

Final Evaluation Report

# Inspiring the Next Generation of Independent Media in Pakistan

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## **How to Cite this Report**

Khan, S.U., et. al. (2023). Inspiring the Next Generation of Independent Media in Pakistan. Search for Common Ground. 2023.

## **Key Themes**

- #Pakistan
- #Gender&SocialInclusion
- #ConflictSensitivity
- #DigitalPeacebuilding
- #IndependentJournalism

## Acronyms

CFWIJ	Coalition for Women in Journalism
CGA	Common Ground Approach
FN	Freedom Network
GAP	Gender Action Plan
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulations
HoD	Head of Department
IFJ	International Federation of Journalists
IP	Implementing Partner
JTP	Journalist Training Program
KII	Key Informant Interview
KP	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
MC	Media Center
MTRC	Media Training and Research Center
NMD	Newly Merged Districts
OECD-DAC	Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development – Development Assistance Committee
PEMRA	Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority
PIF	Peace Impact Framework
PC	Press Club
Search	Search for Common Ground
ToT	Training of Trainers

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## 1. CONTEXT

### Introduction

The media sector in Pakistan has undergone a rapid transformation in recent decades, with the rise of private news channels and the establishment of the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) in 2002.<sup>1</sup> However, this growth has not come without challenges, particularly for women journalists who go through a multitude of challenges and impediments in the line of their duties. The growth of social media has provided new opportunities for women journalists, but it has also exposed them to cyber bullying, doxing, and trolling.<sup>2</sup> Besides, gender gap in pay in the media sector is another hindrance that discourages women to pursue their career in the media.<sup>3</sup> Independent bodies such as the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) and the Coalition for Women in Journalism (CFWJ) have raised their concerns on these challenges. Cultural inhibitions and a lack of training have also limited women's involvement in professional journalism, and they often face threats of sexual violence and online harassment.

The provinces of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Balochistan are particularly challenging for women journalists owing to conflict, social-cultural barriers and limited opportunities. The lack of financial incentives often discourages women and youth to continue their professional journey in journalism. These regions require support to develop an independent media sector and create an environment that promotes the expansion and safety of young aspiring journalists, including women. Press clubs in both the provinces are in high need of training and reforms, as they often face forced closures, violent attacks, and targeted threats. In this regard, the lack of representation of women journalists as members of press clubs is also a major obstacle to their advancement.

### Project Overview

Search for Common Ground (Search) supported the implementation of the project 'Inspiring the Next Generation of Independent Media in Pakistan,' to support the growth of independent and diverse media in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan. With a planned project duration of two years, the project implementation period was cut short to one year to account for operational challenges resulting from government administrative regulations. The project focused its work on local universities and press clubs to support the next generation of independent journalists. This project supported the growth of independent and diverse media in these provinces by increasing the capacity of young journalists, particularly young women, in independent and conflict-sensitive reporting; and fostering an enabling environment for the professional advancement of women in media.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.moib.gov.pk/Pages/178/PEMRA>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ifj.org/media-centre/blog/detail/category/labour-rights/article/pakistan-harassment-of-women-journalists-perspectives-politics-action>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.hilal.gov.pk/her-article/detail/NDQ1OA==.html>

The overall goal of the project was to advance women and youth-led independent media in these two provinces. It had two main objectives:

**Objective 1** was about promotion of practices of conflict-sensitive journalism by young journalists and university media departments. The **two outcomes' statements** for objective were related to contributing to the achievement of this objective include efforts by targeted universities to institutionalize conflict-sensitive journalism in the media department curricula and increased access of journalists to resources and capacity building to champion conflict sensitive journalism. The five major activities under objective 1 mostly related to training of journalists and media internships and fellowships.

**Objective 2** focused on fostering an enabling environment for the professional advancement of women in independent media. The **two outcome statements** for this objective revolved around support for women in media and women journalists feeling safer, more confident and safer at the workplaces. The four different activities contributing to these outcomes were training, press club reform initiatives and women-focused networks.

From a geographical focus perspective, the project was implemented in nine districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and six districts of Balochistan. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, these nine districts included seven Newly Merged Districts (formally known as Federally Administered Tribal Areas) namely Bajaur, Khyber, Kurram, Mohmand, Orakzai, North Waziristan and South Waziristan as well as Peshawar and Dera Ismail Khan. In Balochistan, the six targeted districts were Quetta, Qilla Saifullah, Pashin, Khuzdar, Sibi and Chaghi.

To implement the project activities, Search worked with three implementing partners. These partners were:

- Media Teaching Resource Center (MTRC);
- Media Center (MC); and
- Freedom Network (FN).

As part of the academia engagement, the project collaborated with three universities of which two were based in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and one was in Balochistan. These were the University of Peshawar, Gomal University and Balochistan University.

Other key stakeholders engaged in the projects were the press clubs and media houses. These press clubs were based in the 15 targeted districts whereas media houses were mainly located in Peshawar, Dera Ismail Khan and Quetta.

Through its multi-prong engagement approach, Search successfully completed the project in the stipulated time period despite operational challenges faced at the project rollout time.

## **Our Approach to the Assignment**

The evaluation followed the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development - Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) evaluation criteria i.e., relevance, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. The evaluation also collected information on three Peace Impact Framework (PIF) themes namely Violence, Personal Agency and institutional legitimacy. GLOW adopted a mixed method approach involving both qualitative and quantitative research methods. The data collection employed participatory approaches, ensuring all marginalized groups including youth and women, and all other relevant stakeholders including beneficiaries, key government officials, partner staff such as Search, Freedom Network, Media Center, Media Training & Research Center, and trainers and mentors in the target hubs were included. The evaluation team consulted a diverse and gender-inclusive group of respondents for the quantitative survey, Key informant Interviews, and In-depth Interviews (see methodology for details). Gender, disability, and Do No Harm remained cross-cutting themes and were carefully considered during data collection and reflected in every aspect of the analysis and reporting. The overall approach followed by GLOW adhered to Search's guiding principles of inclusive and effective participation, conflict sensitivity and Common Ground approaches. To avoid any communication barriers that may have risen due to frequent interactions with a diverse sample during this assignment, the research team included Balochi-speaking, Brahvi-speaking, and Pashto-speaking members as part of the data collection team. Overall, this approach helped to comprehensively covered all aspects of the evaluation.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

### Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the final evaluation study was to document the project performance in terms of advancing women- and youth-led independent media in Khyber Pakthukhwa and Balochistan through this project. To serve this purpose, the key evaluation questions were based on OECD-DAC criteria, reflected in table 1 below:

Table 1: Key Evaluation Questions

<b>Relevance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To what extent is the project relevant to the current conflict dynamics vis-a-vis the media landscape in KP and Baluchistan? If needed, the scope of the evaluation may be further elaborated by the evaluator in the inception report.</li> <li>- To what extent the project interventions met the needs of women and youth journalists in the target areas?</li> <li>- How inclusive was the selection process (from gender, ethnicity perspective) of the participating journalists?</li> </ul>
<b>Effectiveness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Did the activities achieve targeted results in relation to the stated objectives/results according to the logframe?</li> <li>- To what extent did the project affect the resources and capacity of press clubs, journalists and universities to practice and promote conflict sensitive journalism?</li> <li>- To what extent the project was able to promote the practice of conflict-sensitive journalism by participating young journalists and university media departments?</li> <li>- To what extent was the project able to foster an environment where women journalists can practice the media profession safely and independently? Is there any evidence of women journalists being supported by mainstream media actors, including their male counterparts?</li> <li>- What role did the project play to help women journalists feel more confident and safer in their work?</li> </ul>
<b>Intermediate Impact</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To what extent has the project or program generated, or is expected to generate, positive or negative, intended or unintended, high-level effects in the professional lives of women and youth journalists?</li> <li>- In what ways, if at all, has the project contributed to promoting the role of youth and women in the media in KP and Balochistan?</li> <li>- Is there any evidence of integration of conflict sensitivity in the journalism landscape in the target regions?</li> </ul>
<b>Sustainability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Have they taken steps to ensure sustainability of the results post-project? If yes, what does it include? If not, why not?</li> <li>- What are the signs that the program or its components will continue after external funding ends?</li> <li>- Is there any evidence of local partners, universities, press clubs or government actors taking ownership (on-going or planned) of the project initiatives and continuing in the post-project period?</li> <li>- Is there any evidence of institutionalization (formally or informally) of conflict sensitive journalism in the curriculum by the departments or professors in the target universities?</li> </ul>
<b>Lessons learned and good practices</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Were there any significant changes in the project design or the implementation context?</li> <li>- What were the reasons for these?</li> <li>- What were the major lessons learned from this project?</li> <li>- What were the innovative approaches/good practices used, If any?</li> <li>- Is there any potential of replicability and scaling-up (full or partial) of the project in the same locations or in other locations in Pakistan?</li> </ul>



## Data Collection and Analysis

For this Search's project evaluation, the evaluators used a mixed methods approach for data collection. This consisted of collecting both secondary and primary data, as well as qualitative and quantitative data collection. The evaluators conducted a desk review, key informant interviews (KIIs), focus group discussions (FGDs), in-depth interviews (IDIs), and a survey with project beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries. Additionally, evaluators developed case studies to better showcase the impact of the project. The data collection involved:

