



SHIRKAT GAH

STRATEGIC PLAN

2014 – 2018

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All Pakistan You



th Convention
14th and 15th Dec. 2013



Image: All Pakistan Youth Convention, 2013

SG at a
GLANCE





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ACRONYMS

CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CNIC	Computerized National Identity Card
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DCG	District Core Group
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
HR	Human Resource
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
KMS	Knowledge Management System
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
PSL	Personal Status Laws
RM	Resource Mobilization
S&OP	Strategic and Operational Plan
SG	Shirkat Gah
SP	Strategic Plan
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
UN	United Nations
VAW	Violence Against Women
WFS	Women Friendly Spaces
WLUML	Women Living Under Muslim Laws



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

THE DEVELOPMENT OF **SHIRKAT GAH'S** FIVE YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN (SP) (2014-2018)

The development of Shirkat Gah's five year Strategic Plan (SP) 2014-2018 would not have been possible without the enthusiastic commitment of all SG teams: the specially constituted Steering and Editorial Committees played a pivotal role in ensuring a successful process; the SG Board and Collective (General Body) members provided invaluable support and guidance. The contribution of SG's support staff, especially in Lahore, working beyond the call of duty to ensure a smooth planning process, is also greatly appreciated.

We extend a special thanks to RIZ Consulting for its enthusiastic and energetic facilitation.

We would also like to acknowledge all our partners, civil society groups and alliances, and especially women activists and their male supporters for their feedback and insights into community dynamics, as well as duty bearers and policy-makers responsive to women's rights who became key allies. All of their contributions helped inform our strategic planning process.

Finally, the generous support provided by Oxfam-Novib, SG's partner for over 25 years, especially for the Strategic Planning process, is greatly appreciated. We would also like to thank the Heinrich Boell Foundation and the Royal Norwegian Embassy amongst others for their continued support and belief in Shirkat Gah.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Working since 1975 as a leading women's rights organization, Shirkat Gah (SG) continues to contribute towards sustainable change across its core focus areas that include (i) family/personal status law matters (ii) sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) (iii) a gendered perspective in sustainable development, green economics and globalization, and new areas of women's leadership and peace-building.



This Strategy Planning process has been an evolving one for Shirkat Gah. Although significant thought processes informed the previous Strategic Plan (SP) (2011-2015), a need was identified to update the document in light of the changing socio-political environment across Pakistan as well as donor environment. This SP (2014-2018) builds upon the foundation already laid in the previous plan. The conceptualization of this new SP started with review meetings in early 2013 and concluded with consultative and participatory workshops held with core SG staff, Board and Collective members in Lahore and Karachi in October.



To realistically and practically inform the new SP, Shirkat Gah retrospectively reviewed its past as well as existing programs, strategies and interventions. To improve good governance and provide women with greater access to their rights, SG developed District Core Groups (DCG) to bring Civil





Society Organizations (CSOs), duty bearers and service providers together. Similarly, SG launched Women Friendly Spaces (WFS) in a bid to provide women safe public spaces through which they can be empowered to return to their lives after suffering disasters as well as abuse. To strengthen women as rights holders, SG focused on building leadership across its different activities; all programmes focused on youth, who remain key drivers for future change. The importance of peace and security was realized as a key factor to sustaining and furthering women empowerment. SG has expanded its work in this area to include needs assessments in conflict-ridden areas, building and bringing together multi-stakeholders' networks comprised of human rights defenders, women, duty bearers and media.

SG's current governance structure supports this SP in terms of both capacity as well as commitment. The Collective and Board members not only endorsed the SP, but showed their willingness and support for effectively implementing it over the next five years. To implement this SP, SG will engage closely with key stakeholders including state and non-state actors, women and allies in communities and through bilateral and multi-lateral linkages.

To make more informed and result-oriented future decisions, four thematic areas for future strategic directions have been identified that not only complement each other, but also work in concert with the organization's overall vision, mission and core values. These include:

- 1. Bodily Rights;**
- 2. Voice;**
- 3. Environmental Context;**
- 4. Organizational Evolution.**

Through this Strategic Plan, SG seeks to broadly:

- Work towards a revised organizational structure that reflects SG's vision, mission and core values;
- Increase internalization of feminist perspectives within SG staff;
- Adopt a more in-depth, concentrated and holistic approach in its initiatives;
- Increase linkages with regional and international actors and hold Government accountable on its national and international commitments;
- Strengthen women to claim their rights / entitlements through countering extremism and patriarchy;
- Engage more men and youth to raise awareness and promote women empowerment;
- Undertake knowledge transference and promote rights-seeking behavior around bodily rights;
- Use media (including social media) to further and promote women's voices and tackle negative mindsets and extremism;
- Lobby policy makers/duty bearers to advocate and implement laws and policies through evidence based research;
- Reinforce women's voices by building alliances amongst women working in communities and those engaged in public and political arenas and deepening the understanding of women's rights;
- Facilitate evidence based advocacy efforts from local to global through the use of information, education and communication (IEC) tools to promote women's voices;
- Build capacities of duty bearers on gender and human rights.

