

REPORT

“Policy Dialogue on Violence against Women & Girls (VAW&G)”

With
Political Party Leaders and Legislators

April 30th, 2014
Pearl Continental Hotel, Bhurban



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ACRONYMS

AF	Aurat Foundation
ANP	Awami National Party
ASC	AAWAZ Steering Committee
DAI	Development Alternative Inc
JI	Jamaat-e-Islami
JUI – F	Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (F)
KP	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
MNA	Member National Assembly
MOLHR	Ministry of Law, Justice and Human Rights
MQM	Muttahida Quami Movement
PTI	Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf
PML (N)	Pakistan Muslim League (N)
PML (Q)	Pakistan Muslim League (Q)
PPPP	Pakistan Peoples’ Party Parliamentarians
QWP	Qaumi Watan Party
SAP-PK	South Asia Partnership- Pakistan
SDPI	Sustainable Development Policy Institute
SPO	Strengthening Participatory Organisation
SF	Sungi Foundation
VAW&G	Violence against Women and Girls

BACKGROUND

AAWAZ – Voice and Accountability Programme strives to strengthen stable, inclusive and tolerant democracy in Pakistan. The programme views democracy through a gender lens, and intends to contribute to women’s political empowerment, resolution of conflicts across the communities that it works with, and better public service delivery especially in the areas of health and education through informed and active engagement of citizens.

Development Alternatives Inc. (DAI) is the management organisation for implementing the AAWAZ programme, while Pakistan’s prime civil society organisations: Aurat Foundation (AF), South-Asia Partnership Pakistan (SAP-PK), Strengthening Participatory Organisation (SPO) and Sungi Development Foundation (SF) form the implementation consortium responsible for directly working with communities. Besides this, generation of evidence on the basis of informed social action that can influence the policy environment is carried out by Policy, Analysis, Results and Research (PARR) facility in AAWAZ. The PARR facility is housed in Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI).

Between 2012 and 2017, AAWAZ will work in more than 4500 villages across 45 districts in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP).

4 outputs of AAWAZ Programme are:

1. Output 1: Women better able to participate safely in politics and in public spaces at federal, provincial and local levels in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab
2. Output 2: Citizens and communities better able to resolve disputes peacefully, and work together for common solutions in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab
3. Output 3: Women and other excluded groups better able to demand improved delivery of services in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab
4. Output 4: Improved evidence generated, synthesised, and communicated/championed to political leaders in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab

To achieve Output 1 i.e. “Women better able to participate safely in politics and in public spaces at federal, provincial and local levels in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab”; lobbying and advocacy with the mainstream political parties of Pakistan is one of the strategies AAWAZ adopted. For this purpose, the first interaction with 9 political parties was made on 29th – 30th April, 2013 in PC Bhurban where a one day workshop on “Gender Sensitisation” was conducted followed by one day “Policy Dialogue on Violence against Women & Girls (VAW&G)”

The purpose of this workshop and policy dialogue was gender sensitisation of the political leaders and legislators besides structuring a framework for ending VAW&G. Political parties as gatekeepers are the key actors that can support women’s political participation within parties as well in the electoral processes which is one of the main focus of AAWAZ Programme.

Honorable Mr. Murtaza Javed Abbasi, Deputy Speaker, National Assembly, was the chief guest. More than 50 representatives from leading political parties, Ministry of Law, Justice and Human Rights, and AAWAZ consortium partners attended the policy dialogue. In this policy dialogue 34 MNA’s, Senators and office-bearers from the following political parties participated: (Detailed list of participants is attached in Annexure 1)

1. PML (N)
2. PPPP
3. PTI
4. MQM
5. PML (Q)
6. ANP
7. QWP
8. JI
9. JUI – F

Besides this, representatives from Ministry of Law, Justice and Human Rights, media and consortium partners also participated. Approximately there were 55 participants who attended the Workshop and Policy Dialogue.

PROCEEDINGS

Mr. Younas Khalid, Chief Strategy and Policy Officer, Aurat Foundation on behalf of AAWAZ consortium welcomed all the participants on Policy Dialogue. He said that country doesn't progress until all institutions work together. Decision making bodies and implementation making bodies must work together for progress. This interaction of legislators and civil society is very important. We all together make civil society. We have to be together to move forward and achieve success. This policy dialogue is one such initiative AAWAZ has taken.

Mr. Irfan Mufti, Deputy Director, SAP-PK said that he is feeling honored to be part of this Policy Dialogue and it is indeed a great achievement that representatives from 9 political parties are here at one platform.

