

## **Understanding United Nation (UNDP) Programs & Projects: (A Case Study of Rural Punjab, Pakistan)**

**Hadeed Shahid Awan<sup>1</sup>, Rana Danish Nisar<sup>2</sup>, Taimoor Ahmad Chaudry<sup>3</sup>**

### **Abstract**

Half of the world's population are women and their condition is severe all over the world. The 21st century's most pressing issue is women's empowerment. The West's incredible affluence is directly related to the emancipation of its women. With enabling the other half of the people, it has been demonstrated that no nation can flourish in any industry. Many governmental and non-governmental organisations are actively addressing the topic of female equality, however the United Nations (UN) efforts stand out because its charter guarantees women's basic freedoms. The UN has organised numerous conventions, forums, and symposia on female issues over the past 20 years to spur global action. Several UN organisations are working on this subject, but the United Nations Development Program has done the most effective work in terms of empowering women (UNDP). The present study in hand shed lights the United Nations Development Programs (UNDP) programs and projects in the rural Punjab in Pakistan. This is profoundly a qualitative research along with desk research using secondary data serene through published annals, libraries search contraptions and other internet springs. Mostly, the data collected were secondary data obtained from sources that are related directly to the theme of study.

**Key Words:** UNDP, Women Empowerment, Rural Punjab, Gender Equality, Bio Saline II

### **Introduction**

Status is a Latin word, which refers to a state, condition, or situation. Socio-economic status is an economic and sociological measure of a person's work experience based on income, education and occupation. When a family's status is analyzed, the household

---

<sup>1</sup> Hadeed Shahid Awan, Department of Politics and International Relations (DPIR), University of Sargodha.

<sup>2</sup> Rana Danish Nisar, School of politics and International Studies (SPIS), CCNU.

<sup>3</sup> Taimoor Ahmad Chaudry, University of Sargodha.

income, earner's education and occupation are examined keeping this in view. The women's quality of life can be determined through the socio-economic status. Inequities in wealth and quality of life for women are long standing, and exist at local and global level. Low socio-economic status among women, such as poverty, lower education, and poor health for children and families, ultimately affect entire society. Socio-economic status includes income and earning ability, psychological health, physical strength and quality of life (APA, 2013). In the most societies of the world, particularly in the developing countries, household falls under women's domain, and the public and politics are the domains of men. This is due to biological difference between man and woman. Females give birth to children and are equipped to feed the newly born. They are biologically bound to perform domestic duties. Males are physically strong and leave their offspring for the extended periods. Therefore, they are more likely to be engaged in the activities such as hunting and fighting and other socio-economic activities (Ramesh, 2000). Throughout the world, society is the combination of two genders (male and female). They have their respective roles in the development of society. In underdeveloped world, strength based activities are not obligatory to males. In fact, activities such as burden bearing and water carrying are done mostly by females (Begum, 2002). Women need to be empowered to uplift their socio-economic status. Empowerment of women is a complex, multi-faceted and rising thought in development studies of feminism (Hains, 2009). It contains numerous elements which include social, cultural, economic, political, religious, personal, psychological and emotional aspects. Empowerment is seen to be context-specific and has number of determinants. Females are capable of empowering themselves through their own lives and point of view. External forces create a supportive atmosphere in empowering women. Empowerment of women can be explained in a broad variety of behaviors which include: access to material resources including land, money, credit and income; availability of adequate work opportunities; access to power through representation in political and decision-making organization; the liberty to make choices in life; enjoyment of basic rights granted in the constitution and international agreements; equal access to quality education and health facilities; mobility to be able to access some facilities; control over one's body, sexuality and reproductive options (Aurat Foundation, 2011f). International organizations have a significant role in the gender equality and women empowerment. The efforts of international organizations are to eradicate violence against women, and to bring fundamental gender equalities in society. International organizations have the most suitable resources to tackle these issues. These organizations have access all over the world. They fund relative governments, or work independently on

## Understanding United Nation (UNDP) Programs & Projects: (A Case Study of Rural Punjab, Pakistan)

these issues. The United Nations (UN) is first to come to mind when speak about the International Organizations. The UN, in its charter has emphasized on women rights. There are 30 articles of the UN Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women, which reflect the importance of women for the organization. It also acknowledged that empowerment of women and gender equality are prerequisites for the achieving the political, social, economic and environmental security among all peoples (UN, 1995). The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) was founded in 1965 with the merger of two sub agencies, named as ‘Expanded Program of Technical Assistance’ and ‘the United Nations Special Fund’ (UNDP, 2011). UN has defined millennium goals for countries that are to be achieved till 2015, including the gender equality and women empowerment goal. The UNDP is the primary agency which helps countries in achieving these goals. Advancing women’s economic and social rights is a core UNDP priority (UNWOMEN, n.d.). The UNDP has its own established and independent setup, but it also works through funding and partnerships with governments and non-governmental organizations. In Pakistan, the UNDP works throughout the country as the United Nations Development Programme Pakistan (UNDP Pakistan). UNDP Pakistan is a part of the UNDP’s global network which is currently operating in 177 counties. It is working in the country since its birth in the late 1965, and running many programs and projects to empower women. It supports the Government of Pakistan to accomplish Millennium Development Goals targets for 2015. It works hard to advance the standard of living of the people of Pakistan in the thematic areas of democratic governance, environment and climate change, crisis prevention and recovery, development policy, poverty reduction and the empowerment of women.

