



PAK VOICES



PakVoices stimulates and supports **citizen journalism** in Pakistan

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Free Press Unlimited and Bytes for All wanted to create more transparency and accountability in remote regions of Pakistan such as Southern Punjab, the Makran Coast and Tharparkar. Those regions are marginalised and overlooked by the national media and therefore often considered 'media dark zones'. In September 2016 we started PakVoices, a project to stimulate and support citizen journalism. With this project we aim to give communities a voice, promote investigative journalism and strengthen the network of journalists in remote regions of Pakistan.

When citizen journalists can share their stories, information starts to flow, allowing media dark zones to slowly brighten up. This has a big impact on the lives of local communities. Drawing attention to local stories has called authorities to action, bringing about improvements to education, infrastructure and other issues important to local communities.

National coverage for local stories

Free Press Unlimited is working together with long standing partner Bytes for All to stimulate and support citizen journalism in Pakistan through the PakVoices project. With this project we aim to bring national attention and coverage to local stories. Free Press Unlimited has facilitated the launch of PakVoices and provided guidance and support to the team behind the project, which has demonstrated their capacity to take the lead through their previous activities. The relationship between Free Press Unlimited and our partners in Pakistan allows us to strengthen their networks, thereby extending the potential reach of their stories.

Statistics

Where: Pakistan

Since: 2016

Website PakVoices



Active in **1** country



1
project



Promoting Citizen journalism

In order to achieve a strong network of citizen journalists in several remote regions of Pakistan, the PakVoices project will focus on:

1. Promoting citizen journalism, by building capacity and setting up Community Media Centres. These centres are to be managed by the community, to enhance digital and media literacy, promote women's participation in media and strengthen the network of journalists in remote regions of Pakistan.



1
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2. Develop an online presence through the PakVoices website and their social media channels ([Twitter](#), [Facebook](#)). By increasing their online presence, they will also increase the reach of the stories they share and the potential social impact if and when they are picked up by national media, calling authorities to action.
3. Establishing an independent association of citizen journalists, bloggers and social media activists, who are not recognised by Pakistan's official press bodies. The association will give citizen journalists representation, establish a code of ethics, and promote a safer media environment for them throughout Pakistan.

