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# Development Log



پاکستان انسٹیٹیوٹ آف لیبرا کیجو کیشن اینڈ ریسرچ  
PAKISTAN INSTITUTE OF LABOUR  
EDUCATION & RESEARCH

## **Pakistan Institute of Labour Education and Research (PILER)**

The Pakistan Institute of Labour Education and Research (PILER), established in 1982, is a not-for-profit, citizen sector organization engaged in research, education, policy advocacy and networking in the areas of labour rights, social justice, human development, regional solidarity and peace. PILER, as a resource centre, facilitates the labour movement in building a wider social consensus on core labour rights through advocacy and linkages with local, national, regional and global partners. PILER considers militarization, state conflicts and social intolerance as major barriers to realizing labour rights, and engages with peace movements at national, regional and global levels.

### **Rebuilding Lives and Livelihoods: Advocating for Structural Reforms**

PILER initiated a programme "Rebuilding Lives and Livelihoods..." following the 2010 floods that exposed a much compromised state of citizenship of a large majority of the country's population affected by the disaster. The basic premise of the programme is drawn from the 'Citizens Charter', a common agenda crafted by the civil society of Pakistan in 2011. The Charter advocates for the re-establishment of state-society relations that, in its current fractured state, has resulted in an elite-centric development and resource distribution order, a disempowered state of citizenship and social relations devoid of trust and security. PILER believes that a new social contract between the state and the society is the only way forward for the state to deliver on its constitutional obligations on fundamental rights, governance and social justice, and for citizens to pursue their welfare through political activism and democratic engagement.

The programme is supported by the Tdh Germany, a children's aid agency concerned with development policy, and the Medico International that supports endeavors to create the economic, social and cultural condition which allow each person to attain the highest health standard possible.



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# Editorial

“ The current edition of *Development Log* makes a humble effort to explore some pertinent questions on the narrative on development and humanitarian assistance. ”

We are back with *Development Log*! A delay in production is regretted with the acknowledgement of the need for being more regular with our publication.

The last one year 2012-2013 has furthered the development debate in Pakistan in favour of more convergence, rather than divergence, between the state and the non-governmental sector to strengthen the gains made by Pakistan's continuous walk forward on the path of political democracy. "Sustainability" has been raised as a fundamental concern behind humanitarian and development actions. Participation and accountability are other important considerations.

However, there is a vast gap between the technical idea of development (no single definition) and how the concept is seen in the mainstream, clouded by political rhetoric on economy and security (violence being dominant theme). This is not assisted by the fact that the media, for all its strengths and weaknesses, has become a key actor setting the agenda and shaping the profile of issues. In an election year, this debate became murkier as both the outgoing and the incoming governments chose to focus on "economic revival" as their key agenda. The narrow-based approach towards this revival prioritized fiscal balance, infrastructure development, energy supply, and urbanization over socio-economic aspects of development that repeatedly call for attention to health, education, malnutrition, population control and access to natural resources.

This, undoubtedly, has uncomfortable ramifications for how development, development assistance and development cooperation is seen in the country. The perception gap is only growing because of the divisive nature of politics that is practiced in our society.

**“The term “development”, both as a concept and as a practice, needs to be revisited in the national narrative, even if it is for the purpose of inventing a local definition.”**

The current edition of *Development Log* makes a humble effort to explore some pertinent questions on the narrative on development and humanitarian assistance. In this context, we are particularly interested in emphasizing the gaps in the sustainability of efforts on the ground. The 2012 floods offer a good example of that. Hitting the same areas as the 2010 floods did, there has been little indication of any change in people’s experiences of the humanitarian emergency due to the absence of disaster prevention and disaster response mechanisms. This is despite some focused work in these two areas during the past years’ floods. An overview of shelter rehabilitation in the floods-prone district of Badin paints a similar picture. Millions of rupees of investment in setting up housing blocks went to a waste as the concerned constituencies were never consulted at the project development stage.

The very intense debate on US assistance to Pakistan has been tackled by seeking experts’ observations on the subject; all unanimous in their consensus that assistance cannot be separated from politics. Dr Stephen Commins, an international development expert, in an interview, highlights the capacity factor that is critical in deciding the outcome of any development action. A book review of the “Fundamentals of Development” emphasizes the significance of the recognition of ecology in the economy of growth, for any advocacy on equity. Finally, we also seek to explore if development and remittances be looked at from the same prism, especially since remittances are thrice the size of development assistance received by the country.

As the focus on MDGs intensifies with the 2015 deadline, natural capital, green growth, and sustainable outcomes have been identified as the “future of development cooperation” (OECD Development Co-operation Report 2012). The term “development”, both as a concept and as a practice, needs to be revisited in the national narrative, even if it is for the purpose of inventing a local definition. Its current reference to industrial progress, urbanisation, markets, consumerism and expansion of commerce is giving rise to ambiguities that are shrouding the concerns, and compromising the interests, of the marginalized communities. For a democracy that is struggling to become participatory and representational, this maybe an unaffordable proposition!

**Zeenia Shaukat**  
(Editor)

# Development Highlights



**“A 2012 audit report by the European Union found that more than half the drinking water schemes pursued in the Sub-Saharan Africa had failed to deliver.”**

In India, poor construction quality has meant that 30-40 per cent toilets have been abandoned, repairs are nearly impossible because of the nonexistent supply chains for parts and material, and 'even when still standing, many are used for storage rooms rather than for defecation,' observes Prakash Kumar from the ASH Institute in India.

## • Pakistan pays heavily for poor sanitation, says UN

In a report released by the United Nations (UN) on the World Water Day (March 22, 2013) it was estimated that poor sanitation costs Pakistan over US\$ 4.2 billion or 6.3 per cent of its GDP. The UN Deputy Secretary General Jan Eliasson called for urgent action to end the crisis of 2.5 billion people worldwide who live without basic sanitation, and to change a situation in which more people have mobile phones than toilets.

While water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) is a relatively recent concern in Pakistan, mostly as a result of successive floods in the past years, donor initiatives in this sector are seen with much scepticism across the world. A 2012 audit report by the European Union found that more than half the drinking water schemes pursued (by development agencies) in the Sub-Saharan Africa had failed to deliver. Regarded by critics as 'a failing chapter in human development' there is scathing criticism of the focus of the funding agencies on concrete, measurable targets because of which they adopt a 'vending machine' approach in building toilets in sanitation-deprived areas. Critics argue that more often than not communities are completely left out of the implementation process.

## • Ignored by the Federal Flood Commission, eleven schemes for rehabilitation of dykes seek ADB's assistance

Three years after the disastrous 2010 floods, the Sindh Irrigation Department is yet to launch eleven schemes proposed for the rehabilitation of river dykes. The Irrigation Department had to turn to the ADB after the Federal Flood Commission (FFC) declined further



assistance despite its commitment to provide a grant of Rs 500 million for the repair of five out of a total sixteen embankments. The previous Sindh government had identified seventy-six major river dykes that needed repairs following the 2010 'super floods'. The dykes were seldom maintained prior to the 2010 floods. After the floods, the ADB launched the 'Flood Emergency Reconstruction Project' (FERP) and the first phase was completed before the 2011 monsoon. A few more schemes were executed in the second phase. After FFC's refusal to provide further assistance, the project was submitted to the ADB which has indicated that the request for funding is likely to be approved.

also called for enhancing the effectiveness of social spending through improved governance, devolution, better resource management and effective monitoring and evaluation.

#### • USAID to help growers maintain standards

The USAID is planning to support banana and chilli growers in Sindh under its Agribusiness Project. The stated agenda of the programme is to address issues faced by the growers in the absence of adequate knowledge and machinery. The proposed project plans to link up the otherwise isolated farmers with relevant market actors through an integrated system called Value Chain Platforms (VCPs). The farmers will be provided with the required knowledge that will cover all stages in the growing process, from the sowing of the crop to its harvest. The Sindh Chamber of Agriculture observes that with proper picking, processing and packaging, the farmers could fetch a better price for their products.



#### • 'Pakistan may not achieve MDGs even by 2025'

The World Bank and other development partners in D-10, in a meeting with economic managers of the Government of Pakistan, expressed their fear that Pakistan may not achieve its Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) even by 2025. The World Bank was of the opinion that the focus of the government seems to be on wage enhancements and insufficient allocations are made for non-wage expenditures. The Bank also highlighted that the social sector resources are inefficiently used. It was stressed that there is a need for better alignment of budgetary expenditures with development priorities of the government. The Bank

“The World Bank was of the opinion that the focus of the government seems to be on wage enhancements and insufficient allocations are made for non-wage expenditures. The bank also highlighted that the social sector resources are inefficiently used.”

