monitoring, evaluation and research. Ms. Samina has also won an award in 2010 from Knight Foundation in collaboration with UNIFEM, UN GAID, UNESCO, for a project on women empowerment.

**Ms. Hadia Naz - Vice President**

Ms. Hadia Naz started her career in social sector in 2008 with a project on child rehabilitation by UNICEF. After its successful completion, she started her own organisation “Citizen Commission for Research on Human Development.” She has experience of working in diverse fields ranging from legal aid, HIV awareness, women and children’s rights, transgender rights and inter-faith harmony and peace.

**Ms. Irshad Safdar - General Secretary**

Ms. Irshad Safdar is Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Ittehad Foundation, Kasur. Having been part of various development organisations and networks at local, national and international level, Irshad Safdar has experience in training, advocacy, management, leadership, networking, communication, community mobilisation, and project design and planning.

**Ms. Binish Dar - Press and Information Secretary**

Ms. Binish Dar is President of Umeed Welfare Society and has been involved in social welfare activities since 2005. She has worked on various areas including advocacy for women rights and health, monitoring and evaluation and governance. Currently, she is pursuing her LLB degree.

**Ms. Naseem George, Special Representative - Sargodha**

Ms. Naseem George is working as Director Aezaz-e-Niswan Development Organisation since 2004. Prior to that she was involved in various social welfare activities and has been part of national and international trainings, workshops and seminars. She has also received several awards including the Peace Award, Bolan Award for Human Rights Services, and Madr-e-Millat Award for Human Rights and Tamgha-i-Imtiaz in the field of human rights by the Government of Pakistan.

**Ms. Surraya Manzoor, Special Representative - Gujranwala**

Ms. Surraya Manzoor is President Women Development Organisation (WDO). After the establishment of WDO in 2002, she has been working on women empowerment, gender equality, capacity building and advocacy for women’s issues, and enhancing women’s economic and political status in the country.

**Ms. Rani Shamim, Special Representative - Nankana**

Ms. Rani Shamim is working for the betterment of women in Nankana since 1993 as President, Koshish Foundation. Her areas of expertise include advocacy for women rights, girl child education, child labour, and women empowerment. She was at the forefront for forming the first transgender organisation in Nankana. She is also recipient of many regional and national awards.

**Ms. Nazia Latif, Special Representative - Sheikhupura**

Nazia Latif is President of Al-Nisa Welfare Society. She has set up mobile vocational and computer training schools and health centres in her area. She has also set up a primary school where free education is provided to needy children. One of her significant achievements is making her area drug-free by working closely with the Anti-Narcotics Force.

**Ms. Sumera Rafique, Special Representative - Kasur**

Ms. Sumera Rafique is a graduate from Punjab University. She started working in the social sector in 2007. Her areas of expertise include field work, research and advocacy. She is working as Project officer with Youth Advocacy Council (YRC).
Network Members Celebrate 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence

Since 1992, organisations around the world working on women’s rights celebrate the 16 Days of Activism campaign, in the period between 25 November and 10 December, to raise awareness, influencing behaviour change and securing high level political commitment to end gender violence.

Like previous years, various events were organised in Pakistan in 2015 to mark the 16 Days of Activism. Women-led CSOs, that are part of the Sisters’ Voice network in Balochistan and Punjab, also celebrated the 16 days campaign and expressed their commitment to improving the status of women and girls. Some of the activities shared by our network members are as under:

New Hope for Life Foundation (NHLF) Quetta, in collaboration with Potohar Organisation for Development Advocacy (PODA), organised a session on Gender Based Violence (GBV) in Naseerabad. The session was attended by 15 women from the community. These women were sensitised on women’s rights and laws through a lecture by Ms. Binish Sikandar, Chairperson NHLF. Her lecture was followed by questions and answers session. In the end, IEC material was distributed among the participants.

Oriental Women Organisation (OWO) ran a campaign titled “Aitmad” (http://www.facebook.com/Aitmad-421684164707166/?fref=ts) to give women the confidence regarding their equal status and rights. The campaign was led by Ms. Memoona, Advocate High Court. Various awareness raising sessions were held under this campaign.

Ms. Binish Sikandar, in her capacity as the elected President of Women-Led NGOs Network of “The Sister’s Voice Project” attended the National Conference on Human Rights organised by the newly restored Ministry of Human Rights. She shared some points of action for making pro-women laws part of the National Action Plan for human rights.

