

SOCIAL WELFARE
INFRASTRUCTURAL SERVICES & FACILITIES
PROVIDED BY THE RURAL LOCAL COUNCILS
IN PAKISTAN

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INTRODUCTION

Institutions come into existence either through an evolutionary process or a decree of the government or an act of the elected assembly. Those which come into existence through an evolutionary process are everlasting and adaptable to the changing needs and requirements of the society in which they are evolved. On the other hand, those institutions which come into existence through a decree of the government or an act of parliament (elected assembly) do not last long and are either eliminated or modified with the change of the government. Such institutions are not of permanent nature as their existence depends on the policies of a particular government in power. In this context, the age old institution of "Panchayat" is worth mentioning which came into existence through an evolutionary process and rendered social services effectively. On the other hand, the institution of District Board, Basic Democracies, or local government are of recent origin which came into existence through a decree of the government in power. The institution of District Board was introduced by the British Government in India in 1882¹; whereas the institutions of Basic Democracies and those of Local Government were introduced by the Government of Pakistan in 1959 and 1979 respectively.

1.2 Both India and Pakistan inherited the institution of District Board from the British Government at the time of independence in 1947. These institutions were supervised and controlled by the appointed officials at times when the elected chairmen of the district boards did not follow the dictates of the government in power. In such situations, the overall control and supervision of the district boards was transferred to the Deputy Commissioner who had been the head of district administration and coordinated the activities of various administrative departments within the district. From 1947 onward, the district boards continued to function on the old pattern of the British

Government. Under the Basic Democracies introduced in 1959, the district boards were brought under the umbrella of the Basic Democracies System. At the earlier stage when the Basic Democracies Institution was introduced in Pakistan, there were nominated members side by side with elected members at various levels, i.e. Union Council, Tehsil Council, District Council, and Divisional Council. Later on the nominated members were withdrawn. However, at the Tehsil, District, and Divisional level, the Assistant Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, and Divisional Commissioner were the ex-officio chairmen of Tehsil, District, and Divisional Councils. They were appointed officials of the Government and as such representative institutions were brought under the administrative control of regulatory bureaucracy. After the abolition of Basic Democracies System in 1971 no alternative arrangement was made until late 1979² when the local government institutions were re-introduced and assigned expanded role in the process of development. Instead of bringing them under the administrative control of the regulatory bureaucracy, they have their own elected chairmen. This seems to be a departure from the past. It clearly indicates the trust and confidence of the government in the performance of the local government institutions.

1.3 The rationale behind the creation of local self government institutions is that it provides a forum to the local people to voice their grievances under a democratic set up. They serve as training ground for the evolution and development of local leadership and enlist popular support for the mobilization of local resources which otherwise are not adequately made available by the national or provincial governments. In order to provide a democratic set up at the grass root level and involve the people in the process of development, the military government decided to re-introduce the local government institutions. Under the directives of the Federal Government, the respective provincial governments promulgated local government ordinances in

1979.³ This step was taken to ensure proper implementation of the Fifth Five Year Plan (1978-83) which was launched by the military government after the overthrow of the political government on 4th July, 1977. Elections for the local bodies were held under the adult franchise. Since these institutions have been operational for the last 4 years, it is considered appropriate to examine the structural and functional aspects of these institutions and see how far they have been successful in providing social welfare services and infrastructural facilities. This analysis will hopefully provide perspective with regard to strength and weaknesses of the local government institutions enabling us to make certain concrete policy recommendations.

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3. S. Abdul Quddus, Local Self Government in Pakistan, Vanguard Books Ltd, Lahore, 1981.

2. LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN RETROSPECT

The British introduced District Board as an institution of local government in colonial India. This institution was intended to provide representation to the local people in the conduct of their affairs. Since the local people had no experience of such institutions, certain members were associated who were nominated by the British Government in India. These institutions were under the administrative control of the Deputy Commissioner who was an appointed official of the government. After independence in 1947, the institution of District Board was allowed to continue.

2.2 If we have a look on the past of local government institutions in independent Pakistan, we can see four distinct periods of evolution and development of these institutions. The first phase is that of 1947 to 1958. During this period adequate attention could not be given to local government reforms. The pre-independence system of local government was continued to exist with modifications to suite the immediate problems of the country. This period was characterized by the decline of elected local governments. During 1957-58, for example, 11 out of 16 district boards were suspended in Punjab. Similarly, in NWFP all of the district boards and nine municipal committees were suspended and placed under the direct control of administrators appointed by the government. The situation in Sind was about the same. In Baluchistan, there was only one municipal committee which was composed of nominated members.¹ During this period, local government reforms committee was appointed and various reports were commissioned by the government. Instead of making local government institutions more effective, a parallel organization, i.e. Village AID was introduced in 1952.² This period was characterized by political instability, trend towards greater centralization, and bureaucratic control.

2.3 The second period began with the introduction of Basic Democracies in 1959. Under this system, four tiers of local government were established. These were Union Councils, Tehsil Councils, District Councils, and Divisional Councils. Union Councils had directly elected members who elected one of them to be the chairman. At the Tehsil, District, and Divisional levels, however, government officials were made chairmen and members of these bodies were partly nominated. Government officials from relevant nation building departments were made nominated members of these councils. The Basic Democracies system was thus, dominated by government officials at the Tehsil, District, and Divisional levels.³ Political parties were not allowed to be involved in identification of projects and allocation of resources. Basic Democrats were made the electoral college which partly led to the unpopularity of the system. The village community did not generally respond to union councils for performing collective functions associated with productive process. The orientation of government officials was not conducive to eliciting the popular response to government programmes and cooperating with government officials in identifying, and monitoring local projects.⁴ Yet the Basic Democracies increased the access of large and medium size farmers to government facilities and programmes leading to increases in agricultural production; provision of social welfare and infrastructural facilities in rural areas; facilitated dispute settlement; strengthened planning and management capabilities of local leaders; and provided an institutional mechanism for contact between government officials and people representatives at the local level.⁵

2.4 The third policy period was from 1972 to 1979. During this period, elected local councils did not exist and local governments were managed by government officials. Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) was introduced and Rural Development Centres (Marakaz - Marakaz is plural of markaz which mean centre) were established. Though there existed elected representation at the national and provincial levels, the government in

power did not hold elections at the local level. In the absence of elected representatives at the local level, the government programmes were monitored by the members of the national and provincial assemblies.⁶ IRDP continues with some modification. During this period local governments continued to perform their functions. The performance of IRDP was uneven. The project managers lacked adequate authority to coordinate the activities of government functionaries at the Markaz level. Therefore, farmers did not have an adequate access to government facilities, programmes, and agricultural inputs. The role of local government as catalyst of development further declined.

