



Media Update

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UN Women

Press Release

Speakers at the 20th sustainable development conference highlight issues hampering women's access to justice

ISLAMABAD, Tuesday, December 5, 2017: An in-depth panel discussion on 'Violence against Women (VAW) and Women's Access to Justice' was organized by UN Women in collaboration with Sustainable Development Policy Institutes (SDPI) on Tuesday.

The discussion was held as part of the '20th Sustainable Development Conference'. The objective of the session was to provide a platform for gathering and presenting evidence on VAW, essential for advocacy from a broad multidisciplinary perspective.

The panelists stated that access to justice and services for women in all provinces is hampered due to, among others: limited capacity of police and prosecutors to investigate and prosecute crimes against women, biases by judges, no access to transport, and inadequate educational and financial means, and a general lack of knowledge about options, services and remedies. In addition, they said that provisions of penal codes at the federal and provincial levels on rape, adultery, sexual violence committed in marriage (not a crime in Pakistan), and "honor killings" display an unambiguous discrimination against women.

Speaking on this occasion, Ms. Aisha Mukhtar, Program Lead, Violence against Women, Governance and Human Rights, UN Women, Pakistan said that Pakistan has ratified Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Constitution of Pakistan also guarantees equal rights for the women.



Pranav Adhikari from Nepal, a panel member added, “The social media and media has an important role to spread awareness pertaining to the causes and solutions of intimate partner violence, especially among the youth.”

“In 2013, the concluding remarks for Pakistan in the CEDAW Committee focused on ensuring proper implementation of the Prevention of Anti-Women Practices Act of 2011 and other relevant legislations, ensuring uniformity in the application of the law and repealing the provisions of the Qisas and Diyat ordinances which discriminate against women”, said a panel member, Ms. Bandana Rana from Nepal.

Talking about her research regarding intimate partner violence in three countries of South Asia, Pakistan, Nepal and Bangladesh, Dr. Nargis Asad, said, “Through our research, we have found certain risk factors for driving the intimate partner violence such as the lack of education, lack of intelligence, unemployment, early marriage and drug and alcohol abuse.”

Ms. Maliha Hussain, while stressing on the importance of mainstreaming the gender equality agenda in curriculum, said that, “We need to teach our girls and boys about their rights, about their role in driving a change beyond the stereotypical gender roles.”
