

# Recommendation for Agriculture Department Socio-economic rights of Women Working in Agriculture in Punjab



## KEY MESSAGES

- Pakistan has ratified a number of international treaties and have commitments i.e. GSP+ and SDGs for realization of human rights of its citizens.
- There is a dire need to collect sex and gender disaggregated data to address the gender disparity faced by agrarian women in Punjab
- Professional skills enhancement of agrarian womenworkers is needed. It must be aligned to market-based trades.
- Gender responsive budgeting is required to facilitate women to access opportunities to work.

## PURPOSE OF STUDY

- The Participatory Policy Assessment aims to identify gaps in the provision of socio-economic rights to women in the agriculture sector in Punjab under the existing labour laws, and policy framework in the context of GSP+ and SDGs.
- It also aims to provide policy recommendations and a road map for lawmakers, policymakers as well as protection of agrarian women’s labour rights. civil society organizations and other stakeholders for the promotion and

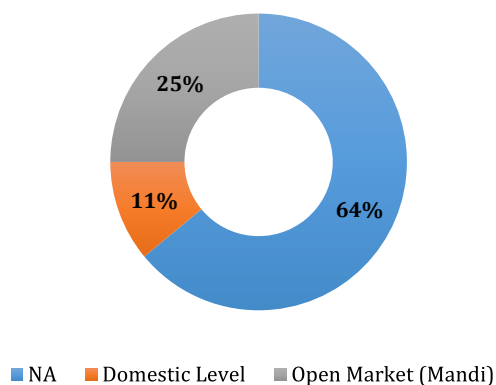
### Introduction of the project

INSPIRED+ Pakistan, is an EU funded project that supports local actors in nine different countries (Armenia, Bolivia, Cape Verde, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Pakistan, Paraguay, and the Philippines). It helps in identifying, analyzing and monitoring those domestic policies that hinder the full implementation of the UN and ILO conventions relevant to the GSP+. It is implemented by the European Partnership for Democracy (EPD), World Leadership Alliance - Club de Madrid (WLA-CdM), and the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD).

In Pakistan, INSPIRED+ supports a multi-stakeholder dialogue for the promotion and protection of labour and socio-economic rights of women working in the agriculture sector in Punjab. This is one specific policy issue (relevant to the 15 UN and ILO core conventions under GSP+. The project is implemented by following the INSPIRED + model which derives from the Integrated Support Programme for Inclusive Reform and Democratic Dialogue the array of instruments aimed at promoting good governance.

institution or organization providing training to start economic activity in agribusiness. In addition, their limited education or in most cases illiteracy, meant they had a lack of job, educational opportunities and training in key areas such as kitchen-gardening, fruit production, livestock management, and food processing and preservation which stands as barriers in their efforts towards economic development and empowerment.

Figure 8. Selling of Agricultural Product (N=100)



## WOMEN'S APPROACH TO AGRICULTURE MARKET

Most of the respondents (64 percent) have restricted mobility and no or little involvement to sale and purchase of agricultural products. Twenty-five (25 percent) of agribusiness women sell their products in an open market (mandi) while (11 percent) of the respondents were not involved in affairs of the market (Figure 8). Amongst these, most women claim that they do not receive suitable selling prices for their products.

- Inefficient use of agricultural inputs such as water, seeds, fertilizer, slow development and dissemination of modern technologies, poor connectivity with markets, and limited value addition in the sector.

- It was also discovered that women's time and burden of the household and farm

activities has increased while their capacity to cope with the climate shocks has decreased. This further deteriorated their health and livelihood. The health of an agrarian woman's children's is worse than those of other children. Factors related to the children's health and malnutrition has gone down.

- The hazards for young working girls include physical abuse, no protective gear, and exposure to chemicals that may increase risks to their reproductive health, little information on hazards, and no medical services.

- Almost 92% agrarian women workers do not have access to any government health insurance schemes for themselves, their children, or dependents. The only reported health facility among survey respondents was one for polio vaccination, while, for other epidemics, there was no facility in vicinity. In case of illness/disease, a major chunk of household income of farm worker and tenant women was used for medicines and treatment, which led towards a decrease in their daily subsistence.

