

One UN Pakistan Statement on Gender Equality 2013



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Islamabad, Pakistan
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The UN Country Team recognises that concerted efforts are needed to achieve a “just and sustainable” level of human development in Pakistan, and looks forward to working with the Government and the people of Pakistan to realise the change for gender equality and women’s empowerment.

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Introduction

In July 2012, the UN Country Team in Pakistan formally endorsed the One UN Pakistan Statement on Gender Equality.

This unanimous decision, the first of its kind in the country, solidified the commitment that all agencies, funds and programmes have already made unilaterally to work towards gender equality through their respective organisations.

The UN Country Team in Pakistan recognized that concerted efforts are needed to achieve a “just and sustainable” level of human development in Pakistan, and has committed itself to working with the Government and the people of Pakistan to realise change for gender equality and women’s empowerment.

A. Pakistan’s commitment

The Government of Pakistan continues to demonstrate its clear will to promote gender equality both at national (including in provinces and regions) and global levels by committing to rights-based international covenants and through progressive internal formulation of national laws, policies and programmes that aim to reduce gender disparity and promote women’s and girls’ advancement. At the global level, Pakistan has adopted a number of key international commitments on gender equality and women’s human rights, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, ratified in 1996, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified in 1990, and others.

B. The situation in Pakistan

Despite clear constitutional commitments toward gender equality and inclusion – including improvement in women’s parliamentary participation with 22.2 percent of parliamentary seats held by them – Pakistan’s Gender Inequality Index value remains critically low with a value of 0.573, placing it at 115 out of 146 countries in the 2011 index, along with a Gender Empowerment Measure of 0.386, ranking it 99th out of 109 Countries (Human Development Report, 2010). The complexity of issues leading to the serious state of gender inequality in Pakistan requires examination of gender gaps in development and humanitarian response processes, the need for systemic and structural shifts and strategic implementation of policies and interventions for girls, women, boys and men in order to more effectively respond to the multiplicity of exclusions and lack of access to rights.

Therefore, it is recognised that in Pakistan a large number of women and girls face specific gender-based disadvantages and do not enjoy many of the rights laid down in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and enshrined within the Constitution of Pakistan. Despite ongoing efforts from the government and development partners – including civil society organizations, academia and women’s organisations – there remains in Pakistan, as in many other UN member States, a significant inequality between the statements of principle and the day-to-day reality for girls and women.

C. The United Nations’ commitment in Pakistan

Each of the UN agencies, programmes and funds continues to work in the area of gender equality and girls’ and women’s empowerment in partnership with each other, with the Government and with civil society. Building on this experience, we, as Heads of the UN agencies in Pakistan, under ONE UN are committed to collaborating closely with the Government of Pakistan – at all levels – and other stakeholders, including civil society, within the framework of the four roles of the

UN – advocate, convener, advisor and service provider – anchored in human rights, inclusive, equitable and sustainable development and humanitarian assistance to enhance institutional processes and procedures, governance systems and mechanisms to deliver on gender equality.

Delivering as One – One Programme II:

The Delivering as One UN Pilot (One UN Programme I or OP I), which recognizes gender equality as a cross-cutting issue, ended in 2012. The current UNDAF/OP II is being finalized for the period 2013-2017. In this respect a rich and varied body of evidence – emerging from a series of provincial and national consultations with Government, CSO partners and donors; the UN Common Country Analysis; initial UN gender audit recommendations, and lessons learned from the OP I Progress Report – emphasized promoting a targeted approach that effectively delivers on girls’ and women’s ability to transform inequitable relationships and structures of power. The findings called for the UN to consider specific, measurable results for girls’ and women’s voices, participation and influence in a range of decision-making processes, including their ability to hold systems to account for their rights and to seek redress in the face of accountability gaps. The OP II, therefore, recognizes Gender Equality and Social Justice as a Strategic Priority Area (SPA 5) while maintaining gender equality as a cross-cutting concern through all six SPAs.

The UN system’s commitment in this regard is manifest in its adoption of Gender Equality and Social Justice as a key result and SPA for the OP II that, while it seeks its own realization, also positions itself as key for the realization of the other five SPAs.

In this regard, the UN system’s approach is two-fold:

- a. Integration and mainstreaming of gender equality into all levels and areas of interventions across specific priority areas and themes

- b. Identification and implementation of specific action focused on girls' and women's empowerment and gender equality to address exclusion and lack of access, voice, visibility and agency.

