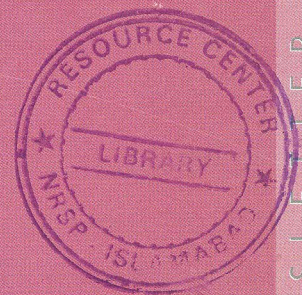


## HRD COMMUNIQUÉ



NEWSLETTER

NRSP

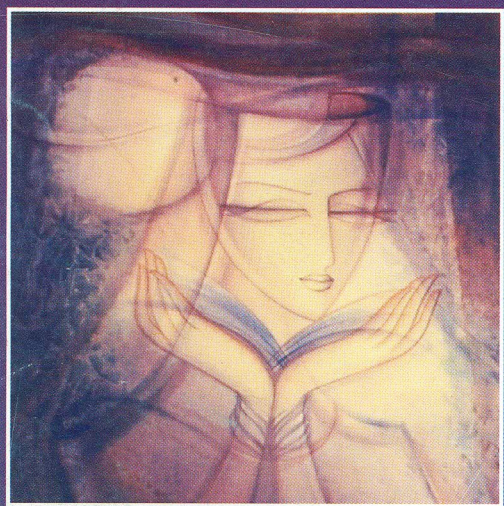
INSTITUTE OF RURAL  
MANAGEMENT

AHK

Resource Center

Issue: 01/07-12 Jan-Mar 2007

## Women - At the Helm



"Woman" by Hajra Mansoor, Courtesy Nomad Center & Art Gallery  
 "Art is being used as a tool for social change for identity development, economic empowerment and skill enhancement of women." Nageen Hyat-Director

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## Acknowledgments:

Dr. Rashid Bajwa, Agha Ali Javad, Roomi S. Hayat

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## Editor's Note

Dear Readers,

The past few years have witnessed an unprecedented rise of women in economic, political and social spheres. Amid a series of administrative, legal and political reforms undertaken since 1999, women are taking up new roles and responsibilities, proving their mettle as professionals, entrepreneurs, politicians, artists and scientists. Whether it is the first female governor of the State Bank of Pakistan or the first ever batch of women pilots to have enrolled to serve the Pakistan Air Force, Pakistani women are establishing that they are capable of taking on positions that were earlier considered the domain of men.

While increasingly women are now visible in public arena as part of public and private organisations, more than 20,000 women sit in local level elected institutions and around 500 women leaders are performing the most important legislative functions of the state as part of the parliament and the provincial assemblies thus making their mark in political echelons.

This march forward by women is significant in a society where gender continues to be one of the organising principles of society. Many women who now become the face of the country

hail from backgrounds where patriarchal values are deeply ingrained and local traditions and culture predetermine the social value of gender. According to a situation analysis published by the Asian Development Bank in 2000: "An artificial divide between production and reproduction, created by the ideology of sexual division of labour has placed women in reproductive roles as mothers and wives in the private space of the home and men in a productive role as breadwinners in the public arena. This has led to a low level of resource investment in women by the family and the State. Thus, low investment in women's human capital, compounded by the ideology of purdah (literally "veiled"), negative social biases, and cultural practices; the concept of honor linked with women's sexuality; restrictions on women's mobility; and the internalization of patriarchy by women themselves, becomes, the basis for gender discrimination and disparities in all spheres of life."

This issue of the HRD Communiqué is dedicated to the women who have sailed into un-chartered waters and are a source of inspiration for the many women awakening to the tune of empowerment. We hope that you will enjoy this issue and we welcome your comments and feedback to improve the content and style of our publication.

# Status of Women in Pakistan

Women have been subject to differential treatment since time immemorial. Socially they have been restricted to various norms, culturally they have been marked as the bearers of tradition and honor, economically societies moved from matriarchal to patriarchal structures taking away economic independence as well as security from their lives. Politically it is only now at the brink of 2007 that we see the first elected woman president in institutions like Harvard, which has been established for more than 300 years in democratic nations like the United States of America!

The most important aspect in assessing any woman's well-being is to ascertain her social well-being, which is measured in the form of tangible indicators such as health, education, fertility and mortality indicators. As far as health is concerned we find that the government sponsored Lady Health Visitors (LHVs) and Lady Health Workers (LHWs) are plying their way in increasing numbers to bridge the gap between trained health providers and women obstetric complications. This would have impact on Pakistan's abysmal maternal mortality rate, second highest in the region.

However, this massive mobilization of health care providers clings close to urban centers and largely ignores the needs of the scattered population across Pakistan.

The nation has also seen a constant increase in female to male ratio in medical (2710:2434) and dental (348:249)

The rigours of early childbirth and its health repercussions are now on a decline, ensuring that women are able to live a life with better health and greater control over their bodies and being.

professions. Nevertheless this hasn't translated into overcoming the missing female doctors at the many unattended

The entrenched patriarchal influences have raised the stakes for rural women, as they have no means of gaining awareness; they belong to the poorest class, they are the most insecure and vulnerable of beings and have minimal access to education.

