
PAKISTAN ON OPEN E GOVERNANCE INDEX

By

BYTES FOR ALL

P a k i s t a n
An assessment on Open E Governance Index

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More acknowledgments come here

This report is a part of pilot measure on developing a global index for measuring the state of open e governance across the world. The country assessment has been led by Bytes for All in Pakistan and contributes to a larger study conducted in three countries in Asia.

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I have no doubt that the nation has suffered more from undue secrecy than from undue disclosure. The government takes good care of itself."

— Daniel Schorr

SECTION ONE

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

CHAPTER ONE

PAKISTAN – AN OVERVIEW

PAKISTAN is a fascinating country for any political scholar. One of the only two states in the world that call themselves *ideological states* the country has grappled with the conflicts that arise when ideological narratives and systems collide and conflict with the democratic narratives and systems that inform global standards. Unfortunately, whether it is the ideological system or the political one, destabilization at the hands of the elite and powerful has been a common thread. On one hand, Islam, the dominant ideological basis for Pakistan's creation has been used as a tool for exerting influence and power, often wielded by power hungry as an excuse to move towards regressive legislation and on the other side, the political arena has been dominated by the military and establishment alliance that has been enabled by the corruption and incompetence of politicians and resulted in the development of a weak and fractured democracy. Within this fragile democratic system, the discussion on open and e governance is fairly new.

This chapter gives an overview of the political context in Pakistan so as to create a baseline for the discussion on OeGI themes within the local context.

The Burden of History

Pakistan is a postcolonial state, created in 1947 as the British moved out of the Indian Sub continent. Like most former colonies, Pakistan bears the baggage of its colonial past. The country's legal justice system is based on English Common Law and the governance system has largely been inherited from the British. The relationship of the state and its citizens within British colonies was one of master and slave. This was an environment where transparency and openness were seen as unnecessary and dangerous. This means that within the laws that deal with the working of the government there is an inherent bias towards secrecy.

Thus, the state has educated its civil servants to abide by laws like the Official Secrets Act, a regressive piece of legislation penned in 1923, and enforced by the British to keep their subjects blind to the government's actions. Observers have termed this

law “a useful bludgeon to silence dissent”¹. Under this act “almost any piece of information can be declared secret or classified without any formality or explanation, which is contrary to the constitutionally-guaranteed right to information of citizens. The government is free to declare any information “confidential” as the law does not describe any guidelines as to who, why or how a document is labelled secret”².

While this act is the most glaring example of the remnants of colonialism within the country’s legislation, it is by no means the only one. Government after government has followed a decidedly secretive policy, that goes against the spirit of openness.

A delicate democracy

Adding to the burden of a secretive history, is the fact that Pakistani democracy has always been at threat. The country experiences its first Martial Law only a decade into existence. In October 1958, the Army Chief, General Muhammad Ayub Khan, took control of the country as its Chief Martial Law Administrator, suspending the constitution, dismissing federal and provincial governments and dissolving the assemblies. Not just that General Ayub also attempted to abolish all political parties. General Ayub later substantiated his power by enacting a new constitution and implementing presidential form of democracy in the country, getting elected twice as president of Pakistan amidst allegations of rigging.

In 1969, General Yahya Khan, then Army Chief, declared the second Martial law and assumed the office of the president. A Provisional Constitution Order was passed and Martial Law Administrators of East and West Pakistan were given additional portfolios of governors.

In 1977, the army staged third coup and General Ziaul Haq overthrew Bhutto’s government. This was perhaps the most dark period of Pakistan’s history as General Zia ul Haq weaponised religion as a tool of political control and introduced regressive policies, silencing the press and punishing any kind of dissent. General Zia’s era is still recalled with dread by the Pakistani media and civil society. General Zia’s martial law saw the hanging of an elected Prime Minister, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and came to an end only after his demise in 1985.

And finally, in 1999, General Pervez Musharraf seized power from the elected

¹ Noorani, A. (2015). *Official secrets*. DAWN.COM. Retrieved 3 April 2017, from <https://www.dawn.com/news/1180818>

² Ghauri, I. (2014). *Remnants of colonialism: Anything can be a secret under the Official Secret Act - The Express Tribune*. *The Express Tribune*. Retrieved 3 April 2017, from <https://tribune.com.pk/story/684110/remnants-of-colonialism-anything-can-be-a-secret-under-the-official-secret-act/>

government of Nawaz Sharif. In 2002, a referendum was held in the country, which was used to give General Musharraf the legitimacy to be elected as a President. It, which gave the armed forces some additional powers. Pervez Musharraf, ruled Pakistan as Chief Executive from 1999 to 2002 and as president from 2001 to 2008.

With this history, it is perhaps evident why Pakistan still lags behind when it comes to the incorporation of values of openness within the government.

The successive martial laws have also strengthened the 'military establishment' in Pakistan, a term used to define the nexus between military institutions and bureaucracy that often takes positions different than the government itself and enjoys the power to see them through.

Current Political Situation

The current government in Pakistan came into power in 2013. The government was hailed as historic in more ways than one; first the 2013 elections represented the first successful transition of democratic power. Second, the Prime Minister, Mian Nawaz Sharif, was initiated into office after a key change in constitution that allowed him to take the Prime Ministerial office for the third time. And third, Mian Nawaz Sharif's last tenure ended with General Musharraf's coup. So, there were a lot of expectations associated with this government. However, traditionally, the governing party PML-N has been more focused on infrastructural development and has had a regressive history in terms of civil liberties.

The government has slowly but progressively enacted various laws over the last four years that have raised concerns in human rights community. Some of these laws and policies have been attributed to the prevailing security situation; for example the establishment of military courts that are not bound by the normal definitions and procedures of fair trial. It is under the same excuse, that of ensuring security, that the government, through Ministry of Interior has initiated an informal crackdown against NGOs, particularly those focusing on human rights violations. Ch. Nisar, the Federal Minister for interior has criticized NGOs of being 'backed by India, United States and Israel' traditionally perceived as unfriendly states in Pakistan and has accused them of 'working against the country'³.

The suspicion against NGOs and civil society doesn't end with Nisar. Media houses with questionable backing have launched hate campaigns against activists, including those who protested against forced disappearances of 4 bloggers recently. Another institution now seeing civil society with suspicion is the judiciary; a recent decision

³ *Several NGOs in Pakistan backed by US, Israel and India: Chaudhry Nisar - The Express Tribune.* (2017). *The Express Tribune*. Retrieved 3 April 2017, from <https://tribune.com.pk/story/902373/several-ngos-in-pakistan-backed-by-us-israel-and-india-chaudhry-nisar/>

by Islamabad High Court asks government to take action against NGO's that 'are working on an agenda to promote blasphemous content'⁴. Thus, the civil society is being seen with suspicion across different institutions and platforms.

A study in contradictions

The environment in Pakistan is currently one of increasing restraint; this does not bode well for values of openness and transparency. The menace of terrorism continues and the credibility of legal justice system and the capacity of judiciary is in question. In such conditions, it is perhaps natural that the general tendency within the power circles is to keep a close guard on information.

However, Pakistan is also trying to establish trade and open its markets to new investors. The Pakistan China Economic Corridor, stands to change the dynamics of economy. In these conditions, it is also important for the government to establish some credence and credibility on the global circles. Perhaps this is the reason why we have seen Pakistan finally become a part of the Open Government Partnership. Tellingly, it was the Minister of Finance Ishaq Dar who signed up the membership in Paris and Economic Affairs Division, operating under his ministry, that is leading the implementation of OGP agenda.

In terms of laws, where we are seeing regressive legislation like the cyber crime bill coming into force, we are also seeing some real development in terms of openness at least at the provincial level. As of March 2017, three provinces in Pakistan Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab and Sindh have passed and started implementing really strong and effective Right to Information Laws. At the Federal level the movement for an improved law is strong.

And finally, as we will see in more detail in Chapter II, the IT industry is booming and eGovernance is fast becoming a demand not just an ideal to look towards.

⁴ Shehzad, R. (2017). *IHC wants blasphemy, pornography sections added to cybercrime law* - *The Express Tribune*. *The Express Tribune*. Retrieved 18 March 2017, from <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1358497/cyber-crimes-ihc-wants-blasphemy-pornography-sections-added-law/>

CHAPTER TWO THE DIGITAL REALM IN PAKISTAN

THE telecommunications sector in Pakistan has claimed a constant growth over the last decade. The telecommunications indicators demonstrate an increase in teledensity, penetration and outreach. The IT ministry, under the State Minister Ms. Anushay Rehman has won multiple international awards and recognitions. In purely economic and infrastructural sense, the industry is growing at a fast pace. On the other hand, the IT ministry and related departments have been criticized by civil society for their attempt to over regulate the sector at the cost of civil liberties and human rights. Freedom of expression, freedom of association and assembly and privacy of users have all been challenged after the adoption of Prevention of Electronic Crime Bill, 2016, that creates the space for unchecked censorship, lowers the requirements for real time surveillance and confuses cyber crime and cyber terrorism, making illegal access to certain kinds of data a terrorism offence punishable by a life sentence. This chapter looks at key telecom indicators and the direction of growth of the sector in Pakistan and gives a brief overview of the regulatory mechanism in place.

Teledensity

Pakistan Telecommunications Authority, PTA, that licenses and regulates the telecommunication sector, documents a growth of 67.59% in total teledensity over the last ten years [between 2005-06 and 2015-16]. At the mobile subscriptions have grown, the fixed line subscriptions have fallen from 5,240,012 in 2006 to 2,805,255 in 2016. Pakistan. The 3G and 4G spectrums came late to Pakistan; a licensing auction being held only in 2013. During the 3 short years that 3G & 4G have operated in the country, the subscriptions have grown from 1,384,077 to 38,962,443 subscribers. Here is a look at key telecom indicators shared by PTA.

Total Teledensity

Years	Total Teledensity (%)
2002-03	4.31
2003-04	6.25
2004-05	11.89
2005-06	26.26
2006-07	44.06
2007-08	58.90
2008-09	62.0
2009-10	64.1

2010-11	68.4
2011-12	72.0
2012-13	74.9
2013-14	79.89
2014-15	62.9
2015-16	70.81
July-16	70.71
Aug-16	70.93
Sep-16	71.08
Oct-16	70.91
Nov-16	71.26
Q2 Dec-16	71.46
Jan-17	71.57
Feb-17	71.81

Annual Cellular Subscribers [%]

Year	Mobile Density
2003-04	3.29
2004-05	8.30
2005-06	22.21
2006-07	39.94
2007-08	54.60
2008-09	58.20
2009-10	60.4
2010-11	64.8
2011-12	68.5
2012-13	71.4
2013-14	76.46
2014-15	60.7
2015-16	69.12
July-16	69.02
Aug-16	69.24
Sep-16	69.39
Oct-16	69.22
Nov-16	69.60
Dec-16	69.80
Jan-17	70.00
Feb-17	70.24

Broadband Subscribers by Technology

Year	DSL	HFC	WiMax	FTTH	EvDO	Others	Mobile BB	Total
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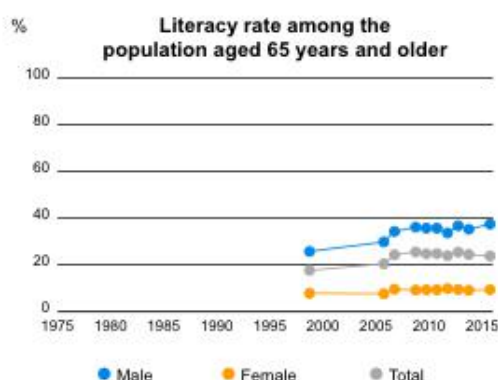
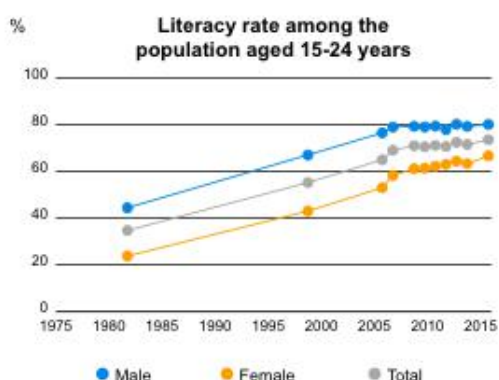
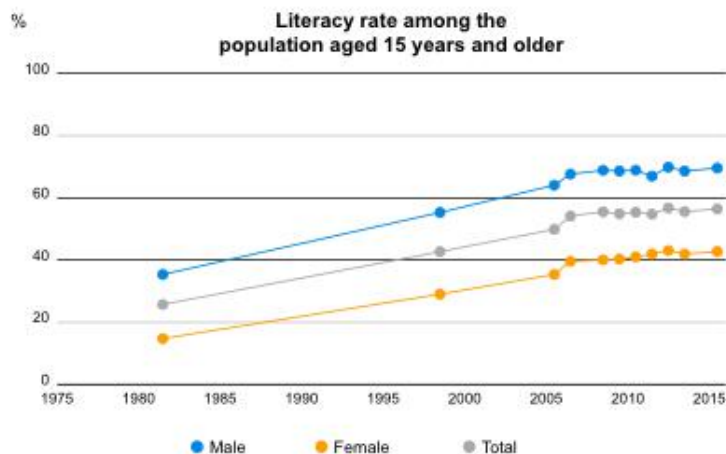
2005-06	26,611							26,611
2006-07	44,669			484				45,153
2007-08	102,910	42,760	19,612	2,800				168,082
2008-09	262,661	36,201	88,477	3,967	22,503			413,809
2009-10	476,722	49,110	257,616	5,002	111,194	1,004		900,648
2010-11	695,245	34,274	428,523	6,346	325,140	1,963		1,491,491
2011-12	880,071	35,520	589,887	8,444	584,459	2,934		2,101,315
2012-13	1,064,003	33,184	575,939	11,152	1,033,513	3,868		2,721,659
2013-14	1,346,817	37,011	530,889	14,848	1,861,118	5,240		3,795,923
2014-15	1,480,672	43,362	487,582	19,490	1,334,725	6,089	13,498,677	16,885,518
2015-16	1,421,746	43,167	183,181	25,665	1,084,367	6,906	29,530,254	32,295,286
July-16	1,402,193	43,241	183,611	26,143	1,032,693	7,229	31,779,549	34,472,659
Aug-16	1,400,398	43,543	180,549	26,141	1,005,269	7,616	32,699,062	35,362,578
Sep-16	1,386,289	43,749	179,885	27,291	983,966	8,263	34,318,350	36,947,793
Oct-16*	1,390,720	42,890	180,466	28,968	959,558	8,521	35,446,843	38,057,966
Nov-16**	1,392,072	43,468	181,194	29,995	917,995	8,871	36,412,247	39,023,370
Dec-16**	1,379,873	43,738	179,238	30,859	878,585	9,097	37,574,396	40,095,786
Jan-17**	1,379,046	43,995	178,012	31,663	847,839	9,264	38,269,702	40,759,521
Feb-17**	1,379,046	43,995	178,012	31,663	847,839	9,264	38,962,443	41,452,262

Apart from the growth in teledensity as indicated by the telecom indicators, the industry's growth in terms of investments and returns is also growing. In 2015-16, 13% of the foreign direct investment in Pakistan was made into telecommunications sector, bringing the total investment in telecoms at 719.7 million USD.

Literacy and Digital Literacy

The indicators demonstrate that at least in terms of access to mobile and telecom services, it is getting more and more feasible to introduce eGovernance initiatives; however, there are no credible estimates about literacy and digital literacy that would be needed to enable people to access eGovernance services. The last census in Pakistan was in the year 1998. A new census has currently started and is on going. In both the previous and current census, the definition of literacy is 'being able to sign one's name'. This is far from the kind of literacy that would be required for people to effectively benefit from eGovernance services.

Looking at the state of literacy in the country is sombering. Official statistics on literacy show a range between 50 to 60% literacy rate. But, which ever source one looks at, it is obvious that the literacy rate among females is lower than that of males. Take a look at the literacy figures released by UNESCO in 2016;



	Total	Male	Female	
Literacy rate (%)				
15-24 years	73.71	80.23	66.8	(2015)
15 years and older	56.44	69.57	42.73	(2015)
65 years and older	23.87	37.51	9.44	(2015)

Pakistan literacy rate, UNESCO 2016⁵

These figures show that the older female population would be at a disproportional disadvantage when it comes to accessing and using eGovernance services. Focusing specifically on digital literacy, the ministry of IT includes ICT Education in its IT policy, stating that the Ministry aims to “create opportunities to ensure inclusive and equitable quality ICT education and promote lifelong learning process”⁶.

To encourage inclusion of women in the sector, the government has initiated a set of programs under ICTs for girls banner under which different departments like women empowerment center Baitulmaal are being operationalized to facilitate the usage of

⁵ Pakistan | UNESCO UIS. (2016). *Uis.unesco.org*. Retrieved 4 April 2017, from <http://uis.unesco.org/country/PK>

⁶ MOIT,. (2016). *National IT Policy, 2016* (1st ed., p. 34). Ministry of Information Technology & Telecommunications, Pakistan.

IT among women, computer equipment is being provided to schools in rural areas and technical centers for girls are being built⁷.

Growth of industry

With the growth in teledensity, the usage of ICTs and social media has also grown. eCommerce, a largely unknown market just 10 years back is growing. Various telecom providers have initiated their own versions of mobile money. The most popular is EasyPaisa [or EasyPay] by Telenor that has taken shape as Pakistan's first consolidated online payment solution⁸, and facilitates different modes of payment for online business. It is also gaining popularity as a money transfer mechanism, offering consumers ease of access and freeing them of the need to visit bank branches or money exchanges. There has been a growing trend of online retailers pairing up with different mobile money providers to offer discounts and deals to customers. A liaison between EasyPaisa and online retailer Daraz.pk created headlines in 2017, by capturing a record number of customers on Black Friday sales⁹.

Banks are becoming more friendly towards eCommerce as well. And a number of them now offer Online Banking solutions for retail, payment of bills and money transfers. However, the eCommerce market is still fairly new, which reflects in a trust deficit among consumers, a large number of whom still view online transactions with some suspicion.

