



# KPCSW NEWSLETTER

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## INTRODUCTION

The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Commission on the Status of Women is a statutory advisory body established under the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Act XIX of 2009 which was amended by the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly under the new Act XXVIII of 2016. The Commission in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is the first ever Provincial Level Commission in the country, established with functions to oversee implementation of laws, policies and programs related to women and propose new measures where gaps exist. The third term of the Provincial Commission on the Status of Women was notified in January 2017. Emancipation, equalization of opportunities and socio-economic conditions amongst women and men and elimination of all sorts of discrimination of women. The basic purpose to establish the Commission was to have a regulatory monitoring body that can work with sister government organizations as well as with NGO's towards the emancipation of women, equalization of opportunities including socio economic condition among women and men. Also to eliminate all forms of discrimination/ violations against women. Commission has a mandate to conduct research on the issues related to the women of KPK especially those deprived women living in the remote areas of the province. These Researches will also be shared with the government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and will help the legislators to concentrate on women issues including Gender Based Violence (GBV). The Researches will also help the NGO sector to understand the current status of women in the light of facts provided through Research papers.

In today's day and age, the participation of women in all areas of public life is essential for the full development and advancement of women and in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and it is now needed more than ever that the rights of women are secured and the constant discrimination against is completely abolished.

The commission plans to achieves these goals and help women in all aspects as over the years we have seen how women are often discriminated against and are treated unequally but did not hold any representative body that could voice their opinions and represent them rightfully. It is an understood fact, that for the full and complete development of a country, the welfare of the world and the cause of peace requires the maximum participation of women on equal terms in all fields.

The rise in women's participation in all fields will encourage our next generation to participate in public life and completely dismantle all the harmful stereotypes and assumptions that impede women's ability to play a central role in public life, including in peace-building processes.

I think it is important, though, to be clear about what we mean when we advocate women's right to participate which is basic support of women's full participation in economic, social and political life being a key factor in reducing poverty, increasing the wellbeing of women and creating fair, safe and secure communities. As I take the responsibility that has been laid upon my shoulders, I know and understand that this is not a matter that can be dealt with flexibly, it is a matter of great responsibility, as for the first time women are being given a representative body to voice their opinions and concern.

This commission has been established to help the women of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in ensuring their involvement in all walks of life and provide necessary recommendations for pro-women legislations. I am confident that we will achieve all our goals successfully. It raises my confidence when I see the tremendous enthusiasm and energy from women that belong to all walks of life in helping us change the system for the better. The road ahead is tough but with the support of provincial government, the Non-Governmental Organizations and off course the common masses of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, it can be made possible.

Neelam Toru, CHAIRPERSON

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Commission on the Status of Women (KPCSW)

**KPCSW Chairperson Ms. Neelam Toru visited the sixty-second session of the Commission on the Status of Women in the United Nations Headquarters, New York. (2018)**

Ms. Neelam Toru- Chairperson KPCSW, with the support of Trócaire and The Australian Government joined a group of female delegates from all over the world to discuss and recognize problems faced by women ranging from sexual harassment and femicide to equal pay and women's political rights.

This year the priority theme being “Challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls.” A lot of concentration revolved around women in the rural setting, who makeup over a quarter of the world's population and are being left way behind in every measure of development. Highlighting the essence of 'Time is now' to recognize the work of rural and urban activists who have transformed the lives of women around the world.

Ms. Neelam Toru expressed the need of acceptance of women in agriculture , their acceptance as owners of land, as well as the need to encourage their ownership rights. She also enhanced the importance and need of legislative actions and measures to be taken and ensuring state recognition of laws to protect and encourage ownership of women's land and agricultural rights.

She also emphasized the mutually reinforcing nature of goals and the gender responsive implementation of the 2030 agenda for sustainable development and expressed concern that rural women are continued to be discriminated against, marginalized and are economically and socially disadvantaged. She urged the governments to enact laws to ensure women's land, property and inheritance rights and called on stakeholders to address the digital divide that disproportionately affected rural women and girls.



**Chairperson KPCSW met Dr. Maliha Lodhi, permanent representative of the Pakistan High Commission in The United States of America.**

Ms. Neelam Toru- Chairperson KPCSW met Dr. Maliha Lodhi and delegates from Turkey, Russia, Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia, Iran and Qatar to emphasize the need to collaborate and join forces to promote friendship and peace in the region and their countries. She discussed the possibility towards creating opportunities and developing similar platforms at regional and national level for women.



**KPCSW Launches Android Application to battle Gender Based Violence:**

Ms. Neelam Toru- Chairperson KPCSW along with BrekBatley- Australian Deputy High Commissioner launched an android application on the occasion of International Women's Day to improve the cyber presence of KPCSW, through the application women will be able to report any case of violence to KPCSW online and offline via several features including voice message, video message, text or photos.

