

Omar Asghar Khan

Annual Report 2015



Acronyms

ADP	Annual Development Programme
C&W	Communication and Works
DEO	District Education Officer
DHQ	District Headquarter (hospital)
ERRA	Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority
FAFEN	Free and Fair Election Network
FY	Financial Year
GPS	Government Primary School
IBP	International Budget Partnership
ICU	Intensive Care Unit
NAP	National Action Plan
NDMA	National Disaster Management Authority
NFC	National Finance Commission
OBI	Open Budget Index
OBS	Open Budget Survey
OT	Operation Theater
PFC	Provincial Finance Commission
THQ	Tehsil Headquarter (hospital)

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SUMMARY

2015 was an exciting year in Omar Asghar Khan Foundation's continuing journey.

Omar Asghar Khan Foundation's Strategy 2020 was defined to build on successes already achieved and to ensure the Foundation continues to help citizens assert their rights.

The Foundation further strengthened its niche in advocating fair and open public budgets. Its analysis of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Budget FY2015-16 focused on funds for decentralization needed to empower the new local government. It urged the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to seize the opportunity to devise an equitable Provincial Finance Commission Award so that evidence and not political expediency decides district allocations for development. It recommended expanding the PFC to give it broad-based acceptance. The Foundation also significantly expanded its support for social accountability. Nearly 40 citizen groups were trained and assisted in gathering and using evidence on public services and engage with the government to improve the conditions of schools, BHUs, hospitals, roads and waste disposal.

The Foundation led the Open Budget Survey 2015 in Pakistan. This global survey is conducted every two years. Pakistan ranked 43 out of 102 countries included in its latest round. The OBS findings are being used to advocate timely production of key documents like the Pre-Budget Statement and Citizens' Budget to improve Pakistan's compliance with international standards of budget transparency.

The Foundation has consistently advocated effective relief and rehabilitation since the earthquake of 8 October 2005 brought unimaginable death and destruction. As the tenth year milestone of the tragedy was reached, the Foundation urged a stocktaking on work done, unfinished tasks, and, recommended drawing institutional lessons to help Pakistan be better prepared to deal with disasters.

Local government was the focus of the Foundation's efforts to improve governance in 2015. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa it mobilized voters to participate in the May 2015 local elections and also observed subsequent electoral processes in Punjab, Sindh and Islamabad.

The Foundation helped more than 100 citizen groups in Abbottabad, Kohistan, Battagram, Mardan, Nowshera and Peshawar to become more familiar with the new local government in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and worked with them to assist citizen interaction with newly elected councilors for improved development and public services.

Through the nationwide coalition Aman Ittehad the Foundation helped citizens review the National Action Plan to counter terrorism. On its signature Solidarity Day on 1st January 2015 Aman Ittehad issued its statement in which citizens commended the NAP, rejected military courts, and, recommended 10 points to improve NAP.

The Foundation continued popularizing counter-narratives to extremism and intolerance. Poetry, song, art and debates helped spread messages of peace. The Foundation also shaped and amplified citizen voices protesting violence and demanding that the state fulfills its responsibility to secure the lives and property of citizens.

Just three weeks after Pakistan observed the tenth anniversary of the devastating 8 October 2005 earthquake, another earthquake brought more misery. The 2015 earthquake claimed lives, disrupted livelihoods, destroyed houses and triggered landslides blocking roads. The Foundation responded immediately, providing relief assistance to some of the poorest affected in Kohistan and Abbottabad. It also advocated prompt government actions to provide fair relief and rehabilitation.

The Foundation continued to work with its partners in some of the poorest rural areas to supply drinking water and reduce the burdens of poverty.

