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GAP ANALYSIS OF PAKISTAN'S SECURITY PROTOCOLS THROUGH A GENDER LENS



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PAKISTAN'S SECURITY
PROTOCOLS THROUGH
A GENDER LENS



A UN Women Research

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

Conflict and post-conflict environments in the world present unique challenges and opportunities for women. This is because conflict and security affect women and men differently. Conflict is often rooted in structural inequalities and exclusion of certain groups, including women, from social, economic and political power. Exclusionary social norms also prevent women from playing their natural role as agents of peace in society.

Despite recent improvements in the internal environment, at the sub national level Pakistan remains conflict prone and fragile. Types of ongoing conflicts include conflicts between state and militants; violent extremism, ethnic and sectarian; organized crime; disputes over land and natural resources, as well as tribal disputes. For the last ten years, however, violent extremist organizations have driven most of the violence. Pakistani state has responded to the threat of violent extremism through largely security means, which has led to massive displacement of communities and destruction of life and property. In post conflict zones, excessive effects of trauma, displacement and violence have marked the end of conflict for many Pakistani women. The lack of skills or education among many of these women means that their access to economic opportunities in post conflict environments is also greatly challenged.

In the last decade Pakistan Government has developed and implemented several new security policy instruments such as *National Internal Security Policy (2014-2018)*, *National Action Plan (2015)*, *National Counter Extremism Policy Guidelines (2018)*, *Anti-Terrorism Act 1997 and its amendments in 2014* and *draft National Action Plan Implementation Strategy*. While some of these instruments do tentatively address and acknowledge gendered aspects of security policy, operationally they fail to present a road map for fully integrating women and their concerns into security

policy, its implementation and a gendered assessment of the impact of security policies.

UN Women's Project "*Gap Analysis of Pakistan's Security Protocols through a Gendered Lens*" aims to fill knowledge gaps and support the integration of gendered perspectives into security policies of Pakistan. The gap analysis also contributes towards creating more cohesive communities and addressing emerging community security threats especially faced by women in Pakistan.

The research study is spread over six chapters: the first four chapters attempt to capture and integrate both conceptual knowledge related to the global Women Peace and Security (WPS) frameworks as well as more empirical analysis of how Preventing/Countering Violent Extremism (P/CVE) in Pakistan has intersected with realizing WPS goals and agenda. The last two chapters are focused on analyzing the comparative profiles of three regional countries: Indonesia, Bangladesh and Jordan; which have developed "National Action Plans" based on Women Peace and Security frameworks in order to distil best practices and recommendations to engage Pakistan government and civil society stakeholders in better integrating the four WPS pillars of: *Protection, Participation, Prevention and Relief and Recovery* into Pakistan's existing security protocols.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction lays out the parameters of UN Women's Project "*Gap Analysis of Pakistan's Security Protocols through a Gendered Lens*" which integrates Women Peace and Security frameworks with *Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE)* lens in order to provide comprehensive analysis of the gender dimension of the state of security sector and security policies in Pakistan. The chapter lays out programmatic linkage between UN Women's Women Economic Empowerment

and Sustainable Livelihoods (WEE &SL) Programme and preventing violent extremism which recognizes economic empowerment as a pathway to engaging women to increase their confidence, self-efficacy, and skills to take part in family decision-making and to resolve community problems and conflicts. The theory of change posits that this empowerment may contribute to easing tensions within the home and community, leading to women's full and equal representation and participation in all levels of peace processes and security efforts.

CHAPTER 2

State of Security, Conflict and Gender Dimension-Global Perspectives aims to provide an abridged overview of the current knowledge and frameworks on gender dimension of security. In the *first section*, it lays out the parameters of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda which recognizes that women and girls face distinct struggles and challenges because of gender biases. These gendered social norms and attitudes are exacerbated in conflict settings, which disproportionately increase risks to women and girls' rights. Hence, WPS seeks to address gender inequality in fragile, conflict-affected and post-conflict contexts. It notes that the terrorist attacks of Sept 11, 2001 and the global militarized response, which followed soon after, eclipsed the WPS agenda as envisioned in UNSCR 1325. The rise of terrorist organizations, violent extremist trends, concerns about nuclear proliferation and the return of competing geo-political power politics at the global and regional level all took attention away from the WPS agenda.

The *second section* reviews and triangulates the global Women Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda with the Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) practice and programming in the last 20 years. It notes several negative impacts of this lack of focus on women in C/PVE global strategies, which include *militarization of the counterterror response* which resulted in gender-based impacts on wars especially in the countries of the global south which saw military interventions. It also notes how WPS agenda has historically focused on the prevention of conflict-related sexual violence but has

had insufficient focus on conflict prevention—including by addressing its root causes—something that requires improving governance and building resilience in ways that protect women's rights and recognize their roles. Most importantly it highlights the *missing focus on socio economic rights and inequalities* in access to resources, property and employment has been lacking both in peace-building measures and in security sector reform programs.

The *third section* in this chapter summarizes the existing needs and vulnerabilities of women and girls in conflict environments globally and the best practices in integrating WPS and PVE agenda. These recommendations emphasize the need to *acknowledge women's multidimensional role and agency* in designing security instruments and countering violent extremism policies and opening up *spaces for women to contribute their knowledge to policy and program design*.

CHAPTER 3

Gender Dimension of Conflict and Security in Pakistan: Impact on Women and Girls focuses on Pakistan and explores how the Pakistani states militarized and securitized counterterror approach which has had deleterious impacts on women's security and safety especially in conflict zones within the country both at the national, sub-national and local level in Pakistan. A key objective of the analysis is to identify gaps in policy response of state institutions to impacts of conflicts that relate to women and girls in Pakistan.

The *first section* in this chapter traces the countrywide impacts of counter terror polices and actions of the government and security establishment and explores their impact on Pakistan's progress on integrating WPS agenda. While Pakistan continuously voices its support for the Women, Peace and Security Agenda⁴⁹, Pakistan has as yet to take meaningful action towards its implementation. Although it has made significant progress on introducing women friendly legislation like the National Commission on the Status of Women (Amendment) Act, 2018; the Election Act, 2017; the Punjab Domestic Workers Act, 2018 there is *missing focus on socio economic rights and gender inequalities, growing regional disparities in Pakistan and conflict and*

security protocols fail to provide significant protections or inclusion for women in conflict environments. The set-up of Peace and Development Unit and Provincial Apex Committees were notable efforts by the Government. However, lack of institutionalization resulted in low interest in P&D Unit by subsequent ministerial level leadership within the Ministry of Planning. Moreover, its overlapping mandate with Ministry of Interior which by law is mandated to look after all issues related to conflict and internal security meant that it soon became dysfunctional. The Apex Committees remain functional have seen far more success than any other policy level intergovernmental platform, largely due to the buy-in and participation of the military high command. A key point of concern is that the Apex Committees remain exclusive domains of security led institutions with practically no participation of women-led bodies or institutions.

The *second section* provides a deeper analysis of the role of women in violent extremism in the context of conflict and terrorism challenges within Pakistan. Contemporary violent extremist organizations in Pakistan have supported traditional, conservative gender norms and ideologies with distinct gender roles for women and men, considering it crucial for stable and moral societies. Most violent organization including Daesh in Pakistan recognize that women and men experience a lack of power and act on their frustrations differently due to gender norms, expectations and identities. Their recruitment campaigns subsequently are highly gendered in order to improve their reach and effectiveness. The section also traces the involvement of women in violent groups in Pakistan – most significantly seen during the Swat operation. Key findings in this section includes evidence that suggest that women’s role in violent extremism in Pakistan goes beyond the commonly accepted role of a victim and extreme disempowerment and gender-based violence is a push factor for women radicalization in Pakistan. Another noteworthy finding relates to social factors; family networks are key pull factors for women radicalization in Pakistan.

The *third* and last section of the chapter suggests pathways for meaningful participation of women and marginalized communities in PVE programs. It uses key

pillars of WPS agenda, namely *Protection, Prevention, Participation and Relief and Recovery* to examine how the state’s policies have exacerbated the state of peace and security for women, especially in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) province (including ex FATA region). In addition, the securitized response of the Pakistani state to militancy and terrorism has left many women vulnerable due to deaths of male family heads, which has affected their social and economic wellbeing. Increased economic vulnerabilities of women in the Tribal districts including the TDP returnees has impacted the post conflict community stabilization. Empirical evidence from Pakistan suggests that there is a measurable correlation between economic vulnerabilities of women and violent radicalization, and stabilization of post conflict communities.

CHAPTER 4

Security Policy Instruments in Pakistan: Gender Gap Analysis focuses on the emerging consensus among academics and policymakers in Pakistan that kinetic measures must be supplemented by non-kinetic targeted interventions to address the root causes of violent extremism. In this regard, legislators and policymakers in Pakistan have passed multiple laws and policies to dismantle the ecosystem of violent extremism. Chapter 4 builds on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) framework to analyze Pakistan’s security policies formulated in past three decades. In particular, it focuses on four key processes associated with preventing violent extremism: ‘prevention’, ‘protection’, ‘participation’ and ‘relief & recovery’ to critically analyzes the following policies --- *National Internal Security Policy 2018-2023 (NISIP)*, *National Action Plan (NAP) 2014*, *Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA) 1997*, and *National Counter Extremism Policy Guidelines (NCEPG)*--- from a gendered lens. The chapter delineates gaps and policy lacunas in the existing policy instruments, especially women’s agential power and the way it mediates and regulates processes of violent extremism.

In particular, the chapter delineates the strengths and limitations of the existing policy instruments. It notes that while both ATA and NAP do not even

acknowledge that there is any gender inequality in Pakistan and consequently, they are completely silent on gendered based PVE issues. Both the NAP and ATA ignore the critical issue of protection of women in a conflict/war. The more recent two policy documents, i.e., the NISP 2018-2023 and NCEPG—which are admittedly more inclusive than the preceding policy documents—are also devoid of any substance as they contain no policy or plan to protect women and gender minorities in a conflict situation. Most importantly the Chapter points out that while both NISP and NCEPG have included a gendered lens, they fall short on ‘mainstreaming gender’ and lack clarity on how to bridge developmental gaps which prevent meaningful inclusion and representation of women at the policy level as well as local level protection and safeguard institutions. A sustainable approach to PVE mandates that policymakers recognize the diverse and complex agency of women, i.e., laws and policies should not just focus on protecting women from violent extremism but they should also encourage and facilitate women to proactively counter violent extremism.

CHAPTER 5

Comparative Profile of National Action Plans: Indonesia, Jordan and Bangladesh. This chapter provides a comparative profile of three Muslim majority countries: Indonesia, Jordan and Bangladesh and briefly outlines their policy frameworks related to women’s engagement in preventing violent extremism and within the counterterrorism frameworks. These three countries represent different geographic contexts: Jordan in the Middle East, Bangladesh, in South Asia and Indonesia, East Asia. All three National Action Plans (NAPs) reviewed contain important lessons and provide pathways for countries like Pakistan to integrate principles of UNSCR 1325 and WPS agenda into its national security frameworks. The matrix developed points to key components of an effective plan: grounding it in the historical and cultural context of the country, a log framework that outlines a detailed implementation plan with indicators, interventions and institutional responsibilities, involvement of civil society organization and a coordinating body/mechanism as

well as a clear source of funding mechanism. The review concludes that both Bangladesh and Indonesian NAPs provide pathways for discussions with the Pakistan state and societal stakeholders both at national and sub-national level to find ways of integrating WPS principles into its existing Internal Security Frameworks without compromising its larger national security goals. Importantly the chapter notes that Pakistan’s current security frameworks and its National Disaster Management Policies/frameworks clearly reference all four essential pillars of the WPS Agenda without creating any obvious linkages with the International Resolutions. Chapter 5 also includes The Guidance Document for In-Country Consultations and makes specific suggestions for in-country consultations on the subject *which includes identification of gaps in existing policies and plans, prioritization of ‘Relief and Recovery’ pillar, integration of women economic empowerment in WPS agenda, reviewing the policies to suggest a clear and detailed disaggregation of roles and responsibilities and providing technical input and best practices to integrate gender sensitivity in existing plans.*

CHAPTER 6

Recommendations and Pathway Forward for Stakeholder Consultations offers certain concrete recommendations based on the gap analysis, identifying programmatic entry points for UN Women at the: *National, Sub-National and Community/local Level.* These recommendations go above and beyond those that have been included in “Guidance Note: included in Chapter 5. Some of the notable recommendations are as following:

Recommendations

1. Engage NSA office and present findings of the Gap analysis: *(see detailed recommendations in Chapter 5: Guidance Note.* As noted earlier, consultations with the government can focus on all four pillars of Women, Peace and Security without referencing UNSCR 1325 and WPS agenda.
2. Explore opportunities to set up a result oriented *Consultative Platform* possibly led by the PM office and the National Security Adviser (NSA) bringing

together relevant ministries: *Ministry of Interior & NACTA, Ministry of Information and National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW)* to discuss/share findings of the Gap Analysis.

3. As discussed in Chapter, Peace and Development Unit as an intra-governmental coordination mechanism has not functioned optimally as it is housed in the Ministry of Planning, Development and Reform. Dr. Moeed Yousaf the present NSA was closely involved in setting up the unit and is aware of all the challenges it faced. Consultations with the NSA could also explore whether placing the P&D Unit within Ministry of Interior, which has the mandate to address internal peace, and security issues can result in revitalizing the P&D Unit and restoring it to its original purpose and mandate.
4. Inputs collated through the *consultation process* are used to develop a *Sensitization and Capacity Building Program* to enable government counterparts: (*national, sub-national and local level*) to sufficiently acknowledge women's multidimensional role and agency in *National Security frameworks, national counter narratives, peace building, security sector and P/CVE programs* especially in conflict and post conflict scenario.
5. Engage the *Interior Ministry and NACTA* in a bilateral dialogue; develop a matrix based on the gender related Gaps identified in this report (Chapter 4), provide capacity and technical support in making mainstreaming gender within the body of National Internal Security policy (NISP) and National Counter Extremism Policy Guidelines (NCEPG) and discuss how gender can be mainstreamed within these security frameworks as well as the implementation plans in light of evidence from Pakistan and global best practices. So far the current government has shown little interest in ownership and operationalizing the NCEPG as it was developed during the tenure of the previous government. MOI (Ministry of Interior) may be more interested in re-launching the Strategy with a stronger framework, which has gender mainstreamed and has a comprehensive implementation plan embedded along with the policy.
6. As a follow up step to the national level consultative dialogue, provincial or sub-national stakeholders especially office of the chief secretaries, PCSWs, Home departments, may be engaged to discuss the role of provincial *Apex Committees* and the participation and inclusion of provincial level women safeguard institutions/statutory bodies and such as the PCSWs and the Ombudspersons Office in policy and security related discussion at the Provincial level.
7. Lack of participation and inclusion of women in Pakistan's security institutions: *National Security Institutions, Counter Terror Departments (CTD), Police, Para Military Forces (Frontier Corp and Levis)* is a key gap in ensuring all four pillars of WPS. UN Women can lead a multi-Agency platform along with UNODC to discuss pathways of increasing participation of women in first responders and security forces in conflict zones.
8. Sensitize and capacitate district/ local level key government institutions have evidence on gender-sensitive policies and initiatives that are effective in promoting social cohesion, tolerance and diversity including gender equality.
9. At the district level, the role women safeguard institutions i.e. DCSWs and Ombudsperson Office especially in KP Province and its conflict affected Newly Merged Districts, must be strengthened. UNDP in FYI 2020-21 with support from GIZ has managed to get 4 DCSWs notified. Their capacity and sensitization on all four pillars: Protection, Prevention, Participation and Relief and Recovery, needs to be undertaken.
10. All UN Women community focused programs in the NMDs, especially those engaging local women for civic and human rights awareness would benefit from integration of sensitization on rights and role of women in peace building and conflict. A context specific training manual incorporating best practices may be developed to engage local women especially women community leaders and women support groups on issues of peace and tolerance.

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

Conflict and post-conflict environments in the world present unique challenges and opportunities for women. While violence and periods of war have negative effects on women, it is suggested that ‘peace time’ also has special implications for women. This is because conflict and security affect women and men differently. Conflict is often rooted in structural inequalities and exclusion of certain groups, including women, from social, economic and political power. Exclusionary social norms also prevent women from playing their natural role as agents of peace in society. They are often excluded from negotiations and peace building efforts despite the fact that they are usually the main targets and victims of conflicts and militant campaigns. Till recently the gender perspective was also largely absent from state strategies for peace building, security and countering violent extremism policies.

Over the years, however the world has increasingly acknowledged the impact of conflict and security dynamic on women. This change has been reflected in the global recognition of the growing Women Peace and Security agenda. The global acceptance of this intrinsic link between gendered view of security and peace building is clearly evidenced and expressed through different international platforms, protocols, laws and resolutions that have been passed in the last decade. The UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (July 2012) on Women, Peace, and Security, envisages each group as having specific needs and priorities which must be addressed through grassroots informed and targeted approaches bolstered by enhanced participation of women in political processes, economic empowerment, humanitarian efforts, peace negotiations, and reintegration and rehabilitation of affected populations. There is a growing realization that

the prevention and countering of violent extremism cannot be restricted to the domain of security and law enforcement. A whole of society approach in which women activists, families, and youth bring their unique perspectives and contributions to the P/CVE efforts can be instrumental in curbing terrorism and radicalization¹

Peace, rule of law and governance are interrelated and are critical foundations for sustainable development. The link between gender justice and peaceful societies is clearly established through the SDG 16 and enshrined within Global Agenda 2030² women, peace and security. This global transformation is predicated on the understanding that human rights, peace and security, and development are deeply interlinked and mutually reinforcing³.

More recently Resolution 2282 and A RES_70_262. (April 2016) highlight the important role of women in peace building and notes the substantial link between:

“women’s full and meaningful involvement in efforts to prevent, resolve and rebuild from conflict and those efforts’ effectiveness and long-term sustainability, and stressing, in this regard, the importance of women’s equal participation in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security and the need to increase women’s role in decision- making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution and peace building.”⁴

More importantly these resolutions underscore the importance of women’s leadership and participation in conflict prevention, resolution, and peace building, by recognizing *“the continuing need to increase representation of women at all decision-making levels in national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for the prevention and resolution of conflict, and the consideration of gender-related issues in all discussions pertinent to sustaining peace”⁵*

1.2 PAKISTAN'S SECURITY CONTEXT

Despite recent improvements in the internal environment, at the sub national level Pakistan remains conflict prone and fragile. These include conflicts between state and militants; violent extremism, ethnic and sectarian; organized crime; disputes over land and natural resources, as well as tribal disputes. For the last ten years however, violent extremist organizations have driven most of the violence. Pakistani state has responded to the threat of violent extremism through largely security means, which has led to massive displacement and destruction of life and property.

In post conflict zones, excessive effects of trauma, displacement and violence have marked the end of conflict for many Pakistani women. Due to these circumstances, many women struggle to participate effectively in the process of post conflict rehabilitation and reconstruction of their societies and communities. The lack of skills or education among many of these women means that their access to economic opportunities in post conflict environments is also greatly challenged. It is critical that the implications of conflict and security measures on women in Pakistan are clearly understood. Furthermore, the post-conflict environment must also be interrogated, as there are social, psychological, physical and economic implications that continue to challenge women.

Pakistan is a signatory to global commitments to transform the world by achieving 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). However, till to date in Pakistan mainstreaming of women and girls as active participants and stakeholders in the peace building process remains a challenge. In this regard, women remain structurally marginalized from playing meaningful roles in the wider security sector, and peace-building interventions. Especially strategies and national frameworks that are designed to prevent conflict and counter violent extremism at both policy and grassroots levels⁶ lack gender sensitivity.

In the last decade Pakistan Government has developed and implemented several new security policy instruments such as *National Internal Security Policy (2014-2018)*, *National Action Plan (2015)*, *National Narrative*, *National Counter Extremism Policy Guidelines*

(2018), *Anti-Terrorism Act 1997 and its amendments in 2014* and *draft National Action Plan Implementation Strategy*. While some of these instruments do tentatively address and acknowledge gendered aspects of security policy, operationally they fail to present a road map for fully integrating women and their concerns into security policy, its implementation, and a gendered assessment of the impact of security policies.

1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND EXPECTED RESULTS

UN Women's research "*Gap Analysis of Pakistan's Security Protocols through a Gender Lens*" aims to fill the above-mentioned knowledge gaps and support the integration of gendered perspectives into security policies of Pakistan. The research led by the Women Economic Empowerment and Sustainable Livelihoods (WEE &SL) Programme is aimed at enhancing women's full and equal representation and participation in all levels of peace processes and security efforts as mandated under UN Women strategic plan 2018 – 2021. The Gap analysis also contributes towards creating more cohesive communities and addressing emerging community security threats. The overall goal of the Project as defined in the TORs and linked to UN Women's global Strategy is:

"Women and girls contribute and have greater influence in building sustainable peace and resilience and benefit equally from the prevention of natural disasters and conflicts and from humanitarian action".

Research specific objectives include:

1. *Identify and address the gender-specific security needs and specific vulnerability of women and girls*
2. *Support full and meaningful participation of marginalised communities, including women leaders and networks, in shaping security priorities and provisions;*
3. *Improve behavior, effectiveness and accountability of formal and informal security actors, particularly in relation to the protection of women and girls;*
4. *Identify the gender gaps in these strategic instruments*

5. *Provide recommendations for improved and relevant policies/strategies that ensure participation and protection of women and girls for this purpose.*

The key outputs and results of the Consultancy include is a comprehensive Desk Review and Gender Analysis of Security Policy Instruments in Pakistan. The results also include comparative profiling of Bangladesh, Jordan and Indonesia on security policies and gender inclusion along with a guidance document for in-country consultation processes.

1.4 RESEARCH INCEPTION

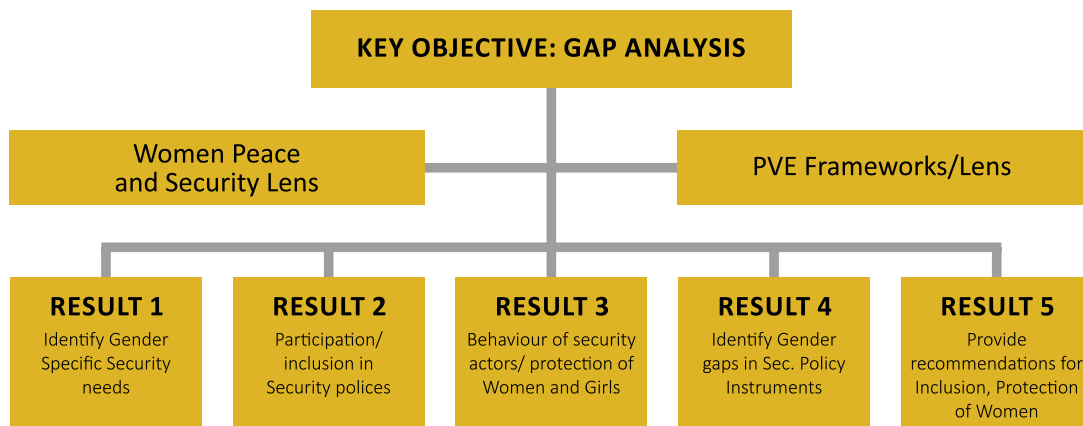
1.4.1. Research Approach

Keeping in view the 5 key objectives mentioned in the TORs, a 2-pronged research design is developed which integrates Women Peace and Security frameworks with Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) lens to provide comprehensive analysis of the gender dimension of the state of security sector and security policies in

Pakistan. This dual lens allows using the gap analysis/ desk research to evaluate the gender dimension from beyond just the inclusion and participatory perspective. By adding the PVE lens to the analysis it attempts to integrate current knowledge, and evidence which support greater focus on role of women when designing PVE strategies and programs. The Project is designed using a holistic approach that encompasses a *Qualitative Research* design, which uses a mixed/ hybrid approach and proposes a methodology, which comprises qualitative research methods to achieve the agreed outputs.

