

(DRAFT)

NATIONAL POLICY ON HOME-BASED WORKERS

GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN

MINISTRY OF WOMEN'S DEVELOPMENT

in collaboration with

MINISTRY OF LABOUR, MANPOWER & OVERSEAS PAKISTANIS

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I. INTRODUCTION

The National Policy on Home-based Workers, framed by the Government of Pakistan, is intended to guide and support the Provincial and Local Governments of Punjab, Sindh, North-West Frontier Province (NWFP), Balochistan, Azad Jammu and Kashmir and the Northern Areas, in developing their own strategies, plans and programmes for the protection and promotion of the rights and benefits of home-based workers, particularly women home-based workers.

This Policy is the result of several stakeholder consultation meetings held at the provincial and national level with Home Based workers, in addition to several working group meetings of experts representing the federal, provincial and local governments and representatives of civil society organizations and networks working for the cause and welfare of home-based workers in Pakistan.

The Government recognizes its obligations under the Constitution and believes that the National Policy on Home-based Workers is inspired by the vision of an egalitarian society, which is free of exploitation and coercion, and where all citizens are equal before law and enjoy equal rights to lead their lives with dignity and self-respect.

The Government recognizes that there 8.52 million home based workers in the country. The proportion of women workers in the home-based based sector is 65% in contrast to only 4% of all male workers who are home-based workers. These home based workers contribute to the country's economic growth. Pakistan accounts 80% of the world's match-grade footballs and earns nearly \$50 million in foreign exchange from this industry alone.

Most of these women home-based workers, who represent 60% of women workforce in the country, are piece rate workers involved in manufacturing and post-manufacturing tasks such as embroidery, carpet weaving and handlooms, wood work and other handicrafts, bangle making, dates cleaning and packing prawn peeling and packing and many other similar tasks.

The women home-based workers usually come from the poor, lower or lower middle income background and form various age groups and possess very little or no education at all. Young girls of age 6 to 14 are working and helping their mothers in making and finishing the tasks assigned to them by the middleman against extremely low remuneration while working 12-16 hours daily under conditions that are frequently harsh, unhealthy, and hazardous.

The Government of Pakistan, however, realizes that currently the workers in the informal economy as well as in the home-based sector are not covered by any labour rights /labour standard legislation nor the definition of the "home-based worker" is part of any statute. Therefore, terms of working conditions of the home-based workers are not regulated by any law or regulation. Labour protection, social security coverage and provision of safety and health services and benefits are not extended to the informal sector, including the home-based sector. Therefore, they are unable to access the services, facilities, rights and benefits, including a fair remuneration under national laws.

The Government of Pakistan has endeavoured to lay down a policy framework on the key elements relating to legislative and administrative measures necessary to ensure the fulfilment of rights and benefits of home-based workers, the responsibilities of the Federal, Provincial and Local Governments and other key stakeholders, within the ambit of guiding principles and core objectives of this Policy.

The National Policy on Home-based Workers has also provided an outline of institutional mechanisms for the implementation of measures to be undertaken for the welfare of home-based workers, which will be elaborated in more detail and specificity through the formulation of Action Plans, to be prepared by the provinces. The Policy has earmarked a key role for the Local Governments in the implementation of the Policy.

The Government, in accordance with its Constitutional obligations and international commitments, hereby reiterates its commitment to addressing the concerns of Home-Based Workers (HBWs) on a priority basis, immediately within the resources at its disposal, and subsequently through further resource mobilization, in a collaborative, consultative and coordinated manner.

The Government would like to pursue the objectives of this Policy within the regional framework of SAARC and while recognizing that the South Asian region is a key area for organizing home based-workers due to their high numbers and numerous constraints. Therefore, a number of associations and networks working for the cause of the home-based workers, particularly women home-based workers, exist in this region, including Pakistan. The Government would like to reiterate its willingness to working with them to protect and promote the rights of home-based workers.

The Government is cognizant of the fact that the ILO has been providing technical assistance to Pakistan in various fields of its competence and concern such as implementation of international labour standards through national law development, and other policy measures in addition to women workers' rights, equality and non-discrimination at the workplace, elimination of child labour and prevention and elimination of bonded labour etc. The Government would like to continue and strengthen this relationship with ILO and other relevant regional and international organizations and bodies of the United Nations, such as UNIFEM.

