

**External Evaluation**  
**Support to Devolution Reforms in Balochistan**  
**SDRB PAK/96/021**

**Evaluation Mission Report, 2004**

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

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ADP	Annual Development Plan
ADB	Asian Development Bank
COIC	Community Orientation and Information Collection
CDD	Community Development Department
CCB	Citizen Community Board
CDP	Community Development Plan
DCO	District Coordination Officer
EAD	Economic Affairs Division, Islamabad
DMU	District Management Unit
DPA	District Project Advisor
DDO	Deputy District Officer
DMIC	District Management Information Cell
DTCE	Devolution Trust for Community Empowerment
DHDR	District Human Development Report
EDO	Executive District Officer
FSO	Female Social Organizer
FCC	Female Community Council
GoP	Government of Pakistan
GoB	Government of Balochistan
GIS	Geographic Information System
GRAP	Gender Reform Action Program
HRM	Human Resource Management
ISR	Information Sharing and Reflection
IT	Information Technology
JSC	Joint Steering Committee
LC	Local Council
LG	Local Government
LIS	Land Information System
LGO	Local Government Ordinance
LGC	Local Government Commission
LAFAM	Light of Awareness for Advancement of Mankind
MCC	Male Community Council
MIS	Management Information System
NEX	National Execution
NPA	National Plan of Action
PPI	Participatory Planning and Implementation
PCOM	Project Cycle Operation Manual
PMM	Participatory Monitoring and Management
PIS	Participatory Information System
P&DD	Planning and Development Department
SDRB	Support to Devolution Reforms Balochistan
SO	Social Organizer
SM	Social Mobilization
SWD	Social Welfare Department
TMU	Tehsil Management Unit
TDMP	Trial District Management Program
ToT	Training of Trainers
ToP	Terms of Partnership

TVO	Trust for Voluntary Organization
TPR	Tripartite Project Review
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UC	Union Council
VC	Village Council
UNDP	United Nations Development Program

## **Executive Summary**

The external evaluation of the SDRB aims at a forward looking review of the project design and its implementation strategies. The evaluation focuses on the project's effectiveness, sustainability, replicability and impacts on the target groups and institutions.

The SDRB is the successor to the Balochistan Trial District Management Project (BTDMP) which was implemented between 1998 and 2002. A four-year implementation cycle, that was completed just before the introduction of the new system of local governments. The project aimed at improving public service delivery mechanisms through a variety of interventions. Among these, developing participatory information systems (PIS) as a decision support system; human resource development for sustainable use of resources; and ensuring community participation for effective planning, implementation and monitoring of development activities were the key areas of focus. Gender mainstreaming was strongly promoted as a cross-cutting theme, particularly during the implementation of the SDRB.

After the local government (LG) elections, the efforts of BTDMP were re-aligned to ensure compatibility with the new local government structures in Balochistan. BTDMP's was subsequently expanded to a Phase II (July 2002-June 2004) with a total budget of US\$ 1.349 million, and renamed "Support to Devolution Reforms in Balochistan" (SDRB). The objectives of the project continued to remain the same as in Phase I, linking these up with the devolution reforms and processes—albeit with a much greater emphasis on gender mainstreaming. At present, SDRB has been implemented in the districts of Jhall Magsi, Loralai, Bolan and Barkhan with major focus on replication of the models developed in the first phase and strengthening of Local Government Institutions.

The review identifies a number of areas for UNDP, GoB and LG consideration. Among these the need for longer-term support is emerging to be a key requirement. Although SDRB has successfully targeted several important areas, the assessment shows that improved planning systems and capacity building (alone), may not lead to effective and autonomous local governments. Holistic and longer-term efforts will be needed to build on the gains made by the project. The local governments are clearly struggling with a variety of legal, political, fiscal and institutional issues which will require patience and continuing support from higher levels of government. Seen in the context of LGO 2001, the process has just begun and much work lies ahead. Successful implementation of decentralization will also require full commitment on the part of the GoB, which has the primary responsibilities to strengthen and further build on an ambitious reforms agenda. There is currently a very strong LG perception on recentralization of the administrative and fiscal authorities devolved under the LGO 2001. Adhoc political and tribal systems continue to dictate local developments and the situation is further compounded by a severe public sector resource crunch for the past many years. Collectively, these factors define the landscape for local governance and have a high potential to undermine the many useful achievements made till date. The assessment shows that many of the SDRB initiatives heavily depend on GoB actions to ensure effectiveness and sustainability of benefits.

A number of design issues have also marred progress. Although the project has been able to achieve the agreed outputs, the implementation model has led to less than desired ownership and weak prospects for sustainability. The project could have clearly benefited from enhanced coordination with the key stakeholders.

The project concept is founded on the premise that information and participation would lead to improved service delivery, which in turn has a positive impact on the beneficiaries. The assessment shows that better quality and access to information is a necessary pre-requisite. However, in itself, it is clearly insufficient to produce tangible gains. The project also appears to have made a number of assumptions, particularly, those relating to the support from government counterparts in the provincial and district

governments. In hindsight many of these assumptions seem ambitious and have had important bearing on the key questions of ownership, sustainability and replicability.

The project has made significant progress in institutional building at the grassroots level, and in building up their capacity to allow the communities to play a more informed and active role in the management of local development activities; developing linkage to increase their access to public and non-state service providers and to carry out gender sensitive planning. However, the project is scheduled for closure in December 2004, and the project's valuable support to engage, support and link up the community groups with other development partners is likely to cease. The mission assessment shows that LG capacities (SWD deptt.) are currently weak and unlikely to sustain the momentum generated by SDRB.

The mission was able to review the working of the DMICs and noted evidence of the PIS usage in the project areas. A system of information requisition is in place and a number of line agencies and local NGOs/CBOs appear to be tapping information in various sectors. However, the mission would also like to highlight questions of ownership and commitment by the key stakeholders in GoB as well as within the local governments with serious implications for sustainability. Although operational, the DMICs are unlikely to sustain in the absence of clear policy directions from the GoB/IT and the provision of appropriate human, material and financial resources that have yet to be sanctioned.

The mission would like to commend the project on a variety of pilot initiatives including support to the Balochistan Local Government Commission (LGC), the assistance with the formulation of LGC Rules of business, the development of a web portal, and more recently support for the design of an M&E system. The web portal clearly offers tremendous prospects for improving LGC's operations, redressing grievances and tackling local issues. However, LGC operations are currently constrained by the virtual lack of manpower, infrastructure and the necessary budgets. The full scale operationalization of the web portal also assumes that necessary support will be extended from the district, tehsil and Union tiers. Other pilot activities include the project's support for the development of a model for Land Information Management System (LIS). The pilot efforts targeted one mauza in Loralai district which has been effectively completed. The mission was able to review the LIS demonstration which showed that the model offers significant prospects. However, full scale replication will require enhanced ownership of the idea and its implementation within the GoB.

Under the capacity building program, the project has prepared nearly 39 training modules and has successfully completed a large number of training programs, seminars, workshops and study tours for the state functionaries and elected representatives. However, a high turn over of staff appears to have drained the modest capacities built by the project. In general the assessment shows a low GoB and LG focus on Human Resource Development (HRD). Although virtually all stakeholders provided a positive feedback on the SDRB training activities, many elected representatives and LG officials noted that HRD interventions were necessary but insufficient for institutional capacity building.

SDRB has an ambitious gender strategy as a cross cutting focus across the components of institutional policy reforms, information system and capacity building. Given such a broad objective targeted through multiple initiatives, the project appears to have spread itself too thinly. Therefore the impact in terms of awareness about gender issues appear high. However, this has not translated into a greater focus for women in actual delivery of services.

Other overarching factors that have impacted on SDRB objectives and its implementation include: the overwhelming resource crunch in Balochistan. With virtually no transfers from the provincial government and limited prospects of own-source revenue generation, the incentives for local government performance are clearly limited. In addition, the devolution and decentralization process is still unfolding and many provincial as well as the local governments are still undergoing a transition phase. While many

institutions have been restructured and others merged, the process is still on-going. This is particularly true for the key counterpart agencies of the SDRB, including the “Information Technology (IT) ” and the “Social Welfare department (SWD)”, both of which are operating with skeletal staff and highly scarce resources. The SDRB has been struggling to work with these institutions that are in the middle of a huge transition. This has directly impacted on project implementation.

The GoB is also faced with a dearth of senior managers which has impacted on the needed support for SDRB implementation. The mission noted that the key implementers, including the National Project Director (NPD), the Project Coordinator (PC) and other senior functionaries of the LGRD have multiple responsibilities in the government and other selected projects and activities. Among other overarching factors, the peculiar political and tribal characteristics of Balochistan have also adversely impacted implementation. The security and religious factors, together with the heavy role of local influentials in planning and decision making present a longer-term challenge for the GoB as well as the LGs.

The mission also feels that a project of relatively modest size has attempted to address far too many areas than it could effectively manage. The large number of activities tended to dilute focus on any one initiative, which also means that additional efforts will be needed to take the many good ideas to fruition. Finally, the vast geographic spread combined with the relatively weak infrastructure and institutional capacities of the target districts have also impacted on the project’s uptake and its implementation.

## **1. INTRODUCTION & BRIEF OVERVIEW**

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### **1.1 Background to the Evaluation**

The SDRB is the successor to the Balochistan Trial District Management Project (BTDMP) which was implemented between 1998 and 2002 with a total budget of US\$ 1.352 million. The project aimed at improving public service delivery mechanisms through a variety of interventions. Among these, developing participatory information systems (PIS) as a decision support system; human resource development for sustainable use of resources; and ensuring community participation for effective planning, implementation and monitoring of development activities were the key areas of focus. Gender mainstreaming was strongly promoted as a cross-cutting theme, particularly during the implementation of the SDRB.

The BTDMP was mostly executed during the suspension period of the Local Council System; therefore the mechanisms developed by the project could not be tested until the emergence of the Local Government Plan 2001. After the local government (LG) elections, the efforts of BTDMP were re-aligned to ensure compatibility with the new local government structures in Balochistan. An external evaluation, conducted in March 2002, endorsed the efforts of BTDMP and recommended its expansion to cover the entire two districts.

BTDMP's was subsequently expanded to a Phase II (July 2002-June 2004) with a total budget of US\$ 1.349 million, and renamed "Support to Devolution Reforms in Balochistan" (SDRB). The Project was further extended by the TPR on 1 July 2004 with an extension Phase of up to 31 December 2004, which also marks the formal closing of the project. The objectives of the project continued to remain the same as in Phase I, linking these up with the devolution reforms and processes—albeit with a much greater emphasis on gender mainstreaming. Under the new project, various models were developed in the areas of MIS/GIS as Decision Support Systems were to be strengthened, capacity-building of stakeholders extended, and community participation further facilitated.

At present, SDRB has been implemented in the districts of Jhall Magsi, Loralai, Bolan and Barkhan with major focus on replication of the models developed in the first phase and strengthening of Local Government Institutions. The project also undertook various research studies under its policy reforms component. These included studies on Land information Management system (LIS), Gender mainstreaming strategy to improve grass-roots women access to public services, Gender sensitive HR Strategy, Impact assessment of the Local Government and development of District Human Development Report.

### **1.2 Approach and Methodology**

The external evaluation of the SDRB aims at a forward looking review of the project design and its implementation strategies. The evaluation focuses on the project's effectiveness, sustainability, replicability and impacts on the target groups and institutions. In addition, the TOR also call for the identification of gaps and good practices, and provide recommendations for future action.

The evaluation approach has relied on a number of instruments, including desk review of the relevant documentation, stakeholder interviews and focus groups discussions (FGDs) held in the project areas. The UNDP resident mission and the project staff ensured access to the key documentation including the Strategic Result Framework (SRF), the Common Country Assessment/UN Development Assessment Framework (CCA/UNDAF) and the SDRB project documents including the annual and quarterly progress reports (APR/QPRs). The mission was also able to review the various outputs of the SDRB,



including research studies, reports and concept notes; the monitoring missions reports, working papers and minutes of the key meetings held by the joint steering committee and the tripartite review committee.

The interviews and FGDs focused on the key project staff and representatives of the concerned line departments at the provincial, district, tehsil and union levels. Meetings were also organized with the elected LG representatives at all three tiers; selected members of the local NGOs, male and female community groups as well as key members of the UNDP, the Economic Affairs Division (EAD) and the National Reconstruction Bureau (NRB).

The mission was composed of two members with experience in devolution and institutional reforms. The field visits covered meetings in Quetta and extensive discussions with selected local government and grass root institutions in Loralai, Bolan and Jhal Magsi districts. All activities were carried out in close collaboration with the UNDP field office and the SDRB management. The SDRB project management assumed responsibilities for the necessary administrative tasks concerning travel arrangements, accommodation, and logistics for the mission team.

The evaluation mission was fielded for 15 days, starting from September 20, 2004. The field visits represented a substantive part of the overall assignment. The balance time was consumed in a preliminary de-briefing to the project staff and the UNDP, team consultations and report preparation, which was completed out of Islamabad and Peshawar.

The TOR called for the submission of an "Evaluation report" covering the overall performance of the project in light of the assessment criteria outlined in the TOR. The Report also summarize, the key conclusions, recommendations and the lessons learnt.

### **1.3 Summary of Achievement of Project Activities**

The project invested considerable effort during the first Phase in mobilizing the communities at the grassroots level and organizing and forming groups of individuals, male and female, into community organizations. Capacity building activities also had a high priority during the implementation period and a number of events related to training, orientation, strengthening and coordination purposes were held with the government and the communities. Phase II activities were extended and expanded in four districts and emphasis was given to completion of the PIS in all districts as well as a number of new initiatives in the realm of formulating policy recommendations to the GoB, support to the newly formed Local Government Commission (LGC), research studies and facilitating the formation of CCBs and following up with the already established VCs and FCCs. To date the project reports the establishment of VCs in 200 selected settlements of 56 UCs, the formation of 110 CCBs and registration of 57 CCBs in the project districts.

To date PIS has been replicated in all four project districts and District Management Information Centers (DMICs) have been established in Bolan and Loralai. The project has also provided policy recommendations on the LGO and rules of business for district governments. Training remained a key focus throughout and more than 39 training modules have been developed and implemented during the project life. Some research studies were also carried out and a few have been completed. The replication of the PIS model in Ziarat district in May 2004 was also an important achievement during Phase II and work is ongoing.

The extension of the project Phase II (July – December 2004) was approved in order to ensure sustainability of the project interventions and to institutionalize the models developed under the project. The rationale for the extension is essentially to promote a wider dissemination and uptake of the project's models and experiences over the last five years, enhancing impact and visibility at different levels within

the LG institutions and soliciting support from the provincial government. This is a no-cost extension with a saving of US\$ 200,000 that was used to finance remaining interventions with some contributions from the GoB.

## **2. PROJECT PERFORMANCE**

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### **2.1 Project Relevance**

The relevance of the project is discussed in relation to the key stakeholders—the GoB, communities and the UNDP.

