

# Improving access to information in conflict-affected areas: Supporting quality journalism, improving safety and the psychological wellbeing of journalists in Pakistan

External Evaluation Report | Executive Summary  
**Pakistan**

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## Background

Pakistan enjoys a high level of media diversity, particularly due to the government liberalizing the electronic media in a watershed legislation in 2002. Reporters without Borders' press freedom ranking places Pakistan at 147 out of 180 countries. Journalists live extremely dangerously, facing constant threats, abuse, and direct attacks from many sides. Many journalists practice self-censorship in light of Pakistan's code of conduct that the Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) passed for radio and television journalists. Also, a broad interpretation of the country's "national interests" as well as blasphemy laws force journalists to practice self-censorship. Amnesty International (AI) criticizes Pakistani media organizations for not protecting their journalists. And in the troubled rural provinces Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), Beluchistan, as well as the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), people are solely dependent on information provided by local radio stations.

DW Akademie's project in Pakistan supports associations of journalists and editors to create continuing education

programs on ethical standards, psychological risks, as well as physical and mental safety at media outlets (project line 1). Trauma centers at the University of Peshawar (UoP) and the University of Baluchistan (UoB) are offering journalists counseling on psychological risks in addition to therapy (project line 1). The curriculum of journalism programs at universities in troubled provinces KP and Beluchistan are expanded and graduates should apply this knowledge in the professional sphere (project line 2). Radio networks in KP, Beluchistan, and FATA should support their local affiliates to encourage their listeners to take part in 'Participatory Information Programmes' (PIPS) (project line 3).

The evaluation is based on the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria as well as the criterion 'Quality of Management'. DW Akademie has chosen a theory-based evaluation design for the evaluation of the projects in Pakistan by the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). The BMZ requires an impartial assessment that the project has achieved the intended results. Theory based design focuses on program theory, specifically change theory,

and action theory. Contribution analysis was chosen for the method approach, which is six steps based on the following questions: Did intended and unintended results occur? If so, how did the project contribute? To what extent did external factors influence the achievement of goals, both in inhibiting and promoting results? What alternative patterns of explanation could there be for visible changes? To compliment this approach, in accordance with DW Akademie criteria, the OECD/DAC criteria relevance, effectivity, sustainability, and the assessment of the quality of management assessment dimensions were adopted. The evaluation examines the project activities between 2015 to 2017. Besides the review of the activities that have already been implemented, an assessment of the possible remaining future activities from April to December 2017 is also made.

The objective of this evaluation, which was carried out by an external consultant, is to provide a constructive assessment of the project's results. The recommendations made at the end do not necessarily align with the perspective and planning of the project team. Nevertheless, all suggestions were discussed in order to allow lessons learned to be incorporated into the development of future strategies.

### Conclusions of the project evaluation

The project leaders identified the relevant target groups and aimed at solving the core problems. During the course of the project there were changes to the general framework. This had only limited influence on the strategic orientation of the project. The criterion **relevance** is judged to be "comprehensively fulfilled."

The purpose of the project is on the whole coherent. The objectives of project lines 1 and 3 are on track and will be fulfilled by the end of the project's term. The objectives of project line 2 are now considered to be too ambitious and they will not be reached by year's end. The objective indicators either do not meet the SMART-criteria or do so only partially. They are, therefore, only not wholly suitable as a basis of evaluation. Unintended negative effects were not observed. The criterion **effectivity** is assessed to be "generally fulfilled."

With regard to content, the project appears to contribute to long-term national goals of DW Akademie and the project partner. The evaluation takes into account that no overall goal has been defined in the logical framework. Therefore, impact is not something that was explicitly laid out in the conception of the project nevermind the prediction at this early stage of long-term effects. In addition, based on the

financial and personnel resources at its disposal, DW Akademie has limited influence on Pakistani groups that are discriminated against or on the country's media scene as a whole. Due to these points, the criterion **impact** is judged to be "partially fulfilled."

From the financial perspective, there were no alternative approaches that would have been more cost-efficient for the measures taken. For the effects achieved, the financial costs are justified. Almost without exception, DW Akademie hired project partners from Pakistan who did the majority of the work. The criterion **efficiency** was rated to be "comprehensively fulfilled."

In concordance with the project's strategy, partners took on responsibility in terms of ownership from the start. Most of the measures have been institutionalized. It can be assumed that the partners will to some extent continue to carry out the measures after the project's financing comes to an end. The projects have also been, for the most part, conceived in a way that sustainability is embedded and should be achieved. Due to the project's conceptualization and implementation, the criterion **sustainability** is rated to be "comprehensively fulfilled."

From the beginning, the project had solid, up-to-date data analysis and information to work with. Cooperative efforts were to a great extent adapted to the needs and facilities of the partners. As a rule, the project partners were ready to take on the institutional changes required. However, the administrative costs are considered to be disproportionately high for the benefits achieved. The project, nevertheless, was able to take on the challenge of dealing with a disproportionately complex system of cause and effect for its relatively small size. It managed this thanks to a well-structured and innovative monitoring system. The **quality of management** criterion is considered to be "generally fulfilled."

Unintended negative effects were not observed in the evaluation period (do no harm). It should be mentioned that the project quite intentionally counteracted the danger of negative effects on the individual level. This was done through a combination of prevention measures and counseling services, e.g., the Competence Centre for Journalists (CTCJ) and the 'Help Line' of the Council of Pakistan Newspaper Editors.

## Key Recommendations

1. The project partners were allowed sufficient room to maneuver, but the logic of this did not allow them sufficiently to cooperate. For the follow-up project, the development of the program theory and choice and formulation of indicators should be such that participative processes can be created.
2. When extending the project, it is recommended to reduce the complexity of the system of objectives and the indicators should correspond with the SMART quality criteria. Furthermore, it is recommended in the follow-up proposal, to reflect on the logic of the effects (allocation efficiency) of the institutional capacity structure of the project partners.
3. An overall objective should be integrated into the logframe to highlight the intended impact of the project.
4. The workload of the project management personnel in the field of administration should be assessed realistically. In this way, any cross-financing by other areas or projects can also be avoided.
5. An external organizational consultancy might be considered with the aim of making administrative procedures more efficient.
6. The project partners submitted a number of ideas and proposals for the content conception of the follow-up project, which should be examined by the country management team in the planning of the follow-up project: It was suggested to address bloggers and columnists as target groups and refer to the crises of Sindh and the involvement of religious minorities of Hindus and Christians, which are underrepresented in the media (Media House Islamabad (MHI), CPNE). As the advisory model and the developed materials are to be gradually adopted by media houses, the synergy effects between the CTCJ and the CPNE/MHI should be exploited to a greater extent. The possibility of outpatient and clinical transfer to psychiatric psychiatrists and psychiatrists for sick journalists, which the CPNE has already established together with the charity organization Basic Needs, requires more development for CTCJ. The MHI recommends that students take part in university lectures interdisciplinarily. Students of the specialized departments of law, political science, peace research and gender studies could be integrated. A cooperation at the districts with universities of applied sciences using the Training of Trainers (ToT) approach is also suggested.

## DW Akademie

DW Akademie is Germany's leading organization for media development and Deutsche Welle's center of excellence for education and knowledge transfer. As a strategic partner of Germany's Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development we strengthen the universal human rights of free expression, education, and access to information.

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