

**TA 4319-PAK: DETERMINANTS AND DRIVERS OF POVERTY
REDUCTION AND ADB'S CONTRIBUTION IN RURAL PAKISTAN**

DRAFT THEMATIC PAPERS: Overview

Background

The four Thematic Papers presented here represent interim outputs for the research project “Determinants and Drivers of Poverty Reduction and ADB’s Contribution in Rural Pakistan” (TA-4319-PAK). This is the third set of formal project outputs following on from the Inception Report (first draft December 2004, revised draft January 2005), and the Scoping Paper (first draft March 2005, revised draft May 2005).

The Inception Report laid out the approach taken by the project, advocating a multi-dimensional approach to the understanding of poverty and poverty reduction. Three types of processes and constraints – viz. economic opportunity, social change, and political empowerment – were identified as the key dimensions of the analysis. Accordingly, the Inception Report proposed thematic papers, respectively, on (a) rural economy and livelihoods, (b) social structures, and (c) governance. It was envisaged that these three Thematic Papers would complement one another.

The Inception Report also proposed a fourth stand-alone Thematic Paper to draw out lessons learnt from existing anti-poverty interventions. This paper was to focus, in the first instance, on selected ADB interventions designed to contribute to poverty reduction in rural Pakistan. The TA’s overall assessment of interventions, however, was to be broader and lessons from a number of significant government interventions (e.g. Khushal Pakistan Programme, homestead land allotment, Tawana Pakistan Programme) and non-governmental initiatives were also to be examined from the viewpoint of poverty reduction.

The Scoping Paper for the TA took the Inception Report as a starting point, developed an analytical framework, and identified key research questions, based on an extensive review of the secondary literature. The work on the analytical framework, at the Scoping Paper stage of the TA, required an interpretation of the “drivers of change” approach to the understanding of poverty reduction in Pakistan.

The “drivers of change” approach to poverty reduction focuses upon long-term and structural drivers and determinants as well as impediments to pro-poor change. These drivers and determinants of change (or, indeed, impediments to change) operate at various levels. Poverty-reduction outcomes include higher economic growth, more equal distribution, higher real wages, better social indicators, improved governance, better access to resources, level playing field in markets, socio-economic mobility, and pro-poor delivery of public goods and services. These outcomes are linked to both exogenous conditions (e.g. external economic and political conditions, and social structures), and also to intermediate endogenous processes (e.g. movements in relative prices, functioning of markets, local collective action etc.).

The scoping exercise for this study determined that the primary focus would be on micro-level exogenous conditions and endogenous processes. The review of existing

literature on poverty carried out in the Scoping Paper led to the identification of knowledge gaps and the formulation of research questions for the three Thematic Papers, respectively, on rural economy and livelihoods, social structures, and governance. These Thematic Papers are closely related to the corresponding sections of Scoping Paper on livelihoods, social structures and governance. In addition the paper included two sections, respectively, on gender and the environment, proposing cross-cutting research issues for all of thematic papers.

The spirit of the review undertaken as part of the Scoping Paper was that the research conducted for the TA should add value to already existing body of literature on poverty in rural Pakistan. Three of Thematic Papers presented here are direct outcomes of that process. As envisaged in the Inception Report and the Scoping Paper, these three papers are closely interlinked and utilize the many complementarities between the three areas of interest.

These papers are based primarily upon fieldwork carried out by the authors and their teams in various parts of the rural Pakistan between June and September 2005. The main gaps in knowledge identified at the Scoping Paper stage of the study related to structural issues and institutional processes that might act as drivers or impediments to poverty reduction. Peer discussion of the Scoping Paper raised a number of important questions about the content as well as the methodology including: the potential significance of non-crop subsectors (including livestock and fisheries) in reducing poverty, and problems of combining qualitative and quantitative data.

Site selection and research tools and approaches

A fieldwork strategy was designed taking into account the research questions raised in the Scoping Paper and the feedback from the review process. The fieldwork for the study consisted of three types of data collection: (a) qualitative at the village level; (b) extended household survey of selected villages; (c) cross-village rapid surveys in selected districts.

A total of eight districts were selected in the four provinces for fieldwork. These districts corresponded with distinct agro-ecological and cultural zones. Within each district a random sample of over 7 administrative villages (and a total of 61 villages) was selected from the village lists published in the District Census Reports of the 1998 Population Census. Out of these 7-plus villages in each area, one village was selected for in-depth investigation.. The districts names are listed in the table below.

