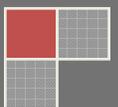


2011

# National Consultation

Advocacy Efforts and Social Protection for  
Home Based Workers



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## **Introduction HomeNet**

Home-based work has come to provide a significant component of all national economic systems, and it is therefore necessary to have a policy dealing with the basic issues related to the operation and future growth of home-based work. In this respect, there are three important parameters around which inputs and strategic interventions need to be designed. These can be grouped in terms of Guarantees, Fair Play and Social Security/Social Protection. HomeNet South Asia is working on these key parameters through its four main programmes, which focus on: (1) organising and strengthening home-based workers; (2) instituting a national policy on home-based workers in each country; (3) promoting social protection for home-based and other informal workers; and (4) promoting fair trade practices for home-based as well as other informal workers.

All national HomeNets have achieved a great deal of progress in formulating a national policy on home-based workers. The efforts regarding advocacy for home-based workers was strengthened after the ‘South Asia Policy Conference on Home-based Workers: Women, Work and Poverty’, which was inaugurated by the Honourable Prime Minister of India in Delhi in 2007. In his speech at this conference the Prime Minister made a commitment to take the important issue of home based workers to the SAARC Summit, and to push for better statistical attention vis-à-vis home-based workers in order to improve recognition of their work and increase their visibility. He also emphasized the need for social protection for home based workers. The issues that were raised at the Conference and the discussions that transpired also helped the national HomeNets advocate with their respective governments regarding a national policy on home-based workers, and for policies regarding social protection for home-based and other informal workers.

## **The Donor**

UNIFEM is one of the founders that helped establish HomeNet South Asia. Since 2000, UNIFEM has helped HomeNet South Asia and the national HomeNets form a network of home-based workers organisations throughout the region. UNIFEM's support from 2000-2006 has resulted in many achievements:

- The establishment of a South Asia-wide home-based workers' network (HomeNet South Asia – the sub-regional network), together with five national networks in the South Asia region;
- Increased recognition and visibility of home-based workers by governments and other key actors;
- Greater understanding of the size and scope of home-based workers in South Asia;
- Increased influence of sub-regional and national home-based worker networks in influencing national and regional policies towards a better enabling environment for home-based workers; and
- Expansion of the HomeNet home-based worker membership base.

The support from UNIFEM for the programme covered under this project has assisted the national HomeNets in strengthening their advocacy efforts for a national policy on home-based workers, and in linking home-based workers to existing social protection schemes. It has further supported the development of a strong, innovative and unparalleled *information base* on home-based workers in the region, which has been created by HomeNet South Asia.

## **The Project**

The project “Advocacy Efforts and Social Protection for Home-based Workers” emphasized two related components: (1) progress towards a national policy for home-based workers in

three South Asian countries, and (2) introducing micro finance and micro insurance tied to social protection for home-based workers in one South Asian country.

The overall objective of the project was to mainstream homebased workers in national policies and programmes in order to attain greater human security – including economic security – in order to meet basic needs and to deal with risks and vulnerabilities. In order to attain the above mentioned objective, National Consultation Meeting of HomeNet Pakistan proved to be a milestone in stepping forward.

## **Envisioned Programme Strategies:**

### **1. Advocacy efforts for a national policy**

The national HomeNets will underpin their advocacy efforts for a national policy by conducting meetings with policy makers on a regular and ongoing basis. The committee formed will analyse the policy in consultation with government bodies. This will help in sharpening the content of the policy.

Consultation meetings will be held with stakeholders, home-based workers, organisations of home-based workers, and policy makers. As the draft policy progresses, it will have to be finalized in consultation with policy makers.

The formulation of a well-designed national policy on home-based workers still has a long way to go. The HomeNets have been doing advocacy work regarding a national policy for the last five years. Today, draft national policies in all five countries have been produced, and are being discussed with policy makers. However, there is still a struggle to formulate policies as the details of formal legislation remains a challenge.

These advocacy efforts are also seen as a tool to make policy makers sensitive to the need for a policy for home-based workers in the country. Through this sequence of consultations, work can be furthered towards shaping effective and comprehensive national policies, contoured to the specific needs of home-based workers in each country.

