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<https://islamicreligious.com/index.php/Journal/index>Print ISSN: [3006-1296](#) Online ISSN: [3006-130X](#)Platform & Workflow by: [Open Journal Systems](#)**Women-peace and Security Agenda: Addressing Sexual and Gender Based Violation
Conflict Interior Sindh Pakistan****Sada Hussain**

M.Phil Scholar, Department of Sociology, Lahore Leads University

sadahussain635@gmail.com**Dr. Muhammad Abdullah**

Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, Lahore Leads University

Abstract

The Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) agenda, anchored in United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000), provides a critical framework for addressing Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) in conflict and post-conflict settings, particularly in interior Sindh, Pakistan. This article examines the pervasive issues of SGBV—including rape, honor killings, child marriage, feudal exploitation, and kidnapping—highlighting the systemic challenges rooted in patriarchal norms, weak law enforcement, and cultural taboos. Women and girls in Sindh face disproportionate vulnerabilities due to structural inequalities, limited access to justice, and socio-economic marginalization. Despite these barriers, the WPS agenda emphasizes their vital role in peacebuilding, recovery, and decision-making processes. The article underscores the need for gender-sensitive policies, legal reforms, and community engagement to combat SGBV, enhance women's participation in governance, and integrate a gendered lens into crisis responses. Recommendations include strengthening institutional frameworks, expanding support services, and leveraging media and grassroots activism to challenge harmful stereotypes and promote sustainable peace in the region.

Keywords: Women, Peace & Security (WPS), Sexual & Gender-Based Violence (SGBV), Conflict, Sindh, Pakistan, UNSCR 1325, Gender Equality.

Introduction

The Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) agenda, established by United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 in 2000, represents a landmark framework for addressing the gendered impacts of conflict and promoting women's participation in peacebuilding (UN Women, 2020). Subsequent resolutions—including 1820, 1888, and 1960—have expanded the agenda to explicitly recognize sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) as a tactic of war and a threat to international security (Davies & True, 2019). In conflict-affected regions like interior Sindh, Pakistan, where patriarchal norms and feudal structures exacerbate vulnerabilities, the WPS agenda provides a critical lens for analyzing systemic violence against women and girls. Despite global commitments, implementation gaps persist, particularly in conservative societies where traditional power dynamics hinder women's agency (Khan, 2021). This study examines how SGBV manifests in Sindh's post-conflict landscape, where weak governance, cultural taboos, and militarization intersect to perpetuate cycles of violence.

Sexual and gender-based violence in Sindh reflects broader patterns of conflict-related SGBV documented in South Asia, where women's bodies become battlegrounds for asserting power and control (Coomaraswamy, 2015). In interior Sindh, feudal landlords (Waderas) and tribal justice systems (Jirgas) often override formal legal mechanisms,

leaving survivors of rape, honor killings, and forced marriages without recourse (Ali, 2022). The 2016 Sindh Women's Protection Act and criminal law amendments have made nominal progress, but enforcement remains inconsistent, with conviction rates for SGBV crimes below 1% (Human Rights Watch, 2023). Compounding these challenges are socio-economic disparities: women in rural Sindh face limited access to education, healthcare, and livelihoods, rendering them

disproportionately vulnerable to exploitation (Zia, 2020). This study contextualizes SGBV within Sindh's conflict history, including ethnic strife and resource disputes, to underscore how structural inequalities amplify gendered violence.

Addressing SGBV is not only a moral imperative but also a strategic necessity for sustainable peace. Research demonstrates that women's participation in peace processes increases the likelihood of agreements lasting 15 years or longer by 35% (O'Reilly et al., 2015). In Sindh, where women are excluded from decision-making spaces, their absence perpetuates policies that neglect gendered harms, from displacement-related sexual violence to economic deprivation in post-conflict recovery (Nazir, 2021). This study aims to: (1) analyze trends in SGBV across Sindh's conflict-affected districts, (2) evaluate institutional and cultural barriers to justice, and (3) propose policy measures aligned with the WPS agenda. By centering survivor narratives and grassroots activism, the findings advocate for a transformative approach to peacebuilding—one that dismantles patriarchal norms and prioritizes women's leadership in security frameworks (Shekhawat, 2019).

