

Impact Analysis of Public Sector and NGO's to Improvement of Rural Livelihoods in Sindh

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Abstract

Rural livelihoods in Sindh recorded an improvement despite financial constraints, expenditure doubled between 2001 and 2006 growing at an average rate of 23% per annum. Public sector contributed significantly through various interventions on poverty alleviation but the most worrying situation was the expenditure on food subsidies, food support programs and low cost housing has been stagnant even in nominal terms with negative repercussions for the poor and the needy. Sindh Agricultural and forestry workers coordinating organization has made social mobilization as core activity and entry point followed by different development interventions. The Agha Khan rural support program provides a one time grant to complement village organizations to the infrastructure projects. The national rural support program has lowered the levels of poverty in member households. The Pakistan poverty alleviation fund educational program provides quality learning at primary level in district Sanghar. Similarly PPAF has also improved health care through the provision of quality basic health services. The young Sheedi welfare organization has establish emergency centre for disaster preparedness and provided 600 goats to 200 beneficiaries. Badin rural development society through their effort 1500 women and 2800 men in 60 villages are engaged in development process. The major strength of NGOs was that they have special ability to reach the poor and other segments of society while their major weakness is small size and budget and lack technical capacity to confront difficult situation. It is recommended that NGOs should ensure that new technologies are introduced to help farmers improve and increase crop production. NGOs should create a condition in which the poor are either given or enabled to acquire their assets and a peaceful environment to benefit from those assets. Government should provide facilities for institutional building to the local NGOs this will encourage them to work sincerely towards poverty alleviation. NGOs should not rely on government for future projects instead they can raise funds through savings and donation from rich individuals.

Keywords: Public sector, NGOs, Livelihood, Sindh

Introduction

Poverty has become a major issue in Sindh whereas 50 percent of the population lives below the poverty line and suffer from low calorie intake, low per capita income, unemployment, inadequate access to education, sanitation, health facilities and unhygienic environment. (Anka *et al.* 2008).

More importantly these people are more vulnerable to shocks. According to studies conducted by Sindh coastal development authority in 2005 concluded that the important factor in predicting poverty is the proximity and availability of water. A high incidence of poverty is found among non-farm households compared to farm households. The average annual income of farm households is 1.7 times higher than those of non households (Agricultural Census of Pak 2000).

According to some survey conducted by SDPC poverty is concentrated in those areas growing the major commodity crops (wheat, cotton and rice). The cotton and wheat growing area of Sindh have the highest farm based poverty indicators suggesting that low commodity prices and the structure of agricultural marketing for the major crop have a serious impact on poverty (Gazdar, 2007).

The distribution of key private assets is highly unequal and this is the fundamental cause of poverty in Sindh. Despite, some promising changes in rural areas, it seems clear that several factors have combined to increase deprivation of some of the poorest in Sindh over the last 55 years or so. (Sindh poverty reduction strategy paper 2003).

The only safety net that is generally known to local people in Sindh is Zakat, unless it is given to deserving people and equitably poverty will remain with vulnerable groups. A critical factor affecting the ability to cope with shock is that poor and very poor families tend to have limited assets available. This increases their vulnerability and results in a decline in well being that is difficult to recover from (Anka *et al.* 2009).

In view of the above this paper shall discussed the contribution of public sector and NGOs towards improvement of rural livelihoods in Sindh.

Objectives

1. To review various public sector programs aimed at rural livelihoods in Pakistan.
2. To discuss the contributions of NGOs towards improvement of rural livelihoods in Sindh.
3. To identify the strength and weakness of NGOs in delivery of poverty alleviation programs.
4. To develop recommendations for public and private sector regarding poverty reduction programs in Sindh.

Methodology

The present paper is a descriptive study which will analyze various programs undertaken by public and private sector organizations for improvement of rural livelihoods in Sindh. Data used in this paper are mostly from secondary sources. Besides identifying the strength and weaknesses of these NGOs the author also explores what will be the likely impact of these programs to the rural communities in Sindh.

