

CHAPTER 7

POVERTY ALLEVIATION AND POPULATION

The North West Frontier Province—with its varied geographic and ecological setting is a resource-rich area. But its population is growing at a high rate, widening the gap between consumption and resource availability. This is leading to unsustainable development patterns within the province. Disparities in terms of development, resource use, and allocation prevail in regions, societies, and different groups, developing a sense of inequity and causing poverty among different sections of society.

More than two-thirds of the people in the NWFP live in rural areas, where the provision of services, utilities, and facilities are inadequate. Most development activities are not targeted to the needs of the weakest section of society, with many communities below the poverty line, which is particularly hard on women and children. Women are not yet being given the chance to become productive human resources for the province.

The present decision making and development planning system in the NWFP as well in Pakistan as a whole has a tradition of centralization that does not adequately take into consideration the priorities and needs of various ecological regions, local communities, and societies. This 'top down' planning has led to very inequitable development in the province.

To reverse this, the disparities among regions, societies, and groups must be addressed. High population growth must be stabilized; there must be better management of resources; and the decision making and planning process must be open to everyone. The provincial Government in recent years has taken many steps to address these fundamental issues, and some progress has been achieved recently

7.1 The Social Action Programme

The poor human development indicators at national and provincial level essentially reflect a public-sector failure to address four interrelated deficiencies with services: limited access to education, health, family planning, especially among poor rural women and girls; poor-quality services when they are provided; little account ability to clients; and insufficient Government resources. In response, the Government launched the Social Action Programme (SAP) in 1992- 93 a broad-based intervention that is the centre piece of the Government's human development strategy.

The SAP seeks to provide basic education, health, sanitation, and family planning facilities throughout the province that are within easy reach of the population, and, equally important, that offer high quality services to all. The SAP has made substantial progress in several areas. Given that most SAP issues are essentially related to the environment, the Government of NWFP proposes that SAP in the NWFP be considered part of the SPCS implementation package.

7.1.1 The SAP Contribution

The SAP is a major effort by the Government to improve basic social services over

the five-year period 1993-94 to 1997-98. It is expected to address the generic weaknesses in the basic social services. The underlying assumption is that gains in improving primary education, primary health care, population welfare, and rural water supply and sanitation will be mutually reinforcing, and that the resultant improvements in health and learning will promote greater economic productivity. The targets of SAP during the Eighth Five-Year Plan (1993-98), and their achievement based on a partial assessment of the programme thus far, are provided in Table. While SAP is a five-year Government programme, multi-donor support for SAP is designed for a three-year period that ended June 1996. Donors are likely to support SAP for the remaining two years as well, however.

The SAP is geared towards improving the poor social development in Pakistan, which persists despite the vigorous economic growth of the preceding decade. The programme targets the underprivileged sections of society, notably the rural poor and women. It prescribes an umbrella approach, integrating the delivery of basic social services. The strategy is to improve planning and implementation by ensuring timely availability of adequate funds and quality delivery of services. This requires capacity building of the implementing agencies, which is being pursued through a decentralized institutional arrangement accompanied by close monitoring.

The landmarks of the SAP in the NWFP include need-based site selection criteria for the establishment of new facilities; constitution of village education committees, and preparation of a master list of school sites for 1995-96 and 1996-97; the approval of a unified policy for the rural water supply and sanitation sector; and a major initiative to restructure the health sector through an integrated health policy statement.

The Government of NWFP is also increasingly engaged in a dialogue with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to involve them in development efforts. Most significant has been the reorientation of attitudes towards a greater recognition of the needs of the social sectors and the sustainable improvement in social services through community participation. The emerging development paradigm holds in it a hope, as well as an opportunity, for the underprivileged sections of society

SOCIAL ACTION PROGRAMME, TARGETS & ACHIEVEMENTS

SECTOR	TARGETS UNDER 8TH PLAN	ACHIEVEMENT
	(1993-98)	(MARCH 1995)
<i>Primary Education</i>		
Participation rate (percent)		
Total	86.2	55
Male	94.8	71.1
Female	77.3	36.5
Enrolment (million)		
Total	2.559	12.946
Male	1.435	8.722
Female	1.124	4.224

Basic Health Services (million)		
Immunization	3.15	0.814
ORS packets	9.5	1
Training of Trained Birth Attendants	0.0087	0.0013
Training of Community Health Workers	0.009	-
Improvement of Basic Health Units	0.0007	0.0003
Improvement of Rural Health Centres	0.00007	0.00003
Rural Water Supply & Sanitation (million people)		
Water supply	13.26 (88%)	9.1 (77%)
Sanitation	4.68 (31.22%)	0.97 (7%)

Source: SAP Section, PE&D Department, Government of NWFP.

