

Assessing Best Practices in Devolution

Innovations in Tehsil Municipal Administration

Jaranwala

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I Introduction



This assessment of the best practice¹ in tehsil municipal administration in Jaranwala, builds upon a preliminary identification process, which was initiated and subsequently reviewed by CIDA-DSP to select specific best practices for undertaking further analysis. This more detailed study of selected best practices² was meant to lend sharper focus to the actual methods, outputs, and underlying challenges behind the approaches being widely recognized (by government, NGO and international development agencies) as being best practices in devolution in Pakistan. Instead of relying on secondary sources, the following documentation is based on primary field research that sought views of a range of concerned stakeholders, and the views of these respondents are in turn supplemented by observations of ground realities emerging from the implantation of a specific best practice in devolution.

i Stakeholders

The views of the following stakeholders were sought to enable the process of assessment:

- i *Institutional Perspective*: The institutional stakeholders of this study are the relevant tier of the local governments
- ii *Perspective of Practitioners*: These views are being obtained to contrast and compare opinions of current service delivery providers and of their predecessors
- iii *Perspectives of Target Audience*: Feedback from the actual users/clients of service delivery mechanisms being reformed under the devolutionary framework, as well as the intended beneficiaries who are not yet availing the service, are obtained and cross referenced to shed light on the actual and potential impact of a selected best practice.

ii Approach to the Study

Information obtained concerning the following best practice has relied on discussions with all of the above mentioned stakeholders. Given the variance in what can actually constitute a best practice however, led to use of a flexible and interactive approach in posing queries to the concerned stakeholders, so that different types of relevant information specific to a particular best practice could be obtained. Methodologically, this required use of open-ended queries, which were posed keeping in mind the individual stakeholders. The contentions emerging from these discussions were then cross-

¹ 'Best practices' are being defined as innovative but workable solutions being implemented in the context of Local Government Ordinance 2001, which bolster local governance processes and outcomes, and contribute to bringing about sustainable improvements in service delivery.

² The best practices identified for further assessment by CIDA-DSP included the effort to improve water sanitation in Lodhran district, the health care management initiative in Rahimyar Khan district, the formation of CCBs in Sadiqabad, and innovations being undertaken by the Tehsil Municipal Administrations in Jaranwala and Sadiqabad.

checked with views of other stakeholders. This multilayered approach enabled a deeper probe concerning the actual meaning of the experiences emerging from the selected best practices, so as to identify and corroborate their intended consequences, to highlight unexpected outcomes if any, and to assess their potential for replication.

A reference to the existing knowledgebase obtained from relevant secondary sources has also been used wherever necessary to help contextualize the consolidated findings of this particular study.



II Infusing vigor into Tehsil Municipal Administration



Jaranwala tehsil in Faisalabad district is located on the north bank of the Ravi. There are 300 villages and 2 urban centres in Jaranwala, covering an area of 437,386 acres, with a population of 1,186,514 people, as per the last census. The vast size of the tehsil places a big responsibility on its Tehsil Municipal Administration (TMA), which has in turn assumed its functions with an impressive vigour that has brought it to the attention of many stakeholders facilitating the process of devolution in Pakistan.

The TMA in Jaranwala has received attention in the local press, from the National Reconstruction Bureau, but also from the donor community³ for providing an impressive example of innovative local governance made possible because of the devolutionary framework. Some salient best practices adopted by the Jaranwala TMA are as follows:

i Using GIS technology for improving municipal management

One of the most impressive innovations of the Jaranwala TMA is its attempt to adopt use of Geographic Information System (GIS) technology for improving municipal functions. GIS is a computer based tool used for mapping, organizing and analyzing prevailing ground realities. While map making and geographic analysis are not new, their digitization using GIS can enable access to very accurate and easily updateable information. Adopting GIS thus promises the ability to better manage assets, reduce survey and design costs, and facilitate strategic planning of infrastructure development whereby ensuring more insightful decision making. It was with these goals in mind that the TMA Jaranwala decided to adopt a GIS based municipal management approach.