# The Floods 2012 Response: A Perspective

By Beenish Zia & Sara Jaffri



The 2012 floods affected all four provinces of Pakistan as well as the Azad Jammu and Kashmir

The year 2012 has been referred to as the 'year of recurring disasters' by the humanitarian community. With Typhoons Bopha and Washi in the Philippines, Hurricanes Sandy and Irene in the Caribbean/US, and three years of widespread flooding in Pakistan, the year saw the repeat of many of the previous years' disasters registering similar scale of devastation, economic damage and the number of people affected.<sup>1</sup> Typhoon Bopha/Pablo (Philippines) was termed as the deadliest disaster in 2012 and Hurricane Sandy the costliest. However, the Pakistan floods, third in a row, spread over 4746 kilometres, and killing 571 people, affected the largest number of people.

Compared to the floods of the past two years (2010 and 2011), the damage in 2012 was slightly lower. The 2011 floods affected over 5 million people and caused the deaths of 400 people, while in 2010, one-fourth of Pakistan came under water, more than 1.89 million houses were damaged, and 1.5 million acres of crops were destroyed. The 2010 floods also resulted in the largest internal migration and the process of rehabilitation and resettlement of the displaced population remains unfinished.

Being the third in succession, the 2012 floods were preceded by a proactive posture by the government. In June 2012, the newly constituted Ministry of Climate Change held a presentation for the media, humanitarian agencies and NGOs working on disaster-related issues. The presentation showed a detailed contingency plan for each province and an account of resource allocation and planned arrangements for future disaster response. The meeting was also attended by donor agencies and the UN bodies.

The provincial governments also launched contingency plans in the wake of the floods forecast. The Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa governments allocated Rs 200 million and Rs 1.25 billion respectively for the rescue, relief and assistance of the people likely to be affected in the event of floods. Following extensive public criticism over weak embankments and poor construction quality of public infrastructure, the Government of Sindh also started a programme to repair and reinforce embankments.

However, when the floods struck in September 2012, these plans and resources proved unequal to the task of coping with the massive extent of devastation. Almost all districts that were affected by the floods in 2010 and 2011 saw a revisit of the water flows in 2012. And strangely, this time too, thousands of people were displaced, houses were damaged, and the provision of clean water, food and healthcare remained inadequate (See Box "The Losses List"). Till December 2012, at least 40,000 people still stood displaced, living in camps and temporary settlements, with floodwaters still standing in some districts in southern Sindh. Prolonged flooding also prevented resumption of activities for people to earn livelihood and have access to food. An unofficial survey found that more than half the people surveyed in December 2012 did not have enough to eat and were skipping meals.

## The Losses List

### Population/Damage:

**Affected population:** 4.85 million  
(0.887 million in Punjab; 3.174 million in Sindh; 0.788 million in Balochistan)

**Lives Lost:** 571

**Injured:** 2,916

**No of Affected Villages:** 14,159

**Flooded Area:** 4,746 Sq Km

**Damage to Property/Assets:** 636,438 houses and cropped area of about 1.172 million acres

### Affected Districts:

**Punjab:** Districts Dera Ghazi Khan, Rajanpur, Rahim Yar Khan, Mianwali, Hafizabad, Bahawalnagar, Sahiwal, Chiniot, Khanewal, Toba Tek Singh, Muzaffargarh and Layyah

**Sindh:** Districts Jacobabad, Shikarpur, Khashmore, Larkana, Sukkur, Qambar Shahdadt, Dadu, Badin, Ghotki, Khairpur, Shaheed Benazirabad, Naushehro Feroz, Sanghar, Tando Allayar, Mirpurkhas, Thatta, Hyderabad, Matiari, Umerkot

**Balochistan:** Districts Jaffarabad, Naseerabad, Jhal Magsi, Loralai, Qila Saifullah, Kachhi, Zhob, Harnai, Lasbela, Khuzdar, Dera Bugti, Barkhan, Sherani, Musa Khel, Sibi

**Khyber Pakhtunkhwa:** D.I. Khan, Nowshera, Abbottabad, Peshawar, Mansehra

**Azad Jammu and Kashmir:** Muzaffarabad, Kotli, Poonch, Bagh, Mirpur

### Worst Affected Areas:

**Punjab:** Sialkot, Rajanpur, Dera Ghazi Khan

**Sindh:** Khashmore, Jacobabad, and Shikarpur

**Balochistan:** Naseerabad, Jaffarabad, Killa Saifullah, Jhal Magsi and Loralai

The Government of Pakistan's decision to avoid international assistance despite the critical situation came under much criticism when the State's limited human, technical and financial capacity failed to match the scale of the catastrophe, providing little relief to the affected population and making feeble efforts for the recovery of the flooded areas. Humanitarian groups observed that hundreds of thousands of people who needed aid received very little; many received none. Despite its inability to meet the needs of the affected population, the government did not reconsider its decision of not seeking international assistance.

This decision of the government also influenced the policies of the global donors which are usually driven by media coverage of natural disasters. Since the government showed no urgency in dealing with the calamity, there was little media attention which, in turn, resulted in potential donors believing that this was not an emergency. Experts also pointed out that without a government call for international aid, some donors face procedural obstacles and delays in funding UN agencies and NGOs, although many donor officials worked actively to overcome these challenges.<sup>2</sup> If measured in terms of funding shortfalls, the UN Monsoon Humanitarian Operations Plan received 30 per cent of the US\$168 million it was seeking. Certain key sectors remained severely underfunded such as shelter (at 5 per cent), health (at 6 per cent) and WASH (at 8 per cent).<sup>3</sup>

“Almost all districts that were affected by the floods in 2010 and 2011 saw a revisit of the water flows in 2012. And strangely, this time too, thousands of people were displaced, houses were damaged, and the provision of clean water, food and healthcare remained inadequate.”

However, it would be more useful to look at the relief and rehabilitation response to the 2012 floods from outside the prism of the government's financial capacity to address the humanitarian emergency. On deeper investigation, one finds widespread evidence to suggest that it was not

just the lack of resources that was behind the inadequate response. A number of issues that emerged in the floods of 2010 and 2011 were once again experienced in 2012. This was despite relatively strengthened institutions and well-defined policy frameworks, a minimum level of preparedness and planning, and pre-positioning of resources, marking a clear improvement over the past.

**“In terms of service delivery, no arrangements were made for the monitoring of relief items.”**

In a dialogue facilitated by the National Humanitarian Network (NHN) in November 2012, communities, NGOs and government bodies from across Pakistan shared their experiences of relief and rehabilitation work during the floods of September 2012. Major concerns raised by them included:

- Lack of communication/coordination amongst government institutions;
- Lack of information from the district administration;
- Restrictions on NGOs access to the affected areas;
- Insufficient resource support by the government;
- Government's limited response capacity; lack of financial resources at the district level for relief and rehabilitation;
- Poor response capacity of the non-governmental sector;
- Lack of community consultation;

In terms of the provision of services, the following observations were shared:

- Communities were still in need of food, water, shelter, blankets, and non-food items;
- Absence of first aid facilities;
- Ineffective distribution system for relief supplies;
- Lack of monitoring; government reportedly distributed food in Balochistan which was past its expiry date;
- Insufficient drainage despite a lapse of months;
- Health interventions required, especially for women;
- Absence of support for agricultural and livestock;
- Occupation of schools.



In terms of the capacity of the disaster response institutions, much gap was noted. Lack of coordination between government institutions and poor information flow from district administration was a repeat episode in the 2012 floods.

