



Individualland

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# JOURNALISM

## in Conflict Areas of Pakistan



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## **"In war, truth is the first casualty." Aeschylus Greek tragic dramatist (525 BC - 456 BC)"**

Pakistan has been engulfed in a conflict since a decade, which has been focused in the areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Baluchistan. Being at the forefront in the war on terror, its proximity to war torn Afghanistan and the influence of major players in the region, Pakistan has witnessed the worst affects of the conflict. More than 37,000 casualties have been reported in conflict related violent incidents, throughout Pakistan in the past ten years<sup>1</sup>. The mentioned provinces have been facing the brunt of this violence, as militants and security forces have been fighting for control. In this conflict, local residents and civilians have been affected the most. The deterioration in the situation has been fueled by radicalization, ethnic divide and intolerance in the society.

The role of media is to provide information to the citizens, in order to assist them in reaching an educated opinion. During conflict this job becomes more important and perilous for the media, as they have to report while keeping the sensitivity of the situation in mind. Conflict sensitive journalism promotes the role of journalism to assist in a resolution of a conflict, by presenting the views of every concerned party and act as a channel of communication. Conflict sensitive journalism is a concept, where media can contribute towards good governance, safeguarding human rights, peace building and resolution to a conflict<sup>2</sup>. It has to be realized by the journalists that they are operating at a considerable risk, not only to themselves but also to their family and counterparts. So, any mistake can lead to serious consequences and potential threat to their lives and the lives of others. It is important for the journalist to survive another day, rather than become a hero.

Historically, Pakistani media has suffered censorship and hurdles at the hands of state. The media in Pakistan has gone through a tremendous revolution, during the past ten years, especially in the electronic sector, where there used to be a state monopoly. More than hundred radio and T.V. channels are being viewed across the country, while there has also been an increase in the number of print and electronic media consumers<sup>3</sup>. Pakistani media has not only experienced a mushroom growth in numbers, but has also gained considerable independence during this time. Realizing the effectiveness of the media, the parties involved in conflict have been engaged in influencing the media. The journalists and reporters operating in conflict hit areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, find themselves caught between the security agencies and militants, which has also resulted in journalists themselves becoming a target of violence. In addition the media personnel active in conflict zones lack proper training and resources to deal with the situation at hand. According to the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), a total of 15 journalists were killed in Pakistan, during the year 2010<sup>4</sup>. International News Safety Institute (INSI), has reported the death of 12 journalist/media personnel in violence related incidents in 2011<sup>5</sup>.

Realizing the need to engage the journalists of both urban and rural areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Baluchistan, in sensitizing them over conflict sensitive journalism and highlighting the problems faced by them in conflict zones, an initiative of one year (February 2011 - January 2012) was carried out by Individualland Pakistan (IL-Pakistan) with the assistance of National Endowment for Democracy (NED).

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<sup>1</sup> South Asia Terrorism Portal. 2011. Fatalities in Terrorism Violence in Pakistan 2003 - 2011. <http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/pakistan/database/casualties.htm>.

<sup>2</sup> Howard, Ross. 2009. Conflict-Sensitive Reporting: State of the Art. France: UNESCO.

<sup>3</sup> Riaz ul-Hassan. 2010. Media Boom: 90 Channels, 106 FM Stations in 10 Years. <http://www.viewpointonline.net/media-boom-90-channels-106-fm-stations-in-10-years.html>

<sup>4</sup> International Federation of Journalists (IFJ). 2010. Gunning for Media. Belgium.

<sup>5</sup> International News Safety Institute (INSI). 2011. Casualties Database. <http://www.newssafety.org/casualties.php>.

A series of nine trainings were conducted for sixteen districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Baluchistan, where a total of 225 journalists, 97 from Baluchistan and 128 from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa participated in the sessions. These areas were mostly neglected in the past, mostly due to the volatile security situation in the provinces and difficult accessibility. Initially the project focused on Peshawar, Charsadda, Mardan, Nowshera, D.I. Khan, Kohat, Mingora, Mansehra, Tank, Upper Dir, Buner, Quetta, Gwadar, Turbat and Chaman. The organization took this project further by extending it to seven other areas<sup>6</sup> on the basis of need assessment and demands of journalists. For the first time journalists at the border region of Chaman were trained in Chaman. This not only broadened the outreach of the organization, but created a positive impact among the journalist community, where they took interest and ownership in the initiative. Assistance was acquired from local press clubs, journalist unions, subject specialists and senior journalists, throughout the course of the project. Even the local administration was taken into confidence regarding the objectives of the project.

During the implementation phase of the project, we found the journalist community to be very cooperative and forthcoming, regarding the predicaments they have been facing during the course of their jobs in conflict zones. Certain issues which previously remained out of sight and were not anticipated also surfaced during the project, as the organization interacted with the media personnel. This included the rivalries which exist between various press clubs, where rival groups were not ready to even sit together at the same forum. The issue of job security, lack of equipment and resources, meager salaries and absence of a training mechanism, on behalf of the respective media organizations were the top most concern of every journalist. The journalists were of the view that the management was not aware of the ground situation and were not taking any serious measures to deal with the problems faced by them in the field.

IL-Pakistan also worked towards addressing some of the concerns faced by journalists. Although, not part of the original plan, but the organization also developed liaison with the Red Crescent to provide journalists with first aid kits, as per their demands. There was also the issue of demand by journalists in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for compensation on attending the workshops, which is a common practice by other organizations. This proved to be a difficulty and as the organization considered it unethical, the demand was not met. Another issue which was highlighted during the initiative is the low number of women in the media sector of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Baluchistan, mostly due to the social and cultural taboos surrounding jobs, considered to be unconventional.

"A Camera is insured but the cameraman is not" somewhat summarizes the difficulties faced by the journalists and their reservations from the senior management. The conclusion which has been drawn at the completion of the project is that there is a pertinent need to involve the owners and senior management of media houses, who develop and implement policies, which affect these journalists at ground level. Associations of owners, such as All Pakistan Newspapers Society (APNS) and Council of Pakistan Newspaper Editors (CPNE), should be engaged to take the appropriate steps, to provide assistance to their media personnel in the field.

IL-Pakistan would like to especially acknowledge the efforts and participation of Shahzada Zulfiqar, Iqbal Khattak, Dr. Syed Zahid Ali Shah and Dr. Anika Ahmed, who were the lead consultants in the project and actively contributed in the initiative.

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<sup>6</sup> Nasirabad, Dera Allahyar, Jhal Magsi, Dera Bugti, Jaffarabad, Chaghi and Pishin.

Here the organization will also like to thank press clubs and journalists unions in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Baluchistan, for their cooperation in the field and the numerous subject specialists for their fruitful opinions and consultations.

## Conflict Sensitive Journalism

### 1. Academic Perspective

Before discussing concept of conflict sensitive journalism, especially in the context of the prevalent global conflicts, it is important to comprehend what is conflict and in what form does it exist presently. Although there are numerous definitions of conflict, but to summarize, it can be defined as, "Conflict is a situation where two or more individuals or groups try to pursue goals or ambitions which they believe they cannot share."<sup>7</sup> The nature of conflict has increasingly witnessed a change in recent history, as the conflicts now not only rage among nation states but also at a local level. Conflicts are not necessarily violent, as there is always difference of opinion and interests present at each level, from an individual to the state. It is only when the conflict aggravates or is not resolved properly that it becomes violent. By the actions of individual, organization or any other unit, there is always a response from the opposite forces, which create conflict.<sup>8</sup>

According to C. R. Mitchell, "If the essential meaning of this common language meaning of conflict is the activity of parties, this leads to an assumption that the term 'conflict' refers to actual behavior (which often involves coercion and usually violence)."<sup>9</sup> There are various types of conflict which are prevalent around the globe ranging from ethnic, social, religious to resource allocation and power struggles. The nature and types of objectives of various parties to a conflict, determine the underlying fundamental reasons of a conflict. There are three inter-related components of a conflict:<sup>10</sup>

- ✍ Conflict Situation
- ✍ Conflict Behavior
- ✍ Conflict Perceptions

In this, the situation arising from a conflict determines the attitudes and perceptions of the various quarters. The intensity of the violence depends on the progress of the events. It has been further stated by C. R. Mitchell that, "Considerable ambiguity surrounds the term conflict."<sup>11</sup> The broad areas which fall under conflict can be understood from a statement by Richard Quinney, a sociologist and critical philosopher, "The social reality of crime is constructed on conflict in our society."<sup>12</sup> In other words criminal conflict arises due to social conflict and class struggle being the propelling components, resulting in crimes taking place within society.