### **UNDP’s Programs and Project in Rural Punjab**

Within the given mandate of the UNDP, it has provided innovative programming and financial aid to the countries to achieve gender equality in accordance with their own national priorities. It further takes strengthening measures for gender equality across the UN system of development cooperation. The UNDP Pakistan is a part of the ‘One UN family’ that provides technical support and advisory for the implementation of gender equality and women empowerment agenda in the country. It supports the steps taken by the government and non-governmental organizations for gender equality and women’s empowerment commitments according to the international and national human rights such as, “Beijing Platform for Action”, “CEDAW”, “Millennium Declaration” and “MDGs” as well as constitution,

“National Action Plan for Women’s Empowerment” (UNDP Pakistan, 2013d). Four indicators have been defined by Pakistan for the third MDG goal, which are related to women empowerment to fulfill under 2015 MDG target. Gender Parity Index<sup>1</sup> (GPI) for primary and secondary education is the first indicator. Second GPI indicator is the literacy rate. Third GPI indicator is women’s share in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector. The last indicator is the proportion of seats which are held by women in legislature and significant improvement has been seen. The female seats have increased to 21 percent in National Assembly and 17.5 percent in Senate and 33 percent in local government form previously 0.9 percent in the National Assembly and 1.0 percent in Senate (UNDP Pakistan, 2013c). In the light of these targets, UNDP is working in Pakistan on different projects and programs. Only those projects have been discussed which are focused on rural areas of Punjab.

1. “The Gender Parity Index (GPI) is a socioeconomic index usually designed to measure the relative access to education of males and females. In its simplest form, it is calculated as the quotient of the number of females by the number of males enrolled in a given stage of education (primary, secondary, etc.). It is used by international organizations, particularly in measuring the progress of developing countries”.

Following projects have been introduced by the UNDP for women’s empowerment in rural areas of the Punjab:

**Table 1 UNDP Projects**

<b>Sr. No.</b>	<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Sector</b>	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Starting Year</b>
1	Regional Symposium on Sustainable Development of Inland Fisheries	Economic	Poverty Reduction by : Establishment of Farms Up gradation of already installed Fisheries Facilities	1990
2	Bio saline II	Agriculture	Rehabilitation of Land	1998
3	Study of Women’s Political and Legislative Participation	Political Participation	Improvement of women participation in legislation	2005

Understanding United Nation (UNDP) Programs & Projects: (A Case Study of Rural Punjab, Pakistan)

4	Gender Promotion in the Garment/Clothing Industry through Skill Development	Economic	Poverty Reduction by: Providing women with employment opportunities	2006
5	Gender Justice and Protection	Violence Against Women	Combating violence by: Advocacy, raising awareness, capacity building, legal aid and action-oriented research	2007
6	Community Empowerment through Livestock Development & Credit	Gender Support	Socio-economic development of women in rural areas	2008
7	Women's Political School Project	Political Empowerment	Building the capacity of women councilors in local bodies	2008
8	Pakistan Domestic Biogas Program	Energy	Providing cheaper energy sources in rural areas	2009
9	Disaster Resilience Flood (2010)	Disaster Relief	Rehabilitation of Flood affectees	2010
10	Joint Program on Education	Education	Improve female education and enrollment	2011
11	Joint Program on Health	Health	Improve female health condition	2011
12	Solar Water	Water	Clean drinking water dispensation	2012
13	Electoral Cycle Support to the Elections Commission of Pakistan	Political Participation	Improvement of participation of female voters and train local election staff	2012

**Source:** UNDP Pakistan.

### 1. Regional Symposium on Sustainable Development of Inland Fisheries

In 1990, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in collaboration with UNDP Pakistan started a Low Cost Fishing project in rural areas of Punjab to meet food and economic needs. The project was funded by the FAO. Project aimed at establishment of fish farm training

centers, construction of ponds, equipment to enhance pond water, improvement in hatcheries and fish nursery units and for the up gradation of previous facilities (George, 1994). UNDP took following steps:

**Results:**

- *Provided farmers with planktons*
- *Provided technical assistance to enhance the quality of pond*
- *Provided assistance in concluding biological survey*
- *Increased fish seed stocking potential*
- *Construction of ponds with community partnership*