- Participating and Non-Participating Journalists
- Search team in Pakistan, MTRC staff, FN staff, and Media Center
- Trainers and mentors
- Media house owners
- Press club officials
- Media department faculty

The following figure 1 below summarizes the tasks that were performed under this evaluation:

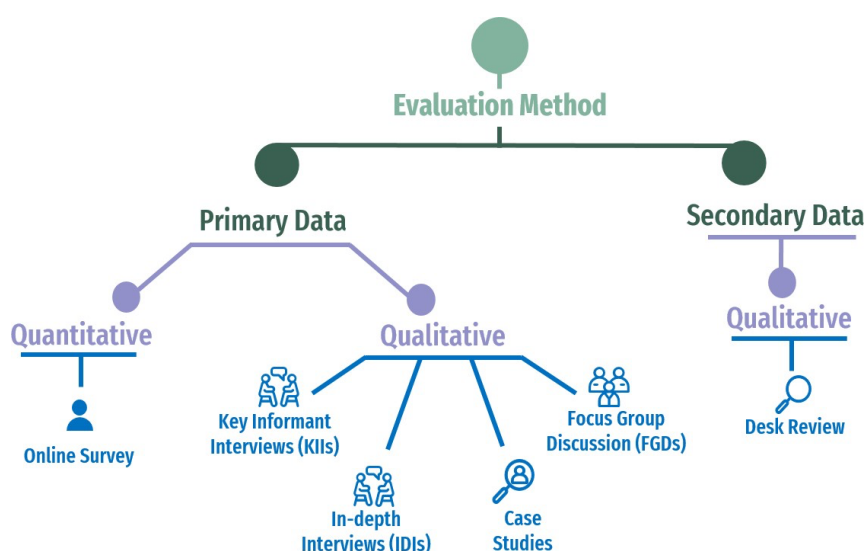


Figure 1: Types of Proposed Data Collection Methods for the Evaluation

All quantitative and qualitative data gathered at field level for the purposes of this assignment were triangulated in order to address desired output and to develop meaningful conclusions and recommendations. Data analysis was conducted utilizing the relevant software including CPro, SPSS, and MS Excel. Analyzed data is presented in forms of tables, charts and graphs. Through the analyzed data, critical observations are made, key findings prioritized based on the OECD/DAC criteria, trends in data spotted, and finally reasoned conclusions are arrived at and recommendations formulated. The data analysis focused on deriving results against the various research questions for this evaluation and informed the results for the log frame.

**Sampling and Representation:** The sampling approach ensured that sample is diversified and representative. The sample for this evaluation covered all the 15 districts from both the provinces. From gender perspective, both male and female were included in the evaluation. The qualitative data covered all the stakeholders including all of the Search's partners, universities and press clubs as well as mentors and trainers who were part of the project. From quantitative data perspective, the evaluation was fully representative of the target beneficiaries where survey findings yielded statistically significant results at 95% confidence and 5% margin of error. A screening question was added to the survey tool to differentiate between participating and non-participating journalists. For this purpose, an online survey was conducted with participating journalists who were part of the journalist training program. Further, a statistically representative sample was drawn from non-participating journalists who were affiliated with the three universities. The survey also gathered quantitative information about the project from the participants and the evaluation team ensured the relevant indicators from PIF were covered as part of the survey questionnaire.

Table 2: Sample Size Achieved During Evaluation

Type of Data	Type	Coverage	Number
Qualitative ((KII)	Search and Partners	Search and all three partners (MTRC, FN and MC) were interviewed	7
Qualitative (KII)	Academia	All three universities (University of Balochistan, University of Peshawar, and Gomal University) were interviewed	3
Qualitative (KII)	Press Club Leadership	All press clubs covered with one per press club per district	15
Qualitative (IDI)	Trainers / Mentors	Over half of trainers / mentors interviewed	5 (3 women)
Qualitative (IDI)	Press Club Members	All press clubs covered with one per press club per district	15 (1 women)
Qualitative (Case Study)	Participating Journalist	Case studies from both provinces collected	5 (2 women)
Quantitative (Survey)	Participating Journalist	Of total 60 journalist, survey sample presented 95% confidence and 5% margin of error.	54 (26 women)
Quantitative (Survey)	Non -Participating Journalist	Of estimated 5,000 media students / journalist in the target districts, survey sample presented 95% confidence and 5% margin of error.	360 (97 women)

## Limitations

With the exception of some minor operational limitations (see table below), there were no major limitations that could have affected the evaluation findings and scope. The table below three minor operational challenges and their mitigation measures.

LIMITATIONS		MITIGATION MEASURE	
<b>Geographical Spread of the Beneficiaries</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» The project target areas were far away from each other, making it difficult to do face to face data collection from the beneficiaries.</li> </ul>	<b>Remote data collection modalities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» To cover come distance related challenges, KIIs and the endline survey were conducted via online modes including phone, WhatsApp and Zoom.</li> </ul>
<b>Data collection delays</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Some of the participating journalist were not available at the proposed time / date, making it more challenging to collect data from them.</li> <li>» Universities were closed on the account of summer vacation making it difficult to reach to students from media and journalism departments.</li> </ul>	<b>Flexibility of data collection coordination</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Multiple follow ups were made to ensure their views are captured and included as part of the study.</li> <li>» Data collection period was extended and snow ball technique was employed to reach to students from media and journalism departments ensuring their participating in the evaluation.</li> </ul>



### 3. FINDINGS

As stated earlier, the project had two objectives whereas each of the two objectives had two outcomes. The findings are presented for each of these four outcomes.

#### **Finding 1 – Outcome 1.1 (Institutionalizing conflict-sensitive journalism)**

*(Outcome 1.1: Targeted local universities institutionalize conflict-sensitive journalism in their media department curricula.)*

To achieve this outcome, the project conducted three main set of activities which included consultative workshop with the three partner universities, Training of Trainers (ToT) on conflict-sensitive journalism and a journalist training program. All three activities were successfully completed. There are early indications of progress achieved towards institutionalizing changes in the curricula which in evaluators opinion event at best of the times is a difficult, time-consuming and long process. This was most visible in case of Balochistan University. Some encouraging signs were observed where Balochistan University started integrating manual-based teachings to students in the 8<sup>th</sup> semester. It is likely that this will be formalized once the matter is reviewed at the Board of Studies Meeting<sup>4</sup>. This initiative was spearheaded by the Head of Department (HoD) of the Mass Communication Department who was also included in the ToT. Overall, based on the evaluation findings, the project worked closely with the mass communications and journalism departments of all the three universities to leverage their expertise and outreach to young journalists. During the evaluation, senior staff from the implementing partner reported that similar efforts were being pursued with Gomal University, Dera Ismail Khan. It is likely that formal integration of the course within university curricula may happen in the future. It is also important to mention the project experienced start-up delays due to a number of factors such as COVID-19 and securing necessary administrative permissions, which impacted the pace of implementation and activities were squeezed into a shorter implementation span. This limited time available for engagement with the universities.

Evaluation found these engagements with the universities followed a systematic approach. This included Conflict Sensitive Training where the survey findings show the overall success of the Conflict Sensitive Journalism Trainings. The duration of each training was two-days and consecutive training events were organized. Based on evaluation findings, it was a challenge to organize a 10 days training, while at the same time, it was also a challenge to split the training into smaller components due to available time for implementation. The on-the-ground situation related to presence of female journalist in the press clubs in the 15 districts were worse than the expectation with most press clubs had no active female journalists. Hence, the project was to make additional

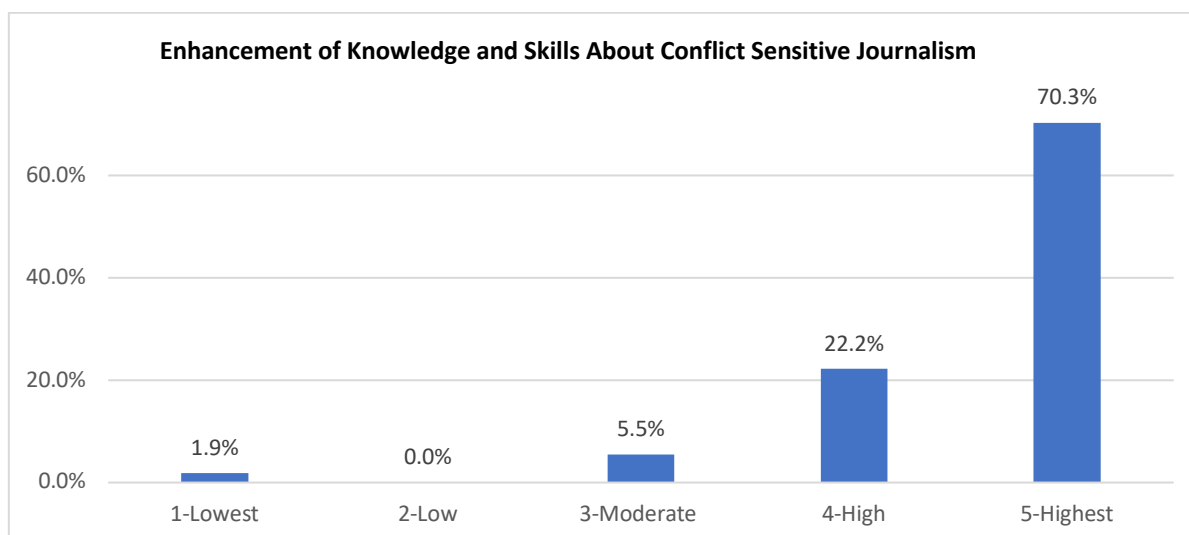
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<sup>4</sup> Key-Informant Interview, IPs.

efforts to identify young journalist from the target districts, including from the university departments. The evaluation also found that project relaxed the selection criteria for participants in terms of age limit helped them achieve their targets with a max age of 40 years, as compared to 35 years, which further helped to reach the intended target groups. This led to a challenge by having some journalists with more experience as part of the selected group while others were new to the field. Based on the evaluation findings, maintaining the right balance between theory and practice was another challenge which the trainers were to juggled with during the training modules. This challenge was overcome by having a following a consultative process engaging all implementing partners, Search staff, and relevant universities and press clubs during the module development.

