

## Understanding The Process Of Development Budget Allocation In Balochistan

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Article Info	Abstract
<p><b>Article History</b></p> <p>Received: October 02 , 2022</p> <p>Accepted: January 03 , 2023</p> <hr/> <p><b>Keywords :</b> Development, Budget, stakeholders, Balochistan</p> <p><b>DOI:</b> 10.5281/zenodo.7501992</p>	<p><i>This paper aims to understand the process of development budget allocation in Balochistan through qualitative. The existing procedure employed for allocations may be labelled as incremental. Allocations in most departments is done without participation of key stakeholders. There is a massive gap what certain districts get and what they really need. For purpose of data collection ten districts of Balochistan are designated with help of the multiple poverty index (MPI). Interview methods is used to understand how people perceive the process of development budget allocation in these ten districts. The data finding indicates that there is lack of monitoring and evaluation. The process of allocation is non participatory at two different levels. First, the role of public is missing from the process their needs are neither assessed no addressed. Secondly, the main stakeholders such as the districts officers or member of parliament are ignored. The most serious issues of development budget allocation in Balochistan are lack of transparency and accountability.</i></p>

### Introduction

Balochistan is the least developed part of Pakistan, the social indicators in the province are very low. Since the inception of country development issues in Balochistan has always been a serious political concern. Being the largest province of Pakistan, it covers almost half of the area of the country. The scattered population and poverty make it complex for government to bring in sustainable development in the area. Due to these conditions the investment prospectus in Balochistan is very bleak and one of the main sources of earning for people is Public Sector Development Program (PSDP). However, allocations to this development program have never been efficient enough to translate into any meaningful development for people of Balochistan. This paper aims to understand the process of development budget allocation in Balochistan through qualitative research.

### Literature Review

This discussion starts with the case of Botswana a developing nation in Africa. Botswana like Pakistan have experienced economic growth coupled with poverty and acute inequalities. Sechele (2016) while discussing Lipton's theory of urban bias arrests that while allocating resources more preference is given to urban development that results in acute inequalities and chronic poverty. Sechele (2016) while further discussing the conception of development claims that such strategies must be guided by objectives of dipping social inequalities and to promote higher distributive justice in process of allocation. Further discussing the experiences and challenges of another developing country in 2018, Mohamed presented the case of Kenya. He assesses the success of devolution in the country after the implementation of new constitution in 2010. He argues that success of devolution is fundamentally related with adequate resource allocation that must help the government in performing their duties more efficiently compare to previous years. The case of Kenya can be related with the 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment of Pakistan when power was transferred to provinces. Mohamed (2018) argues how separation of powers occur will allocating resources. The government can bank on public choice theory, or the invisible hand theory can be in play. Contrary to that the government can also use direct democracy for allocation or they can design a risk-based allocation system. The following section discusses different development budget allocation methods that are being practiced across the world.

### Development budget allocation across world

Different governments across the world uses different means for development budget allocation and this section briefly discusses few of them to create a prespective for analysis and discussion.

### Incremental allocation

Incremental allocation would take into consideration pervious year figures and would add or subtract a portion to determine current allocations (Talukdar, 2020). It is a very simple and upfront method which makes it a favourite for many governments in developing world. Hasyim et al., (2020) discussing the experience of Indonesia argue that in order to reduce poverty level we have to consider the role of development budget allocation in health and education. They argue that while spending on health and education of public we are improving the quality of human resource that will impact poverty alleviation. However, if such allocations are

practiced without improvements, then there will be no sustainable development. Inadequacies in this method let the academics to discover improved methods for budget allocation. In coming years, the scholars turned their attention towards needs rather than on numbers for allocations such as allocation based on needs.

#### **Need based development budget allocation**

In England, the majority of the budget is allocated according to the public's need and adjusted along the pace of change. Weighted capitation formulas are set by independent technical experts by calculating allocation for each zone. Apart from these political decisions are based on the fact that how well people's issues will be addressed through them. Countries like Netherland, Sweden, Germany uses the more advanced version of such methods for need based allocation (Nagy, 2015).

The Resource Allocation Working Party (RAWP) in 1976, proposed this concept to address the different needs of the country, and to correct inequality and methods of distribution of funding. This model's main objective is "to secure equal opportunity of access to healthcare for people at equal risk" (Buck & Dixon, 2013). While further explaining the process Bedard et al., (2000) indicate that in this method resources are allocated on the basis of programs or reasons as per their population, adjusted for age, other relative needs and gender composition. In most developed countries, resource allocation is done by using the method of Risk-Adjusted Capitation method. The reason for using the method of risk-adjusted capitation is to make sure society's needs are well addressed, well served on basis of equity.

