

THE ROLE OF UN AGENCIES IN THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF BALOCHISTAN: AN ASSESSMENT

Social Sciences

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ABSTRACT

Balochistan is the largest, but; the least developed Province of Pakistan. Blessed with rich natural resources and raw material the significant proportion of its population lives under poverty and starvation. Reasons are many, to list a few, dependence on traditional agro-pastoral economy, political insincerity, vested interest of the elites in prevailing power structure maintaining status quo, unsustainable and inequitable exploitation of natural resources, lack of economic opportunities, absence of or inadequate communication infrastructure. In such prevailing situation of distress, frustration, deprivation, and anxiety the remarkable contribution of UN Agencies for the cause of the people of Balochistan, especially, in the terms of their socio-economic development can't be overestimated. The results and the recommendations of the paper are quite important to pave the way for further development in the other sectors.

INTRODUCTION

The Province of Balochistan has its unique cultural, ethnic and geographical background. Many things changed very rapidly around the world but the pace of development in Balochistan has been slow and, thereby, it is the most underdeveloped region in Pakistan. It is still passing through the transitory period of development as compared to the other provinces of Pakistan. Balochistan inhibits two major ethnic groups Baloch and Pashtuns and a minority of other groups. Low literacy, high mortality rates, strong tribal power structure, preference for male child, low status of women and fatalistic attitude, absence of industrial infrastructure, huge area

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of barren land due to the shortage of water, wrong policies, and the inefficiency and corruption of the government officials to misuse the development fund for the socio-economic development are some the socio-economic problems of the province.

As compared to other provinces of Pakistan, Balochistan economic and social development appears to face formidable and daunting challenges. The province starts from a relatively low level in terms of social achievements such as health, education and gender equity indicators, economic development and physical infrastructure. The deteriorating socio-economic condition caught the attention of different United Nations. For this purpose, a large number of projects were launched by UN agencies for the socio-economic development of the province. Their significance and remarkable are recognized everywhere. In order to facilitate and to structure the active involvement of all non-state actors, the right mechanisms and structures will have to be established. But, unfortunately, these agencies did not achieve any desire results to accomplish their objectives and to improve socio-economic development of Balochistan. Barriers to economic growth and poverty reduction in Balochistan have to face the key risks and challenges.

This paper gives brief descriptions of the main challenges to Balochistan in the term of and socio- economic development, namely, those relating to institutions, social structures and political fragmentation. Political administrations here have been mired in conflict and controversy from the very outset. The relationship with federal entities remained an uneasy one from the very start. Tribal structures dominate political processes, resulting in the prevalence of patron-client networks. The ethnic diversity of the province, with ethnic Balochis being a bare majority adds a new dimension to political fragmentation. The province is also a home to competing political ideologies, such as various brands of ethnic nationalism as well as Islamic traditionalism stand in the way of socio-economic development of the province. This paper seeks to outlines the main internal political obstacles to social and economic development of Balochistan. It would be reasonable to argue that the main political obstacles to development might actually lie outside the province:

The researcher tries to highlight the major causes of socio-economic problems of Balochistan. The research paper addresses the main challenges and impediments in the way of socio-economic development of Balochistan. The paper mainly focuses on the role of various UN agencies in the development of various sectors of Balochistan, especially, in the field of health, education, agriculture, and industrial infrastructure. An attempt has

made to explore the ways and means how to eradicate poverty, depression and frustration and to improve the standard of life of the people of the province.

THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF BALOCHISTAN

Balochistan is the Western Province of Pakistan. It is the largest but the under-developed province of Pakistan. Balochistan received the provincial status on July 1, 1970, when the former President of Pakistan Agha Yahya Khan dissolved one unit and created the current status of four separate provinces. (Saeed:1980). Geographically, it starts from the coast of the Arabian Sea and stretches northwards, the coastline about 470 miles long and entirely arid. Sir Thomas Holditch, the prominent Geographer and the author of the book, 'The Gate-Way of India', describes it as a Brazen coast washed by Molten sea and travels through centuries. On the north, it is bounded by Afghanistan, on the north east by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, on the east by Sind, Punjab, and on the west by Iran. (Iqbal: 1992)