In terms of development of ICT based solutions, the industry is growing – a number of incubators and accelerators for technology start ups have been set up at universities and some are privately operating with support from large corporations. One of the largest incubators is Plan 9¹⁰, set up by the Punjab Information and Technology Board. Another incubators to make waves is a collaboration between the National IT Board and telecom provider Mobillink and the National IT Board¹¹ is the National Incubation Centre¹². The host of private incubators and acceletors include

⁷ *Anusha resolves to provide 3G to small villages even* | SAMAA TV. (2017). *Samaa TV*. Retrieved 4 April 2017, from <https://www.samaa.tv/technology/2017/01/anusha-resolves-to-provide-3g-to-small-villages-even/>

⁸ *Easypaisa Revolutionizes Banking through Digitization*. (2017). *Propakistani.pk*. Retrieved 4 April 2017, from <https://propakistani.pk/2017/01/02/easypaisa-revolutionizes-banking-digitization/>

⁹ *The winning partnership: Easypaisa and Daraz partner for Black Friday to break records again!*. (2017). *DAWN.COM*. Retrieved 4 April 2017, from <https://www.dawn.com/news/1298158>

¹⁰ Visit <http://plan9.pitb.gov.pk>

¹¹ *Mobilink to Launch Pakistan's Largest Tech Incubator under National ICT R&D Fund* • *Dispatch News Desk*. (2016). *Dispatch News Desk*. Retrieved 4 April 2017, from <https://dnd.com.pk/mobilink-to-launch-pakistans-largest-tech-incubator-under-national-ict-rd-fund/111049>

VFB

¹² Visit <http://nicpakistan.pk>

Nest/io in Karachi¹³ that offers free space to start ups in addition to mentoring and other services, the LUMS Centre for Entrepreneurship¹⁴ housed at Lahore University of Management Sciences, LUMS, Invest to Innovate, i2i¹⁵, the Microsoft Incubation Centre¹⁶ are better known.

There is a host of new ICT based services coming up in the market. A local mobile based app Careem, is gearing up to be a local version of Uber and challenging the mainstream cab industry. Food delivery services, weather updates etc. are making their space in the market. Private technology firms are teaming up with the government to create IT based civic solutions. Islamabad Civic Innovation Lab, ICIL housed at Code for Pakistan, a local group of volunteers has recently teamed up with the Met Office to create a pollen forecast application for Islamabad¹⁷. Other similar initiatives are in the offing.

All these developments bode well for eGovernance and IT based public services in Pakistan.

Use of ICTs

In 2013, the general elections held in Pakistan saw for the first time an intensive use of social media by political parties. Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, Imran Khan's political party initiated its social media team very effectively. The party managed to dominate Twitter with pro PTI trends during the election campaign and even later. Currently, PTI boasts of a "team of 150+ volunteers from all over the World who update party's official social media accounts (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.) 24 hours a day"¹⁸.

The ruling party, Pakistan Muslim League – Nawaz, PML-N, that lagged behind online during the general elections has succeeded in enacting its own social media cell over the course of four years. The cell, led by the Prime Minister's daughter Maryam Nawaz Sharif, "social media cell not only deals with the image building of the party on popular social media forums like Facebook and Tweeter, but it also draw the media policy on day to day political developments taking place in the country and then in the light of party's line vocal party leaders especially young Parliamentarians

¹³ See <http://thenestio.com>

¹⁴ See <https://lce.lums.edu.pk>

¹⁵ See <http://invest2innovate.com>

¹⁶ See <https://www.pitb.gov.pk/mic>

¹⁷ Details of the application aren't available online yet as the project is still on going. The information about this project was received during an informant interview with Asim Ghaffar, lead with ICIL and President Code for Pakistan.

¹⁸ *Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf | Social Media Team.* (2017). *Socialmedia.insaf.pk*. Retrieved 4 April 2017, from <http://socialmedia.insaf.pk>

are directed to propagate and project it on private electronic and other available media sources”¹⁹.

Other political parties aren't lagging behind either.

The civil society has also used the social media very effectively for its own activities. Whether it is management and correspondence, mobilization of resources and volunteers and others for protests and demonstrations or direct outreach to public and legislators for campaigning, the ICTs and social media is being effectively used as medium. In 2014, a beloved social activist Sabeen Mehmud was shot dead in Karachi. Protest demonstrations were held across the country and a large number of them were organized through WhatsApp groups and Facebook pages. More recently, when four bloggers went missing²⁰ and enforced disappearance was suspected, activists once again used Facebook and twitter effectively under the banner #RecoverAllActivists to mobilise protestors and coordinate the arrangements.

These developments have established ICTs' potential as an effective tool of political and strategic communications. However, the same potential has also challenged the status quo and the government seems to be feeling the heat. Thus, more regressive legislations are being enacted in to monitor users²¹ and to exert some control the social media²².

Laws and Regulation

The licensing and regulation of the telecommunications industry in Pakistan is done through Pakistan Telecommunications Authority, PTA. PTA works to regulate the establishment, operation and maintenance of telecommunication systems and provision of telecommunication services, receive and expeditiously dispose of applications for the use of radio-frequency spectrum, promote and protect the interests of users of telecommunication services , promote the availability of a wide range of high quality, efficient, cost effective and competitive telecommunication services, promote rapid modernization of telecommunication systems and telecommunication services, investigate and adjudicate on complaints and other claims made against licensees arising out of alleged contraventions of the provisions

¹⁹ Maryam-led PML-N social media cell active on all fronts. (2016). *The Nation*. Retrieved 4 April 2017, from <http://nation.com.pk/islamabad/02-Jul-2015/maryam-led-pml-n-social-media-cell-active-on-all-fronts>

²⁰ Rumi, R. (2017). *Bring Pakistan's Missing Bloggers Home*. *Nytimes.com*. Retrieved 4 April 2017, from https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/20/opinion/bring-pakistans-missing-bloggers-home.html?_r=0

²¹ Ashraf, G. (2015). *Facebook user data: Requests from Pakistan at an all time high - The Express Tribune*. *The Express Tribune*. Retrieved 4 April 2017, from <https://tribune.com.pk/story/992765/facebook-user-data-requests-from-pakistan-at-an-all-time-high/>

²² Desk, N. (2017). *Pakistani Govt's War against "Social Media"?* - *Global Village Space*. *Global Village Space*. Retrieved 4 April 2017, from <https://www.globalvillagespace.com/pakistani-govts-war-social-media/>

of this Act, the rules made and licenses issued there under and take action accordingly. And to make recommendations to the Federal Government on policies with respect to international telecommunications, provision of support for participation in international meetings and agreements to be executed in relation to the routing of international traffic and accounting settlements²³.

An additional charge has been given to PTA under the Prevention of Cybercrime Act 2016, that under Section 37 enables the Authority to “remove or block or issue directions for removal or blocking of access to an information through any information system if it considers it necessary in the interest of the glory of Islam, the integrity, security or defence of Pakistan or any part thereof, public order, decency or morality, or in relation to contempt of court or commission of incitement to an offence”²⁴. Thus, in addition to silencing and regulation of telecommunication companies, PTA also enjoys the authority over content regulation online.

The investigative agency that deals with Cyber Crime is Federal Investigative Agency, FIA, that operates National Response Centre for Cyber Crime, NR3C, that claims “expertise in Digital Forensics, Technical Investigation, Information System Security Audits, Penetration Testing and Trainings and has been “involved in capacity building of the officers of Police, Intelligence, Judiciary, Prosecutors and other Govt. organizations”²⁵. The banking and eCommerce parts of the IT industry are directly regulated through the State Bank and Federal Board of Revenue. Other laws also come to effect the digital industry; anti-terrorism laws for example create the space for surveillance [as does PECA2016]. There are no laws in place that deal with protection of consumer data and privacy.

²³ *Functions & Responsibilities*. (2015). *Pta.gov.pk*. Retrieved 4 April 2017, from http://www.pta.gov.pk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=359&Itemid=325

²⁴ *Prevention of Electronic Crime Act 2016*. (2016) (1st ed., p. 762). Retrieved from http://na.gov.pk/uploads/documents/1472635250_246.pdf

²⁵ *National Response Centre For Cyber Crime*. (2017). *Nr3c.gov.pk*. Retrieved 4 April 2017, from http://nr3c.gov.pk/about_us.html

CHAPTER THREE

INTRODUCTION TO THIS RESEARCH

O PEN eGovernance Index, OeGI, is an action-research project²⁶ that aims to measure the state of ‘openness’ in the implementation of ‘e-governance’ around the world. Open e-governance can be measured in terms of the ability of the different actors of the political system, including governments, business and civil society, to participate in decision-making in society through the use of information and communication technologies.

The guiding principles for the OeGI include:

- i. Appropriate and relevant framework for different contexts: The OeGI advocates the acceptability of a more expansive definition on e-governance, going beyond the its traditional definition of prompt government provision of public services using ICTs, but also integrating the notion of the importance of communication rights and openness in terms of widening the access to knowledge and data.
- ii. Cross-country comparability. The OeGI allows the measurement of the space for the use of ICTs for decision-making and for comparison of this space across different national contexts.
- iii. Action orientation. The results of the OeGI should prod governments and citizens group to lobby for changes in policies and programs in order to widen the space for ICT use.

OeGI DIMENSIONS

This research looks at five dimensions of open eGovernance including;

1. Meshed eGovernment

This dimension seeks to reflect a government’s ability to place its public functions online, which in itself comprises many aspects of ICT enablement. Its inclusions are ICT-based mechanisms to enhance efficiencies and effectiveness of back-office operations within government. These include the ability of different government agencies to share data and communicate with one another, how data storage is undertaken, the level of automation of government and the ability of government to

²⁶ This section of the report is copied from the project brief provided by regional research leads, Foundation for Media Alternatives.

develop and implement a unified data for using ICTs with the government bureaucracy. This includes the presence of national eGovernance plans, and the extent of eGovernance programs and projects.

2. eParticipation Channels

This dimension of the index intends to capture citizen-facing applications or front-office eGovernance mechanisms. In general it examines the new (ICT) channels available to citizens to obtain information from and about government, share/express their views with decision-makers or policymakers, and collaborate in governance. It includes dimensions that are related to interfacing with citizens, providing services, asking for feedback, and listening to feedback. It does not include use of ICTs for internal efficiencies.

3. Digital Inclusion

This dimension measures the extent to which government ensures that all citizens benefit from the different information and communication technologies that are available. These include the presence of universal access and universal literacy policies, competition policy and the concentration of media ownership, affordability and access of ICTs to the general population, and the multiplicity of information sources.

4. Civil society use of ICTs

Since the OeGI seeks to measure not just e-government but rather e-governance, the index also includes the ICT readiness and utilization by civil society organizations and other non-State organizations such as political parties and people's organizations. While openness in information gathered and shared by government is imperative for Open E-Governance, the citizenry must have alternative sources of knowledge and opinion and this is a critical part of fostering transparency in governance. Independent organizing and independent creation of knowledge is an indicator of decentralized power. As Gilbert [2010] noted, how technological capacity is related to technological and social capital embedded in particular societies.

5. Fostering an enabling environment for open eGovernance

This includes the extent that the government recognizes and fosters the right to free expression, right over personal communication, cultural freedom, and the use of local languages. It also measures the extent of government to control or limit the use of information and communication technologies among its citizens. Indicators will also be gathered in relation to the extent of telecoms infrastructure, human capital, the concentration of media power, political freedom (including freedom of expression, privacy and censorship), economic indicators and socio-cultural freedoms.

RESEARCH INDICATORS

The research is based upon an Index of indicators, assessing performance in the five dimensions of open eGovernance. The indicators include;

1. Meshed eGovernment Indicators

- 1.1 - Presence of national eGovernment framework/plan
- 1.2 Presence of national enterprise architecture framework/plan
- 1.3 Presence of government interoperability framework/plan
- 1.4 Presence of Open Standards Policy
- 1.5 Presence of an Open Data Policy
- 1.6 Presence of Data Privacy/Data Protection policy
- 1.7 Presence of Information Security/Cybersecurity policy
- 1.8 Presence of eProcurement system/s in government procurement, ePayment systems in citizen's transactions with government and Presence of eFiling system/s for official documents
- 1.9 Presence of institutional mechanisms and policies to oversee eGovernment plans, policies and programs and degree of implementation

2. eParticipation Channels Indicators

- 2.1 Use of basic Information and Communications and Technologies (ICTs) for citizen feedback
- 2.2 Updated and interactive government websites and social media platforms
- 2.3 government websites/online channels and platforms accessible for persons with disabilities (PWD)
- 2.4 Use of national language/s in government websites/online channels and platforms
- 2.5 Government websites/online channels and platforms with women-specific content/channels
- 2.6 ICT-enabled/Online Citizen Engagement
 - Feedback mechanisms
 - participatory monitoring and evaluation
 - Participatory rule-making

3. Digital Inclusion Indicators

- 3.1 Existence of government policy/ies, plans and strategies to enable reasonable access to affordable internet service for all
- 3.2 Existence of government policy/ies, plans and strategies to promote universal ICT literacy
- 3.3 Existence of women-specific ICT access policy/ies, plans and strategies

- 3.4 Presence of women-specific ICT literacy policy/ies, plans and strategies
- 3.5 Presence of ICT access policy/ies, plans and strategies focused on specific disadvantaged groups
- 3.6 Presence of ICT literacy policy/ies, plans and strategies focused on disadvantaged groups

4. ICT Empowered Civil Society

- 4.1 Use ICTs for internal organizational use
- 4.2 Use of ICT for communication and coordination (internal and external)
- 4.3 Use ICT for public engagement and action (online and offline)
- 4.4 Use ICTs for online resource-building/ fund-raising

5. Enabling and Constraining Environment for Open eGovernance

- 5.1 Freedom of Information/ Right to Information
- 5.2 Freedom of Expression/ Opinion: Media Freedom
- 5.3 Freedom of Expression/ Opinion: Censorship/Prior Restraint
- 5.4 Selective Content Regulation: Types of website content that are subject to government limitation or control
- 5.5 Adherence to the principle of “Net Neutrality”
- 5.6 Right to Privacy/Data Protection
- 5.7 Right against unlawful surveillance
- 5.8 Freedom of Association/Assembly
- 5.9 Socio-cultural: intellectual property and the public domain
- 5.10 Socio-Cultural: Open Content
- 5.11 Socio-Cultural: Cultural/ Linguistic Development & Diversity, Right to communicate in mother tongue/ Promotion of linguistic diversity
- 5.12 Cultural development online
- 5.13 Presence of e-Commerce policy
- 5.14 Effects of private power, especially in telecommunications services
- 5.15 Effects of Private power, especially in media services

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Three different data collection methods have been employed to assess Pakistan on the OeG Index.

i. Literature Review for Secondary Data

A detailed literature review was carried out to map the developments and overall situation defining the five OeGI dimensions in Pakistan. The following documents were reviewed;

- i. National IT Policy 2016
- ii. Country Briefing Report – Right to Information Legislation in Pakistan

- iii. Pakistan National Broadband Policy
- iv. Gender Digital Divide by SPDI
- v. CRTI – Report on Proactive Disclosure of Information
- vi. CRTI – Level of Effectiveness of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab RTI Legislation
- vii. Government Data Portals in the age of Open Data – Pakistan
- viii. ICT R & D Policy Document
- ix. Spectrum Management PTA
- x. National eProcurement Policy – Pakistan

Key sources of information tapped into for this research include;

- i. Pakistan Telecommunication Authority Website
- ii. Ministry of IT and Telecommunication Website
- iii. FIA Website
- iv. National Assembly & Senate Websites
- v. Federal Government Website
- vi. PEPPRA Website

Additionally, reports & articles from different organizations including Sustainable Development Policy Institute, SDPI and ProPakistani [a foremost technology blog] were also referenced. Media reports were also reviewed as a part of this research.

ii. **Discussions with experts**

Informal interviews on specific questions were conducted with a number of civil society, technology, academia and media personnel. All of the experts were asked to comment only on specific aspects of the research, as none were proficiently informed about all the five dimensions of OeGI. In addition to one on one discussions, the research also includes insights from a National Consultation arranged by Economic Affairs Division, where a workplan for implementation of Open Government Partnership, OGP framework was being discussed. While not directly arranged for OeGI, the discussion and consultation themes in the workshop were directly related to OeGI and thus could feed into the research directly.

iii. **Validation Workshop**

Finally, once the desk review and expert's opinions were used to grade Pakistan on the list of indicators, a validation workshop was held in Islamabad to share the findings with a larger group of stakeholders for validation purposes. The validation workshop included participants from civil society, media, academia and technology sector. Government representatives invited to the workshop did not attend. The only feedback directly from the government came from a representative of Sindh IT board [mentioned in the previous section] who responded to questions about the research via email.

SECTION TWO

ASSESSING PAKISTAN

CHAPTER FOUR

MESHED eGOVERNMENT

MESHED eGOVERNMENT is the first dimension of OeGI. Through this indicator, the government's own preparedness about eGovernance is measured. Different indicators within this dimension are used to assess the government's plans and strategies for moving towards and implementing eGovernance projects. The indicators include assessment of national eGovernment plan, architecture framework, interoperability, open standards, data protection, information security, eProcurement and implementation plans.

The assessment against meshed eGovernment indicators is as follows;

1.1 - Presence of national eGovernment framework/plan

1.1.1	Does your country have a National/ Federal eGovernment Plan/Strategy?	Yes
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The first eGovernance Plan for Pakistan was made in the year 2002, under the National IT Policy approved by the Federal Cabinet in August 2000. This policy defined the role of the Government as an enabler for IT based future economy²⁷. A comprehensive strategy was made in 2005, to enable the implementation of eGovernment plan. In this strategy, e Governance in Pakistan was defined as “a combination of internal e-enablement and the external provision of e-Services to stakeholders of the Federal Government”²⁸.