**2. Biosaline II “The Community Development Project for Rehabilitation of Salt Affected & Waterlogged Lands”**

In Punjab, more than 3.2 million acres of land have been rendered unproductive or marginally productive due to salinity and water logging. The estimated per annum economic loss is Rs. 176 billion. This project was started in 1998 which contributed towards exasperating poverty in the province. Bio Saline II operates in three districts of Punjab: Jhang, Hafizabad and Sargodha. It deepened the coverage to reach out more farmers and rehabilitated degraded lands. Through UNDP’s support, Community Organizations (COs) were formed, and were trained to rehabilitate unproductive degraded lands. Measures included gypsum application to reduce salinity, plantation of eucalyptus trees to reduce water logging, and establishment of community-based pools for agricultural implements and tube wells. Biosaline II also supported the COs in other income-generating activities, such as kitchen gardening, establishment of fish ponds and nurseries. In order to ensure ownership and sustainability with the community, activities were funded through a cost sharing arrangement between the project and the communities which contributed 20 percent to 50 percent of the costs.

**Results:**

- *Promoted agriculture-based livelihoods of rural communities, especially small and medium land holding farmers through the development of sustainable farming systems for the rehabilitation of salt-affected and waterlogged lands.*
- *Improved agricultural techniques, rehabilitated lands, improved access to services and markets, increased farm incomes, and employment for men and women.*

## Understanding United Nation (UNDP) Programs & Projects: (A Case Study of Rural Punjab, Pakistan)

- *Total of 643 COs were established; 478 for males known as Salt Land User Groups and 165 for females called Women Interest Groups.*
- *More than 1,517 COs managers were trained in Community Management Skills for effective identification of water-logging and salinity, and seek solutions for restoring the fertility of salt-affected lands.*
- *About 203,393 hectares of land was identified in project districts.*
- *About 171,217 acres of land rehabilitated through gypsum application and plantation; 357 implement pools; 63 fish ponds; 329 tube-wells; 129 nurseries and 3,723 kitchen gardens established; and more than Rs. 1,322 million mobilized in kind and cash.*

### **3. Study of Women's Political and Legislative Participation**

This project was initiated by UNDP to empower women in the legislature. It was started in 2005 with an intention to study the existing situation of political participation of women in Pakistan. It also presented some focused analysis of challenges faced by a great number of women who came into political and legislature arena. Furthermore, this study has analyzed the participation and performance of women legislatures in the assemblies. This project also urged women legislators to work more efficiently for women's rights and other issues by tabling proper resolutions. This study has discussed women as voters, women as candidates in elections, women as legislators, women as cabinet members and women as political party members (UNDP Pakistan, 2005). However, here only Punjab chapter has been discussed from 2002 to 2008 elections.

#### **Results:**

There are number of findings emerged through this study which are important for the women in political sphere of life. Under light of these findings, concern institutions can improve the women performance in all aspects of politics. The findings are as follows:

- *No major change took place in voting patterns of voter registration of women. The disparity between the male member and female voters are continued to exist. However, the vote cast ratio of women in 2013 is increased*
- *Gender-disaggregated data was unavailable of votes polled, even continuous demands by women's rights groups*
- *The number of women candidates contesting on general seats has increased*
- *Aggressive election campaigns along with fear of harassment and character assassination are extremely discouraging factors for women candidates*

- *Women legislators have no previous experience and also lack knowledge about legislature procedure, only few of them brought resolutions on women rights*
- *Women legislators were given less time to speak and move their resolutions in the Assemblies*
- *Women legislators on reserve seats are criticized and humiliated because of having no constituency*
- *Women legislators introduced 10 private bills with only one being passed and also moved nine resolutions*
- *More than 70 percent of women legislators have post graduate qualifications*
- *Overwhelming majority of women legislators belong to powerful political families*
- *In terms of cabinet, women legislators on general seats were given preferences in cabinets*
- *The representation of women legislators in cabinet is just 11 percent as compared to 33 percent in assemblies*
- *Membership of women in parties is more on political bases rather than on merit*
- *Every political party has its women wings but these wings lack authority and autonomy*
- *Lack of communications among party workers generally lack knowledge of political system*
- *Generally, heads of these women are legislators who rarely participate or chair a meeting of these wings.*

These findings can prove helpful for reforming the women participation at all levels in political system of the country. Women can prove more effective element in addressing their issues if they utilize these available platforms in a proper manner.

