

DASU HYDROPOWER PROJECT

Impacts on People & The Economy



WATAR AND POWER DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY, DASU DISTT: KOHISTAN (UPPER)

Background:

Dasu Hydropower Project (DHP) is the largest venture by the Government of Pakistan at present. The project is funded by a consortium of financiers including the World Bank. The construction work of this mega project in the Upper Kohistan District of KPK has been in-progress since 2015. The expected completion of the first phase is around 2026. Building of the hydro power structure with a generation



Dasu Hydropower Project site

capacity of 4,320 MW of power undoubtedly magnanimous is a undertaking. Beneath this mammoth development is the relocation of over 3,000 households from 41 villages and the development of infrastructure for the sustenance of the displaced population. As much as power generation and its transmission for the betterment of the country at large is important, safeguarding displaced people's future and livelihoods are also of paramount importance. For this reason, it is critical to plan implementation the resettlement program and for better future of the displaced population.

The check and balances:

In order to address this noble and human rights issue, the DHP has established various checks and balances to be pursued throughout project life. Apart from the mechanism in place to carefully calculate the due compensation and its disbursement to the affected parties without any recourse, the project has several built-in processes to ensure that the people are given the best attention during the process of relocation and beyond. The compensation confirmation and its disbursement itself is the subject assigned to five different committees comprising of over 25 skilled and executive-level staff. Monitoring is conducted at various levels of resettlement implementation process to ensure that the package is properly delivered and that the affectees are relocated in appropriate host area as per their choice. The check and balances include the application of a unique methodology for the measurement of living standards and lifestyle of the affected population before, during and post-resettlement. If the living standards are found to be below pre-project, additional measures are designed for the upliftment of the same so that the affected population's quality of life is not compromised. The entire process is subject to Independent monitoring leading to the implementation of further corrective actions as needed.

Baseline status:

The baseline statistics reveal that the inhabitants of the project footprint possessed a low literacy rate of 23% in 2012. 67% of affected people were living in Katcha (Mud/wooden) houses with only 5% owned Pukka (Tin sheet/concrete floor) houses in 2012. The population did not possess high-end items such as washing machines, refrigerators, color television sets and motor cycles. The number of households living with debts were high. The household's monthly income of PKR 9,000 was found to be not commensurate with the expenditure regime, often making them to seek loans for a living. 27% of households have had paid employees whilst only 1% of households have reported skilled workers.

Impact assessment:

The independent monitoring outfit of the project has undertaken a comprehensive assessment of the entire project landscape as well as a few villages outside to compare and contrast changes that have taken place since beginning of project. This assessment conducted in 2023 has generated following key findings, among others.

Project impacts:

The figures in table below demonstrate the magnitude of change in literacy and living standards that have occurred beneath the mammoth construction work under the project.

Criteria	2012	Project Area	Outside Project (for comparison)
Overall literacy (%)	23	31	25
Women literacy (%)		5	0
Boys schooling (relocated) (%)		100	84
Girls schooling (relocated) (%)		98	28
House type- (Pukka) (%)	5	70	6
House type-(Katcha) (%)	67	0	63
Household income (PKR)	23,000 ²	46,000 ¹	28,000
Health visits by peoples (%)		13	19
Households In debt (%)		8	17
Households with paid employees (%)	27	61	52
Households with skilled workers (%)	1	52	39
Households in possession of highend living items i.e. fans, refrigerator, motor cycles, washing machines (%)		42	24

The literacy:

Eight years into project implementation saw the literacy rate jumped to 31% in project area compared to 25% in control villages outside of the project. The literacy rate has improved only by 2% in control villages between 2012 and 2023.

Schooling:

Enrolment rate was one of the lowest (boys 83% and girls 35%) in the project area. At present, 100% and 98 % of boys and girls respectively are enrolled in school among the relocated households.



Free transport service to students



Seo School shelters by DHPP

Household income:

Household income has doubled between 2012 (pre-project) and in 2023 (with-project). It is about twice more in project area comparison to outside the project foot print. In 2023 July, the project has employed 6,000 people out of which 50 % are sourced from among the



Vocational training Centre for women to improve their income

local population. The average salary per skilled worker is PKR 52,000 whilst that of an unskilled worker is PKR 48,000. The shared work place between Kohistani and non-Kohistani people have produced some exceptional dividends benefiting the local population. The locals are adopting themselves to the positive behavior/attitude of their fellow countrymen/expats who have migrated to Dasu from more developed districts in the south. Awareness regarding the literacy specially female education and professional skills development has been improved, good office behavior and admirable communication skills are developed among local people. These are in addition to the much valuable new trade skills the Kohistani have learned by working together with non-Kohistanis, the latter possess better trade skills.

