

Committee on the Rights of the Child

Day of General Discussion

Friday, 28 September 2001 – OHCHR (Palais Wilson, Geneva)

Violence Against Children within the Family and in Schools

**Submission by NGOs Coalition on Child Rights -Pakistan
(no.2)**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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Dr. Tufail Mohammad
Chairman NCCR.

Prof. M. Ismail,
General Secretary ,
NCCR.

“ State parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that school discipline is administered in a manner consistent with the child’s human dignity and in conformity with the present Convention”.

(Article 28-2 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child)

Background

Corporal punishment or inflicting physical pain for the purpose of discipline is an ancient social practice, prevalent in almost all cultures. The proverb attributed to King Solomon suggest:

“ Do not hold discipline from a child if you beat him with a rod, he will not die. Beat him with a rod and you will save him from grave”.

A Pushto saying goes;

“che charta dab dey, halta adab dey”,

(where there is corporal punishment, there is order and respect).

Corporal punishment has been and still is a subject of debate in legal, educational and social circles in several societies around the world. Proponents of physical punishment have cited studies on laboratory animals or severely handicapped individuals that find aversive, negative stimuli to be effective tools for modifying behaviour. Opponents counter that it is not reasonable to extend such findings to normal children, who in fact react quite differently^{*}. There is also a confusion over the definitions of “punishment” and “discipline” and the interplay between the two concepts. While punishment involves concepts of suffering, pain and retribution, the roots of the word “discipline” stem from learning, molding and perfecting one’s skills or character. If an adult truly wants to instill a child with discipline, an internally and not an externally derived quality, the most effective way to do so is to build on the child’s desire to be liked and to please the adult. Punishment with its attendant degradation is more likely to cause resentment and a desire to hurt or defy the adult in return^{*}.

^{*} Mauzer.A – Corporal Punishment Am.psychol. 1974.

Clinical studies strongly support the contention that corporal punishment has negative consequences. Punishment decreases a child's self esteem and can lead to symptoms of depression anxiety⁹. It can also backfire; making the victim into a hero whom subsequently gets even more peer attention for unacceptable behavior.

“Violence breeds Violence”

Perhaps the most serious consequence of physical punishment is the risk that it will lead to more violence. Unable to strike back at adults, children who are physically punished may transfer their anger to objects around them or to other children when a teacher hits a child with a rod, a wrong message goes – that a conflict can be solved through violence. A glaring proof of internalization of this wrong notion is a high prevalence of students' unrest and violence at educational campuses in Pakistan.

Corporal Punishment is defined as punishment in which physical force is intended to cause pain or discomfort : hitting children with a hand, or with a cane, strap or other object, kicking, shaking or throwing children, scratching, pinching or pulling their hair, locking or tying them up, etc.

⁹• Mauzer.A – Corporal Punishment Am.psychol. 1974.

Study Design

The study was carried out through conducting interviews, administering especially designed questionnaires. 600 Principals/Headmasters of Primary schools (Government and Private) were interviewed in 14 districts of NWFP using questionnaires (Annex. I-a). A similar number of parents (whose children were enrolled in these schools) were also interviewed through administering another questionnaire (Annex I-b).

The interviewers were activists of local community based organizations (Annex -II). The interviewers were given 2 days training in conducting interviews and filling the questionnaires. The filled questionnaires were checked for accuracy and quality by the local coordinators and NCCR researchers. The incomplete/low quality questionnaires were discarded and further interviews conducted in the target area.

The final data compilation, analysis and report writing was done by the researchers at the NCCR's Peshawar Office.

Results and Discussion

630 Principals/ heads of schools from 14 districts of the Province were interviewed. The district wise distribution of respondents is given in Table-1.

Table-1
District wise distribution of Schools

Name of District	Number of Schools			
	Boys	Girls	Co-education	Total
Haripur	17	22	11	50
Charsadda	28	19	03	50
Nowshera	36	30	24	90
Mardan	33	36	10	79
Swabi	50	50	10	110
Kohat	12	04	05	21
Karak	13	13	03	29
Bannu	23	25	02	50
Tank	05	05	-	10
D.I.Khan	15	11	04	30
Swat	07	10	04	21
Dir	29	28	02	59
Shangla	05	05	01	11
Malakand Agency	08	09	03	20
Total	281	267	82	630

Out of the surveyed schools, 548 (87%) were Government and 82 (13%) belonged to Private Sector.