There have also been several policy initiatives such as development of Labour Policies 2002, 2006 and 2007 under successive governments; and a number of institutions were established and put into operation in Pakistan to provide vocational training to women throughout the country. The successive governments also established several national institutes for labour management and administration to improve the working conditions of the working people of Pakistan. The government would like to further strengthen these policies and institution with the intent to extend their mandate and scope to the home-based workers.

The Government, while cognizant of the harsh and painful realities faced by the home-based workers, particularly by the women home-based workers, due to the high and increasing levels of poverty and food insecurity, believes that a cautious and phased approach is required to the elimination of home-based girl-child labour through consistent efforts in collaboration with other

ongoing programmes and initiatives to end the worst forms of child labour, exploitation and bonded labour.

The Government has reaffirmed its commitment to bring the laws and regulations concerning home-based workers in Pakistan into conformity with the common standards and principles developed by international human rights treaties and ILO Conventions; and ratify the ILO Convention on Home Work, C177, along with the adoption of ILO –R-198 Recommendation on the Employment Relationship (2006), which prescribe the ‘definition of home-based worker’ and call for equal treatment with home-based workers in relation to other wage earners performing the similar work.

II. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Government recognizes its Constitutional obligations and believes that the National Policy on Home-based Workers will be inspired and guided by the principles as enshrined in the following Articles of the Constitution of Pakistan:

1. Equality and non-discrimination:

- All citizens are equal before law and are entitled to equal protection of law [Article 25 (1)]
- There shall be no discrimination on the basis of sex alone [Article 25 (2)]

2. Elimination of exploitation:

- The State shall ensure the elimination of all forms of exploitation and the gradual fulfilment of the fundamental principle, from each according to his ability to each according to his work (Article 3)

3. Empowerment of women:

- Steps shall be taken to ensure full participation of women in all spheres of national life [Article 34]
- Nothing in this Article shall prevent the State from making any special provision for the protection of women and children [Article 25 (3)]
- The State shall make provisions for just and humane conditions of work, ... and for maternity benefits for women in employment [Article 37 (e)]

4. Social and economic well-being of the people:

- The State shall provide for all citizens, within the available resources of the country, facilities for work and adequate livelihood with reasonable rest and leisure [Article 39 (b)]
- The State shall provide basic necessities of life, such as food, clothing, housing, education and medical relief, for all such citizens, irrespective of sex, caste, religion, creed or race, as are permanently or temporarily unable to earn their livelihood on account of infirmity, sickness, or unemployment [Article 39 (d)]
- The State shall promote, with special care, the educational and economic interests of backward classes or areas [Article 37 (a)]

5. Freedom of association:

- Every citizen shall have the right to form associations or unions, subject to any reasonable restrictions imposed by law in the interest of sovereignty or integrity of Pakistan, public order or morality [Article 17]

The Government shall also endeavour to fulfil its binding international commitments arising from the State's ratification of the International Covenant on Social, Economic and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Child Rights Convention (CRC), the and the relevant ILO Conventions, such as C100 and C111.

III. MAIN OBJECTIVES

The Government will take steps to ensure /guarantee to attain the following objectives within the broad parameters of the National Policy on Home-based Workers, through legislative and administrative actions in cooperation and coordination with the Home-based Workers themselves, and the various other stakeholders in the public, private and non-governmental sectors, in pursuance of its fundamental responsibility to reach out to and address the concerns of this most exploited segment of Pakistani society.

The main objectives of the National Policy on Home-based Workers are:

