Business Environment Reform Facility

Skills for Competitiveness – Lessons from the Punjab Skills Development Fund

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BE RF Business Environment Reform Facility

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About Business Environment Reform Facility (BERF)

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About this Report

This Evidence and Learning Note is one in a series of Skills for Competitiveness studies developed by BERF for and in association with the World Bank Group's Finance, Competitiveness & Innovation (FCI) Global Practice.

The World Bank Group (WBG) played a critical role in the development of the Evidence Notes. The idea for the series came from FCI's Skills Team which designed the ToRs and provided comments and guidance. DFID funded the series through the BERF programme.

Research for this study was conducted by Thomas Hilton between August and September 2018.

Acronyms and Abbreviations

BERF	Business Environment Reform Facility
BISP	Benazir Income Support Programme
CERP	Centre for Economic Research, Pakistan
DFID	UK Department for International Development
EU	European Union
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft fur Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GoPb	Government of Punjab
ILO	International Labour Organisation
NAVTTC	National Vocational and Technical Training Commission
OJT	On-the-job training
PEOP	Punjab Economic Opportunities Programme (DFID)
PBTE	Punjab Board of Technical Education
PKR	Pakistani rupee
PMT	Proxy means test
PSDF	Punjab Skills Development Fund
PSDP	Punjab Skills Development Programme (World Bank)
PSP	Placement service provider
RCT	Randomised control trial
SDP	Skills Development Programme (DFID)
TSP	Training service provider
TTB	Trade Testing Board
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
TVET RSP	TVET Reform Support Programme (GIZ)

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1. Executive Summary

1.1 Skills for competitiveness

Well-targeted skills development policies are the key to developing and maintaining a competitive edge in an increasingly globalised economy. Public good elements justify a degree of subsidy for skills, but meaningful private sector engagement with skills policy is essential to ensure quality and relevance. Women and young people are vulnerable and underserved in the skills market globally but are also a source of great potential for the development of skills for competitiveness at scale.

1.2 The context of Pakistan

Pakistan's poor performance on skills development has contributed to a relative decline in its competitiveness in recent years. Government skills programmes have been marred by poor governance and low levels of quality, relevance and efficiency. Pakistan's human capital levels are now below those of many low-income countries. The country has a booming youth population, high levels of employment vulnerability, and one of the largest gender gaps in the world, with women being largely excluded from the labour force.

1.3 The Punjab Skills Development Fund (PSDF)

The Punjab Skills Development Fund (PSDF) was established in 2010 by DFID and the Government of the Punjab. PSDF's transparent, evidence-based and private sector-driven competitive grant funding of training service providers (TSPs) serves as an encouraging model for skills provision, stimulating cost-effective private sector delivery of skills.

However, in terms of sustainability, the Fund will continue to rely heavily on public funding for the foreseeable future, be it from donors or the Government of Punjab. Extensive reliance on the latter could risk PSDF losing some of its unique private sector-led characteristics and instead adopting characteristics of past government-led initiatives. Efforts should be made to establish a structure that ensures the autonomy of the PSDF and distances it from the perceived shortcomings of government skills programming in Pakistan.

A pilot cost-sharing model has shown some early successes in securing increased private sector involvement. Further research and piloting should seek to establish the potential for scaling this model in order to reduce the extent of subsidy dependence.

Further research is also needed to (a) gain more in-depth employer feedback on the programme, (b) understand the long-term employability impact on trainees, and (c) understand the impact that PSDF is having on the development of the private market for skills delivery.

2. Introduction

In an increasingly globalised economy, efficient and effective skills development programmes are vital in enabling countries, firms and individuals to develop a resilient competitive advantage in the face of changing technologies and sectoral shifts.

The market failures involved in skills delivery mean that firms and individuals tend to under-invest in training. Responsibility for skills programming has therefore largely remained in the public sector. However, supply-side skills policies have often failed to create competitive incentives, featured limited dialogue with industry, and consequently delivered poorly-targeted, low-quality services. Meanwhile, few examples exist of initiatives which successfully overcome these market failures and incentivise a greater role for the private sector in skills provision.

The shortcomings of government skills programming are particularly familiar in Pakistan. In light of this, the Punjab Skills Development Fund (PSDF) has pioneered a model of competitive grant-based financing for training providers, delivering well-targeted and cost-efficient training to predominantly poor and vulnerable youths across the province, and seeking to promote a sustainable shift towards greater private sector involvement in skills provision.

This Evidence and Learning Note seeks to extract key lessons from the PSDF model for the design of market-oriented skills programming globally. Section 3 sets out the international context for skills for competitiveness. Section 4 begins by presenting the specific challenges faced in the Punjab, before turning to examine the PSDF approach and its results to date.

2.1 Methodology and limitations

The evidence presented here is based upon a literature review of global skills development initiatives, the skills for competitiveness context in the Punjab province of Pakistan, and extensive documentation pertaining to PSDF since its inception in 2010. The literature review has been complemented with interviews with PSDF leadership, as well as additional stakeholders at DFID, the World Bank and the Centre for Economic Research, Pakistan (CERP).

In-country consultations with training service providers (TSPs) and employers were beyond the scope of the analysis. Since the research found fairly limited existing evidence in terms of employer or TSP feedback to date, it is fairly limited in its ability to make robust conclusions with regard to lasting changes in private sector attitudes towards skills development in the Punjab. PSDF should prioritise further research along these lines in support of its emergent sustainability strategy going forwards.

3. Skills for competitiveness in developing countries

The following sets out a summary of current thinking on skills for competitiveness. For the present paper, "skills for competitiveness" are defined as skills that are immediately relevant and appropriate for employment in areas that increase the competitive advantage of firms in the pursuit of economic development.[1]

3.1 The importance of skills for competitiveness

Whilst competitiveness has traditionally been considered a factor of the relative costs of factors of production (labour, land and capital), influenced by a combination of natural endowments and economic policies, skills and human capital have increasingly become central to the agenda (ADB, 2013).

As globalisation intensifies competition through the increased fluidity of goods, services, labour and technology, flexible labour markets and well-functioning skills development systems are vital to individuals, firms and governments seeking to develop and maintain a competitive edge (EDFI, 2016).

In particular, as countries rise to higher levels of development and economic sophistication, the lack of access to skills is increasingly cited by firms as their primary constraint (IFC, 2013). For emerging economies, ADB (2013) note the threat of a 'middle-income trap', whereby an abundance of low-skilled labour can no longer compete with low-income countries, whilst they lack the means of developing the higher skills needed to compete with more advanced economies.

Nine out of ten jobs in the developing world are in the private sector, where 38% of employers complain of a lack of availability of appropriately skilled labour (EDFI, 2016). Nevertheless, firms demonstrably underinvest in training their workforce, partly because the costs of training are tangible and immediate, whilst the results are often intangible and/or take longer to fully materialise. Individuals underinvest in their own up-skilling for similar reasons. Firms are further discouraged by the threat of losing trained workers to competitors (IFC, 2013).

3.2 Public sector skills provision

These market failures significantly hinder the development of private sector training providers. As such, skills provision has traditionally been in the domain of the public sector, through Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) programmes and Active Labour Market Policies (ALMPs) such as labour exchanges and apprenticeship schemes.