Mission

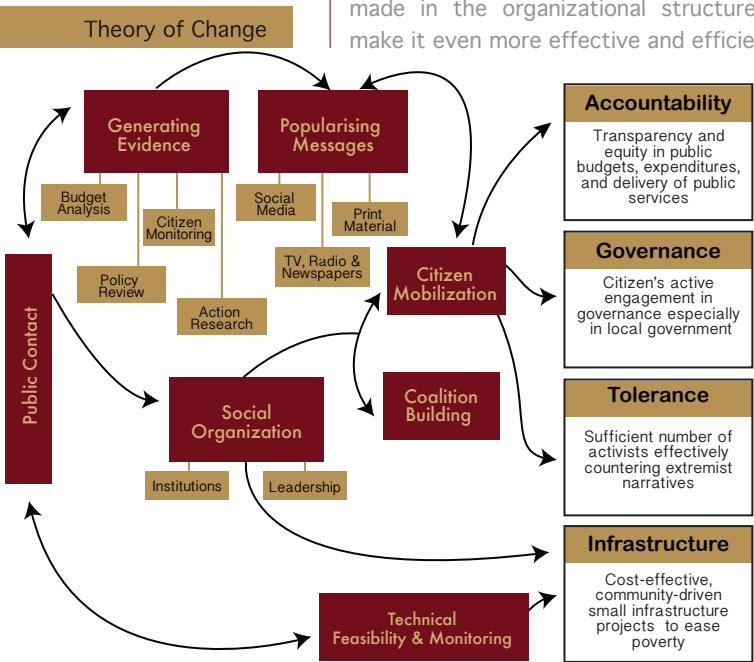
*To strengthen the
resilience of citizens
– particularly the
most vulnerable –
so that they can
claim their rights
from the state,
counter violent
extremism, and
reduce the burden
of poverty.*

BUILDING ON SUCCESS: STRATEGY 2020

Accountability, Governance, Tolerance and Infrastructure are the four pillars of the Foundation's programme strategy for 2015-20.

These were decided by the Foundation based on an in-depth analysis of the organization's strengths developed over more than 15 years since it was set up in 1999, and, more specifically the results of its past five-year strategic plan (2008-13). Emerging trends likely to define the context in which the Foundation operates were also assessed and decisions taken on how to keep its programme at the cutting edge in pursuit of its vision and mission.

The Foundation has refined its mission statement to better express the organization's purpose. A theory of change has been developed that shows the programme is strongly cohesive and as a whole is greater than the sum of its separate activities. Changes were also made in the organizational structure to make it even more effective and efficient.



PROGRAMME PROGRESS



ACCOUNTABILITY

The Foundation helps citizens hold governments to account for the impact of their public finance decisions, especially on the poor. Citizens are assisted in understanding how governments are managing public money and to sift reality from rhetoric. The Foundation assesses provincial budgets, off-budget funds, and the timely access of budget documents. It helps citizens monitor government performance and advocates new spaces for citizen engagement in budgets.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Budget FY2015-16

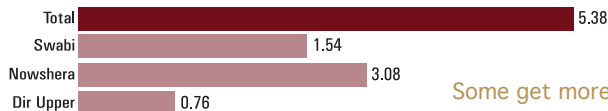
Since 2010 the Foundation analyzes Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's budget. Key findings of its analysis of the FY2015-16 budget include:

Fairly funding local government

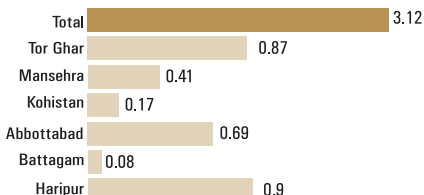
Creating an empowered local government is the ruling Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's landmark policy in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Its success depends on effective fiscal decentralization. The provincial local government law stipulates allocating at least 30 per cent of total development funds for decentralized governance. The Foundation's analysis identified two amounts in FY2015-16, Rs.18.26 billion and Rs.30.27 billion, that combine to account for a little less than 30 per cent allocated for local government. But the devil is in the details.

Rs.18.26 billion is 10.44 per cent of the total development outlay of Rs.174.88 billion. One-third of this amount or Rs.6.1 billion is already allocated to six of the 25 districts. The funds are to be used for pre-determined priorities like "provision of LED/solar road lights," "construction of slaughter houses," etc. The other allocation of Rs.30.27 billion accounts for 17.31 per cent of the total development funds. Local governments may determine its use, but the Provincial Finance Commission (PFC) will decide how much funds will be given to each district, tehsil and village/neighbourhood council. Such allocations do not let local governments use public funds on priorities they identify.