McIntyre et al., (2007), argue that one key factor that facilitates equitable allocation is the clear policy in terms of equity and redistribution. The development of a medium-term expenditure framework (MTEF), which is practiced in countries like South Africa and Namibia, helps in redistribution of resources based on needs of public. On the other hand, countries like Zambia, Multi-donor and bilateral donor agencies also can facilitate the government in resource allocation. Zambia, uses Sector Wide Approach Program (SWAP), where donor take part in the allocation and support need-based resource allocation and encourage its implementation. There are factors that affect the implementation of equitable budget resource allocations. That includes, lack of senior staff at the national level, lack of support staff to do the clear equity-based analysis. Furthermore, an obstacle in some countries is the absence of explicit annual allocation targets. Similarly, there is a lack of information in order to monitor allocation progress (McIntyre et al., 2007).

Formula based need allocation has been the primary method for devolving health system finances in high-income countries. A 'capitation' method is typically used relies on estimates of the characteristics and size of local population that are attuned for risk factors such as disease and poverty levels; however, the degree of complexity used varies significantly between countries (McGuire et al., 2020)

This method is prevalent in number of nations, but many countries would still look for more independent conducts for development budget allocations. Instead of formulas, ground realities are considered for development budget allocations through participation of all stakeholders.

#### **Participatory development budget allocation**

Existing literature on budgeting and resource allocation provides evidence that the implementation and success of participatory budgeting depends on strong support from the government's chief executive (Melgar, 2014). Relationships between factors including economic and political settings and organizations working for civil society are also critical (Sintomer et al., 2012). Franklin et al., (2013) claim that participatory budgeting has been found in some cases to result in increased participation by those in lower socioeconomic groups and more resources have been allocated to previously neglected areas. In addition, scholars have developed model of budget participation which focus on goals based on values of democracy (Franklin & Ebdon, 2020). Like, Ebdon and Franklin (2006) identified seven outcomes that governments need to look for: education participation, reduce cynicism, gaining support for budget proposal, gathering input for making decisions, change in resource allocation, building trust and creating value for the community. Similarly, Fung's (2006) presents his work "Democracy Cube" presenting three key dimensions of participating budgeting, which can lead to effective governance, justice and legitimacy: citizen role of authority, communication, selection and decision-making. While explaining the process further Franklin & Ebdon (2020) explain that the participatory budgeting system takes into consideration the democratic values, like, accountability and transparency, social justice, citizen education, government legitimacy and civil society. In countries like Phillipians, budget resource allocation was facing challenges by third-party intermediaries and continued other issues, like corruption and elitism. However, after trying PB Phillipians challenged the long standing culture of elitism and persistent corruption (Franklin & Ebdon, 2020).

O'Hagan, (2019) while discussing the success claims that since 2014, there has been an increasing trend of involving communities in development budget allocations. Furthermore, development of productive participatory budgeting has been an agenda of democratic innovation and community empowerment and Scotland has joined the global participatory budgeting movement (Escobar et al., 2018). Similarly, Seoul, Korea noticed that, when they created organizational structure that encouraged and enabled public participation they could distribute funds effectively among the marginalised population.

In participating budgeting, citizens are more interested in securing a small infrastructure project for their community than in learning about their rights, the government's fiscal responsibility, or wider social policies (Panday & Chowdhury, 2020). The failure of the Mechanisms is due to a lack of deep engagement from civil servants and political leaders (Panday & Chowdhury, 2020). Hence, how does it affect individual, group and society is still not clear (Franklin & Ebdon, 2020).

Even after assessing the needs of public through formal or direct participation still many countries didn't experience sustainable development. This led the policy makers and researchers to find more ways that can be result oriented. One of such method is performance based budgeting.

#### **Performance based budget allocatin**

The performance-based budget (PBB) allocation model is another most used allocation model in the public sector in today's world. PBB is defined as is a type of budgeting based on measurable results funds are allocated. Moreover, PBB is used as a key model in management to do decent resource allocation (Viapiana, 2020). The goals of PBB in the modern world is not to cut costs, in fact to increase efficiency. PBB got famous after reintroduced by the uplifting of the New Public Management (NPM) movement. Most NPM believers think that the budgeting process should be based on focusing on resources (input) to ensure the public service and budget should be focused on result received from these sources (output) (Viapiana, 2020).