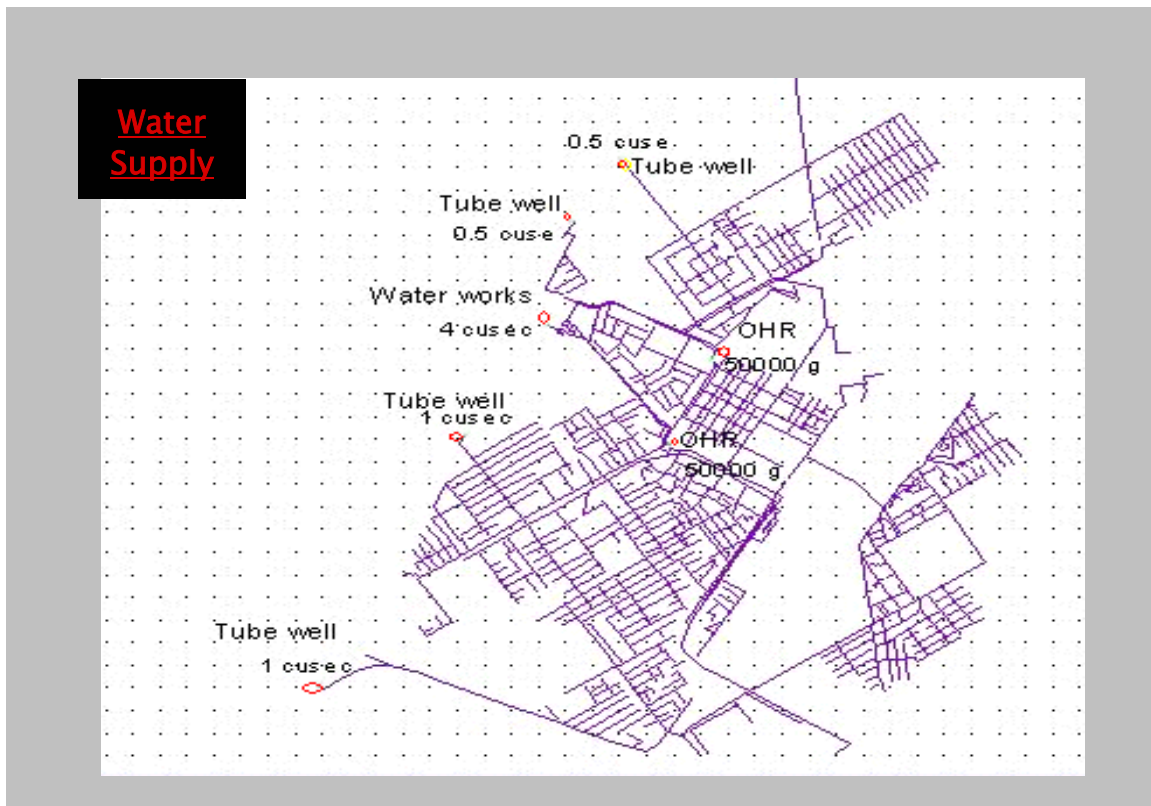


The TMA began making enquires about the required satellite imagery needed for this purpose and with the help of a local NGO (Anjuman Samajee Behbood) it approached the World Wildlife Federation of Pakistan which uses satellite images for conservation purposes. Having secured procurement of detailed satellite maps of the tehsil was not enough. These digital maps now had to be correlated with detailed data concerning ground realities of the tehsil. Given that existing geographic maps of the tehsil had not been updated since the 1950 and that no reliable databases existed concerning

infrastructure facilities such as roads, underground sewerage, water supply, Sui gas lines etc., the TMA's objective implied a huge task. Yet the dearth of existing data evidently strengthened the resolve of the TMA to first obtain updated information and subsequently to adopt state of the art GIS technology for improving infrastructure planning. The TMA even broadened the scope of using GIS from infrastructure

³ The joint DIFD-World Bank-ADB study on devolution undertaken last year (2004) strongly endorsed the initiatives of the TMA in Jaranwala as best practices in devolution.

