CHAPTER 4

The Social Component

Introduction

This chapter, on PERRP's social component, is presented in three parts. Part 1, "At the Community Level," looks at realities on the ground when PERRP arrived a year after the quake, including the necessary process of building and maintaining trust within the communities and figuring out with whom exactly the project should work.

As discussed in the previous chapter, the literature in international development and related fields has for decades been highlighting weaknesses in the practice of community participation. While its original intents and goals are still highly valid and pursued by many, much of what is claimed to be "participation" is implemented in rhetoric only. One reason for the resulting failures is the common misunderstanding of the word "community." In PERRP's community participation program, the sociocultural team placed emphasis on working with a clear concept of "community" and developing specific knowledge and understanding of each community that we worked in, including its broad contexts. We asked: who were each community's people, what was their social structure, how could they be motivated, and what would they do to participate? This chapter introduces the people and communities who were involved in PERRP and defines the communities in terms of geography, social composition, and arrangements of power.

This first part of the chapter, therefore, refers to the emphasis in chapter 2 on understanding the social structure, the community, and its subgroups—including how they function and relate to each other, especially in terms of power. While the literature often raises the subject of power structures, there is a dearth of case studies on recognizing and dealing with these structures. Part 1 provides a detailed example: it dissects how power arrangements were identified, describing each bloc of power and PERRP's process in helping to shift and share this power.

Part 2, "The Social Team and Process," details how the social component and community participation were organized, managed, and im-

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plemented; the social team's composition and duties; the participation process; and our facilitation of decision-making within the program. This part includes exercises that were conducted to develop understanding of the communities:

- a stakeholder analysis (table 4.3) identified those with a stake in the project, and responsibility for that consultation or participation
- a capacities/vulnerability and conflict sensitivity analysis (table 4.4) identified strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities; especially, to prevent or manage conflict
- a "What Could Go Wrong?" analysis (table 4.5) was conducted from several perspectives and was invaluable in foreseeing, preventing, and mitigating problems

Part 3, "How Communities Participated and Contributed—Monitoring," discusses community participation in different forms, including monitoring, giving time, making decisions, problem-solving, organizing school events, providing gifts in kind and cash, and preventing and resolving conflicts. It also looks at benefits to the committee members and what happened to the committees once the project was completed.

Part 1: At the Community Level

What PERRP Found on Arrival

Due to the time that it takes for a donor agency to prepare for a large project and then tender contracts, the PERRP project arrived on the ground thirteen months after the earthquake struck. The implementing agency was new to working in Pakistan but had engaged a local firm to assist in start-up. In November 2006, a small senior management team—myself included—arrived in Pakistan. In some ways, this late arrival was unfortunate; in other ways, it was a distinct advantage, as PERRP was able to learn from the many lessons this disaster response already had to teach. While PERRP was setting up basic project administration such as acquiring office space in Islamabad, setting up field offices, recruiting staff, and performing all the other needs to fast-track a construction project, the social program also was being established.

By the time PERRP started, the early emergency phase was over, but the general organizational response was still chaotic. Hundreds of NGOs and donor agencies were present, as were many United Nations agencies, and all were providing relief assistance in different sectors such as food, shelter, health, livelihoods, water, and sanitation. Of the hundreds

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of agencies, over fifty were carrying out hundreds of projects to help reconstruct houses and public buildings, but there was little coordination. Public mistrust was widespread, as much of the reconstruction had already stalled—if it had started at all. Even so, there was pressure to start construction, to get shovels in the ground and to complete the facilities. Several technical challenges complicated the construction work, including escalated prices and the region's difficult topography, altitude, and climate, as well as shortages of water, electricity, reliable construction contractors, skilled laborers, and materials.

As is common in disasters of this size, when large numbers of aid agencies arrived, prices skyrocketed for most needs—for example, office rentals, equipment, and construction supplies—and there was stiff competition for staff and construction contractors. There was an especially severe shortage of contractors who had experience managing construction to improved international industry standards. Skilled laborers were also in short supply in the project area due to the quantity of reconstruction underway, and there was a significant absence of skilled Pakistani laborers, as many were working in the Gulf States and elsewhere.

But there were additional challenges in simply implementing the project. One disadvantage of their late arrival was the immediate challenge of identifying which of the thousands of destroyed schools and health facilities PERRP would reconstruct. There had been a breakdown in data sharing, leaving government lists of the sites unreliable. Before PERRP arrived, many of the destroyed sites had already been assigned to other donor projects for reconstruction. Some of those had gone ahead with reconstruction, but in many instances, those sites had not been started and their plans were unknown. Agencies often did not inform Pakistan's Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority (ERRA) of their intentions to go ahead or not, leaving lists of sites outdated. Using the ERRA lists, it took several months and innumerable visits to potential sites for PERRP to finalize the list of places—mainly schools—that the project would construct. In the meantime, PERRP staff concentrated on designing and constructing sixteen health facilities, which had been much easier to identify.

The problems with identifying potential sites were a symptom of a general lack of coordination. Coordination of reconstruction work was important due to the sheer number of agencies who were running hundreds of projects, but, as was widely acknowledged at the time, efforts to coordinate were not effective (Haiplik 2007). Still, for PERRP, the few coordination meetings that were held—roughly once a month for about six months—gave us a major advantage. At the meetings, NGO and donor agency representatives complained that most of their construction had

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serious problems and that many of their sites were already stalled, unable to proceed. Attending the meetings on behalf of PERRP, I found that the experiences of the other agencies could teach us many lessons; out of these meetings grew a long list of problems for PERRP to prevent and mitigate.

Some of the problems were simply a matter of agencies not doing their homework. One donor representative spoke in exasperation about communities fighting over land issues. However, when he was questioned about addressing the problems, his projects had no way to deal with them or with the people who were in conflict. He had never even heard of the government's Revenue Department or the *patwari*, who are the locally based government officials responsible for land matters. He had not done even this basic research.

In these meetings, there was practically no evidence that the agencies had considered the social side of construction. At this early formative stage, despite all these agencies and projects involved, PERRP was the only one with a dedicated social team that had a structured program specifically to deal with the communities during the design and construction phases. All in attendance at those meetings were administrators, engineers, architects, or construction managers. No doubt well versed in the technical aspects of design and construction, most were well-intentioned newcomers who were not at all familiar with the realities of Pakistani communities. Others were Pakistani professionals who were familiar with the social and cultural realities but were unable to adjust a project accordingly.

Many agency representatives expressed surprise and frustration over problems with local contractors and people in communities—yet, in many cases it seemed that their own agencies' lack of preparation that led to such problems. At each meeting, the same complaints were repeated. Many voiced exasperation with "inept" construction contractors, attempts to manipulate prices, cost overruns, contractors who did not follow designs, an inability to keep workers, and so on. But most of their complaints were of a social nature. There were major land issues, encroachment, violence, sabotage, fights among people in the community, conflicts between community people and the contractor that resulted in blocked access to the construction site, and court stay orders that halted construction. If these agencies sought solutions, they often left these attempts to construction workers, who did not have the skills needed to deal with such matters, or to the respective government departments, who were notorious for inaction.

From attendance at these early agency meetings, PERRP made its first checklist of potential problems, prevention strategies, and solutions. While starting work in the communities with the engineers, the social

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team also consulted a wide range of perspectives on other potential problems and what others advised as solutions (see table 4.5, "What Could Go Wrong?").

Relationships and Trust Building

For projects in these locations, trust is a crucial matter. When PERRP first visited communities at potential sites, one of the main challenges encountered was the mistrust from local people, which was expressed in public meetings. In almost every case, people said they doubted what PERRP representatives were saying. Over the months since the earthquake had happened, we were told, they had had many visitors from NGOs and government agencies. "Those visitors," they said, "like you, asked a lot of questions and said they would help us—but then they went away and never came back. So why should we believe you? How do we know if you actually plan to rebuild our school here?"

To this skepticism, PERRP representatives would explain that the government of Pakistan and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), as the donor agency, had asked PERRP to come to this community and figure out if reconstruction was feasible. The people were informed that now that the technical and social assessments had been completed, it had been determined that this was a good place for reconstruction—but nothing required PERRP to build here. It was completely up to the community to decide to accept this project or not. The PERRP representatives would then explain the project and what would be expected of the community in terms of participation.

Once communities gave their official willingness to proceed, relations between community members and PERRP staff began to be established as community members watched on, wondering: "Will they do what they said they would do?" Confidence in the project grew once a rhythm was established—a plan was announced, then it was carried out and completed, and that cycle repeated itself many times. Staff members were in the communities daily, senior management and donor officials visited to meet the people, large public meetings were held, plans were shared, and rapport was established. Soon, community members responded with enthusiastic participation, as they saw PERRP doing what it said it would do.

For these kinds of relationships to become established, PERRP staff needed to show themselves to be credible and trustworthy. For both men and women from a range of social groups to trust the social team—whose members also came from multiple social groups—the project needed to consider a wide range of factors. These factors included, as discussed in chapter 2, the languages of the area; the cultural norms, especially those

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that define gender roles (*purdah*); and the roles of traditional informal leaders. Not only would these leaders bring important conflict resolution capacities to the project, but getting their buy-in would be a precondition for local people feeling comfortable with participating and authorized to do so. This also necessitated understanding the power structure and if there were ways to shift and share any of the power—as well as understanding the existing frictions and their underlying causes, and what the project would need to do, or not do, to avoid causing or increasing problems between local people. It was also essential for the project to have specific, structured conflict prevention and resolution approaches. Had PERRP not proceeded so cautiously in this unstable and politically charged environment, we could have caused significant security problems for the local people, and the project could have become another one of the many stalled or abandoned reconstruction efforts.

Whom to Work With

Any project with community participation needs to identify: With whom will the project work to initiate and facilitate participation? Who exactly will carry out the work on the ground? There can be many options to consider.

Whether long-term or short-term, disaster related or not, in sectors such as agriculture, water management, communications, housing, or health, it is common to subcontract some of the work to others, especially to locally based companies or NGOs. In projects implemented by NGOs or companies that have been contracted by donor agencies, the implementing agency's policy or contract will require, allow, or forbid subcontracting. In PERRP's contract, it was required that all design and construction work be subcontracted to Pakistani companies. For the PERRP social component, there was no requirement to subcontract the community mobilization, leaving the senior management team to decide.

Hiring locally is an important step in recognizing that capacities already exist in disaster-struck areas—and that these capacities can benefit the project and can be strengthened over the course of the project timeline. However, as one analyst points out, "More often than not . . . implementing agencies and NGOs are apparently either not aware of already existing institutions, organizations, orders, and arrangements at the local level, and of internal factions and power structures, or these are intentionally not taken into account in favor of a smooth realization or fading-out of their projects" (Titz, Cannon, and Kruger 2018: 18). In PERRP, we sought to tap into existing institutions to determine who would do the work on the

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ground—but what would be the best choice? Would the project hire NGOs or create an in-house team from its own staff? The advantages of the former choice would be the existing NGOs' local knowledge and their continued presence after the project was completed. However, there would be the risk of them not working at the pace and precision desired by PERRP. If we had our own in-house social team, we would be able to direct and manage work at the intensity needed. The disadvantage would be that, at the project's end, the highly trained and skilled staff would disperse—a benefit to development or reconstruction efforts elsewhere, but not as a direct follow-up to this project.

Ultimately, the choice was made by local NGOs themselves. When PERRP social specialists visited and interviewed Pakistani and international NGOs working in the earthquake zone, most indicated they were already too overstretched in other earthquake reconstruction projects and could not take on any more work. The only existing community-based organizations were ones formed by the NGOs, and they were already busy in other NGO activities. The only option left was for PERRP to set up its own social mobilization team to work at the community level. But who would we work with there? In these locations, there were no organized, available, or ongoing representative community-based groups that existed to lead the community for disaster or development work. The only other existing groups were noninclusive. They were for religious or political purposes, based on kinship, caste, denomination, unions, or other factors that were symptomatic of the social divisions and arrangements of power.

There were, however, informal leaders whom locals relied on to address specific problems or resolve conflicts in their community. From time to time in various matters, they would be collectively consulted by government officials or community members, but these informal leaders had no official group. With no other suitable, available community-based organizations present, the social team saw that these informal leaders, if they would assist, had great potential. One other important consideration was that new groups could not be formed out of thin air. To increase the acceptance of such groups and to increase the likelihood of recognition and facilitation by the government or other agencies in the future, the groups needed to fit in with the government's legal framework and have an existing legal identity.

Such considerations pointed to the legal but long-dormant School Management Committees (SMCs) and Parent Teacher Councils (PTCs)—entities that could be reactivated. This potential, however, had to be explored diplomatically, as it also represented some of the tensions that existed around the schools as discussed below.

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PERRP's Approach to "Communities"

In PERRP, we recognized that a community is not just a place, but that communities exist in highly complex sociocultural and political contexts. From decades of previous experience in the project area, PERRP's social team members made no assumptions that communities were harmonious. Rather, we knew that the social structure in the project region meant there were many subgroups with long-established reputations as diverse, hierarchical, and prone to conflict. For a project to initiate participation and operate effectively, it was important to know the subgroups in each community and their places in the hierarchy as seen through local eyes.