Opinion about Corporal Punishment

The heads of school were asked, “ Do you think corporal punishment is necessary at school”. Those who responded “Yes” were asked to give reason in support of their opinion. The responses are given in table 2 and 3.

Table-2

Opinions of Heads of School about Corporal Punishment

Opinion about Corporal Punishment	Number of Respondents	%
Necessary	361	57.3
Not Necessary	260	41.3
No Opinion	09	1.4
Total	630	100

Opinion of Heads of Schools about Corporal Punishment

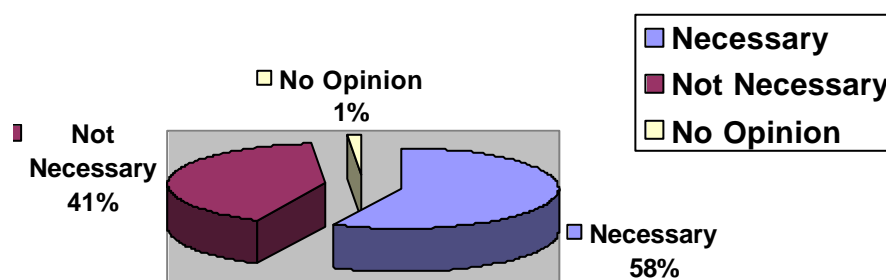
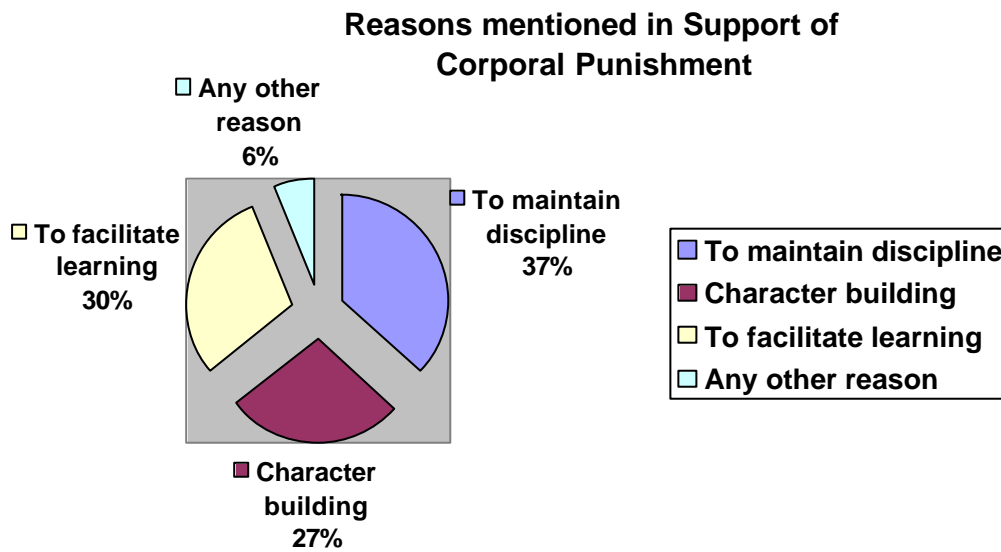


Table-3
Reasons mentioned in Support of Corporal Punishment
Number-361

Reason	Number	%
To maintain discipline	248	68.7
Character building	183	50.7
To facilitate learning	199	55.1
Any other reason	42	11.6



Note: Some of the respondents gave more than one reason in support of corporal punishment.

Some of the responses given under any other reasons are in Box- 1.

