

POPULATION windows



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Women and Population

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Gender Mainstreaming and Millennium Development Goals

An International Conference on "Gender Mainstreaming and Millennium Development Goals" was held from 28-30 March 2005 in Islamabad.

The Conference was a joint effort: hosted by the Ministry of Women Development, Government of



Pakistan it was coordinated by the All Pakistan Women's Association (APWA), with the support of several UN Agencies, including, UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNESCO and UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA);

and in partnership with multi/bilateral donors, including the Asian Development Bank, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and Gender Equality Project (The British Council and the Department for International Development), the media and the corporate sector.

Held to mark the centenary birth anniversary of APWA's founder and Patron-in-Chief, Begum Raa'na Liaquat Ali Khan, it coincided with the 10th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and the five-year review of the implementation of the Millennium Declaration and the MDGs. It thus came at a very opportune time and was critical for reflection, advocacy and positive practical steps towards the future.

The 350 delegates, dedicated "agents of change", representing governments, international organizations, civil society and academia, were unanimous in their resolve to take the agenda of gender equality forward.

The distinguished international speakers from over 21

countries including Macedonia, Afghanistan, UAE, USA, UK, China, India, Switzerland, Brazil, Germany, Malaysia, Australia, Morocco, Gambia, Poland, Lebanon, Cambodia, Tunisia and Bangladesh contributed substantively to the deliberations that ensued during the intensive moot.

In her keynote address, Mehr Khan Williams, Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights, Office of the High Commission for Human Rights focused on why a human rights framework is essential for tackling gender issues and for achieving the MDGs. The plenary session, "Mainstreaming Gender into National Development Policies", was chaired by Dr. Nafis Sadik, Special Advisor to the UN-Secretary General on HIV/AIDS in Asia-Pacific.

The Conference focused on MD Goal 3 on "Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women" which is not only a goal in itself but a means of attaining all the other. The five concurrent workshops had an ambitious agenda, tackling issues of gender equality with regard to women's empowerment, human rights and peace, poverty alleviation, health; and education. As the informative discussions ended, a path to future progress was envisioned as a set of substantive policy and action-oriented recommendations emerged.

Five technical workshops were held on (i) Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment; (ii) Gender Equality, Human Rights and Peace; (iii) Gender Equality and Poverty Alleviation; (iv) Gender Equality and Health; and (v) Gender Equality and Education. The objective was to explore developments in these areas and to share information and make recommendations for inclusion in the Islamabad Plan of Action.

At the closing session, Special Assistant to the US President and Senior Director for Democracy, Human Rights and International Operations, Ambassador Shirin Tahir-Kheli, spoke about the US government's

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Begum Raana Liaquat Ali Khan's Contributions to the Profession of Nursing

Mrs. Imtiaz T. Kamal



Begum Liaquat is well known as the founder of the All Pakistan Women's Association (APWA), and as the Pakistan's first female ambassador. Her role in women's development has been well recognized and documented, but her contributions to the nursing profession have never been highlighted.

At the time of Partition, there were only 4 or 5 Muslim nurses and only three schools of nursing in Pakistan. During World War II, Indian women were given short courses in first aid and basic nursing. Begum Liaquat had also participated in such courses and was thus familiar with the importance of nursing in war and in peace.

Immediately after the formation of Pakistan, she started working simultaneously on women's development and the establishment of the profession of nursing. At the time of Partition, 4 Muslim girls were in England getting training in nursing, having been sent abroad by the Indian government. Two of them were from the Punjab and two from Bengal; all of them opted for Pakistan. In 1948, she began to evaluate and proposed a long-term strategy to the Ministry of Health for developing a critical mass of nursing leaders. The plan was to gradually establish more schools of nursing.

In August–September 1949, through a very transparent process, 19 young women were selected from West Pakistan and 11 from East Pakistan. After many years, in one of the meetings, Begum Liaquat narrated the difficulties faced by her team in the selection. To start with, it was difficult to find Muslim girls with the educational background required. Of those who met the requirements, many were not allowed by their parents to go to England unescorted.

In October 1949, the first batch of 16 was flown in a chartered plane to England; the others followed in December and in early 1950. These girls were placed in different schools of nursing in and around London. Up to the present day, this is the largest group of female students sent abroad for any type of education by the government of Pakistan. This was all due to Begum Liaquat's efforts and personal interest.

During the years that this batch was being trained, Begum Liaquat ensured their welfare through the High Commission of Pakistan in UK. In each of her visits to Great Britain, a meeting with these student nurses was always on her agenda.

Some of the examples of Begum Liaquat's efforts to establish the profession of nursing in Pakistan are:

- In the second half of 1954 and the first half of 1955, most of these nurses came back and started working. She supported them in any way she could and also supported the nursing profession throughout her active life, even when she was serving abroad.
- Some of her protégés did justice to her faith in them. They strengthened the Trained Nurses Association of Pakistan (TNAP). Begum Liaquat provided her patronage to this organization as long as her health allowed.
- In 1957, she was instrumental in getting nursing recognized as a discipline like others, worthy of government awards. The first ever medal for services to humanity was awarded to one of her protégés. This set a precedent that continues to date.
- Televised drama: In 1969, Pakistan Television, televised a drama in which a nurse was portrayed as a non-caring and flirtatious female. In another play, a nurse in uniform was all decked up with hoops in her ears and bracelets on her arms. On behalf of the Nurses Association, Begum Liaquat took up this issue with the authorities. She demanded that this sort of portrayal of the nursing profession should not be repeated.
- In 1972, there was an international Conference in Istanbul on "Women and Family Planning", sponsored by the United Nations Secretariat. Much to the displeasure of the leading ladies of APWA, she nominated a nurse to represent the women of Pakistan.
- She ensured that all events of APWA had representatives of the Nurses Association.
- During her tenure as the Governor of Sindh, she hosted receptions for nurses, at the Governor House, made time to meet them and, whenever needed, took action to minimize their problems.