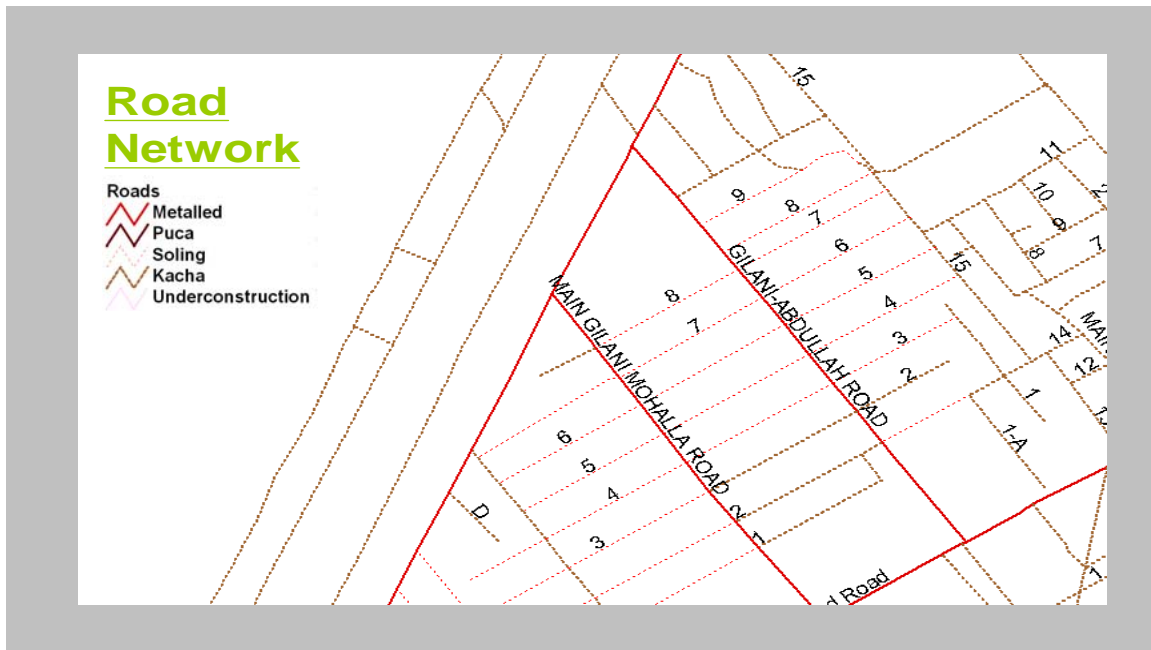
management to include data concerning socio-economic features of individual households as well.



To obtain an accurate database for its GIS, the TMA initiated surveys of all the urban and rural union councils in Jaranwala tehsil, which included not only a plain table survey but also sought socio-economic information. The TMAs itself feels quite confident about the data being generated for the GIS mapping exercise through independent sources, including contracted NGOs and private consultants. The gathered data is meant to be verified through internal cross-checks by TMA officials and was sent to UC nazmeen for verification (the TMA planned publication of union council gazetteers as a separate activity, which has not yet materialized). The Tehsil Nazim in fact recommends that the federal government should involve TMAs in all districts for data collection instead of relying on institutions far removed from the situation on ground. This recommendation however needs to be assessed keeping in mind the specialized nature of obtaining statistics and the fact whether TMA supervised private companies can in fact do a better job across all districts of Pakistan.