As there has been an increase in the intensity, magnitude and number of conflicts, there has also been a realization to manage it in a peaceful manner. In conflicts of recent past and especially engulfing the world at present, the civilian casualties have been transformed from accidental victims to deliberate targets of violence.<sup>13</sup> Since the initiation of the war on terror, the entire characteristic of conflict has changed, where the state and citizens are engaged against a hidden

<sup>7</sup> Howard, Ross. 2003. Conflict Sensitive Journalism. International Media Support (IMS), Institute for Media, Policy and Civil Society) IMPACS.

<sup>8</sup> Bartos Otomar J. and Wehr, Paul. 2002. Using Conflict Theory. Colorado: Cambridge University Press.

<sup>9</sup> Mitchell, C. R. 1981. The Structure of International Conflict. New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Quinney, Richard. 1975. Criminology. Boston: Little, Brown and Co.

<sup>13</sup> Bartos Otomar J. and Wehr, Paul. 2002. Using Conflict Theory. Colorado: Cambridge University Press.

enemy, which has the potential to strike from within the ranks. The war against terrorism has been active at both global and local level. Inter-state conflicts, civil unrests, technological advances especially in weaponry, have all emphasized the importance for conflict management and resolution. In view of this situation, ideas and measures have been developed not only to resolve conflict but also to prevent it.

The role of the media in any situation is to provide unbiased information, while leaving it to the citizens to form opinions and reach an educated decision. In normal circumstances this might seem simple, but during the course of a conflict, the journalists face the threat of being pulled into the conflict. In these extraordinary circumstances, this requires a change of approach by the journalists. Media is considered to be detached from a conflict and insensitive to the outcome of the reporting.<sup>14</sup>

Conflict sensitive journalism is a concept, where media can contribute towards good governance, safeguarding human rights, peace building and resolution to a conflict.<sup>15</sup> It is important to note that it is not the duty or the objective of a journalist to resolve a conflict, but impartial and accurate reporting may lead to preventing aggravation of conflict. In a conflict situation the media can act as a channel of communication, where all opposing sides are given the opportunity to present their views.<sup>16</sup>

Labeling anyone as aggressor or terrorist can be damaging. As the famous saying is, "One man's terrorist is another's freedom fighter", the labeling of any party by the journalist, will in return label the journalist as biased. As mentioned earlier a conflict emerges, when individuals and groups are in disagreement over an objective. Both the sides view each other's stand or position as unjustified and are not willing to accommodate. In such a situation, if the media only highlights the views of a certain group, or adopts a particular jargon offending one of the parties, then it will surely be tagged as biased or inclined. It is imperative that media correspondents in conflict areas should stick to facts and never express their own views during the filing of a news story, while also refraining from taking sides. Otherwise the media personnel might be deemed as a sympathizer. Ofcourse, this is easier said than done.

It is important that the reaction of parties involved in the conflict should be carefully monitored and seriously considered, as the safety of the journalists, their families and their colleagues may depend on it. A journalist needs to do his homework well in advance before venturing into the conflict area, keeping into consideration the local conditions, culture, means of communication, tribal and social structure. It is also necessary to study the factors contributing to the conflict, because every single implication of the conflict is somehow linked to the factors escalating or deescalating it. A journalist must consider all the factors before stepping in the warzone. Following factors can be important in this regard:

- ✍ Historical context of the conflict
- ✍ Local conditions
- ✍ Latest incidents of violence
- ✍ Active parties of the conflict

The journalist has to sometimes look at both moral and professional factors, while reporting or submitting an assignment. The major problem occurs when the moral standards clash directly with professional ethics.

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<sup>14</sup> Howard, Ross. 2008. Conflict Sensitive Journalism: Where Does It Fit In? United States Institute for Peace workshop on Media, Conflict Prevention and Peace building.

<sup>15</sup> Howard, Ross. 2009. Conflict-Sensitive Reporting: State of the Art. France: UNESCO.

<sup>16</sup> Howard, Ross. 2003. Conflict Sensitive Journalism. International Media Support (IMS), Institute for Media, Policy and Civil Society) IMPACS.

There is also an important role of journalism, in the post-conflict scenario, where it is again an important task to keep the channel of communications open. This is only possible when the media will stress on objectivity and accuracy in its reports, without leaning towards a certain element or group. In this manner media can play a peace building role, preventing a violent conflict from emerging again.

## 2. Global Perspective

**"We are in a battle, and more than half of this battle is taking place in the battlefield of the media ...." Ayman al-Zawahiri, July 09, 2005**<sup>17</sup>.

Realizing the potential of the electronic, print and new media in the modern world all parties of a conflict are engaged in influencing the media, for promoting their side of the story and viewpoint. According to the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), a total of 94 journalists were killed in violence related incidents throughout the world in 2010.<sup>18</sup> International Press Institute has reported the deaths of at least 103 journalists, throughout the world during the year of 2011.<sup>19</sup> This clearly highlights how the media throughout the world is becoming a target of violence and is increasingly in the crosshairs of opposing parties in a conflict. Not only warring factions have their own spokespersons but also have developed their own media wings. This is evident in the case of Al-Qaeda, which has its own media house by the name of As-Sahab (The Clouds).<sup>20</sup>

Due to their nature of job, regarding inquiring, observing, reporting and highlighting of issues, journalists are also considered to be associated with certain factions and are treated accordingly.<sup>21</sup> The highlighting of statements or coverage of a certain group by the journalists marks them as being affiliated to the group, or to a certain school of thought. This only exacerbates the already hostile environment for the media. The trend of violence against journalists seems to be rising and the media has to take the necessary measures and precautions to counter the circumstances they face.

In these conflict regions the media has not only been on the target list of non-state actors, but also have experienced hostility and threat from state security agencies and influential quarters. According to figures released by Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), at least 42 journalists have been killed in Mexico, due to violence related to the confrontation between drug cartels and the government, in the past five years.<sup>22</sup> In the conflict stricken continent of Africa, an estimated 199 journalists have perished between 1992 - 2006 while, reporting various conflicts.<sup>23</sup> In Srilanka, Amnesty International has recently reported that 14 journalists have been killed in the line of duty, since 2006.<sup>24</sup> In the mentioned cases, as also stated earlier, the intimidations and threats have been from both sides of the fence and the journalists have been targeted to either silence the media or create an environment of fear. Various leading media organizations have been developing procedures, publishing guidelines, manuals and providing the necessary resources for the reporters and correspondents active in conflict zones.

The inability of journalists to comprehend and maintain objectivity in their reporting, while also resorting to sensationalism, has contributed to their predicaments in conflict struck areas. The journalists in conflict areas are working at a considerable risk to themselves and are less aware of the impact of their reporting, as it might be insufficient and harmful.

<sup>17</sup> Head of Al-Qaeda organization

<sup>18</sup> International Federation of Journalists (IFJ). 2010. Gunning for Media. Belgium.

<sup>19</sup> International Press Institute. 2011. [http://www.freemedia.at/our-activities/death-watch/countryview.html?tx\\_incoredeathwatch\\_pi1%5BshowUId%5D=796&tx\\_incoredeathwatch\\_pi1%5BshowYear%5D=2011&cHash=12e9cd0555](http://www.freemedia.at/our-activities/death-watch/countryview.html?tx_incoredeathwatch_pi1%5BshowUId%5D=796&tx_incoredeathwatch_pi1%5BshowYear%5D=2011&cHash=12e9cd0555).

<sup>20</sup> Rogan, Hanna. 2007. Abu Reuter and the E-Jihad: Virtual Battlefronts from Iraq to the Horn of Africa.

<sup>21</sup> International News Safety Institute (INSI), Intl Federation of Journalists (IFJ). 2007. Live News Africa: A Survival Guide for Journalists. Senegal.

<sup>22</sup> More Journalists Killed in Mexico's Drug War than in Afghanistan. August 03, 2011. <http://www.forbes.com/sites/erikkain/2011/08/03/more-journalists-killed-in-mexicos-drug-war-than-in-afghanistan/>.

