

2017

4th QUARTER REPORT

January - March



WOMEN PARLIAMENTARY CAUCUS

Provincial Assembly of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa - Pakistan

Introduction

The success of any organization or network can be seen from the volume of activities and documentation that it successfully completes for the objective of reaching its goal. Starting with the setting of separate corners in the Assembly library for literature on Women Empowerment in the first quarter, the Women Parliamentary Caucus has moved on from one success to another. The number of meetings that it holds, the documents that are generated, the linkages that have been developed - they have registered a big increase. Word has spread that WPC is serious in working for the development of women. As a result of which the number of visitors and the requests for meetings and signing of MOUs has also gone up. The highlight of this quarter was starting of a helpline, Zama Awaz, for the purpose of connecting women legislators with their constituencies. This development has been appreciated not only locally but internationally too.



The Caucus has shown big improvement in the coordination among the members and their increased participation in different assignments. Due to this new initiatives such as a visit to the Peshawar jail could be effected successfully, and ,with support from development partners, gender audit of three departments, agriculture, home and social welfare, special education and women empowerment was conducted. Though there is still room for improvement in formation and working through committees, overall performance of the members has been very positive and satisfactory.

It may be remembered that the KP Women Parliamentary Caucus was created in the Assembly to give voice to the issues of women as there was a strong feeling that even in the Assembly there was some discrimination in seating, in time given during sessions, and in decision making. Women have needs some of which are completely different from those of men. Only women understand how to express them so it is critical to have women at all decision making places, Administration, Police, Judiciary etc. when this happens there would be healthy cooperation between the two genders,

The quarter registered the successful celebration of International Women's Day on March 8 in the Chief Minister's jirga hall in which women and men from both public and private sectors participated. The highlight of the program was the honoring of five exceptional women in politics, literature, performing arts, physical courage and human rights. The objective behind celebrating special days and events is to bring to the forefront issues of those groups which are neglected. IWD is observed internationally every year to draw the attention of leaders, activists and all stakeholders active in the States' development programs to the fact that women are still marginalized and kept out of important position and unjustly treated in every sector.

Women Parliamentary Caucus is successfully exhibiting that women are a rich resource of the province. The diversity in their thinking, the multiple skills that they are capable of learning, their patient disposition, and their quality of bringing people together are assets which cannot be ignored any longer.



1. Meetings

1.1 Executive Committee

Three meetings of the EC were held during the quarter for planning or review purposes.



1.2 General Body

Two meetings of GB were held during the quarter.

1.3 Public Sector Organizations

Presentation was made to the Chief Minister in his office. He lauded the efforts of the Caucus and assured his full support in its activities. He also approved a grant of .5 million for the Caucus.

Presentation was also made to the Speaker, KP Assembly, seeking his approval for the planned activities of the Caucus. The Speaker expressed his solidarity with WPC and committed to give his full support to strengthen it further.

1.4 Private Sector Organizations

Pak Women which is a regular visitor to the WPC secretariat, the NGO, Khwendo Kor, Awakening Organization, and Mehar Garh held meetings with WPC members.



1.5 International Organizations

Democracy Reporting International held meetings with WPC for the purpose of planning and implementing their joint activities/events





1.6 UN Agencies

During the quarter the one year partnership between Women Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) and the Swiss Development Corporation (SDC) was initiated to enhance the capacity of the WPC-KP to, “integrate a gender perspective in new provincial laws and policies and review of existing legislation”. During the quarter the workplan was finalized, the International Women Day was successfully celebrated and the hiring process of the project coordinator and the consultants to draft the Home Based Workers Bill and Review of the Women Empowerment Policy KP was initiated.



1.7 Meeting with Coffey International Development

A meeting with Coffey International Development and Department of Social Welfare and Women Empowerment of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was held at the WPC secretariat to explore the possibilities on institutionalization of the women desks whereby female Psychologists who were placed in the model police stations (5) of KP by Coffey International development through Aitebar project. During the meeting Mr. Kevin Carty, Policing expert of Coffey International Development reported that the Psychologists are providing services to 300 women a month. The delegates from the Department of Social Welfare and Women Empowerment of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa highly appreciated the contribution of Aitebar project especially the contribution of the psychologists that were placed in the model police stations. In order to continue with the services of the psychologists it was agreed that WPC will play its catalytic role and will liaise with the concerned government departments for funding these positions. In the meantime WPC will also support Social Welfare & Women Empowerment Department KP to develop a 3 years project to be funded by Coffey international/DIFID after completion of all required formalities.

