



# RESEARCH FOR SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION & ADVANCEMENT

COMPETITIVE GRANTS PROGRAMME FOR POLICY-ORIENTED RESEARCH

[www.pide.org.pk/rasta](http://www.pide.org.pk/rasta)

**Pakistan Institute of Development Economics, Islamabad**



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## ABOUT RASTA

The 'Research for Social Transformation and Advancement' (RASTA) is the largest social sciences research network in Pakistan. RASTA's mission is to develop a research culture and network of academia and think tanks across Pakistan producing high-quality, evidence-based policy research to inform Pakistan's public policy process.

The objectives of RASTA programme are to **(a)** reduce research-policy gap by stimulating economic and social science research and debate across Pakistan; **(b)** build a network of thought communities stimulating internally defined and produced policy-relevant research; **(c)** provide a knowledge-sharing/generating platform where different actors can present and share evidence-based research to inform decision-making in the government; **(d)** revisit the future policy agenda in line with the evidence produced in this programme; and **(e)** build capacity and improve policymaking and implementation by involving and engaging local universities, think tanks, policymakers, practitioners, and other stakeholders.

With these objectives, the programme seeks to develop local thought communities and generate knowledge. Substantial outputs will be completed in important areas of public policy that will produce insightful research and facilitate goals that the Government wants to achieve according to its vision.



## RASTA STREAMS

The RASTA has two broad streams through which it is building research networks, funding research projects, and informing public policy in Pakistan.

## Competitive Grants Programme (CGP)

The CGP is the flagship programme of RASTA under which research proposals are invited on specific themes/topics decided by the Research Advisory Committee (RAC). For this, a 'Call for Research Proposals' is announced bi-annually: March and October. Applications from all around Pakistan and abroad are invited through open competition on the broad research themes outlined above for the grant of awards. Anyone from across Pakistan and/or abroad, with a research focus on Pakistan's public policy issues relevant to the stated CGP themes/topic of each round, can participate. Outreach of this programme is ensured through inviting and entertaining reasonable number of applications from outside the major cosmopolitan/metropolitan centres compete for the grants.

### CGP Process



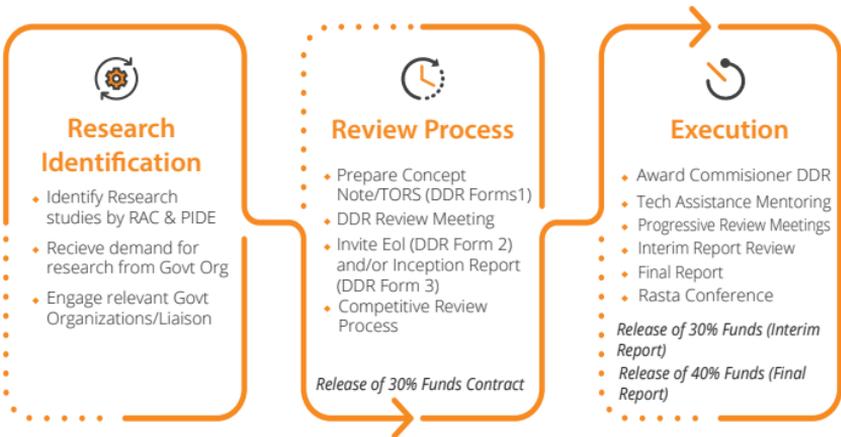
CGP grant recipients are expected to produce research articles or monograph of international peer-reviewed publication quality. Interim and final reports submitted to the review panel are expected to be intermediate products leading to final published output as RASTA Working Papers, Research Reports and/or Book (Chapters). The RAC may also

ask grant recipients to produce RASTA Policy Briefs for wider research dissemination. Completed research will be presented in the RASTA Workshops and Conferences. The findings of research studies are shared with relevant stakeholders to inform public policy making at national and sub-national levels.

## Demand Driven Research (DDR)

The DDR is a pro-active evidence-based research approach to inform governments' policy-making processes. The DDR aims to provide timely and cost-effective research support to meet the public policy demand for evidence-based policymaking in Pakistan. The DDR's objective is to fulfil the demand for research on several pertaining economic/public policy issues in the government, both federal and provincial levels, highlighted by the government organizations, RAC members and experts at PIDE.

### DDR Process



A number of important projects are funded under DDR including the *PIDE Citypedia* that is the master key of information that provides comprehensive view of city economy, government, infrastructure, lifestyle, facilities and much more. Similarly, *PIDE Sludge* Series is about exploring and

calculating excessive and/or unjustified frictions in the public sector procedures and processes. The objective of this series is to highlight the sludge involved – loads of paperwork, money, time and stress – in different processes of the public sector organizations. This series identifies specific sludge areas and suggests interventions to cut short processes through different means and make the public service delivery more efficient and effective.



