Formative Mid-term Review – Women Political Participation

REVISED DRAFT REPORT – VERSION 02
DEVTRIO CONSULTANTS
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CBO</td>
<td>Community Based Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEDAW</td>
<td>Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CFIAP</td>
<td>Canada’s Feminist International Assistance Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNIC</td>
<td>Computerized National Identity Card</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPCSPIA</td>
<td>Canada’s Policy for Civil Society Partnerships for International Assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSO</td>
<td>Civil Society Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSWs</td>
<td>Commissions on the Status of Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DCSW</td>
<td>District Commission on the Status of Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DSW</td>
<td>District Social Welfare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECP</td>
<td>Election Commission of Pakistan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAFEN</td>
<td>Free and Fair Election Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FE</td>
<td>Feminist Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEMPOWER</td>
<td>Feminist Leadership for Accountability and Political Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FGD</td>
<td>Focus Group Discussions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GAC</td>
<td>Global Affairs Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GBV</td>
<td>Gender Based Violence</td>
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<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GGGI</td>
<td>Global Gender Gap Index</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GII</td>
<td>Gender Inequality Index</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICCPR</td>
<td>International Covenant on Civil &amp; Political Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICESCR</td>
<td>International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDEAS</td>
<td>Institute of Development and Economic Alternatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IEC</td>
<td>Information, Education and Communication</td>
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<tr>
<td>IFES</td>
<td>International Foundation for Electoral Systems</td>
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<tr>
<td>ILO</td>
<td>International Labor Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPU</td>
<td>Inter-Parliamentary Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KII</td>
<td>Key Informant Interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KP</td>
<td>Khyber Pakhtunkhwa</td>
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<tr>
<td>KPCSew</td>
<td>Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Commission on the Status of Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGS</td>
<td>Local Governance School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LISTEN</td>
<td>Leverage in Social Transformation of Elected Nominees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MALE</td>
<td>Male Allies for Leadership Equality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MNA</td>
<td>Member of National Assembly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoHR</td>
<td>Ministry of Human Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPA</td>
<td>Member of Provincial Assembly</td>
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<tr>
<td>MTR</td>
<td>Mid-Term Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NADRA</td>
<td>National Database and Registration Authority</td>
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<tr>
<td>NCSW</td>
<td>National Commission on the Status of Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIC</td>
<td>National Identity Card</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OAKF</td>
<td>Omar Asghar Khan Foundation</td>
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<tr>
<td>OECD/DAC</td>
<td>Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development/Development Assistance Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P&amp;D Department</td>
<td>Planning and Development Department</td>
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<tr>
<td>P&amp;D-SP&amp;GM</td>
<td>Planning and Development Department – Social Protection and Gender Mainstreaming</td>
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<tr>
<td>PIPS</td>
<td>Pakistan Institute of Parliamentary Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>PLS</td>
<td>Post-Legislative Scrutiny</td>
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<tr>
<td>PMF</td>
<td>Performance Management Framework</td>
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<tr>
<td>POWER</td>
<td>Participation of Women in Elections and Registration</td>
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<tr>
<td>RBM</td>
<td>Results Based Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RHV</td>
<td>Raising Her Voice</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>SAPP-PK</td>
<td>South Asia Partnership-Pakistan</td>
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<td>SCL</td>
<td>She Can Lead</td>
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<tr>
<td>SE</td>
<td>Special Education</td>
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<td>SED</td>
<td>Special Education Department</td>
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<td>SG</td>
<td>Shirkat Gah</td>
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<td>STEP</td>
<td>Special Talent Exchange Program</td>
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<td>SWD</td>
<td>Social Welfare Department</td>
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<tr>
<td>TA</td>
<td>Technical Assistance</td>
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<tr>
<td>TDEA</td>
<td>Trust for Democratic Education and Accountability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOT</td>
<td>Training of Trainers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VAWE</td>
<td>Violence Against Women in Elections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WE'RE LEADERS</td>
<td>Women’s Enjoyment of Rights, Empowerment and Leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WED</td>
<td>Women’s Economic Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WED</td>
<td>Women Empowerment Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEPP-KP</td>
<td>Women’s Empowerment and Political Participation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIE</td>
<td>Women in Election</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WLG</td>
<td>Women in Local Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WPC</td>
<td>Women’s Parliamentary Caucus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WPI</td>
<td>Women's Power Index</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WPP</td>
<td>Women’s Political Participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WPS</td>
<td>Women Parliamentarian Survey</td>
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<tr>
<td>WVN</td>
<td>Women Voter Network</td>
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</table>
1. Introduction

In response to the call launched by Global Affairs Canada in March 2018 for receiving preliminary proposals for implementing women’s political participation in Pakistan; five organizations were selected to lead the projects related to women’s political participation. Women’s Political Participation in Pakistan (WPP) is a flagship program and a four-year initiative of the Global Affairs Canada (GAC). The intended outcome of this program is centered on increasing political empowerment and enjoyment of rights for women, particularly young and marginalized women and those at risk, in Pakistan. Following are the intermediate outcomes of the WPP program:

**Outcome 1**
- Increased protection and promotion of women's civil and political rights by individuals, governments and civil society

**Outcome 2**
- Enhanced equitable and inclusive participation in democratic processes and civil life by women, particularly of young and marginalized women

**Outcome 3**
- Improved inclusiveness and gender responsiveness of governments, democratic institutions and civil society organizations (nationally and sub-nationally)

*Figure 1: Intermediate Outcomes of WPP Program*

The program includes five projects which were implemented by five different implementing partners. The titles of the projects along with their implementing partners is illustrated in figure 1 as follows:

- **Women’s Empowerment and Political Participation in Khyber Pakhtunkwa WEPP-KP (By CoWater)**
- **Democracy and Empowered Women (Jamhooriat aur Baikhtiar - JAZBA) (By SAP-PK)**
- **FEMPOWER (By Shirkat Gah)**
- **Women’s Enjoyment of Rights, Empowerment and Leadership - WE’RE Leaders (By TDEA)**
- **POWER (IFES)**

*Figure 2: WPP Projects in Pakistan*
2. Objectives of Study

The mid-term review evaluation reviewed WPP projects implemented by five implementing partners including CoWater, SAP-PK, Shirkat Gah, TDEA and IFES in order to gauge as to what extent these projects have achieved their objectives and intended outcomes related to women’s political empowerment and enjoyment of equal rights for young and marginalized women of Pakistan. The mid-term review assessed each of the five projects’ extent of success in the following areas:

- Evaluating the extent to which projects are consistent with GAC’s development assistance priorities, especially those of FIAP.
- Exploring the contribution of projects to institutional strengthening of women’s rights agencies and gender responsiveness of democratic institutions at local, provincial and federal levels.
- Evaluating projects in terms of increasing the effectiveness of civil society, national and local CSOs to advocate for gender equality and inclusive democratic governance systems.
- Accessing project's contribution on terms of increasing women's political representation in decision-making and leadership positions in informal and formal political bodies, including political parties and budgetary
- Gauging if projects are achieving the planned outcomes, outputs and impact results effectively & documenting the extent to which the projects are Effective, Relevant, Impactful and have results that are sustainable beyond the life of the projects

*Figure 3: Objectives of Study*
3. Geographical Scope & Data Collection Modality

A total of 17 districts out of 57 were reached for primary data collection of the study. Out of these 17 districts, 10 districts were covered with in person discussions and interviews; 5 were done with only virtual data collection while for two districts a hybrid approach of data collection was used.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provinces</th>
<th>Districts</th>
<th>Modality of data collection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>In-person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>Lahore</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rawalpindi/ICT</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Okara</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Muzaffargarh</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Toba Tek Singh</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baluchistan</td>
<td>Quetta</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gwadar</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sindh</td>
<td>Hyderabad</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Karachi</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Keamari</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tando Muhammad Khan</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khyber Pakhtunkhwa</td>
<td>Kashmore</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peshawar</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lower Dir</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mardan</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Abbottabad</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kohat</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Geographical focus of the evaluation
4. Projects’ Background

GAC awarded the implementation of the Women’s Political Participation program to 5 different implementing partners including Shirkat Gah, IFES, SAP-PK, CoWater and TDEA. The following section provides a brief overview of each project, their key interventions and their geographical spread.

4.1 FEMPOWER By Shirkat Gah

The project aims to strengthen the poor and marginalized, especially women to articulate their concerns, exercise political choice and hold decision- and policy-makers to account. In keeping with Amartya Sen’s Capability Approach, FEMPOWER points out that that poverty is multi-dimensional and not limited to economic deprivation. Reducing poverty requires: states to be accountable and effective, rights to be institutionalized, the bargaining power of the marginalized to be expanded & sustained public engagement of citizens to be ensured. The combined impact of the interventions proposed by the four-partner consortium under the WPP program GAC would increase the political empowerment of women and help to reduce poverty in Pakistan. ¹

Key Interventions:

Shirkat Gah has devised multiple interventions targeting women’s political participation under FEMPOWER. The following list briefly explains some of the interventions from the project:

- Reinforce the demands of women and civil society organizations for gender equality and inclusive democracy at various levels through awareness raising, capacity building, networking and conducting evidence-based advocacy campaigns;
- Strengthen women and female councilors to adopt rights-seeking behavior and assume leadership roles;
- Extend technical support to elected and executive branches of government to promote and institutionalize gender equitable laws, policies & budgets;
- Provide women and youth opportunities for self-expression and engagement in public debates around gender and other issues of discrimination;
- Ensure greater access of women to gender-sensitized duty-bearers and media personnel.

¹ Shirkat Gah, FEMPOWER Proposal Document.
Geographic Focus:

FEMPOWER’s geographical spread is across all 4 provinces with KP and Punjab receiving the greatest attention. The table below lists all the districts where the project is operational:

4.2 POWER by IFES

Participation of Women in Elections and Registration (POWER) has the objective of promoting and protecting political rights of women through increased gender responsiveness of state institutions and civil society. The Project focuses on ensuring women have full access to the electoral process, as voters, candidates, electoral administrators and active citizens. It provides support to the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to play a leadership role in women’s electoral empowerment and equip civil society and aspiring women leaders with the tools, skills and experience necessary to remove barriers to equal electoral participation; strengthen control over the political decision-making that impacts their livelihoods; and improve well-being and meaningful involvement in civic and political life.

Key Interventions:

IFES has developed a comprehensive set of interventions under their project POWER. The following list explains some of the planned interventions:

**Technical support to ECP:** Providing gender mainstreaming framework and assessment of legal framework with gender lens, suggesting improvement to women CNIC registration and capacity building of male and female staff of ECP.

**She Leads Training:** IFES’s flagship community-level program designed to train and engage women who have demonstrated leadership qualities at community level.

**Male Allies for Leadership Equality (MALE):** To sensitize men to the importance of working together with women to lead political processes and democratic development. IFES partners identified men from their communities, who had the potential to support women for implementation of their action plans.

**Power to Persuade Program:** To enhance advocacy skills of women with disabilities, empower them to influence policy and advocate for equal rights. Capacity building and training on how to identify problems and develop an advocacy plan.

**Women in Elections:** This is a one-stop online portal to provide comprehensive, web-based resource on women’s rights for electoral and political participation.

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2 IFES, POWER Proposal Document.
Geographic Focus:

The geographical focus of POWER is in all 4 provinces of Pakistan. The table below lists down all the districts where the project is underway:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KP:</th>
<th>Punjab:</th>
<th>Sindh:</th>
<th>Balochistan:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bajaur</td>
<td>Jhang</td>
<td>Karachi East</td>
<td>Quetta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Battagram</td>
<td>Jhelum</td>
<td>Benazirabad</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shangla</td>
<td>Chakwal</td>
<td>Sajawal</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Khyber</td>
<td></td>
<td>Tando Muhammad Khan</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbottabad</td>
<td>TobaTek Singh</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kohat</td>
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4.3 JAZBA by SAP PK

South-Asia Partnership Pakistan and Aurat Foundation (AF) envisage a four-year (June 2019-July 2023) "Democracy and Empowered Women " program (JAZBA in Urdu) to enhance inclusive democratic processes and political participation for the advancement of women's rights and at-risk populations, such as minorities and the transgender community, in approximately 25 of the 132 districts of Pakistan, across its four provinces and Gilgit-Baltistan.3

Key Interventions:

SAP-PK has devised the following set of interventions to improve women’s political participation under the banner of JAZBA:

- Training to women and youth for leadership in community and local government.
- Support to women, youth groups & CSOs for public campaigning and interface with political & governance entities
- Support for formation of women voters’ network for meaningful engagement with duty bearers; and facilitation provided for increased women registered for the NIC/electoral roll.
- Capacity building support provided in gender responsive governance to new and existing networks of women in local government (WLG) in different districts and drawing on regional experience
- Women, youth & WLGs supported to engage in community based budget and social accountability mechanism in select 15 districts
- Technical assistance provided to women party workers, male & female key leaders and legislators to advocate for women’s empowerment in general and within political parties and in parliament

Geographic Focus:

Unlike the other projects, JAZBA is operational in Gilgit-Baltistan as well. The list below captures all the districts where JAZBA is functional:

**Figure 10: Geographical Spread - SAP PK**

4.4 **WEPP-KP by COWATER**

The project aims to increase the political empowerment and enjoyment of rights by women, particularly young and marginalized women and those at-risk in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), by pursuing two inter-related intermediate outcomes: improved gender responsive and inclusive systems of governments, democratic institutions and civil society organizations, nationally and sub-nationally and increased and equitable participation of women in democratic processes and public life, particularly young and marginalized women. The project works in collaboration with the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Commission on the Status of Women (KPCSW) and the provincial Social Welfare, Special Education and Women Empowerment Department (SW, SE & WED).

**Key Interventions:**

CoWater’s interventions cut across the themes of capacity development, technical assistance, community engagements, communication, coordination and consultation. The following list further explains the interventions under WEPP-KP:

- **Capacity Development** of government departments like SW, SE & WED; KPCSW; DCSW, DSW, LGS; SP&GM
- **Technical Assistance** for preparation & implementation of laws, policies, procedures, programs, planning and budgeting.
- **Communication, Coordination & Consultation:** Communication Strategy, Stake holder Engagement Plan, Coordination meetings, International Days Celebration, IEC material.
- **Learning & Experience Sharing:** Exposure Visits (National and International), Community Forums, Consultation workshops, Gender Tool Kit, Manuals development, Reports
- **District Level interventions:** Capacity development & technical assistance to District, Committees on Status of Women and District Social Welfare Office of 26 districts. (initially 4 districts).
- **Community Engagements:** Community forum, dialogues and sessions with locally elected representatives, male and female religious leaders and local influential.

**Figure 11: Key Interventions - COWATER**

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Geographic Focus:

The geographical spread of CoWater’s project is restricted to KP as the name suggests and the project is functional in all four provinces of Pakistan. The tables below list the districts where the project is operational:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KP:</th>
<th>KP:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Peshawar,</td>
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<td>• Charsadda,</td>
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<td>• Mardan,</td>
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<td>• Haripur,</td>
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<td>• Abbottabad,</td>
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<td>• Kohat</td>
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<td>• Nowshera</td>
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<td>• Battagram</td>
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<td>• Swat</td>
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<td>• Dera Ismail Khan</td>
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<td>• Lower Dir</td>
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<td>• Shangla</td>
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<td>• Bajour</td>
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Figure 12: Geographical Spread - CoWATER

4.5 WE’RE LEADERS by TDEA

The Trust for Democratic Education and Accountability (TDEA) has developed the Women’s Enjoyment of Rights, Empowerment and Leadership (WE’RE Leaders) project to identify a number of stakeholders to engage in providing and improving women’s participation in political processes on the one hand and capacitating women for more meaningful contribution to the democratic system as a whole.
Key Interventions:

WE’RE Leaders is working on an extensive set of interventions to advance women’s political participation. The following is a summarized list of interventions under this project:

- Facilitation in developing institutional, strategic and/or annual plans of partnering commissions.
- Capacity-building of partnering commissions’ staff to promote and protect women's civil and political rights.
- Advocacy campaign for gender-sensitive regulation of media, progressive portrayal of women.
- Capacity building workshops for electronic media professionals to promote women's civil and political rights.
- Capacity-building and mentoring of aspiring young women leaders/ rights activists.
- Training workshops for potential women candidates/local resource persons on participation in democratic processes and contesting elections.
- Evaluation of existing and proposed laws to identify gender gaps and proposing recommendations to make them gender-sensitive.
- Evaluation of performance of women legislators.