Stakeholder consultations with UN Women team was held to develop a work-plan and scope of work. Consultations with key UN women country office staff and other relevant stakeholders in the team were undertaken in order to align research strategies and methodologies and to identify a common approach to conducting the Gap analysis, preparing key steps, logistics, consultations, etc. for pre-intervention evaluation research.

Figure 1: Research Design



1.4.2. Structure

Output 1: Desk review of existing literature on global frameworks on gender dimension of security conflict and peace building. The review will include an in-depth analysis of international frameworks related to gender mainstreaming and the current status of the global Women Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda as well as preventing violent extremism programs and their impact on women. The analysis will be used to identify and address the gender-specific security needs and specific vulnerabilities of women and girls in conflict environments globally.

Output 2: Comprehensive analysis post conflict scenarios in Pakistan: Existing country reports, Conflict Analysis Reports, Newspaper articles, including updated context analysis on Pakistan conflict and violent extremism especially in Balochistan and KPK and their impact on women. Identify pathways for the full and meaningful participation of marginalised communities, including women leaders and networks in Pakistan, in shaping security priorities and provisions of the Pakistani state.

Output 3: Detailed gender analysis of all listed and major security policy instruments in Pakistan: will be undertaken to identify gaps in the strategic instruments. The Gap Analysis integrates Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) perspectives especially current knowledge and frameworks of analysis on role of women and PVE. Our approach attempts to narrow the gap between PVE and the larger Women Peace and Security Agenda, which focuses on inclusive and gendered lens to security

and conflict. The analysis will be used to develop set of targeted recommendations to improve behavior, effectiveness and accountability of formal and informal security actors, particularly in relation to the protection of women and girls.

Output 4: Develop a comparative profile of given countries (Indonesia, Jordan and Bangladesh): The comparative profile of the three selected countries will be analysed with reference to their national policies and strategies and approach to gender and security. Their specific contrary contexts, profiles will be mined to analyse similarities and differences among the three majority Muslim countries in their approach to gender, women and security. Their security policy instruments will be compared with Pakistan to identify gaps and suggest pathways for cross- regional learning and integrating inclusive practices to expand participation of women in security policy domain in Pakistan.

Output 5: Support the organization and lead the facilitation of in-country consultation processes: The final Report will include a set of comprehensive recommendations for Pakistan government, state security policy institutions and civil society stakeholders for improved and relevant policies/ strategies that ensure participation and protection of women and girls in the security sector and policymaking in Pakistan. The final Report will also include a pathway for the presentation of findings including agenda, presentation discussion guide, for the consultation process to engage UN agencies, civil society and government stakeholders on the subject.

STATE OF SECURITY, CONFLICT AND GENDER DIMENSION: GAPS IN GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

Chapter Summary

The Chapter 2: *State of Security, Conflict and Gender Dimension-Global Perspectives* aims to provide an abridged overview of the current knowledge and frameworks on gender dimension of security. The purpose here is not to cover the entire rich field of gender and security or to narrate the inspiring history of the global campaign by women activists and civil society actors to push forward the Women, Peace and Security agenda which found expression in the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000). The key objective of this chapter is to distill the lessons learned over the last 20 years on how the WPS agenda intersected with the field, practice and implementation of countering/preventing violent extremism programming globally.

The *first section* in this chapter provides a brief evolutionary and progressive view of the current global frameworks related to the gender dimension of security. This section specifically focuses on the discourse surrounding Resolution 1325 along with the subsequent 8 frameworks. The *second section* reviews and triangulates the global Women Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda with the Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) practice and programming in the last 20 years. The *third section* in this chapter summarizes the existing needs and vulnerabilities of women and girls in conflict environments globally and the best practices in integrating WPS and PVE agenda.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Conflict and security affect women and men differently. Conflict is often rooted in structural inequalities and exclusion of certain groups, including women, from social, economic and political power. Exclusionary social norms also prevent women from playing their natural role as agents of peace in society. They are often excluded from negotiations and peace building efforts despite the fact that they are usually the main targets and victims of conflicts and militant campaigns. Despite significant and mounting evidence of variegated impacts and role of women in conflicts around the world, till recently the gender perspective was largely absent from state strategies for peace building, security and countering violent extremism policies.

The current state of global security and its relationship with gender and women in particular is a very broad

subject. The current discourse on the efficacy and limitations of Resolution 1325 in mainstreaming gender, encompass a whole spectrum of issues: *political and economic empowerment of women, social inclusion, Human Rights protections, preventions and participation*. This chapter does not aim to cover the whole spectrum of gaps, issues and critiques related to the current practice and gender dimension of security frameworks. It has a narrower focus: it explores how the understanding and frameworks related to terrorism; violent extremism and prevention of violent extremism have impacted the gender dimension of security and the implementation of resolution 1325. This narrow focus allows for a deeper analysis of gaps in Pakistan's internal security protocols through a gender lens and the exploration of the role of women in community stabilization and social resilience in Pakistan other regional countries.

2.2 CURRENT GLOBAL FRAMEWORKS ON GENDER AND SECURITY: AN OVERVIEW

Since the mid 1990's women activist and NGOs around the world were campaigning to mainstream gender perspectives in global security frameworks. Their concerted efforts resulted in landmark frameworks, *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)*⁷ and the *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPfA)*⁸. The marginalization of women within the global security discourse however continued. The Brahimi Report⁹ (April 2000), intended to provide a comprehensive review of UN peace operations to the UN Security Council and General Assembly, but included only two brief references to women, despite the involvement and inputs from the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security.¹⁰

2.3 UNSCR RESOLUTION 1325: A MILESTONE EVENT

The adoption, on 31 October 2000, of *Security Council Resolution 1325*¹¹ was a response to this kind of recurring marginalization of women and was hailed by many as a victory for feminist activism¹². Although gender mainstreaming had become part of the institutional practice of the UN from the mid-1990s

onwards, the recognition by the Security Council of gender as a key issue in peace and security marked a significant step forward. Not only does Resolution 1325 recognize women as potentially vulnerable in times of conflict, it also importantly, recognizes women as political actors, as agents in peace processes and as key stakeholders in peace building. Security Council Resolution 1325 followed on decades of previous milestones and political advances which recognized the importance of a global strategy to advance women's rights. These advances included: *The International Women's Year in 1975; The UN Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, from 1976 to 1985; the Convention of the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women or CEDAW in 1981; the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1985; the Commission on the Status of Women report on Women and Armed Conflict of 1998; and the Namibia Declaration and Platform for Action on Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective of Peace Support Operations of 2000. The Brahimi Report (March, 2000) also highlighted the need for equitable gender representation in UN peace operations.* The Security Council itself also likely played an indirect role in building momentum through a number of thematic resolutions including SCR 1265 on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict.

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (commonly referred to as UNSCR 1325) was adopted in October 2000 and provides the foundation of the international Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda. In the years since the passage of UNSCR 1325 this agenda has been reinforced by the adoption of a number of further Security Council resolutions. Together, these resolutions draw attention to gendered impacts of conflict-related violence and advocate for the full participation of women at all stages of peace processes.

The priority areas, or 'pillars', pertinent to matters of international peace and security under the WPS agenda are as following and within each of these pillars there are number of strategic priorities or activities:

- *Participation*: addressing the pressing issues of women's political leadership in peace and security governance.
- *Prevention*: focusing on strategies to combat violence.
- *Protection*: of both the rights and bodies of related to 'participation' might include measures to increase the number of women involved in peace negotiations or mediation.
- *Relief and recovery*: would need to ensure that adequate provision is made for the physical and mental health care of male and female survivors of conflict-related sexualized violence in a post-conflict environment.

The passage of UNSCR 1325 in Oct. 2000 was a victory for all women and women's organizations that had been advocating for the recognition of the role of women in international actions dealing with peace and security. It was hoped that the UNSCR 1325 would usher in new more inclusive ways of looking at conflict prevention, conflict management and peace building.¹³

2.4 WOMEN PEACE AND SECURITY (WPS) AGENDA AND THE WAR ON TERROR:

Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda

- The WPS agenda is a human rights and women's rights framework that recognizes the link between gender equality and peace.
- In 2000, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) passed resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. It has since passed an additional nine resolutions: UNSCRs 1820, 1888, 1889, 1960, 2106, 2122, 2242, 2467, and 2493.
- These resolutions have underscored the significance of the WPS agenda, reaffirming the importance of its full and genuine implementation.
- Women and girls face distinct struggles and challenges because of gender biases. These gendered social norms and attitudes are exacerbated in conflict settings, which disproportionately increase risks to women and girls' rights. Similarly, recognizing that gender inequality excludes women from influential political and social forums.
- WPS seeks to address gender inequality in fragile, conflict-affected and post-conflict contexts.
- The WPS agenda affirms the importance of women's participation and gender perspectives at all stages of formal and informal peace processes and in conflict prevention more generally¹⁵.

The WPS policy architecture (that is, the ten resolutions passed in this area by the Security Council since 2000) is binding on member states of the United Nations (UN).

One of the ways in which member states show commitment to these resolutions is through the

development of National Action Plans (NAPs), which outline how individual states intend to implement the provisions and uphold the principles of UNSCR 1325. Till to date (2020) 86 countries have developed National Action Plans for the Implementation of UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security¹⁶. A number of regional organizations, including the African Union, the European Union, and the Pacific Islands Forum, also developed action plans to formalize their engagement with the WPS agenda¹⁷.

The African Union (AU), NATO, and the United Nations have special representatives or special envoys on various aspects of the WPS agenda. The UN, AU, and European Union have committed to regional frameworks for monitoring and reporting on WPS and to zero tolerance for sexual exploitation and harassment. Eleven regional organizations have committed to regional action plans on WPS.

At the national level, more than eighty UN member states have worked to embed these resolutions in national action plans. While these numbers are encouraging prima facie, the effectiveness of these plans is subject to national and regional politics and resources.

Unfortunately, the terrorist attacks of Sept 11, 2001 and the global militarized response, which followed soon after, quickly eclipsed the WPS agenda as envisioned in UNSCR 1325.

The events of 9/11 brought about unprecedented urgency on state action against terrorism. This new momentum was illustrated in both new national policies and legal systems and concerted multilateral counterterrorism action on the international plane. With the result that in the last two decades the security dynamics related to the Global War on Terror have dominated the international system. The rise of terrorist organizations, violent extremist trends, concerns about nuclear proliferation and the return of competing geo-political power politics at the global and regional level all took attention away from the WPS agenda.

Two key aspects of the global 'War on Terror', which had a significant impact on the progress of WPS agenda and implementation of SCR 1325 was the fact that:

- **Terrorism as a non-political security challenge:** While SCR 1325 focused deeply on *participation, protection, prevention and relief and recovery for women* under conventional and civil wars, the initial conceptual frameworks placed terrorism and its related phenomena; violent extremism, beyond normal political dynamics. In order to create broad coalitions against terrorism and violent extremism, the global community including the UN effort became focused on engaging and enhancing the roles, responsibilities and capacities of national governments, states and state institutions in fighting terrorism. With the result that in the initial years after 9/11, WPS agenda and its associated SCR 1325 only tangentially related to anti-terrorism and counterterrorism frameworks. With the result that the Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 8 September 2006 which outlined the *'The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and the Plan of Action'* did not mention resolution 1325 or the WPS agenda while outlining the conditions conducive to terrorism, the expected global response and the measures needed to build state capacities and the role of UN in countering terrorism¹⁸.
- Most terrorists and their victims were overwhelmingly men. Women and their role were seen as that of victims and not as actors: For a long time there have been false assumptions regarding the role of women in CVE/PV. Early literature after 9/11 highlights a popular misconception that women are 'passive victims' of violent extremism (OSCE, 2013). This is due to following reasons: violent actors in extreme movements have predominantly been men: after 9/11 most of the violent acts committed, and those who were consequently incarcerated and arrested were men. Literature and research also ignored a long history of women actively participating in terrorist groups Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam (LTTE)-Sri lank, Irish Republican Army (IRA)-Ireland, and radical far-left groups such as Baader-Mineoff, in Germany¹⁹). This happened despite of ample historical and empirical evidence that showed

that women have played a role in modern violent ideological movements—as supporters, facilitators, recruiters and attackers. Perceiving women only as passive victims reinforced gender stereotypes and undermined the effectiveness of early CVE programme. This view on women passive victims of terrorism started to shift with the rise of **Islamic State (IS) or Daesh**²⁰ by 2014²¹, as the new trans-border organization started to actively recruit women and the number of women as Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTF) fighting in Syrian war increased.

2.5 KEY GAPS IN THE VISION OF WPS AND THE IMPACTS OF COUNTER TERRORISM ON WOMEN

By the first decade after 9/11, however it had become obvious that there were glaring gaps between the larger WPS Agenda as well as the vision behind SCR 1325 and the field and practice of countering and preventing violent extremism. These gaps were even more pronounced in developing states and regions around the world, which had become battleground zones for the global war against terror. In the countries of the global south, which already scored low on global Human Development Indicators (HDI)²² and even lower on Global Gender Gap Index²³, rights and conditions of women, gender and religious minorities, were negatively impacted by national and international security policies related to terrorism and countering and preventing violent extremism.

These gaps are significant in understanding how counterterrorism and associated preventing violent extremism approaches have impacted mainstreaming of Women Peace and Security Agenda especially in countries like Pakistan and other countries included in the present study. These countries became key arenas for conflicts between terrorist and extremist movements and state actors and global coalitions against terrorism. These above-mentioned factors have led to insufficient focus placed on the analysis of 'Women' related drivers of violent extremism (VE) in these countries²⁴. Current knowledge and research suggests that in fact men and women both, are driven to join violent groups due to

a combination of individual and environment related motivators and structures which are: social, political, ideological, economic or neuropathic such as anger, revenge or trauma. These are often referred to as '*push and pull factors*',²⁵ which drive extremism in men and women. There are, however, contextual differences in how these impact woman and men. These differences to-date remain extremely under studied for women but more specifically in the case of women in Pakistan there is a continuing absence of evidence-based research on the role of women in P/CVE.

The reviews mentioned in the previous sections noted the following negative impacts of this lack of focus on women in C/PVE global strategies:

- i. Militarization of the counterterror response:** The United States and its coalition partners soon after 9/11 militarized the counter terror response which resulted in gender-based impacts especially in the countries of the global south which saw military interventions: This has resulted in high civilian casualties; increased widowed populations; and caused mass displacement, refugee flows, and human trafficking with gendered effects and significant rights abuse. Military interventions in Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia and Pakistan's border regions have created humanitarian crises, which have had disproportionate impacts on women and girls. Women in most conflict zones have felt squeezed between the intervening militaries and terrorist groups fighting against foreign and national military forces. Funding cuts and humanitarian crises further restrict funding for women grass root organizations working on women and children. Also, militarization of counter terrorism is also characterized by an increase in the role of the military in non- traditional military activities such as development and civilian affairs, which by definition brings the military into closer contact with civilian populations, where females are predominately civilians.
- ii. The focus on "prevention pillar" and the WPS agenda:** WPS agenda has historically focused on the prevention of conflict-related sexual violence but has had insufficient focus on violence prevention.

For example, prevention refers not solely to the prevention of immediate violence but also to the prevention of conflict—including by addressing its root causes—a project that requires improving governance and building resilience in ways that protect women's rights and recognize their roles. A broader understanding of participation entails dismantling the barriers to women's engagement in peace talks as well as in all decision-making—from policymaking within security institutions to planning for displacement camps to elections in post conflict environments.

- iii. Terrorists and extremists in several countries use the impacts of counter- terrorism operations to limit the rights of women in their communities.** The gendered rhetoric that has accompanied counter-terrorism and preventing/countering violent extremism has served to increase female and LGBTI vulnerability to terrorists who identify women, sexual minorities and their advocates with foreign oppositional forces. Overall marginalization of Muslim communities that has occurred as fallout of the Global War on Terror has put increased pressure on women within those communities to keep silent about their rights. This is particularly true where the counter terror narratives and in some cases terrorists paints gender equality as the very marker of the difference between the "West" and the Muslim societies under-going military interventions.
- iv. Instrumentalization of Gender Equality:** The last decade has seen the instrumentalisation of gender equality agendas by Western governments in support of military interventions and the use of force, in both Afghanistan and Iraq. Such interventions raise challenging and urgent questions for international lawyers and feminist advocates and, in the context of global feminist movements, have led to fragmentation and conflict. Muslim women, in particular, have been placed at the heart of growing human rights versus Islam dynamic, a dynamic that has the potential to constrain the pursuit of inclusive and egalitarian peace-building processes²⁶.

v. **Absence of demilitarization and disarmament:**

Questions about demilitarization and disarmament and their links to meaningful peace are absent from the debates on WPS agenda and its implementation. Conflict prevention is largely absent in debates on and implementation of the WPS agenda. Recruiting and increasing number of women into armed structures of power, security forces as service providers especially in the military and peacekeeping operations, has become a major focus in WPS implementation. This restricts Resolution 1325 as a framework that only concerns conflict affected countries especially in the global south. The narrow and militarized definitions of conflict and peace, and security directly impede root cause analysis, which would suggest solutions based distributive justice and rights based global system.

vi. **De-prioritization of gender equality and bartering human rights:**

Governments have used gender inequality to counter terrorism, employing the rights of women and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender and intersex individuals as a bartering tool to appease terrorist or extremist groups. This has further degraded rights and protections of women and other marginalized groups. The international community ignored human rights abuses of some coercive governments who offered counter terror partnerships and cooperation. For example, in February 2009, Pakistani government signed a peace accord with the militants agreeing to implement the Taliban's version of Islamic law, which would curtail women's rights, in exchange for peace²⁷. In Iraq, the US government has similarly inadequately pressed the Iraqi government to address the targeting of LGBTI individuals by militias and state actors²⁸.

vii. **Focus on sexual violence narrowed the WPS agenda:**

The adoption of Resolution 1820 on sexual violence, while making forceful statements on that issue, has also signaled a potential narrowing of the gender agenda in conflict situations. The broad agenda signaled in SC Res. 1325, with its key focus

on political participation and the recognition of gender equality as essential to comprehensive peace processes, is not repeated. While the focus on Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) does have a positive angle, as it recognizes the disproportionate impact of war on women and girls, specifically through the frequent usage of SGBV as a weapon of war. Nevertheless, this approach, inevitably, undermines conflict prevention efforts. The roots of women's victimization during armed conflict lie in structural and gender inequality that exist before the conflict starts. A focus on protecting women and girls and addressing rights violations during conflict and humanitarian settings alone is insufficient.

viii. **Missing focus on socio economic rights and gender inequalities**

Attention to questions of socio- economic rights and to inequalities in access to resources, property and employment has been lacking both in peace-building measures and in security sector reform programs.

ix. **Lack of attention to sustainable livelihoods vs judicial responses:**

Attention to the everyday questions that impact particularly on the lives of women and that requires attention to the domestic spheres and to sustainable livelihoods is often overlooked in the rush to prosecutorial and formal judicial responses to conflict and human-rights violations.

x. **Compromise on women rights during peace agreement:**

There is also the question of compromise and negotiation in the process of concluding peace agreements and in post-conflict reconstruction. Nationalist sentiment, frequently reinforced by religious and cultural claims, all too often turns on questions relating to sexuality, gendered identities, roles and status. In times of crisis, in fragile states, women and girls become the repository of tradition, and gender identities become the markers of national and group identities, often presumed central to a process of nation building²⁹.

These concerns became a subject of debate and discussion in 2015, as member states of the UN marked the fifteenth year since the passing of the landmark UNSCR 1325. In 2015, the UN commissioned three high-level reviews on peace and security to assess progress and gaps in WPS implementation³⁰. In 2016, the Informal Expert Group (IEG) on WPS was established to ensure coordination and oversight of WPS within the work of the UNSC.³¹ The anniversary was celebrated with a high-level debate leading to the formulation of an eighth follow-up resolution on this agenda (UNSCR 2242) and the launch of UN Women's Global Study on the Implementation of UNSCR 1325³². More importantly in October 2015, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 2242, which linked the women, peace and security (WPS) and the P/CVE agendas and called for synergies between efforts aimed at countering violent extremism and those furthering the WPS agenda.

The Resolution called for the greater integration by Member States and the UN, of their agendas on women, peace and security, counter-terrorism and countering-violent extremism which can be conducive to terrorism, requests the Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) and the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) to integrate gender as a cross-cutting issue throughout the activities within their respective mandates, including within country-specific assessments and reports. Also in 2016, the US government incorporated P/CVE in its National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security³³.

The Resolution 2242 was followed by the Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism 34 to integrate women's participation, which called for women leadership and empowerment as core to the United Nation's strategy, also called for adequate financing to be committed to projects which address gender dimensions including women's empowerment within PVE and counterterrorism agendas. Finally, member states have made numerous commitments towards the implementation of the WPS agenda at high-level stocktaking events in 2010, 2015, and 2019³⁵.

2.6 CONCLUSIONS

Best practices and current knowledge on integrating WPS Agenda into P/CVE Frameworks:

Distilling the lessons learned in the past 20 years current knowledge on the subject suggests the following key best practices in the field. These guidelines/recommendations can also serve as useful yardstick to map and measure how well gender perspectives, particularly Women Peace and Security Agenda is integrated within in-country security frameworks.

These recommendations include the following:

- i. **Acknowledge women's multidimensional role and agency:** National Security frameworks, national counter narratives and P/CVE programs should sufficiently acknowledge women's multidimensional role and agency. Often insufficient attention has been paid to the complex dynamics of women's support for VE in national policies and frameworks, which has perpetuated gendered stereotypes. For example, many programs often depict women as helpless victims and overemphasize the roles that women play as mothers³⁶. PVE programs that focus on women as agents of peace and change tend to be one-dimensional, restricting the political agency of the women they target and thereby limiting the scope and potential. Current knowledge suggests that Women who experience multiple and intersecting forms of marginalization are more receptive to VE messaging, and indeed may actively choose to join VE groups in pursuit of economic well-being, as a means of combating social or political inequality, or in response to perceived injustices³⁷. It is critical to gain a deeper understanding of the range of push factors that motivate women to join and commit violent extremist acts, including the intersection of gender with other forms of identity, such as political, ethnicity, religion, education, and socio-economic status. Also, the stereotype of the impoverished, uneducated, disempowered woman victim, which continues to shape many programmatic responses to VE, must be avoided.