At the same time, where there are strong differences, it is easy to overlook factors and traits that groups and people do have in common. While this was the case of communities in the PERRP project area, PERRP proved that there were outstanding capacities and a willingness to contribute, especially when the people were challenged to do so. To get a more balanced understanding of communities early in the project, the social team conducted capacity and vulnerability analyses as discussed below.

PERRP's participation strategy was problem based and capacity driven. That is, instead of picking ideas out of the air for activities that community members could do, the program had stakeholders foresee needs and problems, and then put community capacities to work in meeting these needs and preventing and solving these problems. As the committees succeeded in many such tasks, it had empowering effects.

Who Were the People and Communities?

In KP province's Mansehra District and AJ&K's Bagh district, the communities lived in the areas surrounding the seventy-seven facilities that PERRP built. Beneficiaries numbered over one million: the sixteen new health facilities served a population of about 300,000, while the sixty-one new schools had an enrollment of 17,000 students from 556 villages with a combined population of approximately 800,000.

Community by Geography

In each case, PERRP's communities were defined first by geography. The project had been assigned to construct facilities that served large catchment areas, as defined by government and the local people. Each school catchment area—varying in size from six to thirty square miles—included several villages and subcommunities that were spread across the area. The health facilities, which were far fewer in number, had much larger catchment areas. Each catchment area was defined by distance and time:

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how far people came to access school or health facilities, and how much time it took to reach them—usually by foot, as roads and transport are scarce. A few of the facilities were in congested urban areas, but most were in remote rural communities in the mountains. By local common understanding, the PERRP communities had at least a rough geographic outline; the facilities were focal points, as they were usually the only facilities of their kind in that catchment area.

Community by Social Composition

Each of the catchment areas had a diverse mixture of social groups, with different castes, kinship groups, *biradari*s, groups with political affiliations, sects or denominations, and tribal and ethnic groups.

Types or Degrees of Participation

Across the many communities served by PERRP, there were different forms of participation, and participation was carried out to varying degrees. By far the most direct and thorough type of participation came from committee members, who numbered over six hundred. They were heavily involved in decision-making; problem-solving; conflict resolution; the detailed procedures for working before, during, and after construction; and all the planning and volunteer coordination that this work necessitated. Especially during the construction phase, which lasted many months, most members were involved on a daily basis. Another form of participation was in the way of contributions: committee members encouraged others to donate and lend property or to contribute resources needed for construction. Details of the forms of participation and contributions are provided in part 3 of this chapter.

There was also widespread participation by committee members and other volunteers who organized and attended events in which they listened and gave input. At public events organized by the committees, it was common for hundreds of people to attend, with public figures, head teachers, and students giving speeches. When architects presented the designs of the new facilities for community feedback, some teachers invited senior students to attend the committee meetings so that they could present their own opinions and ideas. Parents started visiting their children's schools for the first time and children got to take part in new school activities, including sports days, public speaking, and performances with songs, skits, poetry, and art making.

The construction site itself provided opportunities for sharing information, another form of participation. PERRP encouraged the committees to invite visitors to serve as observers. Outside the safety perimeter at each

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site, construction engineers regularly answered questions about the construction and features that made the new buildings earthquake resistant. With many other reconstruction sites progressing slowly or being stalled, this kind of information sharing by PERRP sites drew attention. With this construction speeding along unhindered, members of the public came to watch for fun and out of curiosity, as these schools were often the largest building in the vicinity, were situated in prominent locations, and were being built with construction methods and materials—reinforced concrete—that were rarely seen in these rural areas. To such observers, those sites became touchstones.

Even community people who had no connection to or direct benefit from the reconstruction efforts often attended and assisted just to know what was happening, or because someone in the community asked them to help. Better-off people sent their children to private schools or went further afield for private medical care, but many still were motivated to contribute to the new community facility.

Power and Participation

Analyzing the Power Structure: Why and How

In the research literature on community participation, power is a main issue, as it can determine who participates and who may be left out. Yet there is little practical information in the literature on how community participation can be handled. The following is provided as a detailed account of how, in this project, analyses were conducted to identify the blocs of power, the results of which were then used to shift and share that power.

Working in a community with many subgroups within a geographically defined area, the project's social mobilizers set about to develop their understanding. As full-time participant observers in the communities—in the market, at tea stalls, at prayers at the mosque, at social occasions, and in meetings with officials—they observed each community's social structure, determining who had the most power, who had the least, and who was in between.

At the community level, it was a matter of listening, observing, and having a mental checklist of questions. Social mobilizers asked themselves: To whom would government officials refer the project? If asked, who would people say are the most prominent or "in-charge" people? Who has a reputation for making things happen? Who did the in-charge people identify as prominent? In this culture, for whom did the hosts of meetings or gatherings reserve seats of honor? What is the social identity (ethnicity, clan, tribal group, etc.) of each prominent person? From whence does each person derive their power? How do they use or misuse it? Who and what

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are the "dividers" and "connectors"? Whom do people listen to, show respect for, and admire or fear? Who is involved in settling disputes or conflicts or taking other initiatives for the community? Who has a reputation for acting more in the interests of the community, and less in self-interest?

Because social mobilizers came from the same districts that PERRP worked in, they were easily able to recognize social groups by people's names, occupations, education, economic status, and physical appearance—including racial characteristics, clothing, and stature. By such observations, the social team members could identify which castes, clans, religious denominations, and ethnic or tribal groups were present in any location. As this is a sensitive subject, social mobilizers then discretely observed and researched relations between the groups, including frictions, conflicts, and the ways in which collaboration did occur. This kind of information was necessary to help the project be conflict sensitive: the social mobilizers needed to know who could play leading roles in conflict prevention, resolution, and collaboration.

As the above kinds of observations were being made, social group membership—the stratifications, hierarchy, or layers of social power, as well as the frictions, conflicts, and their causes—became apparent. The PERRP social team discerned the blocs of power. In some communities this hierarchy was immediately visible, while in others it emerged over time. With this profile of each community, the individual social mobilizers developed a clear picture of the social group actors, including their roles and their power. They then used this knowledge to know who to encourage and support, who to protect, who to depend on, and who to turn to for solutions. In general, this knowledge was used by social mobilizers to watch over and guide participation.

Knowledge of the power structure in each community was also important in the ongoing discussion by the social team, and it was shared with engineer counterparts to help with decision-making in different situations—especially in regard to the project's communication protocol, which included grievance procedures. None of this research was formal or in written form, but some formal survey methodologies were adapted—notably triangulation. Due to the divisions among people, it was essential to have information from multiple sources and to use different methods. What resulted was a relatively clear understanding of the power structure in each community.

Arrangements of Power at the PERRP Community Level

The social team identified the blocs of power in the communities around schools. At the top of the hierarchy were head teachers and their immediate circle of advisers or confidants. Then came the community's influential

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Table 4.1. Power Structure—The Blocs of Power in PERRP Communities.

Power within the community:
• At the government school: head teacher with circle of friends and advisers • In the community outside the school: powerful, influential community members, including elders, notables, religious leaders, and elites • Owners of land surrounding the school or granting access to it • Parents and students—women, men, girls, and boys from the poorest families
Power in the community from outside sources:
• The PERRP project • Design and construction contractors

community members, followed by owners and users of land that either surrounded the school or granted access to it. At the bottom of the hierarchy were the parents and students. As shown in table 4.1, coming from outside the community were two other significant parts of the power structure: the PERRP team itself and the contractors who were engaged to do the construction.

The Blocs of Power

Power of the Head Teacher

In their position, head teachers were the official representatives of the Department of Education. They held this role based on their own education, experience, caste, or tribal or ethnic identity, or—as is the case with most government jobs in this highly politicized environment—due to attachment to a political figure or party. Often head teachers are not working in their own villages; instead, they are transferred elsewhere as a reward, warning, or punishment, resulting in frequent changes in school administration. Head teachers then have their own unofficial circle of people whom they trust and whom they call on for advice or support: people from their kinship groups, relatives and friends, other teachers, people from their department, or connections from a political party.

Some head teachers are strong, respected educators who are dedicated to their profession and who put substantial effort into promoting quality education, while still remaining part of the sociopolitical hierarchy. Many others, however, are not so motivated, and they often have weak teaching skills and get little training and low pay. There is widespread teacher absenteeism.

In this position, head teachers often maintain the conventional idea of authority, and they see parental involvement as not needed or even unwelcome. Historically, parents are not involved at the school at all; there are no parent-teacher meetings, and schools often don't even issue report

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cards. While the head teachers are still accorded respect, the school is the head teacher's domain.

Over the years, many education development projects have attempted to bring change along the lines of what foreign donors considered the "modernization" of education, but these efforts have sometimes had limited effect. Some attempted changes—and the ways in which they were implemented—led to failure. In the 1990s in different parts of Pakistan, there was a shift toward introducing more bottom-up approaches in education, health, and other fields. At that time, School Management Committees (SMCs), Parent Teacher Councils (PTCs), and their respective guidelines were introduced to Pakistani communities by various international donor projects. These committees were later legally mandated and obliged to operate at each school. However, in bringing in these committees, the internationally funded projects did not consider the highly complex social hierarchy and power structures in these locations. For such committees to work, it would require a shift or sharing of power that was not welcomed by the head teacher or the other teachers. This well-intended but externally imposed idea meant that, at least in the project area, such committees had existed in theory only. Worse, the earlier failures with "community participation" in education had created a strongly adversarial relationship between educators and members of their communities.

With the design and construction of a new school pending, and many problems being anticipated—especially over land issues, which a head teacher would likely have little inclination or ability to solve—the local prominent people and landowners were especially important to include in the reconstruction work. These people were best positioned to solve related problems and could do so quickly. Without their participation and buy-in to the project, we faced increased risk that such problems would interfere with construction, delaying the completion of the badly needed new school.

Not surprisingly, when PERRP first talked with the head teachers and their allies, the idea of any community participation was commonly resisted. A few flatly rejected the idea, saying it was not needed: "Since this is a government building and I represent the government, I know everything you'll need to know." According to some head teachers, nobody else in the community would be needed; this was a type of elite capture in which the powerful would try to control all the decision-making. The PERRP social team offered friendly encouragement, explained that their workload would be increased if they tried to deal with construction alone, and implemented other ways of reducing friction. Without these strategies, community participation may not have happened at all.

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Much of the resistance to community participation came from having to involve community members who would be from rival castes, political affiliations, ethnic groups, or sects. These people with differences were easily dismissed by the head teachers, who held powerful positions. Among those who at first resisted or were dismissed were the informal leaders, who were other prominent people with their own power.

Power of the Informal Leaders, Notables, Elders, and Elites

Within the school, the head teacher is the authority, but the wider community has its own leaders. Each district had elected government representatives, although these people tended to be distant and were involved only in unusual circumstances. Yet each community also had an informal, nonelected power structure that was present and active, although it was normally not involved with the school at all. This leadership included elders, notables, and other respected, well-known, and influential people; however, a few in this traditional structure occasionally misused their power to get benefits for themselves, their families, and their social groups. These people may have been influential only within their own social group, or they may have had influence among others as well. Almost invariably, these leaders were men who came from a range of occupations: they were shopkeepers, farmers, transporters, bakers, informal social workers, political party representatives, union leaders, journalists, and religious leaders; they could also be retired or active government employees such as head teachers, teachers, and military, health, education, agriculture, or forestry officers. They were not a fixed, organized, or traditional group—they were simply well-known people in the community and were involved from time to time in different matters.

The power or influence of such figures determines much about the community. While it is sometimes an informal leader who causes or contributes to the divisions, this same person can also be seen as a problem-solver who has the power or influence to bring people together, to keep the pot from boiling over, to prevent or settle disputes. In both KP province and AJ&K, these informal leaders are known for their conflict resolution abilities, influence, and authority. In KP province and Afghanistan, the jirga—a community-based decision-making body or gathering of the elders and other influential people—hears all sides in a dispute, and by consensus renders decisions that are customarily binding. Jirgas are sometimes controversial and face accusations about their fairness. They tend to be held only when disputes are prolonged and have reached a critical state; they are not used in early conflict prevention or resolution. AJ&K has similar customs in which the elders and influential people come together to settle a dispute, but there is no particular name for it. Having

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such capacities in a community was invaluable to PERRP, as we found that, once some of the informal leaders became members of the committees, their skills in conflict resolution and problem-solving, combined with the PERRP social processes, worked exceptionally well.

At the same time, as these leaders would remain in the community and in their roles long after the project was completed, it was important the project did not usurp or interfere with their influence. We knew, therefore, that we would need to respect the leaders and be seen in the community doing so. We also knew that we needed to harness their skills, resources, and enthusiasm, and to offer new skills and strengthen their already extensive capacities, which could be put to use in future community development efforts. As an external group, meeting with these informal leaders was a courtesy, and we acknowledged the leadership, influence, and traditional authority they had. Gaining their acceptance was an essential first step in developing a needed long-term working relationship. Without their buy-in, the wider community would not have felt authorized to participate.