Results and Discussion

1. Public Sector Contribution to Rural Livelihoods in Pakistan

1.1 Zakat Program

The principal form of cash transfers to the poor and disadvantaged in Pakistan is through the publicly administered system of zakat. The two main types of support programs, the Guzara Allowance and the permanent rehabilitation grant, absorb in excess of 70 percent of zakat related disbursements. The programs run under zakat are classified as regular and other programs. Funds for the permanent rehabilitation scheme and for regular programs are disbursed through provinces, while those for other programs are distributed directly by the central zakat council. Guzara allowance (or subsistence allowance), one of the major zakat programs, is a typical cash transfer, paid at the rate of Rs.500 per month to eligible and is one of the main instruments of support given by the local zakat committee. Those eligible are;

- (i) Adult living below poverty line (Rs.670 per month for 2002) with preference to widows and disabled.
- (ii) Unemployed and
- (iii) Not habitual beggars

The local zakat committee establishes the eligibility of the person and the list of recipients has to be pasted outside the local mosque. Three different categories of educational assistance are also provided under zakat. The payment is made directly to institutions, where eligible students are enrolled. Stipend are given to students enrolled in the mainstream public or private sector schools (Table-1)

Zakat is being used to finance health care under the national level health programs managed by the provincial and central zakat councils. The zakat council determines the eligibility of an unmarried woman unable to bear expenses related to her marriage. Almost one third of the total disbursement under zakat was devoted to PRS (permanent rehabilitation scheme) benefiting around 10,000 people with the average value of the grant being Rs.17, 000 (Human Development South Asia, 2006).

1.2 Pakistan Baitul Maal (PBM) Scheme

The Pakistan Baitul Maal (PBM), which operates under the administrative control of the Ministry of Women Development, Social Welfare and Special Education, was established as an autonomous corporate body under a special act of 1991. The PBM was set up to help the destitute, needy widows and orphans, invalids and other such people who are in dire need of assistance. The two main benefits that it provides are the food support programme and individual financial assistance. As shown in (Table-2), majority of the beneficiaries (52 percent) belongs to Punjab, while less than 5 percent of the recipients are from Baluchistan, signaling with the population share of the provinces.

1.3 The Food Support Programme (FSP)

A redesigned food subsidy scheme was initiated in 1994, which was renamed as the Atta Subsidy Scheme in July 1997, aimed at providing a cash grant of Rs.200 per month per family to 520,000 poor households across Pakistan. The aim of the food support programme was to provide a food safety net for the poorest households to those with income below Rs.2000 per month. FSP is a cash transfer of Rs.2,400 per annum in two installments of Rs.1,200 each to 1.25 million households.

1.4 Individual Financial Assistance (IFA)

The primary purpose of individual financial assistance (IFA) is to support the poor, widow, destitute women, orphans and disabled persons through medical treatment, education stipends, rehabilitation and general assistance. Financial assistance can only be given once a year. Assistance for medical treatment is provided through government hospital up to the maximum of Rs.300, 000. Bright, deserving students are also give stipend to cover tuition fees up to Rs.40, 000, can be paid to the poor to make them self-reliant.

1.5 The Khushhal Pakistan Programme (KPP)

The Khushhal Pakistan Programme (KPP) is an important public sector programme to create employment opportunities for unemployed poor. Under this programme, members of the national assembly (MNAs) are authorized to identify and finance development schemes upto Rs.5.00 million in their constituencies. The programme provides essential infrastructure in rural and low income urban areas by building farm to market roads, water supply schemes, repairing existing schools, small rural roads, streets, drains and storm channels. The sectoral and provincial distribution of RPP shows that more than half of the disbursements were made for Punjab, 22 percent for Sindh, 14 percent for NWFP and less than 10 percent for other areas of Pakistan.

1.6 Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF)

The PPAF was established in 2000 it provides soft loans to 65 different partner organizations, which, in turn lend to individuals and groups within their target communities. It also provides grants on a cost sharing basis for development of small scale community infrastructure and strengthens micro-finance institutions (MFIs) by supporting their capacity building activities. To date, the PPAF has managed cumulative disbursements of nearly Rs.14 billion. A study conducted by Gallup Pakistan, found adequate evidence to suggest that on the average low income households, who borrow from the PPAF, are better off than what they would have been if they had not borrowed (Human Development in South Asia, 2006).