<sup>23</sup> International News Safety Institute (INSI), International Federation of Journalists (IFJ). 2007. Live News Africa: A Survival Guide for Journalists. Senegal.

<sup>24</sup> Daily Times. 2012. Srilanka journalists demand probes of attacks. January 26, 2012.

There is also a pressure on journalists from their organizations and superiors to file in reports and stories. As the editors and administration of media houses are not present at the ground, so they are unable to understand the gravity of the situation.

### 3. From Pakistan's Perspective

The media of Pakistan has seen a revolution in the last decade, particularly in the electronic media sector, where hundreds of new T.V. and radio channels have been established. This revolution has not been restricted to numbers only and the media has also acquired independence, while the people have confidence in the media to use this freedom with responsibility. Historically the media in Pakistan had to face restrictions both under military and civilian rule, where print media outlets were closed on diverting from government instructions and the electronic media was under the monopoly of the state. Since 2002, the media has been on a path of development, where new media laws broke the control of state media. The media has also been playing its role in developing a strong democratic system, which was evident in the lawyers' movement.<sup>25</sup>

As of 2010, there were approximately 90 T.V. channels and 106 FM radio stations operating in the country.<sup>26</sup> Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) is the regulatory body for the electronic media in Pakistan. The establishment of PEMRA was initiated in 2000 through the formation of the Regulatory Authority for Media Broadcast Organizations. In 2009 the total T.V. viewership in Pakistan was 86 million, consisting of 38 million cable and satellite viewership and 48 million terrestrial viewership.<sup>27</sup> The total number of publications by print media in 1997 was 4,455, but by 2003 only 945 remained. In 2003 daily distribution of print was 6.2 million.<sup>28</sup> Print media is published in 11 languages with Urdu and Sindhi as largest language groups. Urdu newspapers are dominant in rural areas, while the English media is focused on urban consumers. The number of reporters has also increased according to figures of Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists (PFUJ), from 2,000 in 2002 to estimated 17,000.<sup>29</sup>

According to the Global Peace Index 2011, Pakistan has been ranked at 146 out of a total of 153 countries, considered to be one of the worst affected due to conflict.<sup>30</sup> Although the fallout of the war on terror and the various other ethnic and religious tensions reverberate throughout the country, but particularly the most affected have been the Tribal Areas, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Baluchistan. Since 2003 at least 37,000 casualties have been reported, in various militancy and terrorist related incidents throughout Pakistan.<sup>31</sup> As the conflict has progressed the media and journalist community has also found itself being sucked into it. Given the present vibrant scenario of Pakistani media, where not only print but electronic media has shown its presence, each party to the conflict wants to assert and present their side of the story. According to World Press Freedom Index for 2011 - 12, Pakistan has been ranked 151, which is even below Afghanistan.<sup>32</sup>

According to Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) 42 journalists have been killed in Pakistan since 1992.<sup>33</sup> The journalists appear to be sandwiched between these opposing sides and face constant pressure. According to International News Safety Institute (INSI), during the year 2011, 12 journalist/media personnel have perished in violence related incidents.<sup>34</sup> In the Reporters without Borders' Press Freedom Index rankings 2009, Pakistan is given 159th place out of a total of 175 countries.<sup>35</sup> Another figure that has surfaced claims, that 36 journalists have been killed in the

<sup>25</sup> International Media Support. 2009. *Between Radicalization and Democratization in an Unfolding Conflict: Media in Pakistan*. Denmark.

<sup>26</sup> Riaz ul-Hassan. 2010. *Media Boom: 90 Channels, 106 FM Stations in 10 Years*.

<sup>27</sup> Gallup. 2009. [http://www.gallup.com.pk/News/Media%20Cyberletter%20June%2009%20\(2nd%20version\).pdf](http://www.gallup.com.pk/News/Media%20Cyberletter%20June%2009%20(2nd%20version).pdf).

<sup>28</sup> International Media Support. 2009. *Between Radicalization and Democratization in an Unfolding Conflict: Media in Pakistan*. Denmark.

<sup>29</sup> Intermedia. Accessed from: <http://www.intermedia.org.pk/details.php?id=ddpc>. Date of access: January 17, 2012.

<sup>30</sup> Global Peace Index. 2011. *State of Peace 2011*. <http://www.visionofhumanity.org/gpi-data/#/2011/scor>.

<sup>31</sup> South Asia Terrorism Portal. 2011. *Fatalities in Terrorism Violence in Pakistan 2003 - 2011*. <http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/pakistan/database/casualties.htm>.

<sup>32</sup> Daily Times. 2012. *Pakistan below Afghanistan in Press Freedom Index*. January 26, 2012.

<sup>33</sup> Committee to Protect Journalists. 2012. *42 Journalists Killed in Pakistan since 1992/Motive Confirmed*. Accessed from: <http://cpj.org/killed/asia/pakistan/>. Accessed on: February 01, 2012.

<sup>34</sup> International News Safety Institute (INSI). 2011. *Casualties Database*. <http://www.newssafety.org/casualties.php>.

<sup>35</sup> Reporters without Borders. 2009. *World Press Freedom Index 2009*.

<sup>36</sup> Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ). 2010. <http://www.cpj.org/killed/asia/pakistan/>.

line of duty, in Pakistan since the initiation of War against Terror in 2001.<sup>36</sup> What further aggravates the situation is the plight of journalists in border areas of Pakistan and Afghanistan, with their lack of training and unavailability of resources.

Overnight these border areas have become a haven for stringer journalists of international and local media houses. These are freelance journalists, who are being paid on the basis of their published or broadcasted works.

It is pertinent to mention here that journalists not only operating in conflict struck areas, but throughout Pakistan have been targeted. The case of Saleem Shahzad is a prominent example. He was kidnapped on May 29, 2011 from Islamabad, after his reports on alleged links and contacts of Pakistan Navy with Al-Qaeda. His body was found two days later on May 31st in Mandi Bahauddin, Punjab.

The journalists face numerous obstacles apart from the hostile environment. The new-hub remains either Karachi or Islamabad from where most newspapers and TV channels operate from and are not accessible to journalists in conflict zones; neither do the media houses have sufficient knowledge regarding the ground situation. The focus of reporting remains reactionary where viewers/readers are provided with narrative reporting based on eye-witness accounts. The media organizations have not given much attention to the safety and training of their correspondents in these areas, while the journalists are also found complaining for the lack of support extended by their respective media houses. This absence of coordination and trust between the media personnel and their organizations, has only added to the list of problems. The local media houses have been unable to perfect any procedure and provide their reporters with the required resources and guidelines, to operate in conflict zones in Pakistan.

#### 4. Media Map of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has seen the brunt of the conflict, since the beginning of the war on terror, due to the proximity with Afghanistan and the allegiance of certain elements to the Taliban. The extremist militant elements in the province are currently challenging the writ of the government. During the Afghan war with the Soviets, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa served as a staging ground for militants fighting against Russian presence. There was a mass influx of refugees, which also changed the demographics of the area. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is at the forefront of the war on terror and has witnessed violence on unprecedented scale. There were 47 incidents of suicide attacks in 2009, while 26 attacks took place in 2010. The total casualty figures in 2009 remained at above 5,000, which reduced in 2010 but still remained above 1,200.<sup>37</sup> There is also a sectarian element to the conflict, which has emerged due to the radicalization of the society. There were at least 12 major incidents of sectarian violence in the province, in which there were 139 casualties reported.<sup>38</sup>

Since 2002, the province has also seen a growth in media sector, with 24 television and radio stations, although this has been less as compared to the provinces of Sindh and Punjab, where there are at least 36 and 83 television and radio stations respectively.<sup>39</sup> Every major media outlet within the country have their correspondents in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. There are also correspondents belonging to international media organizations based in the province. There are estimated 23 press clubs in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with approximately 974 registered members.<sup>40</sup> In the print media, all major mainstream Urdu and English publications have offices in Khyber

<sup>37</sup> South Asia Terrorism Portal. 2011. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assessment. <http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/pakistan/nwfp/index.html>.

<sup>38</sup> South Asia Terrorism Portal. 2011. Sectarian Violence in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa - 2010. <http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/pakistan/nwfp/datasheet/sectarianviolenceNWFP2010.htm>.

<sup>39</sup> Intermedia. Accessed from: <http://www.intermedia.org.pk/mrc/>. Date of access: January 17, 2012.

