



Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

# Status of Women and Girls in North Waziristan District

## Gender Profile of Merged District



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Merged District Gender Profile  
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## Abbreviations/ Acronyms

AIP	Accelerated Implementation Plan
BHU	Basic Health Unit
BISP	Benazir Income Support Programme
CD	Civil Dispensary
CEDAW	Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CHUs	Comprehensive Health Units
CHC	Community Health Centre
CRVS	Civil Registration of Vital Statistics
CRC	Convention on Rights of Child
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CNIC	Computerized National Identity Card
C&W	Communication and Works (Department)
DDA	Drawing and Disbursement Authority
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
DHQ	District Headquarter Hospital
DHIS	District Health Information Systems
DRC	Dispute Resolution Council
DPO	District Police Officer
EMIS	Education Management Information System
EmONC	Emergency Obstetric and New-born Care
EVAWG	End of Violence Against Women and Girls
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization (United Nations)
FR	Frontier Regions
FATA	Federally Administered Tribal Area
FCR	Frontier Crimes Regulations
FDIHS	FATA Development Indicators Household Survey
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GBV	Gender-based Violence
GE	Gender Equality
GER	Gross Enrolment Ratio
GRAP	Gender Reform Action Plan
GIZ	German Agency for International Cooperation
HeRAMS	Health Resource Availability and Mapping System
HMIS	Health Management Information System
ICERD	International Convention on Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination
ICCPR	International Convention on Civil & Political Rights
ICESER	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
ICPD	International Conference on Population Development
IDP	Internally Displaced Population/Person
IDS	Integrated Development Strategy
IEC	Information, Education and Communication
JJSO	Juvenile Justice System Ordinance KP Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
KAP	Knowledge, Attitude and Practices
KII(s)	Key Informant Interview(s)
KP	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
KPCSW	KP Commission on the Status of Women
KPMD	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Merged Districts (Support Programme)
LG	Local Government
LHV	Lady Health Visitor

LRC	Legal Reform Committee
MA(s)	Merged Areas(s)
MCFC	Mobile Citizen Facilitation Centre
MDs	Merged Districts
MICS	Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey
MNA	Member of National Assembly
MNCH	Mother and Child Health
MPA	Member of Provincial Assembly
NER	Net Enrolment Ratio
NADRA	National Database and Registration Authority
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NMDs	Newly Merged Districts
P&DD	Planning and Development Department
PLC	Police Liaison Council
PPC	Pakistan Penal Code
PPP	Public Private Partnership
QIP	Prime Minister's Quick Impact Programme
RHC	Rural Health Centre
SMEDA	Small and Medium Enterprise Development Authority
SoPs	Standard Operating Procedures
SRH	Sexual and Reproductive Health
SW&WDD	Social Welfare and Women Development Department
TDPs	Temporary Displaced Population/Persons
TDS	Tribal Decade Strategy
THC	Tehsil Headquarter Hospital/Tertiary Health Care
UC(s)	Union Council(s)
UDHR	Universal Declaration on Human Rights
UNCAT	United Nation Convention Against Torture
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children Fund
VCNC(s)	Village Council and Neighbourhood Council(s)
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WFP	World Food Programme
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WHO	World Health Organization
WEE	Women Economic Empowerment

## Preface

UN women proposed to develop an analytical report, based on primary and secondary data, highlighting the present-day situation of women and girls in the five Newly Merged Districts – Khyber, Kurram, Orakzai, North Waziristan and South Waziristan – of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. The analysis and data provided will facilitate the federal Government and provincial Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa; UN Agencies, particularly the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Merged Districts (KPMD) project partners; and other associates in the development and planning, and implementation, of policies and programs that will effectively serve the needs of the most vulnerable groups in the underserved Merged Districts (MDs), particularly women and girls.

A comprehensive analytical report, representing the situation of women and children in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's five MDs, was prepared in collaboration with government ministries, non- governmental organizations (NGOs), civil society organizations (CSOs), and in consultation with other semi-government entities. The complete report (separately available) provides a comparative account off all five MDs; it also provides sectoral recommendations for immediate interventions, in light of the Government's proposed Tribal Decade Strategy (TDS), and the Accelerated Implementation Plan (AIP), to accelerate the social, economic and political development of the MDs.

The subsequent report is a gender profile of North Waziristan District, one of the five MDs. It highlights the current status of women and girls, and the disparities that exist between women and men, boys and girls, in the district. The indicators used for the study were aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Human Development Indices' (HDIs) and the Gender Equality Ranking (GER). Combining multiple primary and secondary data sets, the situational analysis explores gender disparities, vulnerabilities, and social exclusion, as a result of poverty, social and cultural constraints, governance and security situations. The secondary data was collected from public sources, private and development sectors, through surveys, publications, guidelines, directives, research papers and reports. The reviewed material highlighted the salient features of the North Waziristan District in terms of demography, administration, social services and infrastructure, cultural barriers preventing women and girls' access to, and control over, various resources. Primary data was collected through consultative meetings, focus group discussions (FGDs) and key informant interviews (KIIs); the reports incorporate stakeholder voices from the district, providing an insight into the challenges that women and girls face, and their current status with regard to education, health, economic participation and empowerment, gender-based violence, and leadership and political participation.

May 2020

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Project Lead



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## Section 1 Gender Profile North Waziristan District

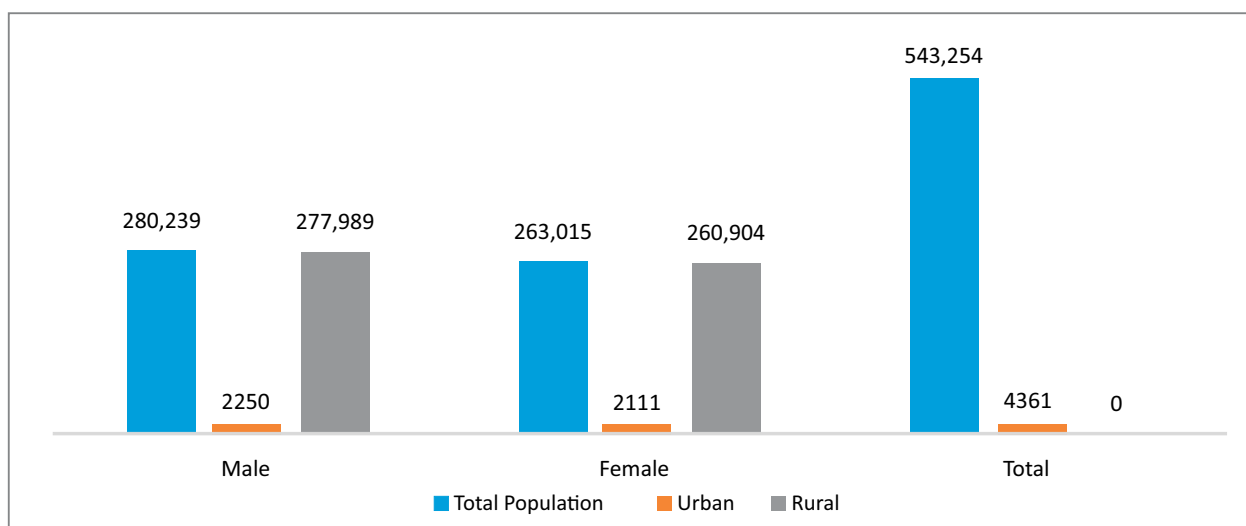
### Demographics

North Waziristan has a mountainous territory with deep and rough defiles. Until May 2018, prior to the merger, the district was known as North Waziristan Agency. It is divided into three sub-divisions, i.e. Mirali, Miranshah and Razmak, which are further divided into nine Tehsils namely Datta Khel, Dossali, Gharyum, Ghulam Khan, Mir Ali Tehsil, Miran Shah, Razmak, Shew, and Spinwam. After the merger, this is now the second largest district within KP, and is currently annexed to the Bannu Division.

#### 1.1 District at a Glance

The district's total landmass is 4707 sq. km. District Kurram and district Hangu are located in the north, districts Bannu and district Karak are towards the East, district South Waziristan towards the south. The district shares its borders with Afghanistan toward the north-west. River Tochi flows in the north and the Gomal river flows to its south. The famous Tochi Pass is also located in this district.





Graph 1: Proportion of total population in urban and rural areas in the district

Population Density	115/Sq.km.
Major Tribes	Utmanzai Pashtun Wazirs, Dawaris, Gurbaz, Kharsins, Saidgis, Malakshis, Mahsuds and Bangashs
Languages Spoken	99.6% speak Pashto Language

According to the district-wise Land Use Indicators for KP (2017-18), around 3.7 % of the total land is under cultivation, while 86% of that is irrigated. The number of persons per hectare of the cultivated land is 32 to 37 persons/irrigated hectare. The total forest area in the district is 11%. North Waziristan is also one of the largest producers of pine nuts. The district has huge reserves of copper, while chromite, manganese reserves are also present. Further oil and gas reserves are also being explored by KPOGCL. These resources may be leveraged for the future growth and prosperity of the district. A limited number of women are employed, most of them in family owned agriculture and livestock. Paid female employment is very minimal, there are those that are employed as teachers and health care providers, in government and non-government organizations.