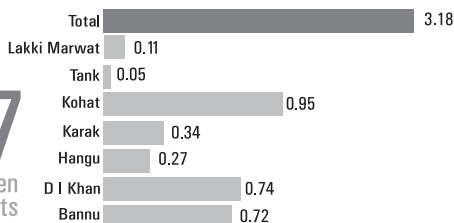
3 Power Districts



6 Hazara Districts



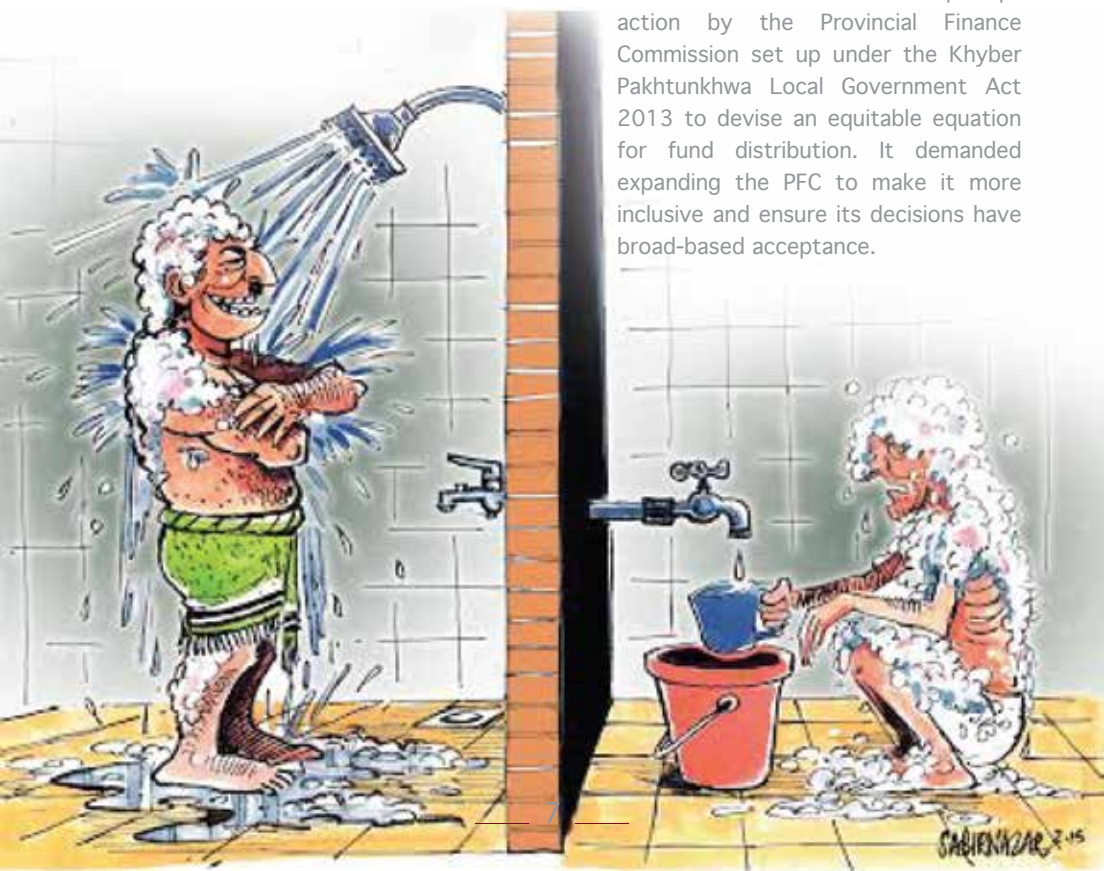
7 Southern Districts



Some get more, some less

District funds for development raise questions about why some get more, some less. The Foundation's analysis shows generous amounts allocated to districts with constituencies of powerful MNAs and MPAs from the ruling coalition parties. For instance, Nowshera, the home district of the Chief Minister, has received Rs.5.3 billion or 3.08 per cent of total development funds. In contrast, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's seven poor southern districts are allocated Rs.5.5 billion, or merely 3 per cent of the province's total development outlay.

The Foundation recommended prompt action by the Provincial Finance Commission set up under the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Local Government Act 2013 to devise an equitable equation for fund distribution. It demanded expanding the PFC to make it more inclusive and ensure its decisions have broad-based acceptance.



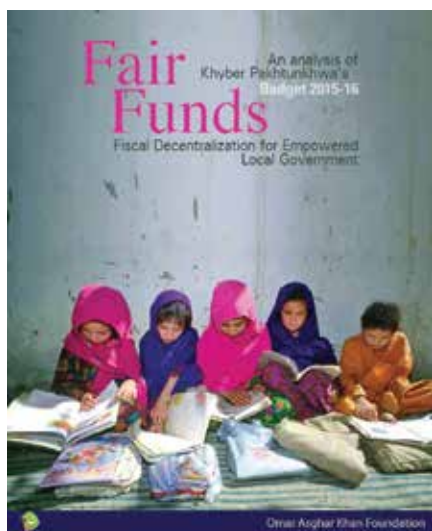
Citizen watch

The Foundation's social accountability data shows that even if public funds are allocated they do not adequately improve public services evident by the poor conditions of public schools and healthcare facilities monitored by citizens.