These were the key issues among many others pointed out by the participants in the consultation process. Gaps in information sharing, community consultation and poor technical capacity in delivery suggest that despite having battled successive floods, state institutions have yet to address the fundamentals of participatory disaster response structures. In terms of service delivery too, it appears that no prior arrangements were made to ensure the monitoring of the relief items, and the strengthening of existing health institutions with focus on emergency handling capacity, or for the draining of stagnant water. In Jaffarabad, Naseerabad and Jacobabad, there were reports of non-availability of teachers after the floods. More than 80 per cent respondents across the five flood-affected districts<sup>4</sup> said that there was no building available to be converted for use as a place for teaching the children.<sup>5</sup> Another report by the IMMAPP<sup>6</sup> on district Ghotki noted the vulnerability map (used to identify vulnerable locations) of the district was not available. “There was a dire need of funds and resources like boats, lifejackets, first-aid kits, ropes, torches, etc. At the district level, there is a deficiency in risk assessment of disaster prone areas. The district also lacked funds and resources for risk reduction projects.”<sup>7</sup>



The government's decision against filing for an international appeal, despite critical situation on the ground, came under much criticism when the state's limited human, technical and financial capacity failed to match the scale of the catastrophe.

“At the district level, there is a deficiency in risk assessment of the disaster-prone areas.”

Serious discrepancies in institutional capacity and functioning were highlighted. Lack of coordination amongst government institutions and poor information flow from district administration (it was absent in many areas) was a repeat of the situation experienced during the 2012 floods. A Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) report in 2012 noted the lead role of the Ministry

of Interior in monitoring the emergency through the national and provincial Crisis Management Cells and other security agencies. However, it observed that “these institutions require more effective capacity for dealing with large-scale disasters. Practically, only the Pakistan Army, because of its superior communications, transportation facilities, and skilled human resources, has a high degree of effective relocation, rescue and immediate response capacity. The DDMA, which are the main implementation focal points during emergencies, mentioned their dependence on the army and NGOs for disaster response purposes during interviews.”<sup>8</sup>

The DDMA continues to battle frequent part-time deputations with the exception of thirty vulnerable districts that relied on the UNDP's funding for a full-time but time-bound position for each district.<sup>9</sup> The DEC report also notes the need for capacity enhancement in PDMA of Sindh and Balochistan.

With enormous gaps in the state's service provision machinery, lack of clarity over district structures (a fundamental grassroots institution), capacity deficits at the institutional level, and funding agencies' focus on short term goals, an overhaul in Pakistan's disaster response is rather difficult to imagine... as of today!

1. The Brookings Institution, "The Year of Recurring Disasters: A Review of Natural Disasters 2012", 2013

2. National Humanitarian Network, Document circulated among members

3. National Humanitarian Network, Talking Points for Monsoon 2012

4. The affected districts are Jaffarabad, Naseerabad, Jacobabad, Kashmore and Rajanpur

5. Multi-sector Initial Rapid Assessment (MIRA) Report, "Pakistan Floods 2012" available at [http://www.pakresponse.info/Portals/0/assessments/MIRA%20Final%20Report\\_20121031.pdf](http://www.pakresponse.info/Portals/0/assessments/MIRA%20Final%20Report_20121031.pdf)

6. Information Management and Mine Action Programme (iMMAP), "Pakistan Emergency Situation Analysis: District Ghotki", (2013)

7. Ibid

8. Alam, Bhatti and Murtaza, "Disaster Risk Reduction in Pakistan: The Contribution of DEC Member Agencies (2010-2012)", Disaster Emergency Committee, July 27, 2012

9. Ibid.

## REVISIT

# The Shelter "Block"

By Nobahar Wassan



Badin's history of disasters has attracted many interventions for the purpose of relief and rehabilitation.

Spread over 6,726 square kilometres, Badin district has a population of about 1.6 million people. The majority of the population lives in rural areas. Prone to cyclones, coastal floods, heavy rainfall, sea intrusion and hydrological as well as meteorological droughts the district faces extreme environmental risks linked to unpredictable rainfall patterns, storm surges and cyclones. The coastal areas are more vulnerable as compared to other rural areas.

Badin's vulnerability comes from its geographical location. It is bounded on the north by the Hyderabad district, which is prone to hazards such as urban flooding, heavy rainfall, environmental issues, fires and social conflicts; on the east by the Mirpur Khas district, which is frequently visited by floods and heavy rainfall, and the Tharparkar district, which has experienced drought, political strife, earthquake, flood, epidemics, wind erosion and fires. On the south are the Arabian Sea and the Rann of Kutch, which also forms the international boundary with India. On the west, it is bounded by the Thatta district, which has been repeatedly hit by cyclones, floods, heavy rainfall, sea intrusion, fires and social conflicts. In addition, Thatta is also confronted by the impact from the Left Bank Outfall Drain (LBOD).

The infamous LBOD circles Badin from the east, west and south. Described as a major cause of the degradation of the ecological system impacting local livelihoods including agriculture and fisheries, the LBOD has been termed a disastrous project due to its negative impact on Badin.

The disaster history of Badin from 1964-2007, point to eleven incidents of extreme disasters, mostly floods and cyclones, killing hundreds and displacing around 350,000 people on an average each time.<sup>1</sup> Lying in Zone II of cyclones, the previous disasters affected UCs of Ahmed Rajo, Bhugra Memon, Kadhan, Mithi III, Abdullah Shah Pangrio, Khoski, Dai Jarkas, Nindo, Kario, Tarai, Garho and Khorwah with varying degrees of severity. The most recent, the floods of September 2011, claimed seventy-three lives in Badin and affected over 70 per cent of the population. All forty-six Union Councils (UCs) of district were swept underwater.

Badin accounts for about 50 per cent of the total crude oil production of Pakistan but remains one of the poorest districts of Sindh.<sup>2</sup> There is only one civil hospital and four taluka hospitals in the district.<sup>3</sup> Health indicators are dismal with diarrhoea, dysentery, and tuberculosis widely prevalent.

The availability of drinking water is much compromised with canals and water courses, the main sources of water supply, now shrinking. Literacy rate was recorded at 27 percent in 2001.<sup>4</sup>

The average temperature from April to June ranges between 25 degrees to 45 degrees. The sea breeze which blows for eight months from March to October makes the hot weather tolerable. The area receives highly erratic rainfall ranging from no rainfall to rains averaging 170mm.<sup>5</sup>

### State of shelter in Badin

Rampant poverty defines the state of housing in the district which is dominated by katcha housing (41 per cent) followed by jhuggies made of straw and wood. Only 11 per cent of 101,669 housing units fall in the category of pucca houses.<sup>6</sup> The majority of the houses are one-room units. Adding to the vulnerability of the dwellings is their close proximity to the Arabian Sea and the LBOD whereby any natural disaster affects these structures most profoundly. The September 2011 floods damaged half of the 0.4 million houses made of mud or bamboo straw.

Badin's history of disasters has attracted many interventions for the purpose of relief and rehabilitation, the most important ones of these are those concerned with housing and shelter. A number of housing blocks, mainly concrete-based, have been set up at different places as a part of rebuilding measures following earlier disasters. These have largely been built by private and non-governmental organizations.

During the course of field visits, PILER interacted with local communities over the issue of shelter rehabilitation. Based on insights shared by the communities, PILER attempted to review a few of these. The reason why shelter interventions were preferred over other relief efforts for the purpose of review was because of the potential of reaching a more informed viewpoint. There are a large number of shelter blocks built before the 2011 floods. Some have been inhabited by the communities while others remain unoccupied despite the fact that these are concrete structures with provisions for the supply of water and electricity.



A model village built by the Punjab Government in Golo Mendhoro in UC Bhugra Memon, Badin.

The response of the communities on the quality and effectiveness of the interventions offered useful insights on the gap between local priorities and externally executed structures that are sometimes non-consultative and top-down in nature.

In Village Golo Mendhoro, UC Bhugra Memon, District Badin, the Government of Punjab, in 1999, constructed a model village of sixty-four single-room (plus kitchen) houses, supplemented by two elementary schools (built earlier) and a hand-pump. The residents of the village are either fishermen or manual labourers. During the course of the visit, PILER found the houses vacant with no occupants. The area has electricity supply, while hand pumps for the provision of water were also an additional facility. The housing units were adequately walled for protection with a small verandah stretching from the house to the boundary wall. A washroom was also attached to each housing unit.

Upon inquiry, the villagers said they did not favour the units due to their small size and the absence of space for their livestock. They found the style of houses different from their regular dwellings where they live in independent units but share a common space for the livestock with the family. Such an arrangement helps families access each other easily and also keep an eye on their animals. The Punjab Government Model Village, despite its concrete structure for protection for the residents and their assets and livestock, does not follow the culture of open space and shared living that the local population is used to. Despite being given the opportunity, people preferred to live in their own houses, repaired after the floods, less than a kilometer away from the shelter project of the Punjab Government.