Some of the major issues prevalent in the district include:

- An absence of electricity that has prevented the establishment of an industry.
- Aggravated shortage of skilled labor, owing to a lack of vocational training institutes.
- Militancy and subsequent military operations, affecting peace and security.
- District's low socio-economic index.
- Wide gender gap in all development indicators.
- Marginalized and vulnerable groups, including women and girls.

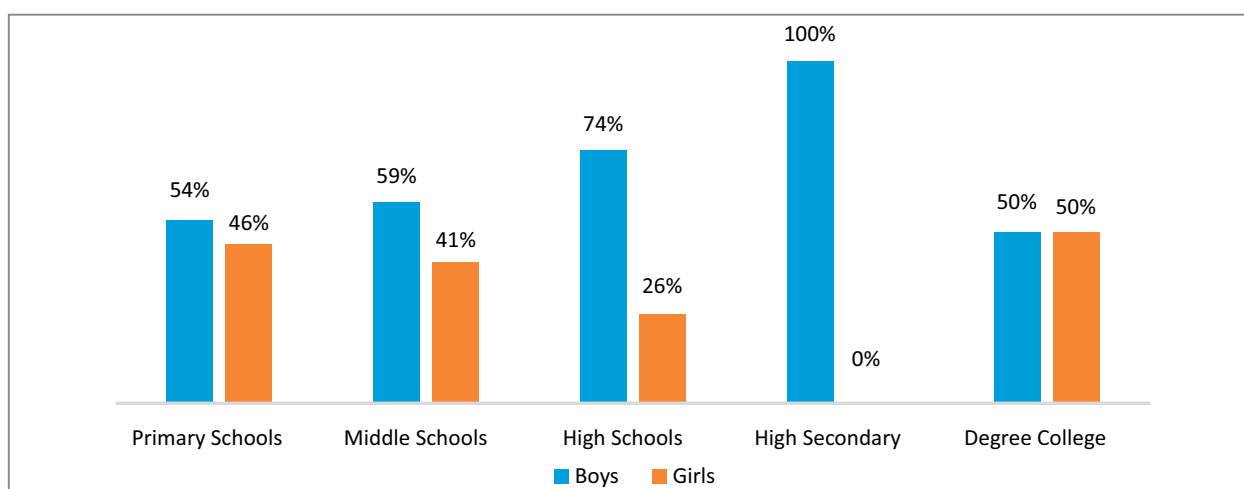
## Section 2 Secondary Data for North Waziristan District

### 2.1 Education

North Waziristan is one of the most affected districts by the protracted conflict in erstwhile FATA. Most of the education infrastructure was destroyed during the Taliban insurgency. In addition to the conflict in this region, an absence of effective socio-economic policies, and inadequate infrastructure in the education sector, has resulted in low literacy rates, directly contributing to extremism in the district. The government's efforts to establish new educational institutions, or upgrade or repair damaged schools, should be cemented by more strategic interventions to institutionalize education in the district, rather than momentarily increasing enrolment ratios.

According to official statistics, the current literacy rate in North Waziristan is around 17%, and 83% of the population cannot read or write their names. The provincial government recently announced the setting up of a Rs1.5 billion education-city in North Waziristan district, a project included in the 10-year development plan for the Newly Merged districts<sup>1</sup>. The following Graph 2 shows the percentage of available functional schools for boys and girls of all ages in the district, and the current gender disparity regarding the availability of facilities for both. Of the total functional schools, there are 58 fewer schools for girls as compared to boys at the primary level; 15 fewer middle schools; and 20 fewer high schools. At the higher secondary school level, there is 1 higher secondary school for boys but none have been established for girls. The education statistics (2017-18) exhibit the prevalence of a large gender-wise institution gap, particularly at the primary and high school levels. There is an overall gap of 10% between boys' and girls' institutions (55% and 45% respectively). Some progress has been made in achieving universal primary education; to shorten the gender gap in enrolment levels across all levels, but higher education opportunities remain a challenge for boys and especially girls. The presence of a college for females is an encouraging sign, but one college may not be sufficient to fulfil the needs of the whole district, just as the total number of schools are insufficient to serve the educational needs of the entire district.

Level	Primary School	Middle School	High School	Higher Secondary	Degree College	
North Waziristan	Boys	432	50	31	1	1
	Girls	374	35	11	0	1
	Total	806	85	42	1	2



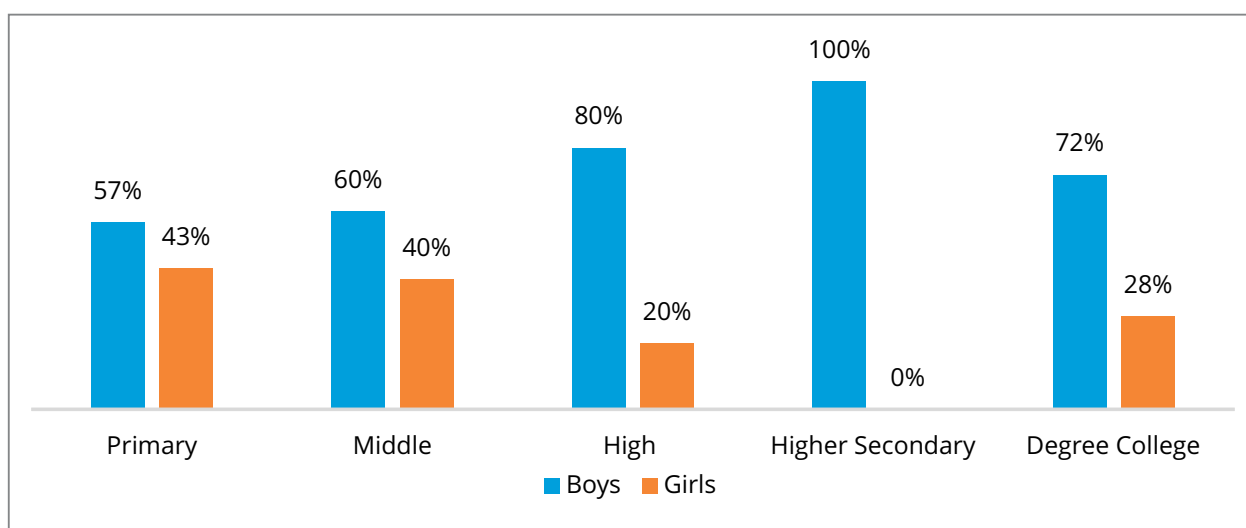
Graph 2: The proportion of educational institutions reserved for boys and girls in the District

<sup>1</sup> <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2063512/1-k-p-set-education-city-north-waziristan/>

The following Graph 3 highlights the percentage of enrolled students (boys and girls). There is significant gender disparity in the number of students enrolled at the primary school level i.e. 57:43 boys to girls, while the gap widens in middle schools with 60:40 (boys to girls). The enrolment in high schools is worse with 80% boys as compared to only 20% girls. At the higher secondary school level, unfortunately, there is no institution for girls. Boys to girls' enrolment ratio at the degree college level is 72:28, depicting a large disparity even though the same number of colleges are available for both boys and girls, therefore there is a need to promote girls' enrolment in colleges. The most worrying indicator is that 69% of boys and 79% of girls drop out of schools at the primary level making North Waziristan the district with the highest dropout rates among the Merged Districts.

