

# Social Viability of Karez Rehabilitation in Balochistan, Pakistan

## (A study of Loralai District)

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### **ABSTRACT**

Policy supported modernization of groundwater abstraction through tube wells have raised serious concerns about the sustainability of groundwater resources in Balochistan. Many experts believe that traditional technologies such as *Karez* were best suited to arid climate of the region and prescribe their revival. While there is generally good gesture about local interest in the revival of *Karez*, it is yet to establish the farmer's serious motivation in this regard. This is particularly important since the socioeconomic and livelihood sources and technological scenario of the region has been rapidly changing since the last few decades. This research investigated the local enthusiasm towards the revival of *Karez* among the household using *Karez*. Four *Karez* from the Loralai District were purposively selected, comprising of two functional and two non-functional *Karezes*. Furthermore, randomly selected sample of 105 household were investigated through structured questionnaire and eight interviews were also conducted to have in depth knowledge of the issue.

The result shows that tubewell didn't help I the expansion of the agricultural land as it was perceived due to high electricity and maintenance cost. The expansion in the cultivated land was witnessed in the region where *Karez* is revived. People from the functional *Karez* region showed high enthusiasm towards *Karez* revival rehabilitation by contributing enormously financially led by strong leadership. On the other hand, people from the non functional region lacked finance, leadership and were comparatively less motivated. Even though the reliance on the tube well is at peak in all the household chores but respondents still claimed their struggle for *Karez* rehabilitation as their crop production was declining.

The results, however, identifies the necessitates for the commencement of the *Karez* rehabilitation and also clears the curiosities for policy makers whether reviving *Karez* will be viable in the present state of the district, eventually improving the ground water resources, with the design and implementation of appropriate policies.