Geographic Focus:

The geographical focus of the project is spread across all four provinces. The districts where the project is operational are mentioned below:

- KP: Peshawar,Charsadda,Mardan,Upper Dir,Manshera,Bannu
- Punjab: Lahore,Rawalpindi/ICT,Okara,Sheikhupura,Muzaffargarh,Rahim Yar Khan,Sailkot,Gujrat
- Sindh: Hyderabad,Karachi,Malir,Khairpur,Kashmore
- Balochistan: Quetta,Loralai,Lasbella
- Gilgit Baltistan: Gilgit

Figure 13: Key Interventions - TDEA

Figure 14: Geographical Spread – TDEA
5. Literature Review

5.1 Rationale for the Literature Review

The purpose of this extensive literature review is to lay the foundations for a conceptual understanding around the issue of women’s political participation in Pakistan. It informs the reader about the framework through which women’s political participation has been analysed and further guides the reader along the contours of the causes and impacts of low female political participation in Pakistan. This literature review helps to set the context for the mid-term review by providing a historical analysis of women’s political participation and then concludes by listing down current initiatives to increase female political participation in Pakistan.

5.2 Conceptualizing Women’s Political Participation

Globally, political participation research has undergone significant developments over the course of the last few decades. Its multidisciplinary and dynamic nature allows it to withstand multiple perspectives.

For the purposes of this evaluation and a deeper understanding, political participation will be analyzed through the bifurcated lens of private citizens and electoral candidates and elected representatives.

- Political Participation through Female Private Citizens

The earliest researchers defined political participation as “those activities by private citizens that are more or less directly aimed at influencing the selection of governmental personnel and/or the actions they take”. According to this, private citizens have the ability to participate in politics not just by casting votes or joining parties but through numerous other activities as well. Their suggested typology consists of voting, campaign activity, contacting public officials, and cooperative or communal activities. This definition also goes beyond elections and brings actions such as protests, strikes, or petitions under the purview of political participation.

- Political Participation through Female Electoral Candidates and Elected Representatives

It is pertinent to examine political participation and political representation through the lens of females to accurately capture the stark disparities in the experiences of both the genders. Formal or democratic political participation is concerned with the election of political candidates and the subsequent governance by elected representatives of the polity. This includes party politics, party and electoral nominations, election campaigning, legislation and all other activities pertaining to holding political office.

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5.3 Historical Development of Women’s Political Participation in Pakistan

Historical review of women’s political participation in Pakistan can be divided into two periods: from the year 1947 to 2000 and from the year 2000 to the present year. The distinguishing feature between these two periods is the difference in the prevalence of legislation and policy initiatives for improving female representation in the country’s political system.

- 1947-1999: The Early Years with Marginal Representation of Women

The Pakistan Movement viewed women such as Ms. Fatima Jinnah as an integral part of the struggle for a separate homeland, however, women’s fairly active role in the freedom struggle did not permeate to Pakistan’s political sphere post-independence. The first National Assembly of Pakistan had only one female representative. The 1956, 1962 and 1973 Constitutions introduced a 3.2%, 3.8% and 4.7% reserved seats quota respectively for women in the National Assembly. General Zia’s military rule increased the female quota to 8.4% but this was shortly overturned by the subsequent governments of Nawaz Sharif and Benazir Bhutto. On average, the early years bore a dismally low rate of female participation in Pakistan’s national, provincial and local politics.

- 2000 to Present: Legislation & Quota Systems for Maximum Female Representation

For the first time and under military rule, in 2000, the quota for women’s political participation was raised to 33% for Local Government structures and was effective at the union council, tehsil and district level. Similarly, the mandated proportion of women in both the National and Provincial Assemblies was also increased to 17%. As a result, the 2002 elections saw the number of females contesting in the elections spike from 56 in 1997 to 188 in 2002. This quota continues till date and is one of the main drivers for increased women’s participation in the political system. In the election of 2018, 171 women in total contested in the general elections, and of these 171, 105 were nominated by political parties, and 69 among them won their respective seats. To compare this to the 1997 election, this ratio was almost one-third: only 56 women contested the election at that time, among them 39 were nominated by political parties, and only 7 managed to win. This quota continues till date and is one of the main drivers for increased women’s participation in the political system as shown in the figure below.

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5.4 Snapshot of Women’s Political Participation in Pakistan Today

This section will give a snapshot of where Pakistan stands globally and nationally in terms of women’s political participation.

Global Indicators

According to the UN Women, only 25% of all parliamentarians around the world are female and only 21st of these parliamentarians hold ministerial positions. Only recently have governments started putting in effort for achieving gender parity in politics. An attribute of this effort has been the collection of gender-disaggregated data to better analyze the state of women in global politics. The following indexes try to capture some element of women’s political participation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Global Gender Gap Index (GGGI)</th>
<th>Gender Inequality Index (GII)</th>
<th>Women’s Power Index</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Developed in 2011 by World Economic Forum, and measures economic participation, educational attainment, health &amp; survival, and political empowerment.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In 2022, Pakistan ranks 2nd-to-last (145th out of 146 countries)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan performed the worst for political empowerment indicator.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflects gender inequalities in health, empowerment and economic activity.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empowerment indicator measures the number of female and male parliamentarians.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In 2017, Pakistan’s GII was 0.541, ranking it 133 out of 160 countries.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Created by Council on Foreign Relations (CFR). It ranks 193 UN member states on their progress toward gender parity in political participation.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan ranked 137th out of 193 countries.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 15: Global Indicators

National Indicators

In order to meet international commitments, Pakistani authorities have put in concerted efforts to improve women’s role in politics. The list below gives a snapshot of the positioning of women in Pakistani politics:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Assembly: 68 or 19.8% women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Punjab Assembly: 74 or 20.1% women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sindh Assembly: 31 or 18.4% women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KP Assembly: 26 or 17.9% women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balochistan Assembly: 11 or 16.9% women</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Women in Ministerial Positions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Only 3 Female Federal Ministers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only 1 Female Minister from Punjab Assembly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only 2 Female Ministers from Sindh Assembly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No female ministers in KP and Balochistan’s cabinets

Figure 16: National Indicators

5.5 Causes for Low Political Participation of Female Citizens

As highlighted from the statistics in earlier sections, Pakistan’s female political participation is below the global average and requires serious attention and effort. This section will examine the causes for low political participation by female citizens in order to later address possible solutions to improve the situation.

Gendered Nature of Political Space and Engagement

Political space in Pakistan is highly gender segregated and underpinned by low contact between women and political party representatives and their workers. A research study by Institute of Development and Economic Alternatives reported that women were 3 times less likely than men to have been mobilized by political parties in the run up to the 2013 General Election or to have made contact with political representatives after elections to resolve their issues.11 When women do make contact with representatives, it is largely mediated by men from the household.

Moreover, gender-segregated political spaces result in large gender gaps in women’s political self-efficacy; interest in politics; and knowledge of politics. This suggests that the gendered nature of social and political spaces in Pakistan is not only lowering the political self-efficacy of women, they are also socializing them as less informed members of the polity with little interest in political matters.

Patriarchal Norms

Gender roles are monumental for determining expectations and perceptions regarding women’s political participation. Multiple studies assert that the most important household factor determining women’s political participation is men’s views about women’s political engagement and the conditions under which they think it is appropriate for women to vote. In a survey by the United States Institute of Peace, 8.3% of Pakistani men responded that it was inappropriate for women to vote in a general election. Unsurprisingly, households where men thought so had an 11% lower female voter turnout. Nearly 55% of men in the sample believed it was acceptable to prevent women in their household from voting if they wanted to vote differently from them. Approximately 43.4% of men reported that it was acceptable to prevent women from voting if there is a chance of fighting breaking out at the polling station. Households where men held these views had an 8.6% lower turnout of women.12

This suggests that men remain important gatekeepers in mediating women’s ability to vote and that individual attitudes and social norms upheld by men are an important determinant of women’s turnout in metropolitan cities as well.

Domestic Responsibilities

Another pressing challenge is the way heavy and uneven domestic responsibilities on women lead to time constraints which limit women’s democratic engagement. The inequality in household relations – including social expectations of gendered division of labor and men’s power over decision making – further limit women’s full and meaningful political participation. These inequitable time constraints affect not only women as voters, but also their participation as candidates and elected representatives. A UN Women survey corroborates this finding as 78% of Pakistani participants reported that women should still perform their domestic duties if elected to public office. In another set of polling data from the 2018 General Elections by the International Republic Institute (IRI), nearly one quarter of women participants cited household roles and duties as the most significant barrier to increasing women’s participation.

Under-representation in the National Registry

The NIC or CNIC is an essential document for a Pakistani woman to claim her rights; this could be the right to claim her inheritance, to open a bank account and arguably the most important one: to cast her vote. 11.31 million women are eligible to vote but they are not registered on the voter lists because these women do not possess valid CNICs.13 This under-registration of women stems from social and cultural factors that restrict women’s participation in civic, political and electoral processes. According to a recent study by ECP, more than one-quarter (27%) of female respondents said they do not need a CNIC, a quarter (24%) cited lack of time, and others cited lack of support from

relatives (13%), not having the required documents (8%), high cost (5%) and distance to NADRA offices (3%) as causes for under-registration with NADRA.\(^\text{14}\)

- **Gender-based Electoral Violence**

The security risks surrounding political activity in Pakistan affect women disproportionately as they put additional restrictions on women’s mobility and democratic freedoms. Electoral violence is employed frequently to intimidate and pressurize candidates and party members with women often being viewed as an easy target. Polling stations – especially those in rural areas - disregard gender sensitivities and contribute to higher chances of violence and harassment for women. In places where polling stations are not segregated, chances of skirmishes between men during and after polling end up inhibiting women from participating in the electoral process.

Being wary of this impending violence during the 2018 General Elections, the ECP amped up security by declaring 20,789 polling stations as ‘sensitive’.\(^\text{15}\) Regardless, the potential threat of gender-based violence prevented women from participating in elections.

- **Mobility Constraints/ Lack of transport**

A sizeable chunk of Pakistani population lives in rural areas and lacks access to basic facilities of roads, public transport, and other roadside infrastructure to allow smooth travel for political activity. Female respondents from rural areas cite long distances to polling stations and the lack of public transport as a deterrent for political participation. While other women report that the men in their family or village place restrictions on their mobility and often bar them from leaving the confines of their homes. In both rural and urban centers, women report limiting their travel due to security risks stemming from street harassment and the paucity of gender sensitive security personnel.\(^\text{16}\) Subsequently, it’s clear that mobility constraints are a serious blockage in the way for achieving gender parity in political participation.

- **Lack of Political Awareness**

Most of the women do not have information or access to information about the political, civic and electoral processes. They remain unaware of the opportunities for women's political participation and their rights. Lack of awareness about rights and opportunities leads to lower participation of women in the political processes. Female respondents in a survey opined that females need to be educated about the importance of their right to vote and they blamed the patriarchal nature of Pakistani society for enforcing strict practices that indirectly keep women ignorant of the importance of their right to vote.\(^\text{17}\) Women are kept inside the house and are scarcely allowed to participate in political matters. As a result, majority of them are unaware of voter

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\(^\text{14}\) [https://www.ecp.gov.pk/ClickECP/Gender/Gender.pdf]
\(^\text{16}\) [https://www.isid.ac.in/~epu/acegd2018/papers/GirijaBorker.pdf]
\(^\text{17}\) [https://journals.pakistanreview.com/index.php/PRSS/article/view/21]
registration and other basic political process. There is an urgent need to raise awareness at the grass root level about the importance of women’s political participation.

5.6 Causes for low Political Participation of Female Electoral Candidates and Representatives

Female political participation is a twofold concept that is concerned with the citizenry and the political leadership. This section will build upon the earlier sections and go a step further to explain the specific causes for low female political participation of electoral candidates and representatives.

- **Political Parties as Gatekeepers to Power**

As the main gatekeepers to power in a patriarchal society, men play a central role in determining the extent and quality of women’s political participation. An overwhelming majority of positions of power and influence are assumed by men. As political candidates, women often don’t go past the party nominations stage. In the General Elections of 2018 only 12% of the nominated candidates were women whereas 88% of the nominated candidates were men.¹⁸ This low level of female nominations is attributed to political parties’ low confidence in women’s ability to garner votes, which contrasts starkly with their high level of political activism for social causes.

The woman who ends up making it to elected positions undergo further discrimination and marginalization at the hands of well-established and closed-off male networks. Women are not empowered to engage effectively within Assemblies and this leads to a loss of women’s agency in influencing political outcomes of the country. As a result, many women are discouraged from participating in the political sphere.

- **Lack of Financing and Networking**

Finance is a crucial issue that females encounter in politics and since a vast majority of women are financially dependent on their males, they cannot contest elections without the consent of their families. Majority of the respondents from a survey in Lower Dir, Pakistan said that women need financial support of family i.e., father, husband or brothers to contest elections.¹⁹ Even if women are salaried, most of the time their income is controlled by men, thus women are always economically dependent on men which is one of the many causes for their low participation in politics.

Moreover, social networking and associations are a very good source to generate trust and mutuality and can enhance participation in a group that can lead to greater political participation.²⁰ Unfortunately, the patriarchal social structure of Pakistani society does not allow women to form social networks that could facilitate their political career. Women’s social networking is discouraged culturally. Even in urban centers, women may have the access to available resources but the lack of social and financial capital, or the inability to build social and financial capital because of various reasons and restrictions, is a very big hurdle in the way of women’s political participation.

¹⁹ https://swgi.lums.edu.pk/sites/default/files/user376/asif_khan_-_panel_7.pdf
²⁰ https://www.annualreviews.org/doi/10.1146/annurev-polisci-033011-201728
Religious Orthodoxy

Since power and authority are believed to be the divine rights of men in many of the religions and women are confined only to a subsidiary role in the society hence, across the world, religion has become a tool to marginalize the females from the political activities. By interpreting religious teachings and thoughts, arguments have been built to justify the social inferiority of women to men. The women, too, have assumed that politics is a dirty game and only men can be the best players. In the case of Pakistan, Islamic teachings never barred women from political participation. Islam recognizes it as their due right to play an active role in electing their leader. However, the religious orthodoxy propagates a particular saying of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW); “A people who entrust power to a woman will never prosper” to keep women out of politics. Islamic Jurists and scholars raise concerns over the reliability of the said tradition on several accounts citing that Islam provides equal rights and opportunities to all and has no discrimination on the basis of gender. 21

Although, the state-religion and all the three constitutions promulgated so far guaranteed equality of rights and dispelled all the gender-based discriminations but the societal norms evolved under the religious orthodoxy made the life of women miserable and politics has become the job of men only. Consequently, when Fatima Jinnah (sister of Muhammad Ali Jinnah—the founding-father of Pakistan) contested the presidential election in 1965, the hardliner ulemas including Maulana Madudi, who was then a renowned religio-political leader, issued a fatwa against her leadership and called it un-Islamic. 22 Thus, it is no surprise that religious orthodoxy interlinked with cultural factors make an environment that is hostile towards women’s political participation.

Character Assassination and Smear Campaigns Through Media

Double standards, blackmailing and smear campaigns in the media are actively used against women politicians, resulting in their dismal political participation and influence. For a traditional country like Pakistan where the concept of a family’s honor is so closely linked to a woman’s honor, it is very easy to intimidate and silence women with the threat of a media campaign about her character.