1.7 Khushali Bank

Khushali Bank launched its operation as a micro-credit financial institution in the year 2000, with the prime objective to establishing a pro-poor sustainable financial services delivery network in the country. With a predominantly rural portfolio, the bank now has service outlets in all provinces. The bank provides short-tenure micro loans ranging up to US \$ 500 dollars for working capital and asset purchase. Nearly one-third of its 50,000 clients are women. The processing of loans is strengthened through the involvement of community based organizations (CBOs) in lieu of the traditional collateral requirements defined as those, living below the level of

the microfinance lending programs of the Khushali bank, have enjoyed considerable improvement in economic / social welfare indicators and have also benefited from accelerated income generating activities in the agricultural sector. However, in general there has not been a significant impact on caloric intake of the borrowers or their consumption expenditure on non-food items. Similarly, the bank clients have not displayed better performance in terms of school enrolment of their children.

For Khushali Bank to realize its potential impact, it is essential to bypass the information problems while conducting micro-credit operations on a truly massive scale. For long term sustainability, it is therefore, imperative to achieve high repayment rates while charging interest rates that cover the cost of lending (Microfinance in Pakistan, 2005).

1.8 Small and Medium Enterprises for Empowerment of the Poor

The small and medium enterprises development authority (SMEDA) in Pakistan was established in October, 1998 as an autonomous corporate body headed by the Prime Minister. The terms of reference of (SMEDA) are that it will be an apex policy making body for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and provide and facilitate support services, generate massive employment opportunities, give industrial growth, revitalize small business and back start the economy through aggressive launch of SME support program. The SME sector has great potential for generating employment, especially for the low income groups thus creating a business environment that is supportive of SMEs. This is an important part of the government's poverty reduction strategy. This sector contributes 30 percent of the GDP with value addition to the manufacturing sector of around 35 percent and generating 25 percent of manufacturing sector export earning (US \$ 2.5 billion). It also provides 99 percent of non-agricultural jobs. The micro enterprises development initiatives such as provision of credit through banks are expected to spur economic activity mainly in the self employed segment of the population (SMEDA, 2008).

The government recognizes that SME led private sector development needs further strengthening of the regulatory environment, adjustment in potential policies and provision of support services for enterprise establishment, development of quality improvement and export marketing in the short to medium term. SME led economic growth is expected to reduce poverty through

- (1) Income generating activities in rural and urban areas.
- (2) Creating employment opportunities
- (3) Providing forward linkages to the micro-enterprises benefiting from the availability of micro credit.

2. Contribution of NGO'S to Rural Livelihoods Improvement in Sindh

The desire to help those in need is as old as civilization itself. Volunteerism is not new in Pakistan. It has a long history dedicated and selfless workers who have devoted their lives to respond to the needs of people. Volunteerism in Pakistan has come to be identified by the organizations to which they belong not too long ago, mostly the non formal organizations were simply known as voluntary social organizations / agencies. Presently, the voluntary organization are in more organized form and are widely known as NGOs.

Realizing the importance of NGOs as a helping hand to state in socio-economic development by the present government, citizen community board (CCBs) has become a part of the local development agenda.

Most NGOs are welfare oriented. They are usually operative at the level of neighborhoods and are involved in the provision civic amenities such as basic health, education, library facilities, vocational training, youth programs, credit, income generating activities etc (Shireen, 1998).

2.1 Participatory Development Approach

Participatory development is a process which involves the participation of the poor at the village level to build their human natural and economic resource base for breaking out of the poverty nexus. It specifically aims at achieving a localized capital formation process based on the progressive development of group identity skill development and local resources generation. The beginning of the process is therefore, the emergence of a nascent form of community consciousness.

Contributions to Rural Livelihood Improvement

The total coverage of NGOs at present is relatively insignificant, compared to the magnitude of the poor population. According to survey conducted by NHDR/PIDE 2001, the total received by all categories of the sample population, the percentage of loans received from NGOs was only 0.8 percent in rural areas and 1 percent in urban areas.

Similarly the national rural support program (NRSP) which is by far the largest NGO in the country, operating in twenty seven districts, has a total coverage of only 293,000 beneficiaries. The NHDR/AI survey shows that there was considerable variation with respect to the effectiveness of targeting of the poor between various NGOs and the impact of intervention on income, nutrition and health of the poor.

NGOs that enabled the formation of autonomous organizations of the poor could play an important role in creating a systemic relationship between local governance and poor communities. Such a relationship would enable the poor to participate in identification and implementation of development projects as well as decisions related with access over markets and local power structures. Equally important the emphasis perhaps may need to shift from building centralized NGOs in a large number of districts with low intensity of coverage and high overheads in each towards district specific NGOs, which achieve full coverage of the poor population in the villages, union councils and tehsils of that district.