There are other smaller incidents which reflect her continued sincerity to promote nursing in Pakistan.

The nursing profession lost its biggest political supporter when Begum Liaquat's health started to fail. But it is known that whenever she met one of her protégés, she always enquired about developments in nursing. If the nursing profession had continued to have the kind of support provided by Begum Liaquat, it would have acquired the status of a prestigious profession like in some of the other countries of the region.

APWA, recognizing her unrivalled efforts for the nursing profession in Pakistan, screened a film on Begum Liaquat at the international conference on Gender Mainstreaming held in Islamabad from 28 to 30 March. Never before had there been any mention of her contributions to the nursing profession in Pakistan.

Minister, Social Welfare & Special Education, Balochistan

Mrs. Shama Parveen Magsi



I take this opportunity to communicate through the newsletter, the importance of the role of the issue of Population and its relevance to the wellbeing of the women of Pakistan. Women indeed are the marginalized segment of society. Limited awareness, lack of appropriate facilities and increasing poverty constitute a vicious circle,

whereby women are pushed into a subjugated position. These problems have great relevance to the issue of growing population, as the increase in population is intensifying the survival struggle.

The Provincial Government is well aware of the issue and is undertaking measures to address the growing population and the welfare of women through launching awareness campaigns, increasing the availability of and accessibility to family planning facilities, involving local opinion makers in support of the cause of child spacing in the broader interest of women's health. The Government encourages the support of the private sector and has joined hands with several organizations to combat the problem.

I appreciate the efforts of Population Association of Pakistan for addressing women in population as an issue on the eve of the important event of International Women's Day.

Minister, Population Welfare & Women Development NWFP

Kashif Azam



I am immensely pleased to learn that Population Association of Pakistan is bringing out its Spring 2005 issue on the theme "Women in Population" through its quarterly newsletter Population Windows and Dareecha. These efforts can provide useful information to the readers and others who are keen to explore the role of women in a society like ours. I am confident that

the forthcoming issue will be of high quality with appealing material for the benefits of readers.

No one can deny the vital role women play today in society and there is strong realization that literate women can bring about meaningful changes. There is a need to focus on and project the positive role women play. These initiatives could encourage others to join the race to make vital contributions to society within the socio-cultural and religious parameters.

I would like to compliment the Editorial Board and all those who have contributed to the publication and wish them every success in these ventures. I hope the publication continues as a regular feature and becomes a creditable document and true voice for women.

May Allah guide us in our endeavours. (Amen)



Dr. Arshad Mehmood

“No nation can rise to the height of glory unless your women are side by side with you; we are victims of evil customs. It is a crime against humanity that our women are shut up within the four walls of the houses as prisoners. There is no sanction anywhere for the deplorable condition in which our women have to live.”
 Mohammad Ali Jinnah, 1944

The Place of Women in Population

According to the concept known as “sex ratio equilibrium”, it is commonly accepted that there are just about equal numbers of males and females in the human population. The ratio of men to women in the Western world is close to equality. Sex ratios at birth are a bit higher, around 105 boys for 100 girls, but higher male mortality results in a sex ratio of around 100 by young adulthood and even lower among older adults. Considerable research has shown that, if men and women receive similar nutritional, medical attention and general health care, women tend to live noticeably longer than men. Women are genetically more resistant to disease and in general, hardier than men, not only in old age but also at the beginning of life, especially during the months immediately following birth, and even in the womb. Although this pattern is universal in the developed countries, population sex ratios in a number of Asian countries seem to be abnormally high. This imbalance is a result of excess female mortality in Asia.

for every 107 men, in Pakistan the ratio is even higher at 100 women for every 108 men (Census of Pakistan, 1998).

This pattern is the reverse of worldwide biological trends, since demographically, women tend to outlive men if both sexes receive similar nutritional and health care. In Pakistan, there was a considerable improvement in the sex ratios in 1998, which followed an earlier reduction in the 1981 census when it was 110; 1972, it was 114. This improvement was mostly related to improved female education, employment opportunities, and rising urbanization and above all, the improved female enumeration in latest population censuses.

One of the reasons for such differences in sex ratios is that the educational status of Pakistani women is among the lowest in the world. According to the 1998 census, the literacy rate for the population of

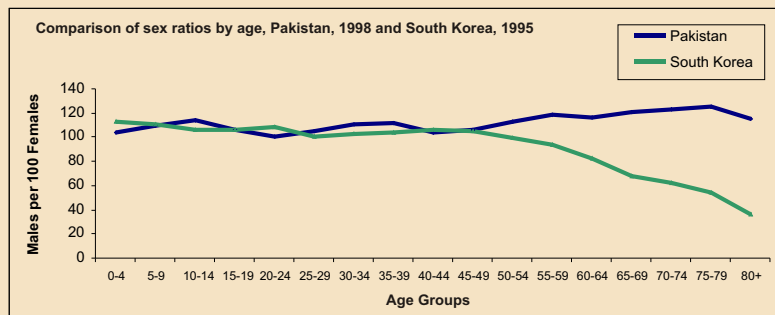
10 years and above was 43.4%. However, there are distinct gender differentials concealed in the literacy rate. Women have a literacy rate of 32%, as against 54.8% for men. The male literacy rate for urban areas is 70% and 46.4% in rural areas. This difference is more pronounced by place of residence. The female

health among female adolescents. All these are manifestations of son preference and the patriarchal structures. And the cycle of deprivation continues. According to one source, almost half of the pregnant women in Pakistan suffer from anemia.