2.5 The final phase or the fourth policy period starts from 1979 when a new local government system was introduced in the country. For the first time in the history of the country, considerable autonomy was given to the local councils and provided a mechanism for participation of local councillors in identifying, planning, and implementation of development programmes and projects. There were several characteristics which differentiated it from those introduced during the first three phases or policy periods. Firstly, elections were held to choose Union and District Councillors throughout the country. Secondly, chairmen of Union and District Councils were elected from among the elected representatives of the people. Thirdly, the elected chairmen of the district councils were made chairmen of the District Coordination Committees, thereby enabling them to review the performance of sectoral departments in the process of project implementation and eliminating the dominance of Deputy Commissioners in development process. Fourthly, district councils were given powers to approve their budgets and local development projects.

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3. MAIN FEATURES OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT SYSTEM

3.1 Under the directives from the Federal Government, the provincial governments promulgated Local Government Ordinances suited to their peculiar needs and circumstances. In Sind and NWFP, these Ordinances were promulgated on July 25, 1979; in Punjab on July 31, 1979; and in Baluchistan on August 28, 1979. These Ordinances were promulgated in pursuance of the Proclamation of the 5th July, 1977 under the Continuance in Force Order of 1977.¹ The main features of the local government system introduced under these ordinances are discussed in the following sections of this chapter.

STRUCTURE OF LOCAL COUNCILS

3.2 Under these Ordinances, Union Councils, Tehsil Councils (in Sind and Baluchistan only) and District Councils were provided for the rural areas; and in urban areas Town Committees, Municipal Committees, and Municipal Corporations were given representative character. In the case of Union Councils 1,000 to 1,500 people elect their representatives.² The size of the Union Council membership is determined by the Provincial Government (where cluster of smaller villages may be brought under the umbrella of a Union Council). The Chairman and the Vice-Chairman of the Union Council is elected by a majority of the Union Councillors. The representative of the Local Government and Rural Development acts as the secretary of the Union Council.

3.3 In Sind, Tehsil Council is known as Taluka Council and consists of Chairmen of Union Councils in the Taluka (Tehsil) and the members of the District Council elected from the Taluka. In Baluchistan, the composition of Tehsil Council is as follows:

- a. all elected chairmen of the union councils within the tehsil;

- b. all elected chairmen of town committees within tehsil who are ex-officio members of Tehsil Council (they have a right to vote);
- c. all representatives of nation-building departments of sub-divisional level who are ex-officio members of Tehsil Council (they have no right to vote).

The term "nation building departments" include Agriculture & Livestock, Education, Local Government and Rural Development, Irrigation and Power, Industries, Health and Social Welfare, Communication and Works, Cooperative, Revenue, and Forest Departments.

3.4 With the promulgation of the Local Government Ordinance 1979, Markaz Councils were not constituted in Baluchistan, Sind, and the North-West Frontier provinces. In Punjab, Northern Areas, Azad Jammu and Kashmir, these councils are composed of the chairmen of the union councils and the members of the District Council from the jurisdiction under each markaz. The Chairman is elected by the majority vote of the chairmen of union councils. The Markaz Manager who is an employee of the Local Government and Rural Development Department acts as the Secretary of the Markaz Council. Sectoral departments representatives posted at the Markaz or Tehsil level are non-voting members of the Markaz Council. This arrangement was introduced under the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) but after the promulgation of the Local Government Ordinance, their status remained dubious.

3.5 The District has enjoyed an important status in the administrative set up of the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent. For administrative conveniences this level has been given due importance and as such the District Councils enjoy a pivotal position in the local government.³ In Punjab it is called "Zila Council"; and elsewhere District Council. In Punjab and Sind, the size of the District Council is determined on the basis of population; whereas in NWFP, it has to be

determined by the Provincial Government as and when found necessary. In the case of Baluchistan, the Local Government ordinance Art 16(1) chapter IV has indicated following composition of the District Council:⁴-

- (i) Peasants equal to 5% of the number of members elected to general seats.
- (ii) Workers equal to 5% of the numbers of members elected to general seats;
- (iii) Tenants equal to 5% of the numbers of members elected to general seats.
- (iv) Women equal to 5% of the numbers of members elected to general seats.

For urban areas, there are three types of Councils: (a) Town Committee; (b) Municipal Committee; and (c) Municipal Corporation. The membership of Town Committees in Punjab, Sind, and Baluchistan is determined by the Provincial Governments on the basis of population; whereas in NWFP, the Government has reserved the right to determine the size of its membership. The same criteria are applicable in the case of Municipal Committees and Municipal Corporations.

COMPOSITION

3.6 The composition of local councils vary from one level to another depending on the size of the population. In 1982, there were 3,661 Union Councils with total membership of 46,144; 83 District/Tehsil/Agency Councils with total membership of 717; 115 Municipal Committees with membership of 2,114; and 267 Town Committees with membership of 3,169. In addition, there were 39 Cantonment Boards with total membership of 145. The overall total of members at the national level was 54,811.⁵

COORDINATION AT VARIOUS LEVELS

3.7 In order to develop coordination among the activities of various councils and those of nation building departments, Coordination Committees have been constituted at District level in the provinces of Punjab, Sind, and NWFP. The Markaz Councils which have been discussed earlier have been retained in Punjab, whereas in Sind and Baluchistan, the activities of various union councils and those of nation building departments are coordinated by Tehsil Councils. Though the Markaz Councils have been retained by Punjab, yet no legal cover has been provided to them by the Local Government Ordinance of that province.⁶ In NWFP, there is no coordinating body in between the Union and the District Council. Instead, the District Coordination Committee at the district level performs a dual function of coordination between sectoral departments and amongst the Union Councils as well as monitoring the implementation of Union Council's activities.

3.8 The District Coordination Committees consists of as many members as specified by the provincial government which varies from district to district. The members of the District Council elect members from amongst themselves and at least two members from amongst the Chairmen of the Union Councils. The Chairman of the District Council is also the Chairman of the District Coordination Committee.⁷ The Deputy Commissioner, and all the heads of sectoral departments in the district including law and order, excise and taxation, forest, WAPDA (Water and Power Development Authority), Irrigation, etc, are non-voting technical members of the District Coordination Committee. The main functions of the DCCs are:⁸

- (a) Coordination of activities of all Local Councils in the District and all Government Departments;
- (b) Settlement of disputes among the Local Councils;
- (c) Coordination of development Plans of Local Councils;
- (d) Review of questions and answers relating to any matter connected with the administration of the Local Councils.

3.9 In Sind, the DCCs comprise of eleven members elected by the Union and District Council, Municipal and Town Committee Councillors from amongst themselves according to the numbers specified to each district. The membership from the rural areas exceeds that of urban areas in these committees. The chairmen are elected by the members of the District Council by the majority vote of the Committee members. The composition and functions of the DCCs in NWFP are similar to those of Sind except that the number of members is same for all the districts. In the absence of Tehsil Council, the DCC also perform the function of coordinating the activities of various nation building departments as well as monitoring of development projects.