However, government provision of such schemes has often been through supply-side policies with poor levels of engagement with industry, and few incentives to deliver high-quality and

[1] Drawing upon the guidance of the World Bank's *Finance, Competitiveness and Innovation Global Practice* and the OECD definition of "competitiveness", available at https://stats.oecd.org/glossary/detail.asp?ID=399.

well-targeted skills. Poor quality programming undermines the confidence of individuals and firms in the system and further erodes willingness to pay, again hindering the development of market-oriented skills systems (IFC, 2013). In response to this, some efforts to introduce competition have been made, including through voucher systems whereby the individual has more say over the services received, albeit with mixed results to date (IFC, 2013; Dunbar, 2013).

3.3 Encouraging private sector involvement

Whilst the public good elements of skills development merit a degree of ongoing subsidy, it is now widely recognised that direct private sector involvement is essential in improving the quality and appropriateness of skills for competitiveness (Dunbar, 2013; IFC, 2013, OECD, 2012; UNESCO, 2012).

Overcoming the market failures that discourage private sector involvement can be challenging. Dunbar (2013) provides an overview of approaches documented in the literature:

- Firms are most likely to engage when they have confidence in both the business environment and the government's commitment to skills development, and when bureaucracy is low.
- Fiscal measures such as tax breaks and skills levies can have some success, but tend to rely on the existence of a large formal sector and strong government administrative capacities – often neither are true of developing countries.
- Multinational firms can be influential in skills development through their extensive supply chains, particularly when supported by donors and/or NGOs.
- On-the-job (OTJ) training and apprenticeships are effective in both the delivery of practical skills and financial incentives for trainees.
- There remain substantial information gaps for firms and individuals in terms of the availability and benefits of training, and finance gaps for the delivery of skills at the scale required globally.

3.4 Inclusive skills development for vulnerable populations

Women and youth are particularly vulnerable and underserved in these systems, with global youth and female unemployment being significantly above the average for men and women of all ages (a challenge compounded for young women).

Globally, women in the labour force are systematically discriminated against to varying degrees, whilst gender norms in many parts of the world exclude them from the labour force entirely (ILO, 2018).

Young people tend to represent relatively inexperienced, unskilled and therefore inexpensive labour, making them particularly vulnerable in times of adverse economic shocks. The limited capacity of the private sector to absorb the demographic "youth bulge" in the developing world exacerbates this vulnerability (IFC, 2013).

Whilst women and youth are particularly vulnerable and underserved demographics, they also represent very large shares of the labour force. Extending skills and opportunities to these groups holds great potential for enhancing competitiveness – indeed IFC (2013) found that the most impactful skills initiatives have often been those targeting women and young people.

Key points

- Well-targeted skills development policies are the key to developing and maintaining a competitive edge in an increasingly globalised economy.
- Public good elements justify a degree of subsidy for skills, but meaningful private sector engagement with skills policy is essential to ensure quality and relevance.
- Women and young people are vulnerable and underserved in the skills market, but are also a source of great potential for the development of skills for competitiveness at scale.

4. The Punjab Skills Development Fund

The PSDF was established under a DFID *Punjab Economic Opportunities Programme* (PEOP) (2010-16). DFID support was renewed in 2016 under the *Punjab Skills Development Programme* (SDP), a £38 million programme funding continued training efforts over the period 2016-21, with the goal of providing skills to 330,000 poor people, of which 40% are intended to be women. DFID support is provided through grant financing to the Government of Punjab (GoPb), who are themselves committing £63 million of their own resources to PSDF over the period.

More detail of the workings and results of the PSDF are provided below in Sections 4.2 and 4.3. First, an outline of the skills for competitiveness situation in Punjab is provided.

4.1 Skills for competitiveness in Punjab

4.1.1 Macroeconomic context

The population of Pakistan has been growing rapidly in recent years, reaching 200 million by 2017 (World Bank, 2017). As a result of the population boom, 60% of people in Pakistan are under the age of 30, with 30% between 15 and 29 years old. To absorb this "youth bulge", it is estimated that some 36 million new jobs will need to be created by 2020, requiring growth rates of 7-8% per annum (British Council, 2009). Actual growth rates have fallen short of this, at around 3-4% per annum (World Bank, 2017).

Within Pakistan, the Punjab accounts for 56% of the population and 52% of GDP (World Bank, 2015). Making up around half the country as it does, the Punjab faces similar problems with a booming youth population and limited economic growth.

4.1.2 Skills for competitiveness

Even as the economy struggles to keep pace with the population boom, the country has also experienced a decline in competitiveness. Pakistan has fallen from 85th to 147th in the World Bank's *Ease of Doing Business* rankings (out of 190 countries) between 2008 and 2018 (World Bank, 2018). According to businesses in Pakistan, a shortage of skilled labour is one of the top constraints to competitiveness (World Bank, 2007).

The World Economic Forum's *Human Capital Index* ranks Pakistan 125th out of 130 countries in terms of the level of human capital in the country, the poorest in South Asia, with only Mali, Ethiopia, Senegal, Mauritius and Yemen scoring lower (WEF, 2017a). By this measure, in the context of its aspirations to move from lower-middle income to upper-middle income status, its current human capital stock is significantly below the average for low-income countries. Whilst the country scores relatively well on the complexity of the economy, the availability of mid- and high-skilled jobs, and the quality of tertiary education institutions, its weak points are centred around skills development and the alignment of education to the needs of industry.

In the national labour market, unemployment is just 4%, but this masks the fact that the vast majority of workers are in vulnerable employment,[2] whilst 75% of women are excluded from the labour force entirely (World Bank, 2017). In the Punjab, the labour force is characterised by a high degree of informality and low skill levels. Accordingly, around a quarter of firms in the Punjab report a lack of skilled employees, rising to 58% in construction and 48% in manufacturing. Further analysis of the labour market is provided in Appendix 3.

4.1.3 Public sector skills development initiatives in the Punjab

The skills development sector of the Punjab has historically suffered from a weak institutional framework, low quality and relevance of training, a lack of evidence-based policymaking and market failures in industry-provided skills training (World Bank, 2015).

The public sector has been the primary provider of skills in the Punjab, with the two largest providers being the Punjab Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority (P-TEVTA) and the Punjab Vocational Training Council (PVTC). A summary of P-TEVTA and PVTC enrolment and graduation in 2013/14 is provided in Table 1 – at the time, the total of 66,449 graduates represented just 13% of the aforementioned target of 500,000 per year, far below what would be needed to supply the necessary skills for the province.

Table 1: Public sector skills provision in the Punjab (2013/14)

Public sector skills provision in the Punjab (2013/14)								
			Enrolled			Graduating		
Agency	Number of institutions	Number of trades	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
P-TEVTA	369	170	62,845	22,675	85,470	24,469	15,171	39,640
PVTC	175	43	18,721	14,941	33,662	16,085	10,724	26,809
Total	**544**	**213**	**81,566**	**37,616**	**119,132**	**40,554**	**25,895**	**66,449**

Source: World Bank (2015).