#### **4. Gender Promotion in the Garment/Clothing Industry through Skill Development (GENPROM)**

The GEN-PROM project was launched in August 2006 for five years. The aim of project was to reduce poverty by generating employment for women in the garment industry through training and building the capacity of the private industry. It also promoted gender participation in the garment industry, and recorded best practices and disseminated the information for up-scaling skill development initiatives in the country. The project was implemented in Punjab in the partnership with GC University, Faisalabad (UNDP Pakistan, 2007). “Poorer the household, the higher is the likelihood of its dependence on female labor”



## Understanding United Nation (UNDP) Programs & Projects: (A Case Study of Rural Punjab, Pakistan)

(UN, 2003). This is further corroborated by evidence on greater impoverishment in households relying on women's productive labor, due to the low economic value of female labor. Lower educational attainment and restricted mobility inhibit women's ability to compete for access to training and jobs on equal bases with men. Garment industry is the largest source of industrial employment in Pakistan, women account for less than a quarter of the work force in contrast to some other garment producing countries where women form the bulk of the workforce in the same industry. The garment industry is another intended beneficiary of this project. In Pakistan's garment industry, lack of skilled labor is a great problem and this deficiency is much more apparent and distinct in women labor force as compared to men (UNDP Pakistan, 2006). Even at the large garment firms, about one-third of men and more than half of women workers have never received any type of training before taking the jobs. The industry was benefitted from the supply of well-trained labor that contributed towards reducing shortages of skilled labor at a time of intensified competition after the expiry of the textiles and clothing quota system and recent economic contraction in the international markets. Provision of skilled workers not only increased the productivity of the firms but also allowed them to produce and export diversified products including high-end garments. The GEN-PROM trainees were scientifically trained through a curriculum, as the factory management it helped in building their skills (UNDP Pakistan, 2011).

### **Results:**

- *The objective of GEN-PROM was to generate employment for women in the garment industry through trainings. In this context four rounds of training were completed in 15 Satellite Training Units (STUs) in Punjab.*
- *The GEN-PROM successfully trained 12 Program Coordinators (PCs), 266 Master Trainers (MTs) and 1,252 women trainees.*
- *The training program continued at STUs under the supervision of MTs for additional rounds of training. As a result, nearly 2,500 additional workers were trained of which 72 percent were women, received training and retraining in the garment factories.*
- *During training, women earned Rs. 3,000 to 4,600 per month, although some firms paid the minimum wage of Rs. 6,000. GEN-PROM training program requested the participating STUs to provide transportation to the trainees/employees to overcome women's*

*mobility issues. This also ensured the safety of the commuting environment and women reaching home before dark (UNDP Pakistan, 2011).*

## **5. Violence Against Women**

Violence Against women (VAW) has become a rampant in the society. Women face violence persistently across Pakistan. The UNDP launched a ‘Gender Justice and Protection’ (GJP) in 2007. It contributed in the continual drop in VAW in the line of policy commitment by the government. A fund was created under this project for supporting promised initiatives by civil society and government organizations to combat violence by the virtue of advocacy, raising awareness, capacity building, legal aid and action-oriented research (UNDP Pakistan, 2007a).

Following initiatives were taken to achieve intended targets of the project which were:

- **Advocacy and Awareness:** *It held 210 theatre, 920 seminars were conducted for awareness raising purpose. More awareness raising sessions were held in 170 schools. This project further: aired 183 radio programs; 1041 types of posters, 29 types of 49,900 stickers, 535 brochures and 27 booklets were printed, and beneficiaries were distributed with 5,725 newsletters.*
- **Capacity Building:** *Initiatives taken under capacity building were: targeted medical officers, religious scholars, factory workers, police officers, para-legal workers, civil society representatives and media professionals for their contribution in eradicating VAW in a sustainable way.*
- **Free Of Cost Legal Aid Provision:** *About 20 referral and legal aid counseling centers were established to provide legal aid to affected women. Nearly 1,900 women got legal aid and over 33,000 women got counseling/referral services. The GJP project also supported the Regional Directorate of Human Rights Punjab by notifying female officers for helping women prisoners to access the facility of bail.*
- **Action-oriented Research:** *This conducted district level research studies with focusing research forms and degree of VAW practices, rehabilitation facilities and coping mechanisms.*
- **Legislative support on VAW:** *It arranged large based consultations for the facilitation of Acid Crime Control and Prevention Bill in seeking various perspectives from*

Understanding United Nation (UNDP) Programs & Projects: (A Case Study of Rural Punjab, Pakistan)

*stakeholders, which included civil society, academia, elected representatives, government and health officials etc (UNDP, 2007a).*

**6. Community Empowerment through Livestock Development & Credit (CELDAC)**

In 2008, under Gender Support Program, the UNDP launched this project for the socio economic development in the rural areas of Punjab. The UNDP and the Nestle introduced a pilot program for women in livestock development, as women have key role in managing the livestock. The project provided employment opportunity to rural women and generated healthy income. This was done at the community and household level by livestock health care skills development, food security and improved livelihoods. Project stakeholders involved; community, rural women, University of Veterinary & Animal Sciences (UVAS) Lahore, livestock department, pharmaceutical companies, all donors, dairy industry and animal feed concentrate manufacturers. Only those villages were selected from selected tehsils of project district which had a reasonable access to electricity and market, and where Lady Livestock Workers (LLWs) felt comfortable to establish them. The criterion for trainees were to be unmarried or a widow without young children, having their own livestock, knew management of livestock, having better health, educated and willing to spread their work to others. Female master trainers that were trained from UVAS trained these women. Standard curriculum was made by the help of the university for this purpose (“CEDLAC”, 2011).