- ii. **Sufficient focus must be placed on political and development contexts of women in fragile settings when designing security instruments:** Understanding women's role in supporting VE requires broad attention to the development context in conflict-affected and fragile environments. Geographic contexts, which are rife with discrimination, inequality, corruption, repression and poor governance, provide the **enabling conditions for extremism and violence** to flourish.
- iii. **Mainstream a strong emphasis on gender equality in all security related instruments:** Recently, research has demonstrated that contexts with high levels of gender inequality are more prone to intrastate conflicts ³⁸, which generate the grievances and operating space that help VE groups thrive. Addressing these development challenges, including the specific impacts they have on women is crucial. In addition, efforts to combat VE can be strengthened by mainstreaming a robust emphasis on gender equality into national security instruments and frameworks as well as CVE work, and increasing collaboration between CVE and gender equality and women's empowerment programs.
- iv. **Support women as key actors in CVE work and to understand and address the challenges they face.** National security policies and implementation plans need to integrate clear pathways to support women as key actors in CVE work, and to understand and address the challenges they face. Currently most emphasis has been placed in recruiting more women as service providers in counter terror forces, counter terror departments in police and peacekeeping forces. This is important and desirable but insufficient in mainstreaming WPS agenda. Women have to be integrated throughout the policymaking levels starting high level parliamentary, national security committees as well as security sector institutional bodies.
- v. **Support and highlight the work of women and women's organizations active in conflict prevention:** The blurred lines between radicalization and terrorism make it hard for policymakers to fashion appropriately scaled responses to extremism. Leaders and policymakers have tended to lean heavily toward military and law enforcement responses and have been slow to recognize their inefficacy. This has negatively impacted CSOs, and on women-led and women's rights organizations in particular. Groups that focus on gender issues are often poorly funded or ignored by state and CSO actors working on CVE³⁹. Divides also persist between secular women's rights groups and those working with religious women due to mutual suspicion and widespread social misunderstanding of the distinction between extremism and religiosity. Women's organizations have also expressed concern that participating in VE work means collaborating with state security actors with a poor track record of respecting women's rights and lacking a clear commitment to gender issues. As a result, the work of many has not gained the much-deserved recognition and traction it deserves.
- vi. **Open up spaces for women to contribute their knowledge to policy and program design:** Around the world there are many good examples of successful CVE efforts led by women's groups and directed towards women's capacities to provide early warning of the rise of VE in families and communities, to spread messages of peace and tolerance, and to promote resilience to extremist ideologies. However, these efforts face several challenges especially in contexts where there is a lack of trust between the State and civil society sectors as is the case in several countries including Pakistan. Addressing these challenges of trust as well as fostering meaningful communication on PVE between State/security institutional actors and women led rights groups can help integrate WPS agenda and PVE efforts.

vii. Identify and mitigate risks for women beneficiaries, peacemakers, community leaders, practitioners: Security instruments and frameworks addressing VE and conflict must clearly understand and identify special risks women face who participate in preventing violent extremism programs. Many national C/VE plans include assumptions and stereotypes about women as “natural peacemakers” and solely seen in the roles of mothers or wives who are tasked with mitigating the risk of radicalization in the families. Moreover, several women’s rights activists have highlighted that including women in CVE efforts without analysis of the risks they may face while standing up to VE in insecure environments which are also marked by elevated levels of GBV can violate principles of Do No Harm⁴⁰.

viii. Security Frameworks on PVE must address cultural aspects of gender dynamics: Often, discussions of gender in the VE/CVE field remain focused primarily on women’s roles as participants in and in prevention of VE. There is often little discussion of gender as a set of social and cultural norms and narratives shaping what masculinity and femininity may mean in a given social context. There is growing evidence that in many countries hyper- masculinity – a social context which places emphasis on male aggression, violence and power over women – also helps drive VE. While there is also growing evidence that stereotypical ideas of femininity as limited exclusively to home and family are being strengthened, manipulated and reproduced in narratives of VE organizations such as ISIS or Daesh⁴¹. More work is needed to ensure that the concerns and experiences of men and women, and boys and girls, are addressed in programming, and that the risks of backlash against women’s participation are minimal.

GENDER DIMENSION OF CONFLICT AND SECURITY IN PAKISTAN: IMPACT ON WOMEN AND GIRLS

Chapter Summary

In the last 20 years Pakistan and its neighboring Afghanistan became a key arena for conflicts related to terrorism and violent extremism. These conflicts and related security crises have had a tremendous impact on the lives of women and girls, especially those living in conflict and post conflict in-country settings. This chapter focuses on the case of Pakistan and explores how the Pakistani government's militarized and securitized counterterror approach has had deleterious impacts on women's security and safety. The previous chapter discussed the impacts that the global militaristic counterterror responses have had on the WPS agenda and the security and safety of women globally. In this section we focus on Pakistan's internal context of conflict and security and examine how some of the negative impacts discussed previously have impacted lives of women and girls at the national, sub-national and local level in Pakistan. A key objective of the analysis is to identify gaps in policy response of State institutions to impacts of conflicts that relate to women and girls in Pakistan.

This section integrates existing knowledge on **Women Peace and Security** frameworks with **Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE)** lens to provide comprehensive analysis of the gender dimension of the state's internal security policies in Pakistan. This dual lens allows using the gap analysis to interrogate the gender dimension from beyond simply 'inclusion' and 'participatory' perspectives. The aim is to integrate current knowledge and evidence, which increasingly support the mainstreaming of WPS frameworks within the design and implementation models of PVE strategies and programs.

The first section in this chapter interrogates *Pakistani State's securitization response to counter growing threat of organized terrorism and violent extremism* and its impact on women and girls. This section traces the countrywide impacts of counter terror polices and actions of the government and security establishment and explores their impact on Pakistan's progress on integrating WPS agenda.

The second section provides a deeper analysis of the role of women in violent extremism in the context of conflict and terrorism challenges within Pakistan. The analysis uses the best practices outlined in the preceding section to analyze gaps in the State's response and the missing elements in the broader P/CVE practice and programs in Pakistan. The third and last section of the chapter suggests pathways for meaningful participation of women and marginalised communities in PVE programs. This section integrates empirical knowledge and data collected on drivers of violent extremism in women in Pakistan to meaningfully integrate WPS agenda into PVE practice and security frameworks in Pakistan.

INTRODUCTION

The struggle for greater rights of women in Pakistan has unfolded against a background of conflict and growing trends of violence and extremism. Over decades multiple internal security fault lines in Pakistan have allowed non-state actors to undermine domestic order and challenge government's legitimacy. Relations of power between state institutions and Islamist groups have also complicated the scenario and entrenched tribal and traditional patriarchal cultural norms, which severely restrict women agency and mobility in large swathes of the country. In recent years, however, targeted attacks launched by violent extremists who profess an overt agenda of gender repression have threatened the security of women in Pakistan in critical ways. The rise of religious extremism, low human development combined with traditional tribal patriarchal structures especially in parts of KP and Balochistan province, have severely limited women and compromised their access to justice and fundamental human rights. The extremist militant groups have consistently targeted women's education, rights and mobility. Extremist trends have deepened the exclusion of women from public life and limited even their traditional role as peace builders at the community level. Domestic violence against *women* and children goes predominantly unnoticed and severely underreported. Traditional taboos related to socio-cultural norms and practices lead to difficulties for women to access justice, realize equal opportunities and receive protections.

Against this backdrop militarized counter terror state policies, especially in the conflict zones in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) province (including ex FATA region), have further exacerbated the state of peace and security for women in peripheral border areas of the country. In addition, the securitized response of the Pakistani state to militancy and terrorism has left many women vulnerable due to deaths of male family heads, which has affected their social and economic wellbeing.

This chapter focuses on how the low status of Pakistani women on almost all development and empowerment indicators ⁴² means that marginalized women in conflict

zones struggle to participate effectively in the process of post conflict rehabilitation and reconstruction of their societies and communities. In Pakistan women's ability to meaningfully participate in peace building processes in conflict and post conflict environments is directly linked to their social, economic, and political empowerment at the national, sub national and local levels.

In the last two decades Pakistan has made significant improvements in women related development indicators as well as some progress on legislation that is aligned with Women Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda (*discussed under policy Response of the State section*). Key findings of the impact analysis are two fold:

1. Improvements in women friendly legislations at the national level are not sufficient in assuring peaceful and secure local environments for women and girls in conflict affected zones in Newly Merged districts (Ex-Fata).
2. Security policies at the national and subnational level have limited focus on gendered aspects of conflict and its impacts on lives of women in conflict and post conflict scenarios.
3. Lack of participation and visibility of women in public and political spheres within rural conflict zones and at-risk urban communities, obscures the importance of the role women actually play in generating social and political grievances, which contributes to the rise of violent extremism in Pakistan.

This chapter briefly analyses the impacts of conflict on women in Pakistan through the WPS lens related to *protection, prevention, participation and relief and recovery* of women in conflict zones. The chapter does not attempt to cover the entire spectrum of conflict impacts on lives of women in Pakistan. Instead, the objective is to demonstrate how the lens can be practically applied to in-country conflict scenarios, past and future. The chapter also provides a rough framework to evaluate securitized responses of the State and the resulting impacts on women related to all four key safeguards highlighted within the WPS agenda.

Balochistan has been left out of the analysis due to absence of credible data and information from conflict hit districts of the province as the security institutions restrict access of all independent monitors, researchers and academia. This chapter is mainly focused on examining how military operations have impacted women in tribal districts (ex-fata) KP.

This chapter engages with the above two themes through the following six sections:

1. State of Women and gender equality in Pakistan
2. Terrorism, conflict, and Fragility in Pakistan: an overview
3. Policy Response of the Pakistani state to terrorism and Impact on Women
4. Security Response: Issues of Prevention, participation, protection and Relief and recovery for women in conflict and post conflict environments
5. Role of Women in violent extremism and terrorism in Pakistan

3.1 STATE OF WOMEN AND GENDER EQUALITY IN PAKISTAN

Women in Pakistan, continue to live in an environment characterized by extreme gender inequality marked by discriminatory legislation, archaic patriarchal norms and a dysfunctional criminal justice system, which puts lives of women at grave risk (*See Figure 2*). Violence against women in Pakistan is still endemic. There exists a general climate of impunity and state inaction in preventing gender-based violence. State institutions repeatedly fail to protect human rights and provide justice.⁴³ Although the Constitution of Pakistan upholds the principles of equal rights and equal treatment of all persons, in practice, women's access to education, employment, and health services remains limited due to a number of structural, class cultural and economic barriers.⁴⁸ These barriers make up Pakistan's larger development and governance challenges while high poverty levels contribute to constraining women's fundamental rights, freedoms and security.

Gender equality in Pakistan: A snapshot

Women's participation in all spheres of public life is enshrined in the Constitution of Pakistan. Nonetheless, women's empowerment indicators continue to fall short of projections.

- **Pakistan ranks 151 out of 153** countries on the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index.
- **Female literacy is as low as 48 percent**, 25% points lower than male literacy.⁴⁴
- **Female labor force participation, while it almost doubled from 13.3 percent in 1992 to 25 percent in 2014, remains one of the lowest**, not just in South Asia but also globally (World Bank, 2018a).

Women and men experience rigid forms of patriarchy Pakistan. Under this form of patriarchy, men are considered not only to be superior to women in all aspects of life, but also control women throughout their life cycle: as daughters, wives, mothers, and mothers-in-law. This system provides incentives to devalue women and girls, whose agency is thereby severely limited.⁴⁵

- In Pakistan, for instance, despite improvements in gender equality in socioeconomic indicators, **women and girls remain severely restricted in their choices for mobility, education, marriage, and employment.**
- **Women and girls experience high levels of and are exposed to gender-based violence (GBV).** Data on myriad forms of violence against women and girls in Pakistan are unreliable and not up to date, however empirical analysis suggests that such violence is very high. For instance, one in three ever-married women (ages 15-49 years) have experienced physical and emotional spousal violence in their lives⁴⁶. Other studies estimate these figures to be much higher.
- **Patriarchal social norms create and perpetuate gender inequality**, not only in agency and outcomes but also in aspirations for the future⁴⁷.

3.1.1 Women, Peace and Security Agenda and its implementation:

While continually voicing its support for the Women, Peace and Security Agenda⁴⁹, Pakistan has as yet to take meaningful action towards its implementation. In 2015 and 2017, Pakistan participated in the Open Debate on Women, Peace, and Security but failed to follow up on its commitment to make sure they respond to the needs of women and girls, as well as to plan for further streamline training for gender sensitization.⁵⁰ Pakistan does not currently have a National Action Plan and no budget has ever been allocated for the implementation of UNSCR 1325.⁵¹ The implementation of WPS concerns however, does not require a formal action plan but instead proposes actionable measures that would allow the elements of the agenda to move forward. The government of Pakistan, so far has not taken significant action in support of the WPS Agenda despite the presence of a few vibrant civil society organizations advocating women's role in peace building.

Lack of formal progress in signing onto the WPS agenda however, does not mean that there has been insignificant progress on women friendly legislation. As mentioned earlier, in the last two decades Pakistan has made significant strides in improving key development indicators for women and introduced new legislations adding new protections for women and girls. The women-friendly policy responses however, fail to provide significant protections or inclusion for women in conflict environments due to the following structural factors specific to Pakistan's context. These are:

3.1.2. Missing focus on socio economic rights and gender inequalities:

While Pakistan has made significant progress in improving legislative response on various women related protections; women in the epicenters of conflict environments are unable to benefit from this legislative progress. Structural barriers including poverty, low human development, patriarchal and tribal norms restrict women's ability to access protections, improve participation or play a meaningful role in prevention of conflict and violence. With the result that in spite of

significant progress in the last two decades, terrorism and counter terror response of the Pakistani State has had a serious but differential impact on the life, safety and security of women in Pakistan. Attention to questions of socio- economic rights of women and inequalities in access to resources, property and employment has been lacking both in peace-building measures and in security sector reform programs.

3.1.3. Growing regional disparities in Pakistan and conflict and security:

Key development indicators in Pakistan (listed below) show uneven growth and economic disparities across and within regions: These disparities impact equal access of women to legal and regulatory safeguards and governance structures especially in conflict prone peripheral regions of the country. Destruction of infrastructure, shelter and livelihoods as a result of militancy, terrorism and military operations has worsened vulnerabilities of women and access to legal aid.

Securitized counter terror strategies of the state impact lives of women in conflict prone peripheral regions of the country far more than compared to women in urban centers. While national poverty rates fell from 55% to 39% from 2004 to 2015, there is a great differential in level of development and poverty in different provinces and regions of Pakistan:

- i.* Rates of poverty are the highest in the conflict prone districts in KP (FATA 73%) and Balochistan (71%) provinces.
- ii.* In the conflict prone tribal districts (Ex-FATA) the regional disparities are even starker. According to the Multidimensional Poverty Index, about 73.7% of the tribal districts' population lives in multidimensional poverty – which is the highest in the country⁵².
- iii.* The literacy rate of women in the newly merged tribal districts (Ex-Fata) is 13% (national 47%)⁵³.
- iv.* Likewise, more than 87% of women have no access to any kind of media ⁵⁴ (DHS, 2017-18), Only 1.5% women have ever used the internet and most

women are unaware of their basic human rights. As compared to males, only 66% females have acquired their CNICs⁵⁵.

- V. Existing lack of skills, education and access to services that exists for women in these conflict prone regions means that access to economic opportunities in post conflict environments is also greatly challenged.

Lack of literacy and limited physical mobility for women means that accessing the formal justice system remains out of bounds for majority of women.⁵⁶

3.2 TERRORISM, CONFLICT AND FRAGILITY IN PAKISTAN

Pakistan is located in a volatile geopolitical region and has faced various inter-state and intra-state conflicts since its independence in the year 1947 (see Fig.2). Regional developments, such as the Kashmir dispute with India, further partitioning of the state in 1971, the wars in Afghanistan, and the recent U.S.-led war on terror, have affected Pakistan's security dynamics⁵⁷. Internal challenges to state's authority include the religion based violent organizations, sectarian and ethnic violence between its diverse populations.

Growing internal terrorism and the 'war on terror' have had high human and economic costs for Pakistan. The Global Terrorism Index 2020 places Pakistan as the 7th most terrorism affected country in the world, following war-torn Yemen and Somalia⁵⁸ at 5th and 6th places. The most affected regions in Pakistan are also KP (including Merged ex-FATA) and Balochistan. Collectively, the two regions recorded 77 per cent of attacks and 85 per cent of deaths in 2019⁵⁹. Since 2002, terrorism has killed more than 67,000 people (2017), which has an estimated economic cost of around US\$126 billion⁶⁰. Rise of militancy and terrorism also has had an enormous and transformative impact on the social landscape in KP's tribal areas and militancy hit Swat valley.

Today violent extremist actors continue to commit terrorism, intimidate businesses, corrupt politicians and launder their proceeds, but also engage in a range of activities that defy and weaken state sovereignty.

Continuing terrorist attacks on civilians, especially on women in Newly Merged Districts of KP and attacks on security forces and CPEC related infrastructure in Balochistan indicate that despite the extensive security infrastructure deployed by the Pakistani state, various armed actors retain the ability to threaten and harm human and material infrastructure. More critical evidence suggests that conflict, militancy and terrorism have impacted men and women differently in Pakistan.

3.3 LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY RESPONSE OF THE STATE

In the following sections we focus on the impacts of Pakistani state's policy and security response to terrorism and impact on lives of women in at-risk areas in Pakistan:

3.3.1 Legislative Response

In addition to the *Security Policy Frameworks (analyzed in detail in the next chapter of this Report)*, in the last two decades successive Pakistani governments have passed several women friendly laws and regulations. In recent years lawmakers, parliaments and civil society activists have successfully campaigned to strengthen national and sub-national laws and legal regimes to improve on all 4 key Pillars of UNSCR 1325 related to the: *participation, prevention, protection, and relief and recovery* of women and girls which have brought significant improvements in the status and lives of women which must be noted here. For example, during the last two decades, many more Pakistani women got *elected to national and provincial parliaments*⁶¹, joined the *labor/workforce*⁶², *literacy rates for women in Pakistan*⁶³ improved significantly and parliaments enacted laws to provide *protections against harassment in work place*⁶⁴, *proscribing child marriages*⁶⁵ and *right to inheritance laws*⁶⁶. Various legal enactments and amendments have been introduced for the advancement and protection of women, including the *Criminal Law (Amendment) (Offences in the Name or on Pretext of Honor) Act, 2016*⁶⁷; the *Criminal Law (Amendment) (Offences relating to Rape) Act, 2016*⁶⁸; the *Women Distress and Detention Fund (Amendment) Act, 2018*⁶⁹; the *National Commission on the Status of*

*Women (Amendment) Act, 2018*⁷⁰; *the Election Act, 2017*; *the Punjab Domestic Workers Act, 2018*⁷¹. The Supreme Court of Pakistan has also reaffirmed the idea that the State is competent to make any special provisions for the protection of women and children⁷².

3.3.2 Institutional Mechanisms:

Since 2014 after the launch of the *National Action Plan (NAP: covered in detail in the following chapter)* Pakistan government also set up some new institutional mechanisms to implement policies to counter growing terrorist and militant threats. These mechanisms were designed to support and implement the new national level policy frameworks (*covered in detail in the next chapter*), and reflect a holistic human security view and integrate focus on vulnerable groups such as women and youth. One of these mechanisms was related to high-level policy coordination or ‘whole of Government’ approach to peace and development. The second mechanism described below is related to streamlining implementation of tactical level security response at the provincial and sub-national level.

Two of these are noteworthy and described below:

i. Peace and Development Unit (PDU) Ministry of Planning, Development and Reform (Jan. 2015-Present)

In line with the *Pakistan Vision 2025*⁷³ launched by the Ministry of Planning, Development and Reform in 2014, the Planning Commission decided to set up a **Peace and Development Unit** in Jan. 2015, with support from USIP and UNDP. The Unit was designed to serve as a high policy level venue to bring a ‘whole of government’ and development related approach to reduce conflict through non-security response of the Pakistani state. The Unit was tasked to integrate peace and stability as one of the Key Performance Indicator of development projects, and also conduct research and assessment studies on peace and conflict in the country for policymakers and the public.

A focus on gender inclusion in peace building, ending marginalization and discrimination was highlighted as a key goal. The P&D Unit was also mandated to consult and engage with women civil society actor and

organizations in order to integrate their inputs into government development planning cycles. The goals of the P&D included the following:

1. To sensitize Pakistani state and societal actors to concepts of peace-building and conflict prevention through development planning. Work with federal line ministries and provincial governments to sensitize all relevant state actors to the peace component within development plans and create ownership of the P&D units work.
2. Create sustainable mechanisms for undertaking peace assessments of development projects at the Planning Commission and other line ministries
3. Bring greater synergy between the Federal and Provincial level planning processes on the subject to prevent stakeholders working in isolated silos
4. Contribute to all ongoing state and societal processes to develop and disseminate a peace narrative in Pakistan
5. Advocate interfaith harmony, sectarian, and ethnic tolerance through targeted interventions focusing on education and curriculum reform, vulnerable community outreach approaches
6. Support all efforts to end gender marginalization and discrimination: and highlight the role of women in peace building both through macro level development planning as well at the micro community level
7. Provide inputs and work with relevant provincial governments to develop a conflict sensitive development and economic uplift plan: for the conflict-stricken border areas in both Fata and Baluchistan.

Functionally, the P&D Unit was designed to work on both horizontal and vertical levels: on the horizontal axis the Unit was tasked to reach out and engage all state level actors to sensitize and build synergies. A proposed *Inter governmental Consultative mechanism on Peace and Development* was part of the horizontal axis. On the top-down vertical level it operates by creating more points of contact between State and society actors on the core issues of peace and development. The Advisory Council

constitutes one of the programs along this vertical axis. The other core functions on this axis are the outreach programs to civil society actors, which included plans of setting up partnerships, and joint programs with think tanks, CSOs and donors.

The P&D Unit faced key functional and institutional challenges immediately after the inception phase, which impacted both the buy-in from other government stakeholders as well as its efficacy. These challenges included the following:

- The setting up of the Unit expedited through personal efforts of the minister and USIP without fulfilling institutional regulatory requirements such as the approval of the PC-1. The due process was not completed and P&D Unit met resistance from the secretariat of the Ministry of Planning.
- Lack of institutionalization has also resulted in low interest in P&D Unit by subsequent ministerial level leadership within the ministry of Planning.
- Building of boarder consensus among government stakeholders was not undertaken before setting up of the Unit with the result there was little buy in from other government institutional stakeholders including the Ministry of Interior and the other institutions within the state security establishment mandated to look after the internal security and conflict related issues.
- The Unit also met resistance from Ministry of Interior, which by law is mandated to look after all issues related to conflict and internal security. These issues are outside the mandate of the Ministry of Planning.

Presently the Planning Ministry's webpage does not show that the Unit is functional or any high- level policy work in integrating focus on vulnerable groups such as women and their role is peace building.

ii. **Provincial Apex Committees**

In January 2015 as a follow up to the *National Action Plan* and as a counter-terror response the government announced the formation of *Provincial Apex Committees*⁷⁴ in all provinces in Pakistan. The committees were tasked to coordinate tactical efforts of all security and civilian administrative stakeholders

at the provincial level to undertake requisite security operations to counter terrorist threats and coordinate the launch security operations.

These committees comprise both military and political leadership at the provincial level and sometimes held at the Corps Headquarters in the provinces. The Apex committee meetings may include representation from *Chief Secretaries and Chief Minister's office, Provincial departments of Information, Home Departments, Law, provincial heads of intelligence agencies and Inspector General of Police, Senior intelligence Officers, along with the Corps Commanders, Director General of Rangers*⁷⁵ etc. The Apex Committee meetings focus on the prevalent security situation at the provincial level with reference to government's security related policy frameworks e.g. NAP (National Action Plan).

The *Provincial Apex Committees* serve as the key government platform to coordinate all civilian and military related operations and execute a comprehensive security plan within laid down parameters and timelines. The Committees are still functional after almost 5 years⁷⁶ and are held by and large regularly. These have seen far more success than any other policy level intergovernmental platform focused on terrorism and internal security. One key reason for its success is the buy-in and *participation of the military high command*. Participation in the Provincial Apex committees has allowed the military to extend its control and influence over the other civilian intelligence institutions at the provincial level.

The improved intelligence sharing, coordination, and implementation of counter terror strategies have shown positive results. There is a marked decline in terrorist incidents and other security related markers as the number of terrorist attacks has declined in almost all provincial settings in Pakistan. Importantly, the committees are venues where key security related plans and actions are designed and implemented which have long term and often devastating impacts on lives of women within local level conflict environments.

