



# Assessing Best Practices in Devolution

## CCB Formation in Khairpur District

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# I Introduction

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This assessment of the best practice<sup>1</sup> in CCB formations in Khairpur district, builds upon a preliminary identification process, which was initiated and subsequently reviewed by CIDA-DSP to select specific best practices<sup>2</sup> for undertaking further analysis. This more detailed study of selected best practices<sup>2</sup> 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-

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<sup>1</sup> '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.

<sup>2</sup> 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 district, 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 Activating Citizen Community Boards in Khairpur district



Khairpur is a large district spread over 15,000 sq. km and comprising a population of 1.7 million persons according to district government estimates. The three tier district government system in Khairpur is comprised of 8 *talukas* (tehsils) and 76 union councils with a membership of nearly 1500 councilors.

Khairpur has poor development indicators, and a lack of illiteracy, lack of women's access to health services, lack of access to water supply and drainage facilities are some of the major challenges facing this district.



### i District government achievements in forming CCBs

Despite the odds, the district government has tried to use the opportunity of involving communities in the process of their own development. Khairpur's performance in the formation of CCBs has been exemplary. In the year 2002-2003 alone, 140 low cost community development projects were formulated by about 100 CCBs, which were placed before the Zila Council, Khairpur for approval. Due to shortage of funds the scrutiny committee of the district council approved 98 Schemes. Eventually however (largely due to the disapproval of the DCO, which will be elaborated upon subsequently) 65 CCB schemes were finally approved. During the financial year 2003-2004, many more CCB schemes were approved including construction of shelterless government school buildings, vocational centers, road and sanitation schemes (for the total number of CCB schemes initiated throughout the district and their descriptions refer to table 1a&b in Annex 2).



The rural population of Khairpur District has also shown serious interest in the CCB schemes given that rural areas in the district still lacking the basic facilities in the field of education, health and infrastructure.



There has been a tactical agreement between the political opponents, with the Nazim on one side and the Pagaros (political influentials in the area) on the other, when it comes to implementation of CCB schemes, which are undertaken in both their constituencies irrespective of politics. Many councilors have come forward to help mobilize communities to undertake CCB schemes in their areas. Yet there has inevitably been some opposition to the involvement of councilors in facilitating formation of CCBs, who claim that political opponents, particularly MPAs, resent the fact that councilors are now playing a pivotal role in providing infrastructure through CCBs, a role reserved for MPAs seeking votes from their constituencies. The district government





also prioritizes the schemes to be funded via CCB projects to avoid duplication of efforts. Given the USAID's ESRA funded initiatives in education in Khairpur district for example, a decision has been taken by the district government not to fund building of schools through CCBs so as to make them focus on meeting other pending needs of their communities.

The District Nazim herself has adopted an incremental approach to CCB formation. Whenever people request her to undertake works in their area, she asks them to mobilize a tenth of the amount and come back to her, when they have done so, she refers them to the EDO (CD) who then guides them through the process of CCB formation and secures the requisite amount in community contributions. The EDO (CD) himself has years of experience in community development and in fact is a DO (Social Welfare), who has been given the additional charge of EDO (CD), in charge of CCB formations, by Nafisa Shah, the Khairpur District Nazim.

Although the prescribed registration fee for CCB formation is Rs. 50, the district government charges Rs. 500 instead, which has become an added source of revenue for it. In turn, the district government provides CCBs access to a complaint cell and to a resource centre within the district government office, which aids formation of CCBs. There is an apparent conviction amongst the concerned staff of the district government that facilitating CCB formation provides a suitable means to improve the lives of ordinary people in the district, and it is this heartfelt conviction which impelled the district government to enthusiastically support CCB formation and to initiate development schemes through them.

## ii A Closer look at CCB Schemes

Random but spontaneous visits to several CCBs indicated all of them to have undertaken genuine work within their communities. While there were some weaknesses evident within CCB schemes, their innovations were much more prominent. An assessment of both strengths and weaknesses emerging from some of this profuse growth of CCBs in Khairpur does merit a closer look not only for their own sake but also for formulating recommendations to strengthen CCB formation in other districts of the country.



