

Q. NO. 2

Despite having an elaborate planning mechanism, Governments in Pakistan are often criticized for short-shifting long term development needs. Do you agree with such criticisms? If yes, where does the fault lie?

This is true that govt of Pakistan neglects future-oriented investments on ^{long term} development goals - for instance, education, health, institutions infrastructure and sustainability - to and focuses on quick fixes or short-term gains. The policies in ~~the~~ most cases, are driven by political cycles rather than development planning. Here we discuss few examples:

Subsidy-heavy economic policies - The government gives subsidies on fuel, electricity and food items to control public outrage, where the long-term needs are ignored. For example: tax reforms, fiscal balance and productivity growth

Development spending via Political Schemes -

There is a focus on the development of R roads and flyovers, but urban planning, housing and public transport needs are underemphasized

Educational Sector — There is an emphasis on quantity and expression rather than quality. There is a need of curriculum reforms—specifying an old curriculum of the secondary level ~~whole~~ and focus should be on learning outcomes, while the government's eyes are on more schools building and increasing enrolment figures without considering if the right education and teaching systems are delivered to the students and their learning requirements are satisfied.

Energy Sector — The Rental Power Projects are installed for immediate electricity generation to reduce load-shedding. This burdens government ~~causing~~ due to high costs coupled with increased corruption loopholes. Furthermore, these are not a sustainable solution to overcome or satisfy energy needs. If the same money is invested in hydro power projects, and renewables and transmission infrastructure the energy issue would be resolved rather efficiently with sustainable outcome.

Bailout Packages — Pakistan has been entangled in a vicious cycle of loans through IMF bailout packages — a short-term solution to avoid default than with the help of external financing which curbs

further the independent policy making of jeopardizing the national interest. The repeated balance-of-payments crisis reduce the development of the spending hence the country remains underdeveloped throughout with least opportunity to development and progress. On the other hand, the measures which can resolve the budget-balancing issue on the long term such as Export diversification, reforming industrial policies and expanding the tax network are ignored.

These examples also manifests the government's short shifling of long-term development needs. ~~The fault primarily lies~~

Where does the fault lie?

The fault primarily lies in ¹ weak institutions and governance structure. The institutions in Pakistan are not strong enough to protect policies from political change. Policies are often introduced through executive orders rather than strong legislation, so when governments change, policies can easily be reversed.

1- ~~Lacks~~

2- Lack of Continuity Mechanism:

Pakistan lacks long-term national frameworks with bipartisan support (i.e:

education, water, population policy. Without consensus, every new government reshapes priorities, disrupting long-term development planning.

3- Politicization of Policy Making:

Policies are seen as the "ownership" of a political party or leader. New governments withdraw previous policies to claim credit for new initiatives, even if the old policies were working, turning policymaking into a political tool rather than a developmental process.

4- Short-term Political Incentives:

Governments focus on policies that deliver quick, visible results before elections. Long-term investments for example enhancing the quality of education or institutional reforms, are neglected because their benefits appear after many years, and the government fears the credit may go in opposite court.

5- Poor Monitoring and Evaluation:

Instead of improving weak policies through evaluation, governments often abandon them altogether. The absence of strong data-driven feedback systems, which

are crucial to evaluate the efficiency of the policy, leads to ultimately to policy withdrawal rather than reform.

6- Limited Bureaucratic Autonomy:

Political interference and frequent transfers weaken administrative continuity. With so much politicization of civil services, the ^{public} services become partisan where civil servants focus on pleasing present political leadership rather than ensuring sustained policy implementation, undermining public interest persistently.

Thus the fault to the short-sighting of long-term development needs lies in Pakistan's weak and politicized institutional framework, where short-term political considerations override policy continuity, evidence-based reform, and long-term development goals.

Q. no. 3

What purposes do public policies serve? Explain with reference to some specific public policies. In the context of Pakistan, name one public policy each which can be presented as a success story and a failure. In either case, explain the reasons for its success or failure.

Public policies serve the purpose of public service by solving collective problems which individuals cannot solve alone such as addressing poverty, unemployment and health issues, regulating behavior, ~~the~~ allocating resources to promote public welfare and development. In essence, public policies guide long-term national development and serving inter-related purposes. These purposes can be clearly understood with reference to specific public policies in Pakistan.

Purposes of Public Policies with Examples:

1. Resource Allocation

Public policies determine how

public resources are distributed among different sectors and social groups.

~~For example, the National Action Plan (NAP) was formulated to tackle terrorism and extremism as a national security problem.~~

For Example: The Annual Federal Budget allocates resources to defence, health, education and development projects.

2. Problem Solving

Public policies are designed to address societal problems that individuals cannot resolve on their own. An example to that is National Action Plan (NAP), was formulated to tackle terrorism and extremism as a national security problem.

3. Social Welfare & Poverty Alleviation

Public policies aim to serve public welfare by protecting vulnerable groups and reduce inequality through poverty elimination programs such as Benazir Income Support Program (BISP). This program provides cash transfers to poor households, especially women.

4. Economic Management and Stability

The policies regulate economic

activity to promote growth and long-term economic developmental goals i.e macroeconomic stability. For instance, IMF-supported economic stabilization policies aim to manage balance-of-payment crises and fiscal deficits.