## **2. Social protection programmes:**

The social protection programmes to be undertaken in Madya Pradesh, India will be linked with existing government schemes such as Bima Yogna (insurance scheme) and the Unorganised Sector Bill. For this, a large number of educational programmes will be conducted to help make homebased workers aware of the possibilities offered by these successful micro finance and micro insurance initiatives. This strategy will also help in organising and strengthening the homebased workers in the state.

These efforts are particularly important because very low-income homebased workers – and women workers in particular – are not likely to be aware of the ways in which these initiatives can help secure more stable livelihoods for the women workers and their families. They may think that they do not have the ability to participate in these programmes, or that they are too poor to avail of these initiatives; or that insurance is beyond their means, hoping that nothing goes wrong (an often tragic strategy, given the insecurities of their lives). In view of the crucial importance of their livelihood-related activities for their families' well-being, such educational programmes regarding micro finance and micro credit – and how they can help secure a more stable future – are critically important to the home-based workers.

## **National Consultation**

The main objectives of the National Consultation were:

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- a) To mainstream homebased workers through furthering the development of a well-designed and successful national policy that can be used in each of the South Asian countries;
- b) To sensitize policy makers in South Asia to the importance of an effective national policy on homebased workers (involving the efforts of three national HomeNets in particular – in India, Nepal and Pakistan);

HomeNet Pakistan under its advocacy efforts for a national policy conducted meetings with policy makers on a regular and ongoing basis. The committee formed for this purpose analysed the policy in consultation with government bodies. This helped in sharpening the content of the policy.

The National Consultation, on the National Policy for HomeBased workers: Provincial framework, challenges, opportunities and way forward, organized by HomeNet Pakistan was held on 19 March 2011 in Karachi. The meeting was attended by Honorable Ministers for women development and social welfare from all provinces, Minister for labor Sindh, MPAs, labour department and CSOs (Annex – II).

## **Proceedings**

The need of the meeting was highlighted along with the recommendations for moving forward. A documentary ‘Silent Voices’ was also shown to the participants about the plight of HBWs in Pakistan. In all, six sessions were planned for this one day event (Agenda attached as Annex – I). The following topics were covered under the sessions:

- Mainstreaming Informal Sector in Pakistan: What, Why and How?
- Informal Sector and the Budget Analysis 2010-2011
- “Draft National Policy on Home-based Workers”

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- National Processes and Plans : Specific Focus on the New Provincial Plan of Action; Institutional Mechanism for labor laws
- Mainstreaming Home-based Workers in Policy, Legislation and Labour Administration in the Provinces
- Protecting the Rights of and Promoting the Benefits for Home-based Workers: Responsiveness of Labour Laws and Institutions

Mr Karamat Ali from PILER said that there is a dire need to register the workers working in the informal sector, specifically the Homebased workers who constitute a large labour force and contribute in the GDP. He said that after the 18th amendment it is important to devolve the provinces at the local level and the mechanism of documenting home based workers should be at the union council level. Universal demand for the social security schemes fulfills the need of homebased workers. Furthermore, while speaking on mainstreaming informal sector in Pakistan, he gave an overview of the present scenario regarding different trade union acts. He reiterated the fact that unionization of informal workers is a pre-requisite for the recognition of HBWs. This unionization may be done at industrial or sectarian basis and in the absence of this; vast majority of workers will remain un-identified.

The presentation about ‘The Informal Sector, Social Protection and the Budget A Gender-based Perspective’ by Ms Rubina Saigol (Annex – III) highlighted correlation between poverty and informalization. There is a preponderance of women in the informal sector with a very low ratio of women in the formal sector of employment.