3.10 In Baluchistan there are no DCCs. The District Evaluation Committees headed by the Chairman of the District Council perform these functions. The Chairman is assisted by the Assistant Director, Local Government and Rural Development in the discharge of his functions as Secretary of the Committee. Over and above the District, there are Divisional Coordination Committees whose membership varies from one Division to another. The members of the Divisional Coordination Committee are chairmen of the District Councils and Municipal and Town Committees in the Division. The Divisional heads of various nation building departments are its members and the Divisional Commissioner who is an appointed official of the Provincial Government is the Chairman of the Divisional Coordination Committee which serves as a link between the District Councils and the Provincial Government. These Committees have the power of finalizing lists of Annual Development Programme (projects) exceeding Rs. 2.5 million and approving schemes costing Rs.0.5 to 2.5 million.

3.11. At the Provincial level, there are Provincial Councils responsible for coordination and unification of political and administrative functions. The Governors of the respective

provinces are their chairmen. All chairmen of the District Councils, Municipalities, and Mayors of Municipal Corporations are its members. Other members include one chairman to be elected by the chairmen of the Town Committees in each Division, one woman councillor from each Municipality and Municipal Corporation, one representative from amongst the councillors, one minority representative from amongst the elected councillors, one representative of Pakistan Medical Council provincial branch, one representative elected by the Provincial Bar Council, and one representative elected by the press. The secretaries of the sectoral departments in the provinces are non-voting members of the provincial councils.

FUNCTIONS

3.12 There are two important levels of the Local Government System. The first level is that of Union Council; and another is of District Council. The assigned functions of the Union Councils are related to implementation of development activities (site selection, project preparation, land acquisition, construction and maintenance of new buildings or works as well as the maintenance of already completed projects).⁹ Chairmen of Union Councils and members of the Urban Council act as the chairmen of Arbitration Council under the Muslim Family Laws Ordinance 1961 which regulates procedures relating to marriage, divorce, and maintenance of wives. The chairmen of Union Councils and Town Committees and members of other Urban Councils act as Chairmen of Conciliation Courts under the Conciliation Courts Ordinance 1961 to settle various criminal and civil disputes at the local level.

3.13 At the district level, the district councils are responsible for undertaking development programme planning, implementation, coordination, and monitoring of activities. Thus the locus of planning for local improvement has been

decentralized from provincial to district level enabling them to perform the following functions:¹⁰

- Aggregation of financial allocations and physical programme targets received from the provincial governments in different sectors and to draw up a district development programme;
- To make proposals if need be to the provincial planning and development departments for modifications in the aggregate district programme in the light of local priorities;
- To take up overall responsibility for planning, identification, appraisal and approval of projects prepared by the union councils in the following sectors:

Primary, middle and secondary schools
Rural Health Centres
Basic Health Units

Family Welfare Clinics
Potable Water Supply
Hand pumps
Sanitation
Rural Roads

- Disbursement of ADP funds for the approved projects (placed at the disposal of District Council by the Provincial Government) to the Union Councils.
- To review the implementation of the District Development Programme (as an extension function of the Provincial Planning and Development Department as their agent) by holding review meetings within the district and through inspections and progress report from the Council.

From the above it would be observed that the Union and District Councils are the most important tiers of the local government having been assigned an expanded development role. In order to develop the competencies and capabilities of these councils certain financial powers have been delegated to them which are discussed in the following section.

FINANCIAL POWERS

3.14 The Union/District Councils have been given the power of levying local taxes to generate their own revenues. The

Union Councils have been given the power of levying 28 taxes in Sind; 2 in Baluchistan; 19 in Punjab, and 21 in N.W.F.P. whereas the District Councils have the power of levying 28 taxes in Sind; 11 in Baluchistan; 16 in Punjab, and 12 in N.W.F.P.¹¹ Side by side with the delegation of financial powers regarding the levying of taxes, these councils have also been given the powers of formulating their own budget. All local councils except in Baluchistan are autonomous in preparing and approving their budgets, taxes and development schemes. As far as the preparation of Annual Development Programme by these councils is concerned, a Union Council has been given the power to approve every individual project in the ADP upto Rs. 50,000. If the project cost exceeds the prescribed limit, then it may have to be submitted to the District Council which has the power of approving individual project upto Rs.500,000. Projects costing more than Rs.500,000 are to be placed before the Divisional Coordination Committee for approval and final sanction of the provincial government. Moreover, the district level projects (to be included in the ADP) prepared by the sectoral departments are vetted and approved by the District Councils. The implementation of these projects, however, remains with the departments concerned.

SOURCES OF INCOME

3.15 Taxation is one of the sources of income of local councils. Another source is the income from commercial projects (profits, rents, fees, etc). The third source of income is government grants. Although the list of taxes which the local councils are empowered to levy is impressive, the tax which brings some revenue to the urban councils is the Octroi. Since the councillors have to go back to their constituencies for seeking re-election, it is not possible for them to levy more taxes. As far as income from commercial projects is concerned, the income from such sources is very small. This includes rent from the property and fee from cattle

markets (mandis). The Government's grants to local councils have varied from 3-6 of their incomes. This is the development grant (untied) given for rural development and infrastructure building. The other source of funding is a portion from the provincial sectoral departments development fund to undertake construction and ordinary as well as special repairs of primary, middle, and secondary schools, construction of staff residences and Basic Health Units. Special allocations are also given for the construction of extension or improvement of small irrigation schemes, like roads, and small bridges and dams in consultation with Union Councils. The allocations of grant-in-aid is equally divided between the District and Union Councils. District Council grants are further divided into two equal halves. The first half is distributed equally between the District Councils and the other half on the basis of population in each district.

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8. NWFP Local Government Ordinance 1979, Chapter XIX. Also see Baluchistan Local Government Ordinance 1979 Chapter XXII; and Sind Local Government Ordinance Chapter XII.

9. Sind Local Government Ordinance (LGO 1979) Article 44 Chapter VI, Baluchistan LGO 1979 Article 152, Chapter XVI, Punjab LGO 1979 Art:123 Chapter XI; and NWFP LGO 1979 Art:144, Chapter XVI.
10. Sind LGO 1979 Schedule III, Part I; Baluchistan LGO 1979 Art:60, Chapter X, Punjab LGO 1979 Art:51(M); NWFP LGO 1979 Art;53(K), Chapter IX.
11. Sind LGO Schedule V, Part III; Baluchistan LGO Second Schedule Pt:I&III; Punjab LGO Second Schedule Pt:I&II; and NWFP LGO Second Schedule Pt:I&II.

4. PROCEDURE FOR PROVIDING SERVICES

4.1 In the preceding section, we have covered the structural and functional aspects of the local councils in the light of the Local Government Ordinances promulgated by the respective provincial governments. Wherever, there had been provincial variations those have been highlighted. This section will focus on the mechanism as to how the local council provide social services to the people. These procedural aspects will be covered in the light of the Local Government Ordinances promulgated by the respective provincial Governments.