7.1.2 The SAP & the SPCS

The SAP should be regarded as an integral part of the SPCS, for it addresses key human development aspects that relate directly to environmental problems. It has been designed as an independent programme at the national level, with financing from various donors as well as from local resources. But it is given a conceptual home in the SPCS in the NWFP because if it were not for the SAP, the SPCS would need to address the social issues that are fundamental to sustainability.

The SAP is an ambitious programme, with a planned investment of Rs. 14.858 billion in three years (1993-94 to 1995-96). This investment will create an annual recurrent cost liability of Rs. 3.370 billion to sustain the SAP initiatives in the future. This has major implications for development financing. The NWFP's total revenue receipts during 1994-95 are estimated as Rs. 20.770 billion, out of which only Rs. 1.150 billion is available for development financing. The SAP development and recurrent cost liabilities are using large amounts of funds. Most of the funds needed for SAP implementation have been committed by donors. To attain a balance in resource allocation for the SPCS, the SAP, and other economic development programmes, it is crucial that decisions with respect to one are made in consideration of others.

At a practical level, this means establishing effective coordination mechanisms to ensure that the SAP and the SPCS remain complementary and that the planning for both benefits from the implementation experiences of each other. Such coordination is vital for the SAP also. The supply of piped water does not essentially mean clean water. It will be only through the abatement of rural pollution sought under the SPCS that cleaner water will be available for drinking. Conversely, rural sanitation pursued under the SAP will contribute directly to the reduction in rural depopulation. Similarly, while such large

investments are being made in primary education, they can be made more meaningful if environmental considerations are included. The coordination cell for the SAP and the Environment Section are both part of Planning, Environment, and Development Department, and it should not be difficult to bring about the desired coordination.

SAP implementation will greatly contribute to furthering the SPCS agenda of social reformation and poverty alleviation. Nevertheless, the potential environmental impacts of the small but numerous SAP activities remain a concern. This has not yet been addressed in the SAP, which is yet another reason why the SAP and the SPCS must be partners.

SOCIAL ACTION PROGRAMME ALLOCATIONS, 1993-96

SECTOR	EXPENDITURE (1993-94)			REVISED ESTIMATES (1994-95)		
	DEVELOPMENT	RECURRENT	TOTAL (million rupees)	DEVELOPMENT	RECURRENT	TOTAL
Primary education	433.688	1,648.808	2,082.496	1,041.593	2,479.644	3,521.237
Primary health	242.032	397.959	639.991	239.159	514.455	753.614
Population	76.224	0.000	76.224	108.400	-	108.400
Rural water supply & sanitation	380.338	286.642	666.980	509.805	321.995	831.800
Institution-strengthening	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	1,132.282	2,333.409	3,465.691	1,898.957	3,316.094	5,215.051

SECTOR	EXPENDITURE (1993-94)			REVISED ESTIMATES (1994-95)		
	DEVELOPMENT	RECURRENT	TOTAL (million rupees)	DEVELOPMENT	RECURRENT	TOTAL
Primary education	609.000	3,001.027	3,610.027	2,084.281	7,129.479	9,213.760
Primary health	490.000	593.871	1,083.871	971.191	1,506.285	2,477.476
Population	129.578	-	129.576	314.202	0.000	314.202

Rural water supply & sanitation	940.596	405.492	1,346.088	1,830.739	1,014.129	2,844.868
Institution-strengthening	8.617	-	8.617	8.617	-	8.617
Total	2,177.791	4,000.390	6,178.179	5,209.030	9,649.893	14,858.923

7.2 Poverty And Deprivation

Poverty in either rural or urban environments is a multi-dimensional problem. One key dimension is economic poverty. This includes the actual level of consumption of a household or individual that falls below a certain minimum subsistence level or 'poverty line', which is the lowest acceptable standard of basic need for an individual. Poverty also encompasses other dimensions of social or human development, such as a high rate of child and maternal mortality, a high rate of disease, high illiteracy, or lack of access to clean drinking water and safe sanitation facilities.

