

**Women's Perceptions about Religious  
extremism/Talibanization & Military Operation: Case Study of  
Malakand Division**

*National Commission for the Status of Women  
July 2009*

*By: Sahar Gul*

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## **I. Abstract**

The process of Talibanization in Pakistan and especially in the North West Frontier Province (Pashtunkhwa) and FATA is a complex phenomenon. Through their ideological persuasion, social contagion and social control, the Taliban groups have exhibited a potential to put the social structure, state institutions and cultural values of the mainstream society of Pakistan and the regional state in jeopardy. The process might have far reaching security consequences for Pakistan, regional states and international community if suitable ideological, institutional, economic, social and military response is not given to the crisis in the near future by Pakistan, regional states and international community.

In this context, the National Commission on the Status of Women commissioned a brief study to investigate the very phenomenon on the basis of perceptions of the affected people (after the military crack down on Taliban) of the conflict zones in the North West Frontier Province (Pashtunkhwa) of Pakistan. Hence, we traveled to Peshawar, Swabi and Nowshera and visited the displaced people from Malakand Division inside and outside the camps. The focus of this study was four major themes: **1)** perceptions of the affected people- (especially women) regarding the militant leader, Fazlullah, and his militia **2)** socio-cultural conditions of Swat in particular and Malakand Division in general before Talibanization, **3)** sufferings of women and children due to Talibanization, and **4)** perceptions of the affected people regarding military operation. The study was mostly based on the interviews, especially of women, of the displaced people. We also recorded general observations of the conditions and collected Meta data for analysis (*Kindly see Appendix for the data both in shape of responses and in shape of discussions, stories, opinions and monologues of the displaced people, mostly of women*).

The respondents mostly belonged to Mingowra, Kabal Tehsil, Marghzar valley, Jambil valley and the suburbs of Mingora. It means the people were mostly from Tahsil Babuzai, which is mostly urban centre of Swat, Tehsil Kabal and Tehsil Khwazakela which are mostly rural areas of Swat. The respondents were mostly from the middle and the lower middle class of Swat. The respondents were interviewed and recorded from both off camp and in camp locations in Peshawar, Swabi and Nowshera (*Kindly see Appendix*).

The study affirmed most of the findings by other scholars working on the issue. The process of Talibanization, the group formation of Taliban and the tremendous socio-

cultural implications of Talibanization on the people (especially women) and society of the conflict zones need to be scientifically understood on the basis of cautiously collected data on granular level.

The group formation of the Taliban usually starts from ideological persuasion through mostly using a simplified and inexpensive medium like FM radio. The Taliban then start developing their own resource base through collecting charities and donations locally. They also start recruiting the local youth.

The ideological agenda and its convincing dissemination, monetary benefits and fear of the Taliban ruthlessness are usually instrumental in widespread recruitment of the youth by the Taliban. The Taliban then start isolating the community through banning the movement of the people, especially of women, banning TV, closing down Internet cafes and burning public schools, especially girls schools and women colleges. They also create a socio-cultural vacuum by eliminating the socially, politically and culturally influential of a community. In this process, of course, women have been in double jeopardy.

## II. Introduction

Several scholars and investigators both inside and outside Pakistan have tried to understand the process and phenomenon besides socio-political and socio-cultural implications of Talibanization in Pakistan, especially in the North West Frontier Province (Pashtunkhwa) of Pakistan<sup>1</sup>. Most of these investigations have been made on the basis of secondary data and have not usually taken up women specific issues in the discourse of Talibanization.

For understanding the complexity<sup>2</sup> of extremist ideological, strategic and operational paradigms on granular level and on the basis of people's voices, there was a dire need to carry out field research to collect narratives of the displaced people in general and of displaced women in particular. This, we thought, would give us primary data on the process and phenomenon of Talibanization with special reference to women living in the conflict zones.

It is now quite well-known that extremism and terrorism are actually tearing apart the social fabric and institutional structure of Pakistan. We need to construct a counter-talibanization discourse for responding to the crisis in an organized manner. For that to happen, we need to understand the process and practice of Talibanization on the basis of experiences, perceptions and narratives of the very people who are tremendously affected due to the crisis.