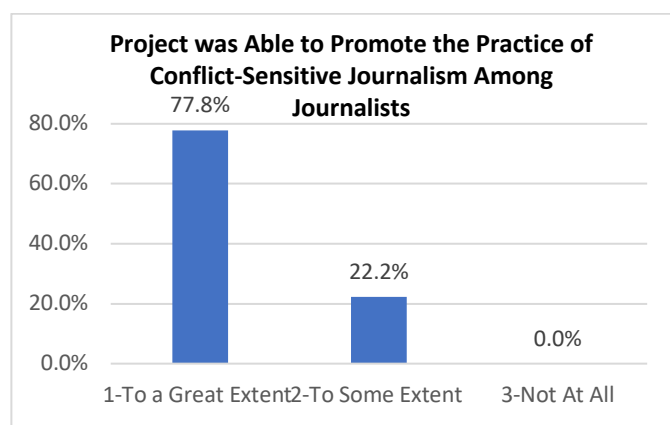
**“There was no mention of conflict-sensitive journalism throughout my university journey, even informally. Now our professors speak about it in the training. Since leaving university, I have been working as a journalist in the field for some time but this training was the first time I came to learn about this concept.” A study participant from Balochistan sharing his experience**

The success of all these efforts is reflected in the survey findings. As can be seen in figure 2, over 92% of the participating journalist confirmed enhancement of knowledge and skills related to conflict-sensitive journalism. This is reflective of the fact that the training courses were comprised of both theoretical and practical teaching methods, both of which were equally effective. Moreover, it is also reflective of the expertise of the trainers which allowed the participants to gain a clear understanding followed by correct application.

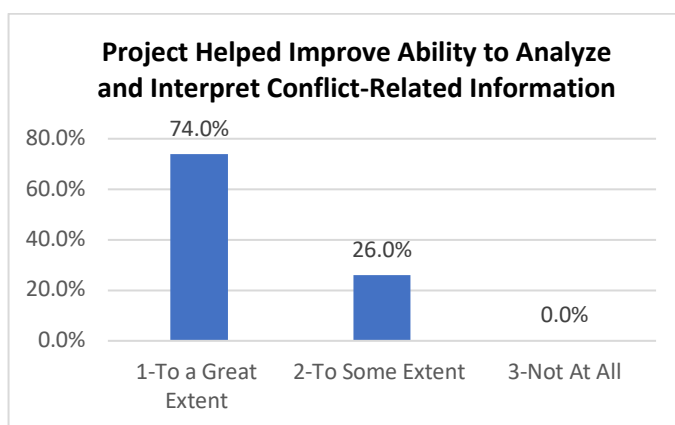


**Figure 2: Percentage of Respondents Confirming the Enhancement of Knowledge and Skills About Conflict Sensitive Journalism**

Furthermore, as reflected in figure 3, 77.8% of the participating journalists were of the opinion that that the project promoted the practice of conflict-sensitive journalism among journalists, highlighting their understanding of both the relevance and importance of this concept especially with regards to the contextual needs of Pakistan. Similarly, with 74% of participants confirming their ability to analyze and interpret conflict-related information it can be said that the training was successful in producing conflict-literate journalists who are now equipped to view all kinds of information through a conflict-sensitive lens.

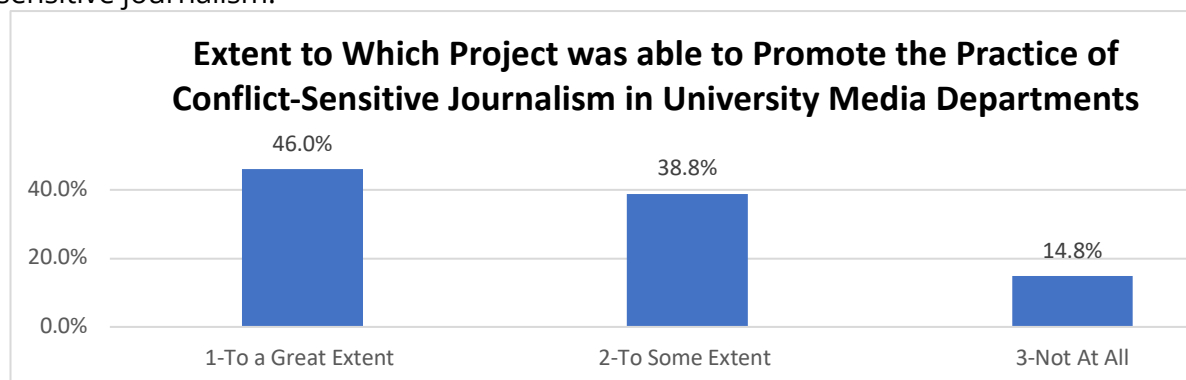


**Figure 3: Percentage Distribution of the Extent to which the Project was able to Promote the Practice of Conflict-Sensitive Journalism Among Journalists**



**Figure 4: Percentage Distribution of the Extent to Which the Project was able to Improve the Ability to Analyze and Interpret Conflict-Related Information**

Additionally, figure 5 illustrates the extent to which the project was able to promote the practice of conflict sensitive journalism in university media departments. The findings indicate that 46% of the respondents mentioned that project promoted the practice of conflict sensitive journalism to a great extent while, 38.8% said to some extent. Around 14.8% of the respondents stated that the project was not able to promote conflict sensitive journalism.



*Figure 5: Percentage Distribution of the Extent to Which Project was able to Promote the Practice of Conflict-Sensitive Journalism in university Media Departments*

**“Even after my experience of over 35-40 years working as a journalist, I was unable to define ‘conflict’ or relate its role in ‘reporting’. Therefore, you can well imagine the significance of this training, especially for the younger lot of journalists. I’d say these project activities have helped fill a huge void that existed within the current media landscape of KPK.” Male Press Club Leadership KII**

## **Finding 2 – Outcome 1.2 (access to resource and capacity building)**

*(Outcome 1.2: Young journalists in the target districts have increased access to resources and capacity building to champion conflict-sensitive journalism in their work.)*

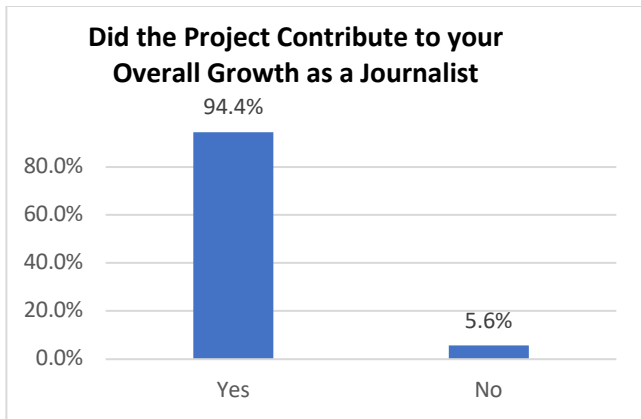
Based on the evaluation findings, as a result of this project, the targeted project beneficiaries had increased access to resources and capacity building related to conflict-sensitive journalism. This was achieved by providing mentoring opportunities through five mentors to the targeted participating journalists. In total 45 media mentorship were provided to young journalist thus giving them the opportunity to learn from senior journalist, a feast otherwise not available with them as clearly evident from the evaluation. Further, 45 media fellow opportunities were provided to the participating youth where youth during the evaluation shared that it equipped them to have the necessary tools to develop stories. During conversation with the evaluation team, the project participants confirmed both these activities increased access to resources and capacity-building opportunities for them. All 60 participating journalists developed stories that conformed with conflict-sensitive journalism, as evident from the evaluation findings. Further, a set of guidelines for conflict-sensitive journalism were also developed in consultation with mentors and provided to press club members to be used as a guiding document for the development of all media stories.

Overall, based on the evaluation findings, the journalist training program has been widely appreciated. There were almost no drop-outs and training participants acknowledged gains in terms of new ideas, concepts and skills. The figure 6 below further supports these findings as over 94.4% of participants were affirmative of the project contributing to their overall growth as a journalist. This suggests that the project was both relevant to the needs of journalists working in the target areas as well as highlighting the effectiveness of project interventions in contributing towards the overall development of participating journalists. With both target provinces being major conflict zones, this project was the need of time, as 87% (See figure 6) of the participating journalists confirmed having all or a significant part of their needs as a journalist met through project activities. This also explains the negligible dropout rate emphasizes the innovative nature of this training due to which participant engagement remained consistent and fruitful. According to one IP, the post-training assessment carried out for participants for the safety and security training for example demonstrated a 119 percent increase in the knowledge levels<sup>5</sup>.