Patients Welfare Society Taluka Hospital in Gambat tehsil (which also runs the tehsil hospital for the Health department) formed a CCB to develop a computer resource centre. After making a computer lab through CCB funding, the Patients Welfare Society has launched the first telemedicine project for Sindh. This project aims to provide specialist medical facilities to patients of remote and rural areas of the province by transmitting their vital signs (ECG, ECHO, heart beat, pulse rate, X-Ray etc.) to specialists located elsewhere for diagnosis and prescriptions of treatment. For this purpose, telemedicine networks have been established between Jinnah Post-Graduate Medical Centre, District Headquarter Hospital Shikarpur and Gambat Medical Sciences. On the other hand, Jinnah Graduate Medical Centre in Karachi will be linked to the Narayana Hurudayalaya Institute of Cardiac Sciences in Bangalore. This initiative is being formulated as a pilot project with the potential for replication of the telemedicine network in many more hospitals. The Patient Welfare Society has been given charge of 9 BHUs in Gambat and it feels that this is a possibility of extending the telemedicine network to BHUs (in a more rudimentary form where patients could be sent doctor reports for example or appointments set using email).

The CCB in Katchi Aabadi (squatter settlement) Faizabad Colony is headed by the husband of a lady councilor. The lady councilor, who is also the president of APWA in Khairpur, was pivotal in mobilizing the community to undertake an open drain sewerage scheme by forming a CCB. She rightly argued that this community was too small and their need too minor for conventional contractors to be interested in building a sewerage system for them and if the community did not take an interest no one else would come to their aid.



The Faizabad CCB contributed Rs. 80,000 and the government provided the remaining amount of Rs. Rs. 400,000 for the sewerage project. The sewerage lines are not yet fully operational but the community can see how they will bring about a marked difference to the state of hygiene in their households. The sewerage system being constructed will discharge into an open plot of land next to the railway tracks, so the community is now interested in building a wall between this area and their residences through another CCB project.



The Councilor for Sachal Town in Taluka Shah Latif motivated his community to form a CCB for pavement of roads in their neighborhood. When the CCB was formed, a government scheme to construct disposal works in the area also came through and even one of the streets earmarked for the CCB project was paved using government funds. The CCB and the local Councilor diverted the remaining funds to pave another street initially not part of the CCB scheme, with the agreement of the district government.



Another interesting example is that of Desire CCB, formed out of an existing NGO headed by a retired engineer from the Public Health Engineering department. CCB Desire has implemented five projects in its area, including the construction of a primary school located on premises donated by the CCB Chairman. Now that the school is completed, Desire CCB plans to approach the Education Department to get a grant of free books which it can offer to its students which will be inducted in August 2005. Moreover, the district government refers CCBs interested in sanitation schemes to Desire, which has now established a consultancy service, with an office in a district government building for which Desire pays a subsidized rent of Rs. 700 per month. Other CCBs which approach Desire are charged between Rs. 3000 to Rs. 4000 so that Desire can visit their project site and help prepare a budget estimate and file an application for implementing their schemes. Desire has already helped out over one dozen CCBs formulate successful project proposals.



The CCB Allah Ditti Faqir Rani is an interesting example of how a CCB has gone beyond its original work to undertake further development work. When the community was sufficiently mobilized to improve the streets in its locality, it took but a little convincing by the District Nazim for them to agree to rehabilitate a disheveled shrine in their neighborhood. This extra work, basically implying whitewash and the construction of a boundary wall to prevent animals from straying into the shrine, is being done under the CCB's supervision but without any extra funds being allocated to it.