Women are represented in the informal



**Unionization of informal sector is a pre-requisite for the recognition of HBWs**

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sector in manufacturing, trade and services. In nearly all categories women earn less than men leading to the intensified feminization of poverty. The link between gender and poverty has been established all over the world. Globally, out of 1.3 billion people living in poverty 70% are women. Women comprise the poorest of the poor and are the most vulnerable section of society. The social relations of gender mediate the manner in which women experience poverty. This phenomenon has given rise to new debates related to poverty reduction and social protection along with calls to formalize the informal sector and bring it within the ambit of the legal protection framework. She also brought the following points to attention:

- Features and expansion of the informal sector
- Globally and in Pakistan, women form a huge part of informal labour/ 12 million out of 20 million in Pakistan. In 2007 Pakistan recorded a 20% growth in the informal sector. In 2008 women constituted 71.7% of the informal workforce/ official estimate is around 73% and more than three-fourths earn less than Rs. 1500/- per month. Women are also highly dependent on middlemen who exploit them. Economic down turn and lack of social protection has further disadvantaged the HBWs.

The social and political scenario of the country and the budgetary expense incurred in the defence sector were also taken into account. The salient measures taken for the workers in formal sector were also part of the presentation.

- Out of the total labour force of over 50 million in Pakistan, only 6.62 million workers benefited from the formal social protection schemes of any form. (PILER)
- In context of the Social Protection and Safety Nets, BISP allocated Rs. 50 billion for 4 million families. Rs.5 billion allocated for training rural unskilled workers in 120 Union Councils in 12 least developed districts. Duty reduced to 5% on pharmaceuticals to reduce the prices of medicines. Reduced customs

***Out of 50 million  
Pakistanis in the  
labor force, only  
2.1 million  
workers have  
secured Social  
Security Cards.  
(LPP)***

duties on 29 items. Food and essential items exempted from imposition of VAT or enhanced GST (now 17%)

- Social Sector spending is now mainly a provincial responsibility. 52% increase in the provincial share of the PSDP from 245 billion rupees to 373 billion (had to be reduced after the floods and to reduce the budget deficit).
- In July 2010, the Punjab Assembly adopted the Working Women Protection Bill. The focus of the bill is to provide protection to female domestic workers in terms of wages, medical and other facilities. The Punjab Government has also announced a total of 85 million rupees for the labour and Human Resource development for the fiscal year 2010-11. Punjab budget envisions a total of five new schemes, out of which, three will be of Social welfare, women development and Bait-ul-Maal with a total fiscal allocation of 45 million rupees.
- In Sindh Province, proposals for raises in salaries and pensions of formal sector employees are underway but, there is near-total silence on the issue of informal sector workers in most provincial budgets. Under the Benazir Youth Development

### ***Guiding Principles of the Policy***

- ***Equality and non-discrimination [Article 25 (1&2)]***
- ***Elimination of exploitation [Article 3]***
- ***Empowerment of women [Article 25 (3), Article 34 and Article 37 (e)]***
- ***Social and economic well-being of the people [Article 37 (a) & 39 (b & d)]***
- ***Freedom of association [Article 17]***

Programme, approximately 80,000 youth had received some training as well as stipends to facilitate temporary income. An independent study showed that over 27% of youth had become self-employed or gained employment from the first batch of youth trained last year. The World Bank lauded this programme and reposed confidence by committing \$16 million in the next year for this programme.

- While discussing the national and provincial literacy rates, it was mentioned that Pakistan is spending only 2.1% of its GDP on education which is in contradiction to the MDG's allocation of 4%.

Dr Sabur Ghayur, in his session Protecting the Rights of and Promoting the Benefits for Home-based Workers: Responsiveness of Labour Laws and Institutions, elaborated the main components of the National Policy and informed that ministry of labour has completed the round of the provincial consultations for finalization of the policy for homebased workers. He said that after 18 amendments all provinces have to develop legislation in conformity to the international treaties signed and ratified by the state. His presentation further indicated that:

- The Constitution Prohibits all forms of slavery, forced labor and child labor (Article-11), provides for the fundamental right to exercise freedom of association and the right to form unions (Article-17).
- Guarantees that all citizens are equal before law, entitled to equal protection and no discrimination on the basis of sex alone (Article-25)

Policy is inspired & guided by the principles as enshrined in the Constitution.

