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# WOMEN'S INITIATIVE FOR LEARNING AND LEADERSHIP (WILL)

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STRENGTHENING WOMEN'S POLITICAL  
PARTICIPATION & LEADERSHIP FOR  
EFFECTIVE DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE  
IN KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA (KP)

*Baseline Research and Needs Assessment Study*



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## I. Acronyms

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Awami National Party	ANP
Baseline Survey	BLS
Chief Minister	CM
Dera Ismail Khan	D.I.Khan or D.I.K
District Education Officer	DEO
Election Commission of Pakistan	ECP
Executive District Officer	EDO
Federally Administered Tribal Areas	FATA
FATA Investment Facilitation Authority	FIFA
Focus Group Discussion	FGD
Jamaat-I-Ulema-Islam	JUI
Jamaat-I-Islami	JI
Key Informant Interviews	KIIS
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	KP
Member of Provincial Assembly	MPA
Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz)	PML (N)
Pakistan Muslim League (Quaid-I-Azam)	PML (Q)
Pakistan People's Party	PPP
Pakistan Tehrik-I-Insaaf	PTI
Provincially Administered Tribal Areas	PATA
Provincial Commission on the Status of Women	PCSW
The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms Of Discrimination Against Women	CEDAW
Union Councilors	UCs
Women's Initiative for Learning and Leadership	WILL

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## II. Executive Summary

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The 2013 elections marked an increase in women's participation in mainstream politics in Pakistan. Not only did more women compete in the elections than ever before, the 2013 election results saw a record 214 women elected to national and provincial assemblies. However, although all the main parties have women's wings, men still dominate the leadership ranks, and many experienced women were denied the chance to contest directly for seats in parliament. Of the new women entrants in 2013, only 16 were elected in general seats; the rest entered parliament through reserved slots. As a result, this new numerical strength has not translated into women having decision-making influence or serving in key government positions.

This Baseline Research and Needs Assessment Study was commissioned by the 'Women's Initiative for Learning and Leadership (WILL)' project, which is aimed at Strengthening Women's Political Participation and Leadership for Effective Democratic Governance in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Province. This research was carried out in three selected districts of KP, Peshawar, Dera Ismail Khan, Tank and the Gomal Zam region.

The project aims at working with elected women politicians as well as former and aspiring women councilors in KP to enhance their engagement in decision-making at the national, provincial and local levels. This research focused on four key areas; needs and confidence levels, key relationships within the political environment, ability to push legislation and policy reforms and media engagement.

Women politicians were quite confident with their own leadership skills and in their ability to compete in a political process dominated by men. Additionally, a majority of women felt that the perception of government officials towards women as leaders in comparison to male leaders was generally positive. Although the majority of the respondents indicated that they were generally aware of the functions and procedures of various government departments, they recognized the need for women politicians to be skilled in legislation formulation, media management, policy making and budgetary processes.

The majority of women claimed that they faced challenges as leaders in the public sphere. With the exception of Peshawar district, many women politicians felt that their male colleagues were 'not comfortable' if the committee or party structure included both men and women members and if the committee or party structure was led by a woman. Moreover, they felt that their male counterparts did little to involve them in decision-making processes or encourage them to take party positions.

Women from Tank, Gomal Zam and D.I. Khan felt strongly about taking specific measures to strengthen women's position within political parties, through ensuring representation of women in the party membership and all decision-making bodies, such as central and provincial executive committees. This could be because these districts are comparatively less progressive and more conservative than Peshawar. Therefore, even though women are politically active here, they don't have equal

representation within their parties.

Interestingly, while a large number of female respondents from Tank, Gomal Zam and D.I. Khan felt that they needed training on leadership; in Peshawar, the majority felt otherwise. One reason for this could be that the major push of trainings in the past has been focused more on women politicians from large cities.

A majority of the respondents from Tank and D.I. Khan said that they had been able to make alliances with local influential leaders and opinion makers 'a large extent' while respondents from Gomal Zam felt that they had been able to do 'very little' in this area. Women from Peshawar felt that they had been able to do this to some extent.

Moreover, women from remote regions of Tank and Gomal Zam felt that they had limited access to the media but did feel conservatively confident about the portrayal of women in the media and felt that the media did not have specific stereotypes of women politicians. Many to review their approach to be able to better handle media and outreach.

Through the focus group discussions it was learnt that male politicians and government officials felt that they had done an adequate job of supporting women to take active part in politics having realized the importance of their role. However, they did recognize that government officials from the smaller districts in particular felt more comfortable interacting with male politicians.

The research clearly indicates the need to continue to work with women politicians, party leadership, civil service and media to enhance the role of women in the political sphere. Despite the gains made in the 2013 elections, the degree and type of participation of women in politics is still needs to be enriched. A large number of people across all districts felt that if the constraints faced by women politicians were not addressed it could lead to increased levels of inequality, poverty and conflict in society.

Lack of education and not having the right connections does create hindrances for them but it has not stopped them from stepping outside their homes to participate in politics. Quite a few of these women have been trained previously. They now need guidance on how to forge connections with other stakeholders, including the media, the government, the bureaucracy and the district administrations. Trainings focused on networking, communications and advocacy would help in improving how they define and promote their policy, move forward within the party ranks and voice their concerns on key issues of the day. There is also a need to work with aspiring women politicians and encourage more women to consider entering into politics.



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### III. Recommendations

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The recommendations below are based on findings from the baseline survey, the focus group discussions and the key informant interviews carried out in the selected districts. These recommendations are meant to help the project implementing team in addressing challenges, through the project, amongst its target stakeholders.

- Reforms are needed within the parties. Research has shown that women politicians on reserve seats do not have as strong a backing of their community as much as those who come through on general seats. Such women are also more dependent on party leadership. Women must be equipped to compete for party tickets against pre-determined selection criteria to strengthen their position within their party and constituencies.
- There is a continued need for training women politicians in information security and networking to support the forging of effective connections with their constituents, the bureaucracy and the local media. The research suggests that female politicians at the district level need to be more media savvy and articulate so as to be taken seriously.
- The bureaucracy needs to have a welcoming attitude towards women politicians, specifically in conservative districts. This can be done through inter-district trainings where female politicians, government officials and media are trained together. Similarly, recommendations should be put state institutions to take steps to foster a better working environment at the institutional level. The process should be kept fluid and not be restricted to one-off training sessions. Creating platforms and networking is essential for women political leaders in this aspect.
- Although there is strength in numbers, women are not included in cabinets and are not well placed within their political party's decision making and policy regulating committees. This is a key barrier in magnifying female politician's voices as well as encouraging active engagement in decision-making at the provincial and local levels. For this to happen, both male and female politicians need to advocate within their political parties.
- Elected women parliamentarians and former and aspiring women councilors, especially at the grass roots level, are unaware of laws relating to women, so as to advocate effectively. It is clearly evident that majority of women are not informed about women specific laws. This can be addressed in upcoming trainings and information seminars where the trainers focus on increasing the knowledge base of politicians.
- In the FGDs, women participants felt that their political parties encouraged female emancipation amongst the party ranks and supported specific women based legislation only verbally. Key legislation related to women remained

unenforced because the party leadership was contentious on such issues. Therefore, it was important to take effective and timely decisions within the party, before debating them in the assemblies.

- In KP as in the case with most of country, politically active women tend to be known through their fathers, husbands, sons and brothers. Therefore, women who are well connected politically use it as leverage when it comes to contesting elections. On the other hand, women who are not so well connected, affluent, need more support and opportunities, comparatively. The WILL program will focus on these women and will explore opportunities to enhance their role within political parties.
- Female MPAs, who are in key decision-making positions within their parties, need to advocate for women's political participation and leadership at the grass roots level, so as to encourage other aspiring women politicians. The WILL program will encourage the participation of aspiring women politicians in training and capacity building events.
- It is important for the WILL program to strengthen women politician networks that cross party lines.
- Politicians, who advocate for women's political participation and leadership during election season, need to be encouraged to continue such efforts after elections.
- Media should play an encouraging and responsible role when reporting or portraying female politicians.

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## IV. Introduction

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This Baseline Research and Needs Assessment Study, as part of the national campaign entitled Women's Initiative for Learning and Leadership (WILL) aims at identifying existing gaps and challenges faced by women politicians in some of the most conservative areas of the country. The goal of WILL is to increase the capacity of elected women parliamentarians as well as former and aspiring women councilors of KP by magnifying their voices and bolstering their engagement in decision-making at the provincial and local levels.

The survey was carried out in three selected districts of KP, which included Peshawar, D.I. Khan and Tank and one area of Gomal Zam were surveyed. Peshawar is a district in the KP province.

The district of Dera Ismail Khan is bordered by the Punjab Province to the east, to the southwest by South Waziristan, and to the northwest by Tank and Lakki Marwat districts. Tank is a southern district in KP. The city of Tank is the capital of the district, which consists of Union Council City I and Union Council City II. There are sixteen Union councils of district Tank. Gomal Zam, not a district, is mostly known for its Gomal Zam Dam, which is in Khjori Kach, South Waziristan Agency, in Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA).

In terms of awareness about specific laws on women's rights such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) & the Women Protection Bill, a majority of the women from Peshawar were more aware about such laws as compared to women from Gomal Zam, Tank and D.I.Khan. In terms of their political parties upholding such laws, most women felt that their political parties were not upholding such laws internally nor were they interested in promoting them.

A majority of the respondents felt that women politicians should have 'excellent' or 'good' skills in three key areas of legislation formulation, policymaking and budgetary processes. In addition, a majority of women from Tank, Gomal Zam and D.I. Khan felt that male politicians involved their female colleagues in decision-making process to a 'very little extent'. A large number of female respondents in Peshawar were also not very confident, saying that women were involved in such processes only 'to some extent'.

Similarly, when it came to their male colleagues encouraging them to take party positions, the majority of respondents in Tank and Gomal Zam felt that their male colleagues did so 'to a very little extent'. Whereas in D.I. Khan, a small section of respondents, said 'to a large extent' while in Peshawar, a large majority felt that women were encouraged 'to some extent'. In comparison to Tank and Gomal Zam; Peshawar and D.I. Khan are comparatively less conservative cities and therefore, it could be argued that men find it easier to approach and encourage their female colleagues in such matters.

**Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)** were conducted in each district, with one FGD per

district. These one-day FGDs had 12-15 participants each with equal numbers of men and women participants..

In terms of supporting women to take active part in politics, the male participants felt that they had done so through advocacy and empowerment. They felt that, over time, they had realized the importance of women's participation. As one participant said 'it has become evident that through politics, we can solve many problems of our people and area'. The men went on further to say that male politicians ensured the participation of females in the party decision making and also for women to hold positions within the party. However, they did feel that it was 'uncomfortable' to work in a committee headed by a woman, 'but we have to accept her', one said.

A majority of the participants also felt that that the political parties did not apply specific rules or laws concerning the rights of women within their own political party framework.

The general opinion of the FGD participants on the role of government officials was that the attitude of the government officials towards female politicians was not very welcoming, especially in smaller districts. They tended to prefer interacting with male politicians and even when female politicians did approach them, they were told to come back with a male family member.

In terms of media, the participants felt that the media did not present women politicians in a positive manner. Some media personnel felt that women who are working at the line ministry positions, on policymaking and implementation, are not actively working on women based political issues and challenges. One journalist said 'If you leave aside the bigger cities, the women politicians are not as active as they should be. The place of women in our society is such that it automatically keeps women behind veil and walls so that they cannot move forward'.

**Key Informant interviews (KIIs)** were carried out with a secondary target group which included male and female politicians, government officials and journalists.

During the KIIs, women MPAs said that leadership challenges for female politicians begin from their homes as they almost always require permission from the head of the family, who are almost always men, to participate in politics. Social and political pressures as well as a lack of financial support and education were some of the other key challenges cited.

Although almost all politicians, men and women, felt that the views of party leadership and male counterparts on role of women leaders in policy making were 'good', they felt that the party leadership did not involve men and women equally in decision making. They felt that the opinions of women party members needed to be listened to as well as considered. Although their male colleagues are cooperative, as was also evident through the FGDs and the KIIs, one female MPA said about her male colleagues, 'they

listen yet they do not really listen’.

Almost half of the female politicians in the KIIs felt that women politicians were portrayed reasonably well in the local media. According to some of the media and the government officials interviewed, women politicians have been able to achieve their aims easily if they have political connections. Also, some media professionals argued that most women politicians themselves had not advocated for increased women’s political participation.

Some female politicians felt that ‘no single party has a clear decision on how much percentage of women should come on party seats’. In their opinion, ‘political parties should be bound to give tickets to women on merit and not because they have political or family affiliations and are well connected. Reforms are needed within the parties. It is very important to encourage self made women’. In terms of receiving trainings, one MPA said that women politicians had received enough trainings. ‘We are trained. It is our voices that need to be heard’.

A majority of the interviewees felt that women had access to media but there needed to be awareness and a more educated approach here. In their opinion, women politicians were not portrayed ‘as well in the local media as they should be’, and that such portrayal depended on the issues and circumstances.

One government official felt that ‘although, on a national level, women politicians have complete access to media, at the provincial level, women politicians have comparatively less access and when it comes to the district/grass roots level, women politicians have no access nor receive any recognition of themselves as individuals or for their work’. The government officials felt that women politicians were portrayed in the local media in a stereotypical manner.

Almost all of the government officials interviewed had not advocated for women’s active political participation. However, none of them negated the importance of increasing women’s role in politics.

A general feeling of frustration was noted while conducting the KIIs with the government officials, politicians and the media personnel. They all felt that the political process that was started at the grass roots level in the early 2000s was not allowed to mature. This would have allowed more women to gain on the ground experience and increased the cadre of women involved in politics who were not from established political families.

## V. Methodology

The primary target group of this research was women members of all elected bodies at district levels and the Provincial Assembly. The secondary target group included male politicians, media and government officials from KP, who have the potential and position to influence policy reforms as well as promote women leadership within and outside of legislatures.

<p><b>A baseline survey</b>, covering 60 female UC members from Peshawar, 26 female UC members from D.I.Khan, 10 female UC members from Tank and 10 from Gomal Zam, was carried out, bringing the total number to 106.</p>	<p><b>Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)</b> were conducted in each district. The one-day FGDs were conducted separately for men and women, with 12-15 number of participants per FGD (almost equal numbers of men and women). Participants of the FGDs were selected from the BLS.</p>	<p><b>Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)</b> focused on participants from the first and the secondary target group. Four male MPAs and four female politicians MPAs (each representing their district ideally), 2 government officials and 2 journalists were interviewed in this process.</p>
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This research aims to provide reliable data on how to measure the core attitudes of all relevant stakeholders towards women political leaders, especially in the identification of issues and attitudes pertaining to them at provincial and district levels.

### Baseline Survey Sample Size

Spread across four selected areas of KP, the baseline survey focused on gathering perceptions of one hundred and six politically active women at the grass roots level. The target was to interview one hundred women, based on population size in the respective areas, but in Peshawar, instead of fifty four, the survey team were able to gather the perceptions of sixty women. The selection criteria used here was to survey all those females who were or had been active politically in the selected districts in Town Councils, Union Councils, Village Councils and the District level-bodies which had come into effect through the Local Government Ordinance (2001), as a result of the Devolution Plan. Detailed information of these participants is shared in Annex C. Support from the local community (elders), especially in conservative areas of Tank, Gomal Zam and D.I.Khan, facilitated the baseline survey.

	District	Population (1998)	Union Councils'	Female UC Members	Sample size
1.	Peshawar	2026851	93	372	60
2.	D.I. Khan	852995	46	184	26
3.	Tank	238216	16	64	10
4.	Gomal Zam				10
<b>Total</b>		<b>3118062</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>620</b>	<b>106</b>

Source: <http://www.pbs.gov.pk/pco-kp-tables>

The following sample size is scientifically appropriate for this research and is significantly based on statistical approach. Proportionate stratified sample size with **95%** confidence level and **9.56%** margin of error

Note: There are compulsory 4 female councilors in each union council. 2 elected and 2 on reserved seats.

## Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

Seven FGDs were conducted, one each in the selected districts and the region of Gomal Zam. Separate FGDs were conducted for men and women, keeping in context the conservative culture of the districts, except the FGD in Peshawar, which was mixed. Although, initially, the number of participants per FGD was kept at 12, but, as can be seen from the table below, each FGD had between 12-15 participants.

	District	Number of FGDs	Number of Participants
1.	Peshawar	1	15 (7 females & 8 males)
2.	D.I. Khan	2	14 (7 females & 7 males)
3.	Tank	2	15 (9 females & 6 males)
4.	Gomal Zam	2	12 (5 females & 7 males)

Participants for FGDs were selected from the women politicians at the district level of the target districts

## Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)

The number of KIIs for each category, government officials, politicians and media, were at least two, from each district. The selection of politicians was not district specific; rather they were affiliated with various political parties.

PESHAWAR		
Government Officials	3	1 female & 2 males
Journalists	3	2 females & 1 male
D.I.KHAN		
Government Officials	2	Male
Journalists	2	Male
TANK		
Government Officials	2	Male
Journalists	2	Male
GOMAL ZAM		
Government Officials	2	1 male & 1 female
Journalists	2	Male
POLITICIANS		
	7	3 males & 4 females
Total	25	8 females & 17 males

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## VI. Research Findings

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### 1. Baseline Survey

A baseline survey of 106 women was carried out in the districts of KP Province in mid-September 2014. This included 54 ex-women union councilors from Peshawar, 26 from Dera Ismail Khan (D.I.Khan) and 10 each from Tank and Gomal Zam. An additional 6 women were included in the survey in Peshawar, bringing the total number of the BLS participants to 106.

The survey consisted of 27 questions, focusing on the skills and knowledge of women leaders on leadership and governance, their ability to run for elections, support from party leaders and male counterparts for taking party positions, formulating and implementing policy reforms at all levels of electoral structures and government, including constituencies and legislative bodies, relationship with line ministry officials for policy making and implementation and questions on media's engagement to portray women politicians. These questions were meant to gauge the understanding of politically active women about leadership, political processes and media relations specifically.

Almost all of the women surveyed have been politically active, whether in office or out of it, mostly at the district level and one was an ex member Provincial Assembly in Peshawar. Out of the 26 women who participated in the BLS in D.I.Khan, there were 11 Union Councilors, 11 District Councilors, 2 Tehsil Councilor, 1 Tehsil member and 1 member District Assembly. In Tank, 4 out of the 10 women surveyed were Union Councilors. In Gomal Zam, 1 out of the 10 women was a Union Councilor.

#### A. Skills and knowledge of women leaders on leadership and governance

##### A.1 Leadership skills which women leaders should possess

When women were asked what leadership skills women leaders should possess, 80% women across the selected districts felt that women should be able to communicate, be educated, politically aware, be able to discuss and solve issues with constituents, be able to work alongside men, get work done quickly, be well connected, aware of constitution, maintain financial records, able to make decisions and also be able to work with media.

A majority (70%) of the women mentioned individual characteristics such as being level headed, brave (able to fight for their rights and show others how to demonstrate), convince others about their point of view, be of good character, honest, have perseverance, have the courage to make the right decision, be active, treat people well and have good family background.

##### A.2 Confidence in leadership skills to compete in the political process dominated by men

Majority of the women from all selected areas were either 'very confident' or 'confident' in their leadership skills to compete in political process dominated by men.



Confidence levels were high in women from larger districts such as Peshawar, where 62% females said 'confident' while 30% chose 'very confident'. Even in smaller districts of Tank and Gomal Zam, majority of the women, (70%-50%) were 'highly confident' and 'confident'. In D.I. Khan, 58% were 'very confident' and 38% were 'confident'. This is interesting to note because women politicians in larger districts tend to have better access to opportunities in comparison to women from smaller and far off districts. Yet, it is encouraging to see that in either case, they were confident in their individual capabilities.

### **A.3. Leadership challenges of women leaders**

Women from Tank said that people in their community consider women's political participation 'bad' and that women have responsibilities at home, which were more important to tend to. The women felt that this was essentially because men were against women's freedom and said that women leaders are not mostly listened to.

Women from Gomal Zam said that '*it is a man's world*' and men are against women stepping outside their homes and forbid their education. They suggested that society and religion are against women in leadership roles. In addition, they argued that men feel insulted when women do better than them and that people do not listen to women leaders.

Women from D.I. Khan said that society considers it bad for women to take on political responsibilities. Statements such as '*Religion and purdah does not allow*', '*Women are hassled in offices and there is bad attitude of higher ups towards women*', '*Women are included in political parties only as puppets*', were noted from the participants.

Resourceful people also created hurdles for their own vested interests. 'Women leaders are left with almost no funds for development work in their areas because in most cases, the Nazims use up those funds and do not listen to women leaders when complaints are made about lack or misappropriation of funds', some said. These women felt that they had no rights and blamed lack of education amongst women and poverty. Only 2 women said that they did not face any problems while 24 mentioned the above issues. Women from Peshawar said that women need to 'mingle' more to build confidence and cited cultural and family pressures as constraints. They also said that it was quite challenging to gather people and coordinate with women to come to 'Jalsas<sup>1</sup>'.

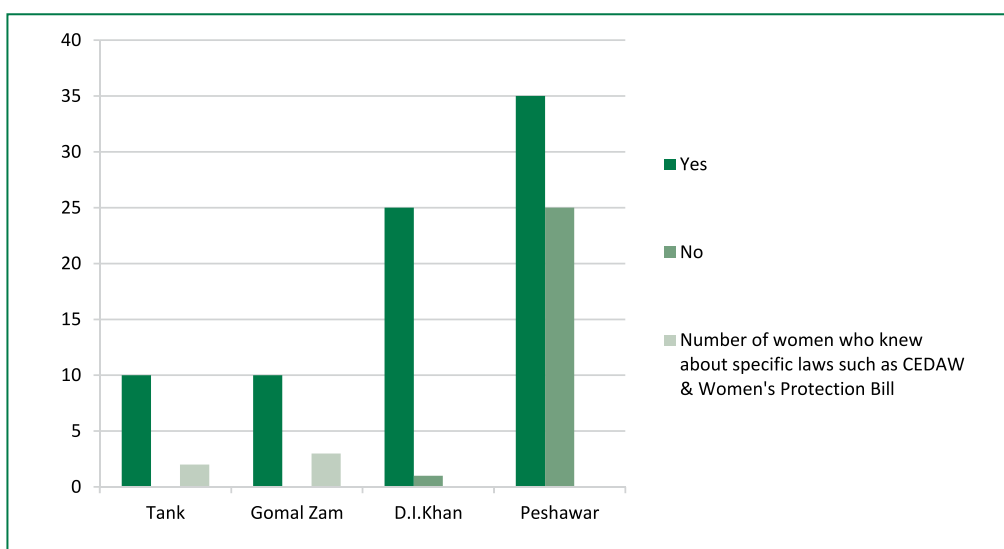
As women leaders in a conservative culture, it also becomes quite difficult for them to convince men in general, who are the heads of households to allow their women to step outside their homes for political activities and in most cases, they have to come up with time consuming solutions to such issues. Other challenges cited were trust building, bad attitude of men, local people not having confidence in them, and not

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<sup>1</sup> Demonstrations

wanting to be guided by women as there is inequality amongst genders. Some women cited language and access issues, as in being unable to reach out to others with their voice and access to information and existing laws related to women.

#### A.4. Awareness about laws which protect women’s rights and encourage political participation



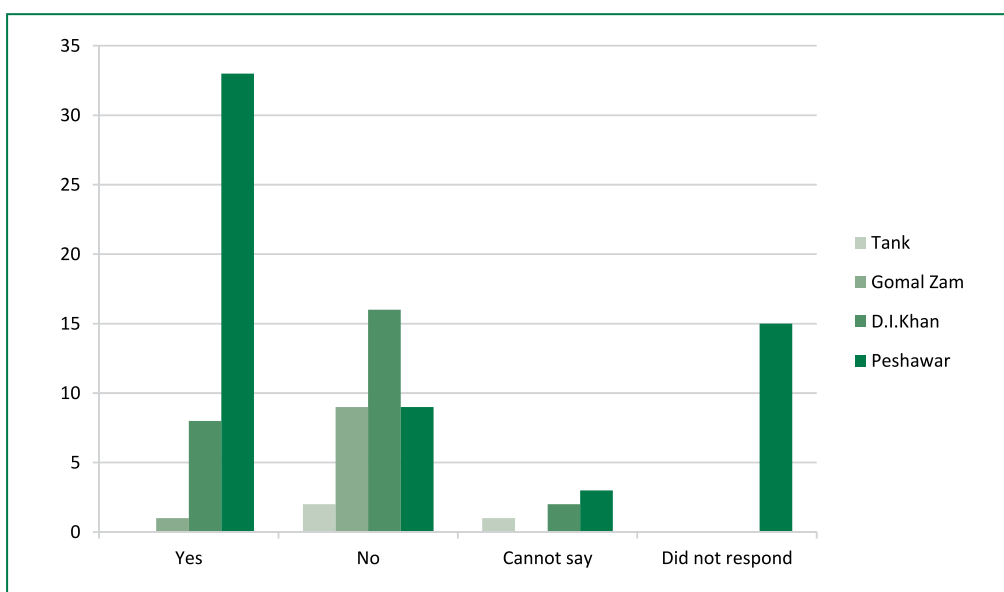
Female participants were asked whether they knew specific laws which protected women’s rights and encouraged their political participation. All women from Tank & Gomal Zam said that they knew about such laws. However, on probing further as to mention specific laws, only 2 out of the 10 women surveyed knew laws. 8 women mentioned acid throwing on women, inter marriages, forced marriages, dowry & gender based violence in this respect and said that such social practices are unlawful in their opinion.

This showed that a majority of these women assumed that they knew about women specific laws, but were unclear about differentiating between unlawful social practices and specific laws. They were more aware about socially un-just practices than laws.

From Gomal Zam, only 30% women mentioned two laws (CEDAW & the Women protection Law/Bill), while over 70% mentioned aggression toward women, acid throwing and dowry. From D.I.Khan 96% said that they knew such laws but only 27% females mentioned CEDAW and 4%, the women protection bill/law, respectively. In Peshawar, 58% said that they knew such laws while 42% said that they did not.

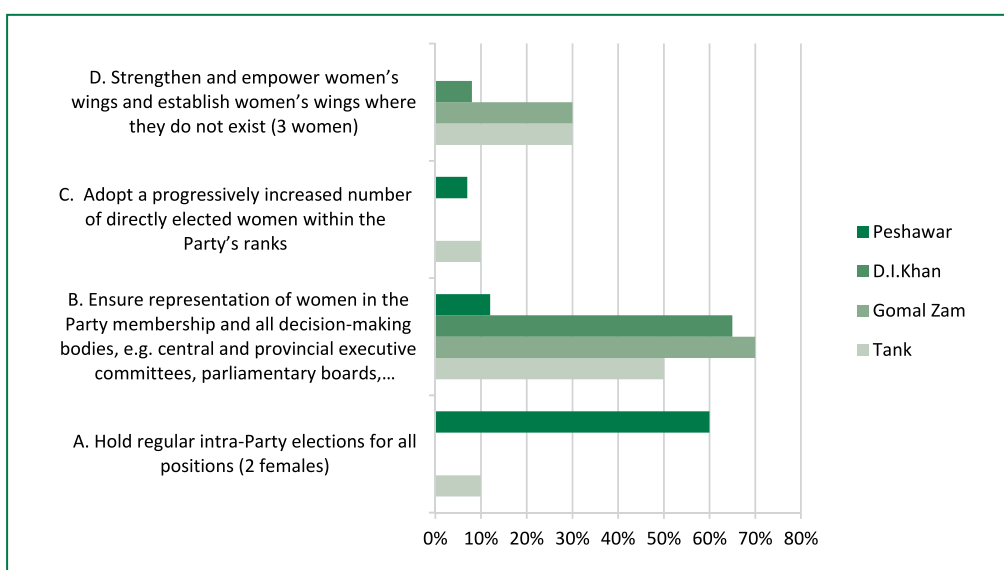
#### A.5. Are political parties upholding such laws?

Visible majority, 62%% women from D.I.Khan and 90% from Gomal Zam felt that their political parties are not upholding such laws while only 20% participants from Tank felt similarly. 20% women from Peshawar said that their political parties are upholding such laws.



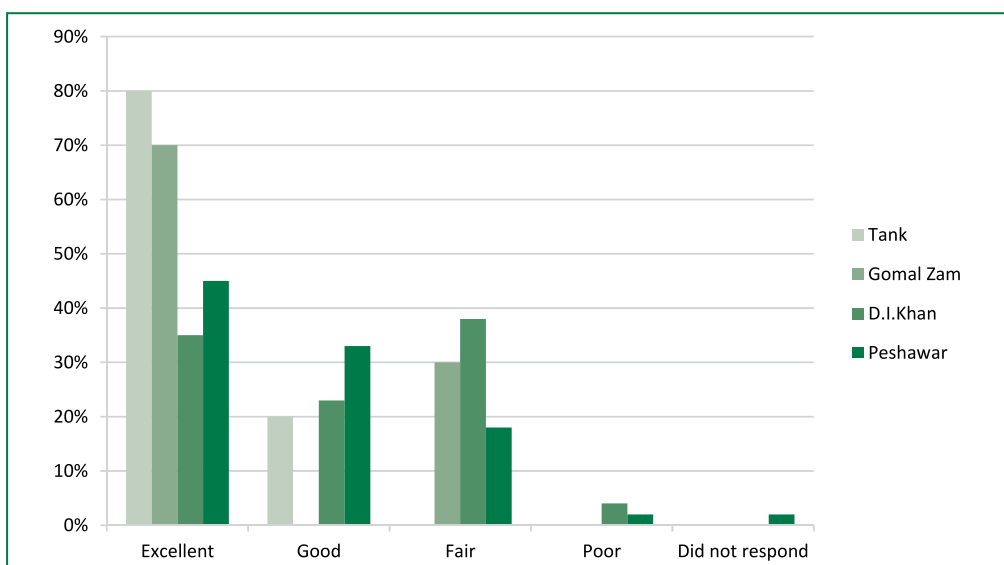
It was noted that the majority of the women who replied either 'yes' or 'no', felt that their political parties are not doing much about the existing un-just social practices. Since majority of them do not know about laws, therefore, they expect their political parties to take steps against unjust practices rather than become aware of or implement women specific laws.

**A.6. When asked if they would like to strengthen women's position within political parties, what measures would they like to enforce, through the revision and amendment of the Political Parties Order, 2002, making it mandatory for all Political Parties to:**



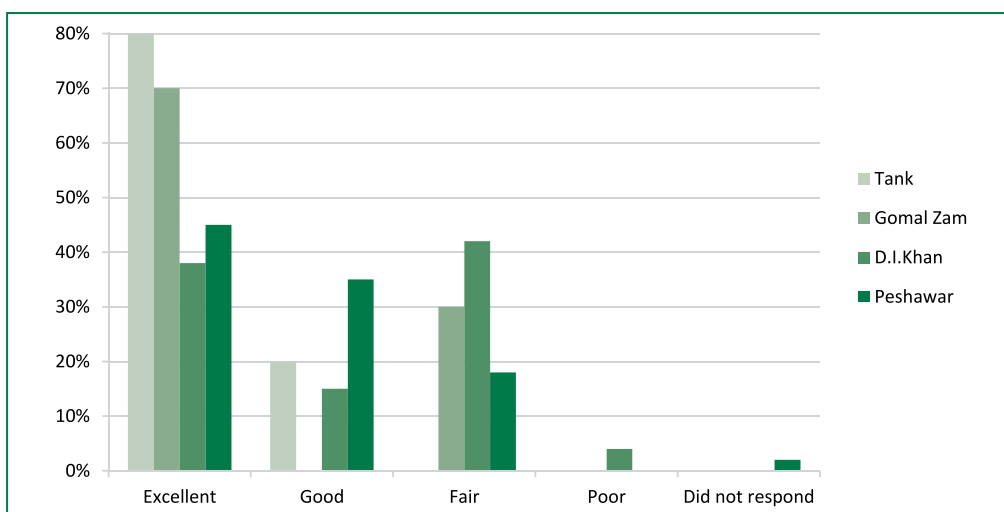
Majority of the respondents selected the option ‘ensuring representation of women in the Party membership and all decision-making bodies, e.g. central and provincial executive committees as well as parliamentary’. This included 50% of females from Tank, 70% from Gomal Zam and 65% from D.I.Khan. Whereas, in Peshawar, 60% chose the option ‘hold regular intra-Party elections for all positions’.