The population of Balochistan comprises three major ethnic groups, the Baloch, Barhvi, and Pashtoon. Baloch is a major group and the Baloch language is commonly spoken by the majority of population in Balochistan. The Baloch, the Med and Jats appear to have been the oldest inhabitants of Balochistan. The Meds live along the coastal area, while the Jats compose the cultivating class of Lasbella and Kachi. (Haughas: 1977). Brahvi is the another major group of Balochistan comprises $\frac{1}{4}$ of the total population of Balochistan. Brahvi and Baloch are the members of the same ethnic clan and belong the same ancestors. The Pushtoon constitute the third major ethnic group of Balochistan. The Pustoon covers an area of 37014 km of the total area of Balochistan. (Marri: 1974). The other small ethnic groups are Parsi (Zoarastairian) and Hazaras (Persian) are the inhabitants of Quetta.

Balochistan is the mountainous region with a small portion of fertile and cultivated land, while, the greater part of the province consists of barren and deserted area. The physical climate of Balochistan varies from place to place. In some parts of the province the temperature falls below the freezing point while in other it goes as high as 50-55 centigrade. The physical feature as mentioned above created obstacles and hurdles in the socio-economic development of the province. As the vast portion of the province consists of mountainous terrain which makes it extremely difficult for the inhabitants to interact and to communicate with the people of other provinces of the country. The lack of communication and transportation is a main problem

which badly affected the pace of social and economic development of the province. Due the scarcity of water thousands acre of land goes out of cultivation annually which has an adverse impact on the agricultural production, the main source of trade and economic transaction. The absence of the proper and effective system of irrigation is another formidable problem. Irrigation in most of Balochistan is managed by Karez system. Karez is a series of connected underground of chains of wells at shallow acquires connected at sub-surface to resists the evaporation. This is an old traditional system of irrigation in the times of Aryans, Alexander the great, and Mughals. (Achakzai & Toor: 1990).But, this system is now collapsing as its management and maintenance has become a problem with the introduction of new methods and techniques of irrigation. (Shakrullah & Arif: 1999)

The government of Balochistan does not pay due attention to solve the basic socio-economic problems. Misused of development funds, bribe and corruption, wrong government policies, inefficiency of government officials, especially, the district administration and local governments are the some of the major impediments that continuously and perpetually impaired economic progress and prosperity. Moreover, the problems of unemployment, disease, starvation, poor economic, agriculture infrastructure, the absence of the effective irrigation system, and the lack of industries and factories, and the failure on the part of the government to solve these problems proved some of the root causes for the deterioration of socio-economic condition of Balochistan. The lack of industrial infrastructure in Balochistan is, yet, another factor which is equally accountable for the deterioration of the economic condition of Balochistan .Dr. Mansoor Akbar Kundi in his book, 'The Elements of International Political Economy' focuses the role of industries as the principal indicator of economic development. In his book he remarks, "That the industrial infrastructure drives a state into economic gainthood".A state without industrial infrastructure is usually marked with low GNP and economic consistency. (Kundi: 2004)

Industrial development is a process whereby a society is transformed from backward to stage higher one in the terms of socio-economic development. The level of industrialization is a paramount factor that globally distinguishes societies from each other. Technological change and modernization of society that come with industrialization drive the societal division of labor in a similar direction, as a result, the occupational structures and associated differences in power, privilege and prestige, become more similar although granted that social differences and class structures could also be attributed to historical, political and political economy factors as well as

(Erikson and Goldthorpe, 1992). In the terms of raw materials and natural resources, Balochistan is the richest province of Pakistan. The huge deposits of raw materials and natural resources i.e. gas, petroleum, gold, copper, zinc, coal and chromites. But, unfortunately, there is no proper utilization of these resources. The mineral sector is a potentially significant but as yet under-developed sector in Balochistan economy. (World Bank: 2007) Currently this sector employs only about 1.3 per cent of the employed persons in the province. (Government of Balochistan: 2003). Extraction of thirty-nine out of the fifty recorded mineral resources present in Balochistan generates annual revenue of close to Rs. 3.4 billion. (Asian Development Bank: 2005).

