This chapter provides a synthesis of the findings of the study and looks into the conclusions that may be drawn from the information we have collected on good practices and the odds that are posed toward their implementation. This chapter has two sections: the first discusses the findings of the study and connects the different chapters’ conclusions to highlight the differences between women’s security and human security. The main contention is that the two, while they overlap, do not have the same implications for men and women. The second section contains a set of recommendations for achieving the goal of ensuring human security for women with a hope that the immediate effect of these suggestions may be local or regional, but the ultimate effect would be global in terms of addressing women’s security.

5.1 POINTS TO PONDER FOR WOMEN’S SECURITY

In this section, we discuss the salient findings of our study and attempt to contextualise them. We set out with the assertion that women’s security requires a different lens because women’s issues are different. When women are subsumed under the category of a ‘person,’ many of the specific disadvantages associated with being a woman are swept under the carpet. This study provides ample proof that whether in the public or in the private sphere women are systematically subordinated through different strategies that involve the use of customs and traditions, religion, law and the coercive power of the state. In addition, they face continuous intangible and subtle discrimination in the form of structural violence whereby their life chances are fewer and they have fewer opportunities to achieve their aspirations. In this connection, we have looked at the relationship between women and the state on the one hand, and the relationship between women and community and family on the other. We demonstrate that there is
collusion among all three levels where violence against women is concerned.

We find that the category of violence is missing from most indices that measure human security. Having outlined the nuances and debates around the differences between human rights, human development and human security, we demonstrate how all three concepts tend to ignore women's specific insecurities. Such neglect is possible only because most of these discourses look at people as persons (read male) rather than as women and men. We have highlighted the manner in which various human rights declarations and conventions are gender blind. Also, we have pointed out the nuanced differences between human development, human rights and human security discourses. Based on these concepts, the indices that scholars and practitioners develop are flawed because they are unable to account for the everyday violence, whether structural or direct, that women face. Further, even where the indices specifically target women for inclusion, the issue of violence against women is overlooked. We conclude that the measures and indices that are developed tend not to account for the sources of women's insecurity that spring from violent relationships — whether within the family, at the level of the community or the state.

This manuscript outlines the specific politics and policies that have shaped women's lives in Pakistan and Bangladesh and attempts to understand the situation of women within these larger contexts of politics and economics. Political development in the two countries has followed very different courses; furthermore, geographically, the two countries are placed differently with regard to international politics. Pakistan has always found itself a role as a frontline state while Bangladesh has escaped this calamity. This situation has exacerbated military rule and militarisation in Pakistan whereas Bangladesh has been able to escape direct military rule since 1990. Rule by political parties, no matter how confrontational and contentious, makes a qualitative difference in the longer run. While democracy is not the panacea for all that women confront, it certainly is an enabling factor that leads to relatively better results than military rule, whose connections with violence against women are widely established. We believe that to understand women's insecurities, we will have to understand the larger context within which they are placed.

The preceding chapters underscore the connections between structural and direct violence. Structural violence results from policy
biases whether legal, social, political or economic, that gives women an unequal position; they are also built around different cultural norms and practices that discriminate against women. Direct violence is connected with structural violence because once women are systematically made vulnerable and inferior it is easy to target them physically. Our study indicates that the connections between structural and direct violence manifest themselves in multiple tangible as well as intangible contexts: political, cultural, economic, social, legal. Women’s security, therefore, is not easy to measure or address through simplistic indices produced by scholars and practitioners with little awareness of the countless ways through which women are kept disadvantaged.

In addition to the two major categories of violence, structural and direct, we assert that (as discussed earlier) the threat of violence is also violence as it impedes women’s options. Thus, one is not only concerned with the numbers game such as the number of women killed in honour-related crimes during a year or the number of women burnt to death by family members but with the threat or risk of such an occurrence. One has seen that such crimes increase when laws in a country allow the perpetrators to escape or when customary practices condone such crimes and the community provides protection to the perpetrators.

The issue of structural and direct violence against women is not one faced by women who are alive. It extends to unborn girls who are aborted due to the availability of technologies that identify the sex of the fetus. Due to sex selective feticide, millions of women are not born, whether in China and India or Pakistan and Bangladesh. The preference for boys has brought about demographic change in these countries which have a higher ratio of men — such is the discrimination women face. In addition, the structural discrimination women encounter whether by being malnourished, illiterate, underpaid and overworked, or because of limited mobility and access to the public sphere — whether hospitals, clinics, courts or police stations, puts them on a permanently unequal footing. This situation, in which they are subordinate, makes them easy targets for direct violence. Thus they suffer and are exposed to spouse and in-law abuse, or to physical attacks due to their association with a particular community. They also face direct violence because the perpetrators of violence know that they can get away with any crime, whether murder in the name of honour killings or rape or sexual harassment.

We have already discussed how women are disadvantaged in different and multiple contexts because of gender ideologies that create
binary hierarchies and relegate women to an inferior position in South Asia. Although the cases of Pakistan and Bangladesh vary because of their particular contexts, the impact of state policies, whether macro-economic, legal or social on women at the individual and collective levels, ensure that they experience increased insecurity and vulnerability. Simultaneously, these policies use a women-friendly rhetoric and purport to work for women’s emancipation. However, the funds that governments allocate to women’s ministries and to women’s needs whether in health or education constitute a tiny and insignificant percent of overall allocations, thus demonstrating the state’s weak support.

The rise of right wing ideologies has resulted in pushing women back whether in Bangladesh or Pakistan. The inability of the Bangladesh government to declare fatwas unlawful in the face of backlash from conservative religious parties, and the Pakistan government’s inability to declare discriminatory laws — especially the Hudood Laws — null and void despite clear-cut recommendations from the National Women’s Commissions demonstrates that women will continue to be exposed to unequal treatment. This need not be the case; however, until the governments are able to shake off their alignments with the religious right for political expediency, women will have to bear the structural discrimination that officially makes them unequal citizens in the eyes of the judiciary.

This situation is further worsened by the rise of political Islam as a response to the US Government’s War on Terror, which has replaced the communist block as their enemy with the so-called Islamic world. Although various western leaders, including President Bush and Prime Minister Tony Blair are quick to point out that they do not consider Islam to the problem, yet the mindset of a “clash of civilisations” has helped to give rise to an increased emphasis on Muslim identity both for men and women. This development makes women’s struggle for equality in a secular context far more difficult. Unjust laws passed in the name of Islam remain untouched by governments due to the sensitivity that their repeal might lead the opposition to dub them anti-Muslim and they might therefore lose their legitimacy to rule. In Bangladesh, the politics of religious identity also play to the detriment of women. The Awami League and BNP accuse each other of being Indian and Pakistani stooges respectively. The BNP emphasises Bangladeshi nationalism on the basis of its Muslim identity vis-à-vis India and claims to have saved the country from a fascist party that
was bent on aligning itself with India. This politics has resulted in shrinking spaces for women whereby the Jamaat assumes itself to be the sole and legitimate instrument for articulating women’s rights and status. The anti-women Fatwas that emanate from different communities are therefore not declared illegal and women continue to face violence from the family and community on the basis of the ill-conceived fatwas aiming to control women’s behaviour and sexuality.

The War on Terror has led the US government to lend support to a military dictator in Pakistan. Although there is a sham-controlled democracy in Pakistan, in reality the country is run by General Musharraf and his corps commanders. In Pakistan, the direct presence of the military in ruling the country for almost 31 out of 59 years of existence accounts partially for the presence of misogyny and support for it. The connections between increased violence against women and militarization have been established by feminist scholars\(^1\) and in the Pakistan context we have seen the rise of intolerance toward women being given official sanction through the double-speak of the government in multiple contexts. While the Hudood laws were introduced by the military regime of Zia ul Haq, the dependence of General Musharraf upon religious parties (whose support for him to retain the posts of president and chief of army staff was critical) has led him to turn a blind eye to the repeal of Hudood Ordinances, to retract some of the progressive policies introduced earlier such as the attempt to change the blasphemy law and reduce the number of women in local government through a reduction of the total number of seats in local government councils. Furthermore, his government prevented Mukhtaran Mai from going abroad lest the name of the country be soiled; President Musharraf went to the extent of saying “if you want to get a US visa or Canadian passport and get rich, get yourself raped.” Such pronouncements from a self-styled liberal politician inspired by the ideas of Kemal Ataturk come as a rude shock for those who expected more from the head of the country. Direct violence is naturalised. Even shocking incidents of gang rape and stripping women naked have become routine and take place in unprecedented fashion. The naturalisation of violence in different contexts of life as well as the emphatic attempt to treat it as a matter pertaining to the private sphere could take place with such shamelessness only under military rule.

