

UNESCO Consultation on Gender Sensitive Guidelines for Women in Media in South Asia achieved significant recommendations for Pakistan

8th October 2016: UNESCO in collaboration with Uks organized a National Consultation to refine and validate the Gender Sensitive Guidelines for Women in Media in South Asia, developed earlier this year in a Regional Consultation, and to propose an action plan for the next steps to be taken.

The opening of the National Consultation was made by UNESCO Representative to Pakistan, Ms. Vibeke Jensen, emphasizing on the important role of all media in promoting gender equality in society at large, and the need of gender balance within decision making and content in the Pakistani media institutions.



Participants discussing during the workshops

Uks director, Ms. Tasneem Ahmar, presented the first collected data on the desk study conducted for UNESCO Pakistan on gender equality within media institutions and gender portrayal in media content. The results showed a vast gender gap within media institutions in Pakistan.



The Gender Sensitive Guidelines for Women in Media in South Asia are the result of UNESCO- SWAN (The South Asian Women's Network) Regional Consultation, held on 3rd May of this year in New-Delhi. Representatives from seven countries including Afghanistan, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka participated and contributed to the development of these guidelines.

The National Consultation brought together senior and mid-level media professionals from print, electronic and online media, including advertising and entertainment, self-regulatory authorities, representatives and activists of civil society, women's focused and media development organizations.

Inspired by the developed guidelines, the National Consultation addressed 6 issues that represents a priority for the Pakistani media institutions: 1) the importance of gender balance in media institutions (at decision making level, in work and working conditions including ethical codes for gender-sensitive policies); 2) Role of unions, associations and clubs in promoting gender balance; 3) Gender sensitisation in education and training; 4) addressing gender based violence, safety and harassment at work place; 5) Portrayal of women in news and current affairs and finally; 6) Portrayal of women in entertainment and advertising.

The working groups concluded by stressing the necessity to adopt UNESCO's Gender Sensitive Guidelines for women in Media within media institutions in Pakistan.