He shared that 3 main principles for strong democracy are:

- Ensure upward control – sovereignty must reside at all level
- Political equality
- Social norms are very important

Mr. Irfan added that people have spent whole lives for the strong democracy; they have made a lot of sacrifices for nourishing the democratic system. Through consortium we are reaching 45 districts at grass root level and main beneficiary is the women and excluded groups. It is a step towards better society where citizens are able to raise their voices for their rights.

Pakistan society is currently facing extremism; people are becoming aggressive and society is moving towards intolerance. Another bad and shocking thing is that violence is happening and law making institutions are not playing their part. A policy dialogue is the step to formulate a framework for the elimination of various forms of violence. Laws are important and the implementation of these laws is also very important. We have to move for a joint collective action to benefit ourselves from the true essence of democracy. Laws are made first and its implementation framework is developed later on. We have to change this approach.

A session on Gender Based Violence: Forms and current situation was conducted by Dr. Rukhshinda Perveen, Gender Specialist. She thanked AAWAZ and AF team for inviting her to this event. She said that what is happening we must know and what should be done is to be analysed. (Presentation in Annexure 2)

Major points discussed were:

- ✓ Irrespective of the fact where we belong to what religion and sect, whether rich or poor; the issue of VAW is the factor and issue that whole society is facing and we have to build a consensus to formulate a strategy for the elimination of all forms of VAW&G. An action plan must be devised and developed.
- ✓ Words (GBV, SGBV (sexual GBV), VAW, Abuses, DV) are used interchangeably. Gender is social construct which is by nature and not a human given thing. However, gender is social construct given and attributed by society. Pakistan is part of many treaties, conventions and commitments for the elimination of violence. Violence is not something that is happening with girls and

women at a particular age. It starts at pre natal stage; abortions are done after ultra sound when the baby is found to be a girl. With growing age, girls and women continue facing violence.

- ✓ Places where violence takes place are home, public places, parliament, institutions etc.
- ✓ Is violence inflicted upon a specific age group? Whether with specific dressing or attire? Or in any specific area? No, it occurs at all levels and everywhere
- ✓ Society is at a denial stage. It sees things happening and let it continue happen. We collectively have to counter and stop it.
- ✓ More than 18 different forms of violence exist in Pakistan each being ugly enough to be condemned. There is no honor in killing, killing somebody is an act of murder and therefore unlawful which should be condemned by all. Instead of giving references of other cultures and countries we need to be watchful and work on ways to eradicate it.
- ✓ Right decisions in the right direction and at the right time are necessary. Instead of focusing on non- issues, we should start focusing on important social issues. We need legislation to counter violence and to eradicate the social evils like dowry and stigmatisation of women.
- ✓ Parliamentarians and legislators can address GBV; they, through their legislative efforts can help. Attitude is in mind and behavior is what we act. We have to step out of attitude and behaviors. If someone is doing violence what parliamentarians can do or is there something they can do, Yes, off course they can support and help in this important issue. They are responsible to carry out legislation and make laws.
- ✓ We need women legislators to move forward yet their visibility is very less. We need to take steps for increasing the women representation within the political parties.
- ✓ SGBV – Sexual and GBV Tree, branches are the various forms of violence, and leaves are the effects of the violence.
- ✓ Why GBV and not VAW: In GBV both sexes are catered as both are facing violence however in our society women are more vulnerable. Due to 302 it is not that murders are stopped but at least law is there and fear of punitive actions is also there. This is what we want and demand. Rule of law is need of time and our demand too. Laws and their proper implementation is important.
- ✓ There are forms of violence which might not be visible. Women widowers' marital status is seen only and therefore they are not giving taxes this is one good thing. However, women who are unmarried and they are playing their part in economy but still giving taxes. We have to see this thing also. We also demand that early child marriages must be stopped. And this applies for both girls and boys. This is a crime and comes under punishable crimes. Though legislation is there but implementing mechanisms are not in place.
- ✓ Researches show that women who got at least primary education are able to make good decisions in their lives. Therefore, primary education should be compulsory for all but specifically for girls who are to be brought into the main stream.

Feedback from participants:

- ✓ Population planning we must focus on elements that might not create problem in the longer run. Legislation and mass media must address the correct things.
- ✓ We must take steps for the transgender also as it is one of the most neglected group.
- ✓ Policy is a line of action which is important for this grave issue of GBV. The issues which are being highlighted in this platform are common we would bring those in parliament also.
- ✓ Legislators must strive for the increase of number of women seats and representation in different houses of parliament and senate. Door is open for discussion with focus on GBV.