- Equality and non-discrimination [Article 25 (1&2)]
- Elimination of exploitation [Article 3]
- Empowerment of women [Article 25 (3), Article 34 and Article 37 (e)]
- Social and economic well-being of the people [Article 37 (a) & 39 (b & d)]

- Freedom of association [Article 17]

While discussing Policy Stress on Protecting and Promoting Rights of HBWs he reiterated the fact that

- Accord legal equality to HBWs in status and rights.
- Ensure application of all rights & entitlements to HBWs
- Recognize & accept HBWs as workers
- Written contracts between workers and employers
- Adherence to minimum wages
- Right to organize and bargain collectively
- Extend laws pertaining to OSH for the formal labour to HBWs
- Provincial governments to extend Social Security benefits currently applicable only to formal organized sector workers to HBWs through enactment or amendment in their respective laws relating to ESSIs.
- The Labour Laws were inherited; modified latter, over 70 - they are broadly grouped under:
  - Industrial relations
  - Employment and service conditions
  - Occupational safety and health
  - TVET competence
  - Social safety nets/social security
  - Wages/remunerations
- In addition to agriculture workers, out of the purview of labour legislation and administration are:
  - Own account workers (self employed) and contributing family workers (unpaid family helpers) accounting for the majority of employed – informal economy workers

- Employees in the category of casual, piece rate and apprentice
- Home based workers
- While talking about Occupational Safety and health laws Mr Sabur (Annex – IV) opined that there is no independent legislation on occupational safety and health issues (OSH). The main law, which governs these issues, is the Chapter 3 of Factories Act, 1934. All the provinces, under this Act, have devised Factories Rules. The Hazardous Occupations Rules, 1963 under the authority of Factories Act is another relevant legislation. These rules not only specify some hazardous occupations but also authorize the Chief Inspector of Factories to declare any other process as hazardous. The other related laws are:
  - Dock Laborers Act, 1934
  - Mines Act, 1923
  - Workmen Compensation Act, 1923
  - Provincial Employees Social Security Ordinance, 1965
  - West Pakistan Shops and Establishments Ordinance, 1969
  - Boilers and Pressure Vessels Ordinance, 2002
- Mr Sabur concluded his presentation by stressing the need to expedite the Labour Law reform process. According to him, most of the labour laws are not only complex and overlap in scope and contents but, importantly, only provide coverage and protection to the workforce engaged in smaller segment of formal economic activities. The reform process already on a slow mode is now technically put on hold due to 18th amendment; it has to be addressed and the laws should duly incorporate provisions as contained in labour inspection and labour protection policies as well as draft HBWs policy.

This session was followed by a Question/Answer session and open discussion on National Processes and Plans: Specific Focus on the New Provincial Plan of Action; Institutional

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Mechanism for labor laws. This discussion was chaired by Mrs Tauqir Fatima Bhutto and the discussants were: Mrs. Ghalaza Gola, Mrs. Sitara Ayaz and Mrs. Rahila Durrani. Mrs Mehnaz Rafi gave her services as a moderator. Mrs Tauqir Fatima, Minister for women development Sindh, stressed the need of coordinated efforts of all relevant ministries for the implementation of policy for the homebased workers in Sindh. Women development in Sindh has already taken many initiatives for empowering the women but increasing poverty is a constant threat for their well being.

Mrs Sitara Ayaz further commented that Provincial commission on the status of women in KPK has been launched and aims to work for the empowerment of women. The policy for the HBWs would be fully endorsed in the provinces and will have full support of the legislators once it comes to the provinces.

Mrs Ghazala Gola, Minister for women development and social welfare, Baluchistan, said that three resolutions on the HBWs issues have already been moved and unanimously passed by the Baluchistan assembly. The female parliamentarians are united and have taken collaborative efforts for the women emancipation. All relevant ministries would be



engaged to ensure the Policy for HBWs in Baluchistan. Legislation on the social protection for the HBWs would be done in accordance and conformity with National Policy framework.

