



ANNUAL REPORT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Women's Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) has made significant strides in advancing gender equality and women's empowerment under the exemplary leadership of Secretary WPC Dr. Shahida Rehmani. This executive summary highlights the impactful outcomes achieved in three key areas of focus: Post Legislative Scrutiny (PLS), Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB), and Engagement with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and academia.

Recognizing the need to evaluate the impact of women-specific laws, the WPC successfully institutionalized Post Legislative Scrutiny (PLS) of such legislation. Through the establishment of a dedicated sub-committee on PLS, the Caucus conducted an in-depth analysis of inheritance laws in Pakistan. By engaging in consultation meetings with stakeholders, including experts and civil society representatives, the WPC ensured a comprehensive evaluation process. This rigorous scrutiny has facilitated evidence-based policy reforms and paved the way for more effective and impactful legislation that safeguards women's rights and promotes gender equality across the country. Moreover, orientations were held for Women Parliamentarians to raise awareness about the significance of PLS, thereby strengthening their legislative role.

During the inaugural General Assembly Meeting of the Women's Parliamentary Caucus (WPC), chaired by Hon'ble Speaker National Assembly Raja Pervaiz Ashraf and led by Secretary WPC Dr. Shahida Rehmani on June 7th, 2022, the importance of analyzing the budget from a gender lens was emphasized. As a result, gender-responsive budgeting was introduced as a key focus area for the Caucus. In the subsequent months, the WPC dedicatedly worked on advancing Gender Responsive Budgeting. The Caucus, in collaboration with FES Pakistan, organized numerous consultations and workshops, engaging Women Parliamentarians and stakeholders to enhance understanding and implementation of this critical concept. By launching the summary paper on "Gender Budgeting in

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Pakistan," the WPC has provided a valuable resource for its own members and other institutions interested in promoting a coherent approach to gender-responsive budgeting. This strategic focus on analyzing budgets from a gender lens ensures that resources are allocated equitably, empowering women economically and socially, and promoting inclusive and sustainable development.

The WPC has actively fostered partnerships and engagement with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and academia, recognizing their indispensable role in promoting gender equality. By strengthening ties with CSOs and academia, the Caucus has harnessed their expertise, grassroots connections, and research capabilities to inform policy-making processes. This collaboration has led to a more inclusive and participatory approach, resulting in evidence-based advocacy and policy reforms that address the needs and challenges faced by women in Pakistan. Through this engagement, the WPC has created a vibrant platform for exchange, cooperation, and knowledge-sharing, reinforcing its position as a catalyst for change.

In conclusion, the Women's Parliamentary Caucus, led by Secretary Dr. Shahida Rehmani, has achieved commendable outcomes in the areas of Post Legislative Scrutiny, Gender Responsive Budgeting, and engagement with Civil Society Organizations and academia. Through PLS, the Caucus has facilitated evidence-based policy reforms, ensuring the effective implementation of women-specific laws. The adoption of Gender Responsive Budgeting has highlighted the need for equitable resource allocation for true empowerment of women. By actively engaging with CSOs and academia, the WPC has strengthened its advocacy efforts, enriched policy discourse, and fostered a collaborative environment. The accomplishments in these areas reflect the WPC's commitment to gender equality, women's empowerment, and building a more inclusive and progressive society in Pakistan.

MESSAGE FROM SPEAKER NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF PAKISTAN



I am delighted to convey my heartfelt appreciation to the Women's Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) for their remarkable efforts and accomplishments over the past year. The dedication and commitment shown by the Caucus in advancing women's empowerment and gender equality are truly commendable. I extend my gratitude to the Secretary WPC, Dr. Shahida Rehmani, and the entire team for their exceptional leadership and tireless work in driving positive change.

The WPC's achievements in various areas have been significant. Through initiatives such as Post Legislative Scrutiny, Gender Responsive Budgeting, and strategic collaborations with national and international partners, the Caucus has effectively addressed women-specific issues and fostered inclusive policies. The partnerships forged with parliamentary bodies and organizations worldwide have further enriched the knowledge-sharing and advocacy efforts of the WPC, amplifying its impact on the global stage.

I am particularly pleased to witness the WPC's emphasis on inter-provincial coordination and the strengthening of partnerships with provincial women's caucuses. This inclusive approach ensures that the voices of women from diverse backgrounds are represented and their concerns are effectively addressed in the legislative process. The Caucus's commitment to capacity-building programs and empowering women parliamentarians will undoubtedly pave the way for enhanced policy interventions and meaningful contributions to sustainable development.

As we look ahead, I wholeheartedly support the strategic plan outlined by the WPC for the coming year. The focus on advocacy, partnership building, capacity development, and integration of a gender perspective in all aspects of development aligns perfectly with our national goals and the global Sustainable Development Agenda.

I encourage all stakeholders, including parliamentarians, Civil Society Organizations, and international partners, to collaborate closely with the WPC in realizing our shared vision of a more equitable and just society. Let us work together to empower women, eliminate gender disparities, and foster inclusive governance for the betterment of our beloved country.

Mr. Raja Pervaiz Ashraf
Speaker, National Assembly of Pakistan

MESSAGE FROM SECRETARY WPC



As the Secretary of the Women's Parliamentary Caucus (WPC), I am delighted to share with you the significant progress and aspirations of the Caucus over the past year. Together, with the unwavering support of the Working Council, we have successfully placed gender discourse at the forefront of parliamentary forums. We firmly believe in the vital role of women in attaining human development, recognizing their invaluable contributions to democratic governance and sustainable development at all levels. Our collective aim is to work collaboratively, transcending political affiliations, to champion the cause of women in Pakistan.

Guided by the vision of the esteemed Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, we have established the WPC as a cross-party platform, uniting representatives from various political backgrounds. Through this forum, we lend our collective voice to advocate for disadvantaged women, address their pressing issues, and empower them economically, socially, and politically. To achieve our vision, I am committed to strengthening our partnerships with provincial women's caucuses, recognizing the power of unified action in representing the diverse needs and concerns of women across the nation. By forging alliances with national and provincial women's commissions and collaborating with civil society partners and academia, we can magnify our impact and drive positive change.

Let us remember that addressing the needs and aspirations of women necessitates collective efforts from women representatives. With a united front, we can showcase our unwavering commitment to women's emancipation and work towards a more equitable and inclusive Pakistan.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the remarkable WPC team for their tireless dedication and unwavering support. Their contributions have been instrumental in our achievements thus far. I also extend my thanks to our esteemed partners and all those who have supported our endeavors. It is through your collaboration and commitment that we have made such significant strides.

As we continue on our journey, let us remain steadfast in our mission, knowing that our collective efforts will pave the way for a brighter future for women in Pakistan.

Pakistan Zindabad!

Dr. Shahida Rehmani
Secretary, Women's Parliamentary Caucus

WORKING COUNCIL



Dr. Shahida Rehmani
Secretary WPC



Wajiha Qamar
Treasurer WPC



Kishwar Zehra
Member



Tahira Aurungzeb
Member



Shagufta Jumani
Member



Rubina Irfan
Member



Farukh Khan
Member



Shahida Akhtar Ali
Member



Saira bano
Member



Shahnaz Baloch
Member



Nuzhat Pathan
Member



Rubina Khalid
Member



Sana Jamali
Member



Keshoo Bai
Member

INTRODUCTION

The Women's Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) is a dynamic and inclusive cross-party forum that brings together women parliamentarians from across the political spectrum in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. Founded on 21 November 2008, through a resolution of the National Assembly, the WPC aims to enhance women's participation and engagement in all parliamentary affairs. Led by an elected Secretary and a Working Council comprising women parliamentarians from both government and opposition parties, the Caucus plays a pivotal role in advancing gender equality and women's empowerment in the country.

The WPC serves as a catalyst for change by carrying out a range of vital functions. It actively engages in developing gender-sensitive legislative responses to address the pressing needs and concerns of women. Through its oversight role, the Caucus ensures the review and supervision of gender-inclusive programs and policies, fostering accountability and effective implementation. Moreover, the WPC takes pride in representing the cause of women in Pakistan, acting as a strong and united voice to amplify their concerns and advocate for their rights at the highest levels of governance.