Health service access:

On a very encouraging note, women's visit to health facilities for gynecological consultations was never before heard in Upper Kohistan. Obviously, the facility did not exist and women's awareness was very low too. Eight years into the project, on an average, about 35 women seek this specialized service on day-time whilst the night-time consultation averages at 8 women per day.



Free Medical camp by DHPP



Renovation of RHC, Dasu Kohistan

Improved living standards:

Statistics for the relocated households pinpoint a contrast compared to pre-project. For example, the house quality has improved substantially where every relocated household is now living in a Pukka house whilst only 6% people in control villages live in similar houses. 28 % of relocated households are connected to grid electricity and 15 % connected to public water. The egg-consumption which is considered a symbol of higher living has heavily advanced among the relocated households. The percentage of people consuming 1-2 eggs per week has jumped from 35 % in control villages to as much as 43 % among relocated households. The frequency of meat consumption of 1-2 times per week among relocated households is at a higher level of 60 % compared to 55 % in control villages. The households living with debts have reduced by 9 % among relocated households. On the same token, households seeking a loan for the purchase of essential living items has declined.



Main Jamia Mosque Komila (Dasu) under DHPP

Local economy:

The economic activity is booming in Dasu after the project. The movement of people, goods and commodities and service providers is rising rapidly creating an atmosphere of high economic activity in the Komila hub. The bazar now has 12 commercial banks in comparison to just 1 in Shatial and only 3 in Pattan, the latter hit development much earlier to Dasu. At 728 Businesses and shops functional in Dasu/Komila compared to 188 in Pattan, it is clear that Dasu's economy has already bounced compared to business hub outside of the project. The number of shops selling a basket of consumer goods has increased by several fold. Almost any consumer item is now available in the Dasu/Komila Bazar. The number of clinics and private schools have increased so much giving a wide range of health and educational choices for the local population.



Construction of Jalkot Bridge under DHPP Program

The main indicators of a healthy economy include: a vibrant rental market, competition for premises, accommodation choices, restaurants and a variety of business are all present in Dasu. For the first time, a new insurance business has started operations in Dasu which has already sold several policies.

The above statistics bear evidence for the improved living standards of the population and the rapid pace of development in general in the project area. This outburst is a direct reflection of hydropower project-influenced development in the Upper Kohistan District.



Kacha House

A similar advancement in living standard is obviously not seen outside of the project area.

What factors have caused above impacts?

DHP has heavily contributed to building of infrastructure, improvement of a variety of services and infrastructure of other soft-changes such as as literacy, computer skills, vocational skills, etc. The enhancement of socioeconomic well-being including improved living standards of the local population is a primary result of changes brought about by project activities. A sample of activities fully supported by the project is listed below:



Construction of Razika road under DHPP

Infrastructure built or up-graded by Local area development program:

- Complete rehabilitation of the Right bank Access Road from Komila to Sigloo
- Rehabilitated several link roads adding to a total of over 10 km
- Solar street lighting in Komila, Dasu and other towns
- Rehabilitation of Dasu RHC
- Rehabilitation of Jalkot Bridge
- Installation of distribution network, micro hydel generators and distribution equipment
- Water supply improvements to towns and villages
- Solarization of schools/Hospital

Services improved by project:

- Free school bus pick & drop transport service benefitting about 500 students (150 girls and 350 boys)
- Medical camps offering both free consultant service and medicine to over 10,000 people/ patients
- Supply of electricity to thousands of households
- Provide water storage tanks to over 50 households

Soft-developments directly supported by project:

- Provided employment for over 3,000 local people.
- Income earning opportunities to local population by way of renting building, land, houses and machinery for project work.
- Cash payout by way of land and land based assets compensation and other allowances to over 3,000 affected households.
- Tradable skills training to over 200 Kohistani youth.
- Supply of computers and furniture to 7 schools.
- A centre to improve literacy of local people .
- A centre to upskill women's sewing and embroidery pursuits.
- About 30 women are being trained as Lady Health Visitors.
- A scholarship program for about 30 girls.

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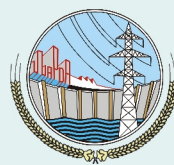
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