The session about ‘Mainstreaming Home-based Workers in Policy, Legislation and Labour Administration in the Provinces’ was Chaired by Syed Mustafian Kazmi and the participants were Secretary Labour Sindh, Secretary Labour Khyber Pukhtoon Khaw, Secretary Labour

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Punjab and Secretary Labour Baluchistan. Syed Mustafain Kazmi, Joint Secretary Federal Ministry of labour informed that provincial consultations in all four provinces have produced fruitful results. The policy will be finalized in a national consultation by next month. Seven countries have ratified C 177 because a lot still need to be done in organizing informal sector. Registration of HBWs is the most crucial thing and the ministry is having consultation with NADRA to add one clause of workplace which would enroll the HBWs in the social security. A comprehensive card will be provided to the workers. Implementation of HBWs policy will be ensured at all levels and registration of HBWs at union council is the only solution for documenting HBWs. During the session Ms Shahida Jaffery played the role of the moderator.

Marvi Rashid ,MPA Sindh stressed the need of developing a definition for HBWs covering all the sectors of HBWs in Pakistan .

Member Parliamentarians form Punjab Faiza Malik MPA and Arifa Khalid (PML) (N) said that it's a very good initiative to bring all the Parliamentarians together to think about women issue and learn from each other's experiences.

## **Outcomes of the Consultation**

As expected in the project document, The National Consultation proved to be an effective tool for gathering the concerned authorities and in reaching to a consensus on the National Policy for the homebased workers. Salient outcomes of the meeting are:

- Sensitization of home based workers
- Finalization of national policy on homebased workers in Pakistan, India and Nepal.

## **Recommendations**

A number of recommendations were gathered from the input received from worthy participants. A summary of which is as under:

- A shift from national security to human security paradigm
- Pakistan needs to urgently work on peace, so that the defence expenditures may be brought down
- Pakistan should seek a debt write-off or rescheduling
- Land reforms are urgently required to re-distribute wealth, especially among women
- Civil Society input into the budget-making process is necessary
- Wasteful expenditures of the government and leaders should be curbed to become free of IMF's conditionality
- Large-scale registration of workers in the informal economy
- Viable legal mechanism should be established for the enforcement of minimum wage and facilities.
- Pakistan needs to ratify ILO Convention 177 for Home-based workers
- The Conventions already ratified should be enforced strictly (C100).
- Accord legal equality to HBWs in status and rights.
- Ensure application of all rights & entitlements to HBWs
- Recognize & accept HBWs as workers
- Written contracts between workers and employers
- Adherence to minimum wages
- Right to organise and bargain collectively
- Extend laws pertaining to OSH for the formal labour to HBWs
- Provincial governments to extend Social Security benefits currently applicable only to formal organised sector workers to HBWs through enactment or amendment in their respective laws relating to ESSIs.

- **Concrete Actions Required**
  - Appoint a high powered task force in consultation with the provincial governments and with participation of stakeholders as well as experts to:
  - Look into matters with regard to labour laws and administration in the wake of 18<sup>th</sup> amendment
  - Ensure conformity of labour laws to global standards and obligations
  - Develop a coordinating mechanism as well as consensus
  - Tailor laws to HBWs policy clauses dealing with protecting & promoting rights of HBWs
  - Convene Pakistan Tripartite Labour Conference (PTLC) with a well prepared agenda & commitment to follow up recommendations
  - Importantly, appoint a truly representative high powered commission on mainstreaming informal economy (including also HBWs)

## **Conclusion**

There is a huge and growing informal labour sector in Pakistan. This sector is deprived of Social Protection, Social Security and basic economic rights. There is a preponderance of women in the informal sector. In spite of this, the Federal and Provincial budgets 2010-11 ignore the informal labour sector; even formal sector implementation is weak. Debt servicing and defence take up a very large budgetary chunk. Health and education receive relatively low priority. The current budget has been framed under a changed scenario; the provinces have increased their allocations for social sectors. Good Social Protection schemes are there but weak implementation impedes the success. Least protected among the poor Informal sector, mainly women, contribute greatly to the economy. Fulfillment of Constitutional obligations, among others, also demands:

- Right to organize & bargain collectively to working women and men **including HBWs,**

- A labor administration set up duly incorporating functioning bi- and tripartite bodies coexisting with a mechanism providing labor protection including occupational health and safety,
- A labour inspection mechanism, and
- Avenues for dispute settlement and seeking resolution of grievances also through ADR.

