

# Strengthening Rule of Law in Malakan (SRLM)

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Female lawyers in Chitral ©UNDP

## Bringing Justice to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

Malakand Division suffered three years of extremist activities, which adversely affected its already weak legal and security system. With its Strengthening Rule of Law programme, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) supports the Government of Pakistan (GoP) to establish an efficient and equally accessible security and justice system. The aim of this programme is to stabilise the region by strengthening legal institutions in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The programme is implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

The SRLM programme further aims to increase access to an improved justice system, ensure that alternative dispute resolution mechanisms provide fair and effective justice in accordance with the Constitution of Pakistan, improve the capacities of courts and lawyers, and introduce the concept of community policing and oversight to improve the performance of the police in the region.

### Partners for SRLM

- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands (EKN)
- European Union (EU)
- Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP)

The first phase of the programme focused on both the demand and supply side, specifically the police, the judicial sector, legal aid and alternative dispute resolution as well as traditional legal mechanisms, such as the *Jirgas* (group of tribal elders). The programme has enjoyed significant success and by improving court performance and strengthening the legal aid system, it

has increased access of the population, particularly women and the most vulnerable in Malakand Division, to an improved justice system. Initiatives such as community policing and oversight were introduced to improve the performance of the police in the region. The first forensic science laboratory was established in Swat.



Forensic science laboratory in Swat ©UNDP

Training sessions and advocacy events have also been part of the project as well as the provision of institutional support to the police.

<b>Time Frame:</b>	September 2013 to November 2018
<b>Total Budget:</b>	CHF 9 million
<b>Geographic Focus:</b>	Bannu, Buner, Chitral, Dera Ismail Khan, Kohat, Lower Dir, Malakand, Shangla, Swat, Upper Dir.

## Increasing Access for Women

One of the ways the programme is improving access to the legal system is by increasing the number of female practitioners in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The

**“I may not be the first law graduate from Chitral, but only I dared to start a practice here**

*Naheeda Saif, High Court Advocate from Chitral*

programme provides scholarships to female students, connects female graduates to bar associations and strengthens the capacity of female lawyers. It has also made the environment for female lawyers more conducive by constructing bar rooms and waiting areas for female litigants. The legal aid clinics held under the programme receive more women than men, and they

bring cases related to inheritance, family disputes, and child maintenance.



Women police during training ©SDC

In 2015, the non-governmental organisation PILDAT conducted a survey called 'Public Opinion on Quality of Governance in Pakistan'. It found that the approval rating of law and order in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa improved from 45% to 72% in 2015. SDC plans to sustain the results of the first phase and ensure that the population will also have equitable access to the legal system in the second phase. This is due to be achieved by increasing the effectiveness and the efficiency of the formal legal system and making legal aid sustainable by institutionalising it in the bar associations.

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#### **Further information**

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