## RASTA RESEARCH THEMES

The RASTA themes include, but not restricted to, the following.

- Growth and investment
- Government & public policy processes
- Governance & public sector management
- Public financial management
- Poverty alleviation
- Social protection and social sector development
- Foreign aid effectiveness
- Demography, labour force & unemployment
- Human resource management
- Cities governance & urban development
- Water and energy
- Agriculture and rural development
- Markets & regulations
- Climate change and environment
- Transport & communications
- Trade & commerce
- Housing
- Youth development
- Private sector development

More and newer research areas can be added to this list for which the RAC feels a demand exist and can be used to the optimum in the future.

## RASTA KNOWLEDGE NETWORK

A successful and transformative public policy requires an engaged policy research community developing ideas and evidence from diverse local vantage points. However, Pakistan's economic and social science research remains fragmented, under-resourced and dependent on external policy advice. To overcome this limitation, apart from CGP and DDR, RASTA has established three knowledge platforms where actors and stakeholders present, debate and share evidence-based research to inform decision-making in the government. This will help RASTA to build knowledge networks and help policy communities to learn best local practices through cooperation. Following panels are created for knowledge exchange and informed discussion on pressing public policy issues facing Pakistan.



### Panel of Chief Economists

This unique Panel includes all the Chief Economists of the federal, provincial and regional governments including Gilgit Baltistan and Azad Jammu & Kashmir.



### Panel of Practitioners

This Panel includes government officers (both civil servants and technocrats), development practitioners (from the development sector community), and public policy experts from across Pakistan and abroad.



### Panel of Academicians

This Panel includes researchers, academicians (faculty of higher education/universities) and trainers (training faculty and experts) engaged in research, public policy analysis, and training & development activities.



### RASTA Community

This is a platform for university students, scholars, researchers, academicians, practitioners, policymakers and observers who are interested in conducting and/or learning from research. Members of RASTA Community actively inform public policymaking in Pakistan through research. Interested parties may fill the RASTA C1 Form to become a member and stay updated via RASTA email.



## RESEARCH ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The RASTA is guided by a scholarly Research Advisory Committee (RAC), chaired by the Vice-Chancellor, PIDE Islamabad. The members of the RAC are well-reputed national and international researchers, academics, practitioners, international economic development scholars, and senior federal and provincial government officials. The role of RAC is critical from the call for applications stage to the final submission of the research report. Each member of RAC critically reviews research proposals, participates in the decision to award funds, monitors the progress, provides technical assistance, and mentors awarded research studies during the course.



## RASTA PROJECT MANAGEMENT

The RASTA is managed by the Project Management Team (PMT) at PIDE, Islamabad. The RASTA PMT manages all programme activities under the leadership of Dr Nadeem Ul Haque, Chairman RAC/Vice Chancellor, PIDE and Dr Faheem Jehangir Khan, Project Director, RASTA/Senior Research Economist, PIDE. The PMT, stationed at an independent Project Management Unit, is responsible for the administration and management of grant selection procedure made by the scholarly review panel, commissioning of funds to the awardees, disbursement of funds based on the fulfilment of the grant requirements by recipients, and other operational aspects of the programme.

## RASTA DDR PROJECTS



### PIDE Sludge Series



### Power Sector in Pakistan



### Housing Sector in Pakistan



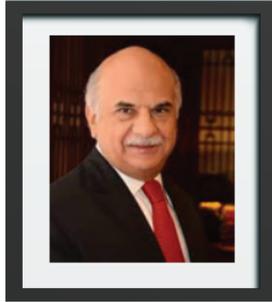
### Pakistan Railways



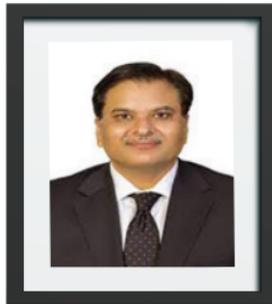


## RASTA CGP PROJECT FUNDING

The Ministry of Planning, Development & Special Initiatives, Government of Pakistan is the sponsoring Ministry of the RASTA CGP project.



**Muhammad Jehanzeb Khan**  
*Deputy Chairman Planning Commission,  
Government of Pakistan.*



**Hamed Yaqoob Sheikh**  
*Secretary, M/o Planning, Development & Special  
Initiatives, Government of Pakistan.*

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## **RASTA SECRETARIAT**

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