

# Media Update-2

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## FAO

PRESS RELEASE

### Stakeholder Consultation on Developing National Fisheries and Aquaculture Development Policy and Plan of Action for 2020-2030

**Islamabad**—The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in collaboration with Fisheries Development Board, Ministry of National Food Security & Research held a stakeholder consultation webinar for developing a national fisheries and aquaculture development policy and plan of action for 2020-2030.

The webinar was attended by participants from Federal Ministries of National Food Security and Research, Maritime Affairs, fisheries departments of all provinces, technical experts from FAO, representatives of fisheries organization and experts from various NGOs and academia.

The “National Policy for Fisheries and Aquaculture in Pakistan” aims for sustainable management and utilization of fisheries and aquaculture resources through creation of a conducive and enabling environment for equitable, economic and social development in the country. The policy will help to achieve the contribution of fisheries and aquaculture to achieve the sustainable development goals. There is a dire need to conduct a holistic sectoral analysis of the fisheries and aquaculture sector in Pakistan to identify the investment gaps and constraints hindering development opportunities in the sector.

Emphasizing on the need of policy formulation, the Country Representative of FAO Pakistan, Ms. Mina Dowlatchahi in her remarks stated that “The existing fisheries legislations need to conform to the international standards for sustainable management and utilization of fisheries resources. Increased investment in the sector can contribute significantly to create income-

generating opportunities in fisheries and aquaculture. We need to establish an enabling environment and right policy and legal framework for investors. This will contribute to improving food security, nutrition, and poverty reduction in the country,” she said.

CEO of Fisheries Development Board, Ministry of National Food Security and Research, Dr. Anser Mehmood Chatta stated that “To critically assess the needs of the fisheries and aquaculture sector, this would be the first ever policy formulation in line to the government policy of economic growth. The Government of Pakistan requested FAO for technical support which was granted through a Technical Cooperation Program by FAO. Fisheries and aquaculture sector provide employment to 1.8 households in the country. The current government has approved three mega projects to promote the sector. We need feedback and consensus by the stakeholders on the policy formulation so that the policy is finalized and presented to the government,” he said.

Technical experts from FAO delivered detailed presentation on the outline draft of the national policy for fisheries and aquaculture. The final policy will be presented to the government after a second consultation with the fisheries and aquaculture stakeholders.

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## UN Women

PRESS RELEASE

### Toolkit on understanding and addressing sexual harassment at workplace launched in Punjab

LAHORE: The Provincial Office of the Ombudsperson for Protection against Harassment of Women at Workplace, in collaboration with UN Women Pakistan, today launched a resource toolkit on ‘Understanding Sexual

Harassment, Legal Provisions, Roles of Duty Bearers and Right Holders' to offer comprehensive guidance to train and capacitate stakeholders on the law and redressal mechanisms for dispensation of justice to victims of sexual harassment at workplace in the Punjab province.

The adverse and lasting consequences of harassment are not limited to women and their families, but they also negatively affect communities and national progress. UN Women and Ombudsperson Office Punjab have prioritized the area of protection against harassment of women at workplace to ensure women and girls can access opportunities to advance their careers in a safe and secure working environment. Ombudsperson for Protection against Harassment, Punjab in partnership with UN women Pakistan, is working to implement the legislation through strengthening existing mechanisms, raising awareness, developing knowledge products and enhancing the capacity of public and private actors for the effective implementation and monitoring of the law for ending harassment at the workplace.

Addressing the launch, Minister for Women Development Punjab, who was the chief guest of the event, Ashifa Riaz Fatyana said, "A safe and enabling environment for women is a must for a society to prosper socially and economically. Sexual harassment of women at workplace is a heinous crime and we all should come forward to play our due role in discouraging this from of violence anywhere in our country. When we don't speak up against incidents of violence against women and girls, such evil acts become normalized. Creating awareness and sensitizing masses especially men that women are equal beings and have a right to live their lives free from violence, harassment and discrimination is critical for making our province, country and this world a better place for all. This event is of utmost importance as the toolkit launched today will lead to advancing consolidated efforts against harassment in the province."

The Minister lamented that while we have women police stations, but they don't have mandate to file a FIR (First Information Report). "In fact, many women police officials, serving in traditional police stations, themselves face harassment within their stations," she remarked while stressing the need for safe spaces for women.

Sharmeela Rassool, Country Representative UN Women Pakistan, stressed that it was a high time to step forward for protection of women and girls and move ahead on a legislative path for ending sexual harassment against them.

Quoting some alarming figures of incidence of harassment in the developed world as well as many South Asian countries, she observed that sexual harassment was a dilemma which was not only affecting Pakistan, but it was prevalent everywhere in the world. “So, we require collective actions from all fronts and I'm glad that Women Development Department Punjab and Ombudsperson Office are prioritizing this issue even during the pandemic situation.” Pakistan is ahead of many South Asian countries in terms of having specific legislation against sexual harassment at workplace.

Underpinning that sexual harassment has negative consequences for women and girls in terms of career barrier, declined costs productivity and restricted movement and growth options, Sharmeela said that addressing harassment will have a direct impact on advancing our journey towards achieving Sustainable Development goals (SDGs), especially SDG 8, decent work; and SDG 5, gender equality. “If you want to stay in economic growth trajectory, female participation in labor force is a must,” she said while reiterating that UN Women was committed to continue working with government and other stakeholders for ending harassment and violence against women and girls in Pakistan.

Other distinguished speakers and participants at the event included Members of Provincial Assembly (MPAs) Raheela Khadim Hussain and Musarrat Cheema; Ambreen Raza, Secretary Women Development Department, Government of Punjab; Irum Bukhari, Secretary Higher Education; Justice Retd. Nasira Iqbal, senior legal expert; Usman Ijaz Bajwa, Assistant Inspector General (AIG) Punjab Police and Head of Provincial Gender Crimes Cell. Nabila Malick, EAW and Governance Advisor, UN Women Pakistan, gave a presentation on key highlights of the toolkit and Saman Ahsan, Portfolio Manager EAW, Governance and Human Rights, UN Women Pakistan, informed participants on the process followed to develop the toolkit. The event was attended by representatives from the government, civil society, academia and media.

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