- ✓ Another important thing we condemn is the absence of any forum to address women issues. There is no ministry for women; the older was merged with the Ministry of Human Rights, Law and Justice.
- ✓ Single women rights are never brought under discussion. We need to focus on this important and neglected sector also.
- ✓ Media's role is important and we have to focus on this. We have to regulate the role media and other tools are playing in changing the mindset.
- ✓ Specialised courts are there but judiciary isn't capacitated enough. Once a culprit is convicted, victims rehabilitation is very important. Initiatives have been taken but such initiatives stop after a while. This is important to make sure that the initiatives once started keep moving so that steps taken for the betterment continue. Reforms must be brought.

An open discussion was generated to formulate a policy framework on Violence against women and girls, session was facilitated by **Mr. Naeem Ahmed Mirza, Chief Operating Officer, Aurat Foundation**. All the participants from political parties actively participated and shared their point of view in this regards.

Some major highlights of the discussion were:

- ✓ Poverty alone isn't the root cause. It is one of the elements responsible for the increased number of cases of violence.
- ✓ Legislation is there but not implementation. If out of court settlement is made what can be done? What should be done? Family mostly tries to avoid the situation in case of violence. Remedy is there but denial is also there.
- ✓ Rights of women and children must be incorporated in manifesto of all the political parties.
- ✓ Prevention is a big element of this policy for which proper budgeting is required.
- ✓ Clarity of vision must be there.
- ✓ Reasons of this violence must be seen, case study must be conducted to see the reasons why such incidents are happening?
- ✓ Awareness raising is important and can be widespread through media, mosques, schools and other institutions. Punishments are there but punitive action is lacking in most of the cases. For the rehabilitation of the victims system needs to be in place, this is very important because the support systems indicate that issue are being taken up seriously. In cases of female victims, even though the victim is right, has suffered, has been wronged, yet if she is poor, her problems are multiplied, society stigmatises her for being wronged and in spite of raising her voice she is not heard and her problem is not addressed.
- ✓ Strengthening rule of law is important, main pillars of justice system i.e. police, prison, speedy trials and prosecution are all roles of legislators to perform. If these 4 principles are strengthened and streamlined all the highlighted issues would be solved.
- ✓ Nations progressed through education only. If education is made compulsory this would bring changes. Security and safety of the environment is important. Laws must be made keeping in view the local context and try to create environment free of violence.
- ✓ Government and private sector duty 'hours' of working women are another important factor to be reviewed. Also the children working in houses are not getting education and other rights as they must have. Role of women must be determined in context with the relevant culture.

