Women Leadership in Public Life

Evaluation Report

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Disclaimer

The information and views presented in this report are based on the data collected and analyzed by the MAHER Consulting team during the assessment period. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information presented, we cannot guarantee that it is entirely free from errors or omissions. The findings and recommendations presented in this report should be considered the opinions of the assessment team and do not necessarily reflect the views of any specific organization or individual.

Despite our best efforts, it is possible that there may be errors or omissions in this report. We encourage readers to bring any such issues to our attention so that we can address them.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FWEG	Friends of Women Empowerment Group
GMIS	Gender Management Information System
KII	Key Informant Interview
OiP	Oxfam in Pakistan
MDF	Management and Development Foundation
SCSW	Sindh Commission on Status of Women
WDC	Women Development Complex
WDD	Women Development Department
WLPL	Women Leadership in Public Life
WPC	Women Protection Center

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Women Leadership in Public Life (WLPL) project was implemented by Oxfam and Management and Development Foundation (MDF) in partnership with the Women Development Department (WDD) and Sindh Commission on the Status of Women (SCSW) to enhance women's participation in public life in Sindh, Pakistan. The project focused on building the capacity of women leaders and supporting the WDD and SCSW in their efforts to promote women's rights.

Oxfam in Pakistan (OiP) commissioned this evaluation exercise. Oxfam is a global non-governmental organization that aims to alleviate poverty, hunger, and social injustice. Oxfam's work focuses on humanitarian aid, development programs, and policy advocacy to promote sustainable solutions to global poverty and inequality. MAHER Consulting undertook the evaluation of the project. MAHER Consulting is a consulting firm that specializes in providing a range of services in the fields of research, capacity building, monitoring, and evaluation. MAHER has extensive experience working with international development organizations, government agencies, and private sector clients.

The report assesses how the program has contributed to women's empowerment and access to justice and identifies the factors that facilitated or hindered its success. The evaluation was carried out through a mixed-methods approach, including a desk review of project documents, key informant interviews, focus group discussions, and site visits.

The following are the major findings of the report:

The evaluation team found the project relevant for all four elements of relevance: the project addressed the immediate needs of the beneficiaries and stakeholders by organizing citizens in Friends of Women Empowerment Groups (FWEGs) and building their capacities for holding the state institutions accountable. It also built partnerships with state institutions like the Sindh Commission on Status of Women (SCSW) and the Women Development Department and built their capacities for better service delivery. The project was also found relevant to the target districts' overall social and cultural context. Sukkur and Sanghar are historically the districts of medium and low human development index respectively, and warrant WLPL-like interventions. The intervention was also designed to address the relevant needs of the beneficiaries. It focused on women's property rights, early and forced marriages, and gender-based violence. The project was also relevant to the international context and directly addressed goals 5 and 16 of the sustainable development goals.

For effectiveness, the evaluation process focused on determining whether the intervention has achieved its intended results, especially at the output level. Some delays were recorded in achieving the outputs, mostly due to external factors like COVID and the preoccupation of key officials in government departments. However, the project successfully built the capacity of 20 members and staff of SCSW to monitor human rights violations and hold the institutions accountable. WDD was the other main stakeholder in the project. Forty district officials, including assistant/deputy directors and women protection officers, as well as 20 officials from

the secretariat/directorate, participated in a capacity-building training aimed at enhancing their ability to respond to women's needs and effectively handle complaints from aggrieved women. As this capacity-building exercise was undertaken in the last phase of the project, its true quantitative effect could not be measured. On the demand side, the project worked with local communities to raise awareness about legal rights and redress mechanisms.

Drawing on the financial data shared by the OiP, it was revealed that cost efficiency was achieved, and activities were completed within the approved limits. In addressing the efficiency questions, the evaluators considered the extent to which achieving key results deviated (in terms of the costs and deadlines) from what was planned and why. The evaluation identified, for example, that the activity implementation was sometimes delayed to external factors like COVID, but the cost did not overrun. While implementing the activities, the project also created synergy with Oxfm's other programs in the area, for example, *Oxfam's Rule of Law Program* that established a network of infomediaries for demand articulation, awareness-raising, and community mobilization to improve access to justice, *Creating Spaces to End Violence against Women and Girls* that aims to reduce violence against women and girls, as well as child, early, and forced marriages and *Empowering Youth for Work Campaign* that provided an opportunity for women to access law enforcement agencies.

The assessment of sustainability involved analyzing whether the necessary policy, institutional, technical, and financial conditions were established to ensure the sustained occurrence of positive outcomes. Many such factors and mechanisms can ensure continuity and sustainability if handled with prudence. The creation of a Gender Management Information System (GMIS) and training of WDD staff to handle GMIS will be the principal mechanisms for sustainability. Regularly feeding the data in GMIS and extracting periodic gender parity reports will ensure that policymakers have first-hand information while formulating policies and making decisions on gender parity. The partnership created with WDD at the district level will ensure better service delivery to violence survivors. Legal literacy and exposing the FWEGs to redressal mechanisms will ensure the presence of a critical mass in society to provide leadership at the local level whenever the rights are infringed. However, the sustainability of the initiatives taken under WLPL will also depend on continued funding for women's empowerment programs in the province.

For the post-project engagements, the study has recommendations for different stakeholders:

Implementing Agencies-MDF

- Providing mentorship and continuous capacity enhancement of FWEGs through regular interaction will ensure the sustainability of the initiatives. MDF should engage the FWEG members in similar projects in the target districts. This will ensure the perpetual development of the FWEGs' members.

- MDF should Develop a strategy for continuous engagement with duty bearers through other projects that MDF is running in the area. This will ensure that the initiatives taken

under WLPL are integrated into the government's structures meant for women's development.

- MDF should develop a strategy for addressing the challenges faced by women in accessing justice and legal aid in the target districts, such as establishing legal aid clinics or partnerships with local NGOs working on these issues.

- MDF should encourage and support innovation in their project design and implementation, leveraging new technologies and creative solutions like GMIS to address development challenges. MDF should continue exploring new partnerships and collaborations, experimenting with new approaches, and learning from best practices across sectors and regions.

- MDF should strengthen its monitoring and evaluation systems to measure its projects' impact better. This can include using more robust indicators, conducting regular surveys and evaluations, and sharing findings with stakeholders. MDF should build the capacity of their staff to implement a result-based monitoring system to enable the project team to better track the project's progress and its impact on the target communities.