SHIRKAT GAH INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING



- Integrated programme with effective ME, knowledge management system
- Revised organisational structure with effective communication & course correction
- Strengthen conceptual understanding & skills

SHIRKAT GAH INTRODUCTION

Initiated as a small voluntary women's collective in Pakistan in 1975, Shirkat Gah (SG) has evolved into a leading women's rights organization that operates out of offices in Lahore, Karachi and Peshawar including its own facility in Lahore, and six new field stations across all four provinces.

SG's uniqueness lies in its cyclical processes to leverage sustainable change. Thinking globally while acting locally, we bring local knowledge to global processes. The lessons of our grounded work enrich interventions at national, regional and global levels; the emerging challenges, concepts, and processes of regional and international arenas are shared with and bolster grassroots work in Pakistan. Community work is anchored in empirical research and conceptual understanding; in turn, grounded experience helps introduce new dimensions to existing discourses and

practices. Strong and sustainable linkages with social movements, media and other actors ensure messages reach a wider audience and help promote an enabling environment for raising women's rights and voices.

SG strengthens women as rights-holders building women's capacity to fully exercise rights, make informed choices and be included in decision-making processes to redefine the existing parameters of society. We generate new knowledge: internationally renowned quality research, carried out locally, nationally and internationally in collaboration with academic institutions, civil society institutions as well as other actors, is shared with a wide range of audiences. We promote a rights-based approach to all our work, undertake evidence-based advocacy, engage in and strengthen a variety of society alliances, partnerships and networks; and are committed to continuous institutional development.

Adopting an integrated approach to understanding gender issues, in the past SG's core focus areas have been:

- i Family/personal status law matters
- ii Sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR),
- iii A gendered perspective in sustainable development, green economics and globalization.



a. Community Change

Considering community-based partners and active citizens to be the lynchpin of sustainable change and accountability at the grassroots, Shirkat Gah works in 44 districts across Pakistan's four provinces. A cascading capacity building model includes knowledge transference, enhancing technical skills, deepening conceptual understanding and critical thinking, mentoring and back-stopping to take action, and training of trainers for further transference. Simultaneously, from the micro (household) to the meso (district) level, SG engages local duty-bearers, community decision-makers, opinion setters and service delivery institutions to bolster an environment conducive for women to claim rights and to facilitate accountability.

b. Policy-Setting at the Provincial and National Levels

SG acts in concert with other Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) as key allies

championing gender equality and social justice. Nationally, SG has contributed significantly to the overall policy and legal framework related to women and works with elected representatives and government functionaries, especially with the ministries and departments of Human Rights, Women Development, Social Welfare, Health, Population Welfare, and key national institutions such as the National Commission on the Status of Women.

c. Regional and International Macro Levels

Recognizing that human rights are universal, indivisible and interdependent, SG believes the local must feed into the global and vice-versa. SG uses agenda-setting opportunities to engage with international development organizations and agencies both for setting norms and standards as well as ensuring accountability. SG's intervention in these arenas is facilitated by its consultative status in the UN Economic and Social Council

(ECOSOC). SG has fully engaged with and led processes concerning obligations and reporting under, in particular, the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing Platform for Action, the International Conference on Population and Development, particular goals of the Millennium Development Goals and Universal Periodic Review.

Nationally and internationally, SG partners with academia and research institutions as well as civil society groups. SG is represented in many international bodies e.g. IUCN (World Conservation Union), functions as the Asia Region Coordination Office for the international solidarity network, Women Living under Muslim Laws (WLUML), and sits on the steering committees of several initiatives to further gender equality.

d. Environment, Climate Change, Livelihood and Land

SG continues to focus on generating knowledge around the gender dimensions of environment such as the gendered impact of climate change in different eco-zones. SG integrates an environmentally friendly gendered perspective across its projects with specific activities designed to promote appropriate practices.

In the area of land and livelihood, SG seeks to understand and respond to women's practical needs, build environmental consciousness for self-initiated actions, and use opportunities to reduce economic vulnerabilities.

e. Governance Structure

In essence, Shirkat Gah comprises of two governing bodies; the General Body or Collective and the Board. The former holds overall responsibility for designing and approving SG's policies, budgets and approving Yearly Plans of Action (YPO's) while the latter is tasked with overseeing and supervising tasks and responsibilities including monitoring and evaluating programme activities among other things.

In 1981, SG launched Women' Action Forum (Khawateen Mahaz-e-Amal) as a platform of individuals and organisations for women's rights and until 1984, SG Collective members were absorbed in establishing WAF. During the period 1985-86, the Collective made several key decisions that included:

- Establishing SG as a full time institution so as to be a more effective resource centre; two members gave up other work to do so;
- Changing society required working with men as well as women.

Starting in 1986, SG became the Asia Coordination office of the international solidarity network, Women Living Under Muslim Laws (WLUML). An extensive action-research on the interface of women, law and customs under the aegis of WLUML's Women and Law in the Muslim World programme galvanized SG's outreach strategy.

