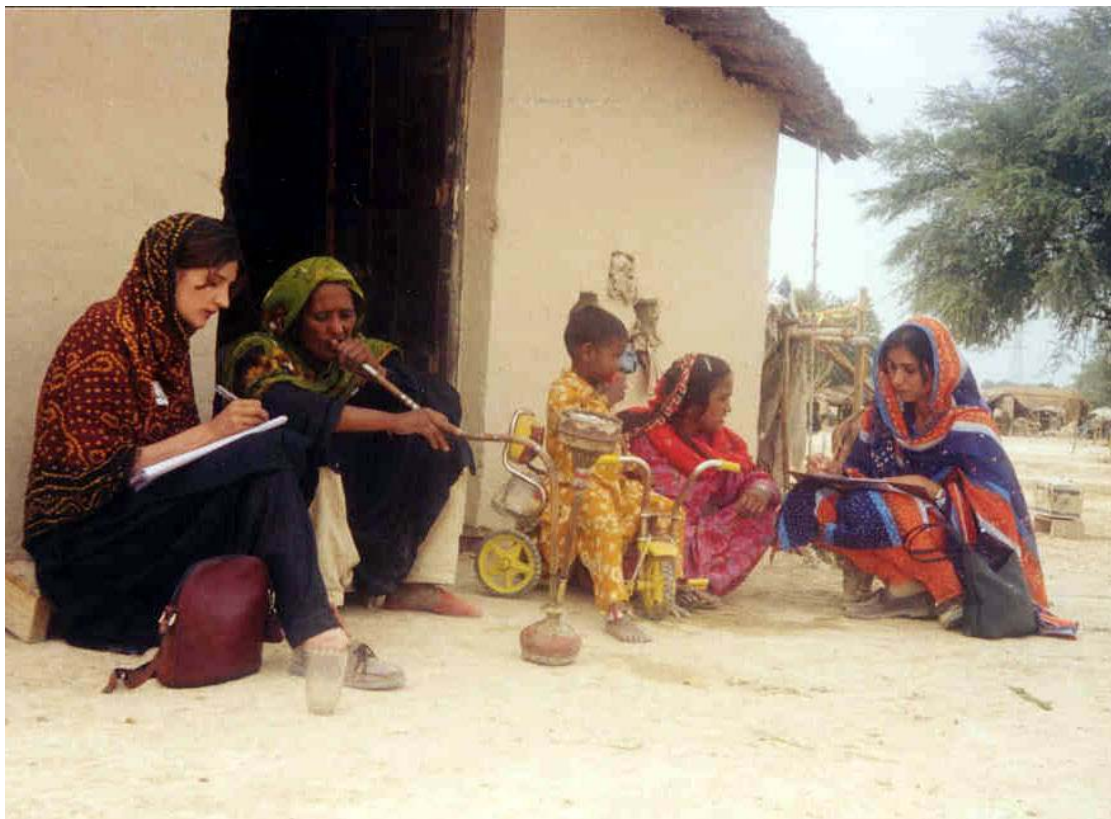


# **Social audit of abuse against women**

## **Final Report**



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## List of acronyms

BHU	Basic Health Unit
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CCB	Citizen Community Board
CIET	Community Information Empowerment & Training
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DCO	District Coordination Officer
DFID	Department for International Development
DHQ	District headquarter hospital
EDO	Executive District Officer
FSCFPP	Federal Steering Committee of FPP
GEUP	Gender Equality Umbrella Project
GoP	Government of Pakistan

GSP	Gender Support Programme
MCHC	Maternal and Child Health Centre
MOWD	Ministry of Women Development
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
PFPP	Pakistan Family Protection Programme
PTA	Parents Teachers Association
RHC	Rural Health Centre
SAAAW	Social Audit of Abuse Against Women
SMC	School Management Committee
THQ	Tehsil headquarter hospital
UC	Union Council
UHC	Urban Health Centre
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services

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## Summary

The objectives of the Social Audit of Abuse Against Women were to:

- Define the extent, status and trends of abuse against women and look behind these statistics to identify positive actions to prevent abuse;
- Raise awareness amongst communities and their leaders of issues of abuse against women and options for action;
- Promote the creation and implementation of community-based strategies to eliminate abuse against women; and
- Define an action plan for the GoP to support community-based strategies to eliminate abuse against women.

Beginning in September 2001, the project was in three phases: design and data collection; evidence-based dialogue and analysis; and communication, dissemination and support for interventions. This report includes a summary of the action plans formulated in the workshopping process in each province, which was also part of the dissemination of the findings, as well as a draft communication strategy for the government to take forward.

## Methods

This first ever nationally representative survey of abuse against women in Pakistan made use of CIET social audit methodology to collect and analyse data and support the use of the findings in developing plans to reduce the problem.

Initially, some 83 key stakeholders from government, academia, NGOs and donors were interviewed about what information was needed and existing studies were reviewed.

### *Instruments and field procedures*

Instruments and field processes were intensively piloted and tested in all four provinces. The adopted field procedure was for more than one interviewer to enter the household: one interviewed the senior woman while the others interviewed the eligible women (all those over 14 years old). Any men present in the households were asked to step outside to be interviewed by a male interviewer. The household instruments included: a questionnaire for eligible women, with questions about perceptions of abuse, experience of abuse and seeking help if abused; a questionnaire for senior women, with questions about household demographics and practices, and perceptions about abuse; a questionnaire for men, similar to that for senior women.

### *The sample*

The sample was designed to give representation of the whole country and of each of the four provinces. Within each district, the allocated number of communities was selected by a two-stage stratified random sampling process. A minimum of one union council per district was included. One community was randomly selected from each union council. In each selected community, all contiguous households up to around 100 were included, radiating from a randomly allocated fixed point in the community. We calculated a weight for each district according to its relative over or under representation in the sample; all indicator values in the report are weighted.

### *Training and data collection*

Field teams composed mainly of women were trained in regions of each province. Training included how to establish a rapport to allow women to disclose their experiences. Data collection was phased across the country, with strong emphasis on monitoring and quality control.

### *Key informant interviews and focus group discussions*

Smaller field teams had further training and returned to the communities to interview the community leader, the Pesh Imam, a woman union councillor, a member of the reconciliation committee (or union council), and the in-charge of the local government health facility. In each community they also conducted separate focus group discussions with women, senior women and men, to discuss the preliminary findings and how matters could be changed.

### *Data management and analysis*

Data entry was programmed with Epi Info. All data were entered twice and validated to reduce key stroke errors. Focus group reports were coded for themes by a small group and also entered onto computer.

Basic frequencies were generated and disaggregated by province. Population-weighted raster maps were generated to show the variation across the country. Analysis of the factors related to the risk of different forms of abuse was undertaken. This risk analysis produced the evidence-base for the workshopping process in the provinces.

### *Workshopping*

In each province, in collaboration with the women development department, working groups were formed with government and non-government representation, to consider the evidence and develop action plans and policy recommendations. Each group met several times over

several weeks or months. The four groups were: educational factors; economic and employment factors; socio-cultural attitudes and practices; and reporting abuse. The workshopping culminated with a plenary workshop in each province in June 2004, where the working groups presented their recommendations.

## Findings

### The evidence base

Some 23,430 women, 8,706 senior women and 1,572 men were interviewed in the households. Over 750 community key informants were interviewed. Over 550 focus groups of women, senior women and men were conducted.

Over half the women (56%) had no formal education at all. Most of them (82%) were not in any form of employment outside the household; 22% of them had some income of their own. Nearly two thirds (61%) of the eligible women interviewed were married, a third were single (35%), 3% were widowed and 1% were divorced. Four out of ten women (43%) (other than those unmarried) reported their husbands had no formal education, and 63% reported their husbands were unemployed or in unskilled labour.

### Household practices

Most households (82%) were in favour of girls' formal education, and 78% thought their local Pesh Imam was in favour of girls' formal education. But almost all Pesh Imams (96%) interviewed in the communities said they were in favour of girls' formal education.

About half the households (55%) said they had a tradition of *watta satta* marriage (exchange marriage). A third (34%) demanded dowry, and nearly all (93%) paid dowry. Few households (10%, n=19980) demanded *walvar/lab* (bride price), except in Balochistan (71%), and few (10%) paid *walvar/lab*, except in Balochistan (73%). In a third of households (33%) the men practised polygamy.

In 3% of households the senior woman said someone in the household was addicted to drugs (excluding tobacco).

It was considered acceptable for women to go out of the house in differing proportions of households, depending on the reason for going out. The main reasons given by focus groups for it not being acceptable for a woman to go out were said to be: lack of trust by men, cultural norms, bad

Household interviews were conducted with:

- 23,430 women
- 8,706 senior women
- 1,572 men

Key informants interviewed

Key informant	Number
Community leader	166
Pesh Imam	147
Member reconciliation cttee*	161
Woman union councillor	139
In-charge health facility	146

\*Or member UC if no reconciliation committee existing

Focus groups conducted:

- 193 groups of women
- 174 groups of senior women
- 187 groups of men

Acceptable for a woman to go out of the house (% households):

To go to work	41
To go to market	58
To visit family	92
To attend a marriage ceremony	93
To go to a <i>Mela</i>	20
To go to parks etc	30
To go to a religious gathering	77
To go to a holy tomb or shrine	63
To go for health care	96

environment outside the house, dishonour for men if the women go out, and no perceived need for women to go out.

### Perceptions about women’s rights and status

Most women (81%), senior women (78%) and men (78%) thought it was alright for a woman to seek legal help for concerns about her property. Most women (75%), and somewhat fewer senior women (66%) and men (61%) thought it was alright for a woman to report to the police a case of violence against her. Respondents had divided views about whether the honour of the family depends on men, women or both. Some 60% of women thought it was alright for a woman to have her right to divorce granted in the marriage contract, while 52% of senior women and 42% of men thought this.

### Perceptions about abuse

Do you think abuse against women includes:	%
	yes
A man staring at a woman?	95
Restrictions on a woman’s activities?	91
Using abusive and foul language?	97
Slapping a woman?	97
Trying to burn a woman? (is it a crime?)	99

There was a remarkable degree of agreement between women about what constitutes abuse, from a man staring at a woman through to burning or attempting to burn a woman.

When asked if a man hitting a woman could be justified “if she has misbehaved” more than half (57%) the eligible women said “yes”. Some 54% of senior woman and 37% of men agreed with this view. The focus groups explored the reasons for this perception about justification for violence and discussed how one might convince someone to change their view about it.

Just over half the eligible women interviewed (54%) said men were the basic cause of physical violence to women, while a fifth (22%) thought women were the basic cause and a quarter (25%) thought both were the cause. The views of senior women on this same question were similar to those of the younger women. Among the men, 39% said men were the basic cause of violence to women, 35% said women, and 26% said both were the cause. Some 74% of senior women and 74% of men thought beating was an unacceptable way for a man to discipline his wife.

Some 6% of women said abuse against women was very common in their community, 33% said it was common and 61% said it was not common. Most participants in focus groups of women and senior women agreed abuse against women was a major issue; and many men’s groups agreed. However, nearly all the groups suggested it was *not* such an issue in their own community, district or province.

## **Information about abuse**

Two thirds of women (67%) said they had discussed abuse against women with other women at some time. Nearly half the women (47%) said they would be able to discuss abuse against women with elders in their community.

Most women (72%) reported that they had at some time seen, read or heard something about abuse against women. Two thirds of the senior women (67%) and just half the men (52%) interviewed said they had some information about this issue. The most common source of information was by word of mouth from neighbours. Younger women got their information more from the television than did the older women or the men. Men got their information more from newspapers. By far the most frequent request in all groups was for information about the reasons for abuse, followed by information about how to prevent abuse happening.

## **Abuse of sisters**

About a quarter of women who could respond (23%) said they had at least one sister who they knew had suffered verbal or physical *harassment* in a public place (for example, at school or at work). Fewer women reported harassment of at least one sister in a public place in Sindh (14%) and NWFP (12%) than in Balochistan (29%) and Punjab (27%).

About two thirds of women who could give an answer (63%) reported they had at least one sister who they knew had suffered *mental or verbal abuse*. The proportion ranged from 52% in Sindh to 78% in Balochistan.

Four out of ten women who could give an answer (41%) reported at least one of their sisters they knew had suffered *beating* by a household member. This ranged from about a third in Sindh (31%) to two thirds in Balochistan (67%).

Just 0.4% of women (n=21346) reported having a sister who they knew had suffered *acid burns*. Some 1% of women reported having a sister who they knew had suffered *stove or other burning*. Some 0.4% of women reported that at least one of their sisters had been the victim of honour killing (*karo kari / gherat ky nam par*).

## Women's experience of abuse and related factors

Nationally, 16% of women said they had experienced *harassment outside the home*. The highest proportion was in Punjab and the lowest proportion was in NWFP. Harassment outside the home was reported more frequently by single women and divorced or separated women than by married women or widows. Many of the factors in the home environment that increased a woman's mobility and decreased her risk of being abused in the home increased her risk of being harassed outside the home. In particular, a woman was more likely to be harassed outside the home if she had employment outside the home.

Nationally, about a fifth of women (21%) said they had been *restricted in their activities as a form of punishment*. Divorced or separated women disclosed more experience of such restrictions than other women. A woman was less likely to experience restrictions as a form of punishment if:

- Her marriage was with consent (or expected to be with consent)
- Her household had no tradition of demanding dowry or walvar
- The men in her household did not practise polygamy
- Women in her household were allowed to go out to the market
- There was no family history of abuse in her household
- Her household was not in the vulnerable category

Just over half the women said they had experienced *mental or verbal abuse* (56%). The highest proportion of women reporting mental or verbal abuse was in Balochistan (70%). This form of abuse was most commonly reported by women who were divorced or separated (83%). A woman was less likely to experience mental and verbal abuse if:

- Her husband had some formal education
- Her husband was in skilled work of some kind
- Her marriage was with consent
- Her household was not in the vulnerable category

Nationally, almost a third of women (30%) disclosed they had been *beaten*. Fewer women disclosed beatings in Sindh (25%) and Punjab (28%) than in NWFP (41%) and Balochistan (50%). The proportion of women who reported beatings was higher divorced or separated women (60%). A woman was less likely to have been beaten if:

- She herself had some formal education
- Her husband had some formal education
- Her household was not in the very vulnerable category

- Her husband was in some sort of skilled work
- Her marriage was, or expected to be, with her consent
- Her age at marriage was 18 years or over
- Her household had no tradition of demanding walvar
- The men in her household did not practise polygamy
- It was acceptable in her household for women to go out to work
- There was no family history of physical abuse in her household
- There was no one addicted to drugs in her household
- She herself did not believe it was justifiable for a man to hit a woman

Only a third of women who had been beaten (35%) had told anyone about it. Many focus group participants thought women did not report abuse to someone inside the family because it would make the problem worse, or give her a bad name within the family. Others mentioned it was out of fear of the family or of being separated or divorced by the husband, or losing her children, or facing more abuse. Only a handful of the nearly 8,000 women who had been beaten said they had told someone outside the family about it, such as the police or a local councillor.

Nationally, some 0.1% of women reported they had suffered burns from an *acid* attack. The rate was similar in all provinces. Only half the women (15/30) who disclosed they had been burned by acid said they had reported this to anyone. Nationally, 0.5% of women reported they had suffered *stove burning* or some other form of burning. Just over half (54%) of them had told someone about it. A few women (2%) disclosed they had experienced *other forms of violence*.

### **Effects of abuse on women's lives**

Nearly half the women (47%) who had experienced some form of abuse said it had affected their lives. Most commonly they said their mental health was affected (71%). Others mentioned anger (13%), or being weak, unable to eat (7%). Nearly all (90%) said the abuse had not stopped them carrying on with their usual work. Some 16% felt the abuse had affected the way their family members related to them, 14% thought it had affected their relationship with their children, and 7% said it had affected the way they related to other people in the community.



## Seeking help for abuse

Among women, the most common suggestions for advice to an abused woman were: to compromise, be tolerant (50%), to involve family members (20%), to seek legal help (13%), and to change her own behaviour (11%). To compromise and be tolerant was also the most common advice proposed by senior women, men and community key informants.

### *Medical care*

Nationally, 12% of women had visited a health service for physical injury in the last year, ranging from 8% in NWFP to 13% in Punjab. Among those who used government health services most paid for the visit (88%). The median amount was Rs 100. Some 10% said they paid for a medico-legal report, at a median cost of Rs 300. Costs for those who visited private services were only slightly higher. Most women (75%) who went to a government health facility with physical injury in the last year were satisfied with the service, while 86% (n=1009) of those who went to a private service were satisfied, and 80% (n=662) of those using unqualified practitioners were satisfied.

Half (55%) the health facilities serving the sample communities had seen injury cases due to violence in the last year; and half (48%) had seen cases suspected to be due to violence. Less than half the facilities (47%) had a systematic way of keeping records of violence cases. Only 12% of facilities provided support other than treatment of the injuries. About a quarter (23%) said they had staff who had received specific training on how to deal with women with injuries due to violence.

### *Police and courts*

Just 3% of women had ever contacted the police, ranging from 2% in NWFP to 5% in Balochistan. Less than half the women (40%) were satisfied with their contact with the police. Just 2% of women had ever contacted the courts.

### *Reporting abuse within the family*

Only 38% of women who had experienced some form of abuse had told someone in the family about it. A woman who had experienced some form of abuse was more likely to tell someone about it if:

- She had some formal education
- She had employment outside the home
- She had some income of her own
- Her household was not in the very vulnerable category
- She was from a household where it was acceptable for women to go out to work

- She was married at aged 18 years or above
- She did not think that a man hitting a woman could be justified

#### *Reporting abuse outside the family*

The number of abused women in the survey who reported the abuse to someone outside the households was so small that a quantitative analysis of the factors related to reporting abuse outside the home was not possible. However, the focus groups of women, senior women and men discussed the issue of reporting abuse and gave their views about why women do not report abuse outside the family.

Participants in focus groups of women said reporting would give a woman a bad name or dishonour her, or dishonour the family, or it would make the problem worse. Women did not report for fear of divorce, separation, losing the children, or facing more abuse. Among senior women's and men's groups, less than a third had a consensus that women should report abuse outside the family.

The most common suggestion from focus groups to help women report was to set up community groups or committees. Most union councillors interviewed agreed that reconciliation committees could have a useful role. In many groups participants did not think the *Pesh Imam* could help, although others thought the Pesh Imam could give religious advice and provide moral leadership. Those groups who thought *community leaders* could help said this would be mainly by their influence on men. Knowledge about the role of *women councillors* was limited but some women thought they could talk to abused women or communicate their problems to a higher level.

### **Evidence-based plans to tackle abuse against women**

#### **Suggestions from community focus groups**

Participants in focus groups of women mostly suggested that a woman could best reduce her risk by being careful and compliant. Others believed a woman could best protect herself and improve the situation for the whole family by being assertive or fighting for her rights, or by becoming economically important to the household. Senior women suggested their role could be to explain to younger women about their role and how to behave. Men mostly said that what made men abuse women was some problem with the behaviour of the woman.

Women focus group participants also stressed the need for a supportive family environment. Abuse against women causes problems for the whole family and only if the whole family is aware of the issue and is willing to deal with it positively can it be effectively tackled. Focus groups and community key informants all stressed the likely beneficial effects of increased education and awareness.

At community level, focus groups and key informants noted the important role for influential people and leaders, and again thought a committee or group could help to solve the problem of abuse against women.

### **Action plans from the provinces**

Working groups in each province considered the evidence in four areas: economic and employment factors, educational factors, socio-cultural attitudes and practices, and reporting of abuse. Each group considered the evidence and then developed action plans and policy recommendations.

#### *Economic and employment factors*

The groups developed recommendations to:

- Improve the workplace environment for women
- Reduce the risk of harassment of women outside the home
- Protect women with an income from abuse at home
- Develop economic opportunities for women

#### *Educational factors*

Recommendations covered the areas of:

- Improve existing education infrastructure
- Improve school management and monitoring
- Promote girls' education
- Increase availability of female teachers
- Curriculum review
- Improve teaching practices
- Non formal education and literacy
- Vocational training and skills development

#### *Socio-cultural attitudes and practices*

The groups recommended in the following areas:

- Age of marriage and woman's consent for marriage
- Tradition of exchange marriage, bride price and dowry
- Polygamy
- Perceptions about justification for hitting a woman

#### *Reporting abuse*

The areas of recommendations came into the areas of:

- Increase social acceptability of women reporting abuse
- Strengthen existing institutions for reporting abuse
- Develop new institutional arrangements to help women report abuse

### **Communication strategy**

The communication strategy for the social audit of abuse against women was already underway at the time of this report, and dissemination of the findings to stakeholders had already taken place in the successful provincial workshopping process.

The strategy (detailed in Annex 7) is based on the evidence, driven by the stakeholders, and oriented towards raising awareness and solving problems. The ultimate goal is to precipitate appropriate decisions and actions in households, services and the different levels of government. The evidence base comes from the findings in the household survey, the focus group discussions, and the analysis of this information, as well as the provincial workshops of key stakeholders.

As pointed out in the provincial workshopping process, a combination of mass media and trusted sources is essential to address values and attitudes deeply entrenched in Pakistani society, and to mobilize stakeholders and communities around the evidence, in order to change social interactions. These interactions occur at different levels of society, indicating the need for a multilayered approach, with different change agents and target groups for each layer. The Ministry of Women Development and the provincial departments of women development are proposed as prime movers, involving as many relevant actors as possible.

The communication strategy also takes into account the objectives of the Pakistan Family Protection Project (PPP) and the Gender Reform Action Programme (GRAP), two major initiatives of the GoP for the advancement of women's rights and gender equality. The aim is to generate synergies between different initiatives that share a common goal: the advancement of women's rights and the protection of their families.

## **Introduction**

The objectives of the Pakistan national Social Audit of Abuse Against Women were to:

- Define the extent, status and trends of abuse against women and look behind these statistics to identify positive actions to prevent abuse;
- Raise awareness amongst communities and their leaders of issues of abuse against women and options for action;
- Promote the creation and implementation of community-based strategies to eliminate abuse against women; and
- Define an action plan for the GoP to support community-based strategies to eliminate abuse against women.

The social audit fell into three phases:

### **Phase 1: Design and data collection**

Phase 1 included the stakeholder consultations, review of relevant studies in Pakistan and internationally, design and piloting of instruments and field processes, selection of the survey sample sites, and collection of data from women in households. The stakeholder consultations and review of relevant studies were covered in detail in the report of the social audit design and consultations, submitted to MOWD in April 2002. The design and piloting of instruments and field processes, which led on directly to the household data collection, were described in detail in the field report on final instruments and field processes, submitted in to MOWD in August 2002.

### **Phase 2: Evidence-based dialogue and analysis**

The initial part of phase 2 included data entry from the household survey and preliminary analysis for the basic frequencies of key indicators. The outcome of this basic analysis was described in detail in the Preliminary Key Findings report submitted to MOWD at the beginning of June 2003. Phase 2 continued with sharing of the results of the preliminary analysis with the government. Focus group discussion guides were developed for taking back and discussing key findings in the survey communities. In each community separate focus groups of women and men discussed the findings and gave their views about solutions to the issues raised. At the same time, key informants in the same communities were interviewed.

Further analysis explored risk and resilience factors for abuse against women, combining quantitative and qualitative data, to indicate interventions that could help to tackle the problem.

### **Phase 3: Communication, dissemination and support for interventions**

This part of the work was undertaken in close collaboration with the Government of Pakistan at federal and provincial levels. It included a workshopping process led by the women development department in each province, with technical support from CIET. In this process, working groups of relevant government and non-government people considered the evidence about the factors related to the risk of abuse against women and developed evidence-based action plans and policy recommendations to tackle abuse against women and support women who experience abuse. This report draws on the recommendations for action arising from the workshopping process in each province and the details of the process are included in Annex 6, which is also available as a separate report.

This report includes a draft communication strategy (Annex 7) for the Government of Pakistan at federal and provincial levels. The strategy is based on the evidence and in draws on the suggestions about effective communication that came from women and men interviewed, female and male focus group participants and stakeholders who participated in the workshopping process in each province.

## Methods

### *Methodology principles*

The CIET social audit methodology has been developed over two decades, working in over 40 countries world wide. The methods are described in detail elsewhere and an overview of the methods is included as Annex 1.

Social audits increase the informed interaction between communities, government and public service providers. A unique combination of quantitative (survey) and qualitative (key informant and focus groups) evidence helps to understand the facts and the relationships between individual experience and community factors. Women and men in civil society, drawn into interpretation of these data in an ordered manner, play the pivotal role in building local solutions. This democratises the decision-making processes and includes the voice of the people in planning. At the national level, these representative data and human interactions around the data provide a step-ladder to designing solutions that are relevant, feasible and acceptable.