Public Offices-(WDD and SCSW)

- The WDD should further establish partnerships with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and private sector companies to train its secretariat and field staff and develop gender-sensitive policies. Under the prevailing economic crunch in the country and the decreasing fiscal space for government departments, such partnership can be very imperitive in continuing the gender parity agenda.

- The WDD should increase its outreach in the districts to promote gender equality by raising awareness and advocating for policies that eliminate gender-based discrimination in all aspects of life. This will create a more inclusive and supportive environment for women to succeed.

- SCSW should strengthen its partnerships with other government agencies, civil society organizations, and international development partners to leverage resources and achieve a greater impact. This could involve identifying and establishing partnerships with organizations that share SCSW's mission and goal.

- SCSW should focus on building the capacity of its staff and stakeholders to ensure the effective delivery of its programs and services. This could involve providing training on women's rights, gender-sensitive approaches, and other relevant topics to staff, partner organizations, and other stakeholders.

- SCSW and WDD should regularly monitor and evaluate the impact of their programs and services to ensure they are achieving their intended outcomes. This could involve

establishing a system for tracking and reporting on key performance indicators and regularly reviewing progress toward achieving its goals.

The European Commission

- A clear and documented exit strategy should either be part of the project or finalized at the inception stage. The work on an exit strategy for a project like WLPL should start from year 1. A good exit strategy provides practical steps for achieving the sustainability of the intervention and the continuation of good results.

- The WLPL project demonstrated the importance of investing in gender equality projects. The European Commission should consider increasing its funding for such projects, particularly in remote areas of KP and Balochistan, which can significantly impact communities and societies. The Gender Parity Report for Sindh shows that Sindh is relatively better placed for GBV indicators, and other provinces also needed such interventions.

- The European Commission should facilitate knowledge sharing between projects and stakeholders. It is generally observed that organizations can create synergies with their programs, but such synergies are seldom created with similar programs being managed by other organizations. Such initiatives under donor's patronage with contribute toward sustainability. The synergy initiatives can include organizing workshops, conferences, and other events that bring together relevant actors to share experiences, lessons learned, and best practices.

1. INTRODUCTION:

The Women Leadership in Public Life (WLPL) project was implemented by Oxfam and MDF, in collaboration with the Sindh Women Development Department (WDD), Sindh Commission on Status of Women (SCSW), and other stakeholders to promote women's empowerment and leadership in public life. The project aimed to address gender inequality and discrimination by improving access to justice, building the capacity of government institutions, and empowering women.

Oxfam in Pakistan (OiP) commissioned the evaluation of the WLPL project in January 2023. Oxfam is a global non-governmental organization that aims to alleviate poverty, hunger, and social injustice. Its work focuses on humanitarian aid, development programs, and policy advocacy to promote sustainable solutions to global poverty and inequality. MAHER Consulting undertook the evaluation of the project. MAHER Consulting is a consulting firm that specializes in providing a range of services in the fields of research, capacity building, monitoring, and evaluation. MAHER has extensive experience working with international development organizations, government agencies, and private sector clients. The evaluation aimed to identify the project's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges and make recommendations for improving its impact and sustainability.

This report summarizes the findings and recommendations of the evaluation, focusing on the key aspects of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability. It is hoped that the insights and recommendations provided in this report will help the relevant stakeholders strengthen the project's impact and sustainability and contribute to promoting gender equality and women's empowerment in Sindh, Pakistan. The evaluation for this report was made based on the questions provided by Oxfam under the key aspects in the ToRs. These questions are tabulated in Evaluation Matrix in Annex 3.

1.2 PROJECT RESULT CHAIN AND ACTIVITIES

Following is the result chain and corresponding activities:

IMPACT: Women living in Sindh enjoy equal rights and greater participation and leadership in public life.

OUTCOME 1: *Sindh Commission on the Status of Women (SCSW) effectively monitoring women's rights violations and holding institutions accountable for redress*

Output 1.1 Review of SCSW Roadmap and development of yearly plan

Activity 1.1.1 – Develop yearly plan for implementation of the Roadmap developed by Sindh Commission of Status of Women (SCSW)

Activity 1.1.2 – Review of five pro-women laws of Sindh government to identify areas for advocacy around implementation

Activity 1.1.3 – Facilitate and support Sindh Commission of Status of Women (SCSW) in development of monitoring mechanisms to track all women protection facilities in target districts

Output 1.2 A comprehensive Gender Management Information System (GMIS) established and mechanism put in place for production of gender parity report

Activity 1.2.1 – Define the scope and design of the GMIS based on data mapping and stakeholder consultations

Activity 1.2.2 Finalise indicators of Gender management information system (GMIS) success and effectiveness after consultations

Organize launch event inviting the participation of all members of the Steering Group to formally approve, endorse and launch the 01 Gender Parity Report based on findings and analysis

Output 1.3 Capacity of Sindh Commission on Status of Women (SCSW) team in execution of essential SCSW functions in line with the road map is strengthened

Activity 1.3.1 – Develop Training Modules that meet the training needs of SCSW staff

Activity 1.3.2 Conduct training for SCSW for sustainable capacity development

OUTCOME 2: Women Development Department (WDD) Sindh leading mainstreaming of women empowerment in public sector service delivery in Sukkur and Sanghar districts

Output 2.1 WDD institutionally strengthened to manage and lead women empowerment functions at the provincial level.

Activity 2.1.1 – Define the ToRs for a coordination Committee composed of WDD and SWD representatives

Activity 2.1.2 – Formalize, launch and operationalize the coordination Committee

Activity 2.1.3 Developing job descriptions, SOPs and performance standards for WDD staff based on research and consultations

Output 2.2 WDCs / WPCs strengthened to improve women's access to protection, legal aid, and referral services.

Activity 2.2.1 Develop Training Modules that meet the training needs of WDD staff

Activity 2.2.2 Conduct training for WDD staff for sustainable capacity development

Activity 2.2.3 Establish a provincial helpline to respond to women's complaints against violations of rights.