This harassment is scaled-up through the media and it only intensifies for women who make it to the Assemblies. An Inter-Parliamentary Union study on 55 women parliamentarians from 39 countries shows that 82% of the interviewees had experienced psychological violence, remarks, gestures and images of a sexist or humiliating nature, or threats and mobbing. 23 Nearly 44% had received threats of death, rape, beats or abductions. Around 20% of women parliamentarian respondents had been slapped, pushed or struck with a projectile that could have harmed them. 24 For instance, when Benazir Bhutto tried to table a constitutional bill for the reintroduction of reserved seats for women, the male-dominated pro-conservative political parties opposed the bill and started a smear campaign against her by calling her a Western agent working against the interests of Pakistan. 25

23 https://www.ipu.org/ar/node/8317
Under-Representation in Key Decision-Making Positions

Women’s exclusion from powerful domains, such as Standing Committees and decision-making levels of their political parties, persists despite three recent successful cycles of elections with a sizable proportion of female parliamentarians. Political parties have established women’s wings but these tend to fulfill largely representative functions at public gatherings, meetings, and campaigns.26

Findings from the Women Parliamentarian Survey (WPS) in 2018 concluded that work environment for women in the assemblies was hostile and unwelcoming as 30% of WPS respondents (all seat-holders) reported being silenced by male colleagues.27 This problem was cited by women in local governments as well, who reported being excluded from meetings or disallowed from speaking when present. Consequently, actualizing gender parity in political participation and engagement would be a pressing challenge without the inclusion of women in important decision-making positions within the political system.

Lack of Capacity-Building

Despite affirmative action and legislative reform to create an enabling environment for women’s political participation, their relative inexperience in the public sphere of politics and their unfamiliarity with governance structures places them at an enormous disadvantage. A similar trend is observed at the local government level where the majority of female councilors are unaware of their roles and responsibilities. This general lack of training and capacity-building results in female office bearers being under-confident and hesitant to bring forward any policy proposals and therefore, not being at par with their male counterparts. This inequality in capacities due to structural and systemic factors inhibits women’s political participation and empowerment.

5.7 Impact of Increasing Women’s Political Participation

As women’s contributions toward a strong and vibrant society are increasingly well documented, understanding of why women’s meaningful participation is essential to building and sustaining democracy is growing. Women’s political participation results in tangible gains for democracy, including gender sensitive legislation, increased prioritization of social needs, inclusive governance, and higher economic progress.

Gender Sensitive Legislation

Women’s meaningful participation in politics affects both the range of policy issues that are considered and the types of solutions that are proposed. Research indicates that a legislator’s gender has a distinct impact on policy priorities. While women lawmakers are not a homogenous group with the same perspectives and interests, they do tend to see “women’s” issues—those that directly affect women either for biological or social reasons—more broadly as social issues, possibly as a result of the role that women have traditionally played as mothers and caregivers in their communities. In an Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) poll of members of parliament conducted between 2006 and 2008, which compiled the views of parliamentarians from 110 countries, women self-identified as being

the most active in women’s issues and gender equality.\textsuperscript{28} The increased presence of women in Pakistan’s parliament has given them space to influence the law formulation process. Female parliamentarians introduced the following bills and laws to protect:

- Honor Killing Act
- The Protection of Women Act
- The Protection Against Harassment of Women at The Workplace Act
- Criminal Law Amendments Act for Sexual Harassment
- The Domestic Violence Act
- Law on Acid Throwing
- Anti-Women Social Practices Act

\textbf{Increased prioritization of social issues}

Research studies have found that women tend to give greater attention to social, community matters and family-related matters - possibly as a result of the role that women have traditionally played as mothers and caregivers in their communities.\textsuperscript{29} Therefore, it is not surprising that when women are empowered as political leaders, countries often experience higher standards of living with positive developments in education, infrastructure and health. Data from nineteen member-countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), researchers found that an increase in the number of women legislators results in an increase in total educational spending.\textsuperscript{30} In Pakistan, representation of women in local councils saw an uptick in child protection units, child and maternal health programs and enrolment of girls in schools.

\textbf{Inclusive and Representative Governments}

Evidence suggests that as more women are elected to office, policy-making that reflects the priorities of families, women, and ethnic and racial minorities also increases. In addition to bringing a gender perspective to policy-making, women’s leadership and conflict resolution styles often embody democratic ideals in that women have tended to work in a less hierarchical, more participatory and more collaborative way than male colleagues. Women are also more likely to work across party lines, even in highly partisan environments. Since assuming 22% of the seats in the Pakistani parliament in 2008, women have been responsible for forming the first cross-party women’s caucus to work on controversial issues such as gender discrimination.

Around the world, women lawmakers are often perceived as more honest and more responsive than their male counterparts, qualities that encourage confidence in democratic and representative institutions. In a study of 31 democratic countries, the presence of more women in legislatures is

\textsuperscript{28} http://archive.ipu.org/pdf/publications/equality08-e.pdf
\textsuperscript{29} https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/21031/927590NWP0Wome00Box385358800PUBLIC0.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y
\textsuperscript{30} https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/21031/927590NWP0Wome00Box385358800PUBLIC0.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y
positively correlated with enhanced perceptions of government legitimacy among both men and women.  

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### Economic Gains

A research paper drew on data from 182 countries and found women’s political participation being positively related to subsequent economic growth. The inclusion of women in politics may not only be justified by an intrinsic, normative motive but also by a more instrumental “investment case” for the political empowerment of women.

In Pakistan, only 22.6% of women are employed compared to 84.8% men for ‘paid’ work and consequently, 95% women do not even have a bank account. Increasing female labor force participation to 50% in Pakistan can increase the national labor value added GDP by 27%. A government which has an equal representation of women is more likely to put in policy measures such as bank loans, to empower women economically. Therefore, the economic value addition by women’s political participation has significant untapped potential in Pakistan.

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### 5.8 Initiatives to Bridge Gaps in Women’s Political Participation

All is not doom and gloom for women’s political participation in Pakistan as the Government has recently collaborated with public and private entities to introduce some high-impact and evidence-backed interventions to streamline female entry and engagement in the politics.

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#### Community Engagement and Advocacy by CSOs

As acknowledged by the United Nations, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) are the most valuable source of dynamic policy perspectives, partnerships and support. CSOs play a pivotal role in strengthening political solidarity between women and feminist movement building. In Pakistan, CSOs like the Women’s Democratic Front and Women Action Forum were central in building a women’s movement, called the Aurat March, which initiated a nationwide dialogue about women’s rights issues and made feminism a part of mainstream discourse in Pakistan. The impact of Aurat March has been pervasive and instrumental for advocating effective political empowerment of women.

CSOs have a wide local network which makes them an ideal partner for work at the grass-roots level. Before the 2018 General Elections, the ECP started a voter and civic education campaign along with other civil society organizations in targeted areas with low female voter turnout in KP. The campaign targeted 8,80,000 women.

There are a large number of CSOs working specially for women’s political participation in Pakistan. Projects like Raising Her Voice (RHV), Leverage in Social Transformation of Elected Nominees

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(LISTEN), She Can Lead (SCL) by multiple CSOs like the Aurat Foundation, Bedari and Baanh Beli have brought about measurable impacts for women’s political participation.\(^{37}\)

### The Elections Act, 2017

The Elections Act 2017 took serious measures to improve women’s political participation as voters and candidates. Section 9 (1) of the Act gives the ECP powers to declare an election void if the women voter turnout is below 10% in a constituency. It further explains that in such a scenario, the ECP may presume that women were restrained from voting and that it has to hold a reelection for that constituency alone. Section 18(1) of the Act talks about reserved seats for women in Parliament as also mentioned in Article 51 of the Constitution while Section 206 clearly states that political parties are obligated to give 5% of general seat tickets to women. Section 47 introduces special measures for enrolment of women voters especially in constituencies with less than 10% registered women voters. The Act has also simplified voter registration process by allowing anyone who applies for a CNIC from NADRA to register themselves as a voter as well.

### Women’s Parliamentary Caucuses

The Women’s Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) was established by a resolution of the National Assembly in 2008 to enhance women’s participation and engagement in all parliamentary affairs. WPC is a cross-party forum run by an elected Secretary along with a Working Council comprising of women parliamentarians. The National WPC is credited with ushering in important legislation for women’s rights, including laws against sexual harassment, rape, and honor killings.

WPCs have been established at the provincial assemblies’ level as well. These Caucuses have been particularly useful for strengthening the voices of sidelined women elected on reserved seats, most of whom have entered the Assemblies for the first time and lacked confidence to demand their rights.

### Gender and Social Inclusion Wing at the ECP

The Gender and Social Inclusion Wing at ECP was established recently to ensure that a gender lens was adopted for all policy-making and electoral activity. It has shed light on important concerns pertaining to gender and the marginalized community of Pakistan. Under its mandate, the Gender and Social Inclusion Wing has collected gender disaggregated data which is disbursed quarterly and made public on the official ECP website. The latter has streamlined the process of evidence-backed decision-making regarding women’s under-representation in the political sphere at the national and provincial level. Additionally, the Gender and Social Inclusion Wing has also undertaken initiatives in collaboration with NADRA and other CSOs to facilitate and expedite the issuance of CNICs to women through mobile registration services. Moreover, in an effort to sensitize the ECP staff regarding gender, the Wing has added a “Gender and Elections” module in their capacity-building trainings for ECP officers.\(^{38}\) They have also partnered with universities to engage with youth to mobilize women to participate in political process. The initiatives undertaken by the Gender and Social Inclusion Wing

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have put gender as a priority item on the ECP’s agenda and it has played a pivotal role in enhancing women’s political participation in Pakistan.

- **Mobile CNIC Registration Services by NADRA**

NADRA has established 19 female-only registration centers and deployed 10 mobile vans to help increase the registration of unregistered women in Pakistan. This project will facilitate people based in far-flung areas of Lahore, Sialkot, Gujranwala, Narowal, Sheikhupura, Nankana Sahib and Kasur in acquiring their ID cards and other documents. Adding marginalized and underprivileged women to the electoral rolls will increase representation and can act as a stepping-stone in improving women’s access to different social and economic opportunities as well.

Recently, NADRA revealed that nearly 10 million women have been added to the electoral rolls since the 2018 General Elections. The total number of female registered voters is now 56.95 million. Given that Pakistan has consistently ranked poorly on global gender gap indices over the years, this is a monumental step for improving gender parity. Additionally, the gender gap in citizens’ political participation, which is the difference between the total number of registered male and female voters, has also climbed down to 11 million due to NADRA, ECP and CSOs concerted efforts.

Women make up half of Pakistan’s population and are an important stakeholder in the country’s political system. The literature review observes that women’s political participation is hindered by a wide range of socio-cultural issues. Discriminatory political spaces, patriarchal norms, religious orthodoxy, lack of finances, transport and capacity building are some of the identified issues that restrict women’s political participation. The literature highlights that, while initiatives such as awareness drives and female quotas have been introduced to improve female political participation, there is still a dire need for continued effort to bridge the gender gap in political participation in Pakistan.

6. Methodology

The evaluation included assessment for both OECD-DAC and non-DAC criteria. A qualitative approach was employed for assessing the contribution and progress of the sampled projects. The design underlined kept the evaluation as “participatory and utility focused’ by reaching out to all the key stakeholders to have their views, opinions and suggestions to inform the evaluation. Both primary and secondary data sources have been effectively incorporated to assess and evaluate the project in light of the review objectives.

6.1 Rationale for OECD-DAC and non-DAC Criteria for Evaluation

An evaluation criteria’s purpose is to support consistent, high-quality evaluation within a common framework. To support evaluation practice, in 1991, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) published definitions of five evaluation criteria which was later increased to six criteria.

Such an evaluation criterion provides a normative framework with which to assess a specific intervention. Collectively, there has been value in having a commonly defined criterion that are similarly applied across interventions. These criteria provide a consistent language across the development field, ensuring standardization and allowing for comparison and learning across interventions.

The criteria should be viewed as a set of lenses through which one can understand and analyze an intervention. It provides complementary perspectives, gives a holistic picture of the intervention and encourages deeper thinking about the nature of the intervention, its implementation, process and results.

6.2 Evaluation Framework

In order to analyze primary and secondary data for the research, key elements of DAC criterion include Coherence, Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact and Sustainability while the non-DAC criteria include Partnership & Cooperation. Research questions analyzed around these areas, which were unpacked during primary data collection and the review of documents during the desk study. For each criterion and subsequent research questions, separate information using various data sources and methods, were collected and analyzed. The Evaluation Criteria Explained

40 https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm
### Evaluation Framework and Research Questions

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Framework</th>
<th>Research Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>RELEVANCE</strong></td>
<td>The extent to which the intervention objectives and design respond to beneficiaries, global, country, and partner/institution needs, policies, and priorities, and continue to do so if circumstances change.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>COHERENCE</strong></td>
<td>The compatibility of the intervention with other interventions in a country, sector or institution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EFFECTIVENESS</strong></td>
<td>The extent to which the intervention achieved, or is expected to achieve, its objectives, and its results, including any differential results across groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EFFICIENCY</strong></td>
<td>The extent to which the intervention delivers, or is likely to deliver, results in an economic and timely way.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>IMPACT</strong></td>
<td>The extent to which the intervention has generated or is expected to generate significant positive or negative, intended or unintended, higher-level effects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SUSTAINABILITY</strong></td>
<td>The extent to which the net benefits of the intervention continue or are likely to continue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PARTNERSHIP &amp; COOPERATION</strong></td>
<td>The extent to which partnerships and cooperation have been built due to the intervention.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 6.3 Alignment with the Feminist International Assistance Policy (FIAP)

On 9 June 2017, the Canadian government made foreign aid history by announcing the country’s first “Feminist International Assistance Policy”. Among other things, it promised that within four years, “at least 95% of Canada’s bilateral international development assistance investments will either target or integrate gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls”. Shortly, in March 2018, GAC announced a contribution of $21 million in the area of women’s political participation and empowerment in Pakistan.
Consequently, the evaluation methodology’s guiding principles came from the FIAP and its feminist directives. In other words, a hybrid approach to evaluation was employed with the use of OECD-DAC and non-DAC Evaluation, framed by a gender lens.

### 6.4 Feminist Principles of Evaluation

Feminist evaluation (FE) emphasizes participatory, empowerment, and social justice agendas. While all evaluation approaches are laden with their own, often implicit, values, few assert their values as openly as feminist evaluation. Unlike most gender approaches, feminist evaluation does not provide a framework or advocate a precise approach; rather, feminist evaluation is often defined as a way of thinking about evaluation.\(^{41}\)

This evaluation framed the inquiry, gathered data, and anchored the interpretation of the findings through a gender lens. This framing was critical since the program is built on FIAP and related to improving women’s political participation. The following table briefly analyses how the feminist principles of evaluation were used:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feminist Principle of Evaluation</th>
<th>Position in the Evaluation(^{42})</th>
<th>Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central focus on gender inequities</td>
<td>Gender discrimination cuts across class, ethnicity, caste and other social cleavages</td>
<td>How do gender inequities affect program reach and transition to higher levels of women’s political participation?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inequities are structural</td>
<td>Understand institutional and systemic discrimination against women that inhibit their political participation.</td>
<td>As the project offered different trainings/technical assistance on inclusivity, gender sensitization/mainstreaming, leadership, decision making, in light of those trainings; please share your views as how those trainings facilitated in bringing a change at institutional and community level?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation is political</td>
<td>Trust building is critical to probe changes in traditional patriarchal engendered attitudes, behavior and institutionalized power structures</td>
<td>What are accepted traditional practices for gender inclusiveness and how do families and communities challenge them (or not)? What are the power issues within families that build barriers? To what extent can deep rooted gender inequities be addressed by men/women and what is difficult?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is value in different ways of knowing</td>
<td>Recognize a variety of data collection methods are important for deep and authentic engagement with stakeholders</td>
<td>Have CSOs received any support from governmental institutions because of this project? Do you think the project has contributed to any attitudinal/behavioral in men regarding gender equality/GBV/women’s leadership and political participation? Has the project enhanced knowledge and information level of transgender/men on gender equality, women leadership, decision making?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seek to hear and represent different voices and provide a space for women or</td>
<td>Reflexivity is important for those implementing programs as it affects the quality of intervention. Those who are</td>
<td>What efforts are made to involve the marginalized such as transgender and low-income women?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{41}\)https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/themes/feminist_evaluation
Table 3 Feminist principles and relevant research questions

| marginalized groups to be heard. | marginalized targeting. |  |

6.5 Data Collection Procedures

The methodology used for conducting the mid-term review employed a combination of primary and secondary data sources to gauge the contribution of each of the five projects.
Secondary Data Collection

An in-depth desk study into the literature and relevant project documents was conducted and it facilitated in developing a comprehensive understanding of the context and project progress made during implementation phase.Textbox 1 highlights the main documents which were consulted as part of this mid-term evaluation.

