

District Jhang

Annual Development Program and its Implementation (2008-09)

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1. Background

Jhang district is located in the Punjab province. Total area of the district is 8,809 square kilometers. It is bounded on the north by Sargodha and Hafizabad districts, on the south by Khanewal district, on the west by Layyah, Bhakkar and Khushab districts, on the east by Faisalabad and Toba Tek Singh districts and on the south-west by Muzaffargarh district.

According to the census conducted in 1998, the total population of the district was 2.8 million, as compared to about 2 million in 1981. It is largely a rural district as only around 23% people live in the urban areas. According to a 2008 estimate, the population of the district has risen to about 3.5 million.

Table 1: Population Profile of Jhang District

	1951	1961	1972	1981	1998
Total	8,63,000	10,65,000	15,55,000	19,71,000	28,34,545
Rural	-	-	-	-	21,71,555
Urban	-	-	-	-	6,62,990
Urban population as %age of Total	-	-	-	-	23.4%

Source: Population Census Organization, Statistics Division, Government of Pakistan, *District Census Report of Jhang*, Islamabad, August 2000.

Jhang is one of the oldest districts of the Punjab province. Currently, the district consists of 4 tehsils: Ahmad Pur Sial, Chiniot, Jhang and Shorkot.

Literacy rate in the Jhang district is one of the lowest in the Punjab province, which is estimated at around 46 percent. It is also low as compared to several of its neighboring districts as, for example, the literacy rate in Faisalabad is 60 percent, T. T. Singh 57 percent and Hafizabad 55 percent.

Table 2: Literacy Rate By Age Groups, District & Gender - Punjab (2003-04)

Area/District	Literacy Rates 10 Years & Above			Literacy Rates 15 Years & Above			Literacy Rates 15-24 Years		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
All Punjab	63.40	43.70	53.90	62.30	39.80	51.50	74.65	61.66	68.32
District									
Bahawalnagar	53.40	33.60	44.00	50.89	28.02	41.00	67.33	47.21	57.44
D.G.Khan	53.30	23.60	39.50	50.43	19.73	35.90	66.65	35.32	51.96
Layyah	58.80	31.80	45.90	54.21	26.09	40.72	67.70	50.06	59.26
Faisalabad	67.60	52.10	60.20	65.62	47.03	56.61	77.29	73.86	75.58
Jhang	60.30	31.30	46.50	58.16	26.36	42.90	71.83	44.45	58.58
T.T.Singh	68.40	46.00	57.60	67.40	43.00	55.71	79.59	71.68	75.88
Gujranwala	72.10	61.80	67.00	67.87	53.97	61.01	82.28	81.47	81.88
Gujrat	73.20	57.20	64.90	70.39	51.16	60.29	86.11	83.20	84.65

Hafizabad	64.40	44.10	55.10	62.10	37.90	51.30	76.80	67.90	72.60
M. Bahauddin	66.20	48.30	57.10	63.06	42.83	52.85	82.90	75.00	79.00
Narowal	71.70	48.60	60.20	68.41	41.95	55.02	85.21	69.21	76.56
Sialkot	75.20	65.00	70.00	72.83	59.34	66.05	88.70	87.41	88.07
Lahore	74.87	66.81	74.00	72.38	61.62	67.21	79.09	80.17	79.61
Sheikhupura	58.00	41.20	49.90	57.74	36.41	47.51	74.05	61.36	67.91
Multan	55.90	35.40	46.30	56.30	32.77	45.20	66.16	54.56	60.83
Khanewal	61.60	35.50	49.20	59.74	30.04	45.48	75.03	52.32	63.58
Sahiwal	63.40	44.50	54.40	61.49	37.69	50.10	76.65	58.31	67.64
Rawalpindi	86.80	68.00	77.50	82.70	58.03	70.21	92.33	85.49	89.00
Attock	73.20	40.40	56.60	69.49	33.45	50.94	85.87	55.81	70.62
Chakwal	83.60	56.90	69.20	79.13	48.46	62.16	93.17	77.95	84.90
Jhelum	77.90	59.10	68.20	75.11	53.39	63.94	84.87	79.85	82.36

Source: Planning and Development Department, Government of Punjab URL: www.pndpunjab.gov.pk

In Jhang, there exists a huge gap between the literacy rates of males and females. For the age group of 10 years and above, the literacy rate of males is 60.5 percent as compared to 31.30 percent for females. The vast gap between the male and female literacy rate is not closing at an adequate pace, as it is clear from the Table below. This situation calls for immediate affirmative actions in favour of girls' education, but the authorities in the district have not yet recognized this shameful reality.