## **Way Forward**

The formulation of a well-designed national policy on home-based workers still has a long way to go. The HomeNets have been doing advocacy work regarding a national policy for the last five years. Today, draft national policies in all five countries have been produced, and are being discussed with policy makers. However, there is still a struggle to formulate policies as the details of formal legislation remain a challenge.

These advocacy efforts are also seen as a tool to make policy makers sensitive to the need for a policy for home-based workers in the country. Through this sequence of consultations, work can be furthered towards shaping effective and comprehensive national policies, contoured to the specific needs of home-based workers in each country. The IR Law needs to be enacted:

- The IR system provides an enabling ground for a participatory work environment duly supported by regulatory framework and a mechanism that governs workplace relations. It also ensures a functioning bi- and tri-partism. It has to be made functional through legislation, thus providing freedom to organize and bargain collectively to all workers including those in the informal economy, agriculture sector and HBWs as well as those working on contracts or through contractors. It should also conform to C 87 & 98
  - Expedite Lab Law Reform Process: Most of the labour laws are not only complex and overlap in scope and contents but, importantly, only provide coverage and

protection to the workforce engaged in smaller segment of formal economic activities. The reform process already on a slow mode is now technically put on hold due to 18th amendment; it has to be addressed and the laws should duly incorporate provisions as contained in labour inspection and labour protection policies as well as draft HBWs policy. Considerable time and efforts have already gone into the classification 13 labour laws dealing with employment and service conditions into one law. In fact, a draft bill was prepared and circulated to the stakeholders in early 2006. This spelled out: i) conditions of employment, ii) restrictions, registrations and regulation of employees, iii) wages and bonuses, minimum wage determination, iv) priority of wages over other debts, v) liability of principal employer and contractor, and vi) punishment and termination of employment. Resolution of labour-related industrial disputes is a painful time-consuming litigation that also entails substantial financial cost; in many cases beyond the capacity of the workers/unions part of the dispute. Prolongation in the settlement of industrial disputes also entails a social cost.

The situation has to be reversed also by developing alternate dispute resolution (ADR) mechanism also for HBWs.



**National Consultation on National Policy for Homebased workers  
Provincial Frameworks: Challenges, Opportunities and Way Forward  
19 March, Marriot Hotel, Karachi**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Topic</b>	
<b>09.30 am</b>	<b>Registration</b>	
09.45 am-10.00	Welcome & Introduction	Ume-Laila Azhar
10.00-10.20	Screening of Documentary on HBWs in Pakistan : <b>“SILENT VOICES”</b>	
10.20-10.45	<b>SESSION-1</b>  Mainstreaming Informal Sector in Pakistan: What, Why and How?	<b>Chair : Mrs. Anis Haroon</b> <b>Speaker : Mr Karamat Ali</b>  Moderator : Ume-Laila Azhar
10.45-11.15	<b>SESSION-2</b>  Informal Sector and the Budget Analysis 2010-2011	<b>Chair : Mrs. Anis Haroon</b> <b>Speaker : Dr Rubina Saigol</b>  Moderator : Ume-Laila Azhar
11.15-11.30	<b>Q &amp; A</b>	
11.30-11.45	<b>Tea Break</b>	
11.45- 12.10	<b>SESSION-3</b>  “Draft National Policy on Home-based Workers”	<b>Chair : Arifa Khalid</b> <b>Speaker : Dr. Sabur Ghayur,</b> Chairman Center for Labour Advocacy and Dialogue  Moderator : Samina Khan
12.10-12.30	<b>Q &amp; A /open discussion</b>	
12.30-01.30	<b>SESSION-4</b>  National Processes and Plans : Specific Focus on the New Provincial Plan of Action; Institutional Mechanism for labor laws	<b>Chair : Mrs Tauqir Fatima Bhutto</b> Discussant: Mrs. Ghalaza Gola Mrs.Sitara Ayaz Mrs.Rahila Durrani  Moderator : Mrs Mehnaz Rafi
01.30-2.00	<b>Open discussion</b>	
<b>Lunch</b>		