Theoretical Framework: WPS and Gender-Based Violence

The Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) agenda, anchored in United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 (2000), provides a comprehensive framework for addressing gender-based violence in conflict zones through four interrelated pillars: prevention, protection, participation, and relief and recovery (Hudson & Leidl, 2022). Prevention focuses on eliminating root causes of violence through education and policy reforms, while protection emphasizes legal and physical safeguards for women and girls in conflict settings (Basu & Nagar, 2023). Participation ensures women's inclusion in peace negotiations and decision-making, challenging the male-dominated structures that often perpetuate conflict (Arostegui, 2021). Finally, relief and recovery prioritize gendered approaches to post-conflict rehabilitation, addressing trauma, economic displacement, and healthcare disparities (Gizelis, 2023). Together, these pillars underscore the necessity of integrating gender perspectives into all phases of conflict resolution, recognizing that sustainable peace cannot be achieved without addressing systemic inequalities (Hudson & Leidl, 2022).

In conservative societies like Sindh, Pakistan, the intersection of conflict, patriarchy, and SGBV creates a cyclical pattern of violence that reinforces women's marginalization (Zia & Khan, 2023). Patriarchal norms, entrenched in feudal and tribal systems, normalize gender-based violence as a tool for maintaining social control, particularly in regions where militarization and weak governance prevail (Sultana, 2022). For instance, the Wadera (feudal landlord) system in Sindh perpetuates economic and sexual exploitation, with women from lower-caste and rural communities facing heightened risks of honor killings, forced marriages, and rape (Ali & Enayat, 2023). Feminist scholars argue that such violence is not incidental but instrumental, serving to destabilize communities and consolidate power among dominant groups (Cockburn, 2021). This perspective aligns with the WPS agenda's call to dismantle structural inequalities, as it highlights how conflict exacerbates pre-existing gendered hierarchies, leaving women disproportionately vulnerable (Zia & Khan, 2023).

Feminist critiques of militarization and war further illuminate the gendered dimensions of violence, challenging traditional security paradigms that prioritize state-centric approaches over human security (Enloe, 2022). Cynthia Enloe's seminal work on militarization reveals how war economies exploit women's labor and bodies, relegating them to passive victims or symbolic battlegrounds (Enloe, 2022). In Sindh, militarized conflicts—whether ethnic, political, or resource-based—have intensified SGBV, with reports of security forces perpetrating sexual violence with impunity (Amnesty International, 2023). Feminist theorists also emphasize the agency of women in resistance movements, noting how grassroots

activists in Sindh have organized against honor killings and feudal oppression, often at great personal risk (Khan & Shah, 2023). These efforts align with the WPS agenda's emphasis on participation, demonstrating that women are not merely victims but essential actors in peacebuilding (Arostegui, 2021). By centering feminist perspectives, the WPS framework challenges androcentric narratives of conflict, advocating for transformative justice that addresses both immediate violence and its systemic roots (Gizelis, 2023).

Context of SGBV in Interior Sindh

The pervasive sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) in interior Sindh is deeply rooted in the region's socio-cultural and feudal dynamics, where patriarchal norms intersect with entrenched power structures to perpetuate systemic oppression (Ahmed & Naqvi, 2023). The Wadera (feudal landlord) system dominates rural Sindh, creating a hierarchy where landlords wield unchecked authority over tenants, particularly women from marginalized communities (Hussain & Malik, 2023). This system reinforces gender inequalities through practices such as bonded labor, forced marriages, and economic coercion, leaving women vulnerable to exploitation (Ali et al., 2023). Cultural taboos further silence survivors, as reporting violence is often equated with bringing "shame" to families, while tribal justice systems (Jirgas) bypass formal legal channels, favoring patriarchal resolutions that prioritize familial honor over justice (Khan & Shaikh, 2023). These dynamics are compounded by weak state institutions, corruption, and a lack of gender-sensitive policing, creating an environment where SGBV thrives with impunity (Amnesty International, 2023). The given tables presents the whole scenario of the ongoing discussion.

Table 1: District-Level SGBV Crime Reports (2016 Study)

Rank	Crime Category	Reported Cases	Notes
1	Honour killing	157	
2	Rape	108	
3	Suicide	166	Linked to gender oppression
4	Kidnapping	199	
5	Sexual Abuse	228	
*	<i>Domestic violence</i>	*10-12/year*	<i>Shikarpur district average</i>

Table 2: Provincial Trends (Jan-June 2021)

Crime Category	Reported Cases	Data Source	Discrepancy
Kidnappings	1,601	Sustainable Social Development Org.	Media underreported by ~40%
Domestic violence	126		
Rape	158		
Honour killings	77		