\(^1\) See for example, Cynthia Enloe (1979).
Women's unequal role and representation in governance structures as well as the state bureaucracies and higher-level management positions in both countries has been dismal. Although Pakistan has recently given women 33 percent representation at the local level and 17 percent at the provincial and federal levels, yet the trends indicate that women's representation needs to go beyond the numbers game. It is important for women to be sensitive to women's issues rather than being present for tokenism. Even in the latter context, the Pakistan government has recently reduced the total number of seats allocated to women (while maintaining the percentage) at the local government level because they had become vocal and assertive about their rights. Many women councillors have faced incidents of physical violence ranging from being stripped naked publicly to being raped, kidnapped and intimidated with threats of physical violence against them or their families. In recent elections, many assertive women councillors were threatened with rape and other forms of physical assault if they did not back off from contesting.

In the Bangladesh context, there is disappointment with the female leadership of the two major political parties as neither woman leader has shown an overt commitment to women's issues. The only political party with an explicit policy on women is the Jamaat, which advocates views diametrically opposite to what the women's movement in Bangladesh has demanded. Furthermore, the alliance of the BNP with the Jamaat makes Jamaat policies and attitudes more dominant in the country compared to the Jamaat's vote bank. Political parties use women to mobilise women voters, not to spread any demand for their rights, which are secondary to the power game. In an atmosphere where money and mastans are employed to win (Aminul Islam, 2002: 64), women have very little space to negotiate their disadvantaged position in a systematic carefully thought-out manner. Similarly, at the local government level, women have held a fraction of the seats openly contested. The government has reserved one-third seats for women subject to direct election. This has opened spaces for women whereby they can begin to introduce pro-women policies and agendas at the local level; however, neither of the major political parties supported attempts by women to come up from the grassroots. At present less than 2%

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The macro-economic policies within both countries that are suffering the ill-effects of structural adjustment and now are being introduced as the PRSPs hold only one promise: the maintenance of high levels of poverty. Given that poverty has a woman’s face, not only in the context of access to food, education, and health services but also in the context of work and unequal wages, we see once again women having to bear the brunt of the negative effects of these policies. As subsidies keep being reduced, women’s role in the care economy increases. In addition, trafficking of women and children is directly tied to levels of poverty.

Further, the pressures of economic globalisation have resulted in expansion of the informal market, where women are employed in greater numbers. While this has opened up some opportunities for women, it is important to note that many women are increasingly more vulnerable to exploitative wage rates and conditions of work. They do not have any social benefits nor do they have employment guarantees. Such exploitation leads to sweatshop-like conditions in the urban manufacturing sector and to extremely hard conditions in the agricultural sector where rural livelihoods have come under increased pressure due to environmental degradation and the neo-liberal market economy. Women continue to face the negative impacts of these policies physically and psychologically. We have already discussed the costs of violence against women, which are reportedly high from countries where such studies have been carried out.

We conclude that though Pakistan may appear to be doing well on the development and empowerment indices, in reality, the situation, especially that of women is much worse. Women’s sphere for aspirations has become more restricted, contained due to the strengthening of ideologies that spring from misogynist interpretations. These are also exacerbated in the larger context of identity production from the war on terror.

We also conclude that Bangladesh appears to be doing better than Pakistan where the political set-up is concerned in that it has a democratic system in which the military’s role is not as invasive as in the case of Pakistan, yet women’s insecurities continue to be issues of serious concern. These have as much to do with the rise of religious fundamentalism and identity politics in Bangladesh, as they have to do with the forces of globalisation that has forced women to join the
informal sector at low wages and exploitative work conditions. Against such an onslaught, it is difficult for civil society actors, specifically NGOs, to initiate effective countrywide measures that can address women's insecurities in their multiple contexts.

Last but not least, the ideology of subservience, inculcated systematically into women and men's thinking, leads to silencing women in the interests of keeping social norms intact. Thus many types of violence that women face, such as spouse abuse or marital rape, are naturalised and not considered as violence. Women seldom speak out against these practices and even when they do, they are ostracised and punished by society.

To change such a complex scenario and integrate it into any category that can be produced in a neat mathematical form is virtually impossible. Keeping this constraint in view, we make some recommendations that pertain both to systemic changes as well as practical solutions that can be implemented with immediate effect.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

This study discusses the specific issues that women face in their daily life and concludes that while women have achieved a limited degree of autonomy, they will continue to be dependent upon state structures and institutions for their protection and security in the foreseeable future. This is ironical since we have demonstrated in previous chapters that it is these very institutions that are the main threats to women.

In this regard, recommendations can be of a dual nature. This pertains to an old debate among those who advocate reform of the system and advocate working for change within the system on the one hand, and those who argue an overhaul of the existing system on the other hand. The latter believes that till the fundamental basis of the existing system is changed, women's insecurities will continue in one form or another. The former argue that from a practical perspective, women are in need of immediate interventions and instead of waiting for an overhaul of the system we must strategise to achieve whatever gains we can make by reforming the system. The strategies they propose pertain to sensitisation of men, and improvement of institutions by making them responsive to women's needs and trying to foster a pro-women attitude through networking and advocacy. While the adoption of one approach does not mean a rejection of the other, the approach advocating reform ultimately falls short of envisioning a more just
world. Our recommendations pertain to both approaches although we are more sympathetic to advocating a fundamental change in the manner in which the state and different patriarchal institutions collude to keep women insecure. No amount of reforms or micro-level initiatives can be the answer to the massive problems women face.

Although the good practices we have described in the preceding chapters are important and constitute links in a chain, these initiatives need to be complimented at several levels ranging from the level of the family to the village/city, district, provincial, national, regional and international levels simultaneously. The recommendation we propose here are at four distinct levels:

- At the systemic and conceptual level whereby gender ideologies that have their basis in patriarchy and are reproduced by state and society would need to be changed.
- Changes in the macro-level structures and policies, especially economic policies that impact on the lives of the poor and disadvantaged in negative ways.
- Changes at the level of scholarship and policy conceptualisation whereby women’s specific issues of security are included and accounted for.
- Practical interventions and arrangements whereby women can seek redress or protection.

5.2.1 The Challenge of Prevalent Gender Ideologies

We have already noted that gender ideologies are present at several material and non-material levels. While women and men live them, institutions are also deeply gendered and so are the values that are placed on different sorts of behaviours and within language itself. To challenge such an intricate grid of inequalities, it is impossible to come up with measurable solutions and indices. However, we do have some concrete proposals requiring initiatives from the state as well as from women’s movements depending upon women’s agency.

There are several levels at which we need to make interventions if women’s security in Bangladesh and Pakistan is to be ensured. These range from the introduction of new categories into development and security-related indices to the implementation of women friendly policies that can ensure that women have access to services and alternative institutions that will help them.
5.2.2 Scholarship, Policy-making and (Re)conceptualisation

In order to make the indices of security and development gender sensitive, we will need to insert the category of structural and direct violence against women into these indices. However, this is not an easy task; for such categories to be included, we will need to come up with new ways of conceptualising and measuring violence, not simply in terms of numbers and methods of calculating economic costs but in terms of life changes, options and constraints. Further, statistical data will need to feed into these categories. Therefore, social audits of abuse against women will need to be conducted to ensure that the situation of women is accurately reflected. At present we do not have systematic collection of data that can account for the categories of violence that we have discussed.

The different human security indices that we have examined do not connect the complex manner in which state structures, and international and national bureaucracies come together to support women and simultaneously maintain gender hierarchies. The role of culture, religion, and traditions is rarely considered a subject for public debate; often, states desist from introducing pro-women change within family and community structures unless forced by popular opinion and moral imperatives. These complexities resist categorisation in simple mechanistic ways of compartmentalising women through the development of indices and measures.

This recommendation also implies that a reconceptualisation of the dominant fundamental categories that define violence is needed. For instance, for many male policy-makers in Pakistan, it is inconceivable to grasp the concept of domestic violence as objectionable or the concept of marital rape; until such sensitisation does not take place, many issues of violence, especially at the family level, will continue to escape any remedial measures. In the same vein, the naturalisation of inequality, whether of wage or rights related to personal law, would have to be conceived in terms of structural violence before remedial measures can be instituted.

