

Women, Employment and Labour in Informal Economy



Feminist Development Justice – 2021





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Report Prepared by

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Supported by



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Acronym

APWLD	Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development
BISP	Benazir Income Support Program
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
CNIC	Computerized National Identity Cards
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DWs	Domestic Workers
DRM/DRR	Disaster Risk Management /Disaster Risk Reduction
FES	Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Pakistan
GDP	Gross Development Product
GMIS	Gender Management Information System
GoP	Government of Pakistan
HIES	Household Integrated Economic Survey
HBWs	Home Base Workers
ILO	International Labour Organization
ICT	Islamabad Capital Territory
IMF	International Monetary Fund
LHRD	Labour and Human Resource Development
LFPR	Labour Force Participation Rate
LFS	Labour Force Survey
LG	Local Government
NCSW	National Commissions on the Status of Women
ND-GAIN	Notre Dame Global Adaptation Initiative
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
PCSW	Provincial Commission on Status of Women
PPPs	Public Private Partnership
PSLM	Pakistan Social & Living Standard Measurement Survey
PBS	Pakistan Bureau of Statistics
PDA	Pakistan Development Alliance
PSPA	Punjab Social Protection Authority

Q1 & Q2	Quarter 1 & 2
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SME	Small and Medium Enterprise
SoP	Standard optional Procedure
UNDP	United National Development Programme
VNR	Voluntary National Review
WEF	World Economic Forum

Acknowledgement

The monitoring and review of SDG 5 and 8 was possible only because of the participation and support of women human rights groups and labour organizations, and other key stakeholders. Our sincere gratitude to the women home workers and domestic workers who participated in the processes and shared their insightful experiences during the interviews, discussions, dialogues and consultations. The immense knowledge of the personal journey of these powerful women from the informal economy, during the challenging times of the pandemic, made it possible for us to document the process. We are also grateful to the representatives their support and facilitation throughout the period. The awareness and sensitization sessions were indeed a great learning for the organization also. Larger sharing of the courageous women's life stories, personal journeys of daily struggle for livelihood and decent living conditions made it possible to understand and unveil the patriarchal fabric enshrined within the systemic barriers creating hurdles for accessing the fundamental constitutional right as workers. The young energetic women who participated in the research and shared their aspirations for a better future with sustainable livelihood and legitimate recognition added more to the whole process. Their conviction, passion and commitment for collective actions ascertained their ability to take up the women labour movement to a level where their voices are included in policies.

The community of women leaders from Karachi and Lahore deserve applause because of their inspirational and motivational input especially during the pandemic. HomeNet Pakistan team also deserved recognition. Despite several challenges, they were able to diligently complete the related activities, initiate dialogues, plan and facilitate the consultative processes and several sessions with the community women, government officials and civil society.

Finally, we extend our appreciation to the Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law, and Development for their insightful comments, guidance, technical and financial support without which the monitoring and review process would not have been possible.

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Executive Summary

Women under-represented and under-valued in the national economy and labour market is one of the most critical factors contributing to the economic inequality in Pakistan. The World Economic Forum Global Gender Gap Report 2021 (GGGR)¹ states that Pakistan has one of the largest economic gender gaps, 31.6 percent, along with Iran, India, Pakistan Syria, Yemen, Iraq and Afghanistan. The Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) 2017-18 national census states labour force participation among women of all ages is 14.52 percent and male participation at 48.32 percent². This disparity translates into income inequality, as a Pakistani woman's income is only 16.3 percent of a man's.³ With high inequality in the wage structure, women have limited choice to work and employment.

Women workers employed in the 74 percent of the informal sector of Pakistan are vulnerable. Home-based work and domestic care work is considered an 'acceptable'⁴ choice for women who need additional income to support their families. In Pakistan, home-based workers (HBWs) and domestic workers (DWs) are overwhelmingly women. According to estimates, there are more than 12 million HBWs and 8 million DWs in Pakistan. The number of women employed on the home-based sector is rising at a rate of five percent a year⁵.

Home-based workers as part of informal labour workforce are workers who carry out remunerative work in their home or in other premises of their choice, other than the workplace of the employer, which results in a product or service as specified by the employer (irrespective of who provides the equipment, materials or other inputs used). Persons with employee status and those who occasionally perform their work at home, rather than at their usual place of work, are not considered home-based workers (ILO R184 - Home Work Recommendation, 1996 (No. 184).

According to ILO Domestic workers are those workers who perform work in or for a private household or households. They provide direct and indirect care services, and as such are key members of the care economy. Their work may include tasks such as cleaning the house, cooking, washing and ironing clothes, taking care of children, or elderly or sick members of a family, gardening, guarding the house, driving for the family, and even taking care of household pets. A domestic worker may work on full-time or part-time basis; may be employed by a single household or through or by a service provider; may be residing in the household of the employer (live-in worker) or may be living in his or her own residence (live-out). A domestic worker may be working in a country of which she/he is not a national, thus referred to as a migrant domestic worker.

¹ Global Gender Gap Report 2021, World Economic Forum
http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2021.pdf

² https://www.pbs.gov.pk/sites/default/files//Labour%20Force/publications/lfs2017_18/TABLE-15_perc_R.pdf

³ Global Gender Gap Report 2021, World Economic Forum
http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2021.pdf

⁴ Home-Based Workers in Pakistan: Statistics and Trends, Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO) Statistical Brief No.9, December 2013

⁵ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1631932>

COVID-19 severely disrupted labour markets around the world, including Pakistan due to workplace closures driven by lockdowns and mobility restrictions. The effects of labour market disruption brought about by the pandemic have been disproportionate. It increased the vulnerability of an already marginalized segment of the workforce, like the informal economy workers, including the HBWs and DWs. It is worth noting that 81% of home-based workers in Pakistan are women.⁶

Prevalence of violence against women and the dominance of patriarchal attributes within the country ranks Pakistan at 159 in the SDG index and 153 out of 156 countries on the Global gender parity index. Country's gender gap has widened over the years and have dropped and 0.7 percent in just one year⁷ (Iqbal, 2021). Despite several pro-women legislations, initiatives for social and economic sustainability, global gender indicators present another deep-rooted phenomenon, which highlights a semi feudal and semi-capitalist patriarchal overarching environment in the neoliberal era. Due to societal conditioning, women consider their main and primary role in the private family unit influenced to be under subordination and reinforces gender stereotypes. Thus the existing prejudices against women in general further reinforces inequality between men and women due to power structures, working silently and forcing women to conform to the existing standards within the societal structure, which make them feel inadequate, inappropriate and inapt.

While Pakistan has many challenges, it is not without opportunities. Circumstances and necessities of communities are changing which is gradually paving the way for women to participate particularly in social and economic spheres of life. Adhering to the commitment to the SDGs implementation framework, several government departments and non-governmental organizations have introduced various interventions focusing on women economic empowerment, and hundreds of women have graduated from such programs, which indicates the willingness of the communities to engage in productive activities. Moreover, the government's efforts to create synergies between the development agenda and indicators, localizing the targets and indicators related to amplifying women's voices and creating impact at the ground remains challenged due to several impediments and systemic barriers within the overall structure of the country.

Women rights organizations are however, involved in monitoring and assessing the ground situation and are committed to advocate and lobby for the need-based recommendations in order to have effective and sustainable policy frameworks based on people's representation. In Pakistan, development projects are not demand-driven and are mostly conceive for political significance. With lack of data backing and demand, the policies implementation on ground remains ineffective and lacks the political will, which further weakens the entire institutional structure.

The overall initiative for the recognition of the informal economy and specifically women in the home-based and domestic care work belonging to the most vulnerable populations remains an important segment of the labor workforce. Women and labour organizations have continuously reached out to women in the informal economy and through this research; we

⁶ Pakistan labor force Survey 2017-18.

⁷ How to Address The Gender Gap In Pakistan? Nasir Iqbal, 2021

<https://pide.org.pk/research/how-to-address-the-gender-gap-in-pakistan/>

were able to present an overview on the issues they face and the systemic barriers, and challenges to development justice.

The report reviews the development agenda in the context of the privatization programs as part of the economic and structural reforms agenda of the Government of Pakistan. Privatization along with deregulation and promises of good governance, seeks to enhance the growth and productivity of Pakistan's economy, by harnessing the private sector as its engine of growth. This framework is supported by policies of international financial institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and have instead further exacerbated the crisis. Through neoliberal policies, businesses are able to take over major thematic and fundamental constitutional obligations of the government such as health, education, housing, power energy, water, sanitation and solid waste management. This has disproportionately influenced the lives of ordinary and poor citizens; most vulnerable are women in the informal economy. This report would like to present the realities and stories of women belonging to the informal employment strata, present the analyses from the grassroots perspectives and present alternatives based on the development justice framework, and contribute to advocacy and lobby work in promoting their social and economic challenges through effective and collective advocacy.

Country Context

Country Snapshot

In developing countries, the middle class now makes up more than 34 percent of total employment a number that has almost tripled between 1991 and 2015 onwards.

As the global economy plunges once again into crisis due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there is further widening inequalities observed with inadequate jobs to keep up with a growing labour force. Pakistan unemployment rate for 2021 was 4.35%, a 0.05% increase from 2020. Pakistan unemployment rate for 2020 was 4.30%, a 0.76% increase from 2019. According to Trading Economics global macro models and analysts' expectations, unemployment Rate in Pakistan is expected to reach 12.00 percent by the end of 2022 According to the International Labour Organization, more than 204 million people were unemployed in 2015 worldwide and the ratio seems to be increasing ever since.

There has been unstable GDP growth from 2021 due to the continuing COVID-19 surges and lockdowns. The first until the 2nd quarter of 2022 seems to be recovering as the local economy slowly opens and there were low-recorded cases. The national poverty rate soared to 43 percent and 38.7 percent in April and May 2020 respectively⁸. While export growth remained upbeat in October–November, import growth continued to surge over the same period predominantly is a result of still-elevated commodity prices translating into surging prices for fuel, food and bodes poorly for consumption activity.⁹ This has been affecting mostly the poor and those without access to social protection and employment.

A majority of the poor in Pakistan are part of the informal economy. This includes home-based workers, domestic workers, sanitary workers and care workers having no formal contractual arrangements. Under the existing laws, they are also ineligible for social protection. Women workers make up 74 percent of the informal economy. Women from poor

- Pakistan current estimated population is 224,218,687.
- GDP per capita in Pakistan \$1,186 in 2020-21.
- Pakistan has a modified Palma ratio of 4.7, meaning that the richest quintile has 4.7 times the income of the poorest quintile.
- UNDP Gender Inequality Index Value 0.538.
- UNDP Gender Inequality Index Rank 154.
- Military Expenditure (2020) 1,289,134 Rs. (In million).
- Health Expenditure (2020) 25,494 Rs. (In million).
- Education Expenditure (2020) 83,363 Rs.(in million).
- Total External Debt (2020) 245,344 Rs. (In million)

(Reference by Pakistan Budget Salient features of Budget 20-21)

⁸ COVID-19: Estimating impact on the economy and poverty in Pakistan: Using SAM Multiplier Model; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.2499/p15738coll2.134244>

⁹ According to the World Bank, a majority of the people living on no more than \$1 a day are women. In addition, the gap between the number of men and women living in poverty has continued to widen over the past decade.

There are two types of definitions for poverty, absolute and relative. Absolute definitions involve a lack of sufficient means to obtain food, clothing and shelter. Relative definitions use various criteria to determine how constrained people's lives are in terms of decent living.

households lack access to decent employment. In the absence of social protection frameworks in the informal economy, the economic stress caused by COVID-19 has pushed more women into home-based work, domestic help and farm work as wage earners. This has resulted in a further lowering of the wages offered to them¹⁰. Socially, the informal workers are trapped in a power structure that keeps them dependent on exploitative employers.

Among the main causes of poverty, a lack of adequate income and assets is the most crucial one as it results in a failure to ensure access to basic necessities like food, shelter, clothing and acceptable levels of health and education. Assets, in this context include skills and good health, land, access to infrastructure, savings, access to credit and networks of contacts and reciprocal obligations. The lack of voice in decision-making is also a factor for their vulnerabilities.

Socio Economic Status of Women

Women workers in the informal economy are some of the poorest amongst the poor for several reasons. They bear a double burden: poverty and the gender bias in social and economic life. The bias reflected very prominently in national income statistics. Women constitute a majority of the agricultural workforce but many of them work without any remuneration as “unpaid family help.”

Most of the women in domestic help employment come from poor and rural communities that settled in urban areas. The rampant poverty and unemployment are push factors for the rural poor. The lack of suitable mechanisms to provide job seekers work closer to their homes makes these women leave their homes and come to cities as domestic workers. Their lack of readily marketable skills and low-income status speak for their vulnerabilities. Children are particularly vulnerable to exploitation and harassment. It is important to note that the mediators encourage and perpetuate deference, docility and subservience among such workers.

The dependency in seeking employment and placement has led to the commodification of women in domestic service. The middle persons perpetuate exploitation as observed. Such activities entrench patriarchal values and subordination of women workers. This also reinforces labour market segmentation so that women from marginalized communities are pushed into low-wage and precarious work without any protection, checks and complaints mechanism. The middle persons or agents are therefore part of a system that contributes to growing labour mobility. The decline in GDP growth over the recent years is also reflective of the decline in employment rate, labour productivity and real wages in both agriculture and manufacturing industries. In the absence of inclusive economic growth strategies, roadmaps and public funded initiatives, the situation is likely to worsen.

Male unemployment and migration also tend to push more and more women into informal work. Women are also poorer because of unequal access to resources and their distribution. Poverty linked to statistical invisibility of women in home-based sector, lack of control over productive resources, limited participation in political and economic affairs, lack of land ownership and gender discrimination in labour markets. The problem is further exacerbated by lack of access to health facilities, education and skill training.

¹⁰ <https://www.thenews.com.pk/tns/detail/760621-feminisation-of-informal-economy>

High fertility and high population growth rates, ill health and poverty are link in a vicious cycle. Despite its claims of race and gender-neutrality, neoliberalism is replacing the old hierarchies with new patterns of racism and sexism. An increase in the low-paid, part-time contingent service sector and outsourced manufacturing work relies disproportionately on marginalized women. The dramatic expansion of a low-wage service and manufacturing sector on a global scale has intensified their exploitation and reshaped the labour market. The growing employment sectors tend to be without benefits or labour protections, while full-time, well-paid manufacturing jobs are on the decline. This shift in the labor market has resulted in women increasingly carrying the burden of financially supporting the family by entering into informal contracts in manufacturing chains.

Neoliberalism and its impact on the workforce

Neoliberalism has also created a new political, economic, and cultural context through deregulation, privatization, securitization, and the dismantling of the welfare state. These changes have had a contradictory impact on women. Neoliberalism has overturned the benefits of social welfare citizenship especially in the low-income countries, limiting those to the organized sector and excluding the unorganized working class. The dismantling of the economic safety net, trend toward privatization and the rise of the security state have increased the burden on women. The reduction or elimination of welfare benefits for the poor, cutback of social services, reliance on market strategies, and mass confinement have led to a crisis of social reproduction and a corresponding increase in women's workloads.¹¹ With a decline in social rights and publicly funded support services, women have access to fewer economic resources and must either turn to the private sector or increase their own unpaid labour.

Socio-economic indicators and the SDGs

Pakistan with an estimated population of over 220 million in 2021, and a growth rate of 1.95 per cent per year is adding 5.28 million people per year to its population. With decreasing ranking on the global indexes, Pakistan ranked 153 in the Global Gender Gap Index and 154th in human development index; the overall performance on socio-economic indicators remains an area of high concern. With 38 percent of its population living with multidimensional poverty,¹² the unequal distribution of resources, lack of budgetary allocation for socio economic development and weak structures for monitoring, presents a high risk at local level. Population growth with increased inflation and inadequate distribution of resources further adds on the challenges and remains one of the biggest challenges of country's development, with 60 percent of its population below the age of 25, and a fertility rate at 3.5 births per woman¹³.