<sup>40</sup> Intermedia. Accessed from: <http://www.intermedia.org.pk/details.php?id=ddpc>. Date of access: January 17, 2012.

<sup>41</sup> All Pakistan Newspaper Society (APNS). Accessed from: [http://www.apns.com.pk/member\\_publication/index.php](http://www.apns.com.pk/member_publication/index.php). Date of access: January 18, 2012.

<sup>42</sup> Free Media Essential for Democracy. November 24, 2011. <http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-27206-Free-media-essential-for-democracy-PPF>.

<sup>43</sup> International Media Support. 2009. Between Radicalization and Democratization in an Unfolding Conflict: Media in Pakistan. Denmark.

Pakhtunkhwa, while there is also the presence of local publications in Urdu, English and regional languages. Approximately more than 40 newspapers and publications on daily, weekly and monthly basis are present in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.<sup>41</sup>

According to Pakistan Press Foundation (PPF) report released in November 2011, there have been at least 11 journalists killed in the line of duty in the past ten years.<sup>43</sup> Many of the journalists operating in the conflict areas of Pakistan are mostly uneducated, untrained and are also shopkeepers and teachers, adopting journalism to make a living. The Khyber Union of Journalists (KHUJ) and Tribal Union of Journalists (TUJ) have often voiced their concerns regarding the circumstances under which the journalists of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) and Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) Region operate. In December 2009 the Peshawar Press Club was the target of suicide attack. In spite of these circumstances, the journalists in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and FATA have stood firm in their line of duty.

The magnitude of threat faced by journalists operating in conflict areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is evident through the following cases:<sup>44</sup>

- ✍ Asfandiyar Khan a reporter for the newspaper Akhbar-e Khyber, was killed in a double bombing at Peshawar, on June 11, 2011.
- ✍ Nasrullah Khan Afridi was a reporter for Pakistan Television, the local Mashreq newspaper and President of Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists (PFUJ). He was killed on May 10, 2011, due to remote controlled explosive device planted in his car.
- ✍ Two journalists Pervez Khan of Waqt T.V. and Abdul Wahab of Express News were among 50 people killed in a double-suicide bomb attack at Ghalanai in Mohmand tribal district on December 06, 2010. The journalists were covering a meeting of tribal leaders and government officials in Ghalanai. Mohib Ali, a reporter for a News Network International was also wounded in the attack.
- ✍ Misri Khan, a reporter for Ausaf, Mashriq and also president of the Hangu Union of Journalists, was shot several times as he entered the press club building in Hangu on September 14, 2010. He was a reporter for Urdu-language daily published and was also president of the Hangu Union of Journalists.
- ✍ Behroz Khan is a GEO T.V. Peshawar correspondent. A group of armed men came to Behroz Khan's house in Balo Khan Village, Buner on the night and early morning of July 8 and 9, 2009. His house had already been ransacked a month earlier. The house was destroyed through explosives, after the occupants were brought outside.
- ✍ On July 09, 2009 home of another prominent Buner journalist Rahman Bunairee, Voice of America Deewa Radio reporter and Karachi bureau chief of AVT Khyber Television, was destroyed by unidentified men.
- ✍ Musa Khankhel a reporter for GEO T.V. and The News was targeted, by unidentified men, while covering a peace march led by Sufi Muhammad on February 18, 2009. He suffered multiple gunshot wounds to the torso and back of the head. The journalist had been abducted at gunpoint from the peace march, and that his hands and feet were bound when his body was discovered.

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<sup>41</sup> Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ). Journalists Killed in Pakistan. Accessed from: <http://www.cpj.org/killed/asia/pakistan/>. Date of access: January 18, 2012.

<sup>43</sup> South Asia Terrorism Portal. 2011. Baluchistan Assessment. <http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/pakistan/Balochistan/index.html>.

## 5. Media Map of Baluchistan

The paradigm of conflict in Baluchistan is quite different from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. In Baluchistan the nature of violent conflict is based on nationalist movements, ethnic and sectarian tensions. There is also the element of Taliban and groups affiliated to terrorist organizations such as Al-Qaeda, creating instability in the province. In 2011 fatalities due to violence related incidents were at their highest, reaching an estimated figure of 711.<sup>45</sup> The trend of kidnapping and killings is on the rise, while the ethnic, sectarian and religious minorities are also being extensively targeted. The reasons for abductions range from political disagreement, ethnic background, to extortion of money.

Similar to the situation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the journalists operating in Baluchistan also are ill equipped both in terms of resources and training to carry out their jobs. There are estimated 27 press clubs in the province of Baluchistan, where there are approximately <sup>47</sup> journalists as members.<sup>46</sup> A total of 7 television and radio stations are operating in the province. <sup>47</sup> More than 35 newspapers and publications of English, Urdu and local languages on daily, weekly and monthly basis are being circulated in the province.<sup>48</sup>

The journalists are being victimized at a large scale by both pro and anti-state militant elements and state security agencies. Recently CPJ and IFJ have expressed their concerns over the string of kidnappings and killings of journalists in Baluchistan.<sup>49</sup> The insecurity to life and property has now become part and parcel for a journalist operating in the province. Journalists are either being labeled anti-state or an agent of the state and are being victimized by security agencies and militant groups. According to Baluchistan Union of Journalists (BUJ) 10 journalists have been killed in the province alone in 2011.<sup>50</sup>

The following few cases highlight the scale of threats faced by journalists operating in Baluchistan:<sup>51</sup>

- ✍ Javed Naseer Rind was an editor and columnist with the Urdu-language daily Daily Tawar in Khuzdar. His body was found on November 05, 2011 two months after his abduction.
- ✍ Muneer Shakir wrote for the Online News Network and was a correspondent for the Baluch television station Sabzbaat in Khuzdar, was shot several times and killed by unknown assailants, on August 14, 2011.
- ✍ Abdost Rind, part-time reporter for an Urdu newspaper Daily Eagle, was shot by armed men in Turbat on February 18th 2011.
- ✍ The body of Lala Hameed Baloch, reporter for the Urdu-language Daily Intikhab, was found on November 18, 2010 in Turbat, after his abduction a few days earlier on October 25, 2010.
- ✍ Cameraman Ejaz Raisani of Samaa T.V. died on September 06, 2010 in the hospital of gunshot wounds he suffered three days earlier while covering a rally in Quetta that turned violent in the aftermath of a suicide blast. A suicide bomber detonated explosives aimed at a demonstration, triggering gunfire that killed more than 60 people and left another 185 injured, including several other journalists.
- ✍ Chishti Mujahid a columnist for an Urdu weekly Akhbar-e Jahan, was killed by unidentified assailants in Quetta on February 09, 2008.

From the preceding discussion it is clearly seen that the journalists operating in the provinces of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Baluchistan are facing a considerable threat to their lives. They are being persecuted and the trend instead of diminishing only seems to be rising at an alarming rate.

<sup>45</sup> Intermedia. Accessed from: <http://www.intermedia.org.pk/details.php?id=ddpc>. Date of access: January 17, 2012.

<sup>47</sup> Intermedia. Accessed from: <http://www.intermedia.org.pk/mrc/>. Date of access: January 17, 2012.

<sup>48</sup> All Pakistan Newspaper Society (APNS). Accessed from: [http://www.apns.com.pk/member\\_publication/index.php](http://www.apns.com.pk/member_publication/index.php). Date of access: January 18, 2012.

<sup>49</sup> International Federation of Journalists (IFJ). 2011. <http://www.ifj.org/en/articles/abducted-journalist-found-dead-tortured-in-balochistan>.

<sup>50</sup> 16 Journalists Killed in Baluchistan This Year. November 30, 2011. <http://tribune.com.pk/story/299997/16-journalists-killed-in-pakistan-this-year-report/>.

<sup>51</sup> Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ). Journalists Killed in Pakistan. Accessed from: <http://www.cpj.org/killed/asia/pakistan/>. Date of access:

January 18, 2012.

The expansion of media sector in the past decade has increased its outreach within the public and added to the impact it creates. The conflict which has engulfed Pakistan and particularly these two provinces has also to a great extent affected the working of the media. The journalists and reporters of both international and local media organizations are being labeled by both militants and security agencies. Consequently they are being threatened, coerced or killed. The journalists on the other hand are in need of support and lack proper training to assess and handle the situation.