In addition to the limited capacity outlined above, the following weaknesses have been identified in the state skills system:

- **Lack of coordination –** There is a lack of clarity on the respective roles of national and provincial agencies. The National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NAVTTC) has not exercised its mandate in this respect, instead deferring largely to provincial bodies. Consequently, P-TEVTA plays both the roles of trainer and regulator, creating a conflict of interest. The training assessment mandates of the Punjab Board of Technical Education (PBTE) and Trade Testing Board (TTB) are overlapping, and multiple departments are involved in poorly-coordinated skills provision activities (World Bank, 2015; DFID, 2015).
- **Lack of evidence-based policy –** There is no systematic gathering and analysis of data on skills supply and demand by the GoPb, whilst a lack of data and indicators on the

[2] Defined by the ILO as self-employed or family labour.

public skills providers makes it difficult to evaluate their performance (World Bank, 2015; DFID, 2015).

- **Lack of relevance and quality** - As of 2013, 54% of firms in the Punjab reported that the existing skills development system was not producing workers with the skills required by employers. This arises from a combination of (a) outdated curricula, (b) lack of on-the-job training (OJT), (c) lack of competency-based training, (d) absence of qualification frameworks, and (d) poor engagement with industry (World Bank, 2015).

  Public sector training institutes have centrally-allocated funds that are not linked to outputs, and performance evaluations are not conducted. Budgets are largely dedicated to staff salaries, whilst infrastructure and equipment remains outdated. Moreover, these institutions are largely staffed by public sector administrators with limited private sector experience. Within this setup, few incentives exist to improve the quality of training or deliver a more cost-effective service (DFID, 2015).

- **Lack of access, particularly for women and the poor** – State-provided skills programmes typically require five years of formal education, which often precludes the participation of women and the poor, due to their low inclusion in the formal education sector (World Bank, 2015).

Recognising these shortcomings, the Government of Pakistan set out its National Skills Strategy (NSS) in 2009, proposing a wide range of reforms in support of two broad goals – (a) shifting from time-bound, curricula-based training to flexible, competency-based training, and (b) shifting from supply-driven to demand-driven training. GIZ have been working with NAVTTC to implement the reforms proposed in the NSS under the *TVET Reform Support Programme* (TVET RSP). Donor support for TVET in Punjab has also come through the World Bank's *Punjab Skills Development Programme* (PSDP) (see Appendix 2 for more details).

4.1.4 Private sector skills development initiatives in the Punjab

Prior to PSDF (see below), private sector skills provision was extremely limited in the Punjab. The weaknesses described above significantly undermine the willingness of individuals to pay for training, since the low quality and limited relevance of training, coupled with the absence of reliable, harmonised certification schemes, offer a relatively poor return on investment. The poor reputation of TVET has severely hindered the development of a private market for skills provision (DFID, 2015).

With regards to OJT, only 8% of Pakistani firms offer in-service training, compared to 37% in Sri Lanka, 26% in Bangladesh and 17.5% in India (World Bank, 2009). A 2012 survey of southern Punjab revealed that 95% of households acquired skills through family, informal trainers, or self-practice (CERP, 2012).

Key points

- Pakistan's poor performance on skills development has contributed to a relative decline in its competitiveness. Government skills programmes have been marred by poor governance and low levels of quality, relevance and efficiency. Pakistan's human capital levels are now below those of many low-income countries.
- The country has a booming youth population, high levels of employment vulnerability, and one of the largest gender gaps in the world, with women being largely excluded from the labour force.

4.2 The Punjab Skills Development Fund

It was within this context that the PSDF was established in 2010. Established as a not-for-profit company by GoPb and DFID, PSDF provides finance to private sector training service providers (TSPs) across a wide range of sectors, with the aim of stimulating a competitive market for private sector skills provision. PSDF is not in itself a skills provider.

Originally operating in the four poorest districts of southern Punjab, the Fund subsequently expanded to 14 districts by the end of the DFID PEOP programme in 2016, before expanding to all 36 districts of Punjab under the current phase (DFID SDP). It supports over 400 TSPs, who in turn provide training in over 250 trades.

4.2.1 The PSDF model[3]

The PSDF model is summarised in Figure 1. Broadly, PSDF designs and launches projects targeting specific sectors and/or geographies within Punjab, based upon in-depth market research as to the skills needs of the relevant sectors. TSPs can then apply for funding under relevant project windows. If contracted, TSPs carry out training under a rigorous system of third-party monitoring, before receiving results-based payments from PSDF.

More details of each step are provided in Figure 1.

[3] Details of the PSDF model were taken from discussions with PSDF senior management in August 2018.

Figure 1: The PSDF model

(1) **Research:** Sector and trade identification through research partnerships and market responsiveness

(2) **Projects:** Project windows targeting specific sectors, geographies and TSP types

(3) **Bidding:** Competitive and transparent bidding process to ensure best training provider for each trade

(4) **Monitoring:** Third-party monitoring of trainings to ensure transparency, quality and delivery of trainings

(5) **Placement service:** Third party placement service to connect graduates to employment opportunities **(pilot)**

(6) **Results-based payments:** Results-based system that rewards completion and income generation outcomes

- **Sector and trade research** – PSDF has a strong culture of evidence-based strategy development. Initial baseline studies of the four pilot districts were carried out in collaboration with the Centre for Economic Research, Pakistan (CERP), including an employer and a household study. Subsequently, in-depth sectoral reviews have helped to shape the geographic and sectoral focus of PSDF projects. A relationship with CERP continues to this day, helping PSDF to evaluate their projects and learn from the findings[4].

  Within sectoral research, efforts are made to understand needs for both “hard” skills (technical and vocational) and “soft” skills (i.e. communication, team working, and managerial skills). As part of the process, a range of employers, existing TSPs and sector experts are surveyed to understand the skills requirements of the sector and existing challenges faced.

- **Projects** – In order to ensure PSDF achieves its overarching goals, specific projects are designed to guide resources to particular geographies, sectors and TSP types. These projects in turn represent funding windows that TSPs can bid within.

  Projects are designed with the following targets in mind:

  - **Geography** – PSDF has grouped the 36 districts of Punjab into seven clusters, based on cross-district demographic and economic similarities (Appendix 4). Projects are designed with the goal of ensuring that each geographic cluster receives at least 10% of the annual total allocation of support for TSPs.

[4] See, for example, Appendix 8 for a summary of the CERP evaluation of PSDF’s *Skills for Market* project.

- **Sector** – PSDF has identified five critical sectors for the economic development of Punjab – (a) textiles, (b) construction, (c) services, (d) agriculture and livestock and (e) manufacturing[5].

  Projects are designed with the goal of ensuring that each sector receives at least 15% of the annual total allocation of support for TSPs.

- **TSP types** – PSDF works with three types of TSP – (a) **industrial** (private businesses providing training in addition to their core business), (b) **institutional** (certified institutions dedicated to training provision, including training institutes, colleges and universities), and (c) **community-based** (including NGOs and other organisations).

  Projects are designed with the goal of achieving a balance of 40% industrial TSPs, 30% institutional and 30% community-based.

Details of ongoing PSDF projects are set out in Appendix 5. The current division of resources by sector, geography and TSP type is presented in Appendix 6.

- **Bidding process** – Applicant TSPs can bid for funding within relevant project windows, depending on sectoral and geographic focus. To ensure transparency and fairness, bids are processed under a standardised PSDF bid review template by a third party (currently PricewaterhouseCoopers), before scorings and recommendations are submitted to PSDF's Bid Evaluation Committee for final decision-making.