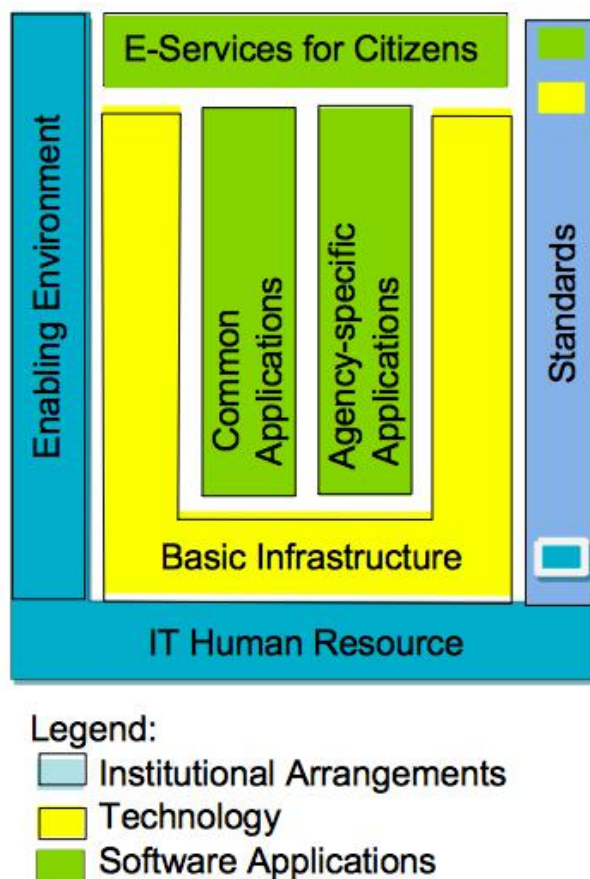
The current eGovernment plan was passed in 2012. According to an abridged policy document by National IT board²⁹, the national eGovernment plan intends to focus on the development of high quality human resource, top level ownership, comprehensive IT plans, high impact applications, interoperability, security of government information, fund raising and software development.

The plan includes the following strategic framework;

²⁷ Mehmood, A. (2002). *E Government Plan Pakistan* (1st ed., p. 2). Retrieved from <http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/apcity/unpan004289.pdf>

²⁸ *E-Government Strategy and 5-Year Plan for the Federal Government*. (2005) (1st ed.). Retrieved from <http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/apcity/unpan037732.pdf>

²⁹ *Abridged E-Government Strategy of Pakistan*. (2012) (1st ed.). Retrieved from <http://www.nitb.gov.pk/images/finalabridged%20egovernmentstrategy%20web1.pdf>



The strategy notes that to move forward in implementation of eGovernment projects, the government has “first to ensure an enabling environment, build standards and arrange for the requisite human resource, then to build up the basic infrastructure”. The plan was due to be completed in 2015-16 and included a detailed timeline for different steps of strategic implementation. A monitoring group to oversee the implementation of eGovernment plan was also created. However, no reports from the group are available for public consumption at NITB or MOIT websites.

1.2.1 Presence of national enterprise architecture framework/plan

1.2.1	In implementing the eGovernment strategy, is government guided by blueprint or a document that “explains how all the information systems, processes, agencies and people in government function as a whole” (i.e., is there a National Enterprise Architecture plan)?	No
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There is no indication of a national enterprise architecture framework in IT policy or IT plan. In expert interviews, people working directly on eGovernment initiatives also denied knowledge of a larger architecture plan that defines how information systems function in relation to other stakeholders. The only mention of an integrated plan in the National IT strategy is a guiding principle that states that “a comprehensive plan is required that defines different areas of E-Governance to be

implemented along with their priorities and integration. This is aimed towards implementing projects as part of an integrated approach rather than as silos³⁰. Apart from this and a rudimentary mention of required interoperability, the plan does not include a larger look at government systems.

1.3.1 Presence of government interoperability framework/plan

<p>1.3.1</p>	<p>In undertaking its eGovernment strategy, is government guided by a set of standards that allows agencies to exchange and make use of digital information (i.e., is there a Government Interoperability Framework -“a set of standards and guidelines that specifies the preferred way that government agency, citizens and partners interact electronically with each other)?</p>	<p>No</p>
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Interoperability of applications is mentioned in the National IT plan fleetingly; the plan states that “Interoperability of Applications: The E-Government portfolio must result in a set of interoperable applications having standardized interfaces and similar architecture for similar functionality. Wherever possible, applications should be replicated³¹. However, this is the only mention of interoperability within the document. A more current guiding document is the National IT policy 2016. Within the IT policy, ty interoperability has not been mentioned even once.

Asim Ghaffar, one of the experts contacted for this research, engages frequently with the National IT board and ICT R and D board for civil innovation and development projects was of the opinion that even though there is a general understanding within government offices that setting interoperability standards would be effective for the government as well, there is still no guiding document present. Politics, competition and lack of coordination between different state institutions might be responsible for the delay in the development of interoperability framework.

1.4.1 Presence of Open Standards Policy

<p>1.4.1</p>	<p>Is government mandating the use of Open Standards (as opposed to Proprietary or Commercially-owned standards) in its eGovernment initiatives? N.B. Open standards are easily accessible for all to read and use; developed by a process that is open and relatively easy for anyone to participate in; and not control or tied-in with any specific group or vendor.</p>	<p>No</p>
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On the subject of open standards, the National IT policy 2016 states that there is “no direct preference of open source over proprietary software. Where appropriate, Open source software should be used provided both types of software i.e. open

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

source and proprietary are given a fair consideration during the procurement process. Government IT initiatives should make assessments and do cost-benefit and security analysis to determine most appropriate action for each project”³².

Even though the government does not mandate the use of open standards within its own projects, the IT policy does state that “ministry of IT will continue to encourage research in “Open Source” in the private sector through existing available levers (training and research programs) as it exhibits the properties of public good due to its non-competitive and universally available properties”³³.

1.5 Presence of an Open Data Policy

1.5.1	Is there an open data policy in government which mandates the release of public information and government data to the public in a regular, accessible, and non-discriminatory manner, to ensure transparency and accountability?	No
1.5.2	Does the national government publish government data in an electronic, reusable format?	No
1.5.3	Is the government a member of the international Open Government Partnership (OGP)?	Yes

1.51 - Right to Information legislation at the federal level does not have an effective pro active information disclosure section. There related section in Freedom of Information Act 2002, the relevant legislation operating at the federal level states that “rules and regulations, notifications, by-laws, manuals, orders having the force of law in Pakistan shall be duly, published and made available at a reasonable price at an adequate number of outlets” and “each public body shall endeavor within reasonable time and subject to availability of resources that all records covered by the provisions of this Ordinance are computerized and connected through a network all over the country on different system so that authorised access to such records is facilitated”³⁴.

However, there are various problems with this Ordinance; first, it also enables government to declare any information as off record and second, the implementation of the law has been flawed. The Coalition for Right to Information, CRTI, has been advocating for the adoption of a stronger legislation that would enable public access to open data elated to government functions.

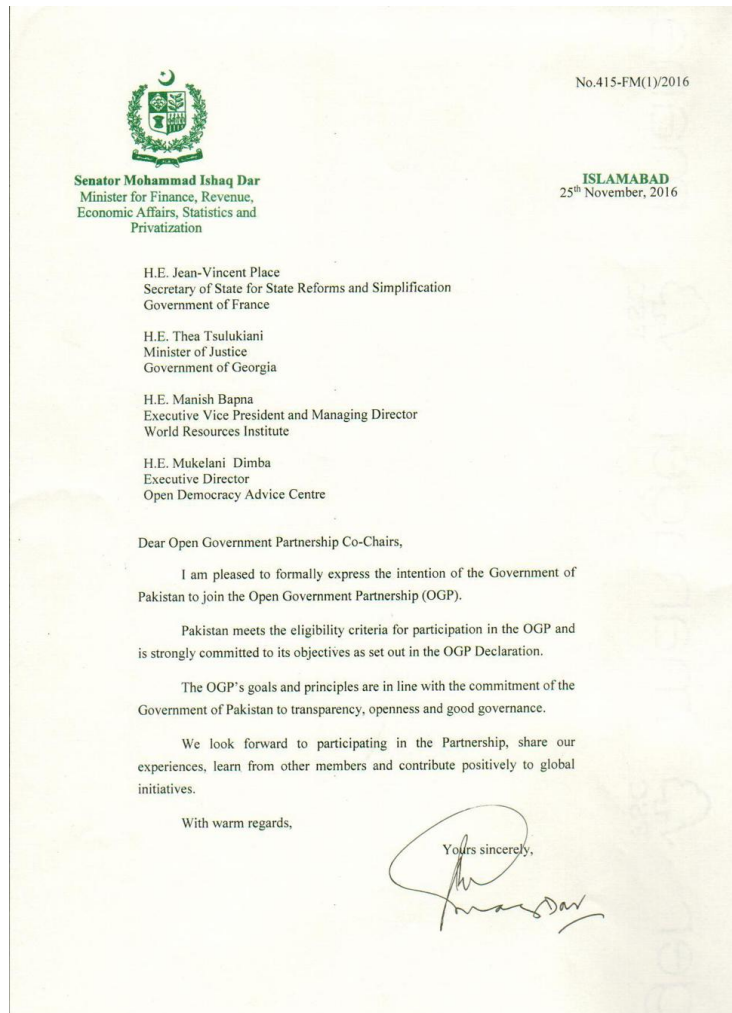
³² *National IT Policy*. (2016) (1st ed., p. 32). Retrieved from http://moit.gov.pk/policies/National_IT_Policy_2016.pdf

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ *Freedom of Information Ordinance, 2002*. (2017) (1st ed.). Islamabad. Retrieved from http://infopak.gov.pk/Downloads/Ordenances/Freedom_of_%20Information_Ordinance2002.pdf

1.5.2 - There is some information available in electronic open data formats, however, by and large, the information placed on government websites is not in a standard open format. Even the telecommunications indicators quoted in Chapter two are placed on PTA website in imbedded table formats. The National Assembly of Pakistan regularly share attendance status of Members of the National Assembly, MNAs, but even though the attendance is recorded on a table, the are uploaded on the websites as PDFs³⁵. Some national departments are making data available in spreadsheet formats [For example the Federal Board of Revenue, FBR], but the availability of such data is sporadic and not initiated through a comprehensive policy to make open data available.

1.5.3 - In November 2016, when finance minister Ishaq Dar, signed a letter of intent to join OGP, stating that Pakistan meets the requisite criteria³⁶.



³⁵ National Assembly of Pakistan. (2017). *Na.gov.pk*. Retrieved 4 April 2017, from <http://na.gov.pk/en/attendance2.php>

³⁶ Dar signs LoT to join Open Government Partnership. (2016). *Associate Press Of Pakistan*. Retrieved 4 April 2017, from <https://www.app.com.pk/dar-signs-lot-to-join-open-government-partnership/>

Letter of intent to join OGP³⁷

The Ministry of Finance, that led the joining, has given the responsibility of coordinating national efforts to move towards OGP goals to Economic Affairs Division, EAD. A consultative national workplan, that outlines the next two years of goals and strategies is to be submitted to the OGP Secretariat by June 2017. The EAD held a day long preparatory meeting in Islamabad in February 2017. The following areas were prioritized for further development;

1. Fiscal Transparency
2. Access to Information
3. Public access
4. Use of digital
5. Access to justice
6. Strengthening accountability
7. Enabling business environment

The government is now working with different NGOs, particularly Accountability Lab to host a national consultation by May 2017, so that the workplan may be finalized with input from all stakeholders.

1.6 Presence of Data Privacy/Data Protection policy

1.6.1	Is there a data privacy or data protection policy in place to safeguard citizens' personal information within government via a national strategy/plan, or specific policy instrument?	No
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There is no legislation or policy that directly deals with data protection of citizen's information. A draft legislation, Electronic Data Protection Act has been pending since 2005 and has never been tabled in the parliament. On the other hand, 'network providers have been required to comply with requests for interception and access to network data as a standard condition of the PTA's award of operating licenses to phone companies'³⁸ since 2004.

The absence of data protection laws has been a point of contention during the advocacy on cybercrime legislation. The cybercrimes law, formally PECA 2016, mandates all service providers to secure retain its specified traffic data for a minimum period of one year or such period as the Authority [PTA] may notify from

³⁷ OGP - Pakistan. (2016). *Open Government Partnership*. Retrieved 4 April 2017, from <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/country/pakistan>

³⁸ *State of Privacy Pakistan | Privacy International*. (2017). *Privacyinternational.org*. Retrieved 4 April 2017, from <https://www.privacyinternational.org/node/970#toc-5>

time to time and, subject to production of a warrant issued by the Court provide that data to the investigation agency or the authorized officer³⁹.

Possible invasion of privacy and lack of data protection was one of the key concerns raised by NGOs advocating for improvement of this Bill. During consultations with the government, even the S Senate Standing Committee on Information Technology maintained that “the cybercrime law must protect privacy, ensure the preservation of users’ data”⁴⁰, however, no such provisions were added before the Bill passed.

Some sections of the bill include a protective clause, for example, Section 32 of PECA 2016, requires that ‘law enforcement officers carrying out a search and seizure “take all precautions” to maintain the secrecy of the seized data and not interfere with any data not related to the crime being investigated. Under Section 38, if a law enforcement officer knowingly shares seized data to any other person, it can be punished with a prison term of upto three years and a fine of upto one million rupees”⁴¹.

The lack of data protection policy is of even more concern as a host of anti terrorism laws allows increased access to citizen’s data without any redressal mechanism if abuse of power takes place.

1.7 Presence of Information Security/Cybersecurity policy

1.7.1	Is there an information security/ cyber security policy in place to protect the national information infrastructure and critical systems via legislation, national strategy/plan, or specific policy instrument?	Yes
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A professor at NUST School of Electrical Engineering and Computer Sciences, notes that there is no policy that prevents import of hardware with embedded technologies and none of the government agencies, media institutions or even educational institutes have a cyber security policy⁴². An article published by Islamabad Policy Research Institute, IPRI states that “the efforts for a unified cybersecurity policy or strategy [in Pakistan] are underway. However, there are certain impeding factors

³⁹ *Prevention of Electronic Crime Act 2016*. (2016) (p. 758). Retrieved from http://na.gov.pk/uploads/documents/1472635250_246.pdf

⁴⁰ Shahid, J. (2016). ‘Cybercrime bill must protect privacy, user data’. *DAWN.COM*. Retrieved 4 April 2017, from <https://www.dawn.com/news/1272360>

⁴¹ *State of Privacy Pakistan | Privacy International*. (2017). *Privacyinternational.org*. Retrieved 4 April 2017, from <https://www.privacyinternational.org/node/970#toc-5>

⁴² Dr. Yamin, T. (2015). *Formulation of Cyber Security Strategy for Pakistan: Needs and Challenges* Islamabad. Retrieved from http://ais.seecs.nust.edu.pk/colonial/siteData/CyberChallenges_TughralYamin.pdf

halting the overall process such as level of awareness and knowledge regarding malicious happenings in cyberspace, lack of cyber-readiness and proportion of national spendings in the field”⁴³.

It is important to mention that PECA 2016, includes sections that deal with breach of citizen’s data and critical infrastructures. Section 8 of PECA 2016 states that “whoever with dishonest intention interferes with or damages, or causes to be interfered \with or damaged, any part of or whole of a critical information system, or data , shall be punished with imprisonment which may extend to seven years or fine which may extend !o ten million rupees or with both”⁴⁴. Section 10 of the same Act, defines and criminalises cyber terrorism largely in context of accessing / damaging critical infrastructure. However, while this Act defines the consequences for breaching the safety of national information infrastructures, a policy that guides how exactly that information is to be made secure is not in existence. Different institutions work on their own to enact safety procedures and SOPs.

1.8 Presence of eProcurement system/s in government procurement,

1.8.1	Is there a functional eProcurement system in place that allows for electronic bidding and/or purchases of goods and services by government agencies online?	No
1.8.2	Is there a functional ePayment system in place that allows for payment by the general public of goods and services from the government online?	Yes
1.8.3	Is there a functional eFiling system in place that allows electronic submissions by the general public of official documents (e.g., income tax returns) or requests to the government online?	Yes

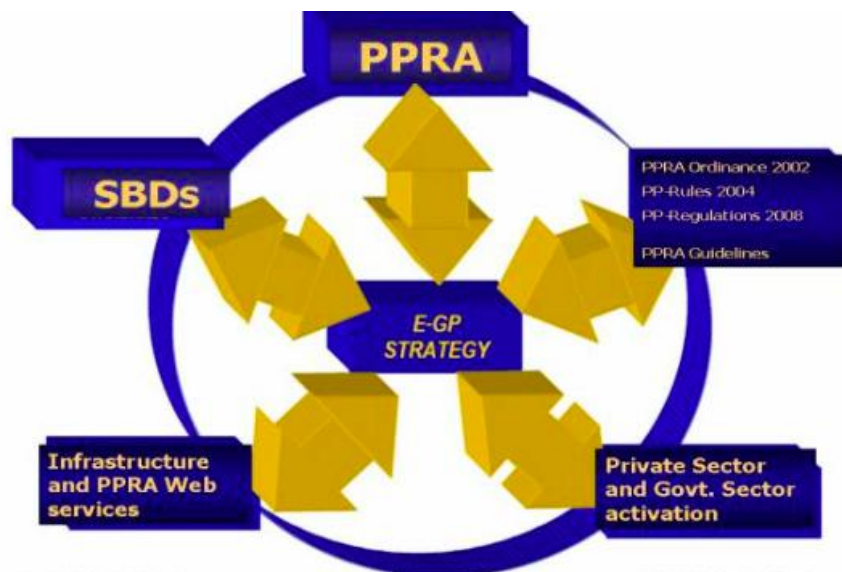
1.8.1 – The response to this question is ‘no’ as it mentions a *functional* eProcurement system. During expert interviews and in validation workshop, there was consensus that the eProcurment system in the country is not function or effective. However, an eProcurment policy and a strategy for implementation exists. Procurement policies in Pakistan are regulated through the Public Procurement Regulatory Authority, PPRA, an autonomous body endowed with the responsibility of prescribing regulations and procedures for public procurements by Federal Government owned public sector organizations.