5.2.3 Linking Reconceptualised Categories with State Policy and Civil Society Interventions

The above recommendation leads us to discuss the possibility of reconceptualising the family and the state, as both can be oppressive toward women. If the family is a microcosm for the state, then surely
power relations within the family need to undergo a change in favour of women. Simultaneously, harmful practices and customs actively practiced, perpetuated and upheld by the community need to be eliminated through interventions by civil society groups that include political parties, trade unions, NGOs, the media, professional organisations and associations. The state will need to shed its negative masculinities; however, to be able to do so, women will need to constantly challenge and unravel these negative masculinities that limit their status to a secondary position.

In the contexts of Bangladesh and Pakistan, women need to be able to depend upon the judicial systems; these systems need to be strengthened through the establishment of referral services as well as support structures that are often absent. The state in both countries needs to build the capacities of alternative institutions such as shelter homes and crisis centres. Further, the rules and regulations that apply to such institutions need to be women friendly; at present these centres act more like sub-jails for women than the support structures they are intended to be. Budgetary allocations in the health sector as well as women's access to health services need to be increased. More schools and colleges need to be available to girls; increased job opportunities on an equal footing need to be made available.

Finally, we need to strategise for organising women themselves. Having limited access to the public sphere, which is dominated by men, women are disadvantaged in the economic, political and social spheres. To be able to overcome their structural disadvantages, and to be able to exercise their agency, women will need to organise themselves. This can be done at several levels and in the different contexts of their work and their lives. They can form self-help groups, or they can form associations along skill lines, or for the management of utilities and services. If women are able to mobilise themselves through the aegis of the women's movements at the sub-national, national, regional and international levels, a significant step toward ensuring their security and asserting their voices will be taken.

5.2.4 A Just Economic Order
We have discussed the negative impacts of the economic order whereby structural adjustment policies followed by the PRSP have resulted in increased poverty, especially for women. Economic globalisation has forced women to enter the market as wage earners in larger numbers
than before because they enter from a disadvantaged position. They receive less for the same work and are considered to be docile and diligent workers. The interests of expanding capitalism demands that women stay as low cost wage workers sans rights such as social and employment security or benefits. As discussed previously, women’s active strategising and coming together in an organised manner to work for their interests is crucial for addressing these challenges.

We have already witnessed resistance from civil society groups to privatisation and liberalisation. Although this resistance may not change the course of privatisation completely, it will certainly have some impact in terms of making the process of development more pro-poor and ensure social protection. Just like globalisation from above, the processes of globalisation from below is also gaining strength. At a practical level, strategies of resistance to corporate profit, whether through working against big dams or the corporatisation of agriculture have pro-poor implications. To what extent these can be made pro-women as well remains to be seen. However, we must emphasise that it is important to work for a pro-women and pro-poor globalisation process that can promise a more equitable system in immediate practical terms as well as for long-term strategic interests.
Annexures
Annex-A

The following table lists the fundamental rights guaranteed to the citizens by the constitutions of Pakistan (1973) and Bangladesh (1972). The fundamental rights have been listed according to the issues they deal with rather than in their numerical order as they appear in the respective constitutions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fundamental Rights</th>
<th>Pakistan¹</th>
<th>Bangladesh²</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Right to Life and Liberty</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• It is the inalienable right (i.e., can never be taken away) of individuals (citizens wherever they may be as well as individuals currently in Pakistan) to enjoy the protection of law and be treated in accordance with law. The protection of life, liberty, body, reputation and property of an individual is also guaranteed by the constitution</td>
<td>• To enjoy the protection of the law, and to be treated in accordance with law, and only in accordance with law, is the inalienable right of every citizen, wherever he may be, and of every other person for the time being within Bangladesh, and in particular no action detrimental to the life, liberty, body, reputation or property of any person shall be taken except in accordance with law.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Any law or custom or usage having force of law inconsistent with</td>
<td>• Laws inconsistent with fundamental rights to be void.</td>
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¹ [http://www.sdpi.org/know_your_rights.htm](http://www.sdpi.org/know_your_rights.htm)
² [http://www.bangladeshgov.org/pmo/constitution/index.htm](http://www.bangladeshgov.org/pmo/constitution/index.htm)

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<tr>
<th>Pakistan</th>
<th>Bangladesh</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Arrested person is to be produced before the Magistrate within 24 hours of arrest; any detention beyond this period without the Magistrate's authority is illegal. <em>(Exceptions: people taken into preventive detention. However, there is also a specified procedure for such detention.)</em></td>
<td>• Every person who is arrested and detained in custody shall be produced before the nearest magistrate within a period of twenty four hours of such arrest, excluding the time necessary for the journey from the place of arrest to the court of the magistrate, and no such person shall be detained in custody beyond the said period without the authority of a magistrate. <em>(Exceptions: people taken into preventive detention, however, there is a specified procedure for such detention.)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A person cannot be punished for an act which was legally not a crime at the time of its occurrence</td>
<td>• No person shall be convicted to any offence except for violation of law in force at the time of the commission of the act charged as an offence, nor be subjected to a penalty greater than, or different from that which might have been inflicted under the law in force at the time of the commission of the offence.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• No punishment other than that prescribed in law at the time of occurrence</td>
<td>• No person shall be prosecuted and punished for the same offence more than once.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• For one crime/offence the accused cannot be punished twice</td>
<td>• No person accused of any offence shall be compelled to be a witness against himself.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• The accused cannot be forced to give witness against herself/himself</td>
<td>• Slavery, all forms of forced labour and trafficking of human beings are prohibited</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• All forms of forced labour are prohibited and any contravention of this provision shall be an offence punishable in accordance with law.</td>
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*Prohibition of Slavery and Forced Labour*
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<th>Annexures</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Pakistan</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>prisoners and any duty for public service required by law, but compulsory service cannot be cruel or incompatible with human dignity)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dignity of Man and Privacy of Home</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Police or any other state agency can enter a home only after obtaining lawful authority (in writing, naming person &amp; purpose of entry — e.g., arrest or recovery of stolen goods)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Basic Freedoms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Every citizen has the right to assemble peacefully (Exceptions: these can be restricted by law in the public interest)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Every citizen has the right to: join an association/union; freedom of speech and expression; freedom of the Press is guaranteed (Exceptions: can be restricted by law on grounds of sovereignty and integrity of Pakistan, public order or morality; government servant cannot be member of a political party)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Every citizen shall have the right to form associations or unions, subject to any reasonable restrictions imposed by law in the interests of morality or public order.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Religious Freedom and Safeguards</th>
<th>Pakistan</th>
<th>Bangladesh</th>
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<tr>
<td>Every citizen, subject to qualifications can enter a trade, business or profession of his/her choice (Exceptions: regulations of trade &amp; commerce can be made by the government)</td>
<td>Every citizen shall have the right to freedom of speech and expression, and there shall be freedom of the press, subject to any reasonable restrictions imposed by law in the interest of the glory of Islam or the integrity, security or defence of Pakistan or any part thereof, friendly relations with foreign States, public order, decency or morality, or in relation to contempt of court, or incitement to an offence.</td>
<td>Subject to any restrictions imposed by law, every citizen possessing such qualifications, if any, as may be prescribed by law in relation to his profession, occupation, trade or business shall have the right to enter upon any lawful profession or occupation, and to conduct any lawful trade or business.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Every citizen has the right to believe, practice and propagate their religion</td>
<td>Every religious community or denomination has the right to establish, maintain and manage its religious institutions</td>
<td>Every citizen has the right to profess, practice or propagate any religion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Every religious denomination/sect has the right to establish, maintain and manage its religious institutions</td>
<td>No person can be compelled to pay any special tax to be spent on the propagation or maintenance of a particular religion or religious institution other than his/her own.</td>
<td>Every religious community or denomination has the right to establish, maintain and manage its religious institutions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No person attending any educational institution can be required to attend religious ceremonies,</td>
<td>No person attending any educational institution shall be required to receive religious instruction, or to take part in or to attend any religious ceremony or worship, if that instruction, ceremony or worship relates to a religion other than his own.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Property Rights</th>
<th>Pakistan</th>
<th>Bangladesh</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• every citizen is allowed to own, sell his/her property in any part of the country</td>
<td>• every citizen shall have the right to acquire, hold, transfer or otherwise dispose of property, and no property shall be compulsorily acquired, nationalised or requisitioned save by authority of law.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• no person can be deprived of her/his property compulsorily. If property, land is needed in public interest, then the government has to give reasonable compensation to the owner.</td>
<td>• A law shall provide for the acquisition, nationalisation or requisition with compensation and shall either fix the amount of compensation or specify the principles on which, and the manner in which, the compensation is to be assessed and paid; but no such law shall be called in question in any court on the ground that any provision in respect of such compensation is not adequate.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Guarantees of Equality and Non-Discrimination</th>
<th>Pakistan</th>
<th>Bangladesh</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• All citizens are equal before law and are entitled to equal protection of law</td>
<td>• All citizens are equal before law and are entitled to equal protection of law.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• There shall be no discrimination on the</td>
<td>• The State shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of</td>
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<tr>
<th>Pakistan</th>
<th>Bangladesh</th>
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<tr>
<td>basis of sex alone (Exceptions: the state can make special provisions for the protection of women and children)</td>
<td>religion, race caste, sex or place of birth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• No discrimination on any basis in access to public places, except those specifically reserved for religious purposes (Exceptions: the state can make special provisions for women and children)</td>
<td>• Women shall have equal rights with men in all spheres of the State and of public life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• No person otherwise qualified can be discriminated against in the matter of employment on the basis of race, religion, caste, sex, residence or place of birth (Exceptions: specific services can be reserved for members of either sex if such posts/services require duties which cannot be adequately performed by the members of other sex, e.g. Lady Health Visitor)</td>
<td>• No citizen shall, on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth be subjected to any disability, liability, restriction or condition with regard to access to any place of public entertainment or resort, or admission to any educational institution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Nothing in this article shall prevent the State from making special provision in favour of women or children or for the advancement of any backward section of citizens.</td>
<td>• There shall be equality of opportunity for all citizens in respect of employment or office in the service of the Republic.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| • No citizen shall, on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth, be ineligible for, or discriminated against in respect of, any employment or office in the service of the Republic. (Exceptions: Nothing in this article shall prevent the State from making special provision in favour of any backward section of citizens for the purpose of securing their adequate representation in the service of the Republic; giving effect to any law which makes provision for reserving appointments relating to any religious or denominational institution to persons of that
Preservation of Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pakistan</th>
<th>Bangladesh</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>citizens have a right to</td>
<td>religion or denomination;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>preserve their language,</td>
<td>reserving for members of one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>script and culture</td>
<td>sex any class of employment or office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>on the ground that it is considered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>by its nature to be unsuited to members of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the opposite sex.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to the Fundamental Rights, the constitutions of Pakistan and Bangladesh make special provisions for women through specific Articles and Principles of Policy, which the respective governments, all public institutions, and all government servants are expected to uphold. The following data enlists these Articles/Provisions.