With power, of course, comes the risk of elite capture. While there were some attempts by individual elites to grab project favors from PERRP—as introduced in chapter 3—the likelihood of this happening had been foreseen early on (see the analysis in table 4.5, "What Could Go Wrong?"), and preventative measures were included in the project approaches. Dealing with elites and elite capture was a responsibility of the committees. As such, demands by elites were easily quashed by their peers. In early community-wide meetings, PERRP's construction engineers provided details about what kinds of work and services the project would provide and what would not be provided or allowed, stating that only the work already specified in a contractor's contract would be undertaken. When elite capture was nonetheless attempted, committee members could, when needed, find people of even higher status or more influence—for example, a certain relative or political party leader—to discourage the elites, or use other reasoning or pressure to dissuade them of their attempted demands, as in the anecdote "Landowner Suddenly Claims . . . ," page 71.

Power of the Landowners Outside School Land

At the schools to be built by PERRP, the land was owned by the government, but there was potential for issues with each site's boundary lines. If there were disputes, they would most likely come from those adjoining landowners who could exercise their power to stop construction through court stay orders or from refusing access to the site. Well before construction began, PERRP took steps to include these landowners in the project process, settling land disputes and establishing and respecting boundary lines.

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Power of the End Users, the Parents and Students in the Poorest Families

While the head teacher was at the top in the power structure in the school community, parents were at its bottom due to their positions at the lowest levels in the social hierarchy. These were the men, women, boys, and girls who are normally excluded or marginalized.

As part of the government-to-government assistance, the government of Pakistan and USAID had agreed that PERRP was to build only government schools, which had a reputation for providing low-quality education. Better-off people sent their children to the mushrooming private schools, meaning attendance at the no-fee government schools was from the poorer families. Poverty pushes these families further down the social hierarchy, leaving them with no voice and no ability to participate—so it was normalized that the head teacher was in charge of education and the school, and that parents never visited the school or received reports about their children's progress. Customarily, these parents were intimidated: they lacked confidence and believed education to be the teachers' and government's responsibility. The PERRP-activated committees gave many parents their first experience at their children's schools.

Power of the Project

Realistically, any donor project arriving in a community has significant power. Wise, respectful use of this power can bring about many other developments. Besides providing the funds, services, and planned benefits, a project can become a strong neutral platform and a catalyst in a community. To lay the groundwork for community participation, PERRP's social program used its position of power and influence to have power shared among the beneficiaries of the project, even if that power sharing was only temporary.

Approaches chosen by the project sometimes brought people together who, until then, may have resisted or opposed each other. This opposition was so strong that, in some cases, it was unacceptable for them, their family, or fellow group members to reach out to the other or even sit in the same room as the other. See ethnography, page 76. But since PERRP had asked them to work together to help get a new school or health center built, most agreed to do so because of their desire for a new facility. Realistically, the project had the power to ask people to do things that they would not normally do, and to do them together; this also gave the communities a platform that they could use to deal with each other, whereas normally there is no such platform. Being connected to the project provided an explanation and justification for different behavior. The project became a safe, friendly place to come together.

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Power of the Construction Contractors

Although contracted and under the supervision of the project, PERRP contractors were used to working alone in communities, without any help from a social team or organization that would host them, as is the norm for construction in Pakistan. Such contractors have a reputation for taking independent actions, often with an attitude of eminent domain, similar to a takeover or invasion. In construction projects, contractors either are given or assume the most powerful position, as they are the ones whom the client has sent to get the job done. Contractors with this mindset have a reputation for ignoring local requests, and so contractors and community members frequently blame each other for any problems.

Power Shifting and Sharing

Participation by the wider community required a shifting and sharing of power—a delicate matter in communities with a strong, established hierarchy. In the study and practice of community participation, such arrangements of power need to be clear. Projects should ask: "Do powerful people have an effect on your ability to work with the people?" (Cannon, Titz, and Kruger 2014: 113). Or, more pertinently, in such circumstances in which the power structure is strong and will not disappear in the short time frame of a project, how can a project work within a given power structure while still helping the people? In PERRP's case, getting participation by the community was set up as a three-step process. As the first step, the social team started at the top, getting buy-in to the project by the head teacher, which then made the second step possible—bringing in the community's informal leaders or influential people. This in turn facilitated the third step, which was participation by the wider community.

A main reason why there had not been community participation or functioning SMCs or PTCs at the schools before was because the government had issued counterproductive committee guidelines. Those guidelines put the head teacher in control, but they also gave committee members—whom the head teacher chose—the responsibility to monitor and report on the head teacher and other teachers, creating a contradictory and adversarial relationship. Not surprisingly, the head teachers then rejected any committee activity, maintaining their sole position of power.

To have the committee acceptable to each head teacher, the social team suggested to them that, for the duration of the project, those guidelines that created friction would be suspended, and new ones would be introduced—starting by removing the monitoring role. Table 4.2 shows the first proposed change—that, for the duration of PERRP, committee

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members would not be monitoring the teachers for any reason. Instead, they would offer only friendly support and help.

The social team, again stressing the temporary nature of the proposed changes—PERRP had no authority for what would happen after the project—also convinced the head teacher of the benefits of other changes shown in table 4.2, starting with a new committee member selection process and the requirement that members be representative of the catchment area and its social groups. Additionally, while the head teacher would remain in the committee's top position as general secretary, a new position for a community representative would be created: the chairperson, the committee's second-in-charge. The chairperson and all other members would be chosen by the community, a major change that shifted and shared power. Head teachers accepted the suggested changes, likely due to the clear advantages of having extra help, plus the emphasis on these being only temporary arrangements. With this buy-in, the social team then recommended that the head teacher, as the authority, call a meeting of these local leaders to discuss construction of their community's school and what they could do to help.

The PERRP team then moved on to the second step of the process, in which dozens of elders, notables, and other influential people attended a meeting chaired by the head teacher. By this point in time, having their school rebuilt had become urgent to all. As community members witnessed the slow progress of other reconstruction projects and saw signs that international funds for reconstruction were already drying up, it was commonly understood this might be their community's last chance to have their school rebuilt. The agenda of these meetings began with the social team again presenting the project ideas and plans, including how

Table 4.2. PTC/SMC Guideline Changes to Shift and Share Power.

Government guidelines:	**Temporary changes introduced in PERRP:**
Committee to monitor and report on teachers, including their attendance	Committee not to monitor teachers, instead to offer only support and help
Committee members prescribed by government, to be chosen internally	Committee members to be selected by community members in a public process
Head teacher maintained permanent leader as committee general secretary	Added community member as second-in-charge, the chairperson
Members restricted mainly to parents of children attending same school	Membership opened to parents and influential people in the community as chosen by the community
No social or geographic representativeness required	Required geographic and social group representativeness

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the community was needed to make it all happen. Invariably there was interest among the informal leaders to be involved, but they also were sensitive to the authority of the head teacher. Purposes for these new committees were agreed upon:

- prevent or solve community problems related to design or construction
- support the school and help improve education
- share responsibility with government for building maintenance

Membership criteria for committees were also decided:

- be representative of local sects, castes, and ethnic, tribal, or other social groups
- have geographic representation from the catchment area and user communities
- be known as respectful and respected
- be willing to volunteer, as there would be no pay, honorariums, or allowances from the project
- act without promoting any political affiliations
- live in the community
- be known as an education promoter and problem solver who is interested to help the community
- have no vested interests in the project, and not be in a position to make money from the construction

With this much decided, the third step—to get community participation underway—was initiated by the head teacher and informal leaders, who jointly called the first public meetings in which the project was formally introduced and the committees were formed. This much alone was a significant change in power sharing.

Some power was also extended to the local landowners. While landowners in these locations can wield power that can severely affect construction, the rights of such owners are frequently ignored. PERRP, however, chose the opposite tactic. Rather than wait and hope that no such issues arose, the social team invited the landowner stakeholders into the project process to draw attention to potential land issues, to address these issues, and to ensure that their rights were honored before construction started. While the process acknowledged their rights, it also brought them under community scrutiny for encroachment or any other practices the committee deemed unwarranted. While the project still dealt with many land issues, this strategy proved to be the main reason that there were no court stay orders to stop construction.

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A significant rearrangement of power also occurred between the communities and construction contractors. Since the committees had been well organized and active months before the arrival of the contractors, this gave the committees an unusual and prominent footing. Along with the management tools such as the Committee-Contractor Agreement, the presence of this new community voice gave the committees power in ways that they had not experienced before.

Parents and students also shared in this power, and were brought into the scene much more than usual. Once the committees were formed, they instituted some of the activities that nonfunctioning school committees were supposed to do all along, especially facilitating parent-teacher interaction. The social team also had the committees work with teachers to introduce student activities, many of which occurred for the first time: sports field days, public-speaking competitions, and school maintenance. There were also a few instances of parents, for the first time ever, making complaints about the teaching, as related in the first of the following anecdotes. Teachers frequently reported how local involvement with the construction had also generated far more community interest in education than they had experienced previously, as described in the anecdote "Community Helping . . . ," page 169. Another anecdote, "Brother Who . . . ," page 170, illustrates how complex it can be, despite all the processes used, to have community or family agreements maintained or honored.

Part 2: The Social Team and Process

The Social Team

Normally, a construction project does not have a dedicated social component with specialized staff to prepare and implement a structured community participation program. In the case of PERRP, the social program started with the USAID request for proposals: along with all the many required details for design, construction, subcontracting, supervision, management, budget, and the like, bidding companies were required to propose how they would liaise with communities. This unusual requirement was backed up by another innovative requirement: that the head of the liaison or social program was to be part of the project's four-member senior management team, along with the chief of party, deputy chief of party, and chief financial officer.

The social element in this project was not part of a broad USAID policy; instead, it came from the personnel that were responsible for conceptualizing USAID's reconstruction program for Pakistan. From their experience working for USAID, other donor agencies, and NGOs in other countries,

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they had observed that some mistakes made in school construction projects were due to local people not being consulted or involved in any way, and they wanted to avoid this. To make the social side of construction an integral part of the project—not to have it be placed in a subdepartment, or outsourced, where it could be treated as less important—matters of community participation were placed at the senior management level. This was important especially when this level of authority was needed to carry out the social program. For policy makers and planners for other projects in which serious thought is being given to the shifting and sharing of power at the bottom levels, serious consideration needs to be given to the composition of the management team at the top level.

PERRP was the only reconstruction project with a team of social specialists whose sole job was to work with communities and construction management. Normally contractors work alone, without a community committee or anyone local to take responsibility for sociocultural integration. If a problem arose from the community, a member of the technical team would try to deal with it, but they often were not successful. Sometimes contractors tried to get government to solve a dispute or to pay people to settle it.

Among both contracted and subcontracted NGOs and agencies with hundreds of projects in postquake reconstruction, most had little or no experience in construction per se. Their expertise was in early emergency response or long-term development in a range of sectors including medical assistance, preventative health programming, water and sanitation, shelter, food, livelihoods, agriculture, forestry, and education, but then they were engaged by donor agencies to also carry out a range of small-scale reconstruction such as rebuilding destroyed primary schools, usually one-room structures. To do so, the NGOs hired their own engineers to oversee light construction or the installation of prefabricated buildings. While these NGOs' field workers or social mobilizers continued their normal main programming, they would be also called upon to react to problems related to interactions between community members and construction workers, or they would take the problem to the responsible government departments. This frequently resulted in delayed responses, no response, or no resolution—main reasons for many stalled reconstruction projects. While the phrase "community participation" was frequently used, upon further inquiry or observation, it usually meant what was done on an ad hoc basis between individuals, without organized community responsibility or other involvement. Whether handled by a construction contractor or NGO, the approach was reactive, not proactive. For the six years that they worked in the earthquake zone, PERRP's social mobilizers listened for, watched for, and made inquiries to find other construction projects

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with any kind of structured, participatory program similar to their own, but we were unable to identify any. However, later, while PERRP was underway, our implementing agency did carry out a second reconstruction project, which was modeled on PERRP, for another donor agency. (See the section in chapter 3 titled "Use and Misuse of the Phrase 'Community Participation.'")

In PERRP, the design of the social program was based on theories and principles that drew on a number of my own influences, as discussed in chapter 3. These included Freireian ideas of encouraging people to analyze their own situations and to become proactive, to participate, and to take action to transform things. Then, as urged by Chambers, was the need to sit down with people, get to know them, listen to and respect them, and be ready to hand over the metaphorical pointer stick and use the participatory methodologies developed by Chambers and countless others. Also adopted was Mary B. Anderson and Peter J. Woodrow's emphasis on seeing the strengths or capacities—not just the problems or vulnerabilities—of communities, as well as Anderson's idea of looking for what connects people, even in conflict-prone situations. An especially strong idea came from the Aga Khan Rural Support Program, which suggested that projects make structured, demanding partnerships with poor communities: this idea was heavily influenced by the work of Akhter Hameed Khan, and his confidence in the "tremendous potential within the poor" (AHKRC 2010: 207). In general, the primary purpose of this social program was not as an ongoing, stand-alone community development program; instead, its purpose was to support design and reconstruction in a short-term project. Potential results from this approach were foreseen: if well designed and well executed, a social program could also result in strong local institution building.

To determine the number of social team members needed, I took a number of factors into consideration: what was the travel time from the field office to the construction site? If the mobilizer then needed to spend two or three hours at each site, how many sites could they reasonably visit in one day? How many construction sites or communities could each one serve in a four-day week, keeping the fifth day for office work, meetings, and reporting? Ultimately, I chose to hire eleven people from earthquake-affected areas to work as social mobilizers. As the twelfth member of the social team, I was in charge of the design and management of the social component in the communities, and also coordinated this work with design and construction through senior management.