### A.7. Level of skills required in relation to legislation formulation?



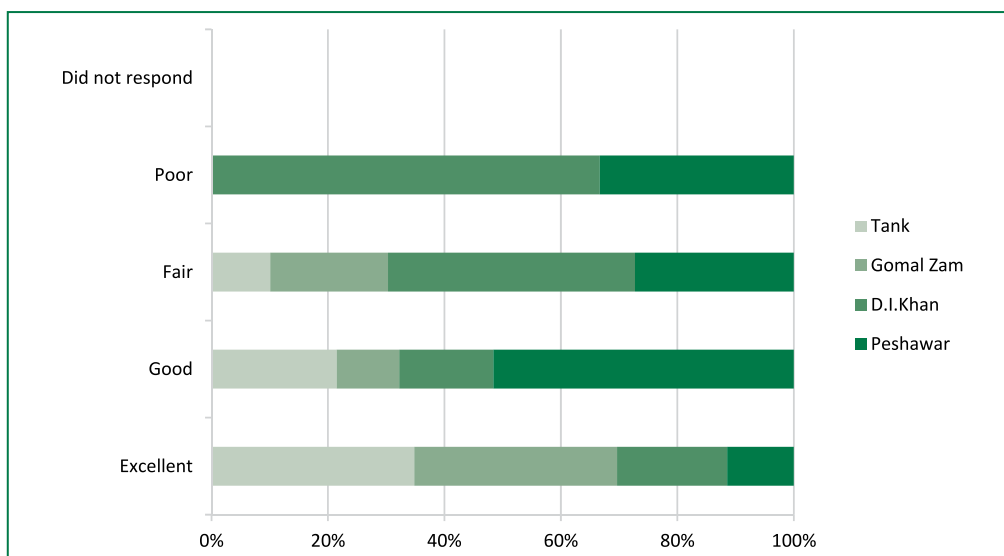
Majority of the respondents across all districts felt that they should have ‘excellent’ skills in relation to legislation formulation. This included 80% of the respondents from Tank, 70% from Gomal Zam, 45% from Peshawar and 35% from D.I.Khan.

### A.8. The level of skills required in relation to policy making?



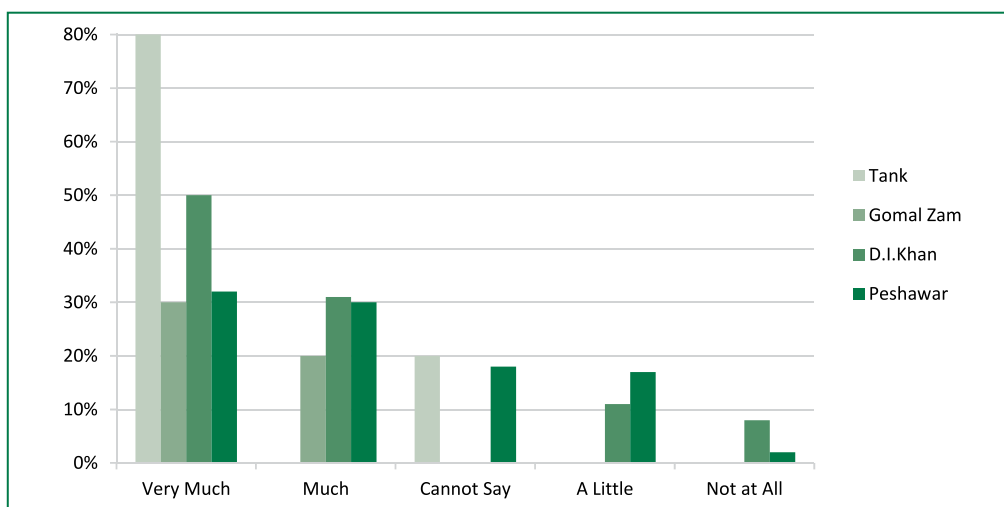
80% of the respondents from Tank, 70% from Gomal Zam, 45% from Peshawar and 38% from D.I.Khan said that they should possess 'excellent' skills when it came to policy making. 42% of the respondents in D.I.Khan also felt that they should only have 'fair' skills.

### A.9. Level of skills the respondents should possess in relation to budgetary processes?



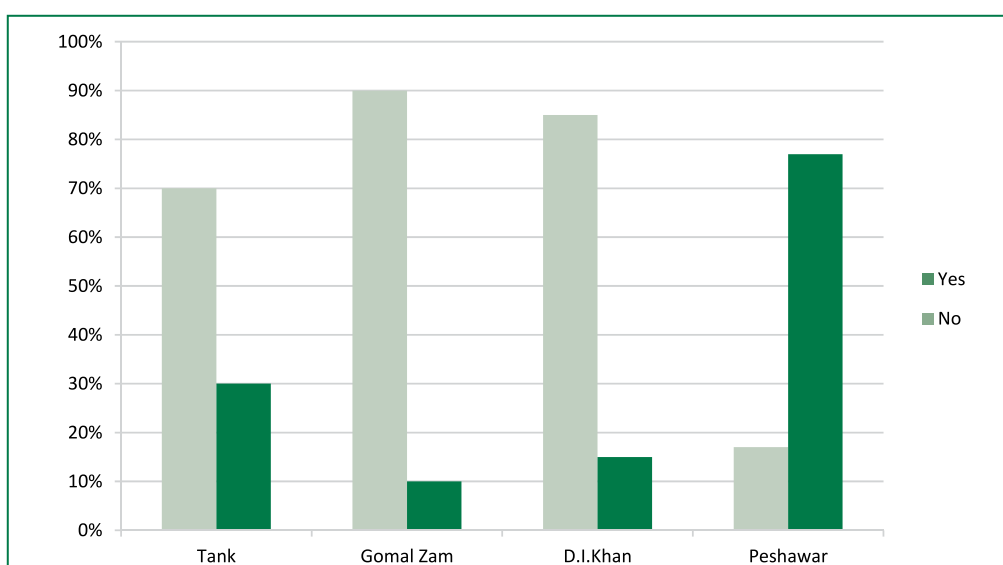
70% of the respondents from Tank and Gomal Zam felt that they should have 'excellent' skills for budgetary processes, In D.I.Khan, 42% selected 'fair' followed closely by 38% who chose 'excellent'. In Peshawar, respondents were more divided with 23% selecting 'excellent' and 48% choosing 'good'.

### A.10. Awareness level about functions and procedures of various government departments



When it came to knowing about the functions and procedures of various government departments, 80% respondents from Tank, 50% from D.I.Khan and 32% from Peshawar selected 'very much', followed by 70% in Gomal Zam and 30% Peshawar, who chose 'much'.

#### A.11. Is training needed on leadership?



90% of the respondents from Gomal Zam, 85% from D.I.Khan and 70% from Tank felt that they needed training on leadership. In contrast, a visible majority (77%) in Peshawar felt that they did not need training on leadership.

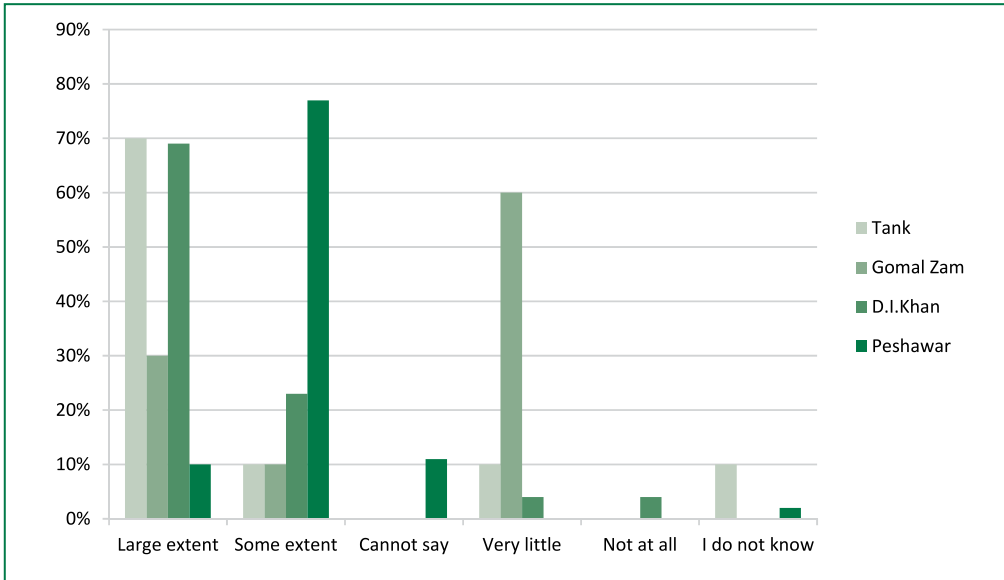
#### A.12. Specific types of skills needed for leadership?

In Tank, respondents felt that they needed trainings specifically on women's role in leadership, 'it should be taught like a subject including with a booklet comprising of all existing rules & laws', one interviewee said. The respondents from Gomal Zam mentioned politics, women's role in it and women specific laws. Respondents from D.I.Khan mentioned Right to Information (RTI), gender based violence, complete awareness about laws, knowledge about the workings of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP).

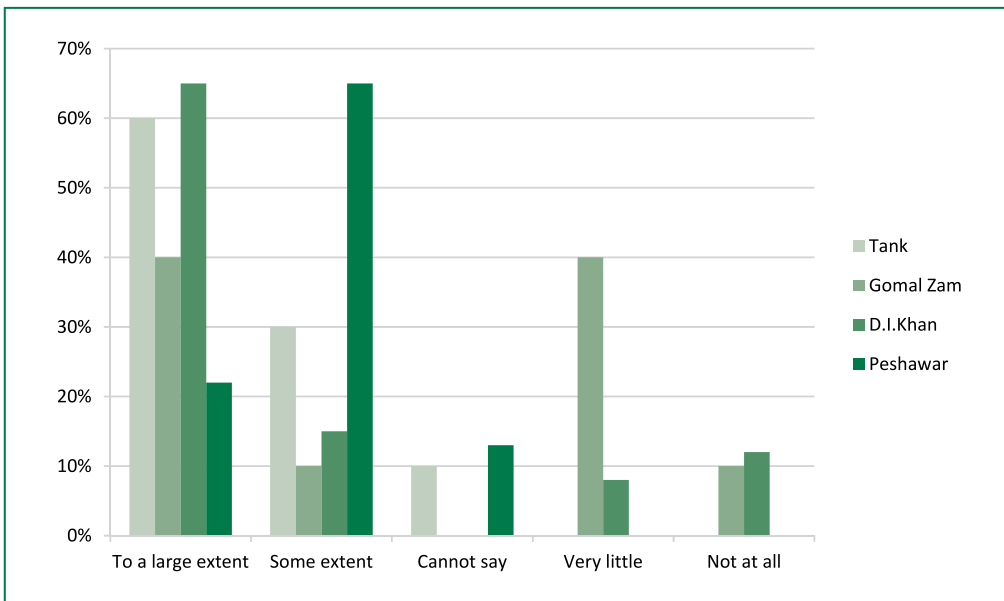
### B. Women's ability and equal opportunity to run for elections

#### B.1. Extent to which respondents are able to make political alliances with local influential leaders (both political and others).

Majority of the respondents in Tank (70%) and D.I. Khan (69%) were able to make alliances with local influential leaders (political and others) 'to a large extent' or 'to some extent' whereas 77% in Peshawar felt that they had been able to do so to 'some extent'.



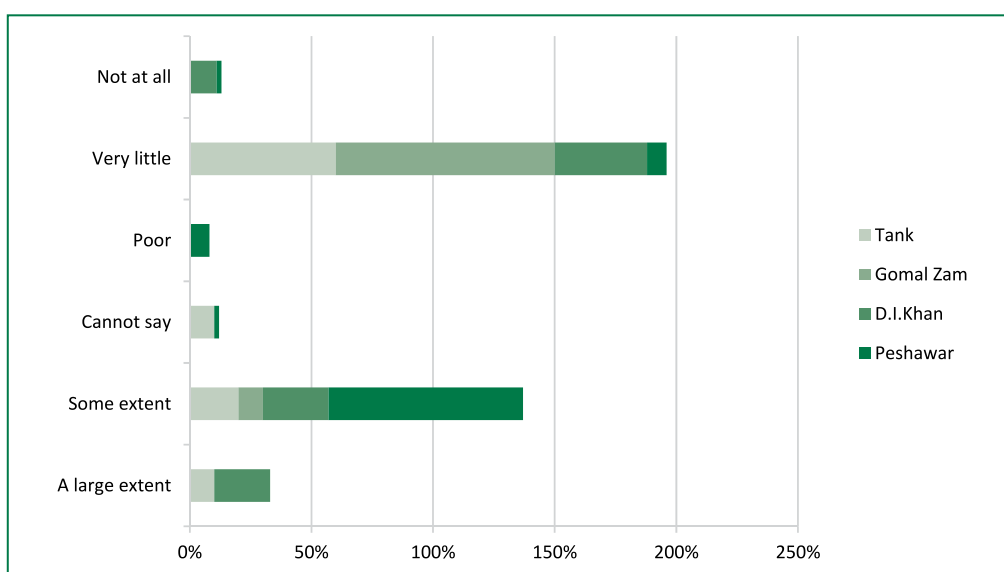
**B.2. Extent to which respondents are able to reach out to the public through effective networking and positive media messaging/engagement**



60% respondents from Tank, 65% from D.I.Khan said that they were able to reach out to the public through effective networking and positive media messaging and engagement, 'to a large extent', whereas, only 40% respondents from Gomal Zam and 22% from Peshawar felt similarly. Majority (65%) in Peshawar chose 'to some extent'.

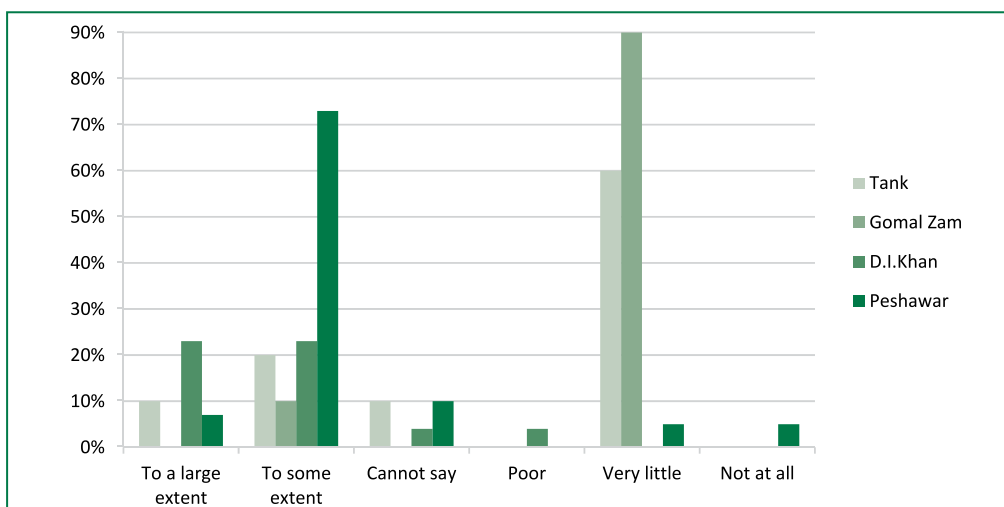
**C. Support from party leaders and male counterparts for women for taking party position, formulating and implementing policy reforms at all levels of electoral structures and government, including constituencies and legislative bodies**

**C.1. Extent to which male counterparts involved the respondents, as women politicians, in decision-making**



90% of the respondents from Gomal Zam, 60% from Tank and 38% from D.I.Khan felt that male politicians involved their female colleagues, in decision making process to 'very little extent'. In comparison, respondents in Peshawar were more confident, with 80% selecting the option 'to some extent'.