In 2014, the World Bank conducted a detailed study on eProcurment in Pakistan and recommended that ‘in Pakistan, e-procurement cannot be imposed unilaterally, but requires a collaborative approach to implementation. The impact of e-Procurement

⁴³ Nazir, M. (2017). *Cyber security and Pakistan : Islamabad Policy Research Institute. Ipripak.org*. Retrieved 4 April 2017, from <http://www.ipripak.org/cyber-security-and-pakistan/>

⁴⁴ *Prevention of Electronic Crime Act 2016*. (2016) (p. 751). Retrieved from http://na.gov.pk/uploads/documents/1472635250_246.pdf

on management systems is too complex for a unilateral approach to succeed in decentralised organisations'⁴⁵. PPRA in its eProcurement strategy, refers to this recommendation and incorporates it into national eProcurement strategy.



Map of PPRA eProcurement strategy includes widespread stakeholder involvement⁴⁶.

While the strategy is far from being effectively implemented, some intuitions have initiated eProcurement projects on their own. One example is Pakistan Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission, SUPARCO, that offers web based eProcurement for registered vendors⁴⁷.

1.8.2 – It is possible to pay bills for almost all utilities including gas, electricity and national telco [Pakistan Telecommunication Corporation Ltd, PTCL] via online banking. One example of epayments is Islamabad Electric Supply Company, IESCO, that offers an epayment solution through its website⁴⁸. Other utility providers also offer epayment solutions via websites. In addition, most banks have also incorporated a utility bill payment solution through their eBanking services.

1.8.3. – Two central government agencies including Federal Board of Revenue, FBR and Securities and Exchange Commission, SECP allow electronic submissions by the general public. FBR is the main agency dealing with filing of taxes. It provides a comprehensive digital system⁴⁹ through which National Tax Numbers, NTN can be

⁴⁵ *eProcurement Strategy and Roadmap for Pakistan*. (2014) (1st ed., p. 64). Retrieved from <http://www.ppra.org.pk/doc/epro.pdf>

⁴⁶ *PPRA e-procurement System*. (2015). *Ppra.org.pk*. Retrieved 4 April 2017, from <http://www.ppra.org.pk/epro.asp>

⁴⁷ *Web Based E-Procurement System (WBEP) ...*. (2016). *Suparco.gov.pk*. Retrieved 4 April 2017, from <http://www.suparco.gov.pk/eProcurement/main.aspx>

⁴⁸ See <http://210.56.23.106:888/iescobill>

⁴⁹ List of eservices offered by FBR can be seen here - <https://e.fbr.gov.pk/AuthLogin.aspx>

confirmed, companies data can be accessed and tax returns can be filed. However, the filing system for tax returns is extremely complicated. When the question of effectiveness of the e system for filing of tax returns was posed to the experts, most of them indicated that they had not been able to successfully use the system and despite trying had to rely on an accountant to manually file the returns.

The other body offering a comprehensive e-filing system is SECP⁵⁰ that regulates all incorporated companies and organisations. SECP's digital system allows users to book names for new companies, file applications for registration and perform other necessary functions including submission of audit reports etc. through its website.

1.9 Presence of institutional mechanisms and policies to oversee eGovernment plans, policies and programs and degree of implementation

1.9.1	Is there a national or federal government agency that oversees and coordinates the eGovernment strategy/strategies, policies and programs within the bureaucracy?	Yes
1.9.2	What percent of the Cabinet-level national/federal government agencies ⁵¹ are implementing eGovernment projects?	0.25
1.9.3	What percent of the Cabinet-level national/federal government agencies ⁵² are implementing eGovernment projects that specifically address women's issues and concerns?)	0

1.9.1 – The eGovernment strategy for Pakistan is coordinated through the National IT Board. The board was created as an attached department of the Ministry of Information Technology & Telecom Division through the merger of former Pakistan Computer Bureau (PCB) and Electronic Government Directorate (EGD) in 2014.

NITB has the mandate to:

- i. Provide technical guidance for the introduction of e-Governance in the Federal Government

⁵⁰ List of eservices offered by SECP can be seen here - <https://eservices.secp.gov.pk/eServices/>

⁵¹ The total number of federal level agencies is over 70. These agencies operate under different categorizations under federal ministries and divisions. For the sake of this research, three relevant [PTA, NITB and PEMRA] and 17 random agencies have been selected for review from different ministries.

⁵² See above.

- ii. Suggest efficient and cost-effective implementation of e-government programs in the Federal Ministries/Divisions.
- iii. Carry out training need assessment and design and implement the identified IT capacity building programs for the employees of Federal Ministries/Divisions.
- iv. Review the status of e-government readiness on a regular basis to ensure sustainable, accelerated digitization and relevant human resource development.
- v. Identify the areas where IT interventions can be helpful and to suggest measures for the automation of these areas through Business Process Re-engineering (BPR)⁵³.

1.9.2 – Only a few government agencies seem to be running effective eGovernment projects. One of the more successful projects is the digital application for Hajj applicants, being run by a department in Religious affairs ministry. The Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority, PEMRA includes a complaint system on its website⁵⁴; this is being considered an eGovernment project rather than a feedback mechanism, because these complaints are directed to Council of Complaints, a mechanism of regulation defined by the PEMRA Act. Thus, the complaint mechanism itself serves an important part of the regulatory mandate of PEMRA.

1.9.3 – None of the agencies reviewed for this research have an active eGovernment project that is dealing specifically with women.

DIMENSION	SCORE
eMeshed Government	0.26

⁵³ National Information Technology Board, NITB. (2014). *Nitb.gov.pk*. Retrieved 4 April 2017, from <http://www.nitb.gov.pk/frmdetails8ddd.html>

⁵⁴ PEMRA - Lodge a Complaint. (2014). *Pemra.gov.pk*. Retrieved 4 April 2017, from <http://www.pemra.gov.pk/feedback/>

CHAPTER FIVE

ePARTICIPATION CHANNELS

Where meshed eGovernment seeks to assess the government’s capacity and inclination towards open eGovernance, the eParticipation dimension looks at the effectiveness of user interface or citizen facing applications and services. The eParticipation indicators explore how citizens and citizen groups access government services and information, particularly if the interface is created with a inclusive eye. The aim of the indicators included in this dimension is “to measure *how well* and *how much* a government utilizes ICTs. That is, the measure seeks to reflect the simple presence of citizen-facing applications, the quality of its content, as well as the extent to which its products are utilized in the daily practice of governance”⁵⁵.

The assessment against eParticipation indicators is as follows;

2.1 Use of basic Information and Communications and Technologies (ICTs) for citizen feedback

2.1.1	Is there a centralized / unified contact/call center service for all citizens’ (voice-based) communications with government?	No
2.1.2	What percentage of national/federal government agencies utilize mobile text/short messaging systems/SMS to gather/collect queries/ feedback/suggestions from the public?	0.25
2.1.3	What percentage of national/federal government agencies make use of major social media platforms (incl. instant messaging/IM) to gather/collect/ queries /feedback/suggestions from the public?	0.25

2.1.1 – There is no centralized call service that caters to all citizen’s communications with government. Some call centres operate with different agencies, but they are not directly connected with each other.

⁵⁵ As indicated by Foundation for Media Alternatives, the regional lead on OeGI research.

2.1.2 There has been an increase in the number of agencies that respond to public queries via SMS. One of the agencies making effective use of SMS for citizen feedback and queries is National Database and Registration Authority, NADRA, that allows SMS based tracking and verification of various services including tracking identity applications, tracking of National Health program status, election system verification. NADRA also provides SMS based citizen verification through a short code⁵⁶.

During the previous general elections, the Election Commission of Pakistan also introduced an SMS based service through which, ‘registered voters could send their Computerized National Identity Cards (CNIC) number without hyphens via SMS to 8300 at anytime from anywhere in the country. After sending the SMS, the voter subsequently received a message in Urdu containing their name, village, city, tehsil or district, location (electoral area) and the serial number of vote registered in the preliminary electoral rolls’⁵⁷.

Similarly, the FBR also runs an SMS based service, through which citizens can send an SMS to 9966 for verification of status on Active Taxpayers List (ATL)⁵⁸.

However, the percentage of agencies utilizing SMS for provision of such services to citizens is still fairly low.

2.2 Updated and interactive government websites and social media platforms

2.2.1	What percentage of national/federal government agency websites are <i>regularly updated</i> (i.e., new content uploaded at least weekly)?	0.25
2.2.2	What percentage of national/federal government agency websites are ‘ <i>interactive</i> ’ (i.e., provides an integral level of usability which allows for dynamic interaction between the site and the user)?	0.75
2.2.3	What percentage of national/federal government agencies utilize major <i>social media platforms</i> as part of their web strategy, and who engage their users over these platforms regularly and in a timely manner?	0.5

⁵⁶ *SMS Services (7000, 8400, 8300, 8500) - NADRA Pakistan.* (2016). *NADRA Pakistan*. Retrieved 4 April 2017, from <https://www.nadra.gov.pk/local-projects/identity-management/sms-services-7000-8400-8300-8500/>

⁵⁷ *Voter verification: ECP launches SMS service - The Express Tribune.* (2012). *The Express Tribune*. Retrieved 4 April 2017, from <https://tribune.com.pk/story/343403/voter-verification-ecp-launches-sms-service/>

⁵⁸ *Introduction of SMS Service for Active Tax Payer Verification.* (2015). *Fbr.gov.pk*. Retrieved 4 April 2017, from <http://download1.fbr.gov.pk/Docs/2015728117129478NewMobileSMSService.pdf>

2.2.1 – Most of the government websites are updated only when there is a new event or policy or other news item that is to be shared. Given this fact, the only websites that are being updated on a *weekly* basis are of departments that are constantly engaged in citizen related activities – for example, PEMRA puts out notices and advisories to media on a very regular basis resulting in frequent website updates. On the other hand PTA only updates its site when there is an event where the Authority has featured or when the status of one of its other content changes. At times there are multiple updates in a week, but at times there are no updates for a couple of weeks. The Met office is one of the very few agencies that put out daily updates; providing a daily weather report to the media through their website.⁵⁹

2.2.2 – Basic level of interactivity is present in almost half of the websites. Websites of most departments allow users to click to read more, navigate across different sections and menus. Barely any websites are completely static.

2.2.3 – Almost half of the agencies reviewed for this research have twitter or Facebook accounts. PEMRA has a most active twitter⁶⁰ and Facebook⁶¹ that it is using to communicate both with media consumers and its license holders. Other department making effective use of its twitter account is the Met Office.

However, it is not clear whether the social media accounts and websites are updated through a coordinated policy or on a more adhoc basis.

2.3 Government websites/online channels and platforms accessible for persons with disabilities (PWD)

2.3.1	What percentage of national/federal government websites comply with international and/or national standards for PWD accessibility i.e., have special channels/features, which specifically cater to persons with disabilities?	0
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Despite the presence of IT Standards for people with disabilities, none of the websites reviewed for this research had any special access features for persons with disabilities.

2.4 Use of national language/s in government websites/online channels and platforms

⁵⁹ Daily Weather Report for Media. (2017). *Nwfc.pmd.gov.pk*. Retrieved 5 April 2017, from <http://nwfc.pmd.gov.pk/media/>

⁶⁰ Report PEMRA (@reportpemra) | Official PEMRA Twitter Account. (2016). *Twitter.com*. Retrieved 5 April 2017, from <https://twitter.com/reportpemra?lang=en>

⁶¹ Official PEMRA Facebook Page. (2017). *Facebook.com*. Retrieved 5 April 2017, from <https://www.facebook.com/reportpemra/>

2.4.1	What percentage of national/federal government websites/social media channels/online channels have content which are in the national language/s?	0.25
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Only a few of the websites reviewed for this research offered content in Urdu; none offered any content in languages other than Urdu. Among the websites reviewed PEMRA and PTA have Urdu language websites.

Here, it is important to note that it was only in 2015, that the Supreme Court issued an order to adopt Urdu as the official language of Pakistan. The SC decision said that ‘in the governance of the federation and the provinces there is hardly any necessity for the use of the colonial language which cannot be understood by the public at large’.

However, the education system in Pakistan is still predominantly English Medium. Linguistically, the country is extremely diverse and even though Urdu is seen as a ‘common language’ its preference over other regional languages has created bitter disputes in the past. Adding to the complexity of the issue is the fact among the major spoken languages in Pakistan including Punjabi, Saraiki, Sindhi, Pashto, Urdu, Balochi, Hindko and Brahui, only Urdu, Sindhi, and Pashto have a standardized alphabet. The curricula and education of ICTs particularly has been in English.

In addition, the Unicode for the use of Urdu as a language for the web is still not perfect. A study exploring the need for Unicode to support local languages notes that “There has been an utter lack of standardization resulting in mutual incompatibility issues and lack of transfer or exchange of data⁶². It is difficult to find fonts that work across platforms and text editors. This makes the development of Urdu content quite difficult.

2.5 Government websites/online channels and platforms with women-specific content/channels

2.5.1	What percentage of national/federal government websites/social media /online platforms have women-specific content/pages/channels?	0
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Among the websites of government agencies reviewed for this research, none had any women specific content. The only content that dealt primarily with women was announcement of gender related news or programs. Such content did not actively try to address women users. Pages or channels for women users are also nonexistent amongst the reviewed websites.

⁶² Bhurgri, A. (2012). *Enabling Pakistani Languages through Unicode* (1st ed., p. 6). Retrieved from <http://www.bhurgri.com/bhurgri/downloads/PakLang.pdf>

2.6 ICT-enabled/Online Citizen Engagement

2.6.1	Do national/federal government websites/online platforms allow/encourage citizens and civil society groups to comment/give feedback on important aspects of policy and governance (i.e., existing or proposed laws/regulations)	Yes
2.6.2	Do national/federal government websites/online platforms enable effective citizen monitoring of implementation of government programs and projects (i.e., through transparency and accountability mechanisms online)?	No
2.6.3	Do national/federal government websites/online platforms encourage citizens and civil society groups to participate in rule-making, i.e., by proposing amendments of laws, policies, or rules, or the suggestion of new ones; and provide online tools to enable such participation (e.g. online petitions, collaborative wikis, etc.)	Yes

2.6.1 – As the indicator includes this as a Yes/No question, the response is Yes – but it is important to note that only *some* of the government websites/online platforms allow/encourage citizens and civil society groups to comment/give feedback on important aspects of policy and governance.

One of the most important portals through which such feedback is enabled is the Senate of Pakistan website. The Senate website includes a Public Petition facility through which citizens have ‘direct access to the Senate and participate in the democratic parliamentary process. Petitioners can raise issues of public importance relating to the Federal Government for consideration of the Parliament and contribute your ideas, opinions and comments on matters that are already being considered by the Senate of Pakistan or Senate Standing Committees’⁶³.

The Ministry of IT has also invited public feedback on its draft policies and laws through its website. Draft policies are routinely placed on the website for ‘public Views, Comments and Feedback’⁶⁴.

2.6.2 – We could not find any platforms through which citizens can regularly monitor the implementation of government plans and projects. The only information on the

⁶³ *Public Petition - Senate of Pakistan*. (2015). *Senate.gov.pk*. Retrieved 5 April 2017, from <http://senate.gov.pk/en/petition.php?id=-1&catid=110&subcatid=282&cattitle=Public%20Petition>

⁶⁴ *Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunications, Pakistan*. (2016). *Moit.gov.pk*. Retrieved 5 April 2017, from <http://www.moit.gov.pk>

status of projects comes through statements of politicians and at times through year end reports.

2.6.3 – The Senate’s website mentioned in section 2.6.1 can technically be used for the purpose of proposing amendments of laws, policies, or rules, or the suggestion of new ones, if the matter is under consideration in senate. In the past the ministry of IT invited feedback on draft policies and received detailed documents by various groups including Pakistan internet service providers association. The frequency of such feedback is quite rare.

DIMENSION	SCORE
eParticipation	0.26

CHAPTER SIX

DIGITAL INCLUSION

Without universal access and digital inclusion, eGovernment strategies stand to further the divide between haves and have nots. To make any eGovernment plan effective, it is imperative that a parallel strategy for decreasing digital divide and ensuring universal access is put in place. This dimension of the OeGI framework seeks to assess if and how the government is enabling digital inclusion. The indicators within this dimension seek to assess the “extent to which government ensures that all citizens benefit from the different information and communication technologies that are available”⁶⁵.

The assessment against the Digital Inclusion indicators is as follows

3.1 Existence of government policy/ies, plans and strategies to enable reasonable access to affordable internet service for all

3.1.1	Does the national/federal government have existing policies/plans/strategies to provide reasonable access to affordable internet service to all citizens	Yes
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The universal access policy is operationalized through the Universal Service Fund, USF, that is funded through 1.5% of adjusted revenues) by the Telecom Operators with no Government funding. The USF holds the mandate to:

- i. bring the focus of telecom operators towards rural population and increase the level of telecom penetration significantly in the rural areas through effective and fair utilization of the fund.
- ii. To improve the Broadband penetration in the country.
- iii. To bring significant advances towards enhancement of e-services, both in rural as well as urban areas of the country

The USF runs multiple projects to move towards universal access including USF Broadband Program that aims to improve ‘broadband penetration in those 2nd/3rd tier urban areas which are un-served from the Broadband perspective’⁶⁶.

The USF also runs a project for establishment of telecentres to expand the benefits of ICT facilities to the people in rural areas. According to USF, each telecentre will be

⁶⁵ As indicated by Foundation for Media Alternatives, the regional lead on OeGI research.

⁶⁶ *USF Broadband Program*. (2015). *Usf.org.pk*. Retrieved 4 April 2017, from <http://usf.org.pk/projects/detail/broadband-program>

“connected to internet through high speed broadband, powered through renewable energy, equipped with computers and other essential network elements (printer/scanner/copier/fax, etc.), located at an easily accessible location, and provide essential services & e-services”⁶⁷.

3.2 Existence of government policy/ies, plans and strategies to promote universal ICT literacy

3.2.1	Does the national/federal government have existing policies/plans/strategies to promote universal ICT Literacy meant to develop basic ICT knowledge and skills of all citizens?	Yes
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The National IT policy 2016 acknowledges that “much needs to be done to bring internet to the masses and further bridge the digital & literacy divide”⁶⁸. The IT Policy states that “Education sector needs revamping and IT centric subjects need to be introduced in our curriculum starting from early child-hood education”⁶⁹.