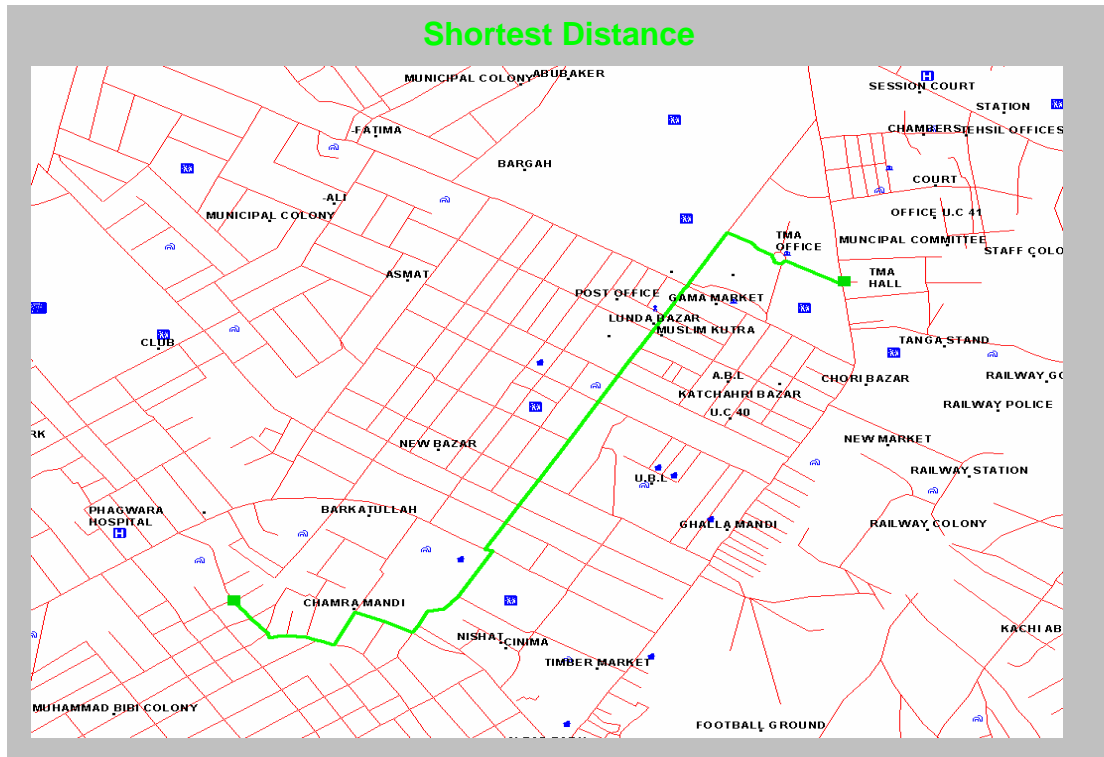
To develop the GIS, the TMA in Jaranwala decided to compile statistical information in two distinct phases. In the first phase, data for 5 out of the 57 union councils of the tehsil was obtained through the afore-mentioned topographic and socio-economic field surveys, and the data obtained from them was digitized. Subsequently, a water supply survey was also undertaken for these 5 union councils. Using satellite images, marking of utility services on digitized maps was undertaken which now provide convenient details concerning underground networks for drainage, sewerage, water-supply, Sui gas, telephone and electricity lines, and general road conditions. The potential applications of

this computerized information are indeed impressive. For example, computer generated calculations of the shortest route from one point to another could minimize the distance that has to be covered while laying pipes for water or sewerage or while constructing roads. Easily accessible information concerning existing facilities could help avoid unnecessary complications of roads being dug up to lay sewerage lines or rupturing of existing lines due to intrusion by other infrastructural activities, so evident even in bigger municipalities.



Some of the indicated benefits of the using GIS for municipal planning, like being able to calculate the shortest route to reach a fire which is meant to assist the fire brigade may not seem so relevant for a small place like Jaranwala but could certainly be of use in city districts (like Karachi). However, since most of the data required by GIS to perform such functions is almost complete for the entire tehsil, perhaps Jaranwala would serve as a pilot project for using such information in more dense and sprawling locations in the country. More importantly however, the inter-departmental and intra-departmental linkages required to benefit from this information are not yet established. While it is true that the topographical and household survey for the entire tehsil is not yet complete the survey is estimated to be completed within the next month, according to the contractor in charge of it), there could have been evidence of some linkages established in the union councils for which the GIS system has already been prepared. The creation of such linkages is not easy and will also require capacity building to ensure familiarity with handling and analysis of such data.