Activity 2.2.4 Support the development of a model Women Development Complexes (WDCs) / Women Protection Centers (WPCs) for the Women Development Department facility in Sukkur to develop and implement a plan for functioning of the centres

Provide technical support for developing a performance management system

Conduct specialized training on complaint handling and referrals for staff, in line with the Institutional Assessment

OUTCOME 3: Women demonstrate leadership in holding duty bearers accountable and leveraging support for institutional reforms and system change

Output 3.1 Women in target districts are organized and facilitated in driving women empowerment and institutional reforms agenda

Activity 3.1.1 –

Form 08 Friend of Women Empowerment (FWE) Groups in 02 target districts.

Undertake training of these groups members to increase their awareness and negotiation skills with service providers

Engage Friend of Women Empowerment (FWE) Groups members with Women Development Department, Social Welfare Department, Police stations, Complaint centres and Health department (including medico-legal professionals) to build trust and confidence

Output 3.2 Women and men in target districts made aware of legal rights and redress mechanisms and provided opportunities to hold local duty bearers accountable.

Activity 3.2.1 – Awareness raising of citizens through developing Information education & communication (IEC) material and dissemination

Airing of six docu-drama on local channel focusing on awareness about violence, human rights, procedures of complaint mechanism

Activity 3.2.2 – Conduct 16 'Khuli Kacheris (1 per quarter) or Open Forums between Friend of women empowerment groups, Women Development Department, Social Welfare Department, Police stations/complaint centers as part of the regular engagement established through other activities to improve service delivery.

1.3 METHODOLOGY

This report's methodology included reviewing project documents and reports, including project proposal, progress reports, M&E reports, and financial reports. In addition, key informant interviews were conducted with project staff, community members, and stakeholders to gain insight into the project's implementation and effectiveness. Two focus group discussions were also arranged with FWEGs at Sukkur and Sanghar.

The evaluation team used a mixed-methods approach to assess the project's efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability. Quantitative data, such as budget and expenditure reports, were analyzed to assess the project's cost-effectiveness. Qualitative data was collected through interviews and focus group discussions to evaluate the project's impact and the sustainability of its initiatives.

2. FINDINGS OF THE REPORT

This section of the report discusses the findings under four main headings: Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, and Sustainability.

2.1 Relevance

2.1.1 RESPONDING TO NEEDS, POLICIES, AND PRIORITIES

Overall, the community and stakeholders received the program intervention well since it met the community's critical needs. The project was developed with the right-based approach, considering the community's developmental needs. A large percentage of evaluation respondents (KIIs, FGDs) agreed that the project intervention was relevant and focused on social and governance issues pertinent to the target groups in society.

> Jutta Urpilainen, EU Commissioner for International Partnerships
>
> "EVERY GIRL AND EVERY WOMAN HAS THE RIGHT TO NOT ONLY SURVIVE BUT TO THRIVE."

The contents of different capacity-building activities were found relevant and appreciated by most of the participants interviewed. Furthermore, during individual interviews with the FWEG members, the respondents mentioned that the contents of the capacity-building workshops and other consultative events helped enhance their skills and helped them understand the prevailing policies and social rights.

Findings of the end project evaluation indicate that the OiP/MDF assessment accurately captured the needs of the people in the target area. The respondents said the need for functioning women's protection centers had always existed in Sindh. For this project, OiP carried out a separate need assessment to gauge the extent of facilities available in target district women's protection centers. The project was also connected with the previous work of OiP in the area.

Regarding physical violence, the project aimed to effectively monitor women's rights violations through FWEGs and hold institutions accountable for redress. This was achieved through the introduction of *khuli kacheri* at the district level. The project also empowered women by improving their access to legal aid and referral services. This was achieved by strengthening Women Women Protection Centers (WPCs) in Sukkur and Sanghar.

> The WLPL effectively monitored women's rights violations through FWEGs and held institutions accountable for redress. The project also empowered women by improving their access to legal aid and referral services.
>
> **Relevance to Needs**

To address issues related to evidence-based advocacy, the project established a comprehensive Gender Management Information System (GMIS) and put in place mechanisms for producing gender parity reports. This system can provide reliable data on the status of women and girls in Sindh, which can be used to inform policy and programming decisions.

Finally, the project also addressed issues related to forced and child marriages by engaging with local communities and building awareness around the harmful effects of such practices. This was achieved through the engagement of FWEGs, who played a crucial role in raising awareness and promoting gender equality in their communities.

2.1.2 Sensitivity and Responsiveness to the Context

The WLPL project was relevant in the context of Pakistan's Vision 2025, National Plan of Action for Women, and National Policy on the Development and Empowerment of Women 2002. At the global level, the project also contributed toward Sustainable Development Goal 5 (Gender Equality) and 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions).

The project is relevant to the EU's Action Plan on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in External Relations 2020–2025 (GAP III), Sustainable Development Goals 5 and 16 and Pakistan Vision 2025.

Relevance to Context

The project is also relevant with the EU's Action Plan on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in External Relations 2020–2025 (GAP III). The plan aims to accelerate progress on empowering women and girls and safeguard gains made on gender equality during the 25 years since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and its Platform for Action.[1]

The project rightly focused on the community members/leaders and local authorities to be agents of change. During FGDs and individual interviews, some of the FWEG members demonstrated a great passion for working toward the rights of the people. However, the absence of well-defined criteria for selecting FWEG members resulted in varied levels of participation from group to group. This absence of specific criteria resulted in the selection of some individuals who were least active or left the group.

The publications (awareness) material and docu-dramas developed during the project focused on the prevailing social and developmental problems. The audience of the material graded it to be beneficial in highlighting the issues and raising awareness among the masses. The stakeholders interviewed were aware of the overall project design and strategy.

2.1.3 Quality of the Design

The project activities were designed keeping in view the social and cultural norms of the target areas. The tools used for sensitization and awareness-raising were acceptable at the community level as well as at the institutional level. The IEC material and docu-dramas followed the local culture, and the target community understood the message well.

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[1] GENDER ACTION PLAN III: TOWARDS A GENDER-EQUAL WORLD
https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/gender-action-plan-iii-towards-gender-equal-world_en

The project adopted a balanced approach both at the supply and demand sides. On the demand side, it raised awareness and prepared the community to ask for their rights, thus creating a demand. During FGDs with different FWEGs, the evaluation team found that most of the activities conducted during the project focused on creating awareness and sensitizing the people in general about the problems and rights of women. These activities resulted in an attitudinal change among the participants to understand their rights and access to services. Conversely, the project also sensitized policymakers and government officials about gender equality and women's rights. Once sensitized, the government officials, including the police and WDD district officers, regularly participated in the *khuli kacheri* and other project activities.