  The bid appraisal is weighted 70% on technical capabilities and 30% on the financial strength of the TSP. As a rule, no single TSP can receive more than 10% of the annual allocation of funds.

- **Third-party monitoring** – Once contracts are awarded, each TSP undergoes a rigorous performance evaluation process undertaken by a third party (currently Ernst and Young), which is in turn shared with the in-house monitoring team at PSDF.

  The weighted performance evaluation framework assesses (a) the frequency and reliability of TSP reporting (10%), (b) training attendance (10%), (c) quality of infrastructure (15%), (d) training deliverables (including consumables, training materials, study plans, study hours, quality of training) (30%), (e) training completion rate (20%), (f) placement of trainees (10%) and (g) length of engagement (5%).

  Strict guidelines set out penalties for minor and major violations under the performance evaluation framework.

- **Placement service** – PSDF is piloting a new 'placement service' connecting training graduates to employers, in an attempt to reduce the search cost, increase employment results and strengthen income-generation outcomes. The pilot is currently being rolled out in the Greater Lahore and Faisalabad cluster. The Placement Service Provider (PSP) is expected to:

- Maintain a database of training graduates who have not yet secured employment under the relevant PSDF scheme.
- Draw upon business and market intelligence to connect graduates to relevant opportunities.
- Provide a range of support to graduates, including help with resume writing, career planning, interview technique, post-employment job retention, and general navigation of the job search and application process.

The two-year pilot will run until 2020.

- **Results-based payments** – PSDF funding for TSPs is entirely results-based. 80% of payments are tied to the performance evaluation of training delivery outlined above, and 20% to income generation.

  Income generation is understood as arising from any of the following:

  - **Trainees securing formal employment** - Industrial trainers are required to commit to 50% employment rates following the programme, whilst institutional trainers are required to commit to 30% employment rates (all at least at minimum wage). Results-based payments are assessed accordingly.
  - **Trainees entering self-employment** – Following recommendations from the 2018 DFID annual review (DFID, 2018), PSDF is currently working to develop a better understanding of self-employment outcomes, and how best to monitor and measure them.
  - **Trainees achieving productivity increases** – Income generation is typically understood to arise from increased productivity in the agriculture and livestock sector, rather than employment. Currently, CERP is assisting with impact evaluations on agricultural productivity under PSDF's *Big Push for Rural Economy* project.

Results to date relating to this process are set out in Section 4.3.

4.2.2 Cost sharing model

In addition to the project-based process outlined above, PSDF launched a new cost-sharing model in 2017. Under this model, partner TSPs are expected to provide at least 50% of the funding for the training delivered. The cost-sharing model aims to (a) reduce the subsidy-dependent element of PSDF, (b) further strengthen the demand-driven nature of training, and (c) demonstrate the value addition of training in order to incentivise firms to scale up efforts on their own initiative. From the perspective of the TSP, whilst they are not allowed to charge trainees for the service, they are expected to recoup their investment through recruitment of graduating trainees.

Prospective cost-sharing TSPs are required to have at least PKR100 million in equity (around US$800,000 as of mid-2018) and at least 250 staff. A future workforce plan must be submitted in order to demonstrate commitment to employing training graduates, along with a proposed curriculum and costs per trainee per month. Furthermore, the 50% employment commitment is raised to 70% under the cost-sharing scheme. In reviewing applications, PSDF compares the proposed curriculum and costs with other TSPs working with PSDF to ensure quality of content and value for money.

Whilst the cost-sharing model is less financially attractive to firms than a fully-funded PSDF contract, it offers a lot more flexibility - cost sharing proposals are not restricted to the specific sector- and geography-based funding windows in PSDF's other schemes, and can be put forward at any time.

4.2.3 Targeting women, youth and the poor

All of PSDF's projects target poor and vulnerable young people (aged 18-29), whilst ensuring that women make up at least 40% of beneficiaries. This is enforced through rigorous proposal appraisal and training monitoring and evaluation efforts. See Appendix 7 for more details.

4.2.4 Governance, management and finance

The PSDF is registered as a not-for-profit company with a private sector-led board of directors. The relatively streamlined organisation of the Fund has helped to keep operating costs at just 6% of total costs, below the target of 7% set by the board. Stakeholders interviewed for the present review praised the pro-active engagement of the board and their wealth of private sector experience as being fundamental to the Fund's success. With regards board responsibilities, the board-level Programme Design and Evaluation Committee (PDEC) is required to approve the design of new projects. Board-level approval of contracted TSPs is not required, although the board is always notified of new TSPs.

4.3 PSDF results to date

The following sections set out the results achieved by PSDF to date. Sections 4.3.4 and 4.3.5 respectively discuss the underlying drivers of success and challenges faced.

4.3.1 Skills development and job creation

The latest DFID annual review commended PSDF for exceeding its targets for the delivery of training (DFID, 2018). A summary of achievements to date includes:

- **Almost 250,000 people trained to date** - 91,083 people trained in 2017/18 (versus a target of 77,000), building on 7,605 trained in 2015/16-2016/17, and 147,709 people trained under the first phase (2010/11-2014/15).

Note that PSDF's 2017/18 performance in this respect now substantially exceeds the combined annual graduate numbers from P-TEVTA and PVTC quoted in Table 1, above.

- **92% exam pass rate** in 2017/18 (versus 90% target).
- **57% TSP compliance with performance evaluation criteria** in 2017/18 (versus 50% target).
- **24 cost sharing agreements signed** in the first year (2017/18) (versus a target of 10), leveraging a US$2.4 million contribution from industry, and over 1,000 people trained under cost-sharing schemes.
- **80% repeat business from private sector TSPs** – Repeat business from TSPs suggests that they are seeing value in PSDF-supported training and the subsequent recruitment of graduates.

With regard to income increases through job creation and productivity gains, more research is needed to assess and validate results for the present phase. A forthcoming Graduate Tracer Study should provide insights on this in early 2019. However, interim findings suggest that 30-40% of graduates from formal training institutions were subsequently employed (versus a target of 50%), and 70% from cost-sharing schemes. Employment rates from graduates of industrial TSP programmes are unclear. It was noted by PSDF that the 57% compliance rate noted above is largely held back by difficulty in achieving employment targets (DFID, 2018).

One potential area for future investigation is the extent to which short-term trainings as delivered through PSDF TSPs can substantially improve employability over the long-term – the Graduate Tracer Study should also be able to shed light on this.

Whilst repeat business from industrial TSPs is a positive sign, further evidence is needed on industry perceptions of the work of PSDF –, more evidence will become available as part of a forthcoming Employer Survey in early 2019.

Both the Graduate Tracer Study and Employer Survey are funded through DFID support.

4.3.2 Impacts on women and youth

The following provides a summary of the impacts on women, youth and the poor to date under PSDF-supported programmes:

- **41% of graduates were women in 2017/18** (versus a target of 40%). This is a slight increase on the 38% of graduates that were women under the first phase of the programme (2010-16).
- **80% of graduates aged 18-29 –** as noted above, the age restrictions have been relaxed in some community-based projects where TSPs are making particular efforts to reach women in remote areas, resulting in the youth rate falling below 100%.