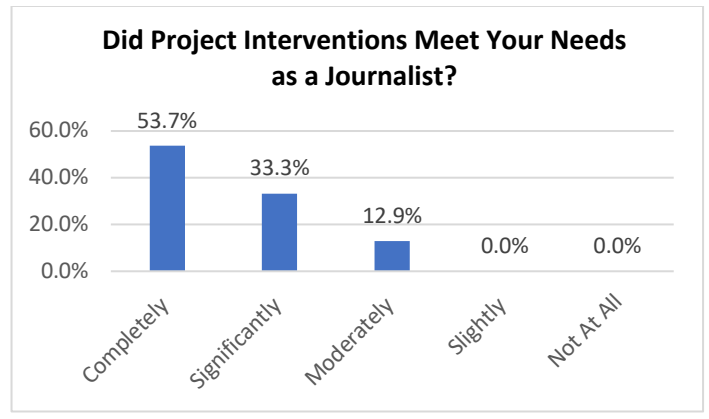
**“To create one of the three stories I’ve produced so far, I travelled to Sohrab Road by myself, which is a highly conservative area where you’d hardly find any women. Moreover, even though I lost my way a little, I managed to locate the library where I confidently interviewed, interacted and photographed men as there were hardly 2 or three women present there. I remember I was trembling on the inside, but I remained cognizant of what our mentors during the training sessions had told us about never letting fear be apparent on our faces.” Female University Student from Balochistan**

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<sup>5</sup> ibid.

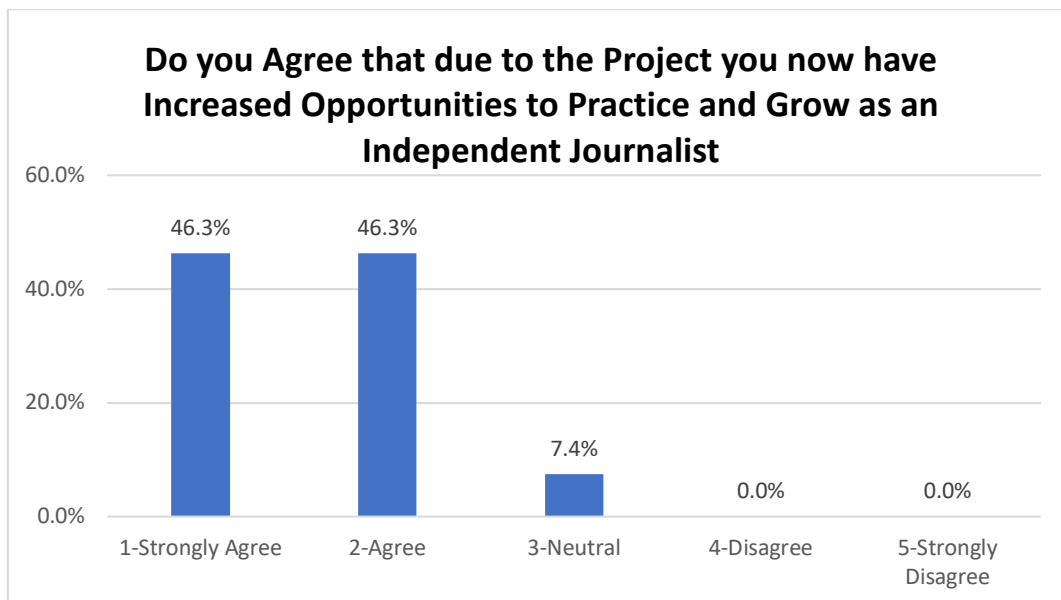


**Figure 6: Percentage of Respondents Confirming/Negating Project Contribution Towards the Overall Growth of Journalists**



**Figure 7: Percentage of Respondents Confirming Having Their Needs Met Through Project Interventions**

Overall, the findings indicate that 92.6% (see figure 8) of the respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that the project has been able to increase the opportunities to practice and grow as an independent journalist. Based on the evaluation findings this was made possible as a result of mentoring opportunities where these mentors were established journalists thus providing networking opportunities for the participating journalists. The fellowship also meant these journalists could produce stories and thus have more opportunities to practice and grow as an independent journalist.



*Figure 8: Percentage Distribution of Respondents affirming/negating having Increased Opportunities to Practice and Grow as an Independent Journalists due to Project Intervention*

Furthermore, figure 9 indicates that 92.5% of the respondent from participating journalist mentioned that the enhancement of the skills and knowledge regarding conflict sensitive journalism was either highest or high. The evaluation team concludes this is mainly due to the fact conflict sensitive journalism was a new topic hence learning curve was steep



for the participating journalist. This once again reconfirm relevance and effectiveness of the project.

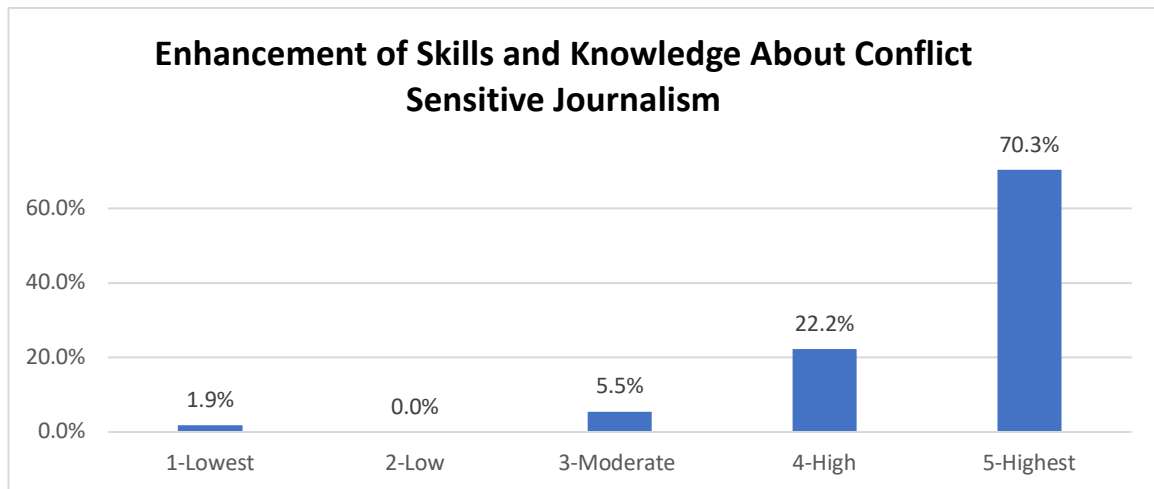


Figure 9: Percentage Distribution of Respondents Affirmative of the Enhancement of their Skills and Knowledge in Conflict Sensitive Journalism

The findings illustrated in figure 10 indicate that majority of the respondents (74%) believed that the project helped improve ability to analyze and interpret conflict-related information to a great extent. Additionally, 26% of the respondents said to some extent. Additionally, 64.8% of the participating journalists shared that they felt equipped and supported to a great extent to advance conflict sensitive journalism after the project. The results indicate that the project interventions have been successful at improving the understanding of journalist regarding conflict related information and following the project interventions they have felt empowered and supported to promote conflict sensitive journalism.

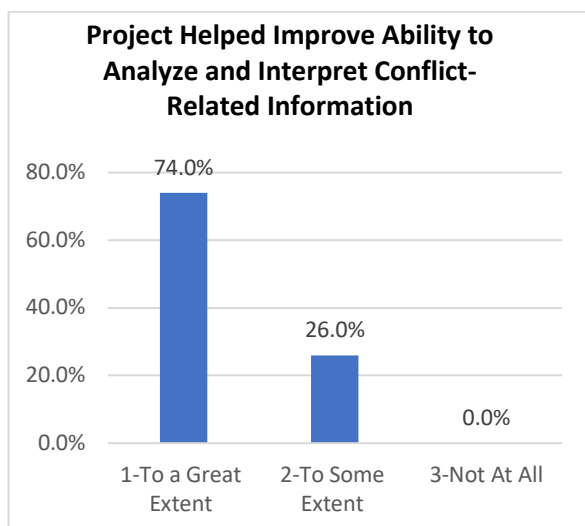


Figure 10: Percentage Distribution of Respondents Confirming the Project Ability/Inability in Improving their ability to Analyze and Interpret Conflict-Related Information

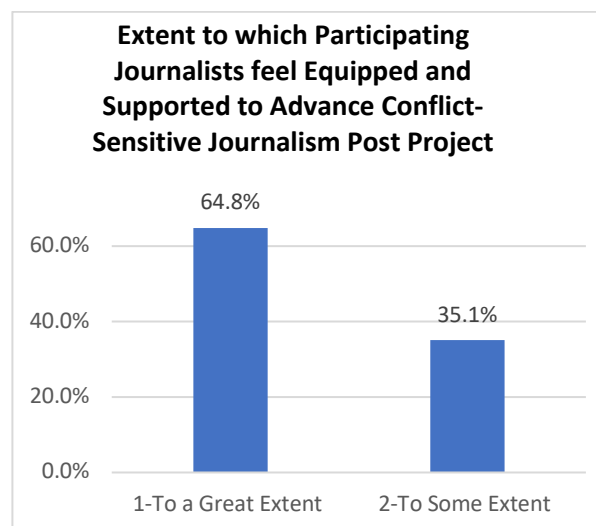


Figure 11: Percentage Distribution of Respondents Confirming the Extent to which they feel Equipped and Supported to Advance Conflict-Sensitive Journalism Post Project

When the evaluation team the respondents if the project, overall, has promoted the practice of conflict sensitive journalism among the participating journalist, as can be seen in Figure 12, majority of the respondents (77.8%) were of the opinion that the project was successful in achieving this to a great extent. At the same time, those who did not choose this response, even they (22.2%) mentioned that the project was able to promote the practice of conflict-sensitive journalism among journalists to some extent.