In addition to its legislative and oversight responsibilities, the WPC is committed to raising awareness on gender issues of urgent importance. By organizing campaigns, events, and awareness programs, the Caucus strives to promote understanding, dialogue, and action on critical gender-related challenges. Through these efforts, the WPC aims to shape public opinion, influence policy-making processes, and drive positive change in society.

With its unwavering dedication to the cause of women's empowerment, the Women's Parliamentary Caucus stands at the forefront of the gender equality movement in Pakistan. By fostering unity, promoting legislative reforms, and raising awareness, the WPC remains committed to creating a more inclusive, equitable, and just society for all women across the nation.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR: ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES

Post Legislative Scrutiny (PLS):

In a significant milestone, the Women's Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) established a dedicated sub-committee on Post Legislative Scrutiny (PLS) for the first time in its history. This initiative aimed to evaluate the impact of women-specific laws across the country. Through rigorous analysis, the sub-committee conducted a comprehensive review of inheritance laws in Pakistan, engaging in consultations with stakeholders to gather diverse perspectives and insights. This groundbreaking step has paved the way for evidence-based policy reforms that safeguard women's rights and promote gender equality.

Gender Responsive Budgeting:

The WPC demonstrated its commitment to gender equality by taking the initiative to introduce Gender Responsive Budgeting. Several consultations and workshops were held in collaboration with various stakeholders, including women parliamentarians and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). These consultations aimed to enhance understanding and implementation of gender-responsive budgeting. Furthermore, the Caucus launched a summary paper titled "Gender Budgeting in Pakistan," serving as a valuable resource to guide future efforts. The engagement of women parliamentarians and CSOs further strengthened the cause of gender empowerment, ensuring a more inclusive and equitable allocation of resources.

Consultation with Women Parliamentarians:

Recognizing the significance of collective input, the WPC conducted consultations with women parliamentarians. These sessions provided a platform for dialogue, enabling women parliamentarians to share their perspectives, experiences, and recommendations. By actively engaging women parliamentarians in the decision-making process, the WPC ensured that their voices were heard and incorporated into policy discussions and reforms. This inclusive approach has fostered a stronger representation of women's interests and needs in the parliamentary arena.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR: ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES

Engagement with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs):

The WPC actively engaged with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to foster the cause of women empowerment. Recognizing the invaluable role of CSOs in advocating for gender equality and women's rights, the Caucus forged partnerships and collaborations. By working together, the WPC and CSOs have enhanced their collective impact in addressing the challenges faced by women in Pakistan. Through joint initiatives, advocacy efforts, and knowledge-sharing, the WPC and CSOs have played a pivotal role in promoting gender empowerment, amplifying women's voices, and driving positive change in society.

These highlights and achievements demonstrate the commitment and dedication of the Women's Parliamentary Caucus in advancing women's empowerment and gender equality in Pakistan. Through the establishment of the PLS sub-committee, initiatives on gender-responsive budgeting, consultations with women parliamentarians, and engagement with CSOs, the WPC has made significant strides in shaping a more inclusive and equitable society for all women across the nation.

POST LEGISLATIVE SCRUTINY (PLS)

In a significant milestone, the Women's Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) established a dedicated sub-committee on Post Legislative Scrutiny (PLS) for the first time in its history. This initiative aimed to evaluate the impact of women-specific laws across the country. Through rigorous analysis, the sub-committee conducted a comprehensive review of inheritance laws in Pakistan, engaging in consultations with stakeholders to gather diverse perspectives and insights. This groundbreaking step has paved the way for evidence-based policy reforms that safeguard women's rights and promote gender equality.

Meeting with Anthro Insights

Secretary WPC along with Ms. Wajiha Qamar – Treasure WPC – had a meeting with Anthro Insights team at WPC Secretariat. Both organizations agreed on following points:

- Support for Post Legislative Scrutiny (PLS) of women specific laws.
- Technical assistance for budget analysis
- Strengthening legislative role of Women Parliamentarians



Third Meeting of the Sub-Committee on PLS with Anthro Insights

Third meeting of the Sub-Committee on Post-Legislative Scrutiny (PLS) with Anthro Insights was held at WPC Office. PLS expert Mr. Mujtaba Zaidi from Anthro Insights briefed the subcommittee about the prominent legal frameworks on inheritance currently prevalent in Pakistan that are intended to facilitate inheritance mutation for its stakeholders. Moreover, the sub-committee discussed and reviewed legal penalties, Married Women Act and intent of the law with regards to women's inheritance.



POST LEGISLATIVE SCRUTINY (PLS)



Meeting with National Commission on the Rights of Child (NCRC) and Practicing Lawyers

Treasure WPC and Convener Sub-Committee on PLS chaired the 4th meeting of the Committee with National Commission on the Rights of Child (NCRC) and legal practitioners from Islamabad and Rawalpindi. Secretary WPC, Dr. Shahida Rehmani and WPC team were also present in the meeting. The meeting revolved around discussions on inheritance laws. Chairperson NCRC stressed that inheritance laws must ensure social protection to women and children with an intent that they do not release their right to inheritance

except a sweet will. Practicing lawyers from twin cities were also invited to the consultative meeting. They encouraged the involvement of NADRA in granting inheritance related claims along with few significant suggestions to improve the law in order to facilitate the beneficiaries as well as the judiciary and legal fraternity



WOMEN'S POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT

Women's political empowerment lies at the core of the Women's Parliamentary Caucus (WPC)'s mission, as it recognizes that women in leadership roles have a profound impact on empowering women beyond the confines of their homes. The WPC is committed to creating an enabling environment that allows women to actively participate in politics and decision-making processes. By amplifying women's voices and representation from every stratum of society, the WPC seeks to dismantle barriers and drive transformative change. Through targeted initiatives and advocacy, the Caucus aims to foster an inclusive and equitable political landscape that empowers women and paves the way for a more just and equal society.

Diamond Jubilee Convention for Women Parliamentarians

Diamond Jubilee Convention for Women Parliamentarians by WPC was held in Parliament House. Speaker NA Raja Pervaiz Ashraf shared his delight in acknowledging the struggles and sacrifices of women leaders during the independence movement.

Sec. WPC Shahida Rehmani recognized the contributions of our exceptional women leaders who were deeply committed to the cause of promoting women's rights



and political participation especially Mohtarma Fatima Jinnah and Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto. She assured her full support to all provincial women caucuses on the occasion of Diamond Jubilee Convention, to make assemblies more accessible to females across Pakistan.



WOMEN'S POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT



Representative from PWD community Ms. Abia Akram expressed her concerns regarding 80% disabled women based in rural areas, who are subjected to harassment, lack of education, and poverty which needs to be addressed on priority basis.



Senator Sana Jamali brought attention to Balochistan issues and highlighted women's political participation as a fundamental prerequisite for gender equality and genuine democracy.



Tanzeela Malik raised her voice against the harassment faced by female leaders in the political sphere and requested Speaker NA to take this issue into consideration.



MNA Shaista Parvez stressed the importance of working together with civil societies while taking women side by side for the progress of our country.

WOMEN'S POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT



Resolutions Passed

A resolution was unanimously passed to provide all the fundamental rights of women enshrined in Pakistan's Constitution by Speaker NA Hon. Raja Pervaiz Ashraf.

Resolution adopted by women Parliamentary convention held in connection with Diamond Jubilee celebrations of 1st constituent Assembly at Parliament House Islamabad.

We the members of Women's Parliamentary Caucus and representatives of political parties, participating in the Diamond Jubilee Convention of Women Parliamentarians organized by the Women's Parliamentary Caucus held in the premises of Parliament of Pakistan, resolve on this day of August 12, 2022:

Women's illustrious contributions in the creation of Pakistan and its freedom struggle.

Recall that the Constitution of Pakistan which recognizes Quran and Sunnah as the basic source of governance, provides women full rights, rejects all forms of discrimination, and promotes their full participation in public life under Articles 25, 34, 35 and 37 of the Constitution.

Note that the National and International commitments of Government of Pakistan including the National Policy for the Development and Empowerment of Women (NPDEW) 2002, underscore attainment for women in the public and political spheres.