The originality and contribution of CIET methods lie in (i) the incorporation of modern epidemiology to evaluate evidence for planning and (ii) the fact that the community voice plays a central role in that evidence, its analysis and resulting action. In this case, it is particularly the voice of women that is being amplified to the national level, by providing evidence from the first ever nationally representative survey of abuse against women in Pakistan. Accuracy of decisions that result from the use of epidemiological method gives meaning and volume to the community voice.

#### A social audit cycle

- Clarify the strategic focus
- Design instruments, pilot test
- Collect information from households on their perceptions and experience
- Link this with information from key informants and relevant services
- Analyse the findings in a way that points to action
- Take findings back to the communities for their views about how to improve the situation
- Bring evidence into discussions between service providers, planners and community representatives to plan and implement changes

The concept of the social audit is simple: collect information about a key problem from the people affected (in this case women), and from other key players, including men, community leaders and relevant service provider, and use this as a basis for involving women and men in civil society and other key stakeholders in making changes to improve the services. The key steps include: collect information from women and men in households in representative communities about their perceptions and experience of the problem and their use of relevant services; link this with information from community leaders and opinion formers as well as service providers; analyse the findings in a way that points to what actions might

improve matters; take the findings back to the communities for their views about what could improve the situation; bring the findings and suggestions to discussions between planners, community leaders and community representatives to plan and implement changes. The loop is closed when a repeat fact-finding exercise assesses the changes and their effects.

Seven components make up the CIET approach to social audit. As applied to the social audit of abuse against women, these can be summarised as follows:

1. *Getting the evidence*: Quantifying abuse against women is a sensitive issue. Some people claim “it does not happen here” or there may be a “cultural” justification. Even reaching a workable definition of abuse is a challenge. As well as evidence on the dimensions of the problem, evidence is also required on public services available to deal with it, or to help prevent it. Public services do not always work as expected. It is easy to assume that a service will have coverage and impact, simply because they are desired or expected. Hard evidence is needed about what is available and how it works in practice.

2. *Civil society participation*: When civil society is brought into the picture in an informed way, co-producing data and then gaining knowledge of the results through carefully targeted communication strategies, a framework is created in which there is meaningful interaction with the public. Results of each audit are returned to the community for discussion in gender-stratified focus groups; participants of these groups may then present their conclusions to community leaders and local government authorities. Through this involvement of civil society the evidence gets socialised, opening a dialogue on a sensitive issue and replacing prejudice with facts.

3. *Impartiality*: Community-based audits by a neutral third party can help to build a culture of transparency in public life. At district, provincial and national level, this can help to build accountability and good governance. For an issue like abuse against women, where there are strong views from different quarters, an impartial process of gathering and analysing evidence is crucial.

4. *Partner buy-in*: Partners in the district, provincial and federal government are actively involved throughout the audit, from the initial stages of design to planning actions based on audit results. Civil society institutions, whether in a service delivery or “watchdog” capacity, are drawn into



the process as key interlocutors. This partner buy-in helps to build a sense of ownership and promotes use of the data for policy and resource allocation planning.

5. *No finger-pointing*: A social audit is intended to focus on system flaws and to build local solutions. It is not about “finger-pointing”. Even negative findings in an audit can be seen as a baseline, a starting-point to improve. For sensitive issues such as abuse against women this is critical to ensure that the evidence is used to change the system, rather than simply as a basis for media reports.

6. *Repeat audits*: Through an understanding of the risk and resilience factors for abuse against women in different areas, efforts can be focussed where they are most likely to have an impact. Strategic emphasis can be modified over time. Through repeat audits it is possible to identify where the gains of particular interventions level out, allowing investment to be fine-tuned. Repeat audits facilitate changes to address abuse against women by maintaining the pressure of evidence. At the same time they can help to build the capacities of government officials and other key stakeholders.

7. *Communication and dissemination of results*: sharing of results and the ability to interpret them is key to transparency and accountability. Informed by fresh evidence, programme managers get to know about the particular mix of circumstances under which an intervention works. Just as importantly, the public is kept apprised of progress. CIET recently adapted its GIS system for social audit. The maps help to focus attention of decision takers and public alike. Strategic involvement of the media in an informed and constructive way is also important.

## ***Methods in the social audit of abuse against women***

### **Evidence review and stakeholder consultation**

This initial part of the social audit was reported in detail in the field report on social audit design and consultations, April 2002. In brief, some 83 key stakeholders from government, academia, civil society and donor organisations were consulted using a structured interview. They gave their views about what information was needed about the problem and, in some cases, their advice about how to go about getting the information. Data from existing surveys and other sources about the issue of abuse against women in Pakistan was reviewed.

A literature review of studies of abuse against women internationally was conducted as part of the social audit. At the request of the MOWD, the international literature review up to that time was included in the interim report submitted at the beginning of December 2003. This final report now includes an update of the international literature review (Annex 2).

### **Instruments and field processes**

#### **Design of instruments and field processes**

This crucial part of the work was described in detail in the field report on final instruments and field processes, August 2002. An intensive and extensive process of progressive piloting and testing was undertaken, including pilots in all four provinces. Two issues in particular were addressed in this process: how to create a situation, during a brief interview in the household, where a woman could feel able to disclose information about highly sensitive topics to an interviewer she had never met before; and how to maintain confidentiality and the security of both the women being interviewed and the field teams, mostly composed of women. During the process, the instruments for the household survey were developed, as well as an innovative method for conducting the survey, using teams of interviewers.



A discussion during piloting phase  
Photo: CIET

The August 2002 report describes in detail the final field processes developed, and includes copies of the final instruments developed and approved by the Federal Steering Committee of the Family Protection Programme

(FSCFPP) Sub-Technical Committee, chaired by the Secretary of the MOWD, Islamabad. The field processes and instruments are summarised here. Readers should refer to the August 2002 report for more details.

## **The field processes**

### *Interviews with women*

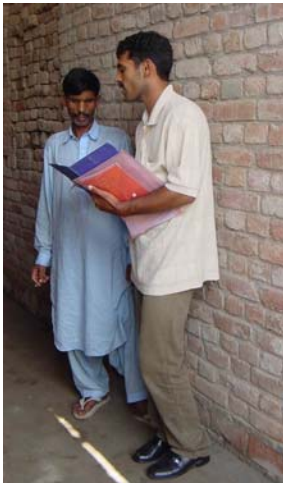
The basic process refined during the design and piloting phase was for each household to be entered by two women interviewers. They identified the women in the household and then one of them interviewed the “senior woman” in the household (usually the mother or mother-in-law of the other women) while her colleague interviewed the “eligible women” in the household. Eligible women were defined as all those aged 14 years and over. If necessary, more women interviewers joined in the household to complete the interviews with the eligible women. This method was demonstrated to be an effective way of interviewing the eligible women without the questions or their responses being overheard. Where possible, interviews with the eligible women took place in a separate room. If it was necessary to interview in the same room, the interviewers made sure they were as far apart as possible and the interviewer dealing with the senior women spoke loudly and clearly, keeping up a flow of dialogue, while the interviewer dealing with the eligible woman spoke softly and confidentially. If it was not possible to interview an eligible woman without being overheard, the interview was terminated or suspended.

There were variations in the method depending on the household circumstances. If there was only one woman in the household, she was interviewed as an eligible woman and then asked the questions in the first part of the senior woman questionnaire, which covered general household information (see Instruments, below). If there were two women of equal seniority in the household (say two sisters), then one of them completed the first part of the senior woman questionnaire in addition to her interview as an eligible woman.

This process meant that there were less older women interviewed as eligible women and administered the full questionnaire including questions about their own experience of abuse. This was fully justifiable as a means of allowing the more junior women in the household to speak confidentially and more freely. It also allowed us to collect specific views of the senior woman on issues

relevant to the experience of abuse of the more junior women in the same household.

### *Interviews with men*



A male interview  
Photo: CIET

While the women interviewers were in the households, the men in the field teams remained outside. They had several roles: to help to direct women interviewers who had spare capacity to households where they were needed to interview additional eligible women; to provide security for the women members of the teams; and to interview men from the households. If a man was present in the household when the women interviewers entered, they asked him to step outside to be interviewed by their male colleague. This meant he was not in the household to listen to the interview with the eligible woman or women. It also provided an opportunity to collect the views of men about issues related to abuse against women. The number of men interviewed was small because in most cases there were no men present in the household when the women interviewers entered.

### **The instruments**

There were three instruments for the household survey: the questionnaire for eligible women (the “woman” questionnaire); the questionnaire for the senior woman in the household (the “senior woman” questionnaire); and the questionnaire administered to any male household member who was present at the time of visiting the household (the “male” questionnaire).

#### *The woman questionnaire*

This included questions about the woman’s age, education, marital status and work; her perceptions and beliefs about women’s status and what she considered to be abuse against women; her knowledge about any abuse suffered by her sisters; and her own experience of different kinds of abuse; and her use of health, police and judiciary services.

#### *The senior woman questionnaire*

The first section included questions about the household demographics such as the number, age and sex of household members and household practices. This section was completed for all households, either by the senior woman who went on to complete the rest of the senior woman questionnaire (and who did not complete a woman questionnaire) or by one of the women who completed the woman questionnaire.

The second section of the senior woman questionnaire included questions about her beliefs and views on issues relevant to abuse against women. It did not include any questions about experience of abuse.

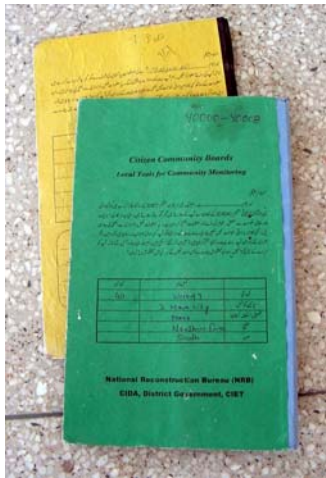
### *The male questionnaire*

The male questionnaire was essentially the same as the senior woman questionnaire. It was administered to any male who happened to be in the household by a male member of the field team, outside the house.

### *Form of the instruments*

The data collection instruments were translated into Urdu, with back-translation to check meanings had been retained, and subsequently translated into Sindhi, Balochi, Brahvi, Pashtoo and Punjabi for their administration in different areas of the country. In some communities the interviewers carried the instruments with them in more than one language.

All the questionnaires were administered using a standard CIET method whereby the two halves of the questionnaire are attached to the inside cover of a register and the responses for each woman (or man) are recorded on a separate, numbered page of the register. Each interviewer used one register to record the responses for all the women she interviewed in a given site. In this case a separate register was kept for the senior women interviews. This method is cost-effective and prevents loss of or damage to individual completed questionnaires in field conditions. It also facilitates data entry, retrieval of particular records during data checking, and storage of the original data records.



Registers for household data collection



Inside of a data collection register

## **Sample and sampling**

The sample was designed to give representation of the whole country and of each of the four provinces. It was not designed to give individual district representation, although it was decided that *all* districts should contribute data to the sample, thus increasing buy-in to the findings at district level where many interventions take place to improve the situation of women, particularly under the devolved local government system.

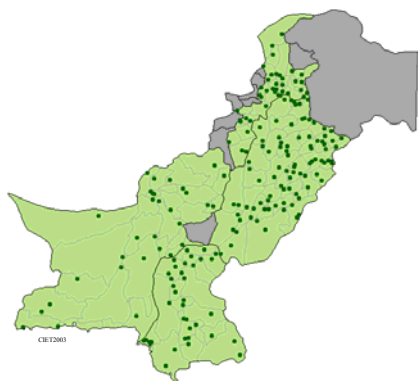


Figure 1. Location of SAAAW sites

Within each district, the allocated number of communities was selected by a two-stage stratified random sampling process. The sampling frame in each district was the official list of union councils within the district. The union councils on the list were first stratified into rural and urban types, according to official definitions. The proportion of urban and rural sites to be included in the sample was set at provincial level according to the urban and rural population proportions in each province in the 1998 census. The allocated number of union councils for the district was then picked randomly from the lists of urban and rural union councils for the district. A minimum of one union council per district was included. For the more populous districts, more union councils were selected. So, for example, many districts in Balochistan had just one union council selected, but up to five union councils were selected for some heavily populated districts in Punjab, and eight were selected in Karachi.

For each of the randomly selected union councils we obtained the list of communities or villages and made a random selection of one community from each list. In each selected community or site, all contiguous households up to around 100 were included, radiating from a randomly allocated fixed point in the community. There was no sampling within this site: all households were included in the sample. Figure 1 shows the location of SAAAW sites.

We deliberately included at least one site per district, even for sparsely populated districts, in order that all districts would have contributed to the national and provincial findings, even if only to a small extent. Because of the wide disparity in district populations across the country, this inclusion of at least one site per district resulted in over-sampling in Balochistan and NWFP and under-sampling in Punjab, relative to their population proportions in the actual population of the country. In order to take into account this disproportion in the sample population distribution, we calculated a weight for each district according to its relative over or under representation in the sample. *All the indicator percentages mentioned in this report at provincial or national level are the weighted values, unless stated otherwise.*

## Formation and training of field teams

Field teams were recruited and trained in each province, and for different regions within each province. People recruited into the field teams included members of NGOs and other Community Based Organisations (CBOs), senior university students and recent graduates, and some government employees such as teachers. Several staff members from provincial departments of social welfare and women development joined the training sessions, although most of them were unable to continue with the subsequent fieldwork because of pressure of other work. The great majority of the field team members were women. Many of them had worked with CIET on earlier projects and shown themselves to be dedicated and efficient fieldworkers. The new recruits were always placed with more experienced people.



Classroom training  
Photo: CIET

Each training session took place over four or five days, depending on the progress of the group. In all training sessions, rather more people joined the training than were required for the field teams in the area, and only those who did well in the training were selected for the teams. The training included classroom sessions to give the teams an understanding of the purpose of the social audit and a basic understanding of the CIET methods. Also in the classroom the trainers went through the questionnaires in detail. The trainees practised administering the questionnaire to each other in the classroom, including role-playing the introductions and potential difficult scenarios. The training included careful discussion about establishing a rapport with the women being interviewed, such that she would feel able to disclose about the sensitive issue of experiencing different forms of abuse. Women team members described to each other cases of abuse they personally knew of, and this session helped them in their subsequent interactions with women in the households.



Role play during training  
Photo: CIET

Two half days of training were spent in field practice in a nearby non-sample community, with close monitoring and feedback about any errors and misunderstandings. The final day of the training was a full mock data collection in the field, with the proposed teams working together. If the trainers were not satisfied with the work on the mock data collection day, the training was extended with further feedback and further field practice until the trainers were satisfied. In particular, the disclosure rates of abuse were noted, and extra attention was paid to team members who were having difficulty in this regard.

All the training sessions were conducted according to the same standards across all the provinces, and CIET provincial coordinators from different provinces joined colleagues to assist with training and the first days of fieldwork in each region. Thus the standard reached after training by all the field teams was the same across the country.

Each field team comprised twelve female interviewers (six pairs), three male interviewers (one of whom also acted as the logistic control associate) and one female quality control associate.

## **Data collection**

The training of field teams and household data collection took place according to a phased schedule, moving from province to province. The first province to be covered was Sindh, followed by Balochistan, then NWFP and then Punjab, with some overlap between provinces. In each province a CIET provincial coordinator has responsibility for the activities in that province. The Sindh provincial coordinator is also the national coordinator. The provincial coordinators scheduled the field work in each province, such that coordinators were able to help each other during training sessions.

In general, each field team could complete the household survey in a community in one day and move to another community the following day. In some cases this was not possible due to terrain or difficult weather conditions and additional time was allowed for travel or to complete data collection from a site.

The field teams took with them a letter from the Federal Ministry of Women Development, giving official status to the work. The teams also made contact with district government officials as they entered each district, to brief them about the aims of the social audit and to seek their support for the field work as necessary. In some districts in particular where the security situation was difficult, the district officials were very helpful to the teams, giving them advice and sometimes logistic support to reach difficult communities.

The field teams managed to collect data from almost all districts, even those with marked security problems. They achieved this using good local knowledge and contacts, as



well as with support from district government and administration. It was not possible to conduct the survey in Dera Bugti because of the serious security problems there, which made it very difficult even to enter the district. In Kohistan it was not possible to conduct the survey because we were not able to recruit sufficiently educated Kohistani-speaking women from the district and the sensitive nature of the interviews precluded using interpreters.

On entering each community, before the team started the household interviews, the logistic control associate made contact with community leaders to explain the general purpose of the survey (he explained it was about women's views and issues) and seek their support to work in the community. In nearly every case the community leaders agreed to the survey. In the handful of communities (less than ten in total) where the leaders refused to allow the survey to take place, the field team undertook the survey in the next neighbouring community instead.

### **Quality control of data collection**

Quality control during fieldwork is a crucial concern. In the social audit it was ensured in several ways:

>Careful training emphasized the importance of proper conduct of the household interviews, according to strict guidelines, leaving no room for individual interpretation by interviewers.

>Only those trainees who showed themselves capable of good, careful work were selected for the field teams.



A provincial coordinator checks a register  
Photo: CIET

>All team members were told that if they did not work properly while in the field, they would be asked to leave the team immediately. On rare occasions in the course of the data collection of the social audit it was necessary to dismiss field team members and replace them with reserves.

>In each team, the quality control associate checked the registers completed by the interviewers, first after they had completed three households, then in the middle of the day and at the end of each day. She pointed out any incorrect recording of information and instructed the interviewer to return to households to collect missing information if necessary. The quality control associate also randomly visited some households to check they had actually been interviewed.

>The field coordinators and provincial coordinators between them visited the field teams in the field sites to check how they were working, to deal with any identified problems and to make a further check on the work of the quality control associates within the teams.

## **Key informant interviews**

In light of the sensitive nature of the nature of the household interviews and the need to keep the process low-profile in the communities during the household data collection, it was decided to conduct interviews with key informants in the communities at the stage of returning to the communities for the focus groups, rather than conduct them at the time of the household interviews. Interview schedules were designed to seek the views of key informants about the size and causes of the problem of abuse against women in their community and about how it could be tackled, including how women could be helped to report if they experienced abuse. The key informants in each community were: a community leader, the pesh imam, a woman union councillor, a member of the union council reconciliation committee if there was one (or a member of the union council), and the in-charge of the local health facility.

Members of the teams formed and trained to undertake the focus group discussions (see below) were also trained to undertake the interviews with key informants. The key informant interview schedules were piloted and finalised in communities around Abbotabad in June 2003. As the teams moved to each community to undertake focus group discussions, they also interviewed key informants in that community.

## **Focus group discussions**

Focus group guides were developed, based on the main quantitative findings from the household survey. Three separate but related guides were developed, for three separate groups: junior women; senior women; and men.

The guides for each focus group were for the group facilitator, to ensure that the intended topic areas were discussed. They are *not* questionnaires intended to collect quantitative data; they are guides to support collection of the same sort of qualitative data from each group. The focus

group guides were piloted and finalised in communities around Abbottabad in June 2003.

Focus group facilitators and recorders were selected mainly from among people who had been members of the field teams who collected the household data. This meant they were already familiar with the topics in the household questionnaire and also that they knew and were known in the communities in the sample, where they were returning to conduct the focus group discussions. Training for the focus group facilitators and recorders took place in each province, at several times and on a regional basis, as the focus group field work proceeded. The training lasted at least three days and sometimes it was extended for a further day if the trainers were not satisfied with the standard reached by the trainees.

Focus groups were conducted in every community where household data had been collected, as far as possible. Moreover, the participants for the focus groups were drawn from the same group of about 100 households that had been included in the household survey. In nearly all communities, junior women, senior women and men were happy to see the team members coming back and welcomed the opportunity to talk about the findings from the recent survey in their community. In a few communities, the women felt too scared to come to a focus group discussion, fearing that they may suffer repercussions if they attended. In another few communities, the men were not sufficiently interested in a topic concerning women to attend a focus group discussion, or did not complete the whole focus group.

In addition, two focus groups of unmarried young women aged between 14 and 20 years and two of unmarried young men in this age range were conducted in areas of Karachi, using guides similar to those for the women's and men's groups.

In each group the facilitator took the lead in guiding the discussion and ensuring views were heard from all group members, while the recorder took careful notes. After the end of the discussion, the recorder and facilitator sat together to produce a fair copy of the report from the group.

The focus groups were conducted on a regional basis, similar to the approach in the household data collection. Field monitors visited the teams to check that the work was progressing well, examine the reports being made and sort out any difficulties. The provincial coordinators in each

province had overall responsibility for ensuring the arrangement and quality of the focus groups in each province.

## Data management

Data entry took place in the CIET data management unit in Karachi, and the household data registers and completed key informant interview formats from all provinces were sent to Karachi for this purpose.



Data entry operators at work  
Photo: CIET

CIET trained all data entry operators and selected the best candidates to undertake the work. Many of the operators have worked with CIET on previous projects and are very experienced in the data entry methods used in CIET work. Data entry was programmed using the public domain epidemiological and statistical software package Epi Info, version 6. All data were entered twice and validated using the Epi Info Validate facility. Double data entry and validation greatly reduces key stroke errors in the dataset.

After validation, further cleaning of the dataset looked for logical errors, out of range responses and duplications. The cleaning was completed by checking back to the original data registers as necessary.

Responses to the key informant interviews, which were mostly composed of open-questions, were coded and entered using Epi Info. The key informant data sets were then checked for logical errors, out of range responses and duplications. Again, cleaning was completed by checking back to the original interviews as necessary.

A small group, including the national and provincial coordinators, the country director of CIET, and some experienced field workers read through a large number of the focus group reports to develop and identify recurring themes in the responses. Further people in each province were subsequently trained to recognise and code the themes. Between them they went through all the rest of the focus groups and coded the presence of these responses, adding new categories as necessary. They also extracted particularly apposite quotations from the focus group reports. The codes representing different themes in each focus group were then entered into a computer database using an Epi Info data entry programme. The frequencies of the themes (there could be multiple themes in each topic area) were summarised using the SPSS software package.

## **Analysis**

### **Analytical approach**

The full CIET analysis goes beyond the calculation of frequencies of indicators. While frequencies of indicators describe the present situation – and it can be of interest to look at their variation across the country, for example – this is not of much help to planners who need to develop strategies to change the situation. Further analysis looks at the actionable factors that are related to the important indicators. The potential affects of changing these factors on the outcomes can be calculated. In doing this, it is important to take into account the other factors that might be the real cause of apparent associations (confounders) as far as possible, otherwise spurious associations can be misleading.

The CIET analysis complements quantitative data analysis with semi-quantitative and qualitative elements from key informants and focus groups, using *meso-analysis*. For example, sites can be coded to reflect the distance of the government health facility from the community, or the views of the Pesh Imam. Focus group discussions generate richer and more textured evidence than structured interviews with key informants or individual quantitative questionnaires. Information in focus group reports can be coded to reflect certain views (for example, beliefs about a woman's role) that may be present in some communities but not others. This coded information can then be linked to the records of individuals from the communities, using the community code as the link. Meso-analysis essentially deals with factors operating in the community or peer group by linking them to the experience of the individuals in that community.

### **Analysis in the social audit**

The frequencies of basic indicators, including frequencies of different sorts of abuse against women, were calculated nationally and for each province and formed the basis of the preliminary key findings report. Further analysis examined the factors related to a woman's risk of experiencing abuse, including factors at household level and factors at community level. The findings from this risk analysis formed the basis for the workshopping process in each province: different working groups considered the factors that, if they could be changed, would be likely to reduce the

risk of abuse against women. They developed action plans for how these factors could be changed.

## **Mapping**

The maps produced by the CIET mapping techniques are raster maps, with interpolation of levels of indicators between the sample sites. Importantly, the weights for the sites in relation to their population contribution are taken into account in constructing the maps, so that the area of the map in a particular colour represents the proportion of the population with that level of the indicator, and not just the geographical distribution. The maps should be interpreted essentially as weather maps, with the focus on the overall picture rather than on individual positions on the map.

Maps of the basic frequencies of indicators, including the frequency of different types of abuse, were produced. These maps were used as a key way of presenting the basic findings. Their use allowed the findings to be shown with a focus on their variation across the country, but without providing any figure for the 'average' frequency. It led easily into a description of the factors related to the risk of abuse and prevented discussion being diverted into looking only at the actual present frequencies of abuse. Maps of the potential effects of different interventions on the frequency of abuse, based on the risk analysis, were also produced and are included in this report.

## **Weighting**

As mentioned in the section on sampling, the deliberate inclusion of at least one site from every district resulted in over-sampling of sparsely populated districts of Balochistan and NWFP and under-sampling of densely populated districts of Punjab. This was taken into account by calculating weights for each district (the ratio of their fraction in the sample population to their fraction in the actual population). All the main indicator percentages quoted in this report for provinces or at federal level are quoted as weighted values.

## Using the findings to develop action plans

The workshopping process that took place in each province and the resulting action plans and policy recommendations are described in detail in Annex 5. Separate detailed accounts of the workshopping process in each province have also been prepared for each province.