1. Disaster Risk Management Plan, District Badin Government of Sindh, District Disaster Management Authority, pg. 88, 2008, available at [http://unesco.org.pk/ns/documents/Workshop\\_Workbook/Session\\_5/7\\_DDMA-Badin-District.pdf](http://unesco.org.pk/ns/documents/Workshop_Workbook/Session_5/7_DDMA-Badin-District.pdf)

2. Population Welfare Department, District Badin, Government of Sindh

3. Disaster Risk Management Plan, District Badin Government of Sindh, District Disaster Management Authority, pg. 88, 2008, available at [http://unesco.org.pk/ns/documents/Workshop\\_Workbook/Session\\_5/7\\_DDMA-Badin-District.pdf](http://unesco.org.pk/ns/documents/Workshop_Workbook/Session_5/7_DDMA-Badin-District.pdf)

4. The World Conservation Union-IUCN and the District Government Badin, "District Vision Badin: A Framework for Sustainable Development", Report, pg. 114, 2006.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid.



A shelter project by the Allied Bank of Pakistan.

Village Ahmed Rajo has an approximate population of 3,500 living in around 600 houses. The village has two primary schools, a middle school and also the facility of electricity. Following the floods of 2007, two shelter projects were set up for the village:

- The Allied Bank Shelter Project
- The UNDP's Global Environment Facility Shelter Program in collaboration with the Government of Pakistan

The Allied Bank has completed 85 houses as per its scheme. These are 2-room units with attached toilets on the side. All the units are occupied. The average family size of the occupants is seven.

The blocks match the local housing standards. Each unit has large, airy rooms. A shaded verandah looks out to an open space, unobstructed by any boundary walls. The houses are built on raised platforms. The families are able to follow their traditional living pattern with shared space for their livestock and mobility/interaction. The houses are connected to the electricity transmission of the district while water is availed through shared hand-pumps that have been installed. According to locals, the houses were constructed following consultation with the local communities.

The area has no community centre and the school space is often used for communal meetings.

There are some shortcomings that reflect the limitations of externally-funded projects. There is no piped drainage system linked to the washrooms because of which the sewage drains out into the open ground inviting mosquitoes and the possibility of diseases. The washroom facility is almost redundant for the residents of the houses who prefer open defecation.

The second externally funded housing block in village Ahmed Rajo is a UNDP-executed project that was launched in 2009 but still awaits completion. The 34-unit housing block, which includes some partially constructed units, remains unoccupied.

The two-room houses, made of bricks, are built on raised platforms. A washroom has been built opposite every housing unit. The units are large and airy. The ceilings are partially completed while the flooring is yet to be done. There is a hand-pump for the supply of water and provision for electricity is available.

It is either due to non-completion or absence of follow up that the housing block has not been allocated to the local communities. With four years in the making, and having faced one major flood and several rainfalls, the houses are losing their architectural quality. The washrooms are blocked with sand and mud, the bricks are chipping off and the elevated platform is flattening. The houses may require major restoration if the UNDP decides to complete the project. The project is marked as complete on the UN webpage. PILER contacted the relevant UNDP office, following the information given on the internet page of the project. PILER's queries failed to receive any positive response by the concerned officials at the Programme's office in Islamabad.

Our review has limitations as we are merely visitors, though regular, but not residents of the area. It is difficult to reflect the exact conditions of those living and negotiating life in the disaster-prone district of Badin, especially when faced with the state's non-delivery of essential services. This review only attempts to present a brief picture of the level of engagement of non-governmental organisations and the effectiveness of their interventions which depend as much on their practices as it does on the local communities' response to these initiatives.



A 34-unit housing block funded by the UNDP.



## OUTLOOK

# Of Development and Politics: The Highs and Lows of American Assistance

By Asif Shakeel



Pakistan has historically been among the top recipients of US assistance with more than US\$ 67 billion received between 1951 and 2011.<sup>1</sup> Until the 1960s, American assistance was a significant part of food support, development and humanitarian emergency projects. By 1964, the US support accounted for 5 per cent of the country's GDP contributing to industrialization and development. With the assistance focusing on economic development, the US seldom had image issues that it now has because of the political and military character of its current alliance with Pakistan.

The US assistance to Pakistan was suspended in 1965 as a result of the war between Pakistan and India. The super power remained a withdrawn partner during the 1971 war too. However, a decade later, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan resulted in a surge in the American support for military and development purposes in Pakistan. A large part of the security-related assistance went into backing the Afghan war. The US, which was already seen as an unreliable friend because it had failed to support Pakistan in the two wars with India, suffered further damage to its image due to the popular perception that its keen partnership with Pakistan was based on its vested interest in fighting the Soviets in Afghanistan.<sup>2</sup>

The US economic assistance to Pakistan peaked at over US\$ 2.3 billion in 1962 while it hit the lowest point in 1990 when President George Bush Senior suspended aid in order to discourage Pakistan from pursuing its nuclear programme.<sup>3</sup> The diplomatic relations between the two countries suffered further setbacks, first as a result of the nuclear tests in 1998, followed by a military coup a year later, resulting in more sanctions being imposed on Pakistan. The aid came down to as low as US\$ 36.76 million during the financial year 2000.

The September 11 attacks, however, changed the situation altogether. Pakistan became a frontline state in the war on terrorism and one month after the attacks the US decided to lift the aid embargo on Pakistan. With this, the assistance climbed to US\$ 187.7 million in the financial year 2001. In a period of just one year the aid was increased about eleven-fold to US\$ 2000 million. In a 2003 meeting with military ruler General Musharraf, President George W. Bush vowed to work on establishing a US\$ 3 billion aid programme, spread over a period of five years, with the money to be divided equally to meet the military and economic needs. These annual instalments of US\$ 600 million each began in the 2005 financial year. Two-thirds of the overall aid of some US\$ 15.8 billion disbursed between 2002 and 2012 was spent on security assistance to Pakistan.<sup>4</sup>

The biggest turnaround in the chapter of the US assistance to Pakistan came when President Obama signed the Kerry-Lugar-Berman Bill into an Act in 2009. Under the KLB Bill, the US authorized US\$ 7.5 billion in assistance to Pakistan to be disbursed over a period of five years. The Bill was entirely focused on development assistance with the theme of "improving Pakistan's governance, support its economic growth, and invest in its people."<sup>5</sup> This was a shift from the previous US policy of providing security assistance which had come under much criticism in Pakistan.

From October 2009 to September 2012, a total of US\$ 3.17 billion has been disbursed under the Programme. Out of this, the biggest share of US\$ 934.8 million was spent on law enforcement, counternarcotics and for the economic and social uplift of conflict-affected communities in the tribal areas of Pakistan. This was followed by allocations to the sectors of education and social/humanitarian assistance which received US\$ 360 million and US\$ 320 million respectively. Apart from this, the US spent \$1.06 billion on disaster relief and assistance after the floods in Pakistan.

Enormous grants were also given to local civil society organisations for development projects. A US\$ 40 million Gender Equity Program was launched in partnership with the Aurat Foundation to provide 400 to 500 grants ranging from US\$ 25,000 to US\$ 100,000 to local organisations. This massive financial support to the non-governmental sector has been the subject of much debate in the development circles. Critics say that such an approach amounts to transforming civil society organisations into grant disbursement bodies. They argue that with limited absorption capacities, this trend labelled as 'artificiality of aid economy', poses a serious threat to the sustainability and independence of recipient organisations.<sup>7</sup>

A related unpleasant episode is the Pakistan Children Television (PCTV) programme for which the USAID awarded a US\$ 20 million cooperative agreement to the Lahore-based Rafi Peer Theatre Workshop (RPTW). Under the agreement, the RPTW was to provide support to the programme through television, radio and theatre productions. A year after the project took off, the USAID discontinued the grant on account of alleged 'irregularities' and 'misuse of funds'.<sup>8</sup> The resultant spat between the USAID and the RPTW hurt both organisations and exposed the pitfalls of arrangements in which big money can result in fuelling unbridled ambition.