The social team was a small percentage of PERRP's staff. Out of the total of about two hundred project staff members, the social team was made of twelve people: I myself and eleven local women and men who

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were survivors of the earthquake and who came from the same districts as the project. Most social team members were recent university graduates with master's degrees in various disciplines—political science, economics, law, education, international relations, and physics—but none had anthropology or rural sociology degrees, as such degrees were either available only at universities in faraway cities or not pursued because, as students, they were interested in other subjects. Three of the PERRP social mobilizers had several years of experience in this kind of work; two others had been primary school teachers before the quake, while the others got their first jobs straight out of university when the NGOs arrived for emergency relief operations.

In KP province and AJ&K, the prequake community-level jobs reflected the political situation. In KP province, local, national, and international NGOs had been operating for decades, providing jobs and valuable work experience. The people we hired to work as PERRP social mobilizers in KP province had worked for a few years in these NGOs in various community development projects: in water supply, livelihood development, education, agriculture, forestry, biodiversity, wildlife conservation, and other sectors. As AJ&K is a disputed territory, Pakistan had never allowed international NGOs to operate there until the earthquake happened—afterward, however, they were allowed in freely. Until then, there were few opportunities for community development jobs in AJ&K.

With little or no social mobilization experience, we hired social mobilizers based on what they had already been doing in their own communities, considering this experience to be the best indicator of their interest, suitability for the job, and depth of understanding. While many dozens of candidates were interviewed, all those selected had been involved at home as informal volunteer social workers or activists. Their activities included leading or helping in different emergencies such as floods, accidents, or landslides; organizing services for the disabled; getting friends together to tutor poor students or give classes to street children; working in campaigns to promote vaccinations, school attendance, and sanitation practices; participating in charitable work at the mosque; starting organizations at university; and demonstrating for various causes. It was this kind of practical experience that counted most, as from that experience, they could also articulate the complexities and challenges of a project, and could demonstrate their analytical and problem-solving abilities. All were fluent in English, Urdu, and local languages, and all had come through government schools, not through a private education system. All members of this highly dedicated team are named in the acknowledgements to this book.

As discussed in chapter 2, of all the skills needed by social mobilizers, what stood out was the need to be respectful and adept with cultural

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norms, specifically in regard to language, gender roles, the customs of *purdah*, and the local power structure and informal leaders. Of immediate importance for the project was the social mobilizers' distinct multilingual abilities. The project engineers and other PERRP staff had been recruited from Islamabad, the capital city, and from other parts of Pakistan, and so the mobilizers—who came from the project districts—were the only project staff who spoke the many local languages prevalent at the PERRP sites. Their knowledge of communities before, during, and following the disaster was invaluable.

The social mobilizer's role was to know and help steer the project through the social and cultural context of the immediate area, while also working side by side with their counterpart engineer (discussed below in chapter 5). The mobilizers were the project's eyes and ears in each community: they listened to what people were saying, solved problems, met with local officials, contributed to the ongoing iteration of approaches, assessed risks, and generally helped to shape the social process over the duration of the project. The social process was revised and refined through ongoing discussion, frequent meetings, and self-assessment. The social mobilizers developed skills in facilitation, group formation, performance monitoring, social assessment, report writing, participatory methodologies and approaches, data collection and analysis, and event planning and management. The duties and responsibilities of the social mobilizers were to:

- work with project engineers as counterparts, to understand the technical needs and plans, and to work jointly with them to introduce measures in the community to help construction start, continue, and finish on schedule
- work with the community to identify people's needs, help them to organize, and follow through to help prevent or solve problems
- contribute to ongoing analysis and iterative processes in order to develop the participation program and carry it out at the community level
- act as a project representative to local officials and organizations
- contribute to ongoing performance monitoring
- contribute to monthly reports, annual reports, and others

To emphasize community priorities and encourage the development of community leaders' capacity, the relationship between social mobilizers and committees was delineated: each committee was in charge and responsible for their community, while the social mobilizer was only the facilitator or adviser and acted as a bridge with the project. To avoid undue

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local pressures, the only proviso about the social team was that mobilizers could not work in their home communities.

To prepare for daily joint work at construction sites, social mobilizers and site engineers were trained together to understand their respective roles, as discussed in chapter 5. After a few days of orientation, social mobilizer training drew on the experience of each mobilizer, and consisted of a combination of learning-by-doing, action research, and iterative development. This style of training particularly suited the quick start-up of the project, and it enabled new staff to become familiar with two subjects at once: the communities and the needs of construction. For each school or health facility that would be built, a social mobilizer and project engineer were matched to work together, with their responsibilities clearly divided into social and technical areas as outlined in the communication protocols. The social mobilizer and project engineer needed to support each other's work—a complimentary partnership that proved vital.

The social mobilizers' daily activities varied according to the stages of construction. When construction of a site was completed, the social mobilizers also completed their duties; they then moved to the next sites to start the process again. Social mobilizers often worked in pairs to support each other. Each social mobilizer was responsible for an average of five or six sites. Social mobilizers, along with committee members, handled a wide variety of matters on a daily basis.

Examples of Social Mobilizer Work from One Month

In Bagh District, AJ&K:

- Government Girls' High School Chatter #2 inaugurated by senior deputy mission director of USAID along with program manager of District Reconstruction Unit, district education officer, PERRP staff, members of School Management Committee, and hundreds of community members and students.
- Library management training for twenty-five volunteer teachers and head teachers was planned but postponed at eleventh hour due to trainer's involvement in a road accident.
- Final inspection was carried out at Government Boys' High School Dherray, BHU (Basic Health Unit) Thub, BHU Sohawa, and BHU Sahlian Dhundan, along with program engineer, District Reconstruction Unit, School Management Committees, and Health Management Committees.
- Urgent operation and maintenance training given at newly inaugurated Government Girls' High School Chatter #2.

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- Boundary line demarcation facilitated by School Management Committee at Government Boys' Primary School Pehl regarding the construction of a boundary wall.

In Mansehra District, KP:

- In May, events were celebrated at schools. The social team gave some school bags to Parent Teacher Committee, which they awarded to the students who had the top marks. Such events were held in twenty-six project schools in Mansehra District.
- One head teacher reported that, due to the quality of the constructed schools, demands for enrollment were increasing. At each school under construction, several students were refused admission as the students were still in the tents and there was no room for new students; even so, the demand for enrollment was increasing, in anticipation of when the construction of new schools would be completed.
- The executive district officer visited schools under construction in Khawari and expressed his satisfaction over the quality. He said in public a number of times that he wished all schools in Mansehra District were built like this.

Social mobilizers' skills were tested early on. As reconstruction and its slow pace had become highly politicized, local political party representatives sometimes spoke at public meetings, trying to take credit for the arrival of PERRP. With the public already informed that the project was a humanitarian gesture from one country to another, social mobilizers and committee members diplomatically reminded audiences that this project had nothing to do with political parties. While such political maneuvering was common and expected in other public gatherings, direct political gesturing ceased within the first few months of PERRP, as committee members and political figures learned to self-regulate.

Social Process and Community Analyses

Given that this reconstruction project arrived in Pakistan over a year after the quake, the pressure was on to get shovels in the ground as quickly as possible. With project engineers and designers fast-tracking their work, the social team did likewise. Under such time limits and pressures, this was not the situation for a conventional, in-depth, time-consuming social and cultural analysis; rather, a pragmatic approach was required.

When choosing potential reconstruction sites, the work of the social team and engineers began on the same day in the same communities. This

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on-site work began only ten days after the project first arrived in Pakistan and, within one month, the first three communities had formed their committees to work with the project. While engineers conducted technical feasibility-testing assessments, the social team members went to work almost immediately to conduct social analyses that helped to increase their knowledge of the communities in a number of subjects. The first was a basic rapid social assessment. Over the next few weeks, the social team carried out a more detailed social analysis, which can be used as "a tool for project planners to understand how people will affect and be affected by development interventions" (Rietbergen-McCracken and Narayan 1998: 20).

Unlike conventional research that relies on questionnaires and surveys, in which an outside researcher collects data and then takes it away to be analyzed according to their own understanding, PERRP used participatory methods. These included participatory action research methods, rapid assessment, participant observation, key informant interviews, focus group discussion, mapping, and an iterative approach. However, some formal data collection was still conducted; community members were trained to do so in their own committees for monitoring purposes. Often, these methods were applied while on the move, as the social team observed, listened, and discussed in a range of situations: in groups standing along the road; at construction sites; in vehicles; in meetings with community members, officials, or engineers; in briefings and debriefings; in workshops and facilitated discussions; and in visits to the schools or health facilities to talk with staff, parents, and students.

To start the social program's process—described in more detail in chapter 2—the social team members synthesized the project's contexts and took next steps to apply that knowledge at the community level. Historically, the project area had been complex. PERRP took place in a region with a long history of tension, which was now experiencing additional strain from Pakistan-India conflict—mainly over Kashmir—and "war on terror" activity close by. These risks of insecurity and conflicts of varying degrees were present throughout the project. The general area, including the two project districts, also had a complex social structure. It was a multicultural, multilingual, heterogeneous, stratified, hierarchical, and politicized environment, in which people lived traditional, conservative lifestyles. Most people in the project area were among the country's poorest and were living below the poverty line. Given the negative reputation of reconstruction projects already, PERRP would need to be especially both culturally and conflict sensitive.

The PERRP social team conducted three main sets of analyses to develop understanding of the communities: a Stakeholder Analysis, a Capacities/Vulnerabilities and Conflict Sensitivity Analysis, and a "What Could Go Wrong?" Analysis.

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Exercise 1: Stakeholder Analysis

Purpose

A Stakeholder Analysis was one of the earliest exercises needed. This quick exercise compiled a comprehensive list of the people and organizations that had a stake in the project, including those who would be needed to provide input from time to time. Not recognizing who stakeholders are and failing to prepare for how the project will relate to them can lead to oversights and missed opportunities. A Stakeholder Analysis identifies the specific organizations, departments, groups, and individuals who have a stake in the project and with whom the project needs to work. It is a framework of information that assists in coordination.

Conducting the Exercise

Compiled with input from senior management, the social team, community leaders, and government line agencies, the stakeholder analysis served as a reminder among project staff of the many parties involved—parties they would need to work with.

The PERRP social team defined "stakeholder" as any individual or organization of any kind that had a stake in the construction work and the reconstructed facility. Who would benefit from the construction? Who would be interested in and support the work? Who could be negatively affected by it? Who could hinder, block, or damage the project or construction? Who else would have responsibility for aspects of the project? Whose help might be needed by the project? Who would the new facility need in order to be able to function effectively in future? In discussion with social mobilizers, engineers, and others in project management, these questions were posed and a list of stakeholders was drawn up. We questioned what roles each stakeholder would play and what roles they might expect from the project. Among project staff, agreements were made about which team members would be responsible for each bloc of stakeholders, as well as what types or degrees of consultation or participation would be used. From the earliest days of the project, particular efforts were made to start building relationships with these stakeholders, through holding introductory meetings and discussions.

The Findings

As table 4.3 shows, the stakeholders were clustered into groups: international- and national-level government, provincial or state government, district government, private sector, and community. Depending on contract requirements, the roles of these stakeholders may have already been specified, especially regarding who reported to whom. Table 4.3

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Table 4.3. Stakeholder Analysis.

Organizations and Individual Stakeholders	Who is responsible in PERRP? Types and degrees of consultation or participation:
International-Level Government: United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Government of Pakistan	**Senior management:** Report to these stakeholders and keep them informed; take directions, consult, obtain required approvals, and request assistance; host representatives visiting PERRP project offices, construction sites, and communities.
National-Level Government: Government of Pakistan's Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority (ERRA) National Engineering Services Pakistan (NESPAK) Ministry of Interior	
Province- or State-Level Government: For KP: Provincial Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority (PERRA); Ministry of Education For AJ&K: State Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority (SERRA); Ministries of Education and Health	**Social team**, with senior management as needed: Hold meetings with stakeholders, provide and request information, get input, request assistance, seek approvals, invite stakeholders to attend events, etc.
District-Level Government: Deputy Commissioners (head administrators) Departments of Education Department of Health (AJ&K only) Land Revenue Departments (responsible for land) Road Maintenance Department Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA)	**Social team,** with senior management as needed: Consult, provide and request information, seek approvals, get input, request assistance, solve problem, invite to events, etc.
Contractors and Suppliers: Design and construction companies, suppliers, workers Local subcontractors, suppliers, workers	**Senior management team:** Prequalify, contract, monitor, supervise, provide information, build capacity of these stakeholders.
Community Level: Community members: elders, elites, notables, religious leaders Head teachers and teachers Parents Students Health facility staff and users Neighboring landowners People along routes to facilities to be constructed Elected officials	**The social team:** Carry out all work daily with the community, including communications. Social mobilizers facilitated the community participation. For design and construction at each site, a social mobilizer and site engineer worked together as counterparts.
Implementing Agency: CDM Smith company and PERRP management and teams: technical, social, and administrative	**All PERRP staff**
Other organizations and projects doing reconstruction	**Social team,** with senior management as needed

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also indicates the type and degree of participation or consultation that would occur. In PERRP, senior management personnel were responsible for working with the government of Pakistan, the Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority (ERRA), and USAID. This work was in the form of reporting, meeting, planning, joint decision-making, and hosting the donor and recipient agency personnel to visit project sites at any time. Senior management and project engineers at the regional level and at each construction site were responsible for collaborating with design and construction contractors.