The above mentioned situation has given rise to the following issues and challenges for the journalist community, operating in conflict areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Baluchistan:

- ✍ Personal safety is the foremost concern of every journalist, as they face constant threat to not only their lives but also the lives of their family.
- ✍ The journalists are not being provided with the basic safety equipment and are extended minimum support by their respective organizations.
- ✍ Due to the absence of support by the organization, the journalists are pressurized by both state and non-state actors.
- ✍ Media personnel working in conflict areas have meager salaries and there is no concept of insurance or any financial assistance to their families.
- ✍ There is no proper training mechanism implemented in Pakistan for the media personnel. Most of the time they learn only through their own experience.
- ✍ Many journalists operating in conflict areas have been unable to develop their contacts and network, which also is a reason they get caught up in security concerns.
- ✍ Many of the media personnel operating in conflict zones have no or little concept of risk assessment, first aid and the appropriate responses in certain situations.

## The Initiative

From the situation mentioned previously, there is a dire need for training of journalists especially reporting from conflict areas in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan, sensitizing them towards conflict sensitive journalism and responsible reporting, while also developing their response mechanism and risk assessment capabilities. We initiated a training program with the support of National Endowment for Democracy (NED), from February 2011 - January 2012 for journalists of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Baluchistan, titled "Training of Print and Electronic Media Journalists on Conflict Sensitive Journalism in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Baluchistan". The initiative was aimed at journalists reporting in conflict areas, enabling them to report in a manner which does not jeopardize their own wellbeing. The target group, were the print and radio journalists who, face numerous challenges in providing accurate and impartial news while in conflict areas.

The project focused upon assisting them to move beyond the "body count" style of war reporting. Conflict reporting entails much more than bloodshed and this has been highlighted in the initiative. Emphasis was given to facilitating the journalists, for drawing attention towards dilemmas faced by the local populace residing in conflict zones, such as plight of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and incorporating their voices in the media.

The basic aim of the project was to focus upon the journalists who are sandwiched between militant organizations and law enforcement agencies, facing numerous challenges in providing accurate and impartial news and are being pulled into the conflict. Both parties want their viewpoints to be highlighted. It is imperative that clear and balanced report can help defuse tension along with keeping journalists safe as well. The project focused at highlighting the core issues such as "What to Report", "How to Report" and "When to Report". The journalists were sensitized on a holistic understanding of conflict reporting and factors that contribute to conflict aggravation.

The core focus was on sensitizing the journalists on a holistic understanding of conflict reporting including but not limited to factors that trigger conflict, factors that contribute to conflict aggravation. The key four pillars of conflict reporting i.e. Conflict Management (CM), Conflict Resolution (CR), Conflict Trigger (CT) and Conflict Contribution (CC) were focused upon.

The reason for the neglect of these areas in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Baluchistan was mostly due to the volatile security situation in the provinces. The security concerns were addressed by Individualland, through developing local connections on the ground and also maintaining a fruitful relationship with the local journalist unions, press clubs and local administration.

Initially in the project a situation analysis and need assessment was carried out by the project team. This was compiled through consultative sessions with senior journalists and subject specialists, who had experience of working in conflict zones. The need assessment encompassed and identified the problems and difficulties faced by the journalists in the current circumstances. The gap in the current standards and the optimal standards of a journalist, working in these conflict areas was also assessed.

The assistance of subject specialists and media personnel was also acquired during the development of the training module, where they were also invited to the pre-test training. The views and suggestions of these subject specialists were accommodated into the project, so as to develop and adopt the optimum course of action, during the project.

A total of 225 (97 in Balochistan and 128 in KPK) journalists, were sensitized in the first phase of the project. Trainings workshop were initially conducted in districts of Peshawar, Charsadda, Mansera, Nowshera, D.I.Khan and Kohat. After the trainings in these areas were completed, seven further districts namely, Nasirabad, Dera Allahyar, Jhal Magsi, Dera Bugti, Jaffarabad, Chaghi and Pishin were included into the project, for the training of journalists. These inclusions were based on the need analysis and the demand of journalists to further enhance the training program. The Quetta training workshop also included participants from district Chaghi, who were invited for the training to Quetta. Similar method was implemented for training in Chaman that also involved journalist from Pishin. The training workshop conducted at Nasirabad involved participants from Dera Alla Yar, Jal Magsi, Dera Bugti and Jafarabad. These forms of training workshops not only added to the capacity of these journalists, but also assisted participants from various districts to interact with their counterparts.

The overall methodology of the sensitization session was participatory and experiential in nature, rather than being a lecture. The sessions employed a variety of techniques and activities to encourage participants to discuss and learn new concepts and skills. The activities revolved around general discussion, interactive presentations, group work, case studies, and practical assignments. The journalists were presented with local case studies on the subject, they were sensitized over risk assessment regarding any assignment and also filing of a news story based on various scenarios.

The journalists were also specifically trained regarding 'first aid' in conflict area. This was done in order to develop the response mechanism of journalists during emergency situations, when a colleague may be in need of medical assistance. Its importance was emphasized by the medical consultant with demonstration of first aid related to conflict zone. A first aid handbook based on the exercises explained during the workshops, was also developed and distributed among the participants. Group activities were performed during the sessions, by the journalists to further elaborate on response mechanism in conflict areas.

Experience sharing sessions were held in Quetta and Peshawar, where a total of 40 journalists participated. These journalists were selected from the initial trainings which were conducted in the province. These sessions also served as a tool for enabling journalists to disseminate, what they learnt from the sensitization sessions and exposure visit among their peers. In addition this presented an opportunity for journalists, to interact with their counterparts from other areas. In the final phase of the initiative fifteen journalists were selected for an exposure visit to Islamabad. They attended the National Media Conference, where they interacted with prominent journalists and subject specialists, invited from throughout the country.

## **Involving Local Administration**

Apart from involving the journalist community, local administration, officials of the police and respective provincial governments, including governors and chief secretaries were also engaged in the project. Letters were dispatched to the government officials during initial phase of the project, where they were requested for their cooperation. This also served as a tool for creation of awareness regarding the project and its objectives within the government machinery. Assistance was also taken of police officials, who were called into the trainings to sensitize the journalists regarding the security situation. The journalists were appraised on the overall security condition, as well as the situation in particular areas. They were also sensitized by these officials, of the potential threats they may have to face.













## Learning

The project is an initial effort towards sensitizing the journalist community on conflict sensitive journalism and identifying the problems of journalists in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Baluchistan. The impact of the activities in the phase of the project was sizeable. Following are the lessons learned by the organization during the phase of the 12 month project:

- ✍ From an early phase of the project, press clubs and journalists unions were actively involved into the project. This ensured interest generation at local level among the journalists and media personnel. This also insured a participation and ownership of the initiative by the journalists, ensuring sustainability. Assistance was also taken from subject specialists and senior journalists to identify the needs.
- ✍ Baluchistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa have remained mainly neglected, due to the difficult accessibility and the deteriorating security situation. IL-Pakistan involved the maximum number of areas into the project. It was for the first time that a training for journalists of Chaman was held in Chaman, rather than inviting journalists to Quetta.
- ✍ The original plan was revised on the basis of need assessment and seven other districts were added into the project namely, Nasirabad, Dera Allahyar, Jhal Magsi, Dera Bugti, Jaffarabad, Chaghi and Pishin. There was an overwhelming demand of the journalists to extend the project further. They were also of the view that Punjab and Sindh should also be included as journalists in those provinces also face considerable threat to their safety.
- ✍ The training modules included practical story review, which assisted the journalists in conflict reporting. The training modules were based and developed over extensive literature review of manuals and reports, interviews and consultative sessions with senior journalists and subject specialists.
- ✍ First aid exercises were also carried out by IL-Pakistan project team professional, which assisted the journalists in responding to incidents. These exercises were included into the training, as part of the development of response mechanism, for the journalists in conflict situations. A first aid handbook was developed for the journalists, which was shared during the sessions. The handbook was based on the first aid measures regarding any unforeseen incident. The assistance of a medical consultant was acquired during the sessions, where he demonstrated the first aid techniques and elaborated their importance in an emergency situation.
- ✍ A liaison was also developed with Red Crescent and some were provided with first aid kits, while their respective organizations were requested to provide them with safety equipment, such as bullet proof vests.
- ✍ The exposure of journalists increased during the trainings and visit to Islamabad, as they came into contact with their counterparts from other areas of not only the province, but from throughout the country. These media personnel also interacted with senior journalists during the exposure visit to Islamabad.
- ✍ Despite a limited budget and overall security situation, IL-Pakistan was able to extend the project, in order to cover seven (7) more districts of Baluchistan namely Nasirabad, Dera Allahyar, Jhal Magsi, Dera Bugti, Jaffarabad, Chaghi and Pishin, due to the overwhelming demands of the journalists.
- ✍ The services of both local and mainstream media were utilized at their utmost level. The project activities were highlighted in both the print and electronic media. This helped IL-Pakistan project team to create an impact also amongst common people, government officials and administration of media houses. The media coverage assisted in creating an echo chamber especially within the provinces.