**Pakistan**

- Article 25:
  1. All citizens are equal before law and are entitled to equal protection of law.
  2. There shall be no discrimination on the basis of sex alone.
  3. Nothing in this Article shall prevent the State from making any special provision for the protection of women and children.

- Article 26:
  1. In respect of access to places of public entertainment or resort not intended for religious purposes only, there shall be no discrimination against any citizen on the ground only of race, religion, caste, sex, residence or place of birth.

- Article 27:
  1. No citizen otherwise qualified for appointment in the service of Pakistan shall be discriminated against in respect of any such appointment on the ground only of race, religion, caste, sex,
residence or place of birth. Provided that, for a period not exceeding [forty] years from the commencing day, posts may be reserved for persons belonging to any class or area to secure their adequate representation in the service of Pakistan: Provided further that, in the interest of the said service, specified posts or services may be reserved for members of either sex if such posts or services entail the performance of duties and functions which cannot be adequately performed by members of the other sex.

- Article 34: Steps shall be taken to ensure full participation of women in all spheres of national life.
- Article 35: The State shall protect the marriage, the family, the mother and the child.
- Article 37: The State shall:
  (c) make technical and professional education generally available and higher education equally accessible to all on the basis of merit;
  (e) make provision for securing just and humane conditions of work, ensuring that children and women are not employed in vocations unsuited to their age or sex, and for maternity benefits for women in employment;
  (g) prevent prostitution, gambling and taking of injurious drugs, printing, publication, circulation and display of obscene literature and advertisements.
- Article 38: The State shall:
  (a) secure the well-being of the people, irrespective of sex, caste, creed or race, by raising their standard of living, by preventing the concentration of wealth and means of production and distribution in the hands of a few to the detriment of general interest and by ensuring equitable adjustment of rights between employers and employees, and landlords and tenants;
  (b) provide for all citizens, within the available resources of the country, facilities for work and adequate livelihood with reasonable rest and leisure;
  (c) provide for all persons employed in the service of Pakistan or otherwise, social security by compulsory social insurance or other means;
  (d) provide basic necessities of life, such as food, clothing, housing, education and medical relief, for all such citizens, irrespective of sex, caste, creed or race, as are permanently or temporarily unable to earn their livelihood on account of infirmity, sickness or unemployment;
reduce disparity in the income and earnings of individuals, including persons in the various classes of the service of Pakistan.

- Article 51:

(1) There shall be three hundred and forty-two seats of the members in the National Assembly, including seats reserved for women and non-Muslims.

(1A) The seats in the National Assembly referred to in clause (1), except as provided in clause (2A), are allocated to each Province, the Federally Administered Tribal Areas and the Federal Capital as under:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>General</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Balochistan</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NWFP</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Punjab</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sindh</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FATA</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal Capital</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>272</strong></td>
<td><strong>60</strong></td>
<td><strong>332</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Article 34:

(4) For the purpose of election to the National Assembly,

(d) members to the seats reserved for women which are allocated to a Province under clause (1A) shall be elected in accordance with law through proportional representation system of political parties' lists of candidates on the basis of total number of general seats secured by each political party from the Province concerned in the National Assembly.

- Article 50:

(1) The Senate shall consist of one-hundred members, of whom,

(c) two on general seats, and one woman and one technocrat including Aalim shall be elected from the Federal Capital in such manner as the President may, by Order, prescribe.

(d) Four women shall be elected by the members of each Provincial Assembly.

- Article 106:

(1) Each Provincial Assembly shall consist of general seats and seats reserved for women and non-Muslims as specified herein below.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>General seats</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Non-Muslims</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baluchistan</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The North-West Frontier Province</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Punjab</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>371</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sindh</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2) For the purpose of election to a Provincial Assembly –

(b) each Province shall be a single constituency for all seats reserved for women and non-Muslims allocated to the respective Provinces under clause (1);

(c) the members to fill seats reserved for women and non-Muslims allocated to a Province under clause (1) shall be elected in accordance with law through proportional representation system of political parties' lists of candidates on the basis of the total number of general seats secured by each political party in the Provincial Assembly.

Bangladesh

The following box contains specific Articles of the Bangladesh Constitution, which guarantee various rights to women.

- Article 9: “The State shall encourage local government institutions composed of representatives of the areas concerned and in such institutions special representative should be given as far as possible, to peasant, workers and women.”
- Article 10: “steps shall be taken to ensure participation of women in all sphere of national life.”
- Article 11: “The Republic shall be a democracy in which fundamental human rights and freedoms and respect for the dignity and worth of the human person shall be guaranteed.”
- Article 15: “It shall be a fundamental responsibility of the State to attain, through planned economic growth, a constant increase of productive forces and steady improvement in the material and cultural standard of living of the people, with a view to securing to its citizens (a) the provision of the basic necessities of life, including food, clothing, shelter, education and medical care; (b) the right to work, that is the right to guaranteed employment at a reasonable wage having regard to the quantity and quality of work; (c) the right to reasonable rest, recreation and leisure; and (d) the right to social security, that is to say to public assistance in cases of undeserved want arising from unemployment, illness or disablement, or suffered by widows or orphans or in old age, or in other such cases.
- Article 17: the State shall adopt effective measures for the purpose of –

(a) establishing a uniform, mass-oriented and universal system of education and

---

http://www.rcss.org/policy_studies/ps_16_4.html
extending free and compulsory education to all children to such stage as may be determined by law; (b) relating education to the needs of society and producing properly trained and motivated citizens to serve those needs; and (c) removing illiteracy within such time as may be determined by law.