With the endorsement of the Ministry of Women Development, the SAAAW team worked closely with the women development departments (WDD)<sup>1</sup> in each province to discuss and make use of the findings in the identified action areas. The workshopping process aimed at:

- Sharing the findings from Social Audit on Abuse Against Women (SAAAW) with government and other stakeholders
- Discussing possible actions to address the actionable factors related to the risk of abuse
- Developing policy recommendations to guide national and provincial governments to take necessary actions
- Identifying and discussing the role of other stakeholders in civil society and the private sector that could act as change agents

In early 2004 the social audit team held internal meetings with the women development departments in each province, to brief them about the social audit findings, particularly the findings about the actionable factors related to the risk of abuse. The departments expressed their interest in playing a lead role in undertaking a workshopping process around the findings. Based on the findings about the factors related to the risk of abuse, four working groups were convened in each province to consider the evidence and develop action plans and policy recommendations in four sectors:

- Educational factors related to the risk of abuse;
- Economic and employment factors related to the risk of abuse;
- Socio-cultural factors related to the risk of abuse; and
- Factors related to reporting by women who experience abuse

In each province the women development department identified suitable members for each working group: people with suitable knowledge and experience in the topic area. The membership of each group included people from government, academia, NGOs and other individuals with

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<sup>1</sup> The term "women development department" is used here to include joint departments of social welfare, women development and other areas as not all provinces have a separate women development department.



A working group meeting

Photo:CIET

the relevant expertise. The potential working group members were invited by the women development department to participate. Each group had a first meeting which included a briefing about the social audit process and the relevant findings about the factors related to the risk of abuse. Sometimes this first meeting was held jointly between several groups, and sometimes it was held separately with each group. Each group subsequently met several times over the period of a few months, to consider the evidence and develop detailed action plans and policy recommendations. Sometimes they invited additional people to join them, who had specific expertise in the relevant area. By the end of their last meeting, each group had finalised a summary of their policy recommendations and action plans using a format supplied for the purpose, to help them to include relevant information.

In June 2004, in each province the women development department convened a plenary workshop to complete the workshopping process. In this workshop, representatives of the four groups presented the evidence they had considered and their action plans and policy recommendations. The plenary workshops were well attended and included high level provincial government representation. The minutes from the provincial plenary workshops, and the action plans from the four working groups in each province are included in Annex 5.

### **Communication strategy: taking forward the action plans**

A draft communication strategy has been developed based on the evidence from the social audit. It is set out in Annex 6. It includes a proposal about disseminating the final report of the social audit. More importantly, it includes a strategy to communicate about issues related to the problem of abuse against women, with the intention that this communication will lead to a reduction of the problem of abuse or improvement of the reporting of abuse by women who have experienced it. This communication strategy is evidence-based. It draws on the suggestions from the thousands of women and men interviewed individually in the social audit, from the hundreds of separate focus groups of women, senior women and men, and from the working groups of stakeholders convened in each province. Many of the action plans developed by the working groups had communication to different target groups about various issues as a major component, and these elements of the



action plans have been drawn out in the draft communication strategy.

The communication strategy is described for each province as there were clearly differences of approach between the four provinces in the action plans they developed, including the communication aspects. However, there are many common areas as well, and many areas where action at federal level will be required to support effective communication about issues related to abuse and tackling abuse.

Taking forward the communication strategy and the action plans in general will require concerted effort over a prolonged period. The MOWD and the provincial women development departments are well placed to play the leading role, but they will need to draw in many other players. Resources will be needed. The action plans outlined here are not seen as separate activities but rather as inputs into ongoing programmes of support for gender reform and prevention of abuse against women. These include the Gender Reform Action Programme (GRAP) and the Pakistan Family Protection Project (PFPP).

The social audit on abuse against women was initiated as a part of the overall Family Protection Programme supported by DFID, with the findings from the social audit being an important input into the national awareness campaign and other activities that make up the PFPP. The draft communication strategy takes this into account and the PFPP have already expressed their interest in using the strategy, once finalised, as a guide in their work.

The social audit team was invited to give a presentation about the social audit methods, findings and working group recommendations at a meeting of government and non-government stakeholders from across Punjab to launch the Gender Reform Action Programme in that province on 13 July 2004. Again, the findings and action plans arising from the social audit are a useful and important input into the GRAP.

Specific projects are already being developed with input from the social audit findings. For example, the proposed project on Alternative Dispute Resolution, to support the formation and effective working of the Musalihat Anjuman to help women who have experienced abuse, draws on the social audit evidence from women themselves about what they think would help women to report abuse.

## Findings

### Information base

#### The households in the survey

Table 1. The household sample by province

Province	No. HH	HH size
Sindh	4,000	6.7
Balochistan	3,084	7.8
NWFP	3,891	7.6
Punjab	9,059	6.6
Total	20,034	7.0

Table 2. Reported male and female household members by province

Province	Male	Female
Sindh	14,035	13,057
Balochistan	12,364	11,770
NWFP	15,075	14,434
Punjab	30,456	29,724
Total	71,942	68,987

In each household, the most senior woman completed an interview that covered general household information. The numbers of households in the sample in each province, and the average household size are shown in Table 2. As happens in almost all household enquiries in South Asia, there was evidence of under-reporting of female household members. This was apparent across all the provinces (Table 2). It was also a feature of the 1998 population census and of other surveys in Pakistan.

Most (91%, n=19987) household heads were male. Around half of them (51%, n=19948) were said to have no education. The proportion of household heads with no education was highest in Balochistan at 68% (n=3062) and lowest in Punjab at 50% (n=9034).

A variety of occupations were reported for the main household breadwinner. In 63% of households nationally (n=19889) the main breadwinner was unemployed or in unskilled labour (this also included the few said to be students, retired or housewife/husband). The proportion of household breadwinners unemployed or working as unskilled labour varied from 62% in Punjab (n=9008) to 70% in Balochistan (n=3036).

#### Household construction and occupancy

Nationally, just under half (45%, n=19938) the households in the survey were recorded as having a poor roof construction: katchi (mud or bamboo thatch), a rough shelter, or wooden planks. The proportion of households with poor roof construction was highest in Balochistan at 81% (n=3077) and lowest in Sindh at 30% (n=3979).

Overall room occupancy was calculated by dividing the number of household members by the number of rooms in the household. Households were classified as crowded when the calculated value for room occupancy was more than 4.0. Some 33% (n=19915) of households nationally were crowded according to this definition, ranging from 28% (n=3071) in Balochistan and 29% (n=3878) in NWFP to 40% in Sindh (n=3974).



A house with poor roof construction  
Photo: CIET

## Vulnerable households

### Vulnerable households

A household is “vulnerable” if it has any two of:  
 >Poor roof construction  
 >High room occupancy  
 >Poor occupation of main breadwinner

### Very vulnerable households

A household is “very vulnerable” if it has:  
 >Poor roof construction  
 and  
 >High room occupancy  
 and  
 >Poor occupation of main breadwinner

A combined vulnerability index was constructed from the information about type of roof construction, room occupancy and type of occupation of the main household breadwinner. A household was defined as *vulnerable* if it had any two of the three factors: poor roof construction, overcrowding or poor occupation of the main breadwinner. If all three factors were present, a household was defined as *very vulnerable*.

Nationally, about a third of the households (34%, n=19684) are in the vulnerable category and 13% are in the very vulnerable category. The highest proportion of vulnerable households is in Balochistan (53%, n=3019) and the lowest in Sindh (31%, n=3921). For very vulnerable households, the proportion is higher in Balochistan (17%, n=3019) and NWFP (15%, n=3861), than in Punjab (13%, n=8883) and Sindh (13%, n=3921).

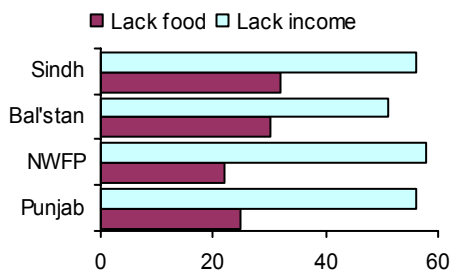


Figure 2. % households reporting lack of income or food

We also asked about some other issues bearing on the socio-economic status of the household. These are summarized in Figure 2. Nationally, 26% (n=19969) of households reported they did not have enough food in the household in the last week, 56% (n=19978) said their income was not enough for their needs, and 45% (n=19934) considered their financial situation was worse than average compared with others in the same community.

## The women in the survey

Some 23,430 women across Pakistan participated in the survey. They were drawn from all districts with the exception of Dera Bugti where it was not possible to conduct the survey because of the security situation, and Kohistan where it was not possible to identify sufficient educated Kohistani-speaking women interviewers.

Status	% (n) women
Interviewed	75 (23430)
<i>Not interviewed</i>	
Unavailable	20 (6465)
Declined (self)	3 (1061)
Declined (other person)	1 (451)

The field teams identified the eligible women for interview in each household (those over 14 years old). They interviewed three quarters (75%) of the eligible women and recorded the reasons why the remainder were not interviewed (Table 3). The usual reason was that the women were not available in the household at the time. Very few refused to be interviewed. Rarely, someone else (usually the senior woman in the house) refused to allow an eligible woman to be interviewed.

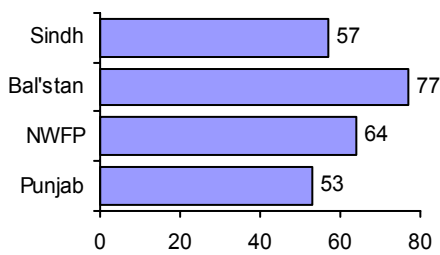


Figure 3. % women with no education

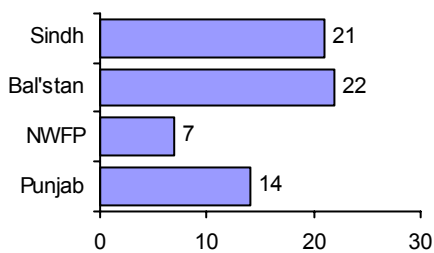


Figure 4. % women with an income they decide how to spend

*Age:* The mean age of the women interviewed nationally was 26.9 years (n=23338). The mean age varied from 26.4 years in Punjab (n=10841) to 27.4 years in Balochistan (n=3605).

*Education:* Over half the women (56%, n=23398) had no formal education at all. The proportion of women with no education was highest in Balochistan (77%, n=3621) and lowest in Punjab (53%, n=10845) (Figure 3)

*Employment and income:* Most of the women (82%, n=23354) said they were not in any form of employment outside the household, ranging from 80% (n=4389) in Sindh and 80% (n=10844) in Punjab to 91% (n=4525) in NWFP and 92% (n=3596) in Balochistan. However, this does not mean that women did not have some form of income of their own. Nationally, 22% (n=23373) of the women reported some income of their own. There was variation between provinces, with more women with an income in Sindh (29%) and Balochistan (29%) than in Punjab (22%) or NWFP (10%). The women who reported an income were asked who decided how to spend the income. In about two-thirds of cases, the women themselves (or with their husbands) decided how to spend their income. In summary, just 15% (n=23302) of women reported having an income that they made the decision about spending, again with variation between provinces (Figure 4).

*Marital status:* Nationally, nearly two thirds (61%, n=23430) of the eligible women interviewed were married, a third were single (35%), 3% were widowed and 1% were divorced. A handful reported they were separated. The marital status was similar across provinces, with the lowest proportion married (58%) in Punjab and the lowest proportion single (28%) in Balochistan.

*Age at marriage:* The proportion of women married, or expecting to be married, at age 18 years or above, is shown for each marital group in Table 4. Note that many young single women were not able to predict at what age they would get married.

*Marriage with consent:* The proportion of women who said their marriage was with their consent, or they expected it to be with their consent, is shown for each marital group in Table 5. The highest proportion reporting marriage with their consent was among currently married women.

Table 4. Women married at age 18 years and above

Marital status	% (n) married at 18 years +
Married	47 (6845)
Single	93 (2485)
Widowed	35 (200)
Divorced/separated	46 (90)

Table 5. Women whose marriage was with their consent

Marital status	% (n) married with consent
Married	36 (5327)
Single	22 (1421)
Widowed	27 (158)
Divorced/separated	30 (62)

*Husbands:* Nationally, four out of ten women (43%, n=15436) (other than those unmarried) reported their husbands had no formal education. The proportion of husbands with no education was higher in Balochistan (60%, n=2553) than in the other provinces.

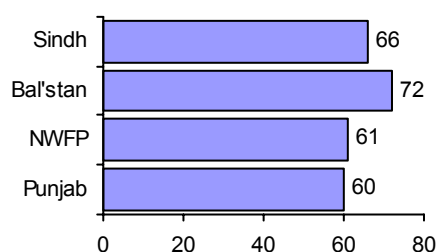


Figure 5. % women with husbands unemployed or in unskilled work

Overall, nearly two thirds of women (63%, n=15419) reported their husbands were unemployed or in unskilled labour. The proportion of husbands unemployed or in unskilled work varied between provinces and was highest in Balochistan (Figure 5).

*Children:* Nationally, 75% (n=15496) of the women who were or who had been married reported they had at least one male child. This figure was almost the same across all provinces. Less of these women reported they had at least one female child (71%, n=15477) and again this was consistent across provinces.

## Senior women in the households

Some 8706 senior women completed their own questionnaire, following on from the section on general household information, while other women in the household were being interviewed (see Methods section). In other cases, the initial section about general household information was completed with the eligible woman (or one of the eligible women) in the household.

Table 6. Mean age of senior women

Province	Years (n)
Sindh	45.1 (1676)
Balochistan	46.8 (1485)
NWFP	46.2 (1824)
Punjab	46.3 (3703)

Nationally, the mean age of the senior women was 46.0 years. There was some variation by province (Table 6).

## Men in the households

Some 1572 male household members were interviewed. They were only interviewed if they were present inside the house when the interviewers entered to interview the women, in which case they were invited to step outside the house to be interviewed by the male interviewer.

Table 7. Mean age of men interviewed

Province	Years (n)
Sindh	38.6 (327)
Balochistan	34.4 (220)
NWFP	42.7 (144)
Punjab	38.6 (873)

The mean age of the men interviewed was 38.7 years (n=1564). There was some variation in mean age by province (Table 7) but it should be noted that the number of men in each province was relatively low.

## Key informants

Table 8. Key informants interviewed

Key informant	Number
Community leader	166
Pesh Imam	147
Member reconcil cttee*	161
Woman union councillor	139
In-charge health facility	146

\*Or member UC if no reconciliation committee existing

Several key informants were interviewed, where possible, in each sample community. The numbers of different key informants interviewed are shown in Table 8.

Details of the interview responses of the different key informants are given in Annex 3. Relevant findings from the key informant interviews are included in the main body of the report at appropriate points. Variables from key informant interviews have also been examined for their relationship to the risk of abuse against women in the mesoanalysis.

## Focus groups

Table 9. Focus groups conducted in each province (number)

Province	W	SW	M
Sindh	38	36	40
Balochistan	29	27	26
NWFP	38	33	36
Punjab	88	78	85
Total	193	174	187

W=women, SW=senior women, M=men

The numbers of focus groups of eligible women (all those over 14 years and not in the senior woman category), of senior women (the mother or mother-in-law figure in the household), and of men conducted in each province are shown in Table 9. In addition, we conducted two focus groups of young unmarried women aged 14-20 years and two focus groups of young unmarried men aged 14-20 years in areas of Karachi.

The discussions and themes arising from the focus groups are described in some detail in Annex 4. In this main report, the focus group findings are included at relevant points.

## Household practices

In each household the person who gave the general information about the household (the senior woman or one of the eligible women) was asked about household practices with some bearing on the situation of women.

*Women's education:* Most (82%, n=19976) households were in favour of girls' formal education. This ranged from 75% in NWFP to 85% in Punjab. Some 78% (n=19869) of households said their local Pesh Imam was in favour of girls' formal education and a further 11% did not know his views on the matter. This was similar across all provinces.

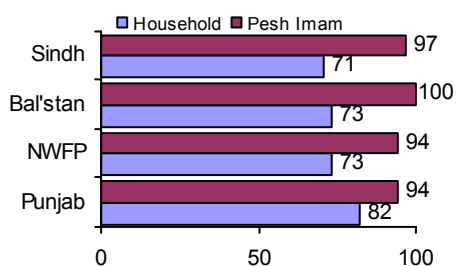


Figure 6. % households and Pesh Imams who say the Pesh Imam is in favour of girls' education

Pesh Imams interviewed in the communities were asked directly if they were in favour of girls' formal education. Almost all of them (96%, 141/147) said they were in favour. There is thus a gap between the households' perception of the Pesh Imam being in favour of girls' formal education and the view about this expressed directly by the Pesh Imams. This gap of perception was present in all the provinces (Figure 6). It suggests that the Pesh Imams are not telling households in their communities about their support for girls' education.

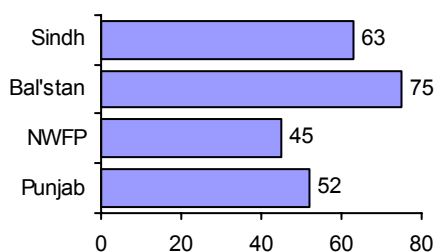


Figure 7. % households with tradition of watta satta marriage

*Marriage customs:* Over half the households (55%, n=19985) said they had a tradition of *watta satta* marriage (exchange marriage). The proportion was highest in Balochistan (75%) and lowest in NWFP (45%). The variation between provinces is shown in Figure 7.

About a third of households (34%, n=20009) said they demanded dowry. This ranged from 24% in NWFP to 59% in Balochistan. However, most households (93%, n=20004) said they paid dowry (from 83% in Balochistan to 95% in Punjab). Few households (10%, n=19980) said they demanded *walvar/lab* (bride price), except in Balochistan where 71% of households demanded *walvar/lab*. Similarly, few households nationally (10%, n=19982) said they paid *walvar/lab*, but in Balochistan 73% of households said they paid.

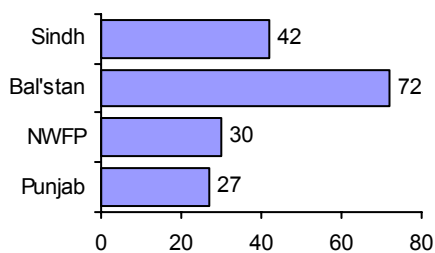


Figure 8. % households where men practise polygamy

One third of households in the sample (33%, n=19954) nationally said the men practised polygamy. The proportion was much higher in Balochistan (72%) than elsewhere (Figure 8). Among those households where the men practised polygamy, it was usual (67%, n=7587) for the wives to stay under one roof. This was especially the case in Balochistan (81%).

*Children:* In response to a question about “who decides about how many children to have”, the most common response was Allah. When a specific person was mentioned, this was most often the husband (34%, n=19427). This ranged from 33% in Punjab to 44% in Balochistan. Asked if the birth of a son or a daughter was more celebrated (or both equally), just over half (51%, n=19918) the households said that the birth of a son was more celebrated. This ranged from 49% in Sindh to 61% in Balochistan.

Table 10. Main reported usual methods of disciplining the wife in the houses

Method	% (n)
Explaining gently	65 (12607)
Getting angry	28 (5359)
Beating	9 (1787)
Doing nothing	3 (587)

Respondents could give more than one answer

*Discipline:* An open question was asked about how the husband usually disciplines (*islah*) the wife for her mistakes in that household (Table 10). In two-thirds (66%, n=19266) of households, the respondent (female) said “by explaining gently”. In 9% of households, beating or physical discipline was reported as the usual way for the man to discipline his wife.

*Drug addiction:* In just 3% (738/19986) of households the senior woman respondent reported that someone in the household was addicted to drugs (excluding tobacco).

## Women’s freedom of movement

Table 11. % households where it was acceptable for women to step out of the house to go to different places

Place	Sin	Bal	NW	Pun
Work	40	40	34	44
Market	61	30	34	64
Family	95	91	94	90
Marriage	95	90	96	92
<i>Mela</i>	34	23	12	16
Parks etc	43	24	18	27
Religious	68	69	76	82
Shrine	73	60	46	63
Health	98	95	98	96

Sin=Sindh, Bal=Balochistan, NW=NWFP, Pun=Punjab

The woman responding to general questions about the household was asked about the situations when it was acceptable for a woman to step out of her home (Table 11).

To go to work: Nationally, this was reported as acceptable in 41% of households (n=19927), ranging from 34% in NWFP to 44% in Punjab.

To go to the market: This was acceptable in 58% (n=19928) of households, ranging from 34% in NWFP to 64% in Punjab.

To visit family: This was acceptable in 92% of households (n=19936) with little difference between provinces.

To attend a marriage or engagement ceremony: This was acceptable in 93% of households (n=19941) and much the same in all provinces.

To go to a *mela* (festival): This was acceptable in only 20% of households (n=19928), ranging from 33% in Sindh to 12% in NWFP.



To go out for recreation to parks etc: This was acceptable in 30% of households (n=19923), ranging from 42% in Sindh to 18% in NWFP.

To go to a religious gathering: This was acceptable in 77% of households (n=19875), ranging from 68% in Sindh to 82% in Punjab.

To go to a tomb/holy shrine: This was acceptable in 63% of households (n=19979), ranging from 73% in Sindh to 46% in NWFP.

To go for health care: This was acceptable in nearly all households (96%, n=19982) nationally, with little variation between provinces.

"There are some men who themselves are of bad character and misbehave with women outside. Therefore, they don't allow their women to go out as they think that other men would do the same to their women."  
Women's focus group, Balochistan

"It's their basic training as a part of Pattan family culture that men don't allow their women to go out."  
Senior women's focus group, NWFP

"If the women were given freedom, they would behave in the same way as a free animal who runs into and starts grazing in every field outside."  
Men's focus group, Sindh

"Those who allow their women to go out must be *bay-ghairat* (without any self respect and honour)."  
Men's focus group, Balochistan

"It is better that the woman stays restricted to the home as she is born for the household and she looks nice within the household boundaries."  
Senior women's focus group, NWFP

"In situations where men and women trust each other and they don't care about what other people say, there the women are allowed to go out."  
Women's focus group, Balochistan

"There is a lot of unemployment. Women are compelled to go out for work."  
Men's focus group, Punjab

"It is better that there is some restriction on women's mobility. This helps to make a good home environment. With total freedom women get spoiled and may lose character."  
Women's focus group, Balochistan

Focus groups suggested several types of reasons why women are not allowed to leave the house to go to the market or for other purposes:

- that men do not trust their women; this was especially mentioned by the younger women
- that it is cultural or traditional practice for women not to go out of the house
- that there is a poor social environment outside the house so that men may harass women outside their houses, or that women themselves may indulge in bad behaviour; this was particularly mentioned by men
- that it is an issue of honour and self-respect for men, for whom it would be dishonour if their women are seen outside the house; women mentioned this issue more than men
- that there is no need for women to go out; this was mentioned as much by women as by men.

Common suggestions from participants about what was different about households that *did* allow women to go out included:

- the men are more trusting and supportive of their women; this was mentioned especially by younger women
- the men and women are more educated and aware
- the women need to share work and other responsibilities outside the household; in this case it's a matter of expediency

In over half of the groups women, most participants thought that some limitations on women's movements outside the house were a *good* thing. In about a quarter of the groups the majority thought restrictions on movement were a bad thing and in another quarter there was no consensus in the

group. In two-thirds of the men's groups the majority said they thought restrictions on women's movements outside the house were a good thing and in only a few groups did the majority think such restrictions were a bad thing.

### **Perceptions of women's status and rights**

All interviews – with eligible women, with senior women and with men – included questions about what women could do and what they should be able to do. The responses to these questions are simply perceptions or views, but they permit estimation of subjective norms. Perceived norms and personal alignment with these norms (or willingness not to align, in the case of negative subjective norms) is an important threshold for changing any behaviour.

Table 12. OK for women to seek legal help for property concerns (%)

Province	Women	Senior women	Men
Sindh	79	77	81
Bal'stan	71	67	58
NWFP	81	75	72
Punjab	82	80	79
National	81	78	78

*Legal help for property concerns:* Most eligible women (81%, n=22855) thought that it was “okay for a woman to seek legal help for concerns about her property”. The lowest proportion thinking this was in Balochistan (71%, n=3573). The views by province are shown in Table 12. The view of senior women was similar about this issue, with 78% (n=8504) nationally thinking it alright for a woman to seek legal help for property concerns (Table 12). The view of the smaller number of men interviewed was also quite similar on this issue (Table 12).

Table 13. OK for women to report violence to the police (%)

Province	Women	Senior women	Men
Sindh	70	59	66
Bal'stan	62	56	37
NWFP	77	68	62
Punjab	77	70	60
National	75	66	61

*Reporting violence to the police:* Three-quarters (75%, n=23220) of the eligible women interviewed thought it was “okay for a woman to go to the police to report a case of violence/physical harm against her”. Again, the lowest proportion thinking this was alright was in Balochistan. The views by province are shown in Table 13. Rather fewer senior women (66%, n=8606) thought it was alright for a woman to report physical violence to the police, with a similar variation by province (Table 13). Nationally, 61% (n=1556) of men said it was alright for a woman to report physical violence to the police, with a lower proportion thinking this in Balochistan (37%).