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A 2011 report of the Center for Global Development (CGD) analyzing US aid strategy for Pakistan specifically outlined improved planning and implementation of US development programmes in the country as an important need. While calling for a revisit of President Obama's controversial 'Af-Pak' strategy, the report notes that the US assistance to Pakistan, under the new arrangement, has its share of flaws:

- The integration of development into the 'Af-Pak' bureaucratic structure has undermined the needed focus at the highest level on the development programme.
- It has been unable in boasting a coherent set of focused development priorities or the organization and tools to manage and adjust those priorities as conditions require.
- Transparency has not been a priority.
- Lack of clear information generates scepticism and mistrust in Pakistan.
- The USAID mission in Pakistan is neither empowered nor equipped to succeed.
- The focus on the dollar size of the aid programme has raised expectations in Pakistan and created unreasonable pressure in Washington to spend quickly.

Critics of the KLB Bill also argue that the USA had planned on marching into every sector, be it law enforcement, energy, education, health or gender. Four years since its enactment and with billions of dollars already invested, the 'hardly visible outcomes' are testing the patience of public representatives in Washington. For a variety of political reasons, no substantial progress could be made in achieving an important underlying objective of the aid programme, that of the image revival of the US.

For a more informed perspective on the subject, PILER contacted four experts from the fields of development, human rights and academics and sought their opinion over the direction, priorities, effectiveness and impact of the US assistance to Pakistan, especially in the last ten years. Following are the excerpts:





**Dr Kaiser Bengali**

*Senior Economist and former Advisor to the Sindh Chief Minister on Planning and Development*

The US assistance has not had much impact because of its flawed nature. They have sought to focus on projects with the attitude that if you throw money, you get results. For example, they set up an industrial estate in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with the objective of curbing poppy production by providing (alternative) employment to the people. However, conditions for setting up industries did not exist in that area as there was neither raw material available nor were there any markets close by. It was a bureaucratic decision, both in the USAID and in Pakistan. On top of that, the Pakistani government granted tax holiday on the imported raw material. Industrialists with industries in major Pakistani cities established units in the industrial estate and declared these as operational in their books. But in reality they imported duty-free raw material and transported it to their already established industries in other cities where the actual production was taking place.

From my work experience with the government and ministries, I can say that they (the government) are not bothered about the purpose of the funding or the nature of the project. Their attitude is that let the dollars flow in. When I was working with the government, the USAID was planning to extend huge assistance to prepare and rehabilitate over 2000 schools. I reasoned with them that they would never be able to monitor the preparation and rehabilitation (of schools at such a large scale), so they needed to use the same money for fewer schools. It was beneficial for students too as usually the rehabilitation of one-room schools is an unsustainable proposition. Eventually, they agreed to finance 200 schools instead of 2,000 and build complete campuses.

Half the responsibility of badly planned projects lies with us because we don't negotiate with them. Recently, the USAID introduced sunflower seeds in different areas of Sindh and it was a successful intervention. Now it has become an alternate cash crop for farmers in the province.

All aid is politically motivated. Assistance is given because the donor's own national interests are served and it is also true of the USAID. However, it needs to be channelled into those areas and projects that match Pakistan's needs.

“They (the US) have sought to focus on projects with the attitude that if you throw money, you get results.”



**Irfan Mufti**

*Deputy Director,  
South Asia Partnership - Pakistan (SAP-PK)*

During the past few years we have seen a shift in American funding. Traditionally they were focused on (providing assistance to improve the) physical infrastructure but now they are concentrating on rights in democracy and electoral politics. This is also reflected in their programmes such as the Gender Equity Programme and the Citizens Voice. It is a good sign. They are also coming to various rights-based organisations and offering handsome grants. However, there are problems.

There are examples where the USAID has applied its own models instead of respecting and following the local ones. They try to impose their concept of rights which does not find much resonance here. The other issue is that they play with the credibility of the (participating) organisations. In recent cases, they have blacklisted some organisations without thorough investigations or providing the other party an opportunity to present its point of view. At one level, we see politics involved in it. At another level, the handling of the cases is quite disturbing. This will have serious repercussions.

Americans need to learn that assistance is not merely about funding. Instead of acting like policeman, they should respect the local aspirations/agenda and make the civil society a part (of the process of assistance).

It was expected that the KLB Bill would help them in regaining their reputation but with the models that they apply, their mindset and their business approach, as I said earlier, they are not going to achieve the (larger) objective of the assistance.

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**Dr Rubina Saigol**

*Independent Researcher and Educationist*

The US assistance during the past ten years has not had much of an impact on the Pakistani society. Most of it has gone to the military and into serving the US's own interests in the region. Very little of it has been received by the government or the development sector.

I know they have done some projects on education and health but I don't see any impact because assistance is always tied with strings. Naturally, aid is always given to further the interests of the donor country and not of the recipient country.

Pakistan and the USA cannot be partners because the latter is too powerful and rich while Pakistan is poor and powerless. The Americans lay down the terms which we have to fulfil otherwise they can stop the assistance; so it can never be a 'partnership'.

I don't think that development should ever be separated from politics because if you do that you would not be developing the people; you will only be providing what is known as 'welfare'. Development work should bring about transformation in society - it should lead to a social change and not just a school here and dispensary there!





**Dr Nadia Tahir**  
Economist

Historically speaking, US assistance was an instrument to gain goodwill and support for her international policies.

In the last ten years, the US Congress approved US\$ 18 billion in military and economic aid for Pakistan. It included military assistance of US\$ 11.740 billion and economic assistance of US\$ 6.08 billion. But only US\$ 8.647 of this amount was released in direct financial payments for Pakistan. It shows lack of trust and commitment on the part of the US to curb terrorism and promote economic development during (the terms of the) democratically elected regimes in Pakistan. The incidence of conflict has increased. The government has less funds to fight against terrorist organisations who are challenging the writ of the state.

The Kerry Luger Bill passed in 2009 after the democratic elections in Pakistan had proposed US\$ 1.5 billion in annual assistance till 2014. This target was never achieved. Only US\$ 179.5 million out of US\$ 1.51 billion in U.S civilian aid to Pakistan was actually disbursed during 2010-11.

It is not really an unrealistic expectation to separate politics from development aid. Initially, development assistance plans started with the objective to bridge the gap of technique and technology in developing countries. President Truman (1949) announced aid for development but the objectives of the United States have clearly been to promote political and strategic interests. Wood (1959) viewed aid programme as a selection problem with implications for trade, business and for various civil and military departments. During the 1970s, the emphasis was on the basic needs approach. This was followed by poverty reduction and controlling disease. Failing in overcoming poverty, the objectives changed again and now the focus is on promoting democratic reform, human rights, transparency and accountability.

**“ The Kerry Luger Bill, passed in 2009 after the democratic elections in Pakistan, had proposed US\$ 1.5 billion in annual assistance to Pakistan till 2014. This target was never achieved due to political issues. ”**

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## VIEWPOINT

**“Right now it’s not that the donors have so much money, but that Pakistan collects so little money”**

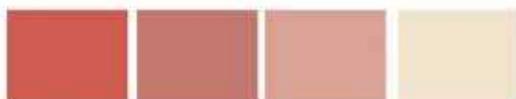
*By Zeenia Shaukat*



Dr Stephen Commins works on regional and international development, with an emphasis on service delivery and governance in fragile states. He took his PhD in urban and regional planning from the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), where he now lectures. He also worked as Senior Human Development Specialist at the World Bank from 1999-2005, where, among other initiatives, he established the Bank’s children and youth clusters and co-authored the World Bank’s World Development Report 2004, “Making Services Work for Poor People”. He also contributed to the review of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) programme’s effectiveness, and conducted a study on decentralisation for the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP). Other recent projects include a handbook for the community and local government interface on disaster risk reduction for the World Bank in Bangladesh; a study on fragile states’ strategies for Save the Children-UK; and advising PLAN-UK on their global report on the wellbeing of girls. Dr Commins spoke to *Development Log* on the sidelines of the Sustainable Development Conference in December 2012, where he was invited as a speaker. Following are the excerpts of his interview.

## The Funding Dilemma

An interview with  
**Dr Stephen Commins**



DEVELOPMENT LOG: How correct is the impression that the international community's interest in development in Pakistan is driven by security concerns rather than by the objective of social betterment?

**DR STEPHEN COMMINS:** I would say that it is particularly the case with the USAID but less with DFID, because the British government and Pakistan share a very deep historic relationship. Similarly, the European Commission, the World Bank or the Asian Development Bank are more concerned about the issues of poverty, and (now) increasingly about vulnerability and disasters. Obviously, security has been a concern after 2001. However, the (2010) floods, which were historic and massive in nature, created enormous pressures on institutions to respond within the UN system. Today, development efforts are much more focused on providing security; not military security, but human security for the people of Pakistan.