- Article 26 of Part III of the Constitution: (1) All existing laws inconsistent with the provisions of this Part shall, to the extent of such inconsistency, become void on the commencement of this Constitution; (2) The State shall not make any law inconsistent with any provisions of this Part, and any law so made shall, to the extent of such inconsistency, be void; and (3) Nothing in this article shall apply to any amendment of this Constitution made under Article 142.

- Article 27: “All citizens are equal before the law and are entitled to equal protection of the law.”

- Article 28: (1) The State shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth. (2) Women shall have equal rights with men in all spheres of the State and of public life. (3) No citizen shall, only on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth be subjected to any disability, liability, restriction or condition with regard to access to any place of public entertainment or resort, or admission to any educational institution. (4) Nothing in this Article shall prevent the State from making special provision in favour of women or children or for the advancement of any backward section of citizens.

- Article 29 of the Constitution ensures equality of opportunity for all citizens in respect of employment or office in the service of the Republic and prohibits any discrimination against any citizen on ground of sex in matters of such employment. The Article keeps a clause whereby it allows reservation of any class of employment or office for one particular sex on the ground that is considered by its nature to be unsuited to members of the opposite sex. However, Clause 3 of the same Article is a safety net, which states that, “Nothing in this Article shall apply to any amendment of this Constitution made under Article 142, which deals with the power to amend any provision of the Constitution.”

- According to the Constitution, a woman may be elected as a Member of Parliament by directly competing in the national election with her male counterpart or being indirectly elected on the vote of the 300 Members of the Parliament as one of the 30 seats reserved specially for women representatives. In the 1972' Constitution, the number of seats reserved for women was 15, which was reserved for a period of ten years. By the Second Proclamation Order No. IV of 1978, the Parliament of 1978, raised the number to 30 seats and enhanced the period of ten years to fifteen years. Again, by the Constitution Act, 1990, that is the Tenth Amendment, this provision of indirect election of women in the reserved seats was extended for another ten years.

Annex-B

The following table gives information on both countries vis-à-vis their positions, declarations and reservations (if any) on international treaties relating to women.

### International Treaties Relating To Women

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No</th>
<th>Treaty Details</th>
<th>Parties/Signatories</th>
<th>Pakistan Position, Reservation (if any) and Declaration</th>
<th>Bangladesh Position, Reservation (if any) and Declaration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

(contd.)
### Annexures

**Annex-B contd.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No</th>
<th>Treaty Description</th>
<th>Parties/Signatories</th>
<th>Pakistan Position, Reservation (if any) and Declaration</th>
<th>Bangladesh Position, Reservation (if any) and Declaration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
(Annex-B contd.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No</th>
<th>Treaty</th>
<th>Parties/Signatories</th>
<th>Pakistan Position, Reservation (if any) and Declaration</th>
<th>Bangladesh Position, Reservation (if any) and Declaration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Pakistan has made the following declaration and reservation to the Convention: Declaration: "The accession by [the] Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to the [said Convention] is subject to the provisions of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan" Reservation: "The Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan declares that it does not consider itself bound by paragraph 1 of article 29 of the Convention." Declaration:

(continues)
### Annexures

(Annex-B contd.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No</th>
<th>Treaty</th>
<th>Parties/ Signatories</th>
<th>Pakistan Position, Reservation (if any) and Declaration</th>
<th>Bangladesh Position, Reservation (if any) and Declaration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>SAARC Convention on Trafficking in Girls and Women.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Signature December 2001</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Convention on the Political Rights of Women</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ratified by Pakistan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>UN Convention Against Transnational Organised Crime</td>
<td>Signatories 141 Parties 10</td>
<td>Signature 14 December 2000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Below is a chronology of policy developments in Pakistan, which directly or indirectly impacted on women.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>Pakistan People's Party comes to power in December elections.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>New Constitution provides for the reservation of ten National Assembly seats for women and five percent of Provincial Assembly seats for women for a period of two general elections. All government services opened to women, barring the police force.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>First UN World Conference for Women held in Mexico. Pakistan participates and supports the agenda. UN declares the Decade for the Development of Women. In response, the Pakistan government creates the first Pakistan Women's Rights Committee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>First draft of the Women's Rights Committee Report submitted to People's Party Prime Minister Zulfiquar Ali Bhutto. It recommends legal and structural reforms to improve women's status. Dowry and Bridal Gifts (Restriction) Act passed to limit marriage expenditures and dowry expectations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>Bhutto's PPP government is overthrown in a coup d'etat led by the Chief of Army Staff, General Zia ul Haq.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>General Zia promulgates the Hudood Ordinances to override the existing Pakistan Penal Code in matters of rape, adultery, sex outside of marriage and certain other crimes. Maximum punishments include stoning to death, for which a woman's evidence is not admitted. General Zia establishes a Women's Division within the Cabinet Secretariat. Women's Development Cells established within the Planning and Development Departments in the provinces in order to create a linkage with the Women's Division. All funding comes from the centre.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>General Zia promulgates the Qanoon-e-Shahadat (Law of Evidence) Ordinance such, that in financial matters the testimony of one woman witness will be equivalent to that of two male witnesses. In February, Women's Action Forum, a collection of urban women's rights groups and women activists, demonstrates in Lahore against the Law of Evidence. Police beats women demonstrators. The day becomes a milestone in the women's movement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>Planning Commission includes a chapter on women's development in the Sixth Five-Year Plan (1983-1988), for which an expert working group is constituted. The Ansari Commission is appointed to submit proposals for Islamising the state of Pakistan. Controversial recommendations regarding women are ignored.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(contd.)
General Zia establishes the Pakistan Commission on the Status of Women to identify women's needs in a wide range of sectors.

1984 The Commission on the Status of Women submits its Report, but it is promptly suppressed. Parliament doubles the number of reserved seats for women from ten to twenty. Parliament enacts the Law of Evidence as an Act. It still reduces the evidence of a woman in some cases to half that of a man.

1988 Planning Commission includes another chapter on women's development for the Seventh Five-Year Plan (1988-1993) and has a working group submit recommendations. Pakistan holds its first post-martial law elections after the death of General Zia. The People's Party, led by Benazir Bhutto, wins. The Constitutional provision for women's reserved seats lapses. Despite lobbying by women's and human rights organisations, along with political promises to restore the seats, to date (1998) it has not happened.

1989 Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto upgrades the Women's Division to a full-fledged Ministry for Women's Development. Bhutto publishes and disseminates the 1985 Commission Report on the Status of Women. The First Women's Bank is created to provide improved credit facilities to women and increased employment opportunities for women in the banking sector. Monitoring and Evaluation Cells are established at the centre and provinces to replace the Women's Development Cells within the Planning Commission and its provincial Departments. Minimum five percent quota for employment of women in government services is established through Cabinet decision. However, no mechanism is put in place to ensure its implementation.

1990 Women's Ministry holds National Conference on Policy Recommendations for Women's Development. A draft policy on women is prepared by the Ministry but never finalized. President dissolves the PPP government and new elections bring the Muslim League and its coalition partners into power. Parliament amends the Constitution through the Shariat Act to ensure that all legislation is in accordance with Islam. The Qisas and Diyat Ordinance is re-promulgated, which equates a woman's value to half that of a man for purposes of compensation in case of murder.

1994 Muslim League government dissolved by the President and new elections bring the PPP back into power. National Inquiry Commission on the Status of Women is established, headed by a Supreme Court judge and including political representatives and experts. Women's Police Stations set up on an experimental basis at nine locations nation-wide to facilitate women's access to the police without fear of violence at the hands of male officers.

(contd.)
Women appointed to the superior judiciary for the first time. There is an increase in the number of women in senior official positions, which is not sustained by the next government.

Legal Aid Centres established within Oar ul-Amans (government-run homes for destitute women).

National Consultative Committee set up to recommend legal reforms and measures to increase women's political representation. It fails to complete its work.

Pakistan actively participates in the UN International Conference on Population and Development held in Cairo.

Women's Development Cells in the provinces are disbanded and full-fledged Women's Development Departments are established to facilitate de-centralised ownership.

1995 Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto and her cabinet sign CEDAW in preparation for Pakistan's participation in the UN World Conference for Women at Beijing later that year. Pakistan official and non-governmental participation is the largest in its history of participating in UN Conferences for Women.

Punjab Government passes an Ordinance reserving one-third of all local council seats for women.