4.3.3 Wider impacts

Beyond the direct trainee beneficiaries, stakeholders interviewed for the present review noted that PSDF has had a positive impact on the following:

- **Government attitudes on skills development –** PSDF has demonstrated to government that skills provision can be delivered more cost-effectively than past public sector initiatives by ensuring a demand-driven model with strong private sector engagement and good governance.

  The GoPb Growth Strategy for 2015-18 (GoPb, 2015) identified the development of skills and human capital for job creation as a central pillar, and explicitly referred to PSDF model as "a solid foundation for the government to build upon".

  However, questions remain over the potential future role of PSDF within the broader government approach to skills delivery (see Section 4.4 on sustainability).

- **Private sector attitudes on skills development** – 92% of PSDF's TSPs are from the private sector. Stakeholders noted that working with PSDF has had a positive demonstration effect, particularly on industrial TSPs with regards to the return on investment in skills training delivery. Moreover, a number of expenses involved in establishing training facilities and equipment of a sufficient standard to comply with PSDF requirements may be considered as sunk costs, making continuation of service provision more likely in the absence of PSDF support.

  However, a more robust evaluation is needed of the willingness and ability of TSPs to become self-financing in the skills delivery sector – at present, there is only anecdotal evidence to support a potential move in this direction. Understanding the impact that PSDF has had in this respect is key to understanding the extent to which it is on track to achieve its goals of stimulating the development of a private sector market for skills development.

  Given that a key stated aim of PSDF is the facilitation of the development of a private sector market for skills provision, the lack of available evidence on this, and the strong focus of the DFID logframe on training and employment numbers rather than sustainability and market development, is considered a weakness of the programme.

4.3.4 Drivers of success

In light of the above evidence, as well as interviews with PSDF staff and stakeholders, the following factors can be identified as key drivers of success

- **Demand-driven and evidenced-based** – The PSDF model is built on strong engagement with industry, including in-depth market research and industry consultation in order to inform the design of sector-specific schemes tailored to the needs of employers.

- **Strong governance and transparency** – The use of third party bid appraisal and training monitoring services from reputable international service providers (PwC and EY) gives confidence in the transparency and accountability of the overall PSDF process. A committed board with strong private sector representation has been valuable in steering the mission of PSDF.
- **Capable, private sector-oriented team** – Prior private sector experience is also present through the staff of PSDF, further helping to strengthen the focus on needs of industry. This contrasts with public sector TVET schemes, which have often been staffed largely by government administrators with limited private sector experience.
- **Performance related pay** – Payments being 100% output-based (80% on training delivery, 20% on income-related outcomes) creates strong incentives for partner TSPs. This is a marked contrast with public sector TVET schemes, which tend to have guaranteed input-based budgets.
- **Tailored solutions for gender targets** – PSDF have taken care to develop solutions that increase the likelihood of the inclusion of women in training courses, leading to them exceeding their 40% female beneficiary target in a context with extremely stark gender disparities.
- **Government support** – A combination of the above factors has secured government confidence and backing for PSDF, leading to lessons learned from PSDF being incorporated into wider government policy and continued financial commitments to support the work of the Fund.

4.3.5 Challenges faced

Key challenges faced by PSDF include:

- **Ensuring employment outcomes are met** – TSP compliance with the performance evaluation criteria currently stands at 57%, with the biggest constraint to higher compliance being the satisfaction of employment targets. The latest DFID annual review (DFID, 2018) recommended the following:
    - Support to link institutional TSPs to employers
    - Review of student admissions criteria to target pro-active job seekers
    - Stronger focus on self-employment in PSDF employment verification approaches
    - Prioritisation of delivery of the Graduate Tracer Survey and Employer Survey in order to gather more evidence on the issue, both due in early 2019.
- **Influencing government policy** – Whilst there has been a strong positive response and continued financial support to PSDF from GoPb, many challenges remain in the broader TVET environment, and broad institutional change at the provincial and national level is slow. Some aspects of this serve as barriers to the full achievement of PSDF's

goals. For example, fragmented certification and regulatory schemes create confusion and limited confidence in the system as a whole, including PSDF, restricting the likelihood that commercially viable willingness to pay for TVET will arise in the near future.

- **Lack of evidence on skills market development** – As noted above, PSDF's results framework, driven by the DFID logframe, is largely focused on training and employment numbers, whilst little evidence exists on market development and sustainability. As such, it is difficult to say with any certainty whether PSDF is having the desired impact on the private skills development market overall.
- **Sustainability** – Perhaps the greatest challenge facing PSDF to date is the question of how to ensure the sustainability of the Fund in the long term. The following section addresses this issue.

4.4 Achieving scale and sustainability

Over the course of its eight years in operation, the PSDF has scaled from four pilot districts to all 36 districts of Punjab. With a population of 110 million, if it were an independent country, it would be the 12th largest in the world. This suggests commendable scaling of the programme over its relatively short lifetime. What is more, this growth has been done whilst maintaining a fairly even spread across the clusters and sectors (see Appendix 6). Meanwhile, the number of trainees has grown from an average of around 30,000 per year in the first phase (2010-11 to 2014-15) to over 90,000 in 2017-18 alone, across 196 active TSPs.

However, the key outstanding question for the PSDF remains the issue of sustainability. Recent DFID Annual Reviews have emphasised that whilst the PSDF has outperformed its targets in many areas, there is a pressing need to develop a sustainability strategy.

Whilst no formal sustainability strategy is in place, the current assumption arising from discussions with donors, staff and stakeholders is that government funds will be the most likely route to sustainability if donors do not extend their current commitments. Whilst the GoPb has made no formal commitment to this end, it has already committed substantial resources to the PSDF, and has voiced enthusiasm for the results delivered under the programme.

However, the prospect of a government-reliant sustainability strategy involves a number of major concerns for stakeholders:

- It is unclear whether PSDF could maintain its autonomous status and governance structures in the event of becoming fully government funded, or whether it would be subsumed within the state.
- Government skills initiatives in Pakistan have a poor reputation in terms of quality of programming, value for money, transparency and accountability. Stakeholders were of the view that government skills programmes had been staffed largely by administrators with insufficient expertise in the area, rather than the private sector-minded technical

experts required to deliver such a programme. Engagement and alignment with industry is perceived to have been poor, leading to substandard high cost outcomes.

- If PSDF moves towards being a state-operated model, it is likely to become difficult to attract the calibre of staff, and particularly board-level expertise, that the programme has benefited from to date, due to the perceptions outlined above.
- State institutions are subject to the changing priorities of the prevailing leadership of the time, rather than being insulated from this (to a degree) within the private sector.

In light of the above, it is clear that a formal sustainability strategy needs to be developed well in advance of the end of the current SDP phase to 2022, including clarity and agreement from all parties concerned. Whilst strong government enthusiasm for the programme, and accordingly generous funding, has undoubtedly been a positive for the programme, it will be important to learn from past shortcomings of skills initiatives, and to preserve in any future business model those elements of PSDF that have afforded it such successes to date.

As work continues of the formulation of a sustainability strategy, PSDF is experimenting with models that would increase private sector revenue streams, such as the cost sharing model outlined in Section 4.2.2, and models around trainees putting up some of the cost themselves. If successful, these models may reduce the extent to which PSDF is reliant upon public funds, and continue to push the sector in the direction of market-based solutions to the skills problem.