The areas of focus include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Provision of assistance to and for gender analysis of national policies, programmes and projects to ensure that gender equality concerns are adequately reflected and addressed. This includes technical support for gender responsive planning and budgeting, as well as programme implementation for women, girls, boys and men.
- Promoting, through policies and programmes, equal opportunities in employment, skills development and social protection.
- Institutional strengthening of related public sector institutions, civil society organizations, academia, and social and economic sectors, with specific attention to enhancing capacity of national machineries for women, social welfare departments and national machineries responsible for finance and planning to integrate gender equality in planning and implementation including progressive collation and interpretation of disaggregated data.
- Promotion of women's equal and empowered participation in decision-making at the policy and implementation levels in all sectors.
- Promoting a social environment free of fear, violence and harassment for empowered and meaningful participation of women and men in all spheres of life with dignity and freedom of choice based on application of human rights.
- Strengthening peace building, community mobilization and people-to-people dialogue and diplomacy focusing on women's role in peace building per UN Security Council Resolutions 1325, 1820, 1888 and 1889.
- Supporting protection of displaced persons with specific attention to the differences in the needs and concerns of women and girls, and issues such as gender-based violence and equitable access to services.

- Advocacy and investment to make workplaces in both public and private sectors conducive and responsive to the needs of working parents, especially mothers and their children.

1. The UN as an Advisor

The UN system in Pakistan will continue its advisory role in extending its technical expertise to all partners for contextualized achievement of MDGs and beyond; promotion and incorporation of a human rights-based approach within all development and humanitarian processes, implementation of national and international gender equality commitments; integration of refugees and displaced populations in recovery and development processes.

2. The UN as an Advocate

The UN agencies believe that women's empowerment and gender equality must be addressed by national processes that are anchored in rights, and evidence-based advocacy. We will, therefore, seek to support these processes by advocating early action on a number of high priority issues. As an Advocate, the UN system in Pakistan will continue to advocate for and support the government and national partners for effective implementation of international and national commitments on gender equality through evidence-based advocacy at different levels with relevant stakeholders.

3. The UN as a Convener

In its role as a Convener, the UN system in Pakistan is committed to facilitating progressively widening and deepening strategic alliances and multi-stakeholder partnerships for stretching space for dialogue and interaction amongst diverse development and humanitarian stakeholders including government bodies, CSOs, funding partners and private sector for girls' and women's empowerment, women's agency role and gender equality.

4. The UN as a Service Provider

The UN system in Pakistan has a lead role in coordinating international community response to emergencies, disasters and crises, all along ensuring its commitment to women's empowerment and gender equality and gender based violence prevention and response. The UN ensures integration of gender equality and social protection as cross-cutting areas within its crisis prevention and response initiatives as one of the main approaches and aims of its disaster risk management policy.

Furthermore, as a service provider the UN is committed to integration of gender ineffective governmental health administrations; furnishing appropriate technical assistance. In emergencies, the UN is committed to ensuring women's and girls' right to food and non-food items; and safe access to the humanitarian community. The UN system is committed to ensuring multi-sectoral coordination for prevention and response to gender-based violence in emergency.

D. Integration of cross-cutting issues within the UN Reforms process and programming

A High Level Committee meeting co-held by the Government of Pakistan, the UN and funding partners on 7 March 2008 validated gender equality as a cross-cutting theme within the Delivering as One pilot in Pakistan. The Delivering as One pilot created an opportunity to synergize all ongoing efforts and enhance the capacity of the UN system to deliver on its unanimous commitment to gender equality. Providing a common framework, the ONE UN is committed to align with Pakistan's national priorities and international commitments of Pakistan for delivering on gender equality. We recognise that delivering on gender equality is a shared responsibility of the participating partners – including UN entities, government, funding partners, private

sector and civil society organizations. Prerequisites for integration of gender equality concerns include: ensuring a rights-based approach; ensuring gender equality as a key result; promoting participatory approaches; commitment to women's agency role; allocating resources; creating space for these themes; ensuring monitoring of the integration process; and holding interventions accountable.

E. In-house policies

With regard to the UN's own internal policies, we commit ourselves to:

- Ensuring that Gender Equality and Social Justice is recognized and collectively contributed to systematically as an SPA for One UN Programme II, along with its specific outcomes;
- Creating and maintaining an enabling and gender-responsive environment within the UN through affirmative action, including increasing the number and level of female staff members in our organisations;
- Developing in-house capacity of UN staff for integrating gender responsiveness in all initiatives undertaken by the UN;
- Establishing a gender-sensitive and transparent internal mechanism whereby complaints of inappropriate behaviour and sexual harassment are dealt with fairly and effectively, and offenders are subjected to appropriate disciplinary action.

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