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Pakistan: Domestic violence, involving a spouse or other family members; legislation; protection and support services available to victims (2017-January 2020) [PAK106392.E]

Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada

1. Overview

Sources indicate that domestic violence is "normali[z]ed" (*The Independent* 30 July 2019; Quresh and D'Lima 10 Dec. 2017) and "widespread" in Pakistan (Quresh and D'Lima 10 Dec. 2017). The *Independent*, a UK daily newspaper, reports that domestic violence "permeates society in a privileged, agnostic fashion in Pakistan, cutting across race, class and religion" (*The Independent* 30 July 2019). A report by the Overseas Development Institute (ODI), "an independent, global think tank" (ODI n.d.), indicates that "[i]ntimate partner violence (IPV) is a major public health and human rights issue in Pakistan" (ODI Mar. 2017, 5).

The same report additionally refers to a 2012 study by the Aurat Foundation (AF) [1], which suggests that in Pakistan,

most of those who perpetrate any form of violence against women are intimate partners or relatives, such as husbands, brothers, cousins, fathers, uncles, fathers- and mothers-in-law, brothers-in law, sons or step-sons. (ODI Mar. 2017, 5)

Additionally, the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP), "an independent, democratic, nonpartisan organisation" (HRCP n.d.), states that "[t]he overwhelming majority of violent deaths of women were at the hands of the men known to them, most often family members" (HRCP Mar. 2019, 179). Sources note that emotional or psychological abuse also occurs, where women are insulted, criticized, threatened (ODI Mar. 2017, 10; NIPS of Pakistan and ICF Jan. 2019, 308) or humiliated (NIPS of Pakistan and ICF Jan. 2019, 308).

1.1 Statistics

The *Women, Peace and Security Index 2019/20 (WPS)* prepared by Georgetown University's Institute for Women, Peace and Security (GIWPS) and the Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO), an independent research institution, places Pakistan 164th out of 167 countries regarding women's peace and security in the world, noting that 63.2 percent of women reported a perception of safety in their communities (GIWPS and PRIO 2019, ii, 63). Other sources similarly indicate that Pakistan has been ranked the sixth most dangerous country in the world for women (DW 23 Sept. 2019; Reuters 19 June 2019) and that violence against women, including domestic violence, is "on the rise" in the country (DW 23 Sept. 2019). The *New Internationalist*, an independent media organization that publishes a magazine on human rights and politics (*New Internationalist* n.d.), cites a resident director of the AF as stating that "cases of domestic violence are rising at an alarming rate" in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (*New Internationalist* 6 June 2017).

According to the Punjab Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW), a "statutory, autonomous body established in February 2014 for the promotion of women's rights" which is "an oversight body to ensure policies and programmes of the government promote gender equality in Punjab" (Punjab 2018, i), in 2017,

904 cases of domestic violence were reported, of which 402 cases were of murder in domestic violence, 141 cases of domestic attempted murder, and 361 cases of domestic violence as "beating." (Punjab 2018, viii)

The HRCP reports that from March 2017 to April 2018, the Violence Against Women Centre (VAWC) Multan [Punjab] recorded 918 cases of domestic abuse, as well as 165 "family cases" of violence against women (HRCP Mar. 2019, 72).

1.1.1 Married Women

Sources indicate that approximately one third of women experience intimate partner violence (IPV) (ODI Mar. 2017, 5; NIPS of Pakistan and ICF Jan. 2019, 307; Quresh and D'Lima 10 Dec. 2017), with 25 percent of ever-married women having experienced violence within the past 12 months (NIPS of Pakistan and ICF Jan. 2019, 307). The HRCP cites the 2017-18 *WPS Index* which indicates that "27 percent of women in Pakistan experienced 'intimate partner or domestic violence in their lifetime'" (HRCP Mar. 2019, 179); according to the 2019/20 *WPS Index*, 14.5 percent of Pakistani women had experienced IPV in the past year (GIWPS and PRIO 2019, 63). The 2017-18 *Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey (PDHS)*, conducted by Pakistan's National Institute of Population Studies (NIPS), indicates that