#### **2.1.1 Relevance with the Country Context—The Devolution Process**

The new LG mandates have clearly placed a tremendous pressure on all tiers of governments, particularly at the level of the local governments, who are now expected to manage vastly different administrative structures; maintain and improve the pre-devolution service levels; and also quickly adjust to the new rules of local governance. Various assessments indicate that managing such a major transformation will be a long and on-going process as the LGs struggle with a variety of legal, political, fiscal and institutional issues. Post devolution experiences suggest that the key challenges include weak institutional capacities, lack of resources, low awareness, weak inter-governmental coordination, poor gender focus and the virtual absence of linkages with civil society and grass root institutions.

These factors combine to hamper progress towards the overall vision of good governance and the specific objectives set out under the devolution plan. However, the Federal government appears mindful of the various constraints as well as the need for urgent actions. The key federal plans including the Ten Year Perspective plan (2001-2011), the Three-Year Poverty Reduction programme (2001-2004) and the Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy paper all point to the centrality of governance reform.<sup>1</sup> The federal government has launched a variety of measures through the National Reconstruction Bureau (NRB), the respective provincial governments and through dedicated support programs assisted by a number of multi-lateral and bi-lateral donors. The SDRB represent one of the many projects and programs that have been launched to sustain and further strengthen the devolution process.

#### **2.1.2 Relevance with UNDP Country Mandate and Priorities**

The project falls within the priority areas identified in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and the Common Country Assessment (CCA) jointly prepared by the UN country and regional offices and selected GOP Ministries and civil society representatives. The UNDAF thematic focus on “participatory Governance” highlights the centrality of the governance reforms and acknowledges that progress in all other areas are hinged on the creation of an enabling environment that is best ensured through rapid improvements in the area of governance.

The project objectives are consistent with the Strategic Results Framework of UNDP under the thematic and programmatic focus under its sub goal on improving decentralization and local government. The CCA also notes that the Governments’ policy of devolution has a great potential for enhancing participation, non-discrimination, protection and state accountability.

#### **2.1.3 Relevance to the GOB Mandate, Local Governments and Key Stakeholders**

Discussions with the key stakeholders in Balochistan indicate that the SDRB interventions were highly relevant. Collectively, the interventions offer a significant potential for improved planning and management of the LGs and enhanced opportunities for community participation in local developments. Various SDRB interventions, including the participatory information system, the DMICs, the large capacity building program for state functionaries and elected representatives as well as the pilot LIS and LGC initiatives were widely seen to be supportive of the GoB own efforts to improve systems for grass

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<sup>1</sup> The UNDAF for Pakistan, (2004-2008)

root service delivery and local governance.

The mission was informed that the GOB had also appropriated additional funds from own sources (Rs. 10 million) for scaling up and replication of the PIS in other districts. Various other reports also indicate that the GOB had also advocated the PIS case with potential donors, including the ADB, which has reportedly commitment between USD 2-5 million under its Decentralization Support Program (DSP). These measures show that the GOB considers the PIS to be highly relevant for longer-term planning and development.

The SDRB training programs were also considered to be relevant for awareness and capacity building, particularly in the evolving context of local governance. The existing capacities at the lower tiers of LG, provide a strong rationale for a longer-term focus on human and institutional development. The pilot LIS developed by the SDRB is also clearly useful for the much needed reforms in the Revenue department and several related areas. Likewise the various research studies completed under SDRB have identified potential areas of focus that are relevant to the GOB's own focus on gender mainstreaming and local government reform.

#### **2.1.4 Relevance of the Project to the Communities**

The relevance of the project in relation to community participation and its beneficiaries is high—for establishing and registering the community based organizations as envisaged under the LGO 2001 and building their capacity for increased access and control in the decision making processes. The formation and evolution of the original MCCs and FCCs into VCs and later their conversion into CCBs is an example of how the project evolved so that it could stay relevant to the bigger process of change within the country and province as well as the communities.

Given the ambivalent stance of the government regarding the formation of the VCs, the formation of new VCs/FCCs was stopped<sup>2</sup>. Although this may have stopped the benefits of social mobilization from spreading to additional communities, the project made a rational decision to focus on those that had already been formed and to come up with ways that could grant them sustainability and legitimacy in terms of their acceptance and recognition by the LG. The central focus on data collection for community participation seemed to have effectively engaged the communities in the beginning but it was clearly not sufficient to keep the communities interested and involved in the process. As a result of this, focus was given to forming cross-sectoral linkages and the input of training at the grassroots level so that the communities could access “tangible” benefits.

Viewed in this context, all core objectives of the SDRB and the specific outputs are clearly supportive of the GOP/UNDP vision and highly relevant to the devolution support process.

## **2.2 Outputs and effectiveness of key interventions**

The SDRB covered three broad areas of focus or key objectives. Given the diversity of these areas, the mission has attempted to separately assess each objective. The following sections provide an assessment in each area.

### **2.2.1 Support to policy reforms**

This sub-section summarize the assessment in relation to the first objective, i-e support for the development of a policy framework for improved public sector service delivery. Within this broad

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<sup>2</sup> The UNDP Monitoring Mission (July 2003) and JSC decision (26 July 2003) proposed revisions in the project document, one of which pertains to reorienting the social/community mobilization strategy.

objective, the project essentially focused on the introduction of i) a standardized district based MIS/GIS with emphasis on sex disaggregated data in various sectors ii) development of standards for information interchange between other public sector information systems such as BMEIS, HMIS, BOS etc. iii) Development of a pilot model for Land information system (LIS) and iv) A series of research studies in the areas of; a) gender mainstreaming for improved access of women to public services; b) Gender sensitive HRM and c) Impact of LG system on public service delivery mechanism

The key outputs under this area show that a PIS system has been developed and operationalized in the project areas. Two District Management Information Cells (DMIC) are operational in Loralai and Bolan while a pilot DMIC has been recently established in district Ziarat. Other pilot initiatives included the development of a Land information Management System (LIS) which has been completed for one mauza in district Loralai.

In the two project districts of Loralai and Bolan, the PIS process has been fully completed, and a DMIC is in place. The mission was able to review the working of the DMIC and noted evidence of the PIS usage in the project areas. A system of information requisition is in place and a number of line agencies and local NGOs/CBOs appear to be tapping information in various sectors. Field reports also indicate that stakeholders consider the DMIC to be easily accessible. Several LG officials noted that the information available in the DMICs was valuable -- and in some cases, more credible than other sources of information. Based on review of the requisition records, the mission noted a higher PIS usage by the local NGOs and CBOs. Although some public sector organizations appear to be tapping the DMICs, there was limited evidence of such usage at the lower tiers of the LGs, particularly at the level of Tehsils and the Union councils.

The mission also noted strong and contrasting views from several senior officials, particularly in district Loralai, where the DCO, the EDO Revenue and some UC Nazims expressed serious reservations about the credibility and validity of the PIS data; The officials pointed out that the district government has yet to sanction the PIS data as an official source. Although this position could change with greater line agency involvement and official validation. In contrast, several LG officials felt that the DMIC information was quite credible. They pointed out that the SDRB had heavily invested in field surveys which has ensured the accuracy of information.

However, nearly all district staff was of the view that typical line agencies could not afford to invest in such a system through their normal budgets. Interestingly, most line agency officials also viewed the PIS as the only information system in the district and were largely unaware of other data sources or their efficacy. However in some district agencies, such as the health and education departments, a parallel use of other data sources such as EMIS, HMIS etc. was also reported. In these agencies, the concerned officials nominated as the SDRB focal points were generally unclear about the differences in PIS and the technical data basis prepared by their own organizations.

The effectiveness of the PIS (in a spatial sense) is partly constrained due to missing data on a number of Union Councils. The project staff noted that security concerns have led to the exclusion of a number of Union councils from the PIS surveys. Security issues were widely acknowledged to have impacted on the project as well as local developments. The district planning and finance (P&F) representative in Bolan noted that the completion of a district wide PIS and its validation by the technical line agencies, would further enhance its credibility and also facilitate macro-level planning. The later was currently not possible due to lacking data on significant parts of the district.

The project had recently established a local area network (LAN) for key district officials (DCOs, EDOs etc.) in both Loralai and Bolan. The key officials were connected with the main DMIC server which was aimed at facilitating quick access to the data base, while sitting in respective offices. However, with few exceptions, most district, tehsil and lower offices currently do not have access to the hardware or

computers, that could enable PIS utilization. The DCO Loralai noted that the district will require 14 computers to run the system. However, there are no budgets to procure these during 2004. However, despite the lack of hardware, nearly all line agencies have unimpeded access to the DMICs that are conveniently located within the DCO compound in both districts. The mission noted that the DMICs have also maintained useful public sector information on a variety of public sector themes, which could be further supported to allow these centres to perhaps grow into a full fledged resource centre in each district.

In the extended phase, the DMICs have been physically relocated in the DCO's offices. This has cut back on the overheads (OHs) and allowed a greater prospect for integration and adoption by the district. The project has also invested a great deal of time and effort in ensuring that the provincial government take charge of the DMICs after the Project's closure in December 2004. A formal MOU has been reportedly signed after significant delays. However a full take over is constrained due to lack of sanctioned IT staff. The remoteness of the target districts and weak incentives for work also mean that it will be difficult to find suitable IT professionals who can manage such facilities. In the meantime a stop gap arrangement appears to be in place with adhoc (low level) staff deputed from other technical agencies including the Planning and Finance (P&F), Education and the Health department. The current number and quality of technical staff deputed to the DMICs is clearly inadequate to meet the projected needs.

The project staff also reported that several PIS orientation and utilization workshops were held in the target districts. In addition, hard copies of the Union profiles had been circulated to all UCs. However, the mission noted a fairly limited understanding of the PIS or its usage at the levels of TMAs and the Union administrations visited by the team. Although several factors explain this situation, the key answers came from the local Nazims and the LG officials themselves. A high turn over of staff was identified as one major reason for the relatively low uptake and understanding of the PIS. The virtual lack of resources was identified as the other factor. Most LG officials and elected representatives felt that there were limited incentives to engage in a sophisticated planning process, when there were no resources to plan any developmental activities. Indeed many stated that the line agencies did not even have enough recurring budgets for timely payment of staff salaries or meet other departmental liabilities. The resource crunch appears to be quite severe in all project areas and continues to heavily impact on the morale and the stake holder's interest in working with the PIS system. Among other factors, virtually all stakeholders lamented that key decisions on planning and resource allocations continue to be largely driven by political, rather than rational considerations. This clearly reduces the incentives for line agencies to engage in the PIS processes or indeed focus on its utilization and maintenance.

Perhaps it is important to underline that the PIS development process has undergone a significant change since the completion of the BTDMP and the introduction of the new LG system. Until recently, the process relied on a team of dedicated project staff (Social organizers) who served as the backbone for information gathering and validation. However, conscious of the need for a lower-cost system and a closer alignment with the new LG framework, the project has recently introduced a new approach in Ziarat. Facilitated by a skeletal project team, the new approach largely relies on the LG tiers --- in particular the Union councils, who have been made responsible to gather household and Union wide data on public infrastructure and services. To ensure effective implementation of the new approach, the project has held orientation sessions for the nearly 70 key individuals in Ziarat. These included the District, Tehsil and UC Nazims as well as the key districts officials. Considering the intervention is fairly new, many of the district officials were largely unclear or un-involved in the PIS process. Some felt that access to information and rational decision making was very useful. However, most agreed that meaningful usage of the PIS would require fundamental changes to the highly politicized decision-making culture of the district.

The Ziarat review also showed that while data gathering and validation is currently underway, the process is fraught with a number of difficulties. The number and quality of DMIC staff as well as the available

hard ware is currently inadequate for the huge task. In addition, there are limitations on the available budget for effective completion of the various processes. As a result a significant volume of the information processing tasks have been routed to the DMICs in Loralai and Bolan. In the absence of dedicated project staff, the UC Nazims reported multiple mechanisms for data gathering. However, these adhoc arrangements do not inspire confidence and also appear unsustainable. The UCs are reportedly relying on the voluntary support from primary school teachers, local activists, CBOs as well as high school children. Some of the UC Nazims suggested that the pace and quality of the surveys could be vastly increased with incentives. However, there are currently no provisions for making payments. The councillors also noted that female involvement in local council affairs-- including the PIS processes was quite low. A high illiteracy rate and the seasonal migration of the local communities, were identified as the key factors hampering progress.

The DMIC in Ziarat was currently being run by adhoc appointees of the district government, including a senior science teacher of the Education department and a clerk of the District Health department. The two individuals were posted during last month. However, similar to the two districts of Loralai and Bolan, there are currently no IT staff or sanctioned positions to take charge of the DMIC operations.

At higher levels, the mission also noted certain concerns from the NPD, the IT department of the GOB as well as the NRB in the Federal government. The NPD expressed concerns with regards to the large volume of information and the PIS limitation for technical analysis. While the Deputy Secretary IT department (DS/IT) indicated fundamental disagreement with the PIS methodology and the strategic direction for managing the process in future. The DS/IT expressed concerns about the high costs of the PIS system in Loralai and Bolan and felt that the GOB will not be in a position to replicate or sustain this through its own sources. Although unaware of the relatively low-cost Ziarat model, the key point that came across from the discussions was the provincial preference for a decentralized approach to sectoral surveys and data management through IT enabled line agencies. Reservations were also expressed on the PIS implementation strategy which by-passed the IT department and did not engage the line agency staff in data collection, data entry and its processing which could have built local (IT) capacities within several line agencies.

Elaborating the IT department's vision for Balochistan, the DS noted that the onus for primary data gathering should ideally rest with technical line agencies. As a matter of fact, this was already part of the line agency mandates. However, implementation was lacking because of limited IT capacities within line agencies, weak coordination and virtually no accountability. He further argued that effective management and sustainability of any information system would require enhanced IT capacities within each district agency. Although such capacities are currently lacking, these could be built within a reasonable timeframe. In terms of the future role of the IT department, he felt that with adequate staff and infrastructure, the department will be well positioned to coordinate, manage and disseminate information at the district levels. However, bulk of the field work and primary processing will need to be managed by the district based technical line agencies and the lower levels of the LGs where appropriate capacities will need to be built.

At the federal level, the representative of the NRB/NARIMs raised a different nature of concern about the future of PIS. The concern mainly related to standardization of the information system and its potential for horizontal and vertical integration with the GOB and the Federal government for downstream use in multiple sectors. Although familiar with the PIS, the chief of NARIMs expressed a strong preference for a standardized system that could be easily linked with other data basis such as EMIS, HMIS and various other sectors. The Federally sponsored National Reconstruction Information Management System (NARIMS) reportedly provides the capability to link up with such systems in future. Though generally positive about the PIS system, the chief of NARIMS noted that the PIS coding and software was different than what is being promoted under NARIMS. Hence the Federal concerns about future integration.