Level	Primary School	Middle School	High School	Higher Secondary	Degree College	
North Waziristan	Boys	47251	2123	4034	133	357
	Girls	35574	1393	1024	0	142
	Total	82825	3516	5058	133	499

Table 2: Enrolment for boys and girls in all schools in N. Waziristan  
Source: District wise Education statistics of KP 2017-18

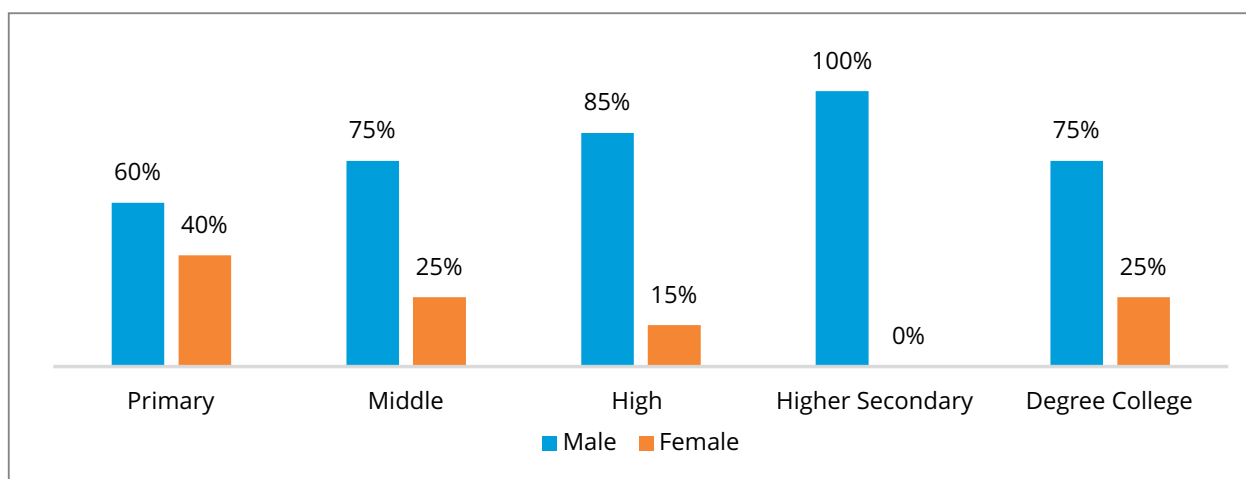


Graph 3: Enrolment figures for boys and girls in various levels of education in the District

Graph 4 highlights the availability of the teaching staff in functional educational institutes in the district. The graph shows that the number of male and female teachers very much corresponds to boys' and girls' enrolment situation at schools. At all levels, the gap between the availability of male and female teachers is significant – except for the teachers at primary schools' level, there is a consistent increase in the gap between the female teachers and male teachers. For instance, there are only 125 female teachers as compared to 370 male teachers in middle schools, while the gap widens further in high schools and colleges; the ratio of the number of students per teacher stands at 42:1 (boys) and 47:1 (girls) at the primary level, while in high schools, the ratio per teacher is 9:1 for boys and 13:1 for girls.

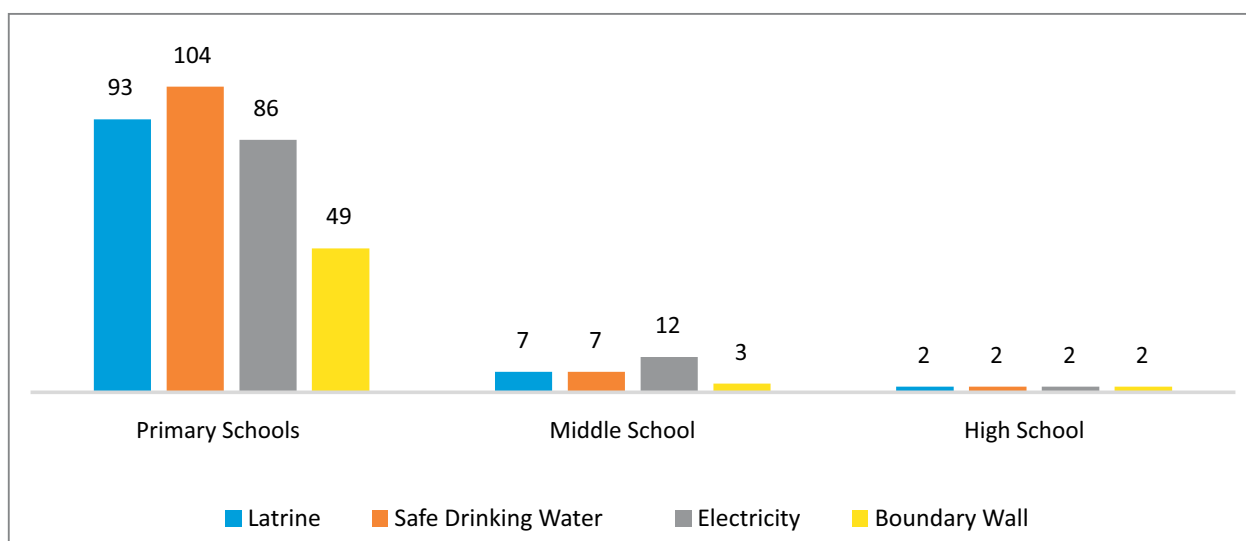
Level	Primary	Middle	High	Higher Secondary	Degree College	
North Waziristan	Male	1124	370	433	28	65
	Female	764	125	77	0	22
	Total	1888	495	510	28	87

Table 3: Availability of male and female teachers for all school levels in selected districts.  
Source: District wise Education Statistics, 2017-18



Graph 4: Proportion of male and female teachers in schools

Girls' schools were analysed with respect to missing facilities; the availability of latrine, safe drinking water, electricity, and a permanent boundary wall. According to the Education Management Information System (EMIS 2017-18), out of total 374 primary schools, 49 are without boundary walls; roughly one-third (104) do not have access to safe drinking water; 86 schools are without electricity; and 93 without latrines. The situation in middle schools is that out of 35 middle schools, 3 are without boundary walls; 7 schools lack safe drinking water; 12 are operating without electricity; and 7 schools do not have toilets/latrines. High schools also lack basic facilities; out of the 11, 2 high schools do not have boundary walls; 2 are without safe drinking water; 2 without electricity; and 2 do not have latrines. Ultimately, the collated statistics reveal that hundreds of young girls in North Waziristan are deprived of basic health needs and facilities in their schools.



Graph 5: Number of girls' schools with missing infrastructure or facilities

The FATA-Education Management Information System (EMIS) noted that 73% of students, comprising of 69% boys and 79% of girls, quit schools at the primary level in the erstwhile. The current situation of inadequate and/or missing facilities provides a strong indication that schools retain poor learning environments, especially in girls' schools, and that this is a major cause for higher education dropouts in the district. In order to combat low retention and attendance rates in girls' schools, these issues must be addressed at the policy and program levels, to ensure favourable educational ambience through the provision of improved physical and learning facilities.

## 2.2 Health

Access to health care in North Waziristan is poor. This district is among those that faces major challenges in the provision of health care services to the entire population, but more specifically to the women and girls in the district. Some of the factors that cause these challenges are as follows:

- Non-availability of a sufficient number of health facilities and services;
- Lack of gender responsiveness at the health institutions;
- Poor socio-economic conditions of the communities;
- Social and cultural norms regarding women's mobility and health privacy; and
- Deficiency in health-related awareness among the masses of North Waziristan

Currently, available statistical data for the North Waziristan district is limited. The statistics provided below are based on secondary research conducted on erstwhile FATA.

Primary level Health Care Facilities		Secondary Level Health Care Facilities
Community-Based Care Services	Facility Based Services	Secondary Care Referral Centers
LHVs CMWs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Civil Dispensaries (CDs)</li> <li>• Basic Health Units (BHUs)</li> <li>• Rural Health Centers (RHCs)</li> <li>• Community Health Centers (CHCs)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tehsil Headquarter Hospitals</li> <li>• District Head Quarter Hospitals</li> </ul>

Table 4: Primary and Secondary Level Health Care Facilities

North Waziristan has the largest health facility infrastructure among the Merged Districts. There is a total of 313 health facilities in the district, out of which, 242 health facilities report to the Directorate of Health Services, while each facility caters to roughly 1800 patients in the district.

Hospitals	Dispensaries	CHCs	BHUs	MCHCs
8	123	58	31	13

Table 5: Health Resource Availability and Mapping System (HeRAMS) in health facilities of FATA Pakistan (2018)

Around 93 health facilities are fully or partially damaged, but continue to provide minimal services to the population. The district also has the largest number of Maternal & Child Health Centers and LS/SFC centers. Seven secondary level health facilities, like the district headquarter hospital and tehsil headquarter hospitals, have been established, while the rest include CHCs, BHUs, CDs and MNCH. Besides the district health care facilities available in North Waziristan, people also depend on public and private health facilities available in the neighbouring districts of Dera Ismail Khan and Bannu.

### Availability of Healthcare Professionals

The minimum health package requires a certain number of health care providers, specifically addressing women's health related issues (for instance, LHVs, Nurses, Trained Traditional Birth Attendants, Dais, Health Educators, etc.) and provision of mother and child health services, including family planning, pre and post-natal services, availability of safe delivery kits, and routine immunization.

However, table 6 below presents a bleak picture regarding the availability of important health care providers, particularly important for mother and child health, sexual and reproductive health services, and to safeguard the overall health status of women and children in North Waziristan.

Staff Category	BHU/CHC Level			CD Level		
	Required	Available	Gap	Required	Available	Gap
Male/Female MOs	19	12	7			
LHVs	30	21	9	71	29	42
Health Technicians	60	34	26			
Health Educators	19	0	19			
Dispenser/Medical Technicians				71	43	28
EPI Technicians				71	22	49

Table 6: BHU/CHC Level

Though there is a substantial health infrastructure in North Waziristan, as compared to other Merged Districts, the available staff at the health facilities is far less than what is required to meet with the health needs of the population.