Box-1

- ❖ *Corporal punishment is necessary as part of a child upbringing.*
 - ❖ *We beat children for their own benefit.*
 - ❖ *Beating has a “toughening impact” on boys.*
 - ❖ *In Pakistan, people only understand one language... Danda (stick).*
 - ❖ *Corporal punishment is part of our culture.*
 - ❖ *It is good for the moral of teachers. They feel in command.*
 - ❖ *“Jore Ustad beh uz Mehr-e-Pidar”. (Persian saying)*
- Translation: Physical Punishment (of a child) by teacher is better than love by his father.*

Policy about Corporal Punishment

The respondents were asked about the School Policy regarding corporal punishment. The responses are given in Table-4

Table-4
School policy about Corporal Punishment

Policy	Type of Schools			
	Government	Private	Total	%
Corporal Punishment Allowed	223 (40.7%)	29 (35.4%)	252	40
Corporal Punishment not Allowed	325	53	378	60
Total	548	82	630	100

The results show that 40% of schools allow corporal punishment. The prevalence in Government and Private schools is 40.7% and 35.4% respectively. There is a strong likelihood that the respondents' bias may have influenced this set of findings and the actual figures may be much higher.

Regulation/Code of Education Department about Corporal Punishment

The respondents were asked “Are you aware of any code/regulation about corporal punishment by Education Department”. Those who responded in “Yes” were asked to give the details of the code/regulation.

The results showed that 43% of respondents were not aware of any code or regulation. Even those who said that a code existed were unable to define it clearly. Some of the details given by the respondents are the following:

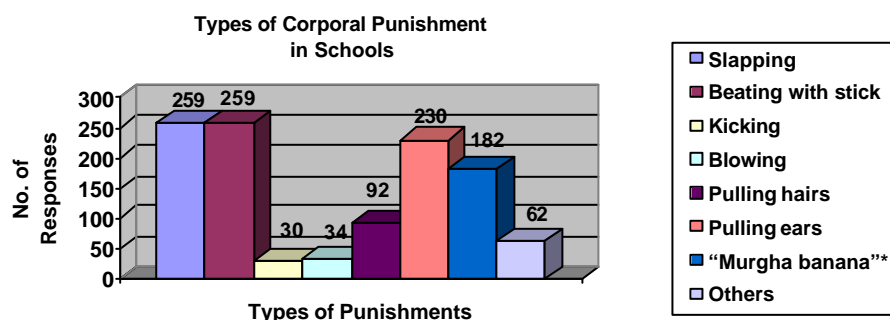
- “During the Teacher’s training, we were told that corporal punishment is not allowed.”
- “During training, we were told that only light punishment is allowed.”
- “Use of stick is prohibited.”
- “Corporal punishment has been banned by Education Department through a circular.”
- “Physical punishment of a girl student is not allowed.”
- “Only Headmaster has the authority to give corporal punishment to students.”
- “Corporal punishment is prohibited under the Education Code -1935.”
- “Corporal punishment is allowed only during the school assembly.”

Types of Punishment

The respondents were asked about types of Corporal Punishment given to children in their schools. The responses are given in Table-5. Interestingly, some of the respondents who had earlier said, “Corporal Punishment is not their policy” reported some form of Corporal Punishments in their Schools.

Table-5
Types of Corporal Punishments in Schools.
Number:630

Type of Punishment	Number of Responses	%
Slapping	259	41.1
Beating with stick	259	41.1
Kicking	30	4.8
Blowing	34	5.4
Pulling hairs	92	14.6
Pulling ears	230	36.5
“Murgha banana”^{©*}	182	28.9
Others	62	9.8



♥ Note “Murgha banana” or “To assume the position of a Cock” is a humiliating form of Corporal Punishment, in which “the child bends his body forward in a semi-sitting position, with his head down and buttocks up, arms twisted around knees and holding/pulling his ears with his own hands.”

Some “other” forms of corporal punishment practices in schools are given in Box 2.

Box-2

- ❖ *Child stands on one foot and stretches his arms up.*
- ❖ *Child stands on a bench, facing the class.*
- ❖ *Sit-Stand. The child stands and sits continuously till he is fully exhausted.*
Sometimes the whole class is punished this way.
- ❖ *Standing under sun in hot weather.*
- ❖ *Continuous running in the school compound.*
- ❖ *In one of the Schools, the children are asked to climb and descend a nearby hillock.*
- ❖ *Pinching the child.*
- ❖ *Asking two students to continuously slap each other on face.*
- ❖ *Pushing and shacking the child.*

Almost all types of corporal punishment are reported from both Government and Private schools. None of the Girls Schools reported “kicking/hitting with foot” or “hitting with closed fist.”

