In Pakistan, 20% of the National Assembly and 18% of the provincial assemblies are comprised of women, but women’s voices are still far from reaching the mainstream despite their numbers. Dependent on the nomination from their parties, they cannot perform and grow according to their talents and hence, have a limited role in policy and decision-making. Imparting leadership skills to present and aspiring women parliamentarians will create examples of women leadership. It will strengthen the faith of the Pakistani society in the leadership capability of women and will also inspire young women to step forward and lead the country.

“Women’s Initiative for Learning and Leadership (WILL): Strengthening Women’s Political Participation and Leadership for Effective Democratic Governance in Pakistan”

SFCG Pakistan has been working with women parliamentarians across Pakistan for their capacity-building to magnify their voices and bolster their engagement in decision-making processes at provincial and local levels.

The WILL initiative was launched in September 2011, with support from the U.S. State Department's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor (DRL) and implemented through local partners, with a national focus covering all four provinces as well as the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). This project strengthened the capacity of its local partners and participants through training, coaching sessions, networking platforms and leadership forums, workshops and one-on-one coaching sessions around essential leadership skills such as conflict resolution, advocacy, media messaging, consensus building and mediation. The project also provided an opportunity to network through National Networking Summits where participants came together as leaders beyond party lines.

The Media was instrumental in fighting negative stereotypes centered around women's leadership capabilities and to facilitate a positive transformation of their public perception in Pakistan. This was achieved through a national campaign entitled “Women’s Initiative for Learning and Leadership (WILL)” which was used for message development, stakeholder meetings, Common Ground workshops, developing and handling of publicity and interactive talk shows on issues related to women's leadership.
Having met all the targets and drawing on these successes, SFCG Pakistan kick-started the second phase of WILL in October 2013 with its implementing partner, Insan Foundation Trust. With a current focus on the provinces of Punjab and Sindh, the challenge is now to further strengthen the leadership capacities of women parliamentarians (MPs) in the Provincial Assemblies, along with their male counterparts and government officials with the overall goal to strengthen and portray these women leaders as creative, capable, assertive and effective to engage with all stakeholders at multiple tiers of governance.

Having a total of 128 women MPAs as direct beneficiaries so far, the numbers are expected to increase in this phase with each trained woman further imparting these valuable skills, to peers, which is one of the several significant objectives throughout the duration of this project.

Over the next 16 months, SFCG Pakistan and IFT aim to conduct and facilitate a range of robust training, dialogue, networking and coaching activities with women and men politicians, parliamentarians and government officials to increase the leadership skills of women parliamentarians (MPs) for effective policy-making and reform, facilitate the creation of policy mechanisms that enable women parliamentarians (MPs) to collaborate across party lines with their male counterparts and government officials and build positive public perception around the role of women parliamentarians (MPs) as effective leaders and decision-makers through media sensitization.

Our Achievements

- **240** Individual Coaching Sessions
- **2** National Networking Summits
- **3** Provincial and District Level Capacity Strengthening Workshops **230** Participants
- **1** Video Documentary
- **150** Interactive Radio Talk Shows
- **1** Common Ground Media Workshop **30** Participants

Direct Beneficiaries

- **128** Women MPAs from all Four Provinces of Pakistan

**Punjab 22.7%**

**Sindh 52%**

**Balochistan 51.7%**

**KPK & FATA 68%**

Supported by:

- U.S. Department of State Democracy, Human Rights and Labor (DRL)

Duration:

- September 2011 – September 2015

Implementing Partners:

- Phase I: PAIMAN Alumni Trust, Insan Foundation Trust and Uks Resource Center
- Phase II: Insan Foundation Trust (IFT)

Geographical Coverage:

- Phase I: Punjab, Sindh, KPK, Baluchistan and Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA)
- Phase II: Punjab and Sindh

Beneficiaries:

- Provincial women parliamentarians, former aspiring women councilors at provincial and district levels, government officials and male counterparts.

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