Table 14. Does the honour of the family depend on men, women or both? (%)

Province	Women	Senior women	Men
<i>Sindh</i>			
Men	35	35	39
Women	35	34	22
Both	29	31	40
<i>Bal'stan</i>			
Men	39	34	24
Women	43	47	38
Both	18	19	38
<i>NWFP</i>			
Men	32	33	25
Women	44	38	40
Both	24	29	35
<i>Punjab</i>			
Men	42	47	48
Women	32	25	33
Both	26	28	19
<i>National</i>			
Men	39	42	44
Women	35	30	30
Both	26	28	26

*Honour of the family:* Asked whether the honour of the family depends more on the men, the women or both, the eligible women were divided in their responses. Of the 23306 who responded, 39% thought the family honour depended mainly on the men, 35% on the women and 26% on both. There was some variation by province. Senior women held generally similar views about this issue, with much the same provincial pattern. Men also held quite similar views on this issue (Table 14).

Table 15. OK for right to divorce to be included in marriage contract (%)

Province	Women	Senior women	Men
Sindh	63	57	49
Bal'stan	51	48	16
NWFP	59	45	41
Punjab	60	53	41
National	60	52	42

*Right to divorce:* Respondents were asked if they thought it was “okay that a woman has her right to divorce (*talaq-e-tafweez*) granted in the marriage contract (*nikahnama*)”. Some 60% (n=23321) of eligible women who responded thought it was alright, and a further 8% said they did not know. The lowest positive response to this question was in Balochistan (51%, n=3620). Table 15 shows the variation in response by province. Among senior women, less were in agreement that it was alright for the right to divorce to be included in the marriage contract, with 52% (n=8656) nationally agreeing that it was alright. The variation by province is shown in Table 15. Nationally, 42% of men thought it was alright for a woman’s right to divorce to be included in the marriage contract, with just 16% thinking this in Balochistan.

Table 16. Solution to serious conflict between husband and wife (%)

Response	Women	Senior women	Men
Mutual compromise	61	56	33
Involve family	13	22	38
Separation	8	3	8
Divorce	7	10	15
Wife compromises	6	7	1
Police/courts	2	0.2	1
Neighbours / community	1	0.3	7

*Solution to serious conflict between husband and wife:* When asked about the solution to serious conflict between husband and wife, the most common response from eligible women was that they should sit together to discuss and come to a mutual compromise. The most common responses to this question are shown in Table 16. Senior women gave similar responses to the younger eligible women (Table 16). But the male responses were a little different.

## Perceptions about abuse

The survey deliberately did not go to the communities with preconceived ideas about what is considered abuse against women and what is not. Therefore a number of questions explored perceptions about abuse, some of them to all respondents and some of them only to the group of eligible women. The eligible women were asked a series of questions about issues that might be considered abuse, and in each case they were asked if they thought that thing was abuse or not.

*A man staring at a woman:* Nearly all women (95%, n=23380) thought that abuse against women includes a man staring at a woman. There was very little variation in this view between provinces.

*Restrictions on a woman’s activities:* In asking about this, visiting parents or friends were given as examples of what activities could be restricted. Again, most women (91%, n=23387) thought that imposing these sorts of restrictions is a form of abuse against women. There was again very little variation in this view between provinces.

“It’s not good to restrict a woman unnecessarily. She has sacrificed a lot by leaving her parent’s home. So if she wants to visit them, the man should not prevent her from doing so.”

Women’s focus group, Punjab

In over half the focus groups of women the participants agreed that restrictions as a form of punishment are not acceptable, although in some groups participants thought restrictions could be a reasonable form of punishment.

*Abusive and foul language:* Virtually all women (97%, n=23386) thought that using abusive and foul language is a form of abuse against women. This unanimity was found across all provinces.

*Slapping a woman:* Perhaps not surprisingly, nearly all women (97%, n=23350) agreed that slapping a woman is a form of abuse. And again, this view is held in all provinces to the same extent.

*Burning a woman:* In this case, the women were asked if they thought trying to burn a woman is a crime. And virtually all of them (99%, n=23373) thought this.

The high level of agreement among women about these things being abuse against women can inform interpretation of some of their other responses and reported experiences.

## Justification for hitting women

All the respondents were asked questions about whether hitting women could be justified in some cases.

*Eligible women:* When asked if a man hitting a woman could be justified “if she has misbehaved” more than half (57%, n=23273) the eligible women said “yes”. In this case, the few who responded “it depends” have been included with “yes” as they are saying that sometimes it can be justified. There was variation across provinces (Figure 9 and Figure 10), with more women in Balochistan and NWFP saying that hitting a woman could be justified than in Sindh or Punjab.

Women in focus groups were presented with the finding that more than half the women respondents thought hitting a woman could be justifiable and they discussed *why* many women think like this. The common ideas from the focus groups of women included:

- because the woman has committed some fault and therefore brought it on herself
- because women think this is normal and a man’s right as the breadwinner

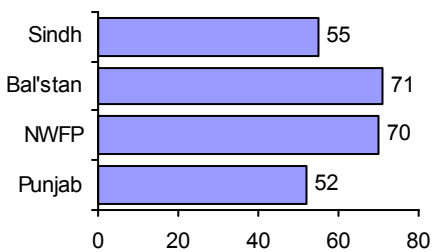


Figure 9. % women who think a man hitting a woman can be justified

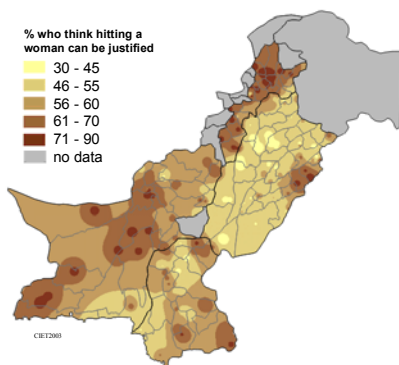


Figure 10. Map of % women who think hitting a woman can be justifiable

"It's an issue of tradition. Women who have been observing women being abused and beaten in their family regard this as a norm and hence consider this to be justified."  
Women's focus group, Sindh

- because of jealousy and rivalry between women (so one woman would feel another woman deserved to be beaten)
- because of lack of education and lack of awareness of rights

"Women who think hitting is not justified are aware of their rights and of religion. There is nothing in the religion that permits a man to hit a woman."  
Women's focus group, Sindh

Women focus group participants thought that more educated women would be less likely to accept that a man hitting a woman is justifiable. They also thought women aware of their rights under Islam were less likely to believe that hitting a woman could be justifiable.

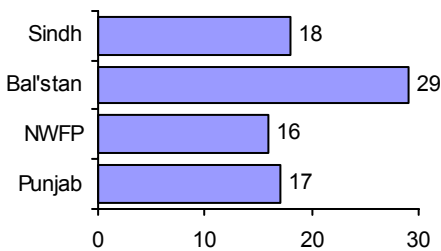


Figure 11. % senior women who think a mother-in-law hitting a daughter-in-law can be justified

*Senior women:* The views of senior women on this issue were much the same as those of the younger women. Over half of them (54%, n=8622) considered a man hitting a woman could be justified if she had misbehaved. Again there was variation between provinces, with 70% in NWFP and 68% in Balochistan saying that hitting women could be justified, but only 54% in Sindh and 49% in Punjab saying this. Senior women were additionally asked if a mother-in-law hitting a daughter-in-law could be justified if she had misbehaved. Far fewer senior women said this could be justified: only 20% (n=8648) nationally. Many of these senior women were themselves mothers-in-law. There was some variation between provinces, with more senior women in Balochistan saying that a mother-in-law could justifiably hit her daughter-in-law (Figure 11).

"If the woman does not care for her husband, argues with him or does not give food on time, it is acceptable that her husband beats her."  
Senior women's focus group, Punjab

In focus group discussions, the senior women mentioned many of the same reasons as younger women for why some women think hitting a woman is justifiable. They mentioned many circumstances when hitting a woman was justifiable, such as arguing, being disrespectful to the husband or in-laws, being of loose character, disobeying the husband, and not caring for the family or not doing the housework properly.

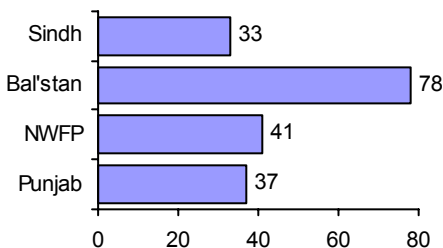


Figure 12. % men who think a man hitting a woman can be justified

Nationally, *less* men (37%, n=1546) were of the opinion that a man hitting a woman could be justified if she had misbehaved. This ranged from 33% in Sindh to 78% in Balochistan (Figure 12). Men's views about the justification for a mother-in-law hitting a daughter-in-law were similar to those of the senior women. Nationally, 18% of men (n=1548) thought it could be justified, ranging from 16% in Sindh to 23% in Balochistan.

"Many women are illiterate and they only understand physical language. Hence beating is the only solution for them."  
Men's focus group, Punjab

Among the reasons why some men think it justifiable to hit a woman, the common ideas expressed in focus groups of men included:

"One should never hit a woman because Islam does not permit us to hit. If one is too much irritated or frustrated, it's better to divorce her."  
Men's focus group, Punjab

- because the woman has committed some fault and therefore brought it on herself
- because of lack of education of men

Some participants in the focus groups of men stressed that religious belief is an important reason for considering that a man hitting a woman cannot be justified.

Community leaders and Pesh Imams interviewed in the communities were also asked if they thought a man hitting a woman could be justified. They were all men and their responses were similar to those of men interviewed in the households: 40% (58/147) of Pesh Imams and 36% (59/165) community leaders thought that a man hitting a woman could be justified.

### Men or women as the basic cause of physical violence to women

Table 17. Eligible women's views about who is basic cause of violence to women (%)

Province	Men	Women	Both
Sindh	68	11	21
Bal'stan	65	21	14
NWFP	51	25	24
Punjab	48	26	27
National	54	22	25

Just over half the eligible women interviewed (54%, n=23000) said men were the basic cause of physical violence to women, while a fifth (22%) thought women were the basic cause and a quarter (25%) thought both were the cause. There was some variation between provinces, although in all cases the opinions were divided about who was the basic cause (Table 17).

"It's women who are the enemy to other women and create problems. Look at the conflicts between a woman and her female in-laws such as mother-in-law, sister-in-law, daughter-in-law."  
Women's focus group, Punjab

The focus groups clarified of women what was meant by those women who said women were the basic cause of violence to women: women might incite violence to other women, rather than necessarily actually perpetrating it themselves.

"Sometimes the mother-in-law does not like the daughter-in-law. In such cases she wants her daughter in-law to be abused or beaten."  
Senior women's focus group, Punjab

The views of senior women on this same question were similar to those of the younger women. Nationally, 49% (n=8505) said men were the basic cause of violence to women, 23% said women were the cause and 28% said both were the cause. Again, there was variation between provinces, with the highest proportions blaming men in Sindh (63%) and Balochistan (64%) and the lowest blaming men in NWFP (46%) and Punjab (43%).

Among the men who were interviewed, 39% (n=1509) said men were the basic cause of violence to women, 35% said women were the cause and 26% said both were the cause. In this case, the lowest proportions blaming men were in Balochistan (29%) and NWFP (23%).

The Pesh Imams interviewed in the communities held views on this issue similar to those of men interviewed in the households: 27% (39/147) thought men were the basic cause of violence to women, 32% (47) thought women were the basic cause and 41% (61) thought both were the cause. Among male community leaders interviewed, 25% (41/166) thought men were the basic cause, 37% (61) thought it was women and 29% (64) thought it was both.

## Acceptable discipline

Almost all (99%, n=8651) the senior women who responded said they thought a man should discipline (*islah*) his wife. The proportion was the same in all provinces. Similarly, virtually all the responding men thought a man should discipline (*islah*) his wife.

Asked an open question about what they considered *acceptable* forms of discipline, nearly all the senior women (98%, n=8513) said “explaining gently”. Just 1% said getting angry was acceptable, and 1% mentioned involving elders in the dispute. Among the men, 74% (n=1553) mentioned involving elders in the dispute, 24% said “explaining gently”, and 3% mentioned giving Islamic advice.

74% of senior women and 74% of men said beating was an *unacceptable* way for a man to discipline his wife

Asked about *unacceptable* forms of discipline, 74% (n=8589) of senior women said they thought beating was unacceptable, while 23% said getting angry was unacceptable. Some 2% mentioned temporary separation and 2% mentioned divorce as unacceptable forms of discipline. Among the men the most common suggestion for unacceptable discipline was beating (74%, n=1478), with other suggestions including: ignoring or not speaking to the woman (14%), getting angry (8%) and divorce (4%).

Among community leaders interviewed, 90% (149/165) thought a man should discipline his wife by “explaining gently” and just 7% (11) thought he should use physical punishment. Among Pesh Imams, 81% (118/146) recommended explaining gently, 21% (30) mentioned giving Islamic advice, and just 5% mentioned physical punishment.

Table 18. Ways that women provoke men to abuse them, mentioned by women

Way of provoking	% (n)
Argue/quarrel	31 (7202)
Disobey/ask for rights	28 (6400)
Relations with other man	13 (3024)
Nothing specific	13 (2975)
Careless with man/family	11 (2558)
Nothing –it’s man’s nature	5 (1104)
Don’t know	5 (1205)

Eligible women were asked about whether they thought women in some way ‘provoked’ men to abuse them, and if so what it would take to provoke a man to abuse a woman. Table 18 shows the most common responses. Many women felt that arguing or quarrelling would be enough to provoke

abuse (31%, n=23126), followed closely by disobeying or demanding rights (28%). Less commonly, women mentioned that relations with another man would provoke abuse from the husband (13%) or that nothing specific would be required.

## Perceptions about abuse in the community

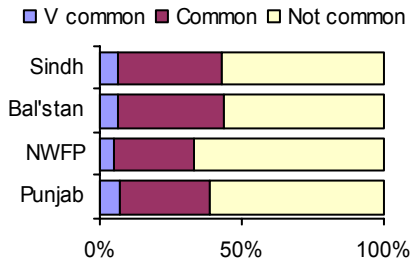


Figure 13. Women's view about frequency of abuse against women in the community

Eligible women were asked how common abuse against women was in their community. Just 6% (n=22768) said it was very common, 33% said it was common and 61% said it was not common. There was not very much variation in this pattern between provinces (Figure 13). Taking this response together with the women's later disclosures about their own experiences of abuse (see below) suggests that they may believe they are the exceptions and that other women are not experiencing the same problems as them. It could also be that at this stage of the interview the women were not ready to reveal their real view about the situation.

"This is a big problem for a woman in our society. She takes care of all the household but still she bears all the abuse and torture."  
Senior women's focus group, Punjab

"It's a big problem but it's out of question in our community for a woman to be abused as it's an issue of honour and respect. We disregard and disrespect a man who hits his woman."  
Men's focus group, Balochistan

"If the woman is educated and aware, she can cover and handle many domestic problems that may lead to her being abused. So it's necessary that women are educated."  
Men's focus group, Punjab

"In places where there is money and all the necessities are fulfilled there is nothing for dispute and hence there is no abuse."  
Women's focus group, NWFP

"Those who are aware of women's rights and respect them, they do not abuse women."  
Men's focus group, Balochistan

Focus group participants were asked how much of an issue they thought abuse against women really was. In nearly all the junior women's groups and senior women's groups the majority of participants agreed it was a major issue; the majority of participants in about two-thirds of the men's groups also thought it was a major issue. However, nearly all the groups, of both women and men, argued that the problem varied a lot from place to place and suggested it was *not* such an issue in their own community, district or province.

Asked what was different about those places with less abuse against women, the most common response was that places where there was *better education* – of women and of men – and *better awareness* had less of a problem with abuse of women. *Better economic* status was also perceived as important by participants in many groups, especially in the men's groups. A *better social environment*, with more respect for women, was also mentioned by many people. Many participants, women especially, said that places with a *better mutual understanding between men and women* were less likely to have a problem with abuse against women.

The majority of Pesh Imams (75%, 107/142) said they thought abuse against women was not a big problem in their community. Similarly, 73% (120/164) of community leaders and 65% (104/159) members of the reconciliation committee or of the union council said abuse against



women was not a big problem in their community. However, 60% (81/134) women councillors thought abuse against women *was* a big problem in their community.

## Information about abuse

### Talking about abuse

Two thirds of women (67%, n=23021) said they had discussed abuse against women with other women at some time. This proportion was much the same between the provinces. Amongst those women who had ever discussed abuse with other women, 21% said they discussed the topic at least once a week, 5% said less than once a week but at least once a month, but most (74%) said rarely or occasionally or “as needed”.

Nearly half the women (47%, n=22930) said they would be able to discuss abuse against women with elders in their community. The proportion who thought this was somewhat lower in NWFP (36%) but otherwise did not vary very much between provinces (Figure 14).

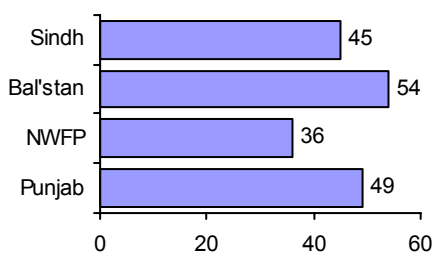


Figure 14. % women who said they could discuss abuse against women with community elders

### Sources of information about abuse

Most eligible women (72%, 16641/23230) reported that they had at some time seen, read or heard something about abuse against women. Two thirds of the senior women (67%, 5785/8654) and just half the men (52%, 804/1557) interviewed said they had some information about this issue. Those who said they had information were asked where they got it, in an open question. For all respondents, the most common source of information was by word of mouth from neighbours. Younger women were somewhat more likely to get their information from the television than the older women or the men. Men were more likely to mention newspapers as their information source (Table 19).

Table 19. Main sources of information about abuse against women (%)

Source	Women	Senior women	Men
Neighbours	49	57	45
Television	31	23	25
Family members	15	19	5
Newspapers	14	7	44
Own observation	6	5	2
Books	4	2	5
Radio	3	3	5

Table 20. What people want to know about abuse (%)

Information	Women	Senior women	Men
Reasons for abuse	81	80	66
How to prevent	14	15	16
Definition	3	4	16
Legal issues	2	2	4
Women's rights	2	2	4
Sources of help	1	1	0

The sort of information about abuse that the different respondents said they would like to have are shown in Table 20. By far the most frequent request in all groups was for information about the reasons for abuse, followed by information about how to prevent abuse happening. It is notable that very few people, women or men, said they wanted information about sources of help. As described below, lack of knowledge about sources of help or reporting arrangements does not seem to be an important factor preventing women from reporting abuse.

## Women's report of abuse of sisters

Questions about abuse experienced by sisters were included as a way of “breaking the ice” for this sensitive section of the interview and partly as another source of information about abuse against women, including the more serious forms of physical abuse and even murder. Women were asked about the numbers of sisters they had alive and dead. Then they were asked about how many of them had suffered various forms of abuse. Reported rates of abuse of sisters may be lowered partly by a woman's unwillingness to disclose such sensitive issues and partly by her lack of knowledge of her sisters' situation, especially for sisters who are living some distance away.

*Harassment of sisters in public places:* About a quarter of women who could respond (23%, n=21092) said they had at least one sister who they knew had suffered verbal or physical harassment in a public place (for example, at school or at work). Quite a few women were not able to give a response to the question one way or the other. The reported harassment must have been serious enough for one sister to tell another about it. Fewer women reported harassment of at least one sister in a public place in Sindh (14%) and NWFP (12%) than in Balochistan (29%) and Punjab (27%). In NWFP, this may also reflect that women go into public places less often (see section above on freedom of movement).

*Mental and verbal abuse of sisters:* The question mentioned the examples of “being yelled at, called bad names, bickering, criticising”. About two thirds of women who could give an answer (63%, n=21246) reported they had at least one sister who they knew had suffered mental or verbal abuse. Again, this must reflect mental and verbal abuse serious enough for one sister to tell another sister about it. The proportion of women reporting at least one sister suffering mental or verbal abuse ranged from 52% in Sindh to 78% in Balochistan.

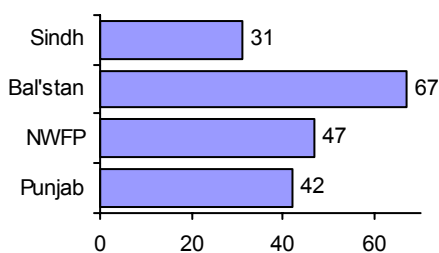


Figure 15. % women who reported at least one sister beaten by a household member

*Beating of sisters:* Women were asked if any of their sisters had ever suffered beating by a household member. Four out of ten women who could give an answer (41%, n=21247) reported at least one of their sisters they knew had suffered beating by a household member. This ranged from about a third in Sindh (31%) to two thirds in Balochistan (67%) (Figure 15). Again, this depends on how many women tell their sisters about their experience of being beaten.

*Acid burns suffered by sisters:* Just 0.4% of women (n=21346) reported having a sister who they knew had suffered acid burns. This is a serious event that a sister is very likely to be aware of. The proportion of women reporting any sister with acid burns ranged from 0.2% in Sindh and NWFP to 0.5% in Punjab and 0.7% in Balochistan.

*Stove burning of sisters:* Just 1% of women nationally (n=21346) reported having a sister who they knew had suffered stove or other burning. Again, this is a serious event that a sister is likely to be aware of. The proportion of women reporting stove burning of a sister ranged from 0.6% in NWFP to 1.5% in Balochistan, with Sindh reporting 1.1% and Punjab 0.9%. Among all reported cases 40% (n=57) were reported as happening less than a year ago.

*Honour killing of sisters:* Women were asked if any of their sisters had suffered honour killing (*karo kari / gherat ky nam par*). Some 0.4% of women (n=21345) reported that at least one of their sisters had been killed in this way. The proportion of women reporting an honour killing of one of their sisters was virtually the same across all the provinces. Almost one fourth of the cases of honour killing mentioned (26%; n=37) were said to have happened within the last year.

## Women's experience of abuse and factors related to the risk of abuse

*Feeling safe and relations in the household:* Women were asked if they felt safe in the household where they were living. Nearly all the women reported feeling safe in the household (96%, n=23189). There was no variation in this perception between provinces. Similarly, nine out of ten women (91%, n=23072) reported their treatment by the elders in the household was good or very good. This was consistent across all provinces.

In this section, the information disclosed by women about their experience of different kinds of abuse is described, together with an analysis of the effects of *potential actionable factors*, examined to see if they were related to a woman's risk of experiencing the different forms of abuse. In each case, the association of each factor with the experience of abuse was examined taking into account the effects of other variables, such as the province, urban or rural place of residence, age, and marital status. The associations described in each case are those that remained after taking other variables into account by stratification.

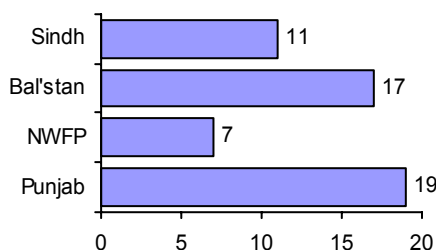


Figure 16. % women who disclosed harassment outside the home, by province

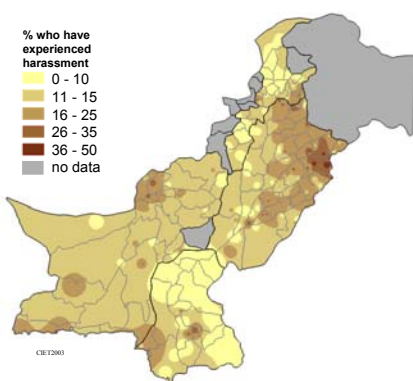


Figure 17. Map of % women who disclosed harassment outside the home

### Harassment outside the home

This survey did not have a major focus on the problems women may experience in the workplace. However, women were asked if they had ever experienced verbal or physical harassment at work, or at school, or in public places such as at the bus stop or in the market. This is in the context of 95% of women saying that a man staring at a woman is a form of abuse against women (see above). Nationally, 16% (n=23362) women said they had experienced such harassment outside the home. The highest proportion experiencing this harassment outside the home was in Punjab and the lowest proportion was in NWFP (Figures 16 and 17). This is probably related to the greater acceptability of women going out from the house for various purposes (including for work) in Punjab (see above).

Four out of every ten (40%; n=2855) women who reported they had experienced harassment outside the home said the last occasion was within the last month, 30% said it was

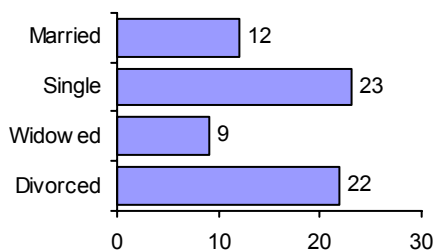


Figure 18. % women who disclosed harassment outside the home, by marital status

"We ourselves don't like to go outside as the outside environment is not good."  
Women's focus group, Sindh

between a month and a year ago, and 30% said it was more than a year ago.