Under USF Broadband Project, ‘special emphasis is being paid to educational institutions, whereby the subsidy winners are required to set-up Computer Labs (Educational Broadband Centres) with Broadband in higher secondary schools and colleges in their respective areas’⁷⁰.

3.3 Existence of women-specific ICT access policy/ies, plans and strategies

3.3.1	Is there a women-specific <i>access</i> policy/ies, plans and strategies within the national ICT framework?	Yes
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A research paper looking at Gender Digital Divide in Pakistan notes that the country is "characterised by wide gender disparities. Wide range of applications of ICTs for gender equality & women’s empowerment internationally. Additionally, "attitudes about women’s interaction with technology, literacy, language skills, domestic responsibilities etc. may represent obstacles to female access to ICTs”⁷¹.

⁶⁷ *Establishment of TeleCentres in Pakitan.* (2015). *Usf.org.pk*. Retrieved 4 April 2017, from <http://usf.org.pk/projects/detail/special-project/establishment-telecenters>

⁶⁸ *National IT Policy.* (2016) (p. 8). Retrieved from http://moit.gov.pk/policies/National_IT_Policy_2016.pdf

⁶⁹ *National IT Policy.* (2016) (p. 8). Retrieved from http://moit.gov.pk/policies/National_IT_Policy_2016.pdf

⁷⁰ *USF Broadband Program.* (2015). *Usf.org.pk*. Retrieved 4 April 2017, from <http://usf.org.pk/projects/detail/broadband-program>

⁷¹ Siegmann, K. (2009). *The Gender Digital Divide in Rural Pakistan: How wide is it & how to bridge it?* (1st ed., p. 4). Islamabad: Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI)/ISS. Retrieved from [http://www.sdpi.org/research_programme/Files/GDDStakeholderPresentation\(2\).pdf](http://www.sdpi.org/research_programme/Files/GDDStakeholderPresentation(2).pdf)

In acknowledgement of these challenges, one of the policy goals in National IT Policy 2016 states that “ensuring that women & girls have equal access to ICTs will help reduce inequalities and support gender equality”⁷². Two sections in the Human Resource Development section of the National ICT policy aim to;

1. Provide equal opportunities to women to be trained and work in the IT sector and develop their own IT businesses.
2. Encourage women participation in the IT and ITES Workforce

Multiple projects are running to increase access and inclusion of women within the national ICT framework. Some programs also focus on developing the capacity of women to work within ICT and related sectors. The National ICT, R and D fund recently invited proposals from qualified applicants to provide ICT training to women entrepreneurship in a program that is projected to benefit around 500 women, at least 70 in each province⁷³.

In December 2015, the IT Minister for State, Ms. Anusha Rehman was awarded the GEM-TECH Global Achievers award by two United Nations bodies—UN Women and International Telecommunications Union (ITU) in recognition of her work on the development of the ICTs and, especially the practical initiatives for the cause of women and girls⁷⁴.

3.4 Presence of women-specific ICT literacy policy/ies, plans and strategies

3.4.1	Is there a women-specific ICT literacy policy/ies, plans and strategies within the national ICT framework?	Yes
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Digital literacy for women appears to be a prioritized theme within the IT ministry. At the policy level, the National IT Plan articles mentioned in the previous indicator include the provision of “opportunities to women to be trained” in ICT sector.

Expert interviewees mentioned the creation of telecom centres for women, creation of labs, and training of women in ICT sector. Additionally, programs to increase literacy at a suburban and rural level are also in place. One project is focused on

⁷² *National IT Policy*. (2016) (p. 16). Retrieved from http://moit.gov.pk/policies/National_IT_Policy_2016.pdf

⁷³ *500 women to benefit through ICT fund for entrepreneurship training*. (2017). *TechJuice*. Retrieved 4 April 2017, from <https://www.techjuice.pk/500-women-to-benefit-through-ict-fund-for-entrepreneurship-training/>

⁷⁴ *Anusha receives top U.N. award, vows to step up efforts for women empowerment*. (2015). *Associate Press Of Pakistan*. Retrieved 4 April 2017, from <https://www.app.com.pk/anusha-receives-top-u-n-award-vows-to-step-up-efforts-for-women-empowerment/>

provision of ICT equipment to girls schools in rural areas⁷⁵.

Under another literacy project ‘the Pakistan Baitul Mal established a modern information technology (IT) laboratory at its women empowerment centre in Sukkur in 2015. The purpose of the lab is to provide computer training to young women belonging to under-privileged families. The IT lab is aimed to secure the future of these women by providing them training of Microsoft Coding and Computing, so that they can get respectable jobs in the government and other departments’⁷⁶. The project is being managed through the Universal access Fund and seeks to provide equitable learning opportunities and a conducive environment to females in Women Empowerment Centres of Pakistan Baitulmal. Presently 7,801 women are enrolled in 157 centres and 106,348 women have been trained”⁷⁷ [till 2016].

3.5 Presence of ICT access policy/ies, plans and strategies focused on specific disadvantaged groups

3.5.1	Is there a specific ICT Access policy/ies, plans and strategies focused on specific disadvantaged groups (i.e., persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, sexual minorities)?	Yes
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The national IT policy includes a 9 step strategy⁷⁸ to increase access for persons with disabilities. These steps include;

1. Implementation of universal design to upgrade or develop official government websites/web portals to enable accessibility by PWDs (PWD friendly)
2. Involve Civil Society and Private Sector organizations for developing and instituting an ICT based eco system to promote ICT accessibility for Persons with Disabilities.
3. Set up an “ICT Accessibility Unit” within Public Sector and encourage Private Sector/Companies to establish an equivalent unit in rural and urban areas to coordinate activities within and outside agencies/companies to train and facilitate PWDs.

⁷⁵ *Girls’ schools in ICT rural areas to get computer labs - The Express Tribune.* (2017). *The Express Tribune*. Retrieved 4 April 2017, from <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1370159/girls-schools-ict-rural-areas-get-computer-labs/>

⁷⁶ *Govt initiative: IT lab set up at Sukkur’s women empowerment centre - The Express Tribune.* (2016). *The Express Tribune*. Retrieved 4 April 2017, from <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1176676/govt-initiative-lab-set-sukkurs-women-empowerment-centre/>

⁷⁷ *Women Empowerment Centres, Baitulmal.* (2016). *Usf.org.pk*. Retrieved 4 April 2017, from <http://usf.org.pk/projects/detail/special-project/establishment-of-50-computer-labs-in-women-empowerment-cente>

⁷⁸ *National IT Policy.* (2016) (p. 31). Retrieved from http://moit.gov.pk/policies/National_IT_Policy_2016.pdf

4. Work in collaboration with local and international software industry to introduce ICT infrastructure and software applications for PWDs along with local language support.
5. Formulation of standards in IT and telecommunications, adoption of these standards to ensure that new and existing technologies are inclusive of PWD community and are developed on a universal design concept.
6. Provision of incentives, including exemption of duties for ICT devices and software tools used by PWDs and to subsidize the cost of assistive technologies & equipment (in consultation with relevant stakeholders) to ensure their affordability for PWDs.
7. Ensure that Bilateral and multilateral donor agencies and international funding agencies adopt award criteria based on the social responsibility of the receiving agencies/organizations, including their obligation to promote ICT accessibility for PWDs.
8. Provision of ICT accessibility for PWDs in all forms of competitive exams.
9. Consideration of PWDs in all National Level ICT schemes/initiatives of GOP.

3.6 Presence of ICT literacy policy/ies, plans and strategies focused on disadvantaged groups

3.6.1	Is there a specific ICT <i>Literacy</i> policy/ies, plans and strategies focused on particular disadvantaged groups (i.e., persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, sexual minorities)?	Yes
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While there is no separate section for digital literacy of persons with disabilities, section 8.3 of National ICT policy seeks to set up an “ICT Accessibility Unit” within Public Sector and encourage Private Sector/Companies to establish an equivalent unit in rural and urban areas to coordinate activities within and outside agencies/companies to *train and facilitate PWDs*. The training and facilitation can be seen as an effort towards increasing digital literacy in persons with disabilities.

In 2008, the USF announced program for Enabling Persons with disabilities to use telecom services. Under this program one project was with Pakistan Foundation Fighting Blindness, PFFB and resulted in the creation of an Audio World Library and establishment of an Internet Café at the PFFB⁷⁹.

DIMENSION	SCORE
Digital Inclusion	1

⁷⁹ *Enabling Persons with disabilities to use telecom services*. (2009). *Usf.org.pk*. Retrieved 4 April 2017, from <http://usf.org.pk/projects/detail/special-project/enabling-persons>

CHAPTER SEVEN

ICT EMPOWERED CIVIL SOCIETY

For citizens to take full advantage of ICTs and eGovernment initiatives, their own usage of ICTs has to be substantial. The availability of ePublic services by government would be best utilized if citizens and civil society were already using ICTs effectively for their purposes. This dimension of OeGI thus seeks to measure the readiness of civil society groups, including Civil Society Organisations, CSOs, political parties, civic groups and religious groups in using ICTs. The indicators in this dimension assess the use and utilization of ICTs for advocacy, communication and other purposes by various non governmental groups.

The assessment on indicators in ICT empowered Civil Society Dimension is as follows;

4.1 Use ICTs for internal organizational use

4.1.1	By your estimation, what percent of major <i>political parties</i> use ICTs (PCs and laptops, cellular phones, other mobile devices etc.) for internal organizational use (i.e., document processing, accounting systems, databases)?	1
4.1.2	By your estimation, what percent of major <i>civic groups</i> use ICTs (PCs and laptops, cellular phones, other mobile devices etc.) for internal organizational use (i.e., document processing, accounting systems, databases)?	1
4.1.3	By your estimation, what percent of major <i>people's organizations/ community organizations</i> use ICTs (PCs and laptops, cellular phones, other mobile devices etc.) for internal organizational use (i.e., document processing, accounting systems, databases)?	1
4.1.4	By your estimation, what percent of major <i>civil society organizations/ non-government organizations</i> use ICTs (PCs and laptops, cellular phones, other mobile devices etc.) for internal organizational use (i.e., document processing, accounting systems, databases)?	1
4.1.5	By your estimation, what percent of <i>major religious/ faith-based organizations</i> use ICTs (PCs and laptops, cellular phones, other mobile devices etc.) for internal organizational use (i.e., document processing, accounting systems, databases)?	1
4.1.6	By your estimation, what percent of major <i>gender-based organizations</i> use ICTs (PCs and laptops, cellular phones, other mobile devices etc.) for internal organizational use (i.e.,	1

	document processing, accounting systems, databases)?	
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The indicators across 4.1.1 to 4.1.6 have been given the same rating – 1 – the indicator deals with *major* political parties, civic groups, peoples and community organisations, CSOs and NGOs, religious faith based and gender groups. With the teledensity and internet penetration at over 70%, all the major organisations and groups use at least cell phones for organizational use, even if they do not have access to laptops and computers. CSO representatives engaged through validation workshop and interviews had the consensus that the inclusion of cell phones in ICTs means that all major organisations and groups would have access to and use them for internal organizational purposes.

Community based NGOs without access to PCs and laptops are still known to take pictures of meeting minutes, white boards etc. to keep a record of the meetings/developments. These organisations also use WhatsApp groups to share documents and news with other members. The extent to which each organization actually depends upon ICTs for internal organizational use might differ.

4.2 Use of ICT for communication and coordination (internal and external)

4.2.1	By your estimation, what percent of major <i>political parties</i> use ICTs (PCs and laptops, cellular phones, other mobile devices etc.) for internal and external messaging and communications?	1
4.2.2	By your estimation, what percent of major <i>civic groups</i> use ICTs (PCs and laptops, cellular phones, other mobile devices etc.) for internal and external messaging and communications?	1
4.2.3	By your estimation, what percent of major <i>people's organizations/ community organizations</i> use ICTs (PCs and laptops, cellular phones, other mobile devices etc.) for internal and external messaging and communications?	1
4.2.4	By your estimation, what percent of major <i>civil society organizations/ non-government organizations</i> use ICTs (PCs and laptops, cellular phones, other mobile devices etc.) for internal and external messaging and communications?	1
4.2.5	By your estimation, what percent of major <i>religious/ faith-based organizations</i> use ICTs (PCs and laptops, cellular phones, other mobile devices etc.) for internal and external messaging and communications?	1
4.2.6	By your estimation, what percent of major <i>gender-based organizations</i> use ICTs (PCs and laptops, cellular phones, other mobile devices etc.) for internal and external messaging and communications?	1

Like indicators included in 4.1, the scoring across the 6 indicative questions in this section is 1. Internal and external messaging in this day and age is heavily dependent upon cell phones. In February 2017, PTA estimates documented teledensity at 71.81%⁸⁰. With such a high mobile, cell phone penetration, it makes sense that people mobilizing under any political party, or belonging to an activism related group are able to access and use technology for basic communication.

It is important to note here that the estimations about use of ICTs by NGOs, CSOs and registered community based organisations have been done in consultation with multiple civil society representatives. However, it would be prudent to keep in mind that the ‘number of active NGOs in the country is, at the very least, anywhere between 100,000 to 150,000, investigations by the Pakistan Centre for Philanthropy (PCP), a certification organization for NGOs and charity institutions, reveal. By this count, there is at least one NGO for every 2,000 people’⁸¹. With so many NGOs in operation, the estimates should only be taken as estimates and not an exact reflection of the situation on ground.

4.3 Use ICT for public engagement and action (online and offline)

4.3.1	By your estimation, what percent of major <i>political parties</i> use ICTs (PCs and laptops, cellular phones, other mobile devices etc.) for public engagement and action (i.e., advocacy, lobbying, volunteer recruitment)?	1
4.3.2	By your estimation, what percent of major <i>civic groups</i> use ICTs (PCs and laptops, cellular phones, other mobile devices etc.) for public engagement and action (i.e., advocacy, lobbying, volunteer recruitment)?	0.5
4.3.3	By your estimation, what percent of major <i>people’s organizations/ community organizations</i> use ICTs (PCs and laptops, cellular phones, other mobile devices etc.) for public engagement and action (i.e., advocacy, lobbying, volunteer recruitment)?	0.5
4.3.4	By your estimation, what percent of major <i>civil society organizations/ non-government organizations</i> use ICTs (PCs and laptops, cellular phones, other mobile devices etc.)for public engagement and action (i.e., advocacy, lobbying)?	0.5
4.3.5	By your estimation, what percent of major <i>religious/ faith-based organizations</i> use ICTs (PCs and laptops, cellular phones, other mobile devices etc.) for public engagement and action (i.e.,	0.5

⁸⁰ Telecom Indicators PTA. (2017). *Pta.gov.pk*. Retrieved 5 April 2017, from <http://www.pta.gov.pk/index.php?Itemid=599>

⁸¹ Shah, F. (2016). *The rise of NGO's and their harmful impact on Pakistan*. *Herald Magazine*. Retrieved 5 April 2017, from <http://herald.dawn.com/news/1152863>

	advocacy, lobbying, volunteer recruitment)?	
4.3.6	By your estimation, what percent of major <i>gender-based organizations</i> use ICTs (PCs and laptops, cellular phones, other mobile devices etc.) for public engagement and action (i.e., advocacy, lobbying, volunteer recruitment)?	0.5

4.3.1 - None of the major political parties in Pakistan can now afford to ignore the use of ICTs for public engagement and action. From mainstream parties like Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz, , Pakistan People’s Party, PPP, Mutahida Qaumi Movement, MQM, Awami National Party, ANP, Jamiat Ulema Islam, JUI and others, to smaller parties like the Awami Workers Party, AWP, all major parties are effectively using social media and other ICTs for public engagement and outreach.

Most major parties have operational social media cells that are putting out both campaign and propaganda material. A news report about the social media cell of PML-N, the ruling part states that “social media cell not only deals with the image building of the party on popular social media forums like Facebook and Tweeter, but it also draw the media policy on day to day political developments taking place in the country and then in the light of party’s line vocal party leaders especially young Parliamentarians are directed to propagate and project it on private electronic and other available media sources”⁸².

While PML-N social media cell seems to be shrouded in secrecy, Imran Khan’s Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaaf makes public a long list of members⁸³ running its own social media section. The cell has a clearly defined hierarchy and operates effectively to ensure that themes closer to PTI’s policies trend on Twitter frequency.

These two examples demonstrate the extent of use of social media and ICTs for political communication, outreach and engagement by political parties.

4.3.2 – 4.3.6 – As mentioned earlier in this section, there are thousands of NGOs and other types of civic groups operating in Pakistan. While it is easy to get estimates about the use of ICTs for communication and basic internal organization, it is more difficult to get true estimates about the use of ICTs for public engagement. There was no consensus on the scoring of this indicator in the validation workshop. The civil society representatives placed the estimated use of ICTs for public engagement at around 0.25 % while the private sector representatives felt that at least 0.75% of the civil society and civic groups are using ICTs for external communication. The scoring

⁸² Maryam-led PML-N social media cell active on all fronts. (2015). *The Nation*. Retrieved 5 April 2017, from <http://nation.com.pk/islamabad/02-Jul-2015/maryam-led-pml-n-social-media-cell-active-on-all-fronts>

⁸³ PTI - Social Media Accounts. (2017). *Insaaf.pk*. Retrieved 5 April 2017, from <http://www.insaf.pk/about-us/contact-us/sm-accounts>

has thus been kept at 0.5%, the mean average of the differing perspectives. There is no data or study available that looks at the use of ICTs for public engagement at a national level.