Paying tribute to:

All the women leaders of Pakistan particularly Mohtarma Fatima Jinnah, Begum Ra'na Liaquat Ali and Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto whose courage and exemplary contributions in public and political life have greatly inspired, built a sense of confidence and empowered the Pakistani women.

Recognizing that:

Pakistan ranks 145 out of 146 countries at recent Global Gender Gap Report covering the four critical areas: health and survival, education attainment, economic participation and opportunity, and political empowerment.

Acknowledging that:

Inclusiveness and representation of women and men in health, education, economy, and politics validates the foundations of democracy and renders legitimacy to it; We, Women Parliamentarians and political parties' representatives in this Diamond Jubilee Convention, today therefore also resolve the following:

- Commit to protecting and upholding women's rights as enshrined in the Constitution and ensure that our respective party manifestos provide a central focus to women in party policy so as to ensure social political and economic empowerment of women;
- Commit to practicing gender-sensitive budgeting and uplifting institutions working on women specific issues;
- Commit to eradicate all forms of social, economic and political discrimination against women. For it we, as legislators, pledge to utilise our legislative authority;
- Commit to ensuring opportunities for education of girls.

WOMEN'S POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT



National Conference of Women's Parliamentary Caucus

The Women's Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) and Resilient Women Network (RWN) jointly organized the National Conference of Women's Parliamentary Caucus in Islamabad. The conference aimed to enhance the meaningful participation of women parliamentarians in peace-building and sustainable development. It brought together women legislators from federal and provincial assemblies, along with representatives from Provincial WPCs, to share experiences and address women-specific issues.

The convention was divided into two sessions. The first session of the conference was dedicated to a



panel discussion on rendering biases for inclusive democratic processes and the panel consisted of members national assembly and senators. The second session of the conference was led by the representatives of provincial caucuses and assembly members that revolved around the role of parliamentarians in securing peace and social cohesion

WOMEN'S POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT



Launch of National Coordination Forum

Speaker National Assembly of Pakistan officially inaugurated the National Coordination Forum which is designed by the team WPC to connect all WPCs on one platform. The purpose of the coordination forum is to engage WPCs in unanimously addressing women's issues, to jointly work on pro-women legislation, and information sharing and to learn from each other's best initiatives. Speaker National Assembly appreciated the purpose of the conference and the initiative of the national coordination forum. Honorable Speaker marked the performance of women parliamentarians better in comparison to their male



counterparts. He suggested that once all women are together through forums like WPC their progress will enhance with leaps and bounds. Speaker NA showed his high hopes for the leadership of WPC in mitigating gender exclusion, and discrimination and gathering provincial women members under one agenda of sustainable development, and peacebuilding in the country.

WOMEN'S POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT



National Convention of Women Parliamentarians

The Women's Parliamentary Caucus organized the National Convention of Women Parliamentarians, held at Pakistan National Council of Arts (PNCA) in Islamabad. With the theme "Empowering Women in Leadership," the convention focused on promoting the participation and inclusion of women in the political process. The event featured Honorable Speaker National Assembly Mr. Raja Pervaiz Ashraf as the Keynote Speaker, and a main panel discussion on the political landscape of Pakistan with or without women. Female parliamentarians had the opportunity to collaborate, share experiences, and discuss strategies to empower women in leadership positions, while engaging with journalists and members of the media. Led by Dr. Rehmani, the WPC

remains committed to advancing gender equality and women's empowerment, with the National Convention of Women Parliamentarians being a significant initiative in support of this objective.



WOMEN'S POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT



Meeting with UN Women and Ministry of Law Representatives to Review Pakistan's Constitution from a Gender Lens

Secretary WPC Dr. Shahida Rehmani, accompanied by MNA Dr. Nafisa Shah and MNA Mehnaz Akber Aziz, presided over a significant meeting held at the WPC Secretariat. The meeting was attended by Mr. Zafarullah Khan and Mr. Hassan Hakeem from UN Women Pakistan and representatives of the AGHS Legal Aid Cell. The primary objective of the meeting was to discuss a collaborative effort between the WPC, the Ministry of law and justice, and UN Women

Pakistan to review the Constitution of Pakistan through a gender lens. Deliberations revolved around the need to ensure gender-responsive provisions within the constitutional framework, promoting women's rights, and addressing gender-based inequalities. The meeting signifies a strong commitment from the WPC to foster a more inclusive and equitable legal framework, striving for gender equality and empowering women in Pakistan.



WOMEN'S POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT



RECLAIMING THE SPACE Reading the Constitution from Women's Perspective

The Women Parliamentary Caucus in collaboration with Federal Ministry of Law and Justice organized a two day event, titled "Reclaiming the Space: Reading the Constitution from Women's Perspective" on June 5-6, 2023 in Islamabad. This event marked the first-ever initiative in Pakistan's 75-year history to critically examine and deliberate on the constitution from a women's perspective.



The event was consisting of an inaugural session followed by a series of accentuated roundtables under the themes of Language of the Constitution, Gender Equality, Women's Empowerment, and Women Representation and Political/Electoral Participation. Each roundtable was chaired by an honorable Member of Parliament, including Ms. Mehnaz Akber Aziz, Dr. Nafisa Shah, Eng. Rukhsana Zubari, and Ms. Shaista Pervaiz Malik, respectively.



WOMEN'S POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT

The insights generated during these roundtables, combined with the remarks by Dr. Syeda Shahida Rehmani, Hon'ble Secretary Women's Parliamentary Caucus, the keynote address delivered by Mr. Mansoor Usman Awan, Attorney General of Pakistan, the speech by the Guest of Honor Mr. Azam Nazeer Tarar, Hon'ble Federal Minister of Law and Justice, and the Address by the Chief Guest Raja Pervez Ashraf, Honorable Speaker National Assembly, has served as valuable inputs to empower and safeguards the rights of women in Pakistan.



GENDER BUDGETING

The WPC demonstrated its commitment to gender equality by taking the initiative to introduce Gender Responsive Budgeting. Several consultations and workshops were held in collaboration with various stakeholders, including women parliamentarians and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). These consultations aimed to enhance understanding and implementation of gender-responsive budgeting. Furthermore, the Caucus launched a summary paper titled "Gender Budgeting in Pakistan," serving as a valuable resource to guide future efforts. The engagement of women parliamentarians and CSOs further strengthened the cause of gender empowerment, ensuring a more inclusive and equitable allocation of resources.

Meeting with Anthro Insights and Omer Asghar Foundation



Secretary WPC Dr. Shahida Rehmani chaired a meeting with representatives from Anthro Insights and Omer Asghar Foundation.

The need for Gender-responsive Budgeting (GRB) was discussed. Secretary WPC was briefed on the cruciality of GRB and social protection for women. Future areas of collaboration were discussed for awareness programs with female legislators of national and provincial assemblies.

Workshop on Gender-Budgeting

A workshop on Gender-Budgeting was organized for Women's Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) Members and Parliamentarians at the WPC Secretariat by a delegation under the Chairmanship of the Head of Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) Asia, Mr. Micro Gunther.



Secretary WPC Ms. Shahida Rehmani strongly advocates gender equality in the country. She regards gender-budgeting an essential tool to ensure

GENDER BUDGETING

effective legislation and resource allocation to safeguard women rights, promote gender equality, inclusion and justice in the country. Parliamentarians discussed future areas of collaboration with FES Asia in the workshop. Secretary WPC Ms. Shahida Rehmani and WPC members appreciated FES support for gender justice and gender equality in Pakistan.



"Gender-Budgeting is a vital tool for effective legislation to safeguard women rights, promote gender equality, inclusion and justice."
Secretary WPC Ms. Shahida Rehmani

Meeting with Speaker National Assembly



Hon'ble Speaker National Assembly Mr. Raja Pervez Ashraf held a meeting with Team FES Asia and Secretary WPC Ms. Shahida Rehmani at Parliament House. Hon'ble Speaker appreciated the recent initiative of WPC on Gender-Budgeting.

He applauded Ms. Rehmani's initiatives for capacity building of the Women Parliamentarians for effective and inclusive legislation on women-specific issues.