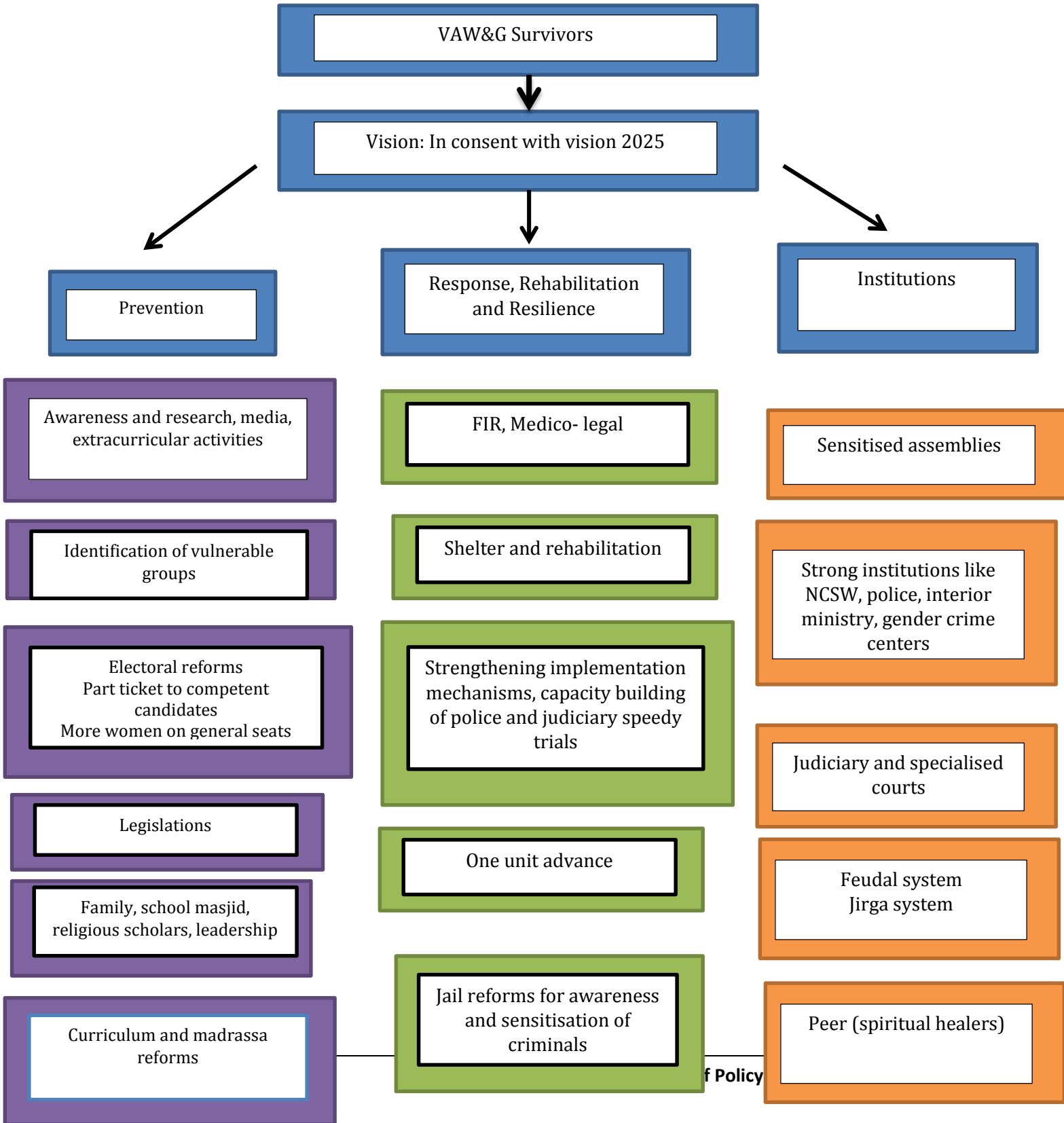
- ✓ These recommendations must be part of 2025 vision. All representatives from political parties must take this forward. Manifestos must include the GBV, women and child rights.
- ✓ Syllabus and curriculum must cater these issues for must. Role of police stations needs to be reviewed and steps must be taken to change their role and make it more effective.
- ✓ Overall policies and procedures need to be reviewed and gender concept must be included. Institutions are not empowered and that is why women are dependent rather than independent.
- ✓ PCSW and NCSW both must be strong and their role needs to be strengthened. Women must be given space to take part in decision making process. We have to review this important factor for the policy.
- ✓ In KP in year 2012, per case Rs. 283 were spent for the investigation of cases. This shows the attitude towards resolving a case.
- ✓ We want women to be part of mainstream. We have to take steps that can help the women in the long run. This is going to be the evolutionary process; changes can't happen in a day or two.
- ✓ Another important thing is to review the role of Madrissas. Madrissa reforms are important. Perhaps there is a need of specialised courts to resolve the issues of violence and women related problems.
- ✓ Laws must be made or amendments must be brought where needed. We have to see the root cause only then we would be able to resolve the issues. Our constitution is policy framework; guidelines are there on how to address these issues. Manifestos must include the highlighted issues.
- ✓ Psycho social response via preparedness and response.
- ✓ Gender crime cell is well equipped with resources but not effective and this is important thing to be reviewed.
- ✓ One year of parliament is about to complete. Out of 36, 20 private member bills have been presented by women only. Remaining women have been part in other bills. This is quite a good performance of the women parliamentarians.

Major points of Policy Framework for Ending VAW&G:

- Vision
- Awareness
- Prevention – Legislation (capacity building of police and judiciary, strategy)
- Rehabilitation
- Institutions and mechanisms – one stop (Punjab government already in process. Rehabilitation centers police FIR etc. at one place)

These points were endorsed by all the participants.

PROPOSED FRAMEWORK ON NATIONAL POLICY ON VAW&G



Mr. Murtaza Javed Abbasi, Deputy Speaker National Assembly was chief guest of the event and therefore he addressed the workshop participants and expressed his appreciation of AAWAZ Programme led by AF and consortium partners. He was thankful to the organisers for inviting him to the event as it served a rich source of knowledge building and an opportunity to interact with members of various political parties, media persons and consortium partners of the entire project. He hoped that he would find opportunities in future to be part of such forum as a whole time participants rather than only a chief guest.