The project's focus on strengthening institutions such as the Sindh Commission on the Status of Women and the Women Development Department is aligned with the strategic goal of creating an enabling environment for women's empowerment and gender equality in Sindh. These institutions serve as key drivers for mainstreaming gender concerns into policy and decision-making processes, thus promoting gender-responsive governance in the province. Moreover, the WLPL project's focus on capacity building of institutions and individuals involved in women's empowerment is crucial for the long-term sustainability of the project's impact. It reflects a strategic consideration of the need to build the capacity of key stakeholders in the province to promote gender equality and women's empowerment.

The engagement of Friends of Women Empowerment Groups (FWEGs) in the project also reflects a strategic consideration of the need to build strong grassroots movements for women's empowerment and gender equality. The project's focus on supporting and strengthening these groups and providing a platform for their engagement with key decision-makers can lead to greater awareness and advocacy for women's rights at the community level.

2.1.4 Adapting over Time

The evaluation team also considered how intervention evolved with time. The project has been affected by internal and external changes, and it was crucial to adapt to them to ensure its continued effectiveness. The external environment, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, caused delays in project activities. Other external changes, such as bureaucratic reshuffling in WDD at the provincial and district levels, also impacted the project. The project team had to liaise with the new Secretary in Karachi office and Deputy Director at the district level. Internally, the changes in the staff at MDF also affected the project. Despite all the changes, the project showed flexibility and adaptivity, and there was no management debacle.

2.2 EFFECTIVENESS

2.2.1 Achievement of Objectives

The project experienced a delay in achieving **Output 1.1**, which was the review of the roadmap and development of annual action plan. The delay was due to the SCSW chairperson's departmental and personal engagements, which prevented the yearly plan from being developed on time. However, it is positive that the project eventually completed this output in the second year.

Regarding **output 1.2**, it is positive that the architecture of the Gender Management Information System (GMIS) was developed and handed over to the Women Development Department (WDD). The GMIS was originally visualized to be in the custody of SCSW but with the refusal of the chairperson, the GMIS was handed over to WDD.

Output 1.3 was fully achieved. This output involved developing a monitoring mechanism to track the WPC's facilities in target districts. The monitoring tool was developed and handed over to SCSW.

The project successfully achieved **Output 2.1**, which aimed to strengthen the WDD's capacity to manage and lead women empowerment functions at the provincial level. The output was designed to be achieved by forming coordination committees composed of WDD and SWD officials to manage the recent administrative shift and responsibilities between the two departments. The formation of the coordination committees was delayed due to COVID-19 but was eventually formed and formally launched in the last year of the project. The coordination mechanism between WDD and SWD is a positive step towards improving the institutional structure for local protection. The shifting of the administrative control of Dar-ul-Aman to WDD also shows progress in the direction of achieving the outcome of improved protection for women in Sindh. The performance standards and Standard Operating Procedures for the WDD were also developed. However, the WDD resolved to develop the staff's job description itself.

Output 2.2 was achieved by strengthening of WDCs/WPCs to improve women's access to protection, legal aid, and referral services. While the project did not establish a new WDC/WPC or invest in infrastructure, it did provide support to the existing ones through training and capacity building of Women Protection Officers. The training modules for WDD staff were developed, and training workshops were conducted. The project did not directly contribute to establishing the helpline but worked on reviewing and assessing the helpline. This assessment was part of the Institutional Assessment of Women Development Department" carried out under the project.

Output 3.1 aimed to organize women in target districts and facilitate their involvement in driving women's empowerment and institutional reforms agenda. To achieve this, the project created Friends of Women Empowerment Groups (FWEGs) in Sukkur and Sanghar, with four groups in each district comprising individuals such as women councillors, Lady Health Workers (LHWs), school teachers, Community-Based Organizations (CBOs), and ordinary citizens. The formulation of FWEGs is an important step towards mobilizing women and building their capacity to drive the women's empowerment agenda in the target districts.

Ms. Kalsoom from Village Wah Burrira

"We were completely unaware that laws and government departments dedicated to women's welfare existed in Sindh. We express our sincere gratitude to OiP and MDF for raising our awareness on this matter"

Output 3.2 of the project involved raising awareness among women and men in the target districts about their legal rights and redress mechanisms through producing and disseminating docu-dramas and IEC material.

The IEC material covered various topics, including helpline 1094 awareness, safety measures for COVID-19, registration of FIR, women's protection centers, women's property rights, and forced and child marriages.

Following table shows the completion status of different activities:

Activity No.	Activity Description	Status
1.1.1	Develop yearly plan for implementation of the Roadmap developed by Sindh Commission of Status of Women (SCSW)	Achieved
1.1.2	Review of five pro-women laws of Sindh government to identify areas for advocacy around implementation	Achieved
1.1.3	Facilitate and support Sindh Commission of Status of Women (SCSW) in development of monitoring mechanisms to track all women protection facilities in target districts	Achieved
1.2.1	Define the scope and design of the GMIS based on data mapping and stakeholder consultations	Achieved
1.2.1	Finalise indicators of Gender management information system (GMIS) success and effectiveness after consultations Organize launch event inviting the participation of all members of the Steering Group to formally approve, endorse and launch the 01 Gender Parity Report based on findings and analysis	Achieved
1.3.1	Develop Training Modules that meet the training needs of SCSW staff	Achieved

1.3.2	Conduct training for SCSW for sustainable capacity development	Achieved
2.1.1	Define the ToRs for a coordination Committee composed of WDD and SWD representatives	Achieved
2.1.2	Formalize, launch and operationalize the coordination Committee	Achieved
2.1.3	Developing job descriptions, SOPs and performance standards for WDD staff based on research and consultations	Achieved
2.2.1	Develop Training Modules that meet the training needs of WDD staff	Achieved
2.2.2	Conduct training for WDD staff for sustainable capacity development	Achieved
2.2.3	Establish a provincial helpline to respond to women's complaints against violations of rights.	Achieved
2.2.4	Support the development of a model Women Development Complexes (WDCs) / Women Protection Centers (WPCs) for the Women Development Department facility in Sukkur to develop and implement a plan for functioning of the centres Provide technical support for developing a performance management system Conduct specialized training on complaint handling and referrals for staff, in line with the Institutional Assessment	Achieved

