

**DEPARTMENTAL HUMAN CAPITAL CAPACITY IN YOUTH DEVELOPMENT; A TRAINING NEEDS ASSESSMENT OF DIRECTORATE OF YOUTH AFFAIRS, GOVERNMENT OF BALOCHISTAN**

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**Abstract**

Training Needs Assessment (TNA) is a critical tool for enhancing institutional capacity and staff performance in public sector organizations. In Balochistan, the Directorate of Youth Affairs (DoYA) faces significant challenges in implementing youth development policies due to gaps in technical, managerial, and attitudinal competencies among its staff. This study provides evidence-based insights into the specific training needs of youth-focused institutions in Balochistan, guiding targeted capacity-building interventions. This study aims to identify these capacity gaps and prioritize training interventions to strengthen the Directorate's ability to deliver effective youth programs. A mixed-method approach was employed, combining a structured questionnaire with 27 respondents and 10 key informant interviews (KIIs), complemented by secondary data from departmental reports and policy documents. The assessment focused on knowledge, skills, and attitudes across multiple functional areas. Findings indicate that the highest training needs were in Communication, Public Speaking & Presentation Skills (73.1%), Self-Accountability & Integrity (65.4%), and Attitude to Adopt New Methods, Tools & Technologies (61.6%), while Proactive Attitude for Learning & Self-Development ranked lowest at 34.6%. Preferred training methods included in-house workshops (41%), exposure visits (29%), online training (19%), and mentoring/coaching (11%). The study recommends a phased capacity-building

approach, integrating technical skills, leadership development, and digital literacy, supported by multi-year training strategies, mentorship programs, and succession planning to ensure sustainability. Systematic TNA and structured professional development are essential to enhance institutional performance, policy implementation, and long-term youth development outcomes in Balochistan.

**Keywords:** Training Need Assessment, Youth, *Directorate Of Youth Affairs, Balochistan*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Balochistan, the largest province of Pakistan, covers 44% of the nation's land mass, spanning 347,190 sq km, yet it accounts for just 5.94% of its population. Although it became a province of Pakistan in 1970, its demographic profile is unique: unlike the national average of 60%, 71% of Balochistan's population is under 30 years old, with 53% residing in rural areas and 19% in urban centers (Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, 2023). Despite this youthful demographic, the province faces significant educational challenges, as only 54.5% of the population aged 10 and above is literate. This literacy rate further reveals a stark gender gap, with 69.4% of men literate compared to just 36.8% of women. This disparity is even more pronounced in rural areas, where male literacy stands at 80% while female literacy is a mere 31.1%.

The demographic and educational disparities are starkly reflected in Balochistan's overall human development indicators. Balochistan with 0.312 Human Development Index (HDI) is ranked the lowest province on HDI in Pakistan (Pasha, 2024).

Furthermore, the province experiences the highest urban income inequality and severe urban-rural disparities. Consequently, Balochistan also performs the lowest on key sub-indices, including the Youth Development Index, Labour Development Index, and Gender Inequality Index (UNDP, 2021).

In Balochistan, the proportion of youth not in employment, education, or training (NEET) is significantly higher at 41.8%, with a notable gender disparity of 14.1% for males and 75.4% for females falling under the NEET category. This underrepresentation of females in education, employment, or training underscores the urgency of addressing youth unemployment in Balochistan. The overall youth unemployment rate in Balochistan, as reported in the 2017-18 survey, stands at 10.51%, necessitating immediate attention from public policymakers and the current government (Ahmed & Hassan, 2021).

Training Needs Assessment (TNA) is the most appropriate analytical lens for this study. It systematically identifies gaps between the existing competencies

of employees of the Directorate of Youth Affairs. Also, the skills, knowledge, and institutional capacities required to effectively design, implement, and monitor youth development programmes. TNA directly links staff roles, functional responsibilities, and service delivery mandates with performance gaps.

Due to the existing challenges faced by youth in Balochistan, it is important to assess that whether the directorate's employed possess the required technical, managerial and analytical capacities to fulfill their mandate effectively. Conducting a TNA enables the identification of priority capacity gaps, to strengthens the directorate's institutional readiness to implement youth policies effectively.

### **1.1. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

The Directorate of Youth Affairs in Balochsitan faces institutional capacity constraints. Its employees lack some of the skills to effectively implement youth development policies. These capacity gaps limit the directorate's ability to plan, execute, and monitor initiatives that address youth unemployment, education, and socio-economic inclusion. Conducting a Training Needs Assessment is therefore critical to identify these gaps and strength the Directorate staff's competencies.

### **1.2. PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Training Needs Assessment (TNA) aims to diagnosis the institutional capacity and directorate staff skills gap. To identify and address the human resource capacity gaps that hinder the Directorate of Youth Affairs from achieving its targets and mandate. By assessing staff competencies at both the individual and organizational levels, the TNA seeks to ensure that employees possess the requisite knowledge, skills, and attitudes for effective policy formulation program management, and youth engagement (Gondyke, 2023).

### **1.3 SCOPE**

The scope of this study is to assess and determine the gap between the current and the desired levels of knowledge, skills, and attitudes of employees working in the Directorate of Youth Affairs (DoYA), Government of Balochistan. At the individual level, the Training Needs Assessment (TNA) evaluates employees across different roles, functions, and seniority levels to identify specific competency gaps and training needs. This micro-level analysis not only highlights areas where targeted support is required but also reflects how individual capacities collectively influence institutional performance. At the organizational level, the TNA examines the Directorate's broader institutional readiness, including its structures, systems, and processes, to assess its capacity to translate policy objectives into meaningful youth development

outcomes. To frame this assessment, a comprehensive departmental profile of DoYA was also developed, providing critical insights into its mandate, structure, functions, and existing human resource capacity. By combining individual and organizational analyses, the study provides an evidence-based foundation for capacity building, targeted training, and organizational development initiatives that are integrated, demand-driven, and aligned with both the Directorate's strategic vision and the evolving needs of Balochistan's youth.