The provision of services and equipment at these facilities is also very distressing; far less than the requirement to meet the health needs of the population. The following table illustrates the current situation:

Description	BHU		CHC		CD	
	A*	E*	A*	E*	A*	E*
<b>Service Provision</b>						
Routine Immunization	6	19	15	15	0	85
Child Screening & Malnutrition Growth Monitoring	1	19	0	15	1	85
Antenatal Services	4	19	1	15	1	85
Basic EmONC	2	19	2	15		
Postpartum Care	2	19	0	15		
<b>Equipment Availability</b>						
Refrigerator	9	19	3	15	24	85
Safe Delivery Kit	3	19	4	15		
Sterilization Facility	18	19	3	15		
Microscope	5	19	4	15	28	85
Delivery Table	5	19	4	15		

A\*: Available E\*: Expected

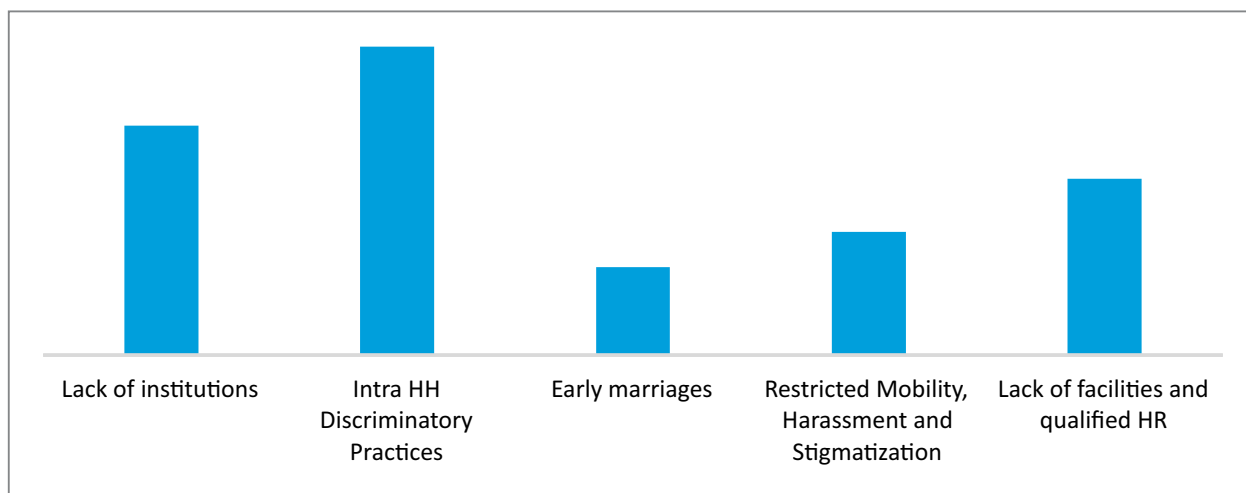
Table 7: Diagnostic Capacity and Essential Medicines to provide Adequate MNCH/SRH Services

According to the Director-General Health Services (DGHS), limited available physical infrastructure, lack of service provision (both staff and services) of health facilities further worsens the situation for the people. There is an evident gap between the required and available qualified human resources, relevant services and the essential equipment required to effectively address health issues. Another important aspect is the training of the available staff, in satisfactorily dealing with, and responding to, women specific issues, particularly victims of gender-based violence; evidently, a majority of currently employed health care providers lack the skills to carefully examine, and properly refer those cases to relevant corners, as stated by the KP Ombudsperson on harassment.

## Section 3 Primary Data for North Waziristan District

### 3.1 Education

The graph illustrates the opinions of the research participants regarding educational challenges in district North Waziristan:



Graph 6: Categories of responses to the challenges and barriers with regards to girls' education

In both FGDs and the KIIs, 33% of participants expressed Intra-household discriminatory practices as the most prominent challenge to equitable girl's education in North Waziristan. Various aspects of gender discrimination have been highlighted, such as giving preference to boys over girls in households with regards to all aspects of life; this is in fact a major reason that results in 95% of girls in many parts of North Waziristan, to not attend school, or to drop-out of school.



Figure 1: A public school in North Waziristan  
Source: Tribal News Network



*“Many families don't grant permission to their girls to go out even to school. Fathers and brothers consider it a disrespect to send their daughters and sisters out of the home. The society thinks bad of a girl who goes out for schooling.”*  
*An adolescent girl in FGD*

*“People of our area are not ready to let go of their daughters and women outside of homes. Take the example of enrolment in the boys' and girls' colleges – boys far much outnumber the girls, otherwise, the overall population of male and female is almost 50-50.”*  
*A female lecturer in Miranshah Girls College expressed during KII*

Trends of girls' education are changing in urban areas like Miranshah and Mir Ali, considering factors like urban centers have more educational institutions nearer houses and communities, some local transportation is available, the security situation is in control, families are comparatively better off, and have been exposed to the outside world. 23% of research participants argued that the district lacked educational institutions to adequately meet the needs of the population, particularly girls in rural areas, that are affected due to a lack of easily accessible schools. However, the number of schools in urban areas like Miranshah and Mir Ali are sufficient, and boys and girls can find schools within their localities. However, only a few respondents commented that urban schools were better equipped than rural schools.

*“Among many other factors, deficiency in the number of schools, mostly middle and high schools in our district, enhances travel distances resulting in major girls' dropouts from the school. Because after graduating from primary school, she reaches the age of puberty and parents become more hesitant to leave her alone going to school. At that age, she would need a company of an adult or secure transport to and from the school which is impossible for majority parents to arrange.”*  
*During the discussion on girls' access to school challenges, an FGD female participant*

Many high schools lack key amenities like science laboratories, playing grounds and qualified science teachers; therefore, many people consider sending their children to these schools a waste of time and money. The collected data indicates that a lack of facilities and qualified teaching staff, was the second biggest challenge to girls' education in North Waziristan. The secondary data also indicates that urban schools were comparatively better equipped than rural institutions; however, primary and higher-level schools lacked essential facilities and qualified teachers.

*“Government planners must adhere to the need and importance of school and health facilities' latrines and boundary walls to ensure culturally practiced purdah and security of the children; otherwise, people hesitate to avail these opportunities at the cost of their and their children's safety and security.”*  
*A male FGD participant from the district was of the view*

*“Unless parents feel secure that their children are provided good physical and learning environment at the schools, they would prefer their children to stay home and assist their families in the household chores or work with them in the fields.”*  
*Likewise, a few women in the FGDs*

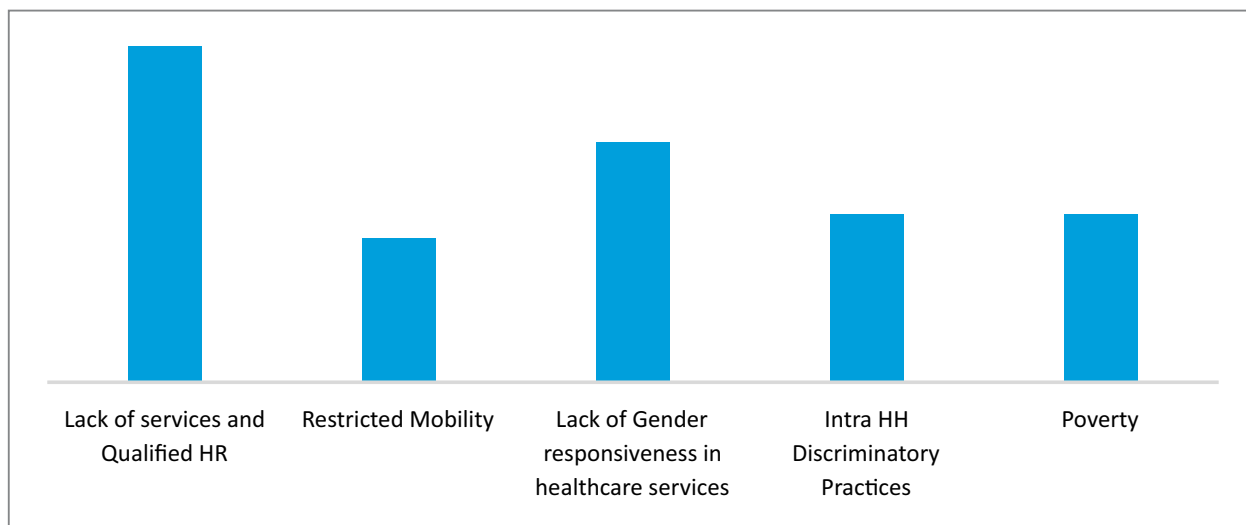
Restricted mobility, harassment while accessing schools, and the fear of social stigmatization, prevents girls from receiving the same level of education as boys. Women's mobility restriction is predicated by both, cultural and systemic practices. The fear of harassment and stigmatization, compel parents to abstain their daughters from leaving the house.