**Results:**

- *A LLW group was formed which developed their capacity in delivering primary livestock production, management and extension services*
- *When participants completed their training each of them got a certificate, basic medicines and free field medical kit to independently initiate their business*
- *The deficiency of rural women in skills in managing livestock and lack of capital and poor marketing were eliminated along with middlemen role*
- *More than 3,000 LLWs of 1500 villages of project districts were trained. Moreover, 65 percent were operating as independent entrepreneurs. These trained women were successfully working as animal feed suppliers, village milk collection agents and livestock health caretakers. Above 3,000 Rupees was their average monthly income. Higher earnings were noticed in some cases.*

- *LLWs gave timely and cost efficient treatment to 50,000 animals on monthly basis (“CEDLAC”, 2011).*

## **7. Women’s Political School Project**

Women in Pakistan are marginalized in politics at national and local level. Keeping this in view, ‘Women’s Political School’ (WPS) project was established under Ministry of Women Development in 2008 with the help of the UNDP and Royal Norwegian Agency for Development (RNE). The project aimed to empower women in public office so that they could have better understanding of their legal and constitutional rights. The program helped molding Women Councilors (WCs) into effective leaders through training, capacity building and networking. Additionally, women councilors’ data profiling was done during the training of 24,000 newly elected female representatives at the local levels (district/tehsil/union council). The objective of this exercise was to gather basic information on socioeconomic status, political affiliations, and their effectiveness as councilors, knowledge/awareness of Local Government (LG) system and their satisfaction over the system. The data was organized through conducting one-to-one interview by a trained research assistant to ensure consistency and completeness of information (UNDP Pakistan, 2007).

### **Results:**

- *Women councilors showed increased efficiency in councils in terms of active participation in deliberations, raised attendance, influencing budgets and policies, and finally in getting schemes approved by assessing proper funding*
- *Women councilors showed effectiveness in outside their councils, in terms of accessing relevant information and creating necessary linkages, facilitating and services to serve their constituencies*
- *A total of 14,051 women councilors were trained from 30 districts of Punjab. About one-third (34 percent) WCs were re-elected. It was found that education level remained low and only 40 percent women ever-attended the school (completed primary level, or grade), whereas 20 percent had completed metric level (10th grade). There were a number of highly qualified professional women including: 62 lawyers, 23 medical doctors, 188 educationists (B.Ed/M.Ed), 54 IT specialists, and two engineers among the group*
- *A majority (64 percent) expressed their satisfaction over the LG system and even a higher proportion (79 percent) wanted to contest LG elections again in the future.*

*Involvement of WCs in the Local Council's affairs also remained low. Health and Education monitoring committees was their preferred choice (UNDP Pakistan, 2007).*

## **8. Pakistan Domestic Biogas Program**

In 2009, Government of Pakistan and the UNDP in collaboration with Winrock International and SNV (Netherlands Development Organization) started implementing a biogas program named "Pakistan Domestic Biogas Program" (PDBP) in Punjab. It carried out a feasibility study to establish a household biogas program on broader bases in Pakistan. Energy crisis has adversely affected Pakistan. Country's rapid economic growth and poverty reduction strategy hampered due to shortage of energy including both the gas and the electricity. Gas load shedding has caused many difficulties to consumers. LPG is the only alternative to firewood or coal in rural areas but its price is hovering above Rs100 per/kg. The rural women face tough circumstances as they have to rely on woods and animal dung for cooking which they used to collect several miles away from their residence. Biogas plants are most suitable alternate to it. There is a huge potential of domestic biogas in Pakistan, as water, animal dung, the availability of construction materials, ambient temperature, freedom from floods, enough space for plant installation and availability of human resources for the construction of plant are available in sufficient numbers. The central Punjab region including Sargodha and Faisalabad divisions have real potential for this program. Local NGOs, training institutes, biogas construction companies and Punjab Rural Support Program (PRSP) are major stakeholders of this program (SNV, n.d.).