2. Assembly Business

2.1 Bills Tabled

MPA Rashida Riffat had taken the responsibility for redrafting of the Domestic Violence Bill when the previous one prepared by the Provincial Commission on the Status of Women was rejected by the Council of Islamic Ideology. The new draft was prepared by a lawyer for WPC in consultation with members from the two religious parties of the province, Jamaat i Islami and Jamaat i Ulema Islam. A committee comprising of members from the Caucus, the Commission and Assembly Management was notified by the Chairperson, WPC, with the assignment to review the Bill and prepare it for tabling in the Assembly. The task was completed and the Bill was submitted in the Assembly on March 7, 2017.

2.2 Resolutions

Three resolutions, one each by MPA Uzma Khan on provision of Sui gas, MPA Rashida Riffat on use of mobile packages, and one by MPA Amna Sardar on recognition of services of Late social worker, Mr. Abdul Sattar Eidhi.

2.3 Call Attention Notices

A total of 30 CANs were submitted by MPAs Rashida Riffat (17), Amna Sardar (5), Uzma Khan (5), DinaNaz (1), Meraj Hamayun Khan (1), and Najma Shaheen (1). Departments involved are Agriculture, Elementary and Secondary Education, Higher Education, Health, Home, Labour, Local Government and Social Welfare and Women Empowerment.

2.4 Adjournment Motions

One Adjournment motion condemning the blast on Sehwan Shareef, Sind, was moved by MPA Nighat Orakzai. Four motions were moved by MPA Amna Sardar on Environment pollution, climate change, traffic congestions, and umbrella fund.

2.4 Questions

A total of 223 questions were submitted by women members which include MPA Sobia with a total of 90 questions, MPA Najma Shaheen submitting 56, and MPA Amna Sardar with a total of 32, MPA Meraj Hamayun Khan 18, MPA Uzma Khan 15, and Rashida Riffat 12.



3. Events Organized

3.1 Jail Visit by MPAs

Finance Secretary, MPA Ayesha Naeem and MPA Nagina Khan along with two Research Assistants and support staff of WPC secretariat visited Women Section of the Central Jail, Peshawar on 11th January, 2017, at 12:00 noon.

The problems observed such as the congested accommodation for 99 inmates including 36 children, the shortage of medical staff, weak infant care, and lack of legal support were all document in a Visit Report and submitted to the secretariat. On the basis of this report WPC will design its strategy to improve the system in all KP jails were observed and recommendations for improvement submitted to the WPC. Visits to other jails of the province are also on the cards.

3.2 With Pak Women

Activities listed in the The Memorandum of Understanding signed by WPC with Pak Women were enthusiastically implemented during the quarter under report. These activities include:

Consultation to frame Rules of Business (RoBs) for WPC

In a two-days workshop organized with support from Pak Women and attended by members of the Caucus and senior managers of the Assembly, the existing draft Rules of the Caucus were reviewed and edited. Since the work could not be finished in two days it was decided to form a committee for updating and finalizing the ROB. The Committee has completed its work and the ROB will be presented to the EC for ratification in the next meeting.

A one-day consultation was held to explore what the Government's Integrated Strategy offered to women.

A special event was held to launch the Helpline, Zama Awaz. The event was attended by all the referral partners along with the members of the Caucus, Pak Women, UN Women and USAid. The launch received very favourable comments from the media at home as well as internationally.



3.3 With UNDP

United Nations Development Programme is a strong and consistent development partner of the KP Assembly. With its support the Assembly has been able to launch a Capacity Development Programme. Strengthening of the Caucus through training in gender empowerment and mainstreaming is one of the components of the Assembly CDP. In the quarter under review, WPC and UNDP together successfully organized the following:



Knowledge workshop: Analysis of budget through gender lens. The workshop was a useful learning and awareness raising exercise and members participated actively.