The NRB is currently promoting NARIMS in Balochistan through its pilot project in Lasbella, which is likely to be scaled up to several other districts in the near future.. When pressed for an opinion on comparative advantages, the NRB/NARIMS representative stated that multiple information sources are not uncommon and perhaps even useful; however the GOB will need to eventually decide, on how it wishes to use its limited resources. Given the nature of various concerns and their potential impacts, the project may need to further engage the IT department and the Federal government to arrive at a mutually acceptable framework for future actions

Among other initiatives, the project has also provided support to the Balochistan Local Government Commission (LGC). The support included assistance with the formulation of LGC Rules of business, the development of a web portal, and more recently support for the design of an M&E system. The web portal clearly offers tremendous prospects for improving LGC's operations, redressing grievances and tackling local issues. However, LGC operations are currently constrained by the virtual lack of manpower, infrastructure and the necessary budgets. The full scale operationalization of the web portal also assumes that necessary support will be extended from the district, tehsil and Union tiers. However, the current state of LGs show that this assumption may be over ambitious. The project had planned to impart training to the agreed focal points in all districts, tehsils and union tiers. This was aimed at orienting and training the selected LG functionaries to ensure the necessary interface between the LGC and LGs. However, various budgetary and time constraints have prevented implementation of the training program.

The rapid appraisal also showed that the LGC structure has inherent limitations. The policy guidance and support relies on inputs from LGC members who have concurrent (and high levels of) responsibilities in the provincial government. The LGC currently comprise of the Minister LG&RD, the Secretary LGRD, the Secretary P&D, a member of the treasury and opposition benches in the Balochistan Assembly and the Director General LGRD. Field reports indicate that other priority engagements have prevented the key members from playing an effective role in management and oversight. The stewardship of the LGC is temporarily in the hands of a Director General, who holds two other positions in the government. This includes a position in the Balochistan Academy for Rural Development (BARD) as well as the LGRD establishment. The additional responsibilities have clearly taken the time away from the much needed focus on LGC operations. The mission gathered an impression that while SDRB has provided the necessary tools to improve LGC performance, various overarching factors have combined to inhibit LGC effectiveness. The current LGC mandates include such critical areas as LG monitoring and inspections, conflict resolution and many other areas with potentially high impact on local governance.

Other pilot activities include the project's support for the development of a model for Land Information Management System (LIS). The pilot efforts targeted one mauza in Loralia district which has been effectively completed. The mission was able to review the LIS demonstration which showed that the model offers significant prospects. The project staff noted that they have also received a request from the Gwadar Development Authority (GDA) to replicate the LIS model. However, full scale replication will require enhanced ownership of the idea and its implementation within the GoB. The mission was informed that the senior management of the GoB Board of Revenue is not convinced of the efficacy of the model. The department has shown a lukewarm response to the various efforts made to explain the purpose and potential of the LIS model. In the meantime various policy and legal amendments in the current land revenue systems, may also be necessary to scale up the efforts launched by the project. The project could also benefit from an enhanced coordination with the field level functionaries responsible for land management. These include the concerned DCO and the EDO revenue who expressed a very limited appreciation or involvement in the LIS development process.

Discussions with the NRB/NARIMS representative indicate that a parallel (country wide) system for Land management has been approved by the Federal government. This is being reportedly steered by the Ministry of Science and Technology in all provinces. Based on this model, a pilot has been launched in



Lahore and is currently under implementation. The SDRB team also noted that this model was reviewed during the LIS design and some improvements made. However, given the scope of the federal program, the project, could clearly benefit from further dialogue between the Ministry of S&T, the GoB and the project staff.

### **2.2.2 Support for Capacity building**

The devolution plan led to the transfer of large scale responsibilities to the local governments. However, the required institutional capacities are clearly lacking. The project recognized that this posed a major challenge to any improvements in service delivery and the GoB vision for good governance. Accordingly, the project committed significant resources for capacity building of the local government functionaries and elected representatives at all three tiers of the local governments. In addition, the project also supported capacity building of a wide range of community organizations, including the VCs, FCCs and the CCBs. Section 3.1.3 provides further details on the capacity building activities in this area.

Specific outputs under this component include a) Capacity building of line department staff in planning, management and control b) Building information management skills of line agency staff for smooth functioning of the DMICs c) Capacity building of elected reps in preparation of development plans, monitoring, financial controls and participatory development with the gender approach as cross cutting theme and d) Capacity of grass roots institutions in the target districts.

The key outputs include nearly 39 training modules and a large number of training programs, seminars, workshops and study tours that were successfully completed for state functionaries and elected representatives. The project clearly operated in a period of massive transition that necessitated immediate and across the board capacity building interventions. The project staff noted that a formal “Training Needs Assessment” (TNA) process was not followed. However, the project tried to respond to the emerging needs in the LG tiers as well as the line agencies. The mission was able to interview selected LG officials and a number of male and female councillors, who noted that the capacity building program was quite effective. In total, nearly 2000 elected councillors, 900 government and project staff and 600 community activists benefited from orientation, exposure and training programs. Most programs were designed and implemented by the project staff directly. Although some were out-sourced to various individuals and organizations. The DPAs and the district based project staff facilitated all trainings in the respective districts with the social organizers providing bulk of the support for training activities at the village levels.

The selection of trainees was typically determined by the participating departments, who nominated individual staff members on a case to case basis. In some cases, the nominations also required approvals through the project forums, and even higher levels of government.. The project reported that a trainee selection criteria was communicated to all departments. In some cases delays were experienced in finalizing nominations, selection and eventual approval, while some of the senior districts officials were dropped due to lack of GoB or Federal Government approval. This reportedly led to considerable backlash and in some cases, has adversely impacted on project implementation. In general, the training process was reported to have worked well.

The mission also noted a very high turn over of staff in virtually all line agencies. This was also recognized as a major concern within the senior policy making circles of the GoB. The politically motivated adhoc postings and transfers of key government officials, particularly officials who had been trained by the SDRB was widely seen as a negative trend. It not only drained the modest capacities built by the project, but also heavily impacted on project implementation. It was pointed out that since the project’s inception, the target districts had witnessed regular and often whole sale changes in the senior management; the changes involved the transfer of the highest district level functionaries such as the DCOs, key EDOs and several key counterparts on a frequent basis. With each change, the institutional

memory as well as the huge effort spent in orienting and training of key government officials was lost. This has been the source of much frustration in the project as each change also dictated a renewed management process. This entailed revisiting the key players, explaining the project process and its key activities, negotiating support and re-building local relationships for effective implementation. Field evidence indicate that this has been an uphill task and often difficult to negotiate.

The project has yet to undertake a formal assessment of the training impact. However, scattered evidence, points to a strong need for holistic follow up interventions. Some of the senior government officials, such as the Secretary LGRD, noted that short-term training and workshops are useful, but short-lived in the larger context of capacity building. The group of senior LGRD officials expressed a strong preference for support to institutional reforms, that would create sustainable capacities, in institutions such as the Union Councils, that currently have no allow capacities to address the grass root needs. A more or less similar theme was also repeated in the target districts, where several senior officials argued that the HRD gains are not matched by concurrent support in other, equally critical areas. Virtually all the stakeholders noted that HRD interventions were necessary but insufficient for institutional capacity building that was viewed to comprise of many building blocks. Many LG and elected officials felt that the Federal and provincial government has yet to effectively transfer LG authorities reflected in the LGO 2001; provide the necessary staff ; and ensure the physical and financial resources to effectively run the local governments. Many argued that these elements brought together, would in turn permit the LGs to translate available capacities into positive actions.

The mission gathered a distinct impression that while most line agency staff and elected representatives were reasonably comfortable with the status of available capacities, there was a strong sense of frustration at not being able to utilize these for public good. Ironically the growing sense of frustration is also a good indicator of enhanced awareness on local authorities and responsibilities that the SDRB has been able to build as a result of its orientation and training programs.

### **2.2.3 The focus on grass root institutions**

The assessment of the effectiveness of the component of community participation is assessed in relation to the question as to whether the project objective of “community participation in order to have better monitoring of public sector services, planning and implementation of village level infrastructure and local resource mobilization” has been achieved or is likely to be achieved.

The project has made significant progress in institutional building at the grassroots level and in building up their capacity to allow the communities to play a more informed and active role in the management of local development activities, developing linkage to increase their access to public and non-state service providers and to carry out gender sensitive planning. The number of such institutions that have been established to date illustrates the achievement of the project: **196 VCs, 113 FCCs, formation of 110 CCBs and registration of 57 CCBs**, as reported by the project. It is clear from the primary and secondary data collected during the evaluation that the most significant achievement of the project in relation to this objective is that the project has given the communities (a) organized forum or a platform for collective dialogue and action (ii) empowered them through knowledge and information on their status, roles and potential (iii) a collective voice that has the potential of finding its way in the decision making processes from which they were excluded so far (iv) a vision in terms of where they would like to be, and (v) ways and means of attaining this vision, e.g. as articulated in the resolutions, community development plans and linkages with other state and non-state service providers.

The project has trained the communities on a number of general and technical/functional aspects including monitoring of public facilities. There is increased awareness, as indicated by some field interviews, on part of the communities and this is demonstrated by the fact that a number of FCCs and VCs have played a pivotal role in rehabilitating dead or semi-functional public facilities. It is, however,

not being done in a consistent manner as a number of LG institutions such as the monitoring committees have still not been formed. The role of the project in giving the communities a voice and the confidence to point out the discrepancies to their elected councils and administration has been significant. The Monitoring and Development Seminars (M&D), conducted on a quarterly basis in each tehsil, is one way in which the communities and the government have been brought closer to each other, however, evidence from the field suggests that this was not done in a consistent manner but has the potential of being an effective forum for information sharing, reflecting and addressing the grievances of the communities.

The project has also organized exposure visits and study trips for the chairpersons and the secretaries of the CCBs to district Faisalabad and other places (three females from Loralai and six from Bolan and Jhal Magsi are reported to have participated in the trip) to orient them with the role and functions of CCBs and how they can play a meaningful role in public service delivery. These are reported to have been useful. The VCs/FCCs have also been imparted specific training and the project documents note that almost 60 CCBs have been trained in the rules of business, proposal writing and registration process, which are reported to have been very useful by the beneficiaries. The training to the government functionaries (EDOs, DDOs) on the roles and concepts of the CCBs was carried out parallel with the community training and has augmented these efforts. A number of CCB proposals have been shared with the local government and some CCB proposals, e.g. Hosary and Kanobi Malakhel, have been given to other donor projects such as AASA, an executing agency for a USAID funded small scale projects. The project documents report that both were accepted in May 2004.

The formation of the VCs and FCCs was discontinued from the second Phase onwards but the project has retained its focus on the FCCs and follow up visits, training and calendar meetings were emphasized throughout Phase II in order to prepare them to work on their own after the project exit. The women members in the FCC, have more often than not, found their way into the VCs and also into the CCBs and have been given training by the project. The first ever female CCBs have been established in Bolan (tehsil Mach and Bhag) but those FCCs that are left behind continue in name and it remains unclear what their future roles will be. The PIS data show the distribution of number of households but do not show the status of the groups or individuals in terms of their poverty status and or benefits. The project has undertaken joint field visits with the line agencies and helped the rehabilitation or utilization of the non-functional public facilities such as schools. These joint trips, although limited in number, have proved invaluable in validating the data/information provided by the communities and in rationalizing and streamlining allocations, e.g. school staff, teachers' salaries etc.

Beyond the large number of community organizations and the more recent focus on CCBs, the biggest achievement of the project seem to be in terms of linkage development (e.g. Bernimi with Taraqqi in Loralai, CCB Kanue Markaz with Light of Awareness for Advancement of Mankind (LAFAM), and CCB Mushkaf in Dhahdar etc). A number of events and activities were carried out by linking up the communities with the line agencies and collaboration with the forest, livestock and health department figure prominently, e.g. tree plantations with the forest department and linkages with WHO for polio campaigns and free eye camp with the health department in district Jhal Magsi.

The complete social mobilization/data collection process (during Phase I) spanning all steps from the Community Orientation and Information System (COIC) to the calendar meetings was followed in its entirety till December 2002. Although the PMM and PPI were discontinued from the second Phase onwards, some elements of the social mobilization process remained throughout the project, such as orientation sessions, monthly calendar meetings, etc. The calendar meetings were emphasized during Phase II as well and are held as a way of maintaining contact with the communities, follow up on previous activities, obtaining nominations for sectoral trainings, facilitating the linkage development with other service providers and to enable the communities to participate and monitor the development schemes at the community level.

### 2.3 Suitability of Implementation Arrangements—The Executing Agency and Key Partners

The project design viewed the P&D as the implementing agency, with little or no provision for technical inputs from specialized entities such as the IT and the SWD. The mission noted that the key counterparts in the provincial government --- in particular the IT department, had strong concerns about the weak coordination and non involvement during key stages of the project. Another key counterpart, the LG&RD department, also appears to have collaborated on the peripheries. While the Social Welfare Department also felt that the project could have benefited from a better coordination during project implementation. These perceptions have clearly led to low levels of ownership and commitment among the key stakeholders of SDRB.

The Social Welfare Department (SWD), GoB is the project's key government counterpart for social mobilization and institutional development at the grassroots level. This recognition, however, seems to have influenced project strategy much later on in the project life as the design of the project makes the P&DD the sole implementing agency and does not call for any explicit role from other departments.

The LGO 2001 specifies that all social welfare, gender and community development activities shall be under the purview of the CDD—a department operating at the district, tehsil and union council level and mandated to carry out all community mobilization related activities. Whereas the LGO clearly spells out the mandate and the roles and responsibilities of the CDD are well defined, the operationalization of it remains incomplete. To date, the SWD is amongst the most neglected government department in terms of allocation of appropriate human and financial capital. The institutional structure at the lower tiers is still not in place nor have other notifications regarding staffing operationalized.

Nonetheless, recognizing the fundamental role of the SWD for the sustainability of the project interventions, *vis a vis* the communities, the project sought to have greater involvement with SWD at the provincial and lower levels and subsequently focused on having a more regular interaction with the department—attachment and training of SW staff in project districts, Training of trainers (ToTs) on SM and CCBs, orientation, joint field visits, CCB formation/registration and coordination—all done mostly in the last two years. A strategy has been chalked out with the department for future coordination and support and the roles and responsibilities of the department in carrying forward the work done by the project in community mobilization and institution building. A planning and coordination meeting<sup>3</sup> was held with the SWD in September 2003 where all the EDOs of the project district along with SW officers, CD officers at tehsils were invited to discuss mutual roles and responsibilities and also discuss future coordination and support to the SWD. Despite these efforts, the coordination of the project with the SWD remained weak at the provincial level but it is reported that the project enjoyed a good working relationship with the CDD in tehsil Duki and tehsil Mach and the staff remained active co-operative. In other areas, however, such as tehsil Loralai, Dhadar, Bhag, Ghandawa and Jhal Magsi, the coordination with CDD remained weak.<sup>4</sup>

The project has prepared a paper for working with the SWD and it emphasizes the need for greater collaboration across all three components of institutional policy reforms, capacity building and community participation. Under the institutional policy reforms the project has tried to facilitate the adoption of SDRB's SM modalities as standard curriculum within the department and input on the rules of business of CDD, however, any significant changes in the working processes of the department are not evident at the moment.