- to recognize and accept Home-based Workers as workers in their own right through legislative and administrative actions;
- to accord legal equality to Home-based Workers in status and rights in relation to other wage earners performing the similar work;
- to focus on the needs, concerns and demands of Women Home-based Workers through an institutional approach of gender mainstreaming at all levels;
- to increase the remuneration of Home-based Workers to a just, decent and living wage in phases and in consideration of the inflationary trends in the country;
- to make the work of Home-based Workers economically viable by creating, facilitating and regulating the marketing opportunities of their products;
- to ensure the application of all rights and entitlements to Home-based Workers available to other wage earners performing similar work, including comprehensive social protection, as well as safe and fair conditions of work for them.
- to provide Home-based Workers visibility and the opportunity for an organized voice to articulate their concerns and demands through registration as collective bargaining agent on behalf of co-workers
- to work in collaboration with Provincial and Local Governments to implement the aims and objectives of the Policy in a participatory, transparent and accountable manner;
- to work in close collaboration with all stakeholders, including representatives of the HBWs, non-government and community-based organizations, the trade unions, local and national networks of NGOs in pursuance of the objectives of this National Policy;
- to bring into conformity the laws and regulations relating to Home-based Workers with the international treaties to which Pakistan is a State Party; and to undertake measures for ratification of the ILO Convention on Home Work (C177).

IV. KEY POLICY MEASURES

The National Policy for Home-based Workers with the focus on women home-based workers will be based on the following key policy measures:

1. Definition and Equality of Legal Status
2. Equality of Treatment and Wages
3. Skills Training Enhancement
4. Access to Credit, Land Ownership and Assets
5. Access to Marketing Channels and Linkages

The Federal, Provincial and Local Governments shall ensure, in collaboration with other concerned stakeholders, to provide HBWs an equality of legal status, a fair arrangement of terms and conditions at workplace with just reward of work in terms of remuneration, in addition to building their skills and creating and facilitating their access to credit schemes and market outlets.

1. Definition and Equality of Legal Status:

The Federal and Provincial Governments shall take appropriate legislative and administrative action to accord equality of legal status to Home-based Workers in relation to other wage earners, who perform similar work to ensure a decent living wage; and define through enactment or notification the following definitions in relevant laws and regulations:

The Government of Pakistan shall recognize that Home-based Workers are a special category of workers; and that Home-based Worker is:

- (a) a person who works within the home boundaries, or in any other premises of his/her choice, but excluding the premises of the employer's or contractor's workplace;
- (b) a person who works at home for remuneration or monetary returns;
- (c) a person who is self-employed or does piece-rate, own-account, or contract work, which results in a product or services as specified by the employer/contractor.

Explanation:

- i) The above-said definition of Home-based Worker does not include:
 - (a) a person with employee status who occasionally performs his/her employee work at home, rather than at his/her usual workplace;
 - (b) a home-based worker who has the degree of autonomy and of the economic independence necessary to be considered an independent self-employed worker under national laws, regulations or court decisions;
 - (c) a domestic worker, since he/she does not work in his/her own home;
 - (d) a person working, outside his/her home boundaries, in the rural or non-formal sectors of agriculture, livestock, forestry, fisheries, etc., since he/she is still termed as "unpaid agricultural family helper".

- ii) The Government shall enact and notify the following term of the ‘employer’ in the specific context of home-based work in relevant laws and regulations; and that the employer in this context is:
- (a) a person, natural or legal, who either directly or through an intermediary/ies or “middleperson/s” – whether or not intermediaries are provided for in national legislation, gives out home-based work in pursuance of her/his business activity;
 - (b) a person who can be an owner, sub-contractor, agent or middleperson, irrespective of who provides the materials, equipment or other inputs used by a home-based worker.

2. Equality of Treatment and Wages:

The Federal and Provincial Governments shall take steps through appropriate legislation and administrative measures to ensure that HBWs are provided equality of treatment, in all areas of work and remuneration, with other wage earners who perform similar work at the workplace.

The governments and concerned institutions and individual, including employers, shall take appropriate measures to ensure that home-based workers earn a decent living wage and:

- (a) that all rules and regulations, common standards and entitlements available to all wage earners performing work similar to home-based workers, under existing national laws and regulations, shall be applicable to HBWs;
- (b) that HBWs are not forced to work disproportionately longer hours than all wage earners performing work similar to home-based workers;
- (c) that employers and sub-contractors (“middlepersons”) shall utilize the services of HBWs only with prior written contracts, just the same as for employees working at the workplace, with comparable remuneration, terms and conditions;
- (d) that the minimum wage of the HBWs is brought at par with the minimum wage of all wage earners performing work similar to home-based workers in three phases: firstly, by immediately rectifying their current remuneration which is around three times less than the minimum wage of other similar wage earners; and thus, facilitating to increase the minimum wage for the home-base workers to a subsistence level; secondly, in the next phase, the Government shall work in a quadripartite manner, to ensure a decent and living wage for HBWs taking into consideration the current inflationary trends and; in the third and final phase, the Government and employers shall work together to ensure a fair wage, to enable the HBWs to improve their family’s nutrition, health and education status, as well as to upgrade their homes, which are their workplaces, in order to make them more hygienic, safe and comfortable.