The uncertain GDP, debts, IMF, increased inflation during the pandemic up to 11 percent in 2020-21 and 13 percent in 2022 is the highest inflation that over the years has been burdening the vulnerable segments with increased taxation General Sales tax (GST) and high utility bills. In addition, despite improved life expectancy, infant and maternal mortality in Pakistan remains significantly high, indicating the gap in health services to the female population.

¹¹ <https://www.thenews.com.pk/tns/detail/760621-feminisation-of-informal-economy>

¹² <https://www.policyforum.net/pakistans-substantial-development-challenge/>

¹³ <https://www.policyforum.net/pakistans-substantial-development-challenge/> Dr Tahmina Rashid

Pakistan also remains one of only three countries that have not yet been able to eradicate polio.

Other sectoral challenges

In the education sector, literacy rates remain abysmal at 59 percent, especially female literacy, which stands at roughly 50 per cent, compared to male literacy at 68 per cent. The quality of education and employability of school graduates is very low, and the growing young population has little to no access to quality schooling.

Pakistan is also facing a huge energy crisis. This is not a recent issue both domestic and industry users have suffered power shortages and blackouts for years. The energy sector relies on hydroelectric, thermal, nuclear and some renewables, though non-renewables remain the largest source. As the global economy continues to recover with slower growth patterns, huge widening of inequalities, in terms of reduced employment, implementation of minimum wages and access to social security remains a high challenge for the growing labour force with new entrants of platform economy as an informal workforce.

Among the main causes of poverty, a lack of adequate income and assets is the most crucial one as it results in a failure to ensure access to basic necessities like food, shelter, clothing and acceptable levels of health and education. Assets, in this context include skills and good health, land, access to infrastructure, savings, access to credit and networks of contacts and reciprocal obligations. Alongside these challenges is the lack of people's participation in decision-making thus further making them more vulnerable to these crises.

The decline in GDP growth over the recent years has led to a decline in employment rate, labour productivity and real wages in both agriculture and manufacturing industries. In the absence of inclusive economic growth strategies, roadmaps and public funded initiatives, the situation is likely to worsen.

Pakistan presently ranks among the worst countries in gender parity, only above Iraq, Yemen, and Afghanistan. According to the “Global Gender Gap Report 2021” published by the World Economic Forum (WEF), Pakistan ranked 153rd out of 156 countries on the gender parity index. The country ranked seventh among eight countries in South Asia, only better than Afghanistan. Pakistan's gender gap has widened by 0.7 percentage points in just one year. WEF uses four sub-indexes to arrive at the rank of 156 countries. Pakistan ranked 153rd in health and survival, 152nd in economic participation and opportunity, 144th in educational attainment, and 98th in political empowerment indices. The said report reflects that Pakistan has failed to improve its score on gender parity in the last sixteen years (the gender parity score was 0.553 in 2006 and is 0.556 in 2021). Neighboring countries, including Bangladesh and India, have shown remarkable improvement to reduce the gender gap. For Bangladesh, the gender parity score has improved from 0.627 in 2006 to 0.719 in 2021 and the country is ranked 65th in the world out of 156 countries.

Socio-economic impact of the pandemic to women in informal economy

The social-economic impacts of the pandemic due to lockdowns have been critical for the development of and emerging economies (UNDP, 2020). COVID-19 lockdown policies have further exacerbated the already existing gender inequalities especially the wage and income. With decreasing GDP and increasing unemployment, developing countries like Pakistan

faced rising inflation, poverty and food insecurity among the 80 percent of the population employed in informal occupations.

While the Pakistani economy suffers as a whole, it is the informal economy, which is more vulnerable to economic shocks and downturns¹⁴. For informal workers, the estimation is that short and long-term impacts of COVID- 19 will manifest ‘disproportionately and differently’ for women as compared to men (UNDP, 2020). Women in the informal sector tend to earn and save less, have lower job security and restricted access to social protection. Additionally, women working in non-essential service industries such as food service, hospitality and domestic work (housekeeping and childcare) were more likely to be lose jobs or exploited for their labor during the pandemic and resulting economic crisis. The informal sector, which predominantly comprises women workers, is also mark by limited access to capital, credit constraints and high rates of business failures as compared to the formal sector. Gender norms also contribute to the layers of discrimination against women on access to finance buyers, networks, and technology. These vulnerabilities are likely to be intensify due to the COVID-19 pandemic. According to ILO, 5% of employed women lost their jobs due to the pandemic compared to 3.9% of the men.

Progress of the SDG goals

Pakistan has prioritized the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) enabling it to join the league of upper middle-class countries by 2030. Pakistan was the first country to adopt SDGs 2030 agenda through a unanimous resolution of the Parliament of Pakistan in 2016.

In a recent Sustainable Development Goal Index (SDG) ranking, Pakistan ranked 129th out of 165 countries in a recent Sustainable Development Goal Index (SDG) ranking, with an overall score of 57.7 percent, mainly for its progress on Goal 13 one of the 17 goals climate action.

The country saw moderate improvements in the goals for poverty, health and wellbeing, water and sanitation, decent work, peace and justice, and partnership, but it stagnated on zero hunger, quality education, gender equality, clean energy, innovation, sustainable cities and communities, and ‘life below water’. It actually went backwards on ‘life on land’.

In 2021, Pakistan was ranked 153th in the Global Gender Gap Index in 2020, it ranked 154th on Human Development Index with 38 percent of its population living with multidimensional poverty¹⁵.

SDG implementation commitments of the government

The government of Pakistan under provincial planning and development with the support of UNDP has established SDG units working closely with CSOs on SDGs related awareness and reporting. In 2022, for the VNR processes and reporting sub-national unit (SDGs Unit) in Punjab collaborated with CSOs for collection of data on thematic goals for VNR reporting. The report is under preparation. Simultaneously, GoP has started a process of consultation with CSOs for VNR processes which is very encouraging.

¹⁴ Covid 19 The New Normal for women in Informal Economy; The Asia Foundation (TAF) & Institute of Development and Economic Alternatives (IDEAS) 2020-21

¹⁵ <https://www.policyforum.net/pakistans-substantial-development-challenge/>

A step forward, the mission for SDG implementation as reported by SDG units, administered at the grassroots level via the local government (LG) system for bottom up engagement and implementation of targets as majority coverage areas stand devolved to the provinces and onwards to the district level. Representatives of the LGs at the district level engaged at national and provincial levels to their priorities. Most referred to education, health, water and unemployment as top issues. The absence of bathrooms and transport facilities affecting female education has also emerged as an important issue.

The province of Punjab has one of the robust gender equality and women protection systems. It is the only province with a Gender Management Information System (GMIS), Safe City Authority, Social Protection Authority and Women Protection Authority in addition to the Women Development Department, Punjab Commission for the Status of Women (PCSW), and Social Welfare Department.

Law enforcing agencies in Punjab are also playing a very active role and have established women protection centers in every district of Punjab. PCSW has its dedicated women protection helpline 1043. A separate Gender Desk under the newly established Gender Unit within Punjab police is established at police stations for facilitation of women for complaints under VAW. The Multi-sectoral Working Group on Goal 5 within the Punjab Assembly established in 2021 has also emerged as an overarching monitoring parliamentary body for achieving targets under Goal 5 in Punjab. It encompasses the Goal 5 Targets and with participation of all the relevant stakeholders. While Punjab has developed a strong mechanism to achieve the SDGs, several challenges remain especially in achieving Goal 5. The inactive Punjab Provincial Commission of the Status of Women (PCSW) with a vacant Chairperson position for the past 4 years has created a vacuum in the implementation of the SDGs related interventions within provinces. Adequate budget allocation is required for proper and institutional functioning of the Gender Management Information System (GMIS) for regular data collection and management from 36 districts. Although growth and social development should go side by side, growth in Pakistan has not contributed to balanced social development in recent decades, primarily due to high levels of population growth. As a result, many of Pakistan's social indicators do not match significant levels of economic growth, averaging 4 percent per year. This makes the Sustainable Development Goals a key priority for the country.¹⁶No matter the government has taken steps to make strong mechanisms for implementation of SDGs yet the integration of SDGs targets and indicators in the development planning are still missing at the district level. The discussions of SDG related targeted development is missing in the major discussions of provincial and national assemblies. The absence of effective local government is a major gap in ensuring the effective implementation of SDGs.

¹⁶ <https://www.thenews.com.pk/tns/detail/760621-feminisation-of-informal-economy>

Systemic Barriers

Unjust Trade and Investment Agreement

High external country debt

In recent years and especially during the pandemic, Pakistan took huge loans and foreign aid to deliver its development programs. However, the huge amount of loans is not translating to genuine development and in the achievement of the SDGs in the country.

According to the State Bank of Pakistan, until December 2019, the total external debt and liabilities were at \$110.7 billion (Chaudhury,2021). This is also an indication that Pakistan faces pressure from developed countries who provide these aids and loans. During the fiscal year 2021, the country's exports registered about \$25.304 billion¹⁷ whereas imports were at \$56.380 billion.¹⁸ In order to have a conducive environment ensuring women in trade and investment, the whole structure of direct and indirect taxation, subsidies, and regulations, federal and provincial levies did not include women in the SMEs and micro entrepreneurship.

The challenges and implications in direct foreign investments and disputes arising because of these investments have subsequent effect on the economic growth and GDP¹⁹. Foreign direct investment (FDI) in Pakistan encompasses smaller range of industries prominently energy, electricity and technology. Over the years, there have been disputes on FDI leading to judgment against Pakistan²⁰.

Pakistan as a developing country face challenges of political instability, unstable economy, poor governance and inefficient resources. The bilateral agreements for foreign investments presents challenges due to the incompatible resource mapping for utilizations of investments. Instead, it ends up in creating debts and disputes and affecting lives of the citizens with increased inflation, dollarization, and inflation.

The policies on international trade, facilitation of customs & tariffs, export duties, quality certification, market access, order compliance, standardization, trade facilitation for SMEs, international exhibitions are not able to address issues and concerns of women. Facilities for branding, marketing, compliances, standardization of products for trade require handholding for women in the micro sector. Women also face challenges in entrepreneurship development,

¹⁷https://www.pbs.gov.pk/sites/default/files//external_trade/annual_analytical_report_on_external_trade_statistics_of_pakistan_2020-21.pdf

¹⁸ According to the World Bank, a majority of the people living on no more than \$1 a day are women. In addition, the gap between the number of men and women living in poverty has continued to widen over the past decade. There are two types of definitions for poverty, absolute and relative. Absolute definitions involve a lack of sufficient means to obtain food, clothing and shelter. Relative definitions use various criteria to determine how constrained people's lives are in terms of decent living.

¹⁹ Disputes Arising Out Of Foreign Direct Investments In Pakistan: A New Look At Legal And Political Issues <https://pjia.com.pk/index.php/pjia/article/view/496/3>

²⁰ Tethyan Copper v Pakistan Tethyan Copper Company Pty Limited v Islamic Republic of Pakistan, ICSID Case No. ARB/12/1

Bayindir Insaat Turizm Ticaret ve Sanayi a.s. V. Islamic republic of Pakistan (ICSID case no. Arb/03/29)
Karkey Karadeniz Elektrik Uretim a.s. V. Islamic republic of Pakistan, ICSID case no. Arb/13/1

establishment of new enterprises, start-ups, marketing, branding and sustainability of businesses.

The IMF concluded its Article IV mission in late November, reaching a staff-level agreement to complete the sixth review under the USD 6 billion Extended Fund Facility, which will likely resume the stalled program and unlock USD 1 billion in funds to Pakistan.²¹

Net official development assistance and official aid received (current US\$) in Pakistan was reported at 2170739990 USD in 2019, according to the World Bank collection of development indicators, compiled from officially recognized sources.

Net ODA received (%of GNI) in 2019 is 0.8 and net ODA received (per capita) in 2019 is 10.

Unemployment Rate in Pakistan increased to 4.40 percent in 2020 from 4.10 percent in 2019. source: Pakistan Bureau of Statistics

The number of employed persons in Pakistan increased to 64030 thousand in 2019 from 61710 thousand in 2018. source: State Bank of Pakistan

Lack of Support to Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)

More than 70% of the women working in the informal sector are HBWs. The least visible of them are women, who sell or produce goods from their homes, face lot of difficulty in promoting, finding investment and finances.

Pakistan's economy has three main sectors – agriculture, manufacturing and services. Whereas Pakistani SMEs continue to face various threats and challenges in all the three sectors specifically in agriculture where the major share of labour force participation in the agriculture sectors goes unrecognized due to informality. The manufacturing sector with huge Cotton textile production and apparel manufacturing , accounting for about 65% of the merchandise exports and almost 45% of the employed labor force have evidence of informality. The workers employed in the home base sector remains unrecognized and hidden. The poor infrastructure, lack of entrepreneurial skills, insufficient financial resources, outdated production facilities, low level of capabilities, incompetent workers, a complex taxation system, and difficulties to get loans from financial institutions further shirks the spaces for small manufactures, enterprises and service sector. Rising commodity prices and a large fiscal deficit have inflated the import bill, putting the country on the verge of a balance of payments crisis. In the short-run, SME's output, human development index, credit to SME, and annual export rate are the main drivers of economic development. However, SMEs face challenges from limited access to finance, lack of databases, low research and development (R&D) expenditures, undeveloped sales channels, and low levels of financial inclusion, which are some of the reasons behind the slow growth of SMEs.

Moreover, the government has no social protection for SMEs in order to grow and expand. The overall business environment for supporting women-led SMEs is not conducive in terms

²¹ <https://www.focus-economics.com/countries/pakistan>

of direct and indirect taxes, subsidies, regulations. This is despite the World Bank report states that SMEs contribute up to 40% of national income (GDP) in emerging economies. These numbers are significantly higher when informal SMEs are included.²²

With regard to facilitating SMEs access to finance provisions e.g. interest rate financial schemes, collateral requirements etc., women still face challenges due to high interest rates, which are almost 22-33%. In addition, there are not many schemes for women home-based workers or women in their own account businesses available. Most programs for SMEs are developed without the grassroots women, leaving them further behind in influencing policy-making.

Corporate Capture

State and Corporate Actors

In a neoliberal model, governments and multinational firms work hand in hand. Policies mostly are developed benefitting private corporations. This also leads to repressed labor conditions, gender-based discriminations and other exploitative conditions for the workers and their communities.

According to the LFA analysis conducted by WIEGO, in recent years, home-based work has grown in Pakistan. This growth is due to an increase in the number of women doing home-based work, while the number of men in home-based work has declined. The majority of agricultural and non-agricultural home-based workers are in rural areas: 95 percent and 59 percent, respectively; this remained the same across both times. Among non-agricultural workers, almost half (48 per cent) are women in rural areas and one-third are women in urban areas. This represents an increase in women's share of home-based work in both rural and urban areas²³

Figures reflected a tripling of the number of women in home-based manufacturing, particularly in textiles and apparel industry from 517,912 to 1,773,139 workers. Most of the home-based workers sell or produce goods from their homes instead.