Khodachek & Timoshenko (2018) sharing experiences of Russian budgeting after the public sector reforms explain that in last four decades there has been considerable effort to transform the public sector. As a result, in most of developed countries there has been a paradigm shift from traditional bureaucratic model towards new public management (NPM), where NPM tells better ways to manage public resources while augmenting accountability and greater focus on outcomes. Apart from NPM other reform paradigms such as: New Public Governance (NPD), Public Administration (PA), and Neo-Weberian state (NWS) can also be used (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2011).

The process of budgeting is not confined to allocation only it is a whole system that involves a set of steps. Milewski & Tomasiewicz (2018) while discussing the importance of performance-based budgeting over the traditional system, claim that former can increase the effectiveness of public funding by ensuring transparency in actions taken.

According to OECD (2017), the key advantages of performance-based budgeting models are increased transparency and accountability. This process makes the relation between resource allocation and results clear, that result in increased productivity.

There are different approaches to performance budgeting systems in practice throughout the world. Like, In the Italian program-budgeting mechanism, funding is not related to results (Viapiana, 2020). Whereas, in Finland, a weighted caseload system is used to determine workload and budgetary requirements, and a bargaining mechanism is in place to assign resources to departments. In another case, the Netherlands represents the extreme case for PBB, as it is the only European country that uses formula funding, while Finland is an example of "dialogue theory" in practice (Moynihan, 2006). Italy, on the other hand, appears to be an example of "opportunistic" use of performance data, with no clear relation between performance and resource allocation (Viapiana, 2020).

Moynihan (2006), while arguing the challenges claims that since the causal relationship between behaviour and outcomes (or production and outcome) and problems and solutions is ambiguous, the use of performance knowledge for budgetary decisions cannot be effective. This means that the same performance outcomes can be interpreted differently, or even the same interpretation can lead to a different solution. The "budgeting dilemma" is a well-known issue. "On what basis shall it be agreed to assign X dollars to activity A instead of activity B?" This query is unanswered by performance data. Indeed, it raises similar concerns, such as, "How do we know whether more money will boost efficiency or waste it?" (Moynihan, 2006). Grossi et al., (2016) arguing against PBB asserts that there is "widespread evidence" in the public sector that "availability of performance data is by no means a guarantee that such data will be used for decision-making". They claim factors such as external stresses, organisational structure, and human characteristics all influence the use of performance data as a decision-making tool.

This discussion implies that development budget allocations can be influenced by the policies and context of a country and there is no best model. Each government can use one model or a mix of models depending on their expertise and resource constrains.

#### **Research methods**

For this purpose of data collection 10 districts of Balochistan are selected using the multiple poverty index (MPI). Table one shows the top 5 districts having the lowest MPI values and the bottom 5 districts having the highest MPI values.

<b>Top 5 Districts</b>		
<i>S. No.</i>	<i>District</i>	<i>MPI</i>

1.	Quetta	0.213
2.	Kalat	0.275
3.	Khuzdar	0.285
4.	Gwadar	0.293
5.	Mastung	0.302
<b>Bottom 5 Districts</b>		
<i>S. No.</i>	<i>District</i>	<i>MPI</i>
1.	Killa Abdullah	0.641
2.	Harnai	0.633
3.	Barkhan	0.627
4.	Ziarat	0.575
5.	Chagai	0.546

Table 1: Sample of the study

Source: *Multidimensional Poverty in Pakistan 2014-15*

### Interviews

Interview methods is used to understand how people perceive the process of development budget allocation in these ten districts of Balochistan. Objective of interviews is to gather evidence about allocation of development budget grounded from responses of the members of government departments (Willis, 2018). The investigators used both semi-structured and unstructured interviews.

The semi-structured interviews are conducted with the help of an interview protocol. Whereas, the unstructured interviews are guided by open-ended questions from the questionnaire, coupled with queries that appeared while interviewing (Emans, 2019).

Principal concern during the interview, was to follow the respondent's interest and knowledge about the process of development budget allocation (Jones, 2020). It was difficult to develop rapport quickly during semi-structured interview due to limitation of time (Emans, 2019). To tackle this issue, the interrogators introduced themselves first and then clarified the aims and objectives of this study. Trust and confidence are augmented by reassuring the interviewees that facts shared will be kept confidential and anonymous. Beside that the candidates are initially inquired about their experiences to build a rapport before the formal interview. Finally, a verbal consent was taken before starting the interview.