A mother with repeated pregnancies, especially at short intervals, does not have sufficient time for recovery, physically and nutritionally, and is more likely to have pregnancy losses and babies of lower birth weight. These repeated pregnancies also take a heavy toll by lowering their resistance to disease. Less than one-third of the total births in Pakistan are attended by qualified, trained health attendants. As a consequence, more than 20,000 women die each year due to complications of pregnancy, and 10 times more women develop life-long, pregnancy-related disabilities. The death or disability of a woman adversely affects the health of her children and household productivity. In Pakistan, about 25 per cent of children are born with low birth weight due to maternal problems. Due to the lack of health facilities and health services providers in rural Pakistan, women's health is generally poorest. The recent study shows that more than seven per cent of children do not reach their first birthday.

In Pakistan, malnutrition is a major public health problem that disproportionately affects women and girls. This segment of the population is also most often vulnerable to common communicable diseases such as tuberculosis, diarrhea, pneumonia and tetanus, which are easily preventable and treatable. The high prevalence of communicable diseases and malnutrition is not only related to poor living conditions, but also to the lower social status of women and girls.

The poor state of women's health in Pakistan is as much a social as a medical problem. High fertility, with an average of four children per woman, has resulted in high population growth of two per cent per annum. Improving women's reproductive health through the use of contraceptives and spacing of children will not only improve women's health but also reduce population growth and allow women more time to pursue economic activities. Improving female education and increased labour force participation continue to be important avenues for lowering the sex ratio. The importance of improving enumeration of females at the household level is at the top. Despite slight improvements in recent years, much greater efforts are needed to combat this most ubiquitous form of gender discrimination in the future.



Demographic statistics provide a measure of the effects of discrimination against women. The figure shows the sex ratios for each age group from 0-4 years to 80+. This clearly depicts the magnitude of missing women in Pakistan compared to South Korea. The demographic status of South Korea is much better than Pakistan. This figure shows that the sex ratio of South Korea for the age-group “more than 80 years old” is less than 40, compared to 118 in Pakistan for the same age group. This demonstrates the greater vulnerability of women in Pakistan. According to one estimate, around 6.7% in China (41 million), 7.9% in India (39 million) and 7.8% in Pakistan (4.9 million) women who should be alive today are “missing” from their respective total female populations.

These missing women are an example of sex-selective abortions, neglect of girl children, maternal mortality, and poor access to health care for girls and women at all stages of their life. South Asia is the only part of the world where men outnumber women in total population: 100 women

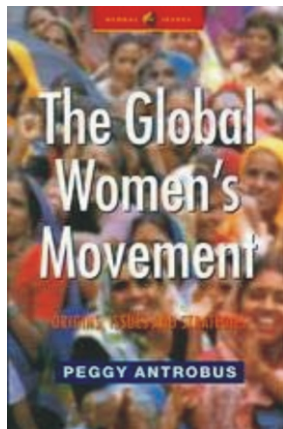
literacy rate in urban (55.2%) is more than 2.5 times that in rural areas (20.1%). Sending girls to schools, especially in rural areas, can clearly remove this educational disparity between the two sexes. Pakistan's low rate of female literacy is also an obstacle to workforce participation. Pakistan's female workforce participation that hovers around a minor 15 per cent compared to 57 per cent in Bangladesh.

Discrimination against women in this region begins at, or even before, birth. Gender discrimination at each stage of the female life cycle contributes to health disparity, neglect of female child, high maternal mortality, and poor access to health care for girls and women. The mortality rate of females in the age group 1 to 4 is almost 50 per cent higher for girls than for boys, suggesting gender discrimination at an early age. This neglect may take the form of poor nutrition, lack of preventive care, and delays in seeking health care. Early marriage and pregnancy and poor educational opportunities all contribute to ill-

The Global Women's Movement

Peggy Antrobus

Of all the great social movements of the twentieth century, it is the 30-year spread and consolidation of the women's movement in North and South that looks set to shape the course of social progress over the next generation. In this overview of the international women's movement, well-known activist Peggy Antrobus looks at where women are now in the struggle against gender inequality, what common issues do they face around the world, what challenges confront these movements and what strategies are needed to meet them. Rooted in her long experience of feminist activism to set women's movements in their changing national and global context, her analysis will be an invaluable aid to reflection and action for the next generation of women as they carry through the unfinished business of women's emancipation. 2005.

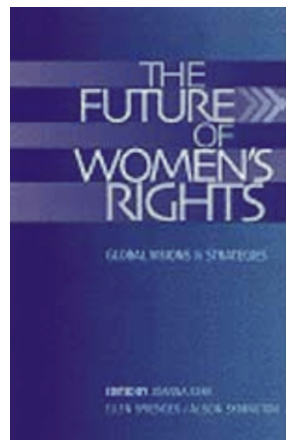


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The Future of Women's Rights: Global Visions & Strategies

Joanna Kerr, Ellen Sprenger, and Alison Symington (eds.)

