USAID ENERGY POLICY PROGRAM

USAID SUPPORT FOR INSTALLATION OF 132 KV DOUBLE CIRCUIT TRANSMISSION LINE FROM SKARDU TO GILGIT

This program is made possible by the support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

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USAID Support for Installation of 132 kV Double Circuit Transmission Line from Skardu to Gilgit

The GB government is seeking funds for the installation of132 kV double circuit transmission line from Harpo to Gilgit, covering a distance of 147 Km, to complete the Gilgit Skardu inter-connection and encourage development of all sites along the route. Estimated project cost is around $18million.

Impact:

1. Interconnecting the power stations of these hydro projects will improve their operating efficiencies and also ensure supply of reliable and sustainable power to the people that will reduce poverty and decrease extremist activities. The transmission line will connect the two main centers of GB and better utilize the power potential of 17 MW Satpara, 26 MW Shagarthung, 40 MW Basho and 35 MW Harpo. All other existing and ongoing small and medium hydro power projects will also be linked with this line.
2. Provision of electricity will strengthen the fruit preservation industry and develop cottage industry in GB. Gilgit Baltistan has an agricultural based economy, and a lot of seasonal fruit is wasted due to the non-availability of preservation plants resulting in a huge loss to the farmers.
3. Growth of the tourism industry in GB. Gilgit Baltistan is known was a tourist hub due to its scenic beauty and geography. The region is a paradise for mountaineers, trekkers and anglers. However, the tourism industry is losing momentum due to unsustainable power supply. The availability of reliable and sustainable power will aid in offering better facilities and increasing tourism.
4. Multiple isolated power plants with generation capacity of 200 MWs are underway even without the proposed transmission line. Electricity from these power plants is to be used in surrounding areas. The proposed transmission line will not only facilitate a well-coordinated regional grid but is also expected to attract private investment.

Background Information, if required:

The present power consumption demand of the region is about320 MW. Presently more than a 100 small hydro power projects, with total installed capacity of about 100 MW are in operation and many other such small plant projects are ongoing in different valleys. However, due to seasonal flow variation, they are unable to meet power demand throughout the year.

GB has a number of potential sites suitable for developing hydro- electric power. Feasibility studies and surveys have so far identified project sites with power generation potential of over 50 MWs for a total of 20,000 MW. Several sites with potential generation capacity of less than 50 MW amounting to 765 MW have also been identified. These projects are Diamer-Basha Dam (4,500MW), Bunji (7,100MW), Yalbo (2,800MW), Tangus (2,200MW)

and Skardu (1,600 MW). Different donors and WAPDA are already coordinating /implementing various hydro power projects in GB, namely: 17 MW dam project in Skardu($26M funded by USAID), 26 MW Shagarthung power project ($42 million funded by Asian Development Bank), 40 MW Basho power project ($44 million possibly to be provided by KFW and AFD in phase II), and 35 MW Harpo power project($80 million funded by KFW and AFD) which includes installation of a 132 kV transmission line from Harpo to Skardu, covering a distance of about 80 km and one regional grid..

Water and Power division of GB has already submitted PC 1 to Planning Commission for 132 kV double circuit transmission line from Skardu to Gilgit (227 km)and 3 regional grids. 80 Km transmission line and one grid is included with Harpo Power Project whereas 147 km transmission line from Harpo to Gilgitand two grids included in this project which cost about $18 million ($17.5 million for 147 km transmission line from Harpo to Gilgit and 0.5 million for 2 regional grids).

In Feb 2013, Chief Minister Gilgit Baltistan requested USAID to fund for 132 kV transmission line from Harpo to Gilgit. This will facilitate to interconnect available power potential (17 MW Satpara, 26 MW Shagarthung, 40 MW Basho and 35 MW Harpo) and all other existing and ongoing small and medium hydro power projects with this regional grid. Consumers of Gilgit and Baltistan will get benefit of this cheapest source of energy based on demand.

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