A new phase started with the key decision to run an expanded and more systematic outreach programme. Three of the Collective members running projects became



Coordinators for the two offices. SG grew exponentially from 1995-2005; adding staff, new projects, and a new office in Peshawar.

In 2005, SG realized that the organization required restructuring. To aid this process, a Transition Team was established and provided its recommendations shortly thereafter. These included (a) a single executive authority heading Shirkat Gah in the form of a Chief Coordinator (b) the Collective to be split into (i) a Governing Board comprising 5-7 members mandated to act as a bridge between the Chief Coordinator and (ii) the rest of the Collective to form a General Body.

In December 2007, a newly established Board was formed. Board Sub-committees were discussed as stipulated in SG Articles of Association in particular Article 16(2) which provides for coopted members and for the Board to allocate a budget for the use of the sub-committees which would report on the usage of any such funds as well as activities on a quarterly basis to the Board. A Programme Oversight and Human Resource

Committee; Finance and Audit Committee were discussed on several occasions amongst the Board and Collective¹ to assume responsibilities for functions being carried out by single Board members². The terms of reference of such committees are still being formulated.

In January 2013, Khawar Mumtaz relinquished her role as SG CEO to assume her responsibilities as the new Chair of the NCSW, and at the request of the Collective, Farida Shaheed assumed responsibility as Executive Director.

f. Stakeholder Analysis

For Shirkat Gah, stakeholders are all those with whom we engage at different levels. For us, stakeholders can broadly be categorized as:

1. State;
2. Non-state;
3. Women and allies in communities;
4. Transnational, regional and international linkages.

¹ Minutes of the Board, 14 Jan 2012, Minutes of the Collective.

² Minutes Of Shirkat Gah Board Meeting – 14 January 2012, 19 May 2012.

BUILDING UPON LESSONS LEARNT

SG interventions are based on a continuous learning process. Informing future strategic directions are lessons learnt over the course of the past three years to strengthen and expand effectiveness. Combined with changes in the external environment and evolving work, the lessons are significant enough to warrant a review of the existing Strategic Plan 2011-2015 to ensure alignment with existing strategies and interventions as well as future needs.

Narrowing the Gap between State & Citizens

Research and community work both indicate that the poor interaction between the State and its citizens, especially in the case of women where interaction is virtually non-existent³, is a grave impediment to women claiming rights as well as to good governance. Women's lack of knowledge concerning legal entitlements and existing services coupled with the paucity of non-family linkages also constitutes a major obstacle in claiming their rights.

In 2011, SG replaced its past practice of working with rights holders and duty bearers in parallel streams with District Core Groups (DCG) that bring together local CSOs, duty bearers and service



providers in one forum. Directly linking rights-holders and civil society activists with both State officials and selected service providers, DCGs have significantly increased women's access to rights and the responsiveness of duty-bearers. The composition of each DCG is tailored to cater to the issues prioritized by local activists, but all DCGs include media representatives, lawyers, representatives of religious minorities, youth and government duty bearers. Examples of improved governance include tens of thousands of citizens obtaining computerized identity cards (CNIC); facilitated access to services and rights; increased registrations of births, marriages and deaths, including through fees exemptions, amended rules and ending malpractices; enhanced voter registration and participation. Numerous individual cases of underage illegal marriages have been prevented; girls' schools made functional and/or upgraded; women enabled to access rights under family law; survivors of violence linked to appropriate resources/services.



A Place of Her Own – Safe Public Discursive Spaces for Women

In the wake of the 2005 earthquake, SG undertook humanitarian relief efforts in selected areas and partnered with CSOs to initiate spaces for women in response to an identified felt-need.

In 2011, SG launched its own Women Friendly Spaces (WFS), initially focusing on reconstruction, rehabilitation, and addressing increased gender-based violence in flood affected areas⁴ that included two WFS in post-conflict areas. These six

(6) WFS have developed into multi-purpose centres, functioning as the 'safe public discursive spaces' that have proved pivotal for women's empowerment regardless of the immediate issue addressed⁵.

Properly facilitated, such spaces enable women to transcend the 'inevitability of fate', the 'bad luck' of an abusive husband or loss of a child, to comprehend the patterns of discrimination and dis-balance of power relations. They put the power back into empowerment.



Leadership and Self-Propelled Actions

Another learning emerging from both practical experience and research is that empowerment means being able to think for oneself; to assess the actors and factors that obstruct access to rights and self-realization; to strategize for and act collectively for change. This requires identifying and nurturing women leaders and multiplying existing champions and active citizens amongst both women and men⁶, linking them with service providers and duty bearers, but equally with existing social change movements, promoting women's voice and facilitating actions. SG interventions in this regard have led to an amazing number of self-propelled and often self-financed activities, and nascent movements.

This new approach necessitates a shift in capacity building from facilitating women around specific issues to enhancing critical thinking (to understand their local situations, actors and factors that obstruct and promote

their rights) and citizen subjectivity (being rights-holders). Only when women truly believe they have the right to be rights-claimants, can they start holding the state accountable. For this they need to be networked amongst themselves, have the support of male allies, and benefit from linkages with duty-bearers and service providers.