A key point of concern is that the Apex Committees remain exclusive domains of security led institutions with practically no *participation* of women-led bodies or institutions.

3.4 PAKISTANI STATE'S SECURITY RESPONSE AND IMPACT ON WOMEN:

The Pakistani state has responded to the growing internal terrorist challenge mainly through a set of securitized strategies, and some policy related frameworks. The securitized response primarily includes a series of military and Intelligence Based Operations (IBOs) against Tehreek-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and other affiliates in KP Province since 2002-2016. The province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in Pakistan has suffered several cycles of conflict. These have been driven by a combination of factors mostly related to its formal and informal governance institutions and the external regional environment.

Since 2001, as another cycle of war started in neighboring Afghanistan, in KP the already fragile governance and rule of law system quickly disintegrated leading to a dramatic increase in violent conflict. Different militant organizations supportive of Taliban's war in Afghanistan joined the fighting alongside the Taliban, quickly expanding the conflict into Pakistan's border areas. By June 2014, additional 340,000 families, about 3 million people were displaced, among which a vast majority or 70 % were women and children⁷⁷. The military counter terror operations in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province especially conflict zones within ex-FATA districts have disrupted the peace, displaced communities and destroyed homes and livelihoods. Lives of women in conflict zones were critically impacted both by rising militancy and the heavy-handed military operations.

3.4.1 Impact on women's Participation, Prevention, Protection, Relief and Recovery:

Caught between the trauma of displacement and conflict and targeted by violent extremists with an overt agenda of gender repression on the other, women's security has become especially threatened in the conflict zones in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province and the Tribal districts.

The Pakistani states militarized counterterror response has resulted in massive destruction of lives, shelter, livelihood and safety of millions of men and women in KP province. Recent displacements from ex-FATA

have affected women and girls differently from men and boys. When displaced and dislocated, women and girls often find themselves more powerless and dependent on others. Conflicts also create far more complex challenges to the equitable and rights-based *participation, prevention, protection and relief and recovery of women* through post conflict phases. Although the Pakistan government in its policy and security response tried to add gender specific interventions to increase women protections and participations, (*discussed in following section*) the prevailing cultural institutions and social norms that have prevented this participation have remained untouched so far.

As is the case in other parts of the world, displacement has also presented new opportunities to some women from the merged areas.⁷⁸ These opportunities include greater access to education, health and mobility and empowerment as many households had to adjust to smaller family units due to higher cost of residences and dwellings in the settled districts⁷⁹. These reduced familial pressures and restrictions women normally faced in the traditional tribal family structures. There are however many more women who continue to face tremendous hardships, trauma and exceptional challenges after their return to conflict zones impacted by military operations.

On the whole, rise of militant Taliban movements and the subsequent military operations have severely compromised protection needs of women in KP province. Till today, despite the military's successive area clearing operations, continuing since 2002, lives of women in the conflict prone areas of the Newly Merged Tribal districts (ex-Fata) remain under serious threat. While things have improved since the height of the insurgency in Swat district (2007-2009), when the Tehrik-e-Nafaz-e-Shariat Mohammadi (TNSM) barred women from working and girls from attending schools and, on occasion, publicly flogged those who did not comply with its version of Sharia. Presently militants continue to retain the capacity to mount targeted attacks against women health workers, and women working in community based and civil society organizations⁸⁰.

Some of the key protections and prevention issues related to conflict and post conflict dynamics in the Merged districts are mentioned below:

i. Protection Issues

- ***Conflict between militants and Pakistani State has increased contestation over rights of women within conflict zones:*** Tehrik-e-Taliban (TTP) and other violent extremist organizations in KP have supported traditional, conservative gender norms and ideologies that promote patriarchal and rigid gender roles for women and men. In the past as part of their appeasement strategies Pakistani state and even political parties in KP⁸¹ signed peace deals with the Taliban especially during the Swat militancy, which compromised women constitutional and fundamental rights including right to an education and mobility. These peace deals were later abandoned both in Swat and Ex-Fata as the military launched large-scale military operations. Since the end of active military operations and return of TDPs (Temporarily Displaced Persons), the Taliban militants have again found women as easy targets of their anti-state and anti-military response. They continue to issue 'night letters' warning and prohibiting mobility of unaccompanied women outside their homes⁸². In online media posts and WhatsApp messages Taliban continue to appeal to traditional *Pakhtun* cultural values concerning women and their honor. This has seriously impacted CSOs working for women and child health in various parts of KP who are unable to continue and ceased operations due to direct threats and actions of the militants targeting women⁸³. This places a particular constraint on the work of Local Government Institutions, Local CSOs, UN agencies and other development actors who are struggling to balance between encouraging social, economic and political inclusion and participation of women in ways that 'do no harm'.
- ***Temporary displacement and de-population of women and children before military operations is insufficient as a protection factor:*** Women,

children and communities in conflict areas in ex-FATA as well as and Swat were requested to by the Government ahead of security operations⁸⁴ to leave areas marked for anti-militant military operations. Pakistani civil and the military command maintain that this was a part of an overall strategy to protect the vulnerable civilian populations especially women, children and the elderly. *Protection* in this case is mostly defined in terms of immediate protection of life during active conflict or military operations. There is no doubt that this large-scale depopulation of conflict zones did contribute to lower civilian casualties and protected the vulnerable women and children from death and injury. This is however a very narrow interpretation of the concept of *Protection*. Under the WPS framework and as defined by RES: 1325 the concept of *Protection* is wider and not limited to immediate protection in crisis or conflict settings; it is also about the threats women face when they attempt to participate in political and economic processes or advocate for human rights and peace in post conflict scenarios. The current situation suggests these needs have not been met and securitized policies have further eroded the scant protections traditionally available for women in the KP Province's conflict zones. At the same time prevalence of informal justice systems continue to discriminate against women and infringe on their constitutional and fundamental rights.⁸⁵

- ***IDPs and returning displaced women continue to be exposed to grave risks of abuse and different forms of GBV gender-based violence:*** Although root causes for high levels of Gender Based Violence (GBV) are embedded in centuries old harmful traditional practices, in the Newly Merged Districts although recent displacements and conflicts have increased women's protection-related concerns. Tribal patriarchal norms and the legal, governance and administrative gaps due to the continuation of the regressive FCR Law⁸⁶ till 2018, have created repressive social conditions for women. The military's counter terror operations, and the ensuing conflict have

further exacerbated these adverse conditions. Women returnees are at greater risk of GBV as conflict and the persisting security gaps on the ground make it even more difficult for women to access legal aid. Continuing security threats, restrictive government authorizing policies have further limited outreach of women related civil society organizations and even local government institutions which are mandated to provide protections and support to women facing various forms of GBV⁸⁷. Vulnerability Assessment Profiling (IVAP)⁸⁸ identifies various types of violence faced by Women IDP's. These include but are not limited to *physical assault, emotional violence, child marriage, female trafficking, domestic violence, denial of health services, honor-related crimes, rape, domestic violence, unwanted pregnancy, bride burning or dowry-related crimes, etc.*

- ***Deaths of male members (husbands, fathers,) have increased protection concerns for many women:*** New forms of violence have been added to the list of GBV types reported: Battle related deaths and disappearance of male members: loss of fathers, husbands or sons who have joined the militants, died in combat or “disappeared”–kidnapped for ransom, or held in a military-run internment centers⁸⁹ have further increased vulnerabilities and exposure of women to ‘sexual and physical violence and abuse by male in-laws’⁹⁰.
- ***Human rights violations; extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances create new protection risks for women:*** Although active military operation have ended, in the merged areas, rights abuses including extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances and custodial deaths continue, as does collective punishment. The **2011 Actions (in Aid of Civil Power)**⁹¹ Regulation, still remains in force in the merged area and KP Province, which allow security institutions to maintain internment centers to hold suspects without trial. The Pakistan military reportedly is still running an unknown number of internment centers dotted around the tribal districts. Military conflict has left scores of women in tribal districts still seeking news on their

missing male family members deepening their psychological trauma and impacting livelihoods. The issue of the missing persons became a rallying cry for new social mobilization among the youth and civil society activists. In 2018, this issue increased confrontation between the military, mobilized youth, and civil society actors in the merged areas⁹². Collective punishment, a draconian relic of the now defunct Frontier Crimes Regulations (FCR) is also still being used as a counter-terror tool by the state security forces to prevent local tribes from giving sanctuary and space to the militants fighting state security forces. For example, after a December 2017 killing of two soldiers, the military imposed a curfew in North Waziristan’s Hamzoni town, preventing access to hospitals and forcing women and children out of their homes during search operations. These and other heavy-handed measures sparked local protests⁹³.

- ***‘Do No Harm’ challenges and post conflict rehabilitation strategies and new protection issues for women:*** In February 2021, a mob of tribal men attacked a government center distributing cash grants to women and a tribal Jirga in Warah, Mahmond tehsil, Bajaur announced a ban on women visiting government-UNDP supported *Sada-e-Amn* centers. They threatened the families of the women with fines and retributions who allowed their women to access these centers. The Jirga also placed a ban on women calling local radio stations, on the grounds that this violated local customs. The decision of the Jirga was strongly resisted by the provincial government in KP and the Jirga later rescinded their ban. This incident however indicates how women-focused rehabilitation interventions can themselves create conditions that can place women in ‘harms’ way. UNDP’s internal reports after the incident did indicate that the *Sada-e-Amn* centers lacked appropriate facilities, bathrooms, culturally appropriate seating areas and were placed in close to busy market places which unnecessarily exposed women against local cultural norms⁹⁴. More alarmingly, four female NGO workers were

targeted and killed and their driver injured in an attack by terrorists in North Waziristan. They were reportedly working as handicraft trainers. This information is per a February 22, 2021 press release from the Office of the District Police Officer, North Waziristan.⁹⁵

ii. Prevention Issues:

The WPS “Prevention Pillar” stresses the need for governments, states and militaries to not only prevent ‘violence against women’ during conflicts and post conflict scenarios; it also stresses the need for governments to develop mechanisms that can prevent future conflicts and their devastating impacts on Women’s lives.

This section looks at women in the NMDs continue to be excluded from negotiations and peace building efforts led by the district administration, military and tribal leaders, despite the fact that they are frequently targeted by militant campaigns. Also, the gender perspective is largely absent from state narratives and communication strategies to counter violence and extremism in the NMDs. Exclusionary social norms combined with the continuing cycle of conflict in the tribal districts not only prevents women from playing their role in peace and resilience building at the local level, the security environment characterized by low intensity conflict restricts opportunities for the government to address structural causes of conflict in the NMDs and prevent future conflicts from occurring.

The current security situation in the Newly Merged districts creates conditions that makes it extremely challenging for the Pakistani State/KP Provincial government to extend safeguards and mechanisms to prevent violence against women in the NMDs. Large parts of the Merged Areas still remain active conflict zones, and the Pakistani State has been unable to develop any inclusive mechanisms to prevent future conflicts and build sustainable peace. The Pakistani State Institutions continue to rely on security related responses, which shrink the space for civil society actors, civilian institutions and the local political forces to address structural causes of violence, which would create community resilience against future conflicts.

Some Key ‘Prevention’ related challenges are as following:

- *The military is striking local peace-deals with breakaway local militant factions, creating ‘peace-committees’ without any transparency on the term e-based framework to undertake formal peace negotiations with militants. The security institutions of the state continue to rely on securitized counter insurgency (COIN) approaches such as informal militias (lashkars)– renamed “peace committees” as well as release, reconciliation and rehabilitation of ex-militants without any Truth and Reconciliation or transitional justice mechanisms⁹⁶ in place.*
- *Respondents from NMDs, both men and women, report that peace committees formed around reconciled militants in South and North Waziristan are reportedly allowed to carry arms and weapons while the local communities have been disarmed and not allowed to carry weapons outside their homes⁹⁷. This has fueled local conflict and adds to the complexity of the conflict dynamic as these groups continue to target opponents, indulge in criminal activity, including drug and arms smuggling. Given the current lack of transparency, the military is determined to tightly control free access to the tribal region. This undermines the rule of law, human rights situation and creates mistrust among local populations in the Newly Merged districts. Many of these are little more than criminal gangs, responsible for countless abuses, including targeted killings, abductions and forced marriages⁹⁸. This has deepened the environment of mistrust among the returning communities in the NMDs and further limited mobility and visibility of women.*
- *Military continues to maintain links with Pro-Afghan Taliban militants.*

The Pakistani military continues with a regional security policy, which sees benefits in maintaining links with the Afghan Taliban as they fight the US and Afghan government access to the border. This complicates the larger battle against those militants such as TTP, which target the military

directly. Military operations have been selective in their targeting of militants. Militant factions with close ties to the Afghan Taliban, such as those led by Gul Bahadur and Sadiq Noor in North and South Waziristan, have been able to survive the military operations by relocating their militias from North to South Waziristan. Similarly, the Afghan Taliban, including the Haqqani Network continues to operate and launch attacks inside Afghanistan. Military operations only temporarily relocated them from North Waziristan to Khurram Agency in 2014⁹⁹.

iii. Participation

Recognizing the role that women can play in peace building and post-conflict reconstruction¹⁰⁰ the WPS agenda addresses the need for increased *participation* of women and girls in conflict and post conflict situations as security providers, peace builders, economic actors and political decision makers. However, such an agenda becomes difficult to implement in the conflict prone Tribal Districts of KP where patriarchal norms and structural inequalities restrict women's meaningful participation in the public, political, economic and security spheres.

- **Economic Participation:** Women in tribal districts (NMDs) KP are mostly engaged in agricultural and horticulture activities, both formally and informally, making up more than two-third of the workforce in agricultural production.¹⁰¹ Breakdown in farming and agriculture related activities due to military operations and abandonment of crops and fields due to displacement has had a sharp impact on food security and livelihoods of women. Home-based work, including participation in local cottage industries, contribute to food security of women and assure minimum survival of children. While male employment is a critical factor in securing household livelihoods in the Newly Merged Tribal districts, tightened restrictions on women's mobility and interactions with non-family market actors have destroyed part of this security margin, particularly where incomes used to come from farm gate sales to traders. This

was especially true during the conflict in Swat District. Increased economic vulnerabilities of women in the Tribal districts including the TDP returnees impact the post conflict community stabilization within conflict zones. Growing global knowledge on the subject of violent extremism suggests that poverty as a radicalizing factor also has a gender dimension¹. Empirical evidence also suggests that there is a measurable correlation between economic vulnerabilities of women and violent radicalization. Focus Group Discussions with women ex-offenders as part of the UNDP's Assessment of its *Swat Local Level Disengagement and Rehabilitation Project*¹⁰² noted evidence which suggested that in many cases mothers encouraged their sons to accept militant incentives due to declining livelihood options and household incomes available to of women¹⁰³ due to growing conflict which started to disrupt the economic activities in the Swat District. The same point is echoed in the **Post Conflict Need Assessment (PCNA)**.¹⁰⁴ regarding the link between conflict, economic vulnerabilities and its impacts on long-term stabilization of post conflict communities. *This point will be discussed in greater detail in the next section: "Role of women in VE in Pakistan".*

- **Participation and representation of women in Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs):** In order to protect and reduce the risk of gender based and sexual violence against women during conflicts, SCR 1324 and WPS agenda highlight the critical need for the participation and inclusion of women Law Enforcement agencies as security providers. In the conflict prone tribal districts in Pakistan traditional tribal cultural norms continue to exclude women from participation in local police forces or other locally recruited paramilitary forces such as the *Khasadar* and *Levies*. Since the merger of the Tribal districts the process of merging these security forces into Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police has started. Although police stations are now in place in the urban areas of the merged districts, they lack female police staff. Tribal norms restrict

1 USIAD: Guide to the drivers of violent extremism https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/Pnadt978.pdf, p. 19

the enlistment and representation of local women in Police. KP Police currently is in the process of enlisting female police officers from adjoining districts and placing them in the Tribal Districts. Currently however due to the lack of infrastructure; police stations, hostels and residential complexes for female officers, there is no deployment of women police personnel in the NMDs. Absence of policewomen and women representation complicate the prevention and investigation of crimes and violence against women. The lack of women within the Law Enforcement Agencies including within the military forces deployed to the Tribal areas impede women's access to justice and provision of fundamental rights. Also, an absence of other women legal professionals (e.g. women lawyers, paralegal professionals, advocates) creates extreme difficulties in interviewing, recording, reporting, prosecuting and investigating women related crimes and violence in conflict and post conflict scenarios in the newly Merged districts in KP.

- **Participation of Women in local Peace building Processes:** Women from conflict zones within the tribal areas remain conspicuously absent from all levels of peace negotiations- national, sub-national and local Level. The securitization of the state's response has meant that most national level approaches to peace building, including peace deals with the Taliban, have taken place behind the scene and through informal mechanisms. The processes involved in these discussions are usually informal and non-transparent and held under the guidance of military and civilian security actors. As noted in the previous section there is zero participation from women led civil society or political actors, national level safeguard institutions such as NCSW (National Commission of Status of Women) or members of Women's Parliamentary Caucus (WPC).

At the sub-national level, as mentioned in the previous section, the *Provincial Apex Committees* function as a mechanism to discuss and coordinate government position on peace negotiations.

Statutory institutions such as Provincial Commission on Status of Women (PCSWs) or the Office of the Ombudsperson are not engaged by the Apex Committees in peace negotiation during pre or post conflict phases. At the local level within the tribal areas traditional community decision-making bodies have tended to be constituted of men. Voices of women are usually channeled through male family members: husbands, fathers, and brothers. Barring a few examples in the past where older tribal women in the family have led family mediations or *jirga's*, traditional tribal culture provides limited opportunities for women's direct participation in local peace negotiations or processes. On the other hand, local peace deals mediated between government actors, tribal mediators and local militants/Taliban often result in compromises over women's fundamental rights and mobility¹⁰⁵. Recently in Feb. 2021 the tribal jirga in Warah, Mahmond tehsil, Bajaur announced a ban on women visiting Sada-e-Amn centers to collect cash grants for their children, and a ban on women calling local radio stations, on the grounds that this violated local customs. The Jirga decision was over turned because strong resistance from the provincial government, which insisted that jirgas did not have the authority to make such decisions post-merger¹⁰⁶.

This and other recent incidents of targeting of women highlight the mobility, voice and access challenges faced by women in the post conflict tribal areas as their basic fundamental rights become a point of contestation and negotiations within conflict and post conflict spaces raising serious protection and 'do no harm' issues especially for UN agencies who are funding and implementing projects which support greater voice and mobility of women in these contexts.

iv. **Relief and Recovery:**

- **Absence of National Identity Cards (CNIC):** The lack of identification is an indicator of the low status of women in the tribal belt and has created multiple challenges related to post conflict relief

and recovery assistance to women and women headed households, widows, elderly, and second/third wives, etc. When the displacement in the ex-Fata started it was discovered that only 23%¹⁰⁷ of women in the tribal areas had National Identity Cards required for registration of the Internally Displaced Persons¹⁰⁸. Women faced unequal access to *Relief and Recovery* assistance provided by the government. Complications related to CNIC and registration of women IDPs by National/ Provincial Disaster Management Authority (NDMA and PDMA) and other governmental agencies left thousands of women unregistered with no way of accessing basic services in the early aftermath of the displacement¹⁰⁹. Many households headed by women including widows, or whose husbands had stayed behind, or women from areas where tribal leaders had opposed NADRA's female registration, faced difficulties registering.

- **Accessing cash grant for Return:** Displaced women also faced greater challenges accessing cash grant for return without CNICs due to restricted mobility. Even post- return, lack of documentation on housing and properties has made it more difficult for women to access government compensation and land settlement¹¹⁰.
- The launch of military operations and the ensuing conflict with militants in ex-fata have had a serious impact on health and education of women and girls. While the destruction of health infrastructure has impacted health services for both men and women, the post conflict environment in the newly merged districts continues to pose exceptional health challenges for women. Although the rehabilitation of health facilities continues since the end of military operations, the on- going security risks related to presence of Taliban and targeted attacks especially against women health workers and NGO staff ¹¹¹continue to severely restrict access to health care and mobility of women. Continuing environment of insecurity have impacted availability of safe spaces such as hostels/residences for female medical staff including gynecologists, midwives

and female nursing staff, which are still not fully in place. Recent data and research examining the effect of conflict on provision of reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health and nutrition (RMNCAH&N) services demonstrate the differential and devastating impacts on lives of women in conflict affected areas of Pakistan (Balochistan and FATA)¹¹². Comparative data from various districts based on the severity of conflict shows that the mean coverage of various RMNCAH&N indicators in Balochistan were significantly lower in severe- conflict districts when compared to minimal conflict districts¹¹³. These differential impacts are not fully factored in Pakistani state's security response to militant and terrorist actors. Community-based social mobilization and behavior change communication initiatives with LHW and MNCH Programs are not fully functional as well to create demand for health services resulting in low utilization of limited services available¹¹⁴.

- **Mental health and Psychological wellbeing of women** and children has been severally impacted by deaths of male family heads, sons, and husbands due to conflict, militancy and military actions in the tribal areas. This has also left many women vulnerable and impacted their social, economic and psychological wellbeing¹¹⁵. Findings from the field indicate widespread prevalence of mental health problems in communities in general and in women and children in particular. ¹¹⁶ People, particularly women and children, have been extremely affected by conflict.¹¹⁷
- **Education:** The literacy rate among males is also low but the female literacy rate presents a dismal situation in all merged districts. According to the FDIHS¹¹⁸ only 33.3% of the population is literate with women's literacy at only 13%¹¹⁹. Even pre conflict various factors contribute to this dire situation of female literacy in merged districts; including cultural and social constraints, poverty, local leaders' disinterest in promotion of education in their communities, hostile attitude towards women's education and independence,

and extremely low budgetary allocations for the education sector to date. According to the NMDs' Annual Education Census 2017¹²⁰, girls' enrollment has always been low compared with that of boys, showing the large gender gap in education. With the emergence of the Taliban, the situation worsened when militants partially or fully destroyed 1,195 schools in the ex-FATA, depriving hundreds of thousands of children of their basic right to education, particularly girls, who already had low participation in schools¹²¹. TTP militants both in Swat and the Tribal districts specifically targeted girls' education and close to 300 schools were destroyed. The lack of education facilities and restriction of girls attending schools in some areas in NMDs (ex-FATA), returnee families and children are faced with negative coping mechanism, including low enrolment rates for girls, child labor, street children/ beggars, etc.¹²²

3.5 ROLE OF WOMEN IN VIOLENT EXTREMISM IN PAKISTAN

3.5.1 Country Context and Overview:

In Pakistan, progress towards adopting and instituting gender inclusive approaches for preventing and countering violent extremism has been minimal. This is largely because of limited direct involvement of women in acts of violence in the country; up till 2013, only 9 out of 400 suicide bomb attacks in Pakistan were carried out by female suicide bombers¹²³. This lack of direct involvement of women in acts of terrorism obscured the role women and girls have played, and continue to play, in the expression of violent extremism in Pakistan.¹²⁴

The absence of women as active members of terrorist organizations such as Al Qaeda, and Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan also influenced the design and implementation of development interventions focused on gender and P/CVE in Pakistan. For instance, in a number of such women focused interventions, women were mostly seen as victims of terrorism or as domestic gatekeepers that can identify and curb early signs of radicalization among children, and vulnerable young men¹²⁵.

This is perplexing because in the last two decades there are several notable examples of women playing very conspicuous roles in violent extremist movements as fundraisers and social mobilizers in the community. The violent incidents related to 'Masjid-e-Hafsa'¹²⁶, a women's Madrassa associated with the *Red Mosque* incident in 2007 should have served as a striking example of rising extremism and agency of women in participating in violent acts. The role women played in support of Mullah Fazalullah and Tehrik e-Taliban in some Tehsils during the militancy in Swat valley 2007-2009¹²⁷ is also well documented¹²⁸.