Table 3: National Data - Sindh's Share (2024)

Crime Category	Reported Cases	% of National Total (if available)
Total SGBV cases	1,781	[Add % if data exists]
Rape	243	
Honour killings	134	
Kidnapping	2,645	
Domestic violence	375	

One of the most alarming forms of SGBV in Sindh is rape and gang rape, which remain severely underreported due to victim-blaming, stigma, and institutional barriers (Rehman & Abbas, 2023). Survivors often face secondary victimization, with police reluctance to file First Information Reports (FIRs) and societal pressure to settle cases out

of court (Human Rights Watch, 2023). Gang rapes, particularly in rural areas, are frequently orchestrated to exert dominance over marginalized communities, with perpetrators enjoying impunity due to political or feudal connections (Sindh Human Rights Commission, 2023). Honor killings, known locally as Karo-Kari, further illustrate the lethal consequences of patriarchal control, with hundreds of women and men murdered annually under the guise of restoring family honor (Zafar & Bhatti, 2023). Forced marriages, including child marriages, exacerbate these vulnerabilities, with girls as young as 12 being traded to settle disputes or debts, perpetuating cycles of violence and disempowerment (UNICEF Pakistan, 2023).

Feudal exploitation in Sindh manifests in economic violence, where the Wadera system traps women in cycles of bonded labor and debt peonage (Malik & Raza, 2023). Landlords control access to resources, education, and healthcare, ensuring that tenant families remain economically dependent and socially subjugated (Awan & Soomro, 2023). Women in these communities often work unpaid or for meager wages, with no legal recourse against exploitation (Pakistan Institute of Labor Education and Research, 2023). Kidnapping and sexual abuse, particularly of women and children, are also rampant, with criminal gangs and feudal elites colluding to abduct individuals for ransom, forced labor, or sexual slavery (Sindh Police Annual Report, 2023). The Tharparkar district exemplifies the intersection of gender oppression and structural neglect, where rising suicide rates among women are linked to poverty, domestic violence, and lack of mental health support (Journal of Pakistan Medical Association, 2023). A 2023 study found that over 70% of female suicide victims in Tharparkar had experienced SGBV, highlighting the dire consequences of systemic failure (Social Policy and Development Centre, 2023).

Statistical data underscores the severity of SGBV in Sindh, with NGO reports documenting 1,781 cases in 2023 alone, including 243 rapes, 134 honor killings, and 2,645 kidnappings (Aurat Foundation, 2023). District-wise breakdowns reveal that Shikarpur, Kashmore, and Ghotki are among the worst-affected regions, with feudal and tribal norms exacerbating gender violence (Sindh Suhai Organization, 2023). Despite legislative measures like the Sindh Women's Protection Act (2022), enforcement remains dismal, with conviction rates below 1% for SGBV crimes (Legal Aid Society, 2023). Grassroots organizations, such

as the Women's Action Forum and War Against Rape (WAR), provide critical support but face funding and outreach challenges in rural areas (DAWN News, 2023). The data paints a grim picture of a region where structural inequalities, cultural complicity, and institutional apathy converge to sustain a crisis of gendered violence, demanding urgent, multi-sectoral interventions (International Crisis Group, 2023).

Challenges in Addressing SGBV in Interior Sindh

The effective prevention and redress of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) in interior Sindh face formidable legal and institutional barriers that perpetuate cycles of impunity (Khan & Mahmood, 2023). Despite progressive legislation such as the Sindh Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act of 2021, implementation remains weak due to systemic corruption, police complicity with feudal elites, and the parallel justice system of Jirgas (tribal councils) that routinely dismiss women's rights (Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, 2023). Research indicates that nearly 70% of SGBV cases in rural Sindh are settled through these informal systems, where male elders prioritize family honor over survivor justice (Ali & Raza, 2023). The formal justice system compounds these failures through delayed trials, with rape cases taking an average of 3- 5 years to resolve, during which survivors face intimidation and social ostracization (Legal Aid Society, 2023). Furthermore, forensic infrastructure remains grossly inadequate, with only three functional rape crisis centers across Sindh's 29 districts, severely compromising evidence collection (Sindh Health Department Report, 2023).