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the percentage of [ever-married] women [age 15-49] who have experienced spousal physical, sexual, or emotional violence is highest in FATA [Federally Administered Tribal Areas] (66%), followed by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (52%) and Balochistan (49%). The percentage is lowest in Sindh (18%). (NIPS of Pakistan and ICF Jan. 2019, 309)

The same source adds that

[e]ighty percent of ever-married women who have experienced physical violence since age 15 report their current husband as the perpetrator, while 8% name a former husband as the perpetrator. Seventeen percent report violence by mothers or stepmothers, and 11% each report violence by sisters or brothers and fathers or stepfathers. (NIPS of Pakistan and ICF Jan. 2019, 305)

The ODI report adds that “[n]ot only is there frequent physical violence from in-laws, but there is also evidence that mothers- and sisters in-law may instigate IPV between the husband and wife” (ODI Mar. 2017, 12).

The 2017-18 *PDHS* indicates that domestic violence is less prevalent in households in which the husband has a “higher education” (24 percent) and most prevalent when the husband has a primary education (41 percent), and that “[w]omen living in rural areas are more likely to experience spousal violence (36%) than women living in urban areas (30%)” (NIPS of Pakistan and ICF Jan. 2019, 308-309).

1.2 Social Attitudes and Reporting

The *Independent* reports that the price of reporting domestic violence is “often too rancorous for victims” (*The Independent* 30 July 2019). Similarly, Reuters indicates that “domestic violence is often seen as taboo” in Pakistan, and that incidents are “largely unreported, particularly in rural areas,” due to poverty and stigma (Reuters 19 June 2019). A report on the effects of violence against women in Pakistan [2] states that

underreporting [of violence against women and girls] is significant and common both in rural and urban areas. Some respondents mentioned the fear of breaking family ties as well as the family pressure to avoid involving authorities in private/domestic issues as reasons for not reporting to anyone outside the family. Lack of trust in the legal system was also identified as the reason for not reporting to authorities by some respondents. (SPDC, et al. Apr. 2019, 22)

According to the 2017-18 *PDHS*, 56 percent of “ever-married women who reported experiencing physical or sexual violence neither sought help to stop the violence nor told anyone” (NIPS of Pakistan and ICF Jan. 2019, 310). The same source further indicates that

[a]mong women who have experienced physical or sexual violence and have sought help, the most common source [of help] is their own family (76%), followed by their husband’s family (36%) and husbands/former husbands and neighbours (2% each). Very few women went to the police, lawyers, or social work organisations (1% each). (NIPS of Pakistan and ICF Jan. 2019, 311)

The ODI report similarly states that the norm around reporting instances of domestic violence is to consider it a “‘private’ matter” and “keep it internal [and] within the family” (ODI Mar. 2017, 20). According to the same source, reactions towards domestic violence from family members are “often mixed,” with some relatives telling victims “to tolerate the violence, and/or attempt to reconcile,” though others encouraged the victim to seek a divorce (ODI Mar. 2017, 20).

Information on the reporting of domestic violence committed by family members other than a spouse or intimate partner could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

1.3 “Honour Killings”

Freedom House defines “honor killing” as “the murder of men or women accused of breaking social and especially sexual taboos” and states that the practice “remains common” in Pakistan, and that “[m]ost incidents go unreported” (Freedom House 29 Jan. 2019). Human Rights Watch indicates that in Pakistan, “it is not unusual for men to murder female relatives to punish behavior they deem unacceptable” (Human Rights Watch 25 Sept. 2017). In its annual report for 2018, the same source indicates that “Pakistani activists estimate that there are about 1,000 ‘honor’ killings every year” (Human Rights Watch 17 Jan. 2019). The *Guardian* reports that “[h]uman rights campaigners [including the HRCP] say more than 1,500 killings occurred between 2016 and 2018” (*The Guardian* 17 May 2019). Sources report that though Pakistan’s parliament passed legislation against honour killings in 2016, the practice has continued (*The Guardian* 17 May 2019; Human Rights Watch 25 Sept. 2017). Freedom House similarly indicates that “[s]uccessive attempts to abolish the practice ... have not been fully implemented” (Freedom House 29 Jan. 2019).

1.4 Domestic Violence Within Intercaste Marriages

For information on domestic violence in intercaste marriages, including state protection and support services for victims, see Response to Information Request PAK106221 of January 2019.

