Mobilizing Local Leaders to Rebuild the Social Compact in Pakistan

Researchers:

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Sector(s): Political Economy and Governance

Location: Pakistan

Initiative(s): Governance Initiative (GI)

Target group: Politicians and electoral candidates Urban population

Outcome of interest: Citizen satisfaction Electoral participation Taxation

Intervention type: Community participation Targeting

Partner organization(s): Evidence for Policy Design (EPoD), Government of Punjab, Pakistan

A significant challenge to the provision of local public services (water, sanitation, waste removal, etc.) in developing economies is the inability to raise adequate resources, especially through local taxation. In many countries, the social compact, whereby citizens agree to pay taxes to fund government services that are then credibly and transparently delivered, is broken. Researchers will investigate whether mobilizing local political leaders to strengthen the link between local collections and urban services can increase citizens' willingness to pay for services, improve service delivery, and ultimately revitalize the social compact. This will be tested in major urban centers in Punjab, Pakistan selected for an ongoing randomized evaluation in which local governments are required to allocate tax revenue according to citizen preferences for local services.