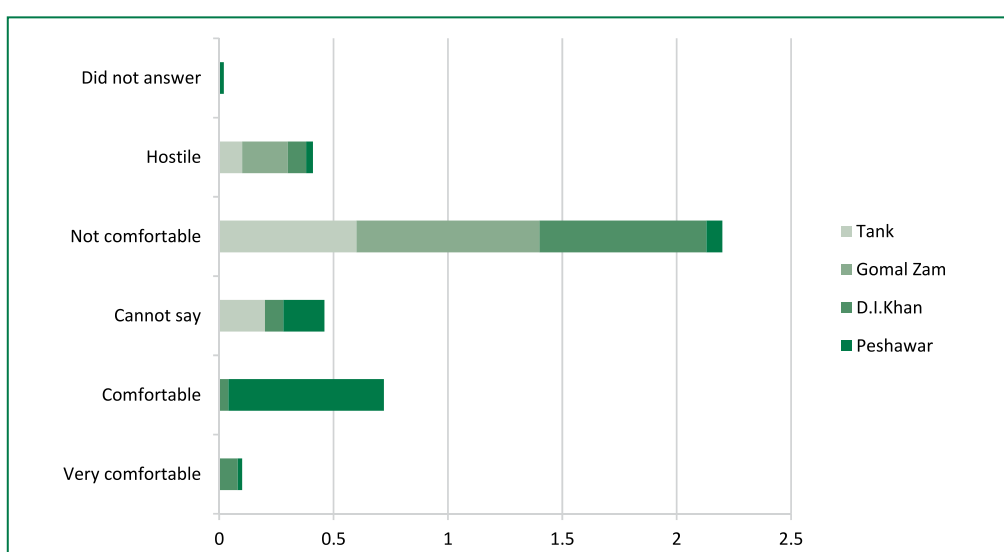
**C.2. Extent to which male politicians encourage their female colleagues to take up party positions**





Respondents in Tank and Gomal Zam were quite dismal in their responses when it came to their male colleagues encouraging them to take up party positions. In Tank, the majority, 60%, and 90% in Gomal Zam felt their male colleagues supported them 'very little'. In D.I. Khan, 23% of the respondents, each, selected the option 'to a large extent' and 'to some extent'. In Peshawar, the respondents were more encouraging with their answer, with 73% selecting the option 'to some extent'.

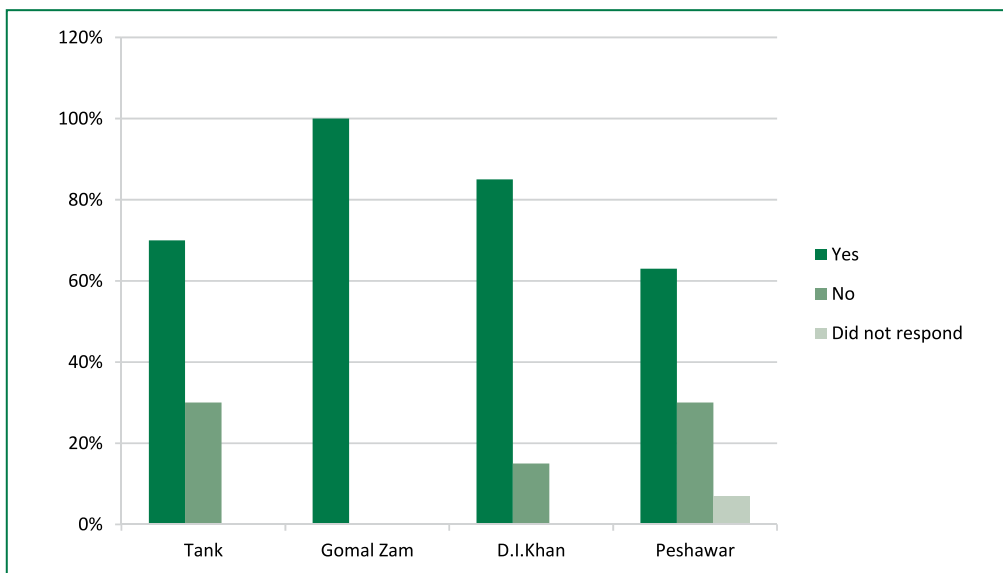
**C.3. Level of comfort of male politicians when the committee or party structure (in which they are members) is led by a woman**



In Tank, 60% of women said that their male colleagues are 'not comfortable' and 10% selected 'hostile', when the committee or party structure in which both men and women are members, are led by a woman. 80% of the respondents from Gomal Zam and 73% from D.I.Khan chose 'not comfortable'. In contrast, majority, 68%, in Peshawar said that their male colleagues were 'comfortable' when the committee or party structure in which both men and women are members, is led by a woman.

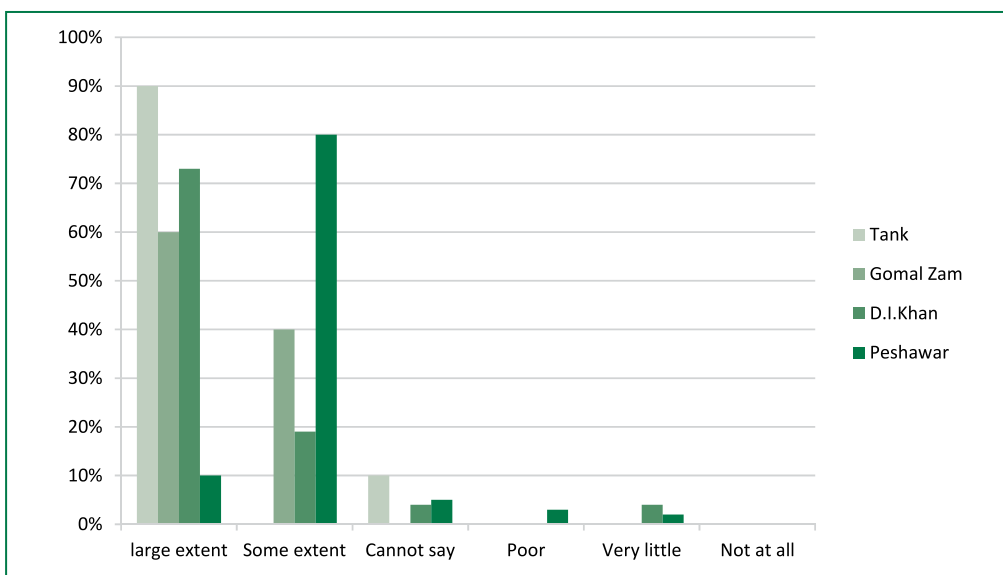
**C.4. If constraints faced by women politicians, in general, are not addressed, when it comes to their increased political participation then could it lead to increased inequality, poverty and conflict in society?**

The respondents were asked that if constraints faced by women politicians, in general, were not addressed, when it comes to their increased political participation then did they think that it could lead to increased inequality, poverty and conflict in society? A dominant majority of the respondents across all selected areas agreed, with 100% of the respondents from Gomal Zam, 85% from D.I.Khan, 70% from Tank and 63% from Peshawar choosing the option 'Yes'.



## D. Relationship with line ministry officials for policy making and implementation

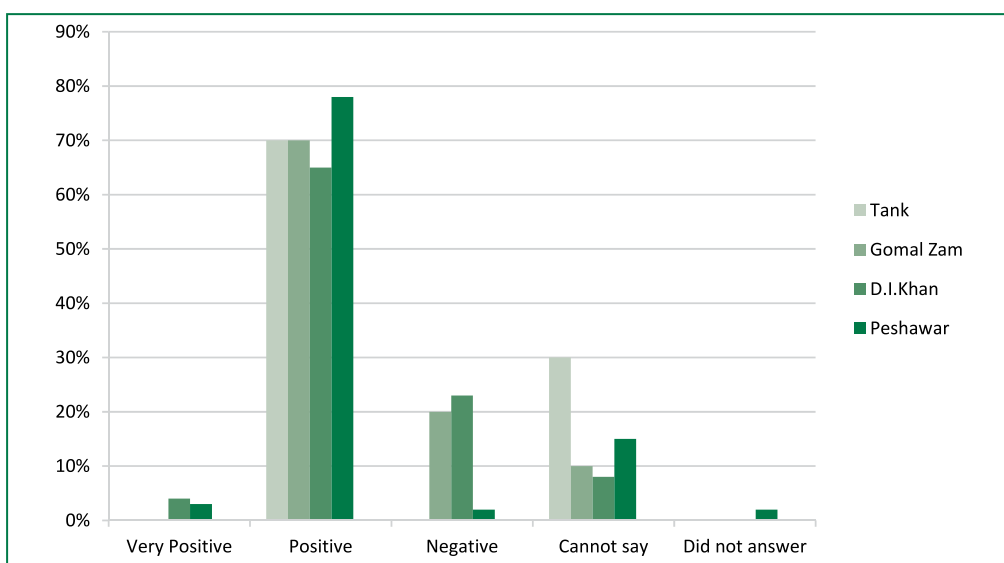
### D.1. Extent to which the respondents are able to develop professional relationships with various government department/officials



90% respondents from Tank, 73% from D.I.Khan and 60% from Gomal Zam felt that they were able to develop professional relationships with various government department/officials to 'a large extent'. From Peshawar, only 10% chose 'to a large extent' while 80% said 'to some extent'.

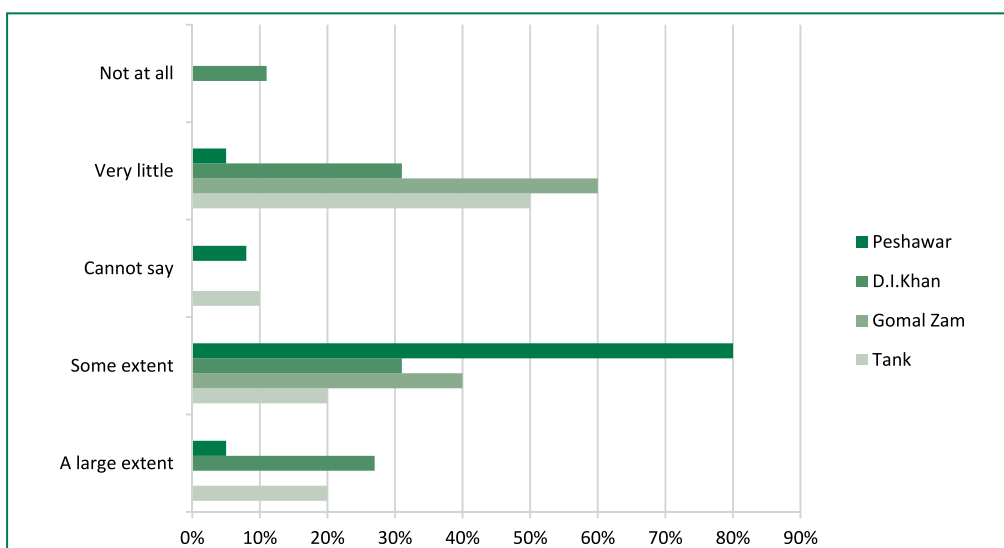
## D.2. Perception of government officials about women as leaders as compared to male leaders

When asked about what was the perception of government officials about women as leaders in comparison to male leaders, a clear majority of female respondents across all districts felt that it was 'positive'. This included 70% of women from Tank and Gomal Zam, 65% from D.I.Khan and 78% from Peshawar.



## E. Media engagement to portray women politicians

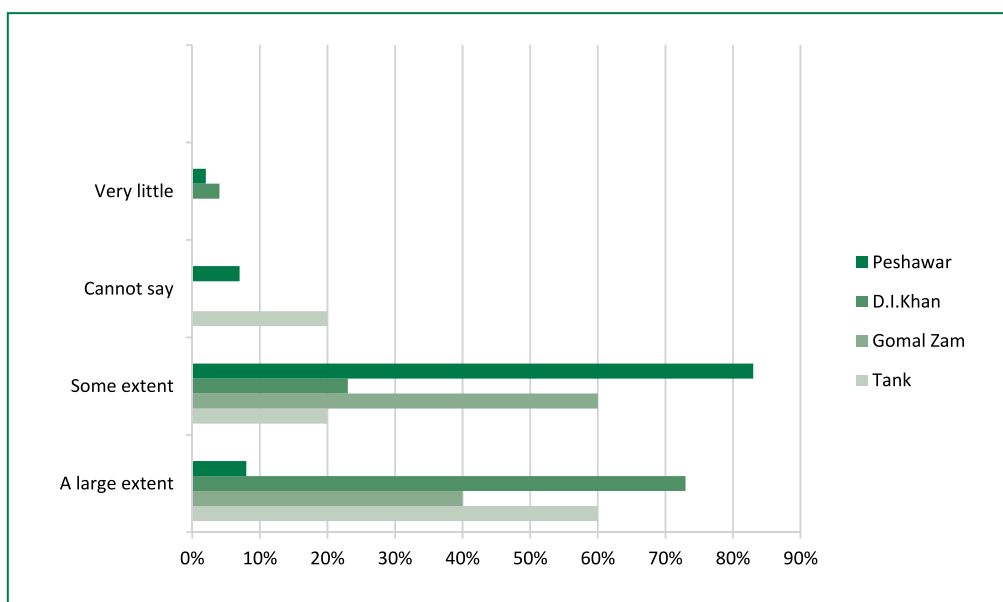
### E.1. To what extent women politicians at various levels have access to Media in Pakistan?



When asked as to what extent do women politicians at various levels have access to Media in Pakistan, 50% women from Tank and 60% from Gomal Zam said that it was 'very little'. In D.I.Khan their response was mixed, with 27% choosing 'to a large extent', 31% said 'to some extent', and 31% 'very little'.

A clear majority in Peshawar, 80%, felt that women politicians at various levels have access to media in Pakistan 'to some extent'.

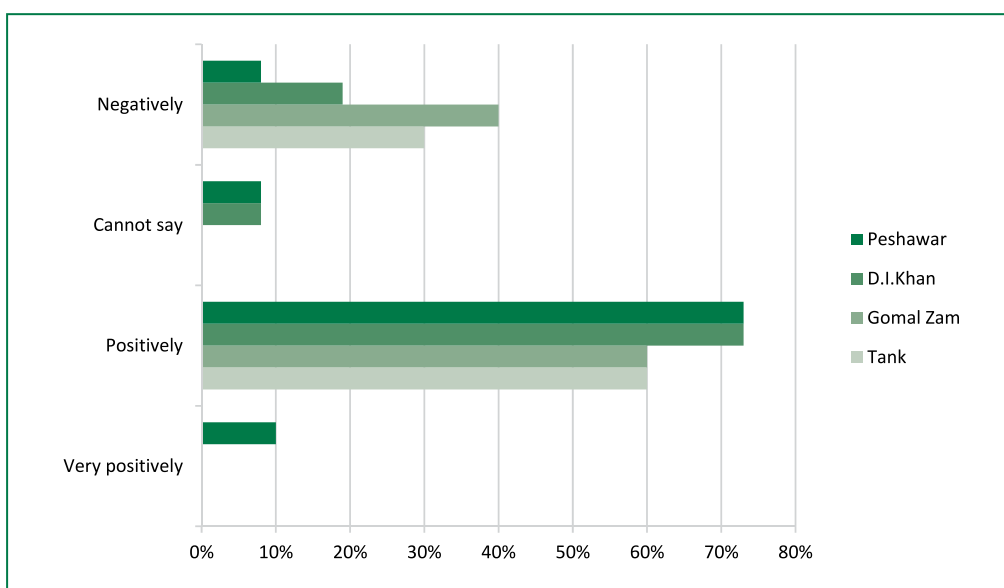
**E.2. To what extent did the respondents possess the required communication skills and knowledge about current affairs to represent their constituents and talk about issues?**



When asked as to what extent did the respondents possess the required communication skills and knowledge about current affairs to represent their constituents and talk about issues, 60% respondents from Tank, 73% from D.I.Khan and 40% from Gomal Zam felt that they did so 'to a large extent' whereas 83% in Peshawar and 60% in Gomal Zam selected the option 'to some extent'.

