

About Us

The word "Uks" is an Urdu term meaning "reflection". At Uks, our team of professional media persons and research staff, aims to promote the reflection of a neutral, balanced and unbiased approach to women and women's issues within, and through the media. The Centre has already won the support of many journalists, human rights and women's rights activists, academics and other like-minded groups.



Since its inception in 1997, Uks has monitored media, conducted research on emerging trends, particularly regarding gender and women development, and undertaken trainings and workshops to raise awareness about crucial issues amongst media.

Uks views the mass media as an exceedingly important part of our day-to-day living, reflecting and to a large extent determining our daily life and ideological beliefs. Therefore it aims to utilise in its entirety, the services of our media to effectively improve the present status of the Pakistani woman and to highlight the importance of her role in national development. Uks, with its team of highly professional media persons and researchers, aims to look at various aspects of women-media relationship.

Aims & Objectives

- ▶ To work towards a more widely accepted understanding of a gender perspective in media.
- ▶ Providing training in gender sensitisation and awareness to media persons while incorporating their suggestions and feedback to help in our own understanding, awareness and evolution.
- ▶ To develop a media related documentation and database covering issues, which impact women.
- ▶ Promoting a neutral, unbiased and balanced attitude towards women in media.
- ▶ Finding out to what extent the media resorts to the use of derogatory or offensive language while reporting on women.
- ▶ Investigating the causes of sexist and derogatory image portrayal, analysing structural, cultural and attitudinal factors.
- ▶ Helping the development of alternative concepts, approaches and vocabulary while dealing with women.
- ▶ Active involvement in efforts for maintaining peace in the region and advocacy against nuclear arms race.

ACTIVITIES & PROGRAMMES

Networking and Advocacy

Uks has built a forum for debate, discussion and its implementation. Over the past few years it has regularly initiated and organised workshops and seminars on themes that needed urgent attention and continues to do so. Uks understands that no individual or organisation can work in a vacuum. Therefore we have always believed in networking with similar minded groups and organisations and taking them along, while learning from their experiences, in our quest to take on the unjust and discriminatory treatment of women. Uks has been an active member of the Legislative Watch Group as well as a part of the Committee for the Repeal of the Discriminatory Laws and the Beijing +10 review process.

Most recently it has networked with media and Civil Society Organisations throughout the country for the British Council funded Gender Equality Project aimed at the Formulation and Implementation of a Gender Sensitive Code of Ethics for the Print Media in Pakistan. As part of this effort, nationwide on-desk trainings for all tiers of print media journalists have been conducted to create gender sensitivity and evolve a consensus on the effective implementation of a gender sensitive code of ethics. Uks has also advocated similar causes in the past, including awareness raising drives regarding HIV/AIDS and derogatory portrayal of women in the media. We aim to continue developing and organising media monitoring, advocacy, mobilisation and sensitisation workshops and seminars primarily on the following issues:

- Women and Health issues with special focus on HIV/AIDS
- Violence against women including war crimes
- Women's Political Participation and Growth
- Women and education
- Trafficking in Women and Children
- Globalisation and its impact on Women



Research and Publications

A product of exhaustive research, the annual desk diary has become the trademark of our organisation. It is a handy document, which also serves as a striking collector's item. To give a well-rounded view of the theme for a particular year, essentially related to women development, press clippings, opinions, poetry, illustrations and a detailed chronology of events are given. The diary is widely circulated among media persons, human and women's rights activists, international agencies and government organisations.

"Changing Images" a national study on monitoring and sensitisation of the print media on the portrayal of women published by Uks has proved to be a valuable resource to researchers, students and anyone interested in pursuing further analysis. This study was the first of its kind in Pakistan, breaking new ground by providing overviews of media coverage, expression of concern by those directly involved in producing newspapers and magazines, and in-depth analysis of specific categories of items. The findings represent the first effort in Pakistan to analyse gender issue in the print media.

"HIV/AIDS and Us", a resource book prepared, edited and published by Uks includes information on the epidemic, the AIDS situation globally and in Pakistan, AIDS and the NGO sector and most importantly 'AIDS and women' with specific guidelines for the media persons on how to report on this issue.

A bi-annual newsletter "Ukaas" provides links between Uks and other agencies besides extending information on internal and external activities on women and media.

Besides producing reports on the basis of various researches conducted by Uks, quarterly and annual reports on the working of Uks are also released.



ACTIVITIES & PROGRAMMES

Uks Radio Project

Uks is perhaps the only Civil Society Organisation in Pakistan that owns a radio production house managed by an all women team of broadcasters and journalists. Uks Radio Project is an attempt to rectify conditions arising from the extremely low percentage of women journalists in the country standing at a mere 3%, as well as infuse a culture of investigative reporting, till now largely missing from local journalistic traditions. Its programmes, aired from private FM channels throughout the country, are primarily aimed at public service broadcasting while providing balanced portrayal vis a vis the projection of women.



One of the major reasons for stereotypical and derogatory projection of women in the Pakistani media, is the extreme under representation of women as journalists and broadcasters. By training a team of women journalists and heading an all female production house, Uks has contributed towards raising the profile of women working in broadcast journalism.

Through its programmes Uks has shared opinions on a whole variety of themes including HIV/AIDS, women trafficking, prostitution, drug abuse and reproductive health which in a conservative society like Pakistan's are considered taboo topics despite the pressing urgency for an open discussion. After the successful conclusion of its year-long radio programme "Meri Awaz Sunno", Uks is undertaking independent ventures as well as commissioned public service programmes.

Monitoring, Documentation & Database

Being a resource centre, this section uses the cut and paste method to preserve newspaper clippings on all issues concerning women. Ten to Twelve, English and Urdu language daily, weekly and afternoon newspapers are daily scanned with the office bearing a comprehensive record since 1998. This is open to public who can make use of it for the purpose of research and analysis. The data is essentially invaluable to the Uks team in facilitating our study of emerging media trends, the shifting balance of gender representation and portrayal of other issues of human concern like HIV/AIDS and human trafficking. Plans are also underway to computerise, what can aptly be termed as, one of Uks' most valuable resources.

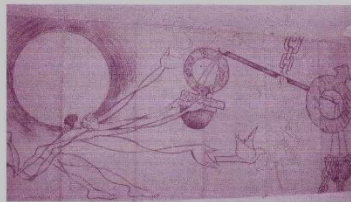
Audience Research

Uks has tried to base its perceptions of media and the society on supplementing its monitoring process with a comprehensive analysis of the audience. We have regularly gauged the preferences of the audience through discussions, debates, questionnaires and polls on various issues relating to media and communication.

None of our projects have been complete without a consistent and continued interaction with average readers and audience. Some of the major discussions we've had include the impact of satellite television, newspaper readers' preferences, the changing role of housewives in our society and the emerging concept of shared parenting. Our research works two ways as it not only results in authentic appraisal of readers' preferences, helping us understand the various influences acting upon a reader, but also creates in them a sense of identity; that of being an important entity in the communication process.



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Uks is a research, resource and publication centre dedicated to the cause of gender equality and women's development. We are an advocacy and rights-based group seeking to raise awareness and assist implementation of our goals and ideals. The Centre focuses on the women-media relationship; a concern that has hitherto remained poorly represented by organisations working on women's rights.

A Research, Resource & Publication Centre On Women And Media