



Policy Brief

# Social Mobilisation Based Pathways of Development

Dr. Muhammad Saleem  
Dr. Haroon Sarwar  
Ghulam Shabbir  
Fatima Shafqat



momentum

# INTRODUCTION

Poverty reduction and ensuring participatory development has always been challenging for policy makers particularly in communities like that of Balochistan, where there are multiple challenges across every facet of socio-economic infrastructure.

Poverty is a multidimensional phenomenon which needs to be handled through holistic and integrated approaches. Some of the poverty imperatives are tangible while others are intangible. In the intangible landscape of poverty factors people's potential, their beliefs, their social organisation and

mutual integration for socio-economic challenges of their areas plays a key role.

This policy brief takes a view of poverty and socio-economic development from the perspective of harnessing people's potential, their social mobilisation and social organisation, based on the findings of the research titled as "Participatory Action Research on Dynamics of Household Poverty and Inclusive Development in Balochistan with a Focus on Women's Empowerment Under European Union (EU) Funded, BRACE Programme".

Before the policy options, let us examine the core findings of the research in the domain of social mobilisation and inclusive development.

## KEY FINDINGS OF THE RESEARCH IN AREA OF SOCIAL MOBILISATION AND INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT

Government service delivery is very weak in the areas of education, literacy, skill development, health, agriculture, water, disaster management, sanitation, etc. One key reason for the weaker service delivery of the government is non-inclusive policies and development programmes. The situation gets even more concerning, when a huge proportion of the masses is illiterate, and they are not aware of their potential as well as their rights. Furthermore, local bodies are not functioning. In this scenario, there is no visible co-ordination between general public or public representatives and the government departments at local levels (i.e. union council, tehsil and district), except in the BRACE Programme districts where Joint District Development Committees have been setup under the Deputy Commissioners.

It is a significant research finding that social mobilisation can bridge the gap between communities and local government institutions. This improved co-ordination between general public, its representatives and government departments can be used as a lever for improving the government service delivery. Social mobilisation can empower communities to get

involved in the local development initiatives vis-à-vis local government officials.

The research has also indicated that social mobilisation can empower women at all levels. Social mobilisation has the potential to eradicate the stigmatic connotations found in our social and culture fabric for participation of women in various household level economic activities and socialisation related events. Improved women participation and awareness (through social mobilisation) can support the women folk in many ways right away from improving their general awareness to ensure their involvement in income generation activities.

Social mobilisation improves the social capital within a community at all levels. The organised community groups through Community, Village or Local Support Organisations, can initiate social capital formation process. The social capital can be translated into many pathways of development like improved access to capital/ credit, skill attainment, increasing participation of various deprived community members in livelihood enhancement activities, etc. According to the research, this enhanced social capital can

also lead to initiation and improvement in bottom up planning of local schemes and programmes. Similarly, it positively impacts the on-going implementation and effective monitoring of the such programmes through the involvement

of community. Hence social mobilisation is a significant strategy for inclusive development. Overall pathways of social mobilisation based individual and community development are given in the following figure.