2.2 Sindh Agricultural and Forestry Workers Coordinating Organization SAFWCO

Since inception in 1986, SAFWCO has worked to improve the quality of life especially the poor. SAFWCO approach is based on five steps such as mobilization, organization, strategic planning, partnership building through small projects and facilitation towards sustainability.

SAFWCO's work is spread across Sanghar District as a demonstration of how to empower people. Significant work has been done in the field of social organization and services delivery, agriculture and economic development, natural resource development and human institutional development. The work in social organization and service delivery builds the social and physical infrastructure enabling the rural poor to address systemic process of poverty. The process of organization and infrastructure building helps them to participate and take control over resources. The human and institutional development process mainly targets awareness and consciousness raising, combined with skills and tools development. The natural resources management and agriculture and economic development programs are aimed at consolidating the social organization process that gives people a sense of accomplishment and confidence in the process. SAFWCO Micro Finance Program is a part of agriculture and economic development sector (SAFWCO Annual Report, 2005).

2.3 Sindh Rural Development Project (SRDP)

In view of the denial by the provincial government of Sindh about the existence of the bonded labour in agricultural sector and the presence of private jails in the province, Asian Development Bank initiated a process for launching a loan project in Sindh for the abolition of the bonded labour in Agricultural Sector in 1998 with the name of Sindh Rural Development Project (SRDP). According to the project documents, the overall goal of the project was to reduce poverty in four districts of southern Sindh, through increasing empowerment and improving governance, improving access of the rural poor to public services, transferring technology for improved livelihoods and providing essential infrastructure. In addition to the above, the project aimed at improving the social status and economic well-being of the poorest groups in the project area with a focus on the following target groups; (i) hairs and agricultural labourers, (ii) marginal owners-cum tenants (with less than 2 ha) and (iii) small village based artisans. There was a particular focus on women as the most disadvantaged among the target groups (Sindh Rural Development Project, 2007).

2.4 Aga Khan Rural Support Program (AKRSP)

Since it began, 13 years ago the Aga Khan Rural Support Program (AKRSP) has transformed the remote Northern areas and Chitral in Pakistan into rural development success stories. Its distinctive approach has provided the inspiration for other programs in Pakistan and elsewhere.

The key element of the program is institutional development at village level, which provides the framework for community members to take advantage of outside assistance as well as to use their own resources more productively. AKRSP started the process by providing an agent to help villagers form a village organization and undertake a significant investment in productive infrastructure of their choice, such as irrigation facilities or a local road that will benefit their community. The program provides a one time grant to complement villagers contributions to the infrastructure projects. The grant process helps village organizations to mobilize savings and acquire agricultural technology and production inputs. As benefits accrue, AKRSP facilitates links with other entities providing health and education services.

a. Strategy

With rapid population growth, limitations on usable land and improved accessibility, the economic environment in the program area is changing. Though, farming is important, most households earn between 30-50 percent of

their income of the farm often in non agricultural jobs. AKRSP is responding to expanding into the promotion of non-agricultural investment.

People in the project areas are increasingly demanding social services and investments in health and education. In response, AKRSP is facilitating links between village organizations and other providers. In future most of the basic infrastructure and social service investment in the region is likely to come from the government.

b. Conditions for Replication

In Pakistan AKRSP has been successfully spread over three districts under separate day to day management and its replication has begun in two adjacent districts with support from Asian Development Bank and government of Pakistan. The prospects of replicating the AKRSP model on a broad scale depend partly on the macro and sectoral policy environment including the regulatory system for finance, natural resource and commerce as well as state support services. Experience over the past 50 years, for example in Brazil, Kenya, Korea, Malawi, Malaysia, Taiwan and China suggests that most successful governments sponsored rural development programs have been run by autonomous and accountable parastatals bodies with carefully crafted institutional development strategies (AKRSP, 2007).