The 16 authors of this book are deeply concerned at the recent emergence of various trends that may threaten the ongoing work of women's movements in advancing gender equality, women's human rights and sustainable human development. These trends include the impacts of globalization and neo-liberal economics, developments in biotechnology, the neo-conservative backlash against women's rights, monopolistic ownership of information technologies that exclude women, fundamentalisms of various kinds and the rise of identity politics that subordinate or marginalize women's issues, and the increase in violent conflict and war. Contributors to the volume see a pressing need for women's movements to evaluate their methods, with a view to improving political work. They show how women should prepare for the current trends and what strategies they should prioritize in order to protect and advance their agenda.



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Developing Power How Women Transformed International Development

Arvonne S. Fraser and Irene Tinker

Presenting the 27 stirring testimonies of activists, practitioners and academics who have contributed to the creation and fostering of the global women's movement, this book uncurls the 35-year-old battle to integrate women into international development programs. Set into individual chapters that explore the struggle within the United Nations and government and through innovative non-governmental organizations, education and development policies, each memoir teases out the strands of the movement in 12 countries and contributes to a sense that every individual can be an effective agent for change. Ultimately, this book takes on the questions that are central to societal change - i.e, how are institutions shaken up? How do out groups get in? How do new ideas get attention and how are they translated into programs and policies? Why is NGO organization necessary for the creation of civil societies?



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Gender Mainstreaming & MDGs.....

Continued from page 1



commitment to women's empowerment globally and its support for women's rights and progress.

Addressing the closing ceremony, President Pervez Musharraf pledged full support to policy initiatives meant to address gender inequality and promised to review the controversial Hudood Ordinances. He endorsed the "Islamabad Plan of Action", a set of recommendations that emerged from the Conference.

These recommendations will be presented to the high-level Segment of ECOSOC in New York and will form a significant contribution to the UN Secretary General's Report to the 60th General Assembly on the 5-year review of the MDGs. The fact that the Prime Minister inaugurated the conference and the President addressed the closing ceremony is a testimony of the political will of the Pakistani government towards the realization of the MD vision of a much-improved world by 2015. Commended as a very "substantive" Conference and one through which "people are thinking gender", it is the follow-up on the "Islamabad Plan of Action", however, which will be the actual measure of the success of this Conference.

Further details of the conference and the Islamabad Plan of Action are available at: <http://www.pakconference2005.com>

READER'S *forum*

Dear Reader,

Greetings from the Editorial Board!

First of all, let me thank all those who have continued their subscription to Population Windows.

This time we have introduced a couple of permanent segments: the Reader's forum and MDGs. You are cordially invited to share your professional/organizational thoughts, research, findings and achievements in respect to MDG, focusing on Pakistan. We will appreciate if, you could share your contribution for the next issue, goal 1 of MDGs. Please note the editorial board has the final right to select contributions from the public.

We are trying to improve Population Windows. We expect that you, as a valued reader, will provide feedback to us through the enclosed evaluation form. Please also note that a return-addressed envelope is also enclosed for your convenience. Furthermore, your suggestions or comments for improvement of the issue will be welcomed.

Thanking you in advance for your feedback.

Managing Editor

Pioneers of Family Planning Movement in Pakistan

Three women, Saeeda Waheed in Lahore, Zarina Fazalbhoy in Karachi and Humaira Saeed in the then East Pakistan, started the Family Planning Movement in Pakistan in 1953 on their own. Later, Shafqat Munir in NWFP was approached by Saeeda Waheed to start work in Peshawar. Saeeda Waheed was a housewife and Zarina Fazalbhoy a skin specialist; Shafqat and Humaira were obstetricians. None of them had any training in family planning nor did they have any financial support of any kind even contraceptives, except condom. For women, there was nothing. All these pioneers had was their inner motivation and dedication. Each of them gradually mustered support and formed a critical mass.

Zarina worked in the area where the Quaid-e-Azam's mausoleum was built later. It was a squatters' settlement with temporary huts. All she did was to talk to the women about breast feeding and very basic contraceptive techniques. Shafqat worked out of her own home spending her own money. Saeeda Waheed did a lot of advocacy work and involved the students of Public Health School. Humaira collected a group of interested individuals in Dhaka, Feroza Begum being one of them.

All the four worked more or less independently. In 1954 Saeeda Waheed took the lead in getting the three pioneers in West Pakistan to form the Family Planning Association of West Pakistan. Simultaneously, Humaira's group formed the Family Planning Association of East Pakistan. The two together formed the Family Planning Association of Pakistan (FPAP). In 1954 FPAP was registered as an NGO and gained affiliation with the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF). FPAP started working with funds from IPPF. For six years, it was the only organization working in the field of family planning. The Director General of Health in the 1950s was not in favor of family planning and did not approve of contraception being promoted by anyone. As the story goes, there was a WHO British nurse in the Public Health School, Karachi. She was known to advise women to use whatever means they could to postpone the next pregnancy. The Director General found out and very gracefully a national nurse midwife, Imtiaz Kamal, replaced her. What the Director General did not know was that the nurse midwife, who replaced the WHO nurse, was a bigger supporter of family planning. Even though Imtiaz had been educated in England, her knowledge of family planning was extremely limited because, at that time, family planning was not taught to nurses or midwives even in England. Imtiaz looked for help and the trail led to Zarina Fazalbhoy. At the very first meeting, they realized that they passionately shared a common goal of averting unwanted pregnancies. They started working together in a partnership that lasted seventeen years.