The conference was part of the National Campaign on 16 Days of Activism organised on the International Human Rights Day.
Moving Towards Sustainable Development

By Fareeha Sultan

On 25 September 2015, 193 member states came together for the historical adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to which Pakistan is also a signatory. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), that contain 169 targets including gender equality, have replaced the millennium development goals (MDGs).

From a feminist point of view, these SDGs have echoed some optimism as out of 17, SDG 5 talks specifically of achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls. “Freedom from violence, gender equality in capabilities and resources and gender equality in decision-making in public/private institutions” comprise three main components of SDGs gender goals.

This stand-alone goal to attain gender equality, empower women and girls, and mainstreaming gender in all other goals and targets is also a victory as this is the first time that the global community has committed to this level of focus, action and prioritisation to gender equality and women empowerment.

Unfortunately, Pakistan’s performance towards achieving MDGs including those aiming at promoting gender equality and empowerment was not encouraging at all. The country still faces enormous challenges in the areas of violence against women, child marriages, discrimination against women, unpaid care and domestic work, and women’s access to public services.

Despite being off track on MDGs, the good news is that Pakistan can still make up on the lost targets. The localisation process of SDGs initiated by the Pakistani government in October last year and

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aligning it with Vision 2025 is a step in the right direction. Nonetheless, there is still a lot to do as the systematic streamlining of a gender perspective will play a crucial role in the success of the Agenda and will affect the progress across all other goals and targets.

Accomplishing SDG 5 is an enormous commitment for any government and requires sustained and high-level political commitment. Simultaneously, some concrete actions and measures are also required. Exhaustive research, developing a meaningful education system, engaging all stakeholders including NGOs, media, private sector, youth and religious leaders and nurturing grassroots women organisations are some steps which can be taken to optimise SDGs for women and girls.

Through the Sisters’ Voice project, CAMP is building the capacities of women-led CSOs at grassroots level so that they can network and advocate on the implementation of women protection laws. Through this endeavour, we hope that the Sisters’ Voice project will be able to make a humble contribution towards the attainment of SDGs.

SDG-5-Targets

- **End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere.**
- **Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.**
- **Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation.**
- **Recognise and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate.**
- **Ensure women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision making in political, economic and public life.**
- **Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences.**
- **Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws.**
- **Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women.**
- **Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels.**

The Global Gender Gap Report 2015 released in November 2015 ranked Pakistan at 144 out of 145 countries. While 2015 left a lot to be desired in terms of safeguarding the rights and lives of Pakistani women, some progress was made in this regard. When it comes to pro-women legislation, no women specific or women-related law was enacted during the year at the federal level, however, a number of bills related to women’s rights and issues were introduced. With the exception of Balochistan Assembly, provincial assemblies also remained pro-active with regard to pro-women legislation.

Following is a brief account of pro-women legislative development done at the provincial level in the year 2015.

**Punjab**

The Punjab Assembly stood out from other provincial assemblies in terms of “pro-women legislation.” The much awaited Punjab Protection of Women against Violence Bill 2015 was approved by the cabinet but could not be presented in the Assembly for approval. Some other important amendment bills which directly impact women including Punjab Child Marriage Restraint (Amendment) Act 2015 (XII of 2015); Family Courts (Amendment) Act 2015, amending the Punjab Muslim Family Courts Act 1964 and Punjab Muslim Family Laws (Amendment) Act 2015 (XIII of 2015) were approved by the Punjab Assembly.

**Sindh**

The Sindh Assembly was not as active as it has been on women related legislation in the past few years. However, the Sindh Commission on the Status of Women Bill, 2015 was unanimously passed by the Provincial Assembly of Sindh in April. The law aims at empowering women and ensuring their rights. The Commission will comprise 21 members and a Chairperson.

**Khyber Pakhtunkhwa**

The KP Assembly passed the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Protection of Breast-Feeding and Child Nutrition Bill, 2015. The law is significant as it focuses on the health of the mother and the early development of the child.

**Balochistan**

No women specific law was passed in the Provincial Assembly of Balochistan in 2015.

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**Global Gender Gap Report 2015 and Pakistan**

The Global Gender Gap report was released by the World Economic Forum in November 2015. This was the 10th edition of the Index. The rankings are based on an analysis of national gender gaps in economic, political, education and health sectors, and allow comparisons on the changing patterns of gender equality around the world and between and within countries and regions.