Key points

- PSDF's transparent, evidence-based and private sector-driven competitive grant funding of TSPs serves as an encouraging model for skills provision, stimulating cost-effective private sector delivery of skills.
- However, in terms of sustainability, the Fund will continue to rely heavily on public funding from donors or the Government of Punjab. Extensive reliance on the latter could risk PSDF losing some of its unique private sector-led characteristics and instead adopting characteristics of past government-led initiatives. Efforts should be made to establish a structure that ensures the autonomy of the PSDF and distances it from the shortcomings of government skills programming in Pakistan.
- A pilot cost-sharing model has shown some early successes. Further research and piloting should seek to establish the potential for scaling this model in order to reduce the extent of subsidy dependence.
- Further research is needed to (a) gain in-depth employer feedback on the programme, (b) understand the long-term employability impact on trainees, and (c) understand the impact that PSDF is having on the development of the private market for skills delivery.

5. Conclusions and recommendations

In an increasingly globalised economy, efficient and effective skills development programmes are required in order to support individuals and firms in developing and maintaining competitive edge. The ability to train and re-train within a flexible labour market allows for resilience in the face of technological developments and sectoral shifts.

Pakistan's aspirations to become an upper-middle-income country are hindered by its poor record on skills development, and its relative competitive position has been in decline for a number of years. Public sector TVET programming has been marred by poor governance and a lack of private sector engagement, leading to low levels of quality, relevance and efficiency, and a poor reputation in the eyes of individuals and firms.

PSDF has established a promising model for more transparent, efficient, private sector-led and evidence-based training provision in the Punjab province of Pakistan. Through competitive grant-making to training providers and output-based payments, PSDF is delivering well-targeted, cost-efficient training at scale across the province.

PSDF will, however, continue to depend on subsidies to a significant extent for the foreseeable future. The public good aspects of skills provision (i.e. the difficulty that firms face in capturing the full value of any investment in skills) justify continued subsidies. However, in the event of becoming primarily government-funded in the absence of donor influence, there is a risk that the private sector ethos of the Fund could be eroded, following in the path of previous government initiatives. Efforts are required to ensure PSDFs future autonomy and the preservation of the characteristics behind its success to date.

The key transferable lessons from the PSDF include the importance of:

- Sector analysis and industry consultation in identifying skills gaps
- Competitive, grant-based training provider financing
- Rigorous, transparent training provider selection and evaluation processes
- Output-based payments (tied to employment outcomes as well as training delivery)
- A board and staff with extensive private sector experience
- Use of cost-sharing models in order to reduce subsidy dependence.

Further research should focus on:

- PSDF's long-term impact on skills market development and the views of the private sector on their role in skills delivery
- Gathering more detailed employer feedback and recommendations
- Evaluating the long-term employability impacts on trainees
- Appraising the potential to scale the cost-sharing model.

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Appendix 2 Donor programmes in Pakistan skills development

GIZ *TVET Reform Support Programme* (TVET RSP)

The *Supporting TVET Reform in Pakistan* programme initially ran from 2011 to 2016, funded by the EU, Germany, the Netherlands and Norway, and implemented by GIZ, in partnership with NAVTCC. The programme has since been extended to 2021.

The initial phase sought to support the implementation of the NSS recommendations. Central to this was the development of a national TVET policy (Government of Pakistan, 2015), which focused on the development of a National Vocational Qualification Framework (NVQF), introduction of Competence-Based Training (CBT) approaches, strengthened private sector engagement, strengthened monitoring and evaluation, and harmonised federal-provincial approaches.

At the end of the first phase, GIZ (2016) and DFID (2015) noted that whilst the programme was well-aligned with national priorities and targeting much-needed reforms, and had also had some successes in its early years, much more work would be needed in order to bring about the nation-wide systemic change required. The programme was renewed in 2016, with GIZ (2016) noting that full implementation of the TVET policy and NVQF would take "at least 10-15 more years".

World Bank *Punjab Skills Development Programme* (PSDP)

The objective of the Punjab Skills Development Project for Pakistan is to improve the quality, labor market relevance of, and access to skills training programs in priority sectors in the Punjab. There are two components to the project, the first component being improving and expanding market-relevant skills training. The objectives of this component are to: (i) strengthen the skills training system; (ii) improve the quality and relevance of skills training; and (iii) increase access to market-relevant trades. The second component is the project management, monitoring and evaluation, and technical assistance. The objective of this component is to support project management, monitoring and evaluation (M&E), and technical assistance (TA) to enable the achievement of the DLIs and ensure efficient and effective management of project implementation. M&E strengthening of the skills development system is embedded within project design and financing for M&E activities will be funded by this component. It would also finance surveys and studies to support the development of policy actions and strategies in areas where technical support could better inform policy makers and development partners, specifically, in the areas of increasing women's participation and private sector provision of skills training programs.

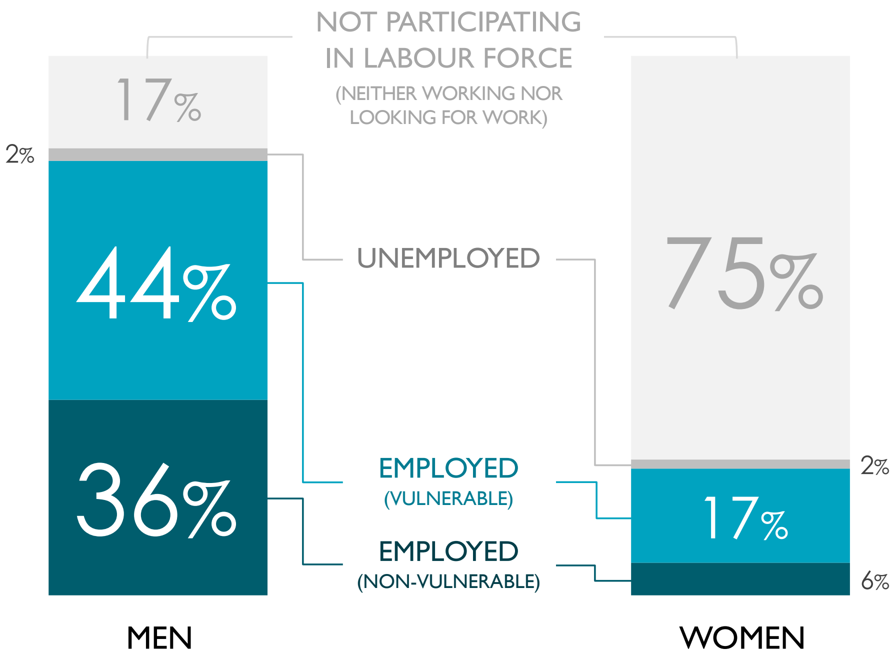
Source: http://projects.worldbank.org/P130193?lang=en

Appendix 3 The Punjab labour market

In the Punjab labour market, overall unemployment stands at 4%. The rate is higher for women at 7%, compared to 3% for men (World Bank, 2017). The rate is higher again for youth unemployment (ages 15-24), at 8%, or 11% for women and 7% for men. Whilst these figures appear relatively low, 60% of employment is deemed "vulnerable" by the ILO (informal self-employment or family labour). Once again, women fare worse, with 75% of employed women being in vulnerable employment, compared to 55% of employed men.