The effect of Talibanization is not restricted to security issues only. It has, in fact, affected all walks of life of the conflict zones of Pakistan and especially of the North Western Pakistan. Loss of popular cultural space, disruption of socio-political institutions, loss of state writ and depletion of natural resources are but some of the fatal effects of Talibanization in the NWFP (Pashtunkhwa) and FATA.

The National Commission on the Status of Women commissioned a brief study to investigate the very phenomenon on the basis of perceptions of the affected people of the conflict zones in the North West Frontier Province (Pashtunkhwa) of Pakistan. Hence, we travelled to Peshawar, Swabi and Nowshera and visited the displaced people from Malakand Division inside and outside the camps.

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<sup>1</sup> See for example White, Joshua T. *Pakistan's Islamist Frontier*. US: Centre for Faith and International Affairs. 2008. Hussain, Khadim. Terrorism in the Pashtun belt. Available on <http://www.airra.org/Papers/AbstractTerrorism%20in%20the%20Pashtun%20belt.pdf> Retrieved on July 27, 2009; Hoodboy, Pervez. The roots of extremism in Pakistan. Available on [http://www.airra.org/Papers/Extremism%20Roots\[1\].pdf](http://www.airra.org/Papers/Extremism%20Roots[1].pdf) Retrieved on July 27, 2009

<sup>2</sup> Hussain, Khadim and Zeb Jan. Complex dynamics of peace, integration and development in the Pashtun belt. Available on [http://www.airra.org/Papers/ComplexDynamics\\_PashtunBelt.pdf](http://www.airra.org/Papers/ComplexDynamics_PashtunBelt.pdf) Retrieved on July 27, 2009

### III. Method of Study

The study was mostly based on the interviews, especially of women. We also recorded general observations of the conditions and collected Meta data for analysis (Kindly see Appendix for the data both in shape of responses and in shape of discussions, stories, opinions and monologues of the displaced people, mostly of women).

The respondents mostly belonged to Mingora, Kabal Tehsil, Marghazar valley, Jambil valley and the suburbs of Mingora. It means the people were mostly from Tahsil Babuzai, which is mostly urban centre of Swat, Tehsil Kabal and Tehsil Khwazakela which are mostly rural areas of Swat. The respondents were mostly from the middle and the lower middle class of Swat. The respondents were interviewed and recorded from both off camp and in camp locations in Peshawar, Swabi and Nowshera (Kindly see Appendix).

Before starting with the collection of narratives of women, I developed research questions which included their perceptions regarding the Taliban groups, military operation, life in the above-mentioned areas before Talibanization and after Talibanization, and how would the people (especially women) like to live within their cultures after peace is restored to the region. We were able to carry out some sixty interviews and develop some five case studies. Care was made that all interviews are duly recorded through video, audio and snaps besides taking notes.

The focus of this study was four major themes: 1) perceptions of the affected people (especially women) regarding the militant leader, Fazlullah, and his militia 2) socio-cultural conditions of Swat in particular and Malakand Division in general before Talibanization, 3) sufferings of women and children due to Talibanization, and 4) perceptions of the affected people regarding military operation.

## **IV. Results and Findings**

Following are the results of interviews, participant observation and narratives in the shape of generalized statements followed by conclusion and analysis of narratives and interviews:

### **1- Perceptions about the Taliban militia**

#### **The ‘Ameer ul Mo’mineen’ of Swat**

Fazlullah, who is called Ameer ul Mo’mineen by his disciples, the urban centers of Swat were not initially affected by his ideological persuasion. The people of rural areas like Bara Bandai, Koza Bandai and Matta were instantly attracted to Fazlullah’s FM radio at the onset. However, later on, the majority of the people started listening to the FM radio (after the Taliban established their control of most of the areas of Swat) out of fear because Fazlullah would announce his threats to different people for different reasons on his FM radio. Everybody wanted to know if he/she was under threat, which would mean a sure denial to one’s right to live. He used FM radio for perpetuating his ideas except for his religious sermons.

