



# BALUCHISTAN RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMME



## RSPN STAFF ORIENTATION WORKSHOP REPORT ISLAMABAD 21<sup>ST</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2017

IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS FOR BRDCEP GRANT COMPONENT



PROGRAMME TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PARTNER





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## BALUCHISTAN RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMME

Recognising the plight of the rural poor and the poor performance of the public sector in the province of Balochistan, the European Union (EU) and Islamic Republic of Pakistan have signed a Financing Agreement in June 2016 to support the Balochistan Rural Development & Community Empowerment Programme (BRDCEP). The aim of this programme is to enable the Government of Balochistan to reduce economic deprivation, poverty, social inequality, environmental degradation and climate change impacts, by building empowered and resilient communities who participate actively in socio-economic development activities in partnership with local authorities, on a sustainable basis.

BRDCEP is supported by the European Union (EU) and being implemented in close collaboration with the Local Government and Rural Development (LG&RDD) Department of the Government of Balochistan (GoB). BRDCEP, a five year EU-funded rural development programme, is launched, with three implementing partners of grant component namely: RSPN, NRSP and BRSP in 249 Union Councils of eight districts of Balochistan. These districts are: Jhal Magsi, Kech/Turbat, Khuzdar, Killa Abdullah, Loralai, Pishin, Washuk, and Zhob. Programme implementation has commenced from June 2017. The EU has also engaged the services of Human Dynamics, an Austrian company, to enable the Government of Balochistan to foster an enabling environment for strengthening the capacities of local authorities to manage and involve communities in the statutory local public sector planning, financing and implementation processes. The Programme also has a Public Finance Management (PFM) component which will work closely with Human Dynamics to assist the Government of Balochistan in costing and funding the community-led development policy framework through clearly defined fiscal and regulatory frameworks, budgetary processes and commitments reflected in a multi-annual budgetary framework and defined institutional arrangements.

The overall objective of BRDCEP is to support the Government of Balochistan (GoB) in reducing the negative impact of economic deprivation, poverty and social inequality, environmental degradation and climate change, and to turn this into opportunities to build and empower resilient communities participating actively in identifying and implementing socio-economic development activities on a sustainable basis in partnership with local authorities. The BRDCEP specific objectives are:

1. To empower citizens and communities and provide them with means enabling them to implement community-driven socio-economic development interventions, an increased voice and capability to influence public policy decision making through active engagement with local authorities for quality, inclusive, and equitable service delivery, and civic-oversight; and
2. To foster an enabling environment for strengthening the capacities of local authorities to manage and involve communities in the statutory processes of the local public sector planning, financing and implementation process.

The overall objective of the RSPN component in the BRDCEP is to support the BRDCEP's implementing partners (BRSP & NRSP) and EU TA to enable the Government of Balochistan in reducing economic deprivation, poverty and social inequality, environmental degradation and climate change by building empowered and resilient communities who participate actively in socio-economic development activities in partnership with local authorities on a sustainable basis.

The corresponding, specific objective of the RSPN component is to strengthen the technical and institutional capacities of BRSP and NRSP and provide support and evidence to the EU TA in order to effectively support the Government of Balochistan in its objective of improving public service delivery.

## STAFF ORIENTATION WORKSHOP

A one-day BRDCEP staff orientation workshop was held on 21<sup>st</sup> September, 2017 at the IRM Hall, Islamabad. The main aim of the workshop was to orient the newly hired BRDCEP team on the programme, RSPN policies and procedures and specifically EU regulations. It was attended by BRDCEP and Sindh Union Council and Community Economic Strengthening Support (Success) Programme teams and RSPN core staff along with NRSP staff. The agenda of the workshop is attached as Annex 1.

## INAUGURAL OF STAFF ORIENTATION WORKSHOP

Mr. Khaleel Ahmed Tetlay (Chief Operating Officer, RSPN) welcomed and addressed the newly hired BRDCEP staff. He informed that BRDCEP is a strategic tool to meet the set objectives under the programme.