4.2 Invariably all the Ordinances have a full fledged chapter on "Executive Powers and Conduct of Business". According to various sections of these chapters, the executive authority of the local councils is vested in elected chairmen. The business of local councils is disposed of at its meetings, or at the meetings of its sub-committees, or by its chairman or servants or other functionaries. A Local council, within three months of the assumption of office frame by-laws for the conduct of its meetings which may provide for:-

- (a) the types of meetings, that is to say, ordinary, special, or emergent;
- (b) the type of business to be conducted in different types of meetings;
- (c) the place of meetings;
- (d) notices required for different meetings;
- (e) authority to call meetings;
- (f) notice of agenda for the meetings;
- (g) quorum for different meetings;
- (h) order of business to be conducted in meetings;
- (i) the manner of asking questions;
- (j) motions and amendments and their withdrawal or discussions on them;

- (k) speeches to be delivered;
- (l) training, discussions to be arranged at the meetings;
- (m) preservation of order;
- (n) decision by votes;
- (o) language to be used;
- (p) adjournments or postponement;
- (q) co-opting of other members or officials;
- (r) re-consideration of the matters once disposed of;
- (s) recreational or entertainment programme to be arranged at the time of meetings;
- (t) suspension of meetings.

All meetings are presided over by the chairman and in his absence by the vice-chairman. It has also been provided that the government may by rule provide for (a) the preparation of plans and estimates for works to be executed by a local council; (b) the authority by whom and the conditions subject to which such plans and estimates are to be technically approved and estimates administratively sanctioned; and (c) the agency by which such plans and estimates are to be prepared and such works to be executed.

4.3 The District Councils have been given the overall responsibility for identification, preparation, approval, implementation, and monitoring the development projects of education, rural health, water supply, storage, sanitation, rural roads, etc. The District Councils have been given the powers to distribute funds among various union councils provided to them under the Annual Development Programme. The financial powers of local councils have been discussed in the preceding section. Now we have to see as to what mechanism has been developed for the identification, preparation, approval, monitoring and evaluation of the development projects.

IDENTIFICATION OF PROJECTS

4.4 Development projects are identified both by the union councils as well as by the district councils. The union councils identify such projects which are of vital importance for the needs of the community. These projects are of minor nature and do not necessarily involve huge expenditure. For instance street pavement, provision of hand pumps, motor pumps, cattle pond, water tank, water channels and construction of irrigation bund (bund is used for diversion of water), addition of rooms in community buildings, etc. It is not necessary that the union councils have to restrict themselves to the identification of projects of minor costs. Sometimes they may identify projects which are of higher costs for which they have to resort to the district council for funding. Majority of the projects, however, are of lesser cost within the competence of these bodies.

4.5 The district council may identify projects on its own or may consider the projects referred to it by the union councils. Since the members of the district council represent their respective communities they identify the development projects of local importance. For instance, projects like construction of roads, primary schools, basic health units, drainage, bridges, etc are identified by the members of the district council. The projects identified by the district council may either fall under its financial competence; or could be referred to the provincial government for consideration.

PREPARATION OF PROJECTS

4.6 In the preparation of projects identified by the members of the union council, the secretary union council usually assist the chairman in formulating the projects. The secretary

of the union council who is an employee of the Local Government and Rural Development Department is not fully equipped with the tools of project preparation. So at this stage the projects are simple and do not possess adequate information to stand the test of scrutiny by the technical and financial experts. More-over it is not possible to go into that level of sophistication as the expenditure involved is not that much which may require such analyses. At the district level, however, there is slight improvement as all the development projects have to be supported by cost estimates. We do not have adequate information to show inter-provincial variation in the preparation of projects. For that reason whatever evidence we have at our disposal can be furnished in the case of NWFP.

4.7 In NWFP where a local council has to undertake original work costing Rs.250 thousand or more with regard to water supply, drainage, development of roads and streets or any other similar service, formulates a scheme and is published so as to invite comments for improvement. After incorporating the comments, the scheme is modified and placed before the council in a special meeting. The council may approve or reject it or ask for modification. When the scheme is approved, it is notified in the official gazette. After the scheme is sanctioned, the local council has to take such steps as necessary or as may be specified by the government. Those schemes funded by the government have to be executed in accordance with the instructions of the government.¹

APPROVAL OF PROJECTS

4.8 Selection of the location of sites, processing and approval of the projects exceeding Rs. one hundred thousand and not exceeding Rs.5.0 million of the sub-sectors of education, basic health, veterinary dispensaries, etc are

required to be scrutinized and approved by a majority of the members of the Development Committee of the District Council. Administrative approval of such projects is granted by the head of the department at the district level in accordance with the prescribed rules. The District Development Committee exercises power in respect of those schemes which are included in the annual development programme and for which provision has been made in the budget. The development Committee cannot sanction schemes beyond the financial powers of the District Council. The proceedings and decisions of the Development Committee are to be recorded and the copies thereof circulated among the members as well as the Finance Departments alongwith a copy of the PC.I (PC-I is a format developed by the National Planning Commission for the preparation of development projects). All these departments are to be kept informed about the progress of the projects.

4.9 Soon after the preparation of budget, the chairman of the local council in consultation with the district engineer and the heads of the local council departments draw up the annual works programme of the council. This programme indicates various works to be undertaken and the mode of their execution; the probable date of completion; and the executing agency whether through contract or by any other agency of the government. The annual works programme is subject to the approval of the local council. When approved, a copy of the programme is sent to the concerned department of the government. It has been stated that the "Government may in any special case involving public or state interest of important nature make such observation as may deem necessary and the local council shall take such observations into consideration and amend the annual works programme accordingly". As soon as the annual works programme is sanctioned, the district engineer under directions from the chairman take

necessary steps for the execution of the work in accordance with the annual works programme.²

IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECTS

4.10 As mentioned earlier, the union councils are competent to sanction development projects up to Rs.50,000. Once the projects are approved and funds made available either by the union council itself or by the district council or by both, the execution of the project is undertaken by the project committees constituted for this purpose. Relatively larger projects are executed through contractors. In the case of district council projects, those are executed through contractors as the projects are more than Rs.50,000 and below Rs. 5.0 million.³ Keeping in view the cost-effectiveness of the projects, the NWFP Government has fully entrusted the responsibility of constructing primary school, basic health unit/dispensaries buildings to the district councils.

MONITORING OF PROJECTS

4.11 The monitoring of projects at the union council level is done by the members of the union council as the area is small enough and the members have frequent meetings to review the progress of the projects. In the case of district council projects, for instance in Punjab, the local councillors are actively involved in monitoring of projects under execution in their locality. This not only facilitate early completion of the projects but also ensure the quality of work undertaken by the contractor. In Punjab, a local councillor in whose constituency the work is being carried out, must certify as to the quality of work before the council make payment to the contractor.⁴ This system of checks and balances has increased the participation of people in actual implementation of development projects at the grassroot level.

EVALUATION OF PROJECTS

4.12 The projects undertaken by the local councils under the direct supervision and control of the local representatives have seldom been evaluated. There are strong reasons to believe that the projects undertaken by the local councils are completed in time and moreover the quality of work as compared with other government departments like communication and works is quite satisfactory. On the basis of evaluation of local councils works, the NWFP Government decided to transfer the construction of schools, basic health units/dispensaries and other works of local importance to the district councils.