The THQ in the remote mountains of Kohistan is a sprawling complex including a 100-bed capacity, ICU, OT, etc. It was inaugurated on 1 February 2007 by an MPA from the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal. To operationalize it staff and equipment are needed for which Rs.21.33 million was allocated in FY2012-13, Rs.21.41 million in FY2013-14 and Rs.21.41 million in FY2014-15. These amounts remained unused and the THQ's impressive structures are wasting away, crumbling the hopes for healthcare pinned by the very poor of this area.



The Foundation publicized its budget findings and recommendations by addressing press conferences in Peshawar and Abbottabad, using social media including text messaging, and publishing an attractive byte-size document that was widely shared with political leaders, parliamentarians, academics, media and other civil society organizations. The Foundation also shared its findings at a provincial conference in December 2015.



Byte-sized publication



Ms. Rashida Dohad, Peshawar Press Club, June 2015

ACCOUNTABILITY

Since the 8th October 2005 earthquake brought death and destruction beyond imagination, the Foundation has struggled for fair compensation and effective rehabilitation, especially advocating support for the very poor. On its tenth anniversary in 2015, the Foundation urged an impartial and frank stocktaking of unfinished tasks and lessons learnt.



*Issues identified by the Foundation were published in a document **Waiting on the Faultline** and also projected through the media.*

Off-budget Funds: Ten Years After the 2005 Earthquake

Job not yet done

Ten years after the earthquake, schoolchildren are still waiting for reconstruction of their schools. Patients await the rebuilding of BHUs. People from areas condemned as red zones are still waiting for a clear policy. Many, tired of waiting for new jobs, have simply moved on.

As of February 2015 the Earthquake Reconstruction & Rehabilitation Authority (ERRA) confirms a staggering 2,873 schools are still not complete out of a total 5,701 to be reconstructed. This sorry statistic includes the government primary school in Battagram's village Kolay. People of this remote rural area say a tender for reconstructing the school was issued around 2007 and four walls were erected in 2009. Nothing has happened since. Abandoned, the incomplete structure is used as a cattle pen. The story of this rural school is not dissimilar to too many more. Tragically, these include numerous schools that were only marginally damaged by the earthquake. Yet, the government razed their structure to the ground with the promise to "build back better."

Figures on health are equally dismal. Out of 306 facilities, 115 are yet to be reconstructed, denying healthcare to areas that were poor even before the 2005 earthquake unleashed further deprivation.

ERRA reports incomplete projects in every sector: transport, water and sanitation, livelihood, social protection, power and telecom, environment, watershed management, and community livelihood rehabilitation. The exception is medical rehabilitation with six planned projects that are complete.

Institutional lessons

Despite ERRA's failure to fast-track or finish rehabilitation, the institution and its tentacles continue to survive. The purpose of maintaining these structures at taxpayers expense is not clear. Another institutional layer appeared in the form of the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and its provincial and district counterparts.

The need for disaster management in vulnerable countries like Pakistan can hardly be overstated. But whose job is it anyway? Should the NDMA be responsible for enforcing codes that make buildings earthquake-resistant? Isn't it better to strengthen emergency response forces like Rescue 1122 to provide swift search and rescue assistance? There may still be a role for institutions like NDMA. But it must be shaped from lessons offered by ERRA and its sub-units that failed the survivors of the 2005 earthquake.

Public funds for rehabilitation

After ten years, to whom should survivors turn? Which door should they knock? Is anyone listening? A glimmer of hope briefly flickered when Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's FY2014-15 budget included an allocation of Rs.300 million for reconstructing 760 schools destroyed by the 2005 earthquake.

But it turned into dismay as the FY2015-16 figures showed the provincial government was unable to expend more than Rs.4.1 million, i.e., less than two per cent of the allocated Rs.300 million.