Privatization and decreasing public commitments

The privatization program is part of the economic and structural reforms agenda of the Government of Pakistan that along with deregulation and good governance, seeks to enhance the growth and productivity of Pakistan's economy, by harnessing the private sector as its engine of growth. Former Prime Minister, Shaukat Aziz who first consolidated the industries under one platform and restructured them before setting them to the privatization market introduced major economic reforms. During the years (1999-2008), it intensified due to the pressure and influence of IMF and World Bank related policies. Privatization describes the process by which a piece of property or business goes from publically owned by the government to private ownership. It generally helps governments save money and increase efficiency, where private companies can move goods quicker and more efficiently. Unfortunately, under the influence of multilateral and neoliberal institutions, the government

²² <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/sme/finance>

²³ Home-Based Workers in Pakistan A Statistical Profile, Statistical Brief No 26 October 2020, WIEGO Sajjad Akhtar

has not gained much under the privatization programs. In fact, it has supported instead the businesses and capitalism to grow smoothly and silently to capture major thematic and fundamental constitutional obligations of the government such as health, education, housing, power energy, water, sanitation and solid waste management, and other gender-related services.

Due to the reduced fiscal space over the years, the government is always welcoming engagement with the private sector as a reliable source and partner in infrastructure development and social development through CSR. Public Private Partnership (PPPs) over the years in the country has progressed and it continues to engage the private sector in different development efforts. However, this poses a great danger to public financing and government services as it continues to take over and seek profits from these services.

The pandemic has led to an inflation crisis. Privatization, on the other hand, has further eroded away basic services from the people. With increased and reported inflation in the country up to 11 percent in 2020, utilities and food items prices keep increasing. In developing countries like Pakistan, under the developed capital market, makes it difficult for the government to float shares and for individual buyers to finance the large purchase.

Due to the hegemonic structures, disinvestment tends to arise political opposition from employees who may lose their jobs due to non-permanent or short-term employment status and lack of collective bargaining under union structures. The employers used the particular tactic during the pandemic, where under the consequence of liquidation of cost reduction by private owners.

The main disadvantage of the private sector in Pakistan is that it has fallen much short of what this sector is capable of or what it has achieved in some other countries. As practice, the private sector is not interested in cost reduction and quality production, protection of employees and their social security, unfair practices adopted where businesses indulge in generating black money and corruption leaving no space for transparency and accountability. However, there are opportunities for genuine and innovative entrepreneurship. However, the processes for small and medium enterprises are too complicated.

The high cost economy is another problematic area for developing countries like Pakistan where the cost, in general, are large and the price of products are unduly high. International tariffs and high taxation barring a small proportion of companies that are efficient and show a good profitability ratio, many are insufficient. The cost of production becomes high partly because of the poor technology and poor management.

Another important thing to note is the high cost of raw materials and components of higher rate of indirect taxations, which further aggravates the situation with shortfall of power for the industries. Consequently, a huge number of small units were partially close and they laid off the workers during the pandemic during the lockdown. Women were laid off permanently from the major industries; whereas men were retained after the lock down.

With the immense concentration of economic power, the private sector has emerged as a hegemonic force with a major concentration of economic power bestowed because of political interests. The dominance of few big businesses viewed as a social problem when it comes to gender and labour justice and equality.

Over the years, it has been observed that policymaking is under the influence of the capitalists' forces. With an increase of entrants in the parliament, the industrialists are influencing the policymaking in their benefits and neglecting the overall working classes. The increased influence of neo liberalism and capitalist forces at work are capturing the policy-making units thus controlling the fair regulation of policymaking and implementation of laws. The overall semi capitalist and semi feudal policy maker's dominant forces are active within parliament and capture the major discussions. Thus, the policies revolve around major industries in agriculture as corporate farming, special economic zones within industrial areas leveraging more to the profit oriented initiatives and less on labour rights and protection.

Land and Resource Grabbing

Women all over the world, especially in South Asia, face institutional obstacles to control land and other productive resources. Their low entitlements such as restricted access to land ownership and credit as well as a lower literacy rate and management skills make women more vulnerable. Women in home-based work often denied access to credit and assets and their role in productivity are not recognized. Their health care and nutritional needs are not a priority and they lack sufficient access to education and support services. Their participation in decision making at home and at community level is also restricted.

According to Punjab Gender Parity Report 2018-20, Punjab's female Labour Force participation Rate (LFPR) is, however, higher than the national average of 20.1%. Rural female LFPR at 34.3% is considerably higher than urban female LFPR at 13.6%. Between 2018 and 2020 in Punjab, male and female landowners increased by 6.2% and 6.8%, respectively. However, the land ownership of women is still less as compared to men.

Illegal and acquisition

In Karachi, home-based workers are located in the peripheries of Karachi where mostly the land mafias through unknown people have threatened them with displacement and dislocation for many years

Distribution of Land

In Karachi, land distribution for commercial purposes is without appropriate city or town planning. There are very few public parks and more shopping malls and business and trade centers constructed in a manner that lead to further road congestion making it difficult for people to commute and adding to already existing heavy pollution.

Case study: Land Grabbing by Government for development projects under Urbanization - River Ravi Development Authority Project

RUDA is an approved urban development mega project in Lahore District, Punjab, Pakistan that runs along the Ravi River in a northeast to southwest direction. It includes the construction of a 40,000-hectare (100,000-acre) planned city and the rehabilitation of the Ravi River into a perennial freshwater body. The project expected to complete in three phases is the largest riverfront project of the world after completion. The project inaugurated on 7th August 2020 by the Prime Minister of Pakistan, began in December 2020. As of January 2021, it attracted US\$8 billion in foreign investment.

Local farmers have been protesting against the RUDA project firstly, as the government is purchasing land from small farmers at cheap rates and secondly the project itself is a danger for the city habitat. The project is likely to cause adverse environmental impacts. Civil society groups believe that the ecosystem of the River Ravi Basin is irreparably damage by the construction of storage dams in India and by the untreated discharge of polluted water into it by the cities of Lahore, Sialkot, Gujranwala, and Faisalabad. Thus, any project along the banks of the Ravi should seek to revitalize its ecosystem rather than causing adverse damages on the environment and local landowners.

Climate Change

Pakistan's biggest domestic climate change challenge is the lack of adaptation and mitigation strategies. Pakistan has been ranked by Germanwatch as the 8th most climate-affected country in the world from year 2000 to 2019. The country's vulnerability to climate change and climate-induced extreme events, and its consistent recurrences had placed Pakistan in the top 10 ranking of Global Climate Risk Index by Germanwatch. Pakistan along with Haiti and the Philippines, are under a new category of countries re-currently affected by catastrophes both in the long-term index as well as in the index for the respective year.

Notre Dame Global Adaptation Initiative²⁴ (The ND-GAIN Index) has placed Pakistan as the 39th most vulnerable country and the 27th least ready country in the world to address the impacts of climate change. This is borne out of the fact that in Fiscal Year (FY) 2020, 40% of households suffered from moderate to severe food insecurity and therefore cannot absorb further climate shocks to food systems²⁵. While the extreme weather related events often cause crop failures threatening food security, the increased temperatures, and variations in precipitation and monsoon patterns coupled with increased carbon, are resulting in decreased protein, zinc, iron, and quality of protein in crops. This results in decreased dietary protein causing malnutrition and stunting.

The country is increasingly exposed and vulnerable to various natural hazards, particularly floods, tropical cyclones, droughts, landslides, Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOFs) and earthquakes. More than 30 million people affected since 2010. The three sectors of the economy that are most at risk include the agriculture-food-water nexus, urban infrastructure, and the financial sector coupled with the government budget. In terms of human costs, the poor are the most vulnerable as they are the most reliant on agriculture, livestock, fisheries, forests and groundwater that is heavily degraded, and are the most directly impacted by natural disasters and slow onset of climate change²⁶. Pakistan experiences recurring heatwaves and droughts, riverine and flash floods, landslides, and sea storms or cyclones. Climate change is expected to increase the frequency and intensity of these events as well as exacerbate people's vulnerabilities.

Climate change in all its facets is indeed a threat multiplier. There lies a hidden yet fundamental inequality as how lives of people living below poverty lines are impacted. The

²⁴ The Notre Dame Global Adaptation Initiative (ND-GAIN) aims to help private and public sectors prioritize climate adaptation, ultimately lowering risk and enhancing readiness. With knowledge from ND-GAIN, leaders can gauge countries and cities based upon critical environmental, economic and social sectors.

²⁵ Updated Nationally Determined Contributors -2021 Government of Pakistan (page 22)

²⁶ Updated Nationally Determined Contributors -2021 Government of Pakistan

low-level working classes generally characterized as poorest of the poor are less equipped and prepared to withstand climate shocks. Low-income countries are likely to suffer more as compared to the developed countries due to inadequate infrastructure, coping mechanisms, awareness and insufficient resources to tackle climate-related catastrophe. Climate change imposes numerous challenges and is becoming an existential threat globally especially for the vulnerable groups.

Pakistan, although only contributing 0.9% to global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, is one of the most vulnerable countries to the impacts of climate change. These impacts are primarily in the form of intense flooding, drastic change in rainfall patterns, melting Himalayan glaciers, increasing cases of vector-borne diseases such as dengue, and an overall increase in the frequency and intensity of climate-induced natural disasters.

Other environmental concerns and impacts to socio-economic situations

Urban flooding

In 2020, Karachi faced its heaviest rainfall. Streets turned into rivers and homes and cars washed away. More than 30 people died due to rain; either electrocuted or drowned (Hasan, 2020). Karachi local administration due to poor response mechanism and drainage systems for past many years is exposed. The overall responsibility of planning and development lies with the provincial government to improve the systems but no visible progress is noted.

Heat Waves

Parts of Pakistan including the metropolitan area have witnessed extreme hot weather in 2021 and 2022 with many cities recording temperatures above 40 degrees Celsius, posing health challenges to people. According to the Pakistan Meteorological Department, based on the regional and global climatic conditions, one to two heat waves forecasted to hit plain areas of the eastern Punjab province, southern Sindh province and southwestern Baluchistan province in the first two weeks of June.

Adding to people's miseries, Pakistan saw a power crisis recently, with blackouts of up to 20 hours in some areas and because of the sharp increase in energy demand amidst the hot weather. According to the Energy and Power Ministry, there is approximately 15-20 percent more peak demand in power compared to last year. Whereas the scorching heat and power crisis has immensely affected the women home-based workers and domestic workers. With lack of proper transportation mechanisms, women traveling on two wheelers complain about the high heat and high prices in fares with no social protection coverage. Women in the home-based sector face issues while working at home, *“with high temperatures and no electricity life becomes miserable and we are unable to complete orders in time”* reports women home workers from Karachi. *“We face unscheduled power and gas load shedding in Lahore yet the bills are higher than our usage. It is becoming difficult for me to work and complete orders sitting at home. My time is wasted and so is my weekly income”* shared a home worker from Lahore.

Water Pollution

Water pollution is a major reason for poor public health in Pakistan. The country ranks 80 among 122 nations in drinking water quality (Khattak, Richter, Azizullah, & Hader, 2011). Drinking water is mostly found contaminated with coliforms, toxic metals and pesticides. Whereas, discharge from industries and agrochemicals deteriorates water quality thus, leading to severe public health issues.

Water Mafias

Furthermore, there is a lot of water shortage in Karachi because of water mafias who steal and sell water tankers at a high price. Rich people can afford to purchase such tankers however; poor HBWs in slums like Baldia Town and Orangi Town from Karachi have no other options. Moreover, the increase in the heat and severe climate related calamities over the past two years have added to the hum cry across Sindh including Karachi. Water is main crisis in Sindh province and no substantial solution is seen so far either in preservation of water, saving rainwater, or provision of safe drinking water at the doorstep.

Air Pollution

Carbon emission and carbon footprints have increased air pollution in the country. City of Karachi has a lot of demand for automobiles. During rush hours, roads are in complete gridlock thus increasing the pollution and affecting the health. Furthermore, many industries constructed in the industrial zones and city outlays are now in the main city area with increased air pollution discharged from those factories affecting the environment and people's health.

Pakistan is among the most urbanized countries in South Asia, and its second-largest city Lahore, with a growing at a rate of 4% annually, is amongst the most polluted city in Pakistan. Urban settlements frequently hit by smog in Asia, and Lahore is no exception. Lahore has become the second-largest and most polluted city in Pakistan. A heavy blanket of smog has plagued the city during the past five years. The ever-growing urbanization and industrialization have contributed to the worsening air quality of the city. Smog, being hazardous to health, is leading to a rapid sprout in multiple health-related problems, as well as raising concerns about the long-term deleterious effects on public health. Due to the lack of active action plan from the government's side and failure of concerned authorities for immediate actions, the situation is probable to worsen.

The exorbitant rise in automobiles, unchecked deforestation, expeditious urbanization, and unabated growth of industries have contributed to this alarming situation over the years. Smog accounts for a rapid sprout in fatal health problems, including exacerbation of asthma, allergies, eye infections, respiratory tract infections, and cardiac pathologies leading to premature death.

Furthermore, the fact that only around 1% of the country's industrial establishments report their emissions raises distressing concerns over the neglected air quality of the city and its effect on public health²⁷.

²⁷ Riaz R, Hamid K (January 25, 2018) Existing Smog in Lahore, Pakistan: An Alarming Public Health Concern. *Cureus* 10(1): e2111. DOI 10.7759/cureus.2111

Pakistan with an overall Index score in 2021 of 57.7 means that the country is on average 57.7 per cent on the way to the best possible outcome across the 17 SDGs. This score is 1.5pc higher than the country's score in 2020. Pakistan is categorized in the East and South Asia region that comprises 21 countries including China and Singapore, pushing the regional scores upward. Compared to 2020, Pakistan's performance has increased by 3pc in the region²⁸.

Patriarchy and Fundamentalism

Deep-rooted Extremism

There are different schools of thoughts in Pakistan. The religious extremist people fuel people with patriarchal ideologies where they derive principles that oppress women in every possible way. Hate speeches for women, minorities and workers are very common and often channelized through the media.

Forced Conversions

In Sindh, there are plenty of cases where Hindu women go through forcible conversion to come into marital contracts. Such cases often go unreported because they take place in rural contexts.

Violence against Women

There is increased gender-based violence observed during COVID-19 lockdowns. Women faced physical, physiological, economic and psychological abuse while they lack access to helplines and services that would help. There was an immense need for psychosocial counseling during COVID-19 but very limited access. Violence also takes place in the form of economic abuse where women are not part of decision making within their homes and their earnings mostly taken by the males of the house. In addition, they face exploitation in the hands of contractors where their wage is deducted either, delayed or not given at all without any reason.

A home-based worker said "Physical abuse is bearable rather than psychological violence because it takes away peace of my life".

Other HBW from Karachi shared "My own family was one of the major reasons for the violence. Despite knowing about my infertility, they kept it hidden from prospective proposals as a result of which I was married and divorced thrice."

Rural to Urban Migration

Domestic workers migrated from rural to urban areas in search of work. However, due to COVID-19, these workers had no work. Majority of domestic workers were laid off from their jobs. Due to irregular and unregulated employment structure, women in the domestic work sector faced vulnerabilities and highly exploitative attitudes in metropolitan cities.

²⁸ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1663373>.

Militarism and Conflict

Use of state force against peaceful protesters

In the Aurat March (Women's March) held in 2021, fake pictures were circulated to demonize the organizers of the march. They have received multiple death threats from extremist groups. Aside from this, most protests are not covered and media is unable to report. Religious bigotry and stigmatization observed and manifested using media against organizers. Most of the time protests of human rights face state led allegations upon violation of civil rights.

Sectarian Violence

In Pakistan, there are two major sects: Sunni and Shia. Cities like Karachi, Lahore and especially Quetta are victims of sectarian violence. These sectarian killings take place on trivial issues and spread like fire across cities in order for demands of different sects to be heard affecting businesses and the public during the violent processes.

State Policing

The state claims of security threats and has led to the increase in state policing of human rights. There is increased digital surveillance of human rights defenders. They have started to label human right defenders as extremist groups. All the personal information of citizens is under surveillance and without privacy.