3. Skills Training Enhancement:

The Federal, Provincial and Local Governments will ensure in collaboration with other concerned stakeholders that skills training enhancement initiatives for home-based workers are undertaken on an outreach basis to their villages and urban slum settlements to address the constraints of mobility and poverty and the triple burden of work in the context of women home-

based workers. The tendency to forcibly bring HBWs to designated working centres in urban or peri-urban areas will be discouraged.

The traditional skills, wishes and needs of the Home-based Women Workers shall be kept paramount in all skills training programmes. The two main objectives shall be:

- (i) to upgrade the capacity of Home-based Women Workers with skill upgradation, improved designs, consistent quality control, product innovation and development, and;
- (ii) to revive the traditional handicrafts heritage and the desire to revive and sustain dying arts and crafts as a means of livelihood.

4. Access to Credit, Land Ownership and Assets:

The Federal and Provincial Governments shall further endeavour to see that HBWs, particularly the Home-based Women Workers, gain easy access to comparatively cheaper credit through several ongoing programmes in the public, private and NGO sectors, e.g. by using group guarantees, revolving funds, cooperative initiatives, profit and loss sharing and other innovative mechanisms.

The Federal and Provincial Governments shall endeavour to link and coordinate the uplift drive for HBWs, particularly for the Home-based Women Workers, with the poverty reduction and gender mainstreaming strategies at the macro-economic level, through:

- (a) the transfer and creation of permanent assets, especially women's ownership of land, through joint spousal title deeds of state-distributed lands to e.g. small farmers/tenant farmers and;
- (b) the reform and enforcement of inheritance law to ensure that women receive their due share, and affirmative measures result in their economic well-being. .

5. Access to Marketing Channels and Linkages:

The Federal, Provincial and Local Government, in collaboration with concerned institutions and agencies, shall lay particular emphasis in streamlining the issues of easy access to markets for the products of the HBWs as they are mainly deprived of the fruit of their labour in this area through the malpractices of the 'intermediaries' and 'middlepersons'.

The Governments shall work at three levels: (a) within the public sector line agencies, e.g. the Ministry of Industries, Production & Special Initiatives, Ministry of Trade & Commerce and Ministry of Social Welfare amongst others; (b) with the private-for-profit sector industry, to ensure that HBWs are provided access to marketing channels, as well as the two-way linkages and networks required to avail them; and (c) with national and international networks of HBWs, to directly and collectively promote their own enterprises, thereby excluding the current unjust practice of intermediaries and middlepersons cutting into their already too low remuneration.

The Governments shall promote the HBWs' production of non-industrial handicraft goods through purchase and utilization in public sector offices as affirmative action (e.g. public sector office furniture, furnishings, fixtures, stationery items, official awards, prizes and gifts).

V. RIGHTS & ENTITLEMENTS

The Home-based Workers will enjoy the core labour standards along with the following rights and entitlements in addition to all rights and benefits available to other wage earners performing the similar work, under the existing or any futuristic laws and regulations:

1. Right of Association and Collective Bargaining:

The home-based workers shall have the right to organize, unionize, associate, and bargain collectively, in addition to their fundamental rights to freedom of assembly, freedom of speech and freedom of movement. Employers and intermediaries shall not be permitted to intimidate or threaten them with loss of livelihoods or social security benefits or sexual harassment or gender-based violence.

The associations or unions of the home-based workers shall have the right to join the networks and umbrella organisation or the existing federations or trade unions of other wage earners or workers to raise a collective voice for themselves. The Government shall encourage and facilitate such national networks to fulfil their role as coordinating entities and to promote the registration and insurance procedures for them.

2. Health and Occupational Safety Standards at Workplace:

The Government, working with the national networks of HBWs, shall endeavour to convince large, medium and small industry owners and business owners, employers and their intermediaries/sub-contractors to ensure the home-based workers' right to health and occupational safety through the provision and use of protective clothing, such as masks, gloves, goggles, and by minimizing occupational safety hazards of respiratory, eye and skin diseases. Alternate practices should be introduced in hazardous sectors such as bangles, carpet weaving and fisheries.