GENDER BUDGETING

Hearing on Gender-Budgeting

NOVEMBER 2, 2022

Women's Parliamentary Caucus and FES Asia organized a Hearing on Gender-Budgeting. Women Parliamentarians shared their experiences regarding budget implementation and perspectives for improvement.



Women Parliamentarians, apart from their party affiliations, gathered on one platform to discuss their experiences and their vision for future work to bring gender equality in the country



Karachi Visit



WPC arranged a visit for the FES delegation to Karachi. Secretary WPC Ms. Shahida Rehmani is a staunch believer of evidence-based legislation and inclusive reforms in a country. In this regard, WPC Secretariat arranged this visit to different areas of Karachi for FES Asia: Working for gender equality and gender justice. Visits to the following areas were arranged to have a holistic insight into deep-seated gender inequalities in Pakistan:

- Visit of NADRA Mobile Registration Van
- Visit of COVID-19 Vaccination Center
- Visit of Cricket Stadium: an initiative by Secretary WPC in Karachi
- Visit of Basic Health Unit (BHU)
- Visit of Polio Vaccination Center
- Visit of Maternity Home (Under-Construction)
- Visit of Water Supply Unit
- Visit of Under-Construction School

GENDER BUDGETING

- Inauguration of Water Project in Karachi
- Visit of Shrine of Mangu Peer



Secretary WPC Ms. Shahida Rehmani and FES Asia delegation held a meeting with Chief Secretary Karachi. The delegation was briefed about initiatives regarding women development in Sindh. Provisions of Gender-Budgeting in Sindh were also discussed in the meeting.



Debriefing Meeting on Gender Responsive Budgeting in Pakistan



The team from Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) Pakistan visited the Women Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) Secretariat to meet with WPC Members and discuss Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) in Pakistan. The meeting was chaired by WPC Dr. Shahida Rehmani and attended by German experts Ms. Marion Boker and Dr. Elisabeth Klatzer.

Secretary WPC Dr. Shahida Rehmani, during her remarks, emphasized that

GENDER BUDGETING

Involving women in the budgeting process is crucial to ensure that their perspectives and needs are considered when designing policies and programs.



Workshop on gender budgeting



The Women's Parliamentary Caucus (WPC), in collaboration with Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) Pakistan, organized a one-day workshop on "Gender budgeting in Pakistan". The workshop was designed to improve the budgeting process and make it more gender-sensitive. The Strategy Paper on Gender Responsive Budgeting in Pakistan was launched the day after the workshop.

This paper proposes ways to address the gender disparities that currently exist in Pakistan through policy interventions and sufficient budgetary allocations to women.

In conclusion, the workshop was part of a broader effort by the WPC to increase the role of women in the parliamentary process.



Launch of Strategy Paper on Gender Responsive Budgeting



The Women's Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) launched a Strategy Paper – An executive Summary on "Gender Budgeting in Pakistan", which provides guidance and strategies for promoting a coherent approach to gender budgeting work. The WPC aims to institutionalize the gender

GENDER BUDGETING



budgeting process and to ensure that the perspectives and needs of women are taken into account while designing the policies and programs.

Speaker of the National Assembly Honorable Raja Pervaiz Ashraf emphasized the importance of empowering women for democracy to work, thanking the WPC and FES for their work in standing up for equality in the federal budget.



According to the authors of the paper, applying a gender perspective to the budget can help realize equality for all genders and ensure that benefits are distributed equally.. Dr. Elisabeth Klatzer also identified the agriculture sector as a potential area for achieving greater gender equality through new investments in farming.

Meeting with FES Pakistan



Representatives of Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) Pakistan visited WPC Office to have a meeting with Secretary WPC Dr. Shahida Rehmani. Both sides discussed strategies to implement the findings of WPC's Strategic Paper on Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) in Pakistan.



GENDER BUDGETING



Consultation Session on Gender Responsiveness of the Budget Process in Pakistan

WPC, in collaboration with Fredrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) Pakistan, organized a consultation session on Gender Responsive Budgeting with the media groups. Hon'ble Speaker National Assembly of Pakistan, Mr. Raja Pervaiz Ashraf was the Chief Guest of this consultation. Former Secretary WPC, Ms. Shaista Pervaiz also graced the event.

The consultation reiterated on more budgetary allocations for women-related development projects/programs. The role of WPC in highlighting issues of Gender Equality, the importance of GRB to ensure true equality and the role media can play in educating the masses in this regard was discussed.



ADVOCACY AND LOBBYING EFFORTS

Advocacy and lobbying efforts have been a key thematic area for the Women's Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) as it actively works towards advancing gender equality and women's empowerment. The WPC has consistently engaged in robust advocacy initiatives, leveraging its collective strength to champion women's rights and amplify their voices in parliamentary discourse. Through strategic lobbying efforts, the Caucus has advocated for progressive legislative reforms and policies that address the specific challenges faced by women in Pakistan. By actively promoting gender-responsive approaches and collaborating with stakeholders, the WPC has made significant strides in creating an enabling environment for women's empowerment and fostering positive change in society.

Secretary WPC in Panel Talk on "Climate Finance Accelerator Pakistan Launch Event"



Secretary WPC Ms. Shahida Rehmani participated in a panel talk at the launch event of Climate Finance Action (CFA). She highlighted the issues of gender inequality and climate change and the nexus between the two.



Women Farmers' Visit

A delegation of women farmers from different areas of Pakistan visited WPC Office. Secretary WPC, Dr. Shahida Rehmani and WPC member Ms. Nuzhat Pathan listened to the grievances and issues of women farmers. Dr. Rehmani acknowledged that Pakistan is an agrarian country and women farmers are the backbone of Pakistan's agriculture sector. Without their empowerment and inclusive participation, agriculture sector of Pakistan cannot grow. She assured that WPC will continue its efforts for empowerment of women farmers.



ADVOCACY AND LOBBYING EFFORTS

Advocacy for Women Legislators to the Prime Minister of Pakistan



In a bid to empower women from within the corridors of power, Secretary WPC Dr. Shahida Rehmani effectively pleaded the case for women MPs during an interaction with the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif during the National Assembly Session held on 20th December 2022.

Ms. Rehmani discussed the need to end gender-based discrimination against Women MPs in the Parliament. She highlighted that their voice is as powerful as that of their fellow male MPS and demanded an increase in allocation of development funds for Women MPs. The Prime Minister welcomed her suggestion and indicated to consider it for deliberation.



The Quest For Equality In Parliament

In a bid to empower women MPs on reserved seats, Secretary WPC, Dr. Shahida Rehmani has always been at the forefront to eliminate all forms of discrimination. Secretary WPC met with the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif to follow up on her previous meeting with the Prime Minister regarding the allocation of development funds to women MPs on reserved seats.



Meeting With Women Journalist To Discuss Online Harassments

Secretary Women's Parliamentary Caucus, Dr. Shahida Rehmani met with a delegation of women journalists led by Ms. Tanzeela Mazhar from Women in Media Alliance(WIMA) Pakistan, where they shared their experiences of online harassment of women. They discussed the need to address the issue with all stake holders for true reforms. Secretary WPC expressed

ADVOCACY AND LOBBYING EFFORTS

the solidarity with journalists and strongly condemned online harassment of women and resolved to stand by them in making online spaces safe for women.



Meeting with Chairman Senate of Pakistan



Secretary WPC Dr. Shahida Rehmani and Senator Ms. Sana Jamali held a meeting with Chairman Senate of Pakistan Honorable Mr. Sadiq Sanjrani to highlight women specific issues prevalent in the country. Dr. Rehmani discussed challenges women face in Pakistan that hamper their political, social and economic integration.

Hon'ble Mr. Sanjrani Dr. Rehmani of his unwavering support to the platform of WPC to promote meaningful participation of Women Parliamentarians in politics.

Meeting with Advisor Chairman Higher Education Commission

Secretary WPC Dr. Shahida Rehmani held a productive meeting with the Advisor Chairman Higher Education Commission at the Women's Parliamentary Council (WPC) office. The meeting focused on exploring future areas for improved access to quality education in the country. Dr. Rehmani and the Advisor Chairman engaged in constructive discussions, highlighting the importance of creating opportunities for all individuals, particularly women, to receive a high-quality education. This collaboration aims to identify strategies and initiatives that will enhance access to education and empower individuals to reach their full potential.