**DL:** There is discontent over the role of the international humanitarian agencies during the successive floods in Pakistan. The affected population felt that service delivery did not match their needs while there was a dearth of accountability. The affectees also complained that the humanitarian agencies wrapped up their operations without prior announcement or a planned follow up.

**SC:** It is unfortunate that there has not been much investment in the areas of disaster risk reduction or for the purpose of mapping and developing a better understanding of communities. This is a failure of not only government agencies but also of donor agencies.

However, ten or twenty years ago, those involved in humanitarian assistance presumed that their work and actions were above accountability, primarily because they were doing good. But under the UN reform process and accountability standards, donors, governments, and NGOs are all accountable to local communities.

**DL:** But how is that to be realised? NGOs work in ways different from the government. Unlike the state, they are not constitutionally or legally obliged to stand accountable to their constituencies.

**SC:** If the non-governmental sector is to accept money either from the UN or a bilateral agency such as DFID or from a provincial government on contract, they are accountable. NGOs should also be accountable to the people they are working with. They (the people) should not be treated as victims but as people who have experience and perspective, who are in charge of their (own) lives. There are numerous mechanisms whereby some NGOs have developed complaint systems. The UN cluster system too, for instance the ones on health or shelter, offer greater scope for the accountability of the non-governmental agencies involved in humanitarian assistance.

**DL:** As an authority demanding accountability, the state (of Pakistan) suffers from credibility deficit. Every time the state seeks accountability, especially of the media or non-governmental organisations, the move is resisted because the state itself is seen as a discredited entity.

**SC:** I understand the politics of why the state is not trusted. But the principle that, in the long run, the people of Pakistan must have an effective and accountable state, is a fundamental principle. If the NGOs do not want to give this information directly to the state it becomes the responsibility of the media groups, independent newspapers and think tanks, to ask for the information because NGOs are no God. In the last couple of decades, governments from Brazil, Uganda and Bangladesh have set up registration systems. There is always a risk that the state will squeeze the NGOs and cut down the space for the civil society. Of course, nobody wants that. However, the state is still the prime public agency, and it should have the right to provide regulations on how the NGOs account for the money (at their disposal).

**“The principle that, in the long run, the people of Pakistan must have an effective and accountable state, is a fundamental principle.”**

**DL:** A number of development agencies have been working in Pakistan. There is a debate that this has sometimes led to a situation where funding is seeking projects rather than the other way round. How does it work for countries like Pakistan that do not have the capacity to absorb that kind of assistance? There is also concern that such a proposition curtails space for creativity and expression by the organisations involved as they end up merely implementing activities outlined by the donor agencies.

**SC:** I think this partly goes back to the different levels of capacity. Within Pakistan there are clearly some departments, ministries, regional governments, and municipalities that are more capable than others. That's a critical point, because this is where you get down to very specific details: a donor with specific interests, and those public institution(s) in Pakistan that it is trying to work with. It could be a public institution that gets high marks or it could be one that everybody knows doesn't function at all.

I think Pakistan needs more forums where the donors, the government and the Pakistani civil society can have a dialogue on developmental and social issues that need priority attention. If you get beneath the specifics, there can be much more direct feedback from local agencies to funding bodies spelling out priority issues. Of course, we cannot overlook the fact that donors have their own politics. For instance, if the government of a donor country decides that it wants to focus on disaster risk reduction, they are going to put money there. It may be right, but it may run against the priority areas of the recipient country. This is undoubtedly one of the problems in the aid business.

Generally speaking, the World Bank (WB) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) are better, because their country assistance strategies and priority settings are in the form of a dialogue. Bilateral donors tend to have, what I would call, their pet projects.

**DL:** People have major problems with the way the WB and the ADB work. They are usually accused of working with policy makers and actors who have little connection with the grassroots. So there is that gap also and people do not have representation in that framework.

**SC:** I do not disagree with what you say but I think that there are ways in which the government and the civil society can have an impact because the Bank does have political mandates about participation and input. However, it does depend on the bank manager and on the project.

**DL:** Is the current flow of assistance turning Pakistan into an aid-dependent country?

**SC:** Well it's actually not so much money. All the donor money for Pakistan combined (including the one promised but not delivered) is barely 1 per cent of the GDP of Pakistan. Pakistan is not an aid-dependant country. If you look at the population of Pakistan, a few billion dollars is not really much money. In comparison, Tanzania or Uganda have larger proportions coming in from donors.

Pakistan has a different problem. It has one of the worst tax response rates. Tax-avoidance and the inability of the state to collect taxes is a fundamental problem and donors feel pretty helpless about it. It is certainly catastrophic because if Pakistan can mobilize (resources generated through taxes) just proportionally to what other countries do, it would give the state far more resources for programmes and independence in terms of pursuing its priority areas.

**DL:** A development expert in an interview with *Development Log* said that the way the nongovernmental sector is filling in the service delivery gap in Pakistan is an inadvisable route. He suggested that they should just concentrate on advocacy. Would you agree with that?

**SC:** That is a wonderful idea, but even in the United Kingdom, the United States and the Netherlands we have voluntary organizations. The state is never going to be able to do all the things that are needed. Japan is a country we admire as a very efficient and technologically advanced state, but look at how badly the Japanese government handled the earthquake. Some of my students at the UCLA visited Japan last spring. They went to all these ghost towns that have neither been cleaned up nor have people moved back in to them. Look at how the US handled Hurricane Katrina. You have voluntary organisations in an ideal world to help add urgent capacity. (But) in the real world, you have voluntary organisations because the state is very imperfect.

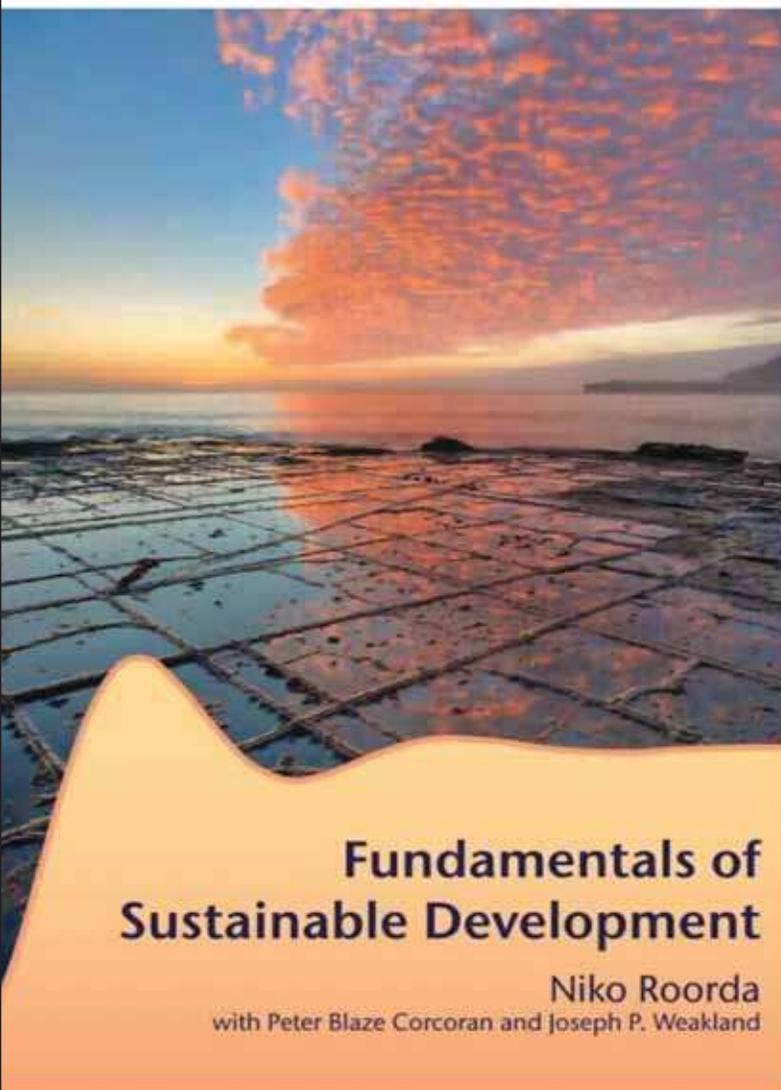
*Interview transcribed by Sara Jaffri*



## BOOK REVIEW

# Nature for Labour before Profits for Capital

By Aly Ercelan and  
Muhammad Ali Shah



## Fundamentals of Sustainable Development

Niko Roorda

with Peter Blaze Corcoran and Joseph P. Weakland

Fundamentals of Sustainable Development  
Niko Roorda,  
Routledge, 2012.  
352pp.