2.2.2 Reflection of Oxfam's Feminist Principles and Values

Oxfam's feminist principles were reflected in stakeholder management, partnership management, and provision of technical assistance to line departments in Sindh. Oxfam actively engaged with stakeholders at all levels, ensuring their involvement in project design and implementation and valuing their knowledge and expertise. They also challenged their own behaviour and biases, thus supporting the feminist movement and promoting the idea that feminism is for everyone. The project adhered to the feminist principle of "Nothing about us without us" by providing sufficient space for community and partner organizations to make decisions. The hiring process was inclusive, and there were no incidents of abuse. The respondents were able to express their opinions freely, which aligns with the feminist principle of valuing freedom of expression. However, the concept of work-life balance was not extensively discussed or integrated into the workplace culture of implementing partner.

2.2.3 Contributions of WLPL to women empowerment agenda

The WLPL has made several contributions to the Sindh Commission on the Status of Women (SCSW), the Women Development Department (WDD), and the overall women empowerment agenda in the context of Sindh. Some of these contributions include:

1. Strengthening the capacity of WDD: The WLPL provided training and capacity-building opportunities to the staff of WDD, enabling them to understand their roles and responsibilities better and to be more effective in advocating for women's rights and gender equality.

2. Supporting the SCSW: The WLPL played a key role in enhancing the staff's capacity of the Sindh Commission on the Status of Women (SCSW), which will be instrumental in promoting women's rights and gender equality in the province.

3. Proving coordination between government departments: The WLPL helped to improve coordination between the SCSW and the Women Development Department (WDD), responsible for implementing women-focused laws and policies in the province. It also provided coordination between the WDD and SWD. This coordination will improved service delivery and better protection for women in Sindh.

4. Empowering women at the grassroots level: The WLPL supported the establishment of Friends of Women Empowerment Groups (FWEGs) in Sukkur and Sanghar districts, which is helpful in driving women's empowerment and institutional reforms agenda in these areas.

20	240	30	20
Local Community Leaders in FWEGs	Office bearers of COs and WROs in FWEGs	Local Elected Representative in FWEGs	Local Government Functionaries in FWEGs

WLPL Case Studies

WLPL: A Citizens–State model for promoting Women Leadership

THE CASE STUDY

The WLPL project implemented in Sukkur and Sanghar districts in Sindh can be considered a successful example of a citizen-state model. The project worked with women's groups and state departments to promote women's leadership and participation in public life.

How did the state do it? Simple. By giving value to people.

WLPL   // Case Studies

The citizen-state model of the Women Leadership in Public Life (WLPL) project involved several components that aimed to address the needs and concerns of citizens in target districts. One of the key components was the establishment of Khuli Kacheris, which provided a platform for citizens to engage with local government officials and discuss their problems and grievances. This helped to improve citizen-state dialogue and promote accountability.

Another important component was the establishment of helplines that provided women with legal aid and referral services. This was particularly crucial in areas where women faced significant barriers to accessing justice and legal services. By providing these services, the WLPL project helped to increase women's awareness of their legal rights and improved their access to justice.

Strengthening Women Protection Centers (WPCs) was another significant component of the WLPL project. The WPCs provided a safe space for women who were survivors of violence and abuse and also offered counseling and support services. The WPCs helped address women's urgent needs and promoted women's empowerment and gender equality.

"That was easily the fastest response time I've experienced and the helpline rep was patient and professional through and through."
A helpline user on anonymity

A Collaborative Approach

The project recognized the need for a collaborative approach, where citizens and the state worked together to create a more inclusive and gender-equal society. The project engaged with FWEGs, WDD, and SCSW to build the capacity of women leaders, foster community-led development, and encourage women's leadership in public life.

The project also engaged with government officials at the district level to advocate for policies and practices that support women's empowerment and gender equality. This collaborative approach ensured that the project was responsive to local needs and priorities and that the efforts were sustained beyond the project timeline.

Citizens-State Model

The WLPL project implemented in Sukkur and Sanghar districts in Sindh provides a useful case study on how a citizen-state model can promote women's leadership and participation in public life. The project's success can be attributed to its collaborative approach, which engaged citizens and the state in a shared vision for gender equality and women's empowerment.

Dr. Yameen Daudpota, President MDF

:Ω: **WLPL**   // Case Studies

2.3 EFFICIENCY

2.3.1   Economic Efficiency

The economic efficiency of the WLPL project was assessed to determine if the project was able to maximize the use of resources to achieve the desired outcomes. The evaluation found that the project was able to achieve its goals while minimizing costs. The project's budget was effectively allocated and utilized toward its intended purpose. The project also demonstrated strong cost-effectiveness by achieving its objectives within the allocated budget. There were minor overspendings in some line items like vehicle rent, office rent, and POL, but the project can be considered economically efficient overall.

2.3.2 Synergies

The WLPL project developed synergies with several of its active programs in Sindh. Oxfam's Rule of Law program in Sanghar and other districts has established a network of infomediaries for demand articulation, awareness-raising, and community mobilization to improve citizens' access to justice. The project is working to strengthen the WDD's capacity to assist victims of human rights violations and has identified gaps that need to be remedied. Oxfam's project, Creating Spaces to End Violence Against Women and Girls, aims to reduce violence against women and girls, as well as child, early, and forced marriages. To achieve this, local community members are encouraged to advance positive gender norms and help women and girls who have been victims of violence. As part of Oxfam's Empower Youth for Work campaign, which also emphasizes the social and economic empowerment of young girls, a women's safety and protection app is being created in coordination with SCSW to increase women's self-confidence and access to law enforcement authorities. By building on earlier and continuing initiatives to create synergies and maximize the effect of Oxfam's work in Sindh, the WLPL project has made the most of these programs' knowledge and resources. The project also created synergies with other organizations working in Sindh. One example of this external synergy is referring the aggrieved women to the Legal Aid Society to benefit from their free legal aid program.

The WLPL created synergies with many of the Oxfam programs in the province. These include the Rule of Law program, Creating Spaces to End Violence against Women and Girls, and Empower Youth for Work campaign. It also created synergy with the Legal Aid Society to provide free legal aid to women.