*Marital status:* Harassment outside the home was reported more frequently by single women and divorced or separated women than by married women or widows. The variation in the experience of harassment outside the home by marital status is shown in Figure 18.

In focus group discussions about the issue of restrictions on women's movement, some women referred to the problems they could face with harassment outside the home. This sometimes meant that they themselves felt reluctant to leave the home environment.

### Factors related to the risk of harassment outside the home

This survey did not collect information about women's environment outside the home, particularly in the workplace. Therefore specific factors reducing a woman's risk of being harassed outside the home were not defined. Many of those factors in the home environment that increased a woman's mobility and decreased her risk of being abused in the home (see below) actually increased her risk of being harassed outside the home. In particular, a woman was more likely to be harassed outside the home if she had employment outside the home<sup>2</sup>. This does not mean that a recommendation from the findings is that women should not go out to work; rather it means that attention to the working environment and the transport arrangements for working women is necessary to reduce their risk of harassment in the workplace and elsewhere.

### Restrictions as a form of punishment

Describing restrictions for punishment as a form of abuse is guided by the views expressed by women themselves: nine out of ten women, across all provinces, said that restrictions for punishment are a form of abuse against women (see above). Nationally, about a fifth of women (21%, n=23263) said they had been restricted in their activities *as a form of punishment*. In other words, these were restrictions imposed over and above any usual restrictions imposed by culture and tradition in their area. There was variation between provinces, with restrictions as a form of punishment being most commonly reported by women in Balochistan (30%)

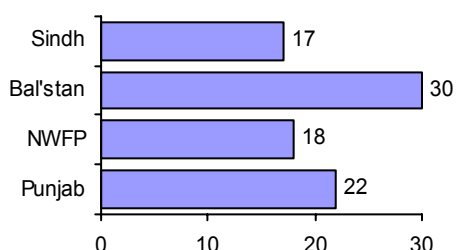


Figure 19. % women who disclosed restrictions as a form of punishment, by province

<sup>2</sup> 2938/3728 (79%) of women with outside employment did not experience harassment outside the home, compared with 16990/19559 (87%) of women without outside employment. OR 0.56, 95% CI 0.51-0.62

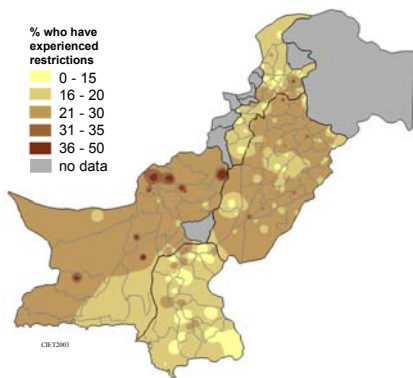


Figure 20. Map of % women who disclosed restrictions as a form of punishment

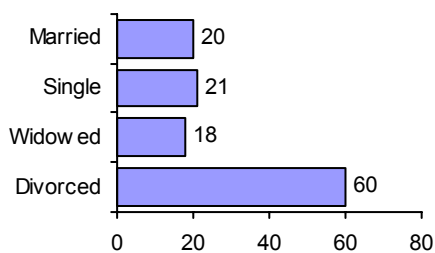


Figure 21. % women who disclosed restrictions as a form of punishment, by marital status

and least commonly by women in Sindh (17%) (Figures 19 and 20).

More than a third (25%) of women who disclosed they had experienced restrictions as a form of punishment said the most recent time was within the last month, 40% said it happened between a month to a year ago, and 35% said it last happened more than a year ago.

*Marital status:* The small group of divorced or separated women disclosed more experience of restrictions as a form of punishment than the other women (Figure 21). This may be related to the reasons for their separation or divorce or they may have been more vulnerable to being restricted in their situation following their separation or divorced, living back in their parental home or with other relatives.

### Factors related to the risk of restrictions as punishment

Potential actionable factors were examined to see if they were related to a woman's risk of experiencing restrictions as a form of punishment. The association of each factor with the experience of restrictions was examined taking into account the effects of other variables, such as the province, urban or rural place of residence, age, and marital status. The associations listed below are those that remained after taking other variables into account by stratification.

A woman was less likely to have experienced restrictions as a form of punishment if:

- Her marriage was with consent (or if unmarried she expected to marry with consent)<sup>3</sup>
- Her household did not have a tradition of demanding dowry<sup>4</sup> or walvar<sup>5</sup>
- The men in her household did not practise polygamy<sup>6</sup>
- Women in her household were allowed to go out to the market<sup>7</sup>
- There was no family history of abuse in her household<sup>8</sup>
- Her household was not in the vulnerable category<sup>9</sup>

<sup>3</sup> 5624/6919 (81%) of women whose marriage was with consent did not experience restrictions as punishment, compared with 11501/14845 (78%) of women whose marriage was not with consent. OR 1.26, 95% CI 1.17-1.36

<sup>4</sup> 11863/14595 (81%) of women whose household did not demand dowry did not experience restrictions as punishment, compared with 6405/8579 (75%) of women whose household did demand dowry. OR 1.47, 95% CI 1.38-1.57

<sup>5</sup> 14943/18709 (80%) of women whose household did not demand walvar did not experience restrictions as punishment, compared with 3302/4435 (75%) of women whose household did demand walvar. OR 1.36, 95% CI 1.26-1.47

<sup>6</sup> 11573/14293 (81%) of women in households not practising polygamy did not experience restrictions as punishment, compared with 6644/8820 (75%) of women in households practicing polygamy. OR 1.39, 95% CI 1.31-1.49

<sup>7</sup> 9268/11501 (81%) of women in households where women could go to market did not experience restrictions as punishment, compared with 8923/11577 (77%) where they could not go to market. OR 1.23, 95% CI 1.16-1.32

<sup>8</sup> 4866/6003 women in households with no family history of abuse did not experience restrictions as punishment, compared with 4470/5893 (76%) in households with a history of abuse. OR 1.36, 95% CI 1.25-1.49

## Mental and verbal abuse

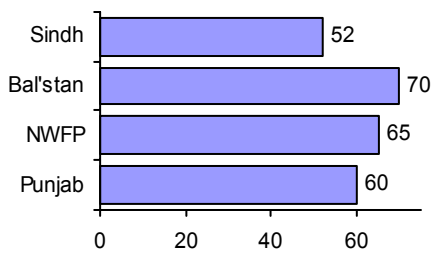


Figure 22. % women who disclosed mental or verbal abuse, by province

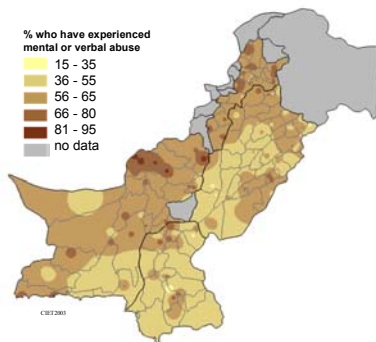


Figure 23. Map of % women who disclosed mental or verbal abuse

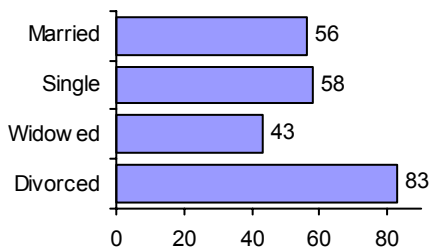


Figure 24. % women who disclosed mental or verbal abuse, by marital status

The question about mental and verbal abuse mentioned the examples of “being yelled at, called bad names, bickering, criticizing”. Virtually all women said they considered the use of foul or abusive language to be a form of abuse against women (see above). Just over half the women said they had experienced mental or verbal abuse (56%, n=23222). There was some variation across the country (Figures 22 and 23), with the highest proportion of women reporting mental or verbal abuse in Balochistan (70%).

Nearly four out of every ten (42%; n=11318) women who disclosed mental or verbal abuse said the last time it happened was within the last week (this includes women who said it happened daily), 41% said the most recent episode was between a week and a year ago and 17% said the last time was more than a year ago.

*Marital status:* Mental and verbal abuse was reported quite frequently by women of all marital statuses. It was most commonly reported by the small group of women who were divorced or separated (83%, n=211). Their separation or divorce may have been related to the abuse or they may have experienced the abuse when they returned to their parental home. The variation in reported mental and verbal abuse by marital status is shown in Figure 24.

*Person responsible:* Among married women, the most common person they said abused them mentally or verbally was their husband (76%, n=8319), followed by the mother-in-law (17%). Among single women, the person responsible was most commonly said to be the mother (67%; n=4555), the father (23%) or a brother (17%). Widowed women also mentioned the husband (57%; n=255), the mother-in-law (13%) and the father-in-law (5%). Divorced and separated women most commonly mentioned the husband (78%; n=172) and the mother-in-law (27%).

### Factors related to the risk of mental and verbal abuse

A woman was less likely to have experienced mental and verbal abuse if:

- Her husband had some formal education<sup>9</sup> (this analysis included married women only)
- Her husband was in skilled work of some kind<sup>11</sup>

<sup>9</sup> 11487/14470 (79%) of women in not-vulnerable households did not experience restrictions as punishment, compared with 6474/8319 (78%) in vulnerable households. OR 1.10, 95% CI 1.03-1.17

<sup>10</sup> 3676/8369 (44%) of women whose husbands had formal education did not experience mental or verbal abuse, compared with 2701/6919 (39%) of women whose husbands did not have formal education. OR 1.22, 95% CI 1.15-1.31

- Her marriage was with consent<sup>12</sup>
- Her household was not in the vulnerable category<sup>13</sup>

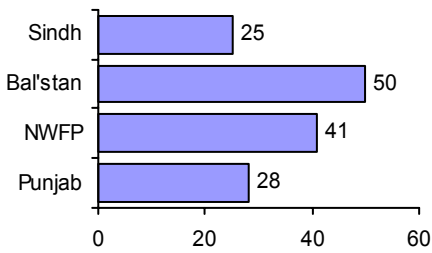


Figure 25. % women who disclosed they were beaten, by province

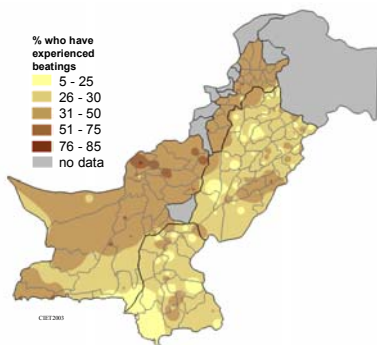


Figure 26. Map of % women who disclosed they were beaten

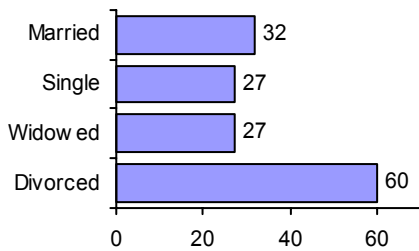


Figure 27. % women who disclosed they were beaten, by marital status

## Beatings

Nationally, almost a third of women (30%, n=23408) disclosed they had suffered beatings. Fewer women disclosed beatings in Sindh (25%) and Punjab (28%) than in NWFP (41%) and Balochistan (50%) (Figures 25 and 26). Of those women who disclosed they had been beaten, more than a quarter (29%; n=6859) said the last time was within the last month (this included some who reported it happened very frequently or on a daily basis), a similar proportion (29%) said it last happened one month to one year ago, and 42% said the last episode was more than a year ago.

*Marital status:* The proportion of women who reported experiencing beatings was notably higher among the small group of divorced or separated women (60%, n=213) (Figure 27). Physical violence may have been part of the reason for the divorce, and divorced or separated women may also be more at risk of experiencing physical violence.

*Person responsible:* Women could mention more than one person who had beaten them, in an open question. Married women most commonly said they had been beaten by their husband (79%, n=5095), also mentioning their own mother (the beatings reported included those in the past) (10%) and their mother-in-law (6%). Single women most commonly said they were beaten by their mother (59%), their father (22%) or a brother (20%). Widows also cited their husbands (73%), mothers (7%) and mothers-in-law (4%). Divorced and separated women most commonly mentioned the husband (86%) and mother-in-law (21%).

## Factors related to the risk of being beaten

Many factors were identified that reduced a woman's risk of being beaten, concerned with education, economic status and employment, and socio-cultural issues.

A woman was less likely to have been beaten if:

<sup>11</sup> 2447/5525 (44%) of women whose husbands were in skilled work did not experience mental/verbal abuse, compared with 3924/9746 (40%) of women whose husbands were not in skilled work. OR 1.18, 95% CI 1.10-1.26

<sup>12</sup> 3073/6912 (45%) of women whose marriage was with consent did not experience mental/verbal abuse, compared with 5832/14816 (39%) of women whose marriage was not with consent. OR 1.23, 95% CI 1.16-1.31

<sup>13</sup> 6034/14444 (42%) of women from households not in the vulnerable category did not experience mental/verbal abuse, compared with 3307/8300 (40%) of women from vulnerable households. OR 1.08, 95% CI 1.02-1.15



- She herself had some formal education<sup>14</sup>
- Her husband had some formal education<sup>15</sup>
- Her household was not in the very vulnerable category<sup>16</sup>
- Her husband was in some sort of skilled work<sup>17</sup>
- Her marriage was, or was expected to be, with her consent<sup>18</sup>
- Her age at marriage was 18 years or over (including only ever-married women)<sup>19</sup>
- Her household did not have a tradition of demanding walvar<sup>20</sup>
- The men in her household did not practise polygamy<sup>21</sup>
- It was acceptable in her household for women to go out to work<sup>22</sup>
- There was no family history of physical abuse in her household<sup>23</sup>
- There was no one addicted to drugs in her household<sup>24</sup>
- She herself did not believe it was justifiable for a man to hit a woman<sup>25</sup>

Table 21. People women told about being beaten

Person	% (n)
No one	66 (5164)
Mother	18 (1375)
Father	4 (336)
Sister	3 (236)
Brother	2 (178)
Other female relative	2 (140)
Mother-in-law	2 (129)
Husband	0.9 (74)
Female neighbour/friend	0.9 (71)
Other male relative	0.9 (67)
Male neighbour/friend	0.3 (20)
Father-in-law	0.2 (18)
Police/courts	0.2 (14)
Male councillor	0.1 (6)
Female councillor	0

### Telling someone about the abuse

Women who disclosed having been beaten were asked who, if anyone, they had told about it. Only a third (35%, n=7828) said they had told anyone about it; in other words, for two-thirds of women the interviewer was the first person they had told about the beating(s). The people women most commonly confided in were the mother (18%) the father (4%), a sister (3%), or a brother (2%). (Table 20). Only a handful of the nearly 8,000 women who had been

<sup>14</sup> 6603/9082 (73%) of women with some formal education were not beaten, compared with 8883/14294 (62%) or women with no formal education. OR 1.62, 95% CI 1.53-1.72

<sup>15</sup> 5876/8450 (70%) of women whose husbands had some formal education were not beaten, compared with 4066/6970 (58%) of women whose husbands had no formal education. OR 1.63, 95% CI 1.52-1.74

<sup>16</sup> 13220/19655 (67%) of women from not very vulnerable households were not beaten, compared with 1970/3274 (60%) or women from very vulnerable households. OR 1.36, 95% CI 1.26-1.47

<sup>17</sup> 3928/5577 (70%) of women whose husbands were in skilled work were not beaten, compared with 6003/9826 (61%) or women whose husbands were not in skilled work. OR 1.52, 95% CI 1.41-1.63

<sup>18</sup> 4953/6961 (71%) of women married or expecting to marry with consent were not beaten, compared with 9530/14942 (61%) married or expecting to marry without consent. OR 1.40, 95% CI 1.32-1.49

<sup>19</sup> 4892/7129 (69%) of women married at age 18 years or older were not beaten, compared with 4997/8181 (61%) of women married below age 18 years. OR 1.39, 95% CI 1.30-1.49

<sup>20</sup> 13123/18829 (70%) of women who household did not demand walvar were not beaten, compared with 2312/4459 (52%) of women whose households demanded walvar. OR 2.14, 95% CI 2.00-2.29

<sup>21</sup> 10117/14377 (70%) of women whose households did not practise polygamy were not beaten, compared with 5302/8880 (60%) of women whose households whose households practised polygamy. OR 1.60, 95% CI 1.51-1.70

<sup>22</sup> 6600/9497 (70%) of women from households where women going out to work was acceptable were not beaten, compared with 8793/13725 (64%) from households where it was not acceptable. OR 1.28, 95% CI 1.21-1.35

<sup>23</sup> 4469/6030 (74%) of women in households where the senior woman had not seen abuse as a child were not beaten, compared with 3679/5930 (62%) in households where the senior woman had seen abuse. OR 1.75, 95% CI 1.62-1.90

<sup>24</sup> 14974/22403 (67%) of women in households with no reported drug addicts were not beaten, compared with 472/885 (53%) in households with drug addicts. OR 1.76, 95% CI 1.54-2.03

<sup>25</sup> 6538/9562 (68%) of women who did not think a man hitting a woman could be justified were not beaten, compared with 8866/13690 (65%) of women who thought a man hitting a woman could be justifiable. OR 1.18, 95% CI 1.11-1.24

beaten said they had told someone outside the family about it, such as the police or a local councillor (Table 21).

"Everyone blames the women. No one says anything to the men even if they are at fault. That's why women don't tell anyone even if they are abused."  
Women's focus group, Balochistan

"Whom should we tell? When our parents marry us, they tell us that for them we are dead and don't exist any more. Neither father nor brother listen to us or help."  
Women's focus group, Punjab

"A woman has a fear that if she were to complain it would worsen the situation, she may get divorced and her children could be taken away."  
Women's focus group, Sindh

Participants in the focus groups of women were given the findings about the low proportion of abused women who told anyone about it. Many thought that women did not report abuse to someone *inside* the family because it would make the problem worse, or give her a bad name within the family. Others mentioned it was out of fear of the family or of being separated or divorced by the husband, or losing her children, or facing more abuse.

Senior women's groups and men's groups were asked for their views about whether a woman should report abuse. In less than half of the senior women's groups a majority of participants thought a woman who was abused should tell someone in the family about it; but in two-thirds of men's groups a majority thought a woman should disclose in the family.

The views of the focus groups about reporting abuse *outside* the family, including through formal mechanisms, are described below in the section on seeking help for abuse.

## Acid burns

Nationally, some 0.1% (30/23361) of women reported they had suffered burns from an acid attack. The rate was similar in all provinces: 0.2% in Sindh, 0.1% in Balochistan, 0.1% in NWFP and 0.1% in Punjab.

Information about time of occurrence was available in 24 cases; 15 of these were said to have happened within the last year.

*Marital status:* Given the relative rarity of acid burns, their frequency by marital status is difficult to examine. Some 0.1% of married women reported acid burns, 0.1% of single women and 0.3% of widows. None of the small number of divorced or separated women reported acid burns.

*Person responsible:* Of the 20 married women who reported acid burns, 18 cited their husband as the perpetrator. Two of the six unmarried women said their brothers had made the acid attack.

*Reporting the acid burns:* Only half the women (15/30) who disclosed they had been burned by acid said they had

reported this to anyone. Of those who did report, 11/15 said they told their mother.

## Stove or other burning

Nationally, 0.5% of women (112/23369) reported they had suffered stove burning or some other form of burning. The rate ranged from 0.7% in Sindh and 0.6% in Balochistan to 0.3% in NWFP and Punjab. More than half (52%; n=99) of the women reporting stove burning said it happened within the last year.

*Marital status:* The numbers are small, but the rate of reported stove or other burns was somewhat higher among the small group of divorced or separated women (1.7%).

*Person(s) responsible:* Married women who disclosed stove or other burning most commonly said the perpetrator was the husband (66%, n=80), mother-in-law (18%), or sister-in-law (10%). The ten unmarried women disclosing stove or other burning cited their mother (5) or sister (2), and other female relatives. Four of the five divorced women suffering stove or other burns said their husband was responsible.

*Reporting:* Just over one half (54%, n=112) the women who disclosed stove or other burning said they reported it to someone. Of these, 35/60 said they reported to their mother and 16/60 reported to their brother.

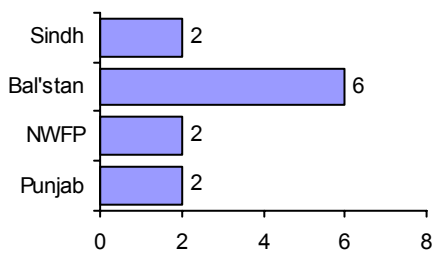


Figure 28. % women who disclosed other forms of violence, by province

Table 22. Other violence described by women

Type of violence	% (n)
Thrown out of house	27 (116)
Starvation	15 (64)
Being ignored	14 (60)
Attempted murder	9 (37)
Restricted to go out	8(35)
Strangulation	5 (22)
Forced marriage	4 (18)
Cigarette burns	4 (15)

## Other forms of violence

A few women (2%, n=23380) disclosed they had experienced other forms of violence. There was little variation by province, except for a somewhat higher rate in Balochistan (Figure 28). The experiences women included in this category of “other violence” are shown in Table 22. Among women who reported other forms of violence, 25% said the last time was within the last month, 20% one month to one year ago, and 56% more than a year ago.

*Marital status:* Other forms of violence were most commonly disclosed by the small group of divorced and separated women (Figure 29).

*Person(s) responsible:* Married women most commonly said the person responsible for these other forms of violence was the husband (63%) or mother-in-law (25%). Unmarried women commonly cited a brother (43%), the

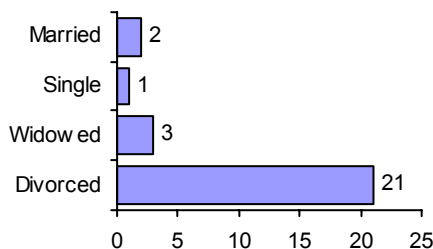


Figure 29. % women who disclosed other forms of violence, by marital status

father (20%) or mother (20%). Divorced and separated women usually cited the husband (29%) or mother-in-law (24%).

## **Effects of abuse on women's lives**

The women who disclosed some form of abuse were asked some further questions about how it had affected their lives.

### **Effects on life**

Women who had disclosed abuse responded to a general, open question about what effects, if any, the abuse had had on their lives. Some women said there was no effect on their lives overall. Nationally, just under half the women (47%, n=14364) who had experienced some form of abuse said this had affected their lives in some way. The lowest proportion who felt their lives were affected was in Balochistan (39%) and the highest proportion was in Punjab (49%).

Table 23. Effects of abuse on life, among women who said there was an effect

Effect	% (n)
Mental health	71 (4516)
Feelings of anger	13 (795)
Unable to eat/weak	7 (420)
Physical effects	2 (113)
Separation	4 (269)

Among women who said their life was affected by their experience of abuse, they most commonly said that their mental health was adversely affected (71%, n=6381) (Table 23). Others mentioned feelings of anger (13%), or being unable to eat, becoming physically weakened (7%). Some mentioned physical consequences, including miscarriages or unwanted pregnancies (2%).

### **Effects on work**

Nearly all the women (90%, n=14400) who had experienced abuse said this had not affected their ability to carry on with their usual work. This high proportion being able to carry on with their usual work was consistent across all the provinces.

Table 24. Reasons for not being able to carry on working, among abused women

Reason	% (n)
Mentally unable	66 (644)
Physical problems	18 (178)
Separated	5 (52)
Don't leave house	4 (37)
Do nothing	4 (35)
Kicked out of house	3 (25)

The minority who said they were not able to carry on working as usual gave their reasons for this in an open question. The most common reason was feeling mentally unable to continue working as usual (Table 24).

### **Relationship with family members**

Women were asked in what way, if any, the abuse they had experienced had affected the way family members related to them. Overall, just 16% (n=14143) of women who had experienced abuse felt this had affected the way their family members related to them. The proportions of abused

women thinking their family relationships were affected were rather higher in Sindh and Punjab than in Balochistan and NWFP.

Table 25. Effects on family relations, in women who said there was an effect

Effect	% (n)
Bad relationships	75 (1477)
Family members helped	22 (437)
Take problems outside	2 (43)

Those women who said their relationships with family were affected gave information about the ways they were affected. The main effect reported was making worse already bad relationships (Table 25).

### Relationship with children

Abused women with children were asked how, if at all, their relationship with their children had been affected by their experience of abuse. Only a minority (14%, n=12126) reported the abuse had affected their relationship with their children. This ranged from 10% in NWFP and 11% in Balochistan to 13% in Sindh and 15% in Punjab.

Table 26. Effects on relations with children, in women who reported effect

Effect	% (n)
Children are affected	90 (1368)
Don't look after so well	4 (55)
Children help	4 (56)
Children less close	3 (40)

Among those who said the relationship with children was affected, the main way was that the woman felt she was not able to pay as much attention to the children (Table 26).

### Relationship with other people in the community

Few (7%, n=13852) of the women who disclosed abuse said it had affected the way they related to other people in the community. This proportion ranged from 2% in NWFP and 4% in Balochistan to 7% in Sindh and 9% in Punjab.