Whatever be the special focus of a social movement, their activists can no longer ignore the claims of nature upon human life, particularly the critical intersections of ecology and livelihoods. South Asia can remain no exception to ignore the fact that no rights can be secured through reckless use of natural resources. All of us are advocates for social justice: hence we must join to reject vicious mantras – that eradicating poverty requires economic growth, which entails expansion in aggregate consumption today, and therefore future generations have no choice but to inherit a world that is degraded or depleted.

**“We believe that no trade-off is necessary between today and tomorrow.”**

In opposition to Washington-led global capitalism and its managers such as the World Bank, IMF and the ADB, we believe that no trade-off is necessary between today and tomorrow if a minority of people can be made to eliminate its obese overconsumption in favour of the impoverished majority – there, here and everywhere. We must not use the real and glaring global inequality of “bads” to sidetrack the urgent task of tackling local inequity based upon extremely unequal local wealth. The labour movement must fight for decent work that begins with rights at work but also emphasises ecologically sustainable livelihoods; similarly the fisherfolk movement needs to project a vision of equitable benefits between boat owners and crews through achievement of marine conservation.

Roorda strives to enable a global perspective for local action. The book’s particular strength lies in bringing together issues of equity (among people) arising from insufficient recognition of ecology (around the planet) in the economy of growth (as irresponsible profits). Social activists will find much support for their advocacy agendas for local and provincial public action. Organized into eight chapters of not just what is but also what should and can be the book presents numerous case studies across both the ‘developed and developing’ world.

The entire book is useful reading, even in disagreement upon private and public action for promoting equitable responses in ecological responsibility. Deserving special recommendation are entire chapters 1 (Introduction), 6 (Now and Later), and 8 (Sustainable Business, optimistically) along with the following sections from remaining chapters. Section 2.6 summarises consequences for nature of the present world of production and consumption; section 3.5 is a concise bringing together of people, planet and profits. Section 4.8 argues for essential cooperation across society; section 5.5 extends to cooperation in international action for shared responsibility and Section 7.5 deals with political and economic instruments to reverse environmental degradation; though less critically than one would want. Several tables and figures stand out, including Table 3.6 and Figure 3.24 for considering both people and nature as parts of the same ecosystem. Table 6.1 is an overview of ecosystem services; figures 7.5-6 illustrate feedbacks for climate change. Table 8.4 on required professional competency applies to both bureaucracy and business.

The author gives less space than deserved for eliminating extreme inequality in use of natural resources. Oddly, we found no substantive discussion of specific social-environmental interactions for women. Consider e.g. the damage to female reproductive systems of picking pesticide-laden cotton for export, or of those wading into city polluted water around Baba and Bhit islands for obtaining mangrove branches as fuel. It is our belief that existing inequity is a major impediment to attaining ecological sustainability. Another example is the dumping of waste from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab into the Indus River: much of Sindh is adversely impacted, but an extreme, uncompensated, burden for the poor in, say, Badin. With a very unequal distribution of upstream land ownership, it is obvious that it's their rich who benefit most from such pollution, especially by high subsidy in irrigation and a trivial income tax levy. The nasty, World Bank-led, LBOD project is an inter-provincial problem, but the recent RBOD project seems to be a devastation entirely created within Sindh. It is perverse love of motherland for nationalists to ignore our own crimes against nature and hence a war upon our people.

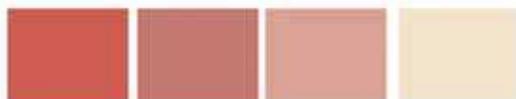
Consider another example. Fisherfolk in Karachi are forced to eat chicken rather than fish because the cost of chicken is kept 'low' by using 'trash' fish as meal for chicken; and the price of premium fish remains high by

subsidizing exports. Both encourage depletion of fish stocks.

The book provides an opportunity to goad us into getting out of political escapism and towards action for 'our' problems rather than await solutions by 'them.' There is real danger, as in blaming all ills on colonialism, of remaining irresponsible. Yes, we inherited the Sukkur Barrage but did 'independent' Sindh have to construct the Kotri barrage? If Kalabagh dam is unacceptable why does not the same opposition object to Bhasha dam?

All readers would gain from a subsequent look at other case materials. Two recent publications are highly recommended: *Sustainability and Equity* (UNDP, HDR for 2012), and *Poverty & Inequality* (UNRISD, 2012). Obviously also the IUCN and WWF, and those from the more progressive organisations of Sungi (established by the late Omar Asghar Khan) and SDPI (set up by Tariq Banuri), specially the annual conference reports of the latter. Thoughtful readers would benefit much from Rohan D'Souza, particularly his recent edited volume of essays from the EPW as *Environment, Technology and Development*, and the powerful case study of floods as man-made disasters: *Drowned and Dammed*.

“**The entire book is useful reading, even in disagreement upon private and public action for promoting equitable responses in ecological responsibility.**”



We also wish to draw attention to unpublished work – such as by Mushtaq Gaadi on Chashma and Taunsa irrigation systems, of Mustafa Talpur on the LBOD, and of our revered friend, the late Professor Muhammad Nauman on Chotiari Reservoir. These provide stunning indictments of accepting a 'development' model with lead funding by the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank.

An immediate global threat of adverse climate change should keep us awake at night. That, sadly, is not happening - dangerous ignorance, denial or pessimistic inaction being not the monopoly of South Asian society and state. Urgently needed are informed citizens in all professions everywhere, who must and can act to change the world. Despite Fukushima, why do we not become serious about dismantling nuclear energy plants, starting with the most dangerous KANUPP on the Sindh coast? The fisherfolk of Kerala are a courage-

-ous lot in opposing a new nuclear plant: we must learn from their struggle.

It is imperative that activists from all walks of life become part of the environment movement rather than just shifting responsibility to organisations such as SHEHRI and the Urban Resource Centre. We must be asking e.g. Environmental Tribunals why they fail to uphold environmental laws even in blatant and outrageous action or inaction by provincial and federal government. When citizens get murdered for eco-activism -- as in Kakapir village (Haji Abu Bakr and Abdul Ghani) -- or in Gutter Baghicha (Nisar Baloch), when will their families get justice? The Lyari Expressway is a clear boondoggle, as is the Korangi Fish Harbour but the Sindh EPA appears asleep.

Unsustainable Interactions ( <i>Roorda</i> )						
Consequences	Causes					
	People		Planet		Prosperity	
	Overpopulation	War and Violence	Climate change	Environmental degradation	Poverty and hunger	Resources exhausted
<b>Over population</b>	Exponential growth	War refugees	Lower yield	Areas become uninhabitable due to environmental disasters	Children to provide in one's old age	Economic refugees
<b>War and violence</b>	Mutual aggression (e.g. Rwanda)	Revenge	Wars for clean water	Resistance by primitive people	Armed resistance	Wars about ore-producing regions
<b>Climate change</b>	Rising production of greenhouse gases	Nuclear winter through radioactive fallout	Change of albedo	Deforestation leads to decrease in precipitation	Forest fires due to shortage of agricultural lands	Combustion of oil, gas, coal, etc.
<b>Environmental degradation</b>	Nature makes way for cities, roads and recreation	Defoliating substances (e.g. in Vietnam War)	Disruption of the ecosystem	Domino-effect due to ecosystem being unbalanced	Habitat loss	Extraction from oil sands
<b>Poverty and hunger</b>	Exhaustion of agricultural lands	Destruction of manufacturing resources and staff	Bad harvests	Reduction in fish catches	Debt burdens through loans	Mines exhausted
<b>Resources exhausted</b>	Ever-increasing number of people sharing resources	Destruction of infrastructure and buildings	Scarcity of fresh water	Loss of natural materials	Loss of timber due to forest fires	More extensive exploitation due to price rises

## COMMENT

# Poverty Reduction Prescription: Remittances or Development Assistance?

By Hira Habib



Overseas Pakistanis remitted US\$ 13.9bn during the last fiscal year (July 2012 – June 2013).<sup>1</sup> This was a jump from the US\$ 11.2bn sent home in 2010-11.<sup>2</sup> Pakistan has a smaller share in the global remittances flow to developing countries that were at about US\$ 406bn in 2012 and may increase by 10 per cent in 2014 to reach US\$ 534bn in 2015.