A provincial comparison of poverty is shown in Table . It indicates that the NWFP in 1991 had the highest concentration of poor people relative to its share in the national population and that the ratio of those living in poverty was some 50% higher in rural areas as in urban areas. This fact has been fully supported by the SPCS consultations, which revealed that people consider poverty to be a major cause of environment deterioration. This is believed to be due to the narrow and weak industrial and commercial economic base and therefore the heavy dependence, overexploitation, and unsustainable consumption of natural resources. This is particularly true in rural areas, where more than 84% of the NWFP population and more than 80% of all the poor live. Where the poor have been able to get a larger share of any progress, such gains have not been enough to compensate for existing poverty and deprivation. Continuing deprivation in the face of real provincial economic growth underlines the difficulties of tackling underdevelopment and endemic poverty in low-income rural economies, notwithstanding past and current approaches towards rural development.

The impact of this inequitable distribution of resources on the rural society is seen in rising unemployment, a concentration of landholdings, lower crop yields, displacement of labour due to mechanization, lower availability of inputs to small farmers, inadequate allocation of resources to agriculture, inaccessibility to rural credit, and inadequate financial allocation for health, education, and other basic needs.

The subsistence economy in rural areas, limited employment opportunities, decreasing size of land-holdings, centralized planning, and absence of local participation in rural development schemes are causing a rural-urban migration that drains human resources from rural society, further widening the gap in rural economic activity. In the past, while economic poverty has declined at the national level and the household income distribution has remained fairly stable, households towards the bottom of income distribution have not shared

significantly in the economic gains made during the period.

Poverty alleviation, however, is a complex issue, and isolated step measures will not achieve the desired objectives rapidly. Rather it requires an integrated approach and the combination of a variety of measures. Improving the social and economic conditions of the rural and low-income urban communities requires integrated development initiatives, including sustainable natural resource management, provision of basic services, extension of more education and health facilities, and skills training, with a heavy emphasis on community involvement. There is a parallel need to boost the local economies and to increase the opportunities for gainful employment.

DISTRIBUTION OF POOR, BY PROVINCE & RESIDENCE				
	PEOPLE LIVING IN POVERTY (%)			1991 INDEX OF
	1985	1988	1991	CONCENTRATION
Pakistan				
Average	18.3	16.6	17.2	100
Urban	11.1	8.7	9.8	57
Rural	21.1	19.6	20.6	119
Balochistan				
Total	27.5	9.3	7.1	41
Urban	17.0	4.4	4.5	26
Rural	28.5	10.0	7.7	45
NWFP				
Total	9.6	15.5	20.0	117
Urban	7.5	12.4	14.3	83
Rural	9.0	16.0	21.4	124
Punjab				
Total	19.0	19.9	19.0	110
Urban	12.8	11.9	11.4	66
Rural	21.3	22.6	21.9	127

Sindh				
Total	15.3	9.5	12.3	71
Urban	7.0	3.4	6.7	39
Rural	22.2	14.6	17.6	102

Source: The World Bank. 1995. Pakistan Country Report for the Social Summit. The World Bank, Washington DC.

Strategic regional development approaches need to be followed in all new programmes and projects to alleviate poverty and protect the environment. In infrastructure improvement projects, the local community should be involved in construction of secondary- and tertiary-level infrastructure facilities, which it is hoped will generate employment at the local level. Decision making and planning should be decentralized to reflect the priorities and requirements of rural society in the development process, and development institutions at village level should be strengthened and provided with staff trained in integrated rural development and rural economics. To diversify rural economies and create local employment, cottage industry promotion and development should be initiated and accelerated, with training in local crafts and support for the marketing of finished goods. Private financial institutions should be encouraged to extend credit facilities to rural communities.

7.3 Unsustainable Population Growth

Natural resources are not limitless, and there has to be a balance between their use and consumption. While an expanding population applies greater pressure, it also squeezes the availability of space for natural resource generation.

Increasing populations also need housing, jobs, education, health facilities, a water supply, and sanitation facilities. All these services and utilities require heavy capital investments, the resources for which must be raised through taxes. This presumes that the country and the province have a sound economy with a well-developed and growing social, economic, financial and industrial base, and the citizens are equitable beneficiaries and have the capacity to be taxed. If these prerequisites are absent as they are in the NWFP—then the fast growth in population is a luxury the province cannot afford.

