

Gender Competition 2022

FATA DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME - FDP Pakistan

Parent Teacher Councils-PTCs

Context:

Located along Pakistan's border with Afghanistan, the erstwhile Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) were a semiautonomous tribal region until they were merged with the neighboring province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP). In 2018, with a population of around five million people the territory now referred to as Merged Areas consists of seven Tribal Districts and six Sub-Divisions. Poverty is widespread and the population faces marginalization, poor basic services, inadequate income generating opportunities, and limited inclusion in planning and decision-making processes. For years, the local population has been suffering from violent conflicts and military operations which resulted not only in the destruction of social infrastructure but also in the temporary displacement of persons, which have gradually returned to the Merged Areas after rehabilitation. After the merger, local governmental and administrative structures are being expanded to areas where people have still been relying on traditional tribal ways of conflict resolution and decision making. The remoteness of the Merged Areas and the lack of efficient local administrative structures impede, however, the effective delivery of public services to the population.

The FATA-Development Programme (FDP) aims at the improvement of the capacities of core governance functions of public administrative units and the capacities of state actors and civil society groups to provide services in selected sectors and to engage in constructive dialogues on development policy issues. To this end, the FATA Development Programme supports inter alia the Elementary and Secondary Education Department (E&SED) in the preparation and implementation of the Education Sector Plan and in its alignment with Annual Development Plans and District Education Plans. To support the efforts of the provincial government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in bridging the development gaps between the Merged Areas and the Settled Districts of KP, FATA-Development Programme assists in development planning, technical and financial monitoring of progress, as well as data integration all in line with the Tribal Decade Strategy and the Accelerated Implementation Plan. For the implementation of needs-based school improvement plans at district and school levels, the programme contributes to the design of a conditional grant programme. The programme further provides capacity development to Parent Teacher Councils to use development funds for school improvement and to improve transparency and service delivery.

Community-based parent-teacher councils are a mandated body in schools of the Elementary & Secondary Education Department of the government of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa to foster school development. Parent-teacher councils aim to assist school improvement for improved teaching and learning processes. The merger of the erstwhile FATA with Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province posed a significant development challenge for the government of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa. Triggering community-led school improvement through public funds had never been tested in the Merged Areas, and given the cultural context and structural imbalances, it was difficult to conceive that women-led parent-teacher councils would implement projects themselves to improve situations of girls' schools. Parent-teacher councils were not trained on their rights and newly assigned roles and had no bank accounts to allow any financial transaction. Opening of bank accounts was even more difficult due to the sub-optimal footprint of Pakistani commercial banks in the erstwhile FATA.

Objectives, Results and Approach:

The FDPs Result Area Education, on the request of the E&SED, worked with men and women of community-based parent-teachers councils in terms of capacity development. This included support to open their bank-accounts in order to receive funds for school improvement projects. As a result, community participation and the involvement of women in decision-making processes could be strengthened through close cooperation with stakeholders at government and community level.

Overall the objective of the initiative is “The capacity of state actors and civil society groups to provide services in selected sectors has improved”. And specifically increasing the capacity of state actors and civil society groups in the Merged Areas for improved services and ensuring women participation in constructive dialogues and decision-making processes.

In a complex and unpredictable security situations and constant threats from militants, FDP designed a strategy that, after several setbacks, led to successful capacity development of 3,352 female members from 1676 girls' schools. In addition, PTCs of 1881 girls' schools were supported to open bank accounts enabling them to receive funds from the provincial government under the conditional grants programme. Each school is empowered to spend up to 3 million Pakistani Rupees (PKR) based on their needs identified in the School Improvement Plans (SIPs). With extensive support from GIZ-FDP, the E&SE Department of the government of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa has been able to transfer PKR 951 million to girls' schools into the bank accounts of women led parent-teacher councils. With extensive support from FDP and its implementing partners in the field, 64% of all PTCs (32% of women led PTCs) have utilized the public funds to complete their projects with regards to the provision of water, toilets, and additional classrooms. For the first time and under comprehensive and transparent procedures, women community members and female teachers are co-signatories of a joint bank account. While there are still relentless challenges, FDP has equally empowered men and women in communities at the grassroot level in the Merged Areas to take charge of their development by utilizing public funds for the first time in the history.

Following are the long-lasting impacts and outcomes for PTCs Initiatives :

- Contributed to SDG-5
- Gender Mainstreaming through Gender Inclusion & Empowerment.
- Capacity Building of Female PTC members
- Targeted and meaningful use Public funds through PTCs.