Despite the implied effort, the need for creating interdepartmental linkages within the tehsil is vital to realize the potential benefits of the GIS and to ensure the sustainability of this innovation. The IT staff in the TMA has written a paper 'GIS Development for Infrastructure Management of Jaranwala tehsil' which is being published by Khufan University in Kuwait. There are plans to launch the GIS system on the website, which will be a costly proposition and would most certainly require donor support. As a first step, the website for the Tehsil has been prepared and launched on the internet.



ii A Women Resource Centre for Jaranwala

Nineteen women councilors of the tehsil have pooled their individual allocations for development schemes to establish a Women's Resource Center. The Tehsil Nazim was the moving spirit behind the construction of this resource centre.

All the councilors spoke to express their satisfaction with the construction of the Centre and felt that women of their constituencies would now have a multi-pronged resource available to them. None of the councilors spoken to however had made an effort to make the Centre functional and they seemed content in following the Nazim's lead in arranging for its operation as well.

At the time of this field visit, the resource centre was not yet operational. Since the TMA offices are also undergoing construction, some of its staff is occupying rooms in the resource centre, which makes it difficult for more women to access the few embroidery machines left over from the former Dastkari centre that was located on



the land where this now impressive resource centre has been built. The Dastkari Centre is itself now a part of the resource centre and there are plans to obtain more machines and to increase enrollments in the once issue concerning the Centre's management are finalized.

The Nazim mentioned other plans for this Centre, which included providing a diploma in fashion designing, to provide computer literacy and skill development courses, or to establish a display and marketing section for displaying the products of local women entrepreneurs. It is not hard to imagine that



the Centre would in fact be offering such services in the not too distant future. However if the councilors themselves were taking a more proactive role in negotiating the achievement of these goals, their involvement would have become an inspiring example to other women holding public office under the local government system.



In response to queries concerning what had impelled the provision of a resource centre for women in Jaranwala, the Tehsil Nazim said that this effort was based on

his own need assessment of the area. He mentioned that less than half the girls (about 300) in the tehsil graduate from the local college and only a fraction of them (about 25) go on for post-graduate studies. Attributing the lack of productive options available to women as the primary reason for their lack of interest in education, the Nazim established contact with NGOs like Green Circle, Sarsabz Foundation, Anjuman Samajee Bahbood, as well as the local Textile Mills Association, all of whom impressed upon him the need for creating a relevant training institute for girls in the area which could supplement their capacity to undertake professional work. Subsequently, the same need was reiterated by local councilors and the Nazim convinced them to provide funds to undertake the construction of a resource centre. The process of getting approval from the Tehsil Council was not a problem, and subsequently a tender was floated and a contractor hired on the basis of the best quotation. The local NGOs impressed by the TMA, expressed their interest in managing the resource centre once it had been built. Discussion with several national level NGOs and with autonomous corporate bodies like the Punjab Vocational Training Council was initiated by the Tehsil Nazim.



An agreement to manage the resource centre is being finalized. The Tehsil Nazim concurred that broad based involvement of different stakeholders (including NGOs, local councilors and relevant hiring institutions, which in the case of Jaranwala were primarily the textile mills) was vital for both accurate needs assessment and subsequent design of services to be offered by a similar facility in other tehsils and may even result in provision of different facilities by other resource centers to cater to distinct needs of different localities.

iii An innovation in traffic management

As a measure to support local traffic police, the TMA has contracted a private Faisalabad based security agency on a yearly contract basis to provide 8 ex-army guards who help the TMA prevent encroachments and traffic jams. Violators are brought to the TMA by these guards, where the Nazim or the TMO issues tickets on encroachment. For traffic violations, particularly infringements of one-way street rules, violators are fined by the TMA. While the TMA can not issue these violators traffic tickets, the Nazim is authorized to levy fine or user charges given approval of the tehsil council.