4.13 Some of the components of project cycle discussed are not strictly followed due to lack of expertise at the local council level. Scientific management techniques like PERT, CPM, PPBS, Bar Chart, etc are seldom used in these projects. Perhaps their utility is not fully appreciated as the officials at the local level or the people's representatives have slightest idea about these techniques and methods. UNICEF has been working for more than three years with the Government of Pakistan to evolve a methodology for local level planning through working in some selected districts of the country. The ultimate aim was to improve the management of basic services for children and women of its less privileged areas of the country. Based on this experience and on concrete request for assistance from different government departments, a project for the institutionalization and training of local level planning was agreed and is being executed in three phases, with technical assistance provided by the United Nations Centre for Regional Development (UNCRD), Japan. Institutions participating in this project are: Planning Commission, Ministry of Local Government and Rural

Development Islamabad, Planning and Development Departments of the Government of Punjab and NWFP; Project Training Institute of the P&D Punjab; Pakistan Academy for Rural Development Peshawar; Provincial Local Government and Rural Development Departments; and Local Government and Rural Development Training Institute Lalamusa (Punjab) and Tandojam (Sind).

4.14 The methodology evolved with the assistance of UNICEF and other International agencies focuses on collection of basic pertinent information with regard to availability of existing facilities from the grass root to the district level. This information is collected by the community workers (volunteers) through interviews with each and every household in the community and eliciting their views of their perceived needs. The information collected at the electoral ward level is then consolidated at the union and district council level. On the basis of this information ward/union and district plans are prepared and the priority of the projects determined. For the implementation and monitoring of the projects certain mechanism has also been developed. This methodology has not so far gained widespread recognition as it was introduced at a limited scale in few selected districts of NWFP and Punjab.⁵ Moreover, such plans will remain ineffective unless they are integrated and dovetailed with the sectoral annual development programmes of the provincial governments as well as those of the district council plans.

4.15 We have mentioned earlier that the district councils have undertaken the task of development by identification, preparation, approval, implementation and monitoring of development projects. This task has added to the load of work on the existing staff of the district council. In accordance with the responsibilities of the district councils, their planning and management capabilities as well as technical

capabilities need to be enhanced. The following suggestions merit consideration by the policy decision makers:-

- a) An analysis of the functions of the present staff of the district councils/union councils to be carried out so as to establish a basis to reformulate their roles in the light of the need to have increased planning and management capability;
- b) In each district a planning and monitoring cell may be established with at least one planning officer. This initiative has already been taken in NWFP by the Rural Development Department;
- c) In order to enable the district councils to implement their expanded responsibilities, directives may be issued to obtain the technical cooperation from the line departments (e.g. construction of all primary schools in NWFP). If considered necessary, the government officers at the district level should be placed under the control of the district council;
- d) The career prospects of Rural Development Department staff such as District Engineers and Secretaries Union Councils needs to be examined as it inhibits the technical capacity available with the district council.
- e) Government training institutions need to review their regular programmes and strengthen the present capability to be able to respond to the training needs of different cadres of personnel at the district level.

4.16 From the preceding discussion it would have been observed that first the procedural aspects were discussed so as to provide perspective about the rules of business which the councils have to decide. We also discussed the mechanism for the identification, preparation, approval, implementation, and monitoring of development projects undertaken by the district councils. Certain constraints regarding the identification, appraisal, and monitoring of district council projects have been highlighted. The methodology for local level planning which has recently been introduced at a limited scale in certain selected districts of Punjab and

NWFP with the assistance of international organizations has been discussed. Suggestions have been offered for the improvement of local level planning and plan implementation which could be taken into account by the policy decision makers. Now we have to see what role the local councils have actually played in providing social welfare and infra-structural services and facilities like health, education, roads and bridges, water supply, etc. The subsequent section is intended to provide some insight into these aspects of the local councils.

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2. _____, op. cit, p.47.
3. Government of Baluchistan, Manual of Instructions for Rural Development Programme, Local Government, Rural Development & Agrovillages Department, Quetta, July 1981, p.12
4. Discussions with Chairman and one member of District Council Multan.
5. The observations are based on the authors participation in a Workshop organized by the UNICEF in collaboration with NCRD Islamabad regarding local level planning through Community Participation held in October, 1983.
6. The findings presented on the basis of discussions held with the chairmen of District Councils Multan (Punjab); Pishin (Baluchistan); and Karachi Rural District.

5. SOCIAL WELFARE, INFRASTRUCTURAL SERVICES & FACILITIES

The local rural councils have been instrumental in providing social welfare and infrastructural services and facilities in their respective areas. These councils had some financial constraints as they could not generate their own revenues. The respective provincial governments especially the Government of Baluchistan have provided them financial assistance for undertaking development projects so as to meet the urgent requirements of the local communities in terms of social welfare and infrastructural services. This section is intended to provide a national profile of the working of these councils in terms of their expenditure on development projects. Attempt will also be made to provide perspective with regard to the situation in each province of the country. The following table shows the development expenditure incurred by the rural local councils in each province of the country:

TABLE 1
PROVINCEWISE DISTRIBUTION OF DEVELOPMENT EXPENDITURE
OF THE RURAL LOCAL COUNCILS

Province	(Rs. millions)							
	1979-80		1980-81		1981-82		1982-83	
	No. of Schemes	Expend	No. of schemes	Exp.	No. of schemes	Exp.	No of sch.	Expd.
Punjab(1)	N.A.	53.60	N.A.	143.30	N.A.	321.50	N.A.	646.60
Sind (2)	12,328	88.30	11,248	117.70	11,183	67.28	11,000	61.50
N.W.F.P. (3)	330	17.72	993	39.29	1,594	58.24	2,143	74.16
Baluch(4) istan	927	43.90	2,239	42.82	2,135	55.91	1,486	53.80

Sources: (1) Government of Punjab, Guide Book - Local Government and Rural Development, Lahore, 1983. The number of schemes have not been provided. A visit to the LGRD office in Lahore was not successful in getting detailed information.

(2) Government of Sind, "Sooba Sindh Kai Behtarin Baldiyati Idaron Ka Taaaruf" (Urdu), Housing, Town Planning and Local Government and Rural Development Department, Karachi, April, 1983.

The figures seems to have been inflated perhaps due to merger of minor schemes of the union councils.

- (3) Budget of Local Councils of NWFP (Mimeo) with courtesy of Director General, Local Government and Rural Development Department, Peshawar.
- (4) Data supplied by the Director, LGRD, Baluchistan, Quetta has been compiled and tabulated.

5.2 From Table 1 it will be observed that there has been continuous increase in terms of supplementing the resources of the local councils by government grants available to both union as well as district councils on a ratio of 50:50. In the province of Punjab the expenditure on development projects rose from Rs.53.60 million in 1979-80 to Rs.646.60 million in 1982-83 which is a substantial increase. In the province of Sind, there seems to be a decrease from the year 1979-80 and 1980-81. Reliability of these figures seems to be doubtful as the local councils in Sind have been as active as other councils in other parts of the country. Like Punjab, there has been continuous increase in the development expenditure of NWFP and Baluchistan. Now we have to see the development expenditure on various sectors by the district councils in each province of the country.