## Obstacles

During the implementation of the project there were numerous obstacles faced by the organization. It is vital to highlight these challenges so that they can be dealt with in future. Many of the obstacles were not anticipated before the initiation of the project and only came forward during the implementation phase. The challenges faced by the IL-Pakistan in achieving project objectives are listed as below:

- ✍ During the phase of the project, a predicament which the organization was confronted with was the internal differences in press clubs of various areas. These were highlighted during the training phase especially, as in the presence of a rival group the other group did not cooperate or participate in the sessions. At times there are more than one press club in the district, due to differences and rivalries, which created problems for coordination. Similar was the case in districts of Tank and Charsadda, where there were two press clubs in each district. If nomination were accepted from one press club, the members of the other became disappointed and initiated negative publicity regarding the workshop. Journalists of different press clubs are not ready to participate at the same forum. This situation also demands more training workshops at district level.
- ✍ The representation of women in the media is very low in the encompassed provinces. As a result, the participation of females, during the training sessions in these areas remained at a minimum. A total of only two female journalists attended the training workshop in Peshawar. This is mainly due to the fact that females are not encouraged to work in these provinces. In addition career oriented women have been targeted in these areas. Despite this, a maximum effort was made to ensure female representation in the sessions.
- ✍ The journalists in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa expected to be paid attendance allowance, for attending such trainings which has proven to be a problem. Although this is a normal practice conducted by various organizations, but IL-Pakistan considers it to be unethical. This created hurdles in the participation of journalists, in training sessions.
- ✍ The security situation in both the provinces proved to be a hindrance during the project, as the encompassed areas have been engulfed in conflict, for the past decade. This was not only a concern for the project team, but as the basic theme of the project suggests, was one of the basic problem for journalists.
- ✍ The journalists in the project specific areas were concerned for their security and lack of safety equipment. As a result, they demanded the organization for providing them with first aid tools and safety equipment, such as bullet proof jackets, which was not part of the objective.
- ✍ The limited budget proved to be a challenge, when the overwhelming demand came from media personnel to extend the project to further districts. It was repeatedly stressed by the journalists that the trainings should not only be extended to certain districts, but also to the provinces of Sindh and Punjab, as journalists are also facing threats in those areas.

## Observations

There was a detailed interaction of IL-Pakistan with the media and journalist community in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Baluchistan during the project, where they presented their views on the prevalent situation. The observations, which IL-Pakistan came across during the implementation of the project, should be looked into while going forward. These have been listed as following:

- ✍ The journalists in most of the sessions raised the issues of job security, personal risks, lack of resources, meager salaries and absence of training as their main concerns. A journalist pointed out that "A Camera is insured but the cameraman is not". Journalists operating in conflict areas do not even have a bullet proof jacket and many shared their experiences, where they were caught in a cross fire. The media personnel operating in conflict areas do not have any safety equipment with them and also do not have any guidelines from their respective media houses.

- ✍ The journalists in these areas have no networking, which is one of the reasons they get entangled in security concerns. They resolve every issue through the tribal system, prevalent in the provinces of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Baluchistan.
- ✍ Recently CPJ and IFJ have expressed their concerns over the string of kidnappings and killing of journalists in Baluchistan. The incidents have mostly taken place in the district of Khuzdar. Recently, senior journalists while speaking at an event in Quetta Press Club also declared Baluchistan as the most dangerous place for journalists. Although the organization encompassed various parts of Baluchistan into the project, which had previously been neglected, but in the current project Khuzdar was not engaged. It is hoped that in future more focus will be given to that particular district.
- ✍ There is also a need for sustained engagement with the journalists on the ground, so that their problems and limitations can be highlighted. A constant approach will also further strengthen the already effective relationship of the organization with the local journalists.
- ✍ The media organizations provide little or no training to journalists and media personnel working in conflict struck areas. These journalists only learn through experience and that too at considerable risk to their lives. There is a pertinent need for the implementation of a proper training mechanism.
- ✍ The media outlet owners and their associations, such as All Pakistan Newspapers Society (APNS) and Council of Pakistan Newspaper Editors (CPNE) etc. have verbally admitted to the absence of any mechanism, to deal with predicaments faced by journalists, especially those who report from conflict areas. It is important that these associations have to be engaged and for the highlighting of the predicaments faced by the journalists.

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It was for the first time that such an initiative was launched, especially in Baluchistan where trainings were arranged for journalists, in districts previously ignored. A total of sixteen districts from Baluchistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were covered, during nine training sessions.</li> <li>• Extensive media coverage, was given to the various activities, leading to heightened awareness in both provinces, regarding the importance of conflict sensitive journalism and the issues faced by the journalist community.</li> <li>• Due to contacts established through journalist unions and press clubs at local level, the organization was able to access and conduct activities in previously ignored areas, due to security reasons and inaccessibility.</li> <li>• The organization developed and broadened its outreach by interacting with journalists, press clubs and unions in major areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Baluchistan.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being a 12 months long project, we did not have enough time to capitalize on the supplementary opportunities.</li> <li>• The media owners and management hierarchy were not encompassed in the current project. As the journalists had reservations over the policies of the respective media houses and there is a presence of communication gap.</li> <li>• The limited budget proved to be a challenge, when the overwhelming demand came from media personnel to extend the project to further districts.</li> </ul>

Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is growing interest and awareness in the journalist community, regarding conflict sensitive journalism.</li> <li>• During the project, realizing the potential of the trainings, the journalists demanded for the trainings to be extended to other parts of the province and preferably throughout the country, even in Sindh and Punjab.</li> <li>• Feedback and discussion over our work, with media houses, their management and owners, will not only highlight the problems faced by journalists, but will also assist in understanding the situation on the ground.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internal differences among rival press clubs can create hindrances, which should be avoided.</li> <li>• The security situation in the two provinces is a major problem in accessing certain areas.</li> <li>• The journalists in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, expected to be paid a stipend for attending the trainings, as other organizations are following this practice, which is considered unethical.</li> </ul>
<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>

## Conclusion

Although the media scenario in Pakistan has become vibrant over the past decade and the media has also gained considerable freedom, but now journalists and media personnel are facing new predicaments. Due to the mushroom growth of media houses and organizations of both print and electronic, there has also been an increase in the number of media personnel, but little focus has been given to the training and safety of the journalists, carrying out duties under unfavorable environment. This issue needs to be highlighted, as the journalists are at a considerable risk. They have been pulled into the conflict by the opposing quarters, which include both state and non-state actors. This is due to the realization by conflicting parties for the importance of the media in the prevalent scenario. Two more factors which also contribute to their problems is the inexperience of journalists and the pressures by media houses for deliverables. Instead of being recognized as observers and reporters, they are now being labeled for being aligned to one side or another.

It is important for journalists to stay unbiased and remain to the facts, while reporting in a conflict zone. As also mentioned earlier the role of media is to provide accurate information to the public, leaving it to the citizens to form an educated opinion on the news provided. The journalists have to remain extra careful in a conflict zone, as any mistake will lead not only endangering their own lives, but also of their family and colleagues. It is also imperative that journalists should also grasp the cultural and social sensitivities of the local area, before stepping into the assignment.

In our experience with the journalists of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Baluchistan, it was observed that they have little or no knowledge of conflict sensitive journalism, nor have they developed any response mechanism regarding the situations that they could face during field assignments. Besides these there is apparent communication gap between the journalists and reporters with their respective media organizations.

There is little or no support in equipment, financial or any other aspect, extended to these media personnel by the organizations. One point which left its impression over the entire initiative was that "The camera is insured, but the cameraman is not." This might summarize the entire situation which is faced by the journalists while reporting, not only in conflict areas but throughout Pakistan.

