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**Press Release**

**11.67 M Women Await Registration as Voters**

**FAFEN holds Consultation on Women CNIC and Voter Registration**

PESHAWAR, December 1, 2016: The Free and Fair Election Network (FAFEN) has called upon the relevant government authorities to pace up efforts to register as many as 11.67 million women who are missing from the electoral rolls before the General Election 2013.

At a consultation attended by representatives from Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA), political parties, civil society organizations and media, FAFEN emphasized that the gigantic task of women registration can only be achieved through joint and well-coordinated efforts of all election stakeholders. FAFEN arranged the consultation on the critical election issue here at a local hotel in collaboration with its partner organization Urban Rural Development Organization (URDO).

In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, according to government’s statistics, every fourth adult woman is not registered as a voter. “As many as 1.756 million women in the province who are not registered as voter might also not be registered for their Computerized National Identity Cards, which is a legal prerequisite for voter registration,” said FAFEN representative Rashid Chaudhry.

Agreeing to the issue of under-registration of women in the province, NADRA’s Provincial Director General Gohar Ahmed Khan informed the consultation that NADRA has been making special efforts to register women. As many as 79 percent of women and 98 percent of men in the province have been registered, he said.

The DG requested the civil society and elected representatives to bring the unregistered persons to NADRA facilitation centers as to optimize the use of these facilities. He said 14 new Mobile Registration Vans (MRVs) are also being brought into operation to facilitate registration particularly of the marginalized segments of society, including women, transgendered persons and persons with disabilities. He said separate counters for women have been established at all NADRA facilitation centers and the transgendered community will be facilitated in line with the directions of the Supreme Court.

To a question, Gohar Khan said the condition of photograph for women is not mandatory for the processing of their CNIC. “What is required is the thumb impression of a relative of the person getting CNIC.”

ECP’s Provincial Director Election Mohammad Farid said NADRA and ECP have proper coordination mechanism. He said District Voter Education Committees have been established, asking the representatives of civil society to bring women to these committees for their awareness.

FAFEN member organizations working in seven districts across the province also shared their experiences while dealing with the important issue of women CNIC and voter registration. Most of them were of the view that women and other members of the marginalized communities are interested in getting themselves registered with NADRA but due to inadequate facilities, they face difficulties in getting their cards.

FAFEN partner organizations highlighted issues that need to be sorted out at the earliest. These included difficulty in getting Mobile Registration Vans (MRVs) for low registration areas, internet connectivity and requirement of women’s photographs for CNICs.