Creating Synergies

2.3.3 Monitoring and evaluation systems

The project's logframe and M&E framework outlines the impact, outcomes, output, indicators, and targets and sets out a data collection, analysis, and reporting plan. The framework includes both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods, such as surveys, focus group discussions, key informant interviews, and case studies, and also identifies responsible parties and timelines for each activity.

In terms of implementation, the project team has demonstrated a commitment to monitoring and evaluation throughout the project cycle. Regular activity monitoring reports are submitted

to Oxfam. But the project's monitoring was activity-based, which means that it focused on tracking the completion of project activities and tasks, rather than evaluating the impact of those activities on the project's intended outcomes. This is a significant limitation because, without result-based monitoring, it is difficult to determine whether the project is achieving its objectives.

2.4 SUSTAINABILITY

2.4.1 Factors for Sustainability

Several factors may impact the sustainability of the initiatives taken under WLPL:

1. **Women Leadership**: WLPL has built the capacity of women leaders and empowered them to create and fill leadership spaces at the local level. This capacity-building will enable women to continue their work and sustain their efforts even after the project has ended. During the project implementation, 400 FWEGs member, including 144 women, enhanced their capacity for legal rights, redressal mechanisms, and demand articulation. Moreover, during interviews with the staff of MDF, it was found that they planned to continue work on the rights and political participation of marginalized groups through other projects in Sukkur and Sanghar.

   144
   Female members of FWEGs

   256
   male members of FWEGs

2. **Partnership building**: WLPL has established partnerships with district officials of WDD and other stakeholders. These partnerships may continue to facilitate the implementation of initiatives after the project has ended. The evaluation team met with several officials of SCSW and WDD in provincial headquarter and project districts and found that they were very appreciative of the project initiatives.

   Ms. Mariam, FWEG member from Sanghar

   WLPL has empowered us to better understand and assert our legal rights as women. We have gained the skills and confidence to continue this initiative in our community beyond the project's lifespan and make it sustainable.

3. **Community engagement**: WLPL has worked closely with the community to raise awareness of gender issues and promote women's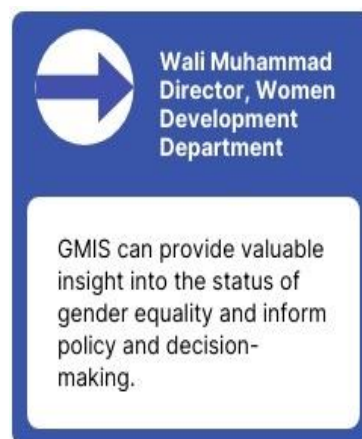 participation in decision-making. This engagement has built community support for the project and the initiatives it has implemented, increasing the likelihood that they will be sustained. It is important to note that women in Sukkur and Sanghar Districts have historically been deprived of their rights to protection, legal aid, relief, and redress from the formal justice system. Through the WLPL project, approximately 80,000 poor, marginalized, and deprived population in the target districts were more aware of their rights and obligations. The project reaching out to that much population will also bring the element of sustainability to the project. Furthermore, the project proposal estimated that 2,000 women callers who need protection, legal aid, and referral services would receive assistance through the helpline at the Women Development Department (WDD). However, no call record of 1094 from the target districts could be accessed, making it difficult to assess the effectiveness and sustainability of this aspect of the project. However, the evaluation

team had the opportunity to meet some of the women who used the helpline service and found them very satisfied with the professional behavior of the helpline staff.

4. **Funding**: The sustainability of the initiatives taken under WLPL will also depend on continued funding for women's empowerment programs in the area.

2.4.2 Mechanism for Sustainability

The capacity building of the Women Development Department (WDD) is another aspect of sustainability. WLPL worked on enhancing the capacity of WDD by providing them with training in various areas, including gender sensitization, advocacy, and communication. It also built the capacity of Women Protection Officers of the Province about their roles and responsibilities under the Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act, 2013. In addition, WLPL supported the WDD in preparing the Gender Management Information System (GMIS) and Gender Parity Report (GPR) to monitor the progress of gender rights in the province.

**Wali Muhammad
Director, Women Development Department**

GMIS can provide valuable insight into the status of gender equality and inform policy and decision-making.

The GMIS and GPR are tools that will help sustain the project by ensuring that data is systematically collected and monitored. The GMIS is an electronic database of gender-disaggregated data and helps collect, analyze, and manage gender-related information. "It can provide valuable insight into the status of gender equality and inform policy and decision-making.", said Mr Wali Muhammad, Director at WDD.

The capacity building of SCSW through training workshops and exposure visits is an important aspect of the sustainability of the WLPL project. By building the capacity of the SCSW members, the project has helped to ensure a sustainable mechanism for addressing violence against women in the target districts beyond the project's lifespan. The SCSW members can utilize the knowledge and skills gained through the project to continue their work on women's rights and gender-based violence in Sindh. Additionally, the exposure visit has helped establish linkages and collaboration between the Commissions of Sindh and KP, which can be beneficial for sustaining the project's efforts in the long run.

**Ms. Kiran Daudpota,
Project Manager, MDF**

"I am proud to say that the WLPL project has successfully developed the Gender Mainstreaming Information System (GMIS), which will play a crucial role in promoting gender equality in the future. The GMIS will not only help in monitoring and evaluating gender mainstreaming efforts but also provide a platform for sharing best practices and lessons learned."

3. CONCLUDING REMARKS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In conclusion, the Women Leadership in Public Life (WLPL) project has made notable contributions toward promoting women's participation in public life in Sindh, Pakistan. The project has demonstrated successes in capacity building of women leaders, strengthening the government's institutional capacity, and improving women's access to justice. However, the project has faced some challenges in terms of delays in implementation due to external factors such as COVID-19 and prior engagements of public officials.

Overall, the Women Leadership in Public Life project contributed significantly towards advancing women's empowerment and gender equality in Sindh, and with appropriate actions, can make a meaningful and sustainable impact. Here are some recommendations:

Implementing Agencies-MDF

- Providing mentorship and continuous capacity enhancement of FWEGs through regular interaction will ensure the sustainability of the initiatives. MDF should engage the FWEG members in similar projects in the target districts. This will ensure the perpetual development of the FWEGs' members.