Table 3: Literacy Ratio by Sex and Rural/Urban Areas - 1981 and 1998

Area	1981			1998		
	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female
All Areas	20.3	30.0	9.3	37.1	51.5	21.4
Rural	14.3	23.2	4.1	30.7	46.7	13.4
Urban	41.7	50.0	27.6	57.5	66.8	47.3

Source: Population Census Organization, Statistics Division, Government of Pakistan, *District Census Report of Jhang*, Islamabad, August 2000.

The above Table also shows that there exists a vast gap between the urban and rural rates in terms of literacy rates. In 1998, for instance, the literacy rate in rural Jhang was only 30.7 percent, as against 57.5 percent in urban Jhang. The literacy rate of females in rural Jhang was only 13.4 percent, as against 47.3 percent in urban Jhang. No clear policy has been adopted as yet to address these concerns within a set timeframe.

2. Annual Development Program (2008-09)

In the annual budget for the year 2008-09, the size of the annual development program (ADP) was only RS 315 million. Under the ADP, the district government was required to work on 211 ongoing and new development schemes. Out of these, 120 development schemes were about roads and rural electrification; whereas the remaining 91 schemes were related to all other departments of the district such as education, health, government

offices, community development and sewerage. Only 18 development schemes were related to the education sector.

Even in terms of allocations, the share of education sector in the ADP was minimal. Out of the total annual allocation of RS 315 million for the ADP, only RS 38 million were to be spent in the education sector. This means that the district government had planned to spend only 12 percent of its annual ADP on the education sector.

Table 4: Jhang - Annual Development Program 2008-2009 (In Millions)

No	Sector	Allocation		Schemes approved by DDC during 2008-09 (until the end of Feb 2009)		Funds released 2008-2009 (until the end of Feb 2009)	Funds utilized 2008-2009 (until the end of Feb 2009)
		No	Amount	No	Cost		
1	Roads	Ongoing schemes: 20 New schemes: 50	98.8	40	63.1	44.4	1.55
2.	Rural Electrification	New schemes: 50	37.7	24	21.2	18	18
3.	Education	Ongoing schemes: 14 New schemes: 04	38	1	37	20	3
4.	Health	Ongoing schemes: 06 New schemes: 5	10.9	1	2	1.8	0.1
5.	Govt. Offices & Buildings	Ongoing schemes: 5 New schemes: 10	28.4	5	10.7	4	0.9
6.	Community Development	New schemes: 03	5.5	2	3.2	0.88	
7.	Sports	Ongoing schemes: 01 New schemes: 02	11.3	2	4	5.6	
8.	Sewerage/ Drainage	New schemes: 34	20.8			0.78	
9.	Un-funded Schemes		50			4.45	
10.	Miscellaneous	Ongoing schemes: 01 New schemes: 06	13				
	Total	211	315	75	141	100	24

Source: District Government, Jhang.

In the ADP, an amount of RS 50 million was allocated for so-called ‘un-specified’ schemes. This was done in violation of relevant laws and rules, as allocations can be made only against specific schemes.

The process of identifying new development projects remained non-participatory and non-transparent. There does not exist any criterion to identify and select schemes for inclusion in the ADP. As a result, what generally happens is that schemes proposed by councilors or influential individuals are given priority. Such schemes are usually

inefficient and do not allow maximum economic or social dividends and, instead, benefit the well off groups of the society.

The ADP for the year 2008-09 shows that the top priorities of the district government included roads and rural electrification, as opposed to education or health sectors. What is not clear how these priorities were determined? As a best practice, and even under the relevant rules, such priorities should be determined only through a transparent and participatory procedure.

3. Implementation of Annual Development Program (2008-09): Issues and Concerns

There also exist a large number of concerns in relation to the implementation of ADP in District Jhang. These are briefly described in the following paragraphs:

3.1. The ADP is not prepared or implemented in a transparent and participatory manner. It is despite the fact that, under the Punjab Budget Rules 2003, the District Nazim is required to hold consultations with stakeholders for the next year budget. Such consultations should take place during July-September in each year; and should result in identification of development priorities. And the annual budget should be prepared in line with these development priorities. But this does not happen. Similarly, there should be open and meaningful discussion on ADP in the district council, but the district council too is used to merely rubber stamp the decisions of the executive.