Table 27. Effects on community relations, in women who reported an effect

Effect	% (n)
Community blame her	37 (292)
Community help her	34 (270)
Stop talking to neighbours	27 (217)
Community blame husband	3 (25)

Among those women who thought their relationships to other people were changed by the abuse, the main changes they mentioned were that the community blamed her or that they helped her (Table 27).

## Seeking help for abuse

### Advice to a woman suffering abuse

Table 28. Advice of household respondents for a woman suffering abuse (%)

Advice	W	SW	M
Compromise/be tolerant	50	50	28
Involve family members	20	14	21
Seek legal help	13	5	13
Woman change own behaviour	11	8	7
Stand up to it/face it	3		
Get a divorce	1		
Discuss with husband			8

W=women, SW=senior women, M=men

All the respondents (eligible women, senior women and men) answered an open question about what advice they would give a woman, say from a similar community to their own, who suffered abuse. They could give more than one response. Their main suggestions are shown in Table 28.

Among eligible women the most common suggestions were: to compromise, be tolerant (50%), involve family members (20%), seek legal help (13%), and for the woman to change her own behaviour (11%).

Senior women recommended: to compromise, be tolerant (50%), involve family members (15%), for the woman to change her own behaviour (15%), and to go for legal help (5%).

Men recommended: to compromise, be tolerant (28%), involve family members (21%), go for legal help (13%), discuss with the husband (8%), and for the woman to change her own behaviour (7%).

Table 29. Advice of key informants for a woman suffering abuse (%)

Advice	CL	PI	RC	WC
Compromise/be tolerant	39	36	19	49
Mutual compromise	19	32	41	30
Involve family members	17	24	10	12
Report to police/courts	16	11	28	12
Use community channels	10	12	9	2
Give help/financial suppt	10	-	19	-
Change own behaviour	8	8	5	16
Involve nazim/UC memb	6	6	10	16
Separation/divorce	6	1	3	4
Stand up/self reliance	1	-	1	11

CL=community leader; PI=Pesh Imam;  
RC=member reconciliation committee/UC member;  
WC=woman union councillor

Key informants were also asked about how they would advise a woman suffering from abuse. The responses of community leaders, Pesh Imams, members of reconciliation committees (or UC members), and women councillors are shown in Table 29. The top three responses for each type of key informant are shaded. There were some differences of emphasis but for all of them the most frequent response was that they would advise the woman to compromise and tolerate.

The advice that the in-charge of the local health facility said they would give to a woman they saw who was suffering from abuse was a bit different, probably because of the circumstances in which they would see abused women (presenting with injuries). Nevertheless, their most common advice (36%) was still for the woman to compromise and tolerate the situation. Some 30% said they would advise the woman to go to the police or courts; and 21% said they would advise help from family members. Some 13% said they would only treat the injuries, not give advice, and 8% said they would advise the woman to go to a woman councillor or the reconciliation committee.

## Medical care

Women were asked about their use of health services in general and more specifically about their use of health services for physical injury, and about their experience of the services.

Virtually all the women (98%; n=23336) had used health services of some sort at some time. Almost three quarters of them (73%, n=22365) had used health services within the last three months, including a small number who called the doctor to their home.

About a fifth (22%, n=22773) of the women said they had visited a health service for physical injury at some time. Visiting a health service for physical injury was rather more common in Punjab (25%) than in NWFP (17%), Sindh (18%) or Balochistan (19%). Nationally, 12% (n=22576) of women had visited a health service for physical injury in the last year, ranging from 8% in NWFP to 13% in Punjab.

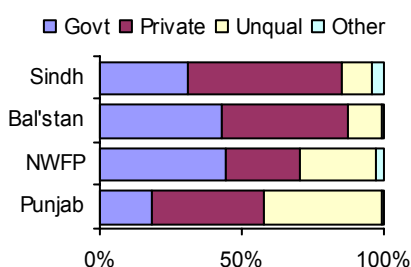


Figure 30. % women's use of health services for physical injury in last year

### Type of health care provider used

Among those women who visited a health service for injury in the last year, 24% (n=4386) visited a government health facility, 42% used a private qualified service and 33% went to an unqualified practitioner. The pattern of use of different health service providers varied between provinces (Figure 30), in line with the overall pattern of use of health service providers in the different provinces<sup>26</sup>.

### Payments

Among those women who used *government* health services for their visit with physical injury in the last year, most paid for the visit (88%; n=1096). This varied from 73% in Sindh to 93% in NWFP. Among those who paid, the median amount was Rs 100. The median amount paid varied from Rs 50 in Sindh to Rs 355 in NWFP (Table 30).

Again, for those using *government* services, 10% said they paid for a medico-legal report, at a median cost of Rs 300. The variation between provinces is shown in Table 30.

Costs for those who visited *private* services were only slightly higher; indeed the median cost of the medico-legal report was the same (Table 31).

Table 30. Visits to government health services for injury: costs incurred

Prov	For visit		For report	
	% paid	Med Rs	% paid	Med Rs
Sin	73	50	21	300
Bal	87	350	10	500
NW	93	355	6	200
Pun	93	100	8	250
All	89	100	10	300

Table 31. Visits to private health services for injury: costs incurred

Prov	For visit		For report	
	% paid	Med Rs	% paid	Med Rs
Sin	98	105	14	300
Bal	97	800	22	500
NW	97	500	6	507
Pun	98	138	9	200
All	98	200	10	300

<sup>26</sup> Cockcroft A, Andersson N, Omer K, Ansari N, Khan A, Chaudhry UU. Social audit of governance and delivery of public services: baseline survey 2002, national report. National Reconstruction Bureau, Islamabad, 2003

Table 32. Visits to unqualified practitioners for injury: costs incurred

Prov	For visit		For report	
	% paid	Med Rs	% paid	Med Rs
Sin	88	50	16	175
Bal	96	250	1	700
NW	91	100	1	97
Pun	94	40	2	350
All	93	50	3	300

The costs for those who visited *unqualified* practitioners are shown in Table 32. Women more often went to unqualified practitioners in Punjab (see Figure 29 above).

#### Satisfaction with the health services

Overall, 75% (n=655) of women who went to a government health facility with physical injury in the last year were satisfied with the service, while 86% (n=1009) of those who went to a private service were satisfied, and 80% (n=662) of those using unqualified practitioners were satisfied. The same pattern of greater satisfaction with private services compared with government services was seen in all provinces, on the background of an overall lower level of satisfaction in Balochistan and NWFP.

Women were asked an open question about why they were satisfied or dissatisfied with the health care service they received. Among those who were satisfied, the overwhelming reason given (84%) was that they got better, or the problem was solved. Some 14% mentioned the doctor was available or good and 1% mentioned the service was cheap or affordable.

Among those who were not satisfied, the main reason given (78%) was that the treatment was not effective or the problem was not solved, 6% mentioned poor quality or dirty facilities and 2% complained that medicines were not available.

#### Health services available for women suffering abuse

The field teams reviewed 146 government health facilities serving the communities in the household survey and interviewed the person in charge. Full tabulations of the findings are shown in Annex 3. The main findings relevant to abused women using health services are summarised here.

The types of health facility reviewed are shown in Table 33. Some 46% (67) were primary facilities; 21% (31) were secondary facilities; and 33% (48) were tertiary facilities.

Over half the facilities (55%, 80/145) had seen injury cases due to violence in the last year; and half (48%, 70/146) had seen injury cases suspected to be due to violence although not reported as such. Less than half the facilities (47%, 69/146) had a systematic way of keeping records of violence cases seen. More tertiary facilities than primary or secondary facilities had seen cases of injuries due to violence or suspected violence and more tertiary facilities

Table 33. Government health facilities reviewed

Type of facility	Level of facility	% (n)
Dispensary	Primary	10 (14)
BHU	Primary	35 (51)
R/U HC	Secondary	21 (31)
THQ	Tertiary	16 (24)
DHQ	Tertiary	16 (24)
MCHC	Primary	2 (2)

BHU=basic health unit; R/UHC=rural/urban health centre; THQ=Tehsil headquarter hospital; DHQ=District headquarter hospital/civil hospital; MCHC=maternal and child health centre

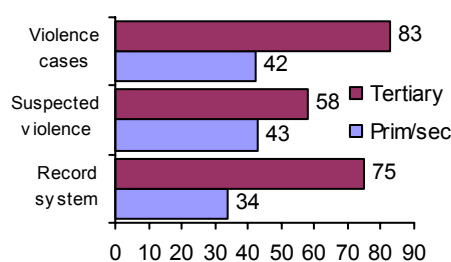


Figure 31. % health facilities seeing cases of violence and having records systems



had a systematic recording system for such cases (Figure 31).

Table 34. Support, training and referral facilities for violence cases seen in government health facilities

Arrangements	Pry/Sdry % (n)	Tertiary % (n)
Support for violence cases	34 (33)	44 (21)
Support other than treatment	8 (8)	19 (9)
Staff specifically trained	14 (14)	40 (19)
Arrangements to report	15 (13)	57 (21)

Over a third of the facilities (37%, 54/146) said they provided support for women suffering violence. But in most cases this was medical treatment or first aid, and only 12% (17/146) facilities provided support other than treatment of the injuries. About a quarter of facilities (23%, 33/145) said they had staff who had received specific training on how to deal with women with injuries due to violence. About a quarter of facilities that responded to the question (27%, 34/124) said they had arrangements for reporting cases of possible violence. The arrangements were to telephone (in all cases) as well as reporting in writing, sending a staff member with the woman to report, and in a few facilities having a police officer present in the facility. Tertiary facilities had more support, training and referral arrangements than primary and secondary facilities (Table 34).

## Police and courts

The issue of use of the police was approached indirectly. Women were first asked if they knew where their nearest police/levies station was. About two thirds of women (62%, n=23286) knew where their nearest police station was. The proportion was lowest in Balochistan (42%) and highest in NWFP (70%).

Nationally, 3% (n=23125) of women said they had ever contacted the police, ranging from 2% in NWFP to 5% in Balochistan. The proportion who had contacted the police in the last five years was virtually the same as this.

The commonest reasons for women contacting the police were: domestic and marital disputes (37%), robbery (21%), property rights (10%), murder (9%), and physical assault (7%).

Most women (73%, n=642) said that when they contacted the police an FIR was raised, with the highest proportion in Sindh (77%) and the lowest in NWFP (56%). But less than half the women (42%, n=538) said the result of raising the FIR was good and that they got justice. The proportion reporting a good result ranged from 34% in Sindh to 50% in Balochistan.

Less than half the women (40%, n=656) said they were satisfied with their contact with the police (from 35% in

Table 35. Reasons for satisfaction with police contacts

Reason	% (n)
Police helped	39 (128)
Problem was solved	29 (97)
Got justice	16 (53)
Good attitude of police	8 (25)
Had connections	3 (14)

Table 36. Reasons for dissatisfaction with police contacts

Reason	% (n)
Police did not help	27 (120)
Police asked for money	27 (113)
Problem was not solved	16 (77)
Favoured other party	7 (29)
Bad attitude of police	6 (25)

Table 37. Main reasons for women contacting the courts

Reason	% (n)
Marital disputes	40 (150)
Property rights	34 (141)
Murder	9 (35)
False custody	4 (15)

Sindh to 45% in Balochistan). They gave their reasons for satisfaction or dissatisfaction in response to an open question. The main reasons are shown in Tables 35 and 36.

Just 2% (n=23250) of women said they had ever contacted the courts, most of them within the last five years.

The reasons why women contacted the courts are shown in Table 37. The most common reasons were for marital disputes or property rights.

### Factors related to reporting abuse within the family

Overall, 38% (n=14410) of women who had experienced some form of abuse said they had told someone in the family about it.

A woman who had experienced some form of abuse was more likely to tell someone about it if:

- She had some formal education<sup>27</sup>
- She had employment outside the home<sup>28</sup>
- She had some income of her own<sup>29</sup>
- She was not from a household in the very vulnerable category<sup>30</sup>
- She was from a household where it was acceptable for women to go out to work<sup>31</sup>
- She was married at aged 18 years or above<sup>32</sup>
- She did not think that a man hitting a woman could be justified<sup>33</sup>

### Why women do not report abuse outside the family

The number of abused women in the survey who reported the abuse to someone outside the households was so small

<sup>27</sup> 2239/5577 (40%) of abused women who had some formal education told someone about the abuse, compared with 2921/8812 (33%) of abused women without any education. OR 1.35, 95% CI 1.26-1.45

<sup>28</sup> 1015/2395 (42%) of abused women who had employment outside the home told someone about the abuse, compared with 4144/11975 (35%) of abused women without employment outside the home. OR 1.39, 95% CI 1.27-1.52

<sup>29</sup> 1363/3239 (42%) of abused women with their own income told someone about the abuse, compared with 3794/11143 (34%) of abused women without their own income. OR 1.41, 95% CI 1.30-1.53

<sup>30</sup> 4365/12032 (36%) of abused women from households that were not very vulnerable told someone about the abuse, compared with 695/2082 (33%) of abused women from very vulnerable households. OR 1.14, 95% CI 1.03-1.26

<sup>31</sup> 2177/5614 (39%) of abused women in households where it was acceptable for women to go out to work told someone about the abuse, compared with 2945/8676 (34%) of abused women from other households. OR 1.23, 95% CI 1.15-1.32

<sup>32</sup> 2264/5840 (39%) of abused women married at 18 years or over told someone about the abuse, compared with 1771/5180 (34%) of abused women married younger. OR 1.22, 95% CI 1.13-1.32

<sup>33</sup> 2314/5822 (40%) of abused women who did not think hitting a woman was justifiable told someone about the abuse, compared with 2818/8502 (33%) of abused women who thought it was justifiable. OR 1.33, 95% CI 1.24-1.43

"If a woman goes to report outside, the husband and the family members would say that before this we were keeping her in the house and tolerating her, but now she has crossed the limit and brought disgrace to the family. They would just throw her out of the house."  
 Women's focus group, Balochistan

"What's the use? We have to go back and live at the same place. It would only aggravate the situation and cause disgrace to us."  
 Women's focus group, Punjab

"It's of no use because the police would call our men and they would bribe the police to remove the case and then would taunt and abuse us for rest of our life."  
 Women's focus group, Punjab

"Women don't have any money and the police ask for bribes. That's the problem."  
 Women's focus group, NWFP

"Women should not tell about abuse outside the family. People only make fun out of it. It's of no use."  
 Senior women's focus group, Punjab

"None of our women has ever gone to the police. This is not our tradition, nor do we allow our women to do this."  
 Men's focus group, Balochistan

Table 38. Reasons for women not reporting abuse cited by key informants

Reason	RC	WC
	% (n)	% (n)
Dishonour/disrespect	38 (22)	58 (73)
Family/social pressure	22 (13)	30 (38)
Lack of educatn/awareness	22 (13)	10 (13)
Afraid to report	17 (10)	48 (61)
No use/ no justice	14 (8)	5 (6)
Restriction/ no access	7 (4)	8 (10)
Poverty/ unemployment	3 (2)	6 (8)
No need to report	21 (12)	0

RC=member reconciliation committee or UC member; WC=woman union councillor

that a quantitative analysis of the factors related to reporting abuse outside the home was not possible. However, the focus groups of women, senior women and men discussed the issue of reporting abuse and gave their views about why women do not report abuse outside the family.

Participants in most focus groups of women said a woman who experienced abuse did not report outside the family because reporting would give her a bad name or dishonour her, or dishonour the family. Some mentioned it would make the problem worse. Participants mentioned that women did not report for fear of divorce, separation, losing the children, or facing more abuse. Only a few people mentioned there was no-one to report to.

Participants in the focus groups of women described the difficulties they thought a woman might face if she decided to report abuse outside the family. They mentioned:

- She would simply not find anyone to help her
- She would face resistance from her husband and family
- She would encounter a bad attitude and bad behaviour from the police
- She might face divorce or separation
- She would not have the knowledge of how to report or who to report to
- She would lack financial resources

Among senior women's focus groups and men's focus groups, less than a third had a majority thinking women should report abuse outside the family. Similarly, only a small proportion thought women should report abuse to the police or other formal body.

The members of the reconciliation committee (or union council members) and the women union councillors who were interviewed gave their views about why women who experience abuse do not report it outside the family. The reasons they cited are shown in Table 38. The most common reasons they cited were similar to those mentioned in the women's focus groups: that reporting brings dishonour to the woman and family and disrespect to the woman; that women are afraid to report; that there is family and social pressure not to report; and that there is lack of education and awareness about the issue.

## What would help women to report abuse

Asked about what systems in communities could help women to feel comfortable to report about abuse,

"There should be some system where some women visit door to door and ask women about their problems."

Women's focus group, Sindh

"A committee of community elders and influential people should be formed. Their wives should also be members of this committee, so that if a woman is abused she can inform them and they in turn can inform their men about it to solve the problem."

Men's focus group, Balochistan

"The Pesh Imam should tell men about Islamic preaching by quoting *Hadith* or put the fear of God in their mind. He should explain to them about women's rights in Islam."

Women's focus group, Punjab

"The new generation does not listen to their elders. They don't even listen to their family elders. How they would respect the Pesh Imam's advice?"

Men's focus group, Punjab

"The Pesh Imam is knowledgeable about religion. He has a lot of respect especially in rural areas. He can resolve the problem in accordance with religion."

Men's focus group, Punjab

"Whether it's the problem of men or women, no one wants to involve themselves in others' affairs. Neither does anyone like an outsider to interfere in their household matters. Hence no one can help."

Women's focus group, Punjab

participants in the focus groups of women suggested several options:

- set up local groups or organizations specifically for women, where they could go to seek help and advice (this was the most popular suggestion)
- women police officers
- community leaders could play a role
- local people (women) with special responsibility for this problem
- a few mentioned a possible role for local councillors

The most popular suggestion from the focus groups of senior women for a community system for women to report abuse was also some sort of group or committee for women. This was also very much the favoured solution from men's focus groups.

### **Role of the Pesh Imam**

Some two thirds of the focus groups of women thought that the *Pesh Imam* could not help, but some thought that the Pesh Imam could talk to the community and give religious advice to reduce the risk of women being abused, or lead by example as a respected person. Some women in the focus groups said the Pesh Imam himself was part of the problem, being against rights for women.

Most of the senior women's focus groups and half the men's focus groups thought the *Pesh Imam* could not help. Some groups however thought the Pesh Imam could help reduce the problem of abuse against women by giving suitable religious advice and speaking out against abuse of women.

Some 83% (114/137) of the Pesh Imams interviewed as key informants in the communities thought that their main role in helping abused women was to talk to the women and family members and help create awareness about the problem, and 223% (31/137) said they could help to negotiate for mutual compromise.

### **Role of community leaders**

The main way that women focus group participants thought that community leaders could help was by talking to the men in the community, perhaps with community elders, to make them realize they should not abuse women.

However, many of the participants thought that community leaders could not help, or even that they were corrupt themselves.

"The community leader can play a role as he is influential. But he has to be just, impartial and trusted by people."  
Men's focus group, Punjab

Many of the senior women's and men's focus groups thought community leaders could help by means of talking to men about the issues of abuse against women, and by involving community elders and mobilizing the community.

Community leaders themselves, interviewed in the communities as key informants, thought the main way they could help abused women was by negotiating for a mutual compromise (64%, 104/162). Some (22%, 36) also thought they could help by talking to women and family members and creating awareness, and some mentioned they could help by being influential and involving other community elders (11%, 17).

### **Role of women councillors**

Focus group participants were asked in particular what they thought the role of women councillors could be in helping abused women.

"Only a woman can understand women's problems. Men only favour men. Hence if the women councillors can take the initiative, this would be of help to women."  
Women's focus group, Punjab

Some participants of women's focus groups thought women councillors could help by talking to abused women and helping them to disclose their problems, or by communicating abused women's problems to a higher level, or helping women take cases to the police or courts. Some participants were less optimistic, thinking that women councillors either did not help or could not help.

"There is no role for a woman councillor in our area as she cannot speak in front of men. In any case this is our local issue and in our area men are the ones who influence such matters."  
Men's focus group, Balochistan

Senior women's and men's focus groups had little awareness about the potential role of women councillors, most participants saying they did not think they could help.

Women councillors themselves, interviewed in the communities as key informants, proposed a number of ways in which they could help abused women: they could advise about reaching a mutual compromise (50%, 67/135); they could involve the nazim or reconciliation committee if there was one (24%, 32); they could help women report to higher authorities and give them protection (21%, 29); and they could accompany women to the police station (19%, 25).

### **Role of reconciliation committees**

Only nine of the 160 UC members interviewed as key informants to talk about the role of reconciliation committees were actually members of such committees. Reconciliation committees were reported to be formed in 69% of the union councils concerned, and functional in 38%. Nine out of ten of the UC members (91%) thought

that a reconciliation committee would be useful for dealing with issues of abuse against women. They mentioned it would help to resolve issues (63%, 100/159); it would mean people did not need to go to the police or courts (23%,36). They noted it would only be effective if it included good people and had necessary powers to act (20%, 31).

Commenting on what could be done at union council level about abuse against women, the male UC members interviewed suggested that UC members should hear and try to solve problems (49%, 68/139); that women councillors should be trained and empowered (22%, 31); and that reconciliation committees should be formed in all union councils 22%,30). Among the women union councillors interviewed, 30% (39/99) said that UC members should listen to and try to solve problems; that the nazim should intervene (22%, 29); and that there should be awareness activities (14%, 18). Some 16% (21) said nothing could be done.

About half (51%) of the community leaders interviewed had heard of reconciliation committees and almost all (93%) thought they would be useful, mostly because they would be a way of resolving issues. A third (33%) of the Pesh Imams interviewed had heard of reconciliation committees, and 93% thought they would be useful.

## Comparison with other studies

To put the findings from the Pakistan social audit on abuse against women in context, they can be compared with other studies that have examined the frequency and causes of abuse against women, as well as the related attitudes and practices. We conducted an international literature review (Annex 5). This was included in the progress report of December 2003 and has been updated in this final report.

When making comparisons between studies of abuse against women, it is important to bear in mind the methodology of the studies, especially the sampling strategies and the methods of collecting data, as these can make a big difference to reported rates of abuse. Study reports do not always provide sufficient detail for a full assessment of the methods and their likely effects on the findings, but we have tried to give some indication of the main methodological issues in the studies included in the literature review in Annex 5.

The SAAAW is the first nationally representative study of abuse against women in Pakistan; there are no other nationally representative Pakistani studies for direct comparison. However, there are studies from Pakistan that give context to the present findings. These are also included in Annex 5.

### Studies from Pakistan

A study published by Lawyers for Human Rights and Legal Aid in 2000<sup>34</sup> asked 2000 working women about their experience of different types of harassment in the workplace. Some 50% of the women reported mental harassment, 40% physical harassment and 10% sexual harassment. The SAAAW did not specifically deal with harassment in the workplace, but nevertheless the working groups on economic and employment issues did consider how to improve the workplace environment for women.

A number of studies in Pakistan have estimated rates of violence and other forms of abuse against women. The smallest study covered one village and the largest 1,500 women in one province. In these studies, estimates of the prevalence of physical violence against women ranged from

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<sup>34</sup> Brohi N. Summary report on harassment of women at the workplace. Working women support centre, Karachi: Lawyers for Human Rights and Legal Aid (LHRLA), December 2000

34% to more than 80%, with the differences mainly related to the sample and the techniques of data collection.

A study of 1000 women in ten villages of Punjab<sup>35</sup> in the 1990's asked about abuse, among other things. Some 34% of women said they had been beaten by their husband at some time. This is close to the SAAAW estimates of proportion of women who had experienced beating (30% nationally, 28% in Punjab). The somewhat higher rate in the Punjab study probably reflects the exclusion of urban sites, where the rate of abuse is generally lower.

A study of 150 married women attending outpatient clinics catering for the low and middle income population in Karachi<sup>36</sup> reported that 34% had suffered physical abuse in their married life, as well as 55% being afraid of their spouse shouting at them, and 49% frightened by the spouse glaring at them. Some 73% of those who had been physically abused reported anxiety or depression. Women gave as main reasons for marital conflict in their houses financial constraints, problems with in-laws, and problems with children. In SAAAW, the proportion of women in Sindh who said they had experienced beating was 25%. It was not estimated separately for Karachi but is probably somewhat lower there than the overall rate for Sindh. The somewhat higher rate in the Fikree study is probably because of selection biases in the small sample, in part related to the catchment of the clinics.

A study of 1500 households in Punjab was carried out by eight masters students in 1998<sup>37</sup>. They reported that most women interviewed (83%) had quarrelled seriously with their husband at some time and in 27% of these quarrels the husband had resorted to beating, as well as abusive language (50%), taunts (58%) and imposing restrictions (12%). The rather lower rates of abuse in this study, compared with those in Punjab from SAAAW, probably reflect under-reporting. The students lacked the resources to conduct simultaneous interviews so that women could be interviewed in private and four of the eight student interviewers were male. Also abuse of women is not limited to situations where there is an actual quarrel. An in-depth study of abuse among 44 women in one village near Rawalpindi<sup>38</sup>, including daily diaries and participatory observation techniques, reported that 60% of the women

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<sup>35</sup> Sathar Zeba, Kazi Shahnaz. Women's autonomy, livelihood and fertility. Islamabad: Pakistan Institute of Development Economics, 1999.