Review of the documents related to each project helped developing a clear understanding and context of project, nature of interventions and progress towards results and outcomes. In addition, documents relevant to Canada’s FIAP and OECD DAC guidelines were also reviewed in order to contextualize the study findings in a rigorous manner.

Primary Data Collection

In addition to a detailed desk study, primary data was gathered by employing qualitative research techniques including Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), consultation sessions and Key Informant Interviews (KII s). An intensive participatory approach was used for data collection purposes.

KII s were conducted with representatives from CSOs, women’s rights organizations, youth groups, women’s group, religious leader, trainers, project staff, representatives from district/agency specific multi-stakeholder areas support networks, media agency representatives, journalists, and representatives from research personnel. FGDs were conducted with men, women who benefitted under the project interventions including community women, female citizens, grass roots women, women party workers, male and female students, and women with disabilities. In addition to FGDs and KII s, consultation sessions were also held with government officials and representatives. Consultation sessions helped in capturing diverse perspectives of each of the stakeholder involved in the five projects. Sessions included officials from government departments including the National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW), Social Welfare Training Institute (SWTI), Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Commission on the Status of Women

Desk Review of Project Documents:
- Planning and approval documents;
- Relevant reports, memoranda, emails, letters, etc. including Contribution Agreements, progress reports, annual work plans, minutes of the Steering Committee meetings, Coordination Workshop reports (2);
- Course modules and teacher’s notes, especially with respect to TOTs;
- Distance courses;
- Criteria for selecting training participants and COVID-19 emergency relief beneficiaries;
- Monitoring of participants’ assessments of delivered training;
- Monitoring of the implementation of COVID-12 emergency relief;
- Direct beneficiaries’ assessments of training and technical assistance;
- Project-funded research studies (how relevant were they, and their impact);
- Financial control documents;
- Contracts, and;
- Receipts and paid invoices.
- Canada’s Feminist International Assistance Policy;
- Canada’s Policy for Civil Society Partnerships for International Assistance, and;
(KPCSW), Social Welfare Department (SWD), Planning and Development Department (P&D Department), Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), Ministry of Human Rights (MoHR), women voter’s network, representatives from sub-national government sphere, women representatives from local government, election administration, women legislators, councilors, DCSW and NADRA. All data collection tools and topics discussed during consultation sessions were finalized after seeking approval from Global Affairs Canada and were pilot-tested prior to being used, for ensuring validity and reliability of the data.

Data collection tools focused on capturing information on various thematic areas outlined in the given ToRs such as tools focused on assessing projects’ approach in ensuring that activities of the projects are consistent with **GAC’s development assistance priorities such as action areas of FIAP including gender equality, human dignity, inclusive governance**; **projects’ contribution in enhancing women’s political participation, institutional strengthening of democratic institutions, CSOs, women’s rights agencies for advocating for gender equality; and documenting projects’ overall success in terms of achieving its intended outcomes and objectives.** In addition to these areas, the tools were also based on collecting relevant information on the **impact of COVID 19, emerging issues in the government’s policies, laws affecting gender equality and documented challenges in the implementation and monitoring and evaluation of the projects.**

The mid-term review ensured that all projects are evaluated by considering and adapting GAC’s **results-based management policy** which mainly focuses on seeing if projects have achieved their stated outcomes and focuses on the interplay of multiple factors including **project strategy, resources (human & financial), transparency, and accountability.**

### 6.6 Sampling Approach

Multi-stage sampling approach using **purposive sampling technique**, was used to identify districts and respondents for primary data collection. Purposive technique is mostly judgemental/subjective or selective, form of non-probability sampling in which researchers rely on their own judgment when choosing members of the population to participate in research.

**Maximum variation sampling, also known as heterogeneous sampling, is a purposive sampling technique used to capture a wide range of perspectives relating to the thing that you are interested in studying; that is, maximum variation sampling is a search for variation in perspectives, ranging from those conditions that are view to be typical through to those that are more extreme in nature. By conditions, we mean the units (i.e., people, cases/organisations, events, pieces of data) that are of interest to the researcher. These units may exhibit a wide range of attributes, behaviours, experiences, incidents, qualities, situations, and so forth. The basic principle behind maximum variation sampling is to gain greater insights into a phenomenon by looking at it from all angles. This can often help the researcher to identify common themes that are evident across the sample.**

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45https://www.alchemer.com/resources/blog/purposive-sampling
In qualitative research,

“...the researcher needs to consider the trade-offs between breadth and depth, and that can be done only by considering the purposes of the qualitative portion of the study. If the goal is to capture variation — i.e., breadth — across cases (programs, individuals), that may call for a larger sample than one intended to explore a narrow phenomenon in depth.”

Considering this, and to avoid saturation in qualitative sample, maximum variation sampling, a form of purposive sampling was adopted.

- At first stage, based on the discussion with GAC staff, **purposive sampling** of the geographical areas, for field visits, shortlisting of the districts was done based on the poor status of development and gender indicators, representation from each region of the provinces, marginalized districts i.e., which are not mainstream and where regular monitoring visits could not be done and also basing on the fact that the selected districts cover more than one project to ensure efficient use of resources. A total of 17 districts were selected from 4 provinces with an exception of Gilgit Baltistan. The selected list was then shared with project staff, who identified the beneficiary group(s) and stakeholders in each selected district that could be reached out for primary data collection.

- At second stage, once the lists were gathered from the projects, the research team, reviewed the list of respondent categories etc. and stakeholders from each selected district; based on the provided list again **purposive sampling technique** was used to select the respondent groups to be reached for data collection.

### 6.7 Qualitative Sampling Matrix

A **purposive sampling technique** was used for qualitative data collection in which potential project beneficiaries and relevant stakeholders associated with the projects under investigation were included in the sample. For JAZBA Project implemented by SAP-PK, there were a total of 18 KIs, 11 consultations and 3 FGDs with 26 men, 75 women and 2 transgenders. Its respondent group included

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47. [https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/acyf/qualitative_research_methods_in_program_evaluation.pdf](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/acyf/qualitative_research_methods_in_program_evaluation.pdf)

48. As per TORs, the primary data collection required reaching out respondents from 16 districts.

49. [https://www.alchemer.com/resources/blog/purposive-sampling](https://www.alchemer.com/resources/blog/purposive-sampling)

---
government officials, representatives from Women Leader Groups, youth groups, journalists, trainers, project staff and women party workers. On the other hand, WEPP-KP had a respondent group that included government officials, representatives from Women’s Groups, trainers, project staff and female project beneficiaries for 3 consultations, 1 FGD and 8 KIIs with a total of 4 men and 11 women. The respondent group for POWER by IFES was similar to WEPP-KP’s respondent group and it included 5 consultations, 5 FGDs and 8 KIIs with a total of 16 men and 7 women. FEMPOWER by Shirkat Gah had 8 consultations, 5 FGDs and 10 KIIs with a total of 15 men, 28 women and 2 transgenders and its respondent group included government officials, representatives from district/agency specific multi-stakeholder support networks, CSOs, students, project staff. journalists and trainers. Lastly, WE’RE Leaders implemented by TDEA, had 8 FGDs, 7 KIIs and 1 consultation with a total of 43 men and 62 women. Its respondent group included government officials, trainers, representatives from rights-based commissions, media and local political party workers.

The matrix below summarizes information about the projects by respondent groups, gender and session type:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Number of Consultative Sessions/Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)/Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Project WEPP-KP (CoWater)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Officials (KPCSW, SWD, SE, WDD, DCSW, DSW, SP&amp;GM)</td>
<td>03 Consultation Sessions, 03 KII</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSO Representative</td>
<td>01 KII</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representative from Women’s Group</td>
<td>01 KII</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trainer</td>
<td>01 KII</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Staff of WEPP</td>
<td>01 KII</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women (Benefitted from project activities)</td>
<td>01 FGD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total KIIs</strong></td>
<td>08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Consultations</strong></td>
<td>03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total FGDs</strong></td>
<td>01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Male</strong></td>
<td>04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Female</strong></td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Democracy &amp; Empowerment Women/JAZBA (SAP-PK)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Officials (SWD, Women Voter’s Network, Women Councilors, Legislators)</td>
<td>05 consultative session, 4 KII (in person), 05 KII (online), 01 FGD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representative of Women’s Leaders Groups</td>
<td>03 KII, 01 FGD, 02 Consultation session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representative of Youth Groups</td>
<td>01 KII</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trainers</td>
<td>01 KII</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journalists</td>
<td>01 consultation session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Staff</td>
<td>01 KII (in person), 03 KII (online), 02 consultation session (in person), 01 (Focal Person Consultation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women Party Workers</td>
<td>01 FGD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total KIIs</strong></td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Consultations</strong></td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total FGDs</strong></td>
<td>03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Male</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Female</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transgender</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**FEMPOWER (Shirkat Gah)**

- Government officials (legislators [women caucuses, parliamentary committees and Secretariats], representatives from sub-national government sphere) 1 consultation session, 5 KII (in person), 3 KII (online)
- Representative from District/Agency specific multi-stakeholder Area Support Networks 1 KII, 7 consultation session
- CSOs (local and national) 2 KII (1 KII from local and 1 KII from national), 1 consultation session (in person)
- Women’s Organization 1 KII
- Project Staff 1 KII
- Trainers 1 KII
- Journalists 4 KII (One from each provincial capital)
- Students 1 FGD with male Students, 1 FGD with female students

| Total KIIs | 10 |
| Total Consultations | 08 |
| Total FGDs | 05 |
| Total Male | 15 |
| Total Female | 28 |
| Transgender | 02 |

**Women’s Enjoyment of Rights, Empowerment and Leadership (WE’RE Leaders) – (TDEA)**

- Government officials (Women Councilors, political parties, Election Administration, elected representatives, legislatures and political parties and other relevant Stakeholders) 1 Consultation Session, 03 KII
- Representative from rights-based commissions 1 KII
- Representative from media and political networks 1 KII, 02 FGD (Pol. Workers & Journalists), 02 FGD (Pol. Workers), 02 FGD (Journalists)
- Project Staff 1 KII
- Trainers 1 KII

| Total KIIs | 07 |
| Total Consultations | 01 |
| Total FGDs | 08 |
| Total Male | 43 |
| Total Female | 62 |

**POWER (IFES)**

- Government Officials (women representatives from local government, election administration, women legislators, councilors, DCSW, NADRA, ECP) 02 Consultative Session, 01 KII
- Representative from Media 1 KII
- Representative from CSOs 1 KII
6.8 Participant Recruitment

The participant recruitment was being done against the backdrop of COVID-19 and severe lockdown restrictions; thus, it was necessary to involve focal persons who could facilitate and arrange interviews and session. During participant recruitment, it was ensured that all the target groups were being covered from each project in each region, along with representation from marginalized groups like ethnic and religious minorities, transgenders etc. across all districts and provinces. The selection of groups and respondents was done after a thorough discussion with project team members and review of key project documents. The respondents were ensured to cover all cadres of beneficiaries and stakeholders. Discussions and consultative sessions were planned to be held with groups developed under projects while in-depth interviews were planned to have more detailed information from certain perspectives. Likewise, key informant interviews were also planned held with stakeholders including CSOs, community and government representatives such as youth groups, party activists etc.

6.9 Framework of Analysis

Keeping in view the scope and nature of mid-term review, OECD-DAC criteria was used for gauging the success of the projects which is considered as a prerequisite for determining the worth, success

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https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm

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and progress of development programs and interventions. The DAC criteria is based on seeing the contribution of the project in six core areas including **coherence, relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, partnership & cooperation, impact and sustainability**. All research areas explored as a result of MTR were structured under the themes of DAC criteria and were analyzed on Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) Scoring Method. Details related to QCA and scoring method are mentioned in the following section of the report.

- **Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA):**

As the mid-term review requires an assessment of the five projects related to women’s political participation and empowerment, a **qualitative comparative analysis** method was **adapted** which is a rigorous methodology for comprehending the change and impact exerted by different number of cases. QCA focuses on **in-depth knowledge** on cross case patterns which looks at **themes, similarities and differences across cases**. Keeping in view the scope and nature of the assignment, **projects here will be treated as cases**.

Using QCA as a backdrop for the mid-term review helped in structuring the assessment using DAC lens, unpacking each DAC criterion in various component/factors by **assessing which projects are on the way to exert impact and to what extent change happened or did not happen in one project and the others**. This underlying assumption shall facilitate in putting the MTR into an accurate context which will eventually feed into valuable information for improving the planning and implementation of the projects for the remaining time period and for future implementation of similar natured projects as well. Table 5 illustrates the analysis framework using DAC criterion.

- **Data Analysis by Adapting QCA Scoring Method:**

Findings gathered as a result of extensive documentary review (including Annual progress reports, PIPs, M&E frameworks, work plans and meeting minutes), interviews, FGDs and consultative sessions with beneficiaries and stakeholders are analyzed in light of the OECD- DAC criteria. Additionally, in an effort to quantify results of evaluation an adaptation of QCA scoring methods is applied to developing a matrix of results. QCA primarily involves two types of scoring method, i.e. crisp set and fuzzy set scoring. **Crisp scoring method** is based on evaluating findings on binary division; either 0 (absence) or 1 (presence). However, as study findings are based on qualitative research methods involving, document review, interviews/FGDs/ consultative sessions which allows greater room for in-depth analysis; therefore, **the Crisp Scoring method is adapted and an additional score of -1 is integrated for documenting a more elaborated version of the study findings**. Therefore, in addition to an in-depth analysis of findings under the DAC criteria, each WPP project is also scored on each of the OECD-DAC criterion indicators and sub-indicators using QCA scoring method. This scoring is reflected in the QCA Matrix added to the conclusion section.

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52 https://delvetool.com/blog/qca
### Table 5: Research Criteria

Following figure illustrate the scoring continuum upon which the study findings have been evaluated:

![QCA Scoring Method](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neutral = 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Functional = 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Needs Improvement = -1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effectiveness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Efficiency</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partnership and Co-operation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coherence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender, Diversity and Inclu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 17: QCA Scoring Method*
7. Findings & Analysis

The WPP program supports five national level projects, undertaken by a diverse set of Implementing Partners (IPs) through the GAC led support and commitment to women’s civil and political empowerment in Pakistan. The projects aim to promote women’s political inclusion and leadership by pursuing inter-related and mutually reinforcing long-term outcomes of achieving: 1) increased political empowerment and enjoyment of rights by women, particularly young and marginalized women and at-risk communities 2) improved gender responsive and inclusive systems of governments, democratic institutions and civil society organizations operating at national and sub-national levels 3) increased and equitable participation of women in democratic processes and public life, particularly young and marginalized women in Pakistan. Through a range of local, provincial and national level initiatives and interventions the projects worked towards a cohesive plan of action that promoted differentiated but mutually reinforcing outputs aligned towards achieving common intermediate and ultimate outcomes.

7.1 Relevance

The strategies and activities adopted by all five WPP projects respond to the local context and are designed on the basis of the past experience and expertise of the respective implementing organizations. The projects operationalized under a well-defined logic model that rationalized the technical approach to setting and achieving short-term outputs and long-term outcomes. The project interventions were largely responsive to the needs and priorities of intended stakeholders and beneficiaries. The projects’ activities were also well in line with the GAC’s mandate and commitment to bolstering GE and FIAP outcomes. The projects strived to intervene at multiple levels to bolster political capacities, including grassroots beneficiaries (women, men, youth and marginalized persons), intermediary stakeholders (women councilors, women activists, CSOs, CBOs) and political leadership and institutions (legislators, parliamentarians, WPCs). The project activities were largely aligned with meeting the proposed outputs and outcomes.

The underlying rationale for interventions has been to bolster local women as rights-holders, build women’s capacity to be more effective political leaders and promote political inclusion at grassroots and institutional levels. The activities planned to achieve the desired change were contextualized within the national and regional socio-political environment marked with barriers to women’s full participation in the political spaces, including: patriarchal orientation of society norms, the rising influence of religious right-winged parties in electoral politics and an unfavorable socio-political environment for women’s involvement within political institutions which are largely male-dominated. In light of this context, most significant activities included: capacity-building trainings and workshops for women political leaders, institutional strengthening and support through gender-mainstreaming guidance and awareness and advocacy at grassroots level through supporting and capacitating CSOs, CBOS and local women leaders.