Ms Rashida Dohad with an ERRA representative

Citizen Charter of Demands

- All incomplete schools, healthcare facilities, and other projects must be completed before 8th October 2016.
- Reconstructing public services destroyed by the 2005 earthquake should be given priority by the provincial and state governments.
- A clear policy on areas marked as red zones must be formulated in consultation with affected people.
- The New Balakot City should either be completed or totally abandoned – with apologies to the people of Balakot who were promised this new “city of hopes.”
- Provincial and state budgets for reconstruction should also receive fiscal transfers from the center.
- ERRA and its sub-units must be immediately disbanded and its offices and equipment transferred to provincial and state governments.
- A complete audit must be done of all rehabilitation funds received and expended by ERRA and its sub-units, and its findings must be made public.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Citizen-state engagement is often marked by mutual distrust. To reduce the trust deficit, the Foundation is facilitating interaction between citizens and the government on the delivery of healthcare, education and roads in some of the poorest regions of districts Kohistan, Battagram, Abbottabad, Mardan, Nowshera and Peshawar of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Citizen Monitoring & Social Accountability

The Foundation has trained and assisted more than 40 citizen groups to use innovative social accountability tools to monitor government performance. The activists were helped in better understanding politics, governance, citizenship, and, public finances. They were assisted in becoming more familiar with the new local government system in the province, and also on ways of using enabling laws like the Right to Information Act. Emphasis was placed on the need for strong, valid evidence for which activists' skills were enhanced in the use of tools like scorecards and photovoice. The Foundation provided followup support as citizens started monitoring governments.



Building citizen capacity to monitor public service delivery

Reconstructing a lifeline road swept away by the 2010 floods, Kandian, Kohistan

The catastrophic 2010 floods affected more than 18 million people across the country. These included people in the remote mountains of Kohistan -- the poorest district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and the second-poorest district in Pakistan. They lost loved ones, their homes were destroyed and their livelihoods were severely disrupted. The flood waters also swept away about 35 km of a road that connected people of the entire 90 km Kandian valley with the main Karakorum Highway.

In FY2011-12 the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa allocated Rs.4.3 million to conduct a feasibility for reconstructing the road. This amount appears expended in FY2012-13. But no amount was subsequently allocated for reconstructing the road.

Frustrated, the people of the area used the Right to Information Act to obtain a copy of the feasibility report. On 27 May 2014 they sent a written request to the local C&W (Kohistan). On 12 January 2015 they lodged a complaint with the Chief Information Commissioner that the requested feasibility report was not provided. On 17 February 2015 the RTI Commission sent a letter to the C&W (Kohistan) asking them to provide the requested document within ten days. Despite the sustained paper trail, the people of Kohistan have not received the feasibility report or even a response from the government department.



Upgrading healthcare in Abbottabad

Soon after assuming office in 2013, the Chief Minister and other senior members of the provincial cabinet made repeated commitments to complete “on war-footing” the upgradation of DHQ Abbottabad that serves as a critical referral point for patients from across Hazara. The urgency expressed in public pledges sharply contrasts with the glacial pace of government action.

The PC-1 for the upgradation was approved in 2012. Its total cost was estimated as Rs.200 million, and it was due for completion in 2016. Rs.5 million was allocated for the upgradation in FY2013-14 and another Rs.20 million in FY2014-15. Both allocations remained unused. No work has started on the ground. In FY2015-16 a further Rs.30 million was allocated. The government further muddled the matter by issuing a notification in FY2014-15 asking for submission of a modified PC-1 in which all construction work is to be deleted. Without construction work, will it be possible to fully upgrade the DHQ?