In this regard, all SG programmes have increased their focus on youth as the key for the future, especially in Pakistan where an estimated 103 million Pakistanis, or 63% of the population, fall under the age of 25 years⁷. Activities have been purposefully enhanced with particularly vulnerable groups such as religious minorities and poor rural women.



Peace Conflict and Security

In view of the deteriorating security environment across Pakistan, SG has developed a new focus on peace. It has carried out basic assessments and research to identify the needs of women in conflict/post-conflict situations⁸, built its own capacity in this area and shared knowledge as well as skills with women and key allies in the field. Activities range from understanding and sharing the international policy framework to helping the healing processes on the ground; from building multi-stakeholder networks,

bringing together human rights defenders, including women, human rights organizations, media representatives and duty-bearers, to catalyzing localized women's peace groups throughout the country. This continues to be an area requiring urgent attention.

³ Farida Shaheed, *Imagined Citizenship: Women State & Politics in Pakistan* (2002). See also Farida Shaheed, "Citizenship and the Nuanced Belonging of Women" (2007) pp. 23-38.

⁴ Gulnar Tabassum, *The Swollen Rivers* [Documentary] and *Changing Tides* [Documentary] (2011); Shirkat Gah, *Keeping Adrift* (2011); Khawar Mumtaz, *Emergencies as opportunities for change?* (2011).

⁵ Southeast Asia Research Centre & Shirkat Gah, *Women's Empowerment in Muslim Contexts: gender, poverty and democratization from the inside out. Final Report. 1st July 2006 – 30 June 2010.*

⁶ This includes the following projects nested in WESJP II: (i) *Achieving MDG5 – Continuing Momentum, Building Champions* (supported by the David & Lucile Packard Foundation) (ii) *Women's Empowerment and Leadership Development for Democratization* (involving over 15 countries), led by SG in partnership with Women Living Under Muslim Laws (WLUML) and the Institute for Women's Empowerment (IWE), Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs: *Funding Leadership and Opportunities for Women (FLOW)*; (iii) *Active Citizens' Programme*, (British Council Pakistan).

⁷ www.un.org/youth.

⁸ Farida Shaheed, *Gender, Religion and the Quest for Justice in Pakistan* (2009).

Prior to developing the Strategic Plan, SG staff engaged in multiple review exercises starting in January 2013. A joint review exercise was carried out in April 2013 to identify synergies between projects and possible new directions⁹. Between July and August, staff from the 3 offices and from the WFS collectively reviewed achievements, gaps, and persisting challenges¹⁰. The drafting of the Strategic Plan comprised of two main phases:

A. Phase I

A five-day Strategic Planning workshop was held in Lahore to define the contours of a five year Strategy Plan to inform the organization's future direction and course of action. This workshop introduced elements of Strategic and Operational Planning (S&OP) to create an appreciation of the process and intended outcomes among the staff members.

Through a participatory and inclusive approach aimed at building ownership of an SP document, participants revisited and further refined Shirkat Gah's existing vision and mission statements along with organizational core values. More specifically, working in thematic groups, participants developed and agreed on the strategic directions, finalized Strategic Planning templates to determine milestones and, based on those milestones, developed Operational Planning (OP) templates to identify priority actions over the course of five years.

B. Phase II

As part of this phase, a two-day Strategic Planning workshop was held in Karachi comprising of Board and Collective members of Shirkat Gah as well as a cross-section of participants from the previous workshop. The workshop objective was to validate the results elicited during the Lahore workshop and to work towards finalizing a consolidated 'Strategic Plan' document.

Additionally, the workshop provided an opportunity to undertake an organizational assessment by reviewing successes, challenges and opportunities. Lastly, the next steps in terms of SP design and outreach (communications) were also discussed and agreed.

⁹ Ayesha Aziz, Strategic Directions and Indicators for Shirkat Gah (April 2013).

¹⁰ Reports of Shirkat Gah Mid-year Review meetings: WFS 17-18 July 2013, Lahore 23-24 July 2013; Karachi and Peshawar 5-6 August, 2013.

VISION MISSION & CORE ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES



VISION¹¹

A just, vibrant and democratic society in which women are fully empowered; human rights and dignity are enjoyed by all equally without discrimination, where peace prevails and resources and opportunities are ensured on a sustainable and equitable basis

MISSION¹²

We strive to:

- Strengthen women as rights-holders to claim their rights and redefine existing parameters of State and society
- Advocate and mobilize for gender equality and social justice, promoting equitable policies and practices from the local to the global and back again;

- Hold the State accountable for equal rights, security, and dignity of all and the sustainable and equitable use of resources;
- Promote a culture of peace, democracy and pluralism and resist the use of culture and religion by State and non-State actors to deny women's rights;
- Flourish as an inclusive, vibrant, proactive feminist organization.

CORE VALUES

Feminist perspective: Rejecting patriarchy and all its hierarchies in theory and practice; challenging all forms of injustice, promoting gender equality in the political, economic, social and cultural spheres.

Participatory democratic approach: Creating spaces for and listening to diverse voices so as to promote equality and opportunities for all; and ensuring principles of equality and respect guide all SG activities.