Research carried out in Pakistan shows that remittances are predominantly used to meet daily expenses such as food, clothing and healthcare. It is also spent on building or improving housing, buying land, cattle and durable consumer goods, repaying loans used for migration and to fund the Hajj pilgrimage.<sup>3</sup> In the floods of 2010, Pakistani immigrants sent additional financial resources to help their families, friends and even larger communities. These individual family transfers complemented the official aid efforts.<sup>4</sup>

In contrast, if one looks at the development and humanitarian assistance received by Pakistan, the net official development assistance and official aid received in 2011, was US\$ 3.508bn.<sup>5</sup> The World Bank, World Development Indicators online database define net official development assistance (ODA) as one consisting of “disbursements of loans made on concessional terms (net of repayments of principal) and grants by official agencies of the members of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC), by multilateral institutions, and by non-DAC countries to promote economic development and welfare in countries and territories in the DAC list of ODA recipients.”

By its definition, the spending priorities of the ODA too indicate their purpose of improving the living conditions of the household. For instance, a substantial portion (US\$ 75mn), of the US\$ 179.5mn assistance from the Kerry-Lugar-Berman Bill of the USA was spent on the Benazir Income Support Program in 2010.<sup>6</sup> Another US\$ 64.5mn went to support education and the remaining was spent on humanitarian assistance during the last consecutive floods.<sup>7</sup>

1. *Independent Auditors' Report to the Shareholders, consolidated financial statements of the State Bank of Pakistan, October 30, 2013* <http://www.sbp.org.pk/reports/annual/FS/FY12/Cons-Financial-Statements-FY-2012-13.pdf>

2. Akhter Shah Nawaz, “Full-year remittances hit record high of \$13.18bn in FY12; *The News International*, July 11, 2012

3. Suleri, Abid Qaiyum and Kevin Savage, “Remittances in crises: a case study from Pakistan” *Overseas Development Institute background paper*, 2006

4. Haq, Riaz, “Doubling Foreign Remittances to Rebuild Flood-Ravaged Pakistan”, *South Asia Investor Review*, September 11, 2010

5. *International Development Statistics (IDS) Online Databases*, OECD, available at <http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/idsonline.htm>

6. *Official report of the United States Government Accountability Office, Pakistan Assistance Strategy*, GAO-11-310R, 2011

7. *Ibid.*

8. Ahmed, Sugiyarto, and Jha, “Remittances and Household Welfare: A Case Study of Pakistan” *ADB Economics Working Paper Series*, 2010 <http://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/pub/2010/Economics-WP194.pdf>

9. *NGO directory, List of NGOs based in various small cities and town of Khyber(NWFP) Province*, available at <http://www.ngos.org.pk/>

Seemingly, both remittances and aid are spent on responding to poverty and social development deficits. Which of the two is more effective remains a question. The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, for instance, has the highest share in total remittances.<sup>8</sup> At the same time, it is also the region where a large number of poverty alleviation and social development programmes are being run by the non-governmental sector.<sup>9</sup>

Overall, literature on the subject provides sufficient evidence that remittances are beneficial to the recipient countries and can significantly affect poverty and development. Remittances are used mostly for family consumption. These, therefore, have better potential to reduce poverty as they are directly received by the poor.<sup>10</sup> In rural Pakistan, temporary migration is associated with higher female and total school enrolment.<sup>11</sup> One important feature of remittances is that it is relatively stable, which allows flexibility in spending and negotiating social mobility. However, exception must be made for periodic economic shocks. For example, in 2009 Pakistan witnessed a 23 per cent growth in remittances. It later emerged that this was not because of an increase in the income of the migrant workers but because they were returning to their home country following the 2007-08 global recession and bringing their savings with them.<sup>12</sup>

**“A problem with development assistance is the gap between its inflow and its benefits at the grassroots level.”**

There have been varied debates on the impact of development assistance on poverty reduction. Overall there is general agreement that development assistance has a positive impact on the GDP, though there are strong arguments against using the GDP growth as a measure of aid effectiveness. Aid channelled through NGOs has also been observed to reduce infant mortality and does so more effectively than official bilateral aid. The impact on illiteracy is less significant though.<sup>13</sup> A World Bank study on aid allocation and poverty reduction suggests that allocation of aid lifts 10 million people permanently out of poverty each year. “With a poverty-efficient allocation this would increase to 19 million per year.”<sup>14</sup>

A problem with development assistance is the gap between its inflow and its benefits at the grassroots level. There is official recognition that ‘a large portion of development assistance ends up being spent on international consultants and overheads.’<sup>15</sup> Not all official development aid is actually meant for the altruistic purpose of development and poverty reduction. There is vast literature suggesting that most donors often pursue and allocate aid according to their own strategic interest. If a significant part of aid is allocated for strategic purposes, no positive impact in terms of growth or poverty alleviation should be expected.<sup>16</sup> The objectives of the recipient countries and the influence of the dominant actors and lobbyists from the policy making, development and commercial sectors can also not be discounted.

The cost of remittances is not merely brain drain. The very exercise of a worker moving out of her/his country for work is an indication of the state’s failure in providing decent work opportunities to its adult population. In a discussion note on remittances, Dr Aly Ercelan argues that while emigration surely allows some workers and families to escape poverty, there are many more who, by any serious definition of poverty, stagnate. “....remittances from fresh emigrants go largely to repay significant debts incurred for emigration expenses of travel, visas, bribes, commissions, etc.... (Also) the price paid in outrageous working and living conditions in 3-D jobs (“dirty, demanding and dangerous”) is often so high as to mock the distinction between work and bondage.”<sup>17</sup>

There is broad agreement that aid and remittances do not work the same way even though the objective of both is to improve the living conditions of the household. The government decides where the aid goes, (mostly to infrastructure development for eg. building roads or to the health or the education sector), the household decides the fate of the remittances, though social factors influence this decision-making. At the end of the day, the question is not of aid OR remittances; for the purpose of development, the goal is to make them work hand-in-hand.

10. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, “Impact of remittances on poverty in developing countries”, Conference Report, 2011

11. Mansuri, “Migration, sex bias and child growth in rural Pakistan”, World Bank Policy Research Paper, 2006

12. Imai, Katsushi S, and Raghav Gaiha et al., “Remittances growth and poverty: New Evidence from Asian Countries”, Occasional Paper, The International Fund for Agricultural Development, 2012, available at <http://www.ifad.org/operations/projects/regions/pi/paper/15.pdf>

13. Masud, Nadia and Boriana Yontcheva, “Does Foreign Aid Reduce Poverty? Empirical Evidence from Nongovernmental and Bilateral Aid”, Working Paper, International Monetary Fund, 2005, available at <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/wp/2005/wp05100.pdf>

14. Collier and Dollar, “Aid Allocation and Poverty Reduction by Development”, World Bank, 1999

15. Interagency Policy Group, Report on U.S. Policy toward Afghanistan and Pakistan, available at [http://www.whitehouse.gov/assets/documents/Afghanistan-Pakistan\\_White\\_Paper.pdf](http://www.whitehouse.gov/assets/documents/Afghanistan-Pakistan_White_Paper.pdf)

16. Masud, Nadia and Boriana Yontcheva, “Does Foreign Aid Reduce Poverty? Empirical Evidence from Nongovernmental and Bilateral Aid”, Working Paper, International Monetary Fund, 2005, available at <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/wp/2005/wp05100.pdf>

17. Ercelan Aly, “Freezing or Dissolving Poverty in South Asia: The Significance of International Emigration and Remittances in Pakistan”, Discussion Note, PILER, 2008

*Photos courtesy: PILER's Image Databank and the Internet*



## **Water Scarcity at its Worst**



A woman from the village community makes a feeble attempt to fetch half a bucket of mud-infested water in Village Siddique Laskani, UC Khairpur Gumbo of District Badin. Located at the tail end, Badin is severely affected by water shortage forcing the local population to consume a cruelly compromised quality of water including saline water. Women, who bear the major burden of this crisis, travel several miles and spend hours to collect a small amount of water for household consumption.



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