Basic Health Units in rural areas of Pakistan. Awareness with regard to use of contraceptive methods and family planning has increased in all provinces yielding an awareness level of at least one contraceptive method to 94.1% of population in Pakistan (2003). With

| SOCIAL INDICATORS |                                 | Female | Male  |
|-------------------|---------------------------------|--------|-------|
| 2004              | Doctors                         | 2710   | 2434  |
|                   | Dentists                        | 348    | 249   |
| 2003              | Mean Age at Marriage (in Years) | 22.3   | 26.4  |
| 1998              | Literacy Rates (%age)           |        |       |
|                   | Urban                           | 55.20  | 70    |
|                   | Rural                           | 20.10  | 46.40 |
| 2003 - 2004       | Primary Schools                 | 43245  | 73783 |

awareness comes implementation that has automatically lead to increased use of family planning methods. These are indicators that show that women are slowly but surely on a positive path to improvement.

The statistics of 1998 reveal higher figures for married women (urban and rural) as compared to those of men (urban and rural). Studies also show that the mean age of females at marriage has increased from an average of 16.7 to 22.3 years while that of men has increased from 23.3 to 26.4 since 1961 to 2003. This is a clear indication that the rigours of early childbirth and its health repercussions are now on a decline, ensuring that women are able to live a life with better health and greater control over their bodies and being.

rural woman (20.1%) yielding a gap of 50% [1998]. This shows that women; rural or urban are both still worse off than men. The entrenched patriarchal influences have raised the stakes for rural women, as they have no means of gaining awareness; they belong to the poorest class, they are the most insecure and vulnerable of beings and have minimal access to education. If schools for girls are provided and attendance of female teachers is ensured, these women may be able to improve their conditions. Societal pressures, norms and traditional barriers all play pivotal roles in stopping these women from improving their lives and moving towards empowerment. A lack of girl schools is a problem (43245: 73783 female: male primary schools [2003-04]) - but it is not the only hindrance.

| ECONOMIC & POLITICAL INDICATORS |                          | Female | Male |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|--------|------|
| 2003 - 2004                     | CAR (%age)               | 11.2   | 48.7 |
|                                 | RAR (%age)               | 15.9   | 70.6 |
| 2003                            | National Assembly (%age) | 21     | 79   |
|                                 | Senate (%age)            | 18     | 82   |

When it comes to literacy rates the urban: rural divide is clearly distinguishable. The urban woman (55.2%) is more educated than the rural man (46.4%), which is a difference of roughly 9% while the urban man (70%) is much more privileged than the

They have increased in the National Assembly from 0.9% to 21% [1990-2003]. Similarly in the Senate there has been an increase from 2% to 18% [1992-2003].

Second to social well-being is economic well-being, which is a determinant of extent of empowerment and improvement in women's status. The Crude Activity (Participation) Rate (CAR) is 'the percentage of persons in the labour force to the total population' (Compendium on Gender Statistics 2004). Refined Activity (Participation) Rate (RAR) is 'the percentage of persons in labour force to the population 10 years of age and above' (Compendium on Gender Statistics 2004). In light of these definitions we find CAR to be 11.2 : 48.7 (female %: male %) to a 30.4% CAR employed Pakistan [2003-2004]. On the other hand we have 15.9 : 70.6 (female %: male %) to a 43.7% RAR employed Pakistan [2003-2004]. This clearly shows that domestic work does not qualify for formal inclusion under employment despite being a full time job; these women work at their own

home ensuring that they hold the fort while their husbands earn and yet they remain

The undoing of past errors as captured by the Women's Rights Protection Bill in 2007, is a step in the positive direction.

largely unacknowledged.

The third most important aspect of well-being is the political inclusion of women and their right of inclusion in the writ-of-law and decision making. Women in Pakistan have been increasingly active in politics over the past decade. They have increased in the National Assembly from 0.9% to 21% [1990 2003]. Similarly in the Senate there has been an increase from 2% to 18% [1992 2003]. We also see to date an increase in female politicians, ministers and political party workers.

Over the years we may have shown a positive graph for these tangible indicators but the problems at the grass roots remain the same. The overall status of women in Pakistan requires concerted policy level intervention with support from media and a more progressive culture of change. The undoing of past errors as captured by the Women's Rights Protection Bill in 2007, is a step in the positive direction and a hope that more measures will allow women to explore and employ their true human potential.

All statistical references are incited from: Compendium on Gender Statistics 2004.

# Supporting Women's Leadership

A significant addition to the 2001 Local Government Ordinance was the allocation of 33% of the seats (36,132 in all) to women of the Union, Tehsil and District Councils. The first challenge was to invest in the women Councillors' capacities: many were not literate; many lived in remote areas with conservative traditions. Most had no experience in making decisions or in representing the people who had elected them.

Several organisations undertook training programmes, including the National Reconstruction Bureau and numerous NGOs. However, in itself, the training did not equip the women to function effectively. Many were desperate to access resources for their voters, to address the particular needs of women, to be able to speak up in councils full of men and to make their presence felt.

## The ADB-funded Regional Technical

Parveen Akhter, 48, is a General Councillor of Kanhat Khalil, Gujar Khan, district Rawalpindi. She is a Manager of NRSP



Parveen Akhter

Community Organisation Kanhat Khalil. She has received extensive training in CO; the role of President and Manager in CO, micro credit, traditional birth attendant, agriculture, tie and die, etc. As a Councillor she has received training about her role nevertheless she feels that, "We need training to understand our rights as a Councillor to enable us to work more closely with the line departments." With Union Council funds she has managed the construction of two streets and boundary wall in her area. She also obtained approval for five telephone poles for the poor. "Women should work side by side men in every field."