Secularism: Promoting the separation of religion from the affairs of the State

which must ensure the equality of all citizens irrespective of religious affiliations and the freedom to profess, practice and propagate their religion fully¹³.

Activism: Upholding SG's commitment to its vision and mission in public and private spheres including beyond SG specific duties/responsibilities.

Environment-friendly: Promoting environment-friendly practices and policies for the sustainable use of natural resources from a gendered perspective, especially with regards to livelihood options of the marginalized.

Professionalism: Effectively using knowledge and skills while maintaining the highest ethical standards.

Continuous learning: Actively seeking new knowledge as well as skills that strengthen SG's ability to analyse and strategize for institutional responsiveness to changing circumstances.

¹¹ A vision statement outlines what the organization wants to be and concentrates on the future. It is a source of inspiration and provides clear decision-making criteria.

¹² A mission statement tells you the fundamental purpose of the organization. It concentrates on the present and defines the customer and the critical processes. It informs you of the desired level of performance.

¹³ For freely practicing religion see the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, preamble and article 2 A.

STRATEGIC CHOICES

Based on deliberations during Phases I and II and on elements of the previous Strategic Plan (2011-2015), Shirkat Gah identified four thematic areas as drivers for future strategic direction. Each thematic area is supported by a Strategic Planning template that is guided by a 'strategic objective'¹⁴. Each template includes 'milestones' and 'timelines' to mark progress of the thematic areas over the course of five years.

1. **Bodily Rights**¹⁵;
2. **Voice**;
3. **Environmental Context**;
4. **Organizational Evolution**.

SG's strategic approach with respect to the environmental context, bodily rights and voice, is to (i) strengthen women as rights' holders, (ii) reorient their immediate community actors to be more supportive and responsive, and (iii) promote a conducive policy framework.

Thematic Area 1: Bodily Rights

SG's current work in this area has been directed towards sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), the continuum of violence against women (VAW) to peace and family/personal status laws¹⁶. It is time to integrate this work into a single three-pronged strategy.

Evidence collected by SG indicates that gross violations of a woman's bodily rights occur owing to a patriarchal mindset, cultural beliefs, religious extremism, the lack of quality services and accountability mechanism, the non-implementation of laws and policies that safeguard these rights and the deteriorating



security environment¹⁷. Unfortunately, many women internalize the justifications for the violation of their bodily rights and the culture of prohibitions, and therefore fail to claim their rights. This calls for actions that increase awareness of bodily rights, starting with the recognition of these rights and their interconnection, existing services and legal entitlements.

In all SG outreach communities, women consistently express a desire for knowledge about their rights and how to access these; they also act to safeguard their own rights and those of others. Consequently, knowledge transference must be accompanied by interventions that facilitate women to a) claim their bodily rights, b) seek legal recourse in cases of violation through effective linkages and referral pathways, and c) hold their local duty bearers and service providers accountable (community accountability models) when there is no access to quality services, or when policies and laws are not implemented.

For a woman to secure her bodily rights, her immediate environment must be enabling. This requires reorienting her community, local

duty bearers, service providers and society as a whole. Interventions must increase the sensitization level and responsiveness of duty bearers and service providers and ensure effective linkages with community based organizations.

The state must ensure that women-supportive laws and policies are formulated and implemented effectively so that women can fearlessly claim their bodily rights. This requires effective advocacy with policy makers, using international forums to set the agenda and monitor the State's compliance with international commitments related to bodily rights, and ensure that women are informed of international norms and standards.

SG will engage with men including youth to create acceptance of women's bodily rights and use diverse media to effectively promote women's bodily rights and counter regressive viewpoints as well as negative portrayals of women. Evidence-based research will inform SG's advocacy with policy makers for effective promotion and implementation of women supportive laws and policies in accord with international obligations.



Strategic Direction

Women enabled to recognize, understand and claim their bodily rights as well as resist all discriminatory practices in a conducive environment.

¹⁴ Strategic objectives provide a set of priority focus areas that determine programmatic and organizational direction for a stated number of years.

¹⁵ Bodily Rights include three focus areas (a) Sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR); (b) VAW; (c) Personal Status Law (PSL).

¹⁶ Shirkat Gah, Violence is not our Culture (2012); ARROW, Rights Based Continuum of Quality Care for Women's Reproductive Health in South Asia (2013).

¹⁷ Shirkat Gah, Rising to the Challenge (2012); Shirkat Gah research, The Puppet and the Puppeteers (2012).

Strategic Objective

To build and enhance women’s conceptual understanding of and ability to exercise their rights in the areas of SRHR, VAW and Personal Status Law (PSL) and promote a conducive environment.