In 1954, Dr. Clarence Gamble, a son of extremely rich American parents and a colleague of Margaret Sanger, toured 40 countries to identify family planning needs of developing countries. In Karachi, he sought out the women who were often seen in the huts of the squatters' colony. He donated five thousand dollars to give them a start. It was as if he had given them the moon.

The first-ever family planning clinic in Karachi was opened in two small rooms in Star Chambers on Victoria Road (now called Abdullah Haroon Road). After a couple of years, the Pakistan Medical Association gave them two rooms on nominal rent in its head quarters on Garden Road and the clinic shifted there. The Karachi branch, which later became the Sindh Provincial Chapter, was the first branch to have a roof over its head. The present building, on Britto Road, which houses the headquarters of FPAP's Sindh Region was purchased, mostly through self help with some funding from IPPF and the generosity of a Hindu family, the Mehtanis.

There were similar developments in both wings of Pakistan. FPAP had made its mark as the only national NGO working in the field of family planning in Pakistan. In 1960, the Ayub era brought in all the support that was needed for population activities: population became a national concern. FPAP at long last started to receive the recognition which it rightfully deserved. Historically, much of the credit goes to the four women pioneers who had a vision and a mission and believed in themselves.

Rural Women in Development



Women in the rural area are totally dependent on the men or an older woman of the family, who more often than not, is her mother-in-law. They have no decision making power and no relief from the daily drudgery of

housework and family work on the farm. Women undertake livestock handling or milking but the sale of the animal or meat, is the prerogative of men.

The system still does not allow rural women access to any cash or wages. They are still paid in kind not in cash, especially in the cotton belt area. Change is coming as education and literacy slowly trickles down to the rural communities, where

nearly 70% of the women (age 10+) are illiterate.

Women have faced many hurdles but a few like A. Bibi of Nath village have struggled and met success. She was one of the 4 wives of a small landlord. Marrying outside her caste, she was disowned by her own family and never accepted by her in-laws, who said that she belonged to a lower caste. Isolated by all, she had 3 children in rapid succession. Concentrating on them, she managed to educate the girls till matric. The only son scraped through class eight. When the NGO Bunyad started working in that village, they employed her daughter as a teacher. Cash started coming into the home, providing a tiny ray of hope to A. Bibi. She went to the nearest clinic, which was a good 50 miles away, and had her tubes tied. At the age of 35 she was scared of having another child from an indifferent husband. She then took a loan of Rs. 25,000/- from Bunyad and bought a cow. After a few months of intense effort, her small business of selling milk started thriving, much to the horror of her rival wives. She started sewing and managed to buy another cow; she now begun to organize her life.

A. Bibi motivated other women in her village. With Bunyad's help, she started a literacy class for older women and a two-room private school for young children. There were 2 public schools in her village but the teachers came only 2 or 3 time a week. When Mr. Paul O. Neil, US Secretary of Treasury, visited Bunyad's center, we were strongly told not to mention population. However, when he met the women adult learners of our center during the introduction, he was told that out of a total of 18, 2 had 12 children, about 7 had 8 and the rest had an average of 6-7! He was simply shocked. We explained that the biggest reason for poverty here was the high rate of population growth, which puts pressure not only on the meager budget of the individual family, but also on the rural economies. Women are still not paid for work on their family farms or are paid in kind, (a percentage of the produce in cash) one can have more choices.

One of the women showed that where cash was available, women could make their own choices. She went 50 miles to a family planning clinic, many more women would undertake the same journey if they had access to cash. A silver lining to the cloud is the availability of micro-credit which is changing the lives of women; they are utilizing the loans with care and integrity. There are hardly any defaulters.

When women become decision-makers, they can change their own lives and those of their families.

Shaheen Attiqur Rehman
Senior Director
BUNYAD Literacy Community Council
Lahore

Prime Minister for private-public partnership to control population growth

Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz has suggested setting up of an institution for private-public partnership to control population growth with a major role of the donors. Speaking at the foundation stone laying ceremony of the Population House, for the ministry in the secretariat the Prime Minister said that he strongly believed in the role of the private-public partnership in this area. He was also appreciative of the role of social marketing companies. The government should increase their number and extend their work to rural areas he stressed.

The Prime Minister added: "I would advise the ministry to institutionalize this body in which the donors should have a major role". The Population House will accommodate the offices of the ministry, which are at present scattered over different places in Islamabad.

Besides the Prime Minister, Ch. Shahbaz Hussain, Minister for Population Welfare, and Secretary Shahzadu Sheikh spoke on the occasion. Among the audience were a large number of provincial ministers, foreign ambassadors, representatives of donors' community, and NGOs.

In his address, the Prime Minister also suggested to the ministry to involve ulema and religious leaders for population control as has been done successfully in other Muslim countries, like Egypt, Iran and Bangladesh. He emphasized that population control was critical to sustainable growth and development of the country. His government, he said, is committed to the population welfare programme and increasing the allocation. However, he added, a lot was still to be done. The message should be taken to every household, and we should adopt the best practices of other countries. Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz said that the total population of the country is 151 million, with the current population growth rate of 1.9 per cent. Every year sees an increase of three million new people, which affects the gender imbalance.