Increase in defense spending

National defense than the SDGs. Sixty five percent (65%) of the national budget goes to the military or national defense. Conflicts created at the back end as a logic to support defense spending.

Patriarchal Authoritarian Governance

Patriarchal Mindset

The biggest challenge for gender-based policies is the government mindset dominated by patriarchal cultures. This further adds oppression for vulnerable and minority groups. as laws, legislation, and directives on controlling the civil society, workers, lawyers and media are made and governed by men. A very vivid example can be of HBWs Act enacted in the provinces of Sindh in 2018 and yet the implementation of the law on ground is not visible. Government claims they do not have resources, and such un prioritization reflects the mindset and culture of the government which is male dominated.

The Ministry of Economic Affairs announced 'Non-Government Organization (NGO) policy 2021' for the non-government organizations (NGOs) and has made two-year fieldwork mandatory to receive foreign aid.

Provincial Charities commissions under the law require registrations of all NGOs.

Feudal mindsets and capitalism

Political elites in the country come from families of big businesses. They influence policy-making to serve their own interests. They also support the ruling parties to take their side and further monopolized legislation.

Priority Issues

Nexus of gender equality and decent work and increasing violence against women

Pakistan reported 2,297 cases of violence against women from 25 districts across the country from 2020-21. There is high turnout despite the challenge of under reporting due to the pandemic lockdowns and taboo culture. The findings show that among the total number of incidents, 57% were reported from Punjab, 27% from Sindh, 8% from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 6% from Gilgit Baltistan, and 2% from Baluchistan. Of all the provinces, Punjab reported the highest incidents of murder, rape, suicide, acid burning, kidnapping, domestic violence, child and forced marriage, dowry and inheritance²⁹.

Worsening situations for women in the informal economy

Women in the informal economy have lower pay, longer work hours, irregular coverage of benefits, no job security and no social protection. The overall average economic growth during the last five years was at 4.8%. Pakistan informal sector has expanded to 74% and nearly 76% of women had joined the home-based sector in no more than the past 15 years, and more specifically, the trend for home-based work had intensified from the 1990s onwards. There are 8.5 million domestic workers in Pakistan (ILO). There are no reliable figures and the majority of domestic workers are from low-income backgrounds. Not much information and data is available on unregulated domestic work. Informal sector workers are mostly exposed to gender-based violence with no access to helplines and social protection. During the COVID-19 lockdowns, there is significant increase in violence against women in the form of domestic abuse (verbal and physical).

Historically, women's inequality has remained deeply entrenched in the economic, social and political structures of Pakistan, serving as an impediment to the eradication of poverty and sustained development in the country. The GII 2017 reports female labour participation rate is 24.9% compared to 82.7% for males. Additionally, a national survey finds that over 70% of women were not allowed to leave their houses to visit a bank, attend an NGO meeting, go to their workplace, or pursue education without permission.

Exacerbated conditions due to COVID-19

Government response during COVID-19 has been very slow and negative when it comes to HBWs and workers. The four main responses that the government should have considered: ration, reduction in school fees, providing safety hygiene kits and awareness raising on COVID-19. The biggest issue during COVID-19 lockdown was non-availability of food ration. Most HBWs were laid off during the COVID-19 lockdown and they had no other means of income to run their houses. The Sindh government planned to launch an app for Sindh relief distribution from where daily wage earners could register themselves and avail ration. Many concerns were raised on this that daily wage earners do not have smartphones,

²⁹ Violence against Women & Girls in the Times of Covid-19 Pandemic; ANNUAL REPORT ON VAWG January – December 2020; Dr. Rakhshinda Perveen; published by Aurat Foundation & SAP-PK Aurat Foundation & SAP-PK

net connection or are not educated enough to understand the technicalities of an application. However, there is also no record available that the app was launch. The ration distribution did take place, but local NGOs and private individuals were distributing it. In some areas of Punjab and Karachi, ration distribution was highly politicized. Awareness raising on COVID-19 through media was problematic for low-income households who did not have TV or smart devices, while language barrier is also a challenge. Furthermore, the government announced 20% fee reduction during the COVID-19 lockdown, however, schools did not follow the instructions and there was no agency to monitor and report the issue. Informal sector workers were struggling to fulfill their basic livelihoods thus even purchasing safety hygiene kits was a challenge to them, due to their capacity of affording. The relief packets from the government did not had a provision of free hygiene kits. The market prices of these kits further increased. Home-based workers who have skills on stitching turned to making face masks made of cloth and hand sanitizers from aloe vera , in order to generate some income.

Targets for Goals 5 and 8 and related processes

The pandemic has gravely affected socio-economic well-being of women and girls in Pakistan and has threatened targets for SDG 5, especially 5.1 on End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls. Demands for the ratification and implementation of international human rights instruments and ILO fundamental conventions, including the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women was raised collectively at all forums.

Also, as part of the regular advocacy processes collective demands were forward to the functional and independent national human rights commission in compliance with the Paris Principles. The Government of Pakistan (GoP) as a Party to the Paris Agreement of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is responsible to perform its role to support the global efforts in combating climate change, particularly to address the vulnerabilities of women and girls.³⁰ The Executive Policy on Disaster Risk Management/Disaster Risk Reduction DRM/DRR Framework passed in 2012 tries to identify the different sectoral vulnerabilities to climate change, and in particular, respond to concerns on water resources, agriculture, forestry, coastal areas, biodiversity and vulnerable ecosystems and spells out the appropriate adaptation measures to be adopted.

Efforts were also made to advocate for the ratification of ILO C 190. Joint campaigning was done, and inputs were provided for the policy brief summary for the Federal government requesting consideration of ratification of the ILO instrument C 190 under Goal 5.2 Eliminate

³⁰ The Paris Agreement is a legally binding international treaty on climate change. It was adopted by 196 Parties at COP 21 in Paris, on 12 December 2015 and entered into force on 4 November 2016. Its goal is to limit global warming to well below 2, preferably to 1.5 degrees Celsius, compared to pre-industrial levels.

The Paris Agreement establishes a global goal on adaptation – of enhancing adaptive capacity, strengthening resilience and reducing vulnerability to climate change in the context of the temperature goal of the Agreement. Government of Pakistan (GoP) as a Party to the Paris Agreement of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) has performed its role to support the global efforts in combating climate change. In Pakistan, climatic changes are expected to have wide-ranging impacts, such as: reduced agricultural productivity, increased variability of water availability, increased coastal erosion and sea water incursion, and increased frequency of extreme climatic events.

all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.

In Pakistan, there still needs to be prioritization on the effective functioning of domestic legal, policy and institutional framework to ensure accountability for human rights and gender equality-related targets of the 2030 Development Agenda, including periodic parliamentary reporting mechanisms and administrative accountability.

Ending violence against women and girls

There is an alarming increase in violence against women during the pandemic, specifically the home based and domestic workers. The recommendations were forwarded to the National Assembly and is being pushed to make amendments to the Anti-harassment Act of 2010.

SDG 5
5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere
5.2 Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking, sexual, and other types of exploitation
5.3 Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation
5.4 Recognize 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
5.5 Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities at all levels of decision making, in political, economic and public life

Another important issue is the targets under SDG 5.3 on eliminating child, early and forced marriages including the policy proposal to raise the age from 16-18 years through the Punjab Early Child Marriage Act that is on-going. “Visibilizing” women’s work.

For Goal 5.4 recognizes 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. There are advocacy efforts to ensure Inclusion of women from informal economy such as budget for the implementation of Sindh HBWs Act of 2018 and Punjab Domestic Workers Act of 2019. Data collection and access of women from the informal economy to social security and protection programs remains a priority. This includes ensuring women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities at all levels of decision-making, in political, economic and public life. For example, there is a need to build

the capacities of women leaders to contest upcoming provincial elections and demand an increase in the allocated seats. During the community meetings, it was emphasized that women belonging to domestic work and home-based work sectors should engage with community level political parties’ structures so that they become part of the neighborhood or community watch groups under local government structures.

As the policy advocacy process is ongoing, one major priority remains to adopt and strengthen policies and effective implementation of gender equality ensuring empowering women and girls at all levels (5.C). Demands for adequate budgetary allocation for the implantation of domestic workers law in Punjab and HBWs Law in Sindh were raise repeatedly. Efforts for the finalization of HBWs Act in Punjab were implemented which brought the approval from the Cabinet. The bill has been in the Punjab Assembly since June 2021. The Government of Punjab also allocated a budget for conducting provincial surveys of home-based and domestic workers 2022-2023.

Decent work and fair wages for women

In order to promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services (Goal 8.3) priority was focused on the wage determination, minimum wage of the women in the home-based and domestic work sector. Entrepreneurship of home-based women workers remain a top agenda. The debate for upward growth and transition of women from micro to small level was heightened during the pandemic which called for the review and amendments in policies ensuring inclusion of women at all levels. Women in the homebased sector of Karachi were facilitated on filling in the wage cards and maintaining record for enabling them to provide information to the labour department during the registration. Similarly, in Punjab, focus was more on determining the minimum wage for domestic workers as per law. Advocacy meetings held with the government on the finalization of rules for the Punjab Domestic Workers Act 2019. Ratification

SDG 8

8.3 Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services.

8.5 By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value

8.5.2 Percentage of workers receiving a living wage (disaggregated by gender, migration status, disability, age, etc.)

8.5.1a Average annual earnings from all sources by gender

8.5.1b Percentage of workers receiving a living wage (disaggregated by gender, migration status, age, etc)

8.5.1c Percentage of sectors and/or enterprises with collective bargaining agreements

of ILO 189 and bringing them under the social security framework was one the most important priority during the course of the project. The data collection also contributed to push the government to have district wise labour force surveys, which include the percentage of workers covered by the national labour code disaggregated by gender.

Another priority is the national legislation of the eight ILO fundamental conventions and other key instruments, including provisions for equality of treatment in respect of employment (in particular wages, social security benefits and skills recognition (8.5.1e). Protection of labour and promoting safe and secure working environments for all workers is the ultimate agenda. For women involved in domestic care work, internal and external migration policy review is underway. Lobbying is also in place for securing policy protection for the women and children including migrant workers especially those in precarious employment (8.8).

Interlinkages in Goal 5 and 8

Women in the informal economy engaged in the programme tend to have developed a sense of realization of their profession and relevance of their work in overall societal development. With increased information and knowledge on their rights, HBWs, DWs and other women workers took up initiatives to connect with women groups for raising their voices particularly in specific policy-making spaces. Facilitated by HomeNet together with legal aid providers,

the women workers were able to identify and take up the issues they experience, particularly on domestic violence and labour rights.

Based on the awareness on minimum wages, women workers were able to negotiate on wages especially during the pandemic when inflation was high. In the process, their negotiation skills along with decision-making and advocacy skills were enhance. Women HBWs went into direct dialogue with labour officials demanding speedy registration and negotiating on social security provisions.

Sadaf a HBWs leader of Karachi during advocacy meeting with SESSI said *“we don’t have any protection for the government of Sindh after the law is passed. HBWs work day and night and yet the government policies are not covering their health benefits. Bringing HBWs in social security through existing laws of labour would discriminate their right to social security and protection. HBWs should be covered in exclusive schemes designed and developed for HBWs”*.

Further, at the advocacy level, the support and lobbying interventions led to the allocation budget for the Provincial Survey for HBWs and DWs of Punjab for 36 districts. Support for the inclusion of women in the informal economy in the social protection mechanism also led to serious discussions aiming at bringing DWs and HBWs at par with registered workers in Punjab-Lahore. Labour department Punjab is finalizing the Rules for Punjab Domestic Workers Act 2019. Amendments for the inclusion of HBWs and DWs in the Punjab Employee Social Security Institute (PESSI) law are also undergoing finalization by the PESSI. The draft of the proposed amendments is send for approval to the cabinet.

In order to ensure participation of women HBWs in the decision-making at policy level, letters to the Sindh labour department with nominations for HBWs leaders for provincial committees have also been send. Meanwhile, the submissions of paperwork for the registration of the union of HBWs and DWs is completed and papers submitted to labour department.

Chapter 4

Assessment on SDGs Commitments and Means of Implementation

National Architecture of SDGs Implementation

The government of Pakistan has already commenced with implementation of the SDGs by approving and adopting the national framework in 2016. Later by notifying the parliamentary task forces on SDGs to oversee the implementation of national priority frameworks, the government established SDG units within the Planning and Development Commission of Pakistan with the support from UNDP. The parliament has adopted the SDGs as a national development agenda unlike the MDGs, are generally consider as UN-driven initiative only to be complied with by four-yearly progress reports. These reports are prepared by consultants, without any implementation mechanism in place to actually deliver.

Special SDG units is established at the Planning Commission and provinces as a commitment of the government to mainstream SDG objectives by creating synergies among various federal and provincial organizations and agencies. In order to achieve sustainable economic growth, the government has introduced growth strategies but the link with SDGs are missing and somewhat the policies are gender blind. The government also sets up economic surveys to monitor the per capita economic growth and contributing factors to the GDP to measure the SDG achievements. However, it is observe that the data gap to report on inclusive economic growth is still inadequate.

Civil society in the process are working within the space provided by the SDG units, in particular, with the outreach programs on VNR reporting. For the 2022 VNR reporting, the Punjab SDG unit collaborates with civil society groups in data collection on thematic goals. The government also starts consultation with civil society groups.

Earlier in 2018 before the presentation of the first VNR, the Pakistan government through the Planning and Development Commission collaborated with CSO alliances Pakistan Development Alliance (PDA) and conducted fact finding on the SDGs in 44 districts of Pakistan. PDA developed and published a report on “Where Pakistan stands on the implementation of SDGs 2018”. A comprehensive gap analysis was developed and highlighted during the policy advocacy meetings from the period 2018-2021³¹.

According to the GoP, their key achievements for ensuring the implementation of SDGs are as follow:

Establishment and setting up of National and Provincial SDGs units. The SDGs units established under Planning Commission at national level and Planning and Development Department at provincial levels have further established thematic sub committees.

- National and Provincial Parliamentary task forces notified by the Government.

³¹<http://awazcds.org.pk/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Where-Pakistan-Stands-on-SDGs-2018.pdf>
<http://awazcds.org.pk/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Citizens-Voices-Report-2019.pdf>

- Capacity Building of Member Parliamentarians by Pakistan Institute of Parliamentary Services initiated for parliamentarians.
- Working Group on Goal 5 in Punjab monitoring closely goal 5 progress and prepares recommendations on addressing the gaps and challenges.
- Ensuring citizens engagements and involvement in VNR review and planning.

In order to ensure implementation and localization of the SDGs, the GoP has taken a step forward by ensuring the inclusion of SDGs related targets in the local government (LG) and at the grassroots level. The LG system is strengthened for bottom-up engagement and implementation of targets. Since the majority of targets are directly linked with women and marginalized sections at the grassroots level, the GoP stands cognizant of the fact that LG and its related implementation mechanism should be made responsible for the implementation of SDGs. It is enlightening to see the engagement of representatives of the LGs at the district level, who were engaged at national and provincial levels to report on the priority targets. Targets related to education, health, water, VAW and unemployment are top priority issues, which under the LG system would be accessible to community women and marginalized segments.

Roles of CSOs in the SDGs Processes

Engagement of the government with CSOs of Punjab has been satisfactory since the adoption. Thematic groups formulated for planning and advice across the provincial capital of Punjab. This effective strategy further played a positive role in determining strategies, localization indicators and road map for further actions in the first phase of SDG implementation. In Sindh, the engagement of the government with CSOs and especially women organizations was a bit delayed due to the internal provincial planning mechanism. However, it gradually improved and strengthened. During the pandemic, there was a delay in the processes due to lockdown and COVID-19 health protocols.