- Advocacy Campaigns Through CSO Alliances & Local Political Leaders
Almost all projects designed interventions to empower and train local political leaders (women councilors and ex-councilors, members of local CSOs and CBOs, youth activists) to impart political rights awareness and advocacy around women’s right to vote and participate in political activities. **FGDs with local women, CSO workers and political leaders from the sample districts revealed that advocacy and political awareness at grassroots level was a fundamental pre-requisite to achieving wider political participation by women across Pakistan.** In a socio-political context with over 12 million women not registered to voters’ lists, an increase in gender gap in electoral processes from past years (ECP, 2018) and existence of systemic barriers such as missing enlisted female voters, women without CNICs, threats of politically incited violence at polling sites, mounting pressure from religious extremists, and political spaces being dominated by male politicians, the need to impart political awareness and empowerment among women to register as voters makes this a highly relevant area of program intervention. The interventions also directly support progress towards achieving outcome of enhancing political inclusion of women at grassroots level.

All projects recognized the value of connecting with an existing network of district-level CSOs and CBOs in engaging the grassroots level women and marginalized persons for advocacy purposes. The projects adopted a range of training and capacity-building activities to sensitize CSOs and local leaders in engaging with communities to promote women’s political participation. This has proved a relevant and efficient strategy in terms of using existing resources and networks as well as building capacity of local CBOs and CSOs.

**Engagement with Political Leadership and Institutions to Augment Their Capacity and Efficacy I**

In alignment with the outcome to enhance gender responsiveness of political institutions, 3 of the projects established specific institutional strengthening and capacity building interventions, oriented towards addressing context-specific needs of respective partner organizations (government commissions, CSOs, CBOs) and relevant political institutions and stakeholders. For example, under projects WEPP and WE’RE Leaders, the need to strengthen leadership and institutional capacity of the relatively inactive and under-resourced KPCSW, SPCSW and SCHR was identified as a key objective to fulfilling long-term outcome of gender responsive and inclusive systems of governance. Similarly, Power-IFES objective to support ECP and NADRA in their women-focused NIC registration campaigns by training the staff on gender responsive campaigning in an effort to close the gender gap in electoral processes was both responsive to institutional needs and context-specific. All three projects also conducted Training Needs Assessments (TNA) during the inception year to identify specific needs of direct stakeholder and partner organizations in order to develop more relevant capacity-building activities.

Gender mainstreaming and capacity building within governmental departments and commissions for promotion of gender responsive policies and laws was identified as an important step to strengthening women’s political leadership during evaluation interviews. **Interviews with political**
leadership in KP reveal the importance and value of the targeted activities by WEPP in improving leadership capacity of the political bodies such as KPCSW:

“When we were engaged with the Cowater and I listed out all the activities and co-water supported us in all activities. We streamlined the Standard operating procedure for the office that is very helpful [as there was not one before] ... We work in a reaction mode, if we receive a letter from social welfare to respond from anywhere then we react. There was no pro-active system and this was the kind of work that we were expected to do as proactive. where we can review the laws and policies, who will initiate. So thanks to co-water [WEPP-KP] for the document [SOPs] and supporting us”

(Member KPCSW)

Similarly, needs for capacity-building of local and higher women political leadership for them to be able to effectively understand, present and promote women’s political rights on national and sub-national political fora is identified by women political leaders working with the JAZBA program in Quetta, Balochistan:

“Actually, gender sensitization is an issue in political parties as well as in overall communities. When the decisions are being taken for the political parties, they do not involve females in decision making and totally exclude them. So, there is a need for such training at provincial level. Most parties are male dominated and they do not have women wings, the parties who have women wings there is not much awareness for female inclusions.” (FGD with WLG Quetta, Balochistan)

- Development of communication strategies and connections with diverse forms of media to amplify the voice of local CSOs in their advocacy efforts

The projects adopted a range of measures to amplify the impact of advocacy campaigns through use of print, television, radio and social media and communication platforms. JAZBA, POWER and WE’RE Leaders in particular amplified the advocacy reach manifold by utilizing a range of media and communication fora including a specialized online portal called WiE (women in election). The issues highlighted through these media and communication campaigns and forums included, awareness regarding women’s political rights, participation in electoral processes, importance of CNIC registration and COVID-19 safety, precautions and relief information. The use of media, particularly, FM radio has been identified by study participants as important source of information for rural women in KP and Balochistan. Hence, targeting a range of media outlets in promoting women’s political advocacy, the projects were able to augment its impact and outreach in a contextually relevant manner.

Additionally, some projects (Fempower, Jazba) produced impressive research and evidence-based publications on issues of women’s political and social rights and wellbeing. While, Jazba produced an evidence-based advocacy report which shed light on the status of violence against women and girls (VAWG) in Pakistan during the pandemic, Fempower developed 3 byte-sized reports highlighting
findings from extensive gender-analysis of provincial budgets. These publications were widely circulated in public events including press conferences.

7.2 Coherence

Although most of the proposed activities under all 5 projects show high level of internal coherence as multiple implementing partners (IPs) in each project collaborate to address multi-faceted objectives by building on strengths of each IP, however, there is a considerable overlap of activities and efforts at project level in certain other areas. For example, while quite effectively wider CNIC registration among women has been identified as a crucial intervention in working towards achieving wider political inclusion of local women, there is a lack of evidence ensuring that coherence was maintained in planning activities in achieving this objective in target districts. All projects have indicated concerted efforts to improving voter registration in all provinces of Pakistan as an important output through: 1) women-focused advocacy campaigns on voter registration (Jazba, Power, Fempower), 2) capacity and leadership trainings of local CSO staff (JAZBA, Power, Fempower, WE’RE Leaders) and the ECP (Power, WE’RE Leaders) in imparting awareness on women’s political rights, and in facilitating women to register for CNIC cards. Both Jazba and Power identified supporting the ECP as an important engagement activity in achieving the objective of improved women voter turnout, however, the level of engagement and support provided to the commission is not clearly laid out and indicates a possible overlap of advocacy efforts. For example, both JAZBA and WE’RE Leaders were working at the GB local election to facilitate and support the electoral processes, however, no clear indication has been shared as to how the two organizations coordinated to avoid duplication of effort. Similarly, of all the projects that have worked directly with the ECP, no evidence of coordination and consideration has been provided that speaks of differentiated outputs and results achieved.

Another common area of action has been working with grassroots organizations and leaders (CSOs, CBOs, women councilors) to build capacity in efforts to reach out to women and marginalized groups (transgender and differently-abled persons) to promote political awareness, action and inclusion. While the area of intervention is highly relevant to achieving the outcome of enhanced political participation of women and marginalized persons, however, there is considerable

In Spotlight

“In my view, JAZBA Project has taken the right path by engaging media outlets and using them to highlight women’s issues...However, it needs to change its focus while planning and executing various initiatives. It should engage district-level press clubs to design and launch various campaigns, instead of tasking individual journalists to perform serious work alone. This would make a major difference in terms of expanding outreach, gaining focused input from senior journalists on social media campaigns, and reducing the workload of district-level staff members.”
overlap in terms of organizations, local groups and persons participating in these capacity-building exercises by different projects. For example, there was considerable geographical overlap between projects with very similar advocacy and engagement activities being carried out by different projects in same districts and at times engaging same local leadership. This resulted in duplication of effort and overestimation of advocacy beneficiaries.

Although, the projects are making valuable contribution to improving women voter registration in the communities, it is important to note that simultaneously, the ECP and the government’s program EHSAS (which offers monetary incentives for registering for CNIC) are also campaigning in the same districts as the WPP projects. While some WPP projects (WE’RE Leaders and Power) have achieved external coherence in collaborating with the ECP and the government to avoid substantial overlaps, others have not reported any such measures to streamline external coherence.

Overall, most WPP projects do not provide adequate documentary evidence on effective coordination to avoid duplication of efforts and resources on advocacy efforts particularly in overlapping districts and ensuring robust external coherence in achievement of this objective.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Geographic Overlap</th>
<th>Project(s)</th>
<th>Intervention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peshawar, Mardan</td>
<td>Fempower</td>
<td>Advocacy campaigns on NIC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WE’RE Leader</td>
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<td></td>
<td>POWER</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lahore, Okara, Nowshera, Peshawar, Mardan, Haripur, Hyderabad, Karachi</td>
<td>Fempower</td>
<td>Awareness and Training campaigns on GBV</td>
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<td></td>
<td>JAZBA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lahore, Okara, Karachi, Peshawar, Mardan, Quetta, Gilgit</td>
<td>Fempower</td>
<td>Dialogue with legislators on gender related issues</td>
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<td></td>
<td>JAZBA</td>
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<td></td>
<td>WE’RE Leaders</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quetta</td>
<td>WE’RE Leaders</td>
<td>Capacity building and trainings of district</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Fempower</td>
<td>departments and women leaders</td>
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<td></td>
<td>POWER</td>
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<tr>
<td>Toba Tek Singh, Abbottabad, Khyber, Quetta</td>
<td>Fempower</td>
<td>Creation of online media for awareness on</td>
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<td></td>
<td>POWER</td>
<td>gender-related issues</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abbottabad, Haripur, Mardan, Peshawar, Nowshera, Khyber</td>
<td>Fempower</td>
<td>Advocacy for gender-responsive budgeting</td>
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<td></td>
<td>WEPP-KP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abbottabad, Khyber, Battagram, Shangla, Bajaur, Kohat</td>
<td>WEPP-KP</td>
<td>Community forums with male and female persons on</td>
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<td></td>
<td>POWER</td>
<td>policy issues</td>
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Table 6 Geographical and thematic coherence
Some other activities of the projects were, however, considerably successful in achieving both internal and external coherence. The Fempower Implementing Partners (IPS) undertook distinct but inter-related interventions to strengthen women legislators, particularly Women Parliamentary Caucuses (WPCs) in KP and Baluchistan: Shirkat Gah (SG) led efforts around international commitments and obligations under the International Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), International Covenant on Civil & Political Rights (ICCPR), International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR); Omar Asghar Khan Foundation (OAKF) around gender-responsive budgeting; and Anthro Insights around Post-Legislative Scrutiny (PLS) training. The overlap of processes led to effective horizontal synergies being formed to achieve outputs. As analyses of gaps in international commitments, identified by SG provided the framework for the budgetary analysis by OAKF, while legal and budgetary gaps identified by SG and OAKF were essential aspects of and fed into the PLS training development. Additionally, FEMPOWER and WEPP-KP maintained operational collaboration and coordination on this activity to avoid duplication of efforts in sensitizing women parliamentarian caucus in KP and support inclusion of KPCSW staff in the gender analysis training undertaken by FEMPOWER.

7.3 Effectiveness

As a result of an extensive document review (project progress reports, M&E frameworks, PIP, project work-plans and related documents) as well as primary data collected as part of evaluation, it is deduced that the WPP program interventions at different levels have been largely successful in making considerable progress towards achievement of proposed intermediary and ultimate outcomes. While the design of most WPP interventions are very similar across projects, a number of unique and effective outputs have been achieved which are highly in line with GAC’s GE and feminist development mandates. A wide base of beneficiaries has been established by the 5 projects, with a high majority of women benefitting from the projects’ interventions. All projects have developed adequate measures of reporting on performance, in most instances these indicators report data disaggregated by gender and ability. However, a relatively low level of outreach and output gains have been reported and observed for the most marginalized communities, particularly, transgender persons and women from religious minorities.

- Efficacy of Interventions to Achieving Common Intermediary Outcome of Increased and Equitable Participation of Women in Democratic Processes And Civic Life, Particularly Young And Marginalized Women Across Pakistan

All WPP projects employed a range of similar but effective interventions to work towards achievement of the outcome of increased political participation and inclusion of women and the marginalized. The WPP project created a network of district level activists, mainly women and men associated with partner CSOs and NGOs to carry out an array of activities for political advocacy and empowerment of community women. The aim was to build and promote an active citizenry that works towards women’s civic and political empowerment.

Some of the project interventions were particularly successful in engaging with and mobilizing youth to fulfil the outcome of an inclusive process of promoting women’s political participation. Under the
project **WE’RE Leaders**, a group of 42 young women (Hum Mustakbil) recruited from colleges and universities were enrolled in a 6-month apprenticeship program to build knowledge and skills on political leadership and advocacy for women’s political rights. The program adopted a range of participatory training activities to capacitate them to become active agents of political and social change. In addition to knowledge and skill-based training (online and physical) the program also allowed these young women hands-on experience of participating and supporting the projects’ advocacy activities, particularly, around researching and developing advocacy materials on gendered COVID response and its impact on women. The observations and research fed into development of print and social COVID-advocacy campaigns undertaken by the project during the COVID outbreak and shutdown. Apprentice-ship and internship programs like these could prove extremely effective in engaging the youth and ensuring a sustainable source of political activism to promote women political rights.

Similarly, the project **POWER** in collaboration with local partner Special Talent Exchange Program (STEP) completed implementation of the Power to Persuade trainings in all four provinces of Pakistan, training 101 women with disabilities nationwide. Following the training, 65 percent of Power to Persuade alumnae implemented assignments to promote the rights of women with disabilities in their communities. As one example of post-training assignments, Power to Persuade alumnae developed policy platforms and coordinated provincial- and national-level conferences with government leaders that resulted in government officials committing to improving accessibility of government buildings, form committees to ensure Pakistan’s compliance with disability rights principles, and explore adoption of a quota for persons with disabilities.

**Engaging Youth!**

Hum Mustakbil apprenticeship program of the WE’RE Leaders project enrolled a batch of 42 young women graduates providing them an opportunity to work with civil society organizations for promotion of women’s rights in the country. The program focuses on enhancing the skills of young women to exercise their civil and political rights offline and online in a safer environment. Moreover, the project provided training to 1,034 young women through 38 training sessions to enhance their knowledge and skills to perform their role as active citizens in the online environment and deal with cyber harassment. As a follow-up to the training, the project carried out telephonic interviews with 401 trainees. Most of the trainees utilized the knowledge and skills acquired through the training. They took steps to increase their social media accounts’ security and shared information and relevant laws with peer groups through dialogues. They started conducting research and wrote papers and blogs to raise awareness.

My experience was very good because the trainer was excellent and I came to know the value of CNIC and elections and my own identity. We learnt from training how to face the challenges and cope with problems and we were aware of our empowerment and increased motivation, confidence etc.

(ShLeads Alumna)
Additionally, all WPP projects developed effective network of district-level female activists to mobilize and identify women in their communities that lack an NIC and provide support needed to help them register. These local leaders were trained in rights-based advocacy by teams of district level Master trainers trained by the projects through ToT activities undertaken at provincial levels. Most prominent among these district-level community-based groups were, Women Voter Network (WVN) and Women in Local Government (WLG) working under JAZBA, SheLeads working under Power and Hum Nigran working under WE’RE Leaders.

The interventions of advocacy and local leadership development have been particularly successful in bringing a knowledge and skill change among participants. Above 90% women working for partner CSOs, NGOs, CBOs and localized political bodies were adequately aware of the women’s major political rights, most particularly, the significance of the right to vote freely and to participate in local political fora. The advocacy campaigns centered around increasing community women’s awareness on the importance of ID cards, mobilize them to get registered with NADRA and organize MRVs in local communities to facilitate the NADRA registration process. The women leaders felt confident in their ability to raise awareness and advocate or engage with local women and community members. A majority of training participants, interviewed for MTR, from all projects exhibited high motivation level to work for and achieve advocacy outcomes of greater inclusion of women in politics.

The participants of the FGDs included a diverse array of participants, including, male and female members of CSOs and NGOs, women councilors and social activists specifically working with WPP projects’ district-level groups such as Jazba District Forums (JDFs), Women Voter Network (WVN), She Leads Alumna and Hum Nigran and Hum Awaz groups. Almost all of the discussion participants

KP Women Caucus on Workshop with Fempower

“Our new women members were given training on how they have to solve the questions, how to work, how to give motion, resolution, and on what issues they have to give.”