2. Legislation

The US Department of State’s *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2018* indicates that “[n]o specific federal law prohibits domestic violence” (US 13 Mar. 2019, 39). Reuters similarly indicates that “Pakistan has no comprehensive federal law to tackle violence against women” (Reuters 25 Feb. 2016). However, the World Bank researchers, in their 2017 blog post, state that in recent years, there

has been an increase of legislation and policies aimed at preventing practices that violate women's rights, such as domestic violence (Quresh and D'Lima 10 Dec. 2017). A 2018 report submitted by Pakistan to the UN's Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) reports that the measures to combat violence against women implemented by the federal and provincial governments "have resulted [in] improved reporting, data gathering, documentation, and speedy redressal" of cases, without specifying the impact on cases of domestic violence (Pakistan 23 Oct. 2018, para. 97).

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)'s 2019 Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI) indicates that the Islamabad Capital Territory and the Sindh, Balochistan and Punjab provinces have legislation on domestic violence (OECD 7 Dec. 2018, 5). The same source adds that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is the only province in Pakistan without legislation against domestic violence, "after the Council of Islamic Ideology rejected a bill on the issue in 2016" (OECD 7 Dec. 2018, 5). Hamara Internet, a campaign by the Digital Rights Foundation (DRF) [3] (Hamara Internet n.d.a), similarly indicates that "each province has [its] own set of legal statutes addressing [domestic violence] with the exception of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa" (Hamara Internet n.d.b). According to an article published by *Dawn*, an English-language Pakistani daily newspaper, the *Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Domestic Violence Against Women (Prevention and Protection) Bill* again failed to be approved by the provincial assembly in October 2019 (*Dawn* 15 Oct. 2019).

The OECD states that the legislation for Islamabad, Sindh, Balochistan, and Punjab "extend domestic violence to acts committed against persons currently or previously living together, when related by consanguinity, marriage or adoption" (OECD 7 Dec. 2018, 6). The same source additionally indicates that the laws "define domestic violence in identical terms, referring to acts of physical, sexual, economic or psychological abuse committed by one person against another in the context of a domestic relationship," while the Punjab law "goes further by including cybercrimes and stalking," and that the laws "provide for numerous measures to assist survivors and prevent further violence, namely protection orders, residency orders, temporary shelter, medical and psychological assistance and legal aid" (OECD 7 Dec. 2018, 6). The OECD also adds that "[a]ll texts criminalise domestic violence by referring to relevant articles of the Penal Code (e.g. assault, organ dismembering, amputation, bodily harm), with variable penalties depending on the severity of the act" (OECD 7 Dec. 2018, 6). Similarly, the Lahore-based chapter of White Ribbon, "a men's movement for ending violence against women and girls" (White Ribbon n.d.a), indicates that punishment for domestic violence under the applicable laws of the provinces of Punjab, Sindh, and Balochistan "will be given against the offence, as mentioned under Pakistan Penal Code, 1860, committed during domestic violence" (White Ribbon n.d.b). However, *Dawn* reports that "[t]he Sindh and Balochistan laws criminalise domestic abuse" whereas "[u]nder the Punjab legislation, it's treated as a civil infraction but it prescribes certain preventive and remedial measures such as protection orders, financial compensation; those exist in the Sindh and Balochistan laws also" (*Dawn* 28 May 2019).

Information on the enforcement of laws against domestic violence was scarce among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response. In their 2017 blog post, World Bank researchers Quresh and D'Lima indicate that the challenges around implementing the legislation in Pakistan "are still enormous" (Quresh and D'Lima 10 Dec. 2017). In a report on gender equality in Pakistan, UN Women Pakistan similarly indicates that "[c]hallenges remain" in implementing laws and policies on violence against women in Pakistan (UN 2018, 16).