There is however a larger problem regarding a perceived conflict of jurisdiction with regards to this initiative. The Nazim apparently faced objections in moots arranged for local government officials by the National Reconstruction Bureau as well. But the LGO 2001 does authorize the TMA 'to provide, manage, operate, maintain and improve the municipal infrastructure and services, including traffic planning, engineering and management' (Section 54, LGO 2001). Being a 'corporate body', the TMA can assign or sublet any such function approved by the Tehsil Council and where there are no public objections. The TMA gave an advertisement in the papers concerning the out sourcing of service. While there may not have been any objections in response to the published advert, speaking to the public at large revealed that people did not take to this idea immediately and there were several people challenged the authority of the security guards during the first few months. Initially, several people challenged the authority of these guards to check them, and there were also incidents of some physical violence between traffic violators and these private guards. Now the public realizes that these private guards have the support of the TMA and the direct backing of the Nazim, so they do acknowledge their authority. The Nazim purposely contracted the service out to a private security agency comprised of retired army personnel, arguing that these private guards have pensions at stake and are more disciplined than ordinary citizens. The Nazim felt that these private guards are more vigilant than traffic police, given that they are accountable to the TMA in addition to the private security company which has been contracted out this service.



It should be noted that this innovation is meant to supplement not replace the traffic management services provided by the police. The Jaranwala Nazim felt that the traffic police should have been devolved to the TMA level even if the rest of the police apparatus was to remain separate. Prior to undertaking this outsourcing initiative, the TMA had no option but to write to the SP-Traffic to complain about the congestion and request an increase of deputed staff. The TMA itself claimed that it encourages interaction in the form of joint patrols of security and regular traffic police, a fact concurred by the ASI-Traffic and Head Constable of Traffic for Jaranwala, who are the highest relevant traffic police officials in the area. The SP-Traffic in Faisalabad however did not seem to have any knowledge of this joint patrolling and maintained that the TMA was authorized to look at encroachment and need not interfere in traffic management. The ASI suggested that it may be good for the private guards to have some traffic management skills if it is established that they are to perform this function. Given the rather overt need for directly interacting with the public, a more integrated approach providing a greater sense of legitimacy would be advisable, if other TMAs also want to become involved in improving traffic management.

iv Other innovations

A recent study of 'Non-state Providers of Basic Services in Pakistan' prepared by researchers affiliated with Loughborough, Birmingham and Sussex Universities, and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, cite the example of Jaranwala where collaboration with non-state providers is arising from the Nazim's recognition that the available skills amongst the staff he inherited are insufficient to provide good services across the many sectors for which they are responsible. Given that there are restrictions on TMA recruitment of new staff, retrenchment and setting of salaries, the scope of getting the right in-house skills and incentives are limited and it is necessary to realize this broader impediment which is encouraging use of non-state providers for the management of basic services.

The Jaranwala TMA has entered into contracts with NGOs to act as intermediaries in the replication of the Orangi Pilot Project (OPP) model of 'component sharing' with communities to extend water and sanitation services to un-served areas. The TMA has also entered into memoranda of understanding with private entrepreneurs to manage the cleaning and maintenance of drains. The TMA has contracted out the cleaning and maintenance of the drains in Jaranwala, and over 300 sweepers are engaged in this activity. The Nazim is planning to contract out other municipal services including solid waste management. The TMA is also collaborating directly with community groups. For example, for those community groups who construct their own lane sewers, the Nazim has agreed



to resurface their road and provide street-lights. Similarly for water, if about 70% of households in one lane pay Rs. 550 up-front for water connections, the municipal authority will provide new water mainlines. The TMA has already provided 1800 street lights for various roads and is installing another 3000 streetlights this year. TMA plans to provide streetlights to all UC's, including the rural ones. According to the TMA's electrification strategy, if the villages agree to pay for the electricity and provide a connection, the TMA goes in and installs street lights in that locality. The TMA has even put together a makeshift vehicle to repair street lights which cost a small fraction of the price of an equipped vehicle of this sort.

The TMA is being supported by the Asian Development Bank with specific regards to water management as well. Encouraged by the ADB's philosophy to institute charges for improving the quality of basic services, water fees have been increased and by 305% over the past four years. The TMA has also saved much money by encouraging communities to undertake their own earth work prior to the TMA's construction.