#### **Fazlullah’s Radio**

Though the FM radio started functioning in 2004, the Taliban leadership started threatening the people in 2007 when they established their writ properly. Most of those who were threatened were the common people like vendors, those who used to sell clothes, barbers and CD shop owners. On FM Radio, Polio vaccination was dubbed as urine of George Bush. Every facility that is bestowed upon humanity by the modern sciences was condemned by the Taliban, every discipline, every modern system, to them was anti to the soul of Islam, and hence was deemed to be rooted out, annihilated.

#### **Perpetuation of fear**

It all was done through perpetuation of fear, and fear was perpetuated through different means. First of all, the Taliban used to wear masks; their hiding their faces doubled the terror in the minds of people. Secondly, they would keep their control by marching in the streets and on roads brandishing their light and heavy weapons. Thirdly, the traditional religious leadership was killed to do away with the alternative interpretation of Jihad. They would also perpetuate fear through exemplary punishments to ‘the wrong doers’ and to ‘the spies of the government and the military’. They would kill the policemen ruthlessly wherever they found them. They used to kill the ‘spies’ publicly. ‘Espionage’ for the government and the military was the crime for which the only punishment they decided was beheading. Fear was perpetuated to the extent that when the Taliban would take a son to kill, the father would watch quietly.

#### **Recruitment**

The human capital the Taliban had was mostly the young men and teen-aged boys. The continuous feature of Taliban group formation was recruitment. The young boys who were jobless were incited first. The Taliban started offering good salary and that also in the name God, so people started handing over their sons to them mostly from Nepkikhel (Bara Bandai, Koza Bandai, Ningolai, Mamdherai, etc). The Taliban used to brain wash the youth and children of the region so much so that they used to dream to do suicide attacks.

### **Resource base**

Donations were the most handy local resource base for the Taliban militia- women were one of the major donors of the Taliban. Initially people were inspired but later they would give donations out of fear. The other local resource base was kidnapping and extortion the local people by the Taliban. Some of the young boys who were kidnapped are still missing.

### **Women's status**

Females were in double jeopardy. In the first phase, veil for even small girls became compulsory after the Taliban established their rule in Swat. Mostly women workers like nurses and women workers of UNHCR and other local, national and international NGOs were threatened. The Taliban passed verdicts<sup>3</sup> that girls would study till 5<sup>th</sup> class only.

## **2- Conditions of Swat before Talibanization- Perception of the affected people (How women lived there?)**

The Taliban ruined the peaceful fabric of the land Swat where people from all over world would come for the purpose of tourism. Swat was a heaven; the people would go out and work without any fear. The people of Swat now dream to get that fearless life back! No doubt, once it was the place where women were free to move around for picnics and excursions outside Mingora. They would visit Kalama, Malam Jabba and other picnic spots almost every Friday.

Women also used to go for shopping in Mingora, where they were free to shop in the well-known cloth and cosmetics market, called Cheena market. Even the male members used to accompany women to markets but they could also go freely to the markets without their male members of the family.

Girls used to go to schools, and there were a number of women working in as teachers, doctors, nurses and development practitioners; culturally there were no such barriers that could have barred women from being part of day to day life.

## **3- Sufferings of women and children due to Talibanization**

The heavy fighting between Taliban and the military would affect children and women the most. Most of the children and women probably need counseling for psychological

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<sup>3</sup> (Their verdicts usually were regarding verdicts related to land disputes, related to common land, how to redistribute common land; about marital conflicts, about forests related to the claims of forestry, social conflicts. Their verdicts mostly related to these four areas. It can be discussed in some other paper)



rehabilitation after repatriation. Due to Taliban's ruthless writ, several hundreds of people were forced to leave their homes and walk dozens of miles to reach safe havens. Even women who had to bear children were forced to leave their homes in this manner.

Initially the people of Swat never used to feel whether there was going to be an insurgency by Taliban against the government, but when they banned women's movement and interfered with their normal life, women felt like going out and leave home.

Only a particular type of veil was acceptable to Taliban. The traditional chadar that the women of Swat wore was not acceptable to Taliban code of life imposed on the people of Swat. The Taliban imposed their brand of Purda through the use of ruthless punishments. There are reports that several women were beaten, disgraced and humiliated in public when found that they violated the Taliban code of veil.