MILESTONES	PRIORITY ACTIONS	By When?				
		Short Term	Medium Term		Long Term	
		0-1 Year	1-2 Years	2-3 Years	3-4 Years	4-5 Years
1. Strengthened women claiming their bodily rights, accessing relevant services and legal measures, and holding duty bearers/ service providers accountable.	1.1 Facilitating women to claim their bodily rights, access relevant services and seek legal recourse.	✓	✓		✓	✓
	1.2 Developing/ mentoring champions to initiate collective actions promoting women’s bodily rights and holding local duty bearers and service providers accountable.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2. Gender sensitized duty bearers providing effective services to women.	2.1 Promoting a holistic approach to SRHR, VAW & PSL and building capacity of duty bearers for gender sensitive services.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	2.2 Creating effective linkages between citizens and duty bearers as well as elected representatives.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3. Improved State responsiveness on SRHR, VAW & PSL issues from local to global and back.	3.1 Advocating for the effective promotion and implementation of women supportive laws and policies related to SRHR, VAW & PSL in Pakistan.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	3.2 Using international forums ¹⁸ to set the agenda around SRHR, VAW & PSL issues and bringing back international thinking to the local.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Thematic Area 2: Voice

Voice, as an exercise of agency, is essential for defining, seeking and claiming democratic rights as well as demanding social justice. Not only is the freedom of expression, thought and conscience a right in its own, voice facilitates all rights: it is vital in articulating and securing rights as well as retaining rights in the face of threats.

At the grassroots, SG has been identifying, nurturing, building capacities and facilitating women to raise their voice and to act collectively for their rights throughout Pakistan, as well as regionally and internationally. In Pakistan, these women – active citizens, champions and leaders – are currently scattered across the country in different SG outreach communities where they have proven to be effective agents of change. This group of active but unconnected women presents an important opportunity to ensure women's influence transcends their own localities.

Connecting women's dispersed voices in districts, provinces and nationally would create a common platform from which women's amplified collective voices can be heard within their own localities and across all levels of policymaking. Combined with strengthened capacity to analyze their context and act collectively, the networking opportunities of mutual learning will bolster women's ability to hold local duty bearers accountable. Eventually, linkages can contribute to building a movement advocating for women's rights on a sustainable basis using public spaces and political processes. In the short term, such voice amplification is

only possible with the support of male allies in the community.

In the broader political and public arenas too, women's voices need strengthening and SG has consistently acted in conjunction with women activists and civil society alliances to advocate for gender equitable, pluralistic societies from the local to the global. Strategic spaces and opportunities arising at national and international forums will be identified so as to insert as well as magnify women's voices.

The gap between elected representatives and constituents needs to be bridged, so that women's concerns and needs can be taken forward at policymaking levels, and elected representatives made accountable to their constituents. Women's voice needs to be reinforced by alliance building amongst women working in the community and those engaged in the public and political arenas, in particular elected representatives, and by deepening the understanding of women's rights, gendered relations of power and the state-citizen relationship amongst politically engaged people.

SG will undertake, as well as build capacity for and facilitate, evidence based advocacy from the local to the global using information, education and communication (IEC) tools to promote women's voices demanding gender equitable, pluralistic societies.

Strategic Direction

Women enabled to exercise individual and collective agency to claim their democratic rights and demand social justice.

¹⁸ Regional and international events relating to e.g. the Commission on Population Development, Asia Pacific Conference on Reproductive and Sexual Health and Rights, Post 2015 development framework, Universal Periodic Review, Commission on the Status of Women, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) Review.

Strategic Objective

To strengthen women to raise their individual and collective voices against patriarchy and other obstructive factors, claim their democratic rights and demand social justice from the local to the global.

MILESTONES	PRIORITY ACTIONS	By When?				
		Short Term	Medium Term		Long Term	
		0-1 Year	1-2 Years	2-3 Years	3-4 Years	4-5 Years
1. Strengthened individual and collective female voices resisting patriarchy and other obstructive factors to claim rights/entitlements, hold duty bearers accountable and demand social justice.	1.1 Facilitating women to claim their democratic rights, promoting rights seeking behaviour and enhancing resistance to patriarchy and other obstructive factors.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	1.2 Developing and facilitating women leaders/champions to hold local duty bearers accountable and to advocate, mobilize and negotiate for gender just societies.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2. Women's voices reinforced by civil society alliances and networks with State representatives advocating gender equitable, pluralistic societies from the local to the global.	2.1 Building capacity of civil society actors and State representatives to support women's voices in public spaces and political processes.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	2.2 Promoting women's voices in political and public arenas through IEC and strengthening linkages with national and international forums and institutions.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Thematic Area 3: Environmental Context

An enabling policy framework and social environment is necessary for women to fully exercise their rights. In Pakistan, patriarchal norms relegate women to and isolate them within the private domestic sphere, obstructing their freedoms of self-expression, mobility and association, rights to education, economic independence and participation in public and political processes. This is compounded by growing religiosity and religious extremism that threaten women's rights and their security¹⁹. Defying obstacles, women adopt strategies to exercise their rights; however, those raising voices for social justice and gender equality, including SG staff and its partners, are at risk²⁰.

Patriarchy and the alarming growth of religious actors need to be countered from the local to the global. The underlying reasons, streams, modalities and impact on women, and what enables religious extremists to get a strong foothold in communities must be understood and the local forms of resistance documented²¹. New knowledge generated will provide a solid basis for building an effective multimedia counter-discourse strategy, formulating models of resistance, and promoting women's rights and peace.

