



# Strategies for Legislative Reform for Women's Increased Participation in Politics



- Marks a record ratio of women in parliament worldwide
- At 21.8% it has doubled since 1995
- Grenada joins the “above 30%” club



- Women still largely outside national political space
- Female voters in large numbers confined to the blackhole of ignorance, victims of intolerance and unacceptable abuse

## RECOMMENDED STRATEGY



Remove women's exclusion which is intrinsically linked with structural & systemic issues



# Strategy: Reservation Thru Affirmative Action

## Article 7 Convention on Discrimination enjoins “equality in political & public life”

- 125 Countries have Constitutional/ Electoral/ Political Party gender quota system (IPU). Proven to be most effective fast track strategy for inclusive democracy. Female critical mass is large enough to be relevant

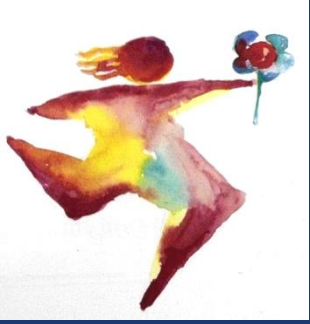


Constitution of Pakistan’s commitment to womens participation and representation :

Article 25 guarantees “there shall be no discrimination on the basis of sex alone and the state shall make provision for the protection of women”

Article 32 “special representation shall be given to women in local government institutions”

Article 34: “Steps shall be taken to ensure the full participation of women in all spheres of national life”



## Chronology of womens reserved seats:

- i. 1973: Constitution of Pakistan: 11 Reserved Seats for women. Time-bound for ten year period
- ii. 1985: Through Ordinance and later incorporated in Constitution: Women's Reserved Seats increased to 20
- iii. 1988: Reservations lapsed after 3 general elections as provided in the Constitution
- iv. During 1973-2002 period women's representation at the national level remained below a negligible 3%



**2000:** To ensure political representation of women under the Devolution of Power Plan (DoPP) 33% seats in the local government reserved for women and in addition to general seats, 17% seats for women in the national & provincial assemblies

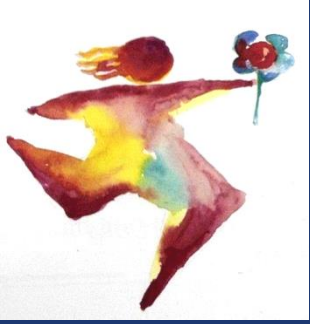
### Article 51:

	General Seats	Women	Total
Balochistan	14	3	17
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	35	8	43
Punjab	148	35	183
Sindh	61	14	75
Federally	12	--	12
Administered Tribal Areas			
Federal Capital	2	--	2
Total	272	60	332



## Article 51 (6)

- b. Each Province shall be a single constituency for all seats reserved for women which are allocated to the respective Provinces under clause (3)
  
- d. Members to the seats reserved for women which are allocated to a Province under clause (3) 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:



# Reservation for Women



## Pakistan Case Study

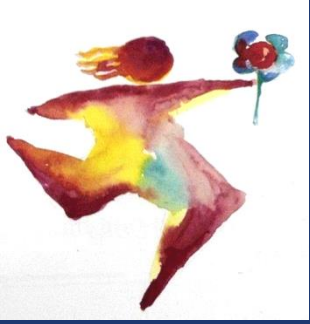
- **Women used the space for representing women's issues/ interests effectively**
- **Enabling factors in misogynist parliamentary culture:**
  - i. Being a critical mass, atmosphere, approach more women friendly
  - ii. Formation of Women's Parliament Caucus, an "above party line" for networking & agenda setting mechanism
  - iii. A woman Speaker who objectively closed the gender gap in Parliamentary business
  - iv. Practice of the Thatcher quote "if in politics you want anything done ask a woman"
  - v. Seriously worked on capacity building

CONTD...



## Pakistan Parliament 2008-2013 (Fafen Source):

- Women carried 72% of all business: Most regular in attendance
- Contributed extensively to House Committees
- 60% of all legislation was women specific and led by women



# Good Practice Legislative Reform

1. The Prevention of Anti-Women's Practices Act 2011
2. Acid Control & Acid Crime Prevention Act 2010
3. The Protection Against Harassment of Women at Workplace Act 2010
4. The National Commission on the Status of Women Act 2010
5. Women in Distress & Detention Act 2011
6. Reproductive Health Rights & Care Bill 2009
7. Child Rights Charter Bill 2009
8. The Prohibition of Corporal Punishment Bill 2012
9. Domestic Violence Bill 2008
10. Equal Citizenship Bill, 2008





## Numbers Alone Not Enough as a Strategy must be coupled with

- (i) **Networking**
- (ii) **Capacity Building**

Capacity building in skills to address gender issues and understand parliamentary practices

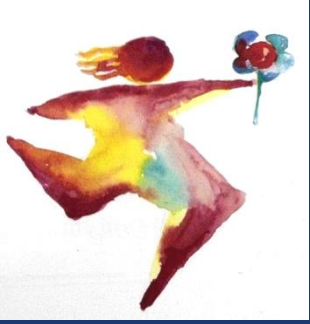
Examples of functional capacity building mechanism

- i. Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services is a state of the art facility
- ii. Pildat caucus initiative of the Parliamentary Consultative group on Women's issues
- iii. Paiman training in (i) art of leadership development (ii) gender role in transforming political process agenda & institutions
- iv. UNDP "Strengthening Women Parliamentarian for Effective Democracy" project



# Strategies Make Women Democratic Oxygen Thru Networking

- Women in Politics have vibrant interaction through networks with the individual and collective of civil society organizations, academia and media
- A national & provincial parliamentary mechanism will address gap between women specific laws and their poor implementation
- Women in politics need to connect, communicate, collaborate & catalyze, the Organization of Women in Parliamentary Politics (OWPP) has been established in Pakistan for this purpose.
- Networking with National & Provincial Commissions on status of Women



## Strategies needed to remove road blocks

- (i) Parallel Laws be addressed
- (ii) Political Party Reform
- (iii) Election Commission Reform
- (iv) Amendment in Political Parties Act

- i. The issue be addressed of women / girls being persecuted due to the non-state system of customary / jirga law
- ii. Women be mainstreamed in Political Party Structures
- iii. The Modality for Women Candidate Lists be transparent
- iv. At least 10% tickets be given to women candidates
- v. At least one member of the Election Commission be a woman
- vi. Electronic voting be installed
- vii. Reservation of 33% seats for women at local government not be tampered



## Strategy of All Strategies for Increased Value of Women in Politics



- Get away from the “zero - sum” mentality. Suggest:
  - (i) change in men/ boys vision of manhood & valuation of girls
  - (ii) identification of men role in defining a transformative culture to bridge gender gap in political institutions
- Women are undervalued. Legislative procedures ensure perspective of women is leveraged and their consensus building skills are put to use
- Call for solidarity between men & women in shaping a new political culture & social contract & thereby a shared future

*“Life without liberty is  
like a body without a  
spirit”*

*By Khalil Gibran*