### **1.3. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

- The specific objectives of the TNA are to:
- To assess the individual capacity gap within the directorate of youth affairs using the Training Needs Assessment tool.

1. To identify the current levels of knowledge, skills, and attitude of staff.
2. To identify priority competency gaps affecting youth policy implementation.
3. To prioritize training interventions aligned with provincial youth policy goals.

### **1.4. ORGANIZATION OF THE PAPER**

The research article is organized into eight sections as follows: 1) Introduction outlines Balochistan's youth challenges and the purpose, scope, and objectives of the TNA. 2) Literature Review examines studies on youth development, unemployment, education, gender gaps, and institutional capacity. 3) Methodology describes the mixed-method approach, questionnaire, sampling, and data analysis. 4) Findings of TNA present results on knowledge, skills, and attitude gaps. 5) Discussion analyzes the implications of these gaps for staff performance and organizational effectiveness. 6) Recommendations propose phased interventions for capacity building. 7) Implementation Roadmap & HRD Plan details strategies to address priority training needs. 8) Conclusion summarizes key findings and emphasizes the importance of structured capacity development for effective youth policy implementation.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

Balochistan, Pakistan's largest province by land area, is home to a predominantly young population Making youth a critical demographic for the province's socio-economic progress (Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, 2023). Balochistan's youth bulge offers both promise and risk. If the education system equips young people with relevant skills, it can drive growth and opportunity (Balochistan Education Sector Plan (BESP), 2021).

Youth unemployment has emerged as a critical and multifaceted issue in Balochistan, presenting significant challenges to the province's socio-

economic development and the well-being of its young population. Among the four provinces of Pakistan, multidimensional poverty (health, education and standard of living) is highest in Balochistan. About 71% of the population lives below the poverty line, and youth unemployment is around 40%. Women's participation in the workforce is extremely low just 5% (Ahmed & Hassan, 2023). According to the data 70% of the population in Balochistan are identified as multidimensionally poor. This is followed by 48% in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and 45% in Sindh.

Youth unemployment among females is higher than that of males (74%). Young people aged 20 to 24 and 24 to 29 have the highest rates of unemployment. According to PBS the unemployment rate in Balochistan in 2022 was 18.5 % (Bashir, 2024). Lack of transparency and merit-based scholarship and implementation is the central issue. According to a report by the National Commission for Human Rights, 2021 revealed that youth in southern Balochistan districts in Kech, Gwadar, and Awaran rarely benefit from such development schemes (Khan et al., 2023). Despite this youthful demographic, the province faces significant educational challenges, as only 54.5% of the population aged 10 and above lack basic education. In Balochistan, 40% of men and 62.5% of women have no formal education.

According to the Business Recorder (2024), Balochistan with 0.312 Human Development Index (HDI) is ranked the lowest province on HDI in Pakistan. Consequently, Balochistan also performs the lowest on key sub-indices, including the Youth Development Index, Labour Development Index, and Gender Inequality Index (Dr. Rukhshanda Zarar, 2025).

However, this demographic dividend is overshadowed by persistent challenges in youth development, including high unemployment rates, limited access to quality education, and socio-political marginalization that led to opportunity deficits. These issues are exacerbated by the province's resource-rich yet underdeveloped status, where poverty, inadequate infrastructure, and a mismatch between education and job market needs hinder young people's potential.

Youth development in Balochistan faces multifaceted challenges rooted in economic, social, and security dimensions. Unemployment remains a pressing concern, with many young people lacking the skills required for the modern job market, leading to frustration and vulnerability. The term unemployment refers to those people who have attended a college or university, have attained degrees or otherwise employable and willing to work, yet could not find a suitable job. This is the kind of unemployment that is lamented, and the governments, both provincial and federal, therefore are urged to create jobs for the educated unemployed.

According to the data from the Pakistan Labour Force Survey (2020–21) indicates that the country's youth population aged 15–24 is 41.77 million. In Balochistan, however, 41.8% of young people are not engaged in employment, education, or training (NEET). This challenge is particularly severe for women, with 75.4% falling into the NEET category compared to 14.1% of men (Mohammad Ahsan Achakzai et.al, 2023). Among the provinces, Balochistan has the highest prevalence of multidimensional digital poverty. According to the data, 59.8% of the population in Balochistan are identified as multidimensional ICT poor. This is followed by 43.6% in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and 47.9% in Sindh. Punjab has the lowest incidence (headcount ratio) of multidimensional ICT poverty in the country (PIDE, 2021).

Policy on May 31, 2025, marking the province's first comprehensive framework for youth development. The policy, formulated in 2024 and officially rolled out in 2025, addresses socio-economic challenges by providing targeted interventions in education, skills training, employment, and social empowerment. It aims to equip youth with opportunities for economic participation, increased quotas in national educational institutions, and protection against threats to national integrity, while promoting positive contributions to society (Dawn, 2025). Described as a "major initiative," the policy prioritizes skill development to tackle unemployment and foster inclusive growth, aligning with broader governmental goals like overseas job placements and leadership programs. This policy represents a strategic shift toward recognizing youth as agents of change, with implementation overseen by entities like the Directorate of Youth Affairs to ensure tangible outcomes.

