

# Risk Management Office Pakistan

## Internal gender mainstreaming and implementation of GIZ's gender strategy

### Pakistan: Gender and Security

#### 1. Background

##### *The Risk Management Office (RMO) in Pakistan*

Presently, GIZ Pakistan employs around 45 international and 350 national staff and implements projects throughout the country. The majority of staff are based in Islamabad, often with frequent travels to the project sites in the provinces. A small but growing number of international staff members are based in Lahore. Some national staff are also based at duty stations throughout the country. Since January 2017, Pakistan is a full-fledged Compensated Time Out (CTO) country.

The GIZ/KfW RMO in Pakistan was established in 2012. It has 17 staff members: 13 in Islamabad (out of which two are female) and one RRMA (Regional Risk Management Advisor) in each of the four Pakistani provinces, namely Punjab, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Baluchistan.

#### 2. Challenges and objective

Pakistan is a male and Muslim dominated country. Cultural as well as gender considerations vary considerably from Western norms. This sometimes creates challenges for national and international personnel (AMAs, consultants, visitors) alike, not only within GIZ but also in interaction with partners and in common day life. Some staff may have attended intercultural and/or gender trainings, however, this does not hold true for all.

Intercultural and gender related problems are interrelated and can occur on various private and professional levels. A few are listed below:

- social interaction:
  - e.g. hand shaking and personal distance, staring at foreign women
  - dealing with superiors / subordinates, hierarchy and honour
  - ways of addressing problems
  - encounters/interaction between men and women in professional and private life
- emergency / first aid handling:
  - e.g. if a female is injured and cannot be touched by a male, or a male is injured and a woman does not want to touch him
  - after incidents females or males prefer to talk to their own kind
- Other: dealing with household staff, etc.

Not all before mentioned subjects are obviously related to the domain of the RMO. However, if difficulties arise due to "misperceptions" this can easily turn into a larger problem or even conflict affecting the safety and security of personnel and thereby turn into an RMO issue. Therefore, the RMO – as part of the mandatory security briefings for new comers and returning visitors to Pakistan – has taken up the issue. The aim of the approach (as outlined below) is to prepare newcomers as best as possible to feel comfortable in Pakistan, to

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prevent misunderstandings and problems that may result, and finally to sensitise national and international personnel to gender and related intercultural issues.

### 3. Approach

Women and men often have a different set of concerns when it comes to security issues. In order to improve the gender situation within the RMO and with our customers (Country office and project staff, visitors), efforts in three areas have been initiated:

1. **Safety and Security documents** have been improved and developed:
  - The Security presentation covers gender and cultural considerations
  - Gender related handouts on “cultural and gender considerations and values in Pakistan”, “do’s and don’ts in Pakistan (behaviour and respect)” focusing on social interaction and communication protocols between men and women
  - Risk Management Guide
  - Safety and security amateur film produced jointly by the RMO staff
2. **Practical efforts**
  - Conduct participatory and tailor made security presentations to incoming staff, involving all senior male and female staff on a rotation basis.
  - Standardized documents (Standard Operating Procedures)
  - Provide tailor made, participatory trainings and workshops on gender and cultural considerations on demand to GIZ Pakistan staff.
  - Encourage female staff to take up full and equal responsibilities as a “Security Focal Point (SFP)” or a “Floor Marshal (FM)”. Presently there are only 3 female SFPs out of 25 and only 7 female FMs out of 33 in total.
  - Increase the number of female professionals working for the RMO
  - Implement gender focused communication protocols within the RMO 24/7 Operation Room to assist staff with their queries and problems (via phone, email advisories and alike).
  - Provide staff in need the option to talk to female or male staff.
3. **Strategic endeavours**
  - Continuously identifying gaps and prioritizing future actions in the field of gender and safety and security
  - Identify specific threats and needs related to gender and safety and security e.g. travel related risks, sexual harassment, gender based violence
  - Develop strategies on how to handle injured male / female staff in an emergency

Safety and security is a male dominated subject and in addition to that not very popular among the staff. Generally, staff is aware of the subject “gender mainstreaming”, but mostly it is perceived a more theoretical and donor driven approach rather than having practical implications. Therefore, mainstreaming gender issues into this field is an extra challenge. The subject is at times sensitive and mutual trust is paramount. Despite the obstacles, the complete RMO team is behind the efforts.

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The situation is far from perfect and continuous improvement is needed to update the documents, to follow-up on the staff and to incorporate the feedback of the recipients, however, the key outcomes so far are:

- Numerous RMO documents reflect gender / cultural considerations
- Functional structures within the RMO to address gender issues in a safety or security situation, according to questions such as:
  - Where and why are women insecure? Where and why do women have a perception of insecurity?
- Openness to the issue of gender and other “soft subjects” that at first glance are not related to safety and security

### **4. Coming up**

The efforts initiated are being continued and revised. RMO will proactively offer trainings on gender and cultural issues to sensitize the international and national staff. The amateur safety and security film will be turned into a professional film focusing more on gender and specific cultural issues of Pakistan, incorporating the feedback received from the amateur film. Documents and strategies are essential, however, visual aids will make a difference. Visual is also the presence of female staff permanently working with the RMO and those staff assuming responsibilities within GIZ in the field of safety and security. This is still work in progress and far from perfect. The promotion of female participation in safety and security responsibilities will be actively pursued by providing awards to female staff volunteering to accept duties and to those who continuously showed efforts.