**E.3. Women politicians portrayal in the local media**

A clear majority of the respondents across the selected districts felt that women politicians are portrayed 'positively' in the local media. This included 73% of the respondents each from Peshawar and D.I.Khan and 60% each from Tank and Gomal Zam.



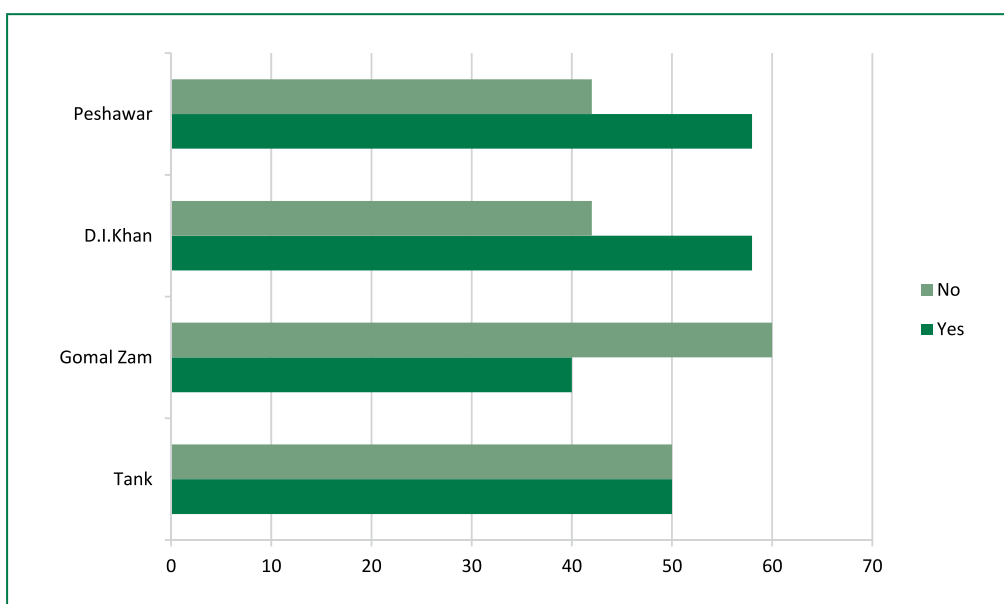
**E.4 & E.5. On media having specific stereotypes of women politicians and the types of stereotypes, if any**

83% of the respondents from Peshawar, 80% from Gomal Zam, 65% from D.I.Khan and 60% from Tank said that media does not have specific stereotypes of women politicians. However, 31% of the respondents from D.I.Khan did feel that media has specific stereotypes of women politicians.

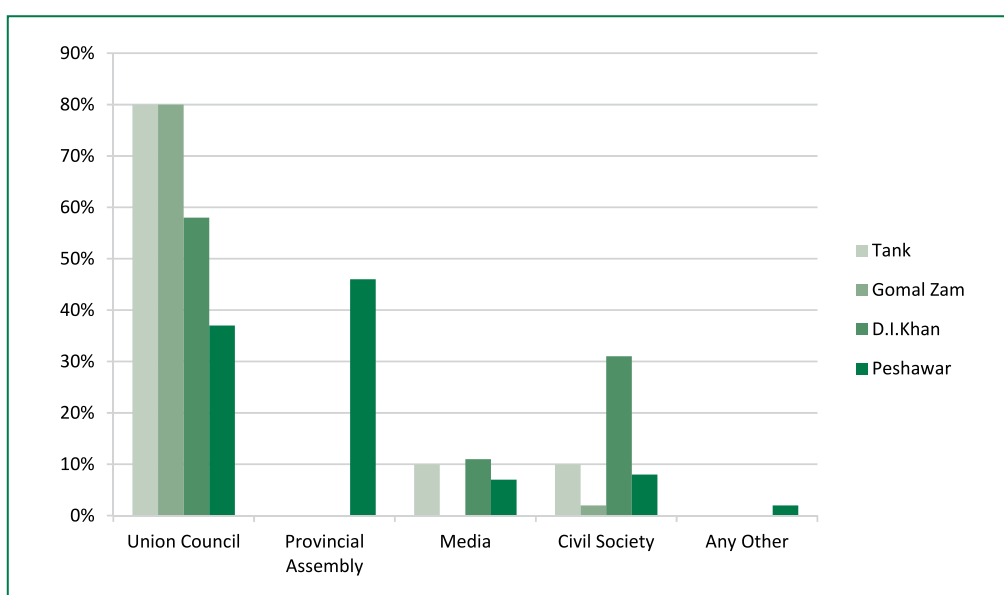
Women in Tank elaborated on the types of stereotypes. Some said that women leaders are made fun of (mostly on their language & dress) and are shown less on media in comparison to men. In some cases, innocent women are openly blamed before they are proven guilty. They also felt that the views of women leaders are not given importance. Perceptions about women politicians, such as ‘they do not have housework that’s why they are out, she likes to sit amongst men, she is not from a good family, women leaders are less intelligent’; were commonly held perceptions amongst general public’, according to these respondents.

**E.6. Have the survey participants themselves advocated for women’s political participation and leadership in the past?**

50% of the respondents from Tank said that they had advocated for women’s political participation and leadership in the past while an equal number said that they had not. In Gomal Zam, the majority, 60%, said that they had not done so while 40% said that they had. In the larger districts of D.I. Khan and Peshawar, 58% of women had advocated for this cause while 42% had not.



### E.7. The most effective advocacy platform in the opinion of respondents



Majority of the respondents from Tank, Gomal Zam and D.I.Khan felt that Union Council is the most effective advocacy platform. This included 80% of the respondents from Tank and Gomal Zam and 58% from D.I.Khan. Only 10% in Tank felt that media and the civil society were more effective platforms. 37% of the respondents from Peshawar chose UC, while 46% (majority) selected the Provincial Assembly. This was interesting to note because, at the district level, women in the towns of Tank and Gomal Zam had much more confidence in the UC platform for varied reasons. These could vary from

having an easy access to the UC or having seen its effectiveness in the recent past as an effective advocacy platform, etc. Similarly, in larger cities such as Peshawar, which also houses the Provincial Assembly, more people had confidence in the PA.

## Comparative analysis of the BLS findings across the districts

In terms of confidence levels in their own leadership skills, females in Tank were the most optimistic followed by females in Peshawar.

More women from Peshawar were aware about women specific laws such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) & the Women Protection Bill followed by women in D.I. Khan.

Majority of women from in the smaller and more conservative districts of Gomal Zam and D.I. Khan. felt that their political parties were not upholding women specific laws. Women in Peshawar did not feel as strongly about this.

Majority of the women in Gomal Zam, followed by those in D.I. Khan and Tank wanted to see specific measures taken to strengthen women's position within political parties, by 'ensuring representation of women in the Party membership and all decision-making bodies, e.g. central and provincial executive committees, as well as parliamentary'. This could be because these three regions are comparatively less progressive and more conservative than Peshawar. Therefore, even though women are politically active here, they are not getting even representation within their parties. In Peshawar, the majority (60%) chose the option 'hold regular intra-Party elections for all positions'. In Peshawar, although women might be more visibly politically active but they felt that within their parties, elections needed to be held regularly for all positions.

Interestingly, while a large majority of women in Tank, Gomal Zam and D.I.Khan felt that they needed training on leadership, in larger cities such as Peshawar, the majority felt otherwise.

Majority of the respondents in Peshawar, Tank and D.I.Khan felt that they has been able to make alliances with local influential leaders (political and otherwise) to 'some or a large extent'.

In terms of being able to reach out to the public through effective networking and positive media messaging/engagement, majority of the women from Tank and D.I.Khan felt that they had been able to do so to 'a large extent'. In Peshawar, a comparatively smaller number were as confident about this.

Majority of the women from Tank, Gomal Zam and D.I. Khan felt that male politicians involved their female colleagues, in decision-making process to 'very little extent'. A large majority of women from Peshawar were more confident about this and felt that women were involved in such processes 'to some extent'.

Again, the majority of the women in Tank and Gomal Zam felt that their male colleagues encouraged them to take up party positions 'to very little extent' whereas women in Peshawar were the most confident about this followed by



women in D.I. Khan.

The same pattern could be seen getting repeated when women were asked about their male colleagues attitudes when the committee or party structure in which both men and women are members, is led by a woman. Majority of the women in Tank, Gomal Zam and D.I. Khan said that their male colleagues were 'not comfortable'. Majority of the female respondents from Peshawar felt that the men felt 'comfortable'.

A large majority of female respondents from all selected areas felt that if the constraints faced by women politicians, in general, were not addressed, when it comes to their increased political participation then it could lead to conflict.

Majority of the respondents from Tank, Gomal Zam and D.I.Khan felt that they were able to develop professional relationships with various government department/officials to 'a large extent' whereas majority of women in Peshawar felt 'to some extent'. This is interesting because women in the FGDs and KIIs from Tank, Gomal Zam and D.I.Khan had said that it was difficult to approach government officials in their areas.

Majority of the women from all selected areas felt that the perception of government officials about women as leaders in comparison to male leaders, was 'positive'.

Majority of the women from Tank and Gomal Zam felt that women politicians at various levels have 'very little' access to media in Pakistan. Whereas, the majority in Peshawar and D.I.Khan felt that they did 'to some extent'

When asked as to what extent did the respondents possess the required communication skills and knowledge about current affairs to represent their constituents and talk about issues, majority of the respondents from all areas felt that they did so 'to a large extent' and 'to some extent'.

Majority of the respondents from the selected areas also felt that women are portrayed 'positively' in the local media. Again, the majority of respondents said that media does not have specific stereotypes of women politicians. This was interesting to note because participants of the FGDs and KIIs had said otherwise.

When it came to advocating for women's political participation in the past, majority of the respondents from Gomal Zam and D.I. Khan had done so. This is interesting, because in cities such as Peshawar, where there is more space for people to advocate for such causes, the respondents had not taken advantage of such an opportunity whereas in places such as Tank 50% had not, which is comparatively a far flung district and very conservative.

In terms of the most effective advocacy platform, majority from Tank, Gomal Zam and D.I. Khan felt that Union Council is the most effective advocacy platform. Whereas, the majority in Peshawar, selected the Provincial Assembly.

**2. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)** were conducted in each district, with two FGD per district except Peshawar, where one FGD was conducted. These one-day FGDs had 12-15 participants each (with men and women in separate groups, except the one in Peshawar<sup>9</sup>). Participants of the FGDs were selected from the BLS.

<p>The FGD in <b>Peshawar</b> included 15 participants (8 men and 7 women). Of these, 1 female was an ex-MPA, 1 a General Secretary and 2 ex-District Councilors. Amongst the men, 1 was a MPA, 2 ex-Union Councilors, 1 ex-Naib Nazim and 1 ex-Union Council Nazim. In terms of their political party affiliation, 4 women and 3 men were politically affiliated with PTI, 1 woman and 2 men were affiliated with PPP, 1 woman was affiliated with PML (N) and 1 with ANP. 2 men were affiliated with JI and one with JUI.</p>	<p>The FGD in <b>D.I. Khan</b> comprised of 14 participants, which included 7 men and 7 women. Of these, 2 women were District Councilors, 4 Union Councilors and 1 a Tehsil Councilor. 1 male was a UC Nazim, 1 Naib Amir and 1 was an ex-Councilor. In terms of their political party affiliations, 4 females were affiliated with PPP, 2 females with PML(N), 1 male and 1 female with ANP, 2 men with PTI, 2 men with JI and one with PKMAP party.</p>	<p>The FGD in <b>Gomal Zam</b> consisted of 12 participants, including 5 women and 7 men. Of these, 5 women were Union Councilors and 1 male was a General Councilor, 1 a Union Councilor, 1 a Kisan Councilor and 1 was the member of a local Shoora<sup>2</sup>. In terms of political party affiliations, 2 women and 1 male were associated with ANP, 2 women and 2 men with JUI, 1 male with JI and 1 was associated with PTI.</p>	<p>15 men and women participated in the FGD conducted in <b>Tank</b>. This included 9 women and 6 men. 8 women were Union Councilors while 1 was a District Councilor. Amongst the men, 2 were General Councilors, 1 was an ex Nazim, 1 a Naib Amir and 1 was a Kisan (farmer) Councilor. Out of these, 3 women and 1 male were affiliated with the ANP party, 3 women and 2 men were affiliated with JUI, 1 female with PML (N), 1 female was independent while one male was affiliated with JI.</p>
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### Findings:

Women participants across all the selected areas visualized leadership as empowering others, solving people’s problems, having knowledge of community based issues, be role models, able to work alongside men, to be educated and able to raise their voices against injustice. *‘We have to do good work for people, such as making brick streets in villages, colleges for girls, improve the conditions of Basic Health Units (BHUs) and hospitals so that our area should also look like a developed city’*, one female said. Another participant said that *‘women leaders should have the courage to carry the*

<sup>2</sup> Due to cultural traditions, the FGDs with men and women were conducted separately. The women were also not willing to be photographed thus most of the pictures were taken from their back and even then they covered their faces (as can be seen in the attached Annexes).

*messages of the local community to a larger, higher platform'*

The main constraints that they faced professionally were non-acceptance of women as leaders, cultural and social mindsets that hindered their progress personally and professionally. *'We feel restricted working openly being a female'*, one participant from D.I. Khan said. *'It is also difficult for educated women to work with the uneducated people of the community'*, one participant said.

Women from D.I. Khan and Gomal Zam identified challenges in the form of conservative mindsets and family pressures which hampered their efforts in advocating for women's political participation and leadership and constrained their free movement within the community due to *Purdah*. In Tank, women politicians said that they faced problems even when it came to stepping out of their homes. *'Women are not allowed to go out of their homes by men of the family'*, some said.

The women participants felt that political parties, in general, did not practice specific women laws (these could include having consensus inter-party on legislation relating to women's protection and rights or giving decision-making powers to women on pertinent issues within parties). They said that there were times when women were included, but that was only when it was in the party's interest or there was external pressure. On receiving support from the political parties, women from Gomal Zam felt that women in other, more developed districts, enjoyed certain privileges and rights in their political parties, but here, their community created problems for them. On receiving support from male colleagues within their parties, women in D.I. Khan said that their political parties and their manifesto did encourage women's participation and that the men of their political parties did support them a little during election campaigns.

About the male politicians involving women politicians in decision-making and taking up party positions, some women said that only those women were supported whose men were part of the same political party. The women participants from Tank, Gomal Zam and D.I. Khan said that majority of their male colleagues felt *'embarrassed or ashamed'* in such situations.