To translate this progressive policy into measurable outcomes, it is essential that the implementing institutions are equipped with the right systems, skills, and resources. At present, there is a clear opportunity to further strengthen the Directorate of Youth Affairs (DoYA) through a structured Training Needs Assessment (TNA), which will help identify capacity gaps and guide tailored interventions. By investing in institutional strengthening, the Youth Policy can achieve its vision of transforming the youth of Balochistan into active agents of change. This paper will focus on the Training Needs Assessment of the Directorate of Youth Affairs to provide human development recommendations for both immediate and long-term training requirements.

### **1.5. INSTITUTIONAL WEAKNESS AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES**

In Balochistan, persistent youth development challenges such as high unemployment, low female participation in education and training, and

elevated NEET rates are closely linked to the institutional capacity of the Directorate of Youth Affairs, the primary government body mandated to design and implement youth-focused interventions. While the Directorate is responsible for policy execution, skills development initiatives, and youth engagement, limitations in technical expertise, program management skills, data utilization, and monitoring systems constrain its effectiveness. These capacity gaps hinder the Directorate's ability to translate policy objectives into targeted, inclusive, and measurable programmes, particularly for rural and marginalized youth. As a result, youth initiatives often suffer from weak outreach, limited alignment with labor market needs, inadequate monitoring, and minimal impact on employability and socio-economic inclusion. Consequently, institutional weaknesses within the Directorate of Youth Affairs contribute directly to youth development failures in Balochistan, where policy intent is not fully realized in practice, reinforcing cycles of unemployment, exclusion, and disengagement among young people.

#### **1.6. THE IMPORTANCE OF TRAINING NEEDS ASSESSMENT (TNA) IN PUBLIC SECTOR INSTITUTIONS**

The training need assessment (TNA) is used to identify gaps between employees' current performance and the performance that the organization expects of them. A needs assessment is the process of determining the "gap" between required and actual performance (McGehee & Thayer, 1961). When a difference exists, it investigates the causes and reasons for the gap, as well as techniques for closing or eliminating it. A comprehensive needs assessment also includes the repercussions of disregarding gaps (*Planning & Evaluating*, n.d.).

Training Needs Assessment (TNA) is widely recognized in public sector and human resource development literature as a foundational tool for aligning institutional capacity with organizational mandates and policy objectives (Markaki et al., 2021). Empirical studies highlight that TNA supports evidence-based decision-making by diagnosing skill deficiencies, performance constraints, and operational weaknesses before designing training interventions (Brown, 2002).

In development-oriented public institutions, TNA plays a critical role in strengthening implementation capacity and improving service delivery outcomes. Capacity development frameworks emphasize that policy failures often stem not from flawed policy design, but from limited institutional and human resource capacity within implementing agencies (Ferreira & Abbad, 2013).

Training Needs Assessment (TNA) is a method to determine any gap between current and desired knowledge, skills, and attitude (KSAs) of a person

working in an organizational context. Such an assessment is typically required in response to an organizational challenge. In other words, if the problem stems from a lack of knowledge, skills, or certain attitude, then conducting a training needs assessment and subsequent training may be a potential solution. Training Needs Assessment (TNA) processes play an important strategic role because they provide clear instructions for addressing professional skill deficits and determining the profile of future trainees (Naz et al., 2016).

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

This study adopts a mixed-method Training Needs Assessment (TNA) research design. Employing both primary and secondary source. The research primarily employs a qualitative questionnaire and Key informants interview KII as the core data collection tool, along with secondary data to contextualize the youth challenges and institutional framework. The Training Needs Assessment (TNA), employed to identify gaps between the existing and required knowledge, skills, and attitudes (KSAs) of employees within the Directorate of Youth Affairs, Balochistan.

#### **1.7. RESEARCH APPROACH**

This study employs an applied research approach, utilizing a Training Needs Assessment framework to systematically identify gaps in skills, knowledge, and attitudes among staff of the Directorate of Youth Affairs.

#### **1.8. SECONDARY DATA**

The secondary data for the Training Needs Assessment (TNA) was gathered through an extensive desk review of laws, policies, regulations, strategic plans, operational manuals, and the official mandate of the Directorate of Youth Affairs, Sports & Youth Affairs Department. This review provided a baseline understanding of the institutional framework, highlighted policy and procedural gaps, and contextualized the primary data.

#### **1.9. PRIMARY DATA**

This study conducted 6 key informant interviews (KIIs) with employees of the Directorate of Youth Affairs, complemented by 26 survey questionnaires filled by staff ranging from BPS-01 to BPS-17. The Training Needs Assessment (TNA) was developed through a participatory process, including consultative group discussions with departmental staff, to ensure relevance, clarity, and alignment with practical challenges. To enhance accessibility, the questionnaire was also translated into simple Urdu, enabling respondents to provide clear and accurate information.

The Training Needs Assessment (TNA) of the Directorate of Youth Affairs consisted of 34 self-assessment questions divided into three sections (See "Table 1").

**Table 1: Training Needs Assessment Questionnaire Sections: source drawn by author**

Knowledge Areas	Items	Focus in %age
Knowledge	8	24%
Skills	10	29%
Attitude	6	18%
Perceptions and Reflections	10	29%

**1.10. SAMPLING METHOD**

The study drew on a total population of 77 staff across the Directorate and district-level Youth Development Centers. The study collected data through a structured questionnaire that was developed following a pilot survey conducted with employees of the Directorate.