“We worked together as a team. In the last budget we put a proposal for women and asked the minister to keep the women’s budget separately. When we did a meeting with them in which the opposition and parliamentarians were involved. And after the meeting with the minister, they kept our few things from the proposal and kept 1 Arab rupees for women separately. And the whole year we did follow up with ShirkatGah about how much was used and how it was used. We implemented 80% of that. We made Darul Aman for women, worked on social welfare, and did development on education and health as well.” (Member, WPC-KP)

The Nazim used not to call the female councilors in the budget meetings, then we trained well at Aurat Foundation through the JAZBA program and we started to go to the budget meetings... Before we came to know our budget right they did not value our opinion but now we are well aware and we ask to allocate the budget for our area. We stood for an equal budget both for men and women. In the jazba program we came to know about our political inclusion and we started coordination and networking.

(Member of WLG (JAZBA) from Quetta, Baluchistan)
were direct or indirect beneficiaries of WPP projects’ capacity-building and leadership trainings and are working towards imparting political rights awareness among local women, most notably, towards getting women to acquire CNIC and also addressing a diverse set of community based socio-political issues faced by women and the marginalized groups.

- **Efficacy of interventions on Institutional strengthening (CSOs, government bodies, political organisations and media) to improve gender responsiveness and inclusion**

All WPP projects have made impressive contributions to making governance systems, democratic institutions, civil society organizations and duty-bearers more gender responsive and inclusive. A wide range of engagements and capacity-building activities were undertaken to fulfil the achievement of the intermediary outcome concerned with augmenting gender responsiveness of the institutions and political bodies operating at national and sub-national levels. **Most notable work was carried out with the provincial Commissions on the Status of Women (CSWs), Women Parliamentary Caucuses (WPCs) and the ECP.**

At provincial level, the projects were successful in streamlining priority and engagement areas between themselves to avoid overlap. So, while **WEPP** and **WE’RE Leaders** worked with political leadership in KP and Sindh respectively. **Jazba, Fempower and Power** engaged political institutes of Punjab, Balochistan and GB. Fempower and WEPP coordinated to avoid overlap in **Fempower’s** training with the WPC in KP.

The projects worked to achieve a number of useful outputs:

- Development of strategic plans and SOPs of operations and communication for the relatively inactive commissions on the status of women (CSWs): KPCSW (by WEPP), SCSW and SCHR (by WE’RE Leaders)
- Gender mainstreaming assistance to enable political bodies at provincial (KPCSW, P&DD-KP by WEPP) and national levels (ECP-Gender wing by POWER) to adopt policies and practices which are gender responsive and contribute to increased political inclusion of women and marginalized groups
- Awareness and skill-building workshops and consultations with legislators (MPAs, MNAs, WPCs) on adopting gender-analysis techniques to developing and reviewing gender-sensitive legislation (Fempower, JAZBA)
- Technical assistance provided to women legislators for improved legislative drafting, oversight, and post legislative scrutiny (Fempower)
- Capacity-building and gender sensitization of journalists and media reporting agencies on gender aware reporting practices (JAZBA)
Capacity-building of CSOs to become active agents of political change for the women and the marginalized communities.

The WPP project activities were largely successful in addressing the capacity needs of some key women-rights based political bodies (WPCs, CSWs) as well as engaging and capacitating a range of political stakeholders at national, provincial and local level to become more responsive to gender-aware processes of legislating and reviewing laws and policies. Two of the projects were particularly successful in making contributions to legislating processes by introducing and facilitating adoption of pro-women laws. For example, Fempower’s consultations and training with the WPCs in KP led to the inclusion of its gender responsive budget proposals in KP’s budget for FY2021-22. In a similar vein, advocacy and consultation of WE’RE Leaders and partner organization FAFEN resulted in inclusion of four gender-responsive amendments to the electoral reform bill passed in October 2020. The reforms are well in line with the feminist mandate of making electoral processes inclusive and empowering.

### Electoral Reforms

#### Recommendation for Amendment to Election Act 2017

**Section 167(b):** This section defines the corrupt practices punishable under the Elections Act 2017; however, it does not include campaigning for or against a candidate on the basis of gender as a corrupt practice. TDEA recommended to include gender as a ground for corrupt practice under law.

**Section 202(2):** This subsection asks political parties to submit to Election Commission a list of 2,000 workers for their enlistment with the Commission. However, it does not provide for a gender-disaggregated list. On TDEA’s recommendation, the recent electoral reforms package proposes to amend this section for at least 20 percent representation of women in the list.

**Section 203(4):** This subsection asks political parties to encourage women to become their members. TDEA recommended to specifically mention persons with disabilities and
Gender Responsiveness of the Public Healthcare facilities in Pakistan

Hum Awaz groups undertook action research in 20 project districts to explore gender equity and gender responsiveness of healthcare facilities in Pakistan. Seven of these districts were in Punjab, six in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), four in Sindh, and three in Balochistan. The research provided for advocacy positions for civil society and recommendations for the district and provincial governments to improve the equity and equality of healthcare facilities to women.

Hum Awaz groups’ members observed 233 healthcare facilities across 20 project districts—163 basic health units (BHUs), and dispensaries, 26 rural health centers (RHCs), 30 district and tehsil headquarters hospitals and ten tertiary care hospitals. Geographically, 74 out of the total observed healthcare facilities were located in districts of Punjab, 70 in KP, 47 in Sindh, and the remaining 42 in Balochistan.

The observation findings identified the gaps in general and medical services provided at healthcare centers to citizens, particularly women, across all project districts. The results highlighted an unconducive work environment for women workers regarding inadequate transport availability and lack of childcare arrangements for staff; these limited women’s ability to work there or access them for medical services. Around a fifth of the observed healthcare centers across project districts lacked the infrastructure to enable PWDs to access the place. Moreover, a third of the healthcare facilities (33 percent) did not have separate toilets for women. The unavailability of female medical staff was also an issue at around 27 percent of the healthcare centers. Nearly 25 percent of the observed public sector healthcare facilities lacked compliance with the requirements of the Protection of Women against Harassment at Workplace Act, 2010. The law requires setting up inquiry committees to deal with complaints of harassment and the prominent display of the anti-harassment code of conduct inside all workplaces, including healthcare centers.

Source: WE’RE Leaders Annual report 2021

Moreover, capacity-building activities with the partner CSOs and media personnel also resulted in impressive headways into making the local processes of governance and reporting more accountable to outcomes of gender equality and structural inclusivity of the marginalised. For example, WE’RE Leaders developed a network of active citizen groups called Hum Awaz in each of the 20 project districts. These groups monitor the public services with a gender lens and advocate for enhancing their gender responsiveness to enable women to participate in civic life effectively. The groups have a diverse membership base, including, teachers, professionals and political activists. The groups also include transgender and differently-abled persons.

It is very difficult to convince the male partners to vote for their female partners where the culture or norms are so strong and we can’t contribute [results] to just one project, especially when different organizations are working.

There are two processes, one is registering voters and the other is voting behavior of people, like people don’t use their right to vote. People’s behavior should be considered whether it is positive or negative. We must change the voting behavior of people.

( ECP from Toba Tek Singh, Punjab)
Challenges to achieving outcomes of wider political participation and institutional gender responsiveness

Although, the WPP projects were able to make considerable contribution to improving the state of political apartheid existing in Pakistan through a range of effective interventions, however, the projects also faced several socio-cultural and structural barriers to achieving inclusive political processes.

For example, interviews and FGDs with project participants reveal an array of highly contextualized challenges in fulfilling the objective of engaging local women and marginalized groups for political inclusion.

All of the women respondents, reached for interviews and discussions for MTR, involved in working directly with local women unanimously indicated that socio-cultural norms grounded in patriarchal values are a major barrier in improving political participation of women. Male head of households exhibit a considerable control over women’s social and political participation, including the decision to acquire CNIC or to cast vote. The need to sensitize local men to the importance of political inclusion of women is identified as the most important breakthrough to achieve political empowerment of women, especially in rural localities. Therefore, interventions aimed at improving only women’s awareness of political rights may not translate into effective political action or enhancement of substantial political freedoms as the structural and cultural barriers prevail.

Moreover, decision-making power and political awareness among women voters is particularly low, even when they are registered to vote it is observed that they do not exercise their political right freely. The male members of households usually direct the decision of voting for them. The women themselves do not feel informed or empowered enough to make the decision to vote and for whom to vote by themselves. This also points to issues of information access by women, with most marginalized women having very limited access to political information and processes. The WPP women leaders themselves were at times unable to engage with women directly without first seeking permission from the male head of household or the community.

“**When we did a workshop awareness and went with our team for the awareness we did not go to their house we talked to the main male head of that area like Nazim so they used to talk to the families and listen to them. And other than that, we talked to the imam of that area so people may listen to them. We reached a community that respected people and was aware of women’s rights and basic needs. So, the respected person talks to local people and they are ready to send their women with us to make identity cards.**”

We say we are a democratic company [country] but it is really hard to take tickets from parties and they don’t give them power. They gave the ticket to those who were wealthy and had power. Our member Arfa Abdullah also stood in the election as a free elected candidate. In Gwadar people are very poor, so they gave seats to those who were wealthy. We give training to women. If we achieve 20%, it will be a big thing for us because women’s empowerment in Gwadar is very low.

*(Member Jazba District Forum, Gwadar Balochistan)*
“(SheLeads Alumna, Abbottabad, KP)

“We need support and permission from home and males. There should be sessions for the males also to sensitize them and to be aware about women rights.” (Female political worker, Kashmore)

The success of achieving wider political inclusion is also linked with tangible incentives. While WPP programs’ awareness activities have played a role in empowering and facilitating women to acquire CNIC, in some districts (with high incidence of poverty), government programs such as Ehsas that provide monetary incentives to household for registering and acquiring CNIC have been more successful in overcoming cultural and patriarchal barriers to enable women to obtain ID cards, as highlighted by some of the study participants.

“Theyir CNIC registration was actually because of the Ehsas program as they were giving women 12,000 rupees, so the men also allowed their women to make their identity cards”

(FGD with CSOs & ShirkatGah)

“Women don’t come with us because they say we can’t fully fill our basic needs so why do we need to make Identity card” (Female Political worker, Okara)

Structural and cultural barrier such as, restricted mobility, lack of resources and proper documentation (birth forms) and inaccessibility of registration centers (including non-cooperative behavior of staff) have been identified as important barriers to achieving the output of wider participation of women through ID card acquisition and voter registration. MRV facilitation for registration is observed to be limited in its outreach to the most deprived and inaccessible areas, because of the severity and magnitude of the problem.

Moreover, more than 50% of the participants highlighted the reluctance and hesitation of the transgender community to participate and to engage with the projects’ advocacy work. The community remains difficult to reach and largely marginalized from the political activism of the mainstream advocacy interventions.

The FGD participants from across sampled districts also highlighted some important factors that can feed into improving capacity-building trainings with local network members. The need to hold refresher trainings and to replicate these trainings at tehsil level for political leadership is endorsed. In some districts, the local women leaders highlight the need to be more effectively linked with
relevant government institutions (such as NADRA) as effective support from state institutions is paramount to achieving the objectives of empowerment of local female leadership and wider political participation of women. Some participants also highlighted the need and expected positive impact of training and raising awareness among male youth so that they be more willing to bring down patriarchal mindset to promote women’s political participation. This aspect has been addressed by some of the advocacy interventions, particularly by JAZBA and Fempower, however, most interventions are mainly focused on engaging women.

Additionally, the need to maintain sustainability of the trainings by: introducing refresher training of the local staff, facilitating transportation for outreach activities and improving access to effective IEC material to guide women on ID registration and documentation processes, were highlighted as important factors impacting performance.

Yes, we feel that the duration of training is low, it is one day training. We suggest that it should be 2 days training and there should be more material. Activities should be increased to grab more ideas and to enhance the knowledge. In training, we should be trained about safety and how a female can move freely because the major problem of females is security and protection.

(Female political worker, Muzaffargarh).

7.4 Efficiency

The WPP projects started operations in 2019 with the inception phase reporting rapid development in terms of building horizontal synergies, identifying IPs role and responsibilities, setting objectives and goals and conducting needs assessment to design effective interventions. However, by the end of the inception phase, the COVID outbreak was at its peak with national lockdowns and closures effectuating all over the country. This proved a major setback to the progress of the project and created many hurdles in achievement of its proposed objectives and outputs particularly those involving mass gatherings and physical outreach.

However, most WPP projects were able to redirect and re-strategize quite efficiently to minimize time losses and maximize activity and progress towards meeting project outcomes. The projects, some more so than others, efficiently positioned to strategize under the existing project framework to implement a mutually complementing set of coherent, evidence-based, and responsive activities.

Most of the management operations were shifted to a virtual space, with project teams continuing to meet virtually to make important decisions on operational strategies. Some of the planned outputs
particularly those pertaining to community outreach and mass trainings were deferred and new and innovative ways of continuing the work of advocacy were developed and deployed. Recorded lectures, online Zoom discussions, WhatsApp groups, and Management Information System (MIS) were the main tools that were employed to conduct trainings and capacitate stakeholders for intervention in systems of local government, democratic institutions, and the issue of women’s participation in political processes.

Some WPP projects undertook effective re-orientating strategies in aligning the advocacy and capacity-building exercises with the emergent contextual priorities and needs of the country. Specific examples of this include altering training content to include sessions on the role women could play during the active pandemic (Jazba, Power). SheLeads in particular encouraged women to develop post-training action plans that would allow them to lead community sessions on the importance of following government-imposed SOPs to mitigate the spread of the covid-virus, and how women could get access to government issued relief efforts. Both Jazba and Power in collaborations with local partners were able to draw connections between evolving and new needs on ground as a result of COVID and connected it more largely to the women leadership content and overarching project objectives of increasing registration of women for an NIC. Additionally, training content delivery itself was adapted to being delivered through online mediums. This provided the opportunity for many women to participate in an online training for the very first time and develop transferable computer literacy skills.

Additionally, the delay in local government elections due to COVID and the development of heightened political tensions between ruling party and the opposition coalition in the following years also had a marked impact on the implementation of a number of engagement activities planned with the parliamentarians and legislators, which were mostly postponed or delayed. Also, a number of advocacy activities planned by WPP projects for the imminent LG elections had to be revised or postponed in light of the delay in the LG elections. Despite the setbacks, WPP projects were able to adopt appropriate risk mitigations strategies to minimize the impact of these hindering socio-political developments. Most notably:

- Fempower redirected its campaigning strategies from its thematic focus ‘From voters to representatives’ to supporting NIC registrations, in light of delays in LG elections
- In wake of COVID, all projects modified their advocacy campaigns to include awareness raising among communities on accessing social-protection programs as well as advocacy with elected representatives and government officials for gender-sensitive and equitable response and relief programs
- In light of delays in elections and taking into consideration the stakeholder interests, WE’RE Leaders actively engaged with the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs, ECP and political parties to advocate on the need for electoral reforms
- IFES and She Leads local partners were able to draw connections between evolving and new needs on ground as a result of COVID and connected it more largely to the women leadership content and overarching POWER objectives of increasing registration of women for an NIC
Additionally, POWER was also able to adapt its leadership training content and medium of delivery to an online platform, also prompting an initiative to develop transferable computer literacy skills among female participants.

Although all WPP projects have developed M&E framework to monitor and report on progress towards achieving outcomes, some M&E plans have been more effective and functional than others. All projects have developed performance indicators against key outcomes to monitor progress against pre-set annual and cumulative targets, however, reporting is only limited to KPIs on immediate outcomes. While reporting on KPIs has been undertaken by all WPP projects, not all projects have reported effective evidence base for the proposed outputs achieved. The baseline reporting has weak evidence base as there’s no explanation for how the baseline data has been identified or generated, exception being Jazba that reports an implementation of a data collection strategy for setting baseline targets. Most projects reporting on KPIs related to training and capacity-building exercises do not provide adequate monitoring and assessment measures for the reported gains in knowledge and skills, exception being WEPP and WE’RE Leaders, that have tried to implement training assessment measures for gauging short-term efficacy of training interventions. Under project Jazba, qualitative techniques of data collection for M&E have been employed, such as, conducting KIIs and FGDs with training participants as well as documenting case studies on success stories. WEPP and JAZBA particularly report effectively on performance indicators, whereby performance indicators are measured using somewhat relevant assessments and evaluation tools, in consideration of the nature of intervention. WEPP also report on developing SMART(Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound) approaches of evaluation of training interventions, however, evidence to support the adoption of these techniques in current reporting periods is weak.