The Jaranwala TMA has also invited an NGO (Quaid-e-Azam Foundation) that emerged from the Faisalabad Area Upgrading Project (FAUP) to facilitate the formation and orientation of CCBs. The TMA has appointed a CCB coordinator to facilitate a quick approval and scheme design process that minimized the bureaucratic barriers for the CCBs that are common elsewhere. There are 73 registered CCB's in Jaranwala. 71 projects are under progress and 20 have been completed already. These projects include sewerage management works, repair work on a graveyard and a *janazgah*⁴. Meetings with CCB Chairmen and Secretaries revealed that it is now easier for them to raise funds from the local community given that some CCB projects have reached fruition on ground. Yet they did recommend some changes to procedural rules which could facilitate their work (also applicable to other tehsils besides Jaranwala). While there is a clear cut demarcation of projects that can be approved by the Tehsil and the District level authorities, CCBs working with tehsil governments felt that there should be a concurrent list to give them an option to undertake a broader range of activities that can be approved at the tehsil level. The TMA office is located much nearer to their residences and is easier to maintain contact with for procedural purposes.

Whenever local government organisations engage private contractors they are obliged to ensure that all rates for construction works are within 15% of the Punjab provincial government's schedule of rates. Typically local government organisations are said to add 37% to these scheduled rates to allow for inflation, making contractor fees for government projects significantly higher than the market rate. In an effort to get better value for money, the Tehsil Nazim called a meeting of the municipal technical staff and local contractors. He negotiated a figure of 25% to be added to the schedule of rates instead of 37%. To secure the contractor's agreement, he agreed that contractors would not have to pay an 'approval fee' at the municipal offices before their invoices were paid and invoices would be approved for payment within 7 days, subject to any objections that were reviewed by the Nazim. It has also been decided by the TMA that contractors would also not be hired to do more work until their pending contract had been completed, a decision which is being adhered to in practice. The TMA has also developed a cash based incentive system for contractors based on scores against agreed criteria related to the quality of work, timely completion and the amount of work completed within the year. Cash awards and merit certificates issued on the basis of

⁴ Prayer hall

best performance are also being distributed amongst its own officials, which is perhaps a contributing factor to the evident sense of enthusiasm evident within the entire TMA.

The TMA reports an impressive increase in revenue. According to its official accounts, building fees in the TMA have recorded an increase of Rs. 175,000 to Rs. 12,495,576 in financial year 2004-2005 as compared to FY 2000-2001. Revenue collected through advertisement taxes was reported to have jumped by 508% and slaughter house fee by 145%. Similarly wagon stand fees reported an increase of 102%, general bus stand fees of 119%, taxi stand of 140%, *tonga*⁵ stand of 106% within the same time period. While Jaranwala TMA's assertive tax drive has won it external praise, last year hundreds of people came out in the streets to protest against the TMA with political support as well, from the Peoples Party of Pakistan.

Some of the other innovations have also created problems for the TMA in Jaranwala. For example, removal of encroachments including over a kanal of land obtained from the police station in UC Khurrianwala, where the TMA planned to build a marketplace is now being contested in the courts. The TMA also has plans to establish a mutton market and ladies market on government land. According to the Deputy District Officer (DDO) - Revenue, the involvement of the TMA in overtly commercial activities was not considered appropriate particularly its decision to turn government allocated land into commercial ventures. The DDO (R) also stated that the local government system had entrusted some miscellaneous functions to him for which he did not have the required administrative control. He cited the example of ensuring the low price of *atta* as an example and he felt that the TMA was much better placed to undertake this responsibility. He did however reiterate that in managing these issues, the TMA must avoid blurring of boundaries between state responsibility and the newfound thrust towards outsourcing.