The Prime Minister said that population stabilization is necessary to attain balance between resources and population by the year 2020 through expeditious completion of demographic transition. He said that the government is increasing the number of lady health workers (LHWs) from existing strength of 80,000 to 100,000 to provide better health facilities to women, especially in rural areas of the country.

He said that the government would increase the financial allocation especially to the health and education sectors from the next fiscal year. Shaukat Aziz said that due to increase in urbanization, the country is facing more challenges than before, so population growth rate must be reduced. He said that in every country, the role of women is very important; he emphasized the need for female literacy and increase in female representation in all

sections of the society to improve the gender balances in the society.

He appreciated the role of NGOs in the country and said that one-third of the NGOs are serving the country in the national family planning system. The Prime Minister said that private-public partnership is necessary to achieve a sustainable population growth rate and must focus on the youth, under the age of 15. He advised the ministry to increase social marketing coverage to remote areas to reduce the population growth rate. Shaukat Aziz said that our country has good roads, canals and a good business environment but lacking in availability of the best human resources. An important factor for socio-economic development of the country.

Federal Minister for Population, Chaudhry Shahbaz Hussain said that our current growth rate is 1.90 per cent and added that, if this rate is left unchecked, our population would increase to 220 million by the year 2020. He said that the total fertility rate is four births per woman; the longterm goal is to bring that down to 1.3 per cent by 2020 to achieve a replacement level of 2.0 births per women. He said that Pakistan's development indicators reflect a high poverty level, low status of women, low literacy rate, high infant and maternal mortality, high unemployment and a high dependency ratio. Shahbaz Hussain said that our population has increased five-fold since 1950 and it would double again in the next 33 years and touch the 300 million mark by 2050.

The federal minister said that the prevailing scenario in the country showed that human numbers are greater than resources, which clearly implies that population growth must be reduced. He urged all social sector partners to join hands with the ministry to crusade against poverty, hunger and disease in the country through provision of quality "family planning" and "reproductive health services". He said that the ministry is working to setup a population commission in the centre and in the provinces to elicit broad-base support for the programme and also encourage population and family-life-education by developing sensitive programmes for students.

Source: Business Recorder, 3/13/2005
[Http://www.brecorder.com/index.php?id=206816&currPageNo=2&query=&search=&term=&supDate=](http://www.brecorder.com/index.php?id=206816&currPageNo=2&query=&search=&term=&supDate=)

Women urged to unite for their rights International Women's Day

Speakers at various programmes on 8 March 2005 stressed that women will have to wage a long struggle to get their rights, which though guaranteed by the constitution and religion, were not being given to them by the male-dominant society.

This was observed by speakers at various functions organized by numerous government as well as non-governmental organizations in connection with International Women's day celebrated on Tuesday 8th March 2005.

They said that though the government as a signatory to the United Nations Convention on Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and was bound to formulate local laws in conformity with its international commitments, very little had been done in this regard.

They called for abolition of all laws that were discriminatory towards the weaker sections of society, including children, minorities, and particularly women, who were 50 per cent of the population. They said a nation could not progress in true sense if half of its population was not allowed to perform its functions normally.

Criticizing the government's proposal to lower the number of women seats in the local bodies, they opposed the idea. They added that the women councillors be given more powers so that they could play their role in the national uplift.

They said that time and again women had proved that whenever equal opportunities were provided, they had proved second to none. They said the results of various examinations had also shown that female students had achieved many top-ranking positions.

They also criticized President Pervez Musharraf for saying that Capt Hamad, a suspect in the Dr Shazia Khalid rape case was innocent, and said that it was in fact an attempt to influence the inquiry in this regard.

Speaking at a seminar on "Violence against women and the role of society", they said society's mindset, which was biased against women had to be changed to bring about any qualitative change in the status of women. The Joint Action Committee for People's Rights organized the seminar. Justice (Retd) Shaiq Usmani, Anis Haroon, Dr Sher Shah, Mazhar Abbas and others spoke at the forum conducted by Aisha Mir.

They suggested that gender-sensitization trainings should be conducted for personnel of law-enforcement agencies and the judiciary, so that their attitude becomes friendly and sympathetic while dealing with cases of violence against women, rape etc.

They said that police usually did not carry out proper investigations in cases related to honor killings etc, owing to which culprits were usually acquitted, and even those sentenced, were awarded very lenient punishment. They also demanded that no compromise should be allowed in honor killing cases, as it encouraged the crime.

They demanded that Hudood, Zina, Qisas and Diyat ordinances and other discriminatory laws be abolished, adding that the number of women in jails had multiplied manifold after the promulgation of these ordinances. A documentary highlighting women issues was also screened. Atiya Dawood presented her poetry, highlighting issues being faced by women.

Source: Dawn, 3/9/2005
[Http://www.dawn.com/2005/03/09/local9.htm](http://www.dawn.com/2005/03/09/local9.htm)

World Bank Approves US\$100 Million for Punjab

WASHINGTON D.C., March 29, 2005: The World Bank Board of Directors today approved a US\$100 million credit for Pakistan's largest province, Punjab. The credit is aimed at enhancing and building upon the improvements in quality and access to education achieved under a similar credit last year.