A general consensus was found in women from across all districts that the involvement of female in the political and democratic processes can play an important role in strengthening women's political participation and leadership for effective democratic governance. The challenges faced by the

*'At times, certain political parties give support to women's cases in courts, in line with women specific laws, but even then, justice is seldom carried out for the women concerned as both parties patch up through the influence of Party's high command and the other influentials of the area (almost all of whom are men. In such cases not only are women's rights overlooked but also, women politicians from within the political parties are seldom consulted'.*

Women from Tank said that they had major issues in approaching government officials, let alone getting support from them. *'When we approach a government office, the guard at the door does not allow us to enter the building. The male staff there asks us, 'ap ke mard kahan hain/where are your men? No one listens to us neither are we taken seriously, unless we come accompanied by men. Their attitude is that we should be accompanied by men or our male colleagues should register complaints, rather than women visiting government offices'.*

FGD women participants, as women leaders in building professional relationship with government departments and officials and receiving support from them, were, according to the women from Tank, Gomal Zam and D.I.Khan, that the men did not respect them as much as their male colleagues and their opinions were not taken seriously. *'Even the women political leaders are not given due respect and sometimes male government officials ridicule them'*, some said.

On getting support from their male family members, female participants from D.I. Khan said that their male family members did not support them in acquiring a public position or to participate in politics and tried to refrain and restrict them for working together with men. Female participants from Gomal Zam said that *'it is different, depending on where one comes from. In some areas, women's*

*families as well their communities support women to take part in politics. However, this is an exception and not the norm, especially in rural and conservative areas'.*

Majority of the women from Tank, Gomal Zam and D.I. Khan felt that limited numbers of active female politicians also limited their ability to make alliances with influential leaders of the area. Despite this, they still tried to make the most of such limited opportunities. Female participants from Peshawar were comparatively more confident because they dwell in an urban area, where they are not dependent 'on local influential actors' as much as their female colleagues in the rural, and in KP's case, Tribal areas.

Most of the women said that they were not able to reach out to the public through effective networking and positive media engagement and the few who were able to, were not appreciated, *'especially if she is seen boldly advertising her political campaign in media'*. The participants from Tank felt that the media personnel, in general, had not favored the political participation of women in the past. The participants from Gomal Zam felt that they lacked the skills and opportunities to reach the people through media.

Some participants felt that although media is independent but it is not responsible in its reporting, saying that women politicians were not being given a fair coverage in media.

Male participants in the FGDs in Peshawar felt that they did provide support to their female colleagues. Some said that they have a separate wing for females in their party

and they provide moral, social and financial support to their female counterparts during the elections. They felt that they involved and support women politicians in decision making and taking up party positions. The participants also said that they had supported women in the past for their participation in politics, through advocacy. The men from Tank and Gomal Zam had similar opinions about their political parties encouraging women politicians within the parties as well as during election campaign. Men from Gomal Zam said that before, they had not supported women's participation in politics but now they did because *'it has become evident that through politics, we can solve many problems of our people and our area'*. Although some said that they had no objection if a woman was head of a committee or a party structure, others admitted that they felt *'a little uncomfortable'* if a female became the head of the party *'but we have to accept her'*. This was a mixed perception across the districts but such sentiments were not as strong in Peshawar, as compared to Tank, Gomal Zam and D.I. Khan.

*Razia Ajmal, a District Councilor from Tank, was kidnapped by the Taliban in 2008. She said that she had received the second highest number of votes after the Nazim/Mayor in elections, and was well known in her community because of being politically active. 'My sons did not have enough money to have me released from Taliban. But the women of my constituency brought as much money as they could, with some bringing as much as twenty five thousand rupees. and offered the money to my sons. I negotiated with Taliban on the ransom amount as I told them that my family does not have that much. They took the cars of my sons and we also had to sell our property. But I am back and I am again serving people!'*

Men from Tank, Gomal Zam and D.I. Khan felt that, in their opinion, the main hurdles in women's political participation was the ignorance of the local community towards the importance of women's participation in politics. *'Local conservative cultures and family structures, an unclear and undefined female participatory role in politics were additional factors'*, some felt. They felt that the electoral system and party rules can play a vital role for overcoming some of these issues.

The men's opinion on the role of government officials, especially in the districts of Tank, D.I. Khan and Gomal Zam, in general, was similar to that of the women FGD participants. *'Male political leaders enjoyed more respect and better relations with government officials'*, some said. They felt that the government officials did not give women politicians the same importance as their male colleagues but they blamed this on the local conservative structures. Male participants from Peshawar felt that government officers did show respect to women *'as it is our custom and culture. This is a privilege given only to women, which their male colleagues do not enjoy'*.

A general opinion amongst the men was that the media did not present women

politicians in a good manner. Some male participants from Gomal Zam stated that media tended to sensationalize women politicians in media. Most of the men across these districts felt that it was important for women leaders to build a regular networking communication pattern with the media.

### 3. Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)

A total of twenty five Key Informant interviews (17 males and 8 females) were carried out with a secondary target group which included male and female politicians, government officials and journalists.

The initial target sample size included 4 male politicians, 4 female politicians, 2 government officials per district (male and female) and 2 journalists per district (male and female).

#### 3.1 Politicians

Seven Members of Provincial Assembly belonging to different political parties were interviewed, which included four female MPAs and 3 male MPAs. The females MPAs had affiliations with Pakistan Tehrik-e-Insaaf (PTI), Jamaat-e-Ulema-e-Islam (JUI), Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz, PML(N) and the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) whereas the male MPA included one from PTI, Peshawar and two from JI (Peshawar and Dir Upper). One of the MPAs is also a senior minister of the provincial cabinet in KP.

**Male Politicians:** All four male politicians, hailing from various districts of KP, belonging to different political parties and holding party positions within their own parties had almost similar views on women politicians. They said that their party had 'clear policies, based on equality' and on encouraging women within the party. They said that the views of party leadership and male counterparts on the role of women leaders in policy making were 'positive' and felt that they involved men and women equally in decision making. However, a few felt that in comparison to their male colleagues, women's involvement in decision making was only 30%. This could be because either the women did not participate or could not at that level.

When asked as to how comfortable did the men feel when the committee or party structure (in which they were members) was led by a woman, they said that they felt '*free, normal and relaxed*' and that they encouraged women politicians to take up party positions '*equally, very much*'.

In terms of media, they said that women politicians at various levels did have access to media but were not portrayed 'as well as they should be' and that there needed to be more awareness amongst the women about the usage of media and for it to be easily and equally accessible to women leaders. In their opinion, how women politicians were portrayed in the local media depended on the issues and circumstances and 'as

*long as they kept doing good work’.*

All of them had advocated for women’s political participation and leadership during and till the election campaign but had not continued to do so afterwards.

**Female Politicians:** Three female MPAs, hailing from different parts of KP, belonging to different political parties and holding party positions within their individual parties also gave mostly similar opinions. They said that to them, leadership meant to have resilience, able to lead, active willingness to sacrifice and be helpful towards others.

They were quite confident in their leadership skills to compete in the political process dominated by men, despite challenges, which, according to them, *‘began from their homes, when they require permission from the head of the family, who is almost always a male, to participate in politics’.* Then there were the outside social pressures, lack of financial support, low literacy levels amongst such women, low confidence when it came to legislation formulation, policy making and budgetary processes since a majority of them had limited knowledge about functions and procedures of various government departments. One MPA observed that *‘women politicians were not treated well. Despite my winning intra- party elections in my district and being the President of the Women’s Wing, I have faced cultural challenges. Gender discrimination does exist and equal rights between men and women were not there in reality’.* She felt that women have *‘to be financially strong as it helps’.* She also felt that communication skills were needed *‘as to how to approach and tackle the local people in the village. Small things can either bring them closer or put them off’.*

*When asked as to which laws, in their opinion, ensured women’s equal participation to run for elections, one MPA said that ‘we know about basic women rights but the Constitution which has all these basic laws and rights is not being implemented because men dominate the system’.* One MPA specifically mentioned the Domestic Violence Bill, which has yet to be passed in the Provincial Assembly, *‘because of religious issues’,* she said. She had also been interacting with women politicians from other political parties, on the Social Welfare Bill, so as to take it to their leaders in the Assembly so that they should pass it. *‘Despite the fact that it is for women’s welfare and in their own interests to pass such bills, women from the other party did agree in spirit but could not push the bill as it was not in their power. Nothing happened’,* she said. Apart from this, she felt that female politicians across different political parties enjoyed a good relationship with one another.

*In terms of support that the women candidates aspiring for public positions were getting from male family members and the society to participate in politics, they felt that such women did not receive appropriate levels of support.* *‘Male colleagues are not supportive. They listen yet they do not really listen’,* one MPA said. She gave a personal example of discrimination saying that, in her district, 20 wells of oil and gas were discovered. *‘The revenue generated from these should be essentially spent on the welfare of the district. Politicians also receive a share in the royalty’,* she said.



Her three male colleagues were receiving such funds, according to her. When she brought it to the attention of the Assembly, 'the Chief Minister rejected my application because they did not want me receiving a share in the royalty fund', she said.

Some felt that women are able to make political alliances with local influential leaders. Similarly, some MPAs felt that women were able to do so only to 'some extent' due to social constraints. Some of them said that a separate platform needed to be made for women to encourage women leadership within their parties. There were mixed perceptions on receiving trainings on leadership. Some felt that they needed training on legislation and how to interact socially while others felt that they had received enough trainings and 'it is our voices that need to be heard'. One MPA said that 'women at the UC and Tehsil level also received many trainings earlier from various non-governmental organizations, which was a good effort as it was geared towards encouraging female participation in politics'.

They felt that the views of party leadership and male counterparts on role of women leaders in policy making are 'good' and that they involved women in decision making, depending on their strength in numbers. However, they added that the leadership did not involve men and women equally in decision making. Some felt that male colleagues did help when it came to getting seats on equality basis but women's leadership needs to be encouraged within their parties by men. One MPA said that 'no single party has a clear decision on how much percentage of women should come on party seats. Political parties should be bound to give tickets to women on merit and not because they have political or family affiliations and are well connected. Reforms are needed within the parties'. A general perception was also that women who come on reserved seats do not get funds. For reserved seats, every party makes a list, which has names of selected/chosen women. Another observation was that women who come on male reserved seats are dependent on men and they end up getting exploited. Therefore, it was very important to encourage self made women. Even when there was some visibility in terms of female political numbers, not much was observed in terms of activities. One MPA said that, 'although we have 10 female MPAs, there are no women in the Core Committee and Cabinet'.

She stressed that education and religious constraints were a big issue in conservative far flung areas and said that, *'I am self made. My husband did not want me entering politics but I managed it. He has realized over time the importance of women's political participation and now he supports me'*.

There were mixed perceptions about the level of comfort shown by their male colleagues when a woman leads the committee or party structure. Some said that the men felt 'relaxed' about it while others said that they did not, but were 'forced to conform as they are party decisions'.

The felt that if constraints, faced by women politicians, were not addressed when it came to their increased political participation then it would not cause harm to the



democratic process.

Some had faced challenges in building professional relationship with government departments/officials and were able to develop professional relationship with various government department/officials 'to a reasonable extent'. Some MPAs felt 'socially' challenged while doing so. One MPA said that bureaucracy had senior members who, in her opinion, did not discriminate on the basis of gender. She felt that much depended on the women and how women politicians conducted themselves and presented their case. However, she did feel that those women who had the support and backing of their (influential) men folk were more/better looked after.

In terms of media, they felt that women politicians at various levels did have access to media to a large extent and were portrayed reasonably well. Some female MPAs utilized their political connections also in this regards. However, the opinions of the majority of female politicians were not taken into account or given importance.

One respondent called media 'the backbone of politics' and that 'it is very powerful. 'We have to be on good terms with them. However, it comes with its own sets of challenges. Print media wants money and if not given then in some cases they resort to blackmail. No one in the public knows who is right', she said. In her opinion, previous government had set bad precedents in this regards. 'A local news paper editor wanted 5 pumps in his area and requested me for them but I said only one pump should be enough. Now he writes against me off and on in his paper', she said. Half of the interviewed MPAs had not advocated for women's political participation and leadership while the other half had.

### **3.2 Government officials**

Nine government officials were interviewed, which included two males and one female officials from Peshawar, two officials (males) from D.I. Khan, two officials (males) from Tank and two from Gomal Zam (one male and one female).

**Men:** A senior ranking Government official in Peshawar, said that the Local Government 2001 Union Councils (UC) were very effective for the decentralization of power and playing an effective role in women's political activity at the grass roots level. The Tehsil Municipal Administration (TMA) also encouraged a lot of women's participation. This also put a legal compulsion on political parties to include women in their ranks, where one saw a majority of the men encouraging their sisters and daughters to join politics. *'This political process started at the time was a much better one than what we have now, where the Local Government remains dissolved. In the early 2000's, the process of devolution had started off with the media fully supporting it'*, he said. *'It is a myth that women in KP are not or comparatively less educated as other women across the country. Here, women are quite educated and vocal'*, he said. *'Look at Karak, a district of KP, which has 97% literacy rate, the highest in the country after Islamabad and*

Wah<sup>3</sup>. 'KP is not as backward as portrayed. Why do not we compare the data of South Punjab with KP's Southern region?' he said. 'Currently, things are going in the proper direction. It is an evolutionary process. KP is at par with any other province. Female MPAs are given a lot of respect and are facilitated. In bureaucracy, there are very few females are working in this field but these women, working in the KP Secretariat, are facilitated on an equal footing', he said.

Government officials from all the districts felt that women politicians had 'complete' access to media. However, due to deep rooted cultural norms, women politicians did require the permission of their husbands/fathers. On the provincial front, women politicians had comparatively less access and when it came to the district/grass roots level, women politicians had neither access nor any recognition of themselves as individuals or their work. As one government official from Tank said, that 'in Tank District, women politicians participation in politics has not been very encouraging but it is understandable because Tank is quite far from the large cities and is backward and conservative'.

Others mentioned that access to media required mobility, which in women's cases, was not that easy. The majority felt that women politicians were not portrayed the way they should be.

Some suggested that within media itself, various aspects/departments of women need to be introduced so that those women who are interested in politics as well as social welfare schemes can participate without any obstacles so that they are able to better articulate about their opinions in an open and pleasant environment. Moreover, that women politicians needed to learn about the existing forms of various media such as internet, fax, twitter, mobile phones, for the use of which they do not even need to step outside their homes, if they had internet. 'These days, the media is present in many form and women can actively participate and voice their opinions on these platforms if they want', one official said. In the local media, women politicians are looked at and portrayed with a lot of respect. Government officials from Tank felt that although women politicians there did not face many problems in accessing media, but it did not mean that these women had similar opportunities as men in accessing media. For male politicians, it was comparatively easier.

None of these officials had advocated for women's political participation, which is understandable because as a norm, government servants do not actively participate in political activities in any form. However, all of them supported women's positive participation but felt that women needed guidance.

**Women:** Female government officials said that to them, leadership meant taking initiative for the better, accepting both the success and the failures of the result,

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<sup>3</sup> District Karak has the highest literacy rate after Islamabad and Wah. [http://www.smeda.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=109:karak&catid=47&Itemid=258](http://www.smeda.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=109:karak&catid=47&Itemid=258)

having education and knowledge about the workings of an institution. They felt quite confident about their leadership skills to compete in the political process dominated by men. Others cited interference by men, family and social issues as challenges.

When asked as to what type of measures would they like to see to improve women's position within political parties; some cited the Constitution of 1973, mentioning specific articles on freedom of assembly, freedom of association, freedom of speech & right to information, equality of citizens, right to education, non-discrimination in respect of access to public places and full participation of women in national life. They also mentioned Bills such as Women Protection Bill and Harassment & Domestic Violence.

In terms of women politicians' knowledge about various government departments, their observation was that women politicians knew very little in this area. In their opinion, for women politicians to be able to actively participate on public forums, they needed support financially, socially, and guidance in building their confidence, and training on decision making and leadership skills.

On support to women politicians by their male family members, they said that they did not know much but were sure that those women who were active in the political field had the support of their male family members.