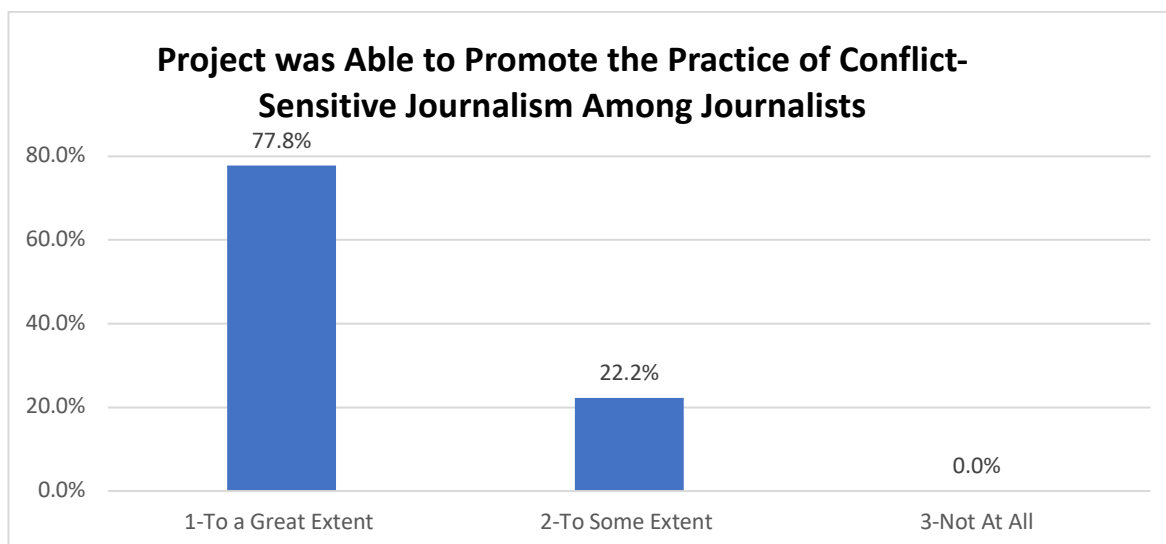


Figure 12: Percentage Distribution of Respondents Confirming the Extent to which they feel the project was successful in promoting the practice of Conflict-Sensitive Journalism Among Journalists

### **Finding 3 – Outcome 2.1 (better support to women in media)**

*(Outcome 2.1: Targeted local independent media actors better support women in media.)*

Based on the findings from evaluation, it is clearly evident the project has resulted in an enabling environment for the professional advancement of women in media. This was made possible through gender training for press clubs and engagements with media houses and workshops with media houses. These activities helped in fostering an enabling environment for the professional advancement of women in independent media in both the province. From the evaluation findings, it is clear it was made possible due to project partners activities. For example, one of the partners conducted eight sessions of two days each for the gender training in all the 15 districts at the end of which the press clubs developed their own gender action plans (GAPs). The evaluation also notes additional efforts required to make these gender action plans more realistic, as some of them were in draft forms and seemed ambitious and required further rethinking around them. It is reported that even after project closure press clubs were engaged in “constitutional review and reform” process whereby other press clubs are also formulating their GAPs and taking affirmative actions for women such as inclusion of women members.

**“In my entire professional experience, I never paid attention to the barriers female journalists face both in their personal as well as professional lives. I wasn’t consciously aware of these barriers nor was I sensitized on them. It was almost like an alien concept. However, after participating in this project, I am now actively trying to provide a conducive environment for woman journalists in our press club, to the best of my ability and within the resources we’ve available.” Male Press Club Member IDI**

Further, the Project held open house events for generating ideas and establishing professional linkages and economic opportunities for journalists. Some of the attendees at these open houses such as representatives from the Radio Pakistan reportedly offered monetary compensation for quality stories, reflecting strengths of their stories. Then we tried to remove

The figure 13 below underscores that a significant majority of the respondents (66.6%) believe that the project has addressed the hurdles faced by female journalist to a great extent. This was made possible due to structural changes in at the press clubs as well as increased awareness amongst media houses. However, it is important to highlight for these changes to be fully realized, it will require sustained efforts for example new female members are inducted in the press clubs and they are given position of powers. This is one of the reasons some of the respondents (33.4%) were of the opinion that the project has addressed barriers but only to some extent.

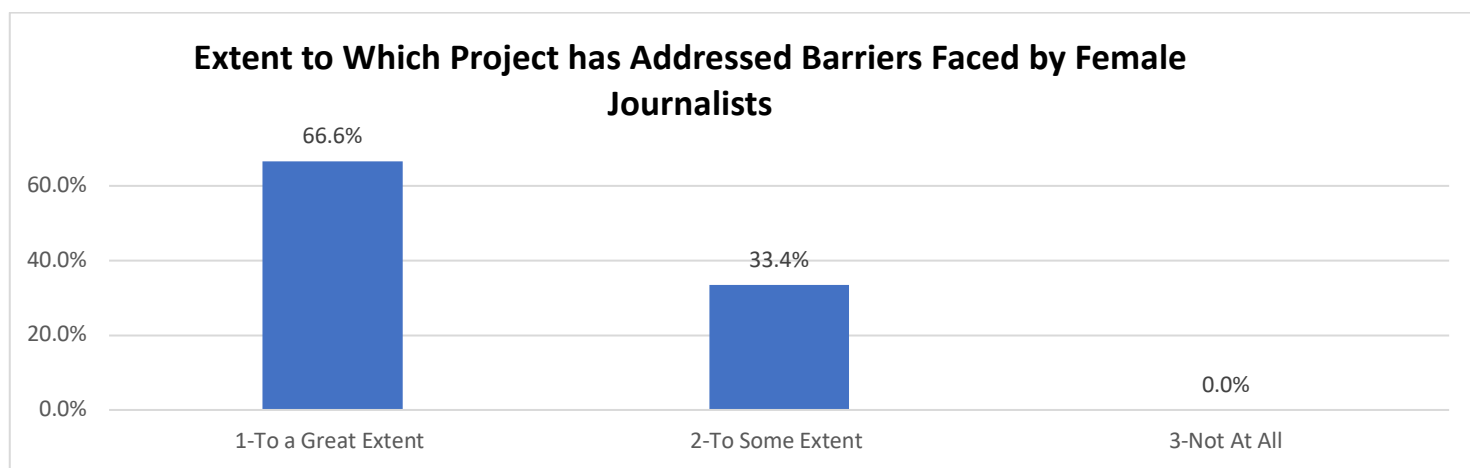


Figure 13: Percentage Distribution of Respondents Confirming the Extent to Which the Project Has Addressed Barriers Faced by Female Journalists

When the evaluation team further probed, as reflected in Figure 14 below, majority of the respondents (33.3%) confirmed that all of the structural and policy level barriers for women in media were addressed by the project. Further, 20.3% of the respondents stated that the barriers related to no protection policy was addressed and 16.6% of the respondents confirmed that the barrier related to no health insurance policy was addressed. Further, as reflected in figure 15, 33.3% of the respondents were of the opinion that all social barriers for women in media

were addressed, while 31.5% of the respondents mentioned that barrier related to predefined roles on the basis of gender and ethnicity was addressed. Evaluation team is of the opinion that this different nature of barriers provides an opportunity to future focus future interventions making it more likely for women and young journalist to take journalism as a profession, and will require different interventions.