All the WPP projects have also regularly reported on risk and mitigations strategies. All projects were successful in analyzing contextual risks of performance and delay and were largely successful in adopting appropriate mitigation strategies, exception being the WEPP project which faced considerable delays in fulfilling its proposed outputs due to lack of effective mitigations strategies pertaining to administrative hindrances. For example, due to the administrative hindrances in obtaining operational approvals for DCSWs, considerable grassroots advocacy and training activities planned through these bodies were delayed.

All in all, the WPP projects have been able to make impressive progress in achieving proposed outcomes through employment of effective interventions and time-efficient operationalization especially during the COVID lockdown. Monitoring and evaluation of the project activities and outputs, however, remains particularly weak for most projects.
7.5 **Sustainability**

The WPP projects were able to achieve certain outcomes that will improve sustainability of interventions and will remain relevant past the life of the project. Although the COVID-related shutdowns seriously impacted the progress of some planned interventions, it also opened up avenues to development of innovative and sustainable strategies to achieve the proposed objectives. More specifically, the restriction on mobility prompted WPP projects to develop new and interactive online interfaces in conducting training or engaging stakeholders and partner CSOs. These measures did not only improve time and operational efficiency of the interventions but have also had an impact on budget spending, and the potential sustainability of project interventions because the focus pivoted to building resilient systems and processes for capacity building which will exist and continue to be used beyond the life of the project. For example, **WEPP-KP** assisted Local Governance School (LGS), a governmental body, in developing an online platform to conduct the gender mainstreaming trainings as well as to make training materials more accessible to the KP government. While initially a response strategy to deal with COVID restrictions, the strategy has greatly improved longevity and sustainability of the training exercise. Similarly, an efficient MIS system was developed under **JAZBA** program to facilitate monitoring and collection of baseline data on project output indicators. The system will continue to support the IPs in producing and managing data on women-rights based initiatives and interventions more efficiently beyond project’s life.

Additionally, interactive online portal called Women in Election (WiE) has been developed by the IP of **Power** project. The WiE web portal provides useful information on women’s rights and electoral and political participation in Pakistan. A similar development is achieved by **JAZBA** in developing a prototype for an online web platform to support WVN in outreach and advocacy. The development of such online interfaces supports online engagement and enhance sustainability of advocacy efforts undertaken under the WPP projects.

Moreover, the capacity-building and advocacy interventions undertaken by the WPP projects, specifically with a range of stakeholders (including the CSOs, women councilors, youth activists and the political leadership) operating at different national and sub-national levels, are expected to effectuate a behavioral and knowledge change. This expected change should continue to affect the political advocacy and institutional capacity of the stakeholders for the achievement of longer lasting and transformational WPP outcomes.

Similarly, the projects have developed training materials on gender-sensitization and gender mainstreaming for a diverse group of stakeholders, including, government bodies, and political leadership, CSOs and youth activists. These training models and materials will likely remain relevant.

“The work we have done demands that we should not leave it here, if it would be stopped then our gains may turn into losses. There is a need to spend more time on it. We should continue the strategic plans of WPP and GAC”

[SAP]
and useful to impart similar activities beyond the life of the projects as most IPs are already operating under the mandate to promote women empowerment and inclusion.

7.6 Impact

Although a transformative impact of the projects interventions is not possible to report at this stage in WPP program’s life, some considerable gains have been made in achieving intermediary outcomes of improving political participation of women at grassroots level and institutional strengthening to promote gender-responsiveness of laws and policies.

Most interventions in the WPP projects aimed to develop a network of advocates and activists for community outreach by imparting knowledge and skills on women’s political rights, electoral processes and significance of women’s political inclusion. These district level groups (SheLeads, Hum Awaz, Hum Nigran, WVN, WLG, JDF) comprised of CSO and CBO members, female councilors and ex-councilors and youth activists.

Almost all (100%) of the sample participants, both male and female, demonstrated that feelings of empowerment and self-confidence in ability to advocate for WPP outcomes increased through meaningful participation in different types of project activities, including capacity-building trainings. Some projects (Jazba, Power, Fempower) also specifically targeted and trained male allies as part of the district level advocacy and outreach efforts. Although consultations with the program participants show positive attitudes towards the project’s activities, however, it was difficult to assess any substantial change in their knowledge or understanding about women’s political rights and gender equality through reported performance indicators.

The second most important area of program intervention has been to build capacity of political or governance institutions through gender mainstreaming of processes and structures and to engage with women political leadership to enhance knowledge and skills on gender responsive processes of reviewing and developing legislations. The projects have provided instrumental support in development of effective operational and communication

“Women’s interest was improved in elections and improved women participation as supporters but women’s participation as candidates did not improve to the level that we might expect because there are more challenges in the system”

[TDEA]
strategies for the Commissions on Status of Women (CSWs) in Sindh and KP. The commissions have been particularly under-resourced and inactive in achieving their legal mandates and to contribute effectively to facilitating and monitoring the implementation of gender-responsive laws and policies, particularly, Pakistan’s commitment to international obligations on women’s socio-political rights.

A few of the projects’ interventions were around engaging political leadership, specifically, WPCs and legislators (MPAs, MNAs) in imparting gender mainstreaming skills such as gender-responsive budget analysis and post-legislative scrutiny of laws and policies to align them with international obligations on women’s political and social empowerment (CEDAW, SDG 5). These efforts and engagements resulted in WPC-KP proposing and advocating for gender-responsive changes in budget for the following financial year. Similarly, as a result of active engagement of WE’RE Leaders and FAFEN with the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs, ECP and political parties to advocate on the need for electoral reforms, the federal cabinet approved the Elections Amendment Bill, 2020, which has been introduced in National Assembly in October 2020. The bill incorporated many recommendations of TDEA-FAFEN including four related to increased participation of women in political and electoral processes. However, it is pertinent to mention that such initiatives of involving political leadership were very concentrated and sporadic which might be of help if focused by involving more women MPAs and MNAs for their capacity building in other thematic areas to ensure that they can contribute to political processes in a more functional and productive manner.

Impressive results have also been achieved in terms of producing research and evidence-based publications on issues of women rights, including, issues of political inclusion, GBV, electoral reforms and COVID’s impact on women’s socio-economic wellbeing. The publications have been reported and disseminated to wide audiences including, relevant government and political bodies, CSOs, NGOs, journalists and policy think tanks.

### 7.7 Partnership & Cooperation

The WPP program was successful in achieving substantially cooperation and coordination in operationalizing different activities of the program. The Implementing partners attained a good level of internal coherence, building effective synergies with partner organizations and stakeholders (CSOs etc). Moreover, under the supervision

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**Women MPAs/MNAs -JAZBA**

> “Throughout the project we learnt a lot which helped us be more functional and vocal in assemblies; it helped us articulate our concerns and questions better which naturally enhanced our confidence.”

*(Trained MPAs/MNAs Karachi, Sindh)*

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**Member of Women Voters Network (WVN)-JAZBA**

> “Jazba had motivated women so much that now they can speak and think about themselves…our members of the Jazba program Ushna, Zainab, and Zenat fight for elections they did not win but they were motivated through that.”

*(Member WVN, Gwadar, Sindh)*
of the GAC, efficient alignment of objectives and outcome-setting was achieved across projects through a three-day coordination workshop held in Islamabad from 10-12 July 2019. The workshop greatly facilitated the process of strategic programmatic planning and cooperation between implementing organisations. The most efficient efforts in this regard, included, development of a common and elaborative MEL framework, with common ultimate and intermediary outcomes and identification of areas of intervention and cooperation. Effective external collaborations were also undertaken, particularly, with the CSOs, the ECP and the CSWs in identifying stakeholders’ needs and pertinent areas of program interventions.

However, in some other areas, such as, geographic focus of interventions, effective external coordination was lacking that led to duplication of efforts and resources on advocacy particularly in overlapping districts and ensuring robust external coherence in achievement of this objective.

7.8 QCA Matrix Scoring & Conclusion

Overall, the WPP projects were able to achieve a range of contextually relevant and impactful outputs, most notably, the projects undertook much ground-breaking work around political awareness and advocacy and some key institutional strengthening exercises with political administrative leadership of Women Parliamentary Caucus, the ECP, the CSWs and multiple district and provincial level CSO and NGOs working for propagation of women’s rights in Pakistan. In the QCA assessment of the individual project’s performance against each of the DAC criterion and sub-indicators, the project JAZBA, WE’RE Leaders and FEMPOWER were able to do well in fulfilling most of its proposed objectives and outputs, in a relatively coherent, effective and efficient manner. These projects worked with a wide variety of stakeholders and targeted interventions at all relevant levels identified in the proposed common logic model, from grassroots advocacy to engaging political leadership and institution. The projects were also particularly successful in reorienting in the face of Covid setbacks.

Fempower and Power, were also largely on track and made good progress in achieving some key outputs for their proposed objectives, Fempower’s work with the WPC in KP and Balochistan was particularly impactful and contributed to institutionalization of gender responsive analysis of budgetary planning of the legislators. Power also achieved some key outputs in institutionalizing gender responsive policies and norms within the ECP electoral processes as well as introducing Gender mainstreaming framework for the Gender Wing within the ECP. WE’RE Leaders and Jazba were particularly successful in creating an innovative network of women leaders and youth activist through creation of district-level advocacy networks and groups such as, Hum-nigran, Hum-awaz, Women Voter Network (WVN) and Jazba District Forums (JDFs). WE’RE Leaders and WEPP-KP were

“Yes, they [transgender] began to disclose it in Balochistan but it is still difficult because they [transgender] do not register themselves.

First of all, we should conduct separate meetings to uproot their hesitation and to develop confidence then we should begin to include them within the other communities.”

(WLG member, Quetta)
able to achieve progress towards some key proposed intermediary outcomes, specifically in strengthening and gender-mainstreaming the CSWs and the government bodies such as the LGS (by WEPP) and the SHCR (by WE’RE Leaders) by providing strategic support and guidance. WEPP, however, suffered from considerable setbacks due to administrative and political delays. For example, the continued administrative and governmental delays in operationalizing the district level IPs (DCSW, SE, WED) of the project led to underachievement of most of its planned outputs, most notably, substantial work at the grassroots level. Overall, most of the projects were unable to provide effective monitoring and evaluation data, most notably, weak reporting of data collection strategies to inform baseline. Moreover, gains reported in terms of increased knowledge and skills or behavior were not adequately supported with evidence generated through means of effective evaluation or assessments. Only WEPP-KP and JAZBA were able to provide some level of effective evaluation measure being adopted to report on efficacy of activities and interventions. Outcome level reporting remains considerably weak for most of the projects, as all projects have mainly developed indicators for and reported progress on immediate outcomes
## QCA MATRIX SCORING AROUND DAC CRITERION & INDICATORS

Factors to be identified through Data analysis corresponding to each of the DAC criteria mentioned above

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implementing Organisation</th>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Relevance</th>
<th>Effectiveness</th>
<th>Efficiency</th>
<th>Partnership &amp; Cooperation</th>
<th>Coherence</th>
<th>Impact</th>
<th>Sustainability</th>
<th>Gender, Diversity and Inclusion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CoWater</td>
<td>WEPP-KP</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-1</td>
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<tr>
<td>SAP-PK and AF</td>
<td>Democracy &amp; Empowered Women/JAZABA</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shirkat Gah Simorgh</td>
<td>FEMPOWER</td>
<td>1</td>
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</table>
The WPP projects set out clear objectives and present an elaborative framework of action to fulfil the goals of improving women’s political participation in Pakistan. The projects have identified some key areas for intervention mainly through capacity building of women political leadership and institutions and advocacy at grassroots. The activities planned towards achieving the proposed outcomes made considerable gains in advocacy outputs and outreach at community level. The district-level support networks generated in collaboration with NGOs and CSOs were particularly empowered to transfer knowledge and awareness at grassroots level.

Moreover, engagement and capacity-building workshops with the political leadership and institutions achieved effective results in promoting gender responsiveness and building forward and backward linkages for promotion of women’s political inclusion at all levels.

The project builds important synergies both horizontally and vertically to improve efficacy of project interventions. It makes effective use of existing local CSOs and CBOs to strengthen existing leadership at local level so that the impact of the localized projects to empower women politically and socially is amplified.

Socio-cultural norms, poverty and structural and institutional barriers including lack of access to political processes and information are identified as important challenges in achieving proposed outputs of improving grassroots political participation of women.

The most marginalized in terms of gender, socio-economic status, disability and religion are less effectively engaged through project activities. Participation and motivation is significantly low and mainly tokenistic for this group of beneficiaries, indicating a need to develop more focused and inclusive interventions in addition to mainstreaming advocacy and outreach.
8. Recommendations and Considerations

The WPP approach in Pakistan is highly aligned with several key elements for achieving transformative results, but more remains to be done. Achievement of WPP objectives were hindered by a range of socio-political contextual issues, some new and some recurring that need to be considered in ensuring effective achievement of WPP long-term outcomes and programmatic impact on women’s political empowerment. The following infographic is further expanded in the following pages to unpack the set of recommendation which are project specific along with some generalized considerations to be made in context of overall environmental conditions to be dealt with women political participation initiatives.

![Figure 18 Women's Political Participation Climate](image-url)

**General Recommendations:**
- Create more avenues for community-building
- Include marginalized communities of women and transgender persons
- Include men and boys
- Engage with Political Leadership and ensure institutional commitment
- Implement programmatic improvements
- Enhance reporting on Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
- Cater to the needs of specially-abled women
- Develop competency of women candidates

**WE’RE LEADERS - TDEA**
- Effective reporting for Hum Awaaz
- More trainings on women's safety
- Provide transport to and from trainings
- Increase training duration
- Engage male members especially in conservative districts

**FemPower - ShirkatGah**
- Increase participation of male allies
- Arrange monthly refresher trainings
- Address other community-level issues faced by women
- Greater focus on outcome indicators than output indicators

**POWER - IFES**
- Increase outreach and scope of trainings conducted with ECP in Sindh
- Keep awareness sessions in local language
- She Leads alumni should give awareness to parents on child registration

**JAZBA - SAP-PK**
- Arrange regular meetings with IPs
- Organize refresher trainings
- Sign MOUs with universities for youth sensitization
- Provide community orientation sessions

**WEPP - CoWater**
- Strengthen mitigation measures
- Seek out alternate entry-points
- Strengthen linkages
- Increase lobbying efforts
8.1 General Recommendations

- Community-Building and Enabling Environment

The WPP program enabled a strengthened resilience focus through participation, and community-building for sustainable WPP outcomes. Key factors for sustaining women’s empowerment observed by projects included the engagement of local actors, reinforcing local ownership and the use of women-led approaches. In all cases, women felt empowered by the sense of community created by projects. Women cited the need for more avenues of female leadership and recommended continued engagement and connection between female participants after project completion.

Future work should focus more on creating more sustainable avenues and platforms for continued engagement of local women and local women leaders to achieve a long-term impact of increased political participation. The engagement activities should be more focused on creating an enabling environment that are specifically curated to a particular community’ needs. For example, several interviewed women leaders observed that while their own motivation has improved as the result of projects’ advocacy trainings, they were still hindered by prevalent sociocultural barriers in achieving meaningful political engagement with the local women, especially in rural areas. A more focused approach to creating an enabling community that supports women’s political empowerment, considering family, community and institutional structures could further improve the WPP advocacy results. This approach should consider: awareness-raising with wider community; seeking innovative and strategic partnerships that target key influencers, including male family and community members and aligning funded projects with existing political initiatives to fully leverage all diplomatic tools.