He appreciated the struggle of civil society for achieving the goal of women empowerment and safeguarding their rights. He said this role was important as it served to be catalyst and thus an agent of change which the society desires so much.

He said that the commitments are essential for building up nations. We also need to commit to ourselves that we would ever stand together to solve our national issues instead of shifting responsibilities on one another. It is essential for the public, the legislators and the governing units to be together for building up a nation and solving our problems. He mentioned the presence of laws and also confessed the gaps that are there in the implementation of these laws. Special focus is needed to prioritise our major national concerns and to strategise the processes to fill these gaps. Taking up issue temporarily and on ad hoc basis is the root cause of our weak systems which we need to think upon and attend with long term planning and processes.

He mentioned the rights granted to women by religion and stressed that these rights need to be practiced in their true spirit for proper empowerment of women. He appreciated the presence of women legislators in the legislative assemblies and the positive role which these women were actively performing within the assemblies. He applauded Ms. Nigar Ahmed and Ms. Shehla Zia for having founded such a splendid organisation, the Aurat Foundation through which opportunities of implementing programmes like AAWAZ had emerged and provided a chance to all of us to benefit from this opportunity. He wished that such programmes could also be carried at grass root level so that common people at the grass root also benefit and learn from such programmes.

Mr. Harris Khalique, team leader AAWAZ Programme addressed the audience with his closing remarks and also offered a vote of thanks to all those who participated, organised and provided all the necessary support required for this event. He mentioned that legislators and leadership present in this workshop is the right people to bring about the change so long awaited by the society. He said that in order to achieve our designated goals we need to think in the multiple terms. We have to identify short term, mid-term and long term targets and devise strategies and policies to achieve those targets.

But for this we require an immediate action towards the right direction as a first step. He appreciated the behavior and attitude of political parties present in the workshop as it encouraged them to believe that such collective wisdom could prove to be a source of power of the powerless majority. He further advised that political parties and civil society taking joint initiatives can be big source of change that the entire society is aiming to achieve.

ANNEXURE 1: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

S. No:	Name	Party Affiliation/Organisation	Designation
1	Ms. Farhana Qamar	PML(N)	MNA, President of Women Wing, Member standing committee of Education and IT
2	Ms. Asia Naz Tanoli	PML(N)	MNA, Member standing committee of Education and Interfaith Harmony
3	Mr. Rashid Mehmood Khan	PML(N)	MNA, Vice President- KPK
4	Mr. Syed Javed Ali Shah Jilani	PPPP	Parliamentary Secretary
5	Ms. Mehreen Bhutto	PPPP	MNA,
6	Ms. Rubina Khalid	PPPP	Senator, Member of standing committee on Cabinet Secretariat, Capital Administration and Development and standing committee on climate
7	Mr. Amir Fida Paracha	PPPP	Ex-Chairman (Nation)
8	Mr. Shaukat Mahmood Basra	PPPP	Information Secretary Punjab, MPA/Parliamentary Secretary Health Punjab/Deputy Opposition Leader Punjab Assembly/Information Secretary PPPP-Punjab
9	Ms. Munaza Hassan	PTI	MNA, Elected president of Women wing for all Pakistan, member of core committee, member of central executive committee, member of parliamentary board
10	Ms. Sajida Zulfiqar Khan	PTI	MNA, Chairperson standing committee/ Member standing committee/Information board committee/Science & technology (National Health Services regulation)

11	Mr. Shehryar Afridi	PTI	MNA
12	Ms. Nafeesa Inayatullah Khattak	PTI	MNA, Secretary General Women Wings Center/ Member National council PTI
13	Mr. Muhammad Ali Rashid	MQM	MNA
14	Mian Ateeq	MQM	MNA, Ex-president of Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Punjab province
15	Barrister Mohammad Ali Saif	MQM	Former Federal Minister
16	Ms. Kishwar Zehra	MQM	MNA, Member Standing Committees of defense and religious interfaith harmony, working committee of women caucus
17	Ms. Maham Ala	PML(Q)	Joint Secretary, Central Women wing, Chairperson Youth Committee
18	Ms. Fouzia Naz	PML(Q)	General Secretary all Pakistan women wing
19	Syed Faqir Hussain Bukhari	PML (Q)	Central Vice President
20	Ms. Farah Aqil	ANP	Senator, Chairperson standing committee- Inter provincial committee (IPC)/Member Standing Committee/Information Board committee/Science & Technology(National Health Services regulation)