The media personnel first will have to remove the differences among their own community, if any progress has to be made. The conflict of interests within the journalist community is also a predicament, which has to be addressed. The journalists themselves are well aware of the problems they face, but also require support from their respective organizations to overcome them. It is important that the administration and owners of media houses should also be taken along in any further initiative, so a mechanism can be developed to deal with the difficulties faced by media personnel, especially in conflict zones of Pakistan.

## **Activities during the Project**

Since the inception report of the project, various activities were undertaken to sensitize the journalists of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Baluchistan to achieve the project objectives. The activities also raised numerous challenges for the IL-Pakistan project team which will be discussed in the report later. The progress since the inception till the conclusion of this project is described here for your knowledge in the sequence taken place:

### **1. Literature Review**

An exhaustive literature review was carried out to develop an understanding of the situation. The literature review focused on training manuals from within Pakistan and different parts of the world. Over a total of thirty manuals were studied to understand conflict sensitive journalism and its importance for a journalist in the Pakistani context. The literature review allowed the IL-Pakistan project team to acquire a contextual understanding for the project objectives. It also provided a regional perspective on journalist trainings and important components of conflict sensitive journalism.

### **2. Situation Analysis Report (SAR)**

The next step in achieving project objective was the compilation of a comprehensive situation analysis report (SAR). SAR was compiled with the help of consultative sessions with senior journalists and subject specialists, who had years of reporting experience in conflict areas. SAR has allowed the IL-Pakistan project team to comprehend the ground realities faced by journalists in conflict areas, apart from violence related situations. A thorough need assessment was also carried out, regarding the problems and difficulties faced by the journalists in the current circumstances. In addition to this, the gap in the current standards and the optimal standard of a journalist, working in these conflict areas was also assessed by IL-Pakistan project team.

### **3. Dispatch of Letters**

Letters were dispatched to senior journalists, press clubs, journalist unions, governors, chief secretaries and police officials in the encompassed provinces, informing them of the project and requesting for cooperation to achieve project objectives. The press clubs and journalists unions such as Tribal Union of Journalists (TUJ) and Khyber Union of Journalists (KHUJ) were also requested for assistance in nominations for the training sessions. Feedback was received from the stakeholders and documented.

### **4. Meetings and Consultative Sessions**

The IL-Pakistan project team had meetings with Mr. Altaf Ullah Khan, Chairman of Journalism Department in Peshawar University and Mr. Malik Safdar Dawar, President Tribal Union of Journalists Peshawar. The feedback of various senior journalists was incorporated in developing a comprehensive training module for conflict area journalists. Consultative meeting with senior journalists was held on February 14, 2011. The meeting aimed to attain the opinions of the participants on the basis of their experience in the field.

## 5. Development of Training Module

The major components and findings from literature review, interviews and consultative sessions with senior journalists and subject specialists were extracted and incorporated to devise an exemplary training module I. The TM devised was considered ideal for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Baluchistan journalists, as it solely focused upon conflict regarding issues in this specific region. The overall methodology of the module was participatory and experiential in nature. The module employed a variety of techniques as part of its activities to encourage participants to discuss and learn new concepts and skills. The main techniques used were interactive presentations, brainstorming, group work, case studies, world café and concept clarification through short lectures.

## 6. Pre-test Training

A pre-test training session was successfully held in Peshawar on 15th - 16th February, 2011. This was to ensure that the module is comprehensible. Mr. Iqbal Khattak, a senior journalist was the lead trainer for the pre-test training who successfully explained the local perspective regarding journalists in conflict areas. The trainer made maximum use of the module in highlighting the complexity of the job in conflict zone and measures to minimize conflict through reporting.

The pre-test training session explained 'Journalism' as a subject in conflict zones. A video was also shown to the participants relevant to international standards of journalism as benchmark to be achieved. The notion of protection to a journalist just like a soldier is armored in war was emphasized. The lives of both are equally important and the participants unanimously agreed. Mr. Iqbal stressed on the notion that a journalist must be secure for reporting in conflict zone. The comparison of an armored journalist was done with a freelance journalist and how tragedy can occur if right measures are not taken by the journalist in conflict zone.

## 7. Training of Journalists

The next step that was successfully taken in the project was the selection of the training groups. This encompassed the nomination of journalists from local press clubs who would attend the training workshops. The training groups were successfully selected after consultations with The Khyber Union of Journalists (KHUJ) and Tribal Union of Journalists (TUJ) and other local press clubs. The first round of nine trainings sessions were successfully conducted in designated districts of the three categories i.e. Urban Centers, Semi-Urban Centers and the Rural Areas. Each session comprised of 20 - 25 participants on average and a total of 225 journalists (97 Baluchistan and 128 Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) were trained. During these sessions, the participants were sensitized according to the project objectives. The participants were also given the hand-book exercises and TM booklet which would further help them in learning about conflict sensitive journalism. The local language of Pushto and Balochi were also used on some instances where required to convey the message more effectively.

The first training workshop was conducted on 11th April 2011, at Quetta. Print and radio journalists attended the training workshop and the lead trainer was senior journalist Mr. Shahzada Zulfiqar. He focused upon enabling journalists to report on conflict constructively and in a manner which does not jeopardize their own well-being. This was done through the TM developed in previous months of project.

The border area journalists were sensitized towards what to report, how to report and when to report in the workshop. Similar to this training, rest of the workshops were also successfully conducted. The trainings concluded on 13th June 2011, the last session was held at Nasirabad.

#### **8. Experience Sharing Session in Quetta**

The first experience sharing session was held in Quetta for the journalists trained in Baluchistan on 18th - 19th September 2011. A total of 17 journalists from various districts of Baluchistan including Quetta, Nasirabad, Jaffarabad, Chaman, Qila Abdullah, Pishin, Noshki, Mastung, Khuzdar and Sibbi attended the sessions.

#### **9. Experience Sharing Session in Peshawar**

The next follow-up session for journalists was held in Peshawar on 10th - 11th October 2011. A total of 23 journalists from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa participated in the session. Media personnel from Peshawar, Mardan, Charsada, Swat, Nowshera, D.I. Khan, Kohat and Tank participated in the sessions.

#### **10. Development of First Aid Handbook**

A first aid handbook was developed for the journalists working in conflict areas, which was also shared with the media personnel attending the sessions. The handbook was based on the trainings regarding first aid after any unforeseen incident, imparted during the sessions. This material was also developed on the basis of need assessment and demands by journalists.

#### **11. Selection for the Exposure Visit**

To enhance the capabilities of media personnel in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Baluchistan, especially in the conflict areas, IL-Pakistan arranged an exposure visit to Islamabad in November 2011. For this purpose a total of 15 journalists were selected out of 40, who attended the second phase sessions. The envisaged objectives for the visit were to provide these media personnel with the opportunity to hold interactive sessions with senior journalists and contribute in discussions on various issues facing the media in Pakistan.

#### **12. Exposure Visit to Islamabad**

Thirteen journalists belonging to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Baluchistan, who had attended the earlier training sessions and the experience sharing sessions were invited for a three day exposure visit to Islamabad from 24th - 26th November 2011. They attended the National Media Conference arranged by IL-Pakistan, titled "Pakistan's Media: Present and Future" on 25th - 26th November, 2011. Prominent journalists and subject specialists from throughout Pakistan had also been invited at the conference to share their experiences and give their insight on various topics. A way forward was also devised during the conference to address the challenges discussed during the sessions. The media conference revolved around five major themes, including Citizens' Media Space Vs Commercial Space, Dissecting the Jihadi/Militant Media, Gender and Media, Challenges for Working Journalists and Tools for Responsible Reporting.