More strikingly, these figures only refer to the actively participating labour force - of which 75% of Pakistani women are not a part (World Bank, 2017). Figure 2 presents the above labour market data as percentages of the total populations of men and women in Pakistan (including those outside of the labour force).

Figure 2: Pakistan labour force summary (% of total population) (World Bank, 2017)



A little over a third of men are in stable (non-vulnerable) employment, compared to just one in twenty women. Considered another way, women make up just 14% of people in non-vulnerable employment. This disparity partially explains Pakistan's ranking of 143rd out of 144 countries in the World Economic Forum's *Global Gender Gap Index*[6] (WEF, 2017b).

Within the Punjab specifically, a similar picture arises – low skills, high informality, and low female participation (World Bank, 2015). The labour force of the Punjab has historically had a low level of TVET, with some 8.5% of the population reporting having received TVET as of

[6] As well as economic participation and opportunity, the *Global Gender Gap Index* takes into account educational attainment, health and survival, and political empowerment.

2012/13 (World Bank, 2015). GoPb estimated that this amounted to around 160,000 individuals enrolling in skills programmes annually, compared to an estimated requirement of 500,000 in a high-growth scenario for the province. Accordingly, around a quarter of firms report a lack of skilled employees, rising to 58% in construction and 48% in manufacturing.

With regards to job growth, skills for the SME sector are vital – 90% of the Punjab labour force employment is in the private sector, and 86% of employees are in units of five people or fewer – 93% are employed in firms with 10 or fewer workers. Firms of this size have limited capacity and resources for in-house training, and so are largely dependent on external skills provision (World Bank, 2015).

Concerted efforts on skills provision are required to improve the country and the province's competitive position, to ensure economic opportunities for the fast-growing youth population, and begin to address the wide gender gap.

Appendix 4 PSDF geographic clusters

PSDF geographic clusters[a]

Cluster	Description	Districts	Sector[a] Agriculture & livestock	Cottage industry	Manufact-uring	Urban services
Southern Belt	Large pockets of desert, heavy reliance on subsistence agriculture, certain pockets of horticultural excellence	Multan, Lodhran[b], Vehari, Bahawalpur[b], Khanewal, R.Y. Khan, Bahawalnager[b]	★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★
Greater Lahore and Faisalabad	Large scale manufacturing, high-end service jobs	Lahore, Sheikhupura, Faisalabad, Nankanasahib	★	★★	★★★★	★★★★
Golden Industrial Triangle	Export-oriented and light engineering clusters, significant agriculture	Sialkot, Gurjat, Narowal, Hafizabad, Gujaranwala	★	★★★	★★★★	★★
Agricultural Heartland	Traditional staple crops, pockets of horticultural excellence, some manufacturing	Jhang, Sargodha, Toba Tek Singh, Chiniot, Jehlum, Khushab, Mandi-Bahauddin	★★★★	★★★	★★	★
Northern Belt	Large pockets of desert, primarily rain-fed agriculture	Rawalpindi, Attock, Mianwali, Chakwal, Bhakhar	★★	★★	★★	★★★
Eastern Belt	Traditional staple crops, pockets of livestock excellence	Kasur, Okara, Sahiwal, Pakpattan	★★★★	★★★	★★	★
South Western Belt	Deeply rural subsistence agriculture	Muzaffargarh[b], D.G. Khan, Layyah, Rajanpur	★★★★	★★★	★	★

Note: (a) Employment intensity: ★★★★ = high, ★★★ = upper-mid, ★★ = lower-mid, ★ = low

(b) Pilot district (Lodhran, Bahawalpur, Bahawalnagar, Muzaffargarh)

Appendix 5 Current PSDF projects

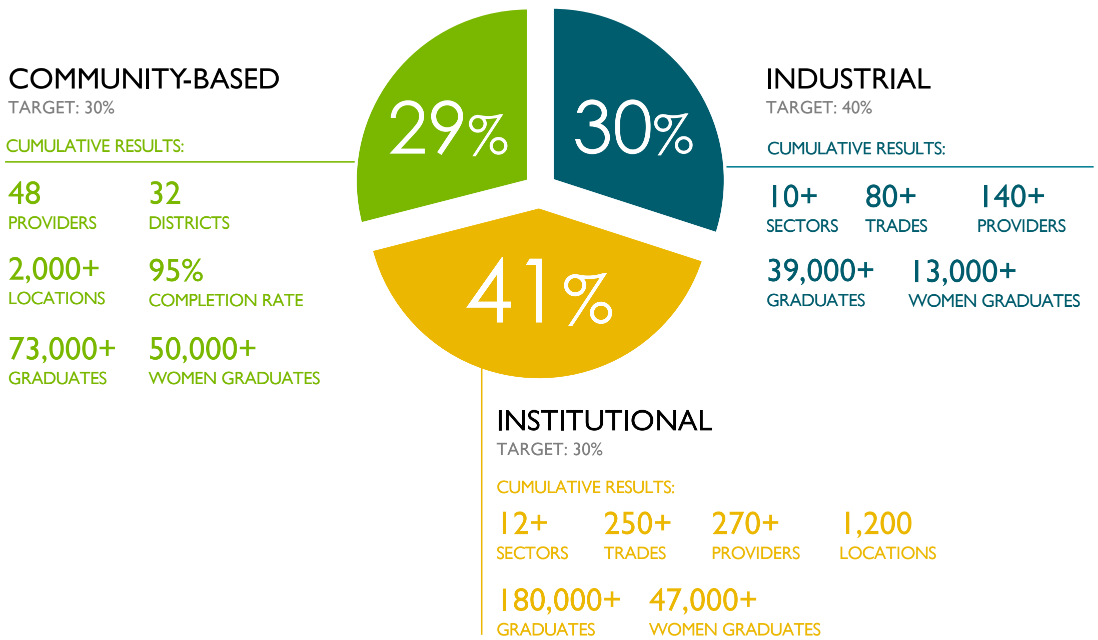
Current PSDF projects [(a)]						
Project	**Sector**	**Geography**	**Start**	**End**	**Value (US$m)**	**Trainees contracted**
Big Push for Rural Economy – Livestock	Livestock	Bahawalpur, Bahawalnagar, Lodhran and Muzaffargarh	Feb-17	Jun-18	1.4	9,700
Women Focused Employment Driven Programme	*various*	*Province-wide*	Sep-17	Sep-18	5.5	10,225
Employable Skills for Females in Beauty Care Industry	Beauty care	Islamabad, Lahore, Faisalabad, Sialkot & Multan	Dec-17	Dec-18	1.4	2,750
Industrial Training Programme 2017	*various*	*Province-wide* (ex. 'Golden Triangle')	Mar-17	Mar-18	4.8	11,400
Industry Led Training for Golden Industrial Triangle 2017	*various*	'Golden Triangle' districts (Gujrat, Gujranwala, Sialkot)	Mar-17	Mar-18	1.3	2,930
Skills for Job 2017	*various*	*Province-wide*	Dec-17	Jun-18	2.2	7,405
Skills for Market Linkage	Textiles	Sheikhupura, Kasur, Multan, Muzaffargarh, Bahawalpur, Lodhran	Dec-17	Mar-19	2.9	3,440
Women-focused Training for Home-based Livestock	Livestock	*Province-wide*	Apr-17	Feb-18	1.6	15,000

Note: (a) Information was only available for projects funded by the DFID SDP (8 of 13 active projects).