2.5 National Rural Support Program in Sindh (NRSP)

In 1991, the Government of Pakistan (GOP) supported the country wide replication of the rural support program model which culminated in the creation of the NRSP. In 1992, Government of Pakistan provided NRSP with a grant of Rs.500 million to start operations. As other resources became available, particularly from donors and also from provincial governments, RSP expanded beyond initial eight districts. Cost recovery from NRSP's micro-credit programme, which credit organization in Pakistan with 160,893 active loans totaling, Rs.1,779 million (US \$29.6 million), now provides a significant proportion of NRSPs operating funds (NRSP, 2000).

a. Experience in the Project Districts

NRSP is established in the project districts with 12 years of operation in Badin and 6 years in Thatta. It engaged in community mobilization, savings and the implementation of small scale civil works in these areas. The details of current NRSP activities in Thatta and Badin districts are shown in (Table-3).

b. Social Mobilization and Small Scale Interventions

NRSP community organizations have proven successful in facilitating needs identification by villages and in arranging for demand to be effectively met in participatory ways. Community organizations (CO) members and their households can avail themselves of a number of services from NRSP including training, micro-credit and support for small-scale civil works interventions. NRSP has also put in place important sustainability measures and is helping (COs), register a community citizens board and access funding from district governments.

c. Achievements Recorded

NRSP performance was evaluated as part of a case study for 2004 Shanghai Conference on scaling up poverty reduction. It was estimated that membership in the NRSP community organizations (CO) resulted in about 7.5 percent higher household incomes annually. Similarly, NRSP estimates show that poverty levels were lower in member households. The UNDP supported Pakistan National Human Development Programme Report (2003) states that 68 percent, of the NRSP respondents ate daily 68 percent ate better than before, 50 percent felt improvements in health and 82 percent experienced a sustainable increase in income after disbursement of credit (NRSP, 2000).

2.6 Badin Rural Development Society BRDS

Badin Rural Development Society (BRDS) has been working for the upliftment and community participation in development initiatives at district level since last one decade. It aims at strengthening the standard of health, food security, water and sanitation better participation of women, creating equal opportunities for vulnerable groups and poverty alleviation in the targeted areas of District Badin especially the coastal belt. These communities face devastation and catastrophes like earthquake, droughts, drenchers and other fatal calamities. Badin Rural Development Society has adopted its integrated social mobilization strategy for the development of area, ensuring women participation or giving preference to women in all its activities.

2.7 Contribution of BRDS to Rural Livelihoods In Sindh

a. Education

Giving right to education is one of the strategic objective of BRDS; the organization has vision to advocate the right of child education for both girl or boy to avail their education with appropriate facilities. In the year 2007,

BRDS has provided bags and other educational materials. Over 4000 children have benefited from their activities. In 2008, BRDS planned to give these materials to only newly enrolled schools except girl's schools initiated by the community and BRDS.

b. Achievements

1. Overall children enrollment increased in sponsored villages.
2. Communities have learnt strategies of how they can advocate the right to education.
3. People are sensitized over right of education and now equally respond to daughter and son for studying.
4. Communities are requesting British Petroleum (BP) for social investment in infrastructure.
5. Children are well organized and attached with BRDS educational facilities.

c. Social Mobilization

In district Badin, the program intervention was based on report building, mobilization and organization for sustainable positive changes in physical and behavioral attitudes within the target communities. During the year 2007, BRDS team mobilized thousands of coastal communities to mainstream them in the people's oriented development. There are 60 villages in union councils Seerani, Bhugra Memon and Ahmed Rajo, where community groups are formed; there are 1500 women and 2800 men who are active members in these groups. BRDS team is regularly interacting with these groups to identify innovative ideas and approaches which can lead to a progressive society (Badin Rural Development Society, 2007).

d. Achievements

1. 1500 women and 2800 men in 60 villages are engaged in development process
2. 10 villages are registered for being part of development in district government initiatives.
3. All women council seats are filled by competitive process in recent local bodies election.
4. 35 mother committees are formed for girls enrolment and school management.
5. Female group members are sending their children in schools and accepted equal right of education for both girls and boys.
6. 10 youth groups are functioning properly at community level.

2.8 Young Sheedi Welfare Organization YSWO Badin

YSWO came into being in the year 1987 with determination, commitment and dedication of the poor Sheedi people under the distinguished leadership of Faiz Mohammad Bilali. This organization has become the silver lining for the poor and marginalized communities of Badin District, particularly those living along the coastal belt. In 1989, it was registered with social welfare department government of Sindh, under social voluntary organization act, 1961.