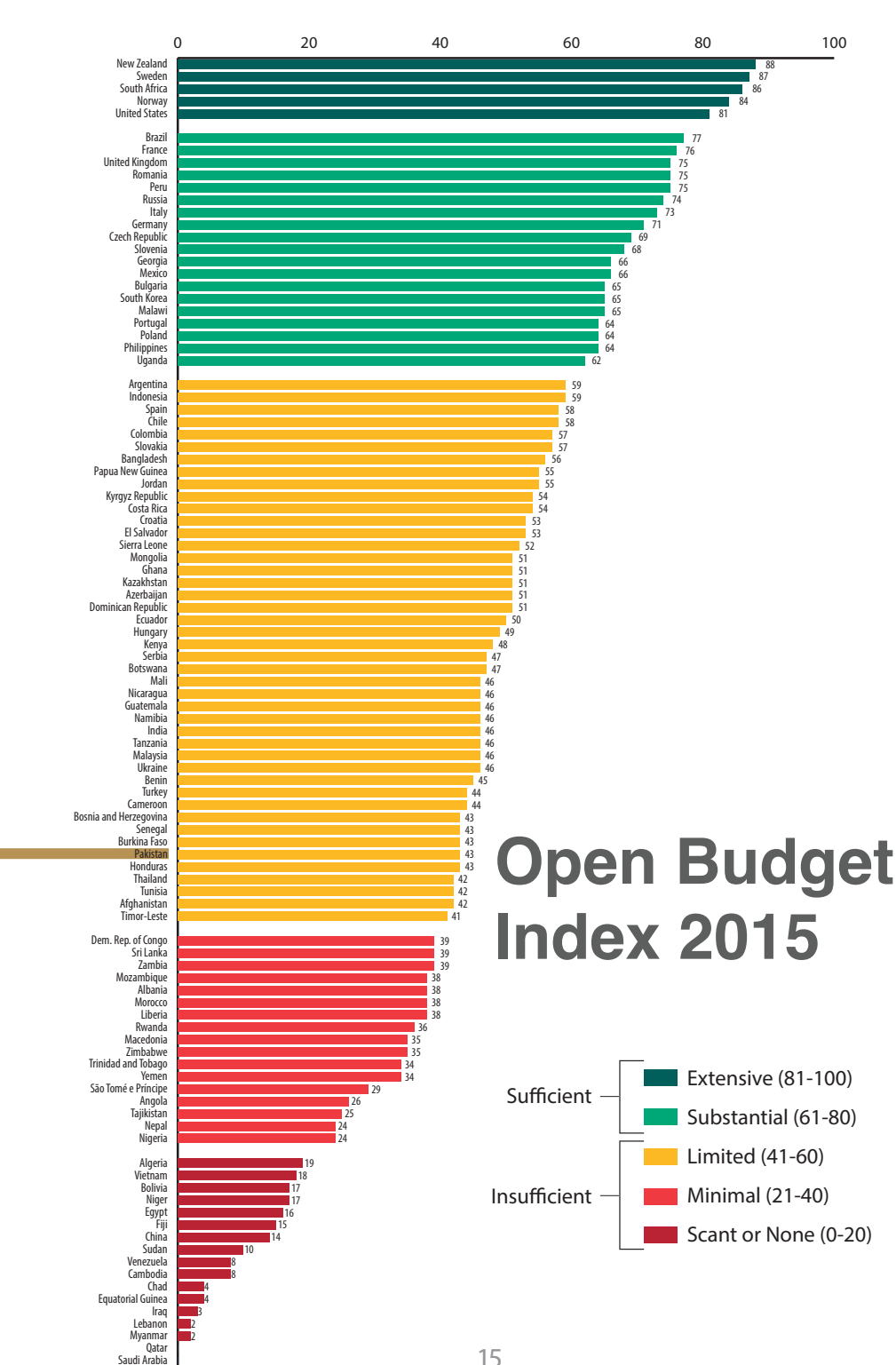


Open Budget Index 2015

Since 2006 the International Budget Partnership (IBP) regularly conducts the global Open Budget Survey (OBS) -- the only independent, comparative, regular measure of budget transparency and accountability. It assesses the availability in each country of eight key budget documents, examines the extent of effective oversight provided by legislatures and supreme audit institutions, and opportunities available to the public to participate in national budget decision-making processes.

The OBS is not a perception survey or an opinion poll. It uses internationally accepted criteria to assess each country's budget transparency and accountability. It is compiled from a questionnaire completed for each country by independent budget experts who are not associated with the national government. Scores assigned to certain OBS questions are used to compile the Open Budget Index – constituting objective scores and rankings of each country's relative transparency.

The Foundation leads the OBS in Pakistan since 2010. The OBS conducted in 2015 included 102 countries. Pakistan's score was 43, falling 15 points from the last round conducted in 2013. The reasons for this score and the decline from the last round were shared with the government and other stakeholders, and actions are being advocated to improve budget transparency and achieve a higher score in the next OBS round.



GOVERNANCE

The Foundation connects citizens and helps their engagement in politics and governance to promote genuine democracy in Pakistan. In 2015 the Foundation focused on the newly established local governments. It helped citizens to get involved and interact with government to build trust and improve the delivery of public services.