- About 68% agrarian women workers continued their work during pregnancy. Sixty two percent (62%) agrarian workers managed to handle an adverse situation by themselves, through indigenous and traditional methods, since no emergency first aid was available in case of injury or health hazards. Most of the respondents do not receive any compensation from the owners or landlord.

- About 84% agrarian women workers were harassed at their workplaces as well as other public places by their co-workers, landlords, and other men. They were also harassed while traveling in public and even private transport.

## Methodology:

This research has been conducted through the participatory approach introduced by INSPIRED+ to assess existing laws, policies, regulations, mechanisms, administrative arrangements, programs, plans of action and strategies for provision of socio-economic rights to women working in agriculture sector in Punjab.

The study used triangulation of methods by conducting stakeholders' consultations, focus groups discussions, desk review, perception survey, and key informant interviews. The study used both quantitative and qualitative approaches to address the issue from different perspectives.

The perception survey data were collected from three regions including Faisalabad, Lahore and Multan. The highest number of respondents were selected from Lahore (36 percent), followed by Faisalabad (34 percent), and Multan at (30 percent). (Figure 4.1).

Figure 4.2. Type of Respondents (N=100)

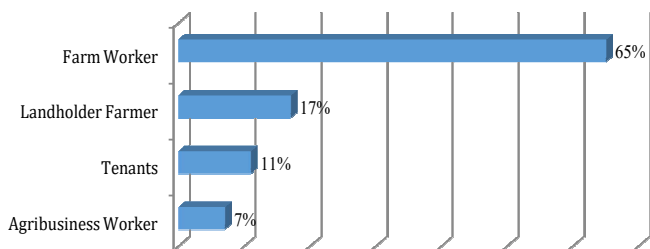
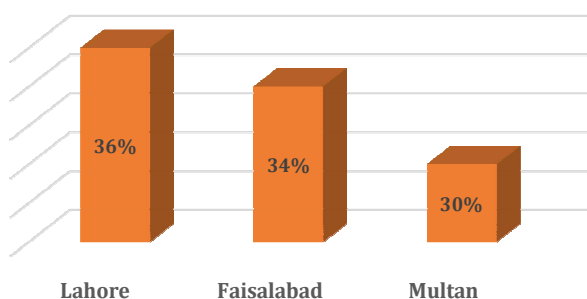


Figure 4.2 indicates that respondents were divided into four groups including 'farm worker', 'landholder farmer', 'agribusiness worker', and 'tenant farmers'. The 'farm worker' outnumbered (65 percent) rest of the categories, followed by 'landholder farmer' (17 percent), 'tenants farmer' (11 percent), and 'agribusiness worker' (7 percent).

Figure 4.1. Region wise respondent's participation (N=100)



## Key Findings

- The agriculture department has not gender disaggregated data.
- Punjab province does not even have its agriculture policy. It indicates a weak institutional and regulatory framework for agrarian women workers in Punjab.
- There is a need to enhance the capacity of relevant stakeholders for policy making on relevant regulatory and legal issues through a gender lens. This lack of capacity, including when it comes to collecting relevant data and statistics, remains a central cause for concern.
- Seventy seven percent (77%) of agrarian women did not know about micro-credit organisation and institutions.
- The agricultural tax for agrarian women also appears as a hurdle, which reduces their productivity efforts.
- Inadequate credit conditions for agrarian women workers are also causes to improve their agriculture sector business. The study also revealed that the male head of the household uses majority of these loans if women are able to get them from the government or NGO.
- Eighty five percent (85%) agrarian women workers did not know about any

- About 41% were harassed through passing sexual comments, 11% by whistling, 21% faced actual sexual assault, a violent physical attack and stalking or blocking their paths, 15% faced harassment by having their photos taken by strange men without their consent, character assassination and luring them on pretext of help, 6% faced touching, 4% were shown obscene gestures while 2% always remained in fear of kidnapping.