It is positive to see government vision for SDG implementation to be administered at the grassroots level via the local government (LG) system for bottom-up engagement and implementation of targets as their priorities. Most referred to education, health, water and unemployment as top issues. It also emerged that absence of bathrooms and transport facilities was affecting female education coverage areas were devolved to the provinces and onwards to the district level. Representatives of the LGs at the district level are engaged at national and provincial levels.

Coalitions of civil society groups under Pakistan Development Alliance (PDA) are actively engaged in the monitoring of the SDGs. Since 2017, provincial chapters established and documentation of the ground level information is taken up. On basis of the information, provincial advocacy on the SDG goals has provided spaces for CSO alliances to intervene, recommend and participate in the SDGs process through information gathering. The CSOs have also taken the initiative of sensitization of policy makers, sharing information and highlighting gaps in the implementation.

Chapter 5

Planning FDJ Monitoring

Research Topic: Women, Employment and Labour in Informal Economy

Key Research Question:

Why are the women in the informal economy of Pakistan excluded from the labour agenda?

What are the experiences of women in the informal sector who are excluded from the labour agenda?

Methodologies:

Qualitative research, community meetings - focus group discussions, score cards, desk review

Proposed Plan:

HNP will collect data from 150 women from the informal economy (HBWs & DWs) from two cities of two provinces –Punjab and Sindh (Lahore & Karachi).

Impact Objectives: Women of Karachi and Lahore are empowered to influence the inclusion of homebased and domestic workers in the social protection programme.

Goals: Target SDG 5 and 8

Target: 150 women from the informal economy.

SDG/National/Development Justice Indicators:

Focusing on SDG 5 following indicators were monitored:

5.2 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.

5.3 Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation.

5.4 Recognize 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.

5.5 Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities at all levels of decision making, in political economic and public life.

Focusing on SDG 8 following indicators were monitored:

8.3 Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro, small- and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services.

8.5 By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value.

8.5.2 Percentage of workers receiving a living wage (disaggregated by gender, migration status, disability, age, etc.).

8.5.1a Average annual earnings from all sources by gender.

8.5.1b Percentage of workers receiving a living wage (disaggregated by gender, migration status, age, etc.).

8.5.1c Percentage of sectors and/or enterprises with collective bargaining agreements.

Analysis of Critical pathway power mapping and movement structure

Critical Pathway

Critical Pathway helped to determine the changes amongst the community through the proposed set of activities. Critical pathways starting from ground zero, gradually proceeding upwards through support with capacity building, networking and advocacy to achieve the main objective of the ground zero for our research as envisioned earlier are as below which helped in building our argument around women , labour, informality and SDGs.

Critical Pathway –Ground Zero	How	What//Action/ activities/support	Action or support outcomes	Advocacy Action	Advocacy Action impact
Lack of Data on exploitation of decent work of WHBWs and DWs	Social mapping and FGs further strengthened and determined the argument that there is lack of data on the HBWs and DWs. Women in informal economy are exploited and yet there is no redress	Social mapping and Focus groups (FGs) Awareness sessions Capacity building Linkages building with legal aid institutions Media campaign Policy dialogues Advocacy meetings	Strong advocacy on the legal status for women in informal economy. Advocacy on the Ratification of ILO C 190. Highlighting systematic barriers	1-Advocacy on the protection, legislation, registration of HBW and DWs. 2-Advocacy for the ratification of ILO 190. 3-Amendments proposed in the Harassment act 2010	1-Allocation of funds for the data collection of HBW & DWs in Punjab. 156 Million Allocated in the fiscal year for survey in 36 districts. 2-Policy briefs developed and shared with GoP. 3-National Assembly approved the amendments with inclusion of HBWs & DWs in the harassment act

Critical Pathway –Ground Zero	How	What//Action/ activities/support	Action or support outcomes	Advocacy Action	Advocacy Action impact
Women don't understand their lack of recognition	Focus groups helped elaborate on the women positioning in constituency. Their lack of collective bargaining due to scattered organizing.	Focus groups Score cards interviews Awareness sessions on feminist practices and organizing Capacity building of leaders. Study circles Knowledge sharing	Strong mobilization and organizing on grounds for collective actions. Strong leadership on MBOs	Data shared at highest forms. Process for unionization	Joint collaboration SDGs. HBWs leaders participated in high level provincial forums with their demands. Direct advocacy on the social security and registration of HBWs in Karachi
Women lack of knowledge on minimum wage, HBWs Act 2018 and pro women laws	Score cards analysis validated the lack of knowledge amongst women groups pro women and labour legislation and HBWs Act 2018 in Sindh. Their lack of collective bargaining due to scattered organizing. Delayed process due to pandemic.	Focus groups Score cards interviews Awareness sessions Capacity building Wage cards record keeping Sessions on minimum wages Media campaign Study circles	Leaders coming center stage. Mobilization, organizing, new membership of MBO groups. Registration of HBWs in Sindh Market exposure and direct access Collective demand for HBWs registration and recognition of legal status	1-Processes Finalization of the rules of DWs Demands and recommendations put forth before the task force. 2-DWs in Lahore organized in groups, data collected and union processes. Punjab HBWs Act finalized comments added. Sent to the Assembly for approval. Registration of HBWs in Sindh expatiated and pressurized for Official registration	Revised minimum wages for DWs Rules for DWs Act 2019 , finalized. Registration forms for HBWs filled & verification processes further made easy for HBWs in Karachi
Women lack bargaining skills, decision-making, advocacy strategies	Focus groups and Scorecard analysis strengthened the argument that due to women weak union power , less representation , women in informal economy lack decision making, collective bargaining and thus delayed advocacy with locals	Social mapping and Focus groups (FGs) Awareness sessions Capacity building Linkages building	Process of unionization. Enhanced capacities of Women leaders. Ensuring participation of women leaders at all forums including media	Linkages for HBWs strengthened with MFI and branchless services. Women HBWs facilitated in financial literacy session by State bank of Pakistan (SBP)	Issues of HBWs raised at high level forums.

Critical Pathway –Ground Zero	How	What//Action/ activities/support	Action or support outcomes	Advocacy Action	Advocacy Action impact
No platform for WHBWs & DWs to express their opinions and views	Focus groups and Scorecard analysis strengthened the argument that due to women weak union power , less representation, women in informal economy lack decision making	Social mapping and Focus groups (FGs) Awareness sessions Capacity building Linkages building	MBOs of HBWs and DWs formation of Unions and submission of papers for formal registration in Sindh and Punjab respectively.	Labour rights are women rights. Dialogue with key stakeholders on union formation, power of organizing	Registration of women for unions
Women not involved at policy level and decision making	Focus groups and social mapping further highlighted the dilemma of women lack of representation at policy forums and involvement at local level decision making bodies	Awareness sessions on leadership, local government Capacity building Linkages building with organization working on local movement	Union formation Leadership in advocacy role Preparation of women groups for upcoming Local government elections in Punjab	Importance of HBWs in local governance raised at policy forums.	Campaign for women in informal economy to participate in local government elections. Voices of HBWs raised at UNDP platforms /SDG units for enabling community support structure
Women lack access to social schemes	Score cards FGs Media campaign	Awareness sessions Capacity building Linkages building Media campaign Sessions with Key departments	Mapping of Social schemes in Karachi share with groups. Women HBWs and DWs data shared with PSPA for social schemes	Importance of Universal social security raised at high level forums. Data of HBWs and DW for Lahore shared with PSPA for new schemes.	Amendments for inclusion f DW & HBWs in Punjab Employees social society Act proposed and sent to Punjab Assembly by LHRD
Less number of women organized in Unions and groups	Focus groups and Scorecard analysis strengthened the argument that due to women weak union power , unregistered groups , less representation , women in informal economy lack decision making	Social mapping and Focus groups (FGs) Awareness sessions Capacity building Linkages building Sessions on Union processes	Submission of Union papers in Lahore & Karachi Forms collection of DWs in Lahore		

Power mapping

The methodology of power mapping in order to identify best actors to target who can bring out the change required to achieve during the process supplemented the advocacy processes in country. While setting the research objective the impact objective of “Women of Karachi & Lahore are empowered to influence the inclusion of homebased and domestic workers in the Social protection program”. The four quadrants of power mapping divided into following categories of actors as below mapped.

HNP identified following actors in these four quadrants:

Most influential & not supportive

The first set of identified key actors are Minimum wage Department (MWD), Labour Department Karachi) Law department, Women Development Department (WDD-Karachi), Businesses and Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Units (Sindh –Karachi).

These actors have the most power to bring about any change about social protection of HBWs and DWs, however, there is partly lack of resources and partly negligence due to which we don't find these actors as supportive. In Sindh, the HBWs Act enacted in 2018 but law is yet to be implemented by the provincial Labour and human resource department (LHRD). The delay in the implementation is due to insufficient budgetary allocations, capacities of the officials and lack of understanding on the process of formalization of informal workers. The Labour department as the implementation machinery for HBWs Law 2018 Sindh, lack willingness and a productive mindset due to which it remains a big issue. The hidden systemic barriers and structural hindrances based on hierarchy and nepotism are causing delays in the first step of registration of HBWs. Provincial SDG units are set up within the Planning and development but reaching out to the units is difficult due the bureaucratic hierarchal settings. The SDGs units supported by UNDP are working as a project with project status within the planning and development bureaucratic structures. The issue of ownership of units effects the effective working and thus ensuring their support become time taking. The reporting mechanism is centralize with less provincial control in absence of local governments. Apart from this, the administrative changes within the department creates main hurdle in institutionalization of the processes.

Most influential & supportive

The second set of key actors under ‘most influential and supported’ are Employees Social Security department (SESSI, PESSI, EOBI), Punjab Social Protection Authority (PSPA-Lahore) Local Government department (Karachi) Labour department (Lahore) Women Development (Lahore) Social welfare department, Media, ILO, GIZ, Pakistan Development Alliance (PDA), Sindh Commission on the status of women (Karachi), UN Women and APWLD.

All these actors come under the category of most influential yet supportive. The Social security department in Punjab played a crucial role during COVID by amending the Punjab Employers social security act an including home base and domestic work sectors. The department finalized the rules of DWs Act 2019. Discussion led for the launching of new schemes for DWs. Its influence in other departments played a pivotal role in Punjab. In Sindh the department, being influential and committed remained dependent on LHRD provincial

office. The inclusion of HBWs as per Act 2018, there are still ambiguities within the department of labour and social security institute. Negotiations are under way with both provincial departments for inclusion of certain important and relevant schemes for workers.

Sindh Commission on the Status of Women have always supported women in informal economy specifically home base workers. Social welfare department is supportive in the skill development opportunities for women. ILO, UN Women, FES and APWLD being most supportive platforms supporting the cause for marginalized people to raise voice and engage with higher authorities to influence their decision making.

Pakistan Development Alliance (PDA) as somewhat powerful with a neutral support because of its engagement as an alliance, citizen's engagement and continuous work on the SDG monitoring reporting for VNRs processes.

Least Influential & supportive

Among the least influential and supportive actors are the Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), worker federation, Trade unions, HBWs leaders, HBWs and DWs. Although least influential but CSOs, workers federation and trade unions are most supportive because one of their major aims is to fight for labour rights. As a collective voice, we believe they are in the upper strata of this quadrant. HBWs leaders are supportive but not as influential as CSOs, they need guidance and handholding to move ahead in the work. HBWs and DWs are least influential and requires assistance from Leaders and CSOs to get awareness and stay motivated.

Least influential & not supportive

The community people and contractors/middle person's actors are least influential and not supportive because community people are least influential and some of them have a patriarchal mindset, which is why they hesitate to fight for their rights. On the other hand, contractors are not supportive, least influential, as they have no interest for development of informal sector workers due to the lack of awareness and knowledge. For them home based work is cheap labour and easy accessible due to the community spread and unemployment at large among the poor of the poor informal economy sector. For them the segment is easy to bargain with because of weak collective bargaining skills, less representation, no legal stake and no collective voice.

Movement Architecture

The overall movement Architecture of the FDJ research revolved around the multiple stakeholders and actors from CSO, GoP and community women groups. All related GoP departments and institutions have been supported throughout the phase but the delay become a hindrance due to the Covid situation and lockdowns. Working from home for Government machineries was a new phenomenon and was very frustrations at times for the CSO. Moreover, in the second year, things became a little better in terms of advocacy. It is not feasible to continue advocacy online. Online may be an effective tool for advocacy, but in person advocacy, presence in person and dialogue, negotiations is something that is very significant. During one on one meetings with government departments, support for women in the informal economy was committed from institutions like Sindh PCSW, Human rights commission and department, PESSI, LHRD.

Platforms like PDA and DAC played a supportive role in the context of solidarity and visibility of women home workers. Moreover, in movement building, national unions, home based workers MBOs remained active and effectively engaged throughout the phase.

Overall, the movement architecture as envisioned supported HNP in a way that pushed the organization along with its women members from MBOs to take up the advocacy agenda for the recognition of women in the informal economy. Generally, the movement building, though with a slow pace kept moving forward from the grassroots level to the policy makers.

Research Methodology

Based on our ground zero, Home Net Pakistan set the following stepping-stones in order, along with the activities for achieving each stepping-stone.

1. Availability of data on WHBWs & DWs exploitation of decent work in Pakistan

- a. Social mapping to identify areas of HBWs & DWs.
- b. Score Cards: A questionnaire designed by HNP consists of questions on SDG 5 and SDG 8 that will provide us information on gender discrimination and situation of decent work growth for HBWs and DWs.
- c. Desk Research: Various relevant secondary data in form of published reports and statistics used.
- d. Focus Group Discussions (FGD): 50 HBW & DW will be part of this FGD. Questions relating to SDG 5 and SDG 8 to know and understand their stance on the development.
- e. Research reports of ILO & UN: Punjab Gender parity report, Citizen' voice and Women Economic Empowerment (WEE) report.
- f. Research reports of government officials: Labour Force survey and gender parity Report.
- g. Data from District Action Committee (DAC): District Action Committee set up by HNP in the hope to have dialogues with other CSOs, HBWs and DWs in order to discuss their issues and concerns. HNP have had many discussions through DAC which involves situation of HBWs and vulnerable groups during Covid-19, government' measures to assist DWs and HBWs.

2. Women have realized their recognition & profession as HBWs & DWs

- a. Training on organizing & mobilizing to sensitize on their issues: Women to receive training on group formation so that they learn to raise collective voice and organize themselves for union. Advantages of group formation to be imparted.
- b. Community meetings/ study circles: Some women associate house chores with home based work; women will be sensitize to distinguish between the two, their work as means of income generation and how it is different from domestic household chores and domestic work.

3. Women gained knowledge on Minimum wage, HBWs Act and pro women laws

Workshop of workers about their law and Workshop of workers about their rights: Sensitization on relevant laws e.g. minimum wage, HBWs Act and Pro women laws e.g. workplace harassment Act and domestic violence Act will be provided to workers by HomeNet. Learning about laws will enable them to understand their rights.

4. Women HBWs & DWs gained negotiation skills, decision-making, leadership and advocacy skills

- a. Training of HBWs and DWs: HBWs and DWs will be train on advocacy strategies and how to raise voice on different platforms. Furthermore, they sessions on leadership, decision-making & negotiation skills will be imparted.
- b. Knowledge & experience sharing of HBWs & DWs leaders: During trainings and community meetings, workers will share their experiences; it will be a good process of learning from each other. Workers will also be motivated to hear stories and learn from examples of resilient workers.