While acknowledging that devolving of operations but not commiserate policy and administration resources to local governments was a problem, the Tehsil Nazim felt that cooperation with the private sector was the only feasible solution and one expressly endorsed by the Local Government Ordinance (LGO) 2001. The TMA in Jaranwala has even become a focus point for channeling public philanthropy. Through public support, the TMA provide an anesthesia machine and an ultra sound machine to the Tehsil hospital. Although the TMA has not yet availed the opportunity of demonstrating the broader utility its innovations like the GIS or of ensuring their sustainability through such integrations, there are instances of the TMA have begun to develop links with other government departments to undertake specific development schemes. For example, the TMA is undertaking development of the canal park in Jaranwala in collaboration with the Irrigation department. It is also establishing parks in specific government schools in collaboration with the Education department using free saplings obtained through the Irrigation department.

v Concluding Assessment

It seems unlikely that the personal power dynamics of the TMA can be replicated in other areas. The Nazim of Jaranwala himself felt that the tenure of his office should have either begun once the devolutionary framework was already complete or else it should

⁵ Horse carriage

have been extended to a period of six years (given that theirs is the first government to assume charge since the LGO 2001 was introduced) to have allowed adequate time for efforts like his to have reached fruition. But instead of reaching the conclusion that tehsil nazims should not initiate projects which cannot be completed in a given timeframe, it is more productive to look at influence of powerful public officials on governance processes and to highlight how best practices emerging from the unfolding devolutionary framework can be made more sustainable. Again the need for creating linkages within and across different government departments within relevant tiers of local government becomes evident, and could do with support from provincial governments under guidance of the NRB. In looking for ways of improving service delivery, the possibility of sub-contracting has certainly provided a unique opportunity for local governments, one which is being availed with great enthusiasm by the TMA in Jaranwala. Since many of the interventions in Jaranwala are relatively new, it is probably too early to fully evaluate their performance. Nonetheless, the various initiatives undertaken by this TMA collectively indicate an impressive sense of commitment and responsibility towards a local government office.

III Concluding Remarks



Several kinds of agreements and contracts between local governments and non state providers are becoming evident under devolution. There are also varying degrees of difficulty in getting the balance of roles and authority right for the sake of improving the quality and enhancing the access to basic development needs of the average Pakistani citizen. It is difficult to say whether the 'private sector' should best work with and through the government or should it be encouraged to offer parallel systems of service delivery. Some of the various strands of public-private partnership becoming evident under the devolution plan are also struggling with such question. For example, in Rahimyar Khan, collaboration has taken place between an NGO and the district government for health management, yet the NGO in question also works like the government in many ways and this is the reason why it has gained the trust and credibility of taking over government BHUs. Yet the PRSP's attempt to follow government procedures in terms of procuring medicines for example has constrained its ability to improve the quality of medicines. In Lodhran, the TMAs have placed a dual responsibility on their own staff, which allows for greater collaboration but also causes a bit of strain within the TMA. In Jaranwala, there is much more aggressive outsourcing, although NGOs are being involved in some instances as well, such as with regards to waste management.

The above case study has attempted to articulate some of the real life stresses, innovations and opportunities becoming evident from the devolution of power in a specific context. A further attempt has been made to include the viewpoint of different stakeholders, including not only the various implementers but also the intended beneficiaries. It seems that the access and quality of services is improving thus far, which is the basic reason for the mentioned initiative emerging from the devolutionary process to be labeled as a 'best practice'.

Yet there is need for giving more attention on the removal of emerging inconsistencies and the hurdles confronting attempts to improve social service delivery. The issue of sustainability is paramount given that local government officials themselves express doubts about the future of their innovations. This assessment of a specific best practice has thus been an attempt to not only highlight innovative processes but also to identify particular impediments pertaining to sustainability and outreach. Wherever possible an attempt has been made to suggest how given impediments have been, or could have been overcome, in the attempt to draw lessons for the replication of this success in other parts of the country.

Annexure 1

List of People Interviewed

Jaranwala

1. Tehsil Nazim
2. TMO
3. Lady Councilors
4. Chairmen and Secretaries of CCBS
5. IT In charge
6. DDO (Revenue), Jaranwala
7. SP Traffic – Faisalabad
8. ASI – Traffic
9. Private Security Guards hired by TMA
10. Pedestrians