Selected Sites

Site #	Province	District	Features
1	Punjab	Chakwal	Barani
2	Punjab	Toba Tek Singh	Canal colony
3	Punjab	Muzaffargarh	Cotton-wheat, Seraiki area
4	NWFP	Upper Dir	Forestry
5	NWFP	Mardan/Swabi	Plains agricultural
6	Sindh	Sanghar	Cotton-wheat
7	Sindh	Thatta	Coastal
8	Balochistan	Khuzdar	Rangelands, livestock

The selection of districts and fieldwork sites was motivated partly by agro-ecological and partly by socio-cultural criteria. Three districts were selected in Punjab, two each in Sindh and NWFP, and one in Balochistan. The Punjab districts represented conditions, respectively, in the rain-fed (barani) areas in the northern part of the province (Chakwal), central Punjab canal colony (Toba Tek Singh), and a cotton-wheat agricultural district of Seraiki-speaking southern Punjab. In both Sindh and the NWFP it was decided to select one district each, respectively Sanghar and Mardan, with standard plains agrarian economy conditions. Additionally in Sindh a site was selected in Thatta district to enable observations about the fisheries sector. A second NWFP site was selected (Upper Dir district) with the view of covering a mountainous and forested part of the province. Finally, district Khuzdar was selected as a site where issues in livestock and rangeland management were thought to be conspicuous.

The first round of fieldwork consisted of qualitative investigations in the villages selected for the in-depth analysis. The main research instruments used were community questionnaires and checklists, in-depth individual interviews, group discussions, and case studies. A key objective of the qualitative fieldwork was to identify the poor households and individuals in each survey site with reference to their individual characteristics, economic endowments, and position in the social structure. The availability and quality of infrastructure, the level of productivity in the agrarian economy, and the types of agrarian and labour arrangements present across and within sites, were also important areas of concern. Moreover, the qualitative investigation paid attention to local collective action, social networks and norms, and patterns of mobility.

In the second round of the fieldwork extended censuses were conducted in one village in every district, in order to gain some quantitative verification of the qualitative observations. There were two important reasons for choosing village-wide censuses over household sample surveys across a larger number of villages. First, the qualitative and quantitative data from the in-depth villages could be combined in the tradition of “village studies”. The “village study” approach allowed investigations into issues such as institutional arrangements, intra-village dynamics, power relations, and patterns of mobility and stagnation. Larger sample surveys which provide valuable nationally or provincially representative data are unable to tell us much about intra-village dynamics. Second, the “village study” approach allowed some possibility also, of investigating inter-village differences in poverty and poverty dynamics. Such comparison also was expected to be an important source of insight.

Apart from the village censuses, moreover, rapid community surveys were carried out in the randomly selected 61 villages in the study districts. These rapid community surveys collected much of the same data as the village census and the qualitative research tools, but did so for entire communities (and sub-groups within communities) rather than individuals or households. These rapid community surveys were intended to provide a larger context for interpreting the village case studies.

Some qualifications and exceptions regarding the data collected for the thematic papers need to be stated at the outset:

First, the aim of the fieldwork was not to collect nationally or provincially representative data on the magnitude of rural poverty. The results must not be

interpreted as statements about poverty trends or profiles in the country or its provinces or regions. The aim, rather, was to investigate those correlates of poverty that are not generally observable in large-scale (and statistically representative) household surveys, and to represent rural poverty through a set of village studies and associated cross-village community surveys.

Second, the data thus far do not include those from the fieldwork sites in Balochistan. Although preliminary qualitative data from various parts of Balochistan were available, the fieldwork teams were not able to complete the Balochistan work in time for the Thematic Workshop. The Balochistan fieldwork will be undertaken and results incorporated into the revised versions of the thematic papers.

Third, given the rather quick reporting cycle of the project – the draft Thematic Papers having been prepared within six weeks of the completion of data collection – it is inevitable that more insights and analysis will be forthcoming in the lead up to the next phase of the TA. It is expected, therefore, that the fieldwork data will continue to be utilized into the subsequent phases of the TA.

Thematic papers in the TA process

The Thematic Papers aim to provide detailed analysis on questions arising from earlier stages of the TA. They will constitute inputs into the final consolidated report that will provide policy analyses and recommendations for the ADB, government and other stakeholders. It is useful to remind readers and reviewers, therefore, that these papers are analytical interim products that will lead to policy recommendations, but do not directly make those recommendations themselves.

It is expected that the analytical work undertaken in the Thematic Papers will lead to practical and positive policy recommendations in the final consolidated report. There are also a number questions not covered directly by the draft Thematic Papers that will be addressed in the final report.

The draft Thematic Paper on the assessment of interventions, for example, focuses on lessons learnt from selected ADB projects in rural Pakistan. The project fieldwork contain important information on labour markets, nutrition, and homestead land, issues which correspond with government interventions such as the KPP, TPP and homestead allotment schemes. A fuller treatment of these interventions, however, will be provided in the policy analysis to be conducted for the final consolidated report.

Similarly, the Thematic Papers, particularly those on social structures and the assessment of interventions analyze social organization and its relationship with poverty reduction. These issues are of direct relevance to the work of non-governmental interventions such as the rural support programmes (RSPs). The RSPs too will receive more explicit attention in the final consolidated report of the TA, based on fieldwork data as well as secondary material.