SG will also mobilize youth and male supporters to promote women's empowerment and a culture of peace, democracy, and pluralism. Engaging men and sharpening understanding of masculinities will help to counter patriarchal mindsets at the community level.

SG's fieldwork indicates that vulnerability to religious extremism is linked with food insecurity and poverty as well as poor State educational and justice systems²². There is a need to explore how to bolster resistance in terms of food security and poverty, and overcome poor education and the lack of government services by addressing women's practical needs to safeguard against growing religiosity and religious extremism.

Upholding women's rights and ensuring an enabling environment is the primary responsibility of the State. Civil society actors help to hold the State accountable for its national and international obligations/commitments on women's human rights and the environment, and strive to establish effective policy frameworks from the local to the global. SG will link with, and act in concert with actors at the regional and international levels to promote accountability as well as in terms of setting agendas and establishing norms and standards.

Strategic Direction

A culture of peace, democracy, pluralism and sustainable development premised on human rights promoted, and the values of women's equality and empowerment upheld.

¹⁹ Gulnar Tabbasum, *All Those Who Have Broken My Heart* [Documentary] (2012).

Strategic Objective

To promote a conducive socio-cultural, political, economic and natural environment to achieve women's empowerment, peace and social justice.

MILESTONES	PRIORITY ACTIONS	By When?				
		Short Term	Medium Term		Long Term	
		0-1 Year	1-2 Years	2-3 Years	3-4 Years	4-5 Years
1. Strengthened civil society, countering the discourse of religious extremism, growing religiosity and patriarchal forces from local to global.	1.1 Developing and implementing an effective evidence-based multimedia counter discourse strategy on religious extremism that promotes women's rights.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	1.2 Building community capacity to counter religious extremism and patriarchal forces including through sharpened understanding of masculinities and enhanced communication capacity.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	1.3 Identifying and further developing local models resisting patriarchy, extremism and growing religiosity, and building peace.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2. Improved State responsiveness to its national and international commitments on women's human rights and the environment.	2.1 Holding the government accountable on its commitments to women's human rights as well as minorities and other marginalized groups.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	2.2 Creating a conducive policy framework by identifying gaps, promoting reforms and effective implementation for (a) women's rights and (b) sustainable use of natural resources from a gendered perspective from the local to the global.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

3. Enhanced understanding of the gender-specific impact of environmental degradation and greater resilience to food insecurity in Pakistan.	3.1 Documenting and sharing gender-specific impact on environmental degradation and climate change with local to national policy makers/implementers.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	3.2 Enhancing conceptual understanding about sustainable food production systems and conservation, and promoting environment friendly practices in communities especially amongst women.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

²⁰ Shirkat Gah, *Obstructing Progress: Growing Talibanisation & Poor Governance in Pakistan* (2013); *Protection Of Human Rights Defenders/ Journalists In Pakistan - Shirkat Gah Narrative Report* (June 2013).

²¹ Farida Shaheed, *Breaching gender frontiers: boon or bane? Gendered citizenship in Pakistan (on the Swat conflict)* (in press, 2013). See also F. Shaheed, 2009.

²² Reports of Shirkat Gah Mid-year Strategic Review Meetings: (i) WFS, Lahore 17-18 July, 2013 (ii) Lahore Office, 23-24 July 2013; (iii) Karachi & Peshawar offices, 5-6 August 2013.

Thematic Area 4: Organizational Evolution

Effective programme delivery requires an effective organizational base. During the 2004-2009 Strategic Plan, SG set out a significant re-visioning of direction accompanied by an organizational change process involving leadership transition for future sustainability through structural change, and a new integrated programming approach to increase efficiency²³. Considerable changes were instituted but the overall goal was only partially achieved. The Strategic Plan 2011-15 reiterated the need to strengthen internal systems and develop systematic policies. Efforts to ensure an integrated programme have been impeded by the change in donor environment; project funding with specific requirements and parameters inadvertently led to initiatives becoming fragmented. Resource constraints impeded a systematic review and up-gradation of systems.

Today, SG sees an urgent need to realign its organizational structure with its vision, mission and core values, to ensure that it remains “an inclusive, vibrant, feminist, learning organization actively promoting social justice and a secular order”. This requires that SG’s core values be reflected in all its structures, policies and procedures as well as its initiatives and engagements. It is essential that all staff understands SG’s philosophy and key concepts, endorses its approach and fully owns SG’s vision, mission and values. A sufficiently robust mechanism needs to be put into place to promote a systematic and system-wide internalization of SG’s feminist perspective and core values, such as secularism, within staff.

A revitalized learning culture requires keeping abreast of new developments in SG’s priority areas and the general socio-political context, in particular the impact of devolution, as well as critical thinking. The failure to reward critical thinking in the overall environment presents a major challenge. SG must strive to be the change it seeks in a wider societal context. A systematic transfer of knowledge and a knowledge management system can prove invaluable in this context²⁴.

A structured program to strengthen conceptual understanding/learning for staff must be accompanied by aligned organizational evolution, in particular effective internal as well as external communication strategies/policies, and human resource management.

