

Strengthening PRS Monitoring Project

The Finance Division, Government of Pakistan with technical and financial support of UNDP Pakistan and Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) has initiated the Strengthening PRS Monitoring Project (2008-2012). The aim of the project is to strengthen institutional capacities for results-based monitoring and evaluation of poverty reduction strategies at Federal and Provincial levels.

Project Outputs

The project has the following three outputs:

- Improvement in quality, collection, analysis and Management of PRSP data at national and province levels for effective tracking of PRSP targets.
- Review public spending and allocations in pro - poor sectors and analyze through a gender lens to better understand the contribution and needs of men and women.
- National engagement in PRSP monitoring mobilized through participatory processes.

Implementation Arrangements

The project is implemented by the Ministry of Finance, Government of Pakistan and, Provincial Planning & Development Departments. For this purpose a federal Project Management Unit (PMU) has been established in the Ministry of Finance while one provincial PMU is located in the Planning & Development Department, Government of Punjab. Similar provincial PMUs will be created in all the other provinces.

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FORMULATION OF POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY PAPER (PRSP) - II

FINAL ROUND OF CONSULTATIONS
by PRSP Secretariat



Government of Pakistan
Finance Division
Strengthening PRS Monitoring Project



Final Round of Consultations for Finalization of Draft PRSP-II:

Embodied in the PRSP framework is the expectation that participation by national stakeholders and international development partners in developing and implementing the poverty reduction strategies will, firstly, deliver a sense of broad-based ownership, not only by the government but also by civil and political society at large. Translating these expectations into operational recommendations, the PRSP framework advocates participation of the poor in poverty analysis; prioritization of public actions to be addressed in the strategy, and monitoring government's delivery of the commitments made. Recognizing that the participation of various stakeholders in the PRSP process needs to be further bolstered for the strategy to become more effective, consultations to finalize draft Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP)-II were held at three levels during November - December, 2008 including (a) Consultations with the national stakeholder; (b) Consultations with the international development partners; and (c) Consultations with the parliamentarians.

NATIONAL WORKSHOP FOR SHARING DRAFT PRSP-II:

BUILDING CONSENSUS

To deepen the sense of local ownership of the PRSP process, and to institutionalize participation of national stakeholders including government ministries/departments, academia, civil society, youth and the poor communities, a Workshop for sharing the draft PRSP-II was held on November 14th, 2008 at National Library Auditorium, Islamabad.



The workshop attracted participants from a wide variety of national stakeholders including policy makers, academia, representatives of non-governmental organizations, students and researchers. The session started with an opening address by the Finance Secretary dilating the importance of consultations and objectives of the workshop.

Minister of State for Finance and Economic Affairs, Ms. Hina Rabbani Khar in her keynote address, impressed upon the audience the government's resolve of sustained efforts towards reducing poverty. In the presentation that followed, highlights of draft PRSP-II were presented to the participants.



To build the discussions on locus of initiatives, intellectual conviction and public support from all stakeholders, the participants were divided into three breakout Groups based on various pillars of the draft poverty reduction strategy and their sectoral inter linkages. The detail of the Groups is as follows:

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|------------|---|---|
| Group I: | Pillar II:
Pillar VIII:
Pillar IX: | Protecting the Poor & the Vulnerable
Capital and Finance for Development
Governance for a Just & Fair System |
| Group II: | Pillar III:
Pillar IV:
Pillar V:
Pillar VII: | Increasing Productivity and Value addition in Agriculture
Integrated Energy Development Programme
Making Industry Internationally Competitiveness
Removing Infrastructure Bottlenecks through Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) |
| Group III: | Pillar VI: | Human Development for the 21st Century: Education, Health, Access to Clean Drinking Water & Sanitation, Population Programme and Women Empowerment |



The participants in their respective Groups deliberated on the draft PRSP-II and analyzed the document from different perspectives under the guidance of experienced facilitators. The officials from line ministries and provincial departments examined the text in view of their previous contributions regarding sectoral policies, proposed interventions and targets given for PRSP-II period (2008/09-2010/11). They also verified the data and identified sources given in the document for effective monitoring and evaluation of the PRSP's output and outcome indicators. The participants also scrutinized the document for missing policy interventions, errors and omissions. Their recommendations were carefully recorded and presented in the plenary session of the workshop.

The invitees endorsed the efforts of the government in formulating a comprehensive strategic thrust to tackle the menace of poverty in a way that commanded broader support of all stakeholders through a comprehensive consultative process.

Civil Society as an irreplaceable key partner in sustainable development and its participation in policy making not only enhances efficiency in implementation, but also contributes to the creation of more effective initiatives for the reduction of poverty. Representatives from Civil Society actively participated in the deliberations and identified policy interventions specifically for human development sector.

**WORKSHOP TO SHARE
PRSP-II WITH THE INTERNATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS:
STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS**

The global consensus on the importance of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) brings the discussion of poverty reduction strategies to the centre stage of the international development efforts. The international development partners not only play a key role in sustained efforts for poverty reduction as outlined in their specific country assistance plans but also provide guidance in the light of their international experiences in undertaking development towards poverty reduction. It is imperative that development strategies and programmes of our development partners are aligned with the PRSP-II for a concerted attack on poverty.



In order to secure development gains and progress in our collective efforts for poverty reduction, a consultative workshop to share the draft PRSP-II with the International Development Partners was organized on November 19th, 2008 at the Finance Division, Islamabad.