### **Results:**

- *Around 16 bio gas companies were installed by PDBP in four districts of central Punjab. These districts included Faisalabad, TobaTek Singh, Sargodha and Jhang.*
- *Companies trained masons and established 70 plants after signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Ministry of Environment. Four years guarantee was also provided for proper operations and functioning.*
- *Many promotional items were developed for the promotion of program such as brochures, newsletters, writing materials, caps, t-shirts etc (SNV, n.d.).*

## **9. Disaster Resilience Flood (2010) prone zones of Punjab**

The flood of 2010 spread in the agriculture heartland of Punjab. An assessment was carried out in four districts of Punjab i.e. Jhang, Layyah, Muzaffargarh and Mianwali to find out the

extent of losses and damages (human and infrastructure) caused by the flood in these districts. The data was collected through meetings with the District Coordination Officers and Focus Group Discussions with the rural communities and NGO personnel. The report provided an overview of the damages incurred on non-farm livelihood, environment, social cohesion, governance and community based infrastructure. The initial assessments lead to a more comprehensive analysis of the situation to propose appropriate early recovery interventions (UNDP Pakistan, 2010).

### **Results:**

Only some of the contribution of the UNDP in flood relief efforts is discussed here.

- *In Athara Hazari, Jhang, women faced acute crisis while fighting for the survival. In this area, the main source of livelihood was farming and livestock. Thousands of square miles of farmland were inundated as cows and goats had nothing to graze. The UNDP provided required vaccines for the animals and fodder.*
- *In Kalabagh, Mianwali, most victims were women and children. They urgently needed clean drinking water. There was a real danger of developing illnesses because of the drinking water had been polluted by dying animals, livestock and human sewage. The UNDP provided clean drinking water by installing hand pumps in the area as women were bringing water from several miles away and some were drinking dirty water.*
- *In Esa Khel, Mianwali, making hand fans from “mazri” is a home based industry since every woman weaves hand fans. Due to floods, the raw material locally known as “saroot” was completely destroyed. Craftswomen used to get the raw material from their own villages. The UNDP provided them necessary raw materials so that they would be able to continue their source of income (UNDP, 2010).*

### **10. Joint Program on Education**

Under the 18th Amendment to the Constitution, education has become the responsibility of the provinces and more funds have been provided to them through the 7th National Finance Commission (NFC) Award. Despite this, the education budgets allocated by the provinces remain far below the needs. Free and compulsory education for children aged five to sixteen has been recognized as a constitutional right by insertion of Article 25-A. About 4.5 million children are out of school in Punjab, and 3 million aged 10 and above, mostly women, are illiterate. Efforts of the UNDP are underway to achieve the MDGs, EFA targets and improve quality of education at all levels (UN, 2013a).

## Understanding United Nation (UNDP) Programs & Projects: (A Case Study of Rural Punjab, Pakistan)

The Joint Program (JP) on Education was launched by the UNDP in 2011 which consisted of three Joint Program Components (JPCs) to contribute in improving the education sector.

- *JPC1 is on the Pre-Primary and Elementary Education, capacity building for Early Childhood Education (ECE), inclusive education, ensuring access to education for girls, improved school planning and management, and teacher training. In relation to education for girls, district education departments were supported in advocating for this: an impact study was conducted of the Gender in Education Policy Support Project and continued support was provided through teacher training and supplies for 74 government girls' primary schools in which grade six classes had been initiated.*
- *JPC2 activities included, Adult Literacy and Non-Formal Basic Education which revolved around improving the quality of literacy programs, advocacy and promoting literacy in relation to child labor. Efforts to enhance quality of literacy programs entailed both capacity development of personnel, and preparation of literacy materials, and a strong emphasis on gender sensitization and promotion of gender related issues (girls' education, elimination of Gender Based Violence, safe motherhood, etc). Adult literacy and skill training centres were set up for girls and women, and various courses in addition to basic literacy were taught, for example, on hygiene, kitchen gardening, livestock. A total of 50 Community Learning Centres (CLCs) were established in Punjab, and about 5,000 adult rural females were made literate through non-formal basic education and provided vocational training in different trades, empowering them economically and enabling them to end their poverty cycle.*
- *JPC3 activities focused Secondary and Technical and Vocational Education were promoted by using a training module on 'Know- About-Business'. A number of schools in Punjab were provided with equipment for IT labs for this purpose. Training materials and assessment resources for masonry were developed, and preparations were made for training of a core group of masons on new competency standards. Finally, a centre of excellence in electronics was established in Multan (UN, 2013a).*

### **11. Joint Program on Health and Population**

In 2011, the UNDP started a JP on Health and Population for Maternal Neonate and Child Health (MNCH) and Family Planning/Reproductive Health (FP/RH) services in Punjab (UN, 2012b).