PUNJAB

5.3 Punjab had been in a position to preserve the hereditary institution of district boards which were disbanded in other provinces. This continuity provided Punjab an edge over other provinces in terms of generating and mobilizing their own resources by which they have reduced their reliance on the provincial government. Substantial portion of the development expenditure by the district councils in Punjab is met from their own resources whereas the provincial government provides grants to reinforce the development process undertaken by the district councils. Now we have to see the mode of spending by

various sectors of the economy. The sectorwise distribution of development expenditure in the province of Punjab can be seen in Table 2 below:

Table 2
SECTORWISE DEVELOPMENT EXPENDITURE OF RURAL LOCAL COUNCILS

Sector	(Rs.inmillions)			
	1979-80	1980-81	1981-82	1982-83
1. General Administration/ Establishment.	31.4	11.8	46.7	98.2
2. Education Service	8.4	20.0	28.6	24.9
3. Public health/ Sanitation, Water supply	20.0	37.7	284.1	308.1
4. Medical Service (Health)	20.4	29.8	19.1	23.5
5. Building, land, shops & Markets.	6.9	9.3	28.8	84.0
6. Roads/Streets.	69.6	133.7	183.9	203.9
7. Veterinary & Stock breeding	12.4	16.6	27.1	32.0
8. Misc (Cattle pond, suspense accounts, advance deposits, etc)	13.8	7.2	21.2	25.7
Total.	182.9	266.1	639.5	800.3

The expenditure figures given in Table 2 do not tally with those given in Table 1. One of the reasons could be the different sources of data from which the information has been extracted. Another reason could be that certain other expenditures have been merged in these figures. We are not quite sure as to which set of figures are to be relied upon. The simple reason for quoting such figures was that the position with regard to various sectors should emerge clearly. We have noticed that expenditure on education which was Rs.8.4 million in 1979-80 rose to Rs. 28.6 million in 1981-82

and fell to Rs. 24.9 million in 1982-83. There seems to be considerable increase over the year 1979-80 in terms of spending on education sector. There has been substantial increase of expenditure on public health/sanitation/water supply which in 1979-80 was Rs.200 million and rose to Rs.308.1 million in 1982-83 without any intervening decrease. In the Health Sector (Medical Services) there has been fluctuations as the expenditure in 1979-80 rose from Rs.20.4 million to Rs.29.8 million in 1980-81 which fell to Rs.19.1 million in 1981-82 and improved during 1982-83, i.e. Rs.23.5 million. There has been constant increase of expenditure on roads/streets. For instance an amount of Rs.69.6 million was spent during the year 1979-80 which rose to Rs.203.9 million during the year 1982-83. Realizing the inflationary trends in prices, even then the expenditure had been quite substantial. We can easily infer that Public Health/Sanitation/Water supply was given the highest priority in the rural local councils programme of Punjab. Roads/streets had secondary importance in terms of expenditure on development projects. This is an overall picture of development expenditure by the rural local councils in Punjab. Now we have to see what had been the trend of development expenditure in the districts. For this particular purpose we have been able to visit certain districts in each province of the country. In Punjab, Multan district was selected where the major expenditure had been on construction of roads and buildings. The findings of the District Council Multan are presented in Table 3.

Table 3
EXPENDITURE BY THE DISTRICT COUNCIL MULTAN

Year	Roads	Buildings
1979-80	2.31	0.23
1980-81	9.25	0.58
1981-82	41.35	1.20
1982-83	30.00	4.12

Source: Data collected from the office of the Chairman District Council Multan.

From the above it appears that the major thrust of development had been on the construction of rural roads and buildings which included new buildings as well as the repair of the existing ones. Similar trends have been noticed in Kasur district of the Punjab. This clearly indicates that there is need for the expansion of rural infrastructure in the form of farm to market roads. Other social services like education, health, sanitation, etc have not yet assumed that importance which the planners or policy decision makers at the national headquarters may assign either for universalization of primary education, or basic health care, or proper sanitation.⁶

PROVINCE OF SIND

5.5 The data regarding the province of Sind is sketchy and incomplete which does not provide proper perspective with regard to allocation/utilization of resources for various sectoral programmes. In Table 1 aggregate figures for the number of schemes and the total development expenditure of rural local councils have been given. Whatever incomplete and sketchy information has been made available, indicates that the rural local councils constructed the following number of primary schools during the four years ever since the promulgation of the Local Government Ordinance.

Table 4
NUMBER OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS CONSTRUCTED BY
THE RURAL LOCAL COUNCILS IN SIND

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number of schools constructed</u>
1979-80	180
1980-81	264
1981-82	268
1982-83	260

Source: Sooba Sind Kai Behtarin Baldiyati
Idaron Ka Taaaruf, April, 1983.

The two years performance of the rural local councils as reported in one of the publication of the Local Government and Rural Development Department for the year 1978-79 and 1979-80 indicates that the district councils gave highest priority to the development projects of communication and buildings; whereas the union councils gave highest priority to water supply and drainage. Construction of roads fall under communication and as such this aspect seems to be common in most of the development programmes of the rural local councils in other parts of the country. Since it was not possible to collect information from all the districts, Karachi Rural district had been the focus of inquiry. The information collected from Karachi Rural district about the mode of development expenditure is presented in Table 5.

Table 5
MODE OF DEVELOPMENT EXPENDITURE IN KARACHI
RURAL DISTRICT

Sector	1979-80	1980-81	1981-82	1982-83	Total
Agriculture	-	-	-	1.93	1.93
Education	-	1.07	-	0.58	1.65
Health	-	0.10	0.28	0.31	0.69
Water supply	0.77	2.65	1.60	2.00	7.02
Communication	0.63	2.30	2.80	2.45	8.18
Social Welfare	-	-	-	0.28	0.28
Total	1.40	6.12	4.68	7.55	19.75

From the above table it appears that communication enjoyed highest priority whereas water supply remained of second priority in terms of development expenditure by the Rural District Council of Karachi. This could be equally true of the whole of the province as mentioned earlier.

PROVINCE OF NWFP

5.6 During the four year period of the local government institutions, the rural local councils in NWFP completed 5060 development projects at a total cost of Rs.189.41 million. From Table 1 it would have been observed that the development expenditure of the rural local councils increased from Rs. 17.72 million in 1979-80 to Rs. 74.16 million during the year 1982-83. Similarly, the number of schemes/projects increased from 330 to 2143. This increase is a clear manifestation of the effectiveness of the local government institutions especially in the rural areas in terms of providing social services and infrastructure to the rural population.

5.7 The limited availability of data restricts our analysis of the social services and infrastructure provided by the rural local councils. Sketchy and incomplete data for two years, i.e. 1981-82 & 1982-83 was made available which can serve as an indicator of sectoral investment by the rural local councils. This data is reproduced in Table 6.