- Inclusion of marginalized communities of women and transgender persons

An institutional level commitment is of utmost importance in making the political processes truly inclusive for socially disadvantaged groups, such as, transgender persons, religious minorities and differently-abled persons. The marginalization is amplified for women belonging to these groups as they operate under an intersectionality of multiple disadvantages. Hence, more focused and strategic interventions are needed to redress political exclusion of these groups. While two of the five WPP projects have worked with the ECP to facilitate provision of MRVs and gender and diversity sensitization training of the electoral and polling staff, however, the impact could be largely augmented by inclusion of similar training and facilitation as part of capacity-building efforts across all projects, greatly improving the geographical spread of such initiatives with ECP. Also, more targeted advocacy and awareness activities are needed with the transgender community to build knowledge and resources that will enable them to overcome socio-cultural barriers to participate more actively in political processes.

- Inclusion of Men and Boys

Women expressed the desire for more significant involvement of men within the WPP projects. This interest was aligned in most of WPP projects that articulated the inclusion of men and boys following the feminist principals of inclusive development. Relatively less evidence of their inclusion was found in all of the sampled projects, with the majority of these activities falling under advocacy and
community outreach on WPP. Some projects targeted university and college boys with awareness-raising on women rights and gender equality and others encouraged GE outcomes by engaging men from CSOs and journalist organizations in gender-sensitization trainings. However, specific outcome reporting on this aspect of the projects activities are relatively weak as we do not know whether the engagement of men had a differentiated positive impact on outreach and advocacy.

Moreover, as male family members were often the determining factor in women’s participation in political processes, as a result, family support was vital, and the active participation of all agents of change to create an enabling environment will be necessary for growth towards increased WPP in the country.

- **Meaningful engagement of Political leadership and institutional commitment to ensuring sustainable political empowerment of women in Pakistan**

With most IPs being rights-based organizations and NGOs, few external partners were politically well-situated or resourced, or held the specific expertise necessary for transformative work at national and provincial level. Very few governmental bodies have the institutional commitment, policies and capacity to design and implement WPP projects. There is a need for more effective involvement of strategic governmental institutes and political leadership, particularly female political leadership, to maintain sustainability and effectuate a transformative impact of project interventions. Engagements with political leadership at highest level were particularly weak and perfunctory across all WPP projects.

Political parties need to directly engage with women to reduce their perception of being politically invisible. To this end, the political parties need to strategically increase inclusion of women workers and improve their representation as candidates to be nominated as MNA and MPA. Another instrumental approach to improving women participation in politics could be through institutionalization of women’s collective action groups, which support them in developing knowledge and skills to effectively participate in electoral processes and in making effective demands from national, provincial and local representatives as well as providing avenues of sustained political training to aspiring political leaders.

Moreover, in light of the continued delay in holding of LG elections, the ECP should ensure that voter education dissemination strategy is gender responsive across Pakistan, particularly, by extending its outreach to previously under-resourced and under-represented areas in terms of training and facilitation services. Given the marked gender gap in electoral registrations, both ECP and NADRA should make concerted efforts to adopt a universal geographic coverage approach to mobilizing women and marginalized groups to register for NIC.

- **Programmatic improvements, commitments and support**

The need to develop strong and sustained programmatic support to women’s political inclusion by national and international organizations is also recommended. This should start with development of a common and locally contextualized understanding of the term ‘women’s political empowerment’, and a commitment for adequate and sustainable funding and organizational support.
While efforts were made to identify and diversify geographical areas of WPP advocacy interventions, there were still overlaps in terms of participating local CSOs/CBOS which led to overestimation of intended beneficiaries in some target regions. More effective and sustained coordination between regional IPs is recommended to avoid duplication of efforts and investments as presently much of advocacy interventions were very similar in design and approach with a considerable geographical overlap of activities. The design and approach of project level interventions could also be diversified to achieve more sustained advocacy and engagement results. For example, advocacy activities could contribute more to changing perceptions at community level by involving more men-centered or community-centered campaigning and awareness initiatives.

The program activities should be carried on for long enough to effectuate a meaningful change and should move beyond the standardized training programs to address more deeply-embedded socio-cultural and institutional barriers. The programs should also utilize new knowledge and evidence-based approaches with a global scope, to improve the scale and design of operations and interventions. For example, elsewhere similar projects that are working with local CSOs or CBOs to capacitate them in their feminist mandates, adopt exhaustive scoping and mapping methods to better understand context and needs of these organizations and to ensure a diversity of gender issues, identities and interventions being addressed by the program.

- **Improved reporting on Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning**

The global IPs GAC and OXFAM conducted a 3-day coordination workshop for WPP projects and IPs from 10-12 July 2019. This was a unique and effective feature of the WPP program to achieve cohesiveness across the five projects and develop an overarching feminist MEL strategy and work plan to report more coherently on results achieved. According to the strategy, project-level monitoring and evaluation fed into program-level corporate reporting through common indicators. While this centralization and formalization of outcome reporting was an efficient step in order to improve monitoring and evaluation of WPP projects, the internalization of the concept of MEL framework and its actual reporting was only perfunctory, with most WPP projects not reporting effectively on outcome and output indicators.

Although impressive outreach numbers on direct and indirect beneficiaries of program activities have been reported, the evidence base in terms of concrete strategies employed to collect data for monitoring on outcome indicators has been weak in most of the projects. While all projects reported progress against KPIs and outputs, improved outcome reporting is needed to allow more targeted programming.

Reports from partners included impressive output data, outcome data was often lacking, and it remained difficult to assess achievements. Better reporting of outcomes would provide an opportunity for the program to better understand and align programming - scaling up where appropriate and learning from challenges and innovation.

The program should encourage WPP partners to collect data on changes in awareness, behavior, skills, knowledge and/or empowerment following trainings or other project interventions using up-to-date feminist and participatory research methods to better report on outcomes that complement existing output-level reporting.
Emerging COVID-19 lessons

COVID-19 caused increased mobility limitations and exclusion of women from public spaces which has had a markedly negative effect on women’s political empowerment. However, it also highlighted digital empowerment as an emerging need and an opportunity for women to acquire digital literacy. While digital engagement assisted in preserving women’s participation in project network and activities, it uncovered intersectional inequalities in access to technology and the internet. Therefore, achieving digital empowerment could help improve current and future political empowerment gains in light of the changing national and global socio-political context.

Catering to the needs of specially-abled women

The needs of women with disabilities and their gender concerns of safety and privacy should be addressed to ensure that first time female voters are not discouraged by the experience or families. Scope of special efforts needed to be widened to reach out to women with disabilities to help them attain their CNIC and to register them as voters. Likewise, special measures need to be taken during elections at polling stations for their easy access to cast their votes. It is imperative that especially abled women (and even men) are to be catered to their nearby polling stations even if their vote is registered in some other area. ECP, in this context, needs to be sensitized and advocacy initiative needs to be planned with ECP and NADRA to help ensure these measures.

Advocacy and Sensitization to equip Trans community

Facilitation to transgender for having their CNICs with their preferred gender identity is the core step to increase their political and electoral participation. This needs awareness and training. Special initiatives are to be designed to equip transgender citizens with knowledge, skills and resources to contest elections. In this regard media campaigns can be one avenue to generate awareness among transgender persons about their political rights. Moreover, sensitization trainings should be held for the officials on duty at polling booths.

Develop Competency of Women Candidates

Political Mentoring: Mentoring and training programs prepare women for political work and enhance their political skills. Local-level positions equip women with the skills necessary for higher levels of public office and careers in regional and national politics. Thus, initiatives focused on encouraging women to enter local politics can be particularly effective at raising women’s participation in political processes.

Women’s Platforms: Consistent and methodical training with female candidates yields better results than offering stand-alone training during just one phase of the electoral cycle. Engaging local women leaders or trainees who pass their knowledge to others increase the relevance and impact of training. It is recommended to train women to fundraise and establish fundraising networks to decrease the obstacle of financial disadvantage. Moreover, provision of opportunities to strengthen elected women’s influence and leadership, such as conducting orientations for newly elected women,
governance skills training, networking opportunities and providing opportunities to foster policy dialogue, will also be useful.

8.2 Project-specific Recommendations

- **WEPP by Cowater**
  i. Strengthen mitigation measures with regards to the delays experienced due to COVID-19, such as in operationalization of district-level CSWs and subsequent planned activities and the suspension of LG elections. In this regard, a comprehensive risk analysis can help to improve and identify how such unavoidable delays can be handled more efficiently.
  ii. A key adaptation measure especially in case of the delayed government notification of DCSWs could be to seek out alternative entry points or avenues for engaging communities and leaders at the district-level. In the meanwhile, Additional Deputy Commissioners for Human Rights, District Social Welfare officers, women’s groups, and religious leaders can be focused on as alternative partners for awareness raising around women’s political participation.
  iii. Strengthen linkages among KPCSW, WPC and government institutions by frequent engagements in the form of progress sharing on important pro-women laws and their implementation through follow-up meetings. This will further enhance awareness regarding the role and mandate of KPCSW among key stakeholders.
  iv. Ensure meaningful and sustained engagements and vertical synergies with political leadership in order to enable achievement of concrete and sustainable outcomes in terms of supporting and building female political leadership. In this context, consultative sessions or working group meetings can be held involving local political leaders and project staff. It is pertinent to increase lobbying efforts in order to secure timely government support for setting up coordination structures as laid out in the programme documents. Effective lobbying would ensure a stronger relationship with the relevant government channels which could expedite and save the project unnecessary delays and costs.

- **JAZBA by SAP-PK**
  i. In order to prevent overlap of advocacy efforts in JAZBA’s support to electoral processes in GB; it is critical to have a clear scope of work and mandate to operate in a complex consortium setting. This will help establish and assess the type of assistance, contribution and coordination expected from each of the IPs.
  ii. An effective coordination mechanism needs to be put in place, consisting of regular meetings with IPs working on similar projects and sharing the same geographic scope. Though such meetings were planned to take place thrice a year with TDEA acting as a secretariat but there is no evidence that these have been conducted.
  iii. A possible approach to ensure implementation and reporting of coordination measures is to explicitly account for them in the logic model. This can be done by including them as specific activities and outputs with the aim to create synergies among projects, leading to greater efficiency in achievement of outcomes.
  iv. Suitable measures must be adopted to ensure sustainability of capacity-building and advocacy efforts, such as refresher trainings, for women, youth groups and women councilors under
the JAZBA project. This need has also been highlighted in KIIs conducted with key stakeholders of the project.

v. Youth can be more effectively engaged through offering sensitization sessions in universities. For this purpose, MOUs can be signed with the university due to conservative outlook and lack of awareness with regards to NGO activity.

vi. Lack of awareness within the community and general suspicion of NGO-related activity was identified as a major impediment by JAZBA project staff. Hence, it is recommended that orientation sessions for increased sensitization should be held for improved response from community to JAZBA project – in certain UCs.

vii. Furthermore, coordination with relevant departments should be formalized. So, that a department official can be present when the community is approached directly. Ideally, sensitization activities need to precede any advocacy work with the community.

viii. More effective forward and backward linkages with need to be established through engagement with political leaders and institutions, especially in relation to identifying male champions for women’s participation in politics.

>>> FEMPOWER by ShirkatGah

i. There is a need to increase participation of male allies in Social Action Initiatives (SAIs) under the FEMPOWER project, as permission from women’s husbands and other male guardians is a prerequisite for them to obtain National Identity Cards (NICs) and thereby access other essential services.

ii. For this purpose, men within the target communities need to be approached in order to dispel harmful patriarchal stereotypes around women empowerment. This will also increase the reach of advocacy measures among women who are not easy to access directly.

iii. Refresher trainings should be made more frequent. Women political workers from Okara, trained as part of the FEMPOWER project, expressed a strong need for refresher trainings.

“First of all, we should reach out to the male members of the communities. Then it will be easy to create awareness among females otherwise we can’t catch the females directly.”
- FGDs with Male and Female Allies, Okara

“Secondly, women are needed to know all the points related to the project. They should be trained once again.”
- FGD with political workers, Okara

“Thirdly, we need refresher sessions as the long gaps can be problematic.”
- FGD with political workers, Okara

“Fourthly, the FEMPOWER project needs to be focused on political participation. However, when we visit the community, they have other major issues. So, we need to add activities which focus on community needs. If we want to sustain our efforts, then we need to prioritize the needs of the community.”
- FGDs with CSOs, Lahore

“Older Politics, New Politics...”

- Women Activists, Mardan

“People react to us like we are thieves! It is our bad luck and the weakness of our JAZBA project”
- Women Activists, Mardan

“Coordination (between activists and relevant departments) should be formalized. May be there is a need to increase the frequency of engagements and it should be mandatory that the people of the department will be present, so that they can check what is happening. Sensitization regarding the project should be delivered first and then activists should go and talk to the people.”
- Women Activists, Mardan
need for the trainings to be held more frequently on a monthly basis as opposed to every 3 months.

iv. Sustained engagement with political leadership above and beyond the WPCs should be undertaken by the FEMPOWER project with regards to gender equitable laws, policies and budgets, with greater participation of male MPAs.

v. FGDs with CSOs emphasized that although the FEMPOWER project focuses on women’s political participation, other important community level issues faced by women should also be catered to. Addressing and prioritizing core needs of women in the community will help enhance sustainability of the interventions as well as secure greater participation by local community.

vi. There should be diversification in the design, objectives and outreach of the advocacy activities as well as a diverse range of beneficiaries, including local women, youth, college and universities, male allies and marginalized communities. This will also help address concerns related to overlap of advocacy efforts under various IPs.

vii. More effective reporting is required on M&E indicators, especially where trainings and advocacy interventions have been reported to have generated direct beneficiaries. Particularly, greater focus on tracking of outcome indicators is required as opposed to output indicators which are being mostly focused on in progress reporting.

We’re Leaders by TDEA

i. Advocacy measures by citizens’ groups under Hum Awaz should also focus their efforts towards addressing barriers faced by women with regards to participation in politics, job market etc. through sensitization of male members of the communities, especially in conservative districts under the We’re Leaders project (such as Quetta, Kashmore etc.).

ii. Prioritizing engaging men from the local community will likely also enhance the reach of the project. Findings from FGDs also emphasized reaching out to male members of the community first, as it is not always possible to approach women directly.

iii. The duration of the training needs to be increased to 2 days instead of 1 day, so that more material can be covered and ideas can be exchanged. The need for longer training sessions was also highlighted in FGDs with political workers.

iv. Training sessions for women political workers should also address women’s safety, which was identified as a major issue in FGDs with political workers in a number of districts. Furthermore, in areas where such concerns have been raised, transportation for outreach activities should be provided.

v. Adoption of suitable measures is needed to ensure sustainability of capacity-building and advocacy efforts such as through refresher trainings.

“Mostly, we focus on women’s awareness but I think we should also focus more on males so that they can allow women to go out for politics, work, etc. We belong to Baloch and Pashtun tribes and due to the tribal system, we need to take permission from males to go out. So, there is a greater need to sensitise males more.”

– FGD with political activists, Quetta

“The duration of the training is too short; it is only a day long. We suggest that it should be at least 2 days in duration….The training should also focus on women’s safety and how women can move freely amid security problems.”

– FGD political workers, Muzaffargarh
vi. More effective reporting is required on M&E indicators, especially where trainings and advocacy interventions have been reported to have generated direct beneficiaries such as in case of citizens’ groups under *Hum Awaz* and their activities.

vii. More effective forward and backward linkages need to be established through engagement with key government institutions, especially NADRA, in order to enhance women’s political participation.

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**POWER by IFES**

i. Sustainable measures should be adopted to ensure longevity and generalizability of the institutional strengthening exercises undertaken with the ECP.

ii. There is a need to increase the outreach and scope of the trainings conducted with the ECP in Sindh to include regions from across Pakistan.

iii. Under the *Power project*, *She Leads Alumni* should also include awareness raising measures for parents on obtaining Child Registration Certificates (CRC)/B-form for their children.

iv. Furthermore, the language barrier during awareness raising activities in remote districts of Sindh must be addressed by the project staff. The trainings/awareness session should be delivered in local language.

v. More meaningful, sustained engagements and vertical synergies with political leadership are needed to enable achievement of concrete and sustainable outcomes in terms of supporting and building female political leadership.

vi. Adoption of suitable measures to ensure sustainability of capacity-building and advocacy efforts (e.g., training refreshers, more efficient oversight, supervision and M&E of grassroots activities conducted by partner CSOs).

vii. More effective reporting on M&E indicators, especially where trainings and advocacy interventions have been reported to have generated direct beneficiaries.