7.3.1 Demographic Trends & Productive Land Resource

The NWFP has a total area of 10.17 million hectares. But land use statistics vary: some sources estimate the cultivated and forest area of the province to be 19% and 17% respectively (see Table 2.1), while the NWFP Development Statistics estimate 23% to be cultivated and 14% to be forested (see Table 7.4). With an estimated population of 15.5 million in 1991, and using the later estimates, the population density in the NWFP is

approximately 0.5 persons per hectare. But the density per irrigated cultivable area is 18 persons per hectare, which does not compare well internationally.

Comparing the increase in population with the available land in past decades shows a high population increase while the productive land resource increase is much lower, further indicating that land resources are under tremendous pressure. Overexploitation of the resource is currently increasing, which is likely to continue as the province attempts to meet the demand for food. This growing pressure and high rate of exploitation is having many adverse environmental impacts and is increasing the pressure on other natural resources.

The capacity of cultivable land to support larger numbers of people can be enhanced through changes in cropping patterns and intensity of cropping, which could be achieved by investments in human resource development and technology. But converting presently unused lands to productive use appears to be prohibitively capital-intensive, involving heavy investments in complex civil works. Therefore the potential of the total land resources of the NWFP to support larger populations is not encouraging

DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS & PRODUCTIVE LAND RESOURCES					
CENSUS	POPULATION	INTER-CENSAL	ANNUAL	FOREST	CULTIVATED
YEAR	(million)	INCREASE	GROWTH RATE	AREA	AREA
		(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)
1951	4.556	-	-	4.23	-
1961	5.731	25.77	2.34	4.55	-
1972	8.388	46.37	3.32	10.86	16
1981	11.061	31.86	3.32	10.26	19
1991*	15.507	40.19	3.2	13.66	23
2001*	20.084	43.39	3.0	-	-
2011*	26.934	29.26	2.6	-	-

Source: Government of NWFP. 1994. NWFP Development Statistics. Bureau of Statistics, PE&D Department, Peshawar

* Projected figures given assumed growth rates.

7.3.2 Trends and Traditions of Large Family Size

Most people in the NWFP live in small villages. The movement to the cities and outside the province and country that started in the 1960s did not bring about any major permanent shift in the existing urban to rural ratios. Rural areas have unfortunately been

the last priority for allocating development funds in the past, and they sorely lack basic services, utilities, and facilities.

The NWFP society is predominantly Muslim and is dominated by strong conservative values exhorted in many cases by local religious leaders. Men have been brought up in a male-dominated patriarchal society, where it is men who deal with the outside world and women are supposed to limit their lives to childbearing and housekeeping. Subjects other than this—about which women are believed to know little are taboo, and women therefore have a limited role in decision making.

Families live jointly in small houses with common living areas. Mothers-in-law dominate the home and dictate the lives of both their sons and their daughters-in-law. Husbands and wives rarely have a common understanding or views on important issues that dominate their lives. This philosophy of life has dominated the NWFP society for much of its history. There has been some change in these attitudes in the cities, where education, exposure, and economic necessities have forced change, but this situation still prevails in much of the rural areas.

Conservative and traditional norms dictate that women follow a socially acceptable behaviour or face severe social ostracism. Women have generally not been educated and are permitted only limited mobility, restricted to their family houses. It is still unusual for women to travel to bazaars without male relatives as chaperones. Women accept and some even believe that their only purpose in life is to produce children. Therefore producing a lot of children is the norm and not the exception. Families with fewer children are considered to be afflicted with physical or financial problems.

Rural society is still very tribal. Sons are a matter of great pride and give strength to the father in the village. Attempts to have a lot of sons generally leads to large families. Health conditions in the past were abysmal, and it was normal for every second or third child to die. It seemed clear that the way to have sons was to have a large number of children. Although availability of health care has improved, the health care system is still not a source of confidence for families. Agriculture is animal-powered and physical, which requires many working hands, providing additional motivation for more children. Poverty also dictates the need for more children to increase the number of earning hands.

Any successful family planning programme must therefore be based on a deep understanding of these social conditions that dictated having large families. It is not wrong to bring about change in traditional ways of life. The system does have positive attributes that ought to be preserved; the negative attributes can be phased out through the provision of health and education facilities.