1996 A process of Beijing Follow-up is launched by donors and government, which includes the formation of National and Provincial Core Groups to monitor the government's implementation of the Platform for Action.

1997 The PPP government is dismissed and the Muslim League wins the elections, this time with two-thirds majority in the National Assembly.

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif fuses the Ministry of Women's Development with the Ministries of Social Welfare and Youth Affairs.

Parliament passes a law making the death penalty mandatory for the offence of gang rape. This is in addition to the existing Hudood Laws.

The National Inquiry Commission on the Status of Women submits its report. Its recommendations include repeal of discriminatory laws, drastic increase of women's political participation through affirmative action and the establishment of a Permanent Commission on the Status of Women.

The Privatisation Commission invites bids for the private purchase of the First Women's Bank. WAF files a petition against the move and the Lahore High Court issues an order ensuring that the FWB mandate is upheld by any future buyer.

Ministry for Women's Development establishes 18 Focal Points with other federal ministries to improving coordination in programmes and planning.

1998 In the wake of international sanctions imposed on Pakistan after it conducts nuclear tests, a state of emergency is declared. The Constitution is suspended and citizens have no recourse to the courts to protect their fundamental rights.

Annex-D

Non-Governmental Organisations in Pakistan and Bangladesh

PAKISTAN

AGHS is a legal aid cell focusing mainly on women's rights. It was set up in February 1980. The founders of this organisation are lawyers by profession. They are also the members of Women Action Forum and are among the most outspoken advocates of human rights in Pakistan. Initially the activities of this organisation were confined to provide legal aid to women. However, gradually these activities increased. These people believe that legal aid should not be restrictive in its concept. Legal awareness, education, protection from exploitation, legal research, counselling and providing legal assistance are all part of legal aid. For women's rights, this organisation follows the definition of human rights as declared and officially endorsed by the international community at the United Nations World Conferences on human rights. The objectives of AGHS are: to make people aware of laws (legal awareness); provide legal aid to women; protect women and children from exploitation; provide legal assistance and counselling; develop the law for human rights; educate women about their rights; encourage arm-chair lawyers to become activists and outspoken advocates of human rights; monitor human rights violations and take necessary steps to do so; promote gender equality. Based on these objectives, the activities of this organisation encompass: legal aid; documentation; research and publication; advocacy and campaigns; monitoring; shelter home for destitute women; and training of paralegals.

Aurat Publication and Information Service Foundation (APISF) is a civil society organisation committed to women's empowerment in society. The Foundation sees this empowerment in the context of women's participation in governance at all levels, which requires increasing their knowledge, their share in resources and their role in management of institutions. The Foundation also works with civil society organisations to undertake advocacy and action on areas of concern for women as well as for a larger enabling environment for citizens' participation in governance.

1 It is pertinent to note here that the lists of NGOs in Pakistan and Bangladesh, is by no means exhaustive.

Aurat Foundation is a national level Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO). With headquarters in Lahore, and five regional offices in the federal and the provincial capitals, the organisation has an outreach extending to 97 of Pakistan's 116 districts.

The Foundation is engaged in advocacy at the policy making and implementation levels to reflect women's concerns in policies and to create linkages for implementation for women at the grass roots levels.³

The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) is a countrywide human rights body. Nationally, the HRCP has played a leading role in providing a highly informed and independent voice in the struggle for human rights and democratic development in Pakistan — a role increasingly recognised internationally. It is an independent, voluntary, non-political, non-profit making, non-governmental organisation.⁴

Pakistan's War Against Rape (WAR): With chapters in Karachi and Lahore, War against Rape (WAR) for short — is a registered NGO dedicated to combating the age-old societal ill of sexual crimes against women. WAR's efforts are three-fold: providing legal, medical, psychological and moral support to victims of rape as best as it can; creating awareness about violent crimes against women and keeping up the pressure on Government in general and Law Enforcement Agencies in particular in the prevention and handling of cases. WAR also provides moral support and shelter to rape victims. Basic Crisis Centres have been set up in the offices of WAR in Karachi.⁵

ROZAN is an NGO working on issues of emotional health, gender and violence against women and children. The ROZAN team consists of psychologists, psychiatrists, community workers, management experts, researchers, teachers and doctors. Rozan's main programmes are on the emotional health of children in general, and on the issue of child sexual abuse in particular; the emotional and mental health of women in general, and highlighting violence against women in particular; gender sensitisation, awareness and training at a national level; attitudinal change and police-community collaboration by addressing issues of self-growth, gender and violence against women and children; and providing telephonic, letter and e-mail counselling and referral services to adolescents on youth issues, emotional problems and physical concerns. The main activities of the organisation are: Psychological Counselling, training, and awareness-raising.⁶

³ http://www.brain.net.pk/~apisf/main.html
⁴ http://www.law.emory.edu/IHR/pakis.html
⁵ http://www.ashrafs.org/ashrafsatrpilwar.html
⁶ http://www.rozan.org/rozan/aboutrozan.htm
**Shirkat Gah Women's Resource Centre** (literally meaning a place of participation) aims to integrate consciousness raising with a development perspective and initiate projects translating advocacy into action.

A quarter of a century after its establishment, Shirkat Gah (SG) has expanded well beyond the Collective to an organisation working in all four provinces of Pakistan with three offices and has ECOSOC status at the United Nations. Shirkat Gah adopts a participatory approach in its internal functioning and all its activities.

Shirkatgah's ongoing focus is on Law and Status; Sustainable Development; and Women’s Economic Empowerment. Gender awareness, popular education, analysis and training cut across all programmes and activities. New areas of focus include Reproductive Rights and Reproductive Health, and Globalisation.

Shirkat Gah's activities include advocacy (around the issues of women and development, human rights (including reproductive health and rights), the environment and globalisation); capacity building (to strengthen conceptual, advocacy, organisational and practical skills of people, especially women, by providing linkages with other organisations and support service providers, disseminating information, providing advice, internships, inclusion in SGs activities and campaigns, and training); solidarity actions (to provide support to individuals in crisis situations, advice and legal assistance through SGs own resources and by linkages with other institutions); support activities (networking, research and documentation); and publications and dissemination of information.7

**Bedari’s** thematic areas are advocacy, women, children, human rights, information dissemination, technology, and youth. Its demographic focus is on both rural and urban areas. It is running a crisis counselling programme on psychological well-being/domestic violence.8

**The Progressive Women's Association (PWA)** founded in Pakistan by Shahnaz Bukhari in 1986 was formed to create public awareness about women's rights and the alarming increase in domestic violence. PWA is a voluntary, non-governmental, and a political organisation. The PWA worked on developing a plan of action to deal with critical women's issues and to evolve strategies for women's empowerment. Since 2002, the PWA has been active in Pakistan, the USA and the Netherlands.

The PWA collects data and information about violence against women to create public awareness. It also guides and assists women in legal issues connected with their employment and family laws.

7 http://shirkat.tripod.com/shirkat.tripod.com/id1.html
8 http://www.net-ngo.com/detailpage.cfm?ngoid=14
To take action against police and public violence, the PWA has formed the women's NGO liaison with the Inspector General Police, Islamabad and the Deputy I.G. Police, Pindi.

Other areas of interest of this organisation are the welfare and rehabilitation of delinquents and newly-released female prisoners, counselling drug addicts, and their rehabilitation.9

Pakistan Women Lawyers' Association 'PAWLA' was initiated by Mrs. Rashida Muhammad Hussain Patel, an eminent lawyer associated with the women's movement. Realising the needs of women in the legal sphere, she banded together like-minded concerned women lawyers to form 'PAWLA'. Initially the emphasis was on Legal Aid to serve women who had little knowledge, and no finance or means to seek legal redress. It is now working towards wider goals and activities. Working since 1981, PAWLA provides services relating to legal aid, legal awareness, and law reforms. It also rehabilitates victims of violence.10

All Pakistan Women's Association (APWA) (established 1949, registered in 1965) (health and economic welfare) is a non-political organisation whose fundamental aim is to safeguard the moral, social and economic welfare of women and children in Pakistan.11

Its areas of operation are Hazara, Peshawar, Kohat and Bannu in the NWFP. Major projects undertaken with regard to women include Training and Employment of Women (1997). The thematic area for this project was business and micro-credit and it was carried out in Hazara (NWFP).