He further said that to achieve this the assurance of quality in implementation is vital. He also accentuated that monitoring and evaluation together with research will assist in generating robust evidence that will be encapsulated into policy and advocacy. More specifically, Mr. Khaleel Ahmed Tetlay added that the BRDCEP aims to empower citizens and communities and provide them with means to influence and implement community-driven socio-economic development, with an increased voice and capacity to influence

public policy decision making through active engagement with local authorities. Simultaneously, the programme aims to foster an enabling environment to strengthen the capacity of local authorities and to involve the communities in statutory processes which includes local public sector planning, financing and implementation of public sector services. By strengthening both the communities and local authorities, the BRDCEP aims to build upon this nexus and promote inclusive, equitable and quality service delivery with civic oversight in the province of Balochistan.

## WELCOME REMARKS

Ms. Shandana Khan (CEO, RSPN) hailed the BRDCEP staff. She said that she was hopeful that this team will contribute effectively. She pinned down three-pointers for BRDCEP staff that are as follows.

1. BRDCEP should not “reinvent the wheel”.
2. It is highly important to establish strong linkage and synergies with EU TA. The BRDCEP team should mainly concentrate



on what can be done in order to influence the policy of the Government of Balochistan through BRDCEP.

3. Also, it is crucial to remember that the BRDCEP emphasis on gender particularly women empowerment.

### VIDEO DOCUMENTARY ON RSPN

Then a documentary was showcased. In it, Mr. Shoaib Sultan Khan (Chairman, RSPN) said at the SAARC Summit in 1993 held at Dhaka that Social Mobilisation, namely fostering institutions of the rural people, should be the centerpiece for all poverty reduction strategies of SAARC states. This can be achieved by setting up independent and autonomous support organizations to mobilise rural poor men and women. He shared that the approach of RSPs centers around a three-tiered model that include community organisations, village organisations and local support organisations. He further added that social mobilization is a holistic approach and cited examples from Pakistan and India to showcase the impact that social mobilization can have.

### PRESENTATION ON OVERVIEW OF BRDCEP

After the tea break, Mr. Ahmed Ullah (Programme Manager BRDCEP, RSPN) presented the overview of BRDCEP. He gave details about the context of Balochistan and reported that although it is the largest



province in the country, it has lowest socioeconomic indicators. The factors attributable for it comprises of security issues; patriarchal society; political instability; etc. He then moved toward the introduction of the BRDCEP and shared that it is five years CDD project that has social mobilization; cross cutting themes such as gender and social accountability; and evidence as its strategic focus. BRSP and NRSP will be responsible for implementation; whereas, RSPN will provide the facilitation in the standardization of tools, manuals and institutional strengthening. The

research component under BRDCEP also lies with RSPN. During the presentation; the expected outputs and results were set forth and the risks/challenges (such as security issues; etc.) associated with BRDCEP and how they can be mitigated were also discussed.

### ORIENTATION ON HR POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Mr. Muhammad Jawad Khan (Manager HR and Administration) presented the HR Policies and Procedures. It was more than an hour-long, but quite interactive session.



He told that CEO is responsible for the execution of this policy with the approval of BODs. In the absence of the CEO, the COO is responsible and in case he/she is not present the responsibility is deemed to the nominee. Any policy that conflicts with labor laws is cast-off.

The rules of employment were discussed at length and it was made crystal clear that RSPN has zero tolerance on financial fraud and harassment cases. The employment procedure of hiring staff as well as the transfer and relocation procedures were expounded. Mr. Jawad Khan also explained the types of leaves permissible, and procedure of leave attainment. He also talked about the grievance redress procedure.