5. Alliances for WHBWs & DWs to raise their voices and be informed and their unions formed

- a. Punjab women Protection Authority: Punjab women protection authority can play an important role is addressing the GBV issue of HBW and DWs. Awareness on the Protection authority, helpline available would enable women at the community level to have access to the existing windows available for legal justice and remedy.
- b. DAC Meetings: DAC meetings can act as platforms where women can share their issues and concerns to wider organizations for visibility.
- c. Mobilization of workers for union formation & Member based organization (MBOs): Women will learn the power of group formation and move towards forming their MBOs and union.
- d. Punjab Commission on Status of Women (PCSW), Sindh Commission on Status of Women (SCSW): These platforms exist to have a dialogue on issues pertaining to women, therefore, these will be utilize for prolific discussion by HBWs and DWs to raise their voices and get further information.

6. Support from Labour department to include voices of HBWs & DWs in decision & policy making of their laws & Support from universal social protection department to ease the access of social schemes for HBWs & DWs

- a. Media Campaigns/ Press release: Stories of women will be publish in media to aware public on the issues faced by informal women workers. Policy dialogue with government officials will also be covered by media to know government' stance on SDGs 5 and 8 and development held so far.
- b. Consultation with parliamentarians, social welfare dept., Law dept., Labour dept., SESSI, PESSI, EOBI & min. wage dept. to include HBWs & DWs: Consultation will be held with government officials to get their support for HBWs and DWs. This will enable to lobby and advocate for the ensuring the social protection of HBWs and DWs in the government schemes. Also support in the registration processes of

workers. Likewise, it will support the organization in developing its advocacy plan for coming years for ensuring the inclusion of the women from the informal economy in the government plans.

Theory of Change

Knowledge, Tools and Resources

- a. Social mapping
- b. Score Cards
- c. Desk Research
- d. Focus Group Discussions (FGD)
- e. Research reports of ILO & UN
- f. Research reports of government officials
- g. Data from District Action Committee (DAC)

Advocacy Opportunities

Consultation with parliamentarians, social welfare dept., Law dept., women development, Labour dept., SESSI, PESSI, EOBI & Local government department, min. wage department. Punjab Women Protection Authority, Punjab Social Protection Authority.

Movement Architecture

- Punjab women protection authority
- Punjab Social Protection authority
- DAC Meetings and PDA meetings
- Mobilization of workers for union formation & Member based organization (MBOs)
- Punjab Commission on Status of Women (PCSW), Sindh Commission on Status of Women (SCSW), Human rights commissions and departments.

Capacity Building

- a. Training on organizing & mobilizing to sensitize on their issues
- b. Community meetings/ study circles:
- c. Workshop of workers about their law and Workshop of workers about their rights
- d. Training of HBWs and DWs on advocacy strategies, leadership skills, decision making & negotiation skills
- e. Knowledge & experience sharing of HBWs & DWs leaders
- f. Media Campaigns/ Press release.

Thematic Analysis - Women's Priorities

GOAL 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

5.2.2 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:

From January until December 2020, around 2,297 cases of VAW were reported in the 25 districts from 4 provinces³². Despite the problem of underreporting during COVID and the limited sample size, the number of cases is shockingly high. Doing a month-to-month analysis of the cases reveals that at the peak of the pandemic in July, cases of VAW were at their highest. Following this, cases dropped again but rose in September due to a resurgence of COVID. 57% of all cases were reported from Punjab, 27% from Sindh, 8% from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 6% from Gilgit-Baltistan and 2% from Baluchistan. Of all the provinces, Punjab reported the highest incidents of murder, rape, suicide, acid burning, kidnapping and miscellaneous violence against women cases (including domestic violence, child and forced marriages, dowry and inheritance). Sindh had the most "honour" killings in the country. The number of reported cases of abduction were the highest, followed by murder and rape. In Baluchistan, the number of reported murders was the highest followed by the number of rapes. In Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, murders were the highest followed by suicides and rapes. In Gilgit-Baltistan, suicides were the most prevalent followed by acid crimes and murder.

Before informing about VAW, participants were asked about the situation of violence in their area and whether it has increased in COVID-19. Initially, participants hesitated but later they stated that it is a common community issue. Women considered as objects receive no respect. All participants except for 1, agreed that during COVID-19 women workers were in a vulnerable situation as some didn't know where to receive help from and some had tight restrictions that they couldn't dare to take help. The psychological impact included increased workload, working from home was creating a toxic environment as household responsibilities increased for women. In a few areas, women reported increased cases of domestic violence without going into much detail, however, they added that no help was received. These incidents included verbal and physical abuse. HBWs reported that husbands would get hyperactive on trivial things and domestic abuse would take place. Besides this, children also became victims of violence especially during COVID-19. One participant went on to say, *"physical abuse is bearable rather than psychological violence because it takes away peace from my life"*.

Violence against women is normalized in a patriarchal society. Through violence, domination, control and power are exercised and strengthened on women. Both men and women can be perpetrators and victims of violence. However, women are more vulnerable and face more violence. Participants were asked to define VAW and few of them mentioned that hitting or slapping women is violence. This is understandable as in patriarchal society women are often taught to normalize violence. Gender-based violence is violence that is

³² Violence against Women & Girls in the Times of Covid-19 Pandemic; ANNUAL REPORT ON VAWG January – December 2020; Dr. Rakhshinda Perveen; published by Aurat Foundation & SAP-PK Aurat Foundation & SAP-PK

directed against a person on the basis of gender. It constitutes a breach of the fundamental right to life, liberty, security, and dignity, equality between women and men, non-discrimination and physical and mental integrity. Pre-existing toxic social norms and gender inequalities, economic and social stress caused by the pandemic, coupled with restricted movement and social isolation measures, have led to an exponential increase in GBV.

Many women were in 'lockdown' at home with their abusers while being cut off from normal support services. In response to the question whether they face gender base violence participants shared their different experiences. Emotional violence is most common among women workers. In recent years, an alarming increase in GBV observed all across the country. Gender equity means fairness of treatment for women and men, according to their respective needs. This may include equal treatment or treatment that is different, but is consider equivalent in terms of rights, benefits, obligations, and opportunities. In absence of community support, women do not have support mechanisms and due to lack of knowledge, they have less access to immediate support. The pandemic and lockdown have increased the exposure, vulnerability and risk of violence for HBWs. Physical violence is slapping, beating, arm-twisting, and stabbing, strangling, burning, choking, kicking, acid attack, threats with an object or weapon, murder and other physically harmful traditional practices. Impact of violence discussed with participants that it adversely affects their livelihood, health and children as well. Increased incidence of inline violence also reported in Karachi "*My husband cropped a photo of my sister and my maternal uncle and placed them together. He sent me on WhatsApp and said I will circulate it in the family and embarrass your family*" shared a home base worker.

In the FGD, women reported many cases of violence. One participant shared that her husband would lock her inside the house when he was away so that she cannot communicate with her parents but one day her son informed maternal grandfather and they took her away. Another domestic worker participant shared that she faced domestic abuse to a point where she was abandoned from her house. She informed the community elders but her in-laws lied to them. At the workplace, she mentioned she was asked by the employer to do extra work other than the agreed work but was not paid for the extra work. Another participant shared that she has five daughters so she became a constant victim of verbal abuse and emotional abuse as her husband kept on threatening her that he will marry someone else. She first had two twin daughters upon which her in-laws tortured her. This torture happened because of demand for son in a patriarchal society. Another woman shared her story where her own family was one of the major reasons for the violence. Despite knowing about her infertility, they kept it hidden from prospective proposals as a result of which she was married and divorced thrice. During this entire journey, she was abused physically and psychologically. Women mentioned that domestic abuse and verbal abuse are the most common cases in their areas. In Pakistan, the cases of violence against women and rape doubled in the last 6 months of the year 2020³³. This is also evident by the fact that many CSOs conducted their individual studies in order to show statistics to the government because no proper action taken on this particular issue. According to a Thomas Reuters Foundation poll in 2011, 90% of Pakistani women suffer

³³ <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/801343-report-on-violence-against-women-statistics-in-2020-launched>

from domestic violence³⁴. Moreover, women mentioned facing abuse in public but not retaliating because they felt they would be humiliated. Few women mentioned that they also faced economic abuse where they face denial of daily expenses for themselves and their children. Women mentioned they never officially reported the incidents of violence because of 4 reasons which are also supported by a report of Pakistan on gender-based violence published in 2020³⁵. Firstly, the element of respectability is associated with women. Secondly, women felt helpless because of children, thirdly, faced financial constraints to report it and lastly, there was no support from anywhere to take this tough decision.

Women shared that remained locked inside their home due to the pandemic and did not have permission by husbands to go outside home. It is understandable as men of households were also unemployed; they further restricted the movement of their women. Furthermore, violence against women increased as verbal and physical fights happened on petty things. For instance, a participant shared that her husband was a diabetic patient and her son had kidney issues so the couple would indulge in fights due to financial issues. Wife would request the husband for money for the treatment of their child but due to shortage of finances, the conversation ended up into verbal, and at times, and physical fights. All women reported increased cases of VAW specifically, verbal abuses. Women also reported cases where in-laws mostly inflicted violence. They both believed, *“if our husbands don’t treat us like humans, how will our in-laws do”*. In addition, half of the participants mentioned being harassed in public transport. Women shared that when they have to step outside of home and take public routes and buses they are often physically touched. Some of them also faced psychological violence such as threats of divorce, threats relating to children and child abuse. Few also mentioned incidents of economic abuse where women did not have access to money to fulfill their basic needs.

5.4 Recognize 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:

All women mentioned that they did not get any help from the government. Some of them mentioned getting or observing CSOs helping with ration and cash relief. Government took Computerized National Identity Cards (CNICs) and filled forms but it was all a fraud. By April 2020, Sindh government reported they have distributed ration of 600 million to 95000 families³⁶. However, workers shared that very few people were able to receive ration also in the month of July and August when the COVID situation calmed down a bit. It is also understandable because of the fact that many informal workers do not have their CNICs) and in order to register for ration you had to provide your CNIC number. In addition to this, ration distribution was highly politicized in Sindh because of infightings of political parties³⁷. Women also informed there were few private individuals/organizations who distributed ration but they did it among their own “baradari”(community) people regardless if they were needy or not. Women mentioned that cash relief through the government EHSAAAS program was

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<https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2012/04/to-be-a-woman-in-pakistan-six-stories-of-abuse-s-hame-and-survival/255585>

³⁵ <https://www.justice.gov/eoir/page/file/1250691/download>

³⁶ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1546086>

³⁷ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1550601>

provided to undeserving people and poor people in home base sector were left out. They also mentioned their experience of ration distribution where the government officials gave ration in return for votes by the community. Only the voters of the constituency were provided ration.

HBWs and DWs mentioned that they do all the house chores and carry a dual burden but house chores are unpaid work³⁸. Few HBWs shared they did stone work, along with all house chores, but their in-laws and community people never appreciated or respected them. Furthermore, 2 HBWs mentioned they are underpaid where a tailor charges minimum Rs.1000 stitching per suit, they were given only Rs.150 stitching per suit. One participant shared that she used to work in a factory before and being a woman, she was not paid for overtime whereas male workers were given pay for overtime. HBWs shared that often their wage is delayed by 2 to 3 months. They tolerate it because they can neither negotiate nor can they argue because of the fear of losing their work. Another participant shared that she stitched shirts and trousers in bulk for a contractor, who took products and ran away. Majority of the time HBWs are asked to produce the products without getting any advance payment which puts them at risk of relying on contractors for payment³⁹

5.5 Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities at all levels of decision making, in political economic and public life

Women home-based and domestic workers mentioned that men are mostly the decision makers even though women voice their opinions, but those are generally disregarded. Some women do believe that compared to the history of women, today' women are in a better position after lots of struggle, however, gender equality is still a far-fetched thought in a patriarchal society.

GOAL 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

8.3 Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity, and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro, small- and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services:

Majority of the participants mentioned that unemployment occurred for both men and women. They were unable to pay house rents and one participant mentioned she still owes the rent. Participants, who were own-account (micro-enterprise) home-based workers mentioned that they face a lot of difficulty in finding finances for their businesses. In COVID-19 situation, their businesses halted and they had no means to make their small businesses survive. They mentioned that the government does not offer any interest free loan scheme which they could avail and help their businesses thus, they had to face huge losses. Similar opinions shared by the domestic workers who wanted to generate some form of income for themselves when they had no work during lockdown. Many home-based workers pointed out that they work for international brands; however, they do not receive half of what is consider

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<https://oxfamlibrary.openrepository.com/bitstream/handle/10546/620925/rr-community-discussions-gender-roles-pakistan-081019-en.pdf;jsessionid=B9DF0AB5EF9982F0741269537FA6A950?sequence=1>

³⁹ <https://www.thenews.com.pk/magazine/you/666293-home-bound>

a minimum wage of Sindh. The wage exploitation that these home-based workers go through is intense. HBWs mentioned that even the factory workers, they know in their area do not get minimum wage set for them under the factory workers act. The participants showed discontent that if factory workers are not getting minimum wage under the law then what change HBWs can bring about in their lives.

8.5 By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value:

HBWs mentioned that their work is still decreasing, they are getting less wages, but they believe something is better than getting nothing at all. They further stated that the contractors do not pay wage on time. Payment is often delayed⁴⁰. As they are helpless and coerced to do the work. Only one participant shared her income, she has been earning a wage of Rs.1500-2000/ month since the past 6 months. One domestic worker shared she is often given extra work but no extra money. On the other hand, another one mentioned that she gets extra money for the extra work.

Participants hesitated to share their exact incomes, however, they informed that they earn half of what they used to earn before COVID-19. Along with this, they also mentioned that now generation of income is very uncertain as at times specifically during lockdown, they do not have any work⁴¹.

Two participants mentioned they work for an average of 15 hours per day. Six participants mentioned working for average 8 to 10 hours per day while remaining eight women mentioned average 8 to 12 hours per day. Except for one participant who shared, that her husband works for average 8 to 14 hours per day rest all mentioned 3 to 6 hours per day as average working hours of men in their house. According to ILO, Pakistan has the highest hourly average gender pay gap identified as 34% that is double the global average gender pay gap⁴².

Women's initiatives and actions

During the course of project through the activities and engagements, women from informal economy took collective actions and initiatives:

Community support structure for ending VAW: Set up a legal aid mechanism for addressing all forms of violence specifically domestic violence. The referral and support structure under the MBO supported women in handling their stress during pandemic, and seeking support for addressing all forms of violence. Women leaders are playing pivotal roles in supporting group members through a seamless structure of community support.

Registration of HBWs information desks: On self-help basis the community home-based women in Baldia town, Karachi, provided assistance to women for filling registration forms. The leaders provided training to members of MBOs who later set up help desks at the

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<https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/77361/2000601-Women-in-Pakistan-Urban-Informal-Economy.pdf>

⁴¹ <https://www.thenews.com.pk/magazine/you/666293-home-bound>

⁴² https://www.ilo.org/islamabad/info/public/pr/WCMS_651658/lang--en/index.htm

community to provide facilitation to women home workers for filling the form as required by the government of Sindh.

Mobilization of DWs and union formation: In the community of Lahore, women domestic workers organized and strengthened for legal registration. The community leaders filled approximately 110 forms of domestic workers who opted to form a DW union. The papers are under process of submission to the LHRD.

Collection of data during pandemic: The women home-based workers facilitated HNP for collecting data from the community for several researches conducted during COVID lockdown. The forms are filled by women leaders of MBOs in Lahore and Karachi in person and online. Women groups collected data of workers from the community for linking them with government and private support for food/ration during the onset of pandemic.

Wage cards: Due to incongruities in wages of home workers and the requirement of legal registration form in Karachi-Sindh, MBOs of women home workers started taking record of their daily wages and contact details of middle person/ contractor. This exercise helped the groups in maintaining their financial sheet on regular basis and regular practice supported them in collective bargaining. The same exercise is also introduced to women home-based workers groups in Lahore.