### Transcription of interviews

Majority of respondent in this research responded in Urdu, or Balochi. However, the candidates had the choice to reply in any language so that they may express themselves amenably. The interviews recorded are then transcribed/translated in English. It is pertinent to mention here that transcriptions of interviews are the closest verbatim representation of responses. To reduce bias in transcript, the interviews were transcribed and translated by specialists (Henderson, 2018 and Loubere, 2017).

### Data Analysis

#### Theme 1: The process of development budget allocations is non participatory

During the data collection the researcher tried to understand the process of development budget allocation and it was observed that the process is non participatory. During a roundtable discussion the representative of private sector assets that:

*PS: We while sitting in Quetta or Islamabad cannot ascertain the needs of Zhob or Awaran hence, if we involve community of area, it will give them a sense of ownership and responsibility to work for the success of the project.*

While the representative of health department claims that involvement of community is missing from the process:

*DP2: We lack the participatory approach particularly; participation of community is missing while designing or implementing our projects. On paper we have guidelines to involve the community but on the ground that is missing.*

An officer of education department claims their practices not by the book:

**DPI:** *In theory this process is supposed to be participatory I mean the government and the public need to interact with each other and realize which projects need to be included in PSDP. However, our practices are different from this in reality, all the projects are decided on political influence without following a procedure.*

Even Deputy Commissioner being the head of the district is not involved in the process:

**DC2:** *I have zero percent say in it, I am with the people I know their problems they would come to my office every day and tell me about their hardships but still government will not involve me.*

**DC3:** *.... the development planning or decision making is done without the involvement of districts. We give zero input for PSDP whereas, if you examine globally or even in rest of Pakistan you will find out that districts have a significant role, and their inputs are considered but in Balochistan districts have zero input.*

**DC7:** *.... departments such as health, education or others are not involved in this, it is decided only on political basis. The politicians decide the projects and inform the departments to write their concept papers for approval. Our only involvement is at the execution level of a project.*

A district officer explains how they are ignored while deciding projects

**DO3:** *They are right neither the school is involved nor the education department, same is the case with other departments. If a building is to be build, C&W department will do it all by itself, starting from the concept paper, till the allocation of funds C&W department will do it directly in coordination of Secretaries sitting in Quetta, the people at district level have no knowledge about anything.*

Another district officer explains how concept paper for a project are made

**DO4:** *Yes, we do get such direction form departments, ministers, and CM office to make concept papers for projects, sometimes they would ask the concern department to make it and at times we are directed to make it.*

When the head of C&W department was enquired about the complains that their department does not share the PC1 of projects related to other departments with them he responded:

**DP4:** *I thank you for taking our perspective on issues related to PSDP, yes, I do receive demands from education or health department that they want a copy of PC1 of their projects, but it is a technical document, and it won't of any use to them. They will not understand what is written in a PC1, you are a highly educated person, a PhD! Even if I share a PC1 with you, you will not understand it.*

He was further asked even if they do not understand it what is the harm in sharing a PC1 with them?

**DP4:** *There is no harm in sharing a PC1 I can share as many PC1s as you desire but when we share a PC1 with a concern department they will start questioning our work without any proper knowledge and then our work gets delayed. Let me give you an example, if we are constructing a school in Quetta and another in Sibi with same number of classrooms and other requirements the school in Quetta will cost more than the school Sibi because Quetta has different land topography than Sibi and it falls in earthquake zone. However, when an education officer will compare both the PC1s he will think we are doing something wrong and will complain about it resulting in delay of our work. To avoid such issues, we try not share PC1 with them.*

### **Theme 2: Need assessment for development budget allocation is misdirected**

Need assessment for development budget allocation is done but it is not directed rightly. A Member of parliament explains how need assessment is carried out in Balochistan:

**MPA:** *Allocation here is generalized, they sit and based on their opinion make decisions. For example, after Covid 19 the government of Balochistan allocated 50 bedded hospitals to each district without any survey. In Kharan hospital out of 200 beds only 3 are occupied and they have given it 50 more beds. Their allocations are construction centric not service orientated.*

The officers of education department highlight the flaws in need assessment

**DPI:** *....in this department, we observe that there are many flaws in the process. First, the need of people or department are not addressed while allocating resources. For example, if our minister wants to establish residential college then our aim should not be only building that college. We must make sure that other essential services should be available, such as water, and electricity.*

**DPI:** *MPAs directly approach the chief minister and would demand a college or school and his/her project will be included in the PSDP without checking the needs of the area or department. They do not consider if there are enough feeding schools to open a college or not. They are not even bothered to check if that place has access to water and electricity before building the college. They start building colleges or schools at barren places and after 5 or 10 years such projects are withheld or cancelled with a half-built school or college.*