Appendix 6 PSDF resource split by TSP, sector and geography (2017/18)

The latest resource PSDF allocation (financial year 2017-18) is broken down by TSP type, geographic cluster and sector in Figure 3, Figure 4 and Figure 5 respectively.

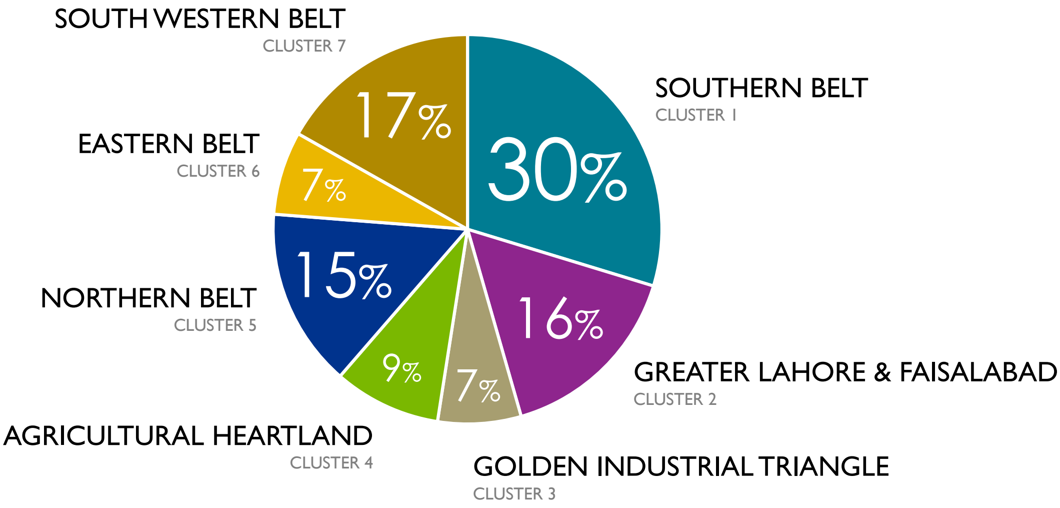
Figure 3: PSDF training service providers (2017-18)



Resource allocation across TSP types was close to the target 40%-30%-30% split across industrial, institutional and community-based providers respectively in 2017-18, albeit with a slight over-weighting on institutional providers (Figure 3). PSDF will be seeking to increase the relative share of industrial providers in future.

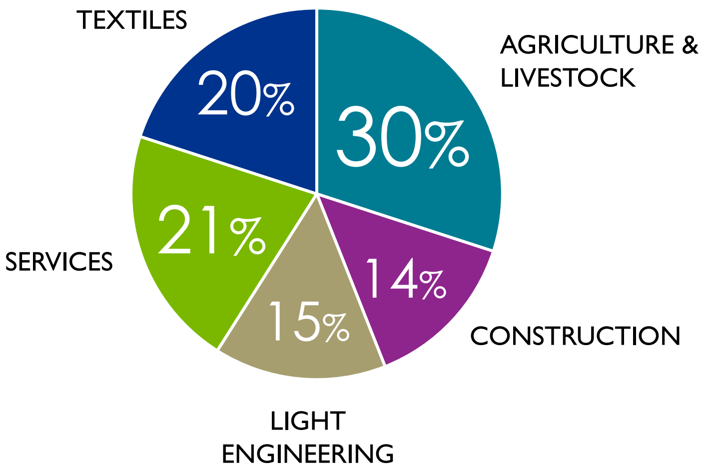
The split across geographic clusters is less balanced (versus the target of at least 10% of annual resources allocated to each of the seven clusters) (Figure 4). The Southern Belt – home to three of the four pilot districts – receives the largest funding share at 30%, possibly a result of its well-established history working with PSDF. The Golden Industrial Triangle, Easter Belt and Agricultural Heartland all remain slightly below the 10% target.

Figure 4: PSDF resource split by geographic cluster (2017-18)



PSDF was broadly on track to ensure that each of the five priority sectors received at least 15% of resource allocation in 2017-18 (. At present, agriculture and livestock is the largest sector, receiving double the minimum resource threshold, whilst construction falls marginally below at 14%.

Figure 5: PSDF resource split by sector (2017-18)



Appendix 7 Targeting women, youth and the poor

All of PSDF's projects target poor and vulnerable young people (aged 18-29), whilst ensuring that women make up at least 40% of beneficiaries. This is enforced through rigorous proposal appraisal and training monitoring and evaluation efforts.

In defining poverty, PSDF follow the methodology of the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), using an asset-based Proxy Means Test (PMT) to determine poverty level. Households are given a scoring of 1-100 – a score of 40 is considered the threshold above which households are not eligible for PSDF-funded support.

Vulnerability is defined as people who are unemployed and 'unskilled' – i.e. never having received any form of TVET.

In order to ensure that the above cohorts are effectively targeted, applicant TSPs are required to provide details of their intended beneficiaries and targeting strategies in their proposals. Orientation sessions are provided by PSDF both pre- and post-contract signing in order to emphasise the importance of targeting women, youth and the poor. Finally, at the monitoring stage, payment penalties are used for violations of commitments along these lines.

As well as the general approach described above, PSDF designs specific schemes in order to ensure that certain targets are reached, particularly the inclusion of women. Special attention is given to the fact that, for example, women are found to be less likely to travel significant distances away from home in order to attend trainings. To tackle this, provisions have been made in some cases to support transport to training facilities, whilst community-based TSPs have been used to reach more remote areas.

In order to reach more women, the youth requirement has been relaxed in some cases, particularly on rural community-based TSP initiatives. As such, overall youth reach of PSDF-supported initiatives currently stands at around 80%.

In addition to targeting women and poor and vulnerable youths, PSDF is exploring ways to reach other marginalised groups, including disabled people and those marginalised due to their religion, ethnicity or caste.

Appendix 8 Skills for Market (2013-14) evaluation

PSDF's *Skills for Market* (2013-14) project provided domestic tailoring skills to rural women in poor and vulnerable households in three states of southern Punjab – Bahawalnagar, Bahawalpur and Muzaffargarh. Six TSPs were contracted under the scheme, including two in each district. The project was the focus of a randomised control trial evaluation conducted by CERP in order to test the theory of change and better understand how to grant access to skills to poor and vulnerable rural women (CERP, 2018).

An earlier CERP evaluation had identified travel constraints as a major barrier to participation in skills programmes. As such, CERP (2018) sought to experiment with different means of increasing access – by providing in-village training, by providing transport to training, and by providing stipends. In-village training was found to be the most effective. The limited impact of stipends suggests that the reasons for remaining close to the household are driven largely by non-financial factors.

Furthermore, CERP (2018) found a significant increase in paid tailoring activities in the treatment group, as well as notable trainee satisfaction with the programme. The evaluation recommended more efforts to make in-village training available to rural women. Further recommendations will be provided following a forthcoming endline survey.

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