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02.30-03.00	<p><b>SESSION-5</b></p> <p>Mainstreaming Home-based Workers in Policy, Legislation and Labour Administration in the Provinces</p>	<p><b>Chair : Syed Mustafian Kazmi</b>  <b>Speaker : Sec Labour Sindh</b>            Sec Labor KPK            Sec Lab Punjab            Sec Lab Baluchistan  <b>Moderator : Shahida Jaffery</b></p>
03.00-03.45	<p><b>SESSION-6</b></p> <p>Protecting the Rights of and Promoting the Benefits for Home-based Workers: Responsiveness of Labour Laws and Institutions</p>	<p><b>Chair : Mrs. Ghalaza Gola</b>  <b>Speaker: Dr Sabur Ghayur</b>  <b>Moderator: Dr Qurat</b></p>
03.45-04.00	Open discussion & Recommendations	
<b>Closing and Vote of Thanks</b>		

## Attendance Sheet



### National Consultation HBWs Policy

Venue: Marriot Hotel, Karachi

Date: 19-03-2011

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**Backdrop**

Ministry for Women Development took the initiative for the development of National Policy for the Home Based workers in Pakistan after the Policy conference held in 2009 Delhi. The first draft of this Policy was prepared after discussion with a number of organisations involved with women home-based workers in Pakistan. Thereafter, a Regional Consultation was held with the members of HomeNet South Asia - HomeNet Nepal, HomeNet Bangladesh, HomeNet India, HomeNet Sri Lanka as well as concerned officials from these countries and some civil society representatives from Pakistan.

After incorporating the recommendations from these consultations, the new draft was discussed with local/district level groups, concerned officials, political parties and local government representatives in 68 districts of Pakistan and finally with the stakeholders at the provincial level. The final version incorporates the recommendations from all these consultations.

The Secretary, Ministry of Women's Development hosted a meeting on 6 Nov 2009 within the Ministry's precincts in presence of Representative of Secretary, Labour and other concerned government officials, where the Policy Document was handed over to the MoWD after a brief presentation on the major components of the National Policy.

The National Commission on the Status of Women hosted a Consultation on the Social Protection of the Home Based workers in Pakistan on 7 June chaired by Mrs Shahnaz Wazir Ali, Advisor to the Prime Minister on Social sector attended by Mrs Yasmine Rehman, Advisor to the Prime Minister on women development, Provincial Ministers for Women Development from Baluchistan and Sindh, Member Parliament Punjab, relevant government officials and representatives of CSO working on HBWs issues. The issues of HBWs were discussed and also the key initiatives on the policy process and legislation were shared.

**Rationale for the National Consultation on National Policy for Homebased workers:**

At the moment the Draft is with the Federal Ministry of Labor. The MoL has started a round of Provincial consultation with labour department, and major stakeholders including HBWs in order to get feed back and final comments from the provinces which become crucial after 18 Amendment in Pakistan. The final comments will enable the MoL to finalize the National policy on grounds of the existing situation in country and develop a national frame work for implementation at provincial levels. However, presently after the post 18 amendment situation in Pakistan, provinces will make their provincial framework once the National Policy for HBWs is approved by the cabinet at the National level.

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At this moment when the MoL is finalizing the National Policy and developing a National framework ,it become important for all the Provinces to understand the emerging situation and discuss what possibly can be done for the proper and larger implementation of the National policy at the provincial level. The National consultation would provide a platform to the Provincial policy makers to have an insight in to the provincial situation, develop coordination and harmony among various ministers, and work collectively for the development provincial frameworks keeping gin view the particular provincial realties.

**Out comes of the National Consultation:**

- Increased awareness of the issue of informal sector, specifically homebase work and its importance as major contributor in National GDP
- Larger sharing of the process of Policy finalization
- Deliberations on the New Provincial Plan of Action and Institutional Mechanism for labor laws
- Mainstreaming of Home-based Workers in Policy, Legislation and Labour Administration in the Provinces