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<sup>3</sup> Workshop Report on Developing Strategies for Cooperation and Coordination Between SDRB and SWD. 16 September 2003.

<sup>4</sup> Minutes of the meeting between Director SWD, GOB and SDRB. September 2003.

## **2.4 Overarching Factors Impacting Achievement of Project Objectives**

A variety of factors appear to be heavily impacting on the working of the local governments in Balochistan. Many of these have directly impacted on the SDRB objectives and also threaten to undermine the gains made over the past 5 years. The following summarize some of the key points.

The province wide resource crunch was cited as the biggest factor which has led to increasingly smaller fiscal transfers to the LG tiers. With virtually no transfers from the provincial government and limited prospects of own-source revenue generation, the incentives for local government performance are clearly limited. The lack of resources also mean that the LG functionaries see limited or no utilization for the new found capacities; the LG councillors have been unable to respond to the rising demand from their constituencies and there is a low appreciation and public sector uptake of the sophisticated planning tools. Many stakeholders were quite vocal in noting that that the planning tools, in themselves, do not offer any visible change to a desperate citizenry.

The devolution and decentralization process is still unfolding and many provincial as well as the local governments are still undergoing a transition phase. While many institutions have been restructured and others merged, the process is still on-going. This is particularly true for the key counterpart agencies of the SDRB, including the “Information Technology (IT)” and the “Social Welfare department (SWD)”, both of which are operating with skeletal staff and highly scarce resources. The provincial IT department has reportedly 4 staff members while there is virtually no staff in the districts.

Likewise, the new Social welfare department has been recreated after the merger of at least five other departments. The secretary SWD noted that with the proposed creation of a separate Women Development Directorate, the department is likely to undergo further changes, which will also reflect on the district hierarchy. Compared with the IT department, the SWD is relatively better placed. However, its provincial and district hierarchy shows limited capacities to take charge of the huge responsibilities associated with community development (CD) portfolio. The SDRB has been struggling to work with these institutions in the midst of this huge transition. The going has been clearly uphill and unlikely to change in the short-term.

The GoB is also faced with a dearth of senior managers which has impacted on the needed support for SDRB implementation. The mission noted that the key implementers, including the National Project Director (NPD) and the Project Coordinator (PC) of the SDRB were holding multiple responsibilities. In addition to the SDRB chair, the NPD also works in another pivotal position as the GoB Chief Economist as well as the project director of at least one other donor funded project. Likewise, the PC is also simultaneously working as the Section Officer (Establishment) within the GoB/P&D--- a position that also carries tremendous responsibilities. Another key counterpart in the Local government--- the DG LGRD also wears three hats, including support for LGC operations that are targeted by the SDRB. Despite the high levels of energy and commitment expressed by the key officials, there is little doubt that multiple --- and often competing responsibilities, directly bear on the physical time as well as the human capacity to effectively focus on any one mandate. With less than optimal support at the provincial level and weak counterpart presence in the districts, the SDRB is clearly faced with multiple challenges that have directly or indirectly impacted on project implementation.

The peculiar political and tribal characteristics of Balochistan has also impacted on project implementation. The complex issues of security and religious factors, compounded by the heavy influence of local Sardars, Nawabs and other influentials are clearly beyond the project’s mandate. However, the security factors have led to the dropping of several Union Councils from the targeted districts while the religious factors have also influenced the gender mainstreaming agenda of the project. Discussions with the LG stakeholders indicate that political and adhoc decision is still the norm. This

clearly presents a longer-term challenge for the GoB as well as the LGs. However, in the short term it has a tendency of reducing the line agency incentives for rational planning and decision making --- a key objective of the SDRB.

Discussions with the senior GoB and selected LG officials in the target districts also indicate a very low focus on Human Resource Development (HRD). There are currently no HRD positions nor any resources to promote capacity building through GoB and LGs own development programs. While many LG functionaries and community leaders favourably viewed the capacity building programs of the SDRB, nearly all argued that capacity building should be an on-going (and core) responsibility of the local governments. Although SDRB was seen to have positively catalyzed the process, the stakeholders were legitimately concerned that this may not be followed up.

Among other factors, the project design viewed the P&D as the implementing agency, while many key components of the project required technical inputs from specialized entities such as the IT and the SWD. The mission noted that the key counterparts in the provincial government --- in particular the IT department, had strong concerns about the weak coordination and non involvement during key stages of the project. Another key counterpart, the LG&RD department, also appear to have collaborated on the peripheries. While the Social Welfare Department also felt that the project could have benefited from a better coordination during project implementation. The IT department felt that line agency is (on;y) now being engaged when the project is confronted with questions of sustainability. These perceptions have clearly led to low levels of ownership and commitment among the key stakeholders of SDRB.

The mission also noted the lack of coordination among UNDP funded activities in the same project areas. This was also identified as an area of concern by the EAD representative accompanying the evaluation team. Another UNDP funded Area development program (ADP) has been active in the same project areas (Loralai) however, there has been little exchange or cross learning during the period of SDRB implementation. Indeed some components of the ADP could have directly benefited the SDRB work at the grass roots. However, the project expressed its constraints due to lack of direction from the GoB and the UNDP. The ADP was also reportedly following a different model for community development that did not fit in the SDRB framework. Further discussions with the EAD suggested that the two projects fall under two different thematic (or focus) areas of the EAD/UNDP.( i-e Governance and Sustainable Livelihoods). The EAD representative noted that although thematic and project specific reviews were common, appropriate internal mechanisms for cross thematic review and follow up were weak during SDRB implementation. These have now been improved and has reportedly led to increased opportunities for cross learning and support as well as improved federal government and donor oversight.

The mission also feels that a project of relatively modest size has attempted to address far too many areas than it could effectively manage. Indeed the project portfolio appears to have swollen during the last year with several new activities, that were not originally conceived under the project document. The project activities ranged from a large community development initiative to capacity building programs for state functionaries, information system development to research studies as well as number of pilot activities for the revenue department and the LGC. The large number of activities tended to dilute focus on any one initiative and has also meant that additional efforts will be needed to further build ownership and sustainability and take the many good ideas to fruition. These include the PIS system, the project's support for LGC ; the LIS model as well as the needed follow up on the very useful research studies.

Review of the project operations also indicate a tendency for centralization in decision making with little or no authorities available at the level of the project. The back and forth "file movement" seeking approvals from the higher level of the project, and in some cases, the GoB and the Federal government--- often for inconsequential matters, has reportedly consumed much time and unnecessary effort. Future projects could benefit from delegation of appropriate administrative and financial authorities for speedier implementation.

The project also appears to have made a number of assumptions, particularly, those relating to the support from government counterparts in the provincial and district governments. In hindsight many of these assumptions seem ambitious and have had important bearing on the key questions of ownership, sustainability and replicability.

Among other factors, the vast geographic spread combined with the relatively weak infrastructure and institutional capacities of the target districts have also impacted on the project's uptake and its implementation. This is clearly not unique in the context of Balochistan. However, a different mix of districts may have facilitated project implementation. Likewise, the changes to the district boundaries and the new jurisdictions have also contributed to project delays.

## **2.5 Degree of Change/Impact**

Various SDRB interventions have created a positive development environment and there is little doubt that collectively these offer a significant potential for far reaching changes. However, it is too early to gauge impacts that will largely hinge on the sustained institutional and financial support from the GoB and concerned LGs.

### **2.5.1 Support for policy reforms**

The mission noted early outcomes in the form of enhanced LG awareness on the potential use of the information system as an effective planning tool. Various LG functionaries felt that PIS is useful and also readily accessible for decision making. There is also evidence of the PIS usage by some agencies, including several public sector and civil society organizations. How and whether this information is being currently used for improved planning and service delivery, is less clear.

Field reports also indicate that the exhaustive field surveys, conducted as part of the PIS process, have already led to improvements in certain sectors such as the education and health department. The exercise led to the identification of several non-functional schools where teachers were reportedly collecting salaries while sitting at home. A collective effort of the project and concerned agencies has led to a reopening of such schools and teachers are now back in the class rooms. Elsewhere the project also reported financial savings, achieved as a result of the identification and eventual lay off of the ghost teachers identified by the project. Questions on whether the district agencies would be able to maintain the momentum generated by the SDRB, led to a common response from virtually all LG officials-----“With the necessary logistics and resources, we will ensure similar or even better results”.

Among other pilot activities, the LIS model and the web portal for LGC offers tremendous prospects. However, in order for these to yield any impacts, the GoB will need to fully own the model and ensure appropriate amendments to related laws and regulations. Likewise, the LGC urgently requires staff, infrastructure and the additional resources to effectively utilize the web portal and commence its normal operations.

### **2.5.2 Support for Capacity building**

Interviews focused on the capacity building aspects show that elected representatives, technical line agency reps, LGC functionaries and community groups view enhanced awareness levels as the biggest gain from various workshops, seminars and study trips. The project has also helped build real capacities, in particular of the CD department, where the staff indicated an enhanced understanding of the CD processes; greater interaction with local community groups, enhanced focus on linkage building and an accelerated pace of CCB registration. Both EDOs of the CD department in Loralai and Bolan had received training and orientation on the CD processes and were quite confident of their ability to manage

their functions. However, lack of staff, logistics and recurring budgets were noted as the key constraints. The EDO noted that the department has currently only one motor cycle to manage activities in the entire district.

The research studies focusing on gender mainstreaming, have yet to be disseminated to the key decision and policy making levels. Therefore it is too early to predict how these will be received or indeed followed up at the level of the GoB. The mission feels that these are unlikely to receive support in the absence of a critical mass. The upcoming ADB funded province wide Gender Reforms Action Plan (GRAP) appear to be the potential window for continued advocacy and policy dialogue at the highest levels. This initiative will also involve restructuring of the Women Development portfolio across the province and is expected to introduce the much needed focus on gender issues.

Under the capacity building component, the LG functionaries reported enhanced awareness on roles and responsibilities. The LG officials noted that they felt more responsive to the needs of the communities and were also relatively clearer about their own mandates. Interviews with TMA officials and selected Union Council Secretaries indicated that training has improved their understanding of the LG protocols and contributed to confidence building. However, most complained about their inability to utilize training because of the virtual lack of resources.

The training impact on enhanced planning and management skills were less evident. However, various external factors are clearly impacting on this and have been listed in a separate section underneath. In general, training on gender related issues appear to have had limited impact; there is some evidence of enhanced awareness on gender, however this does not appear to have translated in a greater focus for women in service delivery.

The outcomes under grass root capacity building are clearer and more tangible. The mission noted that the training program has led to awareness and local capacities for collective action. There is growing evidence of positive contributions by the VCs/CCBs in project areas. The training to CCBs and women councilors have shown visible results: CCBs are aware and are able to develop their own proposals, prioritize their needs, articulate their concerns and also link up with line agencies and donors for local developments. This was noted at several locations including, Bernimi/Loralai, Mushkaf/Bolan, female councilors in Hazara Mohallah, CCB and FCC in Kanuk Markaz. The CCBs that have been recently registered by the project appear much stronger than the one's created around the VCs and FCCs created in phase I. Field reports indicate that these community groups were already active and were identified as potential candidates during the on-going COIC process of the project. Future initiatives could benefit from a similar strategy where the project could invest time and effort in building on the existing potential rather than creating new organizations from scratch.

In trying to relate impacts, the mission also noted that multiple donors, NGOs and other development partners are working in the SDRB project areas. Indeed many NGOs were closely working with the same community groups that were being targeted by the SDRB. Several CCBs reported that they had also received training as well as financial support from other projects which raises the question of attributing impacts. However, the general feedback from the project areas indicate, that the number of effective community groups is somewhat limited. The harsh living conditions, extreme poverty and the virtual absence of public sector support has led to a high level of disillusionment in the local community groups and the few NGOs that exist in the project areas. Pushed by these circumstance, only the most committed groups---or those with prior work experience and established contacts, appear to be surviving.



### 2.5.3 The focus on grass root institutions

The most visible and significant change that the project has yielded at all levels, in particular, at the level of the community, is observed in their increased awareness, knowledge and information in relation to their roles and responsibilities within the community and within the larger developmental process. This is also evidenced in their increased knowledge about the resources that they use, their potential use, rights and some of the ways and means that they can employ in attaining them. The large number of groups who have organized themselves and who meet or participate in project activities at various levels is a good example of the way these communities have been empowered. The CCBs met in Muskaf, Dhadar, Bernimi, Loralai are a few such examples.

#### Best Practice-Community Monitoring

The FCC/CCB in Got Nawab Khan, Loralai, is functional for the last year and a half. Located in an extremely backward and resource poor region, the concept of female education was alien to them. The FCC has managed to get around 30 girls enrolled in the boys' public school and are in touch with the UC to make sure a teacher is available.

There is also evidence that the organised grassroots organizations are playing an active role in exerting on local leadership for rights, resources and services. There are many examples where the community has helped reactivate or rehabilitate the defunct public facilities, e.g. FCC in Got Nawab Khan, has made girls' education possible. The communities have also been made aware on the importance of monitoring mechanisms. Training on monitoring has also been imparted but the monitoring function of the communities is constrained for multiple reasons: inactive or non-existing committees, political factors, peculiar security concerns and a severe lack of resources. Although the information imparted to the communities has yet to translate into significant tangible results, nonetheless, the project has made a great contribution in activating the communities for collective action and bringing improvements in service delivery.

Joint visits of the project and the line agencies have also been made for cross checking of data, verification and monitoring of non-functional facilities and is reported to have been instrumental in improving public services provision, e.g. on-functional schools have been made functional in tehsil Dhadar and Gandawa. Some examples of these include the FCC in Got Nawab Khan for the enrolment of 30 girls in the public school and others reported by the DO Education Bolan and EDC CDD Loralai. There is also an indication that the new cluster CCBs who were not part of the entire SM process, e.g. in UC Gandawa, are more active in monitoring public services and are able to reach other LG institutions as compared to the old MCCs/VCS. Some new CCBs, e.g. the female CCB in Mushkaf, UC Dhadar and CCB Dargah, who are essentially driven by one local activist/leader are active and seem to possess all the right ingredients for accessing funds and services. This observation is, however, based on a small sample of communities.

#### Best Practice-Linkages

A new female CCB, Mushkaf in UC Dhadar have been working with the project since March 2004. Registered in May 2004, they have been trained by the project and are now successfully running an adult literacy center (about 26 students) and also operate a small embroidery school. They have not received government funds but have already linked up with TVO, Khushali Bank and SPO for small schemes and micro finance and expect to receive funds soon.

The project has also made a positive impact on raising the confidence, participation and political know how of the elected councilors (male and female). The training imparted to them has made them aware of their rights and responsibilities. In due course of time, with the availability of funds from the district government, they seem well prepared and determined to implement local level schemes, e.g. female councillors in Hazara Mohallah, Loralai.