Assistance Project 6008: Gender and Governance Issues in Local Government, was a capacity-building initiative conducted in Haripur and Abbottabad, NWFP by the Rural Support Programmes Network and the Sarhad Rural Support Programme. The programme combined awareness-raising with the formation of linkages between women Councillors, mobilized communities and government service-delivery line agencies. The Project also established Forums of women Councillors and development agencies; these were intended to enable Councillors to accomplish their development goals and to form Citizen Community Boards.

Ghulam Yusra, 50, is the General Councillor of Chak Jamal, Jhelum and is also the Manager of Community Organisation Chak Naseer-ud-Din formed by NRSP. "As



Ghulam Yusra

Councillors we received orientation training from NRSP despite which our role has been minimal because strong male dominance does not allow us to speak or raise issues. However, the training we got as NRSP CO members has proven far more fruitful; we have been able to learn skills of book keeping and credit management which have helped improve our income." She feels women's empowerment and voice will come with the economic strength and advocates that the way to achieve this is through skill enhancement training.

An impact study conducted in January 2005 provided clear evidence that the Project has enhanced the Councillors' capacities. It also demonstrated the effectiveness of the nexus between 'governance' and 'gender' at the local level in order to address people's poverty. Examples included:

- A substantial increase in the number of

poor women provided access to job opportunities, vocational training (some through government schemes) and access to micro credit from Khushhali Bank.

Ghazala Shaheen, 30, is a member of NRSP Community Organisation Koriana, Kotli Satian and is a Labour Councillor of Union Council Kotli Satian,



Ghazala Shaheen

district Rawalpindi. She has received training for her role as a Councillor and she seeks further training to enhance her capacity specifically with reference to project funding and implementation. As a Councillor she has been working closely with other CO members and has been able to utilize Union Council fund to establish a seventy two feet pavement in her village by engaging labour from her area. "Women should step out of their homes, acquire information and work to move ahead in their lives."

- A substantial increase in the number of Councillors assisting in implementing infrastructure schemes from line agencies and an increase in the number of schemes: 89 through UC funds and 15 through line agencies. The majority of schemes have been road construction, street pavement, school and mosque renovation and graveyard repair and maintenance.
- Linkages with SRSP have also led to improved water supply through the installation of water pipes and hand pumps in villages.
- A 3-fold increase in the number of new CCBs registered and a 9-fold increase in the number of CCBs acquiring funds for projects.
- Women Councillors have been instrumental in providing poor women -

# Capacities in Local Government

orphans, widows, and those with no income or assets, **access to Zakat** (859 cases) and **Baitul Mal** (96 cases) funds.

- Women Councillors were able to access 2% of the Union Council **budget** for 'women's development'.
- **Linkages** were formed between women and NGOs such as SRSP, the Corporate Society and the SUNGI Development Foundation, which also provide micro-finance services. Linkages were also facilitated with government Area Development initiatives such as the ADB funded Barani II Project.
- The Councillors were able to provide **employment opportunities** for poor women as health workers and support staff in the government line agencies.
- More women now have access to various types of **skill development programmes**, for example, the Leadership and Management and Enterprise Promotion training arranged by SRSP, as well as advocacy courses arranged by SUNGI Development Foundation. Linkages with Barani Area Development Project have led to women being trained as Traditional Birth Attendants and learning kitchen gardening and other skills.
- Women Councillors have played an important role as **Monitoring Committee** members (141 Councillors) or Chairpersons (12). They have also become active members of education, health, finance, accounts and Justice (Insaf) Committees.
- Women Councillors have been instrumental in resolving 314 **arbitration cases** pertaining to domestic violence, child custody, divorce, strained marital relations, separation and land disputes.
- Women Councillors have provided many poor children access to **schools and colleges, free of charge**.
- 122 Councillors said that they were now able to take part in **decision-making process** in their councils. They have become more confident in voicing their opinions.

## Conclusion:

The Project has enabled strong linkages to be fostered between women Councillors, poor communities and government agencies. It has shown how a concerted,

Naheed Akhtar, 37, is a Labour Councillor of Union Council Maloot Satian, Kotli Satian, district Rawalpindi. She is also the President of NRSP Community



Naheed Akhtar

Organisation Mirza Pur Female, Kotli Satian. She has been actively involved with development projects; construction of roads and water management system by utilizing the Union Council fund as well as resources of NRSP. "Training at CO and Council levels has contributed to enhance my performance and to become a more effective Councillor, I endorse specific training for developing linkages with the government and private departments which facilitate the development process. I urge women to organise themselves and work together on self help basis. It is then that they can be self reliant, confident and value development."

well-targeted effort is able to invest in the capacities of these newly elected Councillors and benefit poor people. It has also shown that the strong, on ground presence of a local Rural Support Programme was critical in forging linkages between political representatives and organised communities, as well as linkages between communities, government and non-government development agencies.

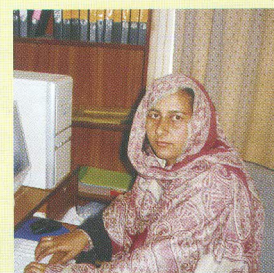
The capacity-building efforts of the project have been a worthwhile investment, which is well sustained as Councillors use their skills to muster resources for their constituencies and make their voices heard in Council full of men. This pilot project has also shown

how efforts can be pooled by non-government, government and political representatives to the benefit of poor communities.

Some problems remain, including the lack of an honorarium or a travelling allowance for Councillors; the lack of public acknowledgment of the women Councillors' efforts, and the continuing need for literacy training. Another issue is the need to establish institutional linkages between the Councils and the social safety net mechanisms (Zakat and Baitul Mal).