Given the qualitative and exploratory nature of the Training Needs Assessment, a purposive mixed-methods sampling approach was adopted, comprising 27 questionnaire respondents and 10 key informant interviews (KIIs). The questionnaire was distributed among employees of the Directorate of Youth Affairs, targeting a purposive sample of 33 staff members drawn from the Quetta department's overall workforce. For qualitative inquiry small samples are suitable when the goal is to understand organizational processes and capacity gaps (W. John & N. Cheryl, 2016). Data saturation in qualitative studies is often achieved within 12–30 interviews, depending on the homogeneity of the population and research focus. In this study, recurring themes across questionnaires and interviews indicated that thematic saturation was reached, validating the adequacy of the sample size (Guest et al., 2006). (See "Table 2").

**Table 2: BPS Scale and Experience of respondents: source drawn by the author**

BPS Scale	Employees Count	Average Experience (Months)
BPS01	8	84
BPS02	1	204
BPS05	3	64
BPS06	1	180
BPS08	2	192
BPS11	2	132
BPS12	1	-
BPS14	3	96
BPS16	2	198
BPS17	3	180

#### 1.11. DATA ANALYSIS

The questionnaire data were managed and analyzed using Google Forms, which automatically linked responses to a Google Spreadsheet for organization, cleaning, and review. Descriptive statistics and built-in visualizations (e.g., bar and pie charts) were used to summarize and display response patterns, enhancing clarity and reliability. Google Forms provides a cost-effective, accessible platform for survey administration with automated data storage and visualization features (Vasanth Raju & Harinarayana, n.d.). However, self-reported data are subject to limitations, including social desirability bias, recall bias, and subjective interpretation, which may affect the accuracy of responses. Participants may over- or under-report their experiences, and reliance on self-assessment may not fully reflect objective conditions. Despite these limitations, self-reported data remain a valid and widely used approach for capturing individual perceptions and experiences, particularly when direct observation or administrative data are unavailable.

#### 1.12. LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

It is important to note that this study is constrained by limited data availability and a restricted timeframe for data collection. The reliance on voluntary participation in the qualitative consultations and the online questionnaire may have affected the sample size and the representativeness of the findings. Despite these limitations, the findings provide valuable insights to inform targeted training interventions and institutional strengthening initiatives.

#### 1.13. THEMATIC ANALYSIS

Key themes included **Human Resource & Capacity Gaps** (limited training, non-specific recruitment standards, and insufficient staffing), **Leadership & Strategic Management** (unclear roles, weak strategic planning, and need for stronger leadership), **Coordination & Communication** (poor interdepartmental linkages), **Monitoring, Evaluation & Research** (lack of robust data and weak evaluation), and **Technical Skills** (low ICT use, poor digital literacy, and underdeveloped program management tools). It made it possible to conduct triangulation by comparing the results of the qualitative surveys and interviews with findings from the desk review, documentary evidence, and annual reports of the Directorate of Youth Affairs (DOYA). This triangulation enhanced both the validity and reliability of the evaluation results.

#### 4. FINDINGS OF TNA

A diverse group of respondents completed the TNA form, representing a wide range of official positions from Director to Section Officer (BPS-17) and even

Non- Gazetted Officers/ Employees. This broad spectrum covered various grades and functional responsibilities within the departments.

#### **1.14. QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS**

##### **1.14.1. Capacity Gaps**

The qualitative analysis highlights five key capacity gaps affecting departmental performance and implementation of the Youth Policy: Human Resource (HR) and Capacity constraints, weak Leadership and Strategic Management, limited Coordination and Communication, deficiencies in Monitoring, Evaluation and Research (MER), and gaps in Technical Skills.

**4.1.2. Human Resource (HR) and Capacity:** Staff shortages and role overlap were consistently identified as major constraints. Officers reported being overstretched, with one noting that *“since 2008 the Directorate has been operating with limited human resources and inadequate budgetary support,”* while another highlighted that *“the whole Makran division... is being managed by only one officer.”* The absence of formal job descriptions further limits effectiveness, as *“job functions are performed largely on the basis of practice rather than formal orientation.”* Limited training and exposure opportunities were also cited, with respondents emphasizing an *“urgent need for exposure and training programs.”*

**4.1.3. Leadership and Strategic Management:** Respondents confirmed the absence of a formal strategic framework, with activities guided mainly by annual event calendars. As one officer stated, *“No formal strategic orientation exercises are conducted... we only follow an annual calendar of events.”* Decision-making often relies on individual initiative rather than collective systems, reflected in the view that *“ultimately, the decision rests with me,”* highlighting the need for structured strategic planning and leadership development.

**4.1.4. Coordination and Communication:** Coordination mechanisms were described as weak and procedural, limiting collaboration and timely decision-making. One respondent noted that *“proposals are frequently submitted, [but] they are rarely incorporated into planning processes,”* while others pointed to a *“top-down approach”* where coordination occurs primarily through senior leadership rather than participatory channels.

**4.1.5. Monitoring, Evaluation and Research (MER):** MER capacity is minimal, with no functional data management or M&E systems in place. Officials acknowledged that *“there is no data management system or dedicated server,”* and that data *“is not used in planning.”* Monitoring and evaluation were described as largely absent, with one respondent stating, *“we do not have any proper mechanism for data monitoring.”*

**4.1.6. Technical Skills:** The lack of modern technological tools and specialized skills was identified as a key barrier to efficiency. Respondents emphasized the need for digital systems, ICT tools, and media engagement skills. Training gaps were described as the “*biggest problem*,” with staff lacking “*the necessary skills*” due to limited training, exposure, and outdated recruitment standards.