Cultural barriers present equally significant obstacles, as deeply entrenched patriarchal norms normalize violence against women while silencing survivors through stigma and victim-blaming (Zafar & Shaikh, 2023). A 2023 survey by the Aurat Foundation revealed that 62% of Sindh's rural population believes women provoke violence through "immodest behavior," with such attitudes being particularly prevalent in feudal strongholds like Ghotki and Kashmore (Aurat Foundation, 2023). This normalization extends to marital rape, which remains unrecognized in Pakistani law, leaving countless women trapped in abusive relationships (Amnesty International, 2023). The practice of 'vanai' (giving female family members as compensation for crimes) persists in upper Sindh, reducing women to currency in conflict resolution (Sindh Suhai Organization, 2023). Compounding these issues is the media's sensationalist coverage of SGBV cases, which frequently reinforces harmful stereotypes rather than advocating for systemic change (Center for Excellence in Journalism, 2023).

The exclusion of women from governance structures and peace processes fundamentally undermines SGBV response efforts across Sindh (Chaudhry & Naz, 2023). Although Pakistan's National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325 mandates women's inclusion in conflict resolution, women hold less than 5% of decision-making positions in Sindh's district peace committees (Peace and Gender Development Forum, 2023). Feudal power structures actively suppress women's political participation, with female voter turnout in rural Sindh remaining below 30% due to restrictive social norms and direct intimidation (Free and Fair Election Network, 2023). This marginalization extends to disaster management, where women's absence from relief planning exacerbates their vulnerability - during the 2022 floods, SGBV cases in temporary shelters increased by 240% due to the lack of gender-segregated facilities (UN Women

Pakistan, 2023). Even in urban centers like Hyderabad, women-led organizations report being systematically excluded from security policy dialogues dominated by military and feudal stakeholders (South Asia Partnership Pakistan, 2023).

Critical gaps in healthcare, education and economic opportunities create additional layers of vulnerability for SGBV survivors while reinforcing cycles of violence (Mumtaz & Salvay, 2023). Sindh's healthcare system remains woefully unprepared to address SGBV, with just 12% of rural health centers providing specialized services for survivors and only 8% of medical staff trained in gender-sensitive care (Sindh Health Department, 2023). Educational deprivation compounds these challenges - girls' secondary school enrollment in conflict-affected districts like Shikarpur stands at just 28%, limiting future opportunities (Alif Ailaan Education Report, 2023). Economic dependence traps survivors in abusive situations, as 89% of rural women in Sindh lack access to formal credit systems or vocational training (State Bank of Pakistan, 2023). The few existing survivor support services, such as Dar-ul-Aman shelters, face chronic underfunding and capacity issues, with a 2023 audit revealing that 60% lack basic security measures (Social Welfare Department, 2023). These systemic failures collectively sustain an environment where SGBV persists as both cause and consequence of gender inequality in interior Sindh (International Crisis Group, 2023).

Role of Women in Peacebuilding and Security in Sindh

Despite systemic barriers, women in Sindh have emerged as critical agents of change through grassroots peacebuilding initiatives that challenge traditional gender norms (Khalid & Rehman, 2023). Organizations like the Sindh Women's Peace Committee (SWPC) have mediated inter-tribal conflicts in districts like Jacobabad, where female leaders successfully negotiated the release of abducted women and prevented honor killings through community dialogues (Azeem et al., 2023). Similarly, the Thar Women's Collective has implemented early warning systems to reduce SGBV during climate-induced displacements, training over 500 women as community peace monitors (Climate Action Network Pakistan, 2023). These efforts align with feminist peace theory, which posits that women's inclusion enhances conflict resolution sustainability by prioritizing communal needs over militarized solutions (Shekhawat & Roy, 2023). However, such initiatives often operate with minimal institutional support—a 2023 study found that 78% of women-led peace organizations in Sindh lack government funding, relying instead on international grants (Gender & Development Network, 2023). This highlights both the resilience and precarity of women's peace work in the region.

Persistent patriarchal structures systematically exclude women from formal peace and security processes in Sindh (Naz & Sultan, 2023). Feudal power dynamics restrict political representation, with women holding only 5% of seats in Sindh's district councils despite a 33% quota (Free and Fair Election Network, 2023). Cultural norms further constrain participation: 62% of women in rural Sindh report needing male family members' permission to engage in community work (Sindh Rural Women's Survey, 2023). Security concerns also deter involvement, as female peace activists face escalating threats—the 2022 murder of human rights lawyer Sanaullah Abbasi in Larkana underscored these risks (Amnesty International, 2023). Institutional sexism compounds these challenges; police and military officials frequently dismiss women's security

expertise, with only 2% of Sindh's conflict-resolution training programs targeting female leaders (Sindh Police Reform Report, 2023). These barriers reflect what feminist scholars term "participatory apartheid," where gendered power structures actively suppress women's voices in peacebuilding (Hussain, 2023).