## ORIENTATION ON ADMINISTRATION AND PROCUREMENT PROCEDURES

This session was followed by a session on the Procurement Procedures of RSPN. Mr. Ali Akbar Qureshi



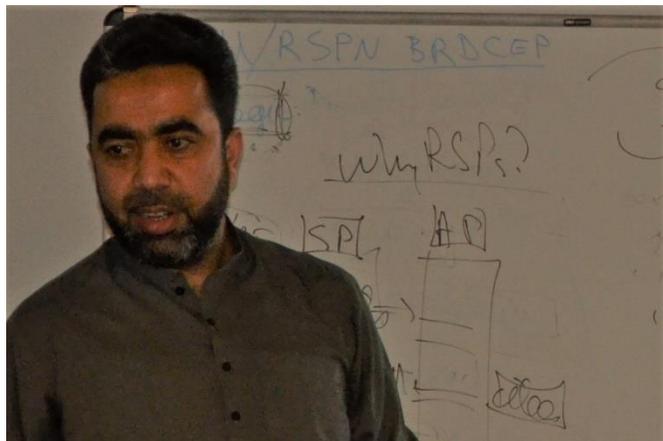
(Programme Officer Administration and Procurement, RSPN) shared that there is a separate manual on this. The manual serves as a guide for unswerving procurement procedures for goods, works or services that facilitates in flattening the operations of RSPN providing management with timely information for control and decision making. In view of that, the policies and processes delineated in various sections of the manual provide guidance and safeguards adherence to the policies and procedures of Companies Ordinance 1984, Public Procurement Regulatory Authority

(PPRA) rules and applicable laws and rules.

Then Mr. Asad Ali Hashmi (Chief Financial Officer/ Company Secretary, RSPN) outlined the procurement related code of ethics that take account of a conflict of interest; competition; best value for money; etc and also explained the composition of RSPN's Procurement Committee. He explained that in case the procurement is up to PKR 25000 the single quotation is used and if above then three quotations and so on. He also explicated the procurement phase that is breakdown into four major categories i.e.,

- (i) Need assessment phase;
- (ii) Pre-procurement phase;
- (iii) Procurement phase; and
- (iv) Post procurement phase.

He also articulated about the types of procurement; pre-qualification of suppliers; approving authorities and tender process. In addition; hiring of consultants and termination of contracts were also explained.



## ORIENTATION ON RSPN FINANCIAL PROCEDURES AND COMPLIANCE GUIDELINES

Mr. Asad Ali Hashmi explained the RSPN financial management policies. He started off with a concise intro of RSPN and its financial control environment and procedures. He also informed about RSPN's accounting and reporting as well as external and internal Audit and Compliance Review procedures. Mr. Asad Ali Hashmi then moved to BRDCEP and EU's financial management and compliance requisites.



He explained the various parts of grant contract done with the EU. Moreover, the cost eligibility criteria were explained and it was informed what falls under direct, indirect and ineligible costs. The reporting requirements and deadlines were delineated along with reporting currency and rules for currency conversion. Regarding amendment; it was explicitly expressed that “An amendment shall not have the effect of making changes to the Contract that would call into question the grant award decision or be contrary to the equal treatment

of applicants.” Also, most importantly, “the final report shall in all cases include a detailed breakdown of expenditure covering the whole Action.”

## VIDEO DOCUMENTARY FROM SINDH UNION COUNCIL AND COMMUNITY ECONOMIC STRENGTHENING SUPPORT (SUCCESS) PROGRAMME

Subsequent to the lunch break, an introductory documentary of SUCCESS programme was televised. It showed that SUCCESS approach was centered on social mobilisation and how organising communities into COs, VO and LSOs can help people unleash their potential and uplift their socioeconomic status. It also showcased what the expected results of SUCCESS are.

## DISCUSSION ON KEY LESSONS/BEST PRACTICES FROM SUCCESS AND WAY FORWARD FOR BRDCEP

After this, Mr. Fazal Ali Saadi (Programme Manager SUCCESS) briefly introduced the SUCCESS. SUCCESS is a six-year long (2015-2021) programme funded by the European Union (EU) and implemented by Rural Support Programmes Network (RSPN), National Rural Support Programme (NRSP), Sindh Rural Support Organisation (SRSO) and Thardeep Rural Development Programme (TRDP) in eight districts of Sindh, namely: Kambar Shahdaskot, Larkana, Dadu, Jamshoro, Matiari, Sujawal, Tando Allahyar and Tando Muhammad Khan. The SUCCESS Programme aims to enable the Government of Sindh from 2018 to support and sustain local Community Driven Development (CDD) initiatives throughout the province, through the provincial budget, based on a dedicated and



costed policy in partnership with community institutions fostered by RSPs. The specific objective is to stimulate local CDD initiatives to reduce poverty in eight poor rural districts of Sindh, paying particular attention to empowering women. The SUCCESS Programme will lead to increased and diversified sources of income for the targeted communities and households.