The Taliban used to ask the people not to use toys for children probably for the reason that there might have been music tones in the toys. They would force men not to shave. The Taliban used to threaten barbers of dire consequences. The Taliban never cared for the poor, the helpless and the distressed until they would join the Taliban ranks. Several examples were narrated to this effect by the respondents (Kindly see Appendix for the statements of the respondents).

#### **4- Perceptions about the military operation (of especially women)**

The people in the war zones seem to be hopeful that Taliban would be rooted out due to military operation. There are a lot of expectations from the military operation against Taliban among the affected people of Swat. They think they would be able to get rid of the menace this time.

The military has to have ground assault, according to the people of the war zone. Heavy weapons may and aerial strikes only destroy the Taliban bunkers and installations. The ground assault by the military would break their backbone. In this way the civilians and the innocents might also be saved in large number.

The people of the conflict zones think that the people have to be united against the Taliban. The war should not be left only to the military to root out the Taliban. The people of the conflict zones perceive the war against the Taliban may take longer than what the government claims.<sup>4</sup>

The people are seriously curious to know whether they would be able to see the top leadership of Taliban arrested or killed.<sup>5</sup> The people specifically talk about Fazlullah, Muslim Khan and Sah Dauran who need to be brought to book. The people think that the Taliban may still find an opportunity to regroup and rearm if their leadership is alive.

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<sup>4</sup> [Till the time of writing this report, when the repatriation of people has already begun, whole the FATA is under the writ of Taliban, where they have institutionalized Shariah and is a small State within the State]

<sup>5</sup> [The top leadership is still not captured/killed, who still commute between South Punjab and FATA where the crack down is much needed, without which the reemergence of the Taliban is inevitable].

#### **IV- Analysis**

The major finding of the research is that the social contagion of the Taliban began in the name of religion; people's sensitivity for religion was used to win their support. Later on the contagion was carried on through perpetuation of fear through Fatwas, Shariah verdicts and beheading, flogging and shooting people publicly. When the people (especially women who used to donate their jewelry and money) witnessed ruthless scenes in the name of religion realized.

As a matter of fact, the process of Talibanization, the group formation of Taliban and the tremendous socio-cultural implications of Talibanization on the people and society of the conflict zones need to be scientifically understood on the basis of cautiously collected data. The group formation of the Taliban usually starts from ideological persuasion through mostly using a simplified and inexpensive medium like FM radio. The Taliban then start developing their own resource base through collecting charities and donations locally. They also start recruiting the local youth. The ideological agenda and its convincing dissemination, monetary benefits and fear of the Taliban ruthlessness are usually instrumental in widespread recruitment of the youth by the Taliban. The Taliban then start isolating the community through banning the movement of the people, especially of women, banning TV and Internet. They also create a socio-cultural vacuum by eliminating the socially, politically and culturally influential of a community.

Mostly the people of the rural areas were attracted to the ideological persuasion of Taliban in Swat. Fear perpetuation, recruitment and isolation of the community are the strategies adopted by the Taliban militia to control a particular community and to establish their writ in a large swathe of geography in Pakistan and especially in the North Western Pakistan. Most of those who suffered because of the Taliban control are common people like vendors, barbers, artists and small businessmen. The Taliban usually develop their resource base with the help of donations by local people and through extortion money.

The Taliban develop their networking through strategically eliminating those who might be a threat for their control in future. They also eliminate the traditional religious hierarchy to do away with the alternative interpretation of Islam. This leaves them to be the only authority to interpret and hence render them unchallengeable.

People are hopeful, two third of the displaced population has returned to their homes and are holding their places passionately; the women who donated to Fazlullah are regretting and have become vocal against the Taliban. These are the hopes which could be translated by the civil society, academia, media, provincial government, federal government. People are ready for joining the community policing over the Taliban reemergence in any village. It's a kind of local resistance that has to be streamlined

through Deputy Police Officer. Their urge to rehabilitate themselves, it is very important to count on this passion right now, it can only be done jointly, simultaneously and multi-sectorally.

## V. Recommendations

The previous discourse of State has to be replaced by new discourse against the Talibanization. This can be done by civil society organizations; National Commission on the Status of Women can develop various discourses and disseminate those through means of brochures and pamphlets.