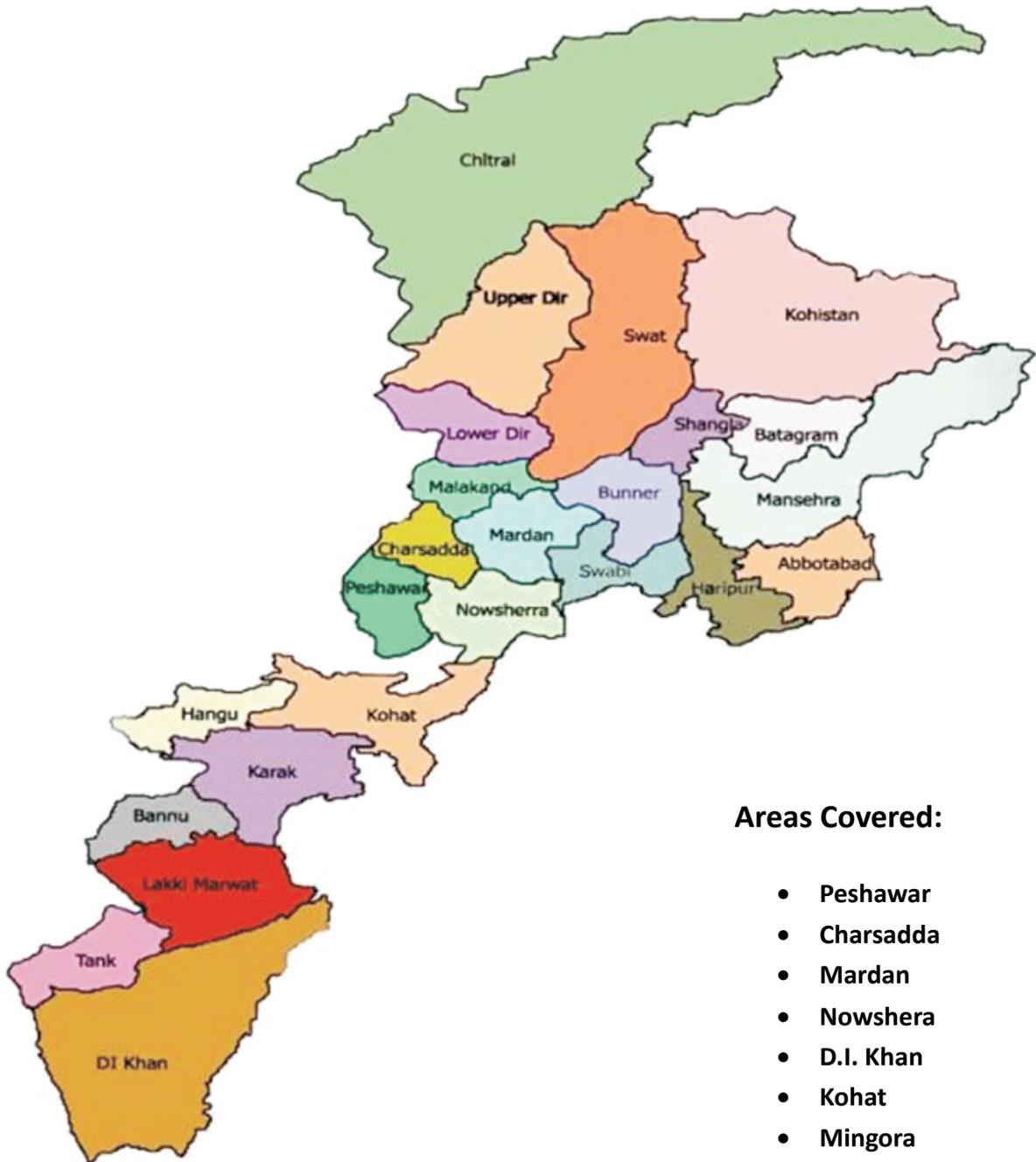
Shahzada Zulfiqar (Senior Journalist), Umar Cheema (The News), Saif ul-Islam Saifi (Peshawar Press Club), Mazhar Arif (Society for Alternative Media and Research), Wajahat Masood (Senior Journalist), Aniq Zafar (Communication Research Strategies), Adnan Rehmat (Internews), Dr. Samina Ahmed (International Crisis Group), Simi Kamal (Gender Equity Program), Ghazi Salahuddin (Jang Group) Absar Alam (Aaj TV) and Amir Rana (Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies) participated in these sessions. Besides these there were over a hundred journalists, from across the country who attended the sessions. The selected journalists from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Baluchistan were provided with the opportunity to interact with the senior journalists and subject specialists, while not only learning from their experience, but also sharing their viewpoint.

### **Schedule of Trainings**

A total of nine (9) trainings and two (2) experience sharing sessions on conflict sensitive journalism were held for the journalists, in sixteen (16) districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Baluchistan:

- ✍ Training Workshop on Conflict Sensitive Journalism: 11th April 2011, Lourdes Hotel Quetta
- ✍ Training Workshop on Conflict Sensitive Journalism: 11th May 2011, Press Club Peshawar
- ✍ Training Workshop on Conflict Sensitive Journalism: 12th May 2011, Town Hall Charsadda
- ✍ Training Workshop on Conflict Sensitive Journalism: 15th May 2011, Press Club Mansehra
- ✍ Training Workshop on Conflict Sensitive Journalism: 22nd May 2011, Press Club Nowshera
- ✍ Training Workshop on Conflict Sensitive Journalism: 30th May 2011, Gomal University D.I. Khan
- ✍ Training Workshop on Conflict Sensitive Journalism: 01st June 2011, Press Club Chaman
- ✍ Training Workshop on Conflict Sensitive Journalism: 05th June 2011, City Lodge Kohat
- ✍ Training Workshop on Conflict Sensitive Journalism: 13th June 2011, Nasirabad
- ✍ Experience Sharing Session: September 18th - 19th 2011, Lourdes Hotel Quetta
- ✍ Experience Sharing Session: October 10th - 11th 2011, Shelton House Peshawar
- ✍ Exposure Visit: November 24th - 26th 2011, Islamabad

**Map of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa**



**Areas Covered:**

- Peshawar
- Charsadda
- Mardan
- Nowshera
- D.I. Khan
- Kohat
- Mingora
- Mansehra
- Tank
- Upper Dir
- Buner

## Map of Baluchistan



### Areas Covered:

- Quetta
- Gwadar
- Turbat
- Chaman
- Nasirabad
- Dera Allahyar
- Jhal Magsi
- Dera Bugti
- Jaffarabad
- Chaghi
- Pishin



صحافیوں کی تربیت کیلئے پائلٹ پراجیکٹ شروع کرینگے گل بند

پشاور: صحافیوں کی تربیت کیلئے پائلٹ پراجیکٹ شروع کرینگے گل بند

پشاور: صحافیوں کی تربیت کیلئے پائلٹ پراجیکٹ شروع کرینگے گل بند

پشاور: صحافیوں کی تربیت کیلئے پائلٹ پراجیکٹ شروع کرینگے گل بند

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## Training workshop for journalists

CHARSADDA, May 12: A training workshop on conflict sensitive journalism was held here on Thursday. Individualland Pakistan, an NGO, in collaboration with Muhammadzai Union of Journalists, had organised the workshop in TMA Hall.

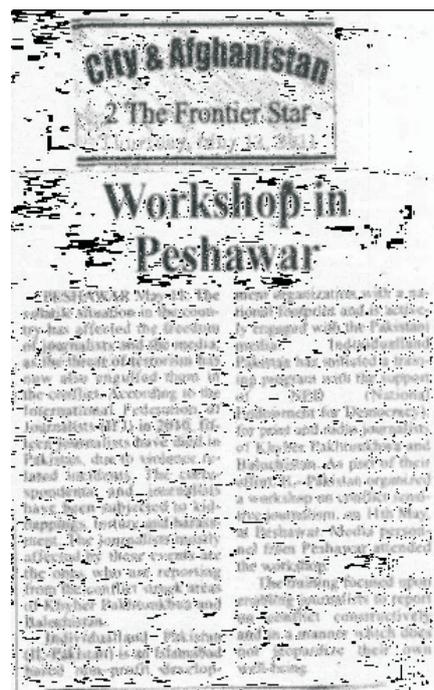
Individualland coordinator Shaukat Ali and senior journalist Iqbal Khattak threw light on the conflict sensitive reporting in the prevailing law and order situation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Other speakers said doing journalism in present circumstances was not an easy task, adding, despite all odds the journalists were performing their job at the risk of their lives and properties. They said since 2002 about 40 journalists had been brutally killed and scores of others wounded.

The workshop was aimed to impart training to newsmen on how to protect themselves during reporting the events in conflict zones. They called upon the government and print and electronic media institutions to take measures for ensuring safety to newsmen.











**Individualland creates choices! As an innovative research-based consultancy and advocacy group we open up space for the individual. Our focus is the role of the media and to generate a peaceful discourse in society. We are working to increase the number of responsible journalists, media-literacy among citizens and a greater acceptance for different ways to live.**