7.3.3 Population Planning Programmes

The Population Planning Programme was initiated in 1953 as a Family Planning Programme and was federally sponsored and implemented by the Federal Government through an NGO, the Family Planning Association of Pakistan. Later it was decided that field implementation of the programme would be carried out by the provinces. During 1981 the programme was further modified and the strategy was changed to a multisectoral social character with a more broad-based resource. Until the late 1980s the programme had little success due to such problems as the lack of political will, inadequate service delivery coverage, restraints on communication, and the lack of

integration of preventive and curative health care, family hygiene, and basic health education in the family planning efforts. Collectively these constraints have led to an unsupportive environment for family planning, further compounded by a lack of continuity. For example, in 1981 the implementation field staff that was handling the outreach programme was drastically cut back, breaking the linkages created with the rural communities.

The strategy was further modified in the Eighth Five-Year Plan, however, using a community-based approach and with quantified targets and objectives. Greater financial resources were allocated to the programme. Support activities such as information, education, vaccination, training, and maternity education were made an integral part of the programme. A better organization and management structure and an improved service delivery system were given emphasis, backed up by a stronger political will and commitment to increase the coverage of the programme to the rural poor and especially to rural women and girls. The Eighth Plan provides for a comprehensive Population Welfare Programme built upon recognized findings of successful international population programmes.

The Federal Government has since entered into an agreement with the World Bank and other donors on the SAP, which as noted, will accelerate funding of education, health, rural water supply and sanitation, and population planning so that the coverage is increased to result in improved literacy, better health care, more potable water and sanitation, and lower birth rates. In the population planning section of the SAP, the Federal Government has sponsored a substantial programme costing Rs. 11.5 billion over five years; this will be implemented by provincial governments and is intended to increasing coverage to 100% in urban areas and 70% in rural areas. This will be achieved by providing a village health worker in every village in the country with more than 2,000 people, integrating family planning services in all health outlets as well as increasing family planning services and doubling mobile family service units.

It is also important that awareness and education should be provided by village health workers, that family planning as a subject is discussed openly, especially where the men congregate. The services have to be available through the village health worker system or through traditional birth attendants at the mohallah (neighbourhood) level. The family planning system should be made a part of the health system for each of the facilities used by women.

POPULATION WELFARE PROGRAMME IN THE EIGHTH PLAN

Objectives

?? To raise family planning practice from 14% to 24%

?? To reduce the crude birth rate from 39 to 35 per thousand

?? To prevent 504,000 births in the province

?? To reduce the growth rate from 2.9 to 2.6%

Components

?? Administrative organization

?? Service delivery system

?? Support activities

7.4 Sustainable Rural Development

The NWFP is a rural and agricultural province, with more than two-thirds of its population living in rural areas and some 51% of the labour force drawing their livelihood from the agriculture sector. Despite this, rural areas are characterized by inadequate infrastructures, insufficient marketing facilities, poor health and education facilities, and poor living conditions. For these reasons, households in rural areas headed by tenants and agricultural labourers have a very high incidence of poverty. Most of the poor of the province are in these areas.

The village-level public consultation for the SPCS indicates that most natural resource management-related environmental problems can only be solved by addressing the fundamental problem of rural poverty. The poverty alleviation issue is the top priority of most of the rural communities. The second most important issue raised at these meetings was the urgent need for basic services, facilities, and utilities such as health care, education, improvement of women's lives, communication, clean drinking water, sanitation, recreation, and street pavements. Related to much of the public concern about poverty alleviation in the rural areas, particularly the northern region, was continuing uncertainty about land tenure, particularly since the incorporation of the 'princely' states. This, combined with the potential misuse or abuse of common property resources (illicit tree felling, water misappropriation), has caused incidents of violence and civil strife. Although not as acute a problem as in urban Pakistan, it is an issue of growing concern that will have to be dealt with at least in the medium term.

The NWFP is a diverse province and there are different needs and requirements in the rural communities, which vary in accordance with the local geo-graphical, climatic, and ecological conditions. As rural communities depend heavily on natural resources for their livelihood, the overexploitation and consumption of these resources results in many environmental problems in different regions deforestation, loss of biodiversity, soil erosion, waterlogging and salinity, over-grazing, decreasing water tables, and so on. Broadly, the NWFP can be categorized into three regions: the central plains, the north and northeastern mountains, and the southern semi-arid plains. A brief description of the regional priorities and main issues follows.