The Federal, Provincial and Local Governments shall endeavour to extend the laws pertaining to Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) for the formal labour to HBWs. The Government shall also take steps to provide women home-based workers with basic and reproductive health care, HIV/AIDS prevention care, VCT and mother and child health care through the Employees Social Security Institutions' and other available health outlets. The women home-based workers shall be brought under the purview of any existing or proposed legislation on sexual harassment at workplace and domestic violence against women.

3. Social Security Benefits:

The Government shall strive to extend the social security benefits currently applicable only to workers in the formal organized sector of employment to the home-based workers through enactment or amendment in the laws relating to Employees Social Security Institutions in the provinces.

The benefits under laws include (but are not limited to) the following: old-age pension funds, workers welfare funds, general and reproductive health services for workers and their families, maternity care, child care and education, death, disability and accident insurance benefits, housing, legal counselling services, and last but not least, support for disaster risk reduction, preparedness, mitigation, reconstruction and rehabilitation. Insurance of HBWs against accident, disability and death shall also be the mandatory responsibility of the employers.

4. Literacy, Basic and Adult Education:

The Government shall take a holistic view of the educational needs of HBWs, particularly of women workers and girl child workers, and shall address them together. Basic functional literacy and numeracy shall be introduced alongside the above-cited skills training programmes for HBWs, through the collaboration of the Ministry of Education.

The Government shall make efforts to persuade the mothers and fathers among the HBWs to enrol their children and especially daughters in regular schools of the Ministry of Education or non-formal education classes through the Ministry of Social Welfare. The Federal and Provincial Governments shall undertake appropriate legislation for the provision of, and access to, universal, compulsory and free education for the children of HBWs.

5. Registration of Home-based Workers:

The Government shall devise a mechanism for the mandatory and free registration of all HBWs, in all public and private sectors of the economy, especially industries, through a tiered system at the Federal, Provincial, District, Tehsil/Taluka and Union Council levels. The details of this mechanism will be formulated in consultation with all the relevant federal line Ministries and provincial Departments, in order to avoid duplication and to promote coordination. Registration will automatically entitle HBWs to social protection and insurance provisions.

VI. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Gender-Disaggregated Data Collection and Research:

The Federal and Provincial Governments shall undertake appropriate measures to include home-based workers in the decennial Population Censuses, annual Labour Force Surveys, and all other national data collection exercises, which will be disaggregated by gender and rural-urban location, especially all research on living standards and poverty measurement. In addition, the data base will include provisions for documenting the various paid work of HBWWs such as their contribution in agriculture, construction, mining or brick kiln sectors.

The Ministry of Labour, Manpower and Overseas in collaboration with Ministry of Women's Development will ensure that these measures are taken and institutionalized within the Population Census Organization, Federal Bureau of Statistics, and other data collection and research institutions. For the forthcoming Census 2009, it will be ensured that a column on HBWs is added to the data enumeration form, as follows: "place of work (f/m)".

2. Ensuring Resources and Gender Budgeting:

The Government shall endeavour to see that all the measures enunciated in this National Policy, as well as the subsequent legislative and administrative measures, including data collection, registration and provision of social; security benefits or HBWs, are carried out through budgeting, earmarking, allocation and timely disbursement of funds through the Ministry of Finance. The Government shall also ensure that gender audits are carried out annually, to ensure that gender budgeting is being implemented in both letter and spirit.