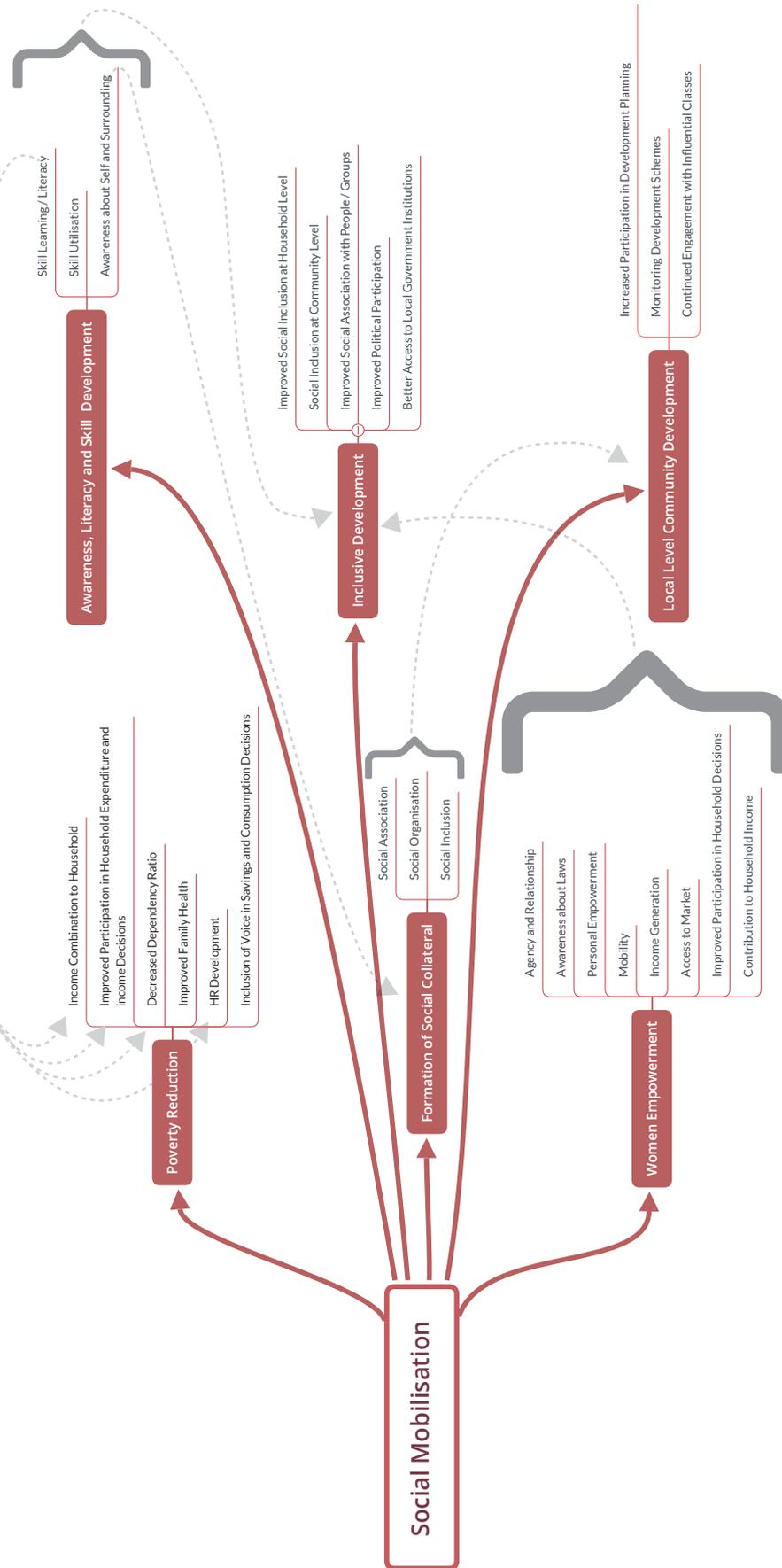


Figure 1: Social Mobilisation Mind Map

# POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Balochistan has tremendous potential for the advent of inclusive development and growth. The first and foremost logical start point towards this journey is the initiation of consistent, conducive and inclusive policies for all the sectors, i.e. rural development, education, health, employment, agriculture, livestock, mining, etc.

Inclusive policies for local level development call for a combined social action which is driven by the community. Therefore, bottom up approach becomes a necessity for every type of development programme design and its flawless implementation. Since social mobilisation provides pathways to participation of organised and aware communities in the process of bottom planning and joint monitoring of development schemes, therefore social mobilisation should be adopted as a centric strategy for all the local governance related initiatives and community development programmes. Social mobilisation should be used as a fundamental lever for enabling the all segments of the people to participate in the socio-economic change and improvement process.

Social mobilisation as a strategy can contribute to improve women's own perceptions about their role in community development, as well as contributing to change the mind-set of local influencers so that more space is provided to women to be involved in the development process. Activities for women, e.g. mobilisation, organisation, skills programme, literacy, access to capital for income generating programmes, awareness raising about crosscutting issues, etc., have to be initiated through Community

Organisations, Village Organisations and Local Support Organisations in culturally sensitive manner. Already there are emerging cases of women accessing various inputs from the BRACE Programme and beginning to contribute to improve their own condition as well as that of their families and communities.

All public service providers can improve their outreach by engaging with the community institutions. Social mobilisation should be viewed as an integral pillar for all the government schemes and programmes (planned at provincial and local level) by the policy makers and planners. Social mobilisation should be introduced as an essential skill for all the government officials and there should be a specific training designed for all the government officials handling public sector services. The Balochistan Rural Development Academy is well placed to play this role.

Keeping in view the above given social mobilisation policy measures, the state of demand for better public sector service delivery will improve from the local communities. The element of co-ordination between service delivery departments and community members/ organisations will improve the overall state of local governance. Community driven ownership will ensure bottom up planning. Increased focus by the government on social mobilisation-based development programmes will guarantee community ownership, hence contribute to successful outcomes.

Prepared by:

Momentum Ventures Pvt Ltd.

info@mv.com.pk

momentum 