3.2. The capacity of district government to utilize annual development budget remains extremely weak, which leads to delayed implementation of projects, massive cost overruns and a lot of inconvenience for the people. One example of this is that the district administration was able to spend only 7.6 percent of the total annual development budget in 8 months i.e. from July 2008 to February 2009. Out of the total original allocation of RS 315 millions for the ADP, the administration utilized only 24 millions until the end of February 2009.

3.3. Out of RS 38 million allocated for education sector in the ADP, the district authorities were able to utilize only RS 3 million in 8 months i.e. by the end of February 2009. Hence, the utilization rate for the education sector projects too was only 7.9 percent.

3.4. Another problem is that the allocated amounts are not released in time. For instance, until the end of February 2009, the government had released RS 100.4 millions, which was only 32 percent of the total allocation for the ADP for the year. One can imagine that, if only 32 percent of the total allocated amount is released in 8 months of the year, how much of it could be released and utilized in the following 4 months. More disturbing aspect is that even the released amount had not been adequately utilized. In 8 months, only 24 percent of the total released funds were utilized.

3.5. In Jhang, the ADP for the year 2008-09 included allocations for 47 ongoing projects and 164 new projects. However, only 75 of these projects had been approved by the District Development Committee (DDC). Under the Budget Rules 2003, all the development projects must be approved by the DDC before the annual budget is presented in the District Council for approval in June. However, in practice, allocations are made for many projects without prior DDC approval. Such systemic inefficiencies result in delayed implementation of projects, as the related homework is carried out and the DDC approval is obtained generally after the start of the new financial year.

3.6. District authorities continue to blatantly violate the Punjab Budget Rule 2003 and, as a result, adequate homework is not done to prepare for the next year budget, especially for the development projects to be implemented in the next financial year. For instance, under the Budget Rules, the district government should complete its home work by the end of February each year; and submit a draft budget to the District Council in March for discussion. This draft budget must then be improved in the light of feedback received; and finally presented in the District Council in June for approval. In practice, the work on the budget does not even start until the month of May or, in some cases, even June. This year too, in Jhang, the administration has not done anything yet to prepare for the next year budget, which is highly disappointing.

3.7. District government failed to utilize even a single rupee on development projects related to community development, sports, sewerage and drainage.

3.8. Contractors, in collusion with relevant government offices, are generally blamed for inefficient and poor quality execution of development projects, as about 25% of allocated amounts are charged by relevant officers as ‘commissions’ from the contractors.

3.9. One of the very important reasons for delay in implementation of ADP has been the lack of working relationship between the District Nazim and the provincial government. It is widely believed that, backed by the provincial government, the District Coordination Officer (DCO) has not been cooperating with the District Nazim. The consequent tension or lack of coordination between the top two offices significantly explains the pathetic performance of the district government in implementing ADP.

4. Recommendations

On the basis of the findings of research carried out for this report, following recommendations are made for the consideration of relevant authorities:

4.1. The district government must consult stakeholders in each year to identify development priorities. The annual budget must be prepared within the framework of priorities thus identified.

4.2. Transparency and citizens' right to information in relation to all government activity, especially in relation to ADP, must be fully ensured. This can be done through an efficient and honest implementation of Section 137 of Punjab Local Government Ordinance (LGO) 2001.

4.3. All the relevant authorities in the district as well as at the provincial level must take immediate steps to fix the problems that cause low utilization of allocations for the ADP. Existing situation is highly pathetic as even a modest ADP cannot be efficiently implemented. There should exist an effective mechanism to hold those accountable who are responsible for unnecessary delays and low utilization of ADP across the board. Steps should also be taken to address systemic inefficiencies.

4.4. Each year in March, there should be a special pre-budget session of the district council. In this session, the draft budget, which the executive should prepare by then, should be discussed to receive feedback of elected representatives. The said draft budget should also be shared with civil society groups and eminent citizens in the district for their feedback, comments and suggestions. The final budget to be approved in June, especially ADP, must take into account all the suggestions received by the authorities.

4.5. As required under the Budget Rules 2003, all government departments must submit monthly receipt and expenditure statements in the District Council, where these should be debated. Such statements should also be displayed by the related offices at conspicuous places for the information of and inspection by citizens. This practice would make it easier for councilors and citizens to track utilization of annual budget including the allocations for ADP.

4.6. At frequent intervals, the Zila Council must thoroughly discuss and debate the issue of 'commissions' in the award of contracts for development projects. The system of 'commission' must end, and the relevant officers must be taken to task for their corrupt practices.

4.7. The provincial government must take steps to address the problem of lack of cooperation between the offices of Nazim and DCO; and allow the elected leadership of the district to effectively play its role within the framework of Local Government Ordinance 2001.

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