

Asia Ashraf

Women's Organisations Committee on Alcohol and Drug Issues, WOCAD

Supported by:

WFAD (World Federation Against Drugs)

Candidate for:

Deputy Secretary

Asia Ashraf from Pakistan holds Masters in Applied Psychology (2003) from Punjab University and Diplomas in HR Management and Speech & Language Therapy from the National Institute for Rehabilitative Medicines, Islamabad. She did a one-year fellowship in Substance Abuse, Education, Treatment, Policy and Prevention from Virginia Commonwealth University, USA (2015-2016). She is national trainer Universal Treatment Curriculums (UTC) for the UNODC and Colombo Plan Drug Advisory Program and is internationally certified addiction professional (ICAP) from ICCE, Sri Lanka. Starting as an intern psychologist (2003), She remained Director Rehabilitation and Head of Psychology Department, Sunny Trust Addiction Treatment and Rehabilitation Centre, Islamabad until 2019. Her main responsibilities were overall management, program implementation, monitoring and supervision of treatment and rehabilitation of persons with substance use and mental health disorders. She undertakes counseling, relapse prevention trainings, capacity-building of addiction professionals including TOTs, and orientation sessions for interns, volunteers and nursing/mental health trainees. She is mentor and member of Pakistan US Alumni Network (PUAN) Islamabad.

Besides working on treatment and rehab of male population, she is deeply interested in exclusive needs and access to these services for the female, who remain neglected and excluded. She improvised treatment and rehabilitation of young girls with substance use disorders by setting up first separate, female unit at Sunny Trust. Now she is core team member of Gender Working Group (GWG) by World Federation Against Drugs (WFAD) to specifically address the illicit drug use/addiction among women, gender based violence and its correlation with illicit drug use and access to health care, treatment and recovery services for women. Whilst advocating for women's rights and contributing to the global drug policy debate. She also launched a first Recovery Club, an open, free, safe space for persons in recovery at Islamabad, Pakistan.

Her yearlong stay in the U.S. under Hubert Humphrey Fellowship (2015-2016) helped her to avail great opportunities including keynote address at the UN Informal Interactive Stakeholder Consultation preparatory to the UNGA Special Session on World Drug Problem, held in New York on February 10, 2016. She also attended UNGASS session, held from 14-18, April 2016, which gave her an in-depth understanding of overall drug situation in the world, approaches adapted to address the issues and international drug policy. She also learned about community coalition model by having internship at CADCA– powerful data-driven community-based approach to address the colossal issue of drug abuse in Pakistan.

She is an energetic, passionate, grass root level female worker with 17 years of experience in diverse areas related to substance abuse & mental health disorders (treatment, rehabilitation and prevention). She has worked with diverse groups of youth, women, children and elderly people. Her practical experience, yearlong stay at USA, active participation in UNGASS, close and responsible role in drug policy futures and in Gender working group and her experience as a special advisor to the board of WFAD has given her good insight into drug situation, strategies and perspective of the world on it.

She has recently registered and is founder of Peace Inn, a house of Peace and Tranquility for mental health and substance use disorders' treatment, rehabilitation and prevention. She aims to create a mentoring network for young people and a strong advocacy platform for the promotion of responsible, balanced and gender-based humane drug policies.