The ADB's partners have learnt that an effective partnership can be forged between political representatives, NGOs, government and poor communities. It has given those partners hands-on experience in working directly with Councillors and it has brought to the fore many policy issues that need to be addressed with the government.

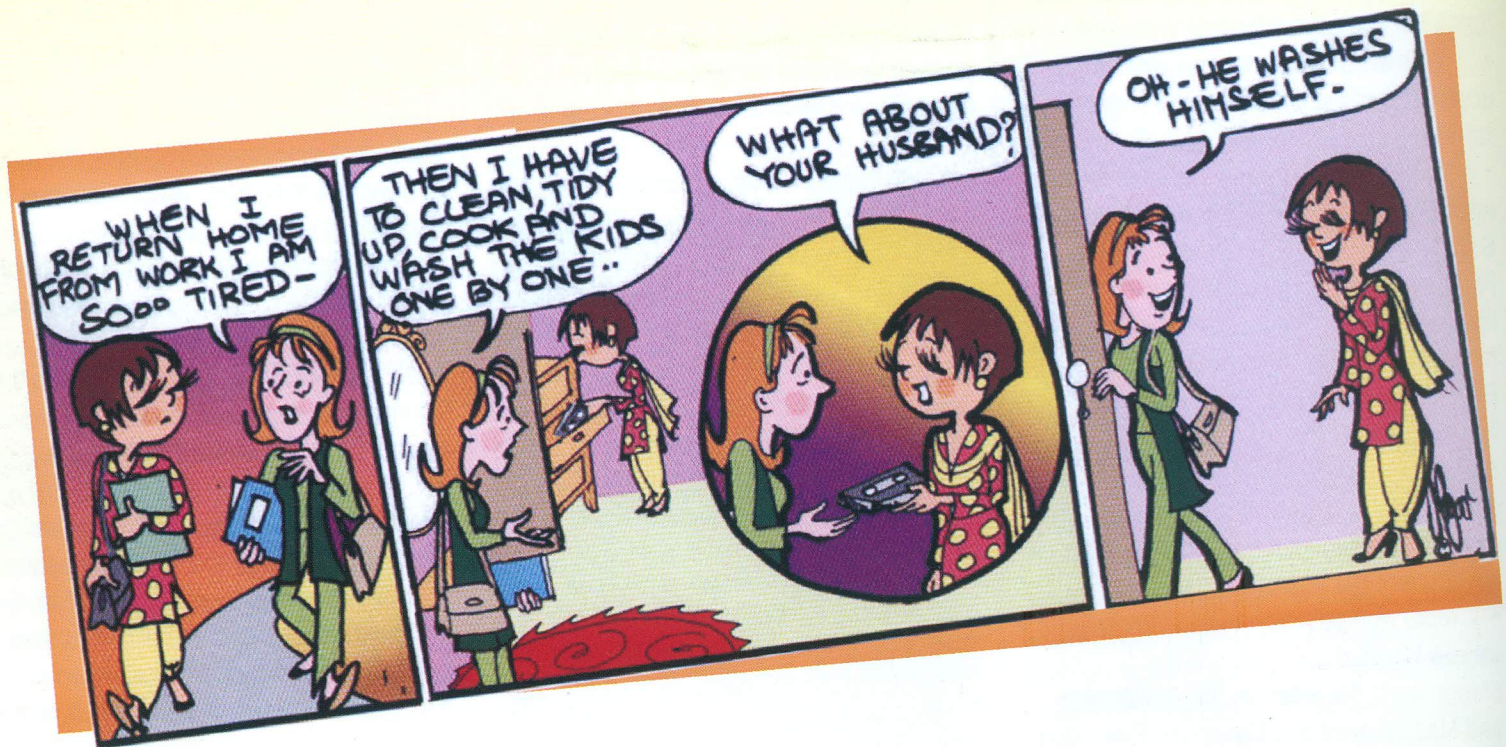
Shaheen Akhtar, 30, is a General Councillor Jand, district Attock and is a member of NRSP Community Organisation in Jand. She is a teacher at a local public



Shaheen Akhtar

school. As a Councillor she received various training from NGOs and government that include awareness of violence against women, education for illiterate Councillors, computer training, etc. "In this era of globalization, computer knowledge is an essential tool for advancement. I was able to assist a burn victim by checking through the Pakistan Government's website how to approach and get help from authorities." She feels that the role of women Councillors still needs to be streamlined in the devolution process. She suggests, "Women should acquire skills to earn which in turn will improve their status at home."