When asked as to what extent the male politicians involved their female counterparts in decision making, they said that depended on the nature of the project and the women's commitment.

About themselves, they felt that they were able to develop professional relationship with various government department/officials to a large extent.

On media's engagement to portray women politicians, they felt that media needed

*In 2001, when the Government announced a 33 percent quota for women in local and national governments, Shad motivated women leaders to participate in the elections. The result was a severe backlash from religious leaders, especially those affiliated with political parties. Fearful of the political fallout, all parties, including the liberals, banned women candidates from not only running as candidates, but from voting as well. Furious, Shad decided to run for office. Men stood guard at district offices with sticks and weapons to scare away anyone who dared to file nominations for women candidates. Despite difficult resistance, Shad's father managed to file her nominations papers for the district and she ran for office. Only 28 women were elected and when they went to attend council meetings, they were confined to a room and asked to observe strict purdah—neither be seen, heard, nor to hear the voices of strangers. Undeterred, Shad continually lobbied to participate and be heard during the council meetings—reaching out to the Ministry of Women Development and the Local Governance Ministry to exert pressure on the council members.*

to be sensitized on gender issues. They felt that women politicians were not shown that much in the local media and those that were, were portrayed in a stereotypical manner.

### 3.3 Media

Nine journalists were interviewed, which included three from Peshawar and two each from Tank, Gomal Zam and D.I.Khan. Apart from two female journalists in Peshawar, the rest were all male. It is to be noted that it was challenging to locate and interview female journalists in the districts of D.I.Khan, Tank and Gomal Zam, as compared to Peshawar.

A local female reporter from a national television network said that, to her, leadership meant to be able to gain information/knowledge, which is useful for her future in bringing about a change in her life.

A senior female reporter of a local daily with a work experience of 15 years, on health based issues related to both men and women, said that she thrived working in a challenging environment and was fully confident working in media. She said that in President Musharraf's time, major efforts were made to bring forth women from all communities to participate at the UC level, which was a remarkable effort. *'Some of these women, who came forward to participate, were so poor that they were not even wearing proper shoes'*, she said.

Numerous trainings were undertaken to build the capacities of these women through different organizations. *'In 2005, the trainings were so grand that we could feel their motivational power and it was not bad on funding either'*. It was wonderful experience to see these women get better and better. *'It was also interesting to note that some of these women were very particular about their responsibility and work.'* she said.

Through this process, trailblazing social workers such as Shad Begum emerged from Dir Lower, a conservative district of KP<sup>4</sup>. She said that she travelled to Batagram in 2013, to see where women were being stopped from voting<sup>5</sup>. She felt that with the new Government in power in KP, the majority of the MPAs have not played any role in Assemblies on women legislation. *'After the 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment, we need more laws but the role of women MPAs is not being seen at all in the Assembly. The Women Development Department has a woman in charge but since the past one year, there has been no project on women this year'*, she said.

The stress is on funding the education and the health sector. In KP, consultation takes place only by the Government and the working groups and these have come to be seen as discriminatory in their approach towards women's active involvement and representation. *'I am not satisfied at all'*, she said<sup>6</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.ashoka.org/fellow/shad-begum>.

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.dawn.com/news/1013307/women-stay-away-from-re-polling-in-batagram>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.dawn.com/news/195066/peshawar-proposals-on-women-s-inheritance-rejected>

Also, currently in KP, the stress is mostly on hiring external consultants to get the work done. This is a major reason for a relapse in funding<sup>7</sup>. She compared the previous women government ministers to the current ones and said that the previous women ministers, especially those who had come from direct representation from the grass roots, were more effective in their work compared to now, where there is no interest or focus. She said that the Provincial Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW), of which she is a member, has been very active in working on the Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Bill and efforts to have it passed in the Provincial Assembly. So far, only Sindh and Baluchistan are the only provinces where the Bill has been passed whereas it remains pending in KP's assembly<sup>8</sup>. *'When we took it to the floor of the assembly, very few MPAs came to the assembly session to support it'*. She said that women were more active in the MMA government as MPAs. In previous government, some high profile active female ministers were also bogged down with rumors and allegations where their fathers and husbands openly took favors.

She felt that the local government process was stopped because there was no will on the part of the government, which was unfortunate because the local body laws were binding and they had brought women out in to the political arena from the grass roots level. However, *'such laws are still unclear on the percentage of women'*, she said. *'Women political wings have been sidelined. Local governments are like training centers for women politicians from the grass roots level as how to present bills, make budgets, and therefore it is very important to bring them into the current scheme of things'*, she said.

She felt that gaps did exist in terms of gender based differences within political parties. For example; *'The ANP party said that they do not believe in women's wings but would rather bring women in to main stream party politics. They have kept women politicians on higher seats within the party in comparison to other parties, on decision making but do not have district level political wings. Parties such as the JI do train women through a proper process as can be seen through their activities. They have a proper process. PML (Q) & (N) use women only in demonstrations and that is why some senior female ministers have joined PPP'*.

Despite an increasing number of women joining the political process at the grass roots level earlier, such women have stayed outside both formal (courts) and informal (Jirga) dispute resolution mechanisms. Without family support from men, women simply cannot come out and become active socially or politically. Similarly, just as women are dependent on their menfolk to join and work through politics, they are also seen to be dependent on male colleagues within their political parties. *'If your party does not agree then even though women from various political parties might agree with one another on an issue, they cannot take a stand. They are dependent on their Parties. Some women have been given a show cause notice when they became vocal*

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.dawn.com/news/1075197>

<sup>8</sup> <http://tribune.com.pk/story/680161/not-a-priority-k-ps-laws-to-protect-women-remain-inadequate/>

*on matters going against the Party agendas’.*

On their relationship with line ministry officials for policy making and implementation, she said that women who are sitting in such departments are not actively working much on women based political issues and challenges. When asked as to what extent was she able to develop professional relationships with government officials, she said that it was usually the other way around. *‘We get calls from women bureaucrats to give information or data on something that they might require. Women are more careful in the bureaucracy. Most of them are as not well informed as their male colleagues. Men have more of a bird’s eye view on things. Women like the Deputy Director will not know as much as her male colleagues. Women’s role in the bureaucracy has been kept very limited. Whereas in terms of women in media, there is now female representation at a higher level, with a female bureau chief (of a television network) in KP, which is a good development’.*

#### **Male respondents:**

Male media personnel, from reporters to bureau chiefs gave their opinions in the KIIs. They felt that women politicians had equal access to the media but they hesitated and took help from male colleagues for this. They felt that these women first needed to be encouraged at the political party level.

Media persons from Gomal Zam felt that in the big cities, women politicians had much more access to media as compared to women politicians in the districts and that at the district level; it was very difficult for them.

Another respondent felt that *‘women in the cities of Punjab have more access to media as compared to the larger cities of KP’.* The local bureau chief of an international daily said that the number of women politicians who are able to talk about issues was quite less.

On women’s portrayal in the media, one said that, *‘in local media, no one is taken seriously until there is a controversial statement given out by them or until someone does something out of the ordinary’.*

For women politicians to be able to network better, they suggested to hold workshops where there was participation from both women politicians as well as media to encourage interaction. *‘There are some educated capable women out there who are not able to reach across’,* one respondent said. *‘The issues of women politicians cannot be addressed from 33% representation of women in the Assemblies because the actual problem is lack of education amongst females which really needs attention’.*

They said that women in media itself needed to be encouraged so that they were able to interact with women politicians at the district level directly, on a one to one basis. They felt that women politicians were portrayed in a ‘lesser’ manner as compared to

their male colleagues *'Sometimes, it is seen that for personal reasons, the characters of women politicians are maligned which is quite sad'*, and suggested that to stop such trends, effective measures need to be taken. 'If you leave aside the bigger cities then the role of women politicians becomes less active as well as evident in smaller cities and districts', one respondent said.

In their opinion, there were very few women in politics and that even because their families were active politically. That is also a reason why *'the character of such women politicians is good'*, one said.

Almost all men interviewed had encouraged women's political participation in one form or another. Some had done this through conducting various types of programs during elections, interviewed female politicians, encouraging them to talk about issues order to make progress on women's rights at the local level, while another had tried to encourage women in his ancestral area of Tank to become politically active, but since there was no previous trend in the area, his efforts could not gather momentum or sustain, according to him. They felt that the place of women in the society was such that it automatically kept women behind the veil and walls.

## Comparative Analysis of the KIIs

Perceptions gathered through the KIIs showed that the opinions of one gender tended to be similar across different groups of respondents. Male politicians, government officials and media personnel across all four selected areas held more or less similar opinions. The same was seen amongst female respondents in the above categories. The difference in opinion and outlook was more visible amongst the genders.

In some areas, such as advocating for women's political participation, male media personnel were comparatively more vocal and consistent, followed by politicians who had advocated for women's political participation but majority had not continued after the elections. The Government officials were not active at all in this sphere, even though they did support women otherwise in their comments.

## Comprehensive analysis based on findings from the Baseline Survey, the Focus Group Discussions and the Key Informant Interviews

### ***Skills & knowledge of women leaders on leadership and governance***

Participants of the BLS and the FGDs were fairly clear on the **meaning of leadership**. Women participants across all the selected areas visualized leadership as empowering



others, solving people's problems, having knowledge of community based issues, being role models, able to work alongside men, to be educated and able to raise their voices against injustice.

In terms of **Confidence in their leadership skills**, females in Tank were the most optimistic followed by females in Peshawar, as was seen in the BLS.

In the FGDs, a general consensus was found in women from across all districts that the involvement of female in the political and democratic processes can play an important role in strengthening women's political participation and leadership for effective democratic governance.

In terms of **awareness about specific women based laws** such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) & the Women Protection Bill, in the BLS, more women from Peshawar were aware about these, followed by women in D.I. Khan. In terms of upholding the above mentioned laws, majority of women from in the smaller and more conservative districts of Gomal Zam and D.I. Khan felt that their political parties were not upholding such laws. However, women in Peshawar did not feel as strongly about this. Even through the responses of female participants in the FGDs, it was observed that the women felt that their political parties (to which they belonged), in general, did not practice specific women laws (these could include having consensus inter-party on legislation relating to women's protection and rights or giving decision-making powers to women on pertinent issues within parties). They said that there were times when women were included, but that was only when it was in the party's interest or there was external pressure.

On **receiving support from the political parties**, women from Gomal Zam FGD felt that women in other, more developed districts such as Peshawar, enjoyed certain privileges and rights in their political parties, but in their areas, their community created problems for them, which had a direct impact on their working more actively within their political party structure as well.

#### ***Women's ability & equal opportunity to run for elections***

In the BLS, majority of the women in Gomal Zam, followed by those in D.I. Khan and Tank wanted to see specific measures taken to **strengthen women's position within political parties**, by 'ensuring representation of women in the Party membership and all decision-making bodies, e.g. central and provincial executive committees, as well as parliamentary'. This could be because these three regions are comparatively less progressive and more conservative than Peshawar. Therefore, even though women are politically active here, they are not getting even representation within their parties. In Peshawar, the majority (60%) chose the option 'hold regular intra-Party elections for all positions'. In Peshawar, although women might be more visibly politically active but they felt that within their parties, elections needed to be held regularly for all positions.



In then BLS, while a large majority of women in Tank, Gomal Zam and D.I.Khan felt that they needed **training on leadership**, in larger cities such as Peshawar, the majority felt otherwise. This could be because women in Peshawar have had comparatively more exposure to such opportunities in comparison to women from the other districts.

Although, the majority of the BLS respondents in Peshawar, Tank and D.I.Khan felt that they has been **able to make alliances with local influential leaders** (political and otherwise) to 'some or a large extent'; In the FGDs, majority of the women from Tank, Gomal Zam and D.I. Khan felt that limited numbers of active female politicians within their communities did have an impact on their ability to make better alliances with influential leaders. Despite this, they tried to make the most of such limited opportunities. In comparison, female participants from Peshawar were more confident because they dwell in an urban area, where they are not dependent 'on local influential actors' as much as their female colleagues in the rural, and in KP's case, the Tribal areas.

In the BLS, majority of the women from Tank and D.I.Khan felt that they had been able to **reach out to the public through effective networking and positive media messaging/engagement** to 'a large extent'. In Peshawar, a comparatively smaller number were as confident about this.

***Support from party leaders & male counterparts for women for taking party positions (to be able to formulate & implement policy reforms at all levels of electoral structures & government, including constituencies and legislative bodies***

Majority of the BLS respondents from Tank, Gomal Zam and D.I. Khan felt that male politicians involved their female colleagues in decision-making process to 'very little extent'. A large majority of women from Peshawar were more confident about this and felt that women were more involved in such processes. Female FGD, participants in D.I. Khan said that their political parties and their manifesto did encourage women's participation and that the men of their political parties did support them 'a little' during election campaigns.

Majority of the BLS respondents in Tank and Gomal Zam felt that their **male colleagues encouraged them to take up party positions** 'to very little extent' whereas women in Peshawar were the most confident about this followed by women in D.I. Khan. In the FGDs, participants said that only those women were encouraged in such cases, whose men were part of the same political party. The women participants from Tank, Gomal Zam and D.I. Khan said that majority of their male colleagues felt 'embarrassed or ashamed' in such situations.

Male FGD participants differed from their female colleagues in terms of providing support to them. Some said that they had a separate wing for females in their party and they provide moral, social and financial support to their female counterparts during the elections. They felt that they involved and supported women politicians in decision making and taking up party positions. The participants also said that they

had supported women in the past for their participation in politics, through advocacy. The men from Tank and Gomal Zam had similar opinions about their **political parties encouraging women politicians within the parties as well as during election campaign**. However, as was observed through some participants comments, the men were not very comfortable when it came to having a female become the head of the Party. This was a mixed perception across the districts but such sentiments were not as strong in Peshawar, as compared to Tank, Gomal Zam and D.I. Khan.

The same pattern could be seen getting repeated when the BLS respondents were asked about their **male colleagues attitudes when the committee or party structure in which both men and women are members, is led by a woman**. Majority of the women in Tank, Gomal Zam and D.I. Khan said that their male colleagues were 'not comfortable' whereas majority of the female respondents from Peshawar felt that the men felt 'comfortable'. It is clear that attitudes and behaviors are gender based and are determined by socio-political cultures in these areas.

In terms of **support from their male family members in acquiring a public position or participating in politics**, the women in smaller districts did not receive it as well as their female colleagues in Peshawar due to a very conservative culture.

***Conflict:***

A large majority of BLS respondents from all selected areas felt that if the constraints faced by women politicians, in general, were not addressed, when it comes to their increased political participation then it could lead to conflict.

Women in the FGDs went into more detail about the constraints faced by them, such as the non-acceptance of women as leaders and existing cultural and social practices that hindered their progress personally and professionally. This was observed more so in perceptions of women hailing from conservative areas of D.I. Khan and Gomal Zam, who identified challenges in the form of conservative mindsets and family pressures which hampered their efforts in advocating for women's political participation and leadership and constrained their free movement within the community due to *Purdah*.

Even the male FGD participants from Tank, Gomal Zam and D.I. Khan felt that the main hurdles in women's political participation was the ignorance of the local community about the importance of women's participation in politics. They felt that the electoral system and party rules can play a vital role for overcoming some of these issues.

***Women Politicians relationship with line ministry officials***

Majority of the BLS respondents from Tank, Gomal Zam and D.I. Khan felt that they were **able to develop professional relationships with various government department/officials** to 'a large extent' whereas majority of women in Peshawar felt 'to some extent'.