ADVOCACY AND LOBBYING EFFORTS



Meeting with VC of Fatima Jinnah Women University to Bridge the Gap Between Parliament and Academia

In a significant step towards fostering collaboration between academia and the parliamentary sector, Secretary WPC Dr. Shahida Rehmani recently held a productive meeting with the Vice-Chancellor of Fatima Jinnah Women University, Ms. Saima Hamid. The meeting aimed to discuss an important initiative of connecting parliament with academia, with the anticipation of a positive impact on both realms. Dr. Shahida Rehmani and Ms. Saima Hamid engaged in fruitful discussions on the potential benefits and strategies for this collaboration. This endeavor holds the promise of

bridging the gap between theory and practice, providing lawmakers with valuable academic insights while offering students and faculty opportunities to contribute their expertise to policy-making processes. This initiative is expected to foster a dynamic exchange of knowledge and ideas, empowering both parliamentarians and academia to work together towards the progress and development of the nation.



ADVOCACY AND LOBBYING EFFORTS



Meeting with Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority (SMEDA)

Secretary WPC and Parliamentary Secretary Ministry of Industries, Dr. Shahida Rehmani, recently held a productive meeting with Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority (SMEDA) to discuss the crucial topic of women entrepreneurship. During the meeting, Dr. Shahida Rehmani emphasized the significance of empowering and supporting women in business as a vital driver of economic growth and innovation. The discussions focused on identifying strategies and initiatives to promote and nurture women entrepreneurship, recognizing its potential to contribute to job creation, economic development, and societal progress.



INTERNATIONAL DAYS CELEBRATIONS



International Democracy Day Celebration 2022

September 15 marks the International Day of Democracy worldwide. The Women's Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) actively participated in the International Day of Democracy, aligning with the global commitment to strengthen democratic values. Under the theme of "Inclusive Democracy: Priorities and Challenges in 2022," the WPC, in collaboration with the Aurat Foundation, organized a significant event at the Pakistan Institute of Parliamentary Services (PIPS) on September 12, 2022. The event brought together the Speaker of the National Assembly, women parliamentarians, representatives of marginalized groups such as Persons

with Disabilities (PWDs), minorities, and the transgender community, as well as Civil Society Organizations



INTERNATIONAL DAYS CELEBRATIONS



International Women's Day 2023

The Women's Parliamentary Caucus commemorated International Women's Day on March 8, 2023, with a heartfelt tribute to the women of Pakistan. The event witnessed active participation from women parliamentarians, with the honorable Speaker of the National Assembly, Raja Pervaiz Ashraf, and Federal Minister for Climate Change, Ms. Sherry Rehman, graced the occasion. Secretary WPC, Dr. Shahida Rehmani, acknowledged the contributions of women nationally and internationally, highlighting their resilience despite challenges. The

event featured two insightful panels, one focused on achieving an equal future for women in leadership, while the other discussed the significance of true representation in power corridors. Esteemed panelists included notable figures from diverse sectors. The event also included captivating performances by renowned international kathak performer, Ms. Farah Yasmeen Sheikh, and closing remarks by educationist Dr. Arfa Zahra. Dignitaries, civil society representatives, and individuals from various backgrounds attended this remarkable celebration of women's achievements and aspirations in Pakistan.



PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS

Inauguration of Polio Vaccination Campaign in Karachi

Secretary WPC, Dr. Shahida Rehmani inaugurated Polio Vaccination Campaign in Karachi on World Polio Day. She vowed to work for polio eradication from country and assured of WPC's support in this regard.



Visit to Polyclinic and PIMS Hospital



Secretary WPC, Dr. Shahida Rehmani, accompanied by Women Parliamentarians, visited Polyclinic and PIMS Hospital to raise awareness about breast cancer. They received briefings from hospital

teams on working patterns and the latest technologies in breast cancer treatment. The WPC members specifically assessed the facilities available at the Breast Cancer Centre in PIMS hospital for the benefit of cancer patients.



Breast Cancer Awareness Campaign

On the directions of WPC Secretary, Dr. Shahida Rehmani, the Parliament of Pakistan was turned pink to spread breast cancer awareness. October is recognized as a breast cancer awareness month around the world. Turning Parliament of Pakistan symbolized Pakistan's promise to

PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS



spread awareness among its women of the disease, ways of its early diagnosis and recovery.

Breast Cancer Awareness Program



The Women's Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) and Ministry of National Health Services, in collaboration with AJM Pharma, jointly organized a Breast Cancer Awareness Program at the Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services (PIPS). This event was part of the WPC's ongoing participation in Breast Cancer Awareness Month. The program aimed to raise awareness among the general public about breast cancer treatment and early diagnosis. Secretary WPC, Ms. Shahida Rehmani, emphasized the

importance of initiating awareness campaigns at grassroots levels, extending from Union Councils (UC) to nationwide coverage.



PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS

Social Media Campaign on Inheritance Laws

During the month of December, a social media campaign was started from all social media platforms of the WPC for creating legal awareness of the inheritance laws in Pakistan. The objectives behind this campaign were to:

- Assess citizens' level of awareness regarding existing inheritance laws via polls
- Assess citizens' views on adequacy of existing laws on inheritance
- Investigate cultural and behavioral outcomes of inheritance laws
- Build political drive for legislative amendments in the existing laws on inheritance.



CAPACITY BUILDING AND TRAINING

Workshop on Emerging Social Media Trends and Techniques for Women Parliamentarians



WPC, in collaboration with Aurat Foundation, arranged a two-days long workshop for Women Parliamentarians on Emerging Social Media Trends and Techniques. Women Parliamentarians were briefed about the importance of social media and how they can use it effectively.



Capacity Building Workshop for Gilgit Baltistan Assembly Members

The Women's Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) organized a two-day capacity building workshop at the



WPC Secretariat for legislators from the Gilgit Baltistan Assembly, with the participation of esteemed members such as the Honorable Deputy Speaker, Law and Finance Ministers, Secretary of the Women Caucus, and women legislators from Gilgit Baltistan. On the first day, Secretary WPC Ms. Shahida Rehmani briefed the delegation on the Caucus's performance and achievements. Mr. Shamooun Hashmi, Additional Secretary Special Initiatives, National Assembly, highlighted the importance of consensus building among legislators across party lines. The GB Legislative Assembly members shared their challenges in addressing women-specific issues.



CAPACITY BUILDING AND TRAINING



The workshop resulted in a reinforced understanding of the significance of dialogue at cross-party forums, consensus building, and creating an inclusive and gender-equal environment. Additionally, a joint resolution on the National Working Women's Day was unanimously passed, aiming to eradicate discrimination against women. On the second day, a detailed presentation on the structure and functioning of the WPC was given, with legislators emphasizing the importance of future collaborations and strong mutual cooperation.