At the provincial (KP) and state (AJ&K) government levels, the social team was mainly responsible for consulting with government personnel to carry out tasks in the field. For example, provincial and state support might be needed to invite representatives to meetings or to get advice, permits, cadastral surveys, or documents. In addition to liaising with government and communities, the social mobilizers also connected with other organizations and projects doing reconstruction. In this postdisaster scenario, there were many NGOs and projects present in the same districts also working in reconstruction and recovery. PERRP social mobilizers were expected to coordinate with them. The idea was to build relations and rapport before help might be needed and, especially from government officials, to take their direction and encourage them to visit the project and take part in any related activities. With so much reconstruction activity going on, it was often difficult to get government staff to play leading roles or even visit, but social team members regularly visited key stakeholders to keep them informed.

Throughout the project, the stakeholder list served as a reminder to all project staff about who was responsible for dealing with which stakeholders and, very basically, what was to be done. It helped maintain awareness, foresee stakeholder involvement, and coordinate the work of project staff. It provided the foundation for identifying specific stakeholders who should participate. Importantly, it meant that when something went wrong, PERRP already knew the right people to help solve the problem. Finally, all staff members shared in the responsibility of collaborating with the implementing agency, CDM Smith, including with the staff at its head office in the US and at project offices in Pakistan.

Exercise 2: Capacities/Vulnerabilities and Conflict Sensitivity Analysis

Purpose

As discussed above, projects are often planned without knowing the strengths or capacities of a community. This oversight results in missed opportunities both for the people and for the projects. With this in mind,

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the basis of the PERRP social program was a capacities approach. Taking this kind of positive approach was the single most important decision in the social program, and it guided PERRP to set up the social process with each community. This approach proved to be highly motivating among project staff and communities. Recognizing existing community strengths and encouraging these to be brought into the project helped build community self-confidence, willingness to contribute, and a sense of empowerment. Looking for the positives in the midst of poverty, disaster, and trauma raised awareness of communities' strengths and put a much higher value on them than would be usual. This built social mobilizers' confidence and the expectations of the people. Talking with leaders about their communities' strengths, resources, ideas, and opinions helped mobilizers to encourage and mobilize people and build their self-confidence. In such a postdisaster situation, it is not necessarily easy to see the positives. In 2006, amid the almost overwhelming results of the earthquake, PERRP social team members needed to be encouraged to search out the strengths, attitudes, and resources that may have existed long before the disaster and that could still be present in each community. This is the main advantage of conducting such an analysis: it brings to light a new set of attitudes that teach others a new way to see.

These approaches particularly suited the PERRP project area, with its stratified, hierarchical social structure and ever-present risk of conflict. The project needed to be aware of what caused frictions, what the project needed to do to not cause conflict, what conflict prevention and management capacities existed in the community, and what the project could add to support those efforts.

Conducting This Exercise

This analysis began in a workshop setting as part of the social mobilizer training, but observation, discussion, and analysis continued throughout the project and guided the social mobilizers' work as situations changed in communities.

From living and working in such communities, social team members had experience observing, hearing, and seeing community realities. It was well known in the team that, although each community was very poor, little had ever happened in these remote communities unless the people themselves made it happen. Government and elected officials hardly ever helped, and outsider help either had never been provided or was scant.

The Capacities/Vulnerabilities and Conflict Sensitivity Analysis drew out observations from social team members who themselves were somewhat representative of project beneficiaries: they also were earthquake survivors from different social groups and from different villages within the

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project districts. As certain factors were identified, we engaged in a long discussion as to whether something was a strength or a weakness, how bias affected our judgements, and how other matters were simply facts, neither negative nor positive. Social mobilizers' own critical analysis capacities were developed through these discussions and continued to evolve throughout the project.

To analyze the postquake project communities in a workshop setting, social mobilizers were asked to consider capacities and vulnerabilities in four realms: physical/material, social/organizational, conflict/collaboration/security, and motivational/attitude. Table 4.4 summarizes results of the analysis, showing a balanced picture: while there were many challenges and risks, there were also strengths. The analysis highlighted that, since the quake, much had already been achieved by the communities with minimal outside assistance.

The Findings and How They Were Used

There are frequently weaknesses in the design of development and disaster recovery projects as the strengths of the communities they intend to help are overlooked. In PERRP's case, when there was deliberate effort to find the positives and capacities, it provided an unusual view of these communities. As intended, the exercise showed that, no matter the many problems, divisions, or vulnerabilities, there are also significant strengths, resources, capacities, and connectors that, if tapped effectively, can gain productive results.

Physical/Material Capacities and Vulnerabilities: Findings

Considered first were the physical or material realities, as these were the most visible and were where most outside assistance went, if any had come. On the vulnerabilities side, there had been much loss and trauma. Houses, schools, health facilities, and much of the infrastructure had been heavily damaged or destroyed. In these regions that were already the poorest in the country, poverty was prevalent, and families had few productive resources with small landholdings. Complex land issues were already a source of much conflict.

However, on the capacities side, there were many strengths. In only one year since the quake, most people had already rebuilt their houses, often using materials or cash assistance from government or aid agencies. Although schools and health facilities had been heavily damaged or destroyed, most families still sent their children to school and still sought medical attention, with these services being provided in the open air, in tents, or in temporary structures crudely put together by community members. Students attended class sometimes only sitting on the ground or on the

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Table 4.4. Capacities/Vulnerabilities and Conflict Sensitivity Analysis: The Findings.

Vulnerabilities and Dividers	Capacities, Strengths, and Connectors
Physical/Material	
Houses destroyed Public buildings, schools, health facilities, roads, bridges and other infrastructure were heavily damaged or destroyed.	By one year after the quake, most houses were rebuilt, children were going to school outdoors. Teachers and health workers were still doing their jobs.
Existing poverty, very small landholdings (average under two acres)	Despite poverty, community members had resources to contribute: influence, time, land, water, materials, etc.
Earthquake destruction, loss, and trauma	People had already taken reconstruction actions in the first year after quake and had a strong desire to do more.
Complex historical issues with land, a main source of conflict	With a fair and transparent process facilitated by PERRP, people were willing to settle land issues.
Social/Organizational	
Communities had many differences based on social stratifications by caste, sect, political affiliations, ethnicity, etc.	Each community had influential people or connectors able to bring or keep the peace.
Lack of unified, representative leadership	Individuals had a strong desire for community recovery and development.
Weak local organization for disaster recovery or development	Organizational skills had been developed in other activities (e.g., organizing political or religious events and family weddings, etc.).
Conflict/Collaboration/Security	
Disputes and conflicts were common, creating high risk to people and the progress of construction. General insecurity and tensions in the region	Each community had "connectors"—people and traditional conflict resolution practices that could be applied to construction.
Motivational/Attitudinal	
Loss of hope in the future, and low level of self-confidence	Getting organized to support construction helped restore confidence and hope. The construction site was seen as a symbol of recovery.
Mistrust. Earlier, other agencies had promised to help but had not. Surrounding reconstruction sites were often stalled or abandoned so people asked, 'Why should we trust PERRP?'	Trust grew as people saw PERRP do what the project said it would do: build. With trust, enthusiasm spread to help get the new facility built.

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rubble, and lessons were written on broken pieces of chalkboard. Teachers and health workers were still doing their jobs, winter and summer.

In most villages, the mosques had also been rebuilt, a clear sign of motivation and the ability to find resources. Despite the poverty, influential community members often had connections or resources that they could access to contribute to the project in the form of loans of land and water. Complex historical land issues were a main challenge for any construction; however, as PERRP found, these issues could be settled through a fair, transparent process that was developed and used by the project.

Social/Organizational Capacities and Vulnerabilities: Findings

On the vulnerabilities side, the communities were heterogeneous, with many divisions and differences based on social stratifications by caste, sect, political affiliations, and ethnicity, and they were divided into separate power groups. Even before the quake, disputes and conflict were common, resulting in much tension and loss to local people; such conflicts had the same effects on reconstruction projects. There was a lack of unified local leadership and the organization for disaster recovery or development was weak.

While such differences are common in the project area, almost every community had the capacity to deal with disputes and conflict. There were numerous people with leadership skills and a generally strong desire to help with recovery and the rebuilding of schools and health facilities. These influential local people included elders, retired or active government employees (such as head teachers and military or forestry officers), businesspeople, social workers, and religious leaders. Such community members were often relied upon for solving community problems using negotiation, their social capital, alliances and connections to others, or pressure tactics. As demonstrated in PERRP, with appropriate facilitation, even communities in which major differences existed could be brought together to help the community and construction. It was also common for some community members to have organizational skills and connections developed through other activities (such as organizing family weddings and political or religious events), which they put to use in the committees.

Conflict/Collaboration/Security Capacities and Vulnerabilities: Findings

As stated above, common vulnerabilities included disputes and conflicts, resulting in much loss. Such risks of sectarian and communal frictions and violence, along with general insecurity and tensions in the country at the time of the project, were a high risk for construction. However, each community had capacities—most importantly, the capacities provided by influential connectors and traditional conflict resolution practices that could be ap-

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plied to construction-related problems. Much of PERRP's approach to community participation was built around this capacity and conflict sensitivity.

Motivational/Attitudinal Capacities and Vulnerabilities: Findings

At the beginning of PERRP, a year after the earthquake, the region was still in the early recovery stage. There was a general and often-expressed loss of hope and lack of confidence in the future. There was also, at first, a general lack of trust in PERRP, which had developed because of other agencies' unfulfilled promises.

On the capacities side, as soon as people saw PERRP doing what it said it would do—building new facilities in a way that was culturally sensitive and respectful of the recipient communities—trust was established. Later, leaders often expressed how getting organized and participating in the project helped restore and build confidence. People saw construction as a symbol of hope for recovery and the future. By the time the project had wrapped up, the committees that had formed were strong, confident, prominent, and respected in the communities.

How These Findings Were Used

The strongest capacities were immediately drawn upon. The presence of influencers, connectors, and people with leadership skills—and the strong sense of self-help demonstrated by the reconstruction they had already achieved on their own—were strong indicators that these communities could achieve even more. This strength-focused approach served to be highly motivating for PERRP staff members, whose enthusiasm then encouraged community members, having a ripple effect. Many people now wanted to participate and contribute to an extent even they had not envisioned. Its empowering results were textbook—exactly what scholars and theorists like Anderson had predicted.

Exercise 3: "What Could Go Wrong?" Analysis

Purpose

A wide variety of things can go wrong in construction or reconstruction: matters to do with administration, management, finance, and scheduling; navigating regulations and obtaining permits; performance of designers, construction contractors, and workers; getting supplies and equipment; and challenging weather conditions. In a postdisaster situation, the challenges can be multiplied many times over, with the abnormally high demand for construction creating shortages and competition for resources. Instead of waiting to see what problems would arise in PERRP, the social team consulted early on to get a range of perspectives about the most likely problems.

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This consultation covered several subjects, and each problem that was identified became the basis for the solutions-based, capacity-driven approaches and strategies that our team used in PERRP community participation.

Conducting This Exercise: Gathering Perspectives

This exercise was conducted by the social team, who limited their discussion to asking only about potential construction problems that involved local people. As opinions could vary greatly over what constituted a "wrong" or something "going wrong," different perspectives were sought from five main sources:

- The other donor and implementing agencies also doing reconstruction
- PERRP's own highly experienced construction engineers
- Social mobilizers who were from the same districts as the beneficiaries
- Community leaders who were watching the slow progress of reconstruction in other projects around them
- Contractors hired by PERRP to do the reconstruction work

Donor and Implementing Agency Perspectives

At coordination meetings with other donor and implementing agencies that had been active in the region following the quake, these agencies reported slow or stopped construction. The main challenges were consistent: land issues, blockages of access to the site, unreliable contractors, and conflict between the community members and contractors. Such challenges were repeated at every coordination meeting.

Construction Manager and Engineer Perspectives

Early in the project, we held a workshop with PERRP's social team and the construction manager and engineers, in which the technical team looked to the challenges ahead and all participants started deciding on the approaches that could be used to handle them. We consulted eleven engineers with a combined total of 240 years' experience working as construction managers for contractors in hundreds of other construction projects. We asked: In their experience, what was a typical construction site like? If there were any problems involving local people, what happened? Who handled the problems and how?

The PERRP engineers pieced together this typical scenario: the client—for instance, the government's Ministry of Education, Health, or Roads—selects a construction contractor and assigns them to go to a place and carry out construction. There usually is no local organization to work with the project, and often even the responsible government department is not effective in dealing with the local people. This situation means that

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the contractor is expected to do everything. They need to build the new building and fend off any problems that might arise from people near the construction site. When such problems arise, the engineers might try to deal with a few prominent people who actually help. Or somebody from the project might have to run after the responsible government department to get them to act, but the department will be slow and is often ineffective. There are rarely any grievance procedures at all. Occasionally, a book will be kept at the gate in which people can write their complaints, but such an approach depends on literacy and can easily be ignored. Typical projects do not have any staff who are specialists in working with communities. The community members are not involved in any planning; there are no formal agreements and very little information is shared. Communities and contractors can often get into conflict, sometimes prompting court stay orders that force projects to come to a halt.