Local elections in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa during May-August 2015 were closely followed. With support from FAFEN (Free & Fair Election Network) the Foundation's teams observed the electoral process in a few rural and urban areas of Abbottabad. They noted significant mismanagement, partly because of chronic lack of capacity of electoral staff, and, partly due to nearly 85,000 candidates contesting more than 41,000 seats. The Foundation also followed the electoral processes completed in phases in Punjab, Sindh and in the capital city of Islamabad.

Local government elections

Voters were mobilized to use their right to vote through a series of public meetings and a cleverly designed campaign using posters and banners.



GOVERNANCE

Local government in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

In 2015 a new local government was introduced in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The Foundation assisted its community partners in different parts of the province, especially in poor villages, to become more familiar with the new governance structure. This helped them engage with it for improved local development, better social services, and effective mechanisms for resolving local conflicts.

The three-tiered structure at the district, tehsil and village/neighbourhood levels and their authority was explained. On fiscal decentralization they were informed about mandatory allocation of not less than 30 per cent of total development funds and the creation of the Provincial Finance Commission. Oversight through the Local Government Commission was also presented.



Ms. Rashida Dohad, Senator Shibli Faraz and Dr. Said Alam Mehsud



GOVERNANCE

Citizen-state interaction is generally marked with a deficit of trust. The Foundation is assisting citizens to use evidence of government performance to demand its improvement. The exchanges are also helping government officials to respond and remove public grievances.



Students at risk in unsafe school building

Citizen-government engagement

Evidence of dangerous rented school building moves government totake action

In the poor Village Council Shamozaï of District Peshawar, young students attend classes in a school building that is so dilapidated it threatens their very lives. This building for the government primary school for boys is rented. Despite real dangers, the students regularly attend classes in their quest for an education. However, they remain anxious at the state of the rented premises.

Local citizen groups, trained by the Foundation, took pictures of the school building to show the grave threat to students' lives. The Foundation also helped identify that Rs.22.15 billion or 12.5% of total development funds of Rs.174.88 billion were allocated for education by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in its budget for FY2015-16. Despite the availability of public funds, the local people argued, why are the lives of the children of the poor VC Shamozaï put at risk?

With the Foundation's support, local citizen groups met government officials and also newly elected councillors. They showed them evidence of the condition of the school building in Shamozaï, questioned government priorities for expending public funds for education, and demanded government action to save the lives and educational future of young students. Their efforts were successful in moving the government to approve a PC-1 (Rs.12.99 million) for construction of a school building. The DEO agreed to shift the school to a safer building which will be rented till the completion of the new building is constructed.

Waste swept away

In District Mardan's Village Council Bughdada Rural 1 people complained about garbage regularly overflowing onto the street. No proper measure was made to collect and dispose it. With support from the Foundation, the local citizen groups gathered evidence on the government's failure to dispose solid waste. They presented it to the newly elected Tehsil Nazim and other government officials demanding government action to redress their grievance. Their efforts led to regular disposal by the sanitary staff, which the local citizen groups continues to monitor.

*Street before (right)
and after (below) citizen actions*



TOLERANCE

The Foundation is connecting citizens, especially the young, to popularize counter narratives to hatred and intolerance. It is helping citizens monitor government actions for reducing insecurity and advocate women's role and agency in negotiating and building peace.

Citizen response to National Action Plan to Counter Terrorism

The nation mourned as school children were mercilessly killed in Peshawar in December 2014. The barbaric massacre forced the formulation of the National Action Plan (NAP), the first-ever concrete policy framework to counter terrorism.

The Foundation assisted citizens through the nationwide coalition Aman Ittehad to review the NAP and present its ten-point response. It was publicized through the Ittehad's signature Solidarity Day organized across Pakistan on 1st January each year.