SG’s organizational evolution requires the development of an integrated program with robust Monitoring & Evaluation (ME) systems. Integrated planning will help overcome the fragmentation of departmental and donor-specific work that impedes collective thinking and system-wide team building. Lastly, a comprehensive resource mobilization strategy (human and financial) is required to ensure security and smooth implementation of systems while making efficient use of resources.

Strategic Direction: An inclusive, vibrant, feminist learning organization promoting social justice and a secular order.

²³ Shirkat Gah-Women’s Resource Centre, Strategic Plan 2011-15, p.4.

Strategic Objective

To mainstream a pro-active feminist, learning and listening culture within staff, supported by appropriate structures, systems and procedures.

MILESTONES	PRIORITY ACTIONS	By When?				
		Short Term	Medium Term		Long Term	
		0-1 Year	1-2 Years	2-3 Years	3-4 Years	4-5 Years
1. An integrated program with effective ME feedback loops, addressing SG priority areas [bodily rights, women's voices and a conducive environment] developed and implemented.	1.1 Developing a customized network-based program management software system.	✓				
	1.2 Developing an ME Strategy and establishing an ME unit.	✓				
	1.3 Developing an electronic knowledge management system (KMS).		✓			
2. A revised organizational structure aligned with SG's vision, mission, and core values with effective communication and course correction mechanisms.	2.1 Formulating an organizational development plan.	✓				
	2.2 Developing and operationalizing an effective internal and external communication strategy.	✓	✓		✓	
	2.3 Developing a Resource mobilization (RM) strategy and establishing a support team.	✓	✓	✓		
	2.4 Reviewing and revising the current policies.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3. Strengthened conceptual understanding and skills of SG staff.	3.1 Developing and implementing a structured program for conceptual understanding and skills for all SG staff.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

²⁴ Shirkat Gah, Organizational Effectiveness Initiative, Final Report 2012.

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ANNEXURES

ANNEXURE 1: LIST OF TERMINOLOGIES

Accountability	<p>a) Generally: the acknowledgement and assumption of the responsibility for the management, governance and implementation of actions, decisions and policies including the obligation to be answerable for, and reportable on the resulting consequences while remaining within the scope of the role, capacity or position.</p> <p>b) With respect to government: promoting the acknowledgement and assumption of responsibility by government officials, from local to national level, for the administration, governance and implementation of all existing laws, policies and international commitments/obligations while endeavouring to ensure that government institutions deliver services efficiently and effectively within the scope of their specific role, capacity and position.</p>
Cyclical Processes	<p>Working from the local to the global to ensure that international agenda-setting is informed by grassroots women's voices/concerns and bringing back regional/international thinking to the local to ensure women are informed of the discussions as well as international norms and standards in a continuous cycle of work.</p> <p>Community and advocacy work highlight issues needing to be better understood/probed; research undertaken to understand the issues; findings shared with communities as well as a more general audience and underpin advocacy work in a continuous learning-action-learning cycle.</p>
Democratic Rights	Democratic rights include freedom of expression, mobility, association and right to participation in political processes and public decision-making.
District Core Groups	District Core Groups (DCGs) are forums established by SG in selected districts, comprising of SG core partner organizations and key community stakeholders, including key district duty-bearers. The DCGs function as district level advocacy networks and a means for taking collective action to support women's rights, including in cases of gender-based violence and access to services; they also promote accountability of government functionaries.
Enabling Environment	A socio-cultural political, economic and natural environment that contributes effectively to women's empowerment, peace and social justice.
Environment Friendly Gendered Perspective	<p>Environment-friendly: Policies and practices that ensure the sustainable uses of natural resources and protect against environmental degradation.</p> <p>Gendered perspective on environment-friendliness: Ensuring that policies and practices safeguarding against environmental degradation and alleviating climate change impact are informed by the differentiated repercussions of environmental degradation and climate change on women in terms of (i) women's reproductive health (e.g. pesticides and chemical fertilizers) and (ii) the gender-specific tasks women are responsible for in their household and physical context (e.g. household water collection).</p> <p>Environment Friendly Gendered Perspective: A strategy where the concerns and experiences of women as well as those of men are an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all environment related matters so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal of achieving gender equality demands assessing the often differentiated implications of environmental actions, in all areas and at all levels, on women and men.</p>
Information, Education and Communication (IEC)	Information, education and communication (IEC) aims to share information, increase awareness, and change attitudes. IEC means sharing information and ideas that are culturally sensitive, using diverse channels and methods (these include posters, flyers, booklets, radio broadcasts and TV spots, documentaries, social media etc.)
Integrated Approach	Understanding the full compendium of factors that impact women's lives, while designing specific interventions in particular life domains.
Integrated Programming	Integrating planning of different SG areas of interventions (e.g. bodily rights, voice and environment) so as to maximize synergies enabling impact beyond the focused interventions and actions, and to avoid fragmentation resulting from project-specific funding support; ensuring that the governance structure reflects and supports an integrated learning process in the work and facilitates a continuous and systematic review of lessons learnt for course correction.



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