Pakistan's first military led de-radicalization programme '*De-radicalization and Emancipation Program (DREP)*¹²⁹' started in September 2009, after completion of Pakistan army's counter- terrorism offensive against the Pakistani Taliban in Swat, included a women only internment and rehabilitation center and program called FEAST¹³⁰. Under the FEAST Program, women offenders who were associated with the Taliban were housed and provided disengagement and rehabilitation support and subsequently released back into their communities. In spite of this early evidence of direct women participation and support of VE in Pakistan, there has been marginal focus on the role that women play in VE in Pakistan's policy frameworks or the government's countering VE interventions until recently. With the rise of 'Daesh or ISIS' in the regional conflict hot spots and Daesh's gendered and successful outreach campaign targeting Muslim women around the world in 2014/15 has brought much needed global focus on the role that women play in VE and women specific drivers for radicalization both individual and contextual.

3.5.2 Daesh in Pakistan and role of Women:

The visibility of Daesh in Pakistan can be traced back to mid-2014, shortly after Abu Bakr a- Baghdadi established the so-called caliphate in Syria and Iraq and laid out his plan of global expansion, identifying the Af-Pak region as 'Wilayat Khorasan'¹³¹. Soon splinter groups of TTP such as Jamaat-ul- Ahrar acknowledged Daesh and Baghdadi's leadership. Shortly after, pro-Daesh wall-chalking and pamphlets began appearing

across Pakistani cities such as Karachi and Quetta¹³². In October 2014, six commanders of the Pakistani Taliban publicly pledged allegiance to al- Baghdadi.¹³³ A month later, Jundullah, an anti-Iranian, anti-Shia militant organisation operating in Balochistan, became the first group to pledge allegiance with Daesh¹³⁴. In November 2014 women students of Jamia Hafsa, a women's madrassa affiliated with Islamabad's Lal Masjid (Red Mosque), publicly declared their support for Daesh while backed by chief cleric, Abdul Aziz¹³⁵. This incident marked the rising popularity of Daesh among women religious extremists and in 2015-16 there were a number of reported incidents of women either migrating to join ISIS in Syria and women cells in various Pakistani cities involved in fund raising for ISIS/ Daesh such as the much-publicized case of women led 'Al Zikra Academy' in Karachi.¹³⁶

Around the same time other organized religious extremist militant such as Lashkar-e-Tayyabah (LeT) affiliated Jamat-ud-Dawa, Lashkar-e-Jhnagvi (LeJ) and Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) started ramping up their communication strategies aimed at increasing women recruitment to their causes. Early research on rising VE trends in women in Pakistan¹³⁷ noted that women drifting into direct involvement in VE activities were more likely to be Ahl-e-Hadith/Salafi than Deobandi or Barelvi. This view was based on the fact that Salafi organizations were more open to the direct participation of women in religious activities versus the Deobandis or Barelvis¹³⁸. For example, unlike Deobandis and Barelvis, Salafis look favorably upon women taking part in mosque prayers. Based on this assumption it was believed that they may be more willing to envision active roles for women beyond the private sphere. This view received greater credibility as in 2015- 2016 several notable cases of women affiliated with Ahle Hadith organization Jamat-ud-Dawa joined ISIS and some even migrated to ISIS held areas in Syria¹³⁹. Subsequent evidence based research¹⁴⁰ has shown that women from different denominations/ sects can be engaged in VE activities and their exact role and participation is deeply determined by contextual factors.

On the whole, contemporary violent extremist organizations in Pakistan support traditional, conservative gender norms and ideologies with

distinct gender roles for women and men, often stating that this is crucial for stable and moral societies. Women's human rights are often framed as 'Western', colonialist and/or immoral; and are blamed for the alleged moral decline they fight against. Most violent organization including Daesh in Pakistan recognize that women and men experience a lack of power and act on their frustrations differently due to gender norms, expectations and identities. Their recruitment campaigns are subsequently often highly gendered in order to improve their reach and effectiveness.

3.5.3 Women related drivers of radicalization and VE in Pakistan: current evidence

In spite of growing information on rising role of women in VE and increasing outreach of VE organizations to women, there is a striking lack of evidence-based knowledge on women specific drivers of VE and radicalization. Most quantitative research on drivers of radicalization in women in Pakistan is based on surveys and opinion polls of women university and madrassa students as respondents and do not include women who are part of VE organizations or are ex-offenders. The Pakistan military internment or rehabilitation centers, which have housed women offenders who underwent psychosocial counseling and other disengagement processes, such as FEAST, have not made any data publicly available. Institutional development donors such as USAID and DFID have also implemented large P/CVE (Preventing/Countering Violent Extremism) programs focusing on radicalization of youth in Pakistan including young women. Research related to these programs however is also not publicly available. Some of these programs are still on going¹⁴¹. Research produced through these programs however remains publicly unavailable.

This Report has primarily relied on data and evidence collected during the implementation of UNDP's Local Level Disengagement and Rehabilitation Project (LLDR) implemented by Decentralization Human Rights and Local Governance (DHL) Program (from 2017-ongoing) to identify key drivers of radicalization in women in Pakistan. The LLDR Project has so far been implemented in three different regional and post conflict contexts

in Pakistan: Swat District, KP Province, Karachi, Sindh and Multan city, Punjab. In June 2021 UNDP will start the fourth phase of the Project in Quetta, Balochistan. Each project phase includes 50% men and 50% women beneficiaries. The observations in this report are based on the disaggregated data (*Survey and FGDs with Women ex-offenders, families of ex-offenders, Women ISG and KIIs*) collected through each implementation phase.

Some of the evidence/findings especially in the Multan Phase of the LLDR Project, have been cross validated by reviewing a 2015 qualitative research study on drivers of radicalization in south Punjab undertaken by USAID as part of their pre-project scoping and context analysis process.¹⁴²

Following are some key consolidated observations on role of women in VE and women specific drivers of radicalization in Pakistan:

i. Women's role in violent extremism in Pakistan went beyond the commonly accepted role of a victim: Current knowledge empirical evidence suggests Women (ex-offenders and at-risk young women) in different conflict scenarios in Pakistan played diverse roles within violent extremist organizations in various regional contexts. Although in Pakistan only a small number of women have trained for suicide missions, women materially support VE Organizations in a variety of combat-support roles including as informants, messengers, and intelligence gatherers, as well as money-couriers and for hiding weapons ¹⁴³. Most typically women that engage with VE organizations tend to play support roles that take two main forms: assistance to husbands and, occasionally, other relatives (brothers, sons) directly involved in VE activities, and help with the dissemination of VE ideology to others in the family and the community. In Multan, the UNDP team heard from several sources suggesting that women were assisting men in VE activities. In Karachi women beneficiaries reported that schoolteachers from private schools in at-risk areas in West Karachi used tableau performances and other interactive presentations, such as

the 'Dr. Afia Siddiqi case¹⁴⁴', to inspire young women to join the radical movements and further entrench religion-based grievances against the western world¹⁴⁵. Women are also employed by some extremist organizations as heads of women madrassas overseeing training and recruitment of women for extremist causes¹⁴⁶. Both qualitative and quantitative data collected provides strong evidence that women in Pakistan have a key role as social influencers and agents of change in both supporting and spreading extremist trends in communities as well as preventing/countering violent extremism. This finding was linked to the positive correlation between social factors, family and community and facets of violent extremism in the survey results. For example, women in Swat played a key role in legitimizing the rise of the Taliban in the initial years. In the current context they remain key agents of change within the disengagement and rehabilitation process at the community level in all conflict and post conflict scenarios.

ii. Extreme disempowerment and Gender based violence is a push factor for women radicalization in Pakistan: Quantitative survey results as well as qualitative data provided evidence (UNDP's LLDR project) that women ex-youth offenders were more likely to seek conflict or power as compared to men. This was a key finding and aligns with current knowledge on women and violent extremism. Studies on VE trends in women in various parts of the world suggest that extreme social exclusion and victimization of women in patriarchal societies create incentives for some women to seek power and mobility by aligning with VE organizations and actors. Project assessment on the LLDR project in Swat found evidence (FGDs, KIIs, case histories) on how VE organizations exploit gender specific grievances to attract women to their causes. Testimonies of at risk/ex-offenders women in Swat described how the Taliban in the initial phase attracted their support by punishing male family members especially in-laws, who had reportedly subjected women to domestic and Gender Based Violence

(GBV). Young women beneficiaries in from at-risk communities in Karachi described how joining VE organizations provided them greater agency and mobility to participate in religious activities outside of their homes providing more freedom of movement, access agency and increased their social capital, influence and networks. More research is needed to understand how social exclusion and disempowerment of women impact their participation and support to VE organizations and trends in the community.

iii. Social factors, family networks are key 'Pull Factors' for Women radicalization in Pakistan:

Evidence from the field suggests family and community based social networks play a key role as VE pull factors for both men and women in Pakistan. Women ex-offenders in all three LLDR project regional contexts reported the decisive role that male family members played in this process. Women ex-offenders as well as those at-risk women who tested high on all risk assessment scales used in the Project, such as VERA-2R, were also related to family males who had been convicted for VE offences or were active members of VE organizations¹⁴⁷. USAID (2015) Report on drivers of extremism in South Punjab noted that in several instances a wife's conversion to Salafi ideology came as a result of a husbands' affiliation with the LeT/JuD network¹⁴⁸.

iv. Women focused communication campaigns and strategies of VE organizations act as pull factors:

In Pakistan VE organizations increasingly are using several communications tools and campaigns to attract women to their cause depending on different in country contexts. Some are used to target women in educational institutions such as madrassas, schools and colleges. Others target women at home through radio, electronic and social media. In Swat the Tehrik-e-Nifaz-Shariat Mohamadi (TNSM) a Deobandi militant organization and Mullah Fazalullah used the FM

Radio programs with great success. He used a local FM Radio station to reach out to local women in their homes in Matta, Kabal and Babozai tehsils and support his fundraising and recruitment drive¹⁴⁹.

Since 2014 after Daesh's successful recruitment of women followers around the world through social media messaging, VE organizations in Pakistan have displayed a heightened interest in engaging women and converting them to their ideology. Revealingly, most VE organizations in Pakistan are now publishing material specifically designed for women and children. Such materials are deemed to be of particular importance as the number of better-educated women are joining madrassas and other VE- connected institutions increases, particularly in southern Punjab.

- **Madrasa's affiliated with VE organizations play a critical role in radicalization of women:** Besides early indoctrination of young minds, madrassas affiliated with VE organizations make the most noticeable contributions to VE. These often arrange visits and lectures by prominent VE figures. JuD (Jammat ud Dawa) affiliated madrassas in Multan hosted a well-known woman associated with a VE organization, Umme Hassan from the Lal Masjid in Islamabad¹⁵⁰. These visits are used to inspire young women to join radical causes and often lead to the identification and selection of motivated young local women from rural or peri-urban districts in Punjab for relocation to more militant madrassas¹⁵¹. In other instances, famous VE male leaders may bring sisters and other women relatives with them when they visit the area, and they may rely on those relatives to recruit women to their cause, including by having these women relatives address other women in women's madrassas. Such guest lectures can prove critical to women's adoption of extremist views to the extent that compared to men, women generally have had fewer prior opportunities to be exposed in a systematic way to VE narratives.

CONCLUSION

Pakistani State's security response to the threat of organized terrorism and violent extremism has had a deleterious impact on women and girls. The counter terror polices and security strategies of the government and security establishment, however has so far not fathomed the multi-dimensional impact that conflict has on lives of women and girls.

The analysis of the role of women in violent extremism

reveals serious gaps in the State's response and the missing elements in the broader P/CVE practice and programs in Pakistan. The knowledge and empirical data on drivers of VE in women in Pakistan, however also suggest pathways for meaningful participation of women and marginalized communities in PVE programs. For prevention of conflict and VE in Pakistan, empirical knowledge and data collected on drivers of VE in women should be integrated into the security frameworks and PVE practice in Pakistan.

SECURITY POLICY INSTRUMENTS IN PAKISTAN: GENDER GAP ANALYSIS

4.1. INTRODUCTION: SECURITY POLICY FRAMEWORKS IN PAKISTAN

As a low-income developing country (LIDC), Pakistan faces a plethora of socio-economic, security, and political challenges. Among its security concerns --- terrorism and violent extremism --- and their diverse manifestations dominate the list. In the recent past, the state has been relatively successful in reducing the number of terrorist attacks through kinetic measures¹⁵². But it is important to note that terrorist activities do not take place in a vacuum rather there are ideological, socio-economic, and cultural factors that perpetuate extremist ideas and violence. Therefore, kinetic measures have built-in limitations because they cannot redress ideological and socio-economic factors which push people towards violent extremism. There is an emerging consensus among academics and policymakers that kinetic measures must be supplemented by non-kinetic targeted interventions to address the root causes of violent extremism. In this regard, legislators and policymakers in Pakistan have passed multiple laws and policies to dismantle the ecosystem of violent extremism. This chapter¹⁵³ critically analyzes these policies --- National Internal Security Policy 2018-2023, National Action Plan 2014, Anti-Terrorism Act 1997, and National Counter Extremism Policy Guidelines --- from a gendered lens. In particular, the chapter delineates the strengths and limitations of the existing policy instruments. It is also important to highlight here that this chapter conceptualizes gender as a multi-dimensional construct, i.e., cisgender, transgender, and non-binary gender. But in Pakistan, the recognition of transgender and non-binary gender is still in its nascent stages, and therefore the primary focus will be on cisgender women. Further, the chapter builds on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Women, Peace,

and Security (WPS) framework to analyze Pakistan's security policies formulated in past three decades. In particular, it focuses on four key processes associated with preventing violent extremism: 'prevention', 'protection', 'participation' and 'relief & recovery'. The chapter delineate gaps and policy lacunas in the existing policy instruments, especially women's agential power and the way it mediates and regulates processes of violent extremism. It then concludes with a concrete set of policy recommendations with reference to ground realities and objective conditions of Pakistan.

4.1.1. National Internal Security Policy 2018-2023

National Internal Security Policy 2018-2023 was approved by the federal cabinet of Pakistan in 2018. In National Internal Security Policy (NISP) 2018-2023, there is a commitment towards gender mainstreaming, i.e., the pressing need to include women and other gender minorities in all aspects of policymaking and policy implementation. NISP acknowledges that the exclusion of disadvantaged segments of the society based on their identities, i.e., religion, sect, ethnicity, and gender have significantly contributed to extremism and militancy in Pakistan (NISP, p.24). Gender mainstreaming is identified an important ingredient in the PVE toolkit. In doing so, the NISP repeatedly draws references from the 1973 Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and the founding father Muhammad Ali Jinnah's life to emphasize the significance of gender parity in all spheres of life to ensure social cohesion, peace, and prosperity in Pakistan.

Traditionally, policies are drafted mechanically in Pakistan, i.e., by exclusively focusing on a policy problem without incorporating the broader socio-economic

and cultural context. NISP is unique in this regard as it marks the departure from the mechanical approach and sets a new precedent in the PVE policymaking in Pakistan. The NISP offers a holistic framework of 6R's and adopts a 'dialectical' approach. Six R's are the following: Reorient the security apparatus, Reimagine the society, Reconcile the historically disadvantaged groups and regions of the society, Redistribute resources, Regional Approach, i.e., working with neighboring countries, and Recognize the need for further research & development. NISP's dialectical approach is rooted in the understanding that violent extremism 'over-determines' (mediate and regulate) all aspects of the society viz. politics, economy, culture, and so on and, at the same time, it is also affected by all of them. This is one of the strengths of NISP as it takes a holistic approach by focusing on potential root-causes of terrorism rather than merely recommending policies aimed at its containment.

Generally, there is a tendency among policy circles to adopt a reductionist and essentialist approach by focusing on a single aspect without acknowledging the dialectical relationship between social, political, cultural, economic and ideological factors. Given this deeper epistemological approach outlined in the policy, NISP lays out an ambitious agenda of offering a holistic gendered perspective on PVE.

A plethora of academic studies demonstrate that gendered hierarchies can perpetuate conflict in societies (Charlesworth, 2006; Charlesworth & Chinkin, 2000). Pakistan is ranked as the sixth-most dangerous country for women. Gendered-based stereotypes are very common in Pakistan, and they are detrimental not only for women but for broader peace in the society. It is estimated that almost thirty-three percent of married women in Pakistan face domestic abuse and overall, around ninety percent of Pakistani women are subject to some form of physical, emotional, verbal, or sexual abuse (Yusuf, 2020). Given the hegemonic

nature of patriarchy in Pakistani society, domestic violence against women is justified on socio-cultural grounds. Young boys and girls who witness domestic violence against women in their homes or communities are highly likely to internalize from a very early age that using violence as a means to resolve a dispute is acceptable in society. This is potentially detrimental in the following two ways:

- a. Young boys in particular and men, in general, see violence against women as a 'domestic/family' issue and/or cultural norm;
- b. Due to lack of legal and social recourse opportunities against violent perpetrators, young girls in particular and women, in general, tend to feel helpless and may become indifferent to violence and abuse. Therefore, young boys and girls who grew up watching violence against women in their homes and communities are psychologically vulnerable to become hostage to violent extremist ideologies.

In this context, NISP's emphasis on a shift in the mindsets of young people by changing and amending the existing curriculum by removing all the divisive, hateful, and misogynistic content is an important step in the right direction. The exact excerpt from the NISP is as follows:

In collaboration with the provinces, curriculum guidelines and standards will be developed to ensure that textbooks are free of hate content, racial, gender and regional stereotypes/prejudices and glorification of war and violence. Content on the modern concept of citizenship, which stresses commonalities among all people, irrespective of their backgrounds, and which derives its values from the basic fundamental rights enriched in the Constitution, will be developed. In this regard, a review of the curriculum of Pakistan studies and Islamic studies shall be prioritized (NISP, 2018, p.47).

Moreover, NISP directly recognizes the significance of domestic violence against women as a major impediment in PVE. It argues that social cohesion and social justice mandates that all the laws aimed at women's protection --- *Anti-Honor Killing Act, Anti Rape Bill, Women Protection Act, & Acid and Burn Crime Bill* --- are enforced in letter and spirit.

Anti-Honour killing Act, Anti Rape Bill and Acid and Burn Crime Bill will be strictly enforced/approved and further strengthened by including modern scientific investigative methods such as DNA sampling to curb gender-based violence (NISP, 2018, p.55, para. 3).

Moreover, NISP emphasizes women empowerment as a means to PVE, in particular, it emphasizes women's economic empowerment both outside the workplace and at the household level. In particular, NISP calls for recognizing the value of unpaid domestic/household work performed by women, who usually leave their career jobs in service of their families.

Economic value of domestic work by women who sacrifice their careers to take up the responsibility of managing households and child rearing will be acknowledged. Family Laws will be amended to take their in-kind financial support to the family into consideration (NISP, 2018, p.55, para. 2).

Further, NISP exhorts the provision of equal opportunity, especially in education and employment, by ensuring strict observance of reserved quotas and mainstreaming all the marginalized groups (p.55). Historically, women were not part of PVE policymaking in Pakistan, and it has been recognized as a major lacuna. *NISP* calls for the inclusion of women, minorities, and other historically disadvantaged groups in all future policymaking. The exact quotes from the NISP policy document are as follows:

Marginalized groups such as women, transgender and differently abled persons will be mainstreamed by facilitating their inclusion in educational institutions as well as public and private sector workforce through affirmative action. Vacant seats on quotas under these categories (where available) will be filled on priority basis (NISP, 2018, p.55, para. 1).

One of the major shortcomings of NISP is that it does

not directly tackle the issue of women being recruited by terrorist organizations. On the separate note it briefly talks about the need of creating separate prisons for women and juveniles in all districts as well as in the federal territory (p.41). This is an important point for at least two reasons. One, given the hegemony of patriarchy in the Pakistani state and society, women inmates can be extremely vulnerable to violence in prisons, therefore, it is important to reimagine prisons as rehabilitation centers where women can feel safe. Second, women who are imprisoned for violent offenses may have substantially different reasons and motivations to commit such crimes due to their different socialization and habituation vis-à-vis men in Pakistan. Therefore, it is important to have gender-sensitive counseling and rehabilitation for women inmates.

Although, the NISP 2018-2023 talks about women's inclusion in different areas of security and social policies, it, unfortunately, fails to mainstream the women and gender minorities in key policy perspectives, especially those related to 6Rs. I will discuss each of them one-by-one.

Reorientation of the Security Apparatus: While this policy aims at a major overhaul of the state security apparatus and law-enforcement agencies, it can be improved by clearly specifying the role women can play in making security and law enforcement agencies more gender representative and sensitive to the gendered nature of PVE. For example, NISP 2018 states the following:

"The state security apparatus must modernise not only its infrastructure and capacity but also by redefining its *raison d'état* and adopting a people-centric approach" (p.9)

Given extreme levels of gender hierarchies in Pakistan, 'people-centric' approach is more likely to reproduce existing gender inequalities and it can be interpreted as 'men-centric' approach. Given that there is a gross underrepresentation of women in the state security apparatus and to mitigate it there is a need to emphasize women-centric approach, in addition to people-centric approach to truly reorient the state security apparatus. But unfortunately, it was either ignored or inadvertently left out.

Reimagining the Society: The second 'R' rightly focuses on building a new national narrative revolving around peace, pluralism, inclusiveness, and national cohesion. It also calls for repudiating and eliminating all toxic narratives that go against the interests of youth, women, minorities, and other disadvantaged groups. However, this process could have been improved by the inclusion of women at *all* stages, for example, right from the beginning of designing an alternative discourse to its implementation and deep penetration among the masses.

“Reimagining the society as a tolerant, inclusive and democratic polity will be pursued to strengthen a shared vision for the nation” (NISP 2018, p. 9)

It is important to point out here that **tolerant, inclusive and democratic** polity is not possible without gender equality. Therefore, it is very disappointing to see that NISP does not directly focus on gender while conceptualizing reimagining of the society. This needs to be improved and the new state narrative must incorporate promotion of gender equality and gender mainstreaming to ensure tolerance in the society.

Reconcile: The third 'R' elaborates upon a policy plan to reconcile and reintegrate the Islamist/Nationalist militants in the national mainstream, especially in areas like the erstwhile FATA, Baluchistan, Karachi, and parts of KPK.

“The incentives for shunning of violence and militancy and for re-integration have to be made greater than the continuation of militancy and anti-societal discourse and practices. Moreover, a process of reconciliation will be started especially in regions affected by sub-nationalist and ethno-political militancy”. (NISP 2018, p. 10)

However, the major shortcoming of this plan is complete and utter disregard of gendered nature of violent extremism and how women are perceived and treated by extremist forces. Therefore, this plan could have improved by the inclusion of women and by seeking their feedback, considering that the women were worst affected by terrorism in the aforementioned areas. Reintegration of militants must include educating them on the importance of promoting gender equality in the society.

Redistribute: The fourth R of NISP 2018-2023 emphasizes upon a fair redistribution of resources in the society, especially towards vulnerable segments including women, youth, and minorities. While this is indeed a laudable effort, the policy clubs together women with minorities and youth.

“A key priority in this regard includes the social, economic and political uplift of marginalised groups such as youth, women and minorities”. (NISP 2018, p. 10)

These are not three separate groups, gender transcends minority and youth, i.e., women from religious and ethnic minorities are more extremely disadvantaged vis-à-vis men from ethnic and religious minorities. Moreover, the data shows that female headed households are worst off vis-à-vis male headed households. Therefore, redistribution policy needs to acknowledge the intersection of class, ethnicity, religion and gender. In particular, the policy can be improved by delineating the gendered based reallocation of resources, disbursements of funds, provision of state services, etc. Not to mention, the inclusion of women expert in the consultative and policymaking process of redistribution cannot be overemphasized.

