

Book Review:

Book Title: The Handbook of Gender Responsive Police Services for Women and Girls Subject to Violence

رہنمائی کتابچہ: صنفی تقاضوں پر مبنی پولیس کی خدمات

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The Directorate of Training, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police has published Urdu translation of the UN Woman's booklet *The Handbook of Gender Responsive Police Services for Women and Girls Subject to Violence*. The Urdu translation is titled “صنفی تقاضوں پر مبنی پولیس کی خدمات: رہنمائی کتابچہ”. As per the Pre-face of the handbook, written by Dr. Quresh Khan, Assistant Inspector General Police (Trainings), this is the first ever translation of the UN Women's handbook in any other language. The booklet is not a word to word translation of the said handbook rather it has been translated keeping in view the context of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the newly merged tribal districts. Furthermore, the handbook has graphic illustration of many concepts and processes with respect to policing services for women and girls.

The handbook has been divided into eight (08) chapters. It introduces the idea of gender-based violence and why and how police is one of the key agencies that needs to play a very effective role in addressing this issue. It discusses major problems police officers face while responding to the cases involving gender-based violence. It presents many best-practices from the police agencies around the world. It warns the police officers of their personal biases in GBV cases. The handbook also provides suggestions and guidelines for police officers in how to respond to GBV cases in routine duty (p.21-22). It also introduces many myths and counter facts about GBV (e.g. p. 25).

Chapter 03 of the handbook talks about prevention of GBV and the role of police officials. On the very first pages, it guides police officers to be aware of the community diversity, have a strong liaison with the community and be impartial (p.48). It also encourages police officers to have stronger coordination with other departments and regularly collect, maintain, and utilized the data.

Other chapters of the handbook provide various hands-on guidelines to police officers regarding first contact, investigation, issues and constraints in investigation, protection of the victim, and gaining cooperation and confidence of the victim of GBV.

What is best about this handbook is that it is in the National language of Pakistan (Urdu) which is easily understood and spoken by majority of the police officers. Almost all of the correspondence of the police at lower and intermediate

levels is in Urdu language (e.g. F.I.Rs are written in Urdu language and Investigation Reports etc are also submitted in Urdu language). The handbook provides enough awareness to the police officers about the issue of GBV. However, what is lacking is on-ground examples from local context. My work with the police which spans over a decade and beyond has revealed that a booklet which does not provide examples that the police under-training can relate to in their daily procedures, is of little practical use to the police officials and thus might be ignored. Nonetheless, this is the first step towards awareness of police officers on GBV cases as per UN guidelines. A blended handbook with more relative examples and case-studies can be developed for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and newly merged districts.

Overall, the handbook is highly recommended to be available on the tables of all the Station House Officers (SHOs), Circle Police Officers (DSPs) District Police Officers (DPOs), and all the training schools, colleges, and centers of the police in the country.