The CCB in Kandjri village in UC Khemtia of Gambat tehsil was the most inspiring CCB visited in Khairpur during the field work for this study. CCB Khandjri had undertaken three projects thus far; one was for a sewerage scheme (the discharge of which is dumped not onto an open area but into a fishing pond instead); another project was for undertaking road construction, and the third one was for building a fence around a graveyard. The community in Khandjri was visibly mobilized and had not only participated enthusiastically in the implementation but was even more importantly taking an interest in maintaining their CCB projects. These people had made implements for undertaking regular desilting of their sewerage lanes, their streets were impressively clean, waste bins and street bulbs had been put up with the help of community funds. The community had been mobilized enough during the CCB formation process to collectively contribute another Rs. 50,000 to construct a main gate around for their community, which they guard by assigning neighborhood watch since a murder in their vicinity the previous year. UNICEF had also a water tank in the primary school after discovering arsenic in the water supply of the area. The CCB Chairman, who is a banking professional in Karachi, explained that they had sold the trees in the graveyard to pay a third of the community portion of the construction costs of a boundary wall around the graveyard and now that the fencing has been completed, they plan to plant date trees along the inner boundary of the wall, the income derived from selling the dates will also be used for some other community project. This was clearly a place which had been infused by a sense of empowerment brought about by their involvement in CCB projects.



### iii Hurdles and contentions

The success achieved by Khairpur district in forming CCBs has not been without its tribulations. There was a big row between the former DCO and the District Nazim which led to the transfer of the DCO and the appointment of another official to Khairpur. The District Nazim claimed that the previous DCO was hindering development of the district by his refusal to transfer the Annual Development Program (ADP) funds under the head



of the Citizens' Community Board (CCB). Khairpur district still has trouble with the Accounts department of the provincial government due to delays in the release of approved funds. Subsequently, this delay causes tensions with those CCBs which have already had their projects approved or in some cases have deposited their share of the scheme and are kept waiting for funds to be transferred to the district government for their projects to commence. Consider for example the case of a CCB formed to construct a press hall in Khairpur. This press hall scheme has been approved by the EDO (CD) but the promised amount is now not available due to paucity of funds at the provincial level. The district government has subsequently placed a limit of 4 lacs on CCB projects with the consent of the council, whereas the allowed amount for CCB projects was around Rs. 1,000,000 in previous years. Now the Press Hall cannot be completed in one go and will have to be funded in two phases, which is causing agitation within the CCB, which feels that it is being let down by the district government. There is need for the provincial government to realize that its delays undermine the legitimacy of district governments and for the NRB to suggest relevant mechanism for expediting this process of fiscal transfers to CCBs on ground.

During this mentioned tussle between the Nazim and the former DCO, the EDO (CD) became a scapegoat and had been transferred to Karachi. During his transfer, the EDO (being the DO for Social Welfare) convinced the Directorate of Social Welfare to organize a province-wide training for DOs (SW) on CCB formation. According to the EDO (CD), there is a natural affinity between the Social Welfare and Community Development departments and thus he recommended that it would be far better to designate DOs (Social Welfare) as EDOs (Community Development, instead of giving the additional charge to other EDO with no interest in working to mobilize and organize communities to directly undertake development. This is the same advice the DO (SW)/EDO (CD) recently gave to the District Nazim of Sukkur who invited him to make recommendations to increase CCB formation in Sukkur. Within Khairpur district, a Citizen Resource Center has been established at the district government offices in Khairpur to guide and facilitate CCB formation. The availability of this resource centre has been wide publicized through Radio Pakistan Khairpur. This effort is supplemented by the Desire Consultancy Center providing technical help in preparation of cost estimates, line plan/feasibility reports for CCB schemes at nominal charges.



#### **iv Concluding Assessment**

Conceptually, CCBs were meant to fully involve local communities in development processes by involving them in identifying, partially finding and implementing their need based schemes. There was a lingering fear however that CCBs would be dominated by the families of the nazims. It was found that in some cases politicians and community influentials had in fact donated more funds or were dominating CCBs indirectly, even while being unable to be a part of them. Conversely, many CCB members in Khairpur had not donated personal funds to their scheme or they knew very little about the

schemes being undertaken by the CCB of which they members, The monitoring of the local government system does not do much to prevent such domination or indifference pertaining to CCBs, nor is it doing much to promote the future sustainability of CCB schemes. Even the current DCO of Khairpur termed CCBs as being a one shot operation to extend infrastructure to rural areas and he agrees that there is no substantive mechanism for their maintenance due to which they do run the risk of falling into disrepair.