Table 6
SECTORAL EXPENDITURE OF RURAL LOCAL COUNCILS

Sector	(Rs.millions)		
	1981-82	1982-83	Total
Communication	13.67	18.17	31.84
Village improvement/Flood Protection Bunds.	1.27	-	1.27
Drinking Water Supply	2.04	0.14	2.18
Irrigation	0.21	0.58	0.79
Community Building	0.84	0.29	1.14
Health & Sanitation	0.29	-	0.29
Misc.Maintenance & Repair	2.49	1.97	4.46
YTotal	20.81	21.15	41.96

Source: Annual Review of the ADP 1981-82 & 1982-83 under the



Development Programme; Dovetailed Programme for the development of education and health: programmes undertaken under the Fertilizer aid; etc.

5.10 During the four year period, the rural local councils have been able to complete 6787 development projects in various sectors at a total cost of Rs.196.43 million. The yearwise breakdown of development expenditure and the number of schemes/projects completed under various programmes can be seen in Table 7.

Table 7
YEARWISE AND PROGRAMMEWISE NUMBER OF SCHEMES
& EXPENDITURE

Sector/ Programme	1979-80		1980-81		1981-82		1982-83	
	No. of schemes	Expend	No. of schemes	Exp.	No. of scheme	Exp.	No. of sche- mes	Exp.
Education	155	11.25	333	17.44	227	21.53	388	22.82
Health	41	6.34	23	5.44	278	13.07	188	9.62
Marakaz Develop ment	310	4.70	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rural Development/ World Food Programme	421	221.61	1411	16.46	1596	16.50	808	19.33
Small Irrigation	-	-	462	3.48	21	4.34*	-	-
Fertilizer Aid	-	-	-	-	13	0.47	-	-
Revenue Department	-	-	-	-	-	-	48	00.83
Governor's Special Fund	-	-	-	-	-	-	54	1.20
Total	927	243.90	2239	42.82	2135	55.91	1486	53.80

Source: Courtesy of Director Local Government and Rural Development Baluchistan, Quetta.

* includes schemes of physical planning and housing as well as emergent schemes.

5.11 From Table 7 it appears that the main emphasis of the development in Baluchistan had been on rural development which included schemes like drinking water, land and water improvement, communication, etc. From the Table it appears that out of total 6,787 schemes, there were 4,236 schemes of rural development. The total expenditure on development schemes was Rs. 196.43 million of which Rs. 73.90 million were spent on schemes of rural development. This emphasis is due to the fact that Baluchistan is the largest district in terms of its geographical boundaries with comparatively smaller size of population. The development of this province require heavy inputs in terms of developing physical infrastructure. Appreciable progress has been made by the rural local councils in terms of providing social services to the thinly and scattered population of the Baluchistan province. Because of the scattered nomadic population, it is not possible for the rural local councils to provide roads which is a common characteristics of other provinces. This aspect is being looked after by the provincial government itself. Thus the number of schemes in the communication sector is lesser as compared to other provinces.

AN OVERVIEW OF SOCIAL SERVICES

5.12 The preceding discussion and the tables provided in support of the presentation clearly indicates the degree of involvement of the people and their elected representatives in the process of undertaking developmental activities. The task of development is gigantic and the resources are limited. Development of the rural areas and bringing them at par with the urban areas will require decades. Assigning the responsibility of development to rural local councils is a step forward in arousing the interest of the communities and

seeking their cooperation in support of the development effort. Without their involvement, the cost of development projects cannot be minimized.

5.13 It has also been observed that those aspects of development which had been neglected in the past are gradually taken care of by the rural local councils. For instance water supply, improvement of ponds, construction of roads, schools and basic health units which had been left to the bureaucracy causing unnecessary delay are now undertaken by the local councils and completed in lesser time as well as with better quality of work.

5.14 As far as the interest of the government in the local government institutions is concerned, the phenomenal increase in terms of allocation of funds under the annual development programmes, is a clear indication of this interest. In the absence of local government institutions, the local communities could not get any encouragement and support for the resolution of their local problems even if they were prepared to donate land and provide free labour for the construction of a primary school or basic health unit or any other facility of social service. With the introduction of local government institutions the rural local councils have been enabled to resolve their problems with slight initiative by the community leadership.

6. COST EFFECTIVENESS OF LOCAL COUNCILS PROJECTS

In the preceding sections we have discussed the number of projects undertaken by the rural local councils and the total expenditure incurred on those projects. We have not been able to undertake an analysis of the cost-effectiveness of the projects undertaken by these councils. In this section we intend to provide some perspective with regard to the cost-effectiveness of the development projects carried out by the local councils. It may not be possible to undertake a scientific analysis with regard to cost-effectiveness due to non-availability of data especially with regard to costs involved on the projects undertaken by the government departments like Communication and Works and those of the district councils. However, an attempt is being made to find some indication of the cost-effectiveness of the projects undertaken by the local councils.

6.2 When we talk about cost effectiveness of the local councils projects our assumption is that the people are more likely to make financial and labour contribution if a scheme is identified, prepared, implemented, and monitored by the local councils themselves. We have mentioned earlier about the role of the project committees at the village/community level which supervise and monitor the progress of the schemes undertaken at the local level. If a scheme is implemented through the village project committee rather than a private contractor, its cost would be less. With this assumption in mind, we had to identify certain cases in which the district councils have spent lesser amount on development projects. Some of the examples of cost-effectiveness of the development projects undertaken by the district councils are discussed in the subsequent paras of this section.

6.2 In the case of Mansehra district council, it was observed that in 1983-84, the cost of black top road was Rs.10,000 per kilometer while that of shingle road Rs.5,000 per kilometer. The cost of 217 primary schools for boys was 15.19 million rupees while for 113 primary schools for girls, the cost was Rs.9.04 million. In Attock district council, the cost of 16 Basic Health Units was Rs. 8.0 million during 1983-84. The cost of 25 boys schools and 9 girls primary schools was Rs. 1.35 million. In the case of Chitral district council, the cost of 23 primary schools was Rs. 1.7 million. In the case of Baluchistan, the average cost of district councils for the construction of a middle school (with five rooms and verandah) was Rs. 250 thousand; for the construction of girls primary school it was Rs.80,000. Generally speaking, these costs are less than those of the C&W Department.

6.3 The following table shows the per unit cost of roads constructed by the district councils under various programmes during 1980-83:-

Table 8
PER UNIT COST OF ROADS CONSTRUCTED BY
DISTRICT COUNCILS UNDER VARIOUS
PROGRAMMES

Programme	Total milage	Total cost in million rupees	Cost per mile in thousand rupees
Special Directives	72	31.9	449
Ongoing roads	86	51.9	603
Link Roads	20.5	15.5	775
Focal Points	19.75	8.0	406
Total	198.25	107.3	541

From Table 8 it would have been observed that the per mile cost of the roads constructed under the Special Directives was Rs.449 thousand; under on-going programme, it was Rs.603 thousand; under link roads it was Rs. 775 thousands; and under the Focal Points programme, it was Rs.406 thousands. For the total milage of 198.25, the total cost was Rs.107.3 million. According to this, the average cost per mile is estimated as Rs.541 thousands.