The condition and the status of women in Balochistan is more terrible than the other provinces of Pakistan. They have been deprived from their due rights and privileges. They lead a miserable life. They are not in position to express their view and to make any decision freely due to a strong socio-cultural and religious constraints and limitations. There is severe problem of unemployment in Balochistan. Thousands of educated Baloch youths are facing terribly due to employment. As a result, the youth indulged in numerous crimes, smuggling, drug-trafficking, theft, and robbery, dacoit, looting, and plundering. The condition of hospitals is worse. Besides, the number of hospitals in Balochistan is less equipped in the terms of basic instruments and facilities with compared to the other parts of Pakistan. There are a few experienced doctors who are working in the various hospitals in Quetta. While there is acute shortage of hospitals in the other parts of the province to provide better health facilities to the people. As a result, it is entirely difficult for the people living in the far-flung areas to get better medical facilities.

Education is a cornerstone of economic, political and social development and a principal means to improve the welfare of the people. The social and economic development is impossible without education. Dr. Mohammad Yousaf in his article, 'the Role of Education in the Socio-Economic Development of a Country', has rightly remarked "that education is one of the keys and integrated components of human resource development. The workers and farmers with more education are more productive than those with a less education". (Yousaf: 2001) Social progress is impossible without an adequate system of education. According to John Dewey, "the main aim of education is to develop the insight and understanding that will enable the youth go forth from the schools to take part in the great work of construction and organization. (Dewey: 1957). It leads towards tolerance humanitarian and civilized society which paves the way for

better and democratic living. But, unfortunately, the education sector in Balochistan is faced with many deep-seated problems. These include the low level of literacy rate, dropouts in the primary and secondary levels, high degree of lack of access for women for education, absence of educational facilities in rural areas, shortage of funds, deficiency on the part of the provincial government to make regular inspections to educational institutions, appointment of teachers on political basis ignoring merit and qualification, nepotism, favoritism and the absence of experienced and trained teachers. Primary education is not receiving a proper attention due to the shortage of funds and the staff. Primary education is the most important sub-sector of the entire education system. It is the foundation stone upon which the large building of social, economic and political development of the nation is to be built. (Hussain: 2001)

THE ROLE OF UN AGENCIES IN THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF BALOCHISTAN

There have been immense services rendered by United Nations and various specialized agencies for the socio-economic development of Balochistan. But before going to discuss the role of these agencies it is appropriate to know about structure and functions of 'Specialized Agencies'. Specialized Agencies do not form the organic part of the United Nations. The UN charter only makes a passing reference to them under Articles 57, 59, 63, 64, and 66. (Basu:1996) These agencies are working under Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), one of the principal organ of the United Nations. The Charter assigns to ECOSOC under the authority of General Assembly a central promotion and coordinating role to the whole United Nations including its principal organs, its various programs as well as specialized agencies. According to the articles 57 and 63 the ECOSOC has given a specific authority to the negotiation of relationship agreements with and coordination of activities of specialized agencies and Article 64 authorizes it to obtain reports from specialized agencies. (Basu: 1996).

The specialized agencies can be broadly classified into three categories.

- The first category concern with technical method, vis., International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), World Meteorological Organization (WMO), International Postal System (IPU).
- The second category serves for social and humanitarian purposes, vis., International Labour Organization (ILO), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), World Health Organization (WHO).

- Third category deals with the economic development vis., International Development Association (IDA), and International Finance Cooperation (IFC), International Monetary Fund (IMF), and World Bank (WB).

These specialized have certain definite characteristics in common. They have a legal existence to treaties and agreements between the states which comprise their membership. All the states are eligible for membership provided that they agree to abide by the specified requirement of constituent character of the specialized agency. Each has its specific constitution which defines its duties and responsibilities. The executive organs of all agencies are in varying degree, responsible for the supervision of the Charter of their Secretariat. Secretariat plays a significant role in assisting the Council by performing the myriad of essential duties. (**Goodspeed: 1967**).

