Discuss the concept of community policing and explain potential benefits and challenges associated with the implementation in Pakistan // How can these challenges be effectively addressed?

1) Introduction :-

Community policing is a policing strategy that emphasizes sharing responsibilities with community for law enforcement and proactive crime control. Implementation of this system has produced several success stories where the strategy achieved problem solving, decline in petty crime, dismantling of organized networks and establishment of trust between community and police. However, this form of policing still faced various hurdles at institutional and community level. To solve these challenges

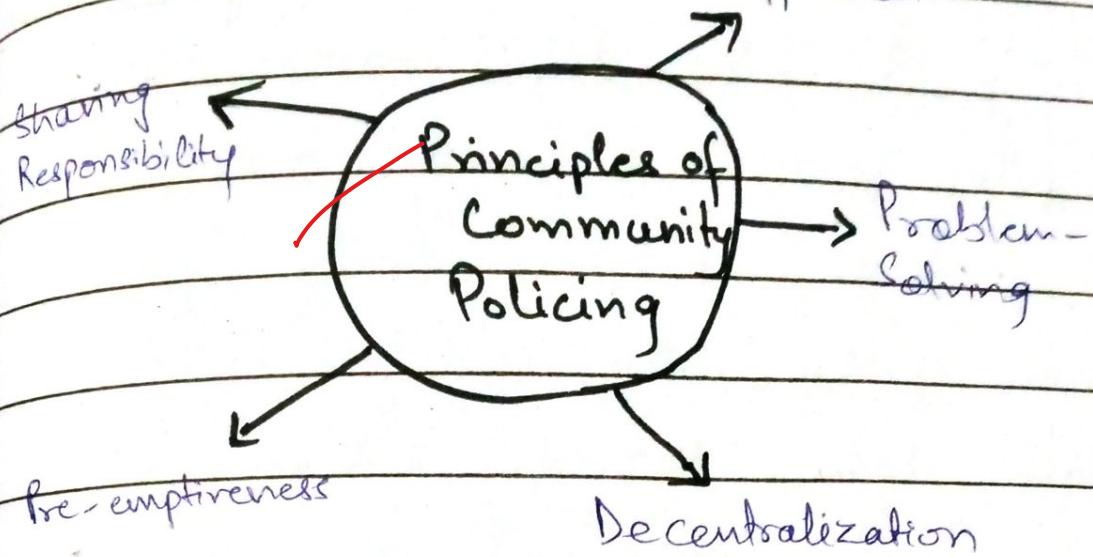Pakistan can rely on legal frameworks, extend such model in all major cities and focus on decentralization of policing.

2) <u>Elaborating the Concept of Community Policing</u>:

According to Larry J. Siegel, Community policing refers to:

"a managerial model that priotizes the community-oriented problem solving and police-community partnerships."

This definition highlights the concept of responsibility sharing, problem-solving and pro-active engagement between community and police department to deter and pre-empt crime.

Whole of Society
Approach

Sharing
Responsibility

Principles of Community Policing → Problem-Solving

Pre-emptiveness

Decentralization

3) Potential Benefits of Community Policing In Pakistan:-

Implementation of this model in some cases has revealed huge successes. Let's take a look at these benefits

a) Decline in Petty Crimes

Collaboration of community and police can help reduce the prevalence of petty crimes. According to UNDP, such arrangement have significantly reduced crime rates in KPK districts of _____ and Mardan

b) Decline in Revenge Killings

In the tribal areas where police control is weak, revenge killings are high and community policing can really help curb this trend via close collaboration between people and police.

c) Decline in Target Killings and Extortions

Target killings and extortions are a problem in urban areas. The study of Karachi's Aman Committees highlights how such initiatives can reduced these crimes to a great extent.

d) Building Trust Between Community and Police

Police is the institution with lowest credibility and citizen trust. Community policing can help establish this trust thus leading to increased efficiency of policing and service delivery.

f) Highlighting Hidden (Under-reported) Crimes

The study of Community Policing forums highlights that they can help in reporting under-reported crimes to governmental agencies

4) Challenges Faced By Community Policing in Pakistan :-

Community policing frameworks remain limited due to the following challenges

a) Centralized Hierarchy Resisting Decentralization:-

According to Police Reforms Committee (2019), centralized hierarchy of police is the biggest hurdle in the functionalization of community policing networks. Central decision-making resists devolvement of decisions to lower tiers

b) Resource Shortage

To develop any such structures we need specialized units or forums where community members and police

can collaborate but resource constraints
make that difficult to achieve.

c) Fear of Retaliation in Community Members

Community members often fear that their collaboration with police might get them targetted by criminal gangs operating in their area.

d) Cultural Barriers Restricting Women Inclusion

Exclusion of women form these initiatives is yet another hurdle. The Mohalla Peace Committees in KPK are a case in point here where women inclusion is almost zero.

5) Adressing Challenges — Recommendations

Following are the recommendations to deal with these challenges.

a) Strengthening Legal Framework

The current laws like Police order (2002) do not provide strong framework for such initiatives. Legal

are frameworks are the prerequisite.

b) Extending Safe City Projects:-

Safe City Project like in Islamabad and Lahore offer community and police to collaborate. Such initiatives need to be extended to other large urban centers.

c) Decentralization of Authority in Police Departments

Decentralization of policing authority is yet another requirement to functionalise community policing.

d) Creating Awareness on Benefits of Community Policing

Spreading awareness is also crucial to let people know how they can benefit from and participate in community policing initiatives.

6) **Conclusion:-**

Community policy is a great way for advancing cross-sectoral problem solving and crime prevention. However in Pakistan, we see poor functionalization of such initiatives. Legal support, institutional support and awareness can be used to unlock the benefits of such initiatives.