7.4.1 Central Plains Region

This region consists primarily of Peshawar valley including Peshawar Division, Mardan Division, and the southern part of the Malakand Division. The plains contain rich soils and good agricultural land, along with a well-established canal and other irrigation systems. This region is the main agricultural area, and at the same time it also has the main industrial base of the province. The landholdings of the average farmers are small. although a few families have very large holdings. Due to its central location in

the province and its access to the majority of facilities and educational opportunities, this region has always dominated political and bureaucratic life.

The priorities and needs of the rural communities of this region are agricultural development and employment opportunities at the village level. Due to its flat topography, rural communities are facing problems with drainage and sanitation facilities. They also place priority on clean water, drainage, sanitation, communications, solid waste, and street paving. The other principal issues they raised during the public meetings were the governance of institutions at the village level, the need for reforestation of barren lands and afforestation on farms, education, pollution abatement, and health care services. Table lists the priorities that emerged during the village-level consultations in this region.

The canal system from Warsak and Tarbela Dams involved construction without adequate provisions to avoid seepage of water or an adequate discharge system. This has adversely affected the surrounding good-quality agricultural land and has resulted in water logging and salinity of a large area. The Government has initiated the Salinity Control and Reclamation Project to lower water-tables, but this is a slow and expensive process. The communities of the region also complain about the agricultural extension services, for example, the availability of good quality seed, fertilizer, agriculture machinery, soil testing advice, and marketing of the crops. These are not provided on a regular basis and at appropriate times for small farmers at the village level. They also raised concerns about the lack of credit facilities and the fact that they are unable to access needed funds at appropriate times (the cropping season) due to the procedural formalities of financial institutions. Many communities pointed out that most of the Government assistance for agriculture has been used by the influential large land owners, whereas the small farmers receive little or no benefit from the programmes.

Future efforts should be focused on an integrated rural development programme based on agriculture development, extension services training, on-farm afforestation, and provision of basic services, utilities, and facilities, with the heavy involvement of local communities. Cottage industry and local agro industry should be promoted in rural areas, with environmental protection measures included. Health and education development programmes should be accelerated to provide wider coverage in rural areas. The capacity and governance of village-level institutions should be strengthened and improved to deliver improved services

ISSUES RAISED IN VILLAGE CONSULTATIONS – CENTRAL REGION		
ISSUES	NUMBER	PERCENT
Poverty alleviation (unemployment & agricultural development)	44	33.6
Provision of basic facilities	26	20
Poor governance	15	11.5
Forestry conservation	14	10.7
Education coverage	11	8.4

Pollution abatement	8	6
Health services	7	5.3
Wildlife conservation	2	1.5
Others	4.	3

7.4.2 Mountain Region

This region consists of the mountain areas of the Malakand and Hazara Division of the province. It is rich in forests, water, and minerals. Agricultural land is scarce and limited, and terrace farming is commonly practiced at a subsistence level. People attached top priority to the protection of existing forests and new programmes for reforestation. They gave second priority to the provision of basic facilities such as water supply, sanitation, solid waste, street paving, drainage, and communications. The other principal issues that emerged were unemployment in the area, the lack of education and health facilities, pollution of water resources, and poor governance at the local level. Because of the ecology of the region, people are well aware of the importance of wildlife conservation and protection, and they raised their concerns about wildlife population decline. The principal issues raised in the village consultations in this region are shown in Table.

Deforestation in the area is the major concern of the communities in the region, as forests are their major economic base. The current high rate of timber extraction by outside contractors, the clearing of hill slopes for agriculture, and the cutting of trees for domestic use and fuelwood by local people constitute unsustainable management practices in the mountain forests. Deforestation and loss of biomass are causing many environmental problems, such as soil erosion and flash flooding.

A large number of village organizations (VOs) are actively pursuing the reforestation of the hills and slopes in their area. Due to their limited financial and technical resources, their efforts are usually quite small. Apart from the local VO, many Government and donor-assisted natural resource management projects are under way to improve the socioeconomic and environmental conditions of rural communities. There is, however, a need for an integrated mountain sustainable development programme that focuses on multi sectoral integrated development approaches using community participation and income generation programmes to improve the social as well as economic conditions of the people.

To create local employment, mineral resources and the potential for ecotourism should be fully explored. Basic services and utilities programmes such as clean water, drainage, sanitation, health, and education should be integrated with other rural development programmes. The institutional capacity at the local level must be strengthened and partnership programmes with local communities and NGOs should be encouraged, to increase the capacity for sustainable management of mountain natural resources.