- Under **JPCI**, *Maternal Neonatal and Child Health, Family Planning and Reproductive Health, universal coverage of MNCH and FP/RH services were promoted through contracting out of health service delivery, voucher schemes to ensure equitable access, provision of Essential Newborn Care (ENC) kits in ten districts, and essential supplies and equipment to District Headquarters as well as to some Tehsil Headquarters and Rural Health Centers (RHCs). Various health care providers were trained in Integrated Management of Newborn and Childhood Illness, Infant and Young Child Feeding and District Health Information System tools. Vaccination and health care messages were conveyed to 162,000 pregnant and lactating women through RHCs and the provision of food (vegetable oil) incentives.*
- Under **JPC2**, *the Communicable Disease Control towards control of polio transmission, increased immunization coverage, control of TB, malaria and hepatitis, and strengthening of the Disease Early Warning System were done. Around 32 million male and female children aged less than five years were vaccinated. A TB control strategy document was adopted, printed and disseminated, and technical support was provided for TB prevalence surveys in 12 districts. TB screening was carried out. A national policy for hepatitis control was developed, and national guidelines for diagnosis and management were revised and disseminated. Injection safety equipment was provided in a number of health facilities and provincial dengue control plans to the management of Punjab.*
- *Activities under JPC3, Health Promotion and Nutrition focused on increasing knowledge and practices for health promotion, and improving nutritional status were carried out. The School Health Program (SHP) was strengthened, for example, through provision of training material, capacity building of teachers on psycho-social rehabilitation, and conducted three provincial seminars with policy makers and others on the need for SHP. Utilization of micronutrients in target populations was enhanced through support for the Universal Salt Iodization initiative, including installation of iodization equipment, provision of Rapid Test Kits, training of salt processors on salt iodization and school-based advocacy. Vitamin A supplementation covered some 30 million children.*
- Under **JPC4**, *Health System Strengthening, human resources development for health and population, Multi-sectoral Country Coordination and Facilitation Mechanism were established. Several other activities were carried out in relation to public health research, including studies on Hepatitis B and C, and on tropical diseases, publication of research papers in scientific journals, and conferences on maternal mortality and neonatology.*



## Understanding United Nation (UNDP) Programs & Projects: (A Case Study of Rural Punjab, Pakistan)

- *Under JPC5, HIV and AIDS, advocacy, service-provision, capacity-building and resource mobilization support for HIV prevention and care were provided for Key Affected Populations and vulnerable populations. Those reached in this way, included 14,000 injecting drug users including females, 500 partners/spouses of drug users, 12,000 highly susceptible persons (mostly female) and 400 transgender people. Support was extended for integration of HIV and AIDS prevention messages in school textbooks and orientation of teachers about this epidemic and the vulnerability of youth in Pakistan. Various forums and advocacy missions were undertaken in the Punjab to support AIDS programs in the health, education, drugs, and social welfare sectors. A policy framework on AIDS Education in Pakistan was prepared.*
- *Activities under JPC6 Population Census focused largely on building the institutional capacity of the Population Census Organization. Geographical Information System (GIS) lab was established in Lahore. Various trainings were conducted for census staff, including on GIS and development of a geo-database. Census questionnaires were printed and delivered, the census procedural history was prepared. A census training film on gender was also developed and gender training conducted for 30 master trainers and 1,150 census trainers and 100 enumerators (UN, 2012b).*

### **12. UNDP Water Project**

The project was initiated in 2011, which was financed by the UNDP. Installation was done in cooperation with the local company Izhar Energy. The project aimed at improving the water supply in flood-affected areas of Punjab.

#### **Results:**

- *Two hundred solar water pumping systems were installed to provide thousands of families and animals with clean and safe drinking water to save energy of thousands of women that might have collected unsafe drinking water from miles away from their homes.*
- *Improved health of thousands of vulnerable women and children that have been exposed to water borne diseases (“UNDP Water Project Pakistan”, 2012).*

### **13. Electoral Cycle Support to the Elections Commission of Pakistan 2012-2014**

This project was initiated by the UNDP with the collaboration of the UNWOMEN and the UNOPS on the request of the ECP to the UN for the electoral assistance. The project took an electoral cycle approach supporting the periods before, during and after elections. The overall

objective was to support and strengthen the ECP to enable it to hold elections that were credible, transparent and inclusive. The project was consisted of two phases. Phase I: pre-elections and during elections. Phase II: post-elections. Phase I is focused on supporting the ECP to prepare and conduct the general elections. Phase II will commence after the general elections and focused on longer term capacity strengthening of the ECP, improvements to the electoral process, civic education and for upcoming local government elections (UNDP Pakistan, 2013b).