2. Gender as a quality feature of our work

The support provided to women led PTCs by FDP has been acknowledged by government partners at the provincial and district level as well as by communities which have benefitted from the programme. Keeping local customs and cultural norms in consideration, equal training opportunities were provided to women in gender-segregated training venues. Effective utilization of public funds, after they are planned and allocated, is a major challenge in public systems. Technical assistance from FDP in planning, data analysis, capacity development, and review of the progress made, has led to the transfer of 100% of the funds released by the government into PTC bank accounts. The public-funded conditional grants programme, under which the PTCs were funded has so far received PKR 951 million which has been transferred to women PTCs, demonstrating a relentless commitment by government partners.

3. Gender and result-based monitoring

The contributions to enhancing gender equality and reducing gender-based discrimination and disadvantages are documented in the project. FDP manages gender-disaggregated data on schools, PTCs, and funds as well as supports the E&SE Department to respond to needs as reflected in data emanating from schools and PTCs. Gender equality is an integral part of the monitoring and evaluation system of FDP and is systematically recorded through data management. The project strategy, including the Gender sensitive monitoring framework, gender indicators in result matrix serve as the key basis for project monitoring. Similarly, effective monitoring and availability of reliable quantitative and qualitative data (sex disaggregated) are critical to the evaluation and assessment of a project's success and impacts. The mechanisms for measuring results documented from planning to the utilization of funds by PTCs are based on actual needs and irrespective of gender.

4. Cooperation

Achieving gender equality is the ultimate intended outcome of the mainstreaming efforts within the project. E&SE department, with extensive support from GIZ, has been perhaps the only department in the provincial government to be able to collect, manage and effectively use gender-disaggregated data in their development plannings. Understanding the historical development lack in the Merged Areas, the lead partner demonstrated the political will to invest in the education sector after its merger with the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. FDP supported the lead partner in developing the plan and then supported it in the implementation through a well designed technical assistance approach at provincial and district levels.

FDP cooperated with the E&SE Department of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and its district formations. Demonstrating commitment, the Minister E&SE Department graced and appreciated FDPs effort to help it achieve goals envisaged of the government-funded Accelerated Implementation Programme (AIP) for the Merged Areas. The cooperation with E&SE Department also cascaded to its district formations and FDP supported staff was provided offices at the district education offices located in the Merged Areas. As FDP was not granted Non-Objection Certificates (NOCs) needed to visit the Merged Areas, it implemented the activities through the Institute of Management Sciences based in Peshawar. FDP, through its implementing partner, was able to solicit and use support from men and women from the communities in the Merged Areas who participated in capacity development efforts. FDP also cooperated with commercial banks that helped by opening dedicated desks for biometrically verified opening bank accounts at the district education offices.

All stakeholders were united to achieve the goals of the Accelerated Implementation Programme (AIP) for the Merged Areas which was essentially the game-changing strategy that responded to needs collected from schools in the Merged Areas.

Major challenges included the lack of a common understanding about the absence of PTC structures in the Merged Areas, a lack of optimal capacities at the district level and PTCs levels, particularly women, structural difficulties that could lead to inefficient use of funds, and risks from multitenancy. The three key success factors included a common understanding of the conditional grants programme under AIP at all levels; relentless and coordinated commitment from the local and provincial levels to achieve results transparently and ensure provision of water, toilets, additional classrooms including particularly to girls' schools; and effective use of data for planning and monitoring of progress at all relevant levels.

Contributions to internal Gender mainstreaming

1. Corporate culture

- Orientation sessions were planned for FDP staff on APLAC reporting.
- Designing of Gender sensitization trainings for GIZ Staff and IPs. Formulation of tools (gender sensitive reporting guidelines, gender objectives for internal use) were drafted and shared with the Result Areas for adoption.
- Gender Mainstreaming Strategy for merged areas was drafted and shared with the Social Welfare department
- Social Inclusion and meaningful participation of women and girls in decision making processes. A fundamental reason we have not yet achieved gender equality in every realm is that women and girls' voices are too often excluded from global and national decision-making, and is very visible in the context of culturally restricted merged areas. Through PTC's, Constructive Dialogues and Governance and health projects, I (Gender Advisor) encouraged and supported the Result Areas (OU) and our implementing partners to encourage more women participation at all levels externally.