Injury as a Result of Corporal Punishment

The respondents were asked if they remembered any incident of injury as a result of corporal punishment. 62 incidents were reported. (Box-3). The Principals told that they provided necessary first aid to the children and advised/warned the teachers to be careful in future.

Box-3

“A boy fell unconscious as a result of severe beating. Next day the boy’s uncle came to school. The concerned teacher had brought a loaded pistol with him. I intervened and sent the man back. Next day, I circulated an order, prohibiting physical punishment. The concerned teacher refused to sign the order. Instead he put the pistol’s magazine in the order book.”

Head Teacher Govt. Primary School, Jalala, District Mardan.

“A boy received severe injury on his eye. I informed his parents. They got severely infuriated and lodged FIR (First Information Report) against the teacher at the local Police Station.”

Head Teacher Govt. Primary School, Lund Khwar Mardan

“A boy fell unconscious, when a teacher hit his neck with a stick. After great efforts, he regained consciousness. I consoled the boy and gave him some money. I requested him not to disclose the incident at home.”

Head Teacher GPS, Mian Dheri Swabi.

‘Once a child fell unconscious as a result of corporal punishment. He was hospitalized for three days. I terminated the services of the concerned teacher.’

Headmistress Badrashi Public School, Nowshera.

“Baby Maimoona was hit by teacher on her face, with a stick. She started bleeding from her face. We took her to hospital for treatment.”

Headmistress Govt. Primary School , Tangay, District Dir.

A boy in a Haripur school received six stitches on his eye, after getting a stick injury on his eye by a class teacher.

The upper arm of a boy was fractured as a result of severe thrashing by the class teacher at a school in District Bannu.

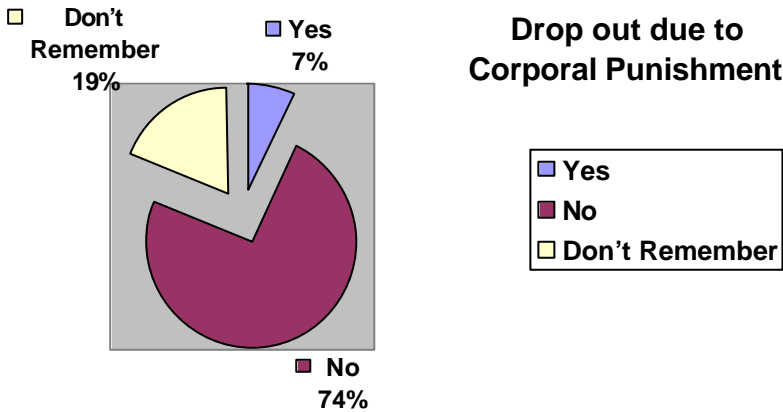
Students Dropout as a Result of Corporal Punishment

The respondents were asked, if they remembered incidents of School drop out as a result of physical punishment during the last 2 years (from the date of interview). The responses are given in Table-6.

Table-6

School Drop out due to Corporal Punishment

<i>Drop out due to Corporal Punishment</i>	<i>Number of Responses</i>	<i>%</i>
Yes	46	7.3
No	465	73.8
Don't Remember	119	18.9
Total	630	100



Despite a strong likelihood of under reporting by the school Principals, the findings reveal that corporal punishment is a significant reason for school dropout at primary level in North West Frontier Province.

Interview with Parents

630 parents (363 Fathers and 267 Mothers), whose children were studying in the surveyed schools, were also interviewed through administering a questionnaire (Annex I-b). The following results were obtained

Practice of Corporal Punishment

The parents were asked if they knew about the practice of Corporal Punishment in the surveyed schools. The responses are given in Table-7.

Table-7

Parent's knowledge of the Practice of Corporal Punishment in the Surveyed Schools.

<i>Corporal Punishment to Children</i>	<i>Number of Responses</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Given	492	78.1
Not Given	90	14.39
No Knowledge	48	7.6

It is important to note that 78.1% parents informed that corporal punishment is practiced in the schools, though only 40% of the school heads admitted the practice (revealing a deliberate under-reporting).

404 parents (64%) informed that even their own children had received corporal punishment in the schools. The type of punishment reported by the parents (given to their children in schools) is given in Table -8.