Social Mobilizer Perspectives

Project social mobilizers, speaking from their experience as local citizens, pointed out that contractors frequently arrive with a dominating attitude, almost like an invasion. Since they have been assigned to work in a location, they act like their assignment gives them the authority to take over. They do not ask local people for permission to take or use things. Because there was a shortage of skilled laborers in the earthquake zone, contractors brought their own laborers from other parts of Pakistan, where the culture was different. These outside laborers did not know how to behave in these conservative villages, leading to a lot of trouble. In general, across Pakistan, contractors have a negative reputation and communities' mistrust of them is reciprocated. Because there is no community organization to work with construction, virtually all the problems come from individuals or small groups who take their complaints directly to the contractor. There is no transparency; deals are made privately and without written agreement, and when things go wrong, there is no recourse, which is a cause of much of the fighting. For example, a local man might agree to rent a house to the contractor and verbally agree to terms, but later the man might accuse the contractor of not paying as promised.

Community Leader Perspectives

In informal discussion in numerous communities, when asked about their experience with construction, community leaders were consistent, outspoken, and clear about the problems. From the earliest community meetings, complaints about other construction contractors were frequent. Construction contractors often were seen as corrupt, inept, and keen to use inexpensive low-quality materials and to take short cuts that reduced

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the quality of construction. They were said to use and overuse local resources (land, water, and electricity) without permission, to disappear or stop working, and to refuse to listen to community members. We were told, "They make agreements with us, to pay us for something or rent something from us, but then they don't keep that promise. Their workers disrespect cultural norms and cause big problems among people in the community."

Construction Contractor Perspectives

As PERRP engaged contractors to carry out the project's construction, some of their company representatives and construction managers were consulted. We asked, in their many other projects around the country, had they experienced any problems that involved local people? Their list of complaints was as long as the others' lists. We were told that individuals or groups in the communities sometimes interfere or try to control what the contractor does, they use coercion to get undue benefits (materials, favors, or services), they exert pressure or make threats to get jobs, they steal or damage equipment, and they get into fights with each other and with the construction staff. A consistent remark was: "People are always coming to us with complaints and demands, telling us what to do and how to do construction. The 'big men' try to force us to give them things or do work for them that is not part of the project contract. People sometimes give wrong information and at times don't honor the agreements that were made."

The Findings

These frank analyses were compiled into a long list (table 4.5). Based on this list, PERRP chose project approaches based on what was needed to prevent or solve each problem with the support of local capacities.

"What Could Go Wrong?" Analysis: How the Findings Were Used

According to the "What Could Go Wrong?" Analysis and PERRP's consultations with different stakeholders, the potential for conflict was the number one issue. This was followed by concerns about construction contractors, especially the way contractors managed—or failed to manage—things on or around the construction site. Other main issues included the behavior of community members and laborers. Foreseeing these issues, the project developed several approaches geared toward prevention and problem-solving, including:

- conflict sensitivity
- committee formation and collaboration
- Communication protocol with grievance procedures
- Committee-Contractor Agreements

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Table 4.5. "What Could Go Wrong?" Analysis: The Findings.

Most common problems in construction in Pakistan that involve local people:	**Responsibilities and strategies in PERRP:**
• Common local differences and conflict • Land issues: ownership, boundary issues, and encroachment • Access blockages across private or other land • Community member–construction worker conflict • Court stay orders to stop construction • Elite capture and "big people" demanding benefits • Uncertain water supply and access (critical for water-intensive concrete work) • Competition for an unreliable electricity supply • Damage or loss of community or contractor property • Placement and storage of construction vehicles, machinery, materials, and equipment • Traffic disruption and damage to roads and bridges • Dust, noise, and hours of work • Loss of privacy and use of visual barriers • Uncertainty of disposal site for rubble and construction debris • Discrimination against workers (by origin, ethnicity, language, caste, etc.) • Pressure and threats to hire local contractors and provide jobs • Mutual mistrust of local people and contractors • Building design features that ignore the culture • Cultural insensitivity of laborers from other parts and cultures of Pakistan • Disrespect for cultural norms, resulting in fights, losses, and risks • Issues at laborers' camps (noise, overuse of resources, firewood, water, etc.)	For each of the problems listed, the social team and committees, in cooperation with the site engineers, worked to prevent conflict and to make and enforce agreements. For the above purposes, several tools were introduced including the communication protocol, lines of communication, grievance procedures, formal Committee-Contractor Agreements, "Do-no-harm" guidelines, Workers' Code of Conduct. All are described in detail in this and other chapters. Architects were directed to follow community design requests where feasible.
• Pre-existing public reputation of contractors in general: blamed for being corrupt, using faulty materials, and taking dangerous shortcuts • Safety on and around the site • Contractors' quality of construction • Late or nonpayment of workers and suppliers	Strict enforcement of contractual requirements, multilayered monitoring, and PERRP control over quality, cost, and time Local committees also invited by project team to be involved in monitoring work.

Conflict Sensitivity

Of high priority was sensitivity to the frictions and conflicts that already existed and how reconstruction was exacerbating these. In the project

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areas, construction sometimes sparked specific problems: encroachment; undesired cultural change brought by outsiders; rejection of ideas by others due to old conflict or rivalries; real or perceived loss of land, water, or other precious and scarce assets; and previous negative experience with, and distrust of, contractors and construction. A vicious cycle can be created where one of the above problems adds to another.

For example, an accusation of encroachment might actually be retaliation against an old political rival, and this latest accusation just added to the enmity. A group from one caste might refuse to share water for construction, as the spring was on their land and they didn't want the other caste to benefit from it, renewing caste-based disputes. Locals beat up construction workers, risking full-blown conflict, because the workers who came with the contractor were from another ethnic group and were perceived to be taking jobs from locals. One community could not come to an agreement over land even though they were all from one caste and part of one large extended family; they were split by old political differences. Combining each community's capacities, especially for conflict resolution, with other features introduced in the project helped prevent and solve conflicts.

Committee Formation and Collaboration

A main source of conflict was the relations among different social groups, including those among castes, sects, ethnicities, or political groups, as discussed above and in chapter 2. In a public forum in each location, PERRP led community members in forming a committee that was representative of the geographic area and its social groups—a highly unusual collaboration. This committee then led the community in working with the project and being responsible for preventing and solving community conflict related to construction. This was a critical first step in participation and conflict prevention.

Communication Protocol with Grievance Procedures

What was clear from discussions with both community members and contractors was that the conflict between them was common and that it was caused by ineffective communications, lack of agreements, and lack of effective methods to handle complaints. The project introduced protocols that separated but coordinated communications between community members and contractors, serving as a way for anyone to make a complaint and get a response quickly. Tensions were reduced simply by knowing whom to talk to, and by having a place to make a complaint and get an answer. For more detail, see chapter 5.

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Committee-Contractor Agreement

As conflict was often caused by contractors' and community members' mutual mistrust, poor treatment of each other, and lack of communication, the social team led the two parties to establish friendly relations and make agreements before construction started. Conflict was significantly reduced by the process, and the resulting written document was used as a reference throughout the project.

"Do No Harm" Guidelines for Contractors

Construction contractors are normally given no guidelines at all about how they should relate to local people, and the result is often conflict. To prevent conflict and loss in PERRP, contractors were given directives to do no harm to people, their property, their relations, or their culture. They were directed to not use land, water, or anything without permission; to not damage buildings, land, water sources, or other natural resources; and to not break cultural norms or create problems between local people. These guidelines became part of the Committee-Contractor Agreement. Having such standards was new to the contractors in PERRP, but the project's site engineers enforced these expectations, reducing reasons for public reaction against construction.

Construction Workers' Code of Conduct

Construction workers who were brought from other locations due to local labor shortages could often be a source of conflict. Having a written code of conduct reduced problems by helping construction workers to be clear about expectations for their behavior.

Part 3: How Communities Participated and Contributed—Monitoring

How did the communities in PERRP participate and contribute, and to what extent? How was all this monitored? To answer these questions, we first must ask: can participation be quantified? While some of the most important forms of participation cannot be counted, aspects of it—for instance, activities—can be quantified at least to a certain extent. As part of the project's overall performance monitoring plan, the social program developed a participation index, with detailed metrics to monitor our work, make certain points measurable, and establish a minimum threshold or goal of 50 percent. This was to be a participatory assessment, and the idea was that these new committees would be able to rate their participation above the minimum threshold.

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Monitoring the Social Component

To establish formal monitoring and the participation index, members of both the social team and the committees set up two main methods: social step tracking and periodic performance assessment.

Social Step Tracking at Each Construction Site

As described in chapter 5, the community participation process—working alongside construction and its innumerable technical steps—was set out in twenty-four main social steps (see table 5.1). Since each committee had its own unique factors and each construction site was at different social and technical stages, and because each social mobilizer was looking after several sites, a way to record this detail was needed.

To help monitor progress, a chart was developed that listed each of the sites, as well as each of their social steps. Table 4.6 shows the twenty-four

Table 4.6. Monitoring—Social Steps Tracking Chart: Monthly Progress.

	Social Steps: *Note: see table 5.1 for more details on each social step*	GGHS Noman Pura	GGMS Kahna Mohri	Basic Health Unit Harighel	Basic Health Unit Khawja Ratnoi	GBPS Phel	GBMS Chaknari	GGHS Chowki	GGHS Dhal Qazian	GBHS Afzalabad	GBPS/HS Mohandri	GGHS Behali
	Stage 1: Before Construction											
1	Rapid social assessment	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2	Introductory meetings	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3	Public meetings, willingness resolution	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
4	Committee formation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
5	Communication protocol with grievance procedures introduced	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
6	Settle the land issues	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
7	Arrange land for temporary tent setup	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
8	Committee input to design	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓
9	Committee hosts prebid site visit	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓

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	Social Steps: *Note: see table 5.1 for more details on each social step*	GGHS Noman Pura	GGMS Kahna Mohri	Basic Health Unit Harighel	Basic Health Unit Khawja Ratnoi	GBPS Phel	GBMS Chaknari	GGHS Chowki	GGHS Dhal Qazian	GBHS Afzalabad	GBPS/HS Mohandri	GGHS Behali
	Stage 2: At Start of and during Construction											
10	Contractor briefing on social component	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓
11	Committee-Contractor Agreement made	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓
12	Committee organizes construction launch event	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓
13	Relocate to temporary site	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓
14	Construction worker code of conduct introduced	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓					✓
15	Make management and maintenance plan #1	✓	✓	✓	✓							✓
16	Committee capacity building	✓	✓	✓	✓							✓
17	Exit plan developed with committees	✓	✓	✓	✓							✓
18	Make management and maintenance plan #2	✓	✓	✓	✓							✓
19	Operation and maintenance training	✓		✓								
	Stage 3: End of Construction											
20	Committee in final inspection	✓	✓	✓								
21	Committee organizes inauguration	✓	✓	✓								
22	Contractor cleanup, restorations	✓	✓	✓								
23	PERRP exits, committees continue	✓	✓	✓								
24	Committee and contractor defects liability period	✓	✓	✓								

Notes:
✓ = step achieved
G (Government), G (Girls'), B (Boys'), PS (Primary School), MS (Middle School), HS (High School)
This is a sample of one month's progress at eleven of the seventy-seven schools and health facilities constructed in PERRP.

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steps and an example monthly reporting chart that details the progress made in of eleven of the seventy-seven construction sites at a certain point during the project. Social mobilizers updated the chart monthly, marking each step that was reached. The chart was kept in two forms: one on large paper for display in a prominent office location, and the other in a digital spreadsheet format to use in monthly reports. Both gave a bird's-eye view of the participation activities as they were reached and what step needed to be done next, helping to communicate progress to others.

Participation Index: Periodic Participatory Performance Assessment

For the participation index's minimum threshold or passing mark, the social team arbitrarily chose 50 percent and developed twenty questions to be answered periodically during the project period. The participation index allowed them to compare total scores at any given time, allowing them to see each community site's progress.

The first time the committees were assessed, only one quarter of them ranked above the minimum threshold of 50 percent—but three years later, all of the committees were above the minimum threshold. By the end of the project, all the committees scored 70–100 percent on the participation index. These scores indicated the high levels of local participation as well as the significant in-kind and monetary contributions. By then, the committees had become deft in project approaches and in dealing with their communities.

For general project purposes and this assessment, social mobilizers trained and monitored committee members in record keeping to collect data on topics such as contractor compliance with the Committee-Contractor Agreement, school maintenance, gifts in kind, attendance at events, and frequency of meetings. This training not only increased skills but also raised awareness and appreciation among committee members about the range of their own contributions and their value, creating a level of competition within and between communities. Recording and accounting for these contributions was another new experience for committee members.