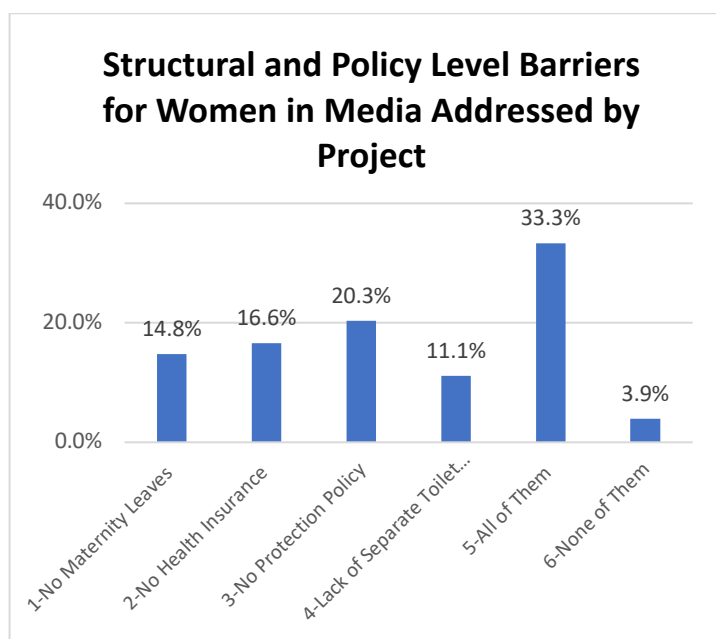


Figure 14: Percentage Distribution of Respondents Confirming the Different Structural and Policy Barriers for Women in Media Addressed by Project

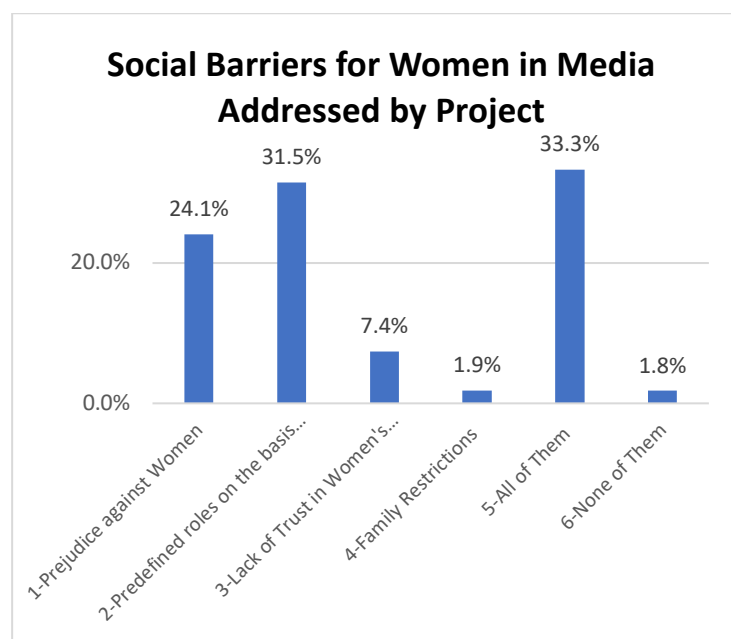


Figure 15: Percentage Distribution of Respondents Confirming the Different Social Barriers for Women in Media Addressed by Project

**“Gender inequality is prevalent in our field. Many of us senior officials often discourage female participation from reporting in certain areas due to sensitivity and security issues, even though the female journalists themselves are willing to do so. However, now our views have changed and instead of discouraging them, we will be trying to facilitate them by improving the working conditions instead of preventing them from going into the field.” Male Press Club Leadership KII**

Similarly, the evaluation findings underscore that around 48.8% of the respondents confirmed that all professional barriers for women in the media were addressed by the project whereas, around 45.6% stated that the barriers of late working hours were addressed due to the project. This includes working hours are an important barrier factor and engagement with media houses and press clubs have helped the project to address it, whereas poor working conditions and security are among the factors which respondents believe were not fully addressed by the project.

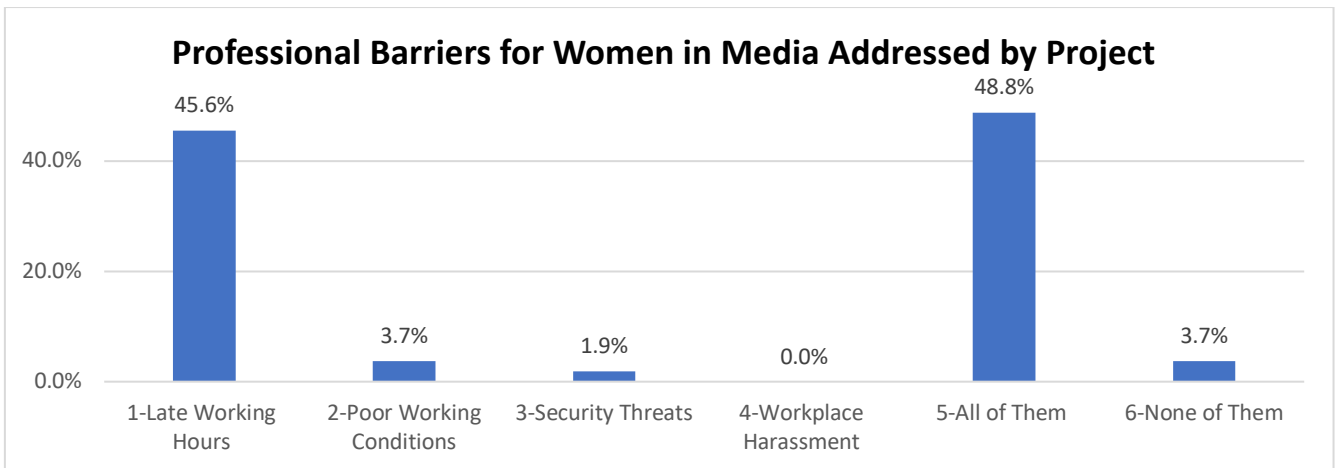


Figure 16: Percentage Distribution of Respondents Confirming the Different Professional Barriers for Women in Media Addressed by Project

According to the findings, as can be seen in figure 17, majority of the respondents (61.3%) mentioned that the project was able to promote an environment where women journalists can practice media profession safely and independently to some extent. Further, nearly 80% of the respondents held the opinion that due to the project women journalists were being supported by mainstream media actors, including their male counterparts (see figure 18). Both these findings illustrate project made meaningful contribution, including due to its ability to work with key stakeholders, but at the same time, highlighting the need for similar interventions in the future.

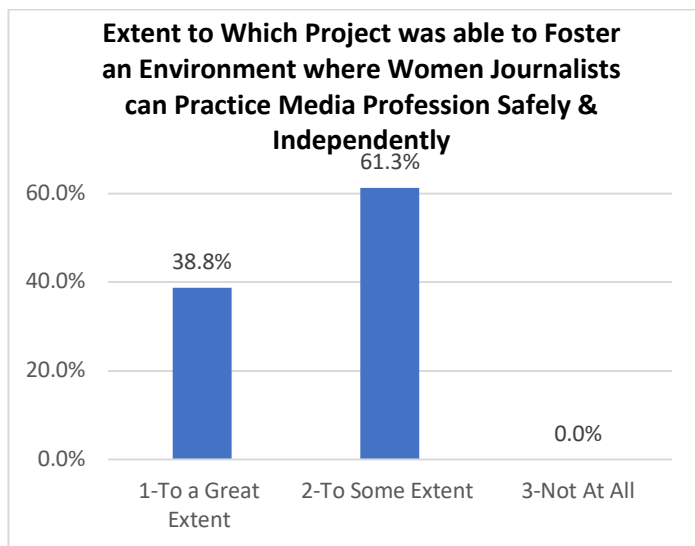


Figure 17: Percentage Distribution of the Extent to Which Project was able to Foster an Environment where Women Journalists can Practice Media Profession Safely & Independently

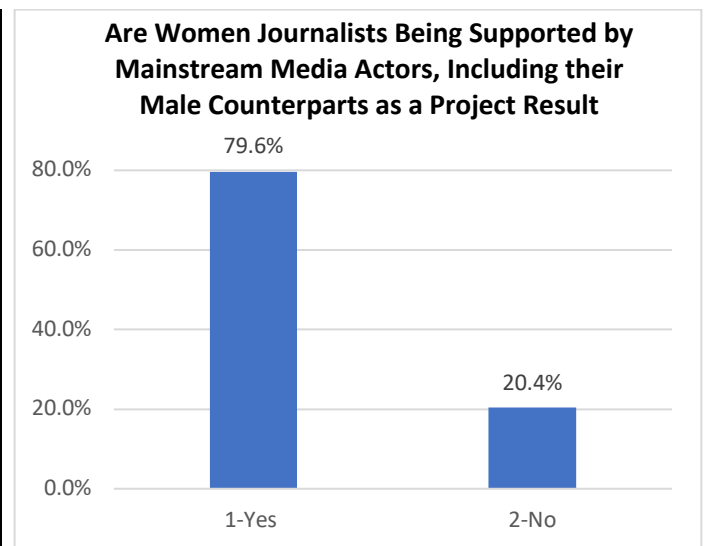


Figure 18: Percentage Distribution of Respondents Confirming the Support/Lack of Support Women Journalists Are Receiving from Mainstream Media Actors, Including their Male Counterparts as a Project Result

#### **Finding 4 – Outcome 2.2 (feeling more confident and safer)**

*(Outcome 2.2: Independent women journalists in the target districts feel more confident and safer in their workplaces.)*

As a result of the project, women journalist in the target districts were feeling more confident and safer in their workplaces, as evident from findings mentioned in the preceding paragraphs of this evaluation report. The obstacles to working female (and male) journalists in the target locations are huge and recognized and duly emphasized by all stakeholders in the KIs. The addition of female membership in press clubs is a key indicator that women were beginning to feel more confident about entering the workforce. After the project, the targeted press clubs have eased their membership criteria as well as provided a work-from-home option for female journalists to facilitate the addition of woman journalists into their press clubs. Moreover, most of the action plans list the addition of extra room and washroom facilities<sup>6</sup> for women amongst key actions to be implemented which underscore the importance of safe workplaces for women journalists. According to one IP, the facility of having separate female rooms was proposed as a project to their donor. The same IP has also mentioned that the sensitization of the training participants to the existing laws, “Protection Against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act, 2010” led them to consider review of their constitutions and making necessary arrangements for the implementation of the Act. The completion dates mentioned for most actions in the GAPs are mostly end 2023-early 2024. A rapid needs-assessment conducted by the partners formed the basis for provision of equipment to the press clubs. This mostly included gadgets such as mobile phones, tripods, mikes and internet devices. Recipients of the equipment were highly satisfied and have used these gadgets to create various media products at both local and international level.<sup>7</sup> Irrespective of the need, a decision was also taken to adopt a uniform approach in providing similar assistance to all targeted press clubs. This approach was essential to avoid any conflict amongst recipients.

