

**Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians Steering Committee Meeting,
[Region] Report**

1. Data on the number of women representatives Including: Statistics in legislatures, executive, company boards Changes in representation following elections Affirmative Action policies, as they relate to quotas, constitutional, legislative, electoral changes	• Statistics in legislatures: As of the report, there are a total of 89 women in Parliament. This includes 72 in the National Assembly (with 12 directly elected on general seats, 59 on reserved seats, and 1 on a non-Muslim seat) and 17 in the Senate (with 1 on a general seat and 16 on reserved seats)¹. • Executive: Women hold several key positions, including one Federal Minister and two Ministers of State. Additionally, there are 8 women serving as Parliamentary Secretaries, 8 on Standing Committees, 1 on a Special Committee, 2 on Functional Committees, and 1 on a Non-Ministerial Standing Committee. • Company Boards: The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) has been instrumental in promoting gender diversity on corporate boards. Since the enactment of the Companies Act 2017, the percentage of listed companies with at least one-woman director has significantly increased from 31% in 2017 to 92%.² • The Elections Act 2017 was a significant legislative change. It mandates that political parties must ensure a minimum of 5% women candidates on general seats for national and provincial assemblies. This policy aims to increase women's representation beyond the constitutionally mandated reserved seats. Pakistan has implemented affirmative action policies, primarily through a quota system, to enhance women's political representation. • Legislative Quotas: The country's constitution provides for a quota of 60 reserved seats for women in the National Assembly and 17 seats in the Senate.³ These seats are allocated to political parties based on their proportional representation in the general elections. • Corporate Quotas: The Listed Companies (Code of Corporate Governance) Regulations, 2017, requires all listed companies to have at least one-woman director on their board.
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¹ <http://na.gov.pk>

² www.secp.gov.pk

³ www.senate.gov.pk

Political Party Reforms and appointments of women within the Party Structures	• Election Commission of Pakistan established a dedicated Gender and Social Inclusion Wing to ensure and enhance participation of women, transgender (TGs), people with special abilities, and religious minorities in electoral process of Pakistan • Local Government: A 33% quota for women was also established at the local government level, encouraging their participation in community-level decision-making. Political parties in Pakistan have implemented certain reforms and initiatives to increase women's participation, though challenges remain in their internal structures and appointment processes. • Candidate Quota: Section 206 of the Elections Act 2017 legally binds parties to allocate 5 % of their general-seat nominations to women. • Reserved-Seat Pathway: The majority of women still enter legislatures via party-nominated reserved seats, reflecting the need for deeper intra-party reforms. The Women's Parliamentary Caucus took a proactive role by spearheading the “Women's Manifesto”. This initiative urged all parliamentary parties to commit to enhancing women's leadership roles within their internal structures and decision-making processes. A "Round Table of Political Parties on Women's Manifesto 2023" where political party representatives debated and endorsed the document. It successfully strengthened networks of women leaders and generated practical strategies for integrating women's concerns into party manifestos, ultimately contributing to women's political empowerment
2. Information on elections that were held this year Including: Data on women Members that won and/or lost seats or	In the general elections held in 2024 and for Senate election: • National Assembly: A total of 312 women contested for general seats, and 12 of them won.⁴ • Senate: One woman senator was elected on a general seat. • Overall Representation: As a result, the total number of women in the National Assembly is 72, and the total number of women in the Senate is 17

⁴ www.ecp.gov.pk

appointed to new positions	
3. Status of the CWP in regional constitutions Including: Updates in Regional Constitutional changes and/or challenges where applicable	NIL
4. CWP Regional Structure Including: Updates on changes and/or challenges to Regional CWP Structures	NIL
5. Regional Budget for CWP Activities Including: Updates on changes and/or challenges to Regional CPA Budgets where applicable	NIL

6. Regional Conference – What role did CWP play? Including: Updates on changes and/or challenges to holding a regular CWP meeting at CPA Regional Conferences Updates on Regional CWP activities	1st Joint CPA Asia & South-East Asia Regional Conference: • The main theme included <i>Parliamentary Strategies for Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Futures</i>. One of the plenary/workshop topics was “<i>Collaborative Legislation for Inclusive and Equitable Development</i>” • The Lahore Charter adopted at the close emphasised equitable representation of women, youth, persons with disabilities, and minorities in legislative bodies and policymaking, and reinforced that systemic barriers should be addressed to make decision-making more inclusive.
7. CPA International Executive Committee – does your region have a female Member? Including: Updates on changes to Regional Representatives to the CPA International Executive Committee	Yes Ms. Farha Azeem Shah, Member of Provincial Assembly Balochsitan
8. Initiatives linked to CWP Thematic Priorities undertaken by Parliaments and/or Regions Including:	

Legislation, resources, Inter-organizational strategies, Intra-Ministerial and Civil Society Cooperation and all other strategies.	
9. The Contribution of women parliamentarians to The Parliamentarian journal article	NIL
10. Other Including, for example: Strategies to Overcome Gender Inequality Education Gender Quotas Leadership programmes Childcare Mechanisms to prevent political violence Equal access to Party resources Coordination with other like-minded Women's organizations	Recently, Pakistan has implemented several strategies to combat gender inequality like: • Special Committee for Gender Mainstreaming: Coordinates legislative and policy steps to integrate gender concerns across ministries. • Gender-Responsive Budgeting (GRB): The Women's Parliamentary Caucus leads the advocacy to make federal and provincial budgets more equitable and data-driven. • Child Marriage Restraint Act 2025 (ICT): Sets 18 years as the minimum marriage age for both boys and girls an important milestone for rights and health. • Electoral Safeguard for Women Voters: Under the Elections Act 2017, the ECP can void a constituency result if women's turnout is below 10 %, deterring voter suppression. • Constitutional Guarantees: The Constitution of Pakistan (Article 25) prohibits discrimination based on sex and mandates the state to take steps to ensure women's full participation in all spheres of national life (Article 34). • International Commitments: Pakistan is a signatory to international instruments like the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), which has influenced its national policies and legislation. • The National Gender Policy Framework (NGPF) is an attempt to catalyze coordinated efforts towards women empowerment in Pakistan by addressing the structural barriers that encumber their meaningful participation in social and economic domains. • National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW) was an outcome of the women's movement struggle for gender equality and continues to support their demands for gender

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• In 26th Constitutional amendment the word “Chairperson” is used instead of “Chairman”. This shows a shift from the older term “Chairman” to the gender-neutral “Chairperson” in the amendment. <p>Article 175A (viii)
<i>“a woman or non-Muslim, other than a member of Majlis-e-Shoora (Parliament), who is qualified to be a member of the Senate as a technocrat, to be nominated by the Speaker of the National Assembly for a term of two years⁵”.</i></p> |
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⁵ https://www.na.gov.pk/uploads/documents/671f74b8da9e0_263.pdf