THE ROLE OF UN AGENCIES IN EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF BALOCHISTAN

The development of education is essential for socio-economic and political development. The fate of the nations and civilizations depends upon proper and adequate system of education. For this purpose, a number of UN agencies especially, Asian Development Bank (ADB), World Bank (WB), and United Nations International Children Education Fund (UNICEF) have launched different projects and programs for the expansion and development of education in Balochistan.

Science Education Project is assisted by Asian Development Bank for five years from 1986 at the cost of Rs.63.520 million. This project has established science laboratories in 61 Middle schools and 40 High schools along with other necessary equipments and furniture. It also provided science kits to 206 to Middle schools and established Science Education Centre at Quetta. (**Directorate of Primary Education Balochistan: 1990**)

Balochistan Primary Education Programme is one of the important among these projects and programs which are working under the auspices of these agencies is Balochistan Primary Education Programme assisted by World Bank. This program has provided maximum facilities and assistance in the field of primary education. Under this programme a large number of Girls schools have been established. The main objective of this program is to improve the system of primary education in Balochistan both qualitatively, and, quantitatively through strengthening the instruction network, improving access and equity, and the enhancing teacher's training programme.

Girls Primary Education Development Project is Asia Development assisted Project which has established 69 Girls Primary Community Model Schools in the province with the cost of Rs.199.326 million. It started work on July 1991 for the term of five years. The main objective of this project is to increase enrollment, decrease dropouts, and to improve the system of education by providing ideal educational facilities such as better infrastructure, trained teachers, sufficient materials for carrying out different innovative activities in order the community, pupils and teachers of the villages where they are established.

Asian Development Bank Teacher Development Programme is an Asian Development Bank 5 year's project with the estimated cost of Rs.153000 million. The project aims at the expanding the capacity of the teacher training, to provide an easy access to training opportunities, especially for women in rural areas, to improve the quality of the teachers, to increase the resources of utilization and mobilization. It has established 12 training Outposts in the existing selected High Schools for teachers in rural areas. **(Directorate of Primary Education Balochistan: 1994-95)**

Pakistan Middle School Project has started work with the assistance of Asian Development Bank with the amount of Rs.55.937 million with the close collaboration of the government of Balochistan. It has up-graded 140 primary schools (96 for girls and 44 for boys) to the status of middle schools. In addition, it provided stipends to 7730 to poor and needy girls in order to encourage them to continue their education. **(Directorate of Primary Education Balochistan: 1994-95)**

World Bank Primary Education Project provides an easy access to the children for primary education throughout the province. Its main objectives are to provide basic hygiene and sanitation facilities to the teachers, to repair bath-rooms, to promote safe motherhood, to address the problems of iodine deficiency, and to finance the expanded programme of immunization

Strengthening Teacher Education in Pakistan (STEP) Project is funded by USAID. The project strives for the enhancement of the Government's capacity to assure quality teacher education by improving policy framework, coordination and standard-setting in order to bring about long term changes. The principal objective of the project stated in the original proposal is "to improve the quality and professional development of teachers and teacher

training institutions through the development of a strategic framework for policy formulation and dialogue with a view to building consensus and mobilizing support for teacher education, effective coordination of interventions in teacher education, including field based teacher education activities, and standard setting for teacher certification and accreditation". The project takes a holistic and unique approach. The STEP project has partnership with all the key government teacher education bodies which have mandates in relation to teacher education curriculum and coordination both at the Federal and Provincial level, aiming to improve coherence and coordination of teacher education system as well as to support each of them to develop its capacity to assure quality teacher education. Balochistan Bureau of Curriculum and Extension (BOC& EXT) is one of the counterpart institutions of the STEP project, STEP an activity with BOC includes, strengthening of Resource Center, organize monthly meetings of BOC, PITE and elementary college to establish coordination network, to organize advocacy seminars in the focused districts to enhance status of teachers, and to update the directory of teacher training institutes covering private & public sector. (STEP: 2008)