Linkage development was a key focus by the project, especially after the implementation of the PPI could not materialize, and there are some very encouraging results from the other donors picking up the schemes identified by the communities. Some NGOs and donors have taken up the CDP's prepared by

the VCs/FCCs mostly the small infrastructure development schemes. Taraqee Trust is reported to have selected around 60 CPI schemes in both districts and there is evidence of some grassroots institutions linking up with non-state service providers (refer annex II-c). The project meetings at the district and tehsil level and the development forum meetings are viewed to be quite useful in collecting different stakeholders under one platform. Such forums definitely have the potential for becoming a dynamic forum for sharing of information and forming cross-sectoral partnerships, streamlining efforts and the project can benefit greatly by hosting such events.

#### **2.5.4 Impact on minorities and marginalised communities**

In general, the project does not make any distinction between economic groups, caste or ethnic minorities and works with all groups of people to interact and participate in activities at their level. Nonetheless, the review of selected project interventions and geographic areas shows that the project has benefited certain minority groups. During the mission's visit to Jhal Magsi, (Union Council Gandhawa), the team noted that the Union Council comprise of a significant Hindu community which has benefited from the project interventions along with the other community members, albeit in a non-distinctive manner. There is, however, no mechanism specified by the project to work with well defined or identifiable groups of poor or marginalised individuals or groups of people.

### **2.6 Sustainability and Replicability**

Concerns about the sustainability and replicability of SDRB interventions merit a high level of attention by the GoB and concerned LGs. The project has launched a massive effort on multiple fronts and has demonstrated that positive changes can be brought about through simple and innovative ways. The introduction of the PIS and the LIS model, the web portal for LGC, the project's support for capacity building and linkages with other development partners are some of the many examples. The GoB and the local governments will now be expected to sustain and further build on this momentum that was so painstakingly generated over the past five years. This will obviously require that the key partners, particularly in the provincial and local governments, show full ownership and commitment to the strategies and causes espoused by the SDRB. However the mission review shows that this is currently the weakest link.

#### **2.6.1 Support for policy reforms**

On the ownership front, the key implementing agencies including the IT department and to some extent the SWD, have expressed reservations that the project has been implemented in isolation; As a result there are questions about the approaches followed for PIS development and its future uptake by the IT department. While the efficacy of the new Ziarat model is still under review, the IT department has clear preference for low cost alternatives for information collection, management and dissemination. The department has also expressed a strategic preference for a decentralized PIS system, that would build on an integrated effort of (IT enabled) line agencies and a core IT department in each district. These and other concerns clearly point to the need for a policy dialogue on how the proposed system may work in future.

The continued maintenance of the PIS is also currently reliant on the availability of resources (both physical and financial) within the provincial and district governments. However, the review shows a virtual absence of provincial and district capacities to support the DMICs and the wider IT vision for the target districts. Province wide availability of IT specialists is reported to be low and several positions advertised by IT department are still waiting to be filled.

Likewise, formal systems for information interchange between the UCs, tehsils, line agencies and the DMICs will be needed to ensure continued operations and maintenance of the PIS; however, there is

limited evidence that the LG institutions are geared to support such requirements in the short term. A variety of resource issues were identified as the key impediment. Lacking support infrastructure in both Loralai and Bolan (Hard ware) and high uncertainty about the availability of recurring budgets, are likely to jeopardize continued use of the DMICs. The field reports also indicate that the district government validation and notification of the PIS as an official data source is still pending. This will be critical for public sector ownership, enhanced credibility, legality and eventual use on a wider scale.

Certain technical concerns may also have a bearing on the sustainability and replicability of the PIS model. The IT as well as the NRB representative highlighted that need for standardisation in areas such as uniform coding system, the use of software as well as the key indicators. In addition, various technical factors were identified that would be critical for integration and aggregation of sectoral and cross sectoral data within PIS. The NRB argued that such systemic capacities would not only ensure a wider usage and uptake but also offer greater prospects for public sector planning and decision making at the local, provincial and national levels. The NRB strongly felt that its product (NARIMS) will go to scale due to its scalable and up-gradable design, while the PIS may not offer a similar potential. The NRB also raised concerns about duplication of efforts (such as the on-going NRB pilot in Lasbella/Balochistan) as well as the future need for vertical and horizontal integration with other data sources, such as the HMIS and the EMIS. This was reportedly necessary for provincial and federal needs. While the mission was clearly unable to undertake a comparative technical review, field discussions with the SDRB staff suggested that the PIS offered similar or even better capacities.

Notwithstanding the obvious merit for multiple data sources and systems for information management, the mission feels that assured budgetary and policy support from the GoB and the Federal government, together with continuing technical support and direction from the key line agencies, would play a decisive role in adoption and province replication of a preferred system. The mission feels that this may require further coordination between GOB, P&D, IT department, SDRB and the NRB.

In hindsight, the project could have benefited from a larger and more upfront role of the IT and the Social welfare department. A wider policy debate may also have led to clearer agreements on the preferred options and strategies for the various pilot efforts launched by the project. A closer integration and proactive role by the key agencies – at least on the technical processes and contents, may have led to greater ownership and even enhanced capacities within the core line agencies.

The project's initiatives in the area of LIS as well as the web portal for LGC are also fraught with similar concerns. Despite the obvious potential, the revenue department as well as the key stakeholders in Loralai have showed little ownership for the idea. The initiative is also dependent on a number of policy and legal amendments to the current land revenue regulations at the highest levels, which are still pending. Likewise the web portal clearly offer tremendous prospects for improved governance. However, its effective operationalization will entirely depend on the GoB support for LGC, which is clearly in need of dedicated leadership and vastly enhanced resources. The web portal would also require support from the lower LG tiers that will need to be cultivated through continuing efforts.

## **2.6.2 Support for Capacity building**

The project has made commendable efforts under the broad area of capacity building. Although a post training assessment is not available, some early outcomes are already evident, particularly in the important area of awareness building. While operational capacities may require continuing efforts, the stakeholders legitimately view capacity building as on-going process rather than a one off activity; Future support for HRD initiatives will depend on the GoB and LG commitment as well as the necessary infrastructure and supporting budgets. The review shows that there are serious constraints on this front. In contrast with some other provinces, there are no HRD officers in the districts nor resources to support the large HRD needs in the short term. The capacities built through the SDRB also appeared to have been

drained due to a high turn over at all levels. Viewed in a more positive light, the trained professionals may still be in a position to influence local developments, while working in other districts of Balochistan. However, there is little doubt that the rapid transfers have undermined the immediate prospects for consolidation and the very useful momentum that was generated, both within as well as across the district agencies. If allowed to continue, the trained staff would have contributed to more sustainable institutional capacities.

The mission would also like to note that the available capacities may further drain due to the overarching cultural, political, resource and other constraints. Collectively these factors have inhibited the effective use of available skills that currently exist in the project areas. The prevailing culture of politically motivated adhoc decisions present a major challenge to the SDRB efforts in support of rational planning and decision making and also reduces the incentive for capacity utilization. Although a much larger objective, there is clearly a longer-term need for continuing advocacy and support for the promotion of good governance at all levels of the provincial and local governments.

### **2.6.3 The focus on grass root institutions**

The project document (1997) lists community mobilization as an essential component and the project has, therefore, strived to meet its target of formation of 196 MCCs and 110 FCCs during 1998-2002 in 11 UCs of Jhal Magsi and Loralai. After the appearance of the LGO 2001 one of the first few steps taken by the project to make the village institutions sustainable was to discontinue the formation of new VCs/FCCs as they were not being encouraged by the GoB. The VCs have remained a highly debatable issue throughout the province as the GoB remained undecided on the creation of such big number of institutions that would carry additional liabilities. It was thus decided by the JSC meeting of 19 December 2003 to reorient the SM activities.<sup>5</sup>

The idea was to focus on strengthening the existing ones so that they could be sustained after the project closure and therefore the need to create sustainability for the 470 grassroots institutions formed under the project remained a key concern of the project during the last one year. The federation of the VCs into cluster and than village level CCBs was also done to build their sustainability. The options available to the project for ensuring the sustainability of these institutions, given the resource constraints and lack of government ownership, were limited and mostly beyond the control of the project, i.e. cultivating the CDD as their key counterpart in assuming their responsibility after the project exit. This consumed most of the project's time and effort during Phase II as emphasised in the project strategy paper for sustainability of SM activities.

In addition the Phase II design did not call for a focus on social/community mobilization but efforts made to continue some elements of the process. This is viewed as a positive decision as the grassroots institutions clearly were not yet in a position to sustain themselves without additional support. One effective way in which the project has tried to ensure the sustainability of the community organizations was (i) discontinuing the formation of any new VCs/FCCs and (ii) accelerating the process of CCB formation and registration so as to make them legitimate under the current structure.

This, of course, raises concerns for the future of the VCs that have been left out of the process of CCB formation. Moreover, the CCBs appear entirely dependent on non-public sector sources of investment and unsustainable in the near future. Field visits also confirm this and the CCBs already express their disillusionment with the local governments. In view of this limited or no public sector support for these organizations the project has facilitated the building of linkages with other organizations—the only feasible option available to the project and has made good progress in this respect. The project has also

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<sup>5</sup> The Provincial government has opposed the formation of VCs in the province due to demanding resources and management/administration issues. Minutes of the JSC Meeting, 16 July 2004.

held numerous meetings with the CDD and provided inputs to strengthen the department in supporting the CCBs.

Those community organizations, in particular, the FCCs who have not been merged into the CCBs seem to exist only in name and fear that they will die out if left on their own. The project strategy states that the 110 CCBs in both the districts shall be linked with the Devolution Trust for Community Empowerment (DTCE) and that these CCBs will be formally handing over to the DTCE. There has not been any formal commitment from DTCE as yet. The Adhoc Tripartite Review meeting (1 July 2004) strongly recommended the project to get formal commitment from the line departments for carrying forward the project activities and to discontinue those that could not find a suitable taker. The committee also endorsed the extension of the project on the condition that the remaining time would focus on the completion of all critical activities. The project has since then tried to make progress on this end but high level commitment for taking over of project activities has still not materialized.

The project exit strategy (20 May 2004) calls for the immediate and urgent attachment of SW staff with the project in order to have a smooth exit. It also emphasizes the need for capacity building of grassroots institutions to increase their role in management of local level activities and the establishment of linkages for greater control of services. A working paper has also been prepared by the project and the most feasible option stated in it for the SM component calls for a project extension so that all VCs/FCCs can be converted into cluster based CCBs and building community and CDD capacities to a level where they can be made sustainable. The project has concluded that it should keep the SM component as an integral part of the project and let it be dependent upon the GoBs decision. *The project's statement that "experience shows that institutional building and proper linkage development ... takes at least two years, where proper outcome of SM is expected" is already sounding ambitious.*

## **2.7 The Gender Mainstreaming Strategy**

SDRB has an ambitious gender strategy as a cross cutting focus across the components of institutional policy reforms, information system and capacity building. With an objective of mainstreaming gender issues across all tiers, community and elected representatives, it seems as if the project may have taken up more than its capacity. As a result, elements of this gender strategy are spread out in all components and there is limited evidence of gender treated as a cross-cutting theme in service delivery. The impact is there in creating gender awareness and in the provision of information and training and there is some evidence of increasing participation and allocations for women in district Loralai as reported by the district Nazim. This impact, however, has not translated into any significant changes for improved gender focus in service delivery, nor in terms of institutionalizing gender issues across different tiers.

The project has given a number of inputs to achieve its objective of gender mainstreaming; it has provided gender disaggregated data through PIS and there is potential use of this gender disaggregated data in the implementation of the National Plan of Action (NPA) and in the upcoming ADB funded Gender Reforms Action Program (GRAP) initiative. Gender guidelines have been suggested by the project for incorporation into the PCIs and although notified by the ACS, have not been adopted to date. The project has also emphasized the formation of District Core Groups for NPA and notifications for the same have been issued by the SWD, however, they have not yet materialized in any of the project districts. One reason for this seems to be that the awareness and systems for the promotion of gender are still lacking at higher levels and district governments reflect the same attitude. The provincial level shows some sympathy towards the efforts made by the project but do not seem well oriented on the project's objectives, philosophy and inputs on gender mainstreaming.

Under the gender strategy (for its policy reforms package) the project has reviewed the rules of business relating to the district governments and has given inputs on gender recommendations for mainstreaming gender within the LGO 2001 and for the rules of business for the city/district, town/tehsil and Union

Administration Budget Rules, 2003. These have not led to any action or changes within the local government institutions as they mostly point out the need to “incorporating a gender perspective” and the “need to emphasize gender and have women representation” in the LG institutions and across functions e.g. finance/budget, planning, committees, CCBs etc., without giving specific inputs on how these can be operationalised. The project has provided useful support for elaborating gender concerns across selected sectors/areas of concern (for example, LGO 2001, HRM and some technical areas ). However, these will require further policy dialogue at various levels of the GoB and eventual adoption by the public sector agencies. The amendments recommended in the Balochistan LGO for mainstreaming of women are comprehensive. However these do not focus on the ways and means that can be employed to impact service delivery or bring about gender equity.

## **2.8 Role of Partner NGOs and other UNDP projects in Balochistan**

### **2.8.1 Role of partner NGOs in supporting villages and communities in target districts**

The implementation of the SDRB in the selected project area overlaps with a number of small and large donor funded organisations, NGOs and other welfare organisations. The programmatic focus and interventions of each are different from each other in terms of the sectors of interest and the target groups but they have clearly something to offer to each other. The most visible support is seen in the areas of grassroots focus and building institutional capacities for carrying out development work.

The project has also tried to utilise the existing institutional base at the grassroots level in their project area, in particular, where the project has facilitated the formation of new CCBs. A few new CCBs formed under the project, e.g. in Bolan and Jhal Magsi, are those that were functional as community based organisations, functioning mostly as voluntary organisations prior to the project’s interaction with them, e.g. in Bolan and Jhal Magsi. The scale of operations of these CBOs was limited and some were semi-functional but nonetheless they represented a significant local resource and are comparatively more advanced in collective management than others and have more capacity for local governance in activities such as local initiatives, management of public goods and entrepreneurship. The project has been quite effective in tapping and organising such village/cluster based organisations around their project interventions.

Other partner NGOs who have collaborated/worked with SDRB directly or indirectly include the Institute for Development Studies and Practices (IDSP), LAFAM and Action Aid. All of these NGOs are working in the areas of health and education etc., with a focus on working with the LG institutions and retaining a focus on community participation as a central theme for project activities. These NGOs have reportedly benefited from SDRB in terms of obtaining information (PIS) and the CDPs. The NGOs, however, point out that the coordination and the sharing of information was on an ad hoc basis—mostly personal contacts—and that this has not yet translated into institutional coordination and benefits for the target beneficiaries.