Officers at district level claims that most of the projects in PSDP are not need based:

**DC2:** *The dilemma is not only with this district but with whole of Balochistan is that our PSDP is not need based, nor research based. What really happens is that our MPAs would make a list of their projects and approach the CM directly to get it approved. They do provide a feasibility report, but that report is not prepared by the concern people rather you can get such feasibility reports readymade from some designated photocopying shops in Quetta.*

Another officer illustrates with an example the level of need assessment:

**DO2:** *Let me give an example to clarify how those projects are not need based, in Gulistan with in the radius of 8Kms we have four Rural Health Centers (RHCs) for God's sake we have rules for making RHCs. First one is in*

*Inayatullah Karaz, second one is in Gulistan Bazar only two minutes' drive from the first one. It was damaged in a tribal dispute instead of repairing it they build a new RHC. The previous RHC already had its SNE approved, and people were drawing salary from that center, but they would prefer a new building as it would give them more benefit, I hope you understand what I mean. Then the next RHC Norak Salmankhel is ten minutes' drive that RHC has walls but no roofs, when I enquired why this RHC is not completed I was informed a case is pending against it in court. It has been 7 years, but the dispute is not settled. Then 2 or 3Kms from there we have another RHC AbdurRahmanzai the fourth RHC, the project is completed but the center is not functional because we have no doctors or staff to run it.*

Deputy Commissioner of a district claims that projects are included in the PSDP without any study:

*DC7: The criteria for inclusion of a project are flawed, we include projects in PSDP without any feasibility study. The MPA of this district nor us have done any study to include any income generation schemes in the PSDP, the MPA will only give projects to his voter such as, roads, dams, schools any building as these projects can fetch them more commission from contractors.*

### **Discussion**

At the inception of this research, it was assumed that the fundamental problem with development budget is the unfair allocation. However, after an intensive data collection it is realized that there is equal or more issues in the implementation of development projects as well. The data findings clearly indicates that there is lack of monitoring and evaluation after initiation of projects. The process of development budget allocation is non participatory at two different levels. The role of public is missing from the process their needs are neither assessed nor addressed. Before designing any project, the prescribed of planning commission is not followed. Out of five PSDP documents, mostly only PC1 or PC2 is used, whereas PC3, PC4 or PC5 are never part of any projects. While ignoring the public in such projects may be observed in many parts of developing world, the process is further compromised when the main stakeholders such as the districts officers or member of parliament are ignored. Usually in Pakistani politics ignoring the opposition member of parliament is a usual occurrence but in Balochistan even the member of treasury benches is ignored while allocating development budget. The inefficiency of development budget is not limited to non-participatory.

Whenever a new government is formed, they tend to ignore the uncompleted projects of last government by not allocating the required money to them. Many projects that are 50% or more completed are abandoned due to this behavior. Then there are projects that cannot be completed on time due to insufficient allocation of funds hence the cost of such projects increases due to inflation. Almost in all the districts visited there were one of two projects that were running for more than 10 years.

The most serious issues of development budget allocation in Balochistan are lack of transparency and accountability. Many Deputy Commissioners who are responsible for running development projects have claimed that when try to penalize somebody for not doing their job they are forced not to do it. Secondly when they inform the concern departments about transgression in a project, they won't act. There have been contractors who have abandoned a project after 80% work completion and went scot-free despite reminders by the concern district officers. The level of transparency is so alarming that there are projects that are completed for years, and nobody is sure which department is supposed to take charge of the building. Then there are projects that are completed on papers and people are drawing salaries against such schools, colleges, or hospital but on ground they don't exist.

### **Conclusion and recommendation**

This research clearly indicates that there is lack of monitoring and evaluation after initiation of development projects. The process of development budget allocation is non participatory at two different levels in Balochistan. The role of public is missing from the process their needs are neither assessed no addressed. The inefficiency of development budget is not limited to non-participatory. Whenever a new government is formed, they tend to ignore the development projects of last government by not allocating the required money to them. The most serious issues of development budget allocation in Balochistan are lack of transparency and accountability.

Contemplating on these conclusions this study recommends that the government of Balochistan need to look for: education participation, reduce cynicism, gaining support for budget proposal, gathering input for making decisions, change in resource allocation, building trust and creating value for the community. For better participation of public these key dimensions must be ensured by government of Balochistan: citizen role of authority, communication, selection and decision-making. Apart from this, values like, accountability and transparency, social justice, citizen education, government legitimacy and civil society must be practiced in development budget allocations.

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