Aiming to further improve the education indicators in this province of almost 84 million people, the credit contributes towards progress in the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) related to poverty reduction and Education For All (EFA). In 2003, Punjab embarked on a wide-ranging reform agenda to improve fiscal management, promote devolution, and improve service delivery starting with education said Tahseen Sayed, Task Leader for Second Punjab Education Development Policy Credit. The credit is the second in a series of three development policy credits to support the Government of Punjab's medium-term education reform program to enhance access and improve the quality of education. Although Punjab has slightly better education indicators than other provinces, it still trails behind in comparison to low-income areas in the region. The rate of participation in the education sector is very low with 47 per cent male and 43 per cent female primary net enrollment rates. In terms of adult literacy rates, Punjab is also among the lowest in the region, with only 36 per cent of women and 57 per cent of men considered literate.

I am happy to note a commendable difference in the service delivery of the education sector in Punjab, says John Wall, World Bank Country Director for Pakistan. Primary school enrollment in the province registered an increase of 900,000 children under the first phase of the Education Reform. Thousands of girl students are receiving stipends, free textbooks are reaching the students in a timely manner, and community involvement is showing encouraging results. Nevertheless, there is no room for complacency; the hard work has just begun with the jump in enrollment. Now the job is to improve the quality of teaching and learning as well as continuing the implementation of what has already begun.

Government committed to lower infant, maternal mortality rate

First Lady Begum Sehba Musharraf said that the government is fully committed to lower the infant and maternal mortality rate through all possible means. She was inaugurating the launch of a National Oral Rehydration Solution (ORS) Campaign by the National Commission for Human Development (NCHD) at a local hotel on 30 March 2005.

Begum Musharraf said that diarrhea has been identified as the major cause of child mortality in Pakistan, accounting for 30 per cent of deaths each year. She said that the strategy of the government on health and education is most effective for the control and prevention of diseases in the country.

"The ORS has been identified by the World Health Organization as the single life-saving advance of the 20th century. It is particularly appropriate for the treatment of diarrhea in developing countries such as Pakistan, because it is inexpensive and can be administered at home," she said. Begum Musharraf hoped that the National ORS Campaign by NCHD would assist poor families in administering ORS to help save their medical expenses, and, more importantly, lower the number of child deaths caused by diarrhea.

Earlier, Chairman NCHD Dr. Nasim Ashraf said that it was very unfortunate that more than one million children died of diarrhea every year in Pakistan, whereas a simple solution made of sugar and salt (ORS) could save these precious lives. Dr. Nasim said NCHD in its campaign would train 2.8 million women in 45 districts of the country during the current year on how to prepare ORS at home. Dr. Moazzam Khalil, Programme Chief (Health) NCHD, briefed the audience about salient features of the campaign.

He said in South Asia, 90 out of 1000 children don't live up to the age of five, while in Pakistan, one child dies every five minutes. He said retaining the loss of water from the body could easily prevent 82 per cent of these deaths.

He said that the main objective of the ORS campaign is to train one woman in every household of the country to prepare and administer ORS to the affected person. He said that NCHD would train 6.75 million women during the next three years and 22 million in a total of five years.

Source: The News, 3/31/2005
<http://www.jang.com.pk/thenews/mar2005-daily/31-03-2005/metro/i14.htm>

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were formulated during the Millennium Summit held in New York, USA, in 2000 and refined through the "Roadmap towards the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration: Report of the Secretary General to the General Assembly" in 2001. To measure progress towards the goals, a framework of 18 targets and 48 indicators was set up by a consensus of experts from the United Nations Secretariat, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the World Bank. The Goals and the targets set in the MDGs are:

1. **Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger:**
 - Reduce by half the proportion of people living on less than a dollar a day
 - Reduce by half the proportion of people who suffer from hunger
2. **Achieve universal primary education**
 - Ensure that all boys and girls complete a full course of primary schooling
3. **Promote gender equality and empower women**
 - Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005, and at all levels by 2015
4. **Reduce child mortality**
 - Reduce by two thirds the mortality rate among children under five
5. **Improve maternal health**
 - Reduce by three quarters the maternal mortality ratio
6. **Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases**
 - Halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS
 - Halt and begin to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases
7. **Ensure environmental sustainability**
 - Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes; reverse loss of environmental resources
 - Reduce by half the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water
 - Achieve significant improvement in lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers, by 2020
8. **Develop a global partnership for development**
 - Develop further an open trading and financial system that is rule-based, predictable and non-discriminatory. Includes a commitment to good governance, development and poverty reduction—nationally and internationally
 - Address the least developed countries' special needs. This includes tariff- and quota-free access for their exports; enhanced debt relief for heavily indebted poor countries; cancellation of official bilateral debt; and more generous official development assistance for countries committed to poverty reduction
 - Address the special needs of landlocked and small island developing States
 - Deal comprehensively with developing countries' debt problems through national and international measures to make debt sustainable in the long term
 - In cooperation with the developing countries, develop decent and productive work for youth
 - In cooperation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable essential drugs in developing countries
 - In cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies—especially information and communications technologies

World Watch

With clarion calls and worldwide events, UN marks International Women's Day 8 March 2005 - The United Nations today marked International Women's Day throughout its many agencies and across its multiple front-line outposts around the world with calls for bolder action to promote gender equality and events ranging from a cancer prevention workshop in Colombia to a hairdressing contest in Russia to a rights seminar in Uganda.