### **2.8.2 The Role of other UNDP projects in Balochistan**

The UNDP funded Area Development Program Balochistan (ADPB) has been active in the same project areas for over seven years but there has been no or very little exchange or cross learning during the period of SDRB implementation. It is felt that that some components of the ADPB could have directly benefited the SDRB work at the grassroots level but it has not been possible to do so due to lack of direction and attention from the GoB and the UNDP. The possibility and potential in collaborating with the ADPB in maximising impact and taking the project interventions to scale has also been noted in the SDRB external evaluation report 2002.

Discussions with the EAD suggest that the two projects fall under two different thematic (or focus) areas of the EAD and UNDP, i.e. governance and sustainable livelihoods. The EAD, however, notes that although thematic and project specific reviews were common, appropriate internal mechanisms for cross reviews and follow up have remained weak during SDRB implementation. These have now been improved and have reportedly led to increased opportunities for cross learning and support as well as improved federal government and donor oversight.

### **3. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

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#### **3.1 Conclusions and Lessons Learnt**

The conclusions relating to development as well as operational lessons have been summed up as follows:

##### The need for longer term support to devolution reforms

In the context of Pakistan, support to decentralization and governance reforms are taking place in a highly politicized and uncertain environment. Four years into the new system, the federal and provincial governments are still debating the overall direction of the reform process. The large scale devolution and decentralization has led to a fundamental re-distribution of powers to the grass roots institutions. Managing such a major transformation will be a long and on-going process, as the LGs struggle with a variety of legal, political, fiscal and institutional issues. These problems, however, are not unique to Pakistan. International experience and the local scenario clearly indicate that the process has just begun and much work lies ahead.

##### GoB commitment and actions in support of SDRB

Successful implementation of decentralization will also require full commitment on the part of the GoB, which has the primary responsibilities to strengthen and further build on an ambitious reforms agenda. There is currently a very strong LG perception on recentralization of the administrative and fiscal authorities devolved under the LGO 2001; the adhoc political and the rigid tribal systems continue to dictate local developments and virtually all target districts showed a severe public sector resource crunch for the past many years. Collectively, these factors define the landscape for local governance and have a high potential to undermine the many useful achievements made till date. The assessment shows that many of the SDRB initiatives now await GoB actions to ensure effectiveness and sustainability of benefits.

##### Design issues

Although the project has been able to achieve the agreed outputs, the implementation arrangements have led to low ownership and weak prospects for sustainability. The project could have clearly benefited from improved coordination with the key stakeholders. There is, therefore, understandable resistance from the line departments in taking over the project activities that they have not implemented or supported during implementation. The key provincial and district officials report that they were not part of the decision making and consequently there is lack of ownership, which adversely affects the prospects for sustainability. The project could have clearly benefited from enhanced coordination with the key stakeholders.

The project approach is founded on the premise that information and participation would lead to improved service delivery, which in turn has a positive impact on the beneficiaries. The beneficiary impact then gets fed back into the loop and strengthens the demand for information and mobilization. People, on the other hand, mobilize on a collective basis if they perceive tangible gains that are of high importance to the community as a whole. The assessment shows that better quality and access to information is a necessary pre-requisite but insufficient to produce tangible gains. The assessment also shows that an improved grass root information system has generally not proved to be an effective entry point for social mobilization.



In order to generate impact and improve their quality of life, people need to increase their incomes, assets and their social condition. These objectives are currently impacted by a large number of overarching factors (section 3.4). There are isolated instances where people have reported positive impact and improvement in the delivery of public services. It is not, however, not surprising that the project's focus on information has not yet translated into very visible impacts.

The project design also viewed the P&D as the implementing agency, with little or no provision for technical inputs from specialized entities such as the IT and the SWD. The mission also noted weak coordination between the project and the counterpart agencies such as the IT, SWD and the LGRD. As a result there is currently low levels of ownership and commitment among the key stakeholders of SDRB. Review of the project operations also indicate a tendency for centralization in decision making and inadequate authorities available at the project level. Future projects could benefit from delegation of appropriate administrative and financial authorities for speedier implementation.

The project also appears to have made a number of assumptions, particularly, those relating to the support from government counterparts in the provincial and district governments. In hindsight many of these assumptions seem ambitious and have had important bearing on the key questions of ownership, sustainability and replicability.

#### The need for holistic capacity building versus HRD

While the SDRB has successfully targeted several important areas of concern, improved planning systems and capacity building alone, may not lead to effective and autonomous local governments. Holistic and longer-term efforts will be needed to build on the gains made by the project. This may require several follow up phases of the SDRB with a primary focus on consolidating the gains made in phase I and II; enhancing ownership within GoB and the LGs; engaging the government and other development partners in a dialogue for continuing reforms and ensuring further improvements and taking the emerging good practices to scale.

#### Sustaining the grass roots momentum: weak SWD capacities

The project has made significant progress in institutional building at the grassroots level and in building up their capacity for local governance, developing linkage to increase their access to public and non-state service providers and to carry out gender sensitive planning. The primary and secondary data collected during the evaluation illustrate that the most significant achievement of the project in relation to this objective.

The project is scheduled for closure in December 2004, and the project's valuable support to continuously engage, support and link up the community groups with other development partners is likely to cease. Based on the exit strategy, the full responsibilities will fall on the shoulders of the district SWD, who have shown very limited (human, material and financial) capacities to support the large portfolio. This is coupled with a virtual lack of financial support from the local governments and many of the community groups are likely to become dormant thus undermining the huge effort applied in their formation and further strengthening during phase I and II.

Some stakeholders have noted that a project design that did not have the means to directly support village level development, should not have raised the village expectations by emphasizing on the preparation of a community development plan (CDP) in all villages. Although the project staff noted potential support from the LGs and other development partners through its linkage program, it was observed that not all communities are likely to get lucky. Indeed the LGs have clearly expressed a lack of ability to financially

support the CCBs. A trend that has continued for the past many years and is unlikely to change due to the severe resource crunch.

The CDP points out existing village facilities, priorities for future and gaps in services. However, it does not provide a holistic portfolio of opportunities that can be readily picked up by service providers. It is not costed and nor does it identify the beneficiaries for the schemes/plans identified. This is particularly true for the UC Report that does not have any analytical content for improving decision making and is one of the reasons that explains the current focus on having the DHDRs. At the moment the plan, at best, lists all the wishes of the community that are not rationalized in terms of the resource requirements and expected benefits.

#### Operationalization of the PIS and DMICs: Some questions of sustainability and replicability

Under the broad objective of policy reforms the key outputs of the project include development and operationalization of a PIS in the project areas, establishment of two DMICs in Loralai and Bolan and a pilot DMIC in district Ziarat. Other pilot initiatives included the development of LIS in one mauza in district Loralai. At the provincial level, the SDRB has also supported the strengthening of the LGC through a number of inputs. Although there is evidence of the usage of the PIS and the usefulness of the DMICs for the line departments, it was observed that there are strong and contrasting views from several senior officials in the GoB and the target districts regarding the overall strategy as well as the credibility and validity of the PIS data. Weak coordination and limited involvement of the key stakeholders during implementation have contributed to low ownership and commitment.

Although operational, the DMICs are unlikely to sustain in the absence of clear policy directions from the GoB/IT and the provision of appropriate human, material and financial resources that have yet to be sanctioned. The NRB has also raised some questions in relation to “standardization” of the PIS and its ability to integrate with other federal and provincial systems. This may require further coordination and a joint technical review by the NRB, GOB/IT and the project authorities. The Ziarat model (for PIS development) is considered to be cost effective and also more inclusive because of its primary reliance on LG tiers and the existing infrastructure. However, its efficacy remains to be tested. The mission recommends that on completion of the PIS process in Ziarat, the GOB/IT, the P&D, the NRB and other concerned agencies carry out a detailed review of the process and its outputs to ascertain the potential for replication.

#### The success and sustainability of the pilot initiatives

The project support to the LGC in the form of the web portal development clearly offers tremendous prospects for improving LGC’s operations, redressing grievances and tackling local issues. However, LGC operations are currently constrained by the virtual lack of manpower, infrastructure and the necessary budgets. The full scale operationalization of the web portal also assumes that necessary support will be extended from the district, tehsil and Union tiers. However, the current state of LGs shows that this assumption may be over ambitious. The rapid appraisal also showed that the LGC structure has inherent limitations. The policy guidance and support relies on inputs from LGC members who have concurrent (and high levels of) responsibilities in the provincial government thus making it very difficult to effectively provide the needed leadership, direction and oversight.

Other pilot activities include the project’s support for the development of the LIS in one mauza in Loralai district that has been effectively completed. The model offers significant prospects, however, full scale replication will require wide ownership of the idea and its implementation within the GoB. The senior management of the Board of Revenue has shown a lukewarm response towards this model. The

replication of this model is also dependent upon a number of policy amendments, which are so far not forthcoming. Moreover the Federal government has recently approved the establishment of a country wide land management system which is likely to be backed by adequate policy and budgetary support in all provinces. Given the obvious nexus and the implications for legal sanction and future replication, the project could benefit from further dialogue between the Ministry of S&T, the GoB and the project staff.

#### Capacity building is necessary but insufficient for meaningful impact

Under the capacity building program, the project has prepared nearly 39 training modules and has successfully completed a large number of training programs, seminars, workshops and study tours for the state functionaries and elected representatives. The project clearly operated in a period of massive transition that necessitated immediate and across the board capacity building interventions. A number of LG officials and councillors have noted that the capacity building program has been beneficial. In total, nearly 2000 elected councilors, 900 government and project staff and 600 community activists benefited from orientation, exposure and training programs.

The mission noted a very high turn over of staff in virtually all line agencies. The adhoc and politically motivated postings and transfers of key government officials, particularly staff that had been trained by the SDRB, are viewed as a negative trend. The high turn over has not only drained the modest capacities built by the project but also heavily impacted on project implementation. The project has yet to undertake a formal assessment of the training impact. Scattered evidence, however, points to a strong need for follow up interventions. Virtually all the stakeholders noted that HRD interventions were necessary but insufficient for building up the institutional capacities. The mission gathered a wide spread perception that the provincial government has yet to fully transfer the agreed LG authorities and the necessary resources to effectively run the local governments. Many argued that these were critical elements to translate available capacities into meaningful results.

#### Influencing policy reform on gender mainstreaming

SDRB has an ambitious gender strategy as a cross cutting focus across the components of institutional policy reforms, information system and capacity building. With an objective of mainstreaming gender issues across all tiers, community and elected representatives, it appears that the project may have taken up an overly ambitious agenda. As a result, elements of the gender strategy are spread out in all components, with limited evidence of gender treated as a cross-cutting theme in service delivery. The impact in terms of gender appears to be higher levels of awareness. However, this has not translated into a greater focus for women in actual delivery of services, e.g. in annual work planning, budgeting, decision making, monitoring, reviews etc. Similarly, research studies/papers are helpful in imparting awareness and capacity building but are not the best means to promote gender sensitive policy formulation.

There are plans at the provincial level to enhance the gender focus through various programs. However, these are at an initial stage. For the near future at least, the ADB funded GRAP seems to be all encompassing framework for institutionalizing gender issues and policy reforms. The energy and focus of the government at present seems to be focused entirely on the GRAP initiative and the interest to take notice of any other piece meal initiative is not evident. The Gender Strategy of the project makes for ambitious reading with a number of interventions and “policy statements”, however the ways and means to achieve these seem unclear. The strategy does not clarify how a project of this size aims to implement it.

### The portfolio of activities

As described in the preceding chapters there is a feeling that a relatively modest sized project such as this has attempted to address far too many areas than it could effectively manage. Indeed the project portfolio appears to have swollen during the last year with several new activities that were not originally conceived under the project document. Consequently there is a lack of consolidation and impact on the ground as focus on any one area tends to get diluted. This is particularly true for the SM component—there are too many steps and the language used is, for most parts, beyond the comprehension of the target beneficiaries.

The project activities ranged from a large community development initiative to capacity building programs for state functionaries, information system development to research studies as well as number of other one-off pilot activities with line departments. The large number of activities tended to dilute focus on any one initiative, which also means that additional efforts will be needed to take the many good ideas to fruition. These include the PIS system, training modules, SM, the project's support for LGC, the LIS model as well as the needed follow up on the very useful research studies.

### **3.2 Looking Forward—Some Recommendations**

The key recommendations arising from the conclusions above are summarized below:

#### The need for longer term support to devolution reforms

International experience shows that successful decentralization may take more than a decade to stabilize. Viewed in the context of Pakistan, the process has clearly just begun. The SDRB has introduced many new ideas and demonstrated that the business of LGs can be run more effectively. There are, however, many challenges that remain to be faced. Ownership and sustainability of the many useful innovations remain a high concern. Likewise, the tremendous potential of the village institutions created under the SDRB will need further nurturing and support. Although efforts are underway to further strengthen the district agencies to take charge of the project activities, meaningful capacity building is likely to take time.

The line departments such as the SWD and the IT will take additional time and resources to get established at the district level. Moreover, the GoB is also in the process of further restructuring these departments and this transition will take time and effort. Hence the rationale to consider a follow up phase would need to dedicate itself to i) building ownership ii) consolidation of the SDRB gains through consensus building on preferred strategies and technical options and iii) focusing on sustainability through continued institutional support. The new strategy must ensure a proactive role of the IT, SWD, Revenue department and the LGRD in all future activities

#### GoB commitment and actions in support of SDRB

Although SDRB has successfully demonstrated several innovations, these now await GoB actions to ensure wider benefits. The key actions relate to the urgent support for IT department (e.g. PIS future strategy and the DMIC staffing and resources); SWD staffing and resources; LGC staffing and resources; LIS adoption and the accompanying legal and regulatory amendments as well as support to the gender mainstreaming agenda. It is obvious from the assessment that without these critical actions many of the SDRB interventions are unlikely to sustain.

#### Design recommendations

Future projects would clearly benefit from enhanced ownership and coordination among the key stakeholders. This would require that all key agencies are actively involved in the project design as well as its implementation. It may be useful to consider, for the next Phase, a change in the implementation methodology such that the project components are implemented directly by those line departments that have been identified for sustaining project activities. A redistribution of the implementation roles to the concerned line agencies would not only build ownership and capacities within key agencies but it would also ensure sustainability. The role of the P&DD can be confined to coordination, which would also be consistent with its provincial mandate.

The assessment shows that better quality and access to information is a necessary pre-requisite but insufficient to produce tangible gains, which is why the projects' emphasis on the grass root information system, has generally not proved to be an effective entry point for social mobilization. Nor has the PIS itself provided the impetus for improved service delivery to the grass roots. The project may wish to consider other innovative ways to clearly demonstrate (at all levels of LGs), the potential use and benefits of the proposed systems, which will generate the LG interest and catalyze further changes.

The project could also benefit from a more decentralized approach with delegation of appropriate administrative and financial authorities to the project team and the partner line agencies for speedier implementation. Among other factors, the new project will need to critically assess the various assumptions, particularly those that relate to the potential support from government counterparts in the provincial and district governments.

The new project (or its extension) could also benefit from enhanced coordination among the UNDP funded activities in Balochistan as well as other devolution (and related) support projects that are in operation or are in the pipeline. The ADB funded DSP, GRAP, BNRMP and some other projects that are in the pipeline are good examples.