21	Ms. Jamila Gilani	ANP	Provincial General Secretary, Ex-MNA and member of standing committee of commerce, minority and human rights
22	Mr. Syed Jafar Shah	ANP	Finance Secretary ANP, Chairperson standing committee on labor/Member PAC, energy & power committee/Finance Secretary ANP Khyber Pakhtunkhwa/Deputy parliamentary leader ANP
23	Mr. Amarjeet Malhotra	ANP	Senator, Member Standing Committee on National food security and research on government assurance
24	Mr. Sultan Muhammad Khan	QWP	MPA, Chairman Standing Committee on Law, Parliamentary affairs and Human rights, KP
25	Ms. Tariq Ahmed Khan	QWP	Provincial Secretary information
26	Mr. Asad Afridi	QWP	Fata In charge, Former Vice President (QWP)
27	Ms. Meraj Hamayun Khan	QWP	MPA
28	Ms. Naeema Kishwar Khan	JUI	MNA, Convener of women wing
29	Ms. Shahida Akhtar Ali	JUI	MNA, Member of standing committees of Public account, religious Affairs and interfaith Harmony. Central President of Women Wing. Former member of council of Islamic ideology (CII)
30	Dr. Rukhsana Jabeen	JUI	In charge women wing and general secretary for all Pakistan women wing
32	Ms. Aisha	JUI	Deputy General Women Wing
33	Dr. Farid Ahmad Piracha	JUI	Deputy General JUI Pakistan

34	Mr. Mohammad Mohsin Leghari	Independent	Senator, Member of Senate committee, defense, water & Power, IT & telecommunication
35	Mr. Naeem Ahmed Mirza	Aurat Foundation	Chief Operating Officer
36	Mr. Younas Khalid	Aurat Foundation	Chief Strategy and Planning Officer
37	Mr. Asim Malak	Aurat Foundation	Director Outreach and Network
38	Ms. Feroza Zahra	Aurat Foundation	National Programme Manager
39	Ms. Hina Akram	Aurat Foundation	Assistant Manager – Capacity Building & Communication
40	Ms. Gulshan Zahid	Aurat Foundation	Assistant Manager – Monitoring and Evaluation
41	Ms. Rabeea Hadi	Aurat Foundation	Director Advocacy
42	Mr. Akram Khurseed	SPO	National Programme Manager
43	Mr. Baber Jamal	SDPI	Research analyst
44	Ms. Shazia Mehmood	Sungi	Director Programme
45	Ms. Naghma Imdad	DAI	Deputy team lead – AAWAZ
46	Ms. Saadia Mumtaz		Gender and Legal Expert
47	Ms. Kishwar Sultana	Insan Foundation Trust	Director
48	Mr. Sajjid Mehmood Qaisrani	Sungi	Executive Director
49	Mr. Muhammad Mushtaq	National Assembly Secretariat	Joint Secretary
50	Mr. Waseem Wagha	Aurat Foundation	Advocacy and research specialist
51	Ms. Rukhshanda Perveen		Gender specialist
52	Mr. Muhammad Hassan Mangi	MOLJ&HR	Director General
53	Mr. Shahzad Ahmed Khan	MOLJ&HR	Deputy Director
54	Mr. Harris Khaliq	DAI	Team Lead – AAWAZ
55	Mr. Irfan Mufti	SAP-PK	Deputy Director
56	Mr. Bilal Naqeeb	DAI	Manager – M&E

PICTURE GALLERY



Figure 1: Left to Right: Mr. Sajjid Mehmood Qaisrani, Executive Director Sungi Development Foundation, Mr. Murtaza Javed Abbasi, Deputy Speaker, National Assembly and Mr. Harris Khaliq, Team Leader, AAWAZ Programme



Figure 2: Mr. Irfan Mufti, Deputy Director, SAP-PK



Figure 3: Mr. Younas Khalid, Chief Strategy and Policy Officer, Aurat Foundation



Figure 4: Dr. Rukshand Perveen, Gender Specialist and Mr. Naeem Ahmed Mirza Chief Operating Officer, AF



Figure 5: Group Photo, participants of policy dialogue with honorable chief guest Mr. Murtaza Javed Abbasi, Deputy Speaker National Assembly