# WOMEN AT WORK -

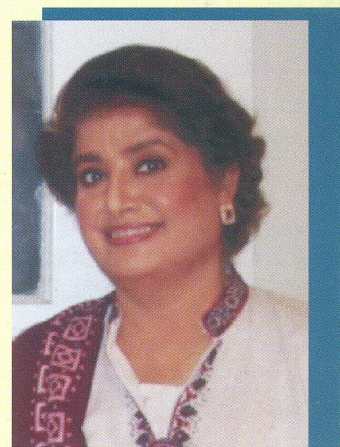


# NO LAUGHING MATTER

## CREATOR OF GOGI: An Introduction



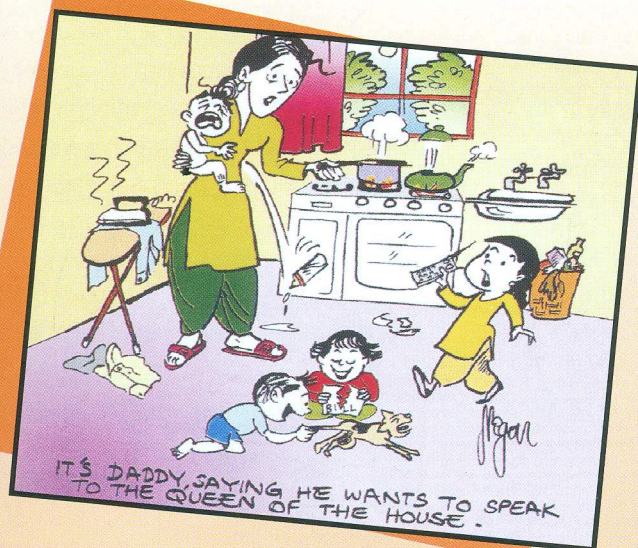
Nigar Nazar the first woman cartoonist of Pakistan, has for many years rendered pictorial humour with a down to earth pragmatism. Her Gogi cartoons have appeared in newspapers, magazines and on TV around the world including "The Daily News" in Turkey, "The Jamahiriya Mail" in Libya and her editorial cartoons for an Australian Art magazine called "Muse".



Nigar has made contributions to UNICEF, UNESCO, OXFAM, ESRA, and University of Oregon (USA) and has received commendations from organisations of repute such as Kinnaird College for Women Lahore, South East Asia Women's Association and International School of Islamabad. She is the first Pakistani cartoonist to be invited as member of the jury of an International Cartoon Competition organised by the highly reputed Aydin Dogan Foundation of Turkey.

In a voluntary project for the Children's hospital in Islamabad, Nigar installed cartoon relief, murals and mobiles, serving as a pleasant distraction to the sick and suffering young patients. After the 8/10 Earthquake Nigar volunteered to administer Trauma counselling to the young victims through an entertaining puppet show and songs supplemented by storybooks and board games on the environmental conservation created by her. She has been commissioned by JICA to prepare Disaster Management books for children.

Recently Nigar has been doing a segment called Gogi's Corner for the Live Sunday Morning show on PTV 1, which features animated social messages and live cartoons drawing sessions. Nigar Nazar has been conferred the Fatima Jinnah Award for contribution in Art by the Government of Pakistan.



# Journeys to Success and Life Lessons - Women Professionals

It's a good time that Pakistan has a critical mass of women in leadership positions. The conventional wisdom is that they are more intuitive, more collaborative and more dedicated. What lessons would they pass on to the women who aspire to follow their path? What do they owe their path of leadership/ professional position to? How do they manage their work and success as a woman? How far do they think training plays a role in development of leadership traits? In this section we talk to some of the most aspiring women who have led the way in social sector, literature, police, education and private sector.



**Helena Saeed**, Superintendent Traffic, Islamabad, was born to parents who travelled the country on bureaucratic postings.

"My brother and I grew up in a home where no constraints were ever placed on me for being a girl. This and my father's urging to join the Foreign Service drove me to enter the civil service but I soon realized my true calling lay in Police. My request for transfer was met with extreme resistance but I won this historic struggle to become the first woman ASP in 1996. My progression in service and rise to senior posts has not been easy, but then true success never is!

It is doubly hard for women as they are at best always doing two jobs. One which they cannot escape is that of a mother. I take mothering as a serious fulltime career. My parents played an important role to support me raise my first born, who is now seventeen. My husband and in-laws are supportive and quite proud of how I have managed to do justice to both my police career and being a hands-on mother for my other seven year old daughter, who joins me at work after school.

This facility to be close to my child has given me great peace of mind and allowed me to excel as I am soon to become Senior Superintendent Police. In my view women have many obstacles to overcome to become professionals; they have to themselves, break out of stereotypical gender restricted thinking. Training can certainly help break these preconceptions,

allowing them to harness their potential as professionals. I would be a willing contributor and trainer for women leadership training for police women. Moreover women professionals need a platform to voice these concerns and spread inspirational messages to mentor young professional women aspiring to rise to leadership positions."

**Dr. Aliya H. Khan**, Professor & Chairperson Department of Economics, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad joined the University in 1987 as Assistant Professor and has been affiliated



with the Department of Economics since the past twenty years. She has one daughter, eighteen years old, who following her footsteps plans to join a university in the USA for undergraduate studies in Economics.

"I owe my professional position to a mix of enabling factors including my academic training both in Pakistan and in the USA, my continued job attachment at a premier public sector institution of higher education, my experience of working with the Government of Pakistan at the Federal Ministry of Labour, with international organisations as well as several civil society organisations but above all to the continued support of my family who has always made it possible for me to keep walking on this challenging path. The major driving force has been my own commitment and persistence to achieve professional recognition as an academician, as an

economist, and most importantly as a social scientist without compromising on family responsibilities to the extent possible. I would again mention the role of my family in helping me to strive for this balance between work and family, an issue that every working woman faces no matter which section of society she belongs to.

In my opinion, training whether formal or informal, plays a pivotal role in building the capabilities of a professional for assuming more responsible roles and greater decision-making power to serve the collective interest of the concerned community.

There is no success without commitment and perseverance. Also, there are no short cuts to achieving success. It is a continuous process which involves making choices and taking decisions at many different levels and at many junctures of time in a person's life span. The key message is to set your goals and utilize your human capital stock of education, skills & training through proper management of time between work and family. It is not easy but it is certainly worth striving for."

