

# Innovation Fund and Innovation Awards Program

**Published On:** 03 April 2017

**Organisation:** United Nations Development Programme

**Country:** Pakistan

**Level of government:** Central government

**Sector:** General public services

**Type:** Other, Partnerships, Public Service

**Launched in:** 2016

**Overall development time:** 6 month(s)

**Link to the innovation's website**

**Like this innovation**

0 persons like this innovation

# Description

---

The Government of Pakistan in collaboration with UNDP has developed a sustainable and politically owned institutional mechanism for supporting innovative practices in the public sector. This entails two primary interventions: Prime Minister Innovation Awards and an Innovation Fund. This initiative aims to strengthen such innovations, mapping, reviewing and refining them (through evidence-based analysis) and scaling them up where appropriate. The programme is putting in place a structured approach to map innovations across the public sector, recognizing the champions who have pioneered them and funding the most promising interventions. The proposed Innovation Fund would support citizen-centric governance and service delivery initiatives by providing financial and technical support, while the Innovation Awards will recognize innovations across the public sector.

The main objective of the project is to ensure replicability and sustainability throughout Pakistan, of successful innovative measures in the public sector. The project has been designed to provide the requisite frameworks, procedures, and financial support to enable replications on a large scale. The innovation mapping exercise develops a typology of innovations currently being pursued, the key factors that enable them, the challenges they face, as well as identifying innovations that will be awarded the "Innovation Awards" and receive support from the "Innovation Fund". These will assist individual projects as well as encourage such innovations across the government. This mapping exercise has informed the structuring of the Innovation Fund and the Awards. Based on this evidence, the design of the Funds and Awards has included replicability and potential for mainstreaming as a key criteria for selecting innovations which will be supported.

---

## Why the innovation was developed

- The public sector in Pakistan has generally not been associated with a culture of either homegrown innovation or adopting established international innovative best practices to improve service delivery performance.
  - There are however cases of public sector individuals and departments who on their own initiative, have introduced and implemented innovations.
  - Therefore solutions exist for problems related to service delivery but they were seldom adopted across the board as there was little to no cross-fertilization of ideas or any institutional support at the national level.
- 

## Objectives

Develop staff capacity, Enhance public trust, Enhance transparency, Improve access, Improve effectiveness, Improve efficiency, Improve service quality, Improve social equity, Improve user satisfaction, Increase citizen engagement, Support economic growth

---

## Main beneficiaries

Civil Society, General population, Government bodies, Government staff

---

## Existing similar practices

### Investing in Innovations Fund (i3)

In other countries' public administrations

US Department of Education

Investing in Innovations Fund (i3) - This is a sector-specific fund established by US Department of Education to provide competitive grants for innovative initiatives aimed at improving student achievement such as ensuring student growth, decreasing dropout rates, increasing high school graduation rates and increasing enrollment rates.

---

# Results

---

**Results not available yet**

# Development

---

## Design

The Office of the Prime Minister empowered the Ministry of Planning Development & Reform (MoPDR) as the premier reform agency for the federal government. The MoPDR in consultation with UNDP, began consultations with the relevant stakeholders to generate ideas and feedback on the reform process. Consensus on the need for institutional support to innovations in the public sector emerged from the Governance Forums 2014 & 2015 and the Bhurban Workshop 2015 which had the active participation of government, civil society and academia. Design time: 6 month(s)

---

## Challenges and solutions

- In the preliminary stages of the project, it was discovered that there is no repository of data which could provide a baseline of innovations undertaken in the public sector. Only anecdotal evidence existed. To move forward, and for any project related programming to be successful it was imperative that accurate on ground information be obtained.
  - To address this issue, a mapping exercise was conducted to identify, sort and analyze all of the existing innovations which had been implemented throughout the public sector in Pakistan.
- 

## Partnerships

### Ministry of Planning Development & Reform

Other Public Sector

The Ministry of Planning Development & Reform (MoPDR) partnered with the UNDP to launch the "Reforms and Innovation in Government for High Performance" project. The key strength of this innovation project is government and political ownership. In this regard, the center of gravity rests within the Federal Government and the implementing government agency being the MoPDR which in itself is the empowered and responsible government organization for formulating and implementing reforms. This greatly enhances the prospects of success and sustainability of the innovation project. The MoPDR also facilitated access to data and information on innovations in the public sector. UNDP provides backstopping and technical expertise for the design and related technical documentation related to the mapping exercise, Innovation Awards and Innovation Fund. Hence, this partnership is mutually reinforcing, both parties contributing with their core strength and expertise areas.

---

# Lessons Learned

---

## Lessons Learned

- The key lessons learned to date from the Innovation Project are that government ownership and consensus among all key stakeholders on reform interventions is crucial in ensuring success and sustainability.
  - The model was designed to whole-of-government in its approach, implying that all public sector organizations irrespective of nature and size were included. This allows greater ownership of the project initiatives across the entire government.
  - Even though most innovations were/are based upon IT solutions, we recognized the importance of non IT-based innovations as well. This reflects the ground realities in which some innovators do not have access to IT skills or infrastructure and need to work within an overall absence of supporting IT resources in some segments of the public sector.
- 

## Conditions for success

- The need for due diligence of all government departments involved in the process is also essential as to have all stakeholders on the same platform and with the same vision and clarity as to how they will approach and address the issues.
  - The Innovation project is fortunate to have an in house reform champion, Mr. Ahsan Iqbal, Minister MoPDR who besides having the official mandate for reform also has undertaken the initiative for pioneering the Innovation Project.
  - Secure and accessible availability of financial and technical resources are key prerequisites for creating the conducive conditions for undertaking a comprehensive novel approach to reforms.
- 

## Other information

The Innovation Fund and Awards are unique in the history of Pakistan's public sector. There have been no national-level, government-backed efforts in the past to document or study innovations, support them through technical and financial assistance and to recognize them through a prestigious regularly organized awards ceremony. While there are parallels that could be drawn internationally, the initiative has mapped such examples from around the world to learn from "best practices".