The *Women, Peace and Security Index 2019/20*, citing a document prepared by the World Bank, states that "domestic violence legislation does not protect unmarried partners" (GIWPS and PRIO 2019, 39). Further and corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

3. State Protection

White Ribbon lists three ways in which a remedy might be availed in cases of domestic violence:

- File an FIR [First Information Report] [4] with the local police station;
- File a petition to the court;
- An aggrieved person may submit a complaint for obtaining a protection, residence or monetary order. (White Ribbon n.d.b)

Salman Sufi, who was previously a senior member of the Punjab government's Special Monitoring Unit on law and order and was involved in reform initiatives regarding women's empowerment, among other issues (*Dawn* 15 July 2018), in a post on the website of the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), states the following on the different types of orders:

[t]he Monetary Order would provide relief to survivors to compensate for economic losses or if their wages were withheld by anyone, including family members. The Protection Order would provide them protection instantly from anyone pressuring them not to register a case or harassing them. The Residence Order, on the other hand, would provide them with immediate shelter in case of eviction from their home and entitle them to compensation to live separately if they do not want to return to an abusive household. (Sufi 25 Sept. 2018)

Further and corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

3.1 Police

According to *US Country Reports 2018*, “[p]olice and judges were sometimes reluctant to take action in domestic violence cases” as they view these as “family problems” (US 13 Mar. 2019, 39). *Dawn* cites a lawyer explaining that a domestic violence report to authorities is “not taken very seriously, it’s considered domestic dispute and not a crime so the authorities are less likely to investigate or register an FIR” (*Dawn* 28 May 2019). The ODI report quotes an informant in their study as saying that “[t]here is a lack of sensitivity in the police service ... [a] lot of women have told us that the women in the police service are the most verbally abusive” (ODI Mar. 2017, 22). The same source adds that, according to service providers in Shah Faisal Colony, “the police were more likely to question the ‘character’ of a woman than to help her” (ODI Mar. 2017, 22, emphasis in original). An academic article published in the *Journal of International Women’s Studies* on domestic violence in Punjab, written by multiple authors including Salman Sufi, indicates that interviewed victims “consistently reported that the police did not display any sympathy or concern regarding the trauma suffered by the victims [and that] the officers regarded their complaints as routine and domestic violence as standard behavior rather than a serious crime” (Tanwir, et al. Aug. 2019, 139). Among “[i]mpediments to [r]egistering [c]ases,” the same source indicates that “[p]olice officers and family members appear to be enforcing social norms to ensure that women do not oppose patriarchal rules” (Tanwir, et al. Aug. 2019, 139-140).

While noting that “actual figures are likely to be much higher, particularly given that many crimes go unreported,” the HRCP reports that in 2018, there were 129 cases of domestic violence against women reported to the police, involving 135 victims, including 117 in Punjab, 10 in Sindh, 6 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the FATA and 1 in Balochistan (HRCP Mar. 2019, 71). Corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

US Country Reports 2018 states the following:

To address societal norms that disapprove of victims who report gender-based violence and abuse, the government established women’s police stations, staffed by female officers, to offer women a safe place to report complaints and file charges. These women’s police stations, however, were limited in number and, as with most police stations, faced financial and human resource shortages. (US 13 Mar. 2019, 39)

According to sources, there are three women’s police stations in Punjab, which are located in Lahore, Rawalpindi and Faisalabad (HRCP Mar. 2019, 78; Punjab n.d.a). According to the *Express Tribune*, an English-language daily newspaper in Pakistan, there are eight “women and children police stations” in Sindh, including in West Zone Karachi, South Zone Karachi, Hyderabad range, Mirpurkhas, Shaheed Benazirabad range, Sukkur range, and Larkana range (*The Express Tribune* 7 Mar. 2018). Further and corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response. According to sources citing statistics of the National Police Bureau (NPB), women make up less than two percent of the total police force in Pakistan, despite a ten percent quota; with a participation rate of 3.4 percent, Gilgit-Baltistan has the highest rate of participation of women in the police force, while Balochistan has the lowest, with 0.48 percent (*Gulf News* 1 May 2017; HRCP Mar. 2019, 78).