In order to counter various external and internal pro-Taliban lobbies multi-sectoral re-institutionalization is required at the indigenous level; otherwise, it is like keeping on fighting the war whole of the life if one sector is functioning well and the other is not.

Losing this war would bring forth immense suffering, which will trigger the dismemberment of so many region states. There will cause again very strong kind of conflict dynamics and divisions. On the other hand, if the Taliban and Talibanization are thrown out from the Malakand division, it would be a model, it can be replicated to rest of the Pakistan (in South Punjab and FATA especially) and throughout the region even. Following are the main recommendations, which should be focused:

1. Re-institutionalization of the affected region is required and it should be multi-sectoral, simultaneous and inter-disciplinary- without multi-sectoral and simultaneous development process the existing gaps would be widened and deepened. A multi-sectoral questionnaire must be developed to identify the gaps.
2. The process of social institutionalization should be expedited through bringing the Taliban's verdicts to the proper trials, and proper tribunals should be made by the administration.
3. All the components and stakeholders of society, including political parties, civil society organizations along with the local administration and provincial and federal government should be involved into infrastructural development, school, hospital, roads.
4. It can be multi-sectoral in this way that the local political parties' activists, hotel associations, private schools associations, labor unions, teachers' associations, health departments, non-governmental organizations, all should be engaged in the process of reconstruction and rebuilding of the institutions in the interdisciplinary manner. If the development and reconstruction process is not coordinated, it would not only increase the disconnection and disengagement, but the lobbies<sup>6</sup> who are pro-Taliban would

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• <sup>6</sup> *(The pro-Taliban lobbies include the retired military Generals, religio-political parties; some people in the media, some in government institutions, some moderate political parties- on macro level parties like PML-N are supporting the discourse of Talibanization. So this is what is actually discomfoting, rather challenging in the process of de-Talibanization; in this case the civil society must be active. Think tanks, NGOs, academia and political parties should get engaged into the discourse of de-Talibanization. There is disruption in the social structure and state institutions which could give strong stimulus to civil society to bring coherence social and economic relationships, and on the other hand, they can influence state*

also regain the space. This is the rational and scientific way to reconstruction of any conflict-ridden society. The disconnection within the sectors of society can be done away with revitalizing the cultural rituals, music concerts, Mushaira etc.

5. The industry, private schools, craft business where women worked before emergence of the Taliban should be revitalized so that the economic activity of women starts. Women used to go for excursions, schools and colleges, worked as teachers, doctors and nurses, this all should be resumed as soon as possible. The multi-sectoral and simultaneous rehabilitation and reconstruction process would automatically benefit women.
6. The service delivery institutions should be active in providing the basic amenities to people, like water and electricity, roads and proper transportation; absence of the basic facilities would hinder those who are engaged in the process of reconstruction and rehabilitation.
7. Community Police should be organized at proper level and streamlined with the police. Local police and local administration should be made properly functional for social regularization. The regrouping of the Taliban can be controlled in this way.
8. The Frontier Constabulary should come under provincial government so the implementation of the orders should be quite convenient
9. Political parties' chapters should organize conferences of their local leadership, to regain the political space in proper security.
10. There is a need of very strong civil society and political parties' pressure on the state institutions for the discourse. One the one level, the civil society must ask secularization of the constitution; on the other hand, the political parties must be restructured and be more active. Collectively, academia & media must understand the issue and get proper guideline on the basis of hard core research.
11. FATA crackdown has not begun with the same gusto so far- the operation has just begun, I think they (military) are properly thinking to clear Malakand division first then start in FATA- so far they have besieged different organizations; however, there seems to be no likelihood of the whole scale crackdown on FATA. There is a writ of the Taliban in FATA, hence, first their bunkers should be attacked through aerial strikes and drones; only then it would be possible for the Army to enter their land-strongholds.
12. Finally, the military should cut Taliban's narcotics business's roots from IRAN or Karachi- their supply lines should be cut. Also they should cut their recruitment by attacking their bunkers. Also, military should hit their backbone by breaking their command and control structure through killing their top leadership.

## **VI. Niche for further investigation**

1. The repatriation of the displaced people to their places should be observed in the context of repatriation, reconstruction and rehabilitation programs started by the government.