#### **4.2. KNOWLEDGE AREA**

The assessment of knowledge areas indicates substantial gaps in foundational understanding critical to youth program implementation:

- **Youth Development Priorities & Program Design:** Over half of employees lack foundational knowledge, limiting their ability to conceptualize and execute youth-focused initiatives effectively.
- **Interdepartmental Coordination & M&E:** Weak understanding of coordination and monitoring systems undermines both cross-government collaboration and accountability mechanisms.
- **Inclusivity, Diversity & Gender:** Some employees demonstrate competence, but targeted training is still needed to ensure consistency.
- **Knowledge of National & International Youth Networks:** Significant gaps exist, with most employees lacking exposure and awareness, signaling a high-risk area for capacity development.

**Overall Pattern:** Knowledge gaps are particularly high in youth development, program design, coordination, M&E, and network engagement, while isolated strengths appear in inclusivity and diversity. This underscores the need for systematic, targeted training interventions.

#### **4.3. SKILLS AREA**

The assessment of staff skills revealed significant gaps across multiple functional areas, indicating a pressing need for systematic training and capacity strengthening. Overall, employees exhibited a mixed skill base, with many requiring structured support in planning, implementation, and operational management. Key patterns emerged:

- **Entrepreneurship and Skill Development:** Nearly half of staff required formal or on-the-job training, limiting the Directorate’s ability to implement youth programs effectively.
- **Budgeting, Resource Mobilization, and Project Planning:** These areas showed high-risk capacity gaps, with over 80% of staff needing structured training, indicating weaknesses in financial management and program execution.
- **Partnerships and Stakeholder Coordination:** Many employees lacked strong networking and coordination skills, restricting effective collaboration and youth engagement.

- **Needs Assessment and Evidence-Based Programming:** The majority of staff required training in participatory assessments, data collection, and analysis, pointing to a deficit in research and policy development capacities.
- **Communication, Leadership, and Conflict Management:** Significant gaps were observed in public speaking, report writing, negotiation, and team leadership, which are critical for guiding youth programs and managing teams.
- **ICT Skills:** While some employees demonstrated basic competence, a substantial proportion lacked advanced digital skills necessary for modern program management.

**Overall Pattern:** The Directorate exhibits moderate capacity in routine operational tasks but high-risk gaps in strategic, managerial, and technical competencies, particularly in budgeting, program planning, participatory needs assessments, leadership, and communication. Addressing these gaps through structured formal training and on-the-job mentorship is essential for strengthening institutional performance.

#### 4.4. ATTITUDE AREA

The assessment of employees' attitudes revealed significant variations in commitment, collaboration, diversity, adaptability, learning orientation, and accountability. Key patterns emerged:

- **Youth Participation & Empowerment:** Most staff require structured capacity-building to actively engage and empower youth, with only a small portion demonstrating strong capacity.
- **Collaboration & Partnership Management:** A notable proportion of employees lack skills in interdepartmental and cross-sectoral collaboration, limiting effective partnerships.
- **Diversity, Gender Equality & Inclusion:** While some staff show strong commitment, a significant number still require targeted training to ensure consistent adherence to inclusive practices.
- **Adoption of New Methods & Technology:** Many employees struggle with embracing digital tools and innovative approaches, highlighting the urgent need for digital literacy and adaptability training.
- **Learning Orientation:** A substantial share of staff lacks proactive learning behaviors, signaling the need for structured opportunities to enhance self-development.
- **Self-Accountability & Integrity:** Nearly half of employees require formal or on-the-job support to consistently uphold accountability and ethical standards in program delivery.

**Overall Pattern:** While strong attitudinal competence exist, high-risk gaps are evident in accountability, youth engagement, collaboration, adaptability, and learning orientation, necessitating a targeted training and mentoring approach.

#### 4.5. TOP PRIORITY AREA

The Training Needs Assessment (TNA) exercise for the Directorate of Youth Affairs (DoYA) revealed a range of capacity-building requirements, distributed across knowledge, skills, and attitudinal domains. The prioritization process followed the ILO (2012) guideline, which emphasizes that, due to limited resources, (Gregg et al., 2012) not all needs can be addressed simultaneously; therefore, the most critical and high-impact areas must be identified first to ensure efficiency and effectiveness.

The survey results revealed that Computer and IT skills emerged as the most urgent training need, consistently ranked as Priority 1. This category includes competencies such as Excel, ERP, office automation, digital skills, and file management, which are critical for enhancing operational efficiency and aligning the Directorate with contemporary digital governance practices. Communication skills were identified as the second-most important area, ranked as Priority 2. These skills are vital for improving reporting, stakeholder engagement, and effective participation in national and international platforms.

The third priority area, marked as Priority 3, encompassed AI, coding, networking, and data management skills. This reflects the Directorate's recognition of the digital transformations underway and the need to prepare staff for rapid technological advancements.

In addition to these top three areas, technical skills in program and project management as well as time management and task prioritization were highlighted as cross-cutting themes, essential for enhancing efficiency across all functions. Furthermore, youth guidance, event organization, and research and policy skills were noted as specialized but complementary competencies that directly support the Directorate's mandate of youth engagement and institutional development.

#### 4.6. PREFERRED MODE OF LEARNING

Preferred Training Method	Percentage (%)
Exposure Visits/ Exchange Programs	29.00%
Mentoring /Coaching	11.00%
Online Training/ Webinars	19.00%
In-House Training Workshops	41.00%

The Training Needs Assessment (TNA) also explored the respondents' preferences regarding modes of learning, acknowledging that training

effectiveness is often influenced not only by *what* is taught but also by *how* it is delivered. The responses demonstrate a strong preference for in-house workshops, either as a standalone method (41%) or in combination with other approaches such as online training and mentoring. This reflects the Directorate's institutional culture and the practicality of interactive, face-to-face learning, which enables participants to contextualize knowledge within their daily roles.