Regional Approach: The fifth 'R' focuses on establishing close collaboration and cooperation with neighboring countries to fight terrorism and control violent militancy. It also talks about a shift of perspective from geopolitics to geoeconomics.

“Some security issues such as terrorism are transnational and require collaboration at the regional and international levels”. (NISP, 2018, p. 10).

However, the role of women is again missing from such apex policymaking and collaborative process. Given that several feminist theories posit that women world leaders are more likely to foster peace and long-lasting regional cooperation, this particular 'R' would have benefitted greatly by focusing on gendered nature of regional approach.

Recognize: The last 'R' calls for the promotion of quality education and research, especially in the fields of Humanities and Social Sciences to make them at par with Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics

(STEM). This is a recognition that promoting humanities in conjunction with natural sciences can foster more tolerance, diverse narratives, and pluralism in Pakistani society besides helping the Pakistani government in moving towards more evidence-based policymaking and enhancing its analytical capacity.

“Promotion of quality research in academia and universities is essential in identifying the causal factors which push social actors towards extreme viewpoints and actions”. (NISP, 2018 p. 10).

However, the policy makes no mention of the barriers faced by Pakistani women in higher education and academia. Men are overwhelmingly appointed as Vice Chancellors of universities, not to mention, top policy making positions at Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan are allocated to men. Therefore, the idea of promoting pluralism and diversity must incorporate gender mainstreaming and gender equality, but unfortunately, it was ignored in the policy document.

4.1.2 National Action Plan

Pakistan’s National Action Plan was drafted in 2014 in the aftermath of the gruesome Army Public School (APS) Peshawar attack in which hundreds of school-age children were murdered by terrorists. It marked a critical juncture in Pakistan’s counter-terrorism and PVE strategy. In consultation with key state stakeholders and mainstream political parties, the Government of Pakistan outlined a 20 points agenda which was named as ‘National Action Plan’.

The 20 agenda items of National Action Plan 2014 are:

1. Implementation of death sentence of those convicted in cases of terrorism.
From a PVE perspective, NAP mistakenly assumes that capital punishment can act as a deterrent against violent extremism. Evidence from across the world suggests otherwise, countries without capital punishment have lower rates of violence and terrorism.
2. Special trial courts under the supervision of Army. The duration of these courts would be two years.

I would argue that point 2 of NAP mistakenly assumes that having access to due legal process and legal safeguards guaranteed in the Constitution of Pakistan is somehow a hindrance against CT and PVE. In fact, due legal process enhances confidence of people in state institutions and it should be further promoted rather than bypassed.

3. Militant outfits and armed gangs will not be allowed to operate in the country.
4. NACTA, the anti-terrorism institution, will be strengthened.
5. Strict action against the literature, newspapers and magazines promoting hatred, extremism, sectarianism and intolerance.
6. Choking financing for terrorist and terrorist organizations.
7. Ensuring against re-emergence of proscribed organizations.
8. Establishing and deploying a dedicated counter-terrorism force.
9. Taking effective steps against religious persecution.
10. Registration and regulation of religious seminaries.
11. Ban on glorification of terrorists and terrorist organizations through print and electronic media.
12. Administrative and development reforms in FATA with immediate focus on repatriation of IDPs.
13. Communication network of terrorists will be dismantled completely.
14. Measures against abuse of internet and social media for terrorism.
15. Zero tolerance for militancy in Punjab.
16. Ongoing operation in Karachi will be taken to its logical end.
17. Balochistan government to be fully empowered for political reconciliation with complete ownership by all stakeholders.
18. Dealing firmly with sectarian terrorists.

Points 3-18 of NAP deal with a diverse range of physical, ideological, cultural, financial, and communication infrastructure of terrorist organizations. These points allude to the fact that

violent extremism is rooted in socio-economic aspects of Pakistani society. Gender is a key socio-economic and cultural construct through which power asymmetries are reproduced and perpetuated in Pakistani society, and yet there is no direct mention of it in NAP.

19. Formulation of a comprehensive policy to deal with the issue of Afghan refugees, beginning with registration of all refugees.

Point 19 can be problematized on multiple accounts as it treats Afghan refugees as a homogenous group. There is obvious innuendo of equating violent extremism with Afghan refugees. Racializing the complex issue of violent extremism is extremely disturbing but unfortunately it is prevalent among security establishment of Pakistan.

20. Revamping and reforming the criminal justice system.

Revamping and reforming on what grounds is the obvious question that remains unanswered in NAP. I would argue that making Pakistan's criminal justice system more gender-sensitive would be a pertinent point to initiate the process of reforms.

Overall, a cursory glance from points 1-20 makes it clear that NAP did not incorporate the gendered analysis in its approach, and it is a major shortcoming of NAP.

4.1.3 National Counter Extremism Policy Guidelines (NCEPG)

In 2018 the National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA) devised a National Counter Extremism Policy Guidelines (NCEPG). According to the National Coordinator of the NACTA at the time Mr. Ihsan Ghani: "the guidelines will be the cornerstone of the country's response to non-traditional threats and to deal with extremist ideology¹⁵⁴". NCEPG builds on NISP and offers an inclusive approach towards all matters related to internal security and terrorism. In fact, the National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA) has labeled NCEPG as a "Connect" strategy that aims to integrate people from diverse backgrounds into a cohesive

national social fabric (p.3). The *raison d'être* of NCEPG is best summarized by the following quote from the document: "principles of inclusiveness, integration, human rights and gender mainstreaming as per para 53 of NISP have been woven in the NCEPG framework" (NCEPG, 2018, p. 7).

NCEPG pays special attention to the inclusion of women and gender minorities in counter-extremism and counter-terrorism. For instance, the NCEPG explicitly recognizes that women are among the worst victims of terrorism and, therefore should have an appropriate role—as stakeholders—in its successful elimination. Furthermore, NCEPG also acknowledges that women can be sympathizers and the perpetrators of violent extremist forces. In other words, it brings to the fore the fact that a gendered lens is necessary to develop a holistic PVE strategy. NCEPG notes that: "the role of women as victims, sympathizers and problem solvers of extremism has been given due attention" (NCEPG, 2018, p.7).

Regarding women offenders, the NCEPG calls for their supervised living [within prison] and skill development to foster a spirit of independence and self-reliance. It also encourages their early release on parole vis-à-vis cash sureties by family members, relatives, or friends. The exact wording in the policy document is as follows:

Women offenders may be given supervised living and compulsory education and skill development. Their release on probation and parole with cash sureties may be provided by family, local elders should also be considered (NCEPG, 2018, p.34).

In other words, it acknowledges that women are subjected to different socialization and habituation in Pakistan, and therefore it is important to have a gender-sensitive approach towards women inmates. Similar to *NISP*, the *NCEPG* also stresses upon the need to change the curriculum by making it less incendiary and more inclusive especially while emphasizing the rights of women and other minorities in the light of Islam, Holy Prophet (PBUH) teachings, and the life of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah. Another important step that *NCEPG* recommends is the inclusion of women figures as role models and ideals from all walks of life. The excerpt from NCEPG is as follows:

In addition to rights of minorities, the rights of marginalized communities including women may be taught from basic elementary level. Teachings of Islam on rights of women, domestic laws and international resolutions are may be taught to students. However, a module on women rights should be sensitively developed without segregating women rights as separate from human rights. Behavioural patterns of acceptance, rights and duties should be developed with regard to women. Our heroes are not to remain limited to men but female figures should be included too (NCEPG, 2018, p.26).

Having women role models is a very important point because it positively impacts both young girls and boys to see women in leadership roles. It also dispels gender stereotypes and humanizes women in Pakistani society. Moreover, NCEPG also calls for equal representation of women in the *Illaqqa Aman wa Behbud* Committees, which are formed to check the incidence of terror and extremism at local levels (p.44). This is an important step since women are more likely to notice factors that may push their family members towards militancy and/or other violent criminal activities. This is a very significant point because it implies that as responsible citizens women are not just passive in processes of PVE but can play an active role in preventing violent extremism.

However, even though the NCEPG acknowledges the significance of women in Pakistan's counter-terror narrative but it unfortunately was never able to spell out any concrete steps let alone the notion of gender mainstreaming. A glance at nearly all the policies highlighted in the document reveals that they are formulated from a rather generalist perspective which does not pay adequate attention to the input or participation of women in the policy process and on-ground policy implementation.

Consider, for example, the policy of strengthening districts via guaranteeing the security of tenure and handsome remuneration to the officers of District Management Group (DMG) and Police Service of Pakistan (PSP). However, this policy makes no mention of what steps will be taken to ensure that women DMG and PSP officers are given equal representation across

all districts, sub-districts, and tehsils of Pakistan (see p. 17).

Similarly, on the policy of FATA (now newly merged districts of KP) mainstreaming, the document makes no mention of women and whether they have been or would be included in any of the consultative and legislative processes. Given that the female population in the erstwhile FATA is more than 1.5 million, the women deserve to be included, or at least be heard, given they have been historically sidelined and disempowered by the local *jirga* laws and colonial Frontier Crimes Regulations (FCR). Another important area where this document omits the participation of women is the critical realm of strategic planning. The policy needs to be improved by ensuring women/gender mainstreaming are better geared towards the need assessment of local communities, in particular, education, healthcare, social protection, and so on—which are noted as the priority areas of the NCEPG (see p. 18).

Although, this policy document does take note of the earlier omissions of women in Pakistan's security policy narrative and offers some amends, it still leaves a lot to be desired as women/gender mainstreaming remains excluded from critical areas of policy such as the Rule of Law & Service Delivery, Citizens Engagement, Media Engagement, Education Reforms, Reformation/Rehabilitation of Militants, and Promotion of Culture.

4.1.4 Anti-Terrorism Act (1997) and its 2014 Amendment

Anti-Terrorism Act was first introduced in 1997 and its latest amendment came in 2014. Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA) envisions women in a highly patriarchal and paternalistic way. The term women is mentioned only once in ATA, and that is also in a paternalistic manner. It calls for a proscribed offender to solicit the permission of relevant SHO (police personnel) for visiting an educational institution or a place of residence of persons under 21 years of age and women. The exact words of this passage are as follows:

He shall not visit or go within surroundings specified in the order including any of the under mentioned places,

without the written permission of the officer in charge of the Police Station with in whose jurisdiction such place is situated, namely: schools, colleges and other institutions where person under twenty-one years of age or women are given education or other training or are housed permanently or temporarily. (ATA, 1997, p. 13, emphasis added).

Firstly ATA equates women with minors (individuals less than 21 years of age), this is extremely problematic. Patriarchal assumption is that minors need protection and so do women in general. Furthermore, it assumes that women are unable to take care of themselves. Not to mention, the entire document is written with a masculine third- person “he/him”. ATA document reflects the prevalent internalized patriarchal mindset and approach among policymakers and state institutions. Consequently, ATA completely ignored women and gender from its consideration.

4.2 CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF PAKISTAN'S SECURITY POLICIES: THE WPS APPROACH

The chapter finds the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) framework as a pertinent point of departure to analyse existing policy instruments in Pakistan. WPS deals with the issue of gender minorities in general and women in particular in the context of the following four important pillars: Prevention Protection, Participation and Relief and Recovery.

The WPS framework does not adopt a passive approach towards conflict resolution, but has an inclusive and pro-active strategy that calls for the inclusion of women in *all* aspects of peacebuilding and security policy. The WPS framework allows us to go beyond the conventional wisdom of seeing women only as victims and encourages us to develop a holistic approach in sync with the agential power of women, i.e., women are active actors in processes of prevention, protection, participation, and relief & recovery associated with the conflict. The WPS approach is in line with the notion of ‘Gender Mainstreaming’, which not only calls for formulating just policies and delivering fair outcomes to women but also ensures their inclusion at all levels and stages of the policy formulation and conflict

prevention/resolution process. I will now systematically analyse Pakistan’s security policies using the four pillars of the WPS theoretical framework: 1) prevention; 2) protection; 3) participation and 4) relief and recovery.

Prevention: It calls for all actors (men, women, transgender) to play their active role in preventing a conflict or conflict like situation. In other words, gender mainstreaming entails that women being equal citizens have equal responsibility and ability to counter/prevent violent extremism and conflict situations. However, in the case of Pakistan’s two most important counter-terror policy documents viz., *The Anti- Terrorism Act (1997) and National Action Plan (2014)*, make no mention of the inclusion of women in the prevention of conflicts, even though these documents delineate at length the rules, regulations, and procedures aimed at curbing and preventing terrorism. In fact, the ATA 1997 begin with the following words:

“[It is]an act to provide for the prevention of terrorism, sectarian violence and speedy trial of heinous offenses” (ATA, 1997, p.1).

Lack of gender mainstreaming is a major shortcoming of ATA 1997 and NAP 2014 and in fact, they perpetuate stereotypical characterization of women as ‘weak’ and must be *protected* or patronized by men. Therefore, these two policies can be best characterized as patriarchal security policies.

However, in comparison to ATA 1997 and NAP 2014, the latter-day policy documents, i.e., the *National Counter Extremism Policy Guidelines (NCEPG)* and *National Internal Security Policy (NISP)*, are relatively more expansive in scope as far as the *inclusion* of women in the prevention of conflicts is concerned. Consider, for example, the proposal floated in the NCEPG which calls for creating Local Peace and Welfare Committees or *Illaqa Aman wa Behbud Committees* tasked with the resolution of local disputes as well as promoting welfare and inclusiveness in the area. As per the terms of reference (TORs) issued by NACTA, the *inclusion* of women is mandatory in all such committees (see NCEPG, 2018, p.44). *NISP* on the other hand, briefly talks about inclusion of women in the prevention of armed conflicts but without addressing the gendered roots of conflict in Pakistani society. Pakistan is one

of the lowest ranked countries in the world in terms of women empowerment. This is important because research studies shows that women join militant organizations—especially the Islamist right-wing outfits— as an escape from the life of humiliation and destitution in their own homes (Guilbert 2016; Ajayi 2020; Badurdeen 2018; Ali 2018; Zeuthen & Sahgal 2019). In particular, the lack of economic opportunities and prevalence of domestic violence perpetrated by husband or in-laws push women to become radicals as society and legal system fails to guarantee women their rights as equal citizens.

In other terms, violent militancy and terrorism is tied to broader socio-economic problems including marginalization of women in the economic, political and domestic spheres. Therefore, achieving gender equality via gender mainstreaming should be an integral component of PVE policymaking in Pakistan. But in the existing policies, there is a huge void. NISP's approach is limited to 'gender inclusion' rather 'gender mainstreaming'. It sees 'gender' as a component rather than part and parcel of policy making. NISP 2018-2023 calls for providing women and young girls *equal* access to educational and employment opportunities (NISP 2018, p. 55), and advocates for the strict *enforcement* of the Women Protection Act to prevent the abuse and sexual harassment of women at homes, offices or public places (NISP 2018, p. 53). On surface one cannot find any problem in these proposals but if we dive deep, we see why these proposals are not enough and problematic. From a gender mainstreaming perspective, policies must incorporate *gender equality perspective* at all stages and levels of policies, programmes and projects. In Pakistan there is an extremely *unequal* access to and control over power, public and private resources, human rights and institutions, including the justice system. Therefore, in a highly unequal setting, inequality cannot be undone by having 'equal' access to education and employment opportunities, this would at best keep gender inequality static. Pakistan needs gender-based affirmative action policies to reduce gender inequality. Moreover, the issue of gender based domestic violence is tied to unequal power distribution and therefore it is not an issue of enforcement per se but requires a head on collusion with 'patriarchy'.

Therefore, gender mainstreaming is mandatory to prevent violent conflicts in Pakistan.

Protection: Second pillar of the WPS framework— i.e., protection of women and gender minorities in a conflict situation is a very important aspect of gender mainstreaming. Conflict affects both men and women but in different ways. Given the prevalence of patriarchy in Pakistan, the impact of conflict can be substantively different for women vis-à-vis men. For example, if men of any traditional household are killed in a conflict, then women's mobility can be severely restricted due to cultural norms and tradition. This impact may remain invisible to policy makers without WPS approach. Moreover, women are more likely to face sexual violence during conflict situations and it can have lasting effect on their psychotically wellbeing. The aim of gender mainstreaming is to take into account these differences when designing, implementing and evaluating policies, programmes and projects, so that they benefit both women and men and do not increase inequality but enhance gender equality.

As mentioned above, the ATA and NAP, do not offer much substance in terms of gender. Both the NAP and ATA ignore the critical issue of protection of women in a conflict/war. In simple words, ATA and NAP does not even acknowledge that there is any gender inequality in Pakistan and consequently, they are completely silent on gendered based PVE issues. In fact, in this regard, recent two policy documents, i.e., the NISP 2018-2023 and NCEPG—which are admittedly more inclusive than the preceding policy documents—are also devoid of any substance as they contain no policy or plan to protect women and gender minorities in a conflict situation.

Participation: The third pillar of WPS calls for the participation of women and others from the community of gender minorities in the prevention of violent extremism (PVE), counter-terrorism, policing, and anti-war efforts besides their inclusion in the policymaking process that deals with these issues. The recent research shows that globally women are significantly underrepresented and underutilized in police work and law enforcement, despite the affirmative action policies adopted by governments the

world-over (Guzman and Frank 2004). This is not merely accountable to the discrimination against women in the hiring and recruitment process but also due to the popular perception ubiquitous in all cultures that view police work as dangerous, inherently violent, physically strenuous, and therefore excessively masculine. Such perceptions have undoubtedly hindered women's entry and advancement in the police and law-enforcement agencies, and research suggests that the underrepresentation of women in these departments is far higher than other occupations, thus making it the most 'gendered' profession in the world (Chan and Kaki 2013, 490).

For a highly patriarchal country like Pakistan, the situation of women participation and employment in the police force and law enforcement is even worst compared to the rest of the world. According to a recent study only one percent of the total police force in Pakistan is comprised of women, that is, out of 400,000 total police officials in the country, only 4400 are women (Sarfranz 2020). This severely undermines or comprises CVE and CT efforts of the state. Pakistan has the lowest female participation rate in the South Asian region, where other countries such as India, Nepal, and Bangladesh have women at 9%, 8%, and 6% in their law-enforcement agencies, respectively.

While many global factors discussed in the preceding paragraph hold for the Pakistani police system and law-enforcement agencies as well, but there are also local factors, i.e., unequal access to quality education to girls and social factors—such as the refusal of a male guardian to allow a woman to work—also inhibit women from joining the police and armed forces. Furthermore, given men dominate law enforcement system in Pakistan, and gender mainstreaming approach is not incorporated, as a result, not enough initiatives have been taken to make law enforcement a women friendly field in Pakistan. Therefore, despite the government-mandated reserved quota of 10% for women in all government jobs, including law enforcement, women participation in law enforcement set to remain at 1 percent for foreseeable future (Sarfranz 2020).

Older security policy documents, i.e., ATA and NAP, unfortunately, contain no plan to ensure women's

participation and integration in the police and law-enforcement agencies. Similarly, the NCEPG passed in 2018 also contains no reformative measures or plans that can address this serious omission, even though it does discuss at length bringing reforms to better integrate women in the socio-economic mainstream. The NISP 2018-2023, however, fares a little better as it calls for including women in all aspects of policymaking and ensuring affirmative action in private and public sector employment, although it does not explicitly mention or suggests any policy to address the gap in women participation in police, armed forces, and law-enforcement agencies. Moreover, the implementation strategy of NISP 2018-2023 does call for the inclusion of women in the Advisory Committee on Internal Security, however, it provides no detailed mechanism as to how shall this overambitious goal will be achieved, given that no women or gender-related organization were consulted at the time of making the "Stakeholders List" for this policy document.

Similarly, the timeline and mechanism through which the following key stated goals of NISP remain vague: making public spaces safe for women, ensuring gender parity in the workforce, recognition of the value of domestic work, and the implementation of Anti-Honour Killing/Anti-Rape Bill/Acid and Crime Burn Bill. While it does give a set of performance indicators (for example the number of bills passed, etc.) to gauge the success of a policy, it does not mention that who will carry out this post- implementation review and whether this activity will include women or not?

In terms of policy making, Pakistan never had a women Federal Interior Minister (it is the main ministry that is responsible for internal security); moreover, the *apex committees* formed at provincial level on CVE/CT lack significant women participation. It would not be a hyperbole to state that security policy in Pakistan is monopolized by men and one of the major reasons behind dismal security situation in Pakistan is the absence of women's perspective and participation in processes of security policy making. Therefore, from the gender mainstreaming perspective I would argue that given the extreme levels of gender inequality in law enforcement and security policy making in

Pakistan, there is a pressing need to introduce gender-based affirmative action policies to incentivize women to join law enforcement and other security related professions.

Relief and Recovery: The fourth and final pillar of the WPS framework concerns the relief & recovery process in the aftermath of a violent conflict, a war, or a military operation. Gendered lens is necessary to ensure smooth relief and recovery in a post- conflict situation. Pakistan has recently come out of the clutches of violent extremism that was spearheaded by the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), and which wreaked considerable havoc in the country. The north-western province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and the erstwhile Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) bore the brunt of this violent conflict, which forced many locals to leave their ancestral lands and become either Internally Displaced People (IDPs) or shift permanently to other parts of Pakistan. Displacement is an inherently gendered process and affects women differently than men. ATA and NAP completely omitted any mention of women displacement or gendered lens towards relief & recovery. Similarly, the NCEPG and NISP 2018-2023 only paid lip service without delineating a clear plan aimed at the relief and recovery of women in conflict/disaster situation.

For example, the NISP 2018-2023 explicitly mentions the expansion of the social safety nets for women, youth, minorities, and other disadvantaged groups (see pg. 10); however, it does not provide a clear road map for its implementation and as per the Implementation Plan, the budget for this exigent task is still pending approval of the Ministry of Health and Department of Social Protection (see p. 70). Generally, government treats women as a part of the household in recovery and relief processes and therefore does not need specific attention. It is assumed that the head of the household (usually men) will take care of women. There is an emerging evidence that female headed households are discriminated in recovery and relief processes (See *preceding chapter in this Research Study*). The government, unfortunately, did not do much for these IDPs except for providing them with housing tents and food rations. Much of the relief and recovery effort was

led by local and foreign non-government organizations (NGOs), which, too, proved limited owing to the large numbers of the IDPs. But whenever there was a relief and recovery effort from the government side, it lacked a comprehensive gendered approach.

For example, in a recent event in Bajaur agency, local tribesmen attacked a government run aid and relief center that was providing food packages to women. Local men felt threatened by it on the premise that government is trying to transform their culture and values by incentivizing women to come out to public spaces to collect food and aid materials. This tragic incident once again calls our attention to immediate need of gender mainstreaming approach which caters to the needs of women in a historical and locally contextualized manner. Women need targeted interventions in terms of recovery and relief processes. Women safety in public spaces and their right to be in public sphere needs to be guaranteed by the state and the policy makers.