6.4 For the purpose of comparison, now we have to see another set of costs. It has been observed that in 1981, the Government of Punjab initiated a programme of farm to market roads. The implementation of this programme was entrusted to the Punjab Highway Department. The length of roads constructed by the Punjab Highway Department and their costs are given in Table 9 below:-

Table 9

FINANCIAL AND PHYSICAL IMPLEMENTATION OF
THE FARM TO MARKET ROADS

Year	Total miles constructed	Total cost in million rupees
1980-81	41	133.1
1981-82	603	342.0
1982-83	751	945.1
Total	1395	945.1

We have noticed that the per mile average cost of the roads constructed by the local councils was Rs. 541 thousands; whereas that of Highway Department of Punjab comes out to be Rs.677 thousands. This comparison provides sound basis to believe that in the case of construction of roads, the

projects undertaken by the rural local councils are cost-effective as compared to that of Highway Departments.

6.5 In NWFP, an allocation of Rs.7.73 million was made to 12 District Councils for the construction of 59 primary schools. This allocation was evidently made on the basis of cost-estimates prepared by the Public Works Department. The District Councils have been able to complete the work at a cost of Rs.5.34 million which is considerably low than what was estimated by the Government Department. This means that in the sector of education especially in the construction of primary schools, the works completed by the district councils are cost-effective.

6.6 Besides reducing the costs of the projects, the implementation of development schemes through the local councils has three other related advantages. Firstly, it leads to the speedy implementation of the schemes since local council in general and the concerned local councillor in particular want to show quick results to their constituents. Secondly, it creates a system of checks and balances among local councillors, contractors, and government functionaries. Thirdly, it improves the quality of the scheme since the concerned councillor must approve the quality of the scheme upon completion before the chairman authorizes payment.

6.7 The procedure of providing services and facilities through local councils is such that it provides an opportunity to local councillors to strengthen their management skills. In the case of District Councils, for example, local councillors are encouraged to submit proposals for development schemes in their areas. After the proposal is approved by the council, the concerned councillor is expected to monitor the imple-

mentation of the scheme and must certify as to the quality of the completed development scheme before payment to concerned parties is made. Where a scheme is implemented through village project committees, the local councillor has a more direct role.

7. CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

Various stages of the development of local government system have been reviewed. During the first phase, i.e. 1947 to 1959 the local government system of district boards introduced by the British in undivided India, was allowed to continue. From 1959 onward to 1971 the Basic Democracies system was made operational. This system was innovative in nature and introduced to achieve certain socio-economic and political objectives. The system was disbanded because of its political connotations being used as an electoral college. Till 1979, the old system of district boards was allowed to continue. From 1979 onward, a new system of local government was introduced under the Local Government Ordinance 1979 through which the elected representatives were given power as well as prestige.

7.2 Main feature of the Local Government System introduced under the 1979 Local Government Ordinance have been discussed. Structure of various local councils, i.e. Union, Tehsil/Taluka/Markaz, District Council, their composition, and functions have been highlighted. It was observed that for the first time, the District Coordination Committees were headed by the elected chairman of the district council. This was a significant departure from the past. The District Coordination Committees have been vested with the power of approving development projects. Sources of income of the district councils have also been discussed.

7.3 Attempt has been made to discuss the procedure for holding the business meetings of the district councils and the nature of cases to be disposed of by them. It has also been pointed out that the district councils have been given overall responsibility for the identification, preparation,

approval, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of development projects falling within the financial powers of the district councils. Description of each stage of the project cycle has also been provided so as to comprehend the problems involved in each stage of the cycle. The methodology recently introduced with the assistance of international agencies for local level planning and plan implementation has also been discussed and suggestions offered for overcoming the deficiencies.

7.4 In order to appreciate the performance of the local councils, an attempt has been made to provide the figures of number of schemes and the yearwise expenditure on the development projects undertaken by the rural local councils in various provinces of the country. Provincewise sectoral distribution of the development expenditure with focus on a selected district in each province has also been given so as to provide perspective about the trends of development expenditure on each sector of the economy. It has been observed that communication sector with emphasis on the construction of roads has been given top priority in the provinces of Punjab, Sind, and NWFP. In Baluchistan, though emphasis has been placed on rural development, yet rural roads seems to be the responsibility of the provincial government. This perhaps is due to the fact that Baluchistan is the largest province of the country with scattered population.

7.5 Though adequate data for determining cost-effectiveness of the development projects undertaken by the rural local councils was not available, yet an attempt has been made to pinpoint certain areas in which they have been cost-effective. This aspect needs in-depth scientific analysis as we cannot draw conclusions on limited amount of data.

There are conflicting views about the costs. According to some critics, the quality of work is affected with the reduction of costs. We have refuted this stand on the basis of the information provided by the district councils in Punjab. Perhaps, it could be useful for other provinces to follow suite of Punjab where the quality of work is reportedly satisfactory.

7.6 The rural local councils have succeeded to a considerable extent in developing necessary infrastructure and providing social services like rural roads, construction of schools and Basic health units, minor schemes of local importance. But the task is so gigantic that perhaps it may require decades rather than years to overcome the problems faced by the rural masses. The income generating capacity of these rural local councils is very poor and the grants made available to them by the respective provincial government too inadequate to meet the basic needs of the rural masses. The local councils have been operating under various set of constraints among which their technical competence and capability, lack of cooperation by various nation building departments and the regulatory bureaucracy in rendering technical advice seems to be of prime importance. Tentative suggestions/recommendations are offered for rectifying the weaknesses and making rural local councils more effective in providing social services to the people.

- Developing technical competence and capability of local councils with regard to identification of needs of of the people;
- Strengthening the capability of the local government training institutions to play more dynamic and effective role in imparting training to the local councillors and their chairmen;
- Setting up of planning units at the district level for the formulation and monitoring of the district plans;

- Aggregation of felt needs of the people at the district level and transforming them into action plans;
- Integration of district plans into provincial and national plans which suggests planning from bottom up rather than top-down;
- Full powers to the district councils to approve the projects at the district level rather than referring them to the Divisional Coordination Committee which seems to be an unnecessary channel between the district and the provincial government;
- Placing the regulatory bureaucracy at the district level under the supervision and control of the district council;
- Restructuring the district administration by reinforcing the support services of the district councils;
- Delegation of more powers to the district councils for enhancing their extractive capability to generate more revenues for providing social services;
- Increased allocations by the provincial governments through ADPs for the development projects to be undertaken at the district level;
- Introduction of system of checks and balances with regard to the implementation of projects and ensuring good quality of work through the project committees and the local councillors as has been introduced in Punjab;

These suggestions/recommendations are tentative and cannot be considered as exhaustive. We are not quite sure as to what extent the regulatory bureaucracy would be willing to accommodate such suggestions/recommendations. But we are fully convinced that without taking drastic steps about the restructuring of administration at the district level, and transferring the powers to the elected representatives, it will be inconceivable to realize the objectives of development. The regulatory bureaucracy had been reluctant to accept the authority of the elected representatives, especially at the grassroot level. In order to meet the future challenges of

development and create self confidence and reliance in the Pakistani nation it is essential that this opportunity should not be missed and the local councils made more effective, and more dynamic.