This full day workshop was attended by a large number of representatives of the international development community including the World Bank, IMF, ADB, EU, USAID, DFID, UNDP, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNESCO, UNICEF, UNIDO, UN World Food Programme, WHO, JICA, CIDA, SDC, FAO, etc. Officials from line ministries and provincial departments were also present.

The session was chaired by Mr. Shoukat Tareen, Advisor to Prime Minister on Finance, Economic Affairs, Statistics and Revenue. In his keynote address, the advisor apprised the participants on the structure of PRSP-II based on the 9-point agenda of the government. He stressed the need to launch a multi-faceted attack on poverty while maintaining sustainable levels of economic growth. He also stressed the importance of sectoral strategies including agriculture, manufacturing and financial sector and their implication for poverty reduction.

The Finance Secretary dilated upon the formulation process of PRSP-II, followed by a presentation on the draft PRSP-II by the Joint Secretary (External Finance Policy).



After inaugural session, invites broke out into three Groups for a focused discussion on various aspects of the draft Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP)-II.

The contents under discussion of the groups remained the same as in the previous Workshop for Sharing Draft PRSP-II with the national stakeholders. The participants, assisted by a facilitator in their respective Groups, deliberated on the various pillars of PRSP-II and synthesized their comments and suggestions, which were then presented in the plenary session of the workshop.

The international community lauded the efforts of the government in formulating a comprehensive strategy for poverty reduction and assured their support to carry out the initiatives as enlisted in PRSP-II according to their priority sectors. The Ministry of Finance appreciated the role of the international community in Pakistan's development efforts and underscored the need for their continued support in regaining the path of sustainable economic development and poverty reduction.

CONSULTATIVE WORKSHOP TO SHARE PRSP-II WITH THE PARLIAMENTARIANS:

ENSURING OWNERSHIP, FACILITATING IMPLEMENTATIONS

Involving the elected representatives of the people in the consultative process of poverty-reduction is not only necessary for the sustainability of the process, but parliamentary oversight of the PRSP can ensure the much needed long-term ownership of the strategies and generate the support necessary to sustain reforms. The Parliament through its representative function is an institution where the voices and preferences of the public, particularly of poor people, can be heard and translated into policy actions. Parliamentarians' outreach to their constituencies on issues of PRSP is, therefore, particularly relevant in this context.



Greater parliamentary involvement in the poverty reduction process helps to ensure that a country's poverty reduction strategy is generated, implemented and evaluated through national institutions with adequate political legitimacy to ensure ownership and sustainability. Parliamentarians also have a significant role to play in influencing the government's poverty alleviation programmes through the budgetary process.

To institutionalize the role of Parliamentarians in formulation of PRSP-II, a consultative Workshop to share the draft PRSP-II was held on December 4th, 2008 in P-Block Auditorium, Pakistan Secretariat, Islamabad.

The Members National Assembly (MNAs) and Senators representing different parties graced the occasion. Mr. Faisal Kareem Kundi, Deputy Speaker National Assembly, chaired the workshop.

Mr. Shoukat Tareen, Advisor to Prime Minister on Finance, Economic Affairs, Statistics and Revenue, briefed the Parliamentarians on the poverty reduction strategy as outlined in the draft PRSP-II.



Ms. Hina Rabbani Khar, Minister of State for Finance and Economic Affairs, dilated upon the crucial role of Parliamentarians in empowering and enabling the poor while, utilizing Parliamentary oversight to ensure implementation. She stressed the need for working together to ensure faster growth and prosperity, with equity and justice to the people.



During discussion, the Parliamentarians stressed the important role legislature plays in guiding government policies in general, and of the budget process in particular, for ensuring that government effectively works toward poverty reduction. They unanimously maintained that agriculture is an engine of growth that needs to be specially highlighted in the strategy for poverty reduction.

They also impressed all line ministries to focus on key areas of human development while giving utmost importance to education, health and access to clean drinking water for the marginalized strata of the society. They praised government's efforts in providing the poor, relief in the form of Benazir Income Support Programme in the face of spiraling inflation. The Parliamentarians overwhelmingly supported government's efforts to improve governance and institutional development. They were of the view that by securing accountability and good governance in the administration and management of pro poor activities and programmes, we can effectively continue our crusade against poverty.



Sustained and meaningful public consultations in formulating, implementing and monitoring the PRSP are essential. The final round of consultations for PRSP-II strengthened the overall consultative process and proved very effective in gaining broad-based support of all the key stakeholders including line ministries, provincial departments, academia, civil society, youth, poor communities, parliamentarians, and international development partners. The PRSP-II consultations proved successful in building a national consensus on how best to tackle the problems of poverty and gain domestic support for reforms and also offer the basis for a coordinated approach by external development partners while providing a way to channel their assistance where it is most needed. We believe that the current PRSP-II presented a special opportunity to build real ownership of the strategy through participation.

PRSP Secretariat

The Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) Secretariat housed in the Ministry of Finance was established in 2000 to prepare a holistic anti-poverty strategy for Pakistan. The Secretariat has been mandated with the overall lead in coordinating, monitoring, evaluating and tracking the implementation of social indicators originally identified in the Interim-PRSP (I-PRSP). Reporting progress on anti-poverty public expenditures, intermediate social indicators and final outcomes as devised under the results-based Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework of PRSP also constitutes an important function of the Secretariat. The government has extended the practice of tracking expenditures to include all anti-poverty public outlays, budgetary expenditures as well as non-budgetary social safety transfers. Progress reports generated by the Secretariat are regularly posted on Finance Division's website. Through this exercise, the government seeks to improve the allocative efficiency of scarce public resources and redirect them to the poor.