Likewise, early marriages force girls to drop-out of schools, in some cases even before graduating primary school. Like in almost all other Merged Districts, the contemporary society of North Waziristan supports early marriages, sometimes as young as 15 years old. The majority of the girls do not attend school at all; however, the ones enrolled, dropout from primary or middle school.

*“Parents in our area want to fulfil their religious and cultural obligations by marrying their children at the earliest possible – soon after their puberty. They can wait sometimes for their sons to complete their high school education and/or find a livelihood, but not for girls.”*  
*A female FGD participant from rural Waziristan*

### 3.2 Health

Findings of the FGDs and KIIs are given below, and the corresponding graph 7 illustrates the opinions of the women, men and girls of North Waziristan regarding the key challenges and barriers with regards to access to MNCH/SRH services:



Graph 7: Key Challenges & Barriers for Females to Access MNCH/SRH Services

Lack of services and qualified human resources available in health care facilities is considered as an enormous challenge to peoples' access to health services. According to the men, women, and girls of North Waziristan, the current supply of health services in urban and rural areas is insufficient to meet the needs and demands of the population. This situation is worst at the BHUs and CD level facilities, which are directly serving the health needs of the rural population.

*“We lack education and health facilities in Shiwa and we carry outpatients to Miranshah (the district headquarters) or Bannu (the adjacent district headquarters) for even minor medical treatments.”*  
*One of the adult male FGD participants from a rural Shawa village*

Another challenge faced by women and girls is the lack of gender responsiveness in existing healthcare facilities. Special needs of women and girls require qualified female staff, while special services, and equipment, are required to adequately address women and child, and sexual and reproductive, needs of the population. Participants pointed out that the available facilities lack female doctors, LHVs, female health technicians and health educators. Moreover, most of these facilities are not properly equipped with essential services like antenatal check-ups, basic EmONC, immunization, and postpartum care.

*“When women and girls get sick, most are taken to the bigger hospitals and private clinics. Here in our district, they don't normally go out for small health issues. However, if the problems are severe, they need to be taken to the city hospital, because the hospitals here do not have proper health facilities (services) to meet the needs of our sick and pregnant women.”*

*A female key informant was of the view*

Some respondents reported that the majority of the health staff is not regular in attending their duties. Their interest lies in offering services through private practice, as it is significantly more profitable.

*“The health staff in the local health facilities do not perform duties with honesty, most of them just attend to their job to pass their time and get paid. They are more interested to invite patients to their clinics. Moreover, most of the staff at the health facilities are male, and our women do not want to see male doctors.”*

*A respondent expressed*

Gender-based discrimination such as intra-household discriminatory practices and discrimination outside the house are significant challenges that hinder women's access to adequate health services. Sick and pregnant women in North Waziristan must face multiple constraints to ensure their survival. Women are not considered equal to men, including in their need for basic health care. Women and girls in rural North Waziristan are affected significantly more by gender-based discrimination than their urban counterparts. Like many women, poor segments and people with disabilities are also severely challenged by the prevailing circumstances of discrimination, poverty and insufficient supply of health services.

*“Men are considered superior. They get priority attention and are immediately taken to see doctors. Women, on the other hand, stay home unless very seriously ill, and even then, she has to seek permission and get money from the men”*

*A participant voiced their concern*

*“When women get sick, they (the men) rarely take them to the doctor, because taking a woman to the hospital is considered a shame.”*

*As quoted by an adolescent girl*

The majority of the population in the newly merged districts, including North Waziristan, live below the poverty line and barely make ends meet. Due to the absence of sufficient basic health facilities and services in most of the rural areas of North Waziristan, people either travel to Miran Shah, Mir Ali or adjacent Bannu district to cater for their health needs. The heavy costs of transportation, private treatment, and rising cost of medicine strains their already grim financial situation. To the extent possible, the poor avoid seeking proper health care and resort to local quacks and traditional healing practices, until they get worse and require urgent medical aid.

*“People, particularly poor children and women get sick quite often. We do not get good basic health facilities near our hometowns. People get basic treatment at home, but for serious illnesses, they need to take their patients to other cities and sometimes even Peshawar and Multan. Transportation and treatment in big city hospitals are very costly. To save family lives, the poor borrow money from others, which they try to pay back throughout their lives.”*

*A rural female FGD participant*

### 3.3 Women Economic Empowerment

North Waziristan is also one of the highest producers of pine nuts, which has great export potential. However, due to a lack of trained harvesters, proper and efficient cutting, roasting and processing of pine nuts, there is a high percentage of wastage. In fact, this sector can engage women and provide them an opportunity to enhance their livelihoods.

The district has reserves of copper, chromite, manganese. Furthermore, oil and gas reserves are also being explored by KPOGDL, and are expected to add to the economic output of the district in the near future. Miran Exploration Block is located in North Waziristan. Investment opportunities for local and foreign companies in exploration and processing are available via joint ventures.<sup>2</sup> Mineral potential in the district has been estimated and according to the estimate, there is a potential of 0.05 million tons of manganese, 1 million tons chromite, 35 million tons copper, and inexhaustible magnesite and granite.<sup>3</sup> Below are some facts and figures for the Merged Districts, that are also relevant and applicable to North Waziristan.

According to the Demographic and Household Survey, Pakistan (2017-18):

- 51% of the household in the Merged Districts are in the poorest wealth quintile;
- 74% live in multidimensional poverty, women among the majority;
- In 99% of the MDs, the women are unemployed;
- Only 13% of women and 11% of men are the Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) beneficiaries;
- Less than 5% women reported having a bank account;
- 66% of men and a very large percentage of the MDs women (87%) have no access to any sort of media (TV, Radio, Newspapers); and
- 1.5% of women have ever used the internet

In terms of economic activities, like in many other parts of the Merged Areas, people of North Waziristan are also mainly engaged with the agriculture sector. Most of the agricultural landholding belong to the influential members of the community, and they are comparatively better off, while a majority of the population either work as tenants or labourers on the lands, or choose to join other professions like a small business or engage in cross-country transportation. Due to the recent unrest and natural calamities, agriculture sector related activities have decreased substantially. Female involvement in agriculture, businesses and paid employment is minimal. Women, if any, are mostly employed as teachers or health care providers.

In the agriculture sector, only rural women in certain parts of the district were reported to be participating in agriculture; however, like in almost all other districts, in North Waziristan women work on their small family-

<sup>2</sup>District Wise Economic Profile, by KP Economic Zone Development & Management Company.

<sup>3</sup>Source: <http://fatada.gov.pk/minerals-sector-projects/>

owned farmlands, supporting their family men. Most women in North Waziristan do not enjoy ownership of land and property; therefore, they do not have lands to cultivate. Moreover, women's involvement in seasonal agriculture was at optimum, mostly equal to men, but entirely unpaid. Due to tribal traditions, women's work for money is stigmatized.



Figure 2: Commencing vocational training programs to enhance livelihoods for tribal women  
Source: FATA Development Authority

*“Most of the agriculture related tasks are performed by women along-with their men. It is only the tough tasks like watering fields in the night that are exclusively done by males. Women equally contribute to sowing and cutting of crops, but still, they get no financial benefits.”*

*A female key informant said*

In some cases, women work more than their men on their agricultural lands. For instance, men involved in family-to-family and tribal conflicts that fear for their lives, or fear revenge from the conflict family or tribe, send their women to take care of their agricultural fields – according to tribal traditions, families and tribes in conflict do not attack women for revenge.

Women headed households, with children to raise, were reported as being settled on their family land, though these are extremely few in number. In all other cases, where there are no adult male members, their lands are given to farmers on a shared production basis, till the time their children are of proper age to take care of their lands.

Nonetheless, rural women were interested in learning modern techniques to increase production on their land eventually increase their family income. Some women stated that poultry and cattle farming were some of the on-farm activities that they could engage in, to generate an additional income. Furthermore, harvesting, grading and packaging of the pine nuts was also another potential.

As mentioned above, since the majority of the agriculture sector is severely affected by the continued conflicts and natural calamities, like depletion of irrigation water sources, many families were exploring alternate sources, like employment and free enterprise.

Many participants also stated that the lack of paid employment opportunities was as a challenge for men and women. The unfavourable militancy circumstance had locked down the district for many years; therefore, the area could not attract investment opportunities, that could create employment

opportunities for men and women of the area. Women's involvement in the paid employment sector remains limited to very few public and private health, education and social welfare sector entities. Furthermore, since these opportunities are mostly urban based, rural women are further disadvantaged.