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*institution to be more pro people and empower them, to minimize the marginalization it must be done indigenously- within Pakistan, Pakhtun belt or within Pakhtunkhwa.)*

2. Perceptions of academia, media, common people, civil society activists and political workers should be gathered about the status of religious extremism in the areas where people have returned, hence threats and challenges should be documented.
3. Meta data and observation is required to see the routine life of women, men, and children in markets and places outside their homes.
4. The cases of psychological trauma among the displaced people and especially women and children should be recorded and rehabilitation guidelines should be suggested.
5. Reconstruction of schools (especially of girls' schools), functioning of hospitals and female teachers and nurses' rejoining their work- that how government is expediting the process of reconstruction.
6. The discourses that are needed to constructed should be enlisted
7. Further investigation needs to be carried out to quantitatively understand the ideological persuasion of the Taliban, their social contagion and their social control strategy. It is also needed that social scientists investigate a suitable response to the expansion and social control of Taliban in Pakistan and the region. Both qualitative and quantitative understanding would provide us ample opportunity to construct a pluralist, counter-Talibanization discourse which seems to be the only viable alternative with the society, states and modern civilization.

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## Appendix

### **Narratives (statements, opinions and comments of the displaced people, especially of women ) from the above-mentioned 7 locations**

*(Following are general perceptions of the displaced people who were staying off camps in the suburbs of Peshawar regarding Radio of Fazlullah and his militia and the conditions in which the militants established their writ. There were some 15 relative families from Amankot (Mingora, Swat), Balogram (Swat) and Mingora (Swat). Income source of most of them was small scale businesses and lower rank employments).*

- Mengawara has many educated people unlike other areas. The problem of giving space to Fazlullah's radio was present mostly in Matta and Bandai (*the Nekpikhel Area across the River Swat and upper Swat*) where people were not usually educated. They used to donate money, jewelry, and other things in kind and cash to Fazlullah and his Markaz. The people in Mengawara (Mingora, an urban centre of Swat) never used to listen to the FM radio regularly.
- However, most of the people from Mengawara started listening to the FM radio out of fear because Fazlullah would announce his threats against different people for different reasons on his FM radio. We wanted to know if we were under the threat.
- The Taliban used to ask us not to use toys for children (*because there might have been music tones in the toys*), and ask our men not to shave. They used to threaten barbers of dire consequences.
- The Taliban mullahs used to recite Hadith, but their recitation was not correct. They even did not know how to pronounce Arabic. They used to tell on radio that such and such people have given us donations so they will go to heavens (*this would create an environment of competitiveness and recognition to the socially and politically unrecognized*). In this way, the girls have donated their jewelry; boys have come to be suicide bombers for them. They used to inspire through radio.
- Later they switched to threats. Nurses were threatened; they used to declare that girls would study till 5<sup>th</sup> class only. UNHCR and NGO girls were threatened. All government employees were threatened.
- In the beginning, we did not know it was going to be wrong. They began with good things, but later on they started terrorizing people.

- We used to wear modern veil, but then modern veil was not accepted. The women who wore only chadar and did not wear veil, the Taliban took off their chadar, in open market, and cut their hair.
- In every place and market, they banned entry of women. They wrote it everywhere.
- If the people Bara Banday, Matta, Kuza Banday (Nekphikhel and upper Swat) had not supported Fazlaullah, he would not have become that strong.
- **How they overpowered people:** They used to wear masks and hide their faces. I (*one woman said*) saw Taliban when TNSM made an agreement with the government; their faces were scary because of dirty dress and because of long hair. In dress, they appeared they were Pakhtuns, but we do not know whether there were some other ethnic groups too.

### **Opinions of women regarding Taliban- Salihkhana (Nowshera)**

*[There was a unique arrangement by the local people to give shelter to the displaced people. They had established a separate compound to accommodate all the guests which were more than 300 people. They were mostly from Jambel valley of Swat and from the outskirts of Mingora. The families had their source of income mostly from the services sector). The organizers of the camp said, "We get ration from the people who has made this camp. Those who send donations to the camp mostly work in the UK and have managed this place". Most of the Displaced people said, ". We get everything here"]*.