<sup>36</sup> Fikree FF, Bhatti LI. Domestic violence and health of Pakistani women. *Int J Gynaecology and Obstetrics*, 1999, Vol 65: 195-201

<sup>37</sup> Social work department of Punjab University and HRCP Lahore

<sup>38</sup> Qayyum Saima. Battered wives, the victims of conjugal violence. Islamabad, Pakistan, Quaid-e-Azam University, 1992



were beaten very often and 23% were beaten often. And over 90% of the women reported variable lengths of temporary separations from their husbands. This study reported higher rates of abuse than other studies, including SAAAW. While the in-depth techniques may have revealed abuse that would not be reported in brief household interviews (even when carefully undertaken to minimise under-reporting, as in SAAAW), the small sample size from one village makes it very difficult to generalise these findings. The study is more important for its insights into the circumstances of abuse than as an indicator of the overall prevalence of the problem.

A 1996 study of human rights covered some 450 respondents in 60 rural communities of Pakistan<sup>39</sup>. The authors noted that recurrent and severe domestic violence against women was reported by 47% of respondents: 61% in Balochistan, 44% in NWFP, 30% in Punjab and 52% in Sindh. It seems that these reports are of perceptions of the problem rather than personal experiences of the respondents. The prevalence of beating is rather higher than reported in SAAAW, again perhaps because the 1996 study covered a small, selected sample in rural communities only. This probably explains the rather higher rate of beating reported in Sindh, for example. The same study also collected information on household practices that could be related to the risk of abuse of women but did not relate them to the experience of abuse.

Studies by Simi Kamal and colleagues<sup>40</sup> covered some 1500 households and asked about cultural practices and norms about marriage, property and women's mobility. The findings can be compared with the SAAAW findings about socio-cultural attitudes and practices, although the sample size in these earlier studies was much smaller and weighted towards urban settings (equal numbers of urban and rural households were included in the sample). These earlier studies did not attempt to relate the household practices to the experience of abuse, and did not collect information about individual women's experience of abuse.

## **Studies from other countries**

Essentially, in all countries where researchers have made serious efforts to document the prevalence of abuse against

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<sup>39</sup> International centre for human rights and democratic development (Canada) and Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NADC), 1996

<sup>40</sup> Kamal S, Bokhari J, Khan MS. Effects of the interplay of formal and customary laws on women: vols II and III (1997), vols IV and V (2002). Raasta Development Consultants, Karachi, and the Royal Netherlands Embassy, Islamabad, 2002

women, they have found various forms of abuse to be common. Mostly the rates of physical violence and other forms of abuse studied are similar to those found in Pakistan in SAAAW. The SAAAW is the largest survey that has been conducted specifically to study abuse against women that we have identified in the international literature. It is also unusual in that it goes beyond the indicators and simple disaggregation of the findings, and seeks to identify evidence-based solutions.

### *Studies from Asia*

A study of nearly 10,000 women in India (as part of a multinational effort) reported that 50% had experienced some form of abuse in their married lives, and 58% said someone in the family was aware of the abuse<sup>41</sup>. The SAAAW figure for women suffering any form of abuse in Pakistan (61%) is quite similar to this figure from India. The proportion of women who said they told someone about the abuse is a little lower in Pakistan (38%) but family members may be aware without being actually told.

A large study in of some 90,000 women in 26 states of India<sup>42</sup>, mainly related to maternal and child health, also asked about experience of physical violence. Some 21% of women aged 15-49 years said they had been beaten, and 56% agreed with at least one justification for wife beating. The data collection method of a standard household interview may well have led to under-reporting of the sensitive issue of violence. The proportion of women who think that beating a woman can be justified is the same as that found in the SAAAW in Pakistan; in both countries over half the women think hitting a woman can be justified.

A study of 6,700 married men in northern India<sup>43</sup> found that 18-45% reported having physically abused their wives. Abuse was more likely if the men were uneducated or the households were very poor. In the SAAAW study in Pakistan lack of male education and poverty were also found to be risk factors for abuse.

An attitudinal study of around 500 people in Singapore<sup>44</sup> found that 65% of respondents strongly disagreed that

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<sup>41</sup> Burton B, Duvvury N, Varia N. Domestic violence in India: a summary report of a multi-site household survey. Washington DC: International Centre for Research on Women (ICRW), 2000

<sup>42</sup> Kulkarni S, Arnold F, Gupta K. National Family Health Survey (NFHS-2), India 1998-99. International Institute for Population Sciences, 2002.

<sup>43</sup> Martin SL, Tsui AO, Maitra K, Marinshaw R. Domestic violence in northern India. *American Journal of Epidemiology*, 1999; 150(4): 417-426

<sup>44</sup> Choi A, Edleson J. Social disapproval of wife assaults: a national survey of Singapore. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, 1996; 27(1): 73-88

"Sometimes it is alright for a husband to use physical force on his wife." However, some people found it justifiable for the husband to use force when his wife violated her roles as a "good mother" (one in four) or as a "loyal wife." (one in three). This shows attitudes similar to those identified in the SAAAW in Pakistan about the circumstances when hitting a woman could be justified.

A study of a community-based sample of 599 mostly married women in a region of Eastern Turkey<sup>45</sup> reported high rates of physical violence. Some 58% of the women had experienced physical abuse from their husbands, 57% emotional abuse and 77% verbal abuse. These rates are higher than those in the SAAAW. The high rates in the particular region of Turkey might not be the case across the whole country. As in the SAAAW, very few of the women in Turkey who had experienced physical abuse had reported to the police (1%) and only 0.2% had filed a complaint.

#### *Studies from the Middle East*

A small study in Israel<sup>46</sup> covered 270 women (74 were pregnant) seeking gynaecological care in women health centres. Some 24% said they had experienced psychological abuse, and 25% had experienced physical attack. The sample may not be representative so the findings have to be interpreted with caution.

A study in Syria of 411 women attending primary care centres<sup>47</sup> reported that 23% were suffering current (repeated and recent) physical abuse, and many of them were experiencing mental distress as a result. Since this figure is for current abuse, it is in line with the SAAAW figures for women who had *ever* experienced beating in Pakistan. The factors associated with risk of abuse were among those found to be risk factors in the Pakistan SAAAW: less education of the woman, less education of her husband, and early age of marriage.

#### *Studies from Africa*

A community-based study in a district of Uganda<sup>48</sup> of more than 5,000 women and nearly 4,000 men reported that 30% of the women had experienced physical threats or violence

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<sup>45</sup> Ikkaracan P and Women for Women's Human Rights. Exploring the context of human sexuality in Eastern Turkey. *Reproductive Health Matters*, 1998; 6(12): 66-75

<sup>46</sup> Fisher, Menachem et al. Domestic abuse in pregnancy: results from a phone survey in northern Israel. *IMAJ*, 2003, vol5

<sup>47</sup> Maziak W, Asfar T. Physical abuse in low-income women in Aleppo, Syria. *Health Care for Women International*, 2003; 24(4): 313-26

<sup>48</sup> Koenig MA et al. Domestic violence in rural Uganda: evidence from a community-based study. *Bulletin of the World Health Organisation*, 2003; 81(1): 53-60

from their current partner, and a common reason for violence was a wife's neglect of household tasks (29%). Risk factors for violence included women's lack of education and drinking of the partner. In this study, very high proportions of respondents thought that it could be justifiable to beat a woman: 70% of men and 90% of women held this view. The prevalence of physical abuse reported is similar to that found in SAAAW in Pakistan, but the belief that violence can be justified is even more common than in Pakistan (56% of women, 37% of men).

#### *Studies from North America*

A national telephone survey carried out in 1995-96 in the USA<sup>49</sup> covered 8,000 women and around 8,000 men. Some 52% of the women and 66% of the men reported they had been physically assaulted as a child or an adult, and 22% of the women reported violence against them by their partners. The telephone survey method may have led to under-reporting but nevertheless the rates of reported violence against women are similar to those found by the SAAAW.

Information on violence was collected by telephone from over 14,000 Canadian women as part of a general society survey<sup>50</sup>. Some 9% of the women reported they had experienced violence by their partner, and 19% had experienced emotional abuse; 21% had experienced any form of abuse. These rates of abuse are lower than in SAAAW and also notably lower than rates reported from studies in the USA. The telephone interview method, may have led to significant under-reporting.

#### *Studies from Europe*

The 1996 British Crime Survey collected information from nearly 11,000 men and women<sup>51</sup>. It revealed that 26% of the women had experienced physical assault at some time in their lives, with 23% having been assaulted by a partner or ex-partner. Some 4% of women had experienced domestic assault in the last year. The figures for lifetime experience of violence are comparable with the rates of physical abuse in the Pakistan SAAAW.

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<sup>49</sup> Tjaden P, Thoennes N. Full report of the prevalence, incidence and consequences of violence against women: findings from the national violence against women survey. National Institute of Justice, Centers for Disease Control and prevention, Washington, DC, 2000.

<sup>50</sup> Cohen M, Maclean H. Violence against Canadian women. Women's Health Surveillance Report. Canadian Population Health Initiative. Health Canada: Ottawa, 2000

<sup>51</sup> Mirrlees-Black C and Byron C. Domestic violence: findings from the BCS self-completion questionnaire. Home Office Research, Development and Statistical Directorate. Research Findings no. 86. London: Home Office, 1996

## Evidence-based plans to tackle abuse against women

Many suggestions for action to reduce abuse and improve reporting have been identified in the SAAAW process, going beyond the quantitative data collection and analysis. They are the product of interactions around the findings with women and men in the communities, with local leaders and opinion formers, and with government officials, civil society representatives and other stakeholders.

### *Suggestions from the community focus groups*

Participants in the separate focus groups of women, senior women and men in the communities were asked about their perceptions of the extent of abuse, and their suggestions for ways to tackle the problem (see Annex 4).

### Perceived extent of the problem

In the focus groups of women, the facilitator briefly summarized the findings about different kinds of abuse, gathered from women in that province in the household survey. In the groups of senior woman and men, the participants were simply told that stories on the television and in the newspapers suggested that many women had experienced abuse. The group participants were asked if they considered the findings, or media stories, reflected the real situation.

"These findings reflect the actual situation that we see around. Even in our houses this is happening."  
Women's focus group, Balochistan

"I'm a health visitor. I see a lot of women and they share with me even their secrets. I know that the situation is even worse than what we are hearing from you. It's everywhere."  
Women's focus group, Punjab

"What you are telling us about abuse of women is exactly what is happening. My own sister is suffering from a similar situation."  
Women's focus group, NWFP

"This is not such a big problem as portrayed by the media. It may happen but it does not happen here. We regard such an act as a dishonour to us."  
Men's focus group, Balochistan

The survey findings came as no surprise to the participants in the women's focus groups. Some two-thirds of the women's focus groups agreed the survey findings from their province reflected their idea of the real situation, while a quarter thought there was actually more abuse happening than reflected in the survey findings.

Most of the senior women's focus groups thought media stories reflected the real situation. They said they based their views mostly on information from neighbours and relatives or discussions with other women, from media stories or from their own observation.

Two-thirds of the men's focus groups thought media stories reflected the real situation, but some thought they were an exaggeration of the extent of the problem.

## Community suggestions to reduce abuse

### What women themselves could do

"A woman should not argue, she should respect other family members and should try to avoid conflicts. That's the best way to avoid abuse."  
Women's focus group, Balochistan

Participants in focus groups of women gave their views about what a woman herself could do to reduce her risk of being abused. They mostly suggested that a woman could best reduce her risk by being careful and compliant:

- by changing her own attitude and behaviour
- by being careful to look after the family and undertake her duties
- by being obedient to her husband
- by being patient and tolerant and not complaining
- by being respectful of her in-laws

"A woman always has the capability to save her home. Even if the man is not good, she should explain to him politely. If the woman has self confidence and courage, she should do something that financially supports the family. This will reduce the risk of abuse."  
Women's focus group, Sindh

Participants in some of the focus groups had a different view of the matter, suggesting a more active role for women themselves. They believed that a woman could best protect herself from abuse and could improve the situation for the whole family by being assertive or fighting for her rights, or by becoming economically important to the household.

"What can a woman do? She is helpless. No one listens to her. She can only tolerate and that's it."  
Women's focus group, Punjab

In a few focus groups participants expressed the view that women were not in a position to do anything to help themselves, or to protect themselves from being abused; they just had to put up with the situation.

### What could be done in households

The most common suggestion from women's focus groups for what could be done at household level to reduce the risk of abuse against women was to encourage a supportive family environment. Abuse against women causes problems for the whole family and only if the whole family is aware of the issue and is willing to deal with it positively can it be effectively tackled. Clearly, messages about the problem have to be aimed as much to men and senior women as to young women.

Another common suggestion from the women's focus groups was the need to involve family elders. They suggested that their early intervention in helping to solve problems could reduce the problem of abuse against women.

Participants in the focus groups of senior women discussed the possible role of senior women in reducing the risk of abuse against women. In almost all the groups participants suggested that their role could be to give advice and explain

"I would advise my daughter-in-law to obey and follow her husband."  
Senior women's focus group, Punjab

"The mother-in-law should explain to both son and daughter-in-law. She should help them to understand that this would have a bad effect on the children who would learn the same behaviour."  
Senior women's focus group, Punjab

to younger women about their role and how to behave, thus reducing their chances of behaving in a way that would make them likely to be abused. Some of them suggested that senior women should be more patient themselves as a way to reduce the risk of abuse to the younger women in the household. Others noted that the senior women could play a role as a mediator and help to resolve problems arising in the family. Only a few thought that senior women could do nothing to help reduce abuse.

In the men's focus groups, discussion on the topic of what makes a man more likely to abuse a woman rarely produced responses concerned with the man himself. Many participants mentioned faults in the woman, such as being of bad character, misbehaving or disobeying, or not caring for the family. Many mentioned low income as a factor, as well as illiteracy, and some noted lack of understanding between men and women. Only a minority mentioned some fault in the man himself as a reason for his abusing a woman.

The most common suggestion of Pesh Imams (interviewed in the communities) for actions at household level to reduce abuse was for better Islamic education for all household members, as well as for more education and awareness in general. Community leaders most often suggested better education and awareness, a supportive family environment, and better income and employment opportunities. Women councillors recommended a more supportive family environment, as well as advising women to be tolerant and compromise. A few women councillors stressed the need to advise and make aware men and other family members.

### **What could be done in communities**

"We have a committee in our area where women are members. We contact them for our problems. Similar committees should be formed in other areas."  
Women's focus group, Sindh

At the level of communities, many women focus group participants believed the active involvement of influential community members in speaking against abuse of women could help, as well as local groups or NGOs working on women's issues. They suggested forming local committees to act as a focus of community efforts to reduce the problem of abuse against women in the community.

Many Pesh Imams, community leaders and women councillors also suggested local committees as a way to tackle abuse at community level. They also noted the need for more education and awareness, the role of influential people in the community, and better income and employment opportunities (see Annex 3).

## **Action plans from the provinces**

The stakeholder workshopping process carried out in all four provinces, in close collaboration with the departments of women development, is outlined in the Methods section above and described in more detail in Annex 6. This detailed process of considering the evidence from the social audit in a series of meetings in each sector led to a set of action plans in each sector, which were presented in a plenary workshop convened in each province during June 2004. The action plans and policy recommendations from the provinces are included in Annex 6, together with minutes of the provincial plenary workshops and relevant press clippings, and the communication aspects of the plans are also included in the communication strategy detailed in Annex 7.

In this section the evidence base and actions recommended based on the evidence are summarised for each of the four sectors. The details about agencies at different levels that would need to take action to make these suggestions a reality are given in the detailed recommendations in Annex 5, together with a potential time frame. Many recommendations were common across all the provinces, but there were also some different proposed actions and policy recommendations from the different provinces. There were some differences of emphasis; for example, issues of harassment of women outside the home, especially in the workplace, were of greater concern in Sindh and Punjab than in NWFP. The sectoral groups formed in each province in the workshopping process considered:

- economic and employment factors
- educational factors
- socio-cultural attitudes and practices
- reporting of abuse

## **Economic and employment factors**

### **The evidence base**

Analysis of the social audit findings indicated that better economic status of the household reduced a woman's risk of being abused (Table 39). This accords with the widely held belief, voiced in the focus groups and by key informants, that poverty is an important reason for women being abused. However, it is clear that better economic status does not guarantee that a woman will not be abused and abuse was certainly not confined to the poorest households in the survey. There are many other factors that

Table 39. Economic and employment factors related to risk of abuse

**A woman is less likely to experience abuse if:**

- The household is not in the very vulnerable category
- Her husband has skilled work

**A woman with employment outside the home:**

- Is more likely to suffer harassment outside the home
- Has at least the same risk of abuse in the home as a woman without employment
- Is more likely to tell someone if she is abused



put a woman at risk of abuse. The situation for working women is not necessarily better than that for women who do not work (Table 39). Indeed, women with employment outside the home or with an income were not found to be protected against the experience of abuse in the home and in addition they faced an increased risk of harassment outside the home: in the general environment and in the workplace specifically. Women with employment or an income were, however, more likely to tell someone if they did experience abuse, perhaps reflecting their greater assertiveness. Thus economic empowerment of women needs to be seen as part of an overall effort which also includes improving education for women and men and raising awareness of other family members about the contribution a working woman makes to the whole household.

The working groups in the four provinces used this evidence to develop action plans and policy recommendations in the economic and employment sector to help reduce abuse against women.

### **Improve the workplace environment for women**

#### *All provinces*

- All organizations should ensure availability of adequate and culturally appropriate physical facilities for women employees such as separate toilets, common rooms and place for prayers.
- For mothers of young children either day care facilities should be provided or there should be some flexibility in their working hours. There should be no compulsion for them to work overtime.
- Employers should make their employees aware of their rights, of rules and regulations, and of reporting channels in case of abuse or violation of their rights.

#### *NWFP*

- Females at work should dress modestly (purdah).

#### *Punjab*

- Employers should provide complaints boxes for employees in work places.
- Employers should display workplace rules and regulations prominently in the workplace.
- Female councillors should visit work places within their area to ensure the safety of female workers.

#### *Balochistan*

- Information on workplace ethics and working women's rights should be disseminated through the media and street theatre.

- Employers should train new employees about workplace ethics.
- Improve legislation on abuse against women, especially on sexual harassment at the workplace

### **Reduce the risk of harassment of women outside the household**

The groups in all the provinces agreed that tackling harassment of women in the general environment requires measures to increase public respect for women's status and their rights. Also, although all types of harassment are punishable crimes, women are mostly unaware of this and have important disincentives to reporting harassment. The groups' recommendations included:

- Use the mass media to raise public awareness about harassment of women in public places.
- Disseminate messages through community meetings, seminars and street theatres. Provide training for councillors and local NGOs to take the lead in this.

#### *Sindh*

- Establish women reporting cells in each district. This will require development of legislation and support from line departments, such as the home department (covering the police).
- Publicise women's rights and contact details of reporting centres through posters in public places.
- Train journalists at district, provincial and national level to highlight the issue of harassment of women.
- Initiate a separate TV channel to carry information on women's issues, including the problem of harassment.
- Enforce the rules about women's seats in public transport. If the rules are broken, punish the transport owner, driver or conductor and the men who occupy the women's seats or stand in the women's compartment.

#### *NWFP*

- Females should dress modestly (purdah).
- Improve transport facilities for women. If possible provide separate transport for women.
- Provide job opportunities for unemployed males so that they are not hanging around the streets.
- Provide local employment opportunities for women to reduce their need to travel long distances to work.

#### *Punjab*

- Provide self-defence training for women.

## **Protect women with an income from abuse at home**

The fact that women with employment outside the home had the same or even an increased risk of abuse in the home compared with non-working women was not a surprise to the working groups in the provinces. They attributed this to the expectations of the family, who expect a working woman to be able also to complete all her household work without any concession. If she fails to fulfill all her household duties she may be subjected to abuse. Her character may also be called into question because she goes out to work. There is a need to change attitudes in the family and in the community about the role of working women, creating an appreciation of the double burden that working women have to bear and of their contribution to the household economy. There should be a more positive projection of working women. The groups recommended Pesh Imams, councillors, NGOs and the mass media as change agents. Their specific recommendations included:

- Promote positive messages about working women locally through community meetings, seminars and street theatres. Train local councillors and NGOs for this task.
- Use the mass media to promote a positive image of working women and their contribution.

### *Sindh*

- Involve Pesh Imams, who can speak on this topic in their Friday sermons
- Improve literacy and formal education so that people can better understand women's changing role.

### *NWFP*

- Women should open their own bank accounts so their pay can be deposited directly into their own account.
- Encourage women with a monthly income to invest some of it in insurance.
- Develop saving schemes for employed women.

### *Balochistan*

- Raise women's status by ensuring their share in property and income in accordance with religious teachings and legal and constitutional rights.
- Advocate among family elders that women should be allowed to decide how to spend their income.
- Provide confidence building for women to demand their rights to decide about their own income.

## **Develop economic opportunities especially for women**

The main focus of the recommendations was the promotion and support of small and medium enterprises, including home based enterprises. The recommendations included:

- Existing units that provide financial and technical support to families should set-up micro-credit schemes and follow-up units. They should also provide information for people setting up SMEs, and provide basic training in management and marketing.
- Provide follow-up support for SMEs. Establish coordination committees with membership from local employers and NGOs.
- Improve credit and other financial assistance for SMEs, such as rotating grants as seed money.
- Form cooperatives or groups rather than giving financial assistance to individuals, to ensure accountability and sustainability.
- Involve the private sector to support skill development centres.
- Train male family members in marketing to involve them in the business and avoid the middle man.
- Develop favourable loan terms and conditions and tax relief for women, and some follow-up support from loan providers to ensure sustainability
- Improve the distribution of funds from Baitul-Mal and Zakat fund and link to skills development to support SMEs.
- Run promotional activities for SMEs such as exhibitions and seminars: at district level to share knowledge and at provincial level to develop new markets.

#### *Sindh*

- Establish district resource centres to support SMEs.
- Develop a directory of district specific feasible products and technologies and make this available to SMEs and training centres.
- Develop a database of all SMEs in each district.

#### *NWFP*

- Establish collective marketing facilities where women can display their products and get a reasonable return without interference of a middleman.

#### *Punjab*

- Introduce vocational training and skills development training in formal schools. This could also encourage parents to send their children to school.
- Develop guidelines and possibly legislation to encourage institutions to employ women.

#### *Balochistan*

- Promulgate and implement legislation on employment opportunities for women.
- Create job opportunities for both men and women to improve the overall economic status of households.

## Educational factors

Table 40. Educational factors related to the risk of abuse

A woman is less likely to experience abuse if:

- She has some formal education
- Her husband has some formal education
- The family is in favour of girls' education

A woman with some formal education:

- Is more likely to tell someone if she is abused

Table 40 summarises the educational factors that were linked to a reduced risk of a woman experiencing abuse. Education of both the woman and her husband was protective. Also, a woman who experienced abuse was more likely to tell someone about it if she had some formal education. Perceptions about the importance of female education were also relevant as an indicator of gender attitudes, and women from households that were in favour of girl's education had less risk of being abused. Qualitative evidence from focus groups and key informants also stressed the importance of better education and increased awareness of both men and women for reducing abuse against women and improving reporting of abuse. The provincial working groups on educational factors considered this evidence, as well as information about present policies and their implementation in the province, in order to formulate their recommendations. The recommendations were about increasing the quantity and quality of education for both males and females; increasing girls' enrolment and retention; and reviewing the curriculum to ensure it deals adequately with gender and human rights issues.

### Improve existing education infrastructure

The recommendations covered the problem of closed and non functioning schools as well as the need for new facilities. The main recommendations included:

- Involve communities in the establishment schools, through Citizen Community Boards (CCBs), local voluntary groups, CBOs and NGOs.
- Establish new schools where needed. The idea of mosque schools could be revived to reduce the cost of establishing new schools.

#### *Sindh*

- Donors should work in coordination with the education department to ensure funds are best used in accordance with the real needs.
- Handover closed and non-functioning schools to willing communities and NGOs after a careful review of their capacities to run them.

#### *Punjab*

- Ensure a uniform education policy for the private and public sectors.

#### *Balochistan*

- Involve elected district government representatives to make needs assessments for educational facilities.

## **Improve school management and monitoring**

- Involve influential people in the communities, such as Pesh Imams, community leaders and councillors, in school management committees (SMCs).
- Union councillors through UC monitoring committees should monitor the schools in their areas.
- Involve communities in the management of schools through Citizen Community Boards (CCBs), local voluntary groups, CBOs, and NGOs.
- Provide logistic support for the field staff in the education department, including transport for conducting monitoring visits to schools.