4.4 Use ICTs for online resource-building/ fund-raising

4.4.1	By your estimation, what percent of major <i>political parties</i> use ICTs (PCs and laptops, cellular phones, other mobile devices etc.) for online fund-raising?	0.25
4.4.2	By your estimation, what percent of major civic groups use ICTs (PCs and laptops, cellular phones, other mobile devices etc.) for online fund-raising?	0.25
4.4.3	By your estimation, what percent of major <i>people's organizations/ community organizations</i> use ICTs (PCs and laptops, cellular phones, other mobile devices etc.) for online fund-raising?	0.25
4.4.4	By your estimation, what percent of major <i>civil society organizations/ non-government organizations</i> use ICTs (PCs and laptops, cellular phones, other mobile devices etc.) for online fund-raising?	0.25
4.4.5	By your estimation, what percent of major <i>religious/ faith-based organizations</i> use ICTs?	0.25
4.4.6	By your estimation, what percent of major <i>gender-based organizations</i> use ICTs (PCs and laptops, cellular phones, other mobile devices etc.) for online fund-raising?	0.25

4.4.1 – 4.4.6 – The attitude towards crowdfunding in Pakistan can be demonstrated by a recent news headline on popular technology blog ProPakistani – crowd funding is not allowed in Pakistan: SECP – the news item quotes a statement by SECP stating that ‘crowd funding is not allowed in Pakistan and no company can raise funds through this scheme’⁸⁴. In addition to this, consider the restraining environment for NGOs in Pakistan. The Interior Minister Ch. Nisar has repeatedly accused NGOs of working ‘against the country's national interest’⁸⁵ and being ‘backed by Israel, United States and India’. We have seen the cancellation of registration of 3,250 NGOs under the National Action Plan, NAP⁸⁶. And more recently, NGOs have been under criticism by the judiciary as well. Islamabad High Court Justice, Justice Shaukat Aziz Siddiqui recently ‘ordered the Federal Investigation Agency, FIA, to enquire about the NGOs

⁸⁴ *Crowd Funding is Not Allowed in Pakistan: SECP.* (2017). *Propakistani.pk*. Retrieved 5 April 2017, from <https://propakistani.pk/2017/03/30/crowd-funding-not-allowed-pakistan-secp/>

⁸⁵ Haider, I. (2015). *Pakistan will not allow NGOs working against national interest: Nisar.* *DAWN.COM*. Retrieved 5 April 2017, from <https://www.dawn.com/news/1187773>

⁸⁶ Shah, S. (2017). *Balochistan cancels registration of 3,250 NGOs under NAP.* *DAWN.COM*. Retrieved 5 April 2017, from <https://www.dawn.com/news/1320873>

operating with the “agenda to spread blasphemous contents and promote pornography, and also working against the ideology and integrity of Pakistan”⁸⁷. With these issues, it would a risky move for NGOs and other civic groups to start collecting funds through digital means – these would be largely unregulated funds without the usual bounds of financial transparency and reporting/audits that are usually necessary for development funds. Political parties raising funds through online crowdfunding are likely to face similar issues.

Also relevant here is the issue of trust in online transactions – a study looking at challenges for eBanking sector in Pakistan notes that ‘the lack of trust is the major issue in the growth of electronic banking in Pakistan’⁸⁸, another study holds that in Pakistan, ‘winning the trust of customers is the greatest challenge for internet banking sector’⁸⁹. Since crowd funding through online means is usually quite dependent on digital transactions, this challenge of people’s lack of trust in digital transactions stands to effect the potential amount of funds that can be raised [at least from within the country].

The scoring across all questions of this indicator is 0.25, as fundraising through digital mechanisms is not really common. It is also an unregulated field, which might lead to issues for political parties of NGOs that are using these means. There was consensus among both civil society and private sector participants that online funding mechanisms are used by less than 30% of the major organisations, civil public groups, CSOs and political parties.

DIMENSION	SCORE
ICT Empowered Civil Society	0.87

⁸⁷ Shahzad, R. (2017). *IHC wants blasphemy, pornography sections added to cybercrime law - The Express Tribune*. *The Express Tribune*. Retrieved 5 April 2017, from <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1358497/cyber-crimes-ihc-wants-blasphemy-pornography-sections-added-law/>

⁸⁸ Kazmi, S., & Hashim, M. (2015). E-Banking in Pakistan: Issues and Challenges. *International Journal Of Academic Research In Business And Social Sciences*, 5(3), 52. Retrieved from http://hrmars.com/hrmars_papers/E-Banking_in_Pakistan_Issues_and_Challenges.pdf

⁸⁹ Mehmood, N., Shah, F., Azhar, M., & Rasheed, A. (2014). The Factors Effecting E-banking Usage in Pakistan. *Journal Of Management Information System And E-Commerce*, 1(1), 54. Retrieved from http://jmisenet.com/journals/jmise/Vol_1_No_1_June_2014/6.pdf

CHAPTER EIGHT

ENABLING AND CONSTRAINING ENVIRONMENT FOR OPEN EGOVERNANCE

The first eGovernance plan for Pakistan created in 2002, included the creation of an enabling environment as one of the guiding principles for eGovernance. Without an enabling environment no government can truly adopt and implement policies that are truly open in nature. In the OeGI index, enabling and constraining environment indicators assesses policies that recognizes and enable the right to freedom of expression and speech, promotion of local languages and cultural values and right to access information. The indicators also assess policies related to media and censorship and the environment for the promotion of diverse set of voices.

Assessment on the indicators included in this dimension follows;

5.1 Freedom of Information/ Right to Information

5.1.1	Does a national law exist (e.g. Freedom of Information Act, beyond an Open Data policy) that guarantees citizens or civic groups the right to demand information from government as a matter of public policy?	Yes
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The right of access to information has been granted by a constitutional amendment; Constitutional Article 19A, states that *“Every citizen shall have the right to have access to information in all matters of public importance subject to regulation and reasonable restrictions imposed by law.”* The laws governing this right in Pakistan differ from region to region. At the Federal Level, the RTI law in existence was originally enacted in 2001 by the military government led by Gen. Pervez Musharraf. The law was enacted to fulfill a condition for a loan that was to be attained from Asian Development Bank. Thus, the law is a weak law. Various attempts to amend the law have been made by certain parliamentarians in successive governments but so far the amendment bill has not been passed. Freedom of Information Ordinance 2002⁹⁰ mandates public bodies to facilitate and encourage, promptly and at the lowest reasonable cost, the disclosure of information.

⁹⁰ *Freedom of Information Ordinance, 2002.* (2017) (1st ed.). Islamabad. Retrieved from http://infopak.gov.pk/Downloads/Ordenances/Freedom_of_%20Information_Ordinance2002.pdf

The bill also has provisions for maintenance and indexing of records, publication and availability of records, computerization of records, declaration of public records, that include transactions involving acquisition and disposal of property and expenditure undertaken by a public body in the performance of its duties, information regarding grant of licenses, allotments and other benefits and privileges and contract and agreements made by a public body, orders and decisions, including decisions relating to members of public and any other record which may be notified by the Federal Government as public record.

The ordinance also bars access to a subjective and long list of information. One of the weakest points of this law is the lack of consequences for public officials who fail to comply by the spirit of this law. The Wafaqi Mohtasib or the Federal Tax Ombudsman can be approached by aggrieved applicants but traditionally their decisions have not been considered binding.

Even though the RTI legislation at the federal level is weak, in Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Sindh, strong RTI laws are being implemented and pressure is mounting up on the government to replace FOI Ordinance 2002 with a stronger and more effective law.

5.2 Freedom of Expression/ Opinion: Media Freedom

5.2.1	Does a national law exist that guarantees a free and independent media, according to universally accepted standards and principles?	Yes
5.2.2	In your estimation, are the significant media channels (Traditional tri-media—TV, Radio, Print; Community media; Online media) reasonably free to publish content with minimal restrictions and State intervention?	No

5.2.1 – Newspaper industry in Pakistan isn't closely regulated and the print media content is regulated only through a Press Council that works in a mostly non binding capacity. The broadcast media is regulated through Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority, PEMRA, that came into being in 2001 and started licensing private broadcast channels. The PEMRA law is reasonable in itself, however there are some criticisms regarding the lack of independence the Authority itself has. In the current set up the Authority reports to the Information Ministry as opposed to the Parliament, which raises questions about its neutrality and independence as a national media regulator. Regardless, the law itself defines a code of conduct for electronic media which has received mixed reviews from different quarters, By and large though, PEMRA Act itself is criticized largely for the composition and reporting hierarchy of the Authority and not its exceeding intervention into media content. The

application of the law and decisions of the Authority have at times become controversial.

Even though other challenges make it difficult for Pakistani media to exercise their freedom, it is important to note that RSF, in their Press Freedom Index on which Pakistan features very low due to threats to lives of journalists, notes that despite the threats, “The Pakistani media are nonetheless regarded as among the freest in Asia when it comes to covering the squabbling among politicians”⁹¹. Here we see the impact of a parallel power hub; while media is free to report independently on the workings of the politically elected government, this freedom is curtailed through formal and informal means when it comes to reporting on matters related to the military establishment. A research study on freedom of expression in Pakistan notes the same, stating that ‘although Pakistani journalists have the freedom to criticize the government, Pakistani media continues to face suppression by the military, intelligence agencies, politicians and judiciary’⁹².

5.2.2 While the laws in place are reasonable, the reality on ground is very different for journalists. Pakistan has been termed one of the most dangerous countries in the world for journalists, with over a 100 journalists being killed in the last 17 years⁹³. The killing of journalists continues almost with a 100% impunity despite pressure from both national and international journalist safety groups.

The Reporters Without Borders, Press Freedom Index ranked Pakistan 147 out of 180 countries in 2016 and notes that ‘journalists are targeted by extremist groups, Islamist organizations and Pakistan’s feared intelligence organizations’⁹⁴. The Freedom House freedom of the press index ranks Pakistan as not free and notes that ‘While the rate of media workers’ killings has declined somewhat in recent years, the number and intensity of threats directed at journalists from a variety of actors, including the military and intelligence agencies and militant groups, remained high in 2015. Impunity remained the norm for crimes against journalists’⁹⁵.

⁹¹ *Pakistan : Targeted on all sides | Reporters without borders.* (2016). RSF. Retrieved 5 April 2017, from <https://rsf.org/en/pakistan>

⁹² Liaquat, a., Qaisrani, A., & Khokha, E. (2016). *Freedom of Expression in Pakistan: A myth or a reality.* Think-asia.org. Retrieved 5 April 2017, from <https://think-asia.org/bitstream/handle/11540/6749/Freedom-of-Expression-in-Pakistan-a-myth-or-a-reality-W-159.pdf?sequence=1>

⁹³ Baig, A. (2015). *Safe Nowhere – Plight of Journalists in Pakistan | Key Fact, Figures and Trends | Part – 1. Media Matters for Pakistan.* Retrieved 5 April 2017, from <http://mediamatterspakistan.org/safe-nowhere-plight-of-journalists-in-pakistan-key-trends/>

⁹⁴ *Pakistan : Targeted on all sides | Reporters without borders.* (2016). RSF. Retrieved 5 April 2017, from <https://rsf.org/en/pakistan>

⁹⁵ *Pakistan | Country report | Freedom of the Press | 2016.* (2017). Freedomhouse.org. Retrieved 5 April 2017, from <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-press/2016/pakistan>

5.3 Freedom of Expression/ Opinion: Censorship/Prior Restraint

5.3.1	Does a national law exist that functions as a general restriction to citizen's in their freedoms of opinion and of expression? (e.g., Anti-terror, internal security, cybercrime legislation etc.)	Yes
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5.3.1 – A number of laws and policies are in place that can be used to restrict freedom of expression and opinion. The cybercrime bill, or PECA 2016 has direct implications for freedom of expression in the country. PECA 2016 has multiple sections dealing with access to information and even defines cyber terrorism in the context of gaining access to information illegally. In addition there are censorship related sections [detailed below in this report], sections that define hate speech in subjective terms and other sections that enable government to gain access to user's data, all of which pose a threat to freedom of expression.

Freedom House Press Freedom Report on Pakistan notes that ‘The constitution and other legislation, such as the Official Secrets Act, authorize the government to curb freedom of speech on subjects including the constitution itself, the armed forces, the judiciary, and religion’⁹⁶.

Journalists and media houses have also been on trial under the Anti Terrorism Act and blasphemy laws.

In addition to all this, attacks, threats and hate campaigns are resulting in an increasing trend of self censorship amongst journalists. Social surveillance and threats of vigilante action and violence is also making social media users more restrained.

5.4 Selective Content Regulation: Types of website content that are subject to government limitation or control

5.4.1	Is government limiting or controlling websites which have the following (i.e., yes or no responses only): a) Content with sexual content (e.g., of an “explicit nature”, constituting “public indecency”, “obscenity” etc.)	Yes
5.4.2	Online Gambling	Yes
5.4.3	Content promoting alcoholic beverages and/or prohibited drugs	Yes
5.4.4	Content promoting alternative religious views or beliefs	Yes
5.4.5	Content promoting dissent/ perspectives espousing opposition to the dominant political dispensation	Yes
5.4.6	Content promoting racial prejudice/racism or degrading to	Yes

⁹⁶ Ibid.

	other races	
5.4.7	Content promoting alternative/non-traditional life choices i.e., catering to sexual minorities (e.g., LGBTI)	Yes

5.4.1 – 5.4.7 – The censorship and blocking of websites is carried out by PTA, under PECA 2016. Section 37 of the Act authorizes PTA to “issue directions for removal or blocking of access of any information through any information system” it considers necessary for “the glory of Islam or the integrity, security or defense of Pakistan...public order, decency or morality, or in relation to contempt of court or commission of or incitement to an offence under this Act”⁹⁷. This section includes very subjective terms [like decency and morality] that are open to interpretation and can be used to censor any and all kinds of content.

The control of content that falls short of the prescribed values isn’t limited to the removal of content. Over the last year, there has been an increase in hate speech on mainstream media⁹⁸, targeting bloggers, usually under the guise of ‘blasphemy’ but extending to those who are critical of the military establishment. The presence of blasphemous content on social media websites has been used in the past to shut down whole platforms – YouTube remained inaccessible in Pakistan for over three years following violent protests over a blasphemous video *Innocence of Muslims*.

The 2016 Internet Freedom Report by Freedom House rates Pakistan as not free⁹⁹ in the category assessing content control. The report states that in addition to PECA 2016, ‘Section 99 of the penal code allows the government to restrict information that might be prejudicial to the national interest, to justify filtering antimilitary, blasphemous, or anti-state content. Critics believe these issues can serve as cover for politically motivated censorship of dissenting voices. Information perceived as damaging to the image of the military or top politicians, for example, is also targeted’¹⁰⁰. A report by Bytes for All found that “The last two years have seen an increased coordination between the state and the Internet companies such as Google, Facebook, and Twitter, where companies have complied to varying degrees in blocking access to content, or providing private user data”¹⁰¹.

⁹⁷ *Prevention of Electronic Crime Act 2016*. (2016) (p. 762). Retrieved from http://na.gov.pk/uploads/documents/1472635250_246.pdf

⁹⁸ Associated Press,. (2017). *Pakistan Seeks Apology From Radical TV Host Over Hate Speech*. *Nytimes.com*. Retrieved 5 April 2017, from <https://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2017/03/30/world/asia/ap-as-pakistan.html>

⁹⁹ *Pakistan | Country report | Freedom on the Net | 2016*. (2017). *Freedomhouse.org*. Retrieved 5 April 2017, from <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-net/2016/pakistan>

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁰¹ Haque, J. (2016). *New Report: Internet Landscape of Pakistan 2016*. *Content.bytesforall.pk*. Retrieved 5 April 2017, from <http://content.bytesforall.pk/node/195>

5.5 Adherence to the principle of “Net Neutrality”

5.5.1	Does a law/policy exist that ensures ensures the principle of net neutrality, i.e., that Internet service providers should enable access to all content and applications regardless of the source, and without favoring or blocking particular products or websites?	No
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The IT Policy 2016, does not mention net neutrality at all. A draft policy shared in 2014 by the Ministry of IT, did make a fleeting mention of the principle but it wasn't applied. In fact, one of the most grave violations of net neutrality principle has been at the hand of Pakistan Telecommunications Company Limited, PTCL, the largest ICT services provider in Pakistan. In March 2014, PTCL entered into an agreement with Dailymotion¹⁰². This deal was made during a time when Youtube was still blocked in the country. Other violations of the principle are also common in the form of bundle packages being offered by almost all telecommunication companies. For example, the Ufone Social Daily bucket, offers ‘free Facebook, WhatsApp and Twitter’¹⁰³ to users, Telenor had previously linked up with Facebook to offer Free Basics and similar deals continue to come into market without any concern about its impact on net neutrality.

A report looking at net neutrality in Pakistan concluded that despite the prevalence of net neutrality violations, any action has not been taken due to ‘the lack of legal framework that recognizes and defines principles of net neutrality in Pakistan and the lack of civil society and consumer groups working towards creating awareness on these principles’¹⁰⁴.

5.6 Right to Privacy/Data Protection

5.6.1	Does a national law exist (e.g., Privacy Law, Data Protection Law) that guarantees citizens the right to privacy of personal information (e.g., personal correspondence, privacy of abode, economic transactions, etc.) in the public and private sector	No
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5.6.1 – As defined in eMeshed Government dimension, there is no data protection policy in place and thus, data protection law is also non-existent.

¹⁰² PTCL and Dailymotion join hands. (2014). *Ptcl.com.pk*. Retrieved 5 April 2017, from <https://www.ptcl.com.pk/Home/PressReleaseDetail/?ItemId=419&LinkId=130>

¹⁰³ Ufone - 3G Prepaid Tariff. (2017). *Ufone.com*. Retrieved 5 April 2017, from <https://www.ufone.com/data/tariff/prepaid/>

¹⁰⁴ Baig, A. (2015). *Mapping Net Neutrality: Basic Analysis of NN Landscape in Pakistan | Part -1. Media Matters for Pakistan*. Retrieved 5 April 2017, from <http://mediamatterspakistan.org/mapping-net-neutrality-in-pakistan-a-nonexistent-debate-part-1/>

5.7 Right against unlawful surveillance

5.7.1	Does a national law/do national laws exist to clearly circumscribe the parameters of legal surveillance?	Yes
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5.7.1 – There are at least two laws that define the parameters of legal surveillance. First, the Investigation for Fair Trial Act 2012¹⁰⁵, defines in detail the procedure that is to be followed by law enforcement agencies and judiciary for requesting, granting and carrying out interception and surveillance. The act includes sections that detail the process for requesting a warrant for initiating surveillance including requisites for filing an application for warrant, process and considerations in the issuance of warrant, form of warrant, record of orders and the duration of warrant of interception/surveillance. While these procedures are clearly defined, the Act itself has been criticized as ‘the provisions of the act are such that they are violative of the principles of natural justice, the fundamental rights as enshrined in the Constitution of Pakistan, and the universally recognized principles of human rights’¹⁰⁶.