The schools and colleges in North Waziristan produce hundreds of graduates every year, but not all can be absorbed into the economy, due to the limited number of opportunities and jobs available; therefore, the people, particularly the educated women, mentioned a lack of paid employment opportunities as a challenge hindering their participation in the overall economic sector. To overcome unemployment, according to many people from the area, young men and women could potentially be encouraged to engage in off-farm independent enterprise - for instance, educated women and men can explore the opportunity to open more private schools and small vocational and technical centers, to prepare the youth for employment.

Keeping in mind the emerging economic trends in the district, there is a huge opportunity for men and women to become actively involved in economic activities. There is an apparent need to increase the appropriate skill sets of both men and women in the district. For this, it is imperative to tap into existing vocational and technical training centers, and networks.

People were hopeful that the merger would bring about new employment opportunities, in the public, and private sectors.

*“We were promised a better life after the merger, and we are hopeful that the dream will be fulfilled once more government departments expand their services in the district. We are also hopeful that will mean more livelihood opportunities.”*

*A key informant from the district*

In North Waziristan, as in other parts of the Merged Districts, women are traditionally constrained from economic participation. Active economic participation heavily depends on women's physical mobility. However, tribal women are not allowed to go out of their homes except for paying visits to their close relatives, or going to the hospital in case of a severe illnesses. In such situations, women cannot leverage resources the way men can.

Currently, a handful of women participate in making and selling handicrafts from household businesses within their respective villages. Several others reported that they keep and sell livestock, or sell eggs and chicken in the village. However, in most cases, they have been dependent on their males, for example, accounting, taking care of the finances, exploring better markets, getting the raw material or resources, etc. Many women and young girls believe that if they were provided with training in entrepreneurship skills, and were helped financially, they would be able to establish their own business, and thereby be more independent.

The data from the survey indicates that for many women and men in North Waziristan, the second greatest challenge to their economic participation and empowerment was a lack of access to markets and finance. Due to lack of exposure and restricted mobility, women in North Waziristan do not possess sufficient knowledge of markets; therefore, many women rely upon their men or third-party (middleman) to buy raw material and sell their finished products. To avoid the middleman, women producers need linkages with the market.

*“I am a widow and responsible in my household of everything. People of the area are supporting me financially and provide me other necessary things. My paternal relatives are also supporting me, because I have no source of income – however, that support is meager and I am unable to provide my children with good education and health.”*

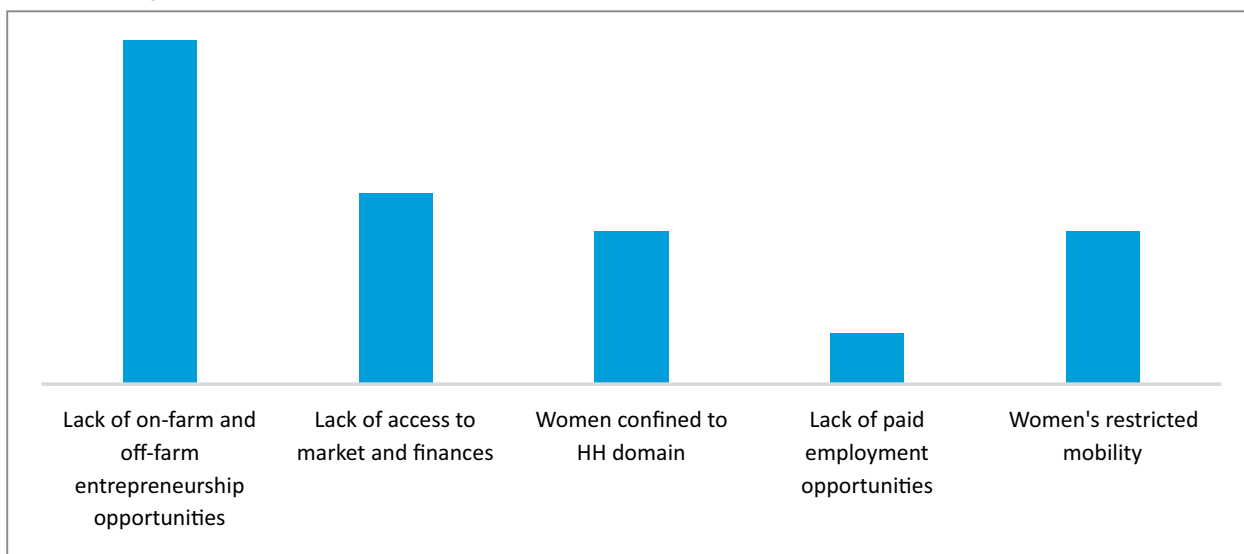
*A female key informant shared*

Women respondents stated that in order to be economically active, a basic necessity was financial capital, as seed money to start a business with. Due to cultural restrictions, most women were neither, aware of existing financial and capacity building opportunities, for example, banks, SMEDA, Prime minister youth support program and Ehsaas program, nor could they fulfil the loan and credit-check requirements. However, the women were greatly interested in capacity building interventions that would enable them to take care of their finances, and to prepare documentation to access easy interest free loans and credits. This would open up avenues for their better livelihood opportunities.

In North Waziristan, women headed households are normally widows, or in some cases, women who have injured, or very old husbands. Many families have in fact lost their male breadwinners in the recent conflicts and drone attacks. A strong social support mechanism existed to support widows and their families at the community level, supported by the village philanthropists and/or the village head, Khans; however, with the passage of time, this due support has decreased because of the recent conflicts that brought economic desolations of poverty, unemployment and financial stress. However, since women's mobility is restricted and is mainly dependent on men, such women lead lives under extreme poverty.

*“We were promised a better life after the merger, and we are hopeful that the dream will be fulfilled once more government departments expand their services in the district. We are also hopeful that will mean more livelihood opportunities.”*  
*A widow woman*

Major challenges faced by women hindering their active participation in economic opportunities include the following:



Graph 8: Major Challenges in Economic Participation

### 3.4 Gender Based Violence

Conflict in North Waziristan has challenged most of the socio-political, moral and ethical structures in the district. The conflict remained here for a longer duration as compared to the other districts, which ended with the final military operation Zarb-e-Azb. During the conflict, people lived an insecure life and had to displace to other less affected parts within the district, or moved to adjacent districts of Bannu, Dera Ismail Khan, and Peshawar.

#### Impact of Conflicts and Shifts in Gender Dynamics

The IDPs of North Waziristan fled not only to the cities or Baka-Khel IDPs' camp, but] also took refuge in the rural areas of Bannu, FR Bannu and some areas of Lakki Marwat like Nawrang. In the rural areas of Bannu,

the social values system was very different from that of North Waziristan.<sup>4</sup> The IDPs experienced living in a big-and-wide house, in large joint families in the rural areas of the host community in Bannu. Moreover, these areas have the same male-female's status, male-female's mobility pattern, communal relations, marriage system, and economic options. Therefore, the IDPs did not experience a visible change in gender roles.

However, for women, gender roles began changing with the passage of time, as the IDPs started acclimatizing to city life in the urban centers of Dera Ismail Khan and Peshawar. Women started sharing responsibilities that previously (before displacement) were counted as men's roles in North Waziristan. Peshawar provided greater opportunities for IDPs to revise their gender roles. Many women started using cell phones, they were allowed access to public transportation, and started independent mobility, accessed the market, escorted children to schools, and became involved in political activities by taking part in mass gatherings (jalsa) of Pashtun Tahafuz (Protection) Movement (PTM)<sup>5</sup> in Bannu.



*Figure 3: Incidence of gender-based violence against women  
Source: Deutsche Welle*

IDPs, including women in the urban centers, became involved in a variety of livelihood opportunities including small home-based business and employment. Due to the adverse conditions in their hometowns and the opportunities, particularly in urban centers, thousands of the IDPs did not return to North Waziristan. 71% of the IDPs are still displaced and only 29% have returned back to North Waziristan.<sup>6</sup>

Women and girls in North Waziristan have always faced challenges regarding their mobility. Cultural restrictions prevailed for ages, which were worsened with militants' restrictions on women's mobility without the presence of close male relatives. Female educational institutions were shut down, and visits to health clinics were conditional, and only with a male escort. The insurgents strictly warned local tribesmen of consequences against allowing women relatives to cast their vote.

<sup>4</sup>value system – men-women's status; men-women's mobility pattern; communal relations [who among the relative and community can visit one's home; rules for trespassers etc.]; marriage system; economy etc.

<sup>5</sup>Fact revealed during side-chat in North Waziristan FGDs.