Similarly, majority of the BLS respondents from all selected areas also felt that the

**perception of government officials about women as leaders** in comparison to male politicians was 'positive'.

However, in the FGDs, women from Tank, Gomal Zam and D.I.Khan felt that, despite developing connections with the government officials to a certain extent, the government officials did not respect women politicians as much or take their opinions as seriously as they did those of the male politicians. The male FGD participants agreed with their female colleagues on this, *especially in the districts of Tank, D.I. Khan and Gomal Zam. They reasoned that it was the local conservative culture which encouraged this.*

### **Media portrayal of Women Politicians**

In the BLS as well as the FGDs, majority of the women from Tank and Gomal Zam felt that women politicians at various levels have 'very little' **access to media** in Pakistan. Whereas, the majority in Peshawar and D.I.Khan felt that they did 'to some extent'. However, majority of the BLS participants felt that women are **portrayed** 'positively' in the local media and that media did not have specific stereotypes of women politicians. This was interesting to note because participants of the FGDs and KIIs felt otherwise. Similarly, in the FGDs, women felt that the few women who were able to reach out to the media were not perceived positively. They also felt that female politicians lacked the skills and opportunities to reach the people through media.

In the FGDs, some female participants felt that although media is independent but it is not responsible in its reporting and felt that women politicians were not being given a fair coverage in media. A general opinion amongst the male participants of the FGDs was that the media did not present women politicians in a good manner. It was encouraging to note that the majority of the men across these districts felt that it was important for women leaders to build a regular networking communication pattern with the media.

Majority of the BLS respondents from all areas felt that they did have the required **communication skills and knowledge about current affairs to represent their constituents and talk about issues.**

Similarly, majority of the BLS respondents from Gomal Zam and D.I. Khan had **advocated for women's political participation in the past.** This was interesting to note, because in cities such as Peshawar, where there is more space for people to advocate for such causes, the respondents had not taken advantage of opportunities as much as far flung districts such as Tank.

In terms of the **most effective advocacy platform**, majority of BLS participants from Tank, Gomal Zam and D.I. Khan felt that Union Council is the most effective, whereas, the majority in Peshawar selected the Provincial Assembly.

**The Key Informants**, which included Provincial Assembly Ministers (serving and

previous), hailing from diverse political parties, the government officials and the media personnel were comparatively much better informed, well versed and clear about the key areas under discussion, as compared to the BLS and the FGD participants. There was no major difference observed except the Key Informants being better informed. Perceptions gathered through the KIIs showed that the opinions of one gender tended to be similar across different groups of respondents, thus further strengthening similar trends seen in the BLS and the FGDs on the key issues. Male politicians, government officials and media personnel across all four selected areas held more or less similar opinions. The same was seen amongst female respondents in the above categories.

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## VII Conclusion

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Overall, women politicians from KP were quite confident with their own leadership skills and in their ability to compete in a political process dominated by men. Additionally, a majority of women felt that the perception of government officials towards women as leaders in comparison to male leaders was positive.

Although the majority of the respondents indicated that they were generally aware of the functions and procedures of various government departments, they recognized the need for women politicians to be skilled in legislation formulation, media management, policy making and budgetary processes.

The majority of women claimed that they faced challenges as leaders in the public sphere. With the exception of Peshawar, many women politicians felt that their male colleagues were 'not comfortable' if the committee or party structure included both men and women as members and if the committee or party structure was led by a woman. Moreover, they felt that their male counterparts did little to involve them in decision-making processes or encourage them to take party positions.

Women are politically active even in very conservative districts of KP. Lack of education and not having the right connections does create hindrances for them but it has not stopped them from stepping outside their homes to participate in politics.

Quite a few of these women have been trained previously. They now need guidance on how to forge connections with other stakeholders, including the media, the government, the bureaucracy and the district administrations.

Trainings focused on networking, communications and advocacy would help in improving how they define and promote their policy, move forward within the party ranks and voice their concerns on key issues of the day. There is also a need to work with aspiring women politicians and encourage more women to consider entering into politics.

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## VIII. References

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## IX. Annex A Baseline Survey Tools (English)

### Search for Common Ground Women's Initiative for Learning and Leadership (WILL)

#### Strengthening Women's Political Participation and Leadership for Effective Democratic Governance in KP

Questionnaire for a Baseline Survey (*only for female participants*)

##### Introduction

Asalam-u-Alaikum/Good morning/afternoon. My name is ..... I am from Search for a Common Ground, which is an organization that looks for shared solutions to destructive conflicts, working at all levels of society to build sustainable peace dialogue, media and communities.

Currently we are conducting a Survey on women's political participation and leadership for effective democratic governance in KP. Could you please spare a few minutes of your time to answer some questions for us?

1. General information about the interview		
1.1	Interview Date & Time	
1.2	Interviewer's name	
1.3	Surveyed district	
1.4	Area/Village name	
1.5	Resp: Phone #	

A. Skills and knowledge of women leaders on leadership and governance		
A.1	What leadership skills do you think women leaders should possess?	Please write maximum five leadership skills.
A.2	To what extent do you feel confident of your leadership skills to compete in the political process dominated by men?	(Please mark on a scale of 1-5, with 1 the lowest and 5 the highest) 1. Highly confident 2. Confident 3. Cannot Say 4. Less confident 5. Not confident at all.
A.3	What are the leadership challenges of women leaders?	(Please mention maximum three) 1. 2. 3.
A.4	<i>The constitution of Pakistan guarantees dignity, freedom and equality to all citizens and forbids discrimination on the basis of sex.</i>  Do you know the laws which protect women's rights and political participation?	1. Yes 2. No If yes, which ones are they?

A.5	Do you think that your political party is upholding such laws?	1. Yes 2. No 3. Cannot say
A.6	If you would like to strengthen women's position within political parties, what measures would you like to enforce, through the revision and amendment of the Political Parties Order, 2002, making it mandatory for all Political Parties:	Choose one or more options below;  A. hold regular intra-Party elections for all positions B. ensure representation of women in the Party membership and all decision-making bodies, e.g. central and provincial executive committees, parliamentary boards, budget and manifesto committees C. adopt a progressively increased number of directly elected women within the Party's ranks D. strengthen and empower women's wings and establish women's wings where they do not exist E. Others (Specify).....
A.7	What level of skills should you possess in relation to legislation formulation?	(Please select one option only) A. Excellent B. Good C. Fair D. Poor E. None
A.8	What level of skills should you possess in relation to policy making?	Please select one option only A. Excellent B. Good C. Fair D. Poor E. None
A.9	What level of skills should you possess in relation to budgetary processes?	Please select one option only A. Excellent B. Good C. Fair D. Poor E. None
A.10	To what extent do you know about functions and procedures of various government departments?	(Please mark on a scale of 1-5, with 1 the lowest and 5 the highest)  1. Very much, 2. Much 3. Can't say 4. A little 5. Not at all.
A.11	Do you think that you need training on leadership?	No (If NO, go to Q NO B.1)  Yes. (If yes, please go to Q A.12)
A.12	If yes, What specific aspect of leadership skills you need?	Please write one.



<b>B. Women's ability and equal opportunity to run for elections</b>		
B.1	To what extent are you able to make political alliances with local influential leaders (both political and others)?	(Please select one option only) - A large extent -Some extent -Can't say - Very little -Not at all
B.2	To what extent are you able to reach out to the public through effective networking and positive media messaging/engagement?	(Please select one option only) -A large extent -Some extent - Can't say -Very little -Not at all
<b>C. Support from party leaders and male counterparts for women for taking party position, formulating and implementing policy reforms at all levels of electoral structures and government, including constituencies and legislative bodies</b>		
C.1	To what extent male counterparts involve you, as a woman politician, in decision-making?	((Please select one option only) -A large extent -Some extent - Can't say -Poor -Very little -None at all
C.2	To what extent male counterparts encourage you, as a woman politician, to take up party positions?	((Please select one option only) -A large extent -Some extent - Can't say -Poor -Very little -None at all
C.3	How comfortable do male counterparts feel when the committee or party structure (in which they are members) is led by a woman?	(Please choose one option only) -Very comfortable -comfortable -Cannot say -Not comfortable -Hostile
C.4	If constrains faced by women politicians, in general, are not addressed, when it comes to their increased political participation then do you think it can lead to conflict?	Yes  No
<b>D. Relationship with line ministry officials for policy making and implementation</b>		
D.1	To what extent are you able to develop professional relationship with various government department/ officials?	(Please choose one option only) -A large extent -Some extent - Can't say -Poor -Very little -Not at all
D.2	What is the perception of government officials of you as a leader as compared to male leaders?	-Very positive -Positive -Negative -Neutral

E. Media engagement to portray women politicians		
E.1	To what extent women politicians at various levels have access to Media in Pakistan?	(Please select one option only) -A large extent -Some extent - Can't say -Very little -Not at all
E.2	To what extent do you possess the required communication skills and knowledge about current affairs to represent your constituents and talk about issues?	(Please select one option only) -A large extent -Some extent - Can't say -very little -Not at all
E.3	How are women politicians portrayed in the local media?	(Please choose one option only) -Very Positively -Positively -Cannot say -Negatively
E.4	Does media have specific stereotypes of women politicians?	No Yes
E.5	If yes, what types of Stereotypes do they have	Write maximum three 1. 2. 3.
E.6	Have you yourself advocated for women's political participation and leadership in the past?	-No -Yes
E.7	In your opinion, which is the most effective advocacy platform?	(Please choose one option only) -Union Council -Provincial Assembly -Media -Civil Society -Any other

**Thank you for taking the time out to complete this questionnaire**

## Women's Initiative for Learning and Leadership (WILL)

### Strengthening Women's Political Participation and Leadership for Effective Democratic Governance in KP

#### Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

**Introduction** Asalam-u-Alaikum/Good morning/afternoon. My name is ..... I am from Search for a Common Ground, which is an organization that looks for shared solutions to destructive conflicts, working at all levels of society to build sustainable peace dialogue, media and communities. This is a Focused Group Discussion (FGD) on women's political participation and leadership for effective democratic governance in KP. Could you please spare a few minutes of your time to discuss this with us?

1. General information about the interview		
1.1	Interview Date & Time:	
1.2	Interviewer's name	
1.3	Surveyed district	
1.4	Area/Village name	
1.5	Resp: Phone #	

A. Skills and knowledge of women leaders on leadership and governance (To be asked only from female participants)		
A.1	What does leadership mean for women leaders in Pakistan?	
A.2	What leadership skills, do you think, they should possess?	
A.3	What are the leadership challenges of women leaders?	
A.4	Do you think that political parties in Pakistan are upholding the women specific laws? If yes, How? And If Not what is preventing them from doing so?	

B. Women's ability and equal opportunity to run for elections (to be asked from female participants)		
B.1	What types of support (if any) women candidates aspiring for public positions are getting from male family members and the society to participate in politics?	
B.2	Are women able to make political alliances with local influential leaders (both political and others)?	
B.3	Are you able to reach out to the public through effective networking and positive media messaging/ engagement?	

**C. Support from party leaders and male counterparts for women for taking party position, formulating and implementing policy reforms at all levels of electoral structures and government, including constituencies and legislative bodies (TO BE ASKED ONLY FROM MALE PARTICIPANTS & ONLY THOSE FEMALES WHO ARE IN PARTY LEADERSHIP POSITIONS)**

C.1	What are your party policies to encourage women leadership within parties?	
C.2	What kind of support (if any) women politicians receive from their male counterparts during the election campaign?	
C.3	Do male politicians involve women politicians in decision-making and also take up party positions?	
C.4	How comfortable do men feel when the committee or party structure (in which they are members) is led by a woman?	
C.5	What are the major hurdles/constraints faced by women when advocating for women's political participation and leadership?	
C.6	What role can existing formal structures, such as the electoral system, and also party rules play for strengthening women's political participation and leadership for effective democratic governance?	

**D. Relationship with line ministry officials for policy making and implementation**

D.1	What are the challenges for women leaders like yourself in building professional relationship with government departments/officials?	
D.2	How do government officials perceive women as leaders like yourself, as compared to male leaders?	

**E. Media engagement to portray women politicians**

E.1	How are women politicians portrayed in the local media?	
E.2	What needs to be done to ensure equal access to media for women leaders?	
E.3	If you have advocated for women's political participation and leadership, then how did you do it? Was it effective?	

**Thank you for taking the time out to complete this questionnaire**

## Women's Initiative for Learning and Leadership (WILL)

### Strengthening Women's Political Participation and Leadership for Effective Democratic Governance in KP

#### Key Informant Interviews KII

##### Introduction

Asalam-u-Alaikum/Good morning/afternoon. My name is ..... I am from Search for a Common Ground, which is an organization that looks for shared solutions to destructive conflicts, working at all levels of society to build sustainable peace dialogue, media and communities.

Currently we are conducting Key Informant Interviews on women's political participation and leadership for effective democratic governance in KP. Could you please spare a few minutes of your time to answer some questions for us?

1. General information about the interview		
1.1	Interview Date & Time:	
1.2	Interviewer's name	
1.3	Surveyed district	
1.4	Area/Village name	
1.5	Resp: Phone #	

A. Skills and knowledge of women leaders on leadership and governance		
A.1	What does leadership mean to you? <i>(to be asked from female participants only)</i>	
A.2	How confident are you in your leadership skills to compete in the political process dominated by Men?	
A.3	In your opinion, what are the leadership challenges faced by women leaders?	
A.4	What level of skills should women politicians possess in relation to legislation formulation and policy making and budgetary processes?	
A.5	To what extent do women politicians know about functions and procedures of various government departments?	
A.6	<i>The constitution of Pakistan guarantees dignity, freedom and equality to all citizens and forbids discrimination on the basis of sex.</i>  (A question to the women participants only): Which laws, in your opinion, ensure women's equal participation to run for elections?	Yes          No  If Yes, which ones are they?

A.7	What is your perspective on such laws?	
A.8	What type of support (if any) women candidates aspiring for public positions are getting from male family members and the society to participate in politics?	
A.9	To what extent women are able to make political alliances with local influential leaders (both political and others)?	
A.10	Do you think that women leaders need training on leadership??	(If yes, then on what specifically)

**B. Support from party leaders and male counterparts for women for taking party position, formulating and implementing policy reforms at all levels of electoral structures and government, including constituencies and legislative bodies (TO BE ASKED FROM MALE PARTICIPANTS ONLY & THOSE FEMALE PARTICIPANTS ONLY WHO ARE IN PARTY POSITIONS)**

B.1	Are you in a party position?	
B.2	What are your party's policies to encourage women leadership within their parties?	
B.3	What are the views of party leadership and male counterparts on role of women leaders in policy making?	
B.4	To what extent do male counterparts involve women politicians in decision-making?	
B.5	How comfortable do male counterparts feel when the committee or party structure (in which they are members) is led by a woman?	
B.6	To what extent male counterparts encourage women politicians to take up party positions?	
B.7	What are the major hurdles/constraints faced by women when advocating for women's political participation and leadership?	
B.8	If constrains faced by women politicians are not addressed, when it comes to their increased political participation then what kind of conflict do you do think it can lead to conflict?	

**C. Relationship with line ministry officials for policy making and implementation (TO BE ASKED FROM FEMALE PARTICIPANTS ONLY)**

C.1	What are your challenges in building professional relationship with government departments/officials?	
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C.2	To what extent are you able to develop professional relationship with various government department/officials?	
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#### D. Media engagement to portray women politicians

D.1	To what extent women politicians at various levels have access to Media in Pakistan?	
D.2	What needs to be done to ensure equal access to media for women leaders?	
D.3	How are women politicians portrayed in the local media?	
D.4	Have you yourself advocated for women's political participation and leadership? If yes, then how did you do it? Was it effective?	

**Thank you for taking the time out to complete this questionnaire**





Search for Common Ground is a non-profit organization with the mission to transform how individuals, organizations, and societies deal with conflict--away from adversarial approaches and towards cooperative solutions and collaborative problem solving. Currently working in 34 countries around the world in Africa, Asia, Europe and the Middle East, SFCG uses a multi-faceted approach, employing media initiatives and working with local partners in government and civil society, to find culturally appropriate means to strengthen societies' capacity to build peace and social harmony: to understand the differences and act on the commonalities.