**Dr Saba Gul Khattak** is Executive Director at Sustainable Development Policy Institute,

Islamabad. She earned her Ph.D in Political Science from the University of Hawaii in 1991. She has taught International Relations at the University of



Peshawar and Political Science at the

University of Hawaii. She has been associated with several organisations; a member of the Women's Action Forum (WAF), governing bodies of several NGOs. She has provided regular input to the government on women's issues. "I consider myself to be primarily a researcher and as such the paradigm of leadership in its narrow sense does not enter my worldview. I am a team player and I believe that I have been able to reach my present position due to the spirit of teamwork.

The obstacles I face are primarily of attitude, e.g., when people decide that my limitations spring from my identity as a mother, this makes me very resentful as I believe that while men are admired for being good fathers, women are told that they are not good mothers because they work. However, the obstacles are not always due to one's identity as a woman, e.g., there is age-ism, there is ethnic prejudice, there is linguistic prejudice...

Training in a particular discipline helps one gain confidence and there is a sense of self-worth. This obviously contributes to honing leadership traits within human beings.

Equally important is the issue of opportunities for training. In our country, where few have access to higher education or skills training, structural discrimination prevents people from realizing their full potential. Certainly my academic training has been critical for my personal intellectual development. It has helped me to understand and analyze our realities and put them in perspective.

I believe that women and men can be successful if the institutions within which they are embedded are supportive. Institutions include the family as much as schooling systems and workplaces. Office environment should not only be women sensitive but also supportive in practical ways."

**Dr. Shabnam Shakeel** earned her Ph.D in Urdu literature from the University of Punjab. For the last 30 years she has been teaching at various prestigious institutions like Lahore College for Women, Queen Mary's College, Kinnaird College, Lahore, Government

College Quetta and Islamabad College for Women. She is the recipient of many national and international awards. In the year 2004, Government of Pakistan awarded her the



prestigious 'Pride of Performance Award' for her services in the sphere of Urdu literature. She is a versatile literary persona and has authored many books on poetry, fiction, essays, and literary criticism. She is the member of PTV censor board and honorary member of many committees.

"I want to bring about a positive change in the societal attitude towards women. As women in our part of the world lag far behind men, that is why my all energies are focused on their education, health and economic independence.

As a working woman and a poet, life has never been easy for me but I believe that with perseverance and courage anything can be controlled.

My home has been my first training academy. I have learnt a lot from my father and my mother; both of them were literary giants in their own right. My teachers at the university were always there for me and Television and Radio have polished my skills to reach a level where people started recognizing me as an accomplished artist. Training is both conscious and unconscious and I believe that it is the training which differentiates between a civilized and uncivilized person.

Success can be defined in many different ways and there is no set formula or a shortcut for success in life. Hard work, courage, perseverance, and commitment are the prerequisites to achieve one's goal."

**Saima Ammar**, Programme Director of Pakistan Foundation Fighting Blindness was the first person, who 12 years ago, started the service of recording audio cassettes for visually impaired around Pakistan. After her Masters in International Relations from Quaid-i-Azam University, she has devoted her life to the cause of helping visually

impaired people in achieving independent access to education, information and entertainment through audio cassettes. So far 3000 people have benefited from this



service. "All this would not have been possible without the grace of Almighty Allah and the untiring support of my parents and late Salma Maqbool.

Moreover, the support of my extended family, friends and now my in-laws and husband has been a key factor in allowing me to excel in my work, spearheading the cause of the visually impaired."

Becoming visually impaired herself at the age of two and a half, due to severe fever, Saima didn't allow her handicap to become a setback in her resolve to move forward in her life. Rather, on the contrary it reinforced her determination to work with greater zeal and commitment to ameliorate the plight of those without sight to live with dignity and respect by creating enabling environment to make them educated members of society.

"My husband is my greatest physical support as he is always beside me when I travel. I was faced with many obstacles initially while fund raising and gathering donations for delivering audio cassettes to visually impaired people at their door step because community awareness and participation was marginal for this forgotten segment of our society." Saima took her training after her A-Levels from Talking Newspaper Association of United Kingdom on Audio Recording Techniques. She was also nominated in Mobility Conference, UN Women Conference, Ratina International Conference and other leadership training programmes. Her message for the women whether sighted or otherwise, is that to never ever confuse their priorities and always keep balance between family and career in their life. Whereas for people with disability, it is important to take education for achieving independence and empowerment.

**Humera Malik** is currently working as a

Manager External Affairs and Community Development with a multinational oil and gas company. Humera has done masters in



Anthropology and is a student of Ph.D. She has some 15 years of experience working within and outside Pakistan with national and international NGOs. She is a member of International Editorial Advisory Board of Participatory Learning and Action, IIED. She is also founding member of two renowned national NGOs, Sungi Development Foundation and Society for the Protection of the Rights of the

Child (SPARC).

"I owe my position, my life to all those people for whom and with whom I worked as development worker, people living in remote villages, katchi basties and slums. I also owe to those development leaders or development Guru who encouraged me to follow this path and always supported me to overcome any challenge.

Analyzing my career journey I feel that behind any success the important factors have been my determination, and belief in my self, self respect and respect for others. I strongly believe that if there is a will, there is a way. As a woman you have to always struggle more to prove yourself in the eyes of other. Acceptability of a woman as a leader is a major ego issue for other gender and thus has to face unnecessary problems.