**“To facilitate our woman counterparts as well as to increase woman participation within our press clubs, we have eased the criteria for membership and are also working on providing a separate working space within our press club along with separate washroom facilities for woman journalists, within the limited resources available to us. We’ve also set a goal to bring in at least two women journalists as members of our press club. Even if only two females join our press club, they will each bring in**

<sup>6</sup> Based on review of gender action plans developed for Bajaur, Pishin, Qilla Saifullah, Landi Kotal and Quetta.

<sup>7</sup> Nasir Hussain from Para Chinaar Press Club is creating a series of 10 stories for a local media house

**two more female journalists and this will create a ripple effect.” Male Press Club Leadership KII**

The exposure visits have noted to be highly useful in soliciting greater interest from trainees and expanding horizons for working female and male journalists through interaction with the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) and with other human rights organizations. Time and other constraints reduced some of the events to online interactions which limited the impact of exposure visits as compared to in-person interactions.

The partner responsible for the gender component has mentioned on-going efforts being made for expanding networks for women in media. Women journalists have been connected with existing “safety hub coordinators” in both provinces and WhatsApp Groups are functional for information sharing and coordination. All partners were also of the opinion that this project was particularly effective in improving coordination and networking amongst the academia and press clubs which was absent or negligible earlier. During the evaluations, when the participants were asked how safe and confident women journalist feel in their workplace, over 57% mentioned they feel either extremely or highly safe after the project as reflected in figure 19 below, once again highlighting the progress achieved as a result of this project.

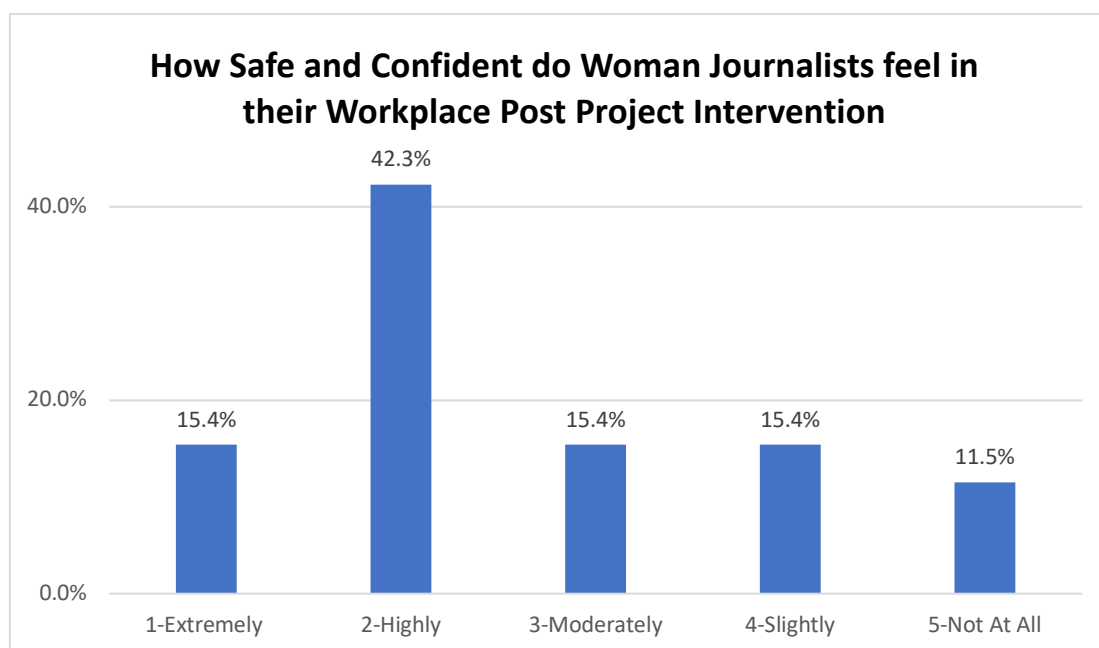


Figure 19: Percentage Distribution of WOMAN Respondents Confirming How Safe/Unsafe and Confident/Unconfident they feel in their Workplace Post Project Intervention

## Project Indicators (Log frame Results including PIF Indicators)

Table 3: Log frame Results

<b>Project Objective 1: Increase capacity of young journalists, particularly young women, in independent and conflict sensitive reporting.</b>					
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Achieved in the Project</b>	<b>Project Target</b>	<b>Comments on Target Achieved</b>	<b>PIF Theme Measured</b>
<b>Outcome 1.1</b>	1.1: % of media products (out of total) produced by the participating young journalists that meet the minimum standard of conflict sensitive media products	88.6%	70%	Target Surpassed	Violence
<b>Outcome 1.2</b>	1.2: # of articles produced by DRL-supported journalists following responsible journalistic practice	105	70	Target Surpassed	Violence
<b>Activity 1.1.1. Consultative Workshop with Partner Universities</b>	1.1.1.1: # of participants engaged in consultative workshop	46	30	Target Surpassed	Personal Agency
	1.1.1.2: # of university departments integrating conflict sensitive journalism into their course curricula	1	3	Work in progress	Institutional Legitimacy
<b>Activity 1.1.2. Training of Trainers (ToT) on Conflict Sensitive Journalism</b>	1.1.2.1: # of participants trained	21	90	All relevant staff from the three universities trained.	Institutional Legitimacy
	1.1.2.2: % of participants with increased knowledge on how to teach conflict sensitive media content development approaches	56.3% increase from the pre-test	20% increase from the pre-test	Target Surpassed	Violence
<b>Activity 1.1.3. Journalist Training Program for Baluchistan and KP</b>	1.1.3.1: # of young journalists trained and supported	62	45	Target Surpassed	Personal Agency
	1.1.3.2: % of participating journalists in Baluchistan and KP with increased knowledge on conflict sensitive journalism	118.9% increase from the pre-test	30%	Target Surpassed	Personal Agency



<b>Activity 1.2.1. Media Mentorships</b>	1.2.1.1: # of journalists matched with mentors	64	45	Target Surpassed	Institutional Legitimacy
	1.2.1.2: # of exchanges organized with mentors and mentees	157	45	Target Surpassed	Institutional Legitimacy
<b>Activity 1.2.2. Media Fellowships</b>	1.2.2.1: # of independent media projects implemented by trained journalists	45	45	Target Met	Personal Agency
	1.2.2.2: % of supported trained journalists who feel equipped and supported to advance conflict sensitive journalism	100%	90%	Target Surpassed	Personal Agency
<b>Project Objective 2: Foster an enabling environment for the professional advancement of women in media.</b>					
<b>Outcome 2.1</b>	2.1: % of women media professionals surveyed who believe that they have increased opportunities to practice and grow as independent journalist by the end of the project	92.3% (51% increase from the barrier analysis)	25% increase from the barrier analysis	Target Surpassed	Personal Agency
<b>Outcome 2.2</b>	2.2: % of women media professionals surveyed who believe that barriers faced by women journalists identified at the beginning have been addressed by the project	100%	50%	Target Surpassed	Violence
<b>Activity 2.1.1. Gender Training for Press Clubs</b>	2.1.1.1: # of persons trained with USG assistance to advance outcomes consistent with gender equality or female empowerment through their roles in public or private sector institutions or organizations	167	120	Target Surpassed	Personal Agency
	2.1.1.2: % participants with increased knowledge on principles and practice of gender friendly media	48.4% increase from the pre-test	20% increase from the pre-test	Target Surpassed	Personal Agency
	2.1.1.3: # of new women members in press clubs	3	35	Not achieved. Work in progress	Institutional Legitimacy
<b>Activity 2.1.2. Workshops with Media Houses</b>	2.1.2.1: # of participants in workshops with media houses	110	120	Target Surpassed	Institutional Legitimacy