- Further examples include showcasing of gender mainstreaming initiatives to a broader audience at global and regional levels in GNM 2020, highlighting activities on gender equality and women empowerment in program fact sheets. Photo's exhibition - photos taken during the implementation phases of FDP, at the occasion of 70 Yrs of Pak and German cooperation.
- Achievements / work on gender equality by the programme was highlighted to a wider audience in Pakistan. This was strengthened through local media reports on the exhibition taking place in Peshawar.
- FDP continuously communicates the successful implementation of activities aiming at women empowerment and the contribution to gender equality to an external audience through the use of social media such as twitter and linked in. Those activities include trainings of government officials, and trainings of members of community-based organisations.
- The majority of women and young girls in merged areas don't have access to using basic technology such as phones and computers, access to information about the new local government set up , basic skills , not able to raise their voice for their rights , don't have access to basic education etc because of infrastructure related challenges and economic reasons. All these inadequacies has been addressed through different projects within FDP (policy to community levels), by enabling them to access to participatory meetings and constructive dialogues , through radio live shows , participation in community led PTCs , has enabled them to raise their voices and can have access to information and public services about the new local government system.
- GIZ-FDP supported the Elementary and Secondary Education Department in preparation of EMIS data led PC-1s (govt proposals) and budgets. This measure contributed to equitable access to education in the Merged Areas. To establish more schools for girls and encourage female education, specially relaxed criteria in promoting establishment and upgradation of girls' schools was used to propose new schools/additional facilities during the development of PC-1s for merged areas.
- Strategically, to ensure women's participation, voice and leadership, including efforts to help government counterparts / local government meet their responsibility to guarantee political participation by women, make participatory processes inclusive and place participatory rights on a sound legal and institutional footing. And this is how these activities are supplementing GIZ Pakistan at a broader level , and as a company our values are ingrained in our approaches and finally reflected in our interventions etc.

2. Gender competence

Challenges and contributions to enhance Gender Competence.

- For arranging dedicated gender sensitization workshops (internally & externally) challenges raised by the Result areas TLs, then small awareness sessions were embedded in their ongoing trainings within the OUs trainings.
- Gender sensitive objectives and gender sensitive reporting guidelines have been developed for the internal use by the programme , despite by discouraging response , worked with results areas as a team to understand challenges and strived to find solutions with regards to data management and reporting.
- Through Female Internship Programme - Governance Unit of FDP provided an opportunity to university graduates to support qualified women in career development and finding entry points for employment
- Through Female Mentoring Programme -FMP, FDP supported personal and professional development of female workforce at GIZ Pakistan, with an ambition of empowering female staff members with leadership ambitions.
- Women and young girls are disadvantaged when it comes to access to secondary education especially in merged areas. Our targeted efforts were to support the Education department in designing education programmes to be gender sensitive and work to dismantle discriminatory gender stereotypes. And if all girls were to receive primary education, mortality rates among children under five would have significantly decreased.
- Strict cultural norms hindered the women participation in the Merged Areas lowering the women ratio in participation. Mobility/ access issues / Covid situation, for women to participate in development planning activities.

3. Cooperation

For GIZ-FDP , the priority issues for promoting gender equality and strengthening the rights of women are political participation, voice and leadership, education, women empowerment and health in all of its interventions. In committing to (SDG 5), FDP has set itself in adopting and strengthening sound policies for the promotion of gender equality and women empowerment, and further targeting to ensure effective participation of women and equal opportunities for leadership / at different fora's , at all levels of decision- making in political, economic and public life are the key success factors and being strictly followed in all the FDP interventions. Gender mainstreaming goals have been relentlessly followed as required by the donor results matrix and commission documents. FDP has worked closely with both lead and implementing partners to develop a common understanding of expected outcomes and implemented a structured approach towards gender mainstreaming. One example is providing equal opportunities to women drawing and disbursement officers to develop capacities in public financial management to help reduce reliance on men positions of power for financial management processes such as budget planning, tender document preparation and auditing etc.

In cooperation with the community and its participation in the programme's activities, it could be ensured that activities on gender equality such as the establishment of women led PTCs are truly community based. This will also ensure their sustainability in the future. Through the same cooperation, the capacity of the community regarding gender equality was strengthened which led to the inclusion of women in decision making processes with regards to the development of their community. Collaboration and Cooperation with / at the community level is vital for sustainability aspect, leads to broader developmental outcomes and outputs in supplementing GIZ Pakistan .

Snap Shots



PTC meeting to discuss Roles & Responsibilities for Community led development in schools at district Bajour 2021. (In this pic , you can see the girls are given equal opportunity to play along with boys in restricted areas .



Parent-Teacher meeting to discuss the roles and responsibilities for community-led development in schools at districts Bajaur, 2021.



Training of male parent teacher councils in Bajaur tribal district



Training of women parent teacher councils in Orakzai tribal district



Covid Awareness Worksheets distributed among primary school girls



Primary Schools renovated as the priority need came up in women led PTC meetings.



Orientation on PTC roles and responsibilities in Bajaur



Women gathered for PTC meetings -District Bajour & Waziristan