Methodology

The social team developed a questionnaire with twenty questions on group representativeness, formal and informal skills, problem-solving, sharing of responsibility, and other factors. This assessment was conducted four times. Early in the project, the first assessment was conducted by social mobilizers alone, who assessed the committees as an office exercise, assigning scores and checking each other, as mobilizers were often familiar with one another's assigned schools. Friendly competition over who had

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the highest-scoring schools helped keep unreasonably high scores in check. The second and third assessments were fully participatory, with social mobilizers facilitating school committees in scoring their own performance. After first scoffing at the idea of marking performance—it was "too much like school"—the social mobilizers and community members soon came to enjoy the chance to officially criticize or praise what they were witnessing.

By the fourth assessment, the same participatory scoring was done in workshop settings in each community, with committee and community members participating. This time, in several places, a community member led the process with mobilizers being only observers. Scores were decided by participants after much debate over what was deserved. Of course, self-scoring like this can be subjective—even highly subjective—but what was much more important was that local people were asked to give their opinions and to make such assessments. This kind of collaborative analytical process among people who often had many differences was likely more important than the score itself.

Participation Index Questions

Questions posed were the same each time: there were twenty questions that were scored from zero to five, with zero meaning "no, not at all," and five meaning "yes, excellent or outstanding." The questions assessed six main subject areas:

1) **Formal group skills**: Has the committee elected officers, held monthly meetings, kept quorum at each meeting, kept written records, and opened a bank account as required by the government?
2) **Nonformal group skills**: Has the committee shown an ability to obtain resources (e.g., land, water, time, money) and to keep or develop relations with the government, NGOs, and other stakeholders?
3) **Representativeness**: What percentage of members are from beneficiary hamlets and social groups? What percentage are women? How does the gender representativeness compare to that of other local events or organized efforts?
4) **Problem prevention, problem-solving, and responsibility sharing**: Has the committee prevented problems that could lead to loss or delays in construction? What number of days were lost due to conflict? What level of assistance was provided by the committee to help prevent construction delays? To what degree is the committee sharing responsibility for facility maintenance? Do they have a written maintenance plan? If yes, how well is it being implemented?
5) **Quality of education (for schools)**: Has the committee initiated school activities or helped the school improve education? What

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is the level of communication between school staff and parents? What is the likelihood of the committee continuing after PERRP is completed?

6) **Miscellaneous impressions**: Overall, how do committee members rate their community's relationship with the contractor, social team, and engineers?

With scores for each answer tallied and expressed in percentages, each committee got an indication of their participation and progress over the duration of the project.

Main Forms of Participation and Contribution

In any project with community participation, consideration needs to be given to what is feasible, needed, and within local means, while also keeping in mind that communities, as well as outsiders, frequently underestimate existing local capacities. A capacities/vulnerability analysis is valuable because it can facilitate such understanding, and, in PERRP's case, it identified significant potential. However, it wasn't enough for PERRP's social team to understand the capabilities of local people: communities still needed to be convinced of their own potential to participate and contribute. Once motivated to try a participatory approach, they found they were often able to mobilize far more than they had previously believed was possible.

From the committees' feedback, we learned that people found it helpful that PERRP was specific about what the project would need, which motivated the committee to get other local people involved—and that started the ball rolling. For example, at the start of the process in each community, the committee was informed that the project would install a temporary tent school or health facility to use until construction of the new building was completed. To set up the tent facilities, flat land of sufficient size would be needed. In mountainous areas where flat land is scarce and the average land ownership size is under two acres, the committee went out, identified suitable land, and convinced the owners to lend it for the tent facilities—a major achievement in itself, as flat land is usually productive for food and resources. Then, at their own initiative, most committees also asked the landowner to donate its use at no cost. PERRP had not asked for free use of land; it was the committees' choice to have others contribute in this way. Committees' success in this request started the long sequence of many more contributions.

To facilitate voluntary contributions, committee members used friendly persuasion, calling on their family and fellow community members to con-

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tribute as part of a collective expression of gratitude for being promised a beautiful, safe facility. It undoubtedly made a difference that the committees and social mobilizers developed strong working relationships, with the mobilizers providing information, guidance, and encouragement throughout the project. Committee members and many other volunteers in each community contributed in different forms, including through time, decision-making, and problem-solving; gifts in kind and cash; event organizing; data collection; and performance assessment. For schools, the levels of participation and contribution in PERRP are all the more remarkable given that, in many parts of the country including the project area, School Management Committees existed in name only. As schools are government owned and operated, it is normal for communities to not be involved at all.

Representative Participation

Committee membership criteria included the need for members to come from and represent the places, ethnicities, castes, and sects in the school catchment area. Assessing this subject in an index question, we found the average score was 91 percent—a high level, and one verified by using membership lists with names and addresses (the names revealing ethnicity, sect, community, and gender) and by observation. Of the 606 committee members, women comprised about 22 percent, which may seem low by standards in other parts of the world, but locally this percentage was reasonably high. Considering that such committees did not exist at all before PERRP, this level of overall representativeness was exceptionally high.

Time and Decision-Making

The greatest contributions to the project were in time and decision-making. Our records show that, altogether, the committees had just over 600 members, who volunteered over 53,000 person-hours—roughly 18 years, collectively—and attended a total of 3,800 meetings! These included the committees' monthly meetings and occasional public meetings or events, but the majority of hours were for the work involved and the many ad hoc meetings held on the construction site, in which social mobilizers and site engineers solved community-related issues. This level of attention, with quick responses to situations as they arose, allowed construction to continue unhindered while also quickly alleviating problems for community members.

Problem-Solving and Conflict Prevention and Resolution

The other outstanding contributions to this project were the quantity and variety of problems solved and the conflicts that were prevented and

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solved by the committees. Many of the situations that arose could have easily led to conflict, work stoppages, or court cases, which might have resulted in long, costly delays or even the abandonment of the construction work. Although these contributions are unquantifiable, it is likely that they saved significant amounts of money for the project and prevented common or typical losses for local people.

Being responsible for preventing or resolving community-related conflict in the project, committee members used both their social capital and the community's conventional methods: pressure to conform to community or committee obligations or decisions; friendly persuasion; calling in influential people; use of reciprocity ("another community member has already done *X*, so you should too"); reminding others of religious obligations for education or health; appealing to those in dispute or conflict, to stop it in honor of those who died in the disaster; and reminding them to think of the future or to show respect for the outside help being received. If these methods of persuasion did not work, the last resort was to threaten shunning, a local practice; but in the end it did not have to be enacted in any of these communities. These traditional approaches, combined with those introduced by PERRP (the communication protocol with grievance procedures and other conflict-sensitive tools), resulted in far less conflict than is common in such projects.

Gifts in Kind and Cash

We also kept records for gifts in kind, especially those of land and water, which have the highest cash value. In almost all cases, contractors needed additional land outside the project site's boundaries—for instance, for a site office or a place to store materials or equipment. Also, in these water-scarce areas, getting the large quantities of water that were needed for concrete- mixing during construction was a major challenge. But as committees had started early, successfully obtaining free land for the temporary tent facilities, they took the same initiative with their next needs, again asking community members to lend free land or give free water for construction purposes. Each contribution was made completely at the initiative of the committee and was not a requirement of the project. Where land was lent without charge, PERRP's construction managers calculated the value of the donation based on current rental rates. Similarly, where communities allowed the contractors to take water, PERRP engineers calculated the value according to what it would have cost for the project to bring tanker truck loads of water. Along with donations of cash and materials for school events, the total market value of these contributions from poor communities was nearly a half a million US dollars.

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The committees also decided that they needed to find and manage cash to carry out any special school events they chose, such as their first-ever parent days, exam results announcement days, construction launch celebrations, and inaugurations. To do this, members usually contributed some cash themselves, but more often, representatives went into the community, asking people in the better-off households, businesses, or the mosque for cash or for loans of goods. For example, committees were responsible for hosting all public events and would have to pay for them themselves—but they were urged to do so cheaply and within their own means. Committee members decided it was important to go all in and make these large events special, which would mean they needed chairs, portable stages, sound systems, and overhead sunshade or tent structures. So committee members tapped the many wedding equipment rental places in the area, asking them to lend these goods as each business's contribution.

For the communities where schools were built, the idea that they could raise funds for these buildings seemed highly unlikely, as communities rarely are involved in the government-run education system. However, not only did these committees choose to fundraise, but they figured out how to do so even in poor communities that were in the early disaster recovery phase. Considering that the daily income in the project area was under $2 and that a teacher's average monthly salary was about $110, it was remarkable that communities raised nearly $40,000 (not even counting the funds they raised for the Library Challenge, described in chapter 7).

Organizing of School Events and Public Attendance

Besides large special events such as the Library Challenge, construction launch celebrations, and building inaugurations, it was part of each committee's responsibility to help improve education. This meant getting involved in school business. They worked with teachers, parents, students, and local officials to organize and host school-based activities, such as public speaking, debates, poetry recitations, arts and crafts, essay writing, sports days, and performances. For schools that normally had few to no such activities, these new efforts and the resulting attendance were a welcome change for the school community. When the head teachers were surveyed to see what they recalled of any such events before PERRP, they reported remembering a total of only two hundred events in all their years of teaching. In contrast, since PERRP had started working in their communities, about one thousand events had been organized. PERRP kept attendance at such events, showing that about seventy thousand people had attended, many of whom had not been to the school before.

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Figure 4.1. Committee-Organized School Activities. In addition to assisting construction, committees formed in PERRP helped with school activities such as this event, a public speaking contest at Government Girls' High School Juglari, 2010. © Asya Tabassum.

Benefits for Committee Members

There is a risk that the rich and powerful get more benefits out of a community project than the intended beneficiaries. Such outcomes can occur when a project has not found ways to prevent the well-off from capturing the benefits. In PERRP, committee members received no monetary or other material benefit for their involvement. As it had been made public information from the beginning of the project, committee members worked purely as volunteers, with no allowances or fees of any kind, even though it was common practice for NGOs to pay at least token fees for attendance or participation in certain efforts. From the day the committees were formed, it also had been a criterion of membership that anyone hoping to benefit financially from the construction—such as a supplier or subcontractor—did not qualify to be a member. Besides gaining new skills, committee members gained some amount of admiration and prestige in the community for having helped the new school be built in each place. In terms of material gain, however, committee members brought far more to the project than they individually got out of it.

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What Happened to the Committees?

It is common in many countries that local organizational efforts, which are started by a temporarily present project or agency, fold once the project has been completed or its agency has left the scene. This also happened with the PERRP committees. Despite early exit planning and extensive ongoing discussion on this subject with the committees—and despite the skills they had built up, and the frequently expressed optimism and the preparation by members to continue and to even form their own umbrella group—all the committees stopped functioning once PERRP was completed and project operations closed down. The reasons for this are numerous and not unique to PERRP or Pakistan. The local history of organizing and the local social structure make such groups fragile, especially when they are without some neutral entity that provides an ongoing and long-term platform or acts as a catalyst. During the project, the power structures outside the groups still existed, and once the independent catalyst was removed, the old power arrangements and struggles took over again. People did not stay organized for many of the same reasons that they were not organized earlier. Without change in the surrounding social structure, and without lasting shifts in power, the sustainability of such groups is commonly at risk.

The longevity of such groups often depends on long-term, regular follow-up by some entity such as an NGO, a self-initiated entity, or a government agency, which would provide structure and maintain community motivation—but that did not happen in this case. Although the committees were legally mandated to exist at each school, the Department of Education had no central office or personnel that could specifically work with these committees. That responsibility was given to the district education officers, who were already overstretched.

Knowing there would not likely be another entity to provide long-term facilitation or a neutral platform after PERRP was completed, the committees had been encouraged to form their own umbrella group to work proactively for their own future, and to continue the highly popular Library Challenge. While this continuity was welcomed by many, when meetings to discuss the establishment of an umbrella group began, power struggles started. When other groups with commercial interests assumed they would take over (inevitably involving matters of caste, political and ethnic groups, and other alliances), the committees walked away.

While the project was present, the committees were strong local institutions. Had they continued, the schools could have benefitted from them significantly. Nevertheless, with the skills they developed and with higher expectations within communities about how they should be treated and

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how projects can be managed, committee members and others are undoubtedly putting this new experience to use in other endeavors, including building capacities in other institutions.

"Participate? Nobody Had Ever Asked Us to Do That Before"

One of the most common remarks made by community members to social mobilizers was: "When you first came here, we did not understand what you were talking about. You said you wanted us to participate, but nobody had ever asked us to do that before, so we didn't know what you meant. But now we know, and we like it a lot. We wish others would ask us to do it too."

See the Difference? Participation versus No Participation

With so much construction being planned or attempted by different donors and projects in so many places all at once, reconstruction, and peoples' varied experiences with it, was a common topic of discussion.

A committee chairperson asked, "Have you seen the school that was under construction down the road? Now there is no activity there, no equipment, no workers. It's all empty since the contractor left, and we don't know why he left. That construction got started in the usual way that government does it, even before the disaster. They hire a contractor who comes to the place and builds. He works alone without a local organization or committee in the community, except for maybe asking some local individuals if he needs help; he goes back to the government if there's a bigger problem to solve. But that is very slow, and all kinds of problems happen that don't get solved. People in the community don't know anything about that construction, even who the contractor is or what exactly they were going to build."