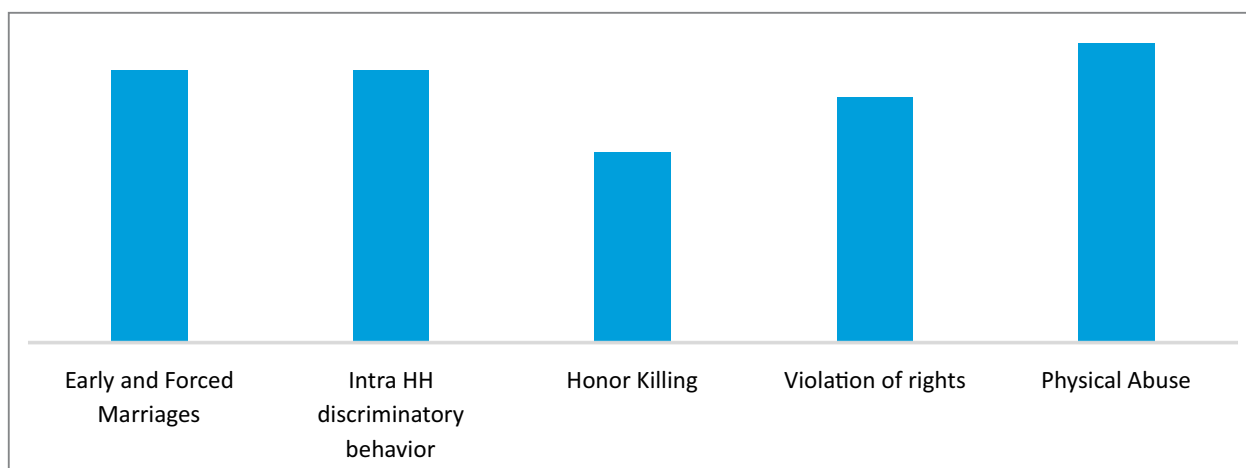
<sup>6</sup>UN OCHA, 2019



Militants have not been the only actors posing threats to women's movement and safety; cases of harassment by security forces have also been reported from the area. In 2019, the alleged harassment of women and children by the security forces in the district provoked outrage and protests. It started after a video went viral in which an 11-year-old boy recounted how four months after the security forces picked up his elder brother and father, soldiers regularly barged into their house in North Waziristan's Khaisor village to make various demands. Later, his mother publicly stated that the soldiers once told her to make beds for them because they would spend the night inside her house if her son (who was with the Taliban) did not surrender.

In the Merged Districts, the occurrence of gender-based violence is almost equal in rural and urban areas of the Merged Districts. The urbanity does not challenge the prevailing tribal social value system in the Merged Districts.

The Demographic and Health Survey Pakistan (2017-18) reveals that in the ex-FATA region more than 66% of the women have experienced spousal physical, sexual, or emotional violence, being the highest in Pakistan. Out of these 66% women, more than 80% never sought any help nor told anyone. The primary reasons being 'shame' and 'non-availability of effective remedial sources/outlet'. Moreover, like in many parts of Pakistan, in the Merged Districts, although with relatively more intensity, a few components of GBV are considered 'normal', for example, 95% of women themselves justify 'wife beating' under particular circumstances such as burning food, arguing with the husband, going out without permission, neglecting the children or in-laws, or refusing to have intimate relations.



Graph 9: Gender Based Violence

This study captures various types of gender-based violence, including violation of rights, early and forced marriages, physical abuse (beating women), honour killing, harassment and sexual assault. Like in several other Merged Areas, interestingly, individual key informants responded more openly to the gender-based violence questions than FGD participants.

Domestic violence, particularly physical (and verbal) abuse and assault of women have been common practices in the district; also, the biggest challenge reported (by 36%) to the research team. Petty issues have been reported as the causes of physical abuse by the respondents. Many women reported physical abuse, a daily routine for them, and stated that women here have become used to it. Though physical abuse invariably exists in the whole district, but among uneducated families, the intensity is high. Young women are more prone to it than old age women.

*“Wife beating is common – our men say that women are like animals which only understand the language of stick to keep them in the track.”*  
 A young woman in one of the FGDs

*“Many men resort to women's physical abuse without realizing that they are doing something wrong, and in many cases, beating women is even considered as a symbol of manhood.”*

*A female key informant was of the view*

Some of the female FGD participants, however, think, that with the passage of time, increased levels of education, awareness and exposure to modern lifestyle, has reduced the practice of wife beating, and many now consider physical violence against women as an inhumane act. In this district, children's physical abuse is also a common phenomenon, at both household and in educational institutions. The prevalence of physical abuse is reported in Madrasahs more than it is in schools.

Around one-third of the research participants believed that early, and some forms of forced marriages, were common GBV practices in North Waziristan. 28% of the participants reported that marriages commonly occur at a young age and with almost none, or very minimal consent from girls. There is a general perception that keeping unmarried young girls for long at home may bring a bad name to the family. On the other hand, in the North Waziristan district, due to the widespread practice of early marriages, many people avoid marrying older girls and argue there must be something wrong with the girl if she is still unmarried.

The most appropriate age for marriage, suggested by several adult participants, particularly the females, was between the 14 & 16 years. A few girls mentioned 15 to 16 years as an appropriate age for marriage. Generally, only less than 14 is considered an 'early marriage', particularly in rural areas, and among uneducated parents. Although, some parents were of the view that a girl should marry a boy that is 'economically stable', so that he can adequately take on the responsibility of raising a family. However, many others believe that married people receive the mercy of Allah, and therefore should not be worried about raising a family or making ends meet; these people ultimately end up as dependants on the parents.

Besides early marriages, girls and women in North Waziristan face the threat of forced marriages as well. Following are the various types of forced marriages in practice in the Merged Areas:

Without 'formal' or proper consent of girl [and boy] – girls and boys even don't oppose. Girls were vocal about not having a say about their marriage decisions. Boys and girls both told that they are informed only when their parents, mainly fathers, finalize the decisions.

Against the will of girls [or boy] – when they oppose the wedding --, they are then forced to marry and parents uphold their decisions. This practice is also common in the tribal population of the district.

The marriage that has taken place under the custom of Ghag or Zhagh – boy's claim over the girl. Ghag in North Waziristan is different than other MDs. Ghag is used by a man/boy to assert his claim over a girl whose family had earlier (usually in childhood) promised to give her in marriage to him but later refuses. In such a case, the boy in question announces that no one will marry this particular girl. This practice is also used for getting a divorce for a girl/woman who wants to leave her husband, but is prevented from doing so. As she cannot marry another man before getting a formal divorce from her husband, the girl's/woman's family uses Ghag for getting her a divorce. In such a case, the girls' brother names a young girl from his sister's in-laws (preferably sister of his brother-in-law) to be his wife. It means that this girl will also remain unmarried until the Ghag is withdrawn. Ghag is withdrawn after the first girl/woman is granted a divorce so that she may remarry.

Women exchange for blood feuds – Traditionally, when a family or tribe want to settle a blood feud, the family who has killed more members of the opponent family has to exchange girl(s) to settle the dispute. The research participants reported that it was currently non-existent in the area.

Child Marriage commitment – these are types where relatives commit to their children's marriages once they grow to the marriage age/puberty. These commitments are normally contracted between close relatives, mostly first cousins, or at least between families within the same tribe. Marriages outside the immediate family are normally not considered.

Both the international covenants and the religious code of Islam protect women's rights. Within the context of Pakistan, in remote and isolated areas, like the Merged Districts, women are more vulnerable and have been deprived of their rights to be properly educated, to vote according to their choice, to participate in economic opportunities, to own a property and to be free of violence.

Though with the passage of time and people's exposures to other parts of the country, some changes have taken place in the lives of women and girls, gender inequality remains high in district North Waziristan. Boys can enjoy almost every right available to the citizens of Pakistan however, females are highly discriminated against. Women have no inheritance rights in North Waziristan, and around 99% women do not possess any property or land in their name.

“Females are the most deprived in this society, boys are considered the genuine heirs of the family and women do not have any rights to be part of the inheritance.”

*A female key informant from the district was of the view*

Honour killing is a serious issue in the North Waziristan district. As it is a sensitive matter in Pashtun culture, so people avoid talking about cases of honour killings. Therefore, such cases are not covered by the media. The killing of women in the name of honour is usually termed as suicide just to avoid the stigma attached to honour killing. Thus, people of the locality also avoid discussing such incidents because doing so may lead to further violence.

“It is an inhuman and barbarian practice, which is taking place in this society for ages. More often is also used just to personal benefits or take revenge.”

*A key informant viewed*

“In a place near our village, a family mobile phone, supposed to be a connection between the family and the men working outside in Karachi, rang and a woman in the household attended that unknown call. Her in-laws, father-in-law and other men from her own parents' family, killed her. She was killed merely for saying hello when she attended the telephone call. Some people are extremely conservative and even do not allow women to attend a stranger's call over the telephone.”