<b>Activity 2.2.1. Press Club Reform Initiatives</b>	2.2.1.1: # of reform initiatives implemented by press clubs	13	13	Target Met	Institutional Legitimacy
	2.2.1.2: # of USG-assisted media-sector civil society organizations (CSO) and/or institutions that serve to strengthen the independent media or journalists (DR.5.3-2)	15	13	Target Surpassed	Institutional Legitimacy
	2.2.1.3: # of media actors engaged in Press Club reform initiatives	205	260	All major actors engaged	Institutional Legitimacy
	2.2.1.4: # of press club policies changed as a result of reform initiatives	7	10	Partially achieved	Institutional Legitimacy
<b>Activity 2.3.1. Expanding Networks for Women in Media</b>	2.3.1.1: # of women supported by the project to engage in networking opportunities	20	20	Achieved	Personal Agency
	2.3.1.2: # of USG-supported activities designed to promote or strengthen the civic participation of women	7	8	Partially achieved	Personal Agency

## PIF Indicators

Table 4: PIF Indicators

PIF Indicator # 1 (Violence)				Indicator # 2 (Personal Agency)				Indicator # 3 (Institutional Legitimacy)			
% of the population that feels safe walking alone around the area they live (SDG 16.1.4). (Participating journalists)				% of the population that believes they can make a positive difference in the area they live (Participating journalists)				% of the population that are satisfied with services they seek from authorities (Participating journalists)			
	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Overall</b>		<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Overall</b>		<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Overall</b>
<b>Very Safe:</b>	3.6%	19.2%	11.11%	<b>Completely Agree</b>	62.50%	76.92%	69.44%	Very satisfied	5.95%	2.56%	4.32%
<b>Moderately Safe:</b>	25%	38.5%	31.48%	<b>Agree</b>	33.93%	19.23%	26.85%	Moderately satisfied	34.52%	35.90%	35.19%
<b>Moderately Unsafe:</b>	32.2%	19.2%	25.93%	<b>Neutral:</b>	3.57%	3.85%	3.70%	Somewhat unsatisfied	30.95%	25.64%	28.40%
<b>Very Unsafe</b>	39.2%	23.1%	31.48%	<b>Somewhat Disagree</b>	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	Very Unsatisfied	19.05%	23.08%	20.99%
<b>Unsure / No Answer:</b>	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	<b>Completely Disagree</b>	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	Unsure/No answer	9.52%	12.82%	11.11%
Percentage of participants and non-participants by their feelings while walking alone around the area they live/work in (Both participating and non participating journalist)				Percentage of participants and non-participants by their feelings while walking alone around the area they live/work in (Both participating and non participating journalist)				% of the population that are satisfied with services they seek from authorities (Participating journalists) (Both participating and non participating journalist)			
		<b>Participants</b>	<b>Non-participants</b>			<b>Participants</b>	<b>Non-participants</b>			<b>Participants</b>	<b>Non-participants</b>
Very safe		11.11%	10.56%	<b>Completely agree</b>		69.44%	25.00%	Very satisfied		4.32%	5.83%
Moderately safe		31.48%	39.44%	<b>Agree</b>		26.85%	56.81%	Moderately satisfied		35.19%	45.74%
Moderately unsafe		25.93%	24.44%	<b>Neutral</b>		3.70%	13.62%	Somewhat unsatisfied		28.40%	9.91%
Very unsafe		31.48%	24.72%	<b>Somewhat disagree</b>		0.00%	3.06%	Very unsatisfied		20.99%	21.02%
Unsure/No answer		0.00%	0.83%	<b>Completely disagree</b>		0.00%	1.53%	Unsure/No answer		11.11%	17.50%

## 4. CONCLUSIONS

The overall project design including the mix of interventions and targeting approaches employed is highly relevant to the overall situation in the country. The geographical targeting of some of the well-known neglected and lagging districts is also indicative of high relevance vis-à-vis situation of women and youth in the media landscape. These include, in particular, the Newly Merged Districts in KP but also those in other districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan where the barriers to women and youth in the media sector are well documented.

From relevance perspective, primary data suggests that interventions were designed in a participatory and inclusive manner often involving multiple partners. There is evidence that certain approaches adopted by the partners also increased overall inclusiveness and participation such as the organizing of open house events in three cities (D.I Khan, Quetta and Peshawar). These open house events brought together a wide range of diverse media actors and stakeholders including newspapers, media agencies, publishing houses etc., which elicited good ideas for identifying different ways of producing and publishing stories for the beneficiaries. This is evident from the achieved results for indicator 1.1 where the project target for participants reporting an improvement in their capacity to develop conflict-sensitive media content was set at 70%, whereas the results show a more promising figure of 88.6%, meaning that a higher percentage of participants have improved their personal capacity to develop conflict-sensitive media content than was targeted.

From the coherence perspective, the interventions are well aligned with and responsive towards the priorities and policies for the protection and promotion of journalists at the international, national, and donor level. The internal coherence of the project is high as signified by the focus of Search's global strategy and its approach of catalyzing collaborative solutions and bringing about positive social change. This project was also very much in line with the priorities of civil society in the country to have a stronger and independent media in the country.

The project is viewed to be effective by evaluators as well as all partners because it was able to meet its targets in the time available and without any major deviations. There is consensus that although the scale of problem is immense, the project has been able to make a dent in the overall media landscape in terms of promoting conflict-sensitive journalism by young journalists and university media departments and contributing towards fostering an enabling environment for professional advancement of women in independent women.

In terms of impact, implementing partners confirmed that the trained journalists and members of the press clubs are equipped with new skills and techniques such as conceptualization and introduction of ideas, conduct interviews, accurate referencing, story production and publication. The trained participants are also able to work independently without external support. The limitations notwithstanding, it is evident that the training was useful and beneficial in equipping participants with increased knowledge and skills in practicing conflict sensitive journalism. From the five themes, the sessions on safety and security and media information literacy have been pointed out to have been particularly useful and engaging for the participants.

From sustainability perspective, the young journalist trained as a result of the project are likely to continue working in the field, even though some may drop out eventually due to family reasons like raising a family. At the same time, the universities are likely to make even more changes with respect to teaching the conflict-sensitive journalism in the months and years to follow. The efforts made at the level of the press clubs in particular have yielded considerable positive gains and primary data suggests additional emerging impacts post project completion as well. The inclusion of female membership in press clubs is noted to be groundbreaking in certain areas where the concept was non-existent prior to the project. There are examples of increased networking and coordination between academia, press clubs, and universities e.g., Quetta press club increased their engagement with universities after the exposure visit. On the whole, there are views suggesting greater collaboration amongst the key media stakeholders and a more active role being played by universities and press clubs vis-à-vis mentoring, networking and job placements for journalists.

## Recommendations

S. #	Lesson learnt	Recommendations
1	The number of active women journalists in the target areas were far fewer than originally anticipated, thus it was difficult to engage them in the project.	There is a need to continue with similar projects to increase the number of participating journalists. It will also require re-looking into the selection criteria of the participating journalist in the project.
2	The university's media, journalism and communication departments provided an easy and practical way forward in terms of engaging young women from the target districts.	There is a need to work systematically with the universities to not only enroll more young women from these areas but also try to reach out to those who graduated in recent years through tracer studies. This will help to increase the number of practicing young women journalists in these districts.
3	Bringing changes in the university course content required more time and engagement, thus all efforts to make changes to curricula by the project could not be materialized.	To bring changes in the course content at the universities, including on conflict-sensitive journalism, there is a need to extend both the duration and intensity of the engagement with them.
4	Introducing reforms in the press clubs was more challenging given it would have meant reduced power for the existing leaderships of these press clubs.	Introducing reforms in different press clubs will require not only individual power analysis for each one of these press clubs, but there are to clear incentives and community pressures to create momentum for reforms. For example, linking more women members with support with physical infrastructure such as separate toilets for women.
5	Close coordination and weekly engagements with partners in this fast-paced project was a success, which helped to achieve the project in the intended duration.	The current coordination structures should continue in the future as well. This could be further extended to beneficiaries, mentors and others by building quarterly face-to-face meetings.

## **5. APPENDICES**

### **Annex 1: Bibliography**

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### Annex 3: Survey Tools

TOOL 1 – SURVEY WITH PARTICIPATING & NON-PARTICIPATING JOURNALISTS	 TOOL 1-SURVEY WITH PARTICIPATING
TOOL 2: IDI WITH PRESS CLUB SENIOR OFFICIALS	 TOOL 2-IDI WITH PRESS CLUB SENIOR
TOOL 3: IDI WITH MENTORS	 TOOL 3-IDI WITH MENTORS.docx
TOOL 4: KII WITH PROJECT PARTNERS	 TOOL 4-KII WITH PROJECT PARTNERS.
TOOL 5: KII WITH PROJECT TEAM	 TOOL 5-KII WITH PROJECT TEAM.docx
TOOL 6: KII WITH MEDIA DEPARTMENT FACULTY	 TOOL 6-KII WITH MEDIA DEPARTMENT
TOOL 7: KII WITH PRESS CLUB MEMBERS	 TOOL 7-KII WITH PRESS CLUB MEMBERS
TOOL 8: KII WITH TRAINERS	 TOOL 8-KII WITH TRAINERS.docx

### Annex 4: Evaluation Terms of Reference

SEARCH ToRS for Final Evaluation	 ToRs-Final Evaluation.pdf
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### Annex 5: Case Studies

Case Study 1	Case Study 2	Case Study 3	Case Study 4
 Aimen Khan Case Study .docx	 HissamUdDin Dawar - Case Study .docx	 Nasir Hussain - Case Study .docx	 Umar Shinwari - Case Study .docx