



# Voices from FATA

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## Editorial

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### **A deepening crisis in Waziristan: military operation & displacement**

With continuing suicide attacks in cities of Pakistan on civilians, and offensive against the military, police, and government installations, the Pakistani government and military were compelled to send troops to South Waziristan to fight Hakimullah Mehsud, the new supreme leader of the Tehrik-e-Taliban Movement Pakistan (TTP).

Although the Pakistan government has been launching such punitive military campaigns since 2004, it has yet to extend its writ in the troubled Waziristan agencies of the tribal areas. After four unsuccessful military operations since 2004, the Pakistani military was compelled to reach to some kind of cease fire agreement with the Taliban.

Frustrated with the ongoing suicide attacks and seriously counting on this military operation against Taliban in the Waziristan, the public is waiting for some respite. Judging from its success in Swat and having the US support on its side, the People's Party government has been successful in molding general public opinion against the Taliban. The Pakistan military has clearly communicated that the operation will be confined only to South Waziristan and against the TTP of Hakimullah Mehsud, sidelining the other three Taliban militant commanders; Molvi Nazir, Gul Bahadar and Haqqani.

The use of heavy artillery and aerial support through F-16 jet fighters and Cobra gunship helicopters has forced over 200,000 people to flee their homes and seek refuge in the nearby districts of D.I Khan, Bannu and Tank, creating another humanitarian crisis, and compelling the government, United Nations and the international community to respond. While thousands have fled South Waziristan, the most underdeveloped agency in FATA, many innocent civilians are dying in the crossfire. Destruction and demolition of the already sparse infrastructure is also generating hatred within

the young population against military and the state of Pakistan.

The government and the international community should take immediate actions to respond to the humanitarian crisis: the internally displaced should be provided with health facilities, education, nutrition, protection and security, so they can live with honour and dignity until it is safe for them to return home. The host communities who are sharing the burden of the displaced should also be supported through relief packages.

As for South Waziristan, the government should announce a special compensation package after conducting a detailed assessment of the damage done to the local population and infrastructure. The young population should be given employment opportunities, engaging them in respectable and productive work. Development schemes, education and health services should be strengthened so that the social indicators could be improved to some degree. Families of those killed or injured during the operation by either party, should be compensated in order to prevent revenge and hatred against the state of Pakistan.

These continuous punitive actions in the tribal areas against the tribesmen have created a sense of deprivation and alienation, exposing disturbing issues. The coming weeks will reveal whether sending troops to South Waziristan was a wise decision. However now is the right time for the Government to start planning for the displaced, and the post-operation period.

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## COMMUNITIES FOR CHANGE:

Laying the Grassroots Foundation for Political Reform in FATA

### News from the field

#### CBOs Identification/ selection

Following the work plan of the project, the field teams successfully achieved the task of selecting the required number of CBOs in their respective agencies by the third week of October 2009. The total number of agencies selected for the project are 102.

As highlighted in previous issues of this Newsletter, these grassroots organizations will be strengthened through extensive training so that they are able to assert and protect the social, political and economic rights of the people of FATA. CAMP's identification process was based on a checklist, which included that the CBO should have a proper set up, proper documentation record, audit report (of completed projects), executive and general body meeting minutes record etc.

##### **Khyber Agency:**

By the month of October, the team identified 37 CBOs, out of which 16 CBOs were selected in tehsil Landikotal, 14 in Jamrud and 7 in tehsil Bara. Due to military operation in tehsil Bara it was not possible for the team to visit the area and hold meetings with the local CBOs. However the team looked for other options and after contacting the CBOs in Bara, they held meetings with them in Peshawar.

##### **Mohmand Agency:**

In Mohmand Agency, the team changed its strategy in October and focused more on tehsil Pandyalai, and Khweza Beza, keeping in mind the mapping exercise. However, the team was unable to work in tehsil Lakkarai due to the increasing Taliban influence in the area and threats to social organizations.

Village meetings were held to get information about the existing CBOs and the team identified and selected 35 CBOs. Out of these 35 CBOs, 11 are in tehsil Ghallanai, 9 in Ekka Ghund, 9 in Parang Ghar, 3 in Khweza Beza, 2 in Padyalai and 1 in sub tehsil Safi.

##### **Kurram Agency:**

In Kurram, the field team



had to focus more on forming new CBOs since there are few existing CBOs; moreover, these are generally loosely structured with limited scope and access to a few households rather than the larger community. The team re-structured eight existing organizations and formed 22 new organizations. The team covered the areas of upper and lower kurram; selecting 23 and 7 CBOs in the areas respectively.

##### **Informal training sessions**

After achieving the target of CBOs identification/selection by the third week of October 2009, the teams started an informal training session programme for selected CBOs in their respective agencies. The objective of conducting these sessions is to strengthen the network with CBOs and to provide them basic information



about CBO management, functions, administration and leadership. The field teams have established a very good rapport with the social organizations in the agencies and the locals are appreciating their efforts.

The Kurram Agency team conducted 6 trainings with 5 CBOs in the Kurram Agency office.