ISSUES RAISED IN VILLAGE CONSULTATIONS – MOUNTAIN REGION		
ISSUES	NUMBER	PERCENT
Forestry conservation	79	32
Provision of basic facilities	56	23
Poverty alleviation (unemployment & agricultural development)	43	18
Pollution abatement	19	8
Education coverage	18	7
Health services	12	5
Poor governance	9	4
Wildlife conservation	4	1.5
Others	4	1.5

7.4.3 Southern Region

The southern region is the most neglected part of the province in terms of both Government and donor initiatives. It includes Kohat, Bannu, and D.I . Khan Divisions, and there is a very limited natural resource base. Due to the shortage of water, agriculture is at a subsistence level and largely depends on seasonal rainfall. The agriculture yield is very low, and while the area is rich in mineral deposits, these resources have not been fully explored or developed. The provision of basic services and utilities is poor, and in some parts non-existent.

People in the southern region are well aware that they have been neglected in the socio-economic development process. They attach top priority to the provision of basic facilities—sanitation, drainage, solid waste management, and especially clean drinking water. The priority issues during the village consultations are given in Table. Lack of water for irrigation and unemployment are the major problems identified by the community as the main cause of poverty in the region. Water shortage was also considered to be the main cause for the desertification of land and an obstacle to the development of forest resources in the area.

The area lies in the arid zone of the province, which receives very little precipitation throughout the year, and the subsoil water source receives very limited recharge to provide enough water for the inhabitants. The communities are in urgent need of clean drinking water, which most of them lack. Sanitation facilities are also not present in the rural areas, posing a health hazard as waste water seepage pollutes the shallow underground water sources. The lack of water has affected agriculture yields and the forest resources in the area.

Special efforts are required to improve the socio-economic conditions in the southern region. The SAP should give priority to this region, to improve basic services and utilities and clean drinking water. Communities should be fully involved in all development programmes to increase the capacity of Government institutions to

deliver services. All development programmes should include income generation schemes. Emphasis should be given to upgrading and improving the existing infrastructure system.

ISSUES RAISED IN VILLAGE CONSULTATIONS – SOUTHERN REGION		
ISSUES	NUMBER	PERCENT
Provision of basic facilities	88	43
Poverty alleviation (unemployment & agricultural development)	49	24
Education coverage	18	9
Forestry conservation/forestation	15	7
Pollution abatement	10	5
Health services	7	3
Poor governance	6	3
Wildlife conservation	4	2
Others	8	4

7.5 Women, Environment & Sustainable Development

Development initiatives for women are a prerequisite for sustainable development. In the NWFP, however, the prevalence of deep-rooted customs and traditions that place women in a secondary position to men has hindered women's participation in socio-economic and political development. Despite the fact that women constitute nearly half the population, their status in society is severely compromised due to attitudes that see women as dependent on men for their existence. There has been a tendency to view women in a fragmented manner through the isolated sectors of education, health, and population, rather than seeing them as an integral part of the socio-economic scene. The Seventh Five-Year Plan (1988-93) emphasized that attitudinal changes are necessary if women are to get their due share in development, and that data on women are outdated and incomplete. As noted in the discussion on family size, the status of women remains low.

The environment issue also has only just caught the attention of policy makers. The National Conservation Strategy is a reflection of awareness at the official level, but it remains to be seen whether this will bring environmental concerns into the development process. "Human development, if not engendered, is endangered", was the message of the Human Development Report 1995 prepared by the UN Development Programme. In the NWFP, it is imperative to take a critical look at development models to see whether they have the capacity to address issues relating to women and the environment instead of marginalizing both.

The burden of displacement and dwindling resources is borne by women because of their role as family sustainers and primary users of natural resources. Moreover, the position of women in a cultural context is essentially closer to nature, because their work has always entailed a closer relationship with nature. Women are often depicted as 'naturally' privileged environmental managers, who over generations have accumulated specific knowledge about natural processes that is different and more appropriate than that of men. Therefore, women and development are as inseparable as environment and development. Unfortunately, in spite of the new concern for the environment, the potential of women as active agents of change has not been fully recognized even by women themselves.