a. Achievements

- (1) 58 Villages in 5 union councils of Ahmad Rajo, Bhugra Memon, Abdullah Shah, Lunwari Sharif and Kadhan have been selected for disaster preparedness and management project.
- (2) 116 Community organizations have been formed.
- (3) 9 clusters of the target villages have been formed.
- (4) 01 Emergency centre has been established and equipped with necessary emergency items.
- (5) 04 Trainings have been given to the officials of community organizations.
- (6) Site has been selected for construction of 2 demoraised platforms in 2 cluster locations in Tehsil Badin.
- (7) 12 TBA Training participants have been selected, while contents have been discussed with lady doctor.
- (8) 3 Radio Programs have been broadcasted out of 10 programs.
- (9) In poverty Alleviation and income generation activities, 431 goat / sheep have been distributed to 143 beneficiaries in Badin.
- (10) 600 goats have been given to 200 beneficiaries in tehsil Johi, district Dadu through local partner village Shahabad Welfare Organization.
- (11) 200 beneficiaries have been finalized in Tehsil Diplo, District Tharparkar through local NGO (Young Sheedi Welfare Organization Annual Report, 2007).

2.9 Land Distribution to the Poor for Self Reliance in Sindh

The Government of Sindh has announced grant of state land to the poor in all districts, where state land is available with primary objective of reaching out to the most marginalized segment of Sindh population. Grant of the state land to the poor Haris is one of the central poverty reduction strategy of the new government. The policies of land grant followed by different governments have however been more or less a routine affair and there has been no attempt to target the landless in transparent manner. Similarly also there was no attempt to facilitate institutional support to the poor beneficiaries in terms of connecting them to rural credit markets etc for enabling them to move to sustainable livelihoods. The broad policy framework has been evolved on the basis of past lessons and major weaknesses of the past policies. What has basically surfaced, is the fact that in the past land grant were primarily implemented through a mechanism provided under the land revenue act. In view of the above, the government has drawn out the framework of a policy that builds upon past mistakes and oversights for ensuring sustainability of reforms.

2.10 Sindh Microfinance Network SMN

Sindh Agriculture and Forestry Workers Coordinating Organization (SAFWCO) being a practitioner in the fields, felt the need of a platform for small scale NGO/CBO who are practitioners and providing microfinance services in their respective areas of Sindh.

Sindh Microfinance Network (SMN) is a Network for organizations engaged in microfinance and dedicated in improving the outreach and sustainability of microfinance in Sindh. Microfinance sector in Sindh is in the initial stages of development. Estimates suggest 2 million households need the microfinance services.

SMN is established to provide a forum for microfinance practitioners to exchange views and experiences on issues of common interest for the majority of the population, this changing scenario has meant decreasing individual control over livelihoods. The objectives of SMN were as follows.

1. Enhance the capacity and support of technical assistance.
2. Build a microfinance database of microfinance institutes.
3. Conduct research on microfinance related issues and provide development services.
4. Facilitate effective networking at provincial, national and institutional level
5. Disseminate information and share experiences and lesson learnt.

2.11 Participatory Village Development Program Sindh PVDP

Participatory village development program PVDP was established in 1997 in response to communities of District Tharparkar needs for poverty alleviation safe health quality education, permanent source of livelihood community capacity for management of their natural and human resources and awareness of their civil and political rights. The wide spread child labor particularly in carpet factories and other work places also created the need to work for child protection and improving the lives of children. PVDP showed utmost concern for the marginalized women who are subjected to maltreatment by males and have restricted access to health services education opportunities, skills and awareness in a society which allows limited social mobility to the women and girls who are also unaware of their basic rights.

So far about 60,000 people have benefited directly or indirectly from water security projects, environmental rehabilitation and other projects including food security, livestock, health, education and income generation and poverty alleviation projects. There are about 1500 male and female community activists who are trained and now serving their own communities. More than 63 staff members have been trained in various subject related with community development.

a. Rural Livelihood Improvement and Food Security Issues In Thar

Like many other Asian countries Pakistan is poverty trapped country and poverty roots have emerged in many areas of Pakistan especially in Thar Desert. In Thar there is lack of income opportunities, regular drought occurring, lack of assets, health and education opportunities. More than 80% households live in constant debt and below the poverty line. As a result of drought like situation in this area people are compelled to leave their homes and migrate to canal irrigated areas outside of Thar in search of food, fodder and work. This has been the coping mechanisms for survival of the people during drought times for many years. Participatory village development program emerged in Thar as a ray of hope for Thari people. PVDP believes in giving people choices and opportunities for improving the quality of their lives. The six step poverty model is designed to give people various choices and opportunities to improve their livelihood, skills and natural environment and

empower women. The poverty reduction model also aims to reduce vulnerability of the poor households through development of assets, skills income opportunities and capabilities for self reliance. The food security issue is important to reduce drought related miseries of the poor. PVDP works with community to support preservation of wild food plus storage of locally produced eatables for drought times when access to foods becomes difficult for the poor masses.