Baanh Beli (established and registered 1987) (education, health and economic welfare): Its area of operation is Sindh (Mirpurkhas and Karachi). Major projects undertaken with regard to women include Village community Development Project, Nagarparkar (1992-99) which focused on saving and credit, female education and female health care; Central Tharparkar Village Community Development, Project Taluka Mithi and Diplo (1996-2000), which had female education as a thematic area; Northern Tharparkar Village community Development Project (1996-98), which focused on female education and Rural Karachi Ujagar Project (2000), which focused on developing primary schools for girls and female health care.

Behbud Association (1970): Its efforts are concentrated on women's development in health, education, vocational training and income generating schemes. Its area of operation is Sindh (Karachi). Major projects undertaken

9 http://www.pwai.org/pwa.html
10 http://www.pawla.sdnpk.org/introduction.htm
11 http://www.sdpi.org/know_your_rights/ngo.htm#allpak
with regard to women include Education Project (1971), Skill Training (1971), Distress and Rehabilitation (1971), Health (1976) and Reproductive Health (1985). All these projects were carried out in Karachi.

**Bunyad Literacy Community Council** (established and registered in 1994): Its area of operation is Punjab (Rawalpindi, Gujranwala, Lahore, Multan, Bahawalpur). Major projects undertaken with regard to women include Women's Development Project (1998) carried out in Multan/Hafizabad, and Women's Empowerment for Poverty Alleviation (1999).

**Caritas** (established 1965, registered 1980) (education, vocational training): Its area of operation is all of Pakistan. Major projects undertaken with regard to women include Social Awareness for Women (1998), Handicraft Centres for Women (1998) and Education for Working Girls (1998). All these projects were carried out in the Punjab (Lahore).

**Kashf Foundation** (established and registered in 1996) (micro-credit): Its area of operation is Punjab (Lahore). Kashf Foundation was inspired by the success of the Grameen Bank in reaching out to poor women and is the first such replication of the Grameen Bank in Pakistan. Its mission is to provide cost-effective and quality microfinance services to poor women, by adding value to women's existing economic opportunities in order to enhance their role in economic and social decision-making.

**Khwendo Kor — Women and Children Development Programme**: Its area of operation is the North Western Frontier Province (Peshawar, Karak and Dir). Major projects undertaken for women include the Microcredit Programme (1994) in Peshawar, and Khajwand Project on Education Health and Poverty Alleviation in Karak.

**Pakistan Women Lawyers Association (PAWLA)** (established 1980 and registered 1981) is a non-government organisation delivering professional legal services and economic counselling to women by means of networking with legal bodies, the government, donors and NGOs. Its area of operation is NWFP (Peshawar), Punjab (Rawalpindi), Sindh (Karachi), and Balochistan (Quetta). Major projects undertaken for women include Legal Aid Project (1981-2000), Jail Project (1990-2000) and Legal Awareness Project (1988-2000), and a book series "Khawateen aur Qanoon." (Women and the Legal System)

**Applied Social Research (ASR)** (registered in 1983): ASR was set up in 1983 as a multidisciplinary, multidimensional group working towards socio-political transformation. ASR's point of departure has been to re-examine and
redefine the political and developmental processes which people themselves identify, articulate and struggle for.

ASR acts as a catalyst, a network and a resource centre for several women's groups, social action groups, theatre and other communication groups, trade unions and peasant organisations in terms of trying to link them to each other and also to link smaller initiatives/groups to larger and more “established” ones.

**Simorgh — Women’s Resource and Publication Centre** (established and registered in 1985): A woman's resource and publication centre. Simorgh is mainly concerned with women and development and women and religion. It was formed in response to the promulgation of retrogressive and discriminatory legislation. Simorgh's main focus is research on women by women in order to free both women and men from the dominance of ideas that support social and economic divisions on the basis of gender, class, religion, race and nationality. Its area of operation is all over Pakistan. Major projects undertaken for women include Violence against Women (1998) and Gender Equality and the Judiciary (1996-todate).

**Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI)** (established and registered 1992): SDPI's mission is to catalyse the transition towards sustainable development, defined as the enhancement of peace, social justice and well-being, within and across generations. It is an independent, non-profit, non-government research institute established to provide advice to public, private and voluntary organisations, and to undertake advocacy on issues of public interest. Its research publications on women include “Women and Local Government,” “Language and Feminist Issues in Pakistan,” “Mohajir Women’s Sense of Identity and Nationhood,” “Women, Work and Empowerment” and “Afghan Women and the Reproduction of Patriarchy.”

**Human Rights Commission of Pakistan** (1986): Mandate includes work for the ratification and implementation by Pakistan of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and of other related charters, covenants, protocols, resolutions, recommendations and internationally adopted norms; to promote studies in the field of human rights and mobilise public opinion in favour of accepted norms through all available media and forums, and to carry out every category of activity to further the cause.

**Citizen's Commission for Human Rights (CCHD)** (1985) is a development organisation with multi-sectoral programmes to achieve and improve the current development goals towards poverty alleviation, empowerment of the disadvantaged, human and civic ecology and sustainability both in urban and rural settings.
LHRLA was formed to meet the ever-growing demands of those who cannot afford the expenses of litigation. The masses that seek help are mainly destitute women and children. This segment of the population is illiterate and financially deprived; it is also totally ignorant of its legal rights. Even among the educated class, individuals have only a negative view of the legal system and are mostly unaware of their basic fundamental rights. Hence there was a dire need for an organisation which would be guided by the UN resolutions for upholding human rights and which would devote all of its energies and resources single-mindedly to provide preventive and remedial legal help.

The system that LHRLA has adopted is to provide direct legal aid by approaching law enforcement agencies, the DIG police, the Home Secretary, the provincial governor and other highly placed officials with reports, petitions and statistics. It is a strong issue-oriented organisation with a motto for action, not mere rhetoric. The organisation welcomes all cases where there has been an infringement of human rights; it focuses primarily on cases of woman and child abuse, trafficking, illegal detention, rape, torture, dissolution of marriage, child custody, the juvenile justice system, jail reforms and public interest litigation. In other words, it takes on all human rights violation cases; and last but not least, cases involving the Hudood Ordinance, which has been distorted and used against the victims, rather than the culprits.12

ORGANISATIONS IN BANGLADESH

Ain o Salish Kendro (ASK) is a legal aid and human rights resource centre. It provides free legal aid to the poor-women, workers and child workers. It has a special consultative status with UNECOSOC. ASK is a membership organisation, started by nine founding members (4 women and 5 men). ASK's legal activism has led to public campaigns and advocacy in defence of individual and group rights within a framework of democracy. Besides providing free legal aid, ASK seeks to create awareness of legal and human rights so as to empower citizens to negotiate their rights. It is committed to campaigning for reform of discriminatory and repressive laws to eliminate systemic social, legal and political discrimination.

ASK's strategies to access justice focus on:

- Creating Awareness of Legal and Human Rights through popular theatre and training on gender and social justice.
- Providing legal support and social support (legal aid, outreach, field liaison support, investigation, and psycho-social help).
- Advocacy for reform through documentation, research, communication and advocacy.13

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12 http://www.lhrla.sdnpk.org/overview.html
13 www.askbd.com
Bangladesh National Women Lawyers' Association (BNWLA) was founded in 1979 by a group of prominent women lawyers who felt the necessity to create a balance in gender inequality in Bangladeshi society. Mainly through legal aid and counselling, BNWLA strives to protect women and children from all forms of violence and discrimination. The main activities of the organisation include providing legal aid, conducting training on legal rights of women and children, carrying out research for necessary reforms in the existing laws, lobbying with different authorities on women and children, investigating cases of violence against women and children, working as a pressure group to adopt policies, and providing rehabilitation to survivors.

As a part of combating violence against women and children and in order to rehabilitate the afflicted and the survivors of various forms of violence BNWLA runs a big shelter home equipped with facilities for physical and psychological recovery, and education and vocational training for reintegration into the society. The shelter home is also a part of the objective of BNWLA which is to improve the state of juvenile justice and ensure gender equality in Bangladesh. Every year BNWLA rehabilitates more than 300 victim children and women. Some children and women return to their families after only a short stay, but in the case of survivors who are highly traumatised, or quite understandably cannot give any useful information about their family (if they have been taken from their homes at a very young age they sometimes do not even speak Bangla) are kept in the shelter home for a long period of time. Through medical care and psychosocial counselling they are helped so that they can regain self-esteem and protect themselves from being further victimised once they are reintegrated into the society through job placement and/or other alternatives.