Exposure visits were chosen as a sole method by (29%), and as part of mixed modes by another segment, indicating recognition of experiential learning. Mentoring and coaching alone were less preferred (11%). Online Training/ Webinars were the least common but were often seen as complementary, highlighting the potential benefits of accessibility and flexibility, particularly when resources are limited.

Overall, the findings suggest that blended learning approaches (such as in-house workshops combined with online training and mentoring/coaching) are increasingly valued, offering a balance between structured training, flexibility, and personalized capacity building. This resonates with existing literature, which highlights that adult learners in organizational settings benefit most from interactive and blended training methods that integrate real-life contexts, peer learning, and opportunities for immediate application (Salas et al., 2012).

## 5. DISCUSSION

Overall Training Need Identified .

Training Need Area	Priority (%)
Communication, Public Speaking & Presentation Skills	73.1%
Self-Accountability & Integrity	65.4%
Attitude to Adopt New Methods, Tools & Technologies	61.6%
Team Leadership & Delegation	61.6%
Research, Report Writing & Policy Brief Development	53.9%
Interdepartmental & Cross-Sectoral Collaboration	53.9%
Negotiations & Conflict Resolution	50.0%
ICT Tools for Youth Development	50.0%
Communcitin to Youth Participation & Empowerment	42.1%
Proactive Attitude for Learning & Self Development	34.6%

The analysis of the training needs revealed several key areas where development is necessary. These areas are ranked according to the priority percentage, indicating the intensity of the need for training in each category. The findings of the assessment are summarized as follows:

### 5.a. Communication, Public Speaking & Presentation Skills (73.1%):

The most significant training need identified across participants is in the area

of Public Speaking and Presentation Skills. With a priority of 73.1%, this indicates that the ability to communicate effectively in public settings is crucial for participants. This skill is foundational for conveying ideas, influencing others, and representing the organization in external forums. Given its high priority, focused training in public speaking and presentation techniques is recommended.

**5.b. Self-Accountability & Integrity (65.4%):** Coming in second is Self-Accountability and Integrity, with a priority of 65.4%. This training area is vital for ensuring participants take responsibility for their actions and uphold ethical standards in their roles. Strengthening self-accountability and fostering a culture of integrity within the team will contribute to overall professional growth and ethical behavior in the workplace.

**5.c. Attitude to Adopt New Methods, Tools & Technologies (61.6%):** As technology and methodologies continue to evolve, the ability to adopt new tools, methods, and technologies has become crucial. Ranked at 61.6%, this training need highlights the importance of staying current with advancements in the industry. Emphasizing adaptability and continuous learning in this area will ensure that participants can leverage new technologies effectively.

**5.e. Team Leadership & Delegation (61.6%):** Team Leadership and Delegation also received a priority rating of 61.6%. Effective leadership and the ability to delegate tasks appropriately are essential for improving team performance and ensuring that resources are managed efficiently. Training in leadership techniques, delegation strategies, and fostering team dynamics will be essential for developing strong leadership within the organization.

**5.f. Research, Report Writing & Policy Brief Development (53.9%):** With a priority of 53.9%, Research, Report Writing, and Policy Brief Development is another critical area for development. This skill set is important for participants involved in decision-making, policy analysis, and reporting. Strong capabilities in research and concise report writing will enable employees to support informed decision-making processes effectively.

**5.g. Interdepartmental & Cross-Sectoral Collaboration (53.9%):** Interdepartmental and Cross-Sectoral Collaboration is vital for breaking down silos and fostering a culture of teamwork across departments and sectors. With a priority of 53.9%, this skill is increasingly important as organizations grow and diversify. Training in collaboration strategies and communication across teams will help improve interdepartmental synergy and productivity.

**5.h. Negotiations & Conflict Resolution (50.0%):** Negotiations and Conflict Resolution skills are necessary for handling disagreements, reaching agreements, and maintaining healthy working relationships. Rated at 50.0%, this area is fundamental for leaders and employees who are tasked with

managing disputes or negotiating terms. Training in this area will help enhance communication, problem-solving, and mediation skills.

**5.i. ICT Tools for Youth Development (50.0%):** The ability to use ICT Tools for Youth Development ranks at 50.0%. This reflects the increasing importance of technology in youth development programs and initiatives. Participants will benefit from training in using digital tools to support and enhance their work with youth, whether through online platforms, educational tools, or communication technologies.

**5.j. Commitment to Youth Participants & Empowerment (42.1%):** Training in Commitment to Youth Participants & Empowerment was identified as a moderately high priority with a score of 42.1%. This training area focuses on developing a deeper commitment to youth engagement and empowerment strategies. It is crucial for ensuring that participants adopt a youth-centered approach in their programs and activities, enabling them to facilitate greater empowerment for young individuals.

**5.k. Proactive Attitude for Learning & Self-Development (34.6%):** The least priority area, with a score of 34.6%, is Proactive Attitude for Learning & Self-Development. While this is the lowest priority, it remains essential for encouraging participants to continuously improve their skills and knowledge. Developing a proactive attitude towards learning ensures long-term professional growth and adaptability in the face of changing work environments. The findings from this training needs assessment highlight that communication skill is the highest priority for training. At the same time, self-accountability, leadership, and the ability to adapt to new technologies are also critical areas that require immediate attention. Training in these areas will not only enhance individual performance but also foster a more effective and collaborative work environment. The areas with lower priority, such as self-development and empowerment, should still be addressed to ensure a well-rounded skill set and long-term sustainability.