- It was our fault that we used to donate jewelry to Fazlullah. We actually strengthened him, but we did it out of innocence.
- Whatever atrocity the Taliban used to inflict on the people, no one raised voice against them because of threats to the people's lives. We were scared of the Taliban that's why we all together could not fight the Taliban.
- We still keep thinking why we were not able to fight the Taliban?

### **Two families from Swat in Jalozai Camp (Nowshera) on FM radio and Talibanization in Swat**

*(These families belonged to Kabal Tehsil of Swat, a rural area of Swat adjacent to the Markaz of Fazlullah. The source of income of the families was livestock and farming.)*

- We used listen to the Mullah. He used to ask us to enlist in his battalion for Jihad but most of us we did not do that.
- We came here because of mortars and shells and because we were scared of Taliban. They used to behead and used to roam in the streets brandishing their small and heavy weapons.
- Suicidal attacks began, one of my cousin died in the attack (*a girl said*).

### **Hayatabad middle school (Peshawar) About Taliban and Fazlullah**

*(There were some 15 families from Amankot (Mingora, Swat) and from Faizabad, (Mingora Swat). The source of income of the families was small businesses.)*

- They used to talk about Quran and Sunnah, so people honored them.
- Women were banned and schools were closed, she said to the annoyance and disgust of the people.
- They used to march in our neighborhood. They made Swat a horrendous place to live in.
- Initially, people were inspired by of firebrand their speeches. People gave them donations.
- *(A lady who was MA in Islamiyat said)* They used to threaten the common people, mostly vendors, those who used to sell clothes, were threatened. They started threatening the people since 2007 though FM radio had started functioning.
- **Veil:** They keep talking about veil, but they made us naked here. All those **Shah Daurans and Fazlullahs**, made us displaced from our homes with out veil and cover. The whole world saw us without veil and uncover.
- When they would carrying a son for killing, the father watch quietly.
- **‘Fazlullah’**—this man did all this to us and our Swat. We will be so pleased to see him doomed.
- Fazlullah was called Ameer ul Mo’mineen by his disciples.
- **Shah Dauran** would say that the spies of FC will be killed in minutes. But those who were Taliban’s spies were paid well.
- The son of my sister-in-law was taken by Taliban forcibly. He was in 9<sup>th</sup> class. The Taliban have still not let him go. No one knows he is alive or not. The Taliban used to brain wash children so much so that children used to dream to do suicide attacks.
- They killed all the traditional religious people and Taweez likhnay walay... sab ko maar diya.
- Fazluallah would say Polio vaccination is urine of George Bush.

### **Shah Mansoor Camp (Swabi): Fazlullah and suicide attacks**

*(We interviewed some 15 families here. The families mostly belonged to Marghazar valley of Swat. They were mostly small businessmen, livestock owners and daily wagers.)*

- Fazlullah talked good but usually he talked bad. He used to say that if anyone did espionage for the government or the miliatry, he/she would be beheaded in public.

### **Who are the suicidal bombers?**

- Suicide bombing began with the attack Zara Ada (means old adda) in Mingora in 2007.
- The boys who were jobless were incited first. There were jobless youngsters in every family. When they started offering good salary and that also in the name of God, people started handing over their sons to the Taliban militia. Initially some people loved to obey but later they obeyed because of fear and poverty.
- It was because unemployment that all criminals, addicts and jobless joined Fazlullah’s militia. They used to keep spies who used to inform them about people about those who would support the government.



### **Military Operation and people's trust**

- Taliban took over Mingora in 2008. I had my papers; it was Eid, in Mengawera. They said Taliban came to help. People used to doubt that army and Taliban were in collusion. The people would observe that Army and Taliban would stand in front of each other, yet the army used to ask people to hand over to us if they knew any Talib, however, they never caught them while standing face to face in streets with them.
- This operation (*that started in April 2009*), we think, is serious but still they have yet to catch Fazlullah and kill him. We middle class people suffer the most. The poorest people cannot afford. Poor suffer the most. The richest have already gone to safe havens.
- Some people say it was a plan to make a military/air base/Chhawani in Mengawera.
- The people initially thought the Military is scared of the Taliban. They used to scare children.
- We hope operation will be successful

### **Two families from Swat Military Operation**

*(These families were staying in Shah Mansoor Camp in Swabi and belonged to Landi Kaz, Mingora. The source of their income was small businesses.)*

- We do not know when the operation will end. They keep changing the dates, and they cannot do it time and again.
- We were not scared of Taliban so we never used to listen to the radio
- Why were they so powerful? Military seems to have supported them. How and from where do they get this ammunition?