The Government shall make efforts to mainstream and institutionalize these activities in each of the respective Ministries/Departments and entities to promote ownership and permanently institutionalized gender-responsive budgeting and auditing in the public sector. This would preclude a wider ownership of HBWs' issues in all the respective Ministries/Departments and entities proposed to be involved in implementing this Policy,

3. Mainstreaming in Policies & Poverty Reduction Initiatives:

The Government shall fulfil its fundamental responsibility to ensure comprehensive Social Protection and Poverty Reduction measures for HBWs, who shall be first in line for public sector poverty reduction initiatives and programmes, such as food stamps, food-for-work, ration cards, and the like. It shall also mainstream and integrate HBWs' concerns in other relevant Policy documents. This shall be done through revisiting and further engendering the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP-II) of the Ministry of Finance, the Poverty Alleviation Strategy of the Planning Commission (PC), along with the PC's Medium-Term Development Framework (MTDF, 2005-10) and Vision 2030 documents, along with the national Trade, Labour, Employment and Social Welfare Policies, and thoroughly revamping the traditional Bait-ul-Maal and Zakat administration systems for Social Protection, in line with the Government's

commitment to achieving the MDGs and adherence to the provisions of the ICSECR, CRC and CEDAW.

4. Regulating Equal and Fair Treatment in Private Sector:

The Federal, Provincial and Local Governments, as well as concerned institutions in public and private sector, shall endeavour to convince industry and business owners, employers and their intermediaries that from their own long-term self-interest perspective, it is their inherent corporate social responsibility to:

- (a) ensure and protect the rights and benefits of HBWs;
- (b) enhance their traditional skills and upgrade their capacities for improved and standardized quality products; and
- (c) provide them decent wages and conducive working conditions.

5. Addressing HBWs' Concerns at Regional and International Fora:

The Federal Government shall take steps to advocate the cause of HBWs at the highest decision-making levels of the South-Asian region and at the United Nation forums. At the South Asian regional level, the Government shall recognize the important role of networks such as HomeNet South Asia, and shall take steps to address HBWs' concerns at the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Summit platform for collective decision-making, e.g. the need for urgent ratification of C177 and R198.

At the International level, the Government shall proactively work with the UN agencies, especially the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and ILO, as well as the other relevant international development agencies, to bring its labour and employment policies and laws into conformity with those of the relevant international instruments, and shall participate in experience-sharing and learning of best practices pertaining to HBWs, for adaptation and utilization in our own national context.

6. Protecting HBWs from Demerits of Globalization:

The Government shall strive to facilitate retail platforms for the products of HBWs throughout the SAARC region and shall strive to encourage its peer SAARC Governments to collectively negotiate with the OECD countries for preferential or zero tariffs on the South Asian HBWs' products collectively in order to protect the communities of home-based workers in each country from the demerits of the globalization, which are resulting in further exploitation by reduction of wages, flexibilization and feminization of labor, insecurity or termination of work due to cheaper labour easily available elsewhere, and through high tariffs.

The Government shall also endeavour to undertake worldwide Trade Promotion Initiatives specific to home-based products through the Ministry of Trade & Commerce, the Export Promotion Bureau and through the Chambers of Commerce & Industry, thereby bringing HBWs into the mainstream of trade promotion as is currently being done for the formal organized sector products.

7. Ensuring Access to Information and Technological Advances:

The Government shall work cooperatively with the public and private entities, including non-governmental organisations to bring both the hardware and software of information communication technology to HBWs, in order to facilitate the linkages and networks of HBWs and to increase their productivity. The Government shall also work with national networks to encourage the print and electronic media in both the public and private sectors, to focus on the situation and needs of HBWs, particularly the needs of women home-based workers.

The Government shall also undertake special efforts to create, facilitate or provide circumstances whereby the home-based workers are able to benefit from the technological advances, especially the increasing focus on the safety of the tools of their trades, quality-enhancement technology, and labour-and time-saving devices. Since the increasing feminization of poverty is partly also due to women's continuing lack of information on and access to information communication technology, steps shall be taken to overcome these constraints.

VII. IMPLEMENTATION & ENFORCEMENT

The main implementing agencies for this National Policy shall work under the mandate of the Provincial Governments in close collaboration with the Local Governments; and they will be guided by the national Plan of Action and their respective Provincial Plan of Action. The Action Plans may also suggest or establish inter-sectoral and inter-ministerial steering group, including representation from the national/Pakistani civil society organisations, at the federal and provincial, to oversee the implementation of this Policy.

1. Plan of Action for Implementation of National Policy:

The Federal and Provincial Governments shall prepare comprehensive Plan of Action for implementing this National Policy on Home-based workers. The Plan of Action shall be widely shared and consultations shall be held at the provincial and national levels to ensure its feasibility and acceptability to all. Once the various stakeholders have endorsed it, its implementation shall start, using time-bound, results-oriented and objectively verifiable indicators.