Secondly, the cybercrime bill, PECA 2016, also includes a section dealing with real time surveillance. Section 39 of the Act¹⁰⁷ details the procedure for real time collection and recording of information i.e. real time surveillance. The procedure defined in PECA 2016 further dilutes the procedure that was defined in investigation for fair trail Act.

5.8 Freedom of Association/Assembly

5.8.1	Is there a national law that empowers government to restrict freedom of movement, assembly, and/or association? (e.g. National Security/ Internal Security law)?	Yes
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5.8.1 The most frequently used law to restrict freedom of movement and assembly is Section 144 of the Code of Criminal Procedure¹⁰⁸, power to issue order absolute at once in urgent cases of nuisance or apprehended danger, that allows government to act immediately to halt any activity that poses a threat to health, safety or public order. The Section is often imposed to curb any kind of assembly including to

¹⁰⁵ *Investigation for Fair Trial At.* (2013) (1st ed.). Retrieved from http://www.na.gov.pk/uploads/documents/1361943916_947.pdf

¹⁰⁶ Adhi, M. (2012). *Unfair trial act?. The Nation.* Retrieved 5 April 2017, from <http://nation.com.pk/columns/19-Apr-2013/unfair-trial-act>

¹⁰⁷ *Prevention of Electronic Crime Act 2016.* (2016) (p. 764). Retrieved from http://na.gov.pk/uploads/documents/1472635250_246.pdf

¹⁰⁸ *Code of Criminal Procedure , 1898.* (2016). *Pakistancode.gov.pk.* Retrieved 5 April 2017, from <http://pakistancode.gov.pk/english/UY2FqaJw1-apaUY2Fqa-apea-sg-jjjjjjjjjjjj>

frequently criminalise *double sawari* or pillion riding on bikes¹⁰⁹. Such measures are always taken with an excuse of controlling security threats. Like various other restrictive laws in Pakistan, this law is also a 'holdover from the days of colonial rule when the British implemented a version of the law in India to inhibit public gatherings among Indian inhabitants'¹¹⁰.

Some laws apply only to specific communities and can result in restricted their right to assembly and association. For example Section 298 B of the Pakistan Penal Code lays down a strict regiment for public behavior of members of a religious minority, the Ahmedi community.

A report by Bytes for all states that in the context of cyberspace, Pakistan Penal Code, 1860 and Qa- nun-e-Shahadat Order, 1984, Pakistan Telecommunication (Re-organization) Act, 1996, Protection of Pakistan Act, 2014 and Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act, 2016 can threaten freedom of association and assembly¹¹¹.

5.9 Socio-cultural: intellectual property and the public domain

5.9.1	To what extent is there a balanced intellectual property—i.e., patents, copyrights, trademarks—regime in the country which recognizes the rights of authors/creators to benefit from their creative work, while balancing this with the rights of users to access the intellectual commons for the public good?	0.5
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5.9.1 – The world Intellectual Property Organization, WIPO, lists 63 texts¹¹² from Pakistan's constitution and laws that can have an impact on intellectual property rights. However, most of these laws only have an indirect connection with intellectual property. The main legislation dealing with intellectual property rights are Copyright Amendment Act 1992, Patents Amendment Act 2010 and Intellectual Property Organization of Pakistan Act 2012, that deals only with the creation of IPO. The other two acts are focused on protection of the rights of the authors and creators but there is some focus on users rights as well; for example Section 57 of the law defines 42 instances in which infringement of copyright will not apply and includes sections like, 57a. creating an exception for 'fair dealing with a literary, dramatic, musical or

¹⁰⁹ *Section 144 imposed, pillion riding banned in Quetta for a month - Daily Parliament Times.* (2016). *Daily Parliament Times*. Retrieved 5 April 2017, from <https://www.dailyparliamenttimes.com/section-144-imposed-pillion-riding-banned-quetta-month/>

¹¹⁰ *Beware of Section 144!*. (2012). *Pakistantoday.com.pk*. Retrieved 5 April 2017, from <http://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2012/05/02/beware-of-section-144/>

¹¹¹ Baloch, H., & Zafar, A. (2016). *Shrinking Spaces: Online Freedom of Association and Assembly in Pakistan* (1st ed.). Bytes for All. Retrieved from http://content.bytesforall.pk/sites/default/files/FoAA_Online_Report_Final.pdf

¹¹² *Pakistan: IP Laws and Treaties.* (2015). *Wipo.int*. Retrieved 5 April 2017, from <http://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/profile.jsp?code=PK>

artistic work for the purpose of, research or private study, criticism or review, whether of that work or of any other work, a fair dealing with a literary, dramatic, musical or artistic work for the purpose of reporting current events'¹¹³.

5.10 Socio-Cultural: Open Content

5.10.1	Are reports/findings of government-funded research generally made available to the public free of charge?	Yes
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5.10.1 – government funded research by some departments are made available online, free of charge. Some researches can be requested through RTI requests, while some are kept private. There is no written policy defining which researches would be shared publicly, but on principle, unless the research has security implications or somehow falls under the exceptions created within FOI Act 2001, the researches can be accessed by the public. One government department that pro actively shares government funded research is Pakistan Bureau of Statistics¹¹⁴.

5.11 Socio-Cultural: Cultural/ Linguistic Development & Diversity, Right to communicate in mother tongue/ Promotion of linguistic diversity

5.11.1	Are there national government plans/policies/programs that guarantee/encourage communication in one's mother tongue?	No
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5.11.1 Pakistan only recently moved to switch its official language from English to Urdu¹¹⁵. Under the new plan, the government is now attempting to ensure that essential documents like utility bills, identity documents and government websites are available in Urdu language. In 2015, a decision was taken to ensure that ‘the President, prime minister and all special designates, will start delivering their speeches in Urdu language regardless of whether these are being delivered within or outside the country’¹¹⁶. However, English speeches outside the country have continued. A recent court order directed the Federal Public Service Commission (FPSC) on Tuesday to conduct Central Superior Services (CSS) examination in the

¹¹³ Pakistan: The Copyright Ordinance, 1962 (Act No. XXXIV). (1992). *Wipo.int*. Retrieved 6 April 2017, from http://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/text.jsp?file_id=129350#LinkTarget_609

¹¹⁴ Accessible via - Publications | Pakistan Bureau of Statistics. (2017). *Pbs.gov.pk*. Retrieved 6 April 2017, from <http://www.pbs.gov.pk/publications>

¹¹⁵ Pakistan to replace English with Urdu as official language - *The Express Tribune*. (2015). *The Express Tribune*. Retrieved 6 April 2017, from <https://tribune.com.pk/story/928480/pakistan-to-replace-english-with-urdu-as-official-language/>

¹¹⁶ Malik, H. (2015). *President, prime minister to deliver speeches only in Urdu, even on foreign trips - The Express Tribune*. *The Express Tribune*. Retrieved 6 April 2017, from <https://tribune.com.pk/story/918707/president-prime-minister-to-deliver-speeches-only-in-urdu-at-home-and-abroad/>

Urdu language next year'¹¹⁷.

However, all these measures, in whatever state of implementation they are, are being taken for the promotion of Urdu only. Pakistan is a linguistically diverse country; the World FactBook shares the following statistics about the use of different languages among the population; 'Punjabi 48%, Sindhi 12%, Saraiki (a Punjabi variant) 10%, Pashto (alternate name, Pashtu) 8%, Urdu (official) 8%, Balochi 3%, Hindko 2%, Brahui 1%, English (official; lingua franca of Pakistani elite and most government ministries), Burushaski, and other 8%'¹¹⁸. Experts have urged government to 'ensure the implementation of teaching mother languages at schools up till matriculation'¹¹⁹ and to devise a 'national level policy to promote national languages'¹²⁰ but so far, there is currently no plan in place for the promotion of mother tongues and linguistic diversity.

The Academy of Letters, an independent department linked with the Ministry of Information and National heritage has an objective to 'administer and coordinate all government systems for the promotion of Pakistani languages'¹²¹, but its website doesn't include any details of a plan or strategy to actually do so.

5.12 Cultural development online

5.12.1	Are there national government plans/policies/programs to encourage the sharing of culture and cultural practices over the Internet and other digital/electronic platforms?	No
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5.12.1 - The department directly engaged with promotion of culture is Lok Virsa, an attached department of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. Among the objectives of Lok Virsa are, 'engage in research, systematic collection, documentation, scientific preservation, projection and dissemination of oral traditions, folklore and other aspects of indigenous cultural heritage and strengthen and nurture the roots of Pakistani culture and achieve fundamental objectives regarding its re-discovery and

¹¹⁷ Court orders FPSC to conduct CSS exam in Urdu next year. (2017). DAWN.COM. Retrieved 6 April 2017, from <https://www.dawn.com/news/1314850>

¹¹⁸ Pakistan - The World Factbook. (2017). Cia.gov. Retrieved 6 April 2017, from <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/pk.html>

¹¹⁹ Promotion of mother languages: Capital celebrates linguistic diversity - The Express Tribune. (2016). The Express Tribune. Retrieved 6 April 2017, from <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1051737/promotion-of-mother-languages-capital-celebrates-linguistic-diversity/>

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Objectives - Pakistan Academy of Letters. (2015). Pal.gov.pk. Retrieved 6 April 2017, from http://www.pal.gov.pk/?page_id=12

re-interpretation to project the true identity of Pakistan'¹²².

However, the organization has no plans or policies for the promotion of culture online. Even the researchers conducted by Lok Virsa to document the cultural practices are not available through its website.

The National IT policy doesn't make a mention of cultural development/promotion through digital means either.

5.13 Presence of e-Commerce policy

5.13.1	If there is a national law (e.g., eCommerce Law or similar legislation) or plan/program that recognizes and enables internet-based economic transactions towards promoting the use of ICTs in business/economic activity?)	Yes
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5.13.1 – The National IT Policy includes a detailed section on e Commerce. The policy guides IT ministry to take measures to;

1. Establish a national e-commerce gateway by State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) with the support and coordination of relevant stakeholders
2. Promote the Internet merchant accounts to ease credit card transactions.
3. Develop a framework to allow e-banking activities in order to maximize the usage of mobile financial services
4. Encourage the use of e-commerce amongst general public through awareness campaigns to promote a culture of e-commerce in the country, which supports electronic business transactions at national, regional and international levels.
5. Create an enabling environment that empowers stakeholders in trade and commerce with the underlying infrastructure to improve productivity and positively position the nation for global competition
6. Promote Pakistan as a competitive Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) destination for E-Commerce as well as attract local private sector participation and investment in the development of E-Commerce solutions
7. Promote the active participation of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and disadvantaged groups to enhance their effective participation in E-Commerce activities.¹²³

¹²² History – Lok Virsa. (2015). *Lokvirsa.org.pk*. Retrieved 6 April 2017, from <http://lokvirsa.org.pk/history/>

¹²³ MOIT,. (2016). *National IT Policy, 2016* (p. 28). Ministry of Information Technology & Telecommunications, Pakistan.

5.14 Effects of private power, especially in telecommunications services

5.14.1	From your observation, is the telecommunication structure in your country conducive to healthy competition, which benefits the general public in providing accessible and quality communications services?	Yes
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5.14.1 – A study by PTA looking at the growth trends in the telecommunications industry in Pakistan notes that, ‘The introduction of two new mobile companies has created a healthy competition resulting in the reduction in mobile tariffs, increase in coverage and better quality of service to mobile users across Pakistan’¹²⁴. This is also demonstrated in the World Economic Forum’s, Global Information Technology Report 2016 which showed that ‘Pakistan’s technology and telecom market had the world’s lowest price points as compared to other markets from around the globe’¹²⁵.

The Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunication also drafted its own Pakistan Telecommunication Competition Rules, 2017, to check anticompetitive behavior in the telecommunication sector. However, this move was not appreciated by Competition Commission of Pakistan, that issued a policy note to the Ministry noting that ‘in relation to the Competition Rules for the telecom sector as it is the sole jurisdiction of CCP under the Competition Act, 2010’¹²⁶. Thus, no separate rules of competition for telecommunications sector are currently in place.

5.15 Effects of Private power, especially in media services

5.15.1	From your observation, is there a trend towards concentration of media ownership in your country, such that fewer individuals or organizations now control a growing share of the mass media platforms and outlets (i.e. media consolidation)?	0.5
5.15.2	From your observation, how diverse is the media in your country, i.e., are the viewpoints/ information sources balanced and sufficiently diverse, as presented in the different media (traditional tri-media: TV/Radio/Print; community media; online media)?	0.5

¹²⁴ *Recent Growth Trends in the Telecom Sector of Pakistan*. (2016). *Pta.gov.pk*. Retrieved 6 April 2017, from http://www.pta.gov.pk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=706:recent-growth-trends-in-the-telecom-sector-of-pakistan

¹²⁵ *Pakistan most affordable country in world for telecom, ICT services: WEF - The Express Tribune*. (2016). *The Express Tribune*. Retrieved 6 April 2017, from <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1219605/pakistan-affordable-country-world-telecom-ict-services-wef/>

¹²⁶ Amin, T. (2017). *MoIT drafts own telecommunication competition rules*. *Business Recorder*. Retrieved 6 April 2017, from <http://epaper.brecorder.com/2017/02/14/5-page/849499-news.html>

5.15.1 – The number of media channels in Pakistan is constantly on the rise. There has been much diversification in the type of stakeholders that are now becoming media owners. When the broadcast industry opened to private market, the initial owners were media tycoons. Over time, industrialists, politicians and their proxies, businesses and even educationalists have acquired media channels. Thus, on one hand it is safe to say that media ownership is diverse. At the same time, the existing media tycoons are amassing more and more market share, which strengthens their media markets in an almost anticompetitive manner. This is why the score for this indicator is 0.5.

5.15.2 – The media in Pakistan is extremely commercial. A study exploring media economy in Pakistan notes that ‘The current economic infrastructure of the broadcast industry leaves local and regional channels at a loss. Pakistan’s current rating system or TAM is designed to cater only to urban population (20 cities with most focus on Karachi, Lahore and Islamabad). Relevant agencies should immediately implement structural changes to encourage gathering of TRP data from rural and urban sectors independent of each other’¹²⁷. The study also finds that due to the over dependence on advertisers for revenue generation ‘certain news stories critical of advertisers but of great public importance are not at all covered in the mainstream broadcast media’ and most private satellite channels are in the habit of ‘Fine tuning the broadcast content to make it relevant to geographical areas with most media concentration is common. The process entails giving highest priority to content relevant for cities/regions with most commercial value. The practice is not entirely illegal, however, it causes broadcast media to become very ‘urban centric’¹²⁸. This demonstrates that the industry isn’t able or willing to include a diverse set of voices and opinions and remains restricted in terms of the voices it chooses to broadcast.

DIMENSION	SCORE
Enabling and Constraining Environment	0.46

¹²⁷ Baig, A., & Cheema, U. (2015). *Broadcast Journalism in Pakistan: A Hostage to Media Economics* (1st ed., p. 2). Islamabad: Centre for Peace and Development Initiatives (CPDI). Retrieved from <http://www.cpd-pakistan.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Broadcast-Media-in-Pakistan-Hostage-to-Media-Economy.pdf>

¹²⁸ Ibid.

SECTION THREE

THE BIG PICTURE

CHAPTER NINE PAKISTAN ON OeGI

Dimensions	Score
eMeshed Government	0.26
eParticipation Channels	0.26
Digital Inclusion	1
ICT Empowered Civil Society	0.87
Enabling or Constraining Environment	0.46
Pakistan OeGI Score	0.57

Key Findings in OeGI dimensions

eMESHED GOVERNMENT

Findings

1. A comprehensive eGovernment plan is present. This is the 3rd national plan and at its completion in 2017, a new eGovernment plan is to be made. However, no reports documenting the status of its implementation is available.
2. Despite the acknowledgement about the need and benefit of interoperability in eGovernment projects, the government has not defined any standards or SOPs to guide its agencies implementing eGovernment projects.
3. The National Action Plan advises its agencies to make financial cost/benefit assessments for making open source versus proprietary software acquisition/development decisions.
4. The Freedom of Information Ordinance 2002, advises GoP to provide public data in open formats. However, no implementation of this advice is witnessed. Open data standards have not been defined and data isn't being made available in open, reusable formats by most of the government agencies.
5. Pakistan has signed a letter of intent to join Open Government Partnership and is in the process of developing a consultative work plan to move towards Open Governance goals in the next two years.

6. Data protection and cyber security are not properly legislated, exposing citizens to risks of human rights violations.

7. A detailed eProcurement Plan exists, but it isn't being implemented or used by government agencies.

8. ePayment of almost all utility bills is possible through functional ePayment and eBanking systems. A number of government agencies are also accepting eFiling of public documents like tax returns.

ePARTICIPATION CHANNELS

Findings

1. A growing number of government agencies are trying to incorporate ICTs in their communication loop with the public. At the moment less than half of the government agencies have the capacity and system to connect with people via SMS.

2. Over half of the government agencies have interactive websites and active social media platforms. However, the websites are not regularly updated in most cases.

3. Government websites do not have any special features that would make them more assessable to persons with disabilities.

4. The majority of government websites do not have national language content i.e. content in Urdu. However, given the fact that till very recently, English was the official language, the tendency to focus on English language content is not surprising.

5. The government through Senate public petition feature and other websites is inviting public participation in the legislative process. However, the public is not able to monitor the implementation of government projects through any digital platforms.