*A Female FGD Participant from Waziristan*

In 2016, Chairperson Human Rights Commission of Pakistan Zohra Yusuf wrote a letter to the then Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Iqbal Zafar Jahar requesting him to protect a girl whose family wanted to kill her in the name of honour (Honour killing bid foiled in North Waziristan, 2016). Participants hoped that with the inception of the merger the practice of honour killing would diminish because the Pakistan criminal laws are strict, and this would deter people from this practice.

Unlike in cities and settled districts, gender-based violence is not reported in most cases unless it is very severe in nature. Like in other Merged Districts, in response to the question of rescue and relief services available to the GBV victims, people said that normally these cases are considered 'personal' and remain confined within family boundaries. However, if the incident is serious and causes bodily injury, the girl's family may get involved, and may ask the husband, and his family, for an explanation. If the problem could

not be solved within the family, community or tribal elders, and Jirga, are involved. However, many believe that the Jirga, to a great extent, avoids interference in such cases, and compels the families to reconcile, rather than punishing the culprit to compensate the victim.

However, in the post-merger scenario, since the extension of the legislation to the Merged Areas, including North Waziristan, no GBV case has been registered. The tribal women are optimistic that their (the victims) voices will be heard through the courts of law. However, the Pakistani justice system is slow in issuing decisions and decrees as noted by the elected representative from North Waziristan. Indeed, to meet the legal needs of the people of the Merged Districts, women should be heard and counselled by female judges and attorneys. Also, it is almost two years after the merger, but the courts are not yet established within the district (operating from Bannu or Tank), therefore, the government should shift the courts at the earliest possible inside the district and must provide free of cost assistance and services to such victims.

### 3.5 Women's Leadership and Political Participation

Women participation in political activities in the North Waziristan district seems to be a distant dream. Despite the heavy military presence, people of North Waziristan faced continued threats and challenges from the militants against allowing females to vote. Constant threats by militants keep women away from political discourse. The situation was extremely dire up to the 2013 general elections, when the Taliban warned the tribesmen to prevent their women from voting, and threatened them of consequences, if they refused to obey the order.



*Figure 4: Women voters during the 2018 provincial elections  
Source: The Daily Star*

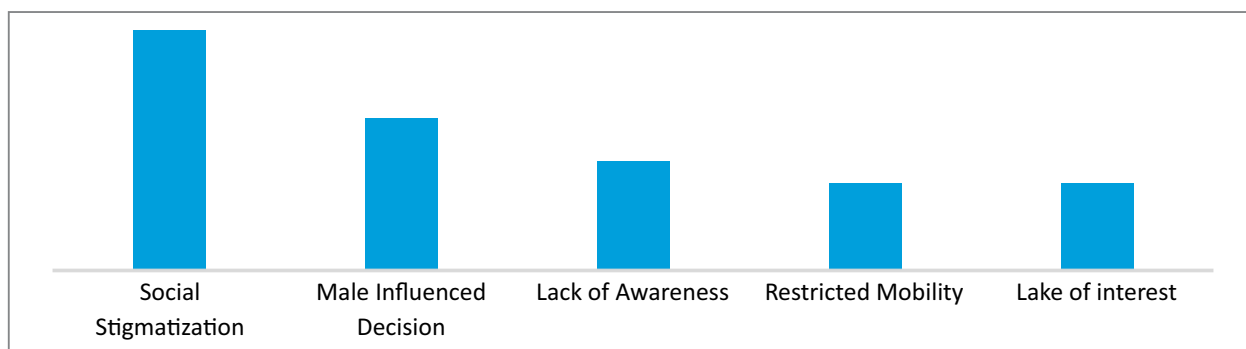
Though the situation has improved since then, the women participation in political activities and electoral process is not very encouraging. For example, this district recorded the second lowest female voter turn-out in the 2018 general elections. Out of a total of 63,954 votes cast there, only 6,364 were cast by women. In provincial elections held in July 2019, of all the 73,422 votes cast in two constituencies, only 10,714 (14.6%) were cast by women. On the one hand, women turnout always happened to be low in the district, while on the other hand, no female candidate has contested elections from the district so far.

In spite of a complete curfew and imposition of section 144, people of North Waziristan participated in both

national and provincial assembly elections. However, due to heavy military presence, strict security and threats from the militants, women could not reach the polling station.

The gender participation in the democratic processes and the possibility of assuming leadership roles by them was conceptually analysed in three steps. The challenges women face at the home level; while outside home; and issues and challenges that obstruct her movement towards the point of decision-making, for example, attaining a position of influence in the political parties.

Keeping in mind the low turnout of women voters, and lack of their participation in the political processes, women and men of the district were asked to share their opinions on the challenges hindering women's political participation in the democratic process, as they themselves experienced in the recent provincial level elections. The graph below illustrates the weightage given by participants to various challenges and their comments in various FGDs and KIIs:



Graph 10: Barriers and Challenges expressed by Respondents

Social stigmatization was reported as the biggest obstacle for women's participation in, and engagement with, the political processes. Participation in civic and political engagement requires women to step out of their homes and share the leadership stage along-with men. However, as several participants, both women and men from our FGDs and KIIs noted, the political activities need a gender-mix atmosphere, late night meetings and frequent travel, were not possible for a conservative tribal woman to perform.

*“Some report on sexual harassment in political gatherings surfaced by social media; hence, most of the women and their families hesitate to participate in an 'unsafe' environment.”*

*A male key informant pointed out*

*“Stepping out for females to participate in politics is like preparing oneself for stoning from the people of this conservation society. Here a woman when goes out for even a genuine health purpose, people use derogatory words for her, so politics is far much beyond their (men) thoughts.”*

*A female FGD participant from North Waziristan*

Due to the fear of stigmatization, women and their families, avoid active politics; however, as reported by a few women and men, in the past two decades women participation in politics has now been accepted up to the 'vote casting' level.

Men make decisions for women on what is appropriate and what it is not. Like in many other parts of the province, women in the Merged Districts, including North Waziristan, cannot vote on their own choice, rather all their voting choices are influenced by their males.

*“Women's decisions are restricted only to their household affairs and political participation falls under the male's wisdom.”*

*The FGD participants were of the view*

*“Our women are restricted to homes, with no exposure to any sort of communication with the outer world, how can we expect them to make an informed decision on who and why to vote for a certain candidate, therefore, they do whatever their men ask them to do.”*

*A male FGD participant from North Waziristan*

*“I don't think there will be many women because people in our area are not yet ready for bringing their women outside of homes. Actually, those decisions will also be made by males and they are not ready to accept women's role out of the home sphere.”*

*Another FGD participant was of the view*

In the tribal system, the powers of the tribes are measured by the headcounts of their men, wealth, and public office powers. Therefore, to acquire the three pillars of power, families and clan's wisdom and power are collectively used to reach the goal.

*“That most of the time it is the tribal elder who decides for the entire tribe that who should they all vote for? And the whole tribe complies with the decision.”*

*One of the participants in the same group discussion*

The data shows that a lack of awareness among people was as an important challenge hindering the political participation and empowerment of women in North Waziristan. Several times, especially during the individual in-depth interview, respondents expressed that neither most of the men, nor the women, were aware of the electoral process, their collective benefits, and particularly how women participation in politics can strengthen gender equality. Many people, because of their cultural and traditional orientation and stereotypes, are unable to visualize women in a leadership role i.e. being a political leader. Lack of education, exposure, and awareness have resulted in widening gender inequality. Many research participants echoed their voices that politics were 'not women's priorities but rather falls under male domains.

*“for the last many months since the 2018 FATA-KP merger, we at the local government level have been trying to encourage women to come forward and get ready for the upcoming local government elections; however, we are not successful in enhancing women's interest in these processes. Rather now we have to first convince and motivate the gatekeepers (the males) to create space for women to actively play their developmental and decision-making roles.”*

*A government official from the provincial Merged Areas secretariat was of the view*

### 3.6 Grassroots Leadership Development

KP-FATA merger and the displacement provided exposure to the men and women of the outside world. The displacement to urban centers, despite its several negative results, also introduced some positive dynamics that were a kind of 'blessing in disguise' for thousands of inhabitants for the Merged Areas. Moreover, a large city, like Miran Shah and Mir Ali with comparatively better educational statistics convey potentials for future educated young leaders. The government interventions, huge military presence, and business-related mobility will also play an important for the youth to come forward. Besides, the political activities of the PTM have also changed the mindset of the people towards development. There are a number of young males (and a few females) who could potentially be engaged and partnered-with future development interventions.

Like in other Merged Districts, another source of potential grassroots leadership identification and development is the pool of activists and potential candidates from the upcoming local government. These people, particularly the elected local government youth and women, can play an important role in the identification and implementation of women development focused schemes at the grassroots level.





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