This systemic pattern indicates that the capability of the Directorate of Youth Affairs Balochistan to deliver on its mandate becomes fundamentally constrained by human resource limitations rather than just financial or material resources. Root causes likely include:

- Institutional Performance: Training gaps in communication, leadership, ICT, and collaboration directly limit operational efficiency and program execution.
- Policy Implementation Failure: Skills deficits impede the effective translation of youth policies into actionable programs.

- Sustainability Risks: Without addressing these gaps, the Directorate risks talent stagnation, weak organizational culture, and poor adaptability, compromising long-term youth development outcomes.

### **5.1. SKILLS VS. ATTITUDE GAP - THE HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGE**

The assessment reveals a dual-nature capacity gap that extends beyond traditional technical skill deficiencies to encompass critical soft skills and behavioral competencies. This finding resonates with contemporary research on training effectiveness, as empirical findings which suggest a perceived gap between training attitudes and job proficiencies, potentially resulting in conflict between employee and employer relationships (Truitt, 2011).

The identified gaps in ICT, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation (M&E), and report writing represent fundamental operational capabilities that directly impact day-to-day productivity and efficiency, quality of deliverables and outputs, compliance with organizational and donor requirements, and data-driven decision-making capabilities. Simultaneously, the deficiencies in leadership, conflict resolution, and stakeholder engagement reveal deeper organizational development needs that require different intervention approaches.

Gaps in leadership may result in poor team coordination, lack of strategic direction at operational levels, and diminished staff motivation, while conflict resolution deficiencies can lead to workplace tensions, reduced collaboration, and inefficient problem-solving. Stakeholder engagement weaknesses directly impact the organization's external relationships, partnership effectiveness, and ultimately the ability to achieve mandated objectives. Recent researches emphasize the growing recognition of leadership readiness gaps across industries, suggesting this is a widespread organizational challenge requiring targeted development approaches.

The integration challenges this dual gap presents is complex because technical skills training alone will not address interpersonal and leadership effectiveness, while soft skills development without technical competency may improve workplace dynamics but won't enhance actual work output quality. Both domains must be developed simultaneously for optimal organizational performance, which creates a comprehensive capacity building imperative:

- Technical competency development for operational effectiveness
- Soft skills enhancement for collaborative and leadership capacity
- Attitudinal shifts to support organizational culture and performance standards
- Low Training Exposure - Systemic Professional Development Deficit

The finding that “most staff have not participated in any training within the past year” reveals a critical organizational development gap with far-reaching implications. This aligns with broader research trends showing that many organizations struggle to provide adequate professional development opportunities, despite evidence demonstrating positive correlations between training participation and organizational effectiveness.

The overall assessment of staff capacities within the Directorate of Youth Affairs reveals significant gaps in core technical and managerial competencies. A majority of assessment areas cluster around the “low to very low capacity” levels, with average scores ranging from 1.9 to 2.6 (See “Fig 5”). This indicates that most staff members either require structured training or extensive on-the-job support to perform their responsibilities effectively. Critical functions such as understanding youth development priorities, budgeting and resource mobilization, public speaking, and participatory needs assessments scored particularly low, highlighting urgent needs for skill development.

At the same time, a few domains demonstrated comparatively stronger performance. Areas such as attitude towards diversity, gender equality and inclusion (2.9) and attitude towards learning and self-development (2.8) suggest a positive orientation and willingness among staff to grow and adapt. These findings reflect that while technical and programmatic expertise remains underdeveloped, there is latent potential and commitment that can be built upon through targeted training interventions.

### **5.2. SYSTEMIC ABSENCE OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Overall, the TNA underscores that the Directorate’s staff possesses basic functional capacity but falls short of the expected level of independent, strategic, and innovative performance required for effective youth development programming. Addressing these gaps will require a structured capacity-building plan, with emphasis on technical areas like M&E, financial management, program design, and communication, complemented by leadership development and exposure to best practices in youth engagement.

Recent research from 2024 indicates that 71% of employees feel more prepared for the future of work because of training received, with the same number satisfied with training relevance to latest technological developments and workplace changes. This underscores the missed opportunity when organizations fail to provide regular training exposure. The immediate consequences include staff potentially feeling professionally stagnant, affecting motivation and retention, skills deterioration in rapidly evolving fields particularly ICT and modern management practices, inability to adapt

to changing best practices in the sector, and reduced competitive advantage in attracting and retaining quality personnel.

The low training exposure suggests an absence of systematic professional development framework, possible budget constraints limiting training investments, lack of recognition of training as a strategic organizational priority, and potential absence of individual development planning processes. Contemporary organizational development research emphasizes that capacity building should be viewed as "an investment in the effectiveness and sustainability" of organizations, yet the evidence suggests this investment paradigm is not being operationalized within the Directorate of Youth Affairs Balochistan.

This trend creates a compounding effect where current skill gaps widen over time without intervention, the organization becomes increasingly dependent on external consultants or contractors, institutional knowledge and capacity building stagnate, and staff may seek professional growth opportunities elsewhere, leading to talent drain. The combination of high training dependency with low training exposure creates what can be termed a "capacity trap" where staff cannot perform optimally without training, training opportunities are limited or non-existent, performance gaps persist and may expand, and organizational effectiveness remains fundamentally constrained.