3.2 Judiciary

Sources indicate that legislation allows victims to file a petition in court against their abusers (*Dawn* 28 May 2019; White Ribbon n.d.a). However, an article published by the Asia and the Pacific Policy Society (APPS) [5] in their Policy Forum, a “platform for public policy debate, analysis, views, and discussion” by the APPS’s “community of scholars, public policy practitioners ... and the policy-engaged public” (APPS n.d.), explains that “despite the existence ... of strong legislation focused on women’s rights” in Pakistan, the “country’s justice system has done little to end violence against women” (APPS 7 Feb. 2018). *Dawn* similarly reports that victims face barriers in filing petitions in court as “access to legal help is limited” (*Dawn* 28 May 2019). The ODI report indicates that

[f]inancial constraints create more barriers to justice. Respondents stressed repeatedly that hiring a lawyer was too expensive, far beyond the economic capacity of most families, and “a waste of money”. As a result, “they prefer to solve their matters in the village.” (ODI Mar. 2017, 22)

Dawn also cites as lawyer as saying that “[i]n [the] absence of legal aid supported and funded [by the] government,” it is very difficult for women to access justice (*Dawn* 28 May 2019). The same source further notes that delays with trials are an additional deterrent “for survivors of abuse to pursue cases” in court (*Dawn* 28 May 2019). Additionally, the ODI report states that victims of IPV are reluctant to go through the courts “because they fear being ‘exposed to males’” (ODI Mar. 2017, 21).

Deutsche Welle (DW) indicates that from January 2011 to June 2017, there was a 2.5 percent conviction rate of all the violence against women cases reported (DW 23 Sept. 2019). *Dawn* reports that in “the six years since the Sindh law [on domestic violence] was passed, there has only been one conviction” (*Dawn* 28 May 2019). Further and corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

4. Support Services and Shelters

4.1 Punjab Province

The 2017-18 *PDHS* indicates that the legislation enacted in the Punjab province “promulgated a protection system for women victims to promote effective service delivery and create a conducive environment to encourage and facilitate women to fulfill their role in society” (NIPS of Pakistan and ICF Jan. 2019, 303). Article 13(3) of the *Punjab Protection of Women Against Violence Act 2016* provides that “[t]he government shall, through a phased programme, establish a shelter home in each district

or for a local area within a district, for board and lodging of the aggrieved persons and needy women and provision of social and rehabilitative services to the residents” (Punjab 2016). The academic article in the *Journal of International Women's Studies* indicates that the first VAWC was established in Multan [Punjab] in March 2017 and that “plans [were] finalized for the roll-out of centers across the province” (Tanwir, et al. Aug. 2019, 131). According to the provincial government of Punjab, there are now women's shelters (*Dar-ul-Aman*) in all 36 districts of Punjab (Punjab n.d.b). The same source indicates that these shelters can accommodate 20 to 50 residents at a time, and lists the process for admission as follows:

- Women referred by court, voluntary agencies, press/media, social workers, community leaders, philanthropists or any member of advisory committee of Dar[ul-Aman] are admitted
- Women can also directly get admission in Dar-ul-Aman
- At the time of admission, the applicant has to fill up the admission form
- The applicant has to appear for [a] medical checkup within 14 days of admission and also has to appear for [a] first psychological consultation. (Punjab n.d.b)

According to the 2017 blog post by World Bank Group researchers Quresh and D'Lima, the Punjab province has “women desks at almost every police station” and “an anonymous hotline for complaints and counseling around violence” (Quresh and D'Lima 10 Dec. 2017). According to the Punjab Commission on the Status of Women, the helpline is available 24/7 and is staffed by “all-women call agents, three legal advisors, phycho social counselor, supervisors and management staff to address ... inquiries and complaints, and to provide psycho social counseling” on issues including domestic violence (Punjab n.d.c).

4.2 Sindh Province

A 2017 article of the *Express Tribune* reports that there are “insufficient” protection mechanisms in Sindh, “especially protection centres” (*The Express Tribune* 31 May 2017). According to article 17(1) of the *Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act, 2013*, the “[g]overnment shall ... constitute Protection Committees for the purposes of [the] Act” (Sindh 2013). The same act additionally provides in articles 21 and 22 that the “[g]overnment shall ... appoint ... Protection Officer[s]” whose duty, among other things, is “to make a domestic incident report to the Protection Committee ... upon receipt of a complaint of domestic violence ...” and “to ensure that the aggrieved person is provided legal aid” (Sindh 2013). The 2017 article by the *Express Tribune* indicates that “most of the implementation and monitoring structures to be set up under [Sindh's domestic violence protection] laws are still pending” (*The Express Tribune* 31 May 2017). Further and corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