5- Regulation of Markets and Behavior

Public policies establish rules to regulate individuals, business, and institutions. One of the manifestations is customer care policies which protect ^{the} customers from being exploited in case of ^{getting} wrong or unwanted products or services. i.e: products' return and exchange policies. Another

Another example to that is competition policy which regulates monopolies and unfair market practices.

6- Provision of Public Goods

Public policies ensure the supply of goods and services that the market cannot efficiently provide. ~~There~~ could for example, National Highway and Motorway policy which provides transport infrastructure for public use

Apart from these public policies serve many other goals for the public service including human development and capacity building.

nation-building and long term development.
i.e The vision 2025 aimed to outline long-term development goals for Pakistan. Thus, public policies serve to solve public problems, allocate resources, regulate society, promote welfare and guide long-term national development as reflected in Pakistan's social, economic and security policies.

Failed Public Policy in Pakistan

~~1. A~~ → A Failed Public Policy
1. National Reconciliation Ordinance (NRO), 2007

The National Reconciliation Ordinance (NRO) was promulgated in 2007 by General Pervez Musharraf. Its stated objective ~~was to~~ promoting political reconciliation, ending political victimization and ensuring political stability by granting amnesty to politicians and bureaucrats accused of corruption. ~~It was~~ It was a top-down executive ordinance rather than a parliamentary legislation and provided blanket amnesty without accountability. The policy was totally partisan as being politically motivated and time-bound.

- Reason of failure of NRO:-
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The National Reconciliation Ordinance

was failed due to many reasons. First, it was an alleged violation of rule of law. The amnesty was granted without due legal process and undermined accountability and equality before law. Second, it lacked legitimacy as no parliamentary debate or public consensus was supported on the time of passing the ordinance. It was perceived as morally and legally unjust. Third, it was an elite capture, benefiting political and bureaucratic elites rather than public; seen as a tool for power-sharing rather than a reform policy. Fourth it faced Judicial Rejection. The Supreme Court, in 2009, declared the NRO unconstitutional, hence, the policy collapsed institutionally and legally.

The NRO failed to achieve long-term political stability and along with damaging public trust in governance and strengthening perception of selective accountability.

2. Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) — A. Successful Public Policy:

The Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) was launched in 2008. It aimed to reduce poverty and income

inequality by providing cash transfers to the poorer households and empowering women financially. The policy is manifested as social protection and welfare policy and was institutionalized through legislation.

• Reasons for success of BISP -

The reasons of ~~success~~ the BISP Benazir Income Support program to be a success are genuine. First, it addressed structural poverty which has been affecting millions, thus met a genuine and persistent public problem. Second, it ~~holds~~ held a political consensus, therefore it was continued by successive governments of different parties and ultimately transforming it from a party initiative into a state policy. B. Third, it was established as an independent statutory body and remained protected from abrupt political reversal. Furthermore, the policy implementation has ensured transparency and focussed target by using database source identity such as NADRA records and poverty scorecards. Hence, it resulted in reduced leakages and improved credibility. Lastly, it was a women-centered design; the cash transfers issued in women's names, therefore ~~that~~ as

it enhanced social acceptance and international recognition.

The IBISP resulted in improved household consumption and financial inclusion. It strengthened social safety net, helping millions of the poor & deprived population on regular terms and became successful because the foundation for Ehsaas Programme.

The failure of NRO and the sustainability of IBISP reflects that the policies driven by elite interests and lacking institutional legitimacy collapse, while those rooted in social need, transparency, and institutional continuity endure.

Q. no. 4

Suppose you are hired by the government on a project to reform the Civil Service. Which four major reforms would you propose, keeping in view the ground realities including, but not limited to, fiscal constraints?

If I am hired by the government on a project to reform civil services, I would propose following key reforms, keeping fiscal constraints and ground realities.

1. Merit - Based Recruitment and Promotion with Performance and Evaluation:— The meritocracy would be strengthened by linking promotions to measurable performance indicators rather than on the basis of seniority alone using existing institutions such as UPSC and the Establishment Division to avoid additional fiscal burden. This would improve efficiency, motivation and service delivery.

2. Stability of Tenure and Protection from Political Interference — Stability of tenure must be ensured by introducing fixed minimum tenures for key posts — for example, 2 to 3 years. Also, making

pre-mature/ arbitrary transfers restricted by subjecting to written justification.

As this is a legal/ administrative reform, would not ~~to~~ ~~also~~ affect budget, but it would rather improve continuity without increasing salaries. The reform will enhance institutional memory and ensure accountability.

3. Digitalization and Process Simplification—

Extensive digitalization and simplification of administrative processes should be undertaken by expanding e-governance, ~~promoting paperless offices~~, and ~~promoting~~ online service delivery → automating routine procedures such as transfers, postings, file movement etc, and promoting paperless offices. This involves limited upfront cost—the one-time investment—but yields long-term savings, reduces corruption and enhances service delivery.

4. Targeted Capacity Building Instead of Across-the-Board pay Raises— Instead of costly across-the-board pay increases, targeted capacity building should be prioritized through cost-effective, local,

and online training in areas such as policy analysis, digital governance, and public finance thereby improving competence and adaptability of civil servants within existing budgets. It is a cost-effective skill development and avoids unsustainable salary increase.

To sum up, meaningful civil service reform in Pakistan requires strengthening merit, ensuring tenure stability, building capacity cost-effectively, and expanding digitalization, as these realistic measures can improve efficiency, accountability and service delivery even under fiscal constraints.