Furthermore, according to a study conducted by Levine et al. (2019), the displacement caused by the TTP's insurgency has unintendedly disrupted some patriarchal norms and practices. This could have been used as an opportunity by the government to empower women from ex-FATA region but due to lack of gendered policymaking, it has not been fully materialized. The displacement of tribal Pashtuns— while stressful and economically costly—has provided an opportunity to women to be relatively free from the stranglehold of joint family systems and the diktats of *jirga* elders that was prevalent prior to internal displacement. Further, it has been noticed that after being relocated to main urban centers—Peshawar in particular—the tribal Pashtuns came into contact with their urban brethren, who are generally more palatable to the prospects of woman education and employment. This positively influenced many tribal Pashtun men, who subsequently enrolled their girls in local schools. Secondly, due to the displacement, most tribal Pashtuns left behind their agricultural lands, cattle, and other rural assets, which was their prime source of income. Having little skills or education, most tribal Pashtuns became exclusively dependent on the wage economy of the city, which

didn't cater to all their subsistence needs. As a result, women had no other option but to work as well to provide for their children and families. With well-crafted recovery and relief programs, the government could have provided a decent employment opportunity to women of IDPs. But the government did not take any major initiative in this regard and it is likely that women will not be allowed to work or appear in public sphere when they return back to their home districts.

To sum it up, it won't be an understatement to state that Pakistan's security policies severely lack gender mainstreaming. And while Pakistani policymakers have done some work on gender inclusiveness, but the gender mainstreaming requires giving equal representation, power and resources to women and gender minorities in all four areas of PVE: prevention, protection, participation and relief and recovery.

4.3 GENDERED PVE APPROACH: A WAY FORWARD FOR PAKISTAN

As the above review of policy instruments shows that there have been multiple attempts by successive governments to deal with the recurring nuisance of violent extremism but there are huge voids in them. Pre-2015 policies do not acknowledge let alone offer policy guidelines on the gendered nature of PVE, while more recent documents, i.e., those formulated in 2018 and later such as the *NISP* and *NCEPG*, recognize the gendered nature of PVE. But despite some progress, there is a lot of room for improvement. First and foremost, the actual process of [security] policymaking has predominantly been exclusive, as it did not engage with civil society organizations in any substantive manner, especially those working on gender issues. In 2000, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) passed resolution 1325 that called for the inclusion of women in the prevention of armed conflicts and its negotiations (such as those in war tribunals) as well as peacebuilding efforts. It was an explicit recognition by an apex international body that matters related to security policy cannot be separated from the prevailing power hierarchies in the society. Therefore, given the global hegemony of patriarchy, (although it varies substantially across regions and countries) exclusion of

women from the security policy matters is tantamount to their dispossession. Policy makers in Pakistan need to catch up with the fact that women are not just victims but can be active players in processes of violent extremism (Chinkin, 2003; Wright, 2001). The former UN Secretary- General Kofi Annan also recognized this fact when he made the following remarks:

The leadership of parties to conflict is male-dominated and men are chosen to participate at the peace table. The desire to bring peace at any cost may result in a failure to involve women and consider their needs and concerns. In addition, women's organizations often do not have the resources needed to effectively influence lengthy peace negotiation process. (UNSC Report of the Secretary- General on Women and peace and security, 2004, pp 6-7).

Furthermore, it is imperative to not just incorporate gendered lens but also let women speak for themselves in processes of policy making. In Pakistan one of the major issues is the conspicuous absence of women in the security policymaking. Moreover, women experts are not given their due space in security policy issues in general and PVE policies in particular. This reflects in the devised policy instruments of Pakistan. As mentioned above, there is an obvious trend, i.e., policy documents drafted before 2018 such as Anti-Terrorism Act 1997 and its 2014 amendment and National Action Plan 2014 have completely ignored underlying gender dynamics in PVE. On the other hand, in more recent years --- National Internal Security Policy (NISP) 2018-2023 and National Counter Extremism Policy Guidelines (NCEPG) --- some women experts are engaged and there is a *relative* improvement in policy documents in terms of recognizing the nuanced role of gender in mediating processes of violent extremism in Pakistan.

In contrast to earlier policies, the architects of NISP and NCEPG have done a decent job in addressing the policy lacunas of internal security while simultaneously making the policy framework more inclusive and expansive in scope. They have highlighted the need of developing a gender-sensitive approach in the larger security framework. However, there is a lot of room for improvement, and more refined and focused work on PVE from a gendered lens is needed. They include

gender as *one* of the many social variables that effects and are in turn affected by violent extremism. But they do not specify the relative significance of gender as compared to other variables. In a patriarchal social setting like Pakistan, gender is a defining feature to allocate economic resources and social privileges and perks. Therefore, I argue that gender needs a much more thorough and detailed investigation in processes of violent extremism in Pakistan. Furthermore, NISP and NCEPG do not fully acknowledge the agency of women as potential perpetrators of violent extremism.

PVE policies in Pakistan must be informed by the latest academic research and from the experiences of other countries in the region. The rise of the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) at the world stage perhaps, presents the best-case study to understand the changing role/expectations of women in the sphere of PVE. In both NISP and NCEPG, women have been viewed only from a passive and secondary position, i.e., either as a victim of terrorism or a passive supporter/sympathizer of a familial male terrorist. However, the uncanny way in which many women are attracted to the virulent messaging of ISIS prompted many experts and academics to reevaluate their earlier stance. Even the United Nations Security Council called for reassessing the role of women in terror and counter violent extremism (CVE) in the context of returning female foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs).

To develop a holistic picture of the changing landscape, it is essential to understand the *agential power* of women in matters of terrorism and violent extremism. Traditionally the academic/policy work on terrorism typically perceives women as passive and helpless victims in a phenomenon—war or violent militancy—that is usually orchestrated by men and is a byproduct of the patriarchal system. This view also assumes that women are pacifist by nature and therefore have lesser or no inclination towards conflict, crime, or ideology-inspired militancy. Such preconceived notions about womanhood and gender, in general, are themselves socially constructed and reinforced by a patriarchy that permeates all aspects of society, including academia and policymaking. In the recent literature on gender and women studies, the aforementioned dominant

perspective is referred to as the ‘essentialist’ theory of gender as it tries to neatly divide gender into certain social roles and even professional careers. Moreover, the processes of peacemaking and warmongering are themselves ‘gendered’ since they are socially determined. Peacebuilding and warmongering are processes that reflect a human need that is satisfied by collective societal action and decisions. Since these processes are socially determined, therefore they entail divisions of roles—and labor—based on gender. For example, warmongering is typically considered to be a masculine endeavor, with women assigned a secondary ‘helper’ role such as nurses, paramedics, and desk clerks. On the other hand, the role of women in peacebuilding initiatives is assumed to be naturally determined—a product of hormones that makes them resist violence and embrace peaceful co-existence (Tobach, 2008).

The roots of the essentialist gender theory are traceable to the observations on physiology and morphology of both men and women. Because women give birth, therefore, they are perceived to be natural caregivers and nurturant. Men, however, based on the observations of their physique and aggression are perceived to be more dominant by nature. These observations are central to the gendered processes of peacemaking and warmongering, where men are seen as aggressors and women as nurturant (Tobach, 2001). The truth, however, is that women are neither natural peacemakers nor helpless victims in the context of our discussion of violent extremism in particular and society in general. By doing away with the myopic socially engineered gender identities—courtesy of essentialism—it becomes clear that women exercise considerable influence and free-will over their decisions to join militant *jihad* and other forms of violent extremism. And this is not a hollow conjecture but a fact that is backed by empirical evidence. For instance, a study conducted by Nuraniyah (2018) in the Indonesian context found that none of the female jihadists were directly coerced into joining ISIS and that all of them joined the terror outfit by getting inspired by ISIS’s ideology. In another research, Darden et al. (2019) studied the participation of women in militant outfits in the volatile regions of Kurdistan, Colombia,

and Ukraine and found that women eagerly joined these groups even when they were hostile to their interests or downright misogynist.

In other words, if I borrow an analogy from statistics, the policymakers need to recognize that gender is not merely a “control” variable—as it has been treated so far— but rather an ‘explanatory’ variable that explains many variations in the dependent variable, i.e., terrorism. Therefore, gender lens needs to be incorporated in all aspects of terrorism and counter-terror policymaking. Moreover, the agency of women needs to be highlighted in all future policymaking, as it has ramifications for both terror-incidents as well as CVE/PVE. Hitherto, women are underrepresented in the police force, law enforcement, and other special [counter-terror] agencies but none of the policy instruments designed in Pakistan has seriously taken up this issue. Again, this is primarily a result of socially contrived notions about some professions more suitable to women— such as teaching, nursing, social work, etc.—than others. The inclusion of women, however, is critical to PVE as women can play an effective role in recognizing the needs and psycho-social dilemmas of individuals, groups, and the communities in which they live.

A recent study by Bigio & Vogelstein (2019) also shows that in social settings where women are in positions of social influence, they tend to play a positive role against

violent extremism and radicalization. Similarly, research shows that women play a significantly positive role in their communities by forestalling the recruitment drive of gangs and other criminal syndicates. In other words, I would argue that incorporating gendered analysis is not only a morally right thing to do, it is also the most effective PVE approach. Therefore, policymakers in Pakistan must keep gender at the forefront while devising future policies, as the country has already borne the brunt of religious and sectarian militancy and cannot afford any complacency, especially in terms of ignoring key factors that account for much of the modern-day extremism and terrorism.

CONCLUSION

A sustainable approach to PVE mandates that policymakers recognize the diverse and complex *agency* of women, i.e., laws and policies should not just focus on protecting women from violent extremism but they should also encourage and facilitate women to proactively counter violent extremism.

Pakistan’s existing Security Frameworks have taken modest steps towards integrating women focused policies and intervention, yet they are a long way away from mainstreaming a gender lens throughout security policymaking.

COMPARATIVE PROFILE OF THE GIVEN COUNTRIES: INDONESIA, JORDAN AND BANGLADESH

5.1. INTRODUCTION

As in Pakistan, various other majority Muslim countries have faced varying levels of terrorist threats and witnessed the rise of violent extremism organizations in the last two decades. These countries have also explored different frameworks to synergize, include and engage women in the development and implementation of national counterterrorism and PVE policies.

This Chapter provides a comparative profile of three Muslim majority countries: **Indonesia**¹⁵⁵, **Jordan**¹⁵⁶ and **Bangladesh**¹⁵⁷ and briefly outlines their policy frameworks related to women's engagement in preventing violent extremism and within counterterrorism frameworks. These three countries represent different geographic contexts: *Jordan in the Middle East, Bangladesh, in South Asia and Indonesia, East Asia*. The comparative profiling of the security frameworks of the three countries aims to:

- I. *Briefly review how countries in different geographic contexts have integrated Women, Peace and Security agenda (WPS) agenda into their P/CVE frameworks*
- II. *Women and Security Framework is used to assess whether the planned actions in each of the Bangladesh, Jordan and Indonesia NAPs-WPS address the gendered realities of women and girls i.e. their practical and strategic needs and interests*
- III. *The comparative profiles are based only on a textual analysis of the NAPs-WPS: the textual analysis entailed a review of the narrative text of the documents. The analysis therefore is limited to the level of the document itself and not the implementation of the stated actions. This comparative profiling of the three NAPs*

offers insights into what the planning documents themselves commit to and contain in respect to the WPS and gender-planning framework.

- IV. *Provide a comparative pathway forward for Pakistan to better mainstream WPS and women engagement into its national security frameworks.*

5.2 OVERVIEW: INTEGRATION OF WPS AGENDA IN SECURITY FRAMEWORKS: CASE OF BANGLADESH, INDONESIA AND JORDAN:

All three Muslim majority countries have followed different pathways to supporting women to play a stronger role in P/CVE and CT, and conflict and post conflict environments. These measures include bringing together the P/CVE agenda with the Women, Peace and Security Agenda (WPS).

One of the key differences with Pakistan's case is that all three countries have enacted **National Action Plans** (NAPS) at various stages, which formally endorse the WPS agenda and sets clear institutional pathways for integrating the Agenda within its security and the C/PVE policy frameworks. It is evident that each of the three countries under review is experiencing the impacts of violent extremism, conflict and regional insecurities, whether internally or externally located, in ways very specific to each context and their responses are tailored accordingly. There are, however, some broad commonalities that this review will summarize, which demonstrate how NAPs can support the implementation of the WPS agenda within a diverse set of countries in Asia.

A brief overview of specific country contexts of Indonesia, Bangladesh and Jordan is set out in Box 1.

BOX 1. COUNTRY CONTEXTS

Bangladesh

Bangladesh NAP reflects the country's experience of independence and the violent conflict associated with the war of independence. It also reflects the current context of the spillover impacts of the Rohingya refugee crises. Bangladesh gained independence from Pakistan after the Bangladesh Liberation War, which took place in 1971. The conflict resulted in thousands of casualties as well as the mass rape of Bangladeshi women by Pakistani soldiers. In 2010, Bangladesh's Awami League (AL) government established an International Crimes Tribunal (ICT), a domestic court charged with investigating the genocide and war crimes that occurred during the 1971 war. However, the court as yet has not fully addressed wartime sexual and gender-based violence. More recently, in 1997, Bangladesh has signed the Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord in order to end the long-lasting ethnic conflict between the Bangladeshi government and its indigenous populations. Since 2017, Bangladesh has also been grappling with the spillover effects of Myanmar's ethnic cleansing campaign against the Rohingya people, and currently the country hosts over 700,000 Rohingya refugees, most of whom are women and girls.

Jordan

Jordan's NAP reflects the geopolitical challenges that the country has faced since its establishment. Since the 1940s, the country has struggled to overcome several challenges related to ongoing instability in the Middle East—ranging from Arab-Israeli wars, the unresolved Palestinian national question, the West Bank status and the refugee crisis, occupations and political coups in neighboring countries, and more recently the repercussions of the Arab Spring that began in 2011. Jordan, however, has succeeded in transforming these challenges into opportunities, establishing a stable country capable of providing its citizens with education, employment and the participation of both men and women in relief and recovery efforts. This was possible despite political challenges, scarce natural resources and the significant recent influx of refugees. Despite regional tensions and challenges, Jordan has not been involved in any armed conflicts. The country has, however, suffered serious impacts of the regional conflicts and refugees.

Indonesia

The Aceh conflict between the armed pro-independence movement GAM and the Indonesian government, which peaked in 1989 and concluded in a peace deal signed in 2005, killed between 10 to 30 thousand people, including many civilians. The human rights court and truth commission that was called for in the peace deal never materialized, and victims and families are still waiting for truth, justice, and reparations for the mass human rights abuses that occurred during the conflict, including violence against women, including rape and sexual harassment, torture of villagers and civilians (men and women), kidnappings and killings (mostly of men) of suspected supporters of the independence movement. Additionally, Indonesia has previously had conflict with Timor-Leste and currently faces demands for independence from armed non-state actors.

5.3 COMPARATIVE PROFILES OF THE NATIONAL ACTION PLANS

This section provides a textual analysis of the NAPs under review. A framework based on ‘indicators’ which reflect key elements of the WPS Agenda and UNSCR 1325 as well as key objectives of this study, is developed to evaluate how each NAP integrates key elements of WPS agenda in its text. The list of 8 ‘Key Indicators’ used to develop comparative country profiles are as below:

- 1) *National Action Plans (Titles, Dates, decrees)*
- 2) *Strategic Goals/Key aims: Relevance to WPS*
- 3) *Coherence to International and National frameworks*
- 4) *WPS Pillars:*
 - 4.1. *Prevention*

4.2. *Participation*

4.3. *Protection*

4.4. *Relief and Recovery*

- 5) *Identity Factors: definition of women in different roles/segments*
- 6) *Civil society participation:*
- 7) *Responsible Institutions*
- 8) *Financial Plan*

The table below lists each element of the Framework and indicates similarities and differences in approaches to the NAPs followed by the three countries. In the following section we provide a disaggregated comparative analysis of various elements of the NAPs.

5.4 COMPARATIVE PROFILES OF NATIONAL ACTION PLANS OF BANGLADESH, INDONESIA AND JORDAN

Key Indicator: No.1. National Action Plans (Dates, Titles, decrees)		
Bangladesh	Indonesia	Jordan
2018: First National Action Plan (NAP) for the period of 2019-2022	2014: National Action Plans for the Protection and Empowerment of Women and Children during Social Conflicts in 2014-2019 (RAN P3A-KS)	2018-2021-Jordanian National Action Plan (JONAP)

Key Indicator: 2. Strategic Goals/Key aims: Relevance to WPS		
Bangladesh	Indonesia	Jordan
<p>#1. To increase awareness and knowledge of key government institutions on root causes of conflict and violent extremism</p> <p>#2. Enhance capacity of key institutions to address root causes of violent extremism including an understanding of the role women play in preventing conflict and VE.</p> <p>#3. Key government institutions are provided with evidence on gender-sensitive policies and initiatives that are effective in promoting social cohesion, tolerance and diversity including gender equality.</p> <p>#4. To establish dialogue platforms and networks of women leaders and civil society actors in order to strengthen social cohesion, social harmony and the prevention of conflict and violent extremism. (p.8)</p>	<p>#1. Key goal is to streamline the protection and empowerment of women and children during conflicts.</p> <p>#2. To serve as a guideline for the ministries/institutions and local governments during conflicts.</p> <p>#3. Support coordinated and planned actions of relevant institutions/ministries.</p> <p><i>Indonesia NAP does not mention preventing violent extremism, and is focused primarily on women and children in conflict environments</i></p>	<p>#1. Achieve gender-responsiveness and meaningful participation of women in the security sector and in peace operations.</p> <p>#2. Achieve meaningful participation of women in preventing radicalization and violent extremism, as well as in national and regional peace building.</p> <p>#3. Ensure the availability of gender-sensitive humanitarian services (including psychological, social, legal and medical services) that are safely accessible by Jordanians and refugees (including those women and girls most vulnerable to violence and in need of protection, in host communities and refugee camps in Jordan), in full alignment with the Jordanian Response Plan for the Syrian crisis.</p> <p>#4. Foster a community culture that recognizes gender-specific needs, the importance of gender equality and the role of women (including young women) in peace and security.</p>

Key Indicator: 3. Coherence to International and National frameworks		
Bangladesh	Indonesia	Jordan
<p>#1. International Frameworks</p> <p>a. Mentions UNSCR 1325 in the preamble: The preamble highlights Bangladesh’s pivotal role in initiating the creation of UNSCR 1325 (2000)</p> <p>b. Clear link to WPS Agenda: Framework of NAP references all four overarching objectives, grouped under prevention, participation, and protection, relief, and recovery, reflect the pillars of WPS/ UNSCR 1325/ (P.2)</p> <p>Also mentioned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Declaration on Elimination of Violence against Women 1993¹⁴ Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) 1979¹³ - Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action 1995¹⁵ - Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) 1999¹⁶ - Commission on the Status of Women, Resolution 57, 2013 - Declaration on the Protection of Women and Children in Emergency and Armed Conflict 1974 - Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 	<p>#1. International Frameworks</p> <p>a. No mention of UNSCR 1325: Gov. considers RAN P3A-KS) a presidential decree and NOT a NAP.</p> <p>b. Mentions implementation of “principles of peace and security for women and children” (p.7) without mentioning WPS Agenda</p> <p>c. Establishes links to Universal Declaration of Human Rights</p> <p>d. Establishes links to Ratification of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. (p. 8)</p> <p>National Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NAP has Status of National Regulation and is linked to Provisions of Article 18 paragraph (2) of Presidential Regulation No.18 of 2014 on the Protection and Empowerment of Women and Children during Social Conflict. - Law No. 7 of 2012 on Social Conflict Management - National Medium-Term Development Plan of 2010 – 2014 - National Medium-Term Development Plan of 2015 – 2019 - National Long-Term Development Plan 2005-2025. <p>These National Action Plans also relate to the elaboration of the program activities at the provincial and district/city level.</p>	<p>#1. International Frameworks</p> <p>a. Mentions Implementation of UNSCR 1325 (UNSCR 1325) and its subsequent resolutions in the Introduction and the text.</p> <p>b. Clear links with WPS framework and Agenda: Framework mentions: Protection, Participation, Prevention, Relief and recovery</p> <p>c. NAP-WPS makes a link to UN Security Council Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security, and includes a pillar on issues of violent extremism</p> <p>#2. National Strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National Coalition on 1325 - Links with the Comprehensive National Human Dev. Plan (2016-2025) - The National Strategy for Jordanian Women (2013-2017) - Jordan’s Vision 2025 (2015-2025) Document

<p>#2. National Strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Suppression of Violence against Women and Children Act 2000 - Directives of the High Court division to prevent sexual harassment against women and children in the workplace and educational institutions 2009⁶ - The Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act, 2010 - The National Women Development Policy 2011 - The Human Trafficking (Deterrence and Suppression) Act 2012 - National Action Plan on National Women Development Policy 2013 - National Action Plan to Prevent Violence Against Women and Children 2018- 2030 - National Plan for Disaster Management (2010 – 2015) The Chittagong Hill Tract (Peace) Accord 1997 - The 7th Five-year Plan (FYP) FY 2016- FY2020 - The on-going CVE initiatives are being undertaken by the 17- member National Committee on Militancy Resistance and Prevention formed in 2009 		
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Key Indicator: No.4. WPS Pillars		
4.1 Prevention		
Bangladesh	Indonesia	Jordan
<p>#1. Bangladesh NAP addresses prevention of violence against women, girls and children as a priority.</p> <p>#2. NAP ensures that key institutions have capacity to address root causes of VE including an understanding of the role women play in preventing conflict and VE.</p> <p>#3. Key government institutions have evidence on gender-sensitive policies and initiatives that are effective in promoting social cohesion, tolerance and diversity including gender equality.</p> <p>#4. NAP supports the establishment of dialogue platforms and networks of women leaders and civil society actors in order to strengthen social cohesion, social harmony and the prevention of conflict and violent extremism. (p.8)</p> <p>#5. Recognizes that concerns related to prevention of crisis and global frameworks have not adequately addressed emergency.</p> <p>#6. Acknowledges and supports promotion of the active and diverse roles that women play in PVE and inter-communal, inter-ethnic and racial tensions, which need to be recognized. (p.8)</p>	<p>#1 Provide accurate data and studies on women and children in conflict areas.</p> <p>#2. NAP provides for studies of gender-based violence cases in conflicts situations.</p> <p>#3. Builds awareness of the communities, local governments, and traditional institutions, religious community forums of communication to give protection for women and children during conflicts.</p> <p>#4. To Intensify the role of mass media, dissemination of information on the protection of women and children during conflicts.</p> <p>#5 Calls for increased number of trainers for the prevention of violence against women and children during conflicts.</p> <p>#6. Promises better understanding of the Presidential Regulation on RAN P3A-KS and the need to establish P3A RAN PK working groups in the regions.</p> <p>#7. Increased understanding of peace and Gender Justice among children. (Pages 38-39)</p>	<p>#1 Women (including young women), CSOs and national institutions are able to contribute to efforts to prevent violent extremism (PVE), through responsive and gender-sensitive approaches</p> <p>#2 Women (including young women), CSOs and national institutions are able to contribute to efforts to prevent violent extremism (PVE), through responsive and gender-sensitive approaches.</p> <p>#3 Local communities, society at large, and youth in particular acknowledge and actively promote gender equality and the role of women (including young women) in peace and security. (JONAP, Strategic Goal 4. Outcomes).</p>