The application is available on Google play store for free download and will be used to connect to KPCSW in user friendly manner, It will also provide useful information on the pro women laws, KPCSWs mandate and functions, calling KPCSW and connecting to its Facebook and website.

On every platform the KPCSW has always worked for and has promoted the rights of women and strives to eliminate violence against women everywhere as a priority on every platform This app will play a pivotal role in providing support services for survivors of gender-based violence, with information to access shelters, medical services or legal aid services. In doing so it will help improve the safety and welfare of women and girls across Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa with the support of Trócaire and The Australian Government.



### **KPCSW Celebrated International Women's Day:**

KPCSW members celebrated International Women's Day at the Chief Minister Secretariat with honorable Mrs. Parvaiz Khattak and Senator Dr. Mehr Taj Roghani along with the commission members and the students from gender gender studies.

The Commission members sensitized the students and highlighted issues regarding Gender Based Violence in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, stressing on the empowerment of women and girls in being critical to building a stable and democratic society.



### **KPCSW campaigned for Making Women's Computerized National Identity Cards:**

With the Help of NADRA, the KPCSW has started a district wise campaign to register women for the National Identity cards, the districts being Charsadda, Peshawar, Lower DIR, Dera Ismail Khan.

The Chairperson stated that issuing of identity cards to women was dictated by the requirements of modern life to enable a woman to carry out all the activities with ease and also to prevent forgeries and trickeries committed in the name of women in the absence of identification.

Widespread lack of official identification (ID) in developing countries disproportionately affects women and girls, who face more and higher barriers to obtaining IDs, These barriers include: restrictions on women's freedom to travel outside the home or community; distance; financial cost; time constraints; illiteracy; lack of information and lack of awareness; and, lack of support or opposition from other family members. KPCSW will work closely with NADRA to develop a strong campaign to get all vulnerable women registered.

### **British Council representatives visit to KPCSW Office:**

Chairperson KPCSW met with the representatives of British council to discuss the way forward for a strong collaboration and support to the commission as well as the district committees on the status of women in the province.



### **Two Days Steering Committee Meeting on Body of Evidence on Policing and Medico Legal Sexual Violence in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa:**

KPCSW organized a steering committee on policing the process of research named "The body of evidence" to combat sexual violence and assault against women.

The steering committee also discussed different medico legal and forensic aspects to aid victims and provide them access to justice in cases of sexual violence against women.



**KPCSW delegation attended a meeting with the representatives of Punjab Commission on the Status of Women.**

KPCSW delegation attended an orientation session in Lahore at the office of the Punjab commission on the status of women regarding the GMIS which KPCSW hopes to install by the end of the year 2018.



**KPCSW Delegation Visited Torghar And Dasu- Upper Kohistan:**

KPCSW Delegation visited District Torghar and Dasu- Upper Kohistan to meet with Government officials including Deputy Commissioner, District Police Officer and other relevant officials in order to establish the nominees of the district committee on the status of women.

Trócaire and The Australian Government extended support to from DCSW in Tor Ghar and Dasu - Upper Kohistan.

The development of these district committees will enable the commission to lay down basic structure and will help women to access to their basic human rights.



KPCSW staff with the Government Officials of Torghar

**Functions of the Commission.**---The Commission shall,-

- a) Examine the policy, programs, projects and other measures taken by Government, for women development and gender equality, to assess implementation and make suitable recommendations to the concerned authorities, where considered necessary for effective impact;
- b) Review all provincial laws, rules and regulations affecting the status and rights of women and suggest repeal, amendments or new legislations essential to eliminate discrimination, safeguard and promote the interests of women and achieve gender equality in accordance with the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and obligations under International Covenants and commitments;
- c) Monitor the mechanism and institutional procedures for redress of violation of women's rights, individual grievances and facilities for social care, and undertake initiative for better management and efficient provision of justice and social services through the concerned forums and authorities;
- (d) Examine and review policies/programs and plans of each department to ensure that they address gender concerns adequately;
- (e) Establish and constitute in consultation with the Government, District Committees, consisting of such number of members with female majority and to be headed by a female Chairperson on such terms and conditions and for such a period as may be prescribed through regulations to examine and review policies/programs and plans for each office in the district and to ensure that they address gender concerns adequately; provided that two female members of district council shall be added to the District Committee and meetings and quorum of the District Committee shall be such as prescribed by regulations;
- (f) Provide guidelines to a District Committee for implementation and receive periodic reports on the implementation status to the Commission;



KPCSW staff with the Government Officials of Dasu

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