## Recommendations:

- Collect Sex and Gender Disaggregated Data; there is a dire need to collect sex and gender disaggregated data to address the gender disparity faced by agrarian women in Punjab, and so that there may be improvement in the policy framework and its implementation.
- Establishment of Skill Development Centre; Agriculture and Labour Departments should establish 'Skill Development Centre' at the village level where farmers, particularly women can get information on how to increase their yields/productivity.
- **Ammendment in laws to overcome discrimination in wages and employment; The existing laws in the province do not cover discrimination in employment and wages. The Govt. ernment of the Punjab should consider introduction of amendments in the existing laws to address this aspect in the light of ILO Conventions 100 & 111. The benefits of new provisions should also be transferred / extended to women working in agriculture sector.**
- A mobile health unit should be provided at village level. Primary and Secondary Healthcare Department may make arrangement for provision of emergency services to women farm workers.

## PAKISTANI WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE:

# UNIONIZATION

## FACTS AND FIGURES

### AWARENESS OF WORKERS' RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS

90% of the workers were not aware about unions or workers right organizations



### THE AIM OF UNIONS

93% of the workers stated that the union must work for fair and just wages

### DISSATISFACTION

Female workers who have knowledge about union/farmer organization/worker's rights committee/cooperatives, were not satisfied with their role in helping women farm workers



### WOMEN ARE SILENCED

Workers shared that unfortunately unions, workers right organization, or Anjuman Mazarin are not effective, and women are silent members. They are not part of the decision making process

*"Women farm workers should make their independent union."*

- Skill Training Programmes should promote income generation, target agricultural production and services and to build their capacities and strengthen value-chain network. It must be aligned to market-based trades.
- A Toolkit should be produced to help policy-makers; covering the different socio-economic aspects of women working in agriculture including elimination of child labour and should address, bounded labour and modern forms of slavery.
- A Gender Sensitization Programme and refresher courses for all stakeholder must be mandatory.
- A formal on-going orientation training programme for agrarian women workers should be launched by covering pro women laws, harassment at work and public place, inheritance, honour killing, Women Protection Act, domestic violence, early child and forced marriage gender based violence, customary practices, etc.
- Universities' Program; Public and private universities should expand their outreach programs to rural areas and agriculture universities should establish women training centres focusing on rural women farmers and capacity building of rural women leaders.
- An Awareness and Sensitization Campaign should also be conducted to educate agrarian community particularly; the right use of fertilizer and pesticides, quantity of water, and harvest timings. NGOs, CSOs, labour organizations, women rights organizations, and trade unions can also be effective in raising awareness among members of their rights and obligations toward workers, including family members on their farms.

## ECONOMIC AGENCY

### FACTS AND FIGURES

#### MICRO-CREDIT LOAN SERVICES

77 % of respondents did not know about any organisation providing micro-credit loans services



#### AGRICULTURE MARKET

64 % of the women have restricted mobility and/or little involvement of the sale and purchase of agricultural products

#### TRAINING

85 % of the women interviewed do not have information or knowledge about training institutions to start agribusinesses or its expansion



#### WOMEN OWNERSHIP OF LAND

64.71 % of women land owners have inherited land, 17.65 % received land as a gift from their husband, while only 17.65 % of women purchased the land on their own



*"Landlords are reluctant to lease land to a woman. For this reason, they prefer to deal with male members of the household"*



# Policy Brief

- Strengthen the Role of Unions, Associations and Cooperatives; Agriculture cooperatives could be a good alternative for the self-employed women with small land holdings wherein they can pool resources for efficient use. An immediate option for uplifting of women engaged in agriculture sector is the formation of unions so that they can stand for their socio-economic rights.
- Collective bargaining; Collective bargaining is an important means to improve wages, working conditions, and safety and health, and agricultural workers' unions, associations and cooperatives can be very effective in promoting, monitoring and enforcing decent work rights and protections for their members.
- Awareness and Sensitization Campaign; Agriculture, Labour, and Women Development Department should launch awareness and sensitization campaign on role of unions, associations and cooperatives to form unions, associations and cooperatives for enabling them to struggle for achieving better employment, wages, job security, and allied benefits. Women's rights organisations, labour education organisations, trade unions can also be effective in raising awareness.



This document was produced with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of the Aurat Publication and Information Service Foundation and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union



18 Zaman Park, Near Canal Road, Lahore  
E-mail: [rdlhr@af.org.pk](mailto:rdlhr@af.org.pk) | Web: [www.af.org.pk](http://www.af.org.pk)