<p>Resolution (Presented on 22-12-2022)</p> <p>We the Members of Women's Parliamentary Caucus and Members of Qaumi Mawjooat-e-Millat, celebrating National Working Women's Day held in the premises of Parliament of Pakistan, hereby adopt the following statements on this day of December 22, 2022.</p> <p>Recalling that: In Islam, women are recognized integral to strengthening family formation, society and the nation; Islam, in all its glory, advocates women rights and women's emancipation.</p> <p>Further recalling that: The Constitution of Pakistan, which recognizes Quran and Sunnah as the basic source of governance, provides women full rights, rejects all forms of discrimination, and promotes their full participation in public life under Articles 25, 34, 35 and 37.</p> <p>Noting that: The National and International commitments of the Government of Pakistan, including the National Policy for the Development and Empowerment of Women (NPDEW) 2002, underscore attention for women in the public and political spheres.</p> <p>Paying tribute to: All the women leaders of Pakistan particularly Murtaza Fatima Jinnah, Begum Raza Liaquat Ali and Shahida Mahatma Benazir Bhutto whose courage and exemplary contributions in public and political life has greatly inspired, built a sense of confidence and empowered the Pakistani women.</p> <p>Recognizing that: Pakistan ranks 145 out of 148 countries at recent Global Gender Gap Report covering the four critical areas: health and survival, education attainment, economic participation and opportunity, and political empowerment.</p>	<p>Acknowledging that: Inclusiveness and equal representation of women in health, education, economy, and politics, validates the foundations of democracy and renders legitimacy to it. We, Women Parliamentarians and Qaumi Mawjooat-e-Millat Members on this National Working Women's Day, therefore resolve the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commit to safeguarding women's rights as mentioned in the Constitution and ensure that our respective party manifestos ensure emancipation of women. Commit to practicing gender sensitive budgeting and that Legislative Society (PLS) of women specific laws to uplift institutions working on women related issues. Commit to eradicate all forms of social, economic and political discrimination against women. For us, as legislators, pledge to utilize our legislative authority. Commit to ensuring opportunities for education of girls. Commit to breaking many long existing taboos to make an egalitarian society. Commit to empowering working women socially and politically. <p>1) <i>Shahida Rahnema - Sec WPC</i></p> <p>2) <i>Huzefa Ahmad Abbasi - Sec Women's Cell</i></p> <p>3) <i>Dr. Farhat Ishtiaq - Parliamentarian Sec. For. Sec.</i></p> <p>4) <i>Saima Zaman - Parliamentarian Sec. Education</i></p> <p>5) <i>Kaneez Fatima - Parliamentarian Sec. Women Development</i></p> <p>6) <i>Kulsoom Fatima - Parliamentarian Sec. For</i></p> <p>7) <i>Sec. Joint Plans - Law Mawjooat-e-Millat</i></p>
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PUBLIC SPEAKING AND MEDIA HANDLING WORKSHOPS

15th Annual Rural Women Leadership Conference



Secretary WPC, Dr. Shahida Rehmani, delivered a keynote address at the 15th Annual Rural Women Leadership Conference organized by the Ministry of Human Rights and PODA. Recognizing the invaluable contribution of rural women to Pakistan's agriculture sector, Dr. Rehmani emphasized the importance of their economic integration for the country's overall development. Despite their vital role in agriculture and related fields, rural women often remain unrecognized and underappreciated. The Women's Parliamentary Caucus firmly believes that rural women are catalysts for the development of Pakistan, particularly in its agrarian landscape.



The Intersectionality of Migration and Mobility

Secretary WPC, Dr. Shahida Rehmani, graced the Migration and Mobility Conference organized by the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) as the guest of honour. In her address, she emphasized the importance of women's participation in overseas migration and the need for their skill development. Highlighting Pakistan's position as one of the top ten emigrant countries globally, she stressed the significance of creating safe migration channels for women, removing gender-related hurdles. The conference aimed to explore themes of youth, migration, and sustainable development while promoting safe migration through partnership and capacity building.



PUBLIC SPEAKING AND MEDIA HANDLING WORKSHOPS

It brought together government officials, migration experts, academia, civil society organizations, media, and international organizations to engage in discussions on the intersectionality of youth, women, and migration, and to address the promotion of safe migration through collaborative efforts.



Karachi University on International Women's Day

Secretary Women's Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) Dr. Shahida Rehmani spoke to young graduates on the International Women Day as a Guest of Honor at Karachi University. In her speech, she highlighted the significance of this day in a women's life as this day women specific issues are highlighted like no other day. She also stressed on the importance of education for empowering women.



National Convention of Women in Local Governance

Secretary WPC participated as a Guest Speaker in the National Convention of women in Local Governance (WLGS) on the theme of "Women Voices For Electoral Reforms, Inclusive Governance And Climate Mitigation." She addressed various challenges faced by women today, alongside former Secretary WPC, Ms. Shaista Pervez. The event, organized by GAC-funded JAZBA Program and Aurat Foundation, brought together women from diverse backgrounds, including transgender individuals, people with disabilities, minorities, and political party workers. It took place at Hotel Falettis in Lahore.



PUBLIC SPEAKING AND MEDIA HANDLING WORKSHOPS

Pakistan Declamation Contest on Constitution



The National Assembly of Pakistan held a "Final Round of all Pakistan Declamation Contest" to commemorate the Golden jubilee of the Constitution of Pakistan (1973-2023) at PIPS Auditorium on April 17, 2023. The Honorable Raja Pervaiz Ashraf, Speaker of the National Assembly, graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. Secretary Women's Parliamentary Caucus Ms. Shahida Rehmani and Honorable Members of the National Assembly Ms. Asiya Azeem and as well as Honorable Senator Mr. Farhatullah Babar also graced the occasion.



The event brought together the faculty members and students from different Schools from all the four provinces, including students from Government Girls High School, Quetta; Islamabad Model School for Girls, Islamabad; Islamia College, Peshawar; Government High School, Dinah, Haripur; Ittehad ul Madaris, Rawalpindi; Board of Islamic Education Jamia Muhammadia Shikarpuri Gate, Bahawalpur; Lahore School System; Lawrence College Murree; Karachi Public School; International Islamic University, Islamabad School; Peshawar Model School; The City School, E-11 and H-12 Campus Islamabad; Government Girls High School, Johal Memorial Rawalpindi; Government Girls Comprehensive Higher Secondary School; Government Boys Secondary School, Kal Board, Karachi and DHA Phase 7 Karachi.

In the end, Honourable Speaker National Assembly, Mr. Raja Pervaiz Ashraf along with Secretary WPC distributed the Certificates to the orator students.

REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT

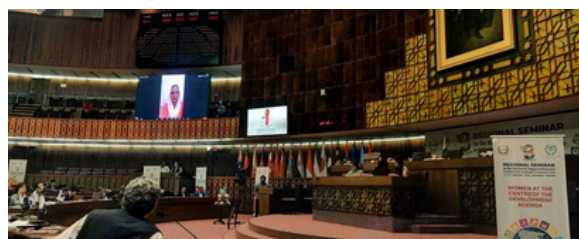
The Women's Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) has actively pursued partnerships and collaborations to strengthen its impact and advocate for gender equality. In terms of regional and international engagement, the WPC has fostered connections with parliamentary bodies and organizations worldwide, exchanging knowledge and experiences on women's empowerment. Through these partnerships, the Caucus has contributed to policy recommendations and legislative initiatives both at the national and international levels. By collaborating with stakeholders, civil society organizations, and academic institutions, the WPC has amplified its advocacy efforts and generated meaningful dialogues to address women-specific issues. These partnerships and collaborations have been instrumental in advancing the cause of women's rights and fostering gender equality in Pakistan and beyond.

WPC in Third Regional Seminar for the Asia-Pacific Parliaments on Achieving SDGs

The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Pakistan, in partnership with the National Assembly of Pakistan, organized the Third Regional Seminar for Asia-Pacific Parliaments on Achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). As part of the event, a session was dedicated to the theme of "Women at the Centre of the Development Agenda," focusing on SDG 5 of gender equality.



The Women's Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) served as a case study during this session, with Secretary WPC Ms. Shahida Rehmani presenting its milestones and achievements. She emphasized the pivotal role of the WPC in bringing women-specific issues to the forefront of decision-making processes. Ms. Rehmani reiterated the importance of cross-party forums for women in leadership roles, underscoring their vital contribution to the empowerment of women from all walks of life.



REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT

Delegation of Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB) Visit to WPC Secretariat



A delegation of former Parliamentarians along with Dr. Charles Rees and Mr. Niall Johnston from FoRB visited WPC Secretariat. WPC team briefed the delegation on the role of Caucus in promoting women-specific issues and effectiveness of such cross-party alliances in Parliamentary democracies.

Visit of Delegation from Paraguay



A delegation from Paraguay visited WPC Office. WPC Secretary, Dr. Shahida Rehmani briefed the delegation on the role of Caucuses in promoting women empowerment. She also discussed how women in leadership roles have played an imperative role in bringing women-specific issues to the decision-making tables of Pakistan.



Meeting with Pakistan Uzbekistan Friendship Group

Meeting of Pakistan Uzbekistan friendship group was convened by Secretary WPC, Dr. Shahida Rehmani at WPC Secretariat. Mutual areas of interest and future collaborations were discussed in the meeting.



REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT

Leading the way at the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians Workshop

Secretary WPC, Ms. Shahida Rehmani, represented Pakistan at the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians' (CWP) workshop titled "Champions for Gender Equality: Achieving Equal Participation in Commonwealth Parliaments" in Canberra, Australia from December 5th to 7th, 2022. Hosted by the Legislative Assembly of the Australian Capital Territory, the workshop brought together parliamentarians from 12 different jurisdictions to enhance their skills and resources as gender champions in their respective Parliaments. Ms. Rehmani highlighted the Women's Parliamentary Caucus of Pakistan as a success story,



showcasing the cross-party alliance of women parliamentarians working towards equal participation and empowerment of women in federal and provincial legislative assemblies,

along with the collective upliftment of marginalized groups.



Belgian Parliamentary Delegation Visit to WPC

The Women's Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) Office welcomed a delegation from the Belgian Parliament, led by Honorable Ms. Alessia Claes. The delegation received a comprehensive briefing from Secretary WPC Dr. Shahida Rehmani and other Caucus members, highlighting their ongoing efforts and achievements in addressing women-specific issues. The WPC team emphasized the Caucus's commitment to empowering women through effective legislation and ensuring the proper implementation of existing laws for the benefit of the country's population.



REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT



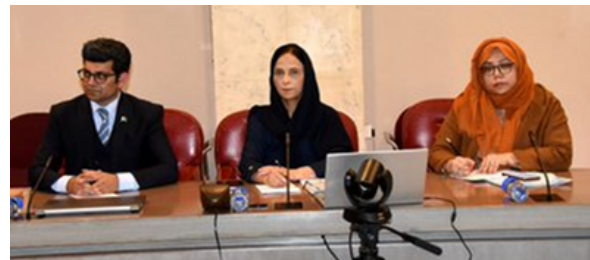
Virtual Meeting of Pak-Uzbek Parliamentary Friendship Group

The National Assembly of Pakistan hosted a virtual meeting between the Parliamentary Friendship Groups (PFGs) of Pakistan and Uzbekistan. Secretary WPC, Dr. Shahida Rehmani, who also serves as the Convener of the Pak-Uzbek PFG, along with Women Parliamentarians, actively participated in the meeting.



Meeting with Turkish Ambassador

Secretary WPC Dr. Shahida Rehmani along with Women Parliamentarians had a meeting with Turkish Ambassador Mr. Mehmet Paçacı. During the meeting, Dr. Rehmani conveyed her heartfelt sympathies and offered prayers for the victims of earthquake in Türkiye.



The discussions highlighted the mutual commitment to enhance bilateral institutional collaboration, including the exchange of delegations, fostering higher-level contacts, and exploring potential areas of cooperation.

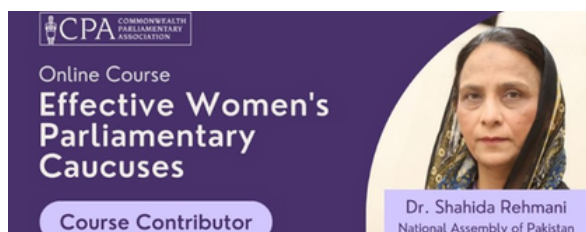


REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT

Dr. Rehmani underscored the significant role of PFGs in promoting inter-parliamentary relations and facilitating people-to-people contacts between the two nations. She emphasized the importance of strengthening cooperation in various areas of mutual interest for the benefit of both countries.

CPA LAUNCHES COURSE ON WOMEN'S PARLIAMENTARY CAUCUSES

Dr. Rehmani underscored the significant role of PFGs in promoting inter-parliamentary relations and facilitating people-to-people contacts between the two nations. She emphasized the importance of strengthening cooperation in various areas of mutual interest for the benefit of both countries.



Earlier, WPC was given special mention by the CPA as a successful

case study of Women Parliamentary Caucuses for others to follow.

WPC Leadership Meets with UN Women Representative to Discuss Future Collaborations for Women Empowerment

Secretary Women's Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) Dr. Shahida Rehmani and MNA Ms. Wajiha Qamar met with UN Women representative Mr Hassan Hakeem to explore potential collaborations aimed at promoting women empowerment and gender equality. The discussions focused on potential joint initiatives and programs, likely involving educational efforts, community awareness initiatives, policy advocacy, and increasing women participation across various societal sectors.



REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT

Secretary WPC Dr. Shahida Rehmani and MNAs Foster Bilateral Relations in Parliamentary Friendship Group Meeting with Syrian Delegation

Secretary WPC, Dr. Shahida Rehmani, along with a delegation of Members of the National Assembly (MNAs), participated in a fruitful parliamentary friendship group meeting with the Syrian Delegation. The meeting provided an opportunity for both countries to strengthen their ties and engage in meaningful dialogue, driven by a shared commitment to forging a prosperous future. Deliberations centered on deepening bilateral relations and identifying areas of mutual interest and cooperation. This diplomatic engagement underscores the commitment of both nations to fostering understanding, collaboration, and peaceful relations, laying the foundation for enhanced cooperation across various domains.



Meeting with Uzbekistan Ambassador to Enhance Bilateral Relations and Foster Cooperation

Dr. Shahida Rehmani held a meeting with the Ambassador of Uzbekistan at the WPC Secretariat. The meeting centered around discussions aimed at strengthening bilateral relations between Pakistan and Uzbekistan while exploring new avenues for cooperation across various sectors. The productive exchange highlighted the shared commitment of both countries to deepening diplomatic ties and fostering a fruitful partnership. The engagement signifies the beginning of an exciting chapter in the friendship between Pakistan and Uzbekistan, with promising prospects for collaboration and mutual growth.



REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT

Meeting with the Delegation from Kyrgyz Republic

Mr. Atazov Shailoobek MP, Chair of International Affairs, Defense Security and Immigration Committee of Parliament of Kyrgyz Republic held a meeting with Secretary Women Parliamentary Caucus, Ms. Shahida Rehman, and other Members National Assembly. Both sides reiterated to further strength the existing bilateral and Parliamentary relations between the two countries.



Meeting with the delegation of Kenya

Kenyan delegation, headed by H.E. Farah Maalim Mohamed Ahmed, MP Fourth Chairperson of Committees met Secretary Women Parliamentary Caucus Dr. Shahida Rehmani on sidelines of International Constitutional Convention. Hon. Members National Assembly of Pakistan expressed gratitude to the Excellencies for participating in the Golden Jubilee celebrations of the #Constitution1973 of Pakistan. They also congratulated Kenya on the peaceful holding of the August 2022 Presidential Elections, which augurs well for the democratic process.



REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT

UN Women and WPC Discuss Women's Political Participation in Pakistan



A meeting was held between Secretary WPC, Dr. Shahida Rehmani and the delegation from UN Women Mission - Regional Office. The contributions of Women MPs and their struggles were discussed in detail to understand their role in the political landscape of Pakistan. The meeting also focused on the destruction caused in the recent wake of floods and the adverse impact of climate change and how it impacts women and children. Exciting prospects for future collaborations in advancing women's empowerment and gender equality were discussed. Senator Sana Jamali highlighted the issues and opportunities present in Education sector for women and shared her personal observations from the relief work she had recently done along with Dr. Rehmani during floods.



ROUND TABLE OF POLITICAL PARTIES ON WOMEN'S MANIFESTO 2023



The Women's Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) organized the Roundtable of Political Parties on Women Manifestos two-day event, titled "All Party Women Manifesto", which is facilitated by UN Women. The event marked the first-ever initiative in Pakistan's 75-year history taken by political parties to critically outline their vision and framework to improve the lives of women in Pakistan. The inaugural session was chaired by Secretary WPC Dr. Shahida Rehmani followed by a series of breakout sessions in the presence of respective experts to discuss the themes of enhancing women's role in Politics, Law, Commerce, Education, IT, Climate Change and Health

Hon. Secretary WPC Dr. Shahida Rehmani stated that the women of Pakistan have played a key role in the political struggle of Pakistan. Women have carved their own paths in every field by proving their mettle. Further, she added that the role of women politicians is not limited only to reserved seats, but women like Fatima Jinnah, Benazir Bhutto Shaheed, and others have led the democratic struggle against dictatorships.