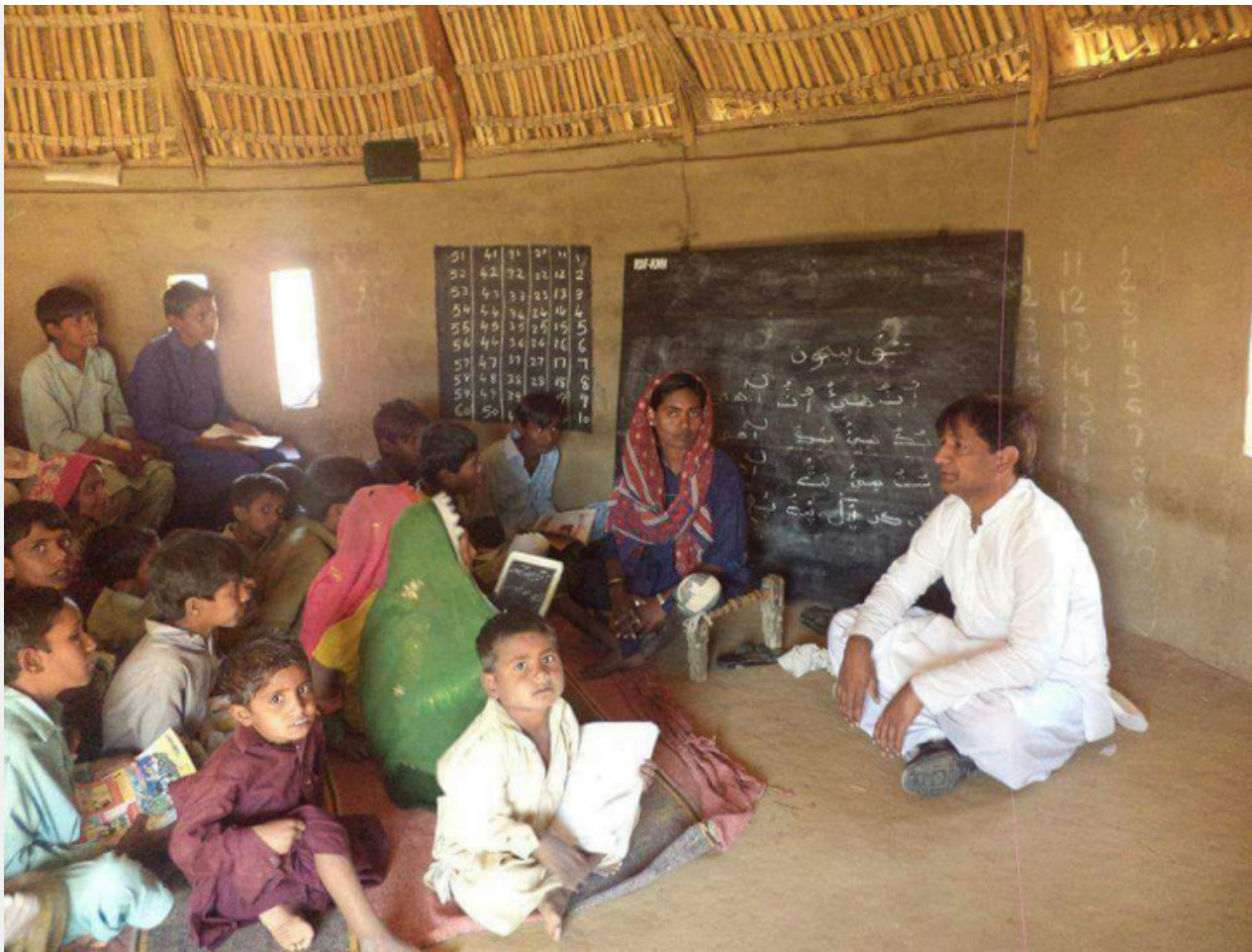
Following training on basic reporting techniques, ethical journalism and digital media, in 2018 the citizen journalists will be trained in mobile journalism techniques, the use of Right to Information laws and election reporting.

Media climate in Pakistan

Pakistan has one of the most hostile media climates in the world. Freedom of expression continues to be constricted, violence against journalists and media professionals is increasing, and perpetrators of such crimes enjoy a high level of impunity. Independent, critical and reliable media are difficult to find, and Pakistani journalists often risk their lives to do their jobs.

The media's struggle is particularly clear in the remote regions of Pakistan, which are considered media dark zones. Many of these regions are practically inaccessible, marginalised and overlooked by national media. Very little information flows out of these areas, and local communities have no voice with which to share their stories or call attention to the issues that matter to them.

In the short time that PakVoices has been running they have managed to bring attention to stories and issues that rural communities have to face. For example, after PakVoices shared [the story of a run-down primary school](#) in Panjgur, local authorities took action to renovate the school – leading to a surge in student numbers, as well as the attendance of the first female students to the school.



More info?

Check out the [PakVoices Facebook](#) page or click on the link for the [PakVoices Twitter](#) account or learn more about press freedom and watch this [video-interview of Amber Shamsi](#) on the PakVoices website.

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Tribal News Network in Pakistan will start producing **local news** for mobile phones

Radio and online news outlet Tribal News Network will start producing local news that listeners can hear by dialing a number on their mobile phone. [Read more](#)

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CONTACT DETAILS

Weesperstraat 3

1018 DN Amsterdam

The Netherlands

T: +31 20 8000400

E: info[at]freepressunlimited.org

IBAN: NL92 INGB 000 000 7676



PARTNERS

greenhost.



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