The national and provincial Plan of Action shall clearly elaborate the rights and benefits of the HBWs, roles and responsibilities of Federal, Provincial and Local Government authorities, in addition to the functions of the other stakeholders. The Plans will also lay down the enforcement mechanisms of implementation of this Policy, particularly regarding access to credit and markets, and the forums and processes of conflict resolution.

2. Inclusion in Labour and Employment Policies and Legislation:

The Government shall undertake a legislative review process of the forthcoming National Employment Policy and the draft Employment and Services Condition Act, 2007, as well as the Labour Inspection Policy (2006), the Labour Protection Policy (2006), the Labour Policy (2002), the Industrial Relations Ordinance (IRO), and ratify ILO convention 177 to include the recognition of HBWs as workers, and the protection of their rights, in accordance with this Policy.

The Government shall ensure that the any such review process and or initiation of new legislative measures will be inclusive and through a quadripartite consultation process, involving the representation of the Employers, HBWs, trade unions and other networks and cooperatives working with HBWs, as well as different entities representing employers, business community and chambers of commerce etc.

3. Dispute and Conflict Resolution Mechanisms:

The Government shall ensure that all existing dispute/conflict resolution institutions of the Ombudsperson, Government tribunals, tripartite mechanisms, Labour Courts, and Local Government systems are explored for this purpose, in a quadripartite consultative manner, involving all the stakeholders. The Government shall also ensure that a grievance reporting and redressal mechanism shall be available to women home-based workers under the existing or

forthcoming laws relating to sexual harassment of women at workplace or domestic violence against women, if such an adverse situation arises.

4. Ensuring Participation of Local Governments:

The Provincial Governments shall ensure that elected representatives and officials of the Local Government, particularly women councillors, at district, tehsil/taluka and union council levels, play a key role in the implementation of various measures stipulated in this Policy. The Provincial Governments in collaboration with Local Governments will ensure that councillors make special efforts to identify HBWs in their respective locations, as well as to collect data on HBWs, and also assist in the registration of HBWs, which are the most crucial links in the process. The Plan of Action shall lay special emphasis on the role of Local Governments' systems and representatives for delivering the benefits of this policy to the HBWs.

5. Ensuring Participation of Women Parliamentarians and NCSW:

The Federal and Provincial Governments shall ensure the involvement of women Parliamentarians, at the federal and provincial levels, to facilitate the process of legislative action in the interests of HBWs. The Federal Government shall also encourage and involve the National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW), as a Permanent Statutory body, in its mandated umbrella watchdog functions, in monitoring the implementation of this National Policy on HBWs, and, where the need arises, also in the above-cited dispute and conflict resolution mechanisms and processes.

VIII. COORDINATION & MONITORING

1. Institutional Mechanisms for Coordination and Monitoring:

The Federal and Provincial Governments shall set up inter-ministerial and cross-sectoral autonomous bodies, at the federal and provincial level, on the basis of public and private partnership to coordinate the efforts to be undertaken for the implementation of this Policy. These ‘Policy Steering and Coordination Committees’ shall be empowered to carry out the required overseeing and monitoring of the functions of various stakeholders, including the roles and responsibilities of respective Governments, as well as those of employers or intermediaries of the HBWs.

The Federal Government shall also ensure that mechanisms created or set up for the purpose of this Policy are also linked with the coordinating and monitoring role of the Planning Commission; and the concerns of HBWs are reflected in the Planning Commission’s “*Social Protection Strategy to Reach the Poor and the Vulnerable*”, for further strengthening the policy framework for the protection and promotion of the rights and benefits of HBWs.

2. Reporting and Accountability:

The Government shall ensure that Sub-Committees are formed under the inter-sectoral and inter-ministerial ‘Policy Steering and Coordination Committees’, at the federal and provincial level, to perform the role of reporting and accountability under this Policy. The Sub-Committees, established for the purpose may appoint Focal Persons in the relevant Ministries with the assigned role of maintaining liaison with the private sector stakeholders relating to home-based work and with the networks, trade unions and other associations working with HBWs; and to report back to the Sub-Committees the progress made in pursuance of the objectives of this Policy and the constraints faced during its implementation.