Most women in the NWFP live in rural areas, are illiterate, and are viewed not as producers but as dependent consumers, linked to a vicious circle of poverty, depletion of resources, and a deteriorating quality of life. The use of modern technology in the agricultural sector has resulted in the displacement of labour, often putting the burden of adjustment on women. A net decrease in the total use of female labour has occurred with mechanization. This has affected women in two ways: it has reduced their income, and it has meant that agricultural vegetation and wastes they traditionally used are less available.

The poverty discussed earlier has specific implications for women, as it is their work that is directly affected. The vicious circle of depletion of resources, poverty, and exacerbation of women's problems is perpetuated. On a brighter note, Pakistani society is in transition, with the various pressures leading to the emergence of an active women's movement that is challenging social norms and resisting moves to restrict women's activities. Increasing consciousness regarding women and their role in development, combined with a large number of new NGOs on women's issues, has heightened the prospects for integrating women into the development process.

The transformation of women from objects of reproduction to autonomous persons in their own right will entail a fundamental change in perceptions and attitudes, however. The role women play in this process is critical. Although changes in the role of women may be an evolutionary process, extensive Government intervention is

- ?? a locally based planning team;
- ?? a round table of local people to oversee the work;
- ?? a broad spectrum of all legitimate interests on the round table;
- ?? support for existing institutions to participate;
- ?? adequate resources;
- ?? a participatory process;
- ?? a communication strategy;
- ?? an education strategy;
- ?? an early focus on key issues;
- ?? clear objectives and a well-defined work plan; and
- ?? an emphasis on sustainable development and people, not just the environment.

Funds for a district strategy for Chitral are already available from the Swiss Development Cooperation in the SPCS budget. For Peshawar, GTZ funds are likely to be available. For the other two districts, funds will have to be arranged, and discussions are already under way with several donors on that.

7.7 Commitments

During the next three years, a commitment is made to:

- ?? continue, consolidate, and expand the existing integrated rural development projects with special emphasis on education, health, income-generation, and environmental protection activities;
- ?? continue and consolidate the implementation of the SAP;
- ?? carry out environmental impact assessment of the SAP activities and incorporate its results in the SAP projects;
- ?? continue and expand population planning programmes;
- ?? expand the skill training and craft training programmes, with greater responsibilities to VOs in rural areas;
- ?? implement the mineral development policy, review it for its environmental impacts, and modify it accordingly;

- ?? prepare and start implementing a cottage industry development and marketing programme in rural areas;
- ?? carry out an effective mass awareness and environmental education programme in rural areas;
- ?? develop and implement a policy to carry out infrastructure development projects through local communities rather than contractors;
- ?? develop and update a data base on women's socio-economic position in rural and urban areas;
- ?? formulate a Women in Development (WID) policy to involve women in decision making, and planning and implementation of development programmes;
- ?? Form a consultative women's committee with female members from the public and private sectors to examine major WID issues and frame recommendations;
- ?? develop a long-range plan of action for wide-spread education for women, including effective implementation and consolidation of the SAP education and WID components, involving the private sector and communities;
- ?? evaluate the existing health facilities for women and institute an efficient delivery system, including health education and the use of existing local health extension workers;
- ?? provide credit, technical, and marketing support for women who are involved in income-generating activities;
- ?? raise representation of women in local bodies from the present two seats, as provided in the local Government ordinances, to at least five seats in each council;
- ?? earmark 5% of the budget of local bodies for women's projects, which will be spent on the recommendations of the female councilors;
- ?? create vocational training centres run by female technical trainers for a cluster of villages and in various towns;
- ?? conduct educational programmes for men to make them more aware of the need to change their attitude regarding women's position and their importance in society;
- ?? develop and start implementing local conservation strategies for Chitral and Peshawar Districts; and
- ?? initiate two or three additional district strategies.

Over the long-term, a commitment is made to:

- ?? evaluate the district strategy processes and continue if they prove to be valuable;
- ?? evaluate the impact of the SAP on rural communities and their socio-economic conditions
- ?? conceive and implement projects to fill in gaps in the coverage of social services;
- ?? evaluate the concept of the community substituting contractors for infrastructure projects and extend it if it proves valuable;
- ?? institutionalize the integrated multi sectoral development approach beyond the project
- ?? implement the plans and policies emanating from the short-term actions;
- ?? review existing legislation and repeal laws that are discriminatory to women;
- ?? maintain affirmative action measures until such a time when women are able to hold their own position in all spheres of national life; and
- ?? identify and build the capacity of local women's groups to ensure their active involvement in women's development activities.