

Strategic Development Partners Forum (SDPF)

Balochistan is the largest province of Pakistan, covering an area of 347,190 sq. km that represents 43.6% of country's total land mass. However, it is also the least populated province of the country, with a population of a shade over 12 million residents. Apart from the few urban centers, most of the population of Balochistan is scattered over a large swath of arid and mountainous terrain which is mainly dependent upon agriculture and livestock for its livelihood and employment with primitive practices of agriculture practices. Besides, the province has very weak industrial and service structure base. The population consist of 65% youth which has to be engaged in various trades reckoning from value addition to those offered under CPEC. These peculiar geographical and inverse population density features, along with a complex governance structure and lack of opportunities, create substantial bottlenecks for the development of the province and better public service delivery. Consequently, Balochistan is one of the least developed provinces of Pakistan, with weak macroeconomic and social indicators.

The present Government of Balochistan has shown strong resolves to embark upon a comprehensive reform agenda aiming at inducing transformation in governance, for better service delivery to its people. The reform agenda articulates core governance and service delivery thematic areas including institutional strengthening, reviving stagnant economy, viz- a- viz, improved security attributed with just criminal justice system taking the agenda human development ahead.

The Government acknowledges the significance of the contributions on part of the development partners and believes in strong coordination with them for the development of Balochistan and consider them as key players, if the province is to achieve the desired excellence.

In order to accelerate partnership between the Government and the international community, the Planning and Development Department intends to establish a designated forum to interact with the development partners through a systematic institutional arrangement which is more vibrant and interactive.

Role of Planning and Development Department:

Foreign Aid Section of the P&D Department acts as a coordinating body for Provincial Government with Federal Government and Donor Agencies for financial and technical assistance. The foreign assistance is sought in form of grants, loans and technical assistance. The P&D department liaise with the development partners and donor agencies for development of partnership instruments, with the sole aim to secure more resources for the province. It is heartening to acknowledge that the Donor Profile has increased tremendously over the last few years. The rigorous efforts on part of the Planning department, manifested in the following activities, to muster extra resources for the province:

- Balochistan Development Forum
- Dubai Investors Conference
- Balochistan Investors Conference
- Pre Budget consultative workshops
- Islamabad Investors Conference
- Donor conferences / Coordination at Islamabad and Quetta

There is lot of attraction for the development partners to invest and support Balochistan in social and growth sectors like health, education, climate change, water and public finance. The China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) brings host of opportunities for the province, for which the GoB must be prepared to capitalise.

At present, the GoB lacks integrated sectoral priorities or sector plans. A couple of sectors that has plans, unlike education, lacks the proper

implementation mechanism and monitoring yardstick. There has been sloppy response on part of the line departments for conceptualisation, negotiation, implementation and completion of the foreign aided projects and donors' engagement. Thus the proposed arrangement will not only strengthen the internal mechanisms but also be able to take prospect development partner on board from conception of any intervention to its implementation.

Strategic Development Partners Forum (SDPF):

In order to streamline the donor intervention and coordination, the Planning and Development department propose to establish a Strategic Development Partners Forum (SDPF). This forum (SDPF) will provide a platform to the development partners to streamline and align their respective assistance as per needs of the Government of Balochistan.

The SDPF will reflect a deviation from the traditional 'donor-recipient' relationship to a peer-to-peer partnership to address regional and provincial development challenges. This forum will impart a clear focus on the government efforts for poverty reduction and inclusive growth, building capacities, encouraging entrepreneurship, sustained service delivery, improved security and an accountable and fair governance structure.

The SDPF, through a structured dialogue process, could then officiate to establish a strategic framework by agreeing on the priorities area for assistance to Balochistan. The proposed SDPF could foster mutual accountability, by setting out individual and shared commitments on part of development partners and Government in a coordinated and harmonized manner. Furthermore, this forum would ensure that the government need areas for assistance are identified and funding channelized accordingly, with no duplication of funding among various development partners.

The strategic framework would entail a comprehensive plan for its implementation. On part of the Government, it will envisage aligning the framework with provincial strategic sectoral strategies and the annual

budgets using the medium-term budgetary approach. The development partners will strategise their assistance in line with the desired needs and prioritisation of the Government of Balochistan.

The SDPF would in place a coordinated and well-programmed mechanism for its operationalization. The operationalization mechanism has two dimensions:

- Sector strategy formulation, implementation, and;
- Oversight on the course of implementation.

To formulate workable and robust solutions in form of sector strategies, various Sectoral Coordination Committees (SCCs) have been notified by P & D others will also be done on priority. These committees are looking after a particular priority sector. The propose of constituting these SCCs is to create the necessary linkages for synchronizing the actions of both the parties in a holistic manner. The respective line departments' secretary heads these SCCs, and also formulate recommendations to develop sector strategies. The committees will consist of stakeholders from respective administrative departments, CSOs, sector specialists available in the province or outside and development partner working in the same sector. The meetings will be co-chaired by ACS (Dev)/Secretary Planning and one of the development partner organization. The TORs of each committee will be developed later.

The Foreign Aid section of the P&D department will be the focal point for this forum. The Technical Assistance team, for the Balochistan Rural Development and Community Empowerment Programme (BRDCEP), chartered by the European Union will provide technical and secretariat assistance for SDPF.

1. Approval in principle to establish the SPDF
2. Authorise the P&D department to engage with the development partners to convene the inaugural session of the proposed forum
3. Establishment of the Sectoral Coordination Committees (SCC)