DIGITAL INCLUSION

Findings

This is the only dimension in the OeGI focus areas where Pakistan has acquired a perfect score. The analysis of the indicators show that the policy available for universal access and digital inclusion is good. The key findings are;

1. A comprehensive universal access plan is available and is being run largely through Universal Service Fund, an operation funded through telecommunication industry.

2. Various initiative and policy decisions are being taken to increase access to women. Policy and practical projects are also in place to increase digital literacy and professional education and training of women in ICT sector

3. Some policy decisions have been made to enable access to disadvantaged groups,

particularly persons with disabilities. A few projects are also underway, both to increase access and to increase digital literacy.

ICT Empowered Civil Society

Findings

1. Majority of major political parties, civic groups, people organisations, community based organisations, NGOs and CSOs, religious and faith based organisations and gender based organisations are using ICTs for organizational use, internal and external messaging and communications and advocacy and lobbying activities.
2. Not many political parties, civic groups, people organisations, community based organisations, NGOs and CSOs, religious and faith based organisations and gender based organisations are using are able to use internet based crowd funding as the legal and regulatory position of crowd sourced funds is not clear. Due to the lack of regulatory mechanisms, taking advantage of crowd funding may create trouble for civic organisations who are already working in an increasingly hostile environment.

Enabling or Constraining Environment

Findings

1. Right to information is guaranteed through the constitution and law. However, at the federal level, the law, Freedom of Information Ordinance 2002, is weak and creates the space for legalized withholding of information.
2. Media related laws are generally progressive but questions on the independence and neutrality of regulatory bodies remain. The main challenge to freedom of expression is the prevalence of impunity in the face of continued attacks on journalists and media workers and the presence of a parallel unwritten policy that creates an environment where journalists are free to criticize the elected government but have to remain careful about reporting on issues dealing with the military establishment.
3. Censorship is prevalent, specially online. A growing trend of hate campaigning against journalists, activists and other people showing dissent is also leading to a growing trend of self censorship on media and social media.
4. Both state and private corporations are benefiting from ignoring the principle of net neutrality and offering 'cheap' deals to customers at the cost of the neutrality principles. The public and a large number of activists remain uninterested or unaware of the implications.
5. There are clearly defined laws dealing with surveillance, however, there are some contradictions between different laws. In addition these laws are invasive and have raised fears of possible human rights violations.

6. Neither the development of regional languages nor cultural practices via digital means appears to be a priority for the Government of Pakistan.
7. The media industry in Pakistan is growing; the number of owners of media channels is increasing, but consolidation of power within large media groups continues.
8. Excessive commercialization of media industry has limited its potential for inclusion of diverse perspectives.

ANNEXURES

Scorecard

1. Meshed eGovernment				
1.11	Does your country have a National/ Federal eGovernment Plan/Strategy?	Yes	1	1
1.2.1	In implementing the eGovernment strategy, is government guided by blueprint or a document that “explains how all the information systems, processes, agencies and people in government function as a whole” (i.e., is there a National Enterprise Architecture plan)?	No	0	0
1.3.1	In undertaking its eGovernment strategy, is government guided by a set of standards that allows agencies to exchange and make use of digital information (i.e., is there a Government Interoperability Framework -“a set of standards and guidelines that specifies the preferred way that government agency, citizens and partners interact electronically with each other)?	No	0	0
1.4.1	Is government mandating the use of Open Standards (as opposed to Proprietary or Commercially-owned standards) in its eGovernment initiatives? N.B. Open standards are easily accessible for all to read and use; developed by a process that is open and relatively easy for anyone to participate in; and not control or tied-in with any specific group or vendor.	No	0	0
1.5.1	Is there an open data policy in government which mandates the release of public information and government data to the public in a regular, accessible, and non-discriminatory manner, to ensure transparency and accountability?	No	0	0.3
1.5.2	Does the national government publish government data in an electronic, reusable format?	No	0	
1.5.3	Is the government a member of the international Open Government Partnership (OGP)?	Yes	1	
1.6.1	Is there a data privacy or data protection policy in place to safeguard citizens’ personal information within government via a national strategy/plan, or specific policy instrument?	No	0	0

1.7.1	Is there an information security/ cyber security policy in place to protect the national information infrastructure and critical systems via legislation, national strategy/plan, or specific policy instrument?	No	0	0
1.8.1	Is there a functional eProcurement system in place that allows for electronic bidding and/or purchases of goods and services by government agencies online?	Yes	1	0.66
1.8.2	Is there a functional ePayment system in place that allows for payment by the general public of goods and services from the government online?	No	0	
1.8.3	Is there a functional eFiling system in place that allows electronic submissions by the general public of official documents (e.g., income tax returns) or requests to the government online?	Yes	1	
1.9.1	Is there a national or federal government agency that oversees and coordinates the eGovernment strategy/strategies, policies and programs within the bureaucracy?	Yes	1	0.4
1.9.2	What percent of the Cabinet-level national/federal government agencies are implementing eGovernment projects?		0.25	
1.9.3	What percent of the Cabinet-level national/federal government agencies are implementing eGovernment projects that specifically address women’s issues and concerns?)		0	
SUB INDICATOR MEAN/AVERAGE SCORE				0.2622

2. eParticipation Channels				
2.1.1	Is there a centralized / unified contact/call center service for all citizens’ (voice-based) communications with government?	No	0	0.16

2.1.2	What percentage of national/federal government agencies utilize mobile text/short messaging systems/SMS to gather/collect queries/ feedback/suggestions from the public?	0.25	0.25	
2.1.3	What percentage of national/federal government agencies make use of major social media platforms (incl. instant messaging/IM) to gather/collect/ queries /feedback/suggestions from the public?	0.25	0.25	
2.2.1	What percentage of national/federal government agency websites are <i>regularly updated</i> (i.e., new content uploaded at least weekly)?	0.25	0.25	0.5
2.2.2	What percentage of national/federal government agency websites are ' <i>interactive</i> ' (i.e., provides an integral level of usability which allows for dynamic interaction between the site and the user)	0.75	0.75	
2.2.3	What percentage of national/federal government agencies utilize major <i>social media platforms</i> as part of their web strategy, and who engage their users over these platforms regularly and in a timely manner?	0.5	0.5	
2.3.1	What percentage of national/federal government websites comply with international and/or national standards for PWD accessibility i.e., have special channels/features which specifically cater to persons with disabilities?	0	0	0
2.4.1	What percentage of national/federal government websites/social media channels/online channels have content which are in the national language/s (i.e., in local/official languages, particularly those other than English)	0.25	0.25	0.25
2.5.1	What percentage of national/federal government websites/social media /online platforms have women-specific content/pages/channels?	0	0	0
2.6.1	Do national/federal government websites/online platforms allow/encourage citizens and civil society groups to comment/give feedback on important aspects of policy and governance (i.e., existing or proposed laws/regulations)	Yes	1	0.66
2.6.2	Do national/federal government websites/online platforms) enable effective citizen monitoring of implementation of government programs and projects (i.e., through transparency and accountability mechanisms online)?	No	0	
2.6.3	Do national/federal government websites/online platforms) encourage citizens and civil society groups to participate in rule-making, i.e., by proposing amendments of laws, policies, or rules, or the suggestion of new ones; and provide online tools to enable such participation (e.g. online petitions, collaborative wikis, etc.)	Yes	1	

SUB INDICATOR MEAN/AVERAGE SCORE				0.2616
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Digital Inclusion				
3.1.1	Does the national/federal government have existing policies/plans/strategies to provide reasonable access to affordable internet service to all citizens (e.g., universal access policy, affordable internet policy, promotion of community access centers/ telecenters)?	Yes	1	1
3.2.1	Does the national/federal government have existing policies/plans/strategies to promote universal ICT Literacy meant to develop basic ICT knowledge and skills of all citizens?	Yes	1	1

3.3.1	Is there a women-specific <i>access</i> policy/ies, plans and strategies within the national ICT framework?	Yes	1	1
3.4.1	Is there a women-specific ICT <i>literacy</i> policy/ies, plans and strategies within the national ICT framework?	Yes	1	1
3.5.1	Is there a specific ICT <i>Access</i> policy/ies, plans and strategies focused on specific disadvantaged groups (i.e., persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, sexual minorities)?	Yes	1	1
3.6.1	Is there a specific ICT <i>Literacy</i> policy/ies, plans and strategies focused on particular disadvantaged groups (i.e., persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, sexual minorities)?	Yes	1	1
SUB INDICATOR MEAN/AVERAGE SCORE				1

4. ICT Empowered Civil Society				
4.1.1	By your estimation, what percent of major <i>political parties</i> use ICTs (PCs and laptops, cellular phones, other mobile devices etc.) for internal organizational use (i.e., document processing, accounting systems, databases)?	1	1	1
4.1.2	By your estimation, what percent of major <i>civic groups</i> use ICTs (PCs and laptops, cellular phones, other mobile devices etc.) for internal organizational use (i.e., document processing, accounting systems, databases)?	1	1	1

4.1.3	By your estimation, what percent of major <i>people's organizations/ community organizations</i> use ICTs (PCs and laptops, cellular phones, other mobile devices etc.) for internal organizational use (i.e., document processing, accounting systems, databases)?	1	1	1
4.1.4	By your estimation, what percent of major <i>civil society organizations/ non-government organizations</i> use ICTs (PCs and laptops, cellular phones, other mobile devices etc.) for internal organizational use (i.e., document processing, accounting systems, databases)?	1	1	1
4.1.5	By your estimation, what percent of major <i>religious/ faith-based organizations</i> use ICTs (PCs and laptops, cellular phones, other mobile devices etc.) for internal organizational use (i.e., document processing, accounting systems, databases)?	1	1	1
4.1.6	By your estimation, what percent of major <i>gender-based organizations</i> use ICTs (PCs and laptops, cellular phones, other mobile devices etc.) for internal organizational use (i.e., document processing, accounting systems, databases)?	1	1	1
4.2.1	By your estimation, what percent of major <i>political parties</i> use ICTs (PCs and laptops, cellular phones, other mobile devices etc.) for internal and external messaging and communications?	1	1	1
4.2.2	By your estimation, what percent of major <i>civic groups</i> use ICTs (PCs and laptops, cellular phones, other mobile devices etc.) for internal and external messaging and communications?	1	1	
4.2.3	By your estimation, what percent of major <i>people's organizations/ community organizations</i> use ICTs (PCs and laptops, cellular phones, other mobile devices etc.) for internal and external messaging and communications?	1	1	
4.2.4	By your estimation, what percent of major <i>civil society organizations/ non-government organizations</i> use ICTs (PCs and laptops, cellular phones, other mobile devices etc.) for internal and external messaging and communications?	1	1	
4.2.5	By your estimation, what percent of major <i>religious/ faith-based organizations</i> use ICTs (PCs and laptops, cellular phones, other mobile devices etc.) for internal and external messaging and communications?	1	1	
4.2.6	By your estimation, what percent of major <i>gender-based organizations</i> use ICTs (PCs and laptops, cellular phones, other mobile devices etc.) for internal and external messaging and communications?	1	1	

4.3.1	By your estimation, what percent of major <i>political parties</i> use ICTs (PCs and laptops, cellular phones, other mobile devices etc.) for public engagement and action (i.e., advocacy, lobbying, volunteer recruitment)?	1	1	0.58
4.3.2	By your estimation, what percent of major <i>civic groups</i> use ICTs (PCs and laptops, cellular phones, other mobile devices etc.) for public engagement and action (i.e., advocacy, lobbying, volunteer recruitment)?	0.5	0.5	
4.3.3	By your estimation, what percent of major <i>people's organizations/ community organizations</i> use ICTs (PCs and laptops, cellular phones, other mobile devices etc.) for public engagement and action (i.e., advocacy, lobbying, volunteer recruitment)?	0.5	0.5	
4.3.4	By your estimation, what percent of major <i>civil society organizations/ non-government organizations</i> use ICTs (PCs and laptops, cellular phones, other mobile devices etc.)for public engagement and action (i.e., advocacy, lobbying)?	0.5	0.5	
4.3.5	By your estimation, what percent of major <i>religious/ faith-based organizations</i> use ICTs (PCs and laptops, cellular phones, other mobile devices etc.) for public engagement and action (i.e., advocacy, lobbying, volunteer recruitment)?	0.5	0.5	
4.3.6	By your estimation, what percent of major <i>gender-based organizations</i> use ICTs (PCs and laptops, cellular phones, other mobile devices etc.) for public engagement and action (i.e., advocacy, lobbying, volunteer recruitment)?	0.5	0.5	
4.4.1	By your estimation, what percent of major <i>political parties</i> use ICTs (PCs and laptops, cellular phones, other mobile devices etc.) for online fund-raising (e.g., web-based solicitation, online donation facility, “crowd-funded” micro donations through external sites, etc.)	0.25	0.25	0.25
4.4.2	By your estimation, what percent of major <i>civic groups</i> use ICTs (PCs and laptops, cellular phones, other mobile devices etc.) for online fund-raising (e.g., web-based solicitation, online donation facility, “crowd-funded” micro donations through external sites,	0.25	0.25	
4.4.3	By your estimation, what percent of major <i>people's organizations/ community organizations</i> use ICTs (PCs and laptops, cellular phones, other mobile devices etc.) for online fund-raising (e.g., web-based solicitation, online donation facility, “crowd-funded” micro donations through external sites, etc.)	0.25	0.25	

4.4.4	By your estimation, what percent of major <i>civil society organizations/ non-government organizations</i> use ICTs (PCs and laptops, cellular phones, other mobile devices etc.) for online fund-raising (e.g., web-based solicitation, online donation facility, “crowd-funded” micro donations through external sites, etc.)	0.25	0.25	
4.4.5	By your estimation, what percent of major <i>religious/faith-based organizations</i> use ICTs (PCs and laptops, cellular phones, other mobile devices etc.) for online fund-raising (e.g., web-based solicitation, online donation facility, “crowd-funded” micro donations through external sites, etc.)	0.25	0.25	
4.4.6	By your estimation, what percent of major <i>gender-based organizations</i> use ICTs (PCs and laptops, cellular phones, other mobile devices etc.) for online fund-raising (e.g., web-based solicitation, online donation facility, “crowd-funded” micro donations through external sites, etc.)	0.25	0.25	
SUB INDICATOR MEAN/AVERAGE SCORE				0.87

5. Enabling / Contraning Environment for Open eGovernance				
5.1.1	Does a national law exist (e.g. Freedom of Information Act, beyond an Open Data policy) that guarantees citizens or civic groups the right to demand information from government as a matter of public policy?	Yes	1	1
5.2.1	Does a national law exist that guarantees a free and independent media, according to universally accepted standards and principles?	Yes	1	0
5.2.2	In your estimation, are the significant media channels (Traditional tri-media—TV, Radio, Print; Community media; Online media) reasonably free to publish content with minimal restrictions and State intervention?	No	0	

5.3.1	Does a national law exist that functions as a general restriction to citizen's in their freedoms of opinion and of expression? (e.g., Anti-terror, internal security, cybercrime legislation etc.)	Yes	0	0
5.4.1	Is government limiting or controlling websites which have the following (i.e., yes or no responses only): a) Content with sexual content (e.g., of an "explicit nature", constituting "public indecency", "obscenity" etc.)	Yes	0	0
5.4.2	b) Online Gambling	Yes	0	
5.4.3	Content promoting alcoholic beverages and/or prohibited drugs	Yes	0	
5.4.4	Content promoting alternative religious views or beliefs	Yes	0	
5.4.5	Content promoting dissent/ perspectives espousing opposition to the dominant political dispensation	Yes	0	
5.4.6	Content promoting racial prejudice/racism or degrading to other races	Yes	0	
5.4.7	Content promoting alternative/non-traditional life choices i.e., catering to sexual minorities (e.g., LGBTI)	Yes	0	
5.5.1	Does a law/policy exist that ensures ensures the principle of net neutrality, i.e., that Internet service providers should enable access to all content and applications regardless of the source, and without favoring or blocking particular products or websites?	No	0	0
5.6.1	Does a national law exist (e.g., Privacy Law, Data Protection Law) that guarantees citizens the right to privacy of personal information (e.g., personal correspondence, privacy of abode, economic transactions, etc.) in the public and private sector	No	0	0
5.7.1	Does a national law/do national laws exist to clearly circumscribe the parameters of legal surveillance (i.e., clearly outlines the circumstances and legal processes where surveillance may be availed of by the State), in accordance with universally accepted standards and principles? (E.g., "Anti-Wiretapping" legislation, provisions in Anti-Terror legislation, limits to internal security legislation, etc.)	Yes	1	1
5.8.1	Is there a national law that empowers government to restrict freedom of movement, assembly, and/or association? (e.g. National Security/ Internal Security law)	Yes	1	1

5.9.1	To what extent is there a balanced intellectual property—i.e., patents, copyrights, trademarks—regime in the country which recognizes the rights of authors/creators to benefit from their creative work, while balancing this with the rights of users to access the intellectual commons for the public good?		0.5	0.5
5.10.1	Are reports/findings of government-funded research generally made available to the public free of charge	Yes	1	1
5.11.1	Are there national government plans/policies/programs that guarantee/encourage communication in one's mother tongue?	No	0	0
5.12.1	Are there national government plans/policies/programs to encourage the sharing of culture and cultural practices over the Internet and other digital/electronic platforms?	No	0	0
5.13.1	If there is a national law (e.g., eCommerce Law or similar legislation) or plan/program that recognizes and enables internet-based economic transactions towards promoting the use of ICTs in business/economic activity?)	Yes	1	1
5.14.1	From your observation, is the telecommunication structure in your country conducive to healthy competition which benefits the general public in providing accessible and quality communications services?	Yes	1	1
5.15.1	From your observation, is there a trend towards concentration of media ownership in your country, such that fewer individuals or organizations now control a growing share of the mass media platforms and outlets (i.e., media consolidation)?	0.5	0.5	0.5
5.15.2	From your observation, how diverse is the media in your country, i.e., are the viewpoints/ information sources balanced and sufficiently diverse, as presented in the different media (traditional tri-media: TV/Radio/Print; community media; online media)?	0.5	0.5	
	SUB INDICATOR MEAN/AVERAGE SCORE			0.46666