"New challenges have emerged," Secretary-General Kofi Annan said, noting the tangible progress that has been made since the Beijing conference on eliminating gender discrimination was held 10 years ago.

"Consider the trafficking of women and children - an odious but increasingly common practice. Or the increasing targeting of women in armed conflict. Or the terrifying growth of HIV/AIDS among women - especially young women," he added, stressing the crucial importance of women's empowerment. "No other policy is as likely to raise economic productivity, or to reduce infant and maternal mortality. No other policy is as sure to improve nutrition and promote health - including the prevention of HIV/AIDS. No other policy is as powerful in increasing the chances of education for the next generation. And I would venture that no policy is more important in preventing conflict, or in achieving reconciliation after a conflict has ended," he declared.

In camps around the world the UN High Commissioner for Refugees organized a plethora of activities with a focus on education and leadership. In Apartadó, Colombia, where fighting between Government and militia forces has driven thousands from their homes, it was holding a workshop on cancer prevention and reproductive health. In Moscow, it organized a conference for Afghan, Iraqi and Nigerian refugee women and asylum seekers to discuss their return options and work opportunities, with a hairdressing contest as part of a training project to help them become more self-reliant.

In Uganda, UNHCR was conducting sensitization seminars on women's rights, girls' education and sexual and gender-based violence, while in Sierra Leone's Kissy Town refugee settlement it was hosting a panel on empowering women for sustainable development in sectors such as education, employment, food security, health and HIV/AIDS.

In Kenya's Kakuma camp the agency was organizing a talk for refugee women to express their views on the possibility of returning to war-torn south Sudan, and in Nepal winners of a poster competition for the elimination of violence against women were receiving T-shirts with the slogans such as "You educate a woman, you educate a community," and "Men and women are two wheels of a chariot."

Agency heads rallied with messages to throw their support behind the momentum for gender equality. "Yet, while we celebrate progress, we know that it has been too slow. Thirty years after the beginning of the

Decade of Women, and 10 years after Beijing, it is still a woman's face we see when we speak of poverty, of HIV/AIDS, of violent conflict and social upheaval, of trafficking in human beings," Noeleen Heyzer, Executive Director of the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) said. "To break the cycles of poverty, violence and gender discrimination, we need to accelerate progress and expand its reach."

The World Food Programme (WFP) stressed the need to ease the burden of women in their traditional tasks such as collecting food while the International Labour Organization (ILO) underscored its commitment to the promotion of gender quality and more and better jobs for women.

The UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) threw the spotlight on systematic rape and sexual violence against women and girls during armed conflict while the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) noted that women are disproportionately affected by natural and weather-related disasters.

The President of the General Assembly, Jean Ping of Gabon, said the Day gave the international community as a whole an opportunity to assess the efforts done and those still to be achieved to advance the status of women worldwide. "Our nations' development requires women's active participation," he added.

The overall message was summed up by the Executive Director of the UN Population Fund (UNFPA), Thoraya Ahmed Obaid.

Source: <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=13567&Cr=women&Cr1=>

WEBSITE

window

Government of Pakistan

<http://www.pakistan.gov.pk/ministries/index.jsp?MinID=17&cPath=182>

The Ministry of Women Development is the national focal machinery for the advancement of women in Pakistan and this website links to National Policy on Women, Economic Empowerment of Women of South Asia, Regional Ministerial Meeting held in South Asia, Pakistani Women Abroad, National Plan of Action (NPA) and CEDAW Report.

<http://www.pakistan.gov.pk/divisions/index.jsp?DivID=20&cPath=185>

Women Development Division homepage provide links to: Social Welfare, Women Development Wing, National Policy for Women and Special Education of Women in Pakistan.

United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)

Promotes women's empowerment and gender equality, working for participation of women in all levels of development planning and practice. UNIFEM Regional Sites Pacific E/SE Asia Andean Region Arab States ...

<http://www.unifem.undp.org>

USAID - Women in Development

Achieve our development goals unless the entire Agency takes the role of both women and men into account in development programming.

http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/cross-cutting_programs/wid

International Women's Development Agency

International Women's Development Agency is an Australian non-government organization working with women in developing countries to support their efforts to improve their life choices and those of their families and communities, and to advance women's human rights. We focus on groups of women that are particularly marginalized or suffer poverty or oppression.

<http://www.iwda.org.au>

OPPORTUNITIES

conferences/trainings

When Women Gain, So Does the World

19 to 21 June 2005, Washington, District of Columbia, United States

Centers around the reality that investing in women's status globally is important not only for women themselves but is critical to the economic and social well-being of entire communities, institutions, and nations.

Website: <http://www.iwpr.org>

Contact name: Dianne Munevar

E-mail: munevar@iwpr.org

Organized by: Institute for Women's Policy Research, The Women's Studies Program of The George Washington University, and The Friedrich Ebert Foundation

Leadership in Strategic Health Communication: Making A Difference in Infectious Diseases, HIV/AIDS & Reproductive Health

Jun 6-24 2005 - Baltimore, MD, United States

Workshop participants will explore the elements of effective behavior development communication and advocacy programmes in a lively, friendly, and creative atmosphere. Participants learn from each other, from knowledgeable trainers, and from the worldwide experience of the Center for Communication Programs based at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.

Website: <http://www.jhuccp.org/training/Workshop/LSHC.shtml>

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