The poverty reduction and food security program has significantly contributed towards PVDP vision of making the poor households socio economically self reliant. This is done through building physical assets such as goat, trees, water tank, economy stores and developing women skills for income generation through embroidery trainings and support.

b. Achievements and Impacts

c. Impact of Poverty Alleviation Programs to Rural Livelihoods

- (1) Women Empowerment through assets development in terms of livestock, trees water tanks and fuel store and marketable handicraft skill of women.
- (2) Reduction in shocks and vulnerability particularly during the emergencies droughts earthquake, flooding.
- (3) Reduction in poverty through income generation from sale of goats and embroidery work and saving on health cost use of clean drinking water.
- (4) Improvement in environment through trees planting use of fuel efficient stove and water conservation.
- (5) Recognition of PRM by other organizations and considering its replication.
- (6) Improved nutrition in food for growing children and pregnant women.

d. Skill Enhancement for Self Reliance of Women through Vocational Centers

PVDP encourages women to improve their handicraft skills in order to generate income for meeting their basic needs. In this regard vocational centers were established in which the women are taught to make different types of handicraft items for sale. The efforts are made to produce innovative handicraft goods for the market. PVDP has so far supported the women in making different types of purses, bags, embroidery work on clothes, wall hanging, artificial jewelry and greeting cards. It can be said with confidence that PVDP can help many women with income generation contributing to poverty reduction and improving their living conditions.

e. Impact of Skill Enhancement for self Reliance

- (1) Women improved handicraft skills according to market need.
- (2) The livelihood of a family increased by involving women in the skill development.
- (3) Confidence of women enhanced.
- (4) Women dignity in family and society enhanced.

3. Strengths and Weaknesses of NGO'S

Like other sectors, the NGO are not exceptional in having strengths and weaknesses. Some strengths and weaknesses are as follows:

a. Strengths: NGO have special ability to reach the poor and other segments of society overlooked by public and commercial sectors. NGO facilitate local resource mobilization and have programs of local participation in development. Service deliveries at low cost and innovative solutions to novel problems are their strengths. The biggest strength of these organizations is the openness in thought. They are said to be learning organizations their capacity grows from small size with administrative flexibility and have relatively more freedom from political constraints.

Perhaps the single most important factor to the success of NGOs is the quality of leadership. Specifically it is the ability to relate with humility and love with the poor. The successful NGO leader creates the team synergy to develop innovative responses to each new problem on the ground. The second factor in the success of small NGOs, which engaged in social mobilization is the identification, training and fostering of village level activists who gradually begin to manage existing community organization (COs) enabling NGO staff to give more time to develop new COs. The third factor in the success of small NGOs is the ability of level leadership to devolve responsibilities acknowledge their achievements and to learn from them just as much as it is necessary for leadership to learn from the poor.

The fourth factor in the success of small NGOs in reaching significant scale is the development of credible accounting procedures and a regular monitoring and evaluation exercise on the basis of which donor funding can be sought when it is required. In each case successful NGO apart from devising some modes of reflection and action with the village communities also develops formalized recording and reporting system.

b. Weaknesses: Due to the small size and budget, NGO lack in technical capacity because the highly trained technical and professional people do not find much attraction for career jobs in this sector. NGO have limited ability to scale up successful projects to achieving regional or national impact. This is due to their small size and resources, that there are unscientific administrative system, intensive focus on a few committees, the difficulties in maintaining their essential value consensus; soon as the staff expands interaction to developing real efficiency and expertise in a well defined technological environment and even living with their own commitments to their beneficiary populations (Shireen, 2002).

4. Summary Conclusion and Recommendations

The paper examine various public sector programs aimed at rural livelihood in Pakistan and Sindh. Contributions of NGOs towards improvement of quality of life in rural areas of Sindh has been discussed. The paper identified the major strength and weaknesses of NGOs in implementing poverty alleviation programs. Finally recommendations were developed for rural livelihood improvement in Sindh.