Programme to Improve Service Delivery in Balochistan is providing a US\$205 million loan and grant package to help increase access to quality social services in Balochistan. The program will support policy reforms to address long- standing systemic issues in education, health, and water supply and sanitation. It will also help the province's local governments to improve access to and quality of social services, and will empower citizens and enable the private sector to play a greater role in social service delivery. The Balochistan Planning and Development Department is the executing agency for the program, which will be carried out up to about June 2009, and the TA project, due for completion in December 2010. The Government of Balochistan has begun implementation of a strong reforms agenda that includes increasing fiscal space for social sectors, setting standards for service delivery and improving human resource management at the local government level. These challenges are being taken up under the Balochistan DSSP and a high level- review took place in January 2006 with the Chief Secretary Balochistan receiving briefings on actions taken. The Chief Secretary underscored the need for the Provincial Government to fulfill its role in providing enabling environments for local governments and for providing requisite leadership on policy reforms. The Provincial Steering Committee for BDSSP was also convened as a follow-up to the Chief

Secretary meeting, where specific responsibilities were determined for provincial departments. **(DSSP Newslines:2006)**

The Area Development Programme Balochistan (ADPB) is a community-driven area development project co-financed by the Government of Balochistan (GoB) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), with parallel funding from the World Food Programme (WFP) and contributions from beneficiary communities. The development interventions were launched in selected Union Councils in nine districts of the province viz. Khuzdar, Kalat, Mastung, Quetta, Pishin, Qilla Saifullah, Loralai, Ziarat and Musakhel. This is a large area, and the project manages its operations through three regional offices. The project goal is to contribute to Poverty Reduction and form human and social capital to improve livelihoods of the poor people in the project areas. The project outcome is to increase land productivity and agriculture production through developing assets for poor communities, and enhancing their access to markets and services. The project directly benefits more than 10,000 households or almost 100,000 individuals in the nine targeted districts. The major activities of the project include promoting community-based interventions to improve crop and livestock productivity, conserve natural resources, improve community access to market and services, support income generation activities, and strengthen women's role in development

This project has a number of sub projects as mentioned below;

- Feed Resources Development Project;
- Watershed and Management Project;
- Integrated Range-Livestock Development Project;
- Urban Environment Project;
- A Date Processing & Marketing Sub-Project.

Under this project 708 women were trained in health and hygiene and another 193 were trained in embroidery, cutting and sewing. 90 poultry farms were established in Quetta, Pishin and Mastung districts and 158 people were trained in poultry and livestock management. This project has taken a huge responsibility for the rehabilitation of Karees and Springs, construction of water reservoirs, and the introduction of effective and efficient Irrigation system. As a result, the availability of water was increased from 75044 Ctf to 105925 C ft and with the increase 400 acres additional land was brought under cultivation. **(ADBP:2010)**

Balochistan Rural Support Programme (BRSP) has been contributing to human development in Balochistan since 1984. It is assisted by GTZ. It is a brainchild of BRSP's mission of "harnessing people's potential to help themselves for poverty alleviation" that was established in March 2008. BRSP considers Human Resource Development (HRD) to be a vital constituent of the process for achieving sustainable socio-economic development. BRSP makes integrated use of trainings, organizational development, and career development efforts to improve individual, group, and organizational effectiveness. BRSP facilitates and provides social guidance through formal trainings, social enterprise concepts, researches, on the job trainings, case studies, stimulations, on and off job technical advices and experience sharing forums both for staff and community members of BRSP, partner organizations, and for national and international organizations and networks. Reducing poverty through skills enhancement; upgrading the technical and managerial skills of rural communities and professionals; meeting the gap between desired and actual performance; utilization of Natural Resources; strengthening our target group to become economically strong; promoting self help concept; to Facilitating community and staff needs in prospect of HRD; are some of the main objectives of BRSP. **(Balochistan Institute of Rural Development: 2011)**

Agriculture Sector Invest Project This Project has launched by the World Bank with the collaboration of the Government of Balochistan with the cost of Res. 120.790 millions. Its objectives are the strengthening the work of Agriculture Research Institute, promoting horticulture research in the tropical and sub-tropical fruits, coordinating farming system research in Balochistan, and improving the plant protection research with the emphasis on integrated pest management. **(Agriculture Sector Investment Project:2004)**