Breakout Sessions



Political Participation/Politics & Leadership



Healthcare



Inclusive Economic Growth/
Economic Empowerment of Women



Media & Culture



Education & Skills

Breakout Sessions



Women in STEM/ IT & Communication Technologies



Legal and Human Rights



Climate Change & Environment



Social Policy & Social Protection

Closing Ceremony



This two-day Women Manifestos event, titled "All Party Women Manifesto" seminar aims to serve as a forum for women to discuss the challenges faced after the pandemic and formulate a strategic roadmap and way forward regarding inclusive policies that are pivotal to empowering women and garnering gender equality. With a renewed commitment and focus, the WPC is aiming to provide a platform to political parties to facilitate discourse amongst political leaders with an aim to engender inclusivity in their political parties' manifestos ahead of the General Elections of Pakistan.



POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS AND LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES

Meeting with FES Pakistan (Friedrich Ebert Stiftung)



Secretary WPC Dr. Shahida Rehmani chaired a meeting with FES Pakistan. FES Pakistan works on following areas in the country:

- Parliamentary democracy
- Protection of human rights
- Free press
- Separation of powers
- Soundly-based rule of law

FES, therefore, promotes programmes and activities aimed at establishing and strengthening civil society and reinforcing democratic government institutions.

In the meeting held at WPC Secretariat, potential areas of mutual cooperation were discussed.



Meeting with Team of Tadveen project

A meeting was held between WPC members and Tadveen team (a project of Mantaq) at WPC Office. Following points were discussed in the meeting:

- a. Areas of mutual interest
- b. Avenues to comply in future

Meeting with Aurat Foundation Representatives

WPC Secretary Dr, Shahida Rehmani held a meeting with representatives from Aurat Foundation. Concerned parties discussed different ways to empower women in elections. It was discussed that providing women with equal suffrage rights is the first step towards empowering them in reality. Issues related to electoral reforms from gendered perspective were also discussed in the meeting.



POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS AND LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES

Secretary WPC Meeting with Country Director PODA Pakistan



Representatives of Potohar Organization for Development Advocacy (PODA) visited Women's Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) Secretariat. Secretary WPC Dr. Shahida Rehmani held a meeting with PODA representatives to discuss future areas of collaboration on empowering rural women at grassroot level. PODA works for the promotion of human rights and economic empowerment in rural areas of Pakistan.



Meeting with Federal Minister for Narcotics Control



A delegation of Women Parliamentarians under the leadership of Secretary WPC Ms. Shahida Rehmani called on the Federal Minister for Narcotics Control Mr. Nawabzada Shahzain Bugti to discuss the rampant use of drugs among youth.

Ms. Rehmani expressed her grave concerns on the rapid increase in use of drugs among youth. She reiterated that Ministry of Narcotics Control should take robust preventive measures to save the youth from this menace.

Mr. Bugti briefed the WPC delegation about different legislative measures that the Ministry is working on to save the youth from the menace of drugs.



POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS AND LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES

Meeting with Federal Minister for Narcotics Control



A WPC delegation, under the leadership of Secretary WPC Ms. Shahida Rehmani, met with the Chairman of the National Database and Registration Authority of Pakistan.



Mr. Tariq Malik at the NADRA head office, Islamabad, to discuss the initiatives being taken to include women in the national database. The delegation was briefed about the working of Succession Facilitation Unit of NADRA and raised questions about the countrywide women voters' registration and identity cards issuance on immediate basis. Women Parliamentarians also discussed and highlighted issues of socio-cultural barriers in registration

Meeting with UN Women Representatives



UN Women Country Representative Ms. Sharmeela Rassool & MNA Wajiha Qamar called on Speaker Raja Pervez Ashraf on 1st March 2023.



Both sides discussed ways and means to address problems of climate change and economic empowerment of women through collective efforts by involving all stakeholders. The speaker said he always strongly supported women empowerment as their inclusion & participation in decision making & economic sector was essential for sustainable development & building peaceful societies.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS AND LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES

Minority Rights Are Human Rights



Secretary WPC Dr. Shahida Rehmani and esteemed WPC members including Ms. Wajiha Qamar, Ms. Nuzhat Pathan, along with Mr. Kesoo Mal Kheal Das and Mr. Naveed Aamir Jeeva had a meeting with a delegation from National Leadership Dialogue for a crucial discussion on minority rights and the need to revise marriage and divorce laws regarding minorities according to the requirements of time. It was an insightful and collaborative meeting, emphasizing the need for inclusivity and equal opportunities.



Meeting with Islamabad Women's Chamber of Commerce (IWCC)



Secretary WPC, Dr. Shahida Rehmani held a meeting with the Islamabad Women's Chamber of Commerce. The discussion focused on strengthening women entrepreneurship in Pakistan by working across party lines. Ms. Samina Fazil (Founder President), Ms. Rizwana Asif (President), Ms. Sonia Saleem (Senior Vice President) and Ms. Naima Ansari (Former President) were among the delegation.



POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS AND LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES

Roundtable on Electoral Reforms in collaboration with Sindh WPC



The Women's Parliamentary Caucus co-organized the Roundtable on Electoral reforms in Sindh, in collaboration with the Sindh Women Caucus. The event, held at the Sindh Assembly, was arranged with the support of UN Women and UNDP. The discussion highlighted challenges & opportunities in enhancing the level of participation for women in electoral processes.

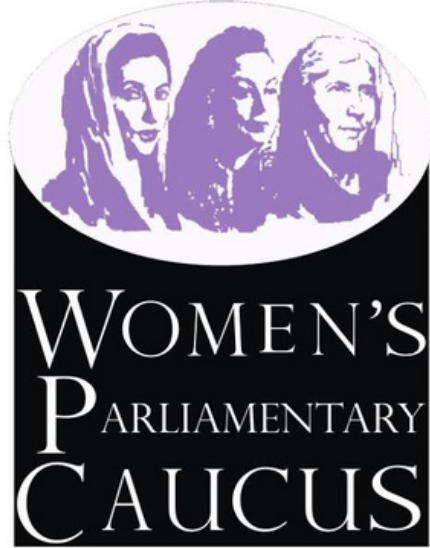


LOOKING AHEAD: STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE COMING YEAR

In the upcoming year, the Women's Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) is strategically focused on advancing women's empowerment and gender equality through targeted initiatives. The Caucus will continue to advocate for women's rights and inclusive policies by actively engaging in legislative processes and ensuring effective implementation and monitoring of gender-responsive legislation. Building strong partnerships and collaborations with national and international organizations, parliamentary bodies, and civil society stakeholders will be a priority to leverage collective expertise and resources. Capacity-building programs will be emphasized to equip women parliamentarians with the necessary skills to address challenges and seize opportunities. The WPC will also strengthen coordination with provincial women's caucuses to amplify the voices of women from diverse backgrounds and promote inter-provincial cooperation. By integrating a gender perspective into all development areas, the Caucus aims to contribute to a more equitable society aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), emphasizing gender equality, women's participation, and the elimination of gender-based violence. Through these strategic endeavors, the WPC envisions a society where women can thrive and achieve their full potential.

CONCLUSION: OUR CONTINUED COMMITMENT TO WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP

The Women's Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) reaffirms its resolute commitment to advancing women's leadership in Pakistan. Over the past year, the WPC has demonstrated an unwavering dedication to creating an inclusive legislative environment where women's voices are amplified, their rights protected, and their contributions valued. Through initiatives such as post-legislative scrutiny, gender-responsive budgeting, and collaborations with civil society and academia, the Caucus has actively worked towards addressing women-specific issues and fostering positive change. Recognizing the pivotal role of women's leadership in driving sustainable development and gender equality, the WPC is steadfast in its mission to provide more opportunities for women's political participation and active involvement in decision-making processes. With a collective vision for a society where every woman can flourish, the WPC remains united in its commitment to empower women and leave a lasting impact on the lives of women across Pakistan.



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