Market visits: Due to the lock down during COVID, women home workers lost all their contracts. Women in groups started visiting markets on a regular basis to collect orders of work and bypassed the contractors/middle persons.

Social media marketing /literacy: A lot of emphasis was on the use of social media and women home workers in groups attended several training sessions on digital literacy for enhancing their marketing. The leaders taking advantage took orders for the group. Women started using social media online spaces for communication.

Picketing during pandemic: Women held small pickets and protests in their community demanding supply of food, electricity and water. They joined the Aurat Marches (Women March) during international women's day observing all the SoPs.

Legal aid service for women in distress psychosocial counselling child marriage etc. The community leaders, already having legal training, used their linkages to provide legal assistance to the women in distress during COVID. Cases referred to legal aid organizations by women leaders. Women leaders also provided psychosocial counselling to group members during the covid.

Common Ground Analysis for the Theme of HLPF 2021

“Sustainable and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic that promotes the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development: building an inclusive and effective path for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda in the context of the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development”

As the world is struggling to recover from aftermath of COVID-19 amidst continuing social, political and economic crises, the HLPF 2021 envisions reflecting collectively on the prospects economic, social and environment in the sustainable development for building an inclusive and effective path of the 2030 Agenda. Thus enabling the countries swift move on to a path to realize the vision of the 2030 Agenda through concrete actions and recovery.

The HLPF theme for 2021 *“Sustainable and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic that promotes the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development: building an inclusive and effective path for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda in the context of the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development”* is well aligned with the Feminist Development Justice Research on Women, Employment and Labour in Informal Economy.

The HPLF 2021 will be discussing SDG Goals 1 on poverty, goal 3 on good health and wellbeing, goal 8 on decent work and economic growth, goal 10 on reduced inequalities, goal 12 on responsible consumption and production, goal 14 on climate action and goal 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions. Apparently, it will further realign with the Feminist development justice research indicators focused on women socio economic frameworks.

The theme for the 2022 HLPF is “Building back better from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” the peoples movement efforts from Pakistan specifically from the perceptive of the women in the informal economy will be an add on discussion from south Asia. The HLPF will be reviewing the SDGs Goal 5 on gender equality and goal 17 on partnerships, which will take into account the different impacts of the pandemic Covid-19 across the integration, indivisible and interlinking environment for the SGDs.

Women in the informal economy are largely not an exclusive part of the global discussions in context of social and economic upliftment. COVID has invariably highlighted the vulnerabilities of the people in the informal economy and exposed the government’s inadequate capacities in preparedness of managing the socio and economic upliftment of the informal economy in terms of social protection, employment security, increased production, and protection from all forms of violence. The pandemic has also exposed the inability of the policy-led initiatives for providing full coverage and social protection to the highly vulnerable segment in the informal economy due to their limited scope of coverage for women in labour and employment. At the same time women rights organizations have been engaged in assessing the ground situation through action research and have advocated for the inclusion of women in the informal economy at national and regional level. The voices of the

women from grassroots have been included in the larger agendas, highlighting the vulnerabilities of the women and gaps within the policies law making and its implementation.

Although growth and social development should go side by side, growth in Pakistan has not contributed to balanced social development in recent decades, primarily due to high levels of population growth. As a result, many of Pakistan's social indicators do not match significant levels of economic growth, averaging 4 percent per year. Thus making the Sustainable Development Goals a key priority for the country⁴³ and commitment of the rights based organizations to closely monitor the progress at the country level and strengthen partnerships at national and regional level for ensuring the effective implementation of the SDGs.

Internationally, the women and human rights organizations in Pakistan have played a key role in shaping the SDGs and ensuring balance among its three pillars economic, social and environmental. The Government of Pakistan (GOP) has launched many programmes to make progress towards these goals. However, in the past two years, the responses from the policy makers for ensuring the coverage of women from the informal economy delayed. At the same time the women's/people's movement have played a pivotal role in getting the collective recommendations from the grass root level women home workers and domestic workers to the national high-level forums and discussions. The untiring efforts of the women's rights organizations in facilitating the data collection from ground, sharing the data, and reaching out to women at the grassroots level have provided a substantial backing for getting their voices heard. Informal women being invisible remain invisible from the policies and development agendas. The collective efforts and long term strategies for high level advocacy and lobbying for the rights of the women from the informal economy have been pivotal in the country's women movement and regional peoples' movement. Thus with the inclusive approaches for ensuring 'leaving no one behind', through the VNR and VLR processes, it becomes important to ensure engagement and involvement from grassroots level for ensuring effective planning, implementation and high commitments for women in the informal economy under SDG goal 5 and goal 8. Gender equality being a cross cutting agenda submerges with all SDGs goals. Therefore, its horizontal and vertical synergetic mainstreaming is very crucial at all levels.

The voluntary national reviews (VNRs) aim to facilitate the sharing of experiences, including successes, challenges and lessons learned, with a view to accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The VNRs also seek to strengthen policies and institutions of governments and to mobilize multi-stakeholder support and partnerships for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. However, the engagement of the peoples or women's movement with national, regional and international level machinery is very significant in the process of planning, monitoring and implementation. These national reviews are expected to serve as a basis for the regular reviews by the High –Level Political Forum (HLPF), meeting under the auspices of ECOSOC. As stipulated in 2030 Agenda, "regular reviews by the HLPF are to be voluntary, state-led, undertaken by both developed and developing countries, and involve multiple stakeholders"; it becomes imperative that voices from the grassroots level are ensured and women rights organizations play role of catalyst for ensuring inclusion and bringing change.

⁴³ <https://www.thenews.com.pk/tns/detail/760621-feminisation-of-informal-economy>

The major groups and stakeholders are supposed to report on their contribution to the implementation of SDGs as an innovative provision under Agenda 2030. Thus making the voluntary review and accountability by non-government stakeholders an integral part of the process and their positions from ground matters at high level forums like UN HLPF. The comparability between the government reports and reports from CSO or NGOs presents a holistic situation of the on ground steps taken by the states for implementation of the SDGs. Therefore there is strong interconnectivity of the women's or peoples movement from Pakistan with UN HLPF 2022 theme "Building back better from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" for collective advocacy for ensuring inclusion of women from informality in policy planning and empowerment.

Conclusion & Recommendations

Conclusion

Despite its claims of race- and gender-neutrality, neoliberalism is replacing the old hierarchies with new patterns of racism and sexism. There is notable increase in the low-paid part-time dependent service sector and outsourced manufacturing work that relies disproportionately on marginalized women of the informal economy. The drastic expansion of a low-wage service and manufacturing sector on a global scale has intensified their exploitation and reshaped the labour market keeping the workers at the lower end.

The growing employment sectors tend to be without benefits or labour protections, while full-time, well-paid manufacturing jobs are on the decline. This shift in the labor market has resulted in women increasingly carrying the burden of financially supporting the family by entering into informal contracts in manufacturing chains.

Neoliberalism has also created a new political, economic, and cultural context through deregulation, privatization, securitization, and the dismantling of the welfare state. These changes have had a contradictory impact on women especially in the context of equality of wages and social security. Neoliberalism has overturned the benefits of social welfare citizenship especially in the low-income countries, limiting those to the organized sector and excluding the unorganized working class. The dismantling of the economic safety net, trend toward privatization and the rise of the security state have increased the burden on women. The reduction or elimination of welfare benefits for the poor, cutback of social services, reliance on market strategies, and mass confinement have led to a crisis of social reproduction and a corresponding increase in women's workloads. With decline in social rights and publicly funded support services, women have access to less economic resources. Therefore, women are compelled to enter or turn to the private sector or increase their own unpaid labour.

Women workers in the informal economy are some of the poorest amongst the poor for several reasons. They bear a double burden: poverty and the gender bias in social and economic life. The bias reflected very prominently in national income statistics. Women constitute a majority of the agricultural workforce but many of them work without any remuneration as "unpaid family help". Most of the women in domestic help employment come from poor and rural communities settled in urban areas. The rampant poverty and unemployment are push factors for the rural poor. The lack of suitable mechanisms to provide job seekers work closer to their homes makes these women leave their homes and come to cities and domestic work. Their lack of readily marketable skills and low-income status speak for their vulnerabilities. Children are particularly vulnerable to exploitation and harassment. It is important to note that the mediators encourage and perpetuate deference, docility and subservience among such workers.

The dependency in seeking employment and placement has led to the commodification of women in domestic service. The middle persons perpetuate exploitation as observed. Such activities entrench patriarchal values and subordination of women workers. This also

reinforces labour market segmentation so that women from marginalized communities are pushed into low-wage and precarious work without any protection, checks and complaints mechanism. The middle persons or agents are therefore part of a system that contributes to growing labour mobility⁴⁴.

The SDGs promote sustained economic growth, higher levels of productivity and technological innovation. Encouraging entrepreneurship and job creation are key to this, as are effective measures to eradicate forced labour, slavery and human trafficking. With these targets in mind, the goal is to achieve full and productive employment, and decent work, for all women and men by 2030. Pakistan secured a score of 55.6 under SDGs' global index against a far better regional average of 63.3 and is even lower than regional peers Bangladesh's 56.2 and India's 58.1.

Another huge challenge to ensure employment and decent work with equal pay by 2030 in line to achieve full productive employment and decent work for all women and women including young persons with disabilities to ensure equal pay for equal work seems a challenge especially when provinces have their own priorities. Moreover, is directly link with promoting employment to youth by ensuring education and training by substantially increasing the vocational basis skills education, which would thus engage and reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training.

In order to address the issues of modern slavery, eradicate force labour, increasing child labour, protection of labour rights and promotion of safe working environments; a multi-pronged strategy is required. The strategy should respond to the needs of all affected constituencies, including bonded laborers, contract workers, home workers, domestic workers, as well as other informal economy workers is necessary in order to achieve SDG 8.7.

Recently the Data Reporting Gap analysis highlighted that the availability of precise data is a prerequisite for measuring development outcomes. Most of the projects/initiatives in developing countries like Pakistan have failed or discontinued owing to the absence of timely and accurate information about tangible and intangible benefits. This has also hampered the development process as the unavailability of data has resulted in the misallocation of valuable public resources. Therefore, collection and timely dissemination of information could vastly improve the decision-making and measurable outcomes of government initiatives. In Pakistan, major data is available with Punjab Bureau of statistics (PBS), Multiple indicator cluster survey (MICS on health and nutrient and gender equality, Pakistan Social & Living Standard Measurement Survey (PSLM and Labour force survey (LFS).

Under Poverty, Labour and Employment, there has been a lot of detailed reporting on poverty, labour and employment related SDGs in Pakistan. While the majority of the indicators are available, the rest will be available with the next PSLM survey. Major gaps included the mismatch in regional coverage by PSLM district level and PSLM provincial level surveys. This is due to the unavailability of the district wise data collection mechanism. However, PBS has decided to restart HIES providing coverage at district level. This will allow computation and comparison of different poverty measurements at the district level, which bodes well with decentralization and demand driven policy and planning. In order to

⁴⁴ <https://www.thenews.com.pk/tns/detail/760621-feminisation-of-informal-economy>

generate authentic information on social protection and transfers, mapping of BISP surveys is a feasible option.

Labour Force Survey, on the other hand, is a useful instrument to obtain data on labor force participation, skills, use of ICT, unpaid work and employment information. However, duplication between PSLM and LFS can be reduced by increasing coverage of LFS from provincial level to district level. So far the generate information on care and undocumented economy, which is essential for female unpaid work, any concrete efforts are missing. However this can be done by simply adding the fields of "major chores" LFS or in household surveys. It is indeed essential to carry out a time use survey after regular intervals to capture information on care and invisible chores etc. Also with regard to the data collection, lack of coordination among the departments seems to be another impediment. Industries department has its own data collection mechanism that provides information of the industries sector wise. However, the analysis and synergies are missing, therefore the economic analysis and planning as the source is always missing.

A major challenge for the planning commission appears to be the data gap reporting analysis. It is observed, that of the 230 indicators, reporting of data on 14 overlapped to where either data was not being reported at all or was being reported on the sidelines. Reporting on around 45 per cent variables was available but not computed.

Internationally, Pakistan has played a key role in shaping the SDGs and ensuring balance among its three pillars economic, social and environmental. Internally, it has launched many programmes to make progress towards these goals. However, Pakistan would work towards ensuring a greater flow of finances and technology from developed countries to developing and least developed nations, in alignment with their explicit commitment in the context of the 2030 Agenda.

The policy makers believe that with combined and sustained efforts at the national and international level it would be possible to eradicate poverty and ensure a prosperous decent world for all. However, in reality, it seems difficult with increasing population, decreasing resources, malfunctioning systems and in absence of infra structures, low-level capacity of the existing government departments, the challenge is high. In addition, reporting on goal 8 would eventually be challenging. In a situation where industries and employers are not ready to give advantage to workers, ensure implementation of minimum wages, faulty contract systems, lack of social protection, OSH provisions to show growth and impact becomes a serious challenge. Further issues like modern slavery and forced , presence of home workers in the global and lack supply chains, unpaid work , lack of availability of sector wise authentic data and increasing inflation, ineffective implementation mechanism of labour laws ,further aggravates the situation to be in line with SDGs⁴⁵

Although growth and social development should go side by side, growth in Pakistan has not contributed to balanced social development in recent decades, primarily due to high levels of population growth. As a result, many of Pakistan's social indicators do not match significant levels of economic growth, averaging 4 percent per year. This makes the Sustainable Development Goals a key priority for the country⁴⁶.

⁴⁵ <https://www.thenews.com.pk/magazine/instep-today/77319-looking-at-the-plus-side>

⁴⁶ <https://www.thenews.com.pk/tns/detail/760621-feminisation-of-informal-economy>

Government response during Covid-19 has been very slow and negative when it comes to HBWs and Domestic workers. There were four main things that the government should have considered, ration, reduction in school fees, providing safety hygiene kits and awareness raising on Covid-19. Participants were informed that the biggest issue was ration. HBWs laid off during Covid-19 phase; they had no means of income to run their houses. The Sindh government planned to launch an app for Sindh relief distribution from where daily wage earners could register themselves and avail ration. Many concerns were raised on this that daily wage earners do not have smartphones, net connection or are not educated enough to understand the technicalities of an app. However, there is no record if that app is launched. The ration distribution did take place but local NGOs and private individuals were mostly active and visible in distributing food packages. In addition, in some areas of Punjab and Karachi, ration distribution was highly politicized. Awareness raising on Covid-19 through media was problematic for low-income households who did not have TV or smart devices and that segment of society who could not understand the local language.

Furthermore, the government announced a 20% fee reduction during the Covid-19 phase, however, schools did not follow the instructions and there was no monitoring agency to report the issue. Informal sector workers struggling to fulfill their basic livelihoods thus purchasing safety hygiene kits was a secondary issue to them, they could not afford it. Government did not provide free of cost kits, in fact prices of these kits further increased during Covid-19. Home based workers who possessed skills of stitching, stitched facemasks made of cloth and hand-made sanitizers from Aloe Vera, in order to generate some income.

The updated Country Nationally Determined Contributors (NDC) 2021 represents a consensus of national aspirations and ambitions, constraints and barriers, as well the multi-sectoral directions of our climate actions, during the decade ahead. The document anchored on the National Climate Change Policy (NCCP) presents Pakistan's national vision for climate change aligned with national development plans and sectoral priorities. However, the updated NDC reflects upon Pakistan's acute vulnerability with a leading role in climate change-related actions and programs in pursuance of the Paris Agreement.

The GoP has undertaken several policy measures since 2016 when the NDC was first submitted. The articulation and progress on ecosystem-based approaches, low carbon development, carbon sequestration, and adoption of renewable energy (RE), have all gained directions from the NCCP, yet the implementation seems to be a challenge in terms of adoption, resource allocation and awareness raising on green jobs initiatives.