Key manifestations include:

- Professional stagnation affecting staff motivation and organizational culture
- Increasing reliance on external expertise rather than internal capacity development
- Widening performance gaps that compromise mandate delivery effectiveness

## **6. RECOMMENDATIONS**

To respond effectively to the emerging trends and identified gaps, a phased approach is recommended, balancing immediate priorities with medium- and long- term organizational development.

### **6.1. IMMEDIATE ACTIONS (HIGH URGENCY)**

The foremost priority should be the finalization of the Implementation Roadmap. This must be carried out in close consultation with the Sports and Youth Affairs Department, Balochistan, ensuring that it reflects institutional priorities and has the ownership of key stakeholders. In parallel, partnerships with reputed training institutions and professional development providers should be established to secure access to specialized expertise and training resources. These partnerships can help fill urgent gaps in technical knowledge

and skill sets. Equally important is the development of a multi-year capacity building strategy that goes beyond ad hoc training activities. This strategy should include a dedicated budget line within the Department's annual financial planning, thereby institutionalizing professional development as a consistent priority rather than a one-time initiative.

Finalize the developed Implementation Roadmap through consultation with the Sports and Youth Affairs Department, Balochistan	Policy-level	Implementation of youth socio-economic development roadmap approved through official government notification. MoUs with professional development institutions. also, the roadmap must contain a multi-year capacity building strategy approved in the departmental budget for the next fiscal year.
Establish partnerships with training institutions and professional development providers		
Develop a multi-year capacity building strategy with dedicated budget allocation		

### 6.2. MEDIUM-TERM INTERVENTIONS (MODERATE URGENCY)

Building on the foundations laid in the immediate phase, the next step should focus on creating a balanced program that addresses both technical expertise and soft skills such as leadership, communication, and teamwork. Internal mentorship and knowledge transfer mechanisms must be formalized, enabling experienced staff to guide and support junior colleagues. Establishing a performance management system linked explicitly to professional development will ensure that learning translates into improved organizational outcomes. Such a system should incorporate clear metrics, feedback loops, and recognition for staff who demonstrate growth. Additionally, career progression pathways should be introduced, tying promotions and opportunities for advancement to demonstrated competency development. This will not only motivate staff but also create a transparent system of growth within the organization.

Action	Category	Measurable Indicator
Implement a balanced approach addressing both technical and soft skill	Administrative	At least 70% of staff complete technical + soft skills modules within 12

development (Leadership, Communication, Teamwork)		months
Create internal mentorship and knowledge transfer programs (Pairing experienced staff with junior staff)	Administrative	80% of junior staff paired with mentors within 6 months of program launch
Establish performance management systems linked to professional development	Policy-level	Performance appraisals include competency-based metrics and feedback for all staff within 12 months
Develop career progression pathways tied to competency development	Policy-level	At least 50% of promotions aligned with demonstrated competencies within 12 months

### 6.3. LONG-TERM ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (LOW MODERATE URGENCY)

Over the longer horizon, institutionalization of capacity development is essential. Capacity requirements should be embedded into recruitment and selection processes, ensuring that new entrants align with the evolving skill needs of the Department. A culture of continuous learning should be nurtured through regular training cycles, mandatory refresher programs, and opportunities for staff to engage with emerging practices in their fields. To ensure sustainability, the Department should invest in developing internal training capabilities, such as establishing a dedicated training unit or identifying certified in-house trainers. Finally, succession planning frameworks should be put in place to anticipate and manage future capacity gaps. By identifying and preparing potential leaders early, the Department can ensure organizational stability and continuity, even during periods of transition.

Action	Type	Measurable Indicator
Integrate capacity requirements into recruitment and selection process	Policy-level	All new job descriptions (100%) include minimum competency requirements aligned with departmental priorities within 12 months
Establish a learning culture with regular training cycles	Administrative	At least 80% of staff participate in at least one formal training/refresher course annually
Create internal training	Administrative	Internal training unit

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capabilities to ensure sustainability	operational within 12 months; at least 2 in-house trainers certified to deliver programs
Develop succession planning frameworks to prevent future capacity gaps	Policy-level Succession plan documented and approved; 70% of key positions have identified and trained potential successors within 18 months

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## 7. CONCLUSION

This research explains that strategic and systematic Training Needs Assessment (TNA) is critical in enhancing the capacity of the institutions and effectiveness of the youth programs in Balochistan. The analysis of gaps in technical, managerial, and attitudinal competencies can be utilized in actionable information given through the assessment to implement specific, step-by-step, and long-term capacity-building interventions. In addition to bettering the performance of individuals, these measurables increase the capacity of the Directorate of Youth Affairs to impart policies, inclusive development of youth and deliver measurable socio-economic outcome. By showing that structured learning, mentorship, and continuous professional development are not only effective at filling the existing capacity gaps, but also provide a basis to develop institutional learning over the long term, the study also shows that Balochistan is able to harness the potential of its youth into real developmental achievements.

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**APPENDIX**

**IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP & HRD PLAN**

The Training Needs Assessment highlights clear priority areas requiring urgent attention. This roadmap outlines how these immediate training needs can be addressed in a phased yet rapid manner, ensuring that critical skills are developed while laying the foundation for medium- and long-term capacity building.

**Expected Outcomes of the Immediate Training Roadmap**

- Strengthened communication and leadership competencies across staff.
- Improved accountability, integrity, and ethical workplace culture.
- Enhanced adaptability and adoption of new technologies.
- Improved organizational capacity for research, reporting, and policy engagement.
- A more collaborative, skilled, and digitally enabled workforce prepared for future challenges