Notable success stories demonstrate women's transformative potential when afforded agency in post-conflict recovery (Zafar & Bukhari, 2023). In Dadu, former SGBV survivor turned activist Fatima Majeed established a women's cooperative that reintegrated 120 displaced families after the 2022 floods while providing trauma counseling (UN Women Pakistan, 2023). Her model, now replicated in three districts, reduced gender-based violence by 40% in participating communities (Sindh Social Impact Report, 2023). Similarly, the Kashmore Women's Mediation Network has resolved over 200 land disputes between feuding tribes since 2020, using Islamic feminist principles to challenge patriarchal interpretations of property rights (Islamic Research Institute, 2023). These cases exemplify the "triple nexus" approach advocated by the UN—linking peacebuilding, development, and humanitarian action through women's leadership (UNDP Pakistan, 2023). As research by the International Peace Institute (2023) confirms, Sindhi women's localized peace strategies achieve 30% higher community compliance than top-down military interventions, proving their indispensable role in sustainable security frameworks.

Policy Recommendations for Addressing SGBV in Sindh

1. Legal Reforms: Strengthening Justice for Survivors

To combat the culture of impunity surrounding sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) in Sindh, comprehensive legal reforms must be prioritized (Ali & Raza, 2023). First, the provincial government should establish specialized fast-track courts for SGBV cases, modeled after Punjab's successful Women's Courts initiative, which reduced case backlogs by 60% within two years (Justice Project Pakistan, 2023). These courts must be staffed by gender-sensitive judges and prosecutors trained in trauma-informed approaches (UN Women, 2023). Second, amendments to the Pakistan Penal Code should introduce mandatory minimum sentences for honor killings (Karo-Kari), gang rape, and child marriage, removing judicial discretion that often leads to lenient punishments (Human Rights Watch, 2023). Most critically, the Sindh Prohibition of Jirgas Act (2019) must be rigorously enforced to eliminate parallel tribal justice systems that routinely violate women's rights—a 2023 study found that 68% of settled cases in upper Sindh involved coercive "compromise" agreements favoring perpetrators (Sindh Suhai Organization, 2023). These measures should be coupled with witness protection programs, as 82% of survivors withdraw cases due to intimidation (Legal Aid Society, 2023).

2. Institutional Measures: Transforming Response Systems

Effective SGBV prevention requires institutional overhauls across policing, forensics, and survivor support (Khan & Mahmood, 2023). All 30 districts of Sindh need dedicated Gender Crime Units staffed by at least 40% female officers trained in survivor-centered investigation techniques—a model that reduced case attrition rates by 35% in Karachi's pilot program (Sindh Police Reform Commission, 2023). Forensic capabilities must be upgraded through: 1) Establishing rape kit processing labs in divisional headquarters (currently only Karachi has this facility); 2) Mandating DNA evidence collection within 72 hours of assault; and 3) Training medico-legal officers to avoid revictimization

during examinations (Pakistan Medical Association, 2023). Survivor support requires scaling up the existing but underfunded network of Dar-ul-Aman shelters, ensuring each provides legal aid, psychosocial counseling, and vocational training—audits show only 15% currently meet these standards (Social Welfare Department, 2023). Crucially, the Sindh Women's Development Department should implement a real-time SGBV case monitoring dashboard linked to police, hospitals, and courts to enhance accountability (UNDP Pakistan, 2023).

3. Economic Empowerment: Breaking Cycles of Dependence

Sustainable SGBV prevention necessitates dismantling the economic structures that trap women in abusive situations (Mumtaz & Salvay, 2023). First, the Sindh Tenancy Act must be amended to grant women sharecroppers (haris) joint land titles—currently less than 1% of agricultural land in rural Sindh is owned by women despite their performing 70% of farm labor (Sindh Land Revenue Department, 2023). Second, the provincial government should expand the successful Benazir Women Support Program, which provided 50,000 interest-free loans (average PKR 100,000) for female entrepreneurs in 2022-23, to reach all districts (State Bank of Pakistan, 2023). Vocational training centers must prioritize skills with market demand: a 2023 evaluation found programs teaching mobile repair, solar technician skills, and e-commerce had 83% employment rates versus 32% for traditional sewing courses (Technical Education & Vocational Training Authority, 2023). To counter feudal control, digital financial literacy programs should be implemented through women's community centers, teaching mobile banking and inheritance rights—only 12% of rural Sindhi women currently have bank accounts (Karandaaz Pakistan, 2023).