Table-8

**Type of Corporal Punishment given to Children as Reported by Parents.
Number-630**

Type	Number of Responses	%
Slapping	159	25.2
Beating with stick	279	44.6
Kicking	30	4.8
Blowing	67	10.6
Pulling hairs	53	8.4
Pulling ears	172	27.3
Murgha Banana	192	30.5
Others	74	11.8

Note: Some parents gave more than one response.

Parents Opinion about Corporal Punishment:

The parents were asked their opinion about corporal punishment in the Schools. The results are given in Table-9.

Table-9

**Parents Opinion about Corporal Punishment in the Schools.
Number-630**

Opinion about Corporal Punishment	Number of Parents	%
Right	256	40.6
Wrong	186	29.5
Wrong but Unavoidable	169	26.8
No Opinion	19	3.1
Total	630	100

Those who said that Corporal Punishment was either right or unavoidable were asked the reasons behind their opinion. The results are given in Table-10.

Table-10

**Parental reasons in support of Corporal Punishment in Schools W=425.
Number-425**

Reasons Justifying Corporal Punishment	No. of Responses	%
To facilitate learning	315	74.1
To maintain discipline	141	33.2
Character building	181	42.6
Other reason	12	2.8

It is evident from the table that a vast majority of parents think that corporal punishment facilitates learning. A common response given under “others” was that “Teachers have full right to give corporal punishment to their students.”

66 parents informed that they had made complaints to school authorities about Corporal Punishment to their children. But the school Heads justified the practice on grounds of maintaining discipline, and to facilitate learning. “It is for the betterment of the child” every teacher argued.

Severe Physical Punishment

74 parents reported incidents of severe physical abuse resulting in serious injuries to children in schools. Some examples are given in Box-4.

Box-4

Hasanzai-Charsadda:

Teeth of a Girl were broken when teacher gave her a severe blow on face.

Charsadda:

“My son was so badly beaten at school that he couldn’t walk for more than a week.”

Dagi Jadid-Nowshera:

Kamran was beaten with a stick on his head. He became a psychiatric case. His father has spent more than Rs. 15000/- on his treatment so far, but the boy has not fully recovered.”

Rahmatabad-Karak:

“My son lost consciousness as a result of severe beating. He was taken to hospital for treatment.

Dir:

A child Shamroz received severe injuries on his fingers. He left the school.

Mardan:

“My son was severely beaten at school. He was crying with pain, when he came back home, I took him to hospital. A fracture (of the arm) was found on x-ray.”

Peshawar:

Qaisar Ismail (son of Prof. Ismail, secretary NCCR) received a lacerated wound on his hand, when a teacher hit him with a stick. His wound was dressed at school. He was still bleeding, when he came back home. His father took him to hospital. The doctors stitched the wound and secured bleeding. His father lodged FIR at the local Police Station. The Chairperson NCCR contacted the School Principal to lodge a protest. The Principal tried to justify the punishment. Comparing the breach of school discipline with heinous crimes (through a wrong analogy), the Principal said, “You are complaining against hitting with a stick, Islam even allows amputation of hand!”

CONCLUSIONS

The following broad conclusions are derived from this study.

1. Corporal Punishment is a highly prevalent practice at the Primary Schools of North West Frontier Province.
2. The most common types of Corporal Punishments are beating with sticks, "*Murgha Banana*", pulling ears and slapping on the face.
3. Although there is no significant difference between Boys and Girls schools, but certain types like "Blowing/Hitting with closed fists" and "kicking with foot" were reported only from Boys Schools. The prevalence in private schools was only marginally lower than in Government Schools.
4. The most common reasons given by School Heads in support of Corporal Punishment were, maintaining discipline, facilitating learning and character building.
5. 67.4% parents consider corporal punishment at schools either "Right" or "wrong but unavoidable". These parents also quote the same reasons as the heads of schools, to justify corporal punishment.
6. Although Heads of schools claim that corporal punishment facilitates learning but they also reported that it is a significant reason for school drop out.
7. Both the school authorities and parents reported many incidents of injuries (sometimes serious) to children as a result of corporal punishment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. There is a need for educational campaign aimed at teachers and parents discouraging physical punishment and encouraging positive disciplinary methods.
2. The Teachers Training Curricula should include modules on the negative consequences of physical punishment on the mental and psychosocial development of children. Teachers should also be trained in alternative methods of discipline.
3. The Education Department should have a clear policy on corporal punishment at schools. The Department should ensure that physical punishment and other humiliating treatment is clearly prohibited in schools.
4. There is an urgent need to inform and educate children about their rights including the right to Physical integrity. Children should be provided with a means of redress when their rights to protection from violence are violated.
5. There is a need to involve media to disseminate information and educate people on the dangers of physical punishment and promote positive ways of disciplining and child rearing.