I believe that learning is a life long process and there are both formal as well as informal methods to learn. To me, informal training has always carried more importance; I learned from people while working with them in their realities. I consider people as my best learning institution.

I would also value formal training which is necessary to enhance your potential capacities or skills. I strongly believe that some people are born leaders. However, training do help further polish those abilities, which help you strengthen your leadership qualities.

Success requires dedication, belief in self and trust that you can do it. If you believe in this, there is no reason why you shouldn't be successful."

NRSP-IRM has initiated a focused year long intensive training programme for women professionals, "Women's Leadership Programme" (WLP). This programme is a part of the Professional Development Programme (PDP), funded by Rural Support Programmes Network (RSPN). WLP aims to develop a cadre of women professionals (coming from the Rural Support Programmes and other organisations) to provide them with the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding to move to top management positions.

This programme aims at providing on job capacity building to women professionals through a year-long extensive training and exposure. The one year course will be completed in 5 phases with a total of 10 weeks training at IRM and 1 week of international exposure visit. WLP phase I has started from March 6, 2007. The participants will initially attend a 2-week workshop followed by four 2-week workshops based on different modules. The workshops will consist of lectures, presentations, field study, exposure visits, distant learning programme followed by individual assignments.

# Women's LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME

A diverse course content has been developed to provide a sound base on subjects related to RSPs and development as well as to enhance personal skills. The modules include: Leadership, Group Dynamics and Human Resource Development, Financial Management, Governance, Development and Gender Issues, Strategic Planning and Operations Management, and Interpersonal, Research and Advocacy Skills. The resource persons for the programme will be international/regional experts and academicians of their respective fields.

The programme would result in the professional development of women leading to their full and effective participation in their respective work place and also result in their career progression. Each year a total of 15-20 women professionals will complete the course. By the end of RSPN Phase II (2006-10), 80-100 women professionals would have completed the course.

# Obstacles to Women's Leadership

Leadership connotes not simply having power or authority but having a vision and a sense of purpose that results in fundamental change not only of the external world, but also of internal processes.

Up to now leadership paradigm has been generally based on "male" models that attribute to "power", "domination", "competition", and so on. An alternative model, based on the writings of feminists and the practices of women's organisations have highlighted a different set of attributes such as the capacity to "empower" and "service" others, "co-operation", "sharing", "consensus-building", and so on. Clearly this model is more suitable to uphold democratic norms and ensure good governance.

Women leaders are painstakingly changing the domestic and professional environment of our while struggling against the patriarchal systems in a male dominated world and battling against their own conditioning through the "cult of motherhood", which perpetuates the insidious traditions of emotional and physical subjugation that teaches girls values like - her education and nutrition is secondary to that of her brother's.

A study conducted in the USA in 2000 confirmed that obstacles, though diminished due to greater gender awareness, still pose as a significant retardant in women's ability to actualize their true potential as first class citizens and productive members of a modern society. While it is not possible to talk about a singular female style of leadership, the majority of these leaders combined a strong focus on results with equal attention to the growth and development of the people surrounding them.

The hurdles that still impede women's leadership abilities are institutional rather than individual. Most of these obstacles are embedded in the organisation of the work

place that was neither designed with women nor the support of a family structure in mind. Their struggle continues to be a daily aspect of their work life. For some women leaders, their individual prominence and achievements now protect them against incidents of gender-based inequity, while still others have benefited from the work of earlier generations of women who blazed the trails that they followed.

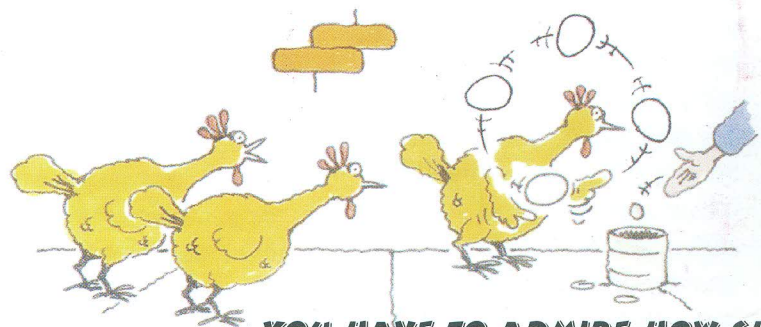
The market economy is putting pressure on the "care economy" (e.g. child care, care of the aged and elderly) and creating extra burden for women as they carry a disproportionate load of the unpaid care related activities. Women are often paid less for equal hours of work and often equal outputs (economic gain) as that from a man's job. The state and its policies should display positive discrimination in favour for women labour that silently account for a large contribution to national GDP.

Violence against women in the name of "honour" is a serious problem, plaguing the nation to date and it is now internationally recognized as a result of the work of great women leaders like Asma Jahangir and Hina Gilani of Pakistan who have taken great personal risks to defend women's rights guaranteed by law yet suppressed by custom.

Political structures in combination with social factors contribute to women's lack of involvement in the political arena. Political life is organised according to male norms and values that does not keep into account a woman's domestic and care roles. Women are overstretched and overworked. In most

countries women are carrying a disproportionate share of domestic work. Women's participation in politics is further constrained by poverty, lack of education and access to information. To exacerbate the problem lack of political party support, such as limited financial support for women candidates; limited access to political networks; and the prevalence of double standards when it comes to resource allocation for development work within the given constituencies, women face numerous hurdles.