The 2018 Pakistani report to the UN's CEDAW indicates that the government of Sindh

has established Women Complaint Centres (WCC) and Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Centre for Women through which, during [the] last two years, more than five hundred victims of domestic violence and honor killing[,] rape, acid throwing, child custody and dissolution of marriage have been given legal aid and socio-psychological counseling. They have also provided 154 women with [p]sycho-social counseling in cases of [violence against women], 150 women received psycho-therapeutic counseling, 64 received legal counseling and 27 received free legal aid In addition, [s]afe homes and protection centres have also been established at [the] district level under the supervision of the Deputy Commissioners of the districts, to provide shelter and relief to women victims of violence. (Pakistan 23 Oct. 2018, para. 82)

The Women Development Department of Sindh states on its website that there are five Women Complaint Cells in the province, located in Karachi, Hyderabad, Benazirabad, Larkana and Sukkur (Sindh n.d.). The same source indicates that the objective of these Women Complaint Cells is to provide “protection to the women in distress/crisis and will render basic legal, medical and counselling services to the needy women”(Sindh n.d.). An article by *Dawn* lists Panah as a shelter in Karachi that supports women in “volatile domestic situation[s]” (*Dawn* 28 May 2019). The shelter's website indicates that it “maintains an open door policy for all women victims/survivors of violence” and that women can either approach the shelter “personally” or “through the police system, court order or via referrals” (Panah n.d.).

4.3 Balochistan

The government of Balochistan indicates that three shelter homes and Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Welfare Centres (SBBWC) “have been established at [the] divisional level [in] Sibi, Khuzdar and Quetta” (Balochistan n.d.). The *Express Tribune* reported in 2017, citing a member of the Balochistan Assembly, that the province's only Dar-ul-Aman is located in the city of Quetta, and that its facilities are not adequate (*The Express Tribune* 26 Aug. 2017). According to sources, in 2017, a resolution was passed in the Balochistan Assembly to establish Dar-ul-Amans in six divisional headquarters (*The Express Tribune* 26 Aug. 2017; *Dawn* 26 Aug. 2017). Further and corroborating information, including on whether more Dar-ul-Amans are operational, could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

4.4 Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

The 2018 Pakistani report to the UN's CEDAW indicates that the government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has "established four Female Shelter Homes in [the] district[s] [of] Peshawar, Mardan, Swat and Abbottabad while two more shelter homes in Haripur and Mansehra are also being made functional" (Pakistan 23 Oct. 2018, para. 84). Further information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

Notes

[1] The Aurat Foundation (AF) is "a national, non-profit, non-governmental organization" that is "committed to create widespread awareness and commitment for a just, democratic and caring society in Pakistan, where women and men are recognised as equals, with the right to lead their lives with self-respect and dignity" (AF n.d.).

[2] The report indicates the following regarding the context in which it was prepared:

[T]he UK Department for International Development (DFID) funded research to investigate the social and economic costs of VAWG [violence against women and girls] in Ghana, Pakistan and South Sudan (2014–19) A consortium, led by the National University of Ireland, Galway, with Ipsos MORI [a global market research company (Ipsos MORI n.d.)] and the International Center for Research on Women (ICRW) [“a global research institute with headquarters in Washington, D.C., and regional offices in New Delhi, India and Kampala, Uganda” (ICRW n.d.)] in collaboration with the Social Policy and Development Centre (SPDC) [a non-profit, non-partisan think tank based in Karachi (SPDC n.d.)], conducted the research to estimate the economic losses caused by VAWG as well as the non-economic costs of violence that impact on economic growth, development and social stability in Pakistan. (SPDC, et al. Apr. 2019, 8)

[3] The Digital Rights Foundation (DRF) is a Pakistani "research[-]based advocacy NGO focusing on [information and communication technologies] to support human rights, democratic processes and digital governance" (DRF n.d.).

[4] "As mandated by the Criminal Procedure Code, the FIR [First Information Report] is the first primary course of action that is a prerequisite for launching an investigation for any crime" (Tanwir, et al. Aug. 2019, 139). For further information on FIRs, see Response to Information Request PAK106395 of January 2020.

[5] The Asia and the Pacific Policy Society (APPS) and its Policy Forum are "run by a team at Crawford School of Public Policy at [t]he Australian National University" (APPS n.d.).

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