He then conversed about the lessons learned from SUCCESS implementation till date. He also demarcated the following key differences between SUCCESS and BRDCE programmes:

- SUCCESS catered women; whereas, BRDCEP focus is on both men and women;
- With respect to policy, BRDCEP appears to be more realistic than SUCCESS;
- The research component of BRDCEP is also different than SUCCESS. In case of BRDCEP, the research will be more prone towards evidence action research that can be translated into evidence-based policy research and will focus more on eliciting the qualitative data from the beneficiaries.

Mr.Fazal Ali Saadi shared the following lessons learned:

- Poverty Score Card
  - As it is the foundation of the programme, the selection of households and data quality is critical;
  - GIS coordinates for monitoring is effective;
  - Door-to-door visits proved to be significant;
  - Regular real time data smooths out the data flow and enhances the quality;
  - Enumerators ranking showed to be useful.

The major lesson was that the context of the province should be taken into consideration.
- The backing of the local government and line departments plays a pivotal role in programme implementation.
- A conjoint dashboard displaying the progress of all partners makes healthy competition amongst the partners.

Fazal also reported some challenges faced that included:

- Some of the banks are reluctant to open bank accounts of CIs that resulted in delays of implementing SUCCESS Programme interventions.
- Despite the presence of the local government in the districts, a lack in financial and human resources poses as a challenge to develop the necessary linkages with the people's institutions. However, the GoS is working on a Provincial Finance Commission Award, which may help resolve this challenge.

## ANNEX 1- AGENDA

### AGENDA Orientation Workshop for BRDCEP Staff September 21, 2017

**Venue:** Institute of Rural Management (IRM) Hall, Islamabad

**Time:** 10:00 AM – 03:30 PM

**Participants:** List Attached

**Objective:** To orient the newly hired BRDCEP team on programme, RSPN policies and procedures and EU regulations

Thursday, September 21, 2017		
Timeline	Activities	Lead
10:00 AM	Recitation from the Holy Quran Round of Introductions	One of the Participants All Participants
10:15 AM	Welcome Remarks and Introduction of RSPN	Shandana Khan, Chief Executive Officer, RSPN
10:30 AM	Remarks by EU Representative	Arshad Rashid, Development Advisor to EU Pakistan
10:45 AM	Video Documentaries on RSPN	Zara Jamil, Communication Officer-BRDCEP, RSPN
11:00 AM	Tea Break	
11:15 AM	Presentation on Overview of BRDCEP	Ahmed Ullah, Programme Manager-BRDCEP, RSPN
11:45 AM	Orientation on HR Policies and Procedures	Muhammad Jawad Khan, Manager HR and Administration, RSPN
12:15 PM	Orientation on Administration and Procurement Procedures	Ali Akbar Qureshi, Programme Officer Administration and Procurement, RSPN
12:45 PM	Orientation on RSPN Financial Procedures and Compliance Guidelines	Assad Ali Hashmi, Chief Financial Officer/Company Secretary, RSPN
01:15 PM	Lunch	
02:15 PM	Orientation on EU Compliance Guidelines	Bader UI Islam Siddiqui, Manager Compliance, RSPN
02:45 PM	Video Documentaries from Sindh Union Council and Community Economic Strengthening Support (SUCCESS) Programme	Zara Jamil, Communication Officer- BRDCEP, RSPN
03:00 PM	Discussion on Key Lessons/Best Practices from SUCCESS and Way Forward for BRDCEP	Fazal Ali Saadi, Programme Manager SUCCESS, RSPN Ahmed Ullah, Programme Manager BRDCEP, RSPN
03:30 PM	Closing Remarks	Khaleel Ahmed Tetlay, Chief Operating Officer, RSPN

\*Note taker: Mawish Iqbal, Documentation and Reporting Officer - BRDCEP, RSPN