Aman Ittehad Solidarity Day, Peshawar, 1st January 2015

TOLERANCE

Women & Peace

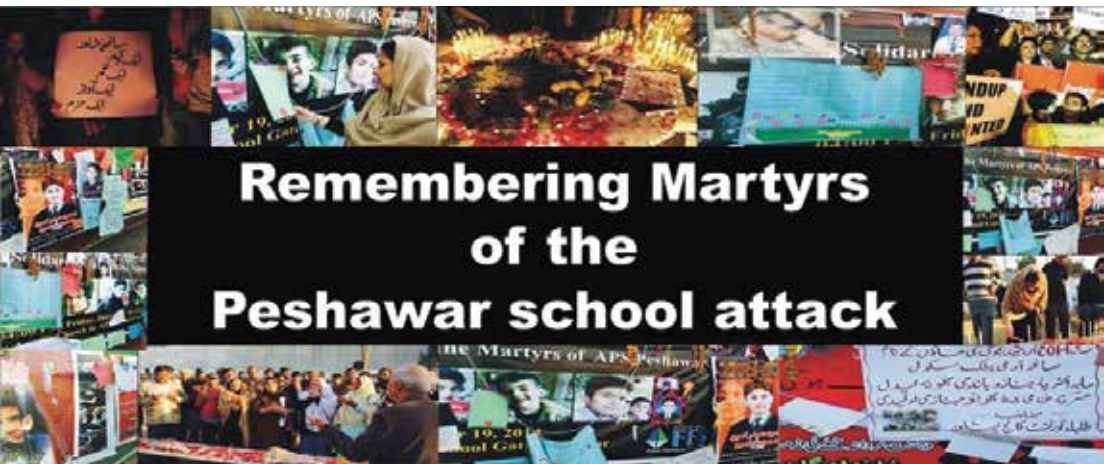
Cedaw General Recommendation #30

Women are among the worst affected by crisis conditions. Their vulnerability and capacity to cope are compounded by entrenched gender inequalities and patriarchy. Socially constructed reproductive and productive roles, caring responsibilities and cultural expectations of their gendered identity are strands that weave together to limit women's opportunities often impoverishing them, and placing them at greater risk to shocks. The Foundation is bringing citizens together and helping to amplify their calls for urgent policy action.

The ambit of public or policy debate on domestic or regional challenges to peace is typically gender-blind. For example, the National Action Plan announced in 2015 to counter terrorism in Pakistan fails to mention women or their concerns and interest. This is despite calls for action made through international conventions such as the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (Cedaw) that Pakistan has signed and ratified.



*Ms. Bushra Gohar, political leader
Peshawar, 15 December 2015*



TOLERANCE

Counter narratives to extremism

Popular resistance poetry by Faiz Ahmad Faiz and Ahmad Faraz are more than verses. They are anthems inspiring movements for peace and justice, a powerful counter-narrative to calls for violence, extremism, and hate-mongering that is tearing asunder the fabric of Pakistan's society. The Foundation popularized such counter-narratives and also promoted music, paintings and debates for peace.

The Foundation continued to raise citizen voices against violent extremism, demanding government actions to apprehend perpetrators and take actions to ensure the state fulfills its basic responsibility to protect the lives of its citizens.



INFRASTRUCTURE & DISASTER RESPONSE

While the Foundation is primarily a public advocacy organization, it also engages citizens in some of the poorest regions of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to develop essential cost-effective community infrastructure. The Foundation's terms of partnership also helps build local capacity to work together, reduce burdens of poverty by removing barriers to accessing clean water, schools, hospitals and jobs.

Water supply to the very poor

Using its strong roots within rural communities and its in-house technical expertise, the Foundation constructed or repaired gravity-flow supply schemes to provide drinking water in some of the poorest villages in the mountainous regions of Abbottabad. The workload of women was reduced as without supply mechanisms they were forced to walk for several hours to fetch water for domestic use.



INFRASTRUCTURE & DISASTER RESPONSE



Earthquake 2015: relief assistance & policy advocacy

About three weeks after the tenth anniversary of the 8 October 2005 earthquake, another earthquake struck on 26 October 2015. Some of the poorest areas of Kohistan and even Abbottabad were among those affected. Fatalities, injuries, collapse of mud houses, and landslides blocking roads leave entire communities isolated were reported.

In response to this new disaster the Foundation moved swiftly. Its four teams distributed 150 packages of relief assistance to the very poorest from 43 villages of District Kohistan and 4 of District Abbottabad on 1-2 November 2015. It also advocated effective and equitable relief and rehabilitation assistance.



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Omar Asghar Khan Foundation

A public advocacy organization helping build a state responsive to its citizens. It seeks to strengthen the resilience of citizens - particularly the most vulnerable – so that they can claim their rights from the state, counter violent extremism, and reduce the burden of poverty. The Foundation works across Pakistan, with its strongest field-base in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. It has offices in Islamabad and Abbottabad.