- MDF should Develop a strategy for continuous engagement with duty bearers through other projects that MDF is running in the area. This will ensure that the initiatives taken under WLPL are integrated into the government's structures meant for women's development.

- MDF should develop a strategy for addressing the challenges faced by women in accessing justice and legal aid in the target districts, such as establishing legal aid clinics or partnerships with local NGOs working on these issues.

- MDF should encourage and support innovation in their project design and implementation, leveraging new technologies and creative solutions like GMIS to address development challenges. MDF should continue exploring new partnerships and collaborations, experimenting with new approaches, and learning from best practices across sectors and regions.

- MDF should strengthen its monitoring and evaluation systems to measure its projects' impact better. This can include using more robust indicators, conducting regular surveys and evaluations, and sharing findings with stakeholders. MDF should build the capacity of their staff to implement a result-based monitoring system to enable the project team to better track the project's progress and its impact on the target communities.

Public Offices-(WDD and SCSW)

- The WDD should further establish partnerships with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and private sector companies to train its secretariat and field staff and develop gender-sensitive policies. Under the prevailing economic crunch in the country and the decreasing fiscal space for government departments, such partnership can be very imperitive in continuing the gender parity agenda.

- The WDD should increase its outreach in the districts to promote gender equality by raising awareness and advocating for policies that eliminate gender-based discrimination in all aspects of life. This will create a more inclusive and supportive environment for women to succeed.

- SCSW should strengthen its partnerships with other government agencies, civil society organizations, and international development partners to leverage resources and achieve a greater impact. This could involve identifying and establishing partnerships with organizations that share SCSW's mission and goal.

- SCSW should focus on building the capacity of its staff and stakeholders to ensure the effective delivery of its programs and services. This could involve providing training on women's rights, gender-sensitive approaches, and other relevant topics to staff, partner organizations, and other stakeholders.

- SCSW and WDD should regularly monitor and evaluate the impact of their programs and services to ensure they are achieving their intended outcomes. This could involve establishing a system for tracking and reporting on key performance indicators and regularly reviewing progress toward achieving its goals.

The European Commission

- A clear and documented exit strategy should either be part of the project or finalized at the inception stage. The work on an exit strategy for a project like WLPL should start from year 1. A good exit strategy provides practical steps for achieving the sustainability of the intervention and the continuation of good results.

- The WLPL project demonstrated the importance of investing in gender equality projects. The European Commission should consider increasing its funding for such projects, particularly in remote areas of KP and Balochistan, which can significantly impact communities and societies. The Gender Parity Report for Sindh shows that Sindh is relatively better placed for GBV indicators, and other provinces also needed such interventions.

- The European Commission should facilitate knowledge sharing between projects and stakeholders. It is generally observed that organizations can create synergies with their programs, but such synergies are seldom created with similar programs being managed by other organizations. Such initiatives under donor's patronage with contribute toward sustainability. The synergy initiatives can include organizing workshops, conferences,

and other events that bring together relevant actors to share experiences, lessons learned, and best practices.

The following are the guiding questions for the evaluation exercise.

1 Guiding Questions for KII (Project Staff)

Relevance

1. What adjustment or change in strategies and activities would you suggest if you or someone else replicates the project?
2. What adjustment or change in strategies and activities would you suggest if you or someone else replicates the project?
3. What **changes** occur in the **internal** (project staff turnover, demotivation of FWEGs) and **external** environment (bureaucratic reshuffle, COVID-19) of the project? How did you cope with these changes?
4. Following areas of improvement are identified in the Situational Analysis for gender empowerment in the development context of Sindh. How did the project approach these issues
    a. Pay gaps, Physical violence, denial of property rights, access barriers between vulnerable women and the justice system, legal illiteracy, access to free legal aid, forced marriages,

Effectiveness

1. How far have the results at the output level been achieved?

What is the level of support provided by the project to:

    a. SCSW
    b. WDD
    c. Overall women's empowerment agenda in Sindh
2. Apart from project outcomes and outputs, what **other unintended results** (positive and negative) does the project yield? What is the impact of these results on the project?
3. Briefly explain the citizens-state model used in the project for women's leadership. How it has been successful in promoting women's leadership in public life. *Case study
4. What would you suggest for increasing coordination among line departments for implementing the project like WLPL.

Efficiency

1. Timeliness of Activities
2. Cost Overrun Analysis of project Activities with reasons for overrun
3. What results at the output and outcome level could you not achieve due to administrative constraints? What administrative best practices helped you in achieving the results?

4. How did the M&E system help the management team to identify the bottlenecks timely, provided learning and readjustment were made in time?
5. What were project synergies developed with similar initiatives in the provinces?

Sustainability

1. Which initiatives/structures developed during the project will sustain beyond the life of the project? What are the chances of their sustainability on the Likert scale

Name	Purpose	Stakeholders	Reason for Sustainability	Sustainability on Likert scale

2. What are the external factors responsible for the sustainability of these structures? How will the presence or absence of these factors affect the continuity of these structures?

2 KII with District Officials (WDD/WPC)

1. Did you feel any change in the level of awareness about human rights among the citizens visiting you?
2. Did you get an opportunity to interact with FWEGs?
   a. How organized are these groups?
   b. What is their level of awareness about human rights and service delivery issues?
3. What kind of women (e.g., minority/rural/urban/PWD) generally visit your facility?
   a. What are their major service delivery issues?
   b. What percentage of these issues get solved at this facility? Can you please share data from the pre and post-project months/years?
4. What qualitative change in service delivery has taken place after the introduction of project activities in the area?
5. Did you get an opportunity to visit *Khuli Kachri*/Open form?
   a. How was your experience in the forum?
   b. Did you feel any change in the participants' confidence while interacting with public officials?
   c. Do you think *Khuli Kacheri* can be a good forum for interacting with government officials?

      d. How many issues were solved because of *Khuli Kacheri*?

6. As you know, the project has officially come to an end. What mechanism or structure do you feel will **outlive the project**? What can be done to make the project initiatives more sustainable?

7. You have a good idea of the project design at the district level. **What change/addition** would you suggest in the project design?

3 Guiding Questions for KII (SCSW)-at Karachi

1. What mechanism is in place to identify human rights violations in the province?
      a. Do you only react to the citizen's complaints or take *suo motto* actions against right violations?