Call for Actions

Local to National

With increase in women's paid employment and share of household income, women's bargaining power within and outside the household (Kabeer, 2008; Qian, 2008) also increases. Unfortunately, during the pandemic, economic shocks and high risks have had a larger impact on women's basic economic security, their ability to shape individual, household, and community decisions.

The national, provincial and local governments must recognize that the informal economy is an area of employment with its own risks. With effective and labour intensive policies, the

regime of informality can become an operative yet effective women friendly platform of better working conditions and a lucrative opportunity for bottom up prosperity with engaging majority unrecognized workforce. The policy makers should be cognizant of the existing hierarchies of the heterogeneous groups within the informal economy. With high levels of risks especially during natural calamities as of current pandemic of and market recession, the government should come up with a social safety nets framework focused on inclusion, diversity and sustainability.

The different layers within government structure and institutions need to collectively brainstorm on addressing the high risks hierarchies within informal employment. In order to reduce vulnerability, holistic frameworks with better coordination for planning and implementation is the key to low risks and vulnerabilities for women in the home base and domestic sector. Women in home base employment such as their own account-self-employed, piece rate or casual wagedworkers and domestic work employment without any contract and legal registration are more prone to high risks during pandemics.

Informal wage workers constitute one significant demographic, while we group own account workers, microenterprise operators, and contributing family workers into a second broad demographic for targeted policy consideration. The proposed recommendations that would apply to all women informal workers, as well as a breakdown of specific policies per demographic. Recommendations for all women informal workers women in informal employment, including the women working as contributing family workers, needs to be accurately counted and recognized as workers, which will create their economic value. The database of the women would subsequently be included and incorporated into existing government labour and women related household data collection mechanisms, paving way for ensuring inclusion in the government-led relief schemes that support their improved access to work and returns from work.

Women in the informal economy, remain under registered as workers due to the definitional and structural restraints in policy implementation, which eventually limit their capacities to access schemes and entitlements as workers under labour legislative framework.

Government Official statistical systems often do not have accurate counts of levels and changes in women informal workers in categories such as home-based workers or domestic workers. Government planning and management systems severely affect women informal workers with little to no consideration of how policy changes affect them. Availability of data mechanism at the lowest tier of government –local government- to be ensured through central database management systems. Likewise, the data is available for the city planning machinery enabling them to ensure inclusion of informal economy worker's needs.

Key and relevant stakeholders involved in the movement architecture should closely examine policies related to government planning and management and private sector reform to ensure that they promote and support existing livelihood opportunities in the informal economy.

Social safety net measures under the EHAAS program extended early in the pandemic provided crucial support to a limited number of women informal workers where they could access. However, the government led safety net assistance was not accessible for all women in home base and domestic workers. Those were short-term or one-time and set to expire in many cases. Further, what mattered most to the informal women were emergency cash

transfers, food relief and as moratoriums on rent and utilities. Nothing of that sort was available on the ground from the government. The relief measures to be extended on a monthly basis to the household with severe economic crises. Regular distribution of food during pandemic to communities of undocumented segments should be a regular feature of local government planning. Social protection measures such as cash and food transfers need to be specifically focused on women in informal employment.

Government experimented with alternative methods to target transfers to the most vulnerable, which required registering at a web base portal, verification, authentication etc. The HomeNet experience revealed that women in the informal economy are less likely to know about government schemes and use the web-based portals and registration. Women in the informal economy are less comfortable with digital tools firstly because of their knowledge and learning and secondly because of their accessibility to mobile gadgets. Therefore, apart from designing of the schemes, utilization of such schemes needs to be women centric and targeted more to ensure outreach to women.

The government of Pakistan under EHAAS added an application-based programme to supplement a social assistance programme that already reached of the population inscribed in the social registry but women home worker and domestic workers residing in urban slums reported that they could have access to the schemes.

The data gaps underlying social assistance needs to be filled on a priority basis. A key policy analysis gap to fill includes careful review of the models adopted by other countries for ensuring the inclusion of informal workers to supplement social assistance programs. It also requires a progressive gender based policy analysis of the fiscal policies, budgets and with checking miniscule technicalities of inclusivity and prioritization for micro, low, middle income brackets workers households.

The lack of broad-based, systematic, and comprehensive social protection systems is a pre-existing condition affecting informal workers (Marcos Barba et al, Oxfam 2020). Beyond social safety net policies, broader social security systems that include old age pensions, compensation etc. often do not cover informal workers by design of labour framework. A thoughtful examination of comprehensive social security policy and labour policies that includes and especially women in the informal economy, is therefore critical. In the realm of HBWs policies and enacted legislations and enacted acts of DWs, social security mechanisms should be devise under labour frameworks with appropriate budgetary allocations.

There is a need to develop long-term resilience; priority for expanding the social security system for all workers and contributing family members. In coordination with all relevant and key line departments, a careful selection of welfare schemes must be prioritize for women on an immediate basis including comprehensive health coverage and insurance schemes; fair pensions, unemployment benefits etc.

Voice and agency are critical for women workers to gain visibility, influence policies, and build their own self-confidence. Membership based organizations like trade unions, cooperatives, MBOs and other forms of women's collectives need to be strengthen, empowered and recognized. The government should ensure representation of these women groups in the decision-making bodies being establish under the legislations with provinces.

The women collectives as MBOs allow women to recognize their own contributions to the economy as workers and gain awareness of their rights as productive residents. There is a critical need to strengthen pre-existing alliances among organizations of and for marginalized women workers, to address the root causes and accompanying vulnerabilities and finding collective solutions for collective actions. CSOs, Labour organizations and trade unions should join hands to strengthen, organize and mobilize women in collectives and unions.

Policy Recommendations by Goals

Women in the informal economy in Pakistan have limited participation and recognition within the labour force due to policy gaps. During COVID-19 the women participation in the labour force further decreased not only because of the policy gaps but due to the burden of domestic responsibilities including childcare. This unregulated and uncounted social burden has a direct link with the productivity and income of women in the home base and domestic work sector. Women's social and economic responsibilities during the government-imposed lockdowns increased. This further added on to the vulnerabilities of the women where they faced high job risks related to employment, work and income. Self-employed women engaged in small business temporarily closed off business with laying off workers and reducing wages.

Women in the informal sector are perhaps one of the last segments of society to recover from the economic implications of the pandemic. Relief measures and recovery policies aiming to support the informal women workforce requires urgent attention and should consider and target the needs identified by them

Cash transfers to provide relief as unemployment benefits and business loans are the top priorities for government support identified by this segment of the workforce. However, currently the majority of the informal workforce is not recognized or captured in the labor data and therefore falls through the safety nets. It is therefore imperative the informal workforce is documented to enabling access to social security benefits to be designed and targeted at them⁴⁷.

However, numerous important actions require consideration by the policy makers and implementers for uplifting the social and economic status of women from the informal economy through a multi-faceted approach.

As a policy issue foreseeing the future, the major impetus of the government should focus on providing education, health and employment for a large and growing youth cohort will remain an issue for the near future.

Specific Recommendations Goal 5

- Engagement and role of Parliamentarians in National SDGs mechanisms and review processes to ensure at all levels.
- Role of CSOs in implementation, progress, monitoring and review of SDGs Goal 5 and 8 should be ascertain through policymaking and collaboration. Civil society in Pakistan is very active in sensitization of masses and holding governments

⁴⁷ Covid19 The New Normal for Women in the Economy in Pakistan, 2020, The Asia Foundation & Institute of Development and Economic Alternatives (IDEAS)

accountable towards the achievement of SDGs in Pakistan. Therefore, their inclusion and participation should be mandatory.

- Government in collaboration with CSO should promote social campaigns that encourage men to take an active role in the household arguing for overall harmony and productivity.
- Use economic indicators, such as quantifying women's unpaid work in households and using the benchmark for data driven advocacy about gender equity.
- With adequate budgetary allocation, the national , provincial and local government should introduce and roll out a massive freelance skill training program, linking women to more digital oriented gig work enabling higher earnings for home base workers.
- Identify conflict drivers in the nexus of women's mobility for economic purposes and clashing interests to establish baselines for future sensitization programs.
- Create a need-driven digitization program for women in home base businesses across the country, with a focus on internet connectivity and IT infrastructure to include women confined to the household.
- Focus on introducing and implementing minimum wage legislation enforcement mechanisms, incentivizing households to free up time for women to go for productive work for the overall economy again.
- Increase provision of pro-bono legal aid for women, to pursue legal action against abuse perpetrators.
- In collaboration with women rights organizations and legal practitioners, the government should launch distance based psychosocial counselling to deal with the trauma arising from increased proximity to sources of abuse.
- Increase awareness about available government led reporting mechanism (safety apps, helplines) for physical and sexual abuse through public service announcements.
- Identify conflict drivers in the nexus of women's mobility for economic purposes and clashing interests to establish baselines for future sensitization programs.
- Increase provision of pro-bono legal aid for women, to pursue legal action against abuse perpetrators.
- With support of women rights organizations, introduce community support structures for redresses of gender based violence faced by women workers. Focus should be on capacity development of local women leaders.
- Introduce training of paralegal training programs in collaboration with women rights organizations and bar councils.
- Build on collective consensus to promote a violence free culture to stimulate reduced stigmatization against women exercising economic agency.

- Government and private media led large-scale social campaigns highlighting women's success stories, as entrepreneurs initiated in local languages.
- Policy makers and women high-level committees should deliberate on introducing legislation with provisions to aid women willing to integrate into paid work, by introducing laws against coercion when women exercise economic agency⁴⁸.
- Create pro-bono psychosocial counselling to women on a distance basis, helping women to retain their psychological and social well-being.
- The National and Provincial Commission on the Status of Women in Pakistan should strengthen its efforts for strategic monitoring and implementation of SDGs.

Specific Recommendations Goal 8

- Improve labor force data to include informal workers, so that current economic safety nets such as Ehsaas Program and other programs should be extended to the women in informal and gig economy-based workers.
- Launch an immediate recovery-based program only for women entrepreneurs, focusing on digital and financial literacy and contextually market it.
- Create a task force for women centric economic recovery with women chambers, government ministries, private sector, and civil society organizations.
- At provincial level the SDGs sub committees on SDG Goal 8 need to be notified under the economic preview, plan and execute for economic empowerment of women.
- Increase access to finance for women led enterprises through tapping in micro finance institutions.
- Focus on data collection and usage capacity, to have more data-driven interventions in and size women, led to the economy's contribution.
- Create a targeted public relations campaign urging economic recovery through women led enterprises
- Operationalize one-window set-ups /services for women, through business chambers facilitating women to startup businesses, ensure sustainability through micro entrepreneurship.
- Focus on large-scale need based training programs to equip, reskill the women workforce from traditional means of production to service based, and IT based fields.
- Size the contribution of women led enterprises within the Gross Domestic Product and come up with a 5-year plan to increase the number. Regular tracking system to measure success should be introduced.

⁴⁸ Covid19 The New Normal for Women in the Economy in Pakistan, 2020, The Asia Foundation & Institute of Development and Economic Alternatives (IDEAS)

Recommendations for Regional and Global

- Regional Forums on goal 5 and 8 need to deliberate on commonalities around gender inequality and sustainable economics and develop advocacy strategies to have more collaborative actions to influence governments towards ensuring gender inequality, inclusion and sustainable economic possibilities for just trade leaving no one behind.
- Initiate multi-stakeholders engagement processes under the umbrella of the UN for the Commission on the Status of Women, International Labour Organization (ILO), trade & development, enhanced civic spaces and freedom of expression and association.
- Regularize the annual sessions of South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) to combat poverty, inequality, climate changes, trade and development, ending all forms of violence at the place of work.
- Collaborate with regional feminist and labour networks for collective actions and campaigning for feminist development justice demanding equality, freedom, equitable and just society with equal opportunities for all.
- Translate the feminist movement advocacy agenda into local grassroots level, women through local women rights organizations.
- Global funding agencies and bilateral donors should invest in local civil society organizations for more sustainable, inclusive and participatory solutions for addressing chronic issues related to gender and equality, freedom of expression and association, civic spaces and liberalization of conservative societies.
- Global institutions should provide financing for monitoring of SDGs especially goal 5 and 8 to ensure more inclusive, equitable and just societies.

Annex

Annex 1

Community Meetings

Sector	Area	Number of Participants
Home Based Workers	Khaliq Nager Nishtar town Lahore	20
	Madina Colony Nishtar town Lahore	24
	Old Military barracks Shalimar town Lahore	20
	Abidabad Baldia town Karachi	16
	Baldia town Karachi	12
	Ghass Mandi Shalimar town Lahore	20
	Ghari shaho Gulberg town Lahore.	15
	Gondi peer Durbar Gulberg town Lahore.	18
Domestic Workers	Khaliq Nager Nishtar town Lahore	09
	Madina Colony Nishtar town Lahore	09
	Old Military barracks Shalimar town Lahore	05
	Abidabad Baldia town Karachi	05
	Baldia town Karachi	04
	Baldia town Karachi	16
	Ghass Mandi Shalimar town Lahore	04
	Ghari shaho Gulberg town Lahore.	10
	Gondi peer Durbar Gulberg town Lahore.	04

Focus Group Discussion

Sector	Area	Number of Participants
Home Based Workers	Ghari shaho Gulberg town Lahore.	12
	Gondi peer Gulberg town Lahore.	04
	Abidabad Baldia town Karachi	04
	Baldia town Karachi	09
Domestic Workers	Ghari shaho Gulberg town Lahore.	05
	Gondi peer Durbar Gulberg town Lahore.	16
	Abidabad Baldia town Karachi	03
	Baldia town Karachi	03

Annex 3

Advocacy Meeting with Departments

Date	Department	Number of Participants	
		Male	Female
01 Dec 2021	Industrial Relations Institute Lahore	25	05
03 Dec 2021	Industrial Relations Institute Lahore	26	06
04 Dec 2021	Industrial Relations Institute Lahore	25	05
Jan 2022	Women Development Department Lahore	18	12
29 July 2022	SDG Unit Lahore	15	08

Pictures Gallery



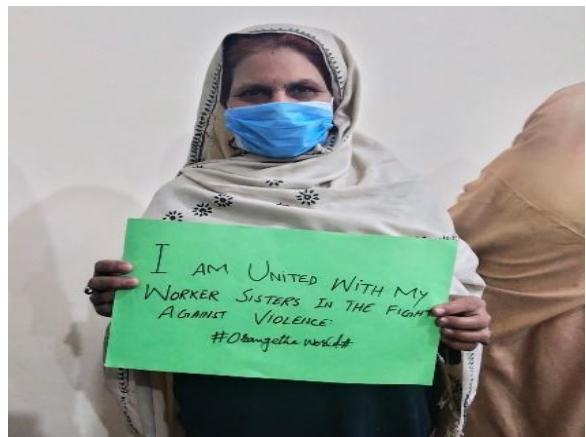


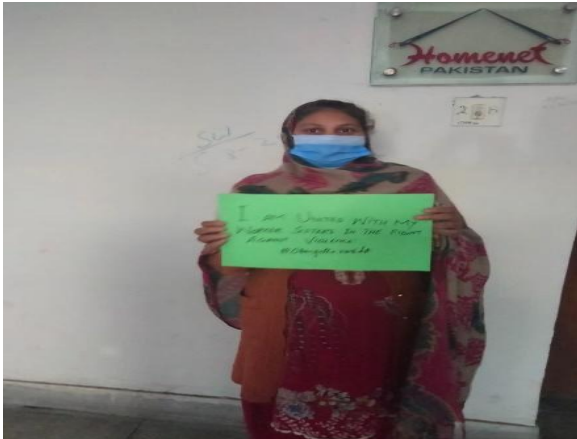














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