Balochistan Natural resource Management Project is launched with the assistance of World Bank in collaboration with the Government of Balochistan at the cost of Rs. 283.330 millions. The prime objectives of this project are to strengthen the principal institutions responsible for environmental protection, to develop policies for sustainable use of natural resources, to improve capacity building, to aware creativeness in environmental practices in Balochistan. This project has seven sub-projects:

- Sub-Project Conservation and Management of Juniper forest Ziarat;
- Sub-Project Makran Coastal sand Dune Stabilization Project in Gwader;

- Sub-project for the improvement of Hazarganjai-Chiltan National Park
- Sub- Project Pilot watershed Rangeland Rehabilitation Programme;
- Sub- Project strengthening of Planning Unit.(**World Bank and Government of Balochistan:1978-1998**)

Bolan Mining Enterprises (BME) is responsible for mining, grinding and marketing of the mineral. In 2004-05, almost 40,000 tonnes of barite was extracted, which generated a royalty of Rs.3.83 million. The World Bank has agreed to loan 53 million US\$ for the development of the sector starting from 2008. The broad goals are geo-data production including establishing Balochistan Geo-data center, air-borne geophysical survey, and detailed assessments of mineral prospects and geological mapping; revisions of regularity and fiscal framework, mines safety regulation, social and environmental assessments and institutional capacity building; and poverty alleviation as a result of mineral development, mining and safety education, and establishment of a mining hazard prevention centre.(**Government of Balochistan:2006**). The World Bank has also asked Pakistan to develop an institutional framework to attract foreign investment in the mineral sector. (**Haque: 2006**)

CONCLUSION

The progress of the nations and civilizations depends upon of economic and social development of society. For this purpose, the role of UN agencies in uplifting of social and economic conditions of Balochistan can't be ignored. Balochistan is the biggest, but the backward province of Pakistan. The problems of unemployment, disease, starvation, poor economic, agriculture infrastructure, the absence of the effective irrigation system, and the lack of industries and factories, and the failure on the part of the government to solve these problems proved some of the root causes for the deterioration of socio-economic condition of Balochistan. Education plays a vital role in the destiny of the nation. Hence, primary education must be given high priority and attention which may serve the needs and aspirations of the nation in this regard, the contributions of the UN agencies for the promotion of educational standard in Balochistan, especially, in the field of primary education are highly exemplary and commendable. In addition, the remarkable role played by the UN agencies for the enhancement and development is worth-mentioned.

Moreover, their positive help and cooperation for the solving the basic social problems i.e. famine, draught, starvation, disease unemployment brought meaning and constructive results. Many schools were established by the UN agencies in order to provide more and more facilities to the students of backward and far-flung areas. This, in turn, created the spirit of consciousness and awareness minds of young generation who came to know the basic causes of their economic and social disintegration. It has a positive impact on the political life of the province, which enable the people to play more effective role in the politics of the province and the country.

The remarkable work of the UN agencies for the development of coastal areas in Makran by providing modern boats and knitting facilities to the fishermen where they can get their livelihood and profits more easily and comfortably. More important, their help and assistance for the construction of roads and communication, small dams brought revolutionary changes in the coordination and the proper functioning of various departments of Balochistan. The construction of dams will not only solve the shortage of clean water but, will greatly solve the chronic problems of water management. The preservation and the proper exploitation of natural resources is one of the greatest sources of national power. Balochistan is the strategically important province of Pakistan in the terms of raw materials and minerals. If these natural resources are properly exploited it will not only bring the period of economic prosperity and stability, but will also provide job opportunities to the educated youth. In this regard, the role of UN agencies in the exploration and utilization of natural resources deserve to be appreciated.

The process of political development is directly associated with the socio-economic economic development. The significant role played by the UN agencies in the socio-economic development of Balochistan will have positive implications on the political condition of the province which, in turn, will bring the period of peace, love, fraternity and progress in the country. Furthermore, it will remove some of the outstanding problems between the province and centre but, will inaugurate the peace, love, fraternity and understanding and prosperity in the country.

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