4.2. Participation Pillar		
Bangladesh	Indonesia	Jordan
<p>1. Ensures that women and men have increased awareness of the importance of women participation in decision making in peace and security issues (<i>% of local government stakeholders, CSOs, civil servants and general public aware of women’s role in peace building, conflict management and security, WPS principles- disaggregated by sex</i>)</p> <p>#2. Laws, policies are in place to enable women increased participation in decision-making positions related to peace and security issues. (<i>Indicators: Assessment of key challenges, barriers to women participation in decision-making positions, #of laws, policies revised, amended, passed, developed drafted, # of measures implemented to advance women official role of women in leadership positions, especially security sector including in Peacekeeping</i>)</p> <p>#3 Women capacity for leadership is enhanced regarding peace and security issues at the community, sub- national and National level. (<i>Indicators: #of women parliamentarians and elected local councilors who have increased their knowledge of WPS, # of women disaggregated by institutional affiliation and geographical representation increased leadership in decision making, negotiation, mediation and conflict resolution skills</i>).</p>	<p>#1. NAP calls for the implementation of TOT (<i>Training of Trainers</i>) of women on peace, and security.</p> <p>#2. NAP ensures increased participation of women as mediators and negotiators of peace in conflict areas. (<i>Indicators: # of women who have attended TOT and training of women, peace, and security, # of women who have been involved as mediators and negotiators of peace in conflict areas</i>).</p> <p>#3. Calls for the provision of accurate and the current data on empowerment of women and children during conflicts.</p> <p>#4. Calls for increased economic empowerment of women and children in conflict areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased productive business undertaking of women who are victims of conflicts, • % Improved self- resilience and skills of women and children in conflict areas. • Increased manpower skills for women who are victims of conflicts. <p>Better promotion of the products made by the women’s groups who are victims of conflicts.</p>	<p>#1. Achieve gender-responsiveness and meaningful participation of women in the security sector and in peace operations (<i>indicators: % increase in the number of women participating in the security sector, % increase in the number of women in leadership positions in the security sector, % increase in the number of women participating in peacekeeping missions, # of security sector institutions with gender advisors / gender focal points</i>)</p> <p>#2. Meaningful participation of women in preventing radicalization and VE and national and regional peace building (<i>Indicators: % increase in the number of women participating in the development of national policies, laws and programs to prevent radicalization and violent extremism, # of women, men and youth with changed religious concept of gender roles and tolerance</i>)</p> <p>#3. Increase funding and resources allocated to national organizations to roll out women’s community-based programming on tolerance and the reduction of violent extremism. (<i>Indicators: % Increase in the number of Jordanian women who participated in national, regional and international mediation networks</i>)</p> <p>#4. Youth throughout the Kingdom are aware of the importance of gender equality and the participation of women (including young women) in peace and security and are supported in establishing networks and alliances aimed at highlighting the role of women, and encouraging young women’s participation in peace and security. (<i>Annex Strategic Goal 4. Outputs</i>).</p>

4.3. Protection Pillar		
Bangladesh	Indonesia	Jordan
<p>#1 Capacity of security sector law enforcement agencies and local government is enhanced to be more Gender responsive (<i>indicators: number of police and military officers' complete trainings and understand principles of WPS, #of women in security sector who have received specialized training, #of security sector personnel who have received trainings on zero tolerance of Gender based, violence, abuse and sexual exploitation</i>).</p> <p>#2. UN Peacekeeping troops deployed have a strengthened capacity to protect women and men from sexual abuse and exploitation during their deployment.</p>	<p>#1. Provide for and increase in role of women and children care service units in protecting women and children in conflict areas and to provide the protection of women and children during conflicts.</p> <p>#2. Ensures availability of urban green open spaces for women and children in conflict-prone areas.</p> <p>#3. Provision of complaint service for women and children who are victims of violence in conflict areas.</p> <p>#4. Provision of basic and specific needs of women and children who are victims of conflicts in the shelters.</p> <p>#5. Increasing rescue and special protection to women and children and human rights activists from becoming victims of violence in conflict zones</p>	<p>#1. Government agencies, local communities, media and civil society have increased knowledge of the negative effects of gender-based violence (GBV) and conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV), and how to address them, with actions undertaken to strengthen services and GBV- related prosecutions.</p> <p>#2. Advocacy and community outreach campaigns regarding the negative effects of GBV and CRSV are conducted.</p> <p>#3. Instruments to monitor document and report GBV and CRSV are created, linked to national structures and systems.</p> <p>#4. Prosecutors, judges and the security sectors are trained on how to handle GBV and CRSV, and promote access to safe reporting channels. (<i>Annex Strategic Goal 3. Outcomes</i>)</p>

4.4. Relief and Recovery		
Bangladesh	Indonesia	Jordan
<p>#1. Capacity of security sector law, enforcement agencies (police, military, first responders, medical staff etc.) and local government is enhanced to respond to disasters, emergencies, humanitarian crises including the capacity to address Gender based Violence. (Indicators same as protection pillar)</p> <p>#2. Knowledge of government and civil society stakeholders including first responders in disasters and emergency situations is increased to protect women safety and well-being in peace and security settings. (Indicators; # of persons/disaster management committees trained on Standing Order on Disasters (SOD) on gender perspectives, # capacity and learning needs assessment, or service package on Gender, in disasters and humanitarian action for first responders/emergency staff, # of female first responders fully trained and recruited, # of CSOs trained in at-risk communities, to deliver gender sensitive emergency response in disasters, and crisis management including evacuation procedures)</p>	<p>#1. Providing health rehabilitation services which are free of charge for women and children who are victims of violence in conflict areas.</p> <p>#2. Ensure availability of reproductive health services, which are free of charge to women and children who are victims of violence in conflict areas.</p> <p>#3. Provide social rehabilitation services free of charge for women and children who are victims of violence in conflict areas.</p> <p>#4. Provide social reintegration services free of charge for women and children who are victims of violence in conflict and conflict-prone areas</p> <p>#4. Provides for legal aid and assistance, which are free of charge to women and children who are victims of violence in conflict areas.</p> <p>#5. Provision of basic and specific needs of women and children who are victims of conflicts in the shelters.</p> <p>#6. Providing educational service facilities that are adequate for children and teenagers in conflict areas.</p>	<p>#1. Ensure the availability of gender-sensitive humanitarian services (including psychological, social, legal and medical services) that are safely accessible by Jordanians and refugees (including those women and girls most vulnerable to violence and in need of protection, in host communities and refugee camps in Jordan), in full alignment with the Jordanian Response Plan for the Syrian Crisis.</p> <p><i>Indicators: # of qualified women engaged in providing services in host communities and refugee camps, % increase in number of women aware of available services in host communities and in refugee camps, % increase of the targeted group aware of the negative effects of GBV and CRSV, and how to address them, # of cases of violence against women successfully adjudicated through national courts or competent authorities (Annex Strategic Goal 3)</i></p> <p>#2. Government agencies, local communities, media and civil society have increased knowledge of the negative effects of gender-based violence (GBV) and conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV), and how to address them, with actions undertaken to strengthen services and GBV- related prosecutions. (Annex Strategic Goal 3. Outcomes).</p>

Key Indicator: 5. Identity Factors: definition of women in different roles/segments		
Bangladesh	Indonesia	Jordan
<p>#1. Identity factors and social characteristics: <i>Most Comprehensive</i></p> <p>a. NAP Acknowledges and supports promotion of the active and diverse roles that women play in PVE and inter-communal, inter-ethnic and racial tensions, which need to be recognized. (P.8)</p> <p>b. NAP Implementation framework mentions special mapping and focus on women in ‘at Risk areas’ and ‘ethnic categories’ (Framework: Prevention section: Activity 1.2).</p> <p>#2. Public professional roles and identity attributions: <i>Comprehensive</i></p> <p>a. Capacity building and awareness interventions also disaggregated across various professional roles and social identities. (Etc. <i>law enforcement actors, peacekeepers members of security forces, civil society and local government stakeholders, Women youth and women parliamentarians</i>).</p>	<p>#1. Identity factors and social characteristics: <i>Limited</i></p> <p>a. NAP Implementation framework focuses mainly on women and children in conflict zones.</p> <p>#2. Public professional roles and identity attributions: <i>Limited</i></p> <p>Capacity building and awareness interventions are disaggregated across various professional roles including: Women, mediators and negotiators of peace in conflict areas, children and teenagers.</p>	<p>#1. Identity factors and social characteristics: <i>Adequate</i></p> <p>The Jordan NAP makes strong and clear references to ‘refugees’ and the refugee population (addressed by strategic goal 3), with the indicators disaggregated to capture that identity group.</p> <p>The Jordan plan mentions ‘youth’ and as noted, also makes a cross-reference to Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security in the narrative of the plan. 1:</p> <p>#2. Public professional roles and identity attributions: <i>Comprehensive</i></p> <p>a. JNOP references ‘military women,’ ‘retirees,’ women as ‘peacekeepers,’ ‘female community leaders,’ ‘teachers’ and ‘professors.’ For example, under Strategic Goal 1, a ‘Proposed Initiative’ is: ‘Participation of military women (workers or retirees) in the educational lectures held by representatives of civil society organizations’</p> <p>b. Under Strategic Goal 2, a ‘Proposed Initiative’ is to: ‘Train female community leaders, mothers, teachers, professors and youth to become constructive voices in efforts to address violent extremism.’</p>

Key Indicator: 6. Consultative platforms for Civil Society participation in NAP formulation/implementation		
Bangladesh	Indonesia	Jordan
<p>#1. Civil society organizations were engaged and participated from the beginning of the NAP process.</p> <p>#2. Representatives from two civil society organizations are members of the NAP Coordination Group led by Ministry of Foreign Affaires¹⁵⁸ (NAP. p.12)</p>	<p>#1. Civil society organizations were engaged and participated from the beginning of the NAP process</p> <p>#2. The Log Framework provided in the annex mentions the engaging civil society organizations and providing capacity building training but does not mention any one specific civil society organization as part of the Implementing team.</p>	<p>#1. Civil society organizations are engaged and partnered with government institutions to formulate and implement NAP.</p>

Key Indicator: 7. Institutional Responsibilities

Bangladesh	Indonesia	Jordan
<p>Inter-ministerial Coordination Group led by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is tasked to monitor and Implement NAP.</p> <p>The Coordination Group consists of representatives from:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) 2. Public Security Division, Ministry of Home Affairs (MOHA) 3. Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MOWCA) 4. Ministry of Disaster Management & Relief (MODMR) 5. Armed Forces Division (AFD) 6. Bangladesh Police 7. Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs (MOCHTA) 8. Ministry of Information 9. Ministry of Education 10. Ministry of Religious Affairs 11. Local Government Division, Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development 12. Two civil society representatives 	<p>Coordinating Minister of the People's Welfare of the Republic of Indonesia, leads:</p> <p>A Central Coordinating Team and working groups at the provincial, district and city level include the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. National Commission on Women Empowerment and Child Protection or KPP PA (Activities coordinator) 2. Police, Ministry of Law and Human Rights 3. Ministry of Communication & Information 4. Ministry of Home Affairs 5. Attorney General Office, National Commission on Child Protection 6. Indonesian Police 7. Ministry of Social Affairs 8. National Commission on Child Protection (KPAI) 9. Indonesian Institute of Science (LIPI) 10. Ministry of Defense. 11. Indonesian Armed Force 12. Ministry of Social Affairs 13. Ministry of Development of Disadvantaged Regions 	<p>Secretary General of the Ministry of Interior leads a <i>High-Level Steering Committee for advancing the implementation of UNSCR 1325</i> in Jordan approved by Prime Minister on 6th March 2016.</p> <p>Steering Committee members include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Secretary General of the Ministry of Interior 2. Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates 3. Secretary General of the Ministry of Justice 4. Secretary General of the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs 5. Secretary General of the General Ifta' Department 6. Director General of Supreme Judge Department 7. Assistant Director of the General Command of the Armed Forces- Arab Army 8. Assistant Director of the Public Security Directorate 9. Assistant Director of the General Directorate of the Gendarmerie

Key Indicator: 8. Financing		
Bangladesh	Indonesia	Jordan
<p>#1. All Programs under the NAP/WPS to be funded primarily by the state budgeting mechanism.</p> <p>#2. Each relevant ministry to allocate funding for programs from annual budgets</p> <p>#3. Each responsible ministry budgets to incorporate priority actions identified in the NAP/WPS into their annual budgets.</p> <p>#4. Additional resources maybe sought from prospective international and multinational development partners.</p>	<p>#1. The funding needed to implement RAN P3A-KS shall be allocated from the budgets of the respective ministries/institutions. (p. 5, Article 8)</p>	<p>#1. Funding mechanism unclear and not specified in the JONAP (p. 25)</p> <p>#2. JONAP emphasizes NEED to mobilize national financial resources in addition to international funding but does not allocate clear budgets or national funds for the effort.</p> <p>#3. Identifies <i>“Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund” (WPHF)</i> as a likely international source of rapid and flexible funding.</p>

5.5 BRIEF COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE THREE NAPS: STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES:

- All three NAPS clearly respond to three different geo-political contexts and the nature of national challenges that each country faces. All three also take varying approaches to respond to issues related to security of women and children in in-country conflict environments as well as impacts of violent extremism under different contexts.
- Out of the three, **Bangladesh's NAP** provides a holistic and comprehensive model for NAPs for other South Asian countries that are similarly grappling with multiple cross cutting peace and security issues. Bangladesh NAP is clear in its aim to *prevent* all kinds of gender-based violence through protection, participation, and provision of relief and rehabilitation of women impacted conflict and violence. The NAP clearly reflects Bangladesh's unique history of war of liberation and the traumatic experience of sexual and physical violence against women during that period. At the same time, it also attempts to address the current national level challenges Bangladesh faces in the shape of the rising incidents of violent extremism and the refugee crisis involving the Rohingya.
- The NAP also reflects Bangladesh's international role and commitments. The country has played a pivotal role in initiating the creation of UNSCR 1325 (2000), the first resolution of the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) Agenda, and underscores the country's ongoing commitment to advancing gender equality at the national and international level. NAP establishes an unambiguous and direct link with UNSCR 1325 and the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) Agenda. The NAP log framework successfully outlines a detailed implementation plan with clear indicators, interventions and institutional responsibilities related to all four pillars of the UNSCR 1325 and WPS agenda, namely: Prevention, Participation, Protection and Relief and Recovery.
- Importantly, there is a clear and detailed disaggregation of roles and responsibilities and identity factors. This is important to note as it relates to analysis in previous chapters, which suggest that National Security Frameworks and other women protection laws, and regulations in Pakistan remain inaccessible to women in marginalized peripheral regions and conflict zones in the country. Another key strength of the Bangladesh NAP is the prominent role assigned to civil society organization especially women CSOs which goes beyond just the formulation of the NAP document. Two prominent Civil Society Organizations are part of the NAP Coordination Group headed by Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which provides oversight to NAP Implementation process. Lastly, an important factor is the Financial Structure of the Bangladesh NAP, which stipulates that all Programs under the NAP/WPS are to be funded primarily by the state budgeting mechanism. This creates wider National level ownership (*government, political and civil society institutions*) of the women empowerment and peace and security agenda.
- Jordanian NAP (JONAP) on the other hand lacks a clear **funding mechanism** and instead looks to international funding sources. This is a serious weakness of an otherwise comprehensive National Plan and raises questions about its future viability and implementation. **Indonesian NAP** despite its limited scope and focus is substantively clear on funding, budgetary and institutional parameters. It is entirely internally focused on protection and participation issues of women and children in conflict scenarios. It completely avoids any linkages and references with UNSCR 1325 and the wider WPS Agenda and references to violent extremism. Its status as a Presidential Decree/ Act and National Regulation grounds it firmly as a national law with wide national institutional ownership and implementation and financing mechanisms.

5.6 GUIDANCE DOCUMENT FOR IN-COUNTRY CONSULTATIONS

Introduction

All three NAPs reviewed contain important lessons and provide pathways for countries like Pakistan to integrate principles of UNSCR 1325 and WPS Agenda into its national security frameworks. Despite constraints there are some current opportunities and openings for engaging high level government institutions on consultations on the subject. Following are guidance suggestions for in-country consultations on the subject:

1. Pakistan's own geo-political environment and successive international military interventions in its region especially the war in Afghanistan has made Pakistani state reluctant to endorse any global framework which defines intra-state conflicts as subjects for international interventions or purview. Given this scenario, both the Bangladesh and Indonesian NAPs provide pathways for discussions with the Pakistan state and societal stakeholders both at national and sub-national level to find ways of integrating WPS principles into its existing Internal Security Frameworks (reviewed in Chapter 4.) without compromising its larger national security goals. In any case engaging Pakistani state institutions on a course correction of its broader international security and conflict related perceptions is beyond the remit of UN Women Pakistan. Pakistan is at the moment also engaged in developing a broad National Security Strategy that integrates its internal and external security dynamic. UN Women with its global mandate should support a multi-stakeholder effort to support the government in integrating a gender lens into its national and internal security policies.
2. Identifying gaps, sharing knowledge, evidence and global best practices without linkages with UNSCR 1325 and WPS Agenda: Pakistan's current security frameworks and its National Disaster Management Policies/frameworks clearly reference all four essential pillars of the WPS Agenda without creating any obvious linkages with the International Resolutions. The gap analysis and the context analysis presented in this current report indicate policy and implementation gaps in all key four areas which should become subjects of consultations with the government. Consultations with government stakeholders should focus on identification of gaps in strategic frameworks as well as the implementation frameworks and work plans related to the policies. The matrix developed for the comparative analysis the three country NAPs condense global best practices and may be shared to government stakeholders in order to discuss pathways of integrating into Pakistan own existing frameworks or developing new instruments for implementation.
3. Priority area for consultations: The pillar of 'Relief and Recovery': relates to protection, prevention and participation of women during man-made and humanitarian crises including conflicts. The recent IDP crises and the issues faced by women in conflict and post conflict environments in the newly Merged Districts, are opportunities to discuss more comprehensive strategies to strengthen government and societal response to support women during crises. The Indonesian NAP serve as a good model of a very strong policy and implementation response targeted to support women in conflict zones. The model can easily be adapted to fit Pakistan's country context and provide a strong policy framework and implementation plan for the protection of women and children during man-made and humanitarian disasters.
4. Integrating women economic empowerment agenda into the Women, Peace and Security Agenda: The Indonesian NAP is also noteworthy that it integrates economic empowerment agenda into its strategy to support women in conflict and post conflict environments. There are substantive lessons and good practices within the Indonesian model for Pakistan, which can be adapted to support economic empowerment of women during and after in humanitarian and man-made crises or post conflict situations in Pakistan.

5. Importantly, Pakistan's security frameworks lack a clear and detailed disaggregation of roles and responsibilities and identity factors. This is important to note as it relates to analysis in previous chapters, which suggest that National Security Frameworks and other women protection laws, and regulations in Pakistan remain inaccessible to women in marginalized peripheral regions and conflict zones in the country. Here the lessons learned and best practices noted in the three-country comparative analysis maybe used to develop a more context specific matrix identity and role disaggregated matrix specifically for Pakistan.
6. The National Security Policy: According to information currently the government of Pakistan under the leadership of the newly appointed NSA Dr. Moeed Yousaf is in the process of developing a National Security Policy. NSA Dr. Yousaf in his meetings with various donors has suggested that the National Security Policy, which is under development, will integrate a gender perspective and gender lens on security. This is an opportunity for UN Women to engage the NSA in a high-level policy dialogue on pathways of ensuring the integration of principles of protection, prevention, participation and relief and recovery into the new National Security Policy document. This initiative may also provide a good opportunity to share the gap analysis of Pakistan's existing Security Frameworks, which is part of this study with the NSAs office and explore opportunities of UN Women support to the government's initiative in terms of provision of high-level technical expertise and capacity for the integration of best practices of women peace and security into Pakistan new National Security Policy.
7. As follow up actions UN Women may provide technical assistance to key Government stakeholders in integrating best practices within their existing policy frameworks as well as support with the development of realistic implementation plans.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND PATHWAY FORWARD FOR STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIONS

The Gap Analysis has attempted to integrate existing knowledge on Women Peace and Security frameworks with Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) lens to provide comprehensive analysis of the gender dimension of the state's internal security policies in Pakistan. This dual lens has allowed us to interrogate the gender dimension from beyond simply 'inclusion' and 'participatory' perspectives. Analysis of Pakistan's in-country conflict context identified gender-specific security needs and specific vulnerabilities of women and girls within conflict/post conflict zones and communities that are at-risk of violent extremism. The analysis also identified how the conflict dynamic at the local level created conditions that further marginalized women in communities facing conflict and extremism challenges, undermining their ability to access protections offered by Pakistanis state legal and constitutional frameworks.

This chapter offers certain concrete recommendations based on the gap analysis, identifying programmatic entry points for UN Women at the: *National, Sub-National and Community/local Level*. These recommendations go above and beyond those that have been included in "Guidance Note: Chapter 5".

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Engage NSA office and present findings of the Gap analysis: *see detailed recommendations in Chapter 5: Guidance Note*. As noted earlier, consultations with the government can focus on all four pillars of Women, Peace and Security without referencing UNSCR 1325 and WPS agenda.
2. Explore opportunities to set up a result oriented *Consultative Platform* possibly led by the PM office and the National Security Adviser (NSA) bringing together relevant ministries: *Ministry of Interior*

& NACTA, Ministry of Information and National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW) to discuss and share findings of the Gap Analysis.

3. As discussed in Chapter 5, Peace and Development Unit as an intra-governmental coordination mechanism has not functioned optimally as it is housed in the Ministry of Planning, Development and Reform. Dr. Moeed Yousaf the present NSA was closely involved in setting up the unit and is aware of all the challenges it faced. Consultations with the NSA could also explore whether placing the P&D Unit within Ministry of Interior, which has the mandate to address internal peace, and security issues can result in revitalizing the P&D Unit and restoring it to its original purpose and mandate.
4. Inputs collated through the *consultation process* are used to develop a *Sensitization and Capacity Building Program* to enable government counterparts: (*national, sub-national and local level*) to sufficiently acknowledge women's multidimensional role and agency in National Security frameworks, national counter narratives, peace building, security sector and P/CVE programs especially in conflict and post conflict scenario.
5. Engage the Interior Ministry and NACTA in a bilateral dialogue; develop a matrix based on the gender related gaps identified the this report (Chapter 4), provide capacity and technical support in making mainstreaming gender within the body of National Internal Security policy (NISF) and National Counter Extremism Policy Guidelines (NCEPG) and discuss how gender can be

mainstreamed within these security frameworks as well as the implementation plans in light of evidence from Pakistan and global best practices. So far, the current government has shown little interest in ownership and operationalizing the NCEPG as it was developed during the tenure of the previous government. MOI (Ministry of Interior) may be more interested in re-launching the Strategy with a stronger framework, which has gender mainstreamed and has a comprehensive implementation plan embedded along with the policy.

6. As a follow up step to the national level consultative dialogue, provincial or sub-national stakeholders especially office of the chief secretaries, PCSWs, Home departments, may be engaged to discuss the role of provincial *Apex Committees* and the participation and inclusion of provincial level women safeguard institutions/statutory bodies and such as the PCSWs and the Ombudspersons Office in policy and security related discussion at the Provincial level.
7. Lack of participation and inclusion of women in Pakistan's security institutions: National Security Institutions, Counter Terror Departments (CTD), Police, Para Military Forces (Frontier Corp and Levis) is a key gap in ensuring all four pillars of WPS. UN Women can lead a multi-Agency

platform along with UNODC to discuss pathways of increasing participation of women in first responders and security forces in conflict zones.

8. Sensitize and capacitate district/local level key government institutions on gender-sensitive policies and initiatives that are effective in promoting social cohesion, tolerance and diversity including gender equality.
9. At the district level, the role women safeguard institutions i.e. DCSWs and Ombudsperson Office especially in KP Province and its conflict affected Newly Merged Districts, must be strengthened. UNDP in FYI 2020-21 with support from GIZ has managed to get 4 DCSWs notified. Their capacity and sensitization on all four pillars: Protection, Prevention, Participation and Relief and Recovery, needs to be undertaken.
10. All UN Women community focused programs in the NMDs, especially those engaging local women for civic and human rights awareness would benefit from integration of sensitization on rights and role of women in peace building and conflict. A context specific training manual incorporating best practices may be developed to engage local women especially women community leaders and women support groups on issues of peace and tolerance.

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