As far as monitoring is concerned, the DCO's office as the local Nazimeen do look over the implementation of CCB schemes. The EDO (CD) sends concerned officials like the TOs for Infrastructure, or for Service and Works, or other relevant officials, to monitor the project in the area where it is being implemented. Even for registration purposes, the CCB is required to obtain the signature of the UC or Tehsil Nazim or Naib Nazim before it can be registered, to help enhance the sense of awareness of community initiatives by public officials. If the district government learns of contractors involvement in CCBs it directs concerned staff at the tehsil level to be extra vigilant of that particular scheme. Recently the Anti-Corruption department has also asked for the record of CCBs in Khairpur. The EDO (CD) feels that this is unnecessary given that the Audit department conducts regular checks on them. The monitoring mechanism may be becoming redundant if there are too many repetitive cross-checks focusing on financial disbursements alone, instead monitoring could be adapted to break the domination of influentials in CCBs or to gauge how many members are actually active in the CCBs, which would in turn help enhance the sustainability to CCBs and have a direct impact on ensuring better maintenance of CCB schemes.

### III Concluding Remarks

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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**

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### **List of People Interviewed**

#### **Khairpur District**

1. District Nazim
2. Nazim, Shah Latif taluka (tehsil)
3. Naib Nazim, Gambat tehsil
4. Councilor for Sachal Town
5. District Coordination Officer
6. CCB chairmen
7. CCB secretaries
8. CCB members
9. Public at large



## Annex 2

**Table 1a: Description of CCB Schemes in Khairpur until 31 August, 2004)**

1	Education sector schemes	Construction of 20 shelter less government primary school buildings in villages consisting of two classrooms, verandah and toilets, at the cost of Rs. 2 to 2.5 lacs each
2	RCC slab bridges scheme	One large size bridge over Mirwah canals near village Hadi Bux Laghari Thari Mirwah constructed at the cost of Rs. 232, 117
3	Small RCC slab bridges	10 small size 8 to 10 feet bridges on small canal & minors constructed at different villages throughout Khairpur district at the cost of Rs.10 lacs
4	Small culverts	50 small culverts on road & water courses constructed at the cost of Rs. 5 lacs
5	Drainage schemes	14 Schemes open surface drains have been constructed in different villages and Muhallas at the cost of Rs. 30 lacs
6	CC topping blocks	10 schemes of CC topping blocks at various muhallas, towns and villages have been undertaken at the cost of Rs. 25 lacs.
7	Village electrification	Electrification provided to village Ali Gulab Shamabani Taluka Nara at the cost of Rs. 185,000
8	Pacca watercourses	Watercourse constructed at Sadda Rind Minor Rd-13 in Union Council Mehar Veaser Taluke Thari Mirwah at the cost of Rs.6 lacs
9	Metallic road	Road constructed at Bannaras Colony at the cost of Rs. 3 lacs
10	Maternity home	Home constructed at Union Council Ripri, Taluka Gambat at the cost at the cost of Rs. 3lacs
11	Brick pavements roads	10 schemes have been undertaken at various villages throughout District at the cost of Rs. 10 lacs.
12	Hand-pumps	40 hand-pumps have been installed at different villages in Nara and Mirwah talukas for sweet water at the cost of Rs.107,700
13	Equipment for medical complex	Rs. 10,00,000 worth of equipment for Red Crescent Medical Complex at Khairpur

**Table 1b: Sector-wise CCB Schemes undertaken between FYs 2002-2003 and 2003-2004**

1	Shelter less schools	20
2	Bridges	05
3	Culverts	51
4	Drainage scheme	10
5	Compound wall of graveyards	12
6	Village electrification	06
7	Metallic link roads	06
8	CC topping girder crosses	12
9	Installation of hand-pumps for drinking water	140
10	Brick pavements/Earthwork	10
11	Computer training centers	06
12	Pacca water courses	02
13	Construction of library	01
14	Construction of maternity home	01
15	Construction of retaining wall	01
16	Blood bank	01
17	Suvages system line	01
18	Musafirkhana	01
19	Water ponds	01
20	Mosques	02