#### Sustaining the grass root momentum

The project is scheduled for closure in December 2004, which is when the project's valuable support for community development is likely to cease. Based on the exit strategy, the full responsibilities will fall on the shoulders of the district SWD, which has shown very limited capacities to support the large and growing portfolio. With the withdrawal of the project and the virtual lack of support from the local governments, many of the community groups (CCBs, VCs and the FCCs) are likely to become dormant. Hence a strong rationale to continue supporting the CD activities until (a) alternative support structure from DTCE/LGs emerge in the project areas (b) SWD develops adequate capacities to take charge or (c) the local community groups start showing sufficient capacities to permit a reasonable withdrawal of external support.

#### Sustainability of the PIS and DMICs

The credibility of the PIS strategy, the overall design as well as its technical contents would vastly improve with further policy dialogue, improved coordination and a proactive role of the key stakeholders including the GoB/IT, the P&D and the NRB/NARMS. The mission recommends a close coordination and consensus building among these institutions before scaling up of the effort.

The sustainability of the DMICs would also require clear policy directions from the GoB/IT and the provision of appropriate resources that have yet to be sanctioned. The project has clearly demonstrated its ability and usefulness in functioning as an important information provider to the government as well as to other civil society organizations. The information, however, needs to be made more operational and analytical for it to add value to any significant policy debate and decision making. The many research

studies, policy papers and other information, useful as they may be, are not likely to be of any great use for the key stakeholders. Similarly, as some others are doing, SDRB could become a key contributor in combining operational research and training to government functionaries and other organizations. This will require that the project orient its information, communication and research products towards the needs of its various partners so that it can create a niche for itself in not just the provision of information but also in capacity building.

The NRB concerns with regards to the “standardization” of the PIS and its ability to horizontally and vertically integrate with other federal and provincial data basis will require a policy dialogue and a comparative technical review of the PIS and NARIMS. The mission also recommends that on completion of the PIS process in Ziarat, the GOB/IT, the P&D, the NRB and other concerned agencies carry out a detailed review of the process and its outputs, to ascertain the potential for replication.

#### The success of pilot initiatives: can these be sustained or replicated ?

The web portal clearly offers tremendous prospects for improving LGC’s operations, redressing grievances and tackling local issues. However, LGC operations are currently constrained by the virtual lack of manpower, infrastructure and the necessary budgets. The full scale operationalization of the web portal also assumes that necessary support will be extended from the district, tehsil and Union tiers. The GoB will clearly need to provide the needed support to make use of the SDRB interventions and ensure that the LGC emerges as an effective body.

The mission review shows that the LIS model offers significant prospects. However, full scale replication will require enhanced ownership with the GOB/Revenue department as well as various policy and legal amendments in the current land revenue systems. The mission recommends a stronger advocacy within the GoB as well as further consultations with the NRB and the Ministry of Science and Technology to review the parallel model being promoted by the Federal government.

#### Capacity building is necessary but insufficient for meaningful impact:

The project has yet to undertake a formal assessment of the training impact. However, scattered evidence, points to a strong need for holistic follow up interventions. Virtually all the stakeholders noted that HRD interventions were necessary but insufficient for institutional capacity building . Many critical and inter-connected elements come together to create holistic and sustainable capacities. Judging from the key factors noted by the LG stake holders, the new project may wish to consider a strong advocacy role on key themes such as effectively transfer of LG authorities reflected in the LGO 2001; policy dialogue on fiscal transfers and decentralization and iii) the provision of physical and financial resources to effectively run the local governments.

The project should invest the remaining time in explaining their interventions to the line departments together with their relevant processes in data collection, capacity building, social mobilization, etc. For the next Phase, the project has to figure out how service delivery can be more user friendly, gender sensitive and pro-poor. For this purpose the approach should be to focus on what is it that the line departments actually do in terms of planning and implementation. It will need to review the annual planning, implementation and review cycles/processes of relevant line departments so as to identify the need for changes in operational policies and procedures, e.g. the inclusion of CCBs in scheme identification, inclusion of women councilors in annual work planning and budgeting etc.

### Influencing policy reform on gender mainstreaming

SDRB has an ambitious gender strategy as a cross cutting focus across the components of institutional policy reforms, information system and capacity building. However, the projects' efforts were thinly spread and therefore had a relatively limited impact. The GoB plans to enhance the gender focus through various programs but in the near future the ADB funded GRAP appears to be the best platform for policy dialogue and institutionalizing gender issues. Although SDRB and its successor may wish to continue and perhaps expand its gender focus at the grass roots, it may wish to move out of the policy and mainstreaming debate that will be best addressed through the much larger GRAP initiative.

### Completing and consolidating achievements and impact

The mission also feels that a project of relatively modest size has attempted to address far too many areas than it could effectively manage. The large number of activities tended to dilute focus on any one initiative which also implies that additional inputs are required to take the many good ideas to fruition.

In view of the list of areas/interventions that the project has proposed for a next Phase<sup>6</sup>, which covers a wide range of activities from social mobilization to law and order, it is important to point out that small projects such as SDRB are not the best means to promote or impact sensitive policy dialogues and institutions. The mission strongly recommends consolidation of the achievements made thus far and deliberate measures to ensure their sustainability. This will also mean that the project narrows down its focus on areas where it can offer clear and a comparative advantage. *The starting point for it is to take firm decisions in terms of where and how best it can add value and the niche that it has created so far, to deepen the focus and quality of the services being offered, for errors or over ambition in this will inexorably lead to loss of focus and credibility—something which this project is not in a position to risk.* The mission would like to strongly recommend focusing the program on niche areas (or selected interventions) that will also ensure improved effectiveness and sustainability. The project's support for PIS/DMICs, LIS development, institutional strengthening of the IT and SWD at the district levels, operational research and the grass root focus on CCB strengthening represent solid areas for future support.

### Introducing a poverty focus

Given the objective for improving service delivery, in particular, for communities where there are gaps or deficiencies in the provision of services, some attention to poverty profiling for the area and the household profiles for the organized communities can better help in monitoring and evaluating the performance of the line agencies as well as the communities. This is also useful for improving the CDPs prepared by the communities and lending it more credibility got getting other donors/sponsors interested in taking up the community development plans. A comprehensive portfolio of investment opportunities thus identified will mobilize communities further.

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<sup>6</sup> Refer strategy paper for possible UNDP support to SDRB, 19 Jan 2004.

## **Annex I**

### **TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE EVALUATION MISSION**

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#### **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

##### **For the**

##### **Project Evaluation Mission**

##### **For the SUPPORT TO DEVOLUTION REFORMS IN BALOCHISTAN Project (PAK/96/021)**

#### **I. Background:**

The Balochistan Trial District Management Project (BTDMP), phase I, was implemented from 1998 to 2002 with a total budget of US\$ 1.352 million. Its objective was to improve public service delivery mechanisms through institutional reforms necessary for the decentralization of public sector services; developing Participatory Information System as a decision support system; human resource development for sustainable use of resources and ensuring community participation at grass roots for effective monitoring; and planning and implementation of development activities with gender mainstreaming as a cross-cutting theme. This phase was implemented in 11 selected Union Councils of Jhal Magsi and Loralai districts. The major achievements of the project in phase-1 were the development and implementation of Participatory Information System as decision support system for local decision makers, involvement of communities in the local level development endeavors by setting up of 196 village councils and 113 female community councils through social mobilization processes, capacity building of elected representatives, line department staff and community activist. Unfortunately BTDMP phase I was mostly executed during the suspension period of the Local Council System, hence the mechanisms developed could not be tested until the emergence of the Local Government Plan 2001. With the latter, the efforts of BTDMP were re-aligned and dovetailed in order to make project activities compatible with the new local government structures in Balochistan. This resulted in high impact and enhanced visibility for the project.

The external evaluation, conducted in March 2002, also endorsed the efforts of BTDMP and recommended its expansion to cover the entire two districts.

BTDMP's was therefore expanded to a Phase II (July 2002-June 2004) with a total budget of US\$ 1.349 million), and renamed "Support to Devolution Reforms in Balochistan" (SDRB). The objectives of the project continued to remain the same as in Phase I, linking these up with the devolution reforms and processes, and with greater emphasis on gender mainstreaming. Models developed in the areas of MIS/GIS as Decision Support Systems were to be strengthened, capacity-building of stakeholders extended, and community participation further facilitated. The project strategy also reinforced the concurrent policies of the Government of Balochistan with ongoing projects, and explored possible linkage development with different NGOs. The principal objective of SDRB was to assess the types of institutional reforms and other changes that might be required for the decentralization of the delivery of public sector services and making them more effective.

Following are major areas of interventions of the SDRB project:

- Capacity building of elected representatives, Government staff and community activists.
- Gender & Development
- Institutional Policy Reforms
- Community Participation
- Strengthening of Local Government Institutions
- Development of Information Systems for District Governments.



At present, SDRB has been implemented in the districts of Jhall Magsi, Loralai, Bolan and Barkhan with major focus on replication of the successful models developed in the first phase and strengthening of Local Government Institutions like monitoring communities and CCBs. The project also undertook innovative research studies under its policy reforms component, which include studies on LIS, Gender mainstreaming strategy to improve grass-roots women access to public services, Gender sensitive HR Strategy, Impact assessment of Local Government and development of District Human Development Report.

The TPR meeting of the project held on 19 December 2003 recommended conducting another project evaluation, for the mission to critically review the achievements of the SDRB project, and to make recommendations for future assistance to the Government of Balochistan.

## **2. Objectives of the evaluation mission:**

The primary objective of the evaluation of the project is to carry out a forward looking review of the project design, implementation strategy, sustainability, impact, results and achievements, identify gaps and good practices, and make recommendations for future action.

## **3. Tasks to be performed:**

The mission will critically assess the following:

- The overall performance of the project;
- The specific impact, usefulness, relevance and sustainability of specific project outputs and activities, in terms of design and implementation, as defined in the project document, in terms of research/studies/documentation, policy recommendations/advocacy, capacity-building intervention (skills, mainstreaming gender, other), awareness raising, networking and coordination;
- The relevance and usefulness of the project with regard to its envisaged target beneficiaries, including public sector institutions, policy makers, elected representatives at local levels, development planners, district and local government, civil society organizations, and local communities. Impact of the project on women, minorities and marginalized groups shall be assessed specifically.
- The suitability and efficiency of implementation arrangements. On this basis, the mission shall highlight major management and operational issues that effected achievement of project objectives, and suggest recommendations for their redressal. Specific attention shall be given to mechanisms and platforms that ensure guidance, monitoring and evaluation of the project. Also, the mission shall review the role of P&DD as an implementing partner, as well as of the specific roles of departments having high priority to the SDRB, i.e. IT, Social Welfare, Local Government, and Revenue. Finally, the mission shall pay special attention to the role of partner NGOs in supporting and organizing the villages, communities and CCBs, in the target districts.
- The sustainability and replication potential for the major components of the project, i.e. replication possibilities of PIS and LIS in Balochistan and GoB's commitment in this regard; taking over of the community mobilization component by the Social Welfare Dept and NGOs; handing over and replication of DMICs by IT Dept, district governments and P&D Dept.
- The significant lessons that can be drawn from the experience of the project and its results (in terms of design, strategy, sustainability, impact, results and achievements), in particular good practices and initiatives that worked well or that can be potentially applied to other projects, as

- well as those initiatives that should be avoided in future. Specific attention shall be given to identify the causes of slow progress and low impact, if any, and accordingly suggest remedial measures and/or recommend readjusting /reorientation of project design.

On this basis, the mission will prepare a debriefing session to UNDP and the project, and present an evaluation mission report for comments, before actually finalizing it.

#### **4. Scope of the Evaluation:**

Geographic Area: Balochistan

The mission will be fielded for 14 days, starting from mid-June. SDRB will be in charge of preparing a briefing package for the members as well as organising all required meetings and interviews with the various parties concerned. Field visits will represent a substantive part of the overall assignment, and will be scheduled by SDRB project to ensure the process of consultation with all necessary stakeholders. Proposed focus areas of visit are Bolan and Loralai. The rest of the assignment will be conducted in Quetta and Islamabad. A detailed agenda will be submitted by the project at the beginning of the mission.

#### **5. Products expected from the mission:**

At the end of the mission, the mission members shall present a draft report with findings on above mentioned assessment areas, recommendations, lessons learned and best practices, as described under point 3. The report shall also include recommendations as for the needs, design and strategy for future related assistance, on the basis of all previous assessments, as well as the recommendations of the various monitoring missions and the Joint Steering and Tripartite Review Committees.

On the basis of comments provided by UNDP and the project management, the mission shall finalize the report, within 10 days after the end of the mission.

#### **6. Methodology Approach:**

- Documentation Review (desk study)

- UNDP Strategic Result Framework (SRF), Result Oriented Annual Report (ROAR), Common Country Assessment/UN Development Assessment Framework (CCA/UNDAF), Country Programme 2004-2008(CP), SDRB Project Document, Annual Progress Reports (APR), Quarterly Progress Reports, Joint Steering Committee and Tripartite Review Meeting Reports; and the Evaluation Report of March 2002.

- UNDP Pakistan Outcome Evaluation Report, monitoring/evaluation material developed by SDRB, planning and concept notes, as well as other reports/outputs/documentation developed by the project; monitoring missions reports; working papers and minutes of joint steering committee and tripartite review committee;

- GoB LGO 2001, and other devolution-related documents;

- Interviews

Interviews with GoB concerned line departments at provincial and district levels, elected representatives at district, tehsil and union levels, UNDP, the Economic Affairs Division, NRB, project beneficiaries (including women) among elected representatives, public sector, training institutions, civil society, media, relevant Local Government institutions, and international donor community.

- Field Visits

Loralai districts and other locations if required.

## **7. Evaluation team:**

The mission team will be composed of two experts on devolution and institutional reforms respectively, out of which an international institutional reforms expert will be the team leader. All duties of the team will be carried out in close collaboration with the UNDP field office and SDRB management. Furthermore, the team will liaise regularly with other concerned and interested government parties as well as the international donor community in Pakistan.

## **8. Implementation arrangements**

SDRB project management unit will undertake all necessary administrative tasks concerning travel arrangements, accommodation, and logistics for the mission team. The mission cost will be charged to SDRB (PAK/96/021), budget line 16.01.

## Annex II

### EVALUATION MISSION ITENARY

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#### Tentative Itinerary for the Evaluation Mission

##### 20<sup>th</sup> September, Monday

- Meeting with UNDP ARR( Democratic Governance )
- Departure to Quetta

##### 21<sup>st</sup> September, Tuesday

- Briefing at PMU about the project
- Document Review further project briefings at PMU

##### 22<sup>nd</sup> September, Wednesday

- Meeting with National Project Director
- Meeting with Secretary LGRD, AS LGRD and DG LGRD/LGC
- Meeting with DS,IT,Quetta
- Visit to LGC and meeting with DG LGC/Staff

##### 23<sup>rd</sup> September, Thursday

- Meetings with Secretary IT
- Meeting with Secretary Social Welfare
- Departure for Ziarat

##### 24<sup>th</sup> September, Friday

- Meeting with EDOs in Ziarat and Visit to DMIC
- Departure for Loralai
- Meetings with District Nazim, DCO
- Visit to DMIC and Briefing
- Meeting with Tehsil Council Loralai and UC Nazims/Secretaries
- Meeting with EDOs (CDD/P&F/Revenue/Education/Health etc.)