## **Promote girls' education**

The recommendations for promoting girls' education included:

- Raise awareness of the public, particularly parents, about the importance of girls' education. The Pesh Imams could talk about this in Friday sermons (note the present evidence that households are not always aware of the local Pesh Imam's support for girls' formal education).
- Provide basic facilities such as toilets, drinking water, boundary walls and chowkidars in all girls' schools.
- Continue and expand special incentives to promote girl's enrolment and retention in school, such as no uniform or free uniform policy at primary level, free text books (arriving on time), free cooking oil and lunch in all girls' schools, free education for girls up to 10<sup>th</sup> grade and scholarships for deserving girls for higher education.

### *Punjab*

- Pesh Imams should use quotes from religious texts to promote girls' education. Provide training for Pesh Imams about the importance of girls' education and check if they then include the issue in their sermons.
- Pesh Imams and community leaders should speak together to promote girls' education, for example at educational festivals and conferences.
- Role models should visit schools to encourage young students, especially girls, to continue education.

### *Balochistan*

- Introduce career counselling into the school timetable, especially for girls, to encourage them to continue their education up to a higher level and go on to find work.

### *Sindh*

- Involve communities in choosing the site of new girls' schools, so they feel comfortable to send their girls to these schools.

### *NWFP*

- Make education compulsory for women. Education, at least at the primary level, should be seen as a basic human right for both women and men.
- Make the timing of girls' schools more flexible to help girls attend regularly.

### **Increase availability of female teachers**

The groups considered non-availability of teachers, especially female teachers, and their uneven distribution between schools to be major problems for girls' education.

Recommendations to address this issue included:

- Hire local teachers and involve communities through SMCs to ensure that teachers attend. Give head teachers more authority and responsibility in this regard.
- Provide incentives to teachers posted in remote areas and make secure arrangements for their accommodation.

### *Sindh*

- In areas where no female teachers are available, hire trusted retired male teachers from the same community.
- District education departments should redistribute teachers to schools where they are lacking.

### *Balochistan*

- Provide transport and accommodation arrangements for female teachers serving outside their home towns.

### **Curriculum review**

There was a consensus among the groups in all provinces that to build a positive attitude among youth towards women, gender awareness, human rights and women's rights should be built into the curriculum at all levels, including the primary classes. The main recommendations included:

- Include women's rights and respect for women in the teaching and textbooks on different subjects.
- Make due reference to Islamic teaching about women's rights from the Quraan and Sunnah.
- Integrate religious and spiritual education with formal education; allocated some time for education on the Quraan and Sunnah in all grades.
- Harmonise the curriculum of private and government schools; education departments should include this in education policies.

### **Improve teaching practices**

The teacher is a role model for students and his or her way of behaving, including on gender issues, helps to shape the

students' character and behaviour. Teachers need better training for this role and better supervision, monitoring and support. The main recommendations included:

- Make teachers' training more practical, including modern methods for primary education.
- In teachers' training place more emphasis on professionalism and the ethics of teaching.
- Make monitoring effective and supportive to help and guide teachers, rather than threatening.

#### *Sindh*

- Arrange regular refresher courses for teachers at all levels, including gender issues.

#### *Punjab*

- Introduce teaching and syllabus in regional languages, especially for primary grades.

#### *Balochistan*

- Organize visits and interaction with other institutions relevant to gender issues for both students and teachers.
- Reduce the student-teacher ratio to allow better quality teaching interaction with students.

### **Non-formal education and literacy**

The main recommendations of the groups regarding non-formal education, with a focus on gender issues, included:

- Establish more non-formal schools in communities, including "home schools" at the local teachers' house, which may be particularly good for girls.
- Link adult literacy and education activities with religious education and skills development.
- Use the mass media and community channels to encourage adults to come forward for literacy training.
- Expand the existing network of Non Formal Education (NFE) as a part of the education for all (EFA) initiative to other areas in all provinces.

#### *Sindh*

- Prioritize allocation of adult literacy funds for those areas where there is more need but fewer opportunities.

#### *Balochistan*

- Arrange for post primary classes as part of evening schooling in government and private schools.
- Involve elected representatives in setting up adult literacy centres.
- Award scholarships to encourage adult literacy.
- Promote distance learning initiatives.
- Officials in the education system should promote regular and open interaction between teachers and principals.



## NWFP

- Use government schools for non-formal education in the evenings.

### **Vocational training and skills development**

The groups in all the provinces noted that basic formal education presently does little to help students to earn a living afterwards, missing an opportunity to improve economic conditions, also linked to the risk of abuse against women. They recommended linking formal and non-formal education with vocation training and skills building. Some specific recommendation included:

- Introduce marketing training for women and men as a part of vocational training.
- Link literacy and vocational training with schemes to develop market opportunities and credit facilities through public and private sector coordination.

### **Socio-cultural attitudes and practices**

Table 41. Socio-cultural attitudes and practices related to reduced risk of abuse:

A woman is less likely to experience abuse if:

- Her marriage was at age 18 or above
- Her marriage was with consent
- Her household has no tradition of exchange marriage, dowry or bride price
- Her household does not practise polygamy
- She does not think that a man hitting a woman can be justified
- The senior woman or man in her household does not think a man hitting a woman can be justified

The socio-cultural practices, family traditions and attitudes that the findings indicated to be related to a reduced risk of abuse against women are summarised in Table 41. Early age of marriage and marriage without consent were associated with an increased risk of a woman experiencing abuse. Also traditional practices of exchange marriage, dowry and bride price carried an increased risk for abuse of women in the household, as did a tradition of polygamy in the household. The attitude that hitting a woman could be justified, more commonly held by women than by men, was also associated with an increased risk of abuse of women.

The groups in all the provinces considering these issues appreciated that changing attitudes and traditional practices will require long term strategies and consistent and continuing efforts. Nevertheless, they believed that a start could be made and some aspects could be more amenable to change. The main recommendations of the groups are summarised below.

#### **Age of marriage and woman's consent for marriage**

The working groups noted that there is existing legislation about age of marriage and consent for marriage, but there are problems with enforcement. For example, many marriages are solemnized not by the Nikah registrars themselves, but by the local Pesh Imam or a family elder acting as 'Nikah Khawan', with the marriage subsequently

reported to the registrar for registration. Thus the registrars cannot check if the marriage complies with the laws before registering it. Most of the Nikah Registrars themselves are not aware of the legal provisions and their responsibilities. There are no criteria for appointment of Nikah Registrars and to ensure they understand their role and responsibilities.

The main recommendations of the groups included:

- Provide training about the legal requirements for marriage, for the Nikah Khawan, Pesh Imams and councillors.
- Union councillors should check for irregularities in marriage registrations in their area.
- Union Councils should issue licences for Nikah Registrars only to persons fully aware of the relevant laws. Union Nazims should cancel licences on report of any violation of the laws.
- Raise public awareness about the disadvantages of early marriage, for health, religious and social reasons, and publicise the laws about marriage. Pesh Imams should include this issue in Friday sermons.
- Include information about family laws in the curriculum of formal and non-formal education.
- Review and update as necessary the existing family laws through a review committee or commission.

#### *Punjab*

- District, tehsil and union governments should ensure implementation of the existing laws.

#### *Sindh*

- Develop a database at UC level to record marriages and divorces as events like births and deaths.
- Promulgate a Local Government ordinance to authorize the Union Council for Nikah registration

#### *Balochistan*

- Health workers such as doctors, lady health visitors (LHVs) and lady health visitors (LHWs) should highlight the health disadvantages of early marriages.
- Incorporate religious teachings about marriage into the curriculum of Madarsahs and formal schools.

### **Tradition of exchange marriages, bride price and dowry**

The groups recognized that these traditions are deep rooted in the culture in almost all parts of the country and will be difficult to change. Their main recommendations included:

- Raise public awareness of the disadvantages of these practices, for example through community meetings led by union councillors, through Friday sermons from the Pesh Imams, and through the mass media.

- Promote government policy of only one dish in wedding meals to eliminate an excuse for demanding dowry.

The working groups considered the use of exchange marriages for settling family and tribal disputes, with such decisions made by local Jirgas. This practice is a crime under the penal Code. In Sindh, for example, the Chief Justice of the High Court has said that such decisions taken by the Jirgas are punishable. The groups' recommendations for curbing exchange marriages included:

- Motivate Jirga members not to give a verdict of exchange marriage to settle tribal and local disputes.
- Promulgate additional laws to prevent exchange marriages, especially those used to settle tribal disputes.

### **Polygamy**

There are clear legal provisions about polygamy. It requires permission from the Arbitration Council consisting of the Chairman (Nazim) of the Union council, one representative of the wife and one of the husband. There are weaknesses in the law and its enforcement. The recommendations of the groups about polygamy included:

- Polygamous marriages should be subject to permission of the Family Court and criteria for granting permission should be strictly followed.
- The Family Court should grant the existing wife or wives adequate provisions for maintaining their own residence and ensure that their financial status is not affected by the additional marriage.
- A husband wishing for another marriage should delegate his right of divorce to his existing wife or wives.
- The husband should pay a dower to the existing wife or wives, with the amount based on financial status.
- Further laws in accordance with Islamic teaching should be promulgated and enforced to discourage polygamy.

### **Perceptions about justification for hitting a woman**

More than half the women interviewed believed that a man hitting a woman could be justified, even though they almost all thought that hitting a woman was a form of abuse. The focus groups confirmed the widespread view that hitting a woman could be justified. They also offered some pointers for how to convince people that hitting women was *not* justifiable. The main recommendations of the groups about how to change the perception about justification for hitting a woman included:

- Undertake advocacy campaigns about the issue, particularly targeting women, with the help of Pesh

Imams, union councillors and NGOs at the local level, and through the mass media.

- Include messages about why hitting women is not justifiable in the curriculum of formal and non-formal education.
- Strengthen and promulgate legislation against beating of women by their husbands or other family members.

## Reporting abuse

Table 42. Factors related to likelihood of an abused woman telling someone about it

A woman who has experienced abuse is more likely to tell someone if:

- She has some formal education
- She has employment outside the home
- She has income of her own
- Her household is not in the very vulnerable category
- In her household it is acceptable for women to go out to work
- Her marriage was at age 18 or over
- She does not think a man hitting a woman can be justified

The findings from the social audit indicated that only a minority of women who had experienced abuse had told anyone about it, even someone in the family. The factors that were associated with an increased likelihood of a woman telling someone about abuse she had experienced are summarised in Table 42. In almost all cases the person a woman told about her experience of abuse was someone in the family and the numbers who reported the abuse outside the household were negligible. Quantitative analysis of the factors related to reporting outside the household was not possible but the focus groups and key informant interviews provided valuable insights into why women do not report abuse and what could help them to report. The main reasons given for women not reporting abuse were the associated dishonour of the woman and the family, the fear of the consequences of reporting, and the perception that it would do no good. Better education and awareness were seen as key to increasing reporting of abuse, as well as providing better local facilities for reporting. The groups considered this evidence and made recommendations for how to encourage women to report and provide help for them when they did report.

### Increase social acceptability of women reporting abuse

The groups recognized the problem of the stigma attached to a woman reporting abuse. Unless this is removed, women will continue to be reluctant to report. The public perception of a woman who reports abuse needs to be changed. At the same time, there is a need to make women aware of their legal rights and to encourage them to report. The groups' recommendations included:

- Run an advocacy campaign to change negative perceptions of reporting abuse. Target women, men and family elders. Involve community leaders, Pesh Imams and especially women councillors as change agents.
- Train women councillors for an advocacy role to change perceptions about reporting abuse.

- Involve the mass media to portray positive images of women who report abuse and avoid negative images.
- Train media representatives to report constructively and effectively issues of abuse and violence against women.

#### *Sindh*

- Train elected representatives about abuse and reporting abuse, as people contact them based on their political affiliation.
- Display short slogans on hoardings etc to encourage women to report abuse.

#### *Balochistan*

- Promulgate provincial policies and any necessary legislation to improve reporting of abuse.
- Implement the NPA with zeal and true spirit.

#### *Punjab*

- Include abuse and reporting abuse as topics in the curriculum of both formal and non-formal education.
- Review and improve legislation to encourage abused women report and to safeguard their rights

#### *NWFP*

- Introduce teaching of the Holy Quran and Sunnah, especially verses relating to rights and status of women, as a compulsory part of the curriculum at all levels of formal education.
- Introduce short compulsory “Dars” from religious scholars at all levels of formal education.
- Review the curriculum of Madarsahs to make them more effective, scientific and practical in the true spirit of Islam. Include students of Madarsahs in social activities

### **Strengthen existing institutions for reporting abuse**

Health services, police and judiciary services should help women to report abuse and provide support for abused women. However, it was clear from the discussions in focus groups and with key informants, as well as the interviews with individual women, that women are loathe to use these services. Apart from a general reluctance to report to anyone, the experience of reporting to these services is often negative, and women report a bad attitude of the service providers. The groups’ recommendations for improving these services included:

#### ***Health services***

- All health facilities, including primary care facilities, should be able to see abused women and refer as necessary to tertiary facilities, Musalihat Anjuman or Union Nazims.

- Train Lady Health Workers (LHWs) to provide first aid and counselling for abused women they may encounter in their routine household visits.

#### *Punjab*

- Training of health care providers to deal with potential abuse cases. Provide incentives to those who help abused women to report.
- Provide counselling and financial support in the health facility for abused women who report.

#### ***Police***

- Recruit police officers on merit and with a minimum educational requirement of graduate.
- Improve pay scales and introduce positive incentives for police officers to prevent corruption.
- Allocate of resources for basic administrative and logistic support to the police force.
- Recruit women staff at each police station. Provide adequate security and professional respect for these women police officers.

#### *Balochistan*

- Create more women police stations especially in rural areas, with suitable facilities.

#### *Punjab*

- Provide gender awareness training for police.
- Simplify the language of the FIR so that people can understand what has been recorded.
- Set up referral links from the police to counselling and legal aid support for abused women.
- Establish an effective complaints system in case women are not treated well by the police.

#### ***Judiciary***

- Increase the number of female judges and prosecutors.
- For all cases of abuse against women the judge and the prosecutor should be female.
- Camera proceedings for women abuse cases to prevent unwanted publicity and embarrassment.
- Develop a code of conduct for abuse cases; judges should ensure this is followed by the lawyers and stop them using insulting language and undue probing.
- Establish speedy trial courts to hear abuse cases.
- Provide free legal aid for needy women

#### *Punjab*

- Provide special training for lawyers and judges who deal with abuse cases.

#### *NWFP*

- Provide special advocates in police stations to help women bring their cases to court.

## **Develop new institutional arrangements to help women report abuse**

The focus groups suggested that some sort of local committee could help women to report abuse. The working groups discussed how to set up a local, accessible, and trusted system for reporting abuse with good referral links and institutional support. They identified the new local government arrangements, including the presence of women councillors, as a starting point for such a system. They noted that the *Musalihati Anjuman* (reconciliation committees) envisaged in each union council could be the first place for women to report abuse. Cases could either be resolved in this forum or referred on as necessary. The groups' recommendations included:

- Women councillors should be proactive in identifying abuse cases and encouraging women to report, through regular contacts with women in their communities.
- Establish and strengthen *Musalihati Anjuman* in each union council; include women councillors as members.
- Develop referral links from *Musalihati Anjuman* to women reporting cells, police, judiciary, health facilities and legal aid organizations.
- *Musalihati Anjuman* should maintain records of abuse cases that they deal with.
- Establish and publicise a women reporting cell in each district to link with the *Musalihati Anjuman*.
- Establish referral links from women reporting cell to the police, judiciary, legal and social support organizations.
- Establish shelter homes, including social and economic rehabilitation support, for abused women who cannot go home once they have reported abuse.

### *Sindh*

- All union councils should construct a community hall at an accessible place where women can gather.
- Establish a 24 hour abuse help line to provide information and counselling support.

### *Punjab*

- Train members of *Musalihati Anjuman* and union councillors about gender and abuse.
- Set up links between *Musalihati Anjuman* and district public safety commissions.

### *NWFP*

- Establish CCBs with female participation to encourage and support women to report abuse.

## **Evidence-based communication strategy**

The communication strategy for the social audit of abuse against women was already underway at the time of this report, and dissemination of the findings to stakeholders had already taken place in the successful provincial workshopping process (see above). The detailed strategy is described in Annex 7 and summarised here.

The strategy is based on the evidence, driven by the stakeholders, and oriented towards raising awareness and solving problems. The ultimate goal is to precipitate appropriate decisions and actions in households, services and the different levels of government. The evidence base comes from the findings in the household survey, the focus group discussions, and the analysis of this information, as well as the provincial workshops of key stakeholders.

Following the recommendations of the working groups, the strategic outline reflects the need to address the wellbeing of women and their families within an Islamic paradigm, mindful of the diversity of social circumstances and cultural traditions in Pakistan.

The communication strategy also takes into account the objectives and work plans of the Pakistan Family Protection Project (PPP) and the Gender Reform Action Programme (GRAP), two major initiatives of the GoP for the advancement of women's rights and gender equality. The aim is to generate synergies between different initiatives that share a common goal: the advancement of women's rights and the protection of their families.

### **Objectives**

*The general objective is:*

To create awareness of abuse against women and to contribute to an informed process of problem solving, driven by stakeholders at the national and provincial levels.

*Specific objectives are:*

- To bring the issue of abuse against women to the public opinion agenda.
- To increase knowledge about different types of abuse and protective factors.



- To underpin political, social, institutional, and educational efforts aimed at tackling abuse against women at the national, provincial, district, and subdistrict levels.
- To reach the communities and the households through relevant change agents.
- To start shaping new attitudes that will contribute to a more protective environment for women and their families.
- To prompt effective action at different levels of government, leading to an improved environment for women outside their homes.
- To inform the public and stakeholders about the social audit process and its findings.

### **Key contents for communication**

The evidence base emerging from this study points in the direction of key protective actions to be supported through mass, institutional and interpersonal communication. Strategic contents should revolve around these factors, fine-tuned to the particular circumstances of each province (see detailed outlines in Annex 7). Some perceptions, attitudes and related practices can be tackled through a common communicational framework aimed at:

- Challenging the idea that hitting a woman can sometimes be justified*
- Promoting the idea that women's work outside the household contributes to the family*
- Discouraging early marriages and marriages without consent*
- Challenging the notion that reporting abuse brings shame and dishonour upon the victim and her family*

Institutional communication should prompt effective action at different levels of government *to improve the environment for women outside their homes*, including proper transport arrangements, better security in public places, and availability of referral channels and centres in cases of abuse or harassment. Public communication should reflect these developments.

The working groups recommended that these issues should be addressed in a national campaign on gender awareness and human rights. They should also be framed as a question of social peace and human rights in religion. Both initiatives tend to highlight *collective values* in the context of an Islamic society.

At the level of the individuals, the call for *compassion* is grounded as much in the evidence as in the religious

context. Focus groups of women suggested the possibility of addressing women –and particularly mothers-in-law - as key change agents within the family, through messages that appeal to their empathy. Men also suggested appealing to religion and affection to address those who may think that hitting a woman may sometimes be justified.

This stakeholder-driven approach builds on the Islamic principles of tolerance and compassion, and the concept of the relationship between men and women as one of love, peace and kindness, and indicates that religious leaders and institutions should play a central role in awareness raising and clarification.

A key issue to deal with is the dominant idea that women who report abuse bring shame and dishonour upon themselves and their families. The idea of honour can be turned around, with ethical and religious appeals, to contend that it is the abuser who brings dishonour upon himself, rather than the victim who reports her suffering.

### **A combined approach to dissemination**

As pointed out in the provincial workshopping process, a combination of mass media and trusted sources is essential to address values and attitudes deeply entrenched in Pakistani society, and to mobilize stakeholders and communities around the evidence, in order to change social interactions. These interactions occur at different levels of society, indicating the need for a multilayered approach, with different change agents and target groups for each layer. The Ministry of Women Development and the provincial departments of women development are proposed as prime movers, involving as many relevant actors as possible.

The media should be considered not only as a channel of information and as the vehicle of mass campaigns, but also *as change agents in their coverage of women's issues*. The working groups noted the negative media portrayal of women who report abuse. Sharing the evidence and recommendations with journalists and editors can enlist their support for women's rights in the public opinion.

A second level of interactions will occur within different sectors and levels of government. In their role of prime movers, the MoWD and the provincial departments of women development will have to engage relevant ministries and departments, legislators, policy makers, district and subdistrict governments.

A third level of interactions will unfold between government and members of the civil society, particularly NGOs, academics, experts in women's issues, religious leaders and scholars. These change agents can work alongside the MoWD and the provincial departments of women development for advocacy and training of other change agents.

As the evidence indicates, mobilization around issues concerned with traditional interactions will be better achieved *at the community level*, where personal influence and collective reflection around the evidence have the potential to influence knowledge, attitudes and behaviours. All over Pakistan, neighbours are the most common source of information about abuse against women. The provincial working groups suggested that union councillors, Pesh Imams and other influential citizens can be effective agents of change, and mentioned community meetings and Friday prayers as opportunities for communal reflection on the issues. At a deeper level, change of attitudes has to occur within families and households, where elders and senior women are identified as potential agents of change.

### **Proposed activities for implementing the communication strategy**

*Stage 1: National plenary session, executive committee, and funding provisions (August-October 2004)*

Based on the provincial experiences and suggestions, a national plenary session convened by the Ministry of Women Development to present the social audit process, the key findings, and the recommended interventions is a good format to involve all relevant stakeholders and put the action plans in the public agenda, with the federal government taking the lead. Representatives from relevant national ministries, such as Law, Education, and Religious Affairs; the National Commission on the Status of Women; members of the provincial governments; federal and provincial legislators; representatives of religious institutions; NGOs; academics, gender advocates, and representatives of the donors and other development agencies should be invited. Representatives from the provincial working groups would summarize their recommendations. This approach can show how Pakistan is taking action to confront a worldwide problem that many countries point to but few act upon.

A Communications Executive Committee (CEC) should also be formed early in the process, including members of the MoWD, the provincial departments of women development, national and provincial NGOs, religious institutions, and other relevant actors, to coordinate the activities at the national level and support the communication processes in the provinces.

The CEC will need to work in three main areas:

- Institutional engagement within the highest levels of the national and provincial governments, sharing the findings and recommendations with relevant ministries and departments.
- First provisions for a public awareness campaign, which includes: a) hiring a specialist to develop the terms of reference for a public tender to undertake a mass media campaign at the national level and within each province; b) developing the terms of reference; and c) estimating the costs of carrying out a mass media campaign.
- Identifying funds to cover the costs of a mass media campaign; elaborating and disseminating summary reports of the findings and recommendations; and producing and disseminating training materials on gender awareness for public services.

After the national plenary session, media training sessions should be held with members and spokespersons of the federal government and the provincial ministries of women development, based on the action plans, the process and the key findings of the social audit. An orientation meeting with editors and journalists of the national and provincial media would contribute to establish a framework for the key role of the media in raising awareness and supporting the communication efforts that are part of the action plans.

*Stage 2: Engaging change agents at the provincial level; developing contents for campaign and advocacy; bids and evaluation for public campaign (November 2004-January 2005).*

At this stage, the provincial departments of women development should engage relevant change agents. As suggested in the workshopping process, provincial working groups of key stakeholders should develop the key contents and approaches to feed and inform the public campaign, the advocacy process, the curricular reviews and the training of service providers. They should also orient the regional, ethnic and language approaches to the communication process within each province.

In November 2004, invitations for bids should be made in the context of the mass media campaign. Time estimates from this point will depend on the characteristics of this call (national or international tender, etc.). At the earliest, proposals could be evaluated by the end of December, for the campaign to be awarded in January 2005.

*Stage 3: Socializing evidence with key change agents; training of public servers; design and evaluation of mass messages and elaboration of media mix (February-March 2005).*

The provincial departments of women development, supported by national and provincial NGOs, undertake activities to:

- Socialize the findings and recommendations, with supporting materials, engaging provincial activists, religious leaders and institutions, district and tehsil officials, and key change agents at the community level.
- Engage media editors and journalists, sharing the findings and recommendations, to discuss their coverage of women's issues, portrayal of women who report abuse, etc.
- Conduct training in police, judiciary, and health services.

During this stage the messages and products for the mass communication campaign are designed, approved at the provincial level and tested.

*Stage 4: Advocacy at the community level; mass media campaign (April-May 2005).*

At this stage, all communication efforts should reach the communities. Among other developments, the following should take place:

- The mass campaign is launched and carried out to cover all four provinces and reaching the districts, tehsils and communities.
- Union councillors hold community meetings to engage key change agents in families and households, like elders and senior women.
- Pesh Imams include the issues in Friday prayers and other community events.
- The issue of women's rights spreads by word of mouth.
- The media reflecting these developments in their news coverage, editorials, talk-host shows, interviews, etc.
- Provincial departments of women development, working with other relevant departments and NGOs, monitor the activities of key change agents in communities.