### **How children suffer- Dr. Anila**

*(Dr Anila belonged to Mingora and is a practicing physician. She belongs to Mingora proper and stays in Hayatabad Peshawar in a rented house.)*

- When it was firing or shelling, children used to suffer badly. They used to go into fits and tremors. Shelling sounds were very heavy.
- Our children's education is badly affected.
- Swat was a wonderful and open society before Taliban. Women used to go for shopping. Male members used to accompany women to markets but there were no restrictions on women to go for shopping without the male members of their families.

### **Families Hayatabad School -Swat before Taliban**

- We used to go on tour to Kalam.
- Women used to go for shopping. In Mengawera there was a well-known market called Cheena market. People, especially women used to go shopping there, even

people used to come there for shopping from as far as Batkhela which is located in Malakand Agency. Now all is gone

- Our people are not used to hot weather (*we saw a girl's face was covered completely with pimples*).
- Swat was a heaven; we all used to work without restrictions. There was no fear. We just dream to get that fearless life back!

### **Newly married couple**

*(We met a newly married couple in Shah Mansoor camp. The couple belonged to Mingora).*

- We want to go back to our home. We have recently married and have yet to see our room. Many people, like us, just got married and had to leave home.

### **Family 2**

*(Shah Mansoor Camp. The family belonged to Mingora.)*

- We came on foot, from Haji Baba Swat. We have two children small, one baby was born here in this camp.

### **Shah Mansoor Camp- Swabi: Sufferings in the camp**

- At one side of the camps side there is no electricity. It is very hot here, it is not possible to be without fan.
- Three children died out of hot weather.

### **Women in particular:**

- Initially we never used to feel it, but when the Taliban banned our movement, we felt like going out and leave home. We used to leave to visit relatives of our family after 8' O clock in the evening, but we could only visit those homes that were near us.

### **People's Resilience**

- **My father** hated to ask us wear veil. He said that he would not do it because of the fear of Taliban.

### **Repatriation**

- **We want:** go to our homes back, we really want to run back to our homes. We just made our home. We got it painted very beautiful, it is now damaged.

### **Salihkhana- Operation- Repatriate**

- We expect and hope as well that the military operation would be successful and Taliban would be rooted out.
- We are really content, hopeful that Taliban would be rooted out
- Operation should end and we want to go back- all we suffer together.

### **Taliban in camps**

- **Taliban:** are in camps and have shaved off their beards... but there are many people who are forcibly made Taliban, made wear jacket.

### **Recommendations- Hayatabat school:**

- Military, when start fighting on land, things will be fine, but they do not come like this- they drop aerial shells and mostly those kill common people. They are not planned, targeted.
- It seems an unending war- how to get rid of Taliban? Its virus, **that all we should be united against Taliban and military come and fight Zamini War...**

### **Two Families- Demand**

- We want government do us better with us.  
**Shah Mansoor Camp- Swabi: Taliban in camps**
- There are Taliban here, and we want government could take any action against them. ISI picked one Talib from here.

**Bajwar-Demands:** We want from government that the operation should be over. My home is taken over by the army soldiers. They asked us to go, you have not listened to firing shots

### **Vaccinators- Jalozi Camp**

*(The workers belonged to Mingora and were staying in Jalozi Camp, Nowshera).*

- I went to one home. A woman-- a widow had lost her husband in the war. The children including mother were crying that since three days they had not eaten anything.
- In another home, there was a retarded girl who needed wheelchair, but our duty was only of polio vaccination.

### **Hayatabad Middle School**

*(Meta data)*

- People were highly scared of camera
- We came on foot until Badakhela, walked till 40 miles along with children
- When the conditions began worsening- since two years conditions started worsening
- We have our relatives all over the world if they see our women on TV.