### **Results:**

- *In Phase I, greater public confidence was achieved in the general elections of 2013 as it is indicated by the acceptance of election results by the majority of citizens and a higher voter turnout ratio was achieved which is 56 percent as compare to 44 percent in the 2008 elections. These results were achieved through training of 400,000 polling officials, implementing of transparent elections results management system and voter education that reaches one million eligible voters. A more transparent elections results management system has been developed. It introduced tamper evident bags to deter fraud. Over 200 ECP district officers were trained and supported in voter education. 18,000 security personnel were trained as well.*
- *In Phase II, the UNDP strengthened the ECP at all levels – head quarter, provincial, regional and district with the confidence and professional competence to hold future elections that are of a high standard. It also got recommendations from election observers and through workshops, civic education curricula in all schools for the future (UNDP Pakistan, 2013b).*

### **Conclusion**

The UNDP in Pakistan launched many successful projects for women's empowerment independently or with the collaboration of concern government departments and other local non-governmental organizations. These programs and projects have raised the living standard of the targeted population in the Punjab. These projects proved their effectiveness and can be considered as benchmark by adopting them on a larger scale in the form of policy. However, these projects have some flaws and needs improvement so that in future these deficiencies can be properly addressed but with fact the efforts of the United Nations regarding Women empowerment of the Rural Punjab are really appreciated and acknowledgeable. Moreover, it

## Understanding United Nation (UNDP) Programs & Projects: (A Case Study of Rural Punjab, Pakistan)

immensely need to do collaboration among Public-Private sector with the assistance of United Nations.

### References

1. American Psychology Association. (2013). *Fact sheet: Women & socioeconomic status*. Retrieved from APA website: <https://www.apa.org/pi/ses/resources/publications/factsheet-women.aspx>
2. Aurat Foundation. (2011f). *Women's empowerment in Pakistan*. Islamabad: Aurat Foundation.
3. Begum, A.G. (2002). Measuring socio-economic gender inequality in: Towards an alternative to the UNDP gender-related development index. *Working Paper Series 251(30)*. Hague: Institute of Social Studies.
4. Community Empowerment through Livestock Development & Credit. (2008). *CELDAC annual report 2008*. Retrieved from CEDLAC website: <http://www.celdac.org/celdac/publications.php?id=1#>
5. George, W. (1994). The status of inland fisheries in Pakistan. In, Peter, T. & Morris, M. (Eds.), *Regional symposium on sustainable development of inland fisheries under environmental constraints*. Bangkok: Food and Agriculture Organization, pp 248.
6. Hains, R. (2009). *Power feminism, mediated: Girl power and the commercial politics of change*. El-Paso: Women Studies in Communication, Organization for Research on Women & Communication.
7. Ramesh, P. (2000). Identifying gender backward districts using selected indicators. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 35(48), 4276-4286.
8. SNV (Netherlands Development Organization). (n.d.). *SNV*. Retrieved from SNV Website: <http://www.snvworld.org/en/countries/pakistan>
9. United Nations. (1995). *Report of the Fourth World Conference on women*. Retrieved from UN website: <http://www.un.org/esa/gopher-data/conf/fwcw/off/a--20.en>
10. United Nations. (2003). *United Nations development assistance framework: Pakistan 2003-2008*. Islamabad: UN Resident coordinator Office.
11. United Nations. (2012b). Part II: One programme progress in Pakistan. In, *Pakistan One UN programme report* (pp. 20-47). Islamabad: The United Nations System in Pakistan Publication.
12. *UNDP Water Project Pakistan*. (2012). Retrieved from: <http://www.phaesun.com/de/>

systeme/referenzen/solarewasserversorgung/wasserpumpsysteme/undp-water-project-pakistan.html

13. UNDP Pakistan. (2005). *Political and legislative participation of women in Pakistan: Issues and perspective*. Islamabad: UNDP Gender Unit.
14. UNDP Pakistan. (2006). *GENPROM Pakistan project document*. Islamabad: UNDP Pakistan, pp 7.
15. UNDP Pakistan. (2007). *Women councilors' data profile summary results*. Islamabad: UNDP Pakistan.
16. UNDP Pakistan. (2010). *2010 floods in Pakistan – A race SNV against time!!*. Islamabad: UNDP Pakistan.
17. UNDP Pakistan. (2011). *UNDP Pakistan annual report 2011*. Islamabad: UNDP Pakistan.
18. UNDP Pakistan. (2013a). *About UNDP in Pakistan*. Retrieved from UNDP Pakistan website:[http://www.pk.undp.org/content/pakistan/en/home/operations/about\\_und.html](http://www.pk.undp.org/content/pakistan/en/home/operations/about_und.html).
19. UNDP Pakistan. (2013d). *Women empowerment*. Retrieved from UNDP Pakistan website:<http://www.pk.undp.org/content/pakistan/en/home/ourwork/womenempowerment/overviewhtml>
20. UNDP Pakistan. (2013c). *Promote gender equality and empower women*. Retrieved from UNDP Pakistan website: <http://www.pk.undp.org/content/pakistan/en/home/mdgoverview/overview/mdg3/>.
21. UNDP Pakistan. (2013b). *Electoral cycle support to the Election Commission of Pakistan*. Retrieved from UNDP Pakistan website: [http://www.pk.undp.org/content/pakistan/en/home/operations/projects/womens\\_empowerment/project\\_sample/](http://www.pk.undp.org/content/pakistan/en/home/operations/projects/womens_empowerment/project_sample/)