Pakistan along with Syria and Yemen is the lowest scoring country in the Index and is ranked 144 out of 145 countries.

According to the report, although Pakistan has performed slightly better as compared to 2014, it still ranks second-to-last in the world on the overall index. On the ‘Economic Participation and Opportunity’ front, Pakistan has improved wage quality but still remains last in South Asia. Literacy rate and enrolment in tertiary education have also shown some signs of improvement, however, it is the lowest in South Asia.

On ‘Health and Survival Sub-index’, Pakistan is one of the top five most-improved countries in the world.

Pakistan is blessed with some dynamic women whose achievements are an inspiration for women across the country. We have put together a list of such women who truly made us proud in 2015:

- Ms. Rahela Durrani was elected as first-ever female speaker of the Balochistan Assembly.
- Ms. Meher Taj Roghani was elected first female deputy speaker of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly.
- Mariam Mukhtiar became Pakistan’s first female fighter pilot to die in the line of duty.
- UN Women named Muniba Mazari as Pakistan’s first National Goodwill Ambassador.
- Pakistani activist Syeda Ghulam Fatima received Global Citizen Award in New York for advocating legal entitlements of the neglected working-class brick kiln workers, as well as female domestic and home-based workers.
- Mariam Adil launched a video game to educate the unprivileged. She came up with the idea of using video games for creating awareness in developing countries.
- Fatima Lodhi launched first anti-colourism campaign.
- Almira Rafique became the first Pakistani footballer to play in the UK.
- Hamna Zubair ran New York City marathon and raised $10,000 for a school in Karachi.
- Twinkle Sohail (57kg), Sonia Azmat (63kg), and Kanwal Shazia Butt (+84kg) received gold medals for Pakistan at the 2015 Asian Bench Press Championship in Muscat, Oman.
- Shamim Akhtar became Pakistan’s first female truck driver.
- Shazia Parveen became the first Pakistani female fight fighter.
- Fiza Farhan was named in the Forbes list of 30 young social entrepreneurs.
- Laraib Atta became Pakistan’s first youngest female visual effects artist.
- Mishal Hussain, British Pakistani news presenter for the BBC was named broadcaster of the year.

Sources:
Global Gender Gap Report 2015

Published by the World Economic Forum, the Global Gender Gap Report 2015 ranks Pakistan at 144 out of 145 countries. The report covers four key areas: economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, political empowerment, and health and survival. Pakistan scores relatively low in all categories.

For more information, visit http://www3.weforum.org/docs/GGGR2015/cover.pdf

References:

SDG-5

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New Hope for Life Foundation (NHLF)
Potohar Organisation for Development Advocacy (PODA)
Oriental Women Organisation (OWO)
شہید ڈاکٹر محمد یوسف پانچاکاراتی کا تعارف

میزبان: محمد عثمان -ORIENTAL WOMEN ORGANISATION (OwO)

شہید ڈاکٹر محمد یوسف پانچاکاراتی کا جمہوریہ بھارت سے ایک ممتاز خواتین کی تحقیق ہے جو ایک تعلیمی اور سماجی ثقافت کے نافذ پیشہ ہے۔ وہ بھارت کی ورثے کے پہلے ہزاروں کے خواتین میں سے ایک ہے۔ وہ اپنی خواتین کے حقوق کی مبارکہ کوشش کرتی ہے۔

تحقیق میں، ڈاکٹر محمد یوسف پانچاکاراتی نے خواتین کے حقوق کی تعلیم میں اہمیت کا نک♭ ہونا کی اثاثہ شدہ کوشش کی ہے۔ وہ ایک تعلیمی اور سماجی ثقافت کے نافذ پیشہ ہے۔ وہ بھارت کی ورثے کے پہلے ہزاروں کے خواتین میں سے ایک ہے۔ وہ اپنی خواتین کے حقوق کی مبارکہ کوشش کرتی ہے۔

UNIFEM، UNGAID، UNESCO

پھر ایک بات ہے کہ یہ کہانی اور اس کی کوششیں میں ہر کیا ہے۔ اس کیا ہے وہ کہانی جو ہمارے لیے نیافٹی ہے۔

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<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Activities</th>
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<tr>
<td>CAMP (Community Action and Mentorship Program)</td>
<td>To empower women and girls in rural areas</td>
<td>Conduct workshops, provide mentorship, and offer educational opportunities</td>
<td>Increased literacy rates and economic independence</td>
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2015-2016: 2016-2017