BNWLA receives information about victims who are in captivity (in brothels, cage brothels or jails in the name of safe custody) from various sources including network organisations, sympathetic clients, community people, police departments, journalists and partner organisations in other countries. BNWLA's people work in collaboration with law enforcers to rescue/release and repatriate victims.14

Bangladesh Nari Progati Sangha (BNPS) provides support for changing the traditional role of women and attempts to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women.15

Banchte Shekha is a women's organisation that conducts a variety of services intended to improve the quality of life of divorced, abandoned, or

physically abused village women. Services include legal counselling, legal aid, legal literacy training, rural credit, skills development in agriculture and handicrafts.\textsuperscript{16}

**Women for Women** combines research with advocacy to advance and promote gender equity. It is one of the most important women's groups in Bangladesh, and is located in Dhaka. 'Women for Women' is engaged in research and public education programmes on gender issues with a view to enhancing the status of women. It was established in 1973 by a group of committed woman professionals and represents a variety of academic disciplines. The group strongly felt the need for developing a sound information base for identifying issues relating to the disadvantaged status of women in Bangladesh and for creating public awareness with a view to ameliorating the existing situation. Since then, Women For Women has been engaged in research, information, dissemination, advocacy awareness and motivational programmes.

The objectives of Women for Women are:

- To create awareness among the people of Bangladesh, particularly policy planners and public functionaries, about the need for enhancing women's status and molding public opinion for action against the oppression and exploitation of women.
- To organise, undertake and promote research and study in all areas of women's life in general, and to focus on specific problems impeding their integration in development efforts in particular, keeping in view national priorities.
- To be a forum for effective advocacy for gender equity through dissemination of policy-oriented research findings concerning women through publications, research, seminars and exchange forums.
- To inform and educate a wider audience about critical issues, and current concerns and to promote interaction through publications and national conventions.
- To establish and develop linkages and networking with similar groups at home and abroad.
- To create and develop gender-sensitivity among planners, public functionaries, development agency personnel and programme implementors through relevant gender training programmes.
- To extend cooperation and consultancy services to the government as well as to other national and international agencies involved in the area of women and development.\textsuperscript{17}

\textsuperscript{16} \url{http://www.mith2.umd.edu/WomensStudies/GovernmentPolitics/InternationalDirectory/East+SouthAsia/bangladesh}.

\textsuperscript{17} \url{http://www.cddc.vt.edu/feminism/ban.html}. 
Bangladesh Home-Workers Women Association (BHWA) is an NGO working with women home-based workers in the country since 1986 towards improving their socio-economic status. Their activities encompass different aspects of developmental work related to women home-workers in Bangladesh. Along with their work on worker rights issues, they are also working towards increased awareness and financial independence for women home-workers in collaboration with like-minded international agencies. (HomeNet South Asia, UNIFEM etc.)

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad (Women's Council of Bangladesh) was founded initially as the East Pakistan Mahila Parishad with the initiative of Begum Sufia Kamal on 4 April 1970. This was formed through conversion of the base organisation Mahila Sangram Parishad (Women's Movement Council), created during the days of mass movement in East Pakistan in 1969. Bangladesh Mahila Parishad took active part in the war of liberation. The organisation was renamed Bangladesh Mahila Parishad after the liberation of the country in 1971. It works with the key principles of promotion of women's freedom and development and solidarity with the movement for secular, democratic, and progressive movements in the country.

The members of Bangladesh Mahila Parishad are organised into committees at primary, thana and district levels, and then in National Conference and National Councils at the apex. In 1972, the leaders and activists of the organisation demanded that the government should amend the inheritance law, introduce direct election of women representatives in reserved seats of the Parliament and introduce free education for girls in junior high schools. In 1976-77, the Parishad organised a mass signature campaign against the dowry system. As a result of its persistent efforts, a law to ban dowry was finally passed by the government in 1980. The Parishad conducts vocational training programmes for destitute women to develop livelihood skills like sewing and handicraft making, and helps implement adult and children's education programmes, runs free clinics, and takes part in relief and rehabilitation work for people suffering from natural disasters.

The Parishad has played a significant role in organising mass movements against polygamy, child-marriage, women trafficking and prostitution. Since torture on women emerged as an issue of increasing concern in 1980s, the Parishad started a legal aid programme to assist oppressed women and to offer law training to all women in general. It has also recommended that the government form a Uniform Family Code. Bangladesh Mahila Parishad is now a big organisation with 21 primary committees in Dhaka city. It has about 75,000 registered members in 150 thanas of 60 districts of the country.

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18 http://www.bhwa.org/
19 http://banglapedia.search.com.bd/
Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) is a Non-Governmental Organisation, which was set up in 1972 by its founder executive director Fazle Hasan Abed. BRAC initially provided relief and rehabilitation assistance to refugees returning from India after the war of liberation. Later, BRAC turned its focus on long-term issues of poverty alleviation and empowerment of the poor in rural areas of the country. At present, BRAC promotes income generation for the poor, mostly landless rural people through microcredit and programmes on healthcare, literacy, and education and training.

The BRAC Development Programme till 2003 had organised over 3.85 million landless poor, mostly women, into 113756 Village Organisations (VOs), each having 35-40 members. VOs serve as forums where the poor can collectively address the key structural impediments to their development. These are also key institutions for the delivery of financial services to the poor.

BRAC's social development initiatives are designed to increase members' awareness of their rights and responsibilities and to facilitate ways of tackling discrimination in villages.

The Health, Nutrition and Population Programme of BRAC takes a broad approach to the health needs of the poor. The full range of reproductive health needs of members in particular and the community in general are addressed through programmes in adolescent family life education, contraception, STD/RTI control and HIV awareness, and special services for improving the health and nutritional status of pregnant mothers. BRAC's health services are available to more than 31 million people.

The BRAC Education Programme has grown to encompass well over 34,000 one-room schools that provide education to 1.1 million children. About 70% of the students in these schools are girls.

The tremendous success of BRAC is evident from the fact that at its inception in 1972, BRAC had an annual budget of Tk 3 million ($247,000). The whole of this fund was supplied by donors. In contrast, the projected budget for BRAC for the year 2002 was Tk 9.42 billion ($166 million) and donor contribution accounted for only 20% of the amount.\textsuperscript{20}

\textbf{Breaking the Silence Group} aims to raise awareness about non-commercial child sexual abuse and motivates people to take action.

\textbf{Madaripur Legal Aid Association} raises awareness of citizens about their fundamental rights; gives legal protection to women against torture and arbitrary divorce proceedings; works to reform the law and legal system through seminars, research and lobbying; extends interest-free loans to

\textsuperscript{20} Ibid.
vulnerable and afflicted women clients; and arranges trainings for women NGO activists to improve their skills for enforcement of human rights.

Nari Pokhho is involved in advocacy, research and support services to women victims and survivors of acid attacks.

Organisation for Mothers and Infants (OMI) works to empower women and children and end violence against them through awareness raising, income generation, training, and health and human rights education.

Centre for Women and Children Studies is involved in advocacy and research work on trafficking of women and children, education, health, reproductive rights, political empowerment, violence against women and feminisation of poverty.

Gonoshasthaya Kendra focuses on development activities for rural women.

Saptagram Nari Swanirvar Parishad (SNSP) creates awareness among the landless and poor widows; offers legal literacy courses and provides health, nutrition and family planning services.21

Acid Survivors Foundation (ASF) With initial funding provided by the Canadian International Development Agency and UNICEF, as well as the pioneering voluntary work of several dedicated Bangladeshis, and the support of its Trustees, the Acid Survivors Foundation has been functioning on a regular basis since 1999.

ASF provides direct assistance to survivors of acid violence as well as ensures support services that are available from partner organisations to meet their needs. This includes (a) coordinating a notification system and referral service; (b) development of medical facilities, medical treatment and counselling services; (c) coordination of legal services; and (d) services for social reintegration.

The Prevention Unit of ASF is responsible for identifying ways to stop acid violence. It coordinates with other organisations involved in preventing the spread of acid violence through advocacy and the implementation of a wide variety of public education programmes. The Foundation continues to play an important role to make acid violence a matter of urgent public concern. It works closely with the GOB, NGOs and civil society to develop laws, system and services for protection and promotion of the rights of the survivors and to develop an effective and efficient response to combat and eliminate acid violence in Bangladesh.22

21 Ibid.
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