The major conclusion drawn from this paper were the underprivileged settlements in rural Sindh experience health problems due to lack of basic amenities and bad hygiene practices. Similarly the lack emergency obstetric services is another issue of greater concern. The most worrying situation was the expenditure on food subsidies, food support programs and low cost housing has been stagnant even with negative repercussions for the poor and the needy. Individual financial assistance given to poor widow, destitute women, opens and disable people is very migre. NGOs lack in technical capacity confront existing challenges this is due to thier small in size and resources. Microcredit loans do not reach the poorest of the poor in Sindh.

In order to address the above issues the following recommendations are made.

4.1 Recommendations

1. There is need to start different public welfare schemes at grass root level for improving livelihoods of the poor.
2. Rural women NGOs already working in Sindh be strengthen, they should include in their charters training of women for income generating jobs.
3. NGOs should ensure that new agricultural technologies are introduced to help farmers to improve and increase crop production so as to improve their living standard.
4. Government should provide facilities for institutional building to the local NGOs. This will encourage them to work sincerely towards poverty alleviations.
5. There is a need for a very strong monitoring and evaluation of NGOs so as to make sure that their services reach the poorest of the poor in Sindh. The monitoring and evaluation should be carried by independent research organization.
6. Rural poor in Sindh should involve themselves in other socioeconomic activities such as monitoring input market and agro processing in order to diversify their means of livelihood so as to generate more income.
7. NGOs should not rely on government to provide funds for future projects. Instead they can raise funds through savings and donations from rich individuals.
8. NGOs should create a condition in which the poor are either given or enabled to acquire their assets and a peaceful environment to benefit from those assets.

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Table 1. Disbursement and beneficiaries of zakat in Pakistan 2003-04

	Total amount disbursed (Rs. Million)	Total number of beneficiaries
(A) Regular Zakat Programs		
Guzara allowance	1923.3	813,642
Educational stipends	408.9	289,181
Stipend to student in deeni madras	174.3	69,851
Health care	152.3	186,750
Social welfare / rehabilitation	121.1	25,544
Marriage assistance to unmarried women	122.4	11,876
Sub-Total (A)	2902.2	1396,844
(B) Other Regular Head		
Eid grants	209.2	0
Leprosy patients	0.5	56
Permanent rehabilitation scheme of zakat phase III	2319.5	175,664
Educational stipend (Technical)	429.2	22,310
Sub-Total (B)	2958.4	198,030
Grand Total (A + B)	5860.6	1594,874

Source: Govt. of Pakistan 2006 B, Zakat Disbursement, Mahbudul Haq Centre for Human Development, 2006 Report.

Table 2. Percentage Province-wise Distribution of Pakistan Baitul Maal (PBM) Beneficiary Households in Pakistan 2003-04

Project	Punjab	Sindh	NWFP	Baluchistan	AJK
Food support program	52	21	18	4	5
Individual financial assistance	44	26	10	11	10
National centre for rehabilitation of child centre's	36	25	20	12	6
Instructional rehabilitation	53	0.50	27	0.49	19

Source: Mahbul Haq Centre for Human Development, 2006 Report.

Table 3. Current NRSP areas in Thatta and Badin

District	Tehsil / Taluka	Field Unit
Badin	* Badin	Badin
	* Golarchi	Golarchi
	Tando bago	Tando Bago
	Talhar	Talhar
	Matli	Matli
Thatta	Thatta	Thatta
	Sajawal	Sajawal
	Mirpur Bathro	Mirpur Bathro
	*Mirpur Satro	Mirpur Satro

Source: NRSP records

* Project areas

Table 4. NRSP Community Physical infrastructure in Thatta and Badin as of 31 August 2006

	Badin	Thatta	Total
Completed projects	322	111	433
Total cost in (Rs. Million)	84,337	14.29	98.647
Donor share	60.936	11.326	72.26
Community share	23.421	2.964	26.36

Source: NRSP records

Table 5. Achievements recorded

S.No.	Activities	Achievement to date
1	Small flocks of goats	4180
2	Fuel efficient stores	4187
3	Bair fruit trees	119,040
4	Fodder trees	132,550
5	Rainwater tanks	3496
6	Embroidery	1356

Source: Participatory Village Development Program Sindh. Annual Report 2007 Page 8

Table 6. Achievements

S.No.	Activities	Achievement to date
1	Skill enhancement training	31
2	Handicraft marketing skills	13
3	Embroidery support to women	1356
4	No of sewing machines provided	73

Source: Participatory Village Development Program Sindh. Annual Report 2007 Page 20