Annex-I.A.

Interview from School Heads

A. Name of Interviewer _____ Date of Interview _____
Name of CBO/Address _____
Name of Respondent _____ Name of School _____

Type of School: Govt. Private. Religious.
Other. Boys. Girls. Co-Ed.

B. Do you think that Corporal Punishment is necessary at Schools?

Yes. No. Don't know. Other Opinion _____

If you say "Yes" would you like to tell reason/s?

For Maintaining Discipline. For Character Building
To Facilitate Learning. Any other reason _____
(Specify)

Is Corporal Punishment allowed in your School?

Yes No

Are you aware of any code/regulation about Corporal Punishment by Education Department?

Yes No

If yes would you please give details?

What type of Physical Punishment is given in your School?

Hitting with stick Hitting with closed fist

Puling Ears Murgha banana Slapping

Kicking with foot pulling hair

Any Other (Specify) _____

Has any child in your School suffered injury/ies as a result of Physical Punishment?

Yes No

If Yes -What was the nature of Injury?

What action/s did you take?

Has any child dropped out of School (in the last 2 years) as a result of Corporal Punishment?

Yes No

Annex- I.B.

Interview from Parents

A. Name of Interviewer _____ Date of Interview _____
Address _____ Name of District _____
Name of Respondent _____
Name of Primary School where your child is studying _____

Type of School: Govt. Private. Religious.
Other. Male Female Co-Ed.

B. Are children being Physically Punished in your child's School?

Yes . No. Don't know.

Has your child ever been Physically Punished at School?

Yes No Don't know

If Yes, what type of Punishment,

Hitting with stick Hitting with closed fist

Puling Ears Murgha banana Slapping

Kicking with foot pulling hair

Any Other (Specify) _____

What is your opinion about Corporal Punishment at schools?

Right Wrong Wrong but Unavoidable

No opinion Any other opinion _____

If you think Corporal Punishment is Right or Unavoidable, what are your reasons?

For Maintaining Discipline. For Character Building

To Facilitate Learning.

Any other reason (Specify) _____

If you think Corporal Punishment is wrong and it is practiced in your child's school, then have you ever discussed it with School Authorities?

Yes No

If yes what was the response of School Authorities.

Do you remember any severe incident of Corporal Punishment in your child's school?

Yes No

If Yes, would you like to give details?

Annex-II

List of Interviewers

INTERVIEWERS:

HARIPUR.

1. Khalid Mehmood, Welfare Society Shadi.
2. Syed Ibrar Hussain Shah, Rural Development Project Hattar.
3. Mohammad Riaz Mughal, Roshan Mustaqbil Welfare Society Ali Khan.
4. Mohammad Fyaz, Rural Organization for Development Haripur.
5. Mehmood Khan, Social Welfare Society Sakhiabad Colony
Kot Najeeb Ullah.

CHARSADDA.

1. Qayum Badshah Shama Social Dehi Taraqiati Tanzeem Nisata.
2. Azim ullah/ Tilawat Shah Islahi Committee Husanzai.
3. Sultan Mohammad, Islahi Committee Batagram Alla dad Khel.
4. Maroof Shah, Dehi Taraqiaty wa Samaji Behbood Halimzai Shabqadar.
5. Maqsood Ali, Islahee Tanzeem Nojawanan Gharibabad Shabqadar.

KARAK.

1. Abdul Wahab, Khyber Welfare Society Ghundi KalaKarak.
2. Abdul Karim Khan, Young Welfare Committee Amberi Kalay.
3. Naeem Ur Rashid, Unique Welfare Society Karak.

BANNU.

1. Mian Saleem Ur Rehman, Boza Khel Welfare Society Bannu.
2. Mohammad Israr Khan, Women and Children Welfare Association Bannu.
3. Falak Naz, Social Welfare Society Bannu.
4. Zainul Abidin, human Welfare Society Bannu.
5. Mir Mohammad Hayat Khan, Miryan Youth Council Bannu.