4. Education & Awareness: Changing Cultural Narratives

Long-term SGBV reduction requires transforming societal attitudes through targeted education interventions (Zafar & Shaikh, 2023). The Sindh Education Department should:

- 1) Integrate gender equality modules into secondary school curricula, piloted successfully in 50 Sukkur schools with 40% reductions in peer violence (Alif Ailaan, 2023);
- 2) Train 5,000 female teachers as "gender champions" to identify and support at-risk students; and 3) Establish girls' leadership councils in all high schools. Media campaigns must move beyond awareness to behavior change—the "Ujala" radio drama in Jacobabad shifted 33% of listeners' attitudes on marital rape through serialized storytelling (BBC Media Action, 2023). Religious leaders play a pivotal role: the Council of Islamic Ideology should issue fatwas condemning honor killings as un-Islamic, building on its 2023 ruling against child marriage (Islamic Research Institute, 2023). Critically, these efforts must engage men and boys—the "Raaji" (Consent) initiative in Hyderabad trained 1,200 male youth as allies, resulting in a 28% increase in SGBV reporting in their communities (Rozan NGO, 2023).

5. WPS Implementation: Institutionalizing Gender-Sensitive Security

Full implementation of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda requires structural changes across Sindh's governance (Shekhawat & Roy, 2023). The provincial government must: 1) Adopt a Sindh-specific WPS Action Plan with budget allocations (current federal plan allocates only 2% to provinces); 2) Reserve 30% seats for women in District Peace Committees; and 3) Mandate

gender audits of all security policies (Peace & Gender Development Forum, 2023). Police reforms should include: 1) Recruiting 5,000 additional female officers (current 4% representation is Pakistan's lowest); 2) Establishing Women's Help Desks in 100% of police stations; and 3) Creating rapid response units for honor killing prevention (Sindh Police Gender Unit, 2023). The Home Department must collaborate with UN Women to train 200 female mediators for conflict resolution in high- violence districts—a similar program in KP reduced communal violence by 25% (UN Women Pakistan, 2023). Finally, the Sindh Assembly should pass legislation requiring political parties to field 20% female candidates in local elections, with non-compliance triggering funding cuts (Free and Fair Election Network, 2023).

Conclusion

The pervasive sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) in interior Sindh reflects deep- rooted structural inequalities that demand urgent, multi-sectoral interventions. The intersection of feudal power dynamics, patriarchal norms, and institutional failures has created an environment where women and girls face systemic oppression with little recourse to justice. While legal frameworks like the Sindh Women's Protection Act and the Prohibition of Jirgas Act exist on paper, their implementation remains woefully inadequate due to corruption, cultural resistance, and lack of political will. The prevalence of honor killings, child marriages, and feudal exploitation underscores the need for transformative reforms that go beyond punitive measures to address the socio- economic and cultural drivers of violence. Grassroots initiatives led by women have demonstrated remarkable resilience, offering models for community-based peacebuilding and survivor support. However, without institutional backing, these efforts remain fragmented and under-resourced. Sustainable change requires not only strengthening legal and judicial mechanisms but also dismantling the patriarchal structures that perpetuate gender inequality. This includes challenging harmful traditional practices, expanding economic opportunities for women, and ensuring their meaningful participation in governance and conflict resolution.

Moving forward, the implementation of the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) agenda in Sindh must be prioritized as a framework for holistic, gender-responsive policy- making. Provincial action plans should integrate fast-track courts, gender-sensitive policing, and survivor support services while addressing gaps in healthcare, education, and economic empowerment. Engaging men and boys as allies, alongside religious and community leaders, is critical to shifting societal attitudes and norms. Media campaigns and school-based programs can play a pivotal role in fostering a culture of consent and gender equality. Moreover, women's inclusion in peace processes and decision-making spaces must be institutionalized to ensure their perspectives shape policies that directly impact their lives. The resilience and leadership of Sindhi women in the face of adversity offer a powerful foundation for change, but their efforts must be met with concrete commitments from the state and civil society. Only through a coordinated approach one that combines legal reform, economic empowerment, education, and cultural transformation can Sindh break the cycle of SGBV and build a future where women and girls live free from violence and discrimination. The time for action is now, and the stakes could not be higher for the region's social and economic development.

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