Consultation on Electoral Reforms. It was noted with satisfaction that the Committee had partially accepted the recommendation that political parties will give some tickets to female candidates. Quota suggested is 5% instead of 10% but women are happy that at least a beginning is being made.

Workshop on Gender Studies

3.4 With Democracy International

Democracy Reporting International is another development partner which has left a big impact on the performance of the Caucus through exchange programs, reviews and training. Some of the activities conducted are as follows:

The KP Assembly has passed a record number of bills during the last three years. Two of the bills which critically impact on the life of common people are the Ehtisaab Act 2015 and Local Government



Act 2014. In the quarter under report, WPC undertook the task of holding public consultations on the bills to detect weaknesses and recommend amendments for strengthening.

DRI has also been arranging exchange visits for the legislators of all assemblies for the purpose of sharing and updating each other on events and developments in their respective domains. During this quarter, three members of the Caucus and one Secretary of the Assembly visited

Baluchistan and met with the Speaker, members of the Cabinet and other MPAs. They also participated in a conference on human rights where they had to share an update of the KP government on the subject.

Another platform that DRI has helped establish is Joint Working Committee with members from the Assembly and civil society organizations. The Committee works on gender, minorities and youth. The Chairperson of WPC is also the Chair of the JWC. It was through this platform that the issues of transgender were highlighted and resolution was tabled in the Assembly for the protection for their rights.

3.5 With UN Women / Swiss Development Cooperation

Strengthening of WPC Project funded by Swiss Development Cooperation and implemented by UN Women was officially launched on Jan 1. at PC, Peshawar. Officials from both public and private sectors were invited to the gathering. Speakers included Chairperson, WPC, Country Representative of SDC, and Country Representative of UN Women. The project duration is twelve months and would include drafting and tabling of two bills, progress review of Women



Empowerment Policy 2014, profiling two districts from gender perspective, organizing International Women's Day and hosting Inter Provincial Ministerial Conference for gender mainstreaming.

International Women's Day

was celebrated with great enthusiasm with over three hundred and fifty people, both male and female, from diverse backgrounds participating in a colorful event at the Chief Minister's Jirga Hall. Speakers on the occasion were the Deputy Speaker, KP Assembly, Minister Information, Chairperson WPC, Country Representative of Swiss Development Cooperation, Country



Representative of UN Women and the five ladies who were awarded for their contribution to performing arts, literature, human rights, politics, and courage. A video of WPC was appreciated by the audience. High tea was served in the lawns of CM Secretariat. Souvenirs were designed for the day which were presented to the Speaker, Deputy Speaker and senior management staff of the KP Assembly. A video of WPC was also recorded and shown during the

Programme.

To implement the project, UN Women invited applications for the posts of Coordinator, Assistant Coordinator and two consultants who would work on legislation and profiling of districts. The preliminary work on the selection process has been completed and the final interview and selection would be help in the first week of April.

All these events needed a lot of time to plan and implement so the quarter was packed with meetings with UN Women, UNDP, DRI and Pak Women. Besides these development partners, other institutions and organizations from private as well as public sectors were in regular communication with the WPC secretariat.



4. Challenges

Though the participation and cooperation of the members has registered a positive jump there is still room for improvement. Coordination mechanism with the departments, KPCSW, and private sector organizations working on gender issues need to be tightened for improved output in different sectors.

5. Conclusion

Women Parliamentary Caucus has achieved its first objective of creating space for women in the male dominated KP Assembly and the confidence on its work has grown tremendously. It has also caught the attention of donors and development partners who are pinning their hopes on it for utilization of their funds for women and youth empowerment. With the rise of expectations among the public and the management, pressure is also growing on the secretariat. The Honourable Speaker has been helpful and provided another assistant which has eased the situation a little bit. The enhanced participation and cooperation of the members has also brought a big improvement in the performance of the Caucus. The knowledge and understanding of the members has been visibly improved due to the multiple trainings which are included in the capacity development Programme. By and large, it can be safely stated that WPC is one of the best initiatives of the current Assembly.



Picture Gallery



Picture Gallery



Picture Gallery



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