In Mohmand, the team conducted 2 training sessions where representatives from 6 CBOs attended. The number of participants in the training with Ekka Ghund was 20 and with Ghallanai was 22.

### IEC material

Development of information, education and communication material is one of the key activities of the Project, through which CBOs will be made aware of thematic areas. The IEC material will also be used as visibility material for the CBOs working with the Project. Although ideas for IEC material were discussed in the inter staff meetings since the beginning of the Project, a formal meeting to initiate the process was held in the second week of October at CAMP office in Peshawar. It was agreed that since most of the CBO representatives have basic education, the material developed should be more visual rather than textual, making it simpler for CBOs and communities to understand.

The strategy for the IEC material is to include both Islamic and western concept of human rights, democracy and good governance, peace and security. Based on the objectives of the Project, print material will include yearly planners, calendars and diaries.

IEC material for the calendar will be based on themes of conflict resolution, peace and security, democracy and governance. The concept of fundamental human rights from Islam (the last address of Holy Prophet), UDHR and Pakistani Law (Constitution of Pakistan) will be presented in the diary. On the planners, photographs of field activities would be depicted.

For the electronic media, a short documentary film will be produced (15-20 minutes), showing the work of local CBOs that have grown from a small grassroots organization. The organizations selected for the documentary will be presented as role models for other CBOs or village based organizations.

### Challenges

In Mohmand Agency due to threats and out of fear of terrorist attacks, the locals usually avoid public gatherings, particularly those organized by social organizations. The field team continues to work closely



with locals to ensure that they understand the objective of the Project and willingly attend any meetings.

The Kurram team continued to face difficulties in traveling to Peshawar to attend project meetings. It was decided by the Project management that Kurram staff will be facilitated to travel by air for important events and meetings.

### What is Talibanization?

In a survey conducted in 2007, responding to a question on 'what is talibanization', 20.5% of the respondents thought the Taliban are madrassah students, while 16.3% believed that the Taliban are trying to introduce Islamic Shariah in the tribal areas. 8.7% considered the Taliban as Jihadis and the largest single group of 20.6% out of 1050 respondents, did not know the answer, or were reluctant to answer.

### Maintenance of law and order

In response to a question regarding maintenance of law and order in FATA, from 1050 people, 45% of the respondents believed that the solution to the currently grave situation of law and order was the introduction of Islamic/Shariat Laws in the FATA. While 36% still believed that Ulasi/Wolasi Jirga was the only solution to maintaining law and order in these areas. 13% of the respondents favoured Pakistani Laws being extended to the FATA Regions. Only 3% still favoured the notorious FCR, while 3% were undecided.

## An open discussion on FCR Amendments

Reported by: Asad Ali

Qabaili Pohan, the auxiliary of CAMP organized a one-day consultation on 19 October 2009 to discuss the “Pro-people” amendments announced on 14th of August 2009 by the President of Pakistan. The group included elders, intellectuals, legal experts, NGOs representatives and the journalist community who discussed in length the recent amendments.

Following is a summary of recommendations from the discussion, (which are not necessarily the views of CAMP).

### Legal Reforms (setting up of FATA Tribunal):

The appointment of the judges for the FATA Tribunal should be made on the pattern of Supreme and High Court, keeping in consideration the needs of the FATA people. A retired judge can neither help nor deliver speedy and easy justice to the people of FATA.

“Probation and Offender Ordinance” should also be extended and a Probation Officer should be deployed in FATA.

For legal reforms there should be a separate judicial system and for appeals and other related matters there should be a High Court.

### Extension of Political Parties Act 2002 to FATA:

The Political Parties Act 2002 should be extended to FATA immediately and political education should be imparted in parallel, giving the people of FATA enough time to prepare themselves. With the freedom of political activity, political activists will also get organized and the political leaders will be compelled to realize their responsibilities, which they do not realize at present.

FATA should be divided into constituencies, e.g. one agency can be divided into 5 constituencies, which would result in the election of 5 MPAs. These 5 MPAs would be responsible for the development of their respective constituencies. This would also ensure that funds are utilized properly.

### FATA Council:

Instead of political parties the state should constitute an independent and elected FATA Council through which all the reforms should be made. Even the fund that is provided for FATA by the foreign countries should be



spent through the proposed FATA Council.

This Council can take the shape of a provincial assembly and must be elected through adult franchise. The development funds and development schemes should be utilized and implemented on the recommendation of the elected FATA Council.

### Powers of Political Agent:

The group recommended that judicial and administrative powers of the political agent should be separated, and the PA's powers should be conferred to the public representatives.

### Media:

The PEMRA ordinance should be extended to FATA so that the tribesmen are able to establish private TV channels and work under the law. In the absence of any such ordinance there are several illegal FM radio channels functioning in tribal areas. The extension of the PEMRA (Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority) would also enable people to publish local newspapers or periodicals.

### Peace and Security:

The funds that provided for FATA must be spent on peace building efforts.

Like Gilgit-Baltistan, FATA should also be given status of a separate province.

For the practical implementation of present Amendments a consultation should be organized with the representatives of all political parties and social organizations, for representation in the policy making institutions.