##### 25<sup>th</sup> September, Saturday

- Visit to CCBs male and female
- Visit to VCs and FCCs
- Meeting with male and female councilors
- Meeting with NGO groups
- Departure for Quetta

##### 26<sup>th</sup> September, Sunday

- Departure for Jhal Magsi
- Meeting with UC Gandawah and selected District LG officials
- Visit to VCs/FCCs and CCBs

- Departure to Bolan

**27<sup>th</sup> September, Monday**

- Meeting with DCO Bolan
- Meeting with selected CCBs(Male and Female)
- Visit to DMIC Bolan Briefing
- Meeting with Tehsil Council Dhadar(Male and Female Councilors)
- Meeting with EDOs and Dos(CDD/P&F/Revenue/Education/Health etc.)

**28<sup>th</sup> September, Tuesday**

- Debriefing at PMU
- Departure to Islamabad
- Departure to Islamabad

**4<sup>th</sup> October, Monday**

- Meeting with Mr.Danyal Aziz ,Chairman NRB
- Meeting with Ms.Farah Ayub ,DS,EAD,Islamabad and Ms.Maria Ijaz (Section Officer)
- Meeting with Mr.Adnan Shah, Chief Consultant NARIMS/NRB,Islamabad

**5<sup>th</sup> October, Tuesday**

- Wrap-up meeting at UNDP

**6<sup>th</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> October**

- Preparation of Draft Mission report

**10<sup>th</sup> -11<sup>th</sup> November**

- Preparation of final Draft

### Annex III

#### LIST OF PEOPLE MET

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Mr.Farhan Sabih, Ms.Shumaila Razaqat and Ms.Maria Ijaz , UNDP, EAD Islamabad	20 <sup>th</sup> September 2004
Mr. Fazle-Haq (DC Loralai), Mr. Haji Murad Ali (M&E specialist), Ms. Fauzia (Gender specialist), Mr. Ali Ahmed Khan (MIS specialist), Mr. Sami Raza Beg (HRD specialist), Mr. Faridullah Khan (District Advisor Kachi)	21 <sup>st</sup> September 2004
Mr.Marri (Chief Economist)	22 <sup>nd</sup> September 2004
Ms.Maria Ijaz (Section Officer) EAD, Islamabad	22 <sup>nd</sup> September 2004
Mr. Masood ahmed (Sec. IT), Mr. Mahmood Mangal (DS. IT), Mr. Sajjad (Business Analyst)	22 <sup>nd</sup> September 2004
Mr.Shah Jehan (AD LG Commission), Mr. Fayaz Ali (Supp. Comp. operation)	22 <sup>nd</sup> September 2004
Capt. (R) Niaz Mohammad Khan (Sec. SWD)	23 <sup>rd</sup> September 2004
Mr. Naqeebullah(Senior Science Teacher),Mr. Abdullah Khan (Health Deptt. Clerk)	24 <sup>th</sup> September 2004
Mr. Mehrab Khan(UC Nazim), Mr. Saleh Mohammad Nasir (EDO P&F), Mr. Taj Mohammad (EDO Agriculture), Mr. Mohammad Akram(SDO Irrg.), Mr. Bismillah (Primary Teacher), Mr.Mohammad Ashraf(X-EN/PHED), Mr.Mohammad Aslam (EDU CD)	24 <sup>th</sup> September 2004
Mr. Samad Khan Noor (District Naib Nazim), Mr. Dawood Khan (DPA Loralai), Mr. Salim Jan (SO/UNDP), Mr. Mohammad Naeem (TMO Loralai), Mr.Masoom Yousaf (FSO Loralai)	24 <sup>th</sup> September 2004
Mr. Noor Mohammad Jogazai (District Zakat Chairman Loralai)	24 <sup>th</sup> September 2004
DMIC Loralai (Mr. Mohammad Akhtar Khilji(computer programmer),Mr.Zafar (P&F/Steno), Mr.Majid (Rev. /Steno).	24 <sup>th</sup> September 2004
Dr. Bakhtiar(Policy facilitator USAID), Mr. Arsala Khan Kakar(IDSP-ESRA), Ms.Sabra Ghilzai(Regional Officer),Mr.Faiz Kakar(ADP. Regional Sup.)	24 <sup>th</sup> September 2004
Mr.Akhtar Mohammad(DO education)Loralai, Mr.Habibullah(EDO CD)	25 <sup>th</sup> September 2004
Mr.Abdul Mannai (District Nazim Loralai)	25 <sup>th</sup> September 2004
Mr.Malik Noorullah (Tehsil Nazim),Mr.Mohabatullah(Tehsil Naib Nazim), Mr.Mohammad Khalid(S.Engineer),Mr.Abdul Manan(Circle Chairman Alizai)	25 <sup>th</sup> September 2004

Mr.Shakil A.Hashmi(DCO),Mr. Rafique Ahmed(EDO)	25 <sup>th</sup> September 2004
CCB group,Loralai(2 UC Councilan,6 CCB Chairman)	25 <sup>th</sup> September 2004
Mr.Faiz(UC Sec,Kari),Mr.Mola Baksh(UC NN,Kari),Mr.Fida Hussain (UC Nazim,Kora Lena)	26 <sup>th</sup> September 2004
Assistant EDO/Finance	26 <sup>th</sup> September 2004
Mr.Najmuddin Sheikh(SO SDRB),Mr.Faridullah(DPA),Mr.Bakhshel (member VC),Mr.Hubdar Ali (Chairman VC),village Noushera/UC Khari/ District Jhal Magsi	26 <sup>th</sup> September 2004
Cluster CCB (CCB Ghandhawa) Young Welfare Association	26 <sup>th</sup> September 2004
Mr.Fareed (DPA,Bolan)	27 <sup>th</sup> September 2004
DCO Bolan	27 <sup>th</sup> September 2004
Mr.Hashim Sahid (District Admin Office, Bolan)	27 <sup>th</sup> September 2004
Mr.Mahboob(Data entry operator),Mr.Javed Iqbal(Data entry operator), Mr.Mohammad Ayub(Computer programmer),DMIC Bolan	27 <sup>th</sup> September 2004
Tehsil Councilors/Dhadar(5 Male,8 Female)	27 <sup>th</sup> September 2004
Ms.Razia Rind(DPO Education)	27 <sup>th</sup> September 2004
Female CCB, Mushkaf, Union Council Dhadar, Bolan	27 September 2004
Mr Daniyal Aziz, Chairman NRB	4 <sup>th</sup> , October 2004
Mr. Adnan Shah, Chief NARIM/NRB	4 <sup>th</sup> October, 2004
Ms Farah Ayub, DS Economic Affairs Division, Isl	4 <sup>th</sup> October, 2004

## Annex IV

### LIST OF TABLES

#### Capacity Building and Community Participation

(a)

##### Training of Grassroots Organizations (Village Councils and Citizen Community Boards)

Description of events	No. of events	No. of participants	
		Male	Female
Management skills training	54	825	76
Monitoring and development seminars	37	2,299	0
Study visits	2	17	0
Sector specific training (livestock, agriculture, health and hygiene, TBA, teachers')	10	148	104
CCB formation workshops	65	1,709	291
CCB strengthening training	10	187	71
Annual stakeholder workshop	3	140	25
Management skills training (for female members)	3	0	46
<b>Total</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>5,325</b>	<b>613</b>

Source: SDRB Presentation to the Evaluation Mission, 21 September 2004

(b)

##### Achievements in Community Participation

Process	Loralai	Kacchi	Total
Information sharing reflection	201	167	368
New village councils formed	101	98	199
Male community councils converted to village councils	40	49	89
Female community councils formed	59	54	113
Participatory monitoring management	143	95	238
Participatory planning and implementation	241	158	399
Community development plans	89	64	153
Citizen community boards	43	66	109

Source: SDRB Presentation to the Evaluation Mission, 21 September 2004



(c)

**Linkages Among Private and Public Sector Organizations**

Activities	Loralai	Kacchi	Total
Schemes taken up by the Khushal Pakistan Program	13	4	17
Schemes picked up by NGOs:			
▫ Trust for Voluntary Organization	5	0	5
▫ Water & Environmental Sanitation Society (h/pumps)	35	0	35
▫ Taraqee Trust (h/pumps)	5	0	5
▫ Khushali Bank (micro-credit)	12VCs	0	12VCs
▫ Action Aid (Edu, health, sports)	8VCs	0	8VCs
Schemes by irrigation dept. (Karez rehabilitation)	15	0	15
ADPB (computer training)	10	0	10
Livestock vaccination	61,651	20,471	82,122
Tetanus/polio campaigns coverage	100%	100%	100%
Tree plantation	26,100	4,050	30,150

Source: SDRB Presentation to the Evaluation Mission, 21 September 2004

## **Annex V**

### **SDRB OBJECTIVES, ACTIVITIES & TARGETS**

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#### **The Project Objectives**

The overall objective of the project is to “improve public sector service delivery mechanism through institutional reforms necessary for decentralization of public sector services; developing participatory information system as a decision support system; human resource development for sustainable use of resources and ensuring effective community participation at grassroots for effective monitoring, planning and implementation of development activities with gender mainstreaming as a cross cutting theme.”

The project was initially (Phase I) implemented in 11 selected Union Councils (UCs) of Jhal Magsi and Loralai districts and extended to 49 UCs during Phase II in all four districts. In 2001 district Bolan was merged into Jhal Magsi and renamed as Kacchi, district Barkhan and Musakhel were merged into Loralai and both districts were included in Phase II.

The development objective of the project is to put in place institutional mechanisms that can effectively provide the delivery of public services based on decentralized and participatory local level development. Specific project objectives are reproduced as follows:

The project objectives as outlined in the project document are given below:

1. To establish a policy framework that enables the local government institutions, line agencies and local communities to undertake effective delivery of public sector services in a gender sensitive, sustainable, decentralized, participatory and efficient manner.
2. Institutional capacity building: An improved linkage between existing public sector and local government institutions and beneficiary communities is established and the capacity of the local government and line agencies at the district and union council levels is strengthened for the management of local development activities.
3. Community participation in order to have better monitoring of public sector services, planning and implementation of village level infrastructure and local resource mobilization.

The major areas of interventions under which the SDRB project activities were implemented include:

- Capacity building of elected representatives, government staff and community activists
- Gender and development
- Institutional policy reforms
- Community participation
- Strengthening of local government institutions
- Development of information systems for district governments

The Phase I activities were mainly focused on the development and implementation of the Participatory Information System (PIS), forming and building capacities of the communities in local level development through the formation of a number of male and female village based institutions, termed as male community councils (MCCs) and female community councils (FCCs) through a process of social mobilization and building the capacities of the government line departments, elected representatives and community activists.

The initiation of the Phase II was after the promulgation of the Local Government Ordinance (LGO) 2001 and the project made some changes in their strategic thrusts and implementation mechanisms. The new Phase was launched with the intention of (a) supporting the ongoing devolution process and (b) With this came not only a widening of the scope of the project area; addition of two new districts, Barkhan and Bolan after the delimitation of the district boundaries from 2002 onwards but also an expansion in the project interventions. The objectives, however, remained the same as of Phase I but a conscious effort was made to link up the project with the ongoing devolution reforms and processes with an additional focus on gender mainstreaming and the strengthening of models initiated during the earlier Phase. Similarly additional capacity building of the stakeholders, strengthening of local government institutions and replication of the PIS in the entire project area as well as in the Ziarat district (as a pilot) were emphasized. The project was also renamed as SDRB in concurrence with the promulgation of the LGO in 2000 and with the directions given in the devolution plan and the priorities of the Government of Balochistan (GoB). A large portion of the second Phase (including the extension period) was also devoted to preparing for, and carrying out various research studies,<sup>7</sup> capacity building and working out modalities for ensuring sustainability of the project interventions, by involving the provincial and district governments.

### **Key Activities and Targets**

The project document for Phase I and II lays down a matrix that illustrates the objectives of the project as well as the different targets/outcomes and activities corresponding to each objective. The key activities and targets are summarized below:

The first objective relating to the policy framework has a number of these activities/targets that are expected to contribute towards the establishment of an enabling environment for effective public service delivery. This include establishing a framework that enables the local government (LG) institutions and communities to undertake effective delivery of public services; standardized district based MIS/GIS in the project area that provides sex disaggregated data in various sectors; developing standards for information interchange between various information management systems in the public sector; undertaking thematic studies, e.g. Land Information System (LIS), gender mainstreaming at the grassroots for improving access of women to public services, provincial Human Resource Management (HRM) strategy, impact of local council system on Public Service Delivery Mechanism (PSDM). The research studies were aimed at supporting and influencing the policy making at higher levels.

The second objective of capacity building includes development of the capacities of the line agencies in planning, management and control; building information management skills of the line departments to enable them to manage the DMICs; capacity building of elected representatives in a number of technical and managerial skills, e.g. planning, budgeting, monitoring, financial control; capacity building of community based institutions such as CCBs and VCs, and development of PIS in the project area to facilitate decision making.

The third and last object relating to community participation included the organization and mobilization of communities to equip them for greater control and management over the local development activities and forging effective linkages between the VCs and the private and public institutions of the districts. The target was formation of VCs in 470 (reduced to 200) selected settlements in 56 additional UCs and formation of 57 Citizen Community Boards (CCBs) in the project districts.

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<sup>7</sup> These include studies on LIS, Gender Mainstreaming Strategy to Improve Grassroots Women Access to Public Services, Gender Sensitive HR Strategy, Impact Assessment of Local Government and Distirct Development Report.

## **Annex VI**

### **SDRB IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS**

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The implementation arrangement defined for the project is the National Execution (NEX) modality as defined in the project document for Phase I (October 1997). The main implementing agency for the project is the Planning & Development Department (P&DD), GoB and the overall implementation/management of the project with the National Project Director (NPD) who is also the Chief Economist P&DD and a Project Coordinator (PC) responsible for operational management. The operating procedures for the project are drawn from the UNDP Project Cycle Operation Manual (PCOM). A Joint Steering Committee (JSC) headed by the Additional Chief Secretary (ACS) development has been constituted by the GoB for providing overall direction and technical backstopping. A Tripartite Review Committee has also been constituted with representatives from UNDP, Economic Affairs Division (EAD) and GoB to monitor overall project implementation and take policy level decisions. There are District Management Units (DMUs) and Tehsil Management Units (TMUs) for implementation of the project activities in the project areas and staffed by professional staff recruited on agreed terms and conditions for project implementation according to the PCOM rules.