Last but not least is the perception in society about women hyped through the media. The media is male-dominated and sadly lacks initiative of generating provocative public discourse about the rights and roles of women in society. It also slacks in its responsibility to take up issues that advocate



**YOU HAVE TO ADMIRE HOW SHE JUGGLES FAMILY AND CAREER**

policy change in favour of women's rights. Most of the world's media has yet to deal with the fact that women, as a rule, are the first victims of economic changes and reforms taking place in a country, i.e., they are the first to lose their jobs, worst hit at times of drought and natural calamity, customarily limited mobility often resulting in deaths at times of childbirth.

Women at the helm are those that have survived and succeeded against immense obstacles. They have displayed that they paid little attention to obstacles in their work life. Whether they stuck to their original plan in the face of obstacles or revised their strategy, optimism and a sense of mission propelled their actions.

# Akhter Hameed Khan

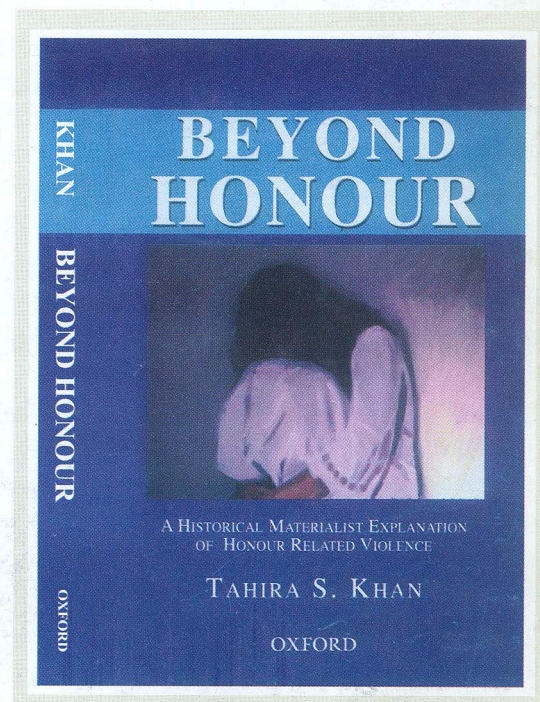
## Resource Center

### Book Review:

This book received Dr. Akhter Hameed Khan Memorial Award 2005-2006. Misperceived, ill-informed and narrowly-researched documentaries, research studies and newspaper reports presented in the United States and Europe have created an impression that honour related violence against women occurs only in Asian and African Muslim communities, mainly due to their backward and conservative cultural and religious beliefs. Such misinterpretations and ethnocentric portrayals of multi-faceted violence have invoked criticism from various communities across the globe. The main focus of previous studies on the subject has been on the socio-cultural aspect of honour and its implications for female bodies and sexuality. This study is an attempt to

look beyond the cultural notion of honour as the only motive behind gender based violence. Focusing on honour related violence in the Muslim world, and especially in Pakistan, this study attempts to explain the origin and persistence of the honour code by applying Marx's historical materialist approach. It takes readers through the histories of religious, legal, social and political institutions, from ancient times to the present day and its comparative historical approach identifies the economic basis of the origin and persistence of honour related violence in some societies, and its absence in others.

This study examines honour related issues, personal experiences and present day stories of victims around the globe through the lens of historical academic research.



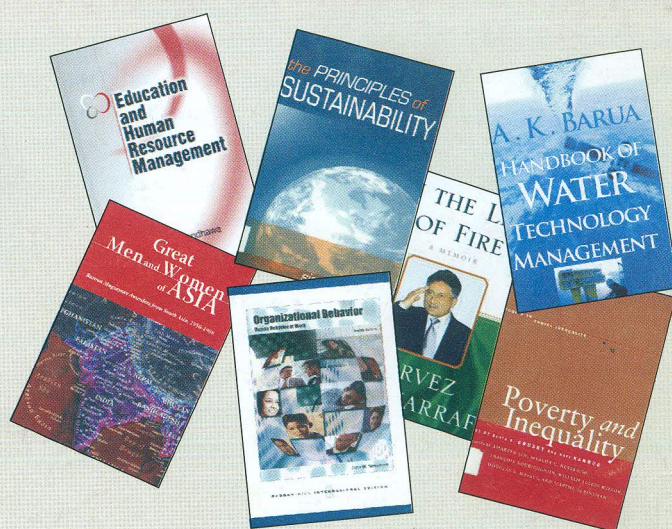
### BEYOND HONOUR

A Historical Materialist Explanation  
of Honour Related Violence

By Tahira S. Khan

## New Arrivals in Akhter Hameed Khan Resource Center

- **Education and Human Resource Management**  
by Gurpreet Randhawa
- **Handbook of Water Technology Management**  
by A. K. Barua
- **The Principles of Sustainability**  
by Simon Dresner
- **Organizational Behavior**  
by John W. Newstrom
- **Poverty and Inequality**  
by David B. Grusky
- **Great Men and Women of Asia**  
by Lorna Kalaw - Tirol
- **In the Line of Fire**  
by Pervez Musharraf



**Sources of Articles:** Articles are produced internally with research from various books, magazines and internet. "Woman", artistic image, is courtesy of Hajra Mansoor and Nomad Center and Art Gallery, Islamabad. This newsletter is provided complementary to the readers.

**Reader's suggestions** will be most welcome. Please write to us at:  
Editor, HRD Communiqué

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