

Moving Towards Attaining Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) - 6.1 for Pakistan - A Localized-Centric Approach for The Provision of Safe Drinking Water for All



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Introduction

A widespread phenomenon, the concept & achievement of water security has drawn attention to the challenges that come along with it [1-3]. Commonly, about 1.8 billion people continue to reside in countries that are experiencing growing levels of water scarcity or stress (United Nations Water, 2013). Eventually, by 2025, more than 2.8 billion people living in 48 countries will be water-stressed. Moreover, by 2050, the number of people exposed to water stress will be doubled (UNESCO, 2017). According to the task force of the United Nations, on the subject of water security, the concept has been defined as “the capacity of a population to safeguard sustainable access to adequate quantities of acceptable quality water for sustaining livelihood, human well-being, and socio-economic development, for ensuring protection against water-borne pollution and water-related disasters, and for preserving ecosystems in a climate of peace and political stability” [4].

An imperative factor is that water security affects public health. Following a synthesis study on Sustainable Development (SDG) 6, it has been outlined that attaining the goal of universal access to water by 2030, would present an enormous challenge for each country, not only in terms of affordability, but accessibility as well. Achievement of target 6.1 implies addressing “unfinished business,” for not only holding out services for 844 million people lacking essential water services but also making progress on improving water quality services for 2.1 billion people. Furthermore, it also considers moving beyond households and provision of the mentioned services in institutions, facilities of healthcare systems, and schools [5].

Worldwide, water contamination continues to be a threat and danger to human health. With water quality continuing to deteriorate in Pakistan- because of a growing population, industrialization, climate crisis, and absence of a mechanism of efficient water management, the majority in Pakistan do not have access to water sources which are either healthy or safe, forcing them to drink unsafe water [6].

Concerning Pakistan’s 2022 floods, the analysis of the data shows the importance of accessibility for displaced individuals. In this case, poor water accessibility from a centralized system forced many Temporarily Displaced Persons (TDPs) to obtain water from potentially unsafe sources, including ponds, rivers, lakes, and streams. Data collection from March 2023 to March 2022 has demonstrated a similar trend. Being a fundamental human right, having drinking water should be a priority concern. It also brings to the surface the question of which climate-resilient solutions should be implemented to secure water for people displaced, and future generations [7].

Conclusion

Being a comprehensive goal, having 11 targets inclusive of accessibility to safe drinking water, fundamental sanitation, to that of having Water Resources Management, and an ecosystem that centers on this given subject, Pakistan having endorsed SDGs has picked up momentum on the achievement of SDG 6.0. Nevertheless, having a 100% attitude and reporting it for considering a developmental framework still needs to be worked upon. Additionally, this goal also holds a complementary role

entwined in its statement & scope as, “ sustainable management of water for all.” For Target 6.1: “ Safe and Affordable Drinking Water for All ” (The Global Goals), waterborne diseases have led to death, having become widespread and aggravated further by water testing and monitoring sources being scarce, however,

pivotal for the protection of drinking water [8]. Whereas, there are many models for the provision of safe drinking water, a localized-country-centric approach is recommended for moving towards the achievement of sustainable development goal 6.1, in Pakistan. Below in the Figure, is an overview of this proposition (Figure 1).

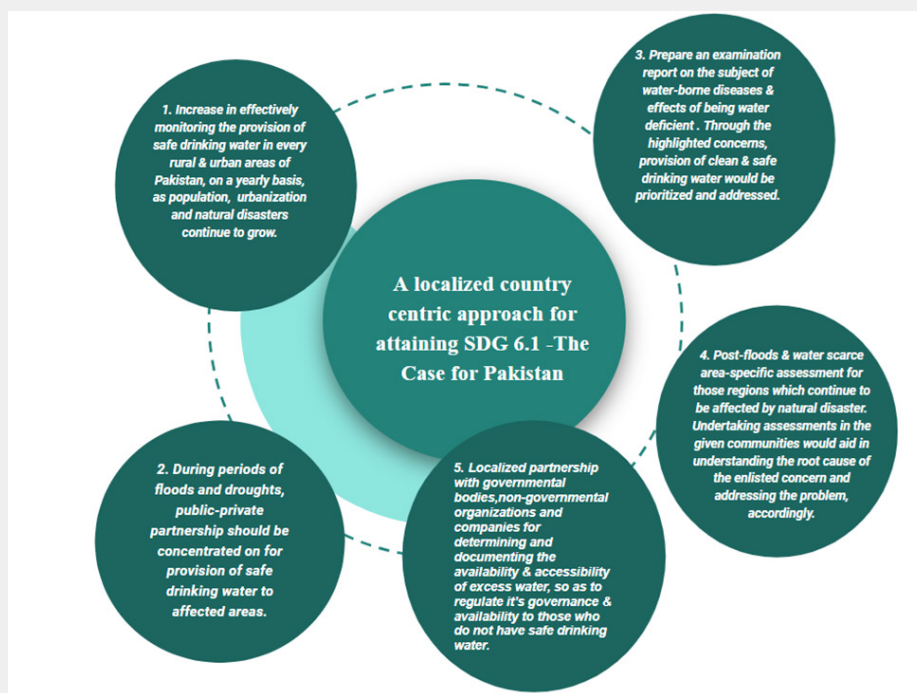


Figure 1: A localized-country approach for achieving SDG 6.1.
Source: Author's Own.

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