Reforms mandated by the 18th Amendment will bring decision-making closer to communities.

**Decentralization and Local Governance**

The 18th Amendment, passed in April 2010, introduced reforms that provide provinces with significant legislative, fiscal and administrative autonomy, but the implementation and institutionalisation of these reforms face significant challenges in a country with a legacy of a dominant centre.

UNDP undertook provincial and national consultations to understand the needs of both federal and provincial governments in its implementation. The findings and recommendations of these consultations laid the groundwork for the Strengthening Participatory Federalism and Decentralization (SPFD) project.

SPFD is a multi-stakeholder project that views the 18th Amendment in terms of governance, development and public policy. It identifies key areas where programme support will provide informed and effective transition management at federal, provincial and local level.

**QUICK FACTS**

**Duration:** 2013-2016

**Implementing partners:** Ministry of Inter-Provincial Coordination, Inter-Provincial Coordination Departments, Balochistan Chief Minister’s Secretariat, Balochistan Planning and Development Department, Balochistan Local Government Department, Forum of Federations, Centre for Civic Education, Higher Education Commission of Pakistan, Chief Minister’s Policy Reform Unit, Council of Pakistan Newspaper Editors

**Funding partner:** UNDP

**Location:** Islamabad and all four provincial capitals

**Annual budget (2014):** US$1 million

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Objective

The project strengthens the democratic process and institutions at the federal, provincial and local levels, enabling them to be responsive and accountable to citizens, and effective in equitable service delivery.

Expected results

- The secretariats of the Council of Common Interests and the Inter-Provincial Coordination Departments are strengthened.
- Multi-stakeholder partnerships ensure the development and implementation of a consensus-based development agenda.
- Technical support provided to provincial law departments in amending and drafting laws on education, health and tax devolution.
- Autonomous devolved institutions are established and functioning in Balochistan.
- Provincial local government laws are improved through appropriate amendments.
- Operational plans for local government and rural development departments are developed.
- Local government committee members perform their functions in KP and Balochistan.
- Participatory development planning is introduced at all tiers of local government in Balochistan and KP.
- Inter-provincial coordination and knowledge sharing on local governments increases.
- Policy research and debate on federalism and decentralization in Pakistan is improved.
- Technical assistance is provided to provincial governments to implement Article 172(3) on the joint and equal ownership of natural resources.
- Right to information laws are drafted or amended in all four provinces.

Main achievements

- The project established the Balochistan Chief Minister’s Policy Reform Unit to provide technical assistance on devolution management.
- Consultation with drafters, experts and civil society activists led to recommendations for draft Right to Information legislation. Recommendations at both the federal and provincial levels were incorporated into the approved legislation.
- About 200 participants took part in district-level pre-legislation consultations on the draft KP Local Government Law and produced 55 recommendations on political, administrative, and financial aspects, some of which were incorporated in the KP Local Government Act 2013.
- The project held a pre-budget consultation in Balochistan that generated 15 recommendations for the provincial government, some of which were incorporated into the provincial budget.
- The project provided technical support to the Gilgit Baltistan standing committee on local governance to finalise and pass the Gilgit Baltistan Local Government Act 2014.
- The project launched the Indigenous HEC-UNDP Fellowship programme that offered 12 fellowships to M.Phil. students in Higher Education Commission recognised universities or degree awarding institutes to undertake research on federalism and inter-governmental relations in Pakistan, the 18th Constitutional Amendment, fiscal federalism, or decentralization and local government.
- First course on Pakistani Federalism developed, 20 faculty members from 10 universities were trained.

What’s next?

- The project will develop a devolution management information system to document the devolution process and streamline procedures.
- The project will institute a research and analysis unit in Balochistan to help the provincial government effectively manage devolution.

Where we work

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