2. What mechanism is in place for holding the institution accountable?
      a. How have you interacted with the institution in the last two years in case of rights violation?

3. What has been the result of these violations?

4. SCSW has developed Roadmap for the Strategic Framework. What change in monitoring human rights has been witnessed after the execution of the framework?
      a. Has the SCSW undertaken an exercise to map and prioritize a policy reform agenda?
      b. What gap identification/research studies were conducted by the commission with the support of the project team?

5. Does the SCSW staff have a fair idea of their roles and responsibilities?

6. What qualitative change has been witnessed in the staff for the execution of essential SCSW's functions after the capacity-building support provided by the project?
      a. Do you think the gains from the capacity-building exercise are sustainable?
      b. Would bureaucratic reshuffling affect the sustainability of the project gains?
      c. If yes, what are the plans to make the project's initiatives sustainable?

7. How far has the project lived up to your expectations?

8. What room for improvement in the project's design would you suggest if the project is replicated in some other province?

9. What would you suggest for increasing coordination among line departments for implementing the project like WLPL.

4 Guiding Questions for KII (WDD)-at Karachi

1. How far was the WDD strengthened to take up the women's empowerment agenda at the provincial level?

2. How far has the formation of a coordination committee been helpful in women's empowerment at the provincial level?

3. What was the institutional strengthening support provided to the WDD by the project??

4. How has the project provided support to achieve the goal of women empowerment at the provincial and district (Sukkur and Sanghar) levels?

5. Has the service delivery been improved in districts (Sukkur and Sanghar) after the introduction of the project?

6. How has the citizens-state model successfully promoted women's leadership in public life?
7. What adjustment or change in strategies and activities would you suggest this project is replicated?
8. How did the project respond to the project's internal (staff turnover, demotivation of FWEGs) and external environment (bureaucratic reshuffle, COVID-19)?
9. What would you suggest for increasing coordination among line departments for implementing the project like WLPL?

5 Guiding Questions for FGD with FWEGs (at Sukkur and Sanghar)

1. You were organized into FWEG to advance women's reform agenda at the local level. What is your motivation to keep the group intact once the project cycle is over?
2. What initiatives were taken by the project team to build the capacity of FWEGs? Do you feel confident while interacting with the government department after this training?
3. What steps were taken during the project implementation for women's empowerment?
    a. Which steps taken during the project implementation will prove beneficial for the women?
    b. What support was provided by the project team to advance the women's empowerment agenda?
4. One of the project mandates was raising awareness among women about their legal rights. How far has the project been successful in creating this awareness?
5. Did you get a chance to visit the *Khuli Kacheri*? What were the benefits of *Khuli Kacheri*?
6. Can you narrate one incident when you held a government official accountable?
7. Can you narrate one change the project has brought in relation to gender rights/women empowerment?
8. Which project-relevant government facility did you visit recently?
    a. What was the purpose of the visit?
    b. Did you find the officials responsive?
    c. How was your overall experience with the facility?
    d. What steps would you suggest for better service delivery?
9. How far has the project met your expectations? What change will you suggest if the project is replicated in another district?

ANNEX 2: EVALUATION MATRIX

Evaluation Question	Proposed Indicators	Means of Verification	Source of Verification
Relevance			
To what extent is WLPL aligned with the mandates of WDD, SCSW – if any organization runs this same project what kind of adjustments regarding WLPL for the future the consultant will propose?	Comparison of project design with WDD/SCWS mandates	Document review KII	WDD/SCSW
To what extent is the WLPL responsive to the changing environment in the project areas and how should it adapt to these changes? The bureaucratic reshuffle, COVID,	design's flexibility & adaptability	Project documents, reports, and KII	MDF/WDD/ FWEGs
To what extent are WLPL's engagements a reflection of key strategic considerations, in the gender empowerment and development context of Sindh?	Critical analysis of project initiatives	FGD/KII/ Document review	CSO/FWEGs WDD
2. Effectiveness			
To what extent is the current WLPL on track to achieve planned results (intended and unintended, positive, or negative)?	# of outputs and outcomes achieved	Project Reports	MDF
How were Oxfam's feminist principles and values get reflected in stakeholder management, partnership management and providing technical assistance to the concerned line departments in Sindh.	Comparison of Project design with feminist principles	Document Review KII	Oxfam/MDF

What are the main contributions of WLPL to the SCSW, WDD, and overall women empowerment agenda in the context of Sindh?	Level of support provided by WLPL to advance women empowerment	-S.S. Interviews

-Document Review | WDD/SCSW |
| What are the unexpected outcomes or consequences WLPL yielded or is likely to yield? What are their implications? | # of unintended outcomes achieved | KII

M&E reports | MDF |
| In what regards WLPL has contributed to demonstrate a citizen-state model of promoting women leadership in public life (if yes try to capture it as a learning case study of the model) | Model case study | KII

Document review | WDD/SCSW

FGD (FWEGs)

MDF |
| **Efficiency** | | | |
| To what extent have the WLPL outputs been efficient and cost-effective? | Timeliness and cost-overrun analysis | Project reports | MDF |
| What are the main administrative constraints/ strengths? | Review of outputs/ Outcome not achieved or difficult to achieve | Project reports

KII | MDF/Oxfam |
| Are the monitoring and evaluation systems that WLPL has in place helping to ensure that project is managed efficiently and effectively? | Analysis of M&E system, frameworks, and reports | Document review

KII | Oxfam/MDF |

Has WLPL been efficient in building synergies and leveraging with other programs and stakeholders in Sindh?	# of synergies efforts made/ review of the synergies developed	Document review KII	MDF/Dev partners in Sindh
Sustainability			
What is the likelihood that the initiatives taken under WLPL will be sustainable?	Impact analysis of initiatives	Exit strategy	MDF/ WDD/SCSW
What mechanisms have been put in place under WLPL for partnerships between government departments / organizations, and civil society and community-based women groups and other development partners to promote long-term sustainability and durability of results?	Number and quality of the partnership mechanism	KII FGDs with community/CSOs	MDF/WDD/ SCSW/Civil Society
What are some of the external factors attached to sustainability of the Govt structures meant for women's development and how it might affect the continuity of inputs made through WLPL to these departments.	Assessment of external environment	KII	WDD/SCSW