TANK.

1. Aziz Ur Rehman, Anjoman Faslhi Insaniat Tank.

D.I.KHAN.

1. Abdul Latif Khan, Young Welfare Society Punyala D.I. Khan.
2. Malak Ghulam Hussain, Gul Welfare Society Shidi Nigar, Rang pur Shamali, D.I.Khan.
3. Mohammad Javed Gohar, Indus Human Development Society D.I.Khan.

SWABI.

1. Imtiaz Ali, Liaqat Ali, Jehan Ali, Mushtaq Mohammad, Hustam Khan, Ruhul Amin, Anjoman Nojawanan Khigarha Swabi.
2. Usman Sher, Anjoman Samajee Behbood Chota Yar Hussain.
3. Mohammad Irshad, Gar Rural Organization for Welfare.
4. Syed Arif Shah, Tanzeem Nojawanan Topi.
5. Abdul Hakeem, Youth Welfare Society Sheikh Jana.
6. Saeed Khan, Rashaki Social Welfare Organization.
7. Saleem Gilani, Mian Dheri Welfare Society Mian Dheri.
8. Zafar Abbas, Anjoman Nojawanan Serai.
9. Farman Ali, Anjoman Nojawanan Nawan Killi Shagai.
10. Zabit Khan, Youth Welfare Society Maniri.
11. Ibad Ullah, Baidar Zalmay Shah Mansoor.

NOWSHERA.

1. Fazal Amin, Marhaba Welfare Society Aman Garh.
2. Noorul Wadood, Shahen Akbar, Anjoman Samajee Behbood Dagi Jadded.
3. Mussarat Shah, Khatak Islahee Tanzeem Spin Kana.
4. Mohammad Asif, APC Akorha Khattak.
5. Hayat Khan, Bacha Iran, Bakht Biland, Social Development Organization Maira Khwishgi Bala.
6. Farman Ullah, Dehi Taraqiati Tanzeem Khawishgi Payan.
7. Faizul Hanan, Suhail Akhtar, Tanzeem Islahee Muashira Pir Piai.
8. Saifullah, Halqa Fikro Nazar Nowshera.
9. Muzayyan Shah, Young Welfare Society Nowshera Khurd, Khat Kalay.

MARDAN.

1. Mehtab Gul, Alkhair Welfare Society Taza Gram.
2. Nisar Mohammad, Tanzeem Khidmate Khalaq, Shah Zaman Qala.
3. Liaqat Ali, Anjoman Nojawanan Kot, Tekht Bhai.
4. Saeed Ur Rehman, Shaheen Welfare Association Lund Khawarh.
5. Mohammad Shahid, Blood Donors Association Tekht Bhai.
6. Ihtisham Ul Haq, Khatima Manashiat Committee Bank Road Mardan.
7. Wali Mohammad Tanzeem Khidmate Khalaq Hatian.
8. Halid Mehmood, Social Welfare Organization Jalala.

KOHAT.

1. Syed Qudrat Shah, Qomi Islahee Falahee Behbood Committee Dhoda Sharif.
2. Khaista Mir Khayal Roomani, Youth Welfare and Younger Blood Donor Association Kohat.

SHANGLA.

1. Iftikhar Ahmad, Shangla Welfare Association Karorha Distt: Shangla.

SWAT.

1. Anwar Iqbal Community Development Council Swat.
2. Nazir Mohammad, Tanzeem Behboode Nojawanan Saidu Sharif.

MALAKAND AGENCY.

1. Arshad Hussain, Anjoman Behbood Nojawanan Gunyar.

DIR.

1. Mohammad Shuaib, Idara Khidmati Khalaq Talash.
2. Taj Mali Khan, Dehi Taraqiati Tanzeem Bajorho.
3. Haji Gul Sher Khan, Falahee Tanzeem Nojawanan Amlook Dara.
4. Badshah Ghani, Islahee Tanzeem Nojawanan Talash.
5. Anwar Badshah, Islahee Tanzeem Nojawnan Sadbar Kalay Samar Bagh .
6. Akbar Khan, Dehi Ijtimae Social Workers Council Timergara.