He continued, "But with the community participation in PERRP everything is different. From the beginning we knew lots of details. Things were explained to us: who is the contractor, where the funds come from to build our school, and what are the details of the construction schedule and the building design. The reason we know this is because the social mobilizers and engineers told us. And we are still surprised we were asked to give our opinions about the design! Our committee is in charge for the community to work with the contractor, and we made a written agreement with the contractor that we are both obliged to follow. If there are any problems or complaints, we have good ways to settle them. Before this project we never heard of community participation: nobody ever asked us to participate, but

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we like very much to do it! And we've never seen construction go on so steadily like this."

An Elite's Demands—Attempting to Capture Benefits

In projects, it can be common for powerful individuals to try to grab benefits for themselves. As found in PERRP, the most effective ways to deal with or prevent this was to first have a public agreement about it, and to have other local influential people taking responsibility to stop it.

Along the road to one of the PERRP construction sites lived a prominent political figure—an elite—who was used to getting personal favors from many sources. He started demanding that the construction team install drainage he needed on his property, which had nothing to do with the construction of a new building. The contractor took this demand to the PERRP site engineer, who, according to PERRP's communication protocol, then told the social mobilizer about it. As the man's demands escalated, the social mobilizer asked the committee to reason with this man and help him to understand that this project would not do unrelated work. They succeeded, and he stopped his demands.

Blocked Access to Construction Site

Regardless of all the effort put into the project preparation and agreements with communities, elites sometimes still rejected community requests or decisions.

Three separate times in one location, despite significant community intervention, the contractor's access to the construction site was blocked by a powerful landowner. In this community's Committee-Contractor Agreement, the owner of the land that provided the only access to the construction site committed to free access without charge. However, a few months later, after differences with the contractor, he changed his mind and blocked access, demanding a large sum of money. Pressure from the community forced the man to honor the agreement and it seemed to be solved—yet a couple of months later, the landowner made the same demands. In a committee meeting with the contractor, on a day when the man was out of the village, his elder brother took charge of honoring the promise on behalf of the family. However, when he returned, the owner rejected his older brother's promise and again demanded payment from the contractor to use the land. Rather than hold up construction any longer, the social mobilizer and resident en-

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gineer had the landowner and contractor negotiate a monthly charge for the use of this land, even though this broke the original agreement.

"My Parents Never Set Foot in My School"

A PERRP social mobilizer explained that, when he was younger, his parents had never met his teachers or saw inside his school. When first visiting schools early in the PERRP project, he remarked, "Nothing has changed in these government schools since I was a student in the primary levels over twenty-five years ago. Back then it was unimaginable for a parent to go to the school, and so my parents never set foot in my school. Just like everybody else, they thought the teacher was in charge, so education was the teacher's responsibility. We showed our respect to them but, frankly, my parents were a little afraid of the teacher. But since the school committees have become active in this project, change has started. They are bringing parents and other community members into the schools for the first time."

Parents Locked the School and Led a Protest against the Head Teacher

Change occurred at all the schools in this project. When PERRP first arrived in a community, parents had never been involved in their children's schools in any way. With time, however, the newly activated committees—for the first time ever—encouraged parents to get involved at the school and in education. One school went much further than the others.

At this school, with the completion of the building only one month away, parents—mainly mothers—led a protest against the school's head teacher when they heard of the poor board exam results of all the students. They put a lock on the school door, and when the head teacher failed to attend a meeting that they had requested, they went to the Department of Education and demanded the head teacher and staff be replaced, or else they would transfer their children to other schools. Project social mobilizers, all of whom were from nearby locations, observed that not only was this parental action unprecedented, the Department of Education's reaction was also unheard of. In only a few days, the District Education Officer attended a meeting at the school with the parents, school staff, and the committee, and, admitting the Department of Education had failed this school, took responsibility and agreed to replace the head teacher. They then appointed an acting head teacher, who was the chairman of the committee and was also the headmaster at a nearby school. The Department of Education had committed not only to finding a new head teacher, but had done so with the input of the committee!

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This was almost a textbook case of people's empowerment. The parents involved had participated in the school's first-ever parent events, which were initiated by their first-ever functioning School Management Committee. These brief meetings appeared to have convinced parents that the education of their children was their responsibility and that they had the right to make demands of the education system. Now the committee could be of even more benefit by harnessing the energy and commitment of these parents.

Not participating in the protest, the committee members acted wisely, cautiously, and diplomatically, as they were reluctant to be perceived as campaigning against school staff or as revolutionaries in the education system—actions that could have put their committee in jeopardy.

Community Helping Construction Drew Attention to Girls' Education

All the activity around design and construction—the activation of prominent people in a school committee, the presence of a large number of workers, the frequent visitors from PERRP, and accessible information about the reconstruction project—served to draw attention to education in general, and in this case, to girls' education.

One girls' school was situated in the middle of densely packed houses and the mosque, with the river on one side. It lacked road access, and was accessible only by a steep, twisting footpath between buildings. Rebuilding this school at first seemed impossible, as there was barely enough space left for a new building and there would be no way to truck in supplies or equipment. In addition, this community was deeply divided—separated into two groups with a long history of conflict—and it was not noted for its efforts for girls' education.

Despite these challenges, the social team was able to work through the design and preconstruction phase. They helped the community to organize and make the Committee-Contractor Agreement, in which the seemingly impossible land and access issues were solved one by one. With the social mobilizers' encouragement, the committee members, surrounding landowners, and local notables provided solutions and made important contributions—including guaranteed access across other private land to move equipment and supplies, and a donation of the use of land for water storage, dumping of excavated material, site offices, and a laborers' camp. Despite the long-standing differences, this committee made it all happen.

Two years after the completion of the school, the head teacher was asked if she saw any differences in her community, besides having a new school. She replied proudly, "Yes, very many differences! Now the community has so many expectations of us! Before the earthquake and our new school, nobody

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in the community was interested in the school and they didn't care at all, but the work they did to help construction made them pay attention to the school for the first time ever. Our committee has drawn a lot of attention to the school and to girls' education. It's all very different now."

Within the first year of the school's completion, enrollment had tripled, and it was expected to grow even more in the next few years.

Brother Who Refused to Lend Land after His Family Agreed to It

In one community, a piece of property was subdivided many times among family members, but ownership had never been formally transferred, and now two brothers were fighting over it. A piece of land had been loaned by the family to serve as a place for the temporary tent school—but when one of the brothers returned home from his job in the Gulf States, he vehemently opposed the loan.

The brother's refusal occurred only a few days before the contractor had planned to set up the tent school. If that could not go ahead, all subsequent steps would be delayed. Knowing this family and community, the social team and committee identified the person most likely to have an influence on the brother—his uncle—and asked him to take charge. The uncle did so, reminding the dissenting brother that this loan had been agreed upon by the family, and that agreement had been written into the Committee-Contractor Agreement. He told his nephew that now the family would be dishonored if they withdrew the offer. After much arguing, he relented. No construction time was lost.

Meeting a Main Stakeholder on the Snow-Blocked Road

Although in the social team we thought we had done a thorough job of listing stakeholders (see Stakeholder Analysis, table 4.3), a few months into our work, we realized we had forgotten to include one quite important stakeholder: the executive engineer of the AJ&K government's road maintenance department. The reminder came in a practical way. One day, driving through a narrow mountain road to meet people in a far-off community, two social mobilizers and I found ourselves driving into deeper and deeper snow. Soon we were stalled in a long lineup of vehicles waiting for the snowplow to carve a corridor through the roof-deep snow ahead.

We decided to join many others who had left their vehicles, walking ahead and mingling with the crowd to see the heavy equipment at work. At the front of the lineup, the crowd stood back from a small group of men direct-

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ing the work. As I was the only foreigner in an area where non-Kashmiris or non-Pakistanis were unusual, the man in charge noticed me and came forward to meet our team for the first time, shaking my hand in greeting. He was the district executive engineer in charge of roads, who happened to be traveling to the same town for his own meeting. He had seen PERRP construction underway and now wanted to hear about it.

As we stood and watched the action, he realized that PERRP would need him, and he told me that when we have issues with roads, the project should call on him and his department. Only a few weeks later we had to start taking him up on his offer, as road issues appeared around a few construction sites. He was good on his word, and readily solved a problem between two contractors. See, in chapter 6, the anecdote "Two Contractors in a Road Dispute."

Why We Want This School

A chairman explained why their committee put in so much effort to get a new school:

> "At any time, construction of anything in this area is very difficult. Our school is at 5,900 feet above sea level but, with no roads in most areas, we have students walking down mountain paths from 2,500 feet further above. Even with severe weather conditions they walk down here every day to attend classes in these rough sheds that the community put together when our school collapsed. The families want their children to get this education, so rather than having these students drop out due to distance or these tough conditions, or having them go away to attend other schools, our hope is to give them the opportunity to study closer to home. With the new building we will be able to do that."
>
> —SMC chairman, Government Girls' High School Kheral Abbasian

Bherkund Snake Infestation

In some cases, committees had to tackle unusual and difficult challenges. Around the town of Bherkund, one story that was told by the people for a long time was how snakes came out of the old school building when it was demolished. The contractor had first established the temporary tent school site on a separate area of the school ground and then shifted the students to the tents before proceeding to demolish the old building. Unbeknownst to all, snakes had made nests in a hidden part of the school and somehow

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survived both the demolition and being trucked in the rubble to the dumping site. When the snakes scurried out of the rocks in the dumping site and into surrounding fields and houses, the local people became so terrified—erroneously believing these were poisonous snakes—that they forbade any more dumping of excavated materials. Without a place to get rid of the materials, all preparations for construction would have to stop.

The committee was so anxious for construction work to continue that its members rapidly went around the community appealing to local people to allow the dumping of the materials on their land. Several hours later, at midnight, the committee convinced one man to let his land be used, and in the morning, dumping of the excavated material was moved to the new location. If this situation had happened in a typical construction project that had no community participation, the contractor would have been left to solve the problem alone, and so an alternate location might never have been found—meaning that construction could have been delayed indefinitely.

Ethnography—Government Girls' High School Long Valley*

**Long Valley is a pseudonym. To maintain confidentiality, the names of schools and villages have been changed.*

The people of Long Valley suffered a great tragedy in the quake: eighty-four students were killed when the local girls' high school collapsed. Because of this great loss, Pakistan's Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority (ERRA) and USAID assigned PERRP to consider building a new school here. The original site was at a high altitude in AJ&K, and despite being in the roughest of conditions, classes were being run both in the open air and in a rough shed built by community members, even in freezing winter conditions.

From the technical assessment at the Long Valley school site, PERRP at first rejected this location due to its limited accessibility and the small amount of land available. The school land was located about eight hundred yards below the road on the steep mountainside. It was also blocked in: the site was surrounded by terraced agricultural land with no access to roads, only a footpath to the school. Therefore, it would be impossible to move even the smallest construction equipment here.

However, as it was the only girls' high school in such a large area, rather than give up on this site, social mobilizers appealed to the engineers to find solutions. Both teams discussed options together. It was clear that the technical challenges could only be overcome with special cooperation from the community—but the social assessment had revealed that community partic-

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ipation would also be a major challenge. In the social assessment, social mobilizers had already learned that this community was one extended family from a single caste, which had split into two factions due to old differences and opposing political party affiliations. For many years, disputes had consistently flared up, keeping the village in a state of tension. In that assessment, ownership of the land had also been identified as a potential problem. The terraced land between the road and school ground was made up of six small separate plots of land, each having at least two or three co-owners who were all brothers and cousins from the family's opposing factions.

The social team called the first public meeting, and an audience of about two hundred men and women from the community attended. The social mobilizers explained that ERRA and USAID had asked PERRP to consider building a school here, but the idea had already been rejected due to poor accessibility and the small land size. If the community knew ways to solve these issues, the project might once again consider building here.

Social mobilizers then left community members to discuss this situation among themselves for the next few weeks. People stayed in their political divisions, discouraging their own members from cooperating, but the social team pointed out that building a school would not be for anybody's political gain and appealed to people to stop politicizing the matter. At the most critical meeting, one of the most influential community members stepped up and asked everyone to remember that eighty-four lives had been lost in the old school, yet not a single political party was helping here. He asked everyone to put their differences aside and to join together to take this huge opportunity. Finally, enough people were convinced to try to figure out solutions.

The biggest technical challenge would be for a contractor to get equipment and materials to the site. A rough road or path was needed, but the only feasible route would be across the terraced land with multiple co-owners. The community asked its most influential people to talk to all the co-owners involved, and after much arguing and dissension, they obtained written agreement from the co-owners to proceed with their request. With this much agreement, the social team asked the project engineers and survey team to visit the site again. Working together with the community leaders and landowners, they first sketched out where a rough access track would need to go. Engineers assured the owners that this would be only a temporary track. After construction was completed, they could choose to leave the track there or, according to their wishes, the contractor could be directed to restore the land. With much negotiation, the track's alignment was moved this way or that way on each little piece of land, with co-owners eventually agreeing to a finalized route. This agreement made it possible for PERRP to proceed. The school was designed to fit the site and it went on to be a landmark that is visible all the way across the valley, with 350 girls attending classes.

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This is another example of the benefits of having a dedicated social team. When the project's technical assessment had deemed construction on one location not feasible, the chances that this badly needed school would be rebuilt were very low. To make things more complicated, the local people were so divided that they might have never been able to solve this problem. However, the persistence of PERRP's social team paid off.

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