

A CASE STUDY OF EDUCATIONAL NEEDS, OBSTACLES AND
OPPORTUNITIES FOR GIRLS, WOMEN AND TEACHERS
IN REMOTE PAKISTAN

by

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of

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ABSTRACT

This case study assesses the educational needs of the teachers, students and women of a remote, isolated school community in Azad Kashmir, Pakistan. It also addresses the cultural, social and religious obstacles that girls, women and teachers face, while identifying appropriate recommendations for girls, women and teachers to improve their level of, and access to, educational opportunities. The methodology and data collection included formal and informal interviews, surveys and field notes gathered over a two-year period.

The results of this study are shared in a narrative analysis of the experiences of teachers, young women and girls in the Seri Valley School community. Barriers to female education have great consequences for family and community health, potential home and community income, and the following generation's educational opportunities. As this study shows, even when girls are allowed to attend primary school, there are still many barriers that keep them from continuing on to higher education. Those barriers are: a shortage of well-educated female teachers, a supportive community that is open to girls continuing their education, and the significantly important approval of the influential male in the family allowing the girl or woman to continue her education. A result of these barriers is that female students in rural, isolated regions of Pakistan rarely go on to middle or high school for their education, therefore not improving the level of education for the population of female teachers and the future generation of girls. Breaking this cycle of depriving girls an education equal to boys needs to start with the community supporting access to schools, educating families about the benefits and importance of educating the female population, and providing opportunities for female teachers to continue their education and professional development.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background

I began working in the region of Azad Kashmir, Pakistan as the International Program Manager for Central Asia Institute (CAI) during the summer of 2007. CAI is a non-profit organization founded in 1995 by Greg Mortenson. The organization is focused on and embodies the mission of providing an education, especially for girls, in the remote mountainous regions of Pakistan and Afghanistan. At this writing (2009) CAI has built over 130 school buildings, 18 vocation centers and 12 water projects in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

My job description for the two years of this study (May 2007- May 2009), as stated by the Executive Director, Greg Mortenson, was “to build relationships and trust with the community members, and to assess the needs of the schools.” The process of relationship building with the local community members is the foundation of CAI’s success in the most remote regions of northern Pakistan and Afghanistan. Before I was hired the staff in Pakistan consisted of eight Pakistani men in their 40’s and 50’s from varying backgrounds representing different tribal regions of northern Pakistan. Following Greg Mortenson’s practice when he built the first schools during the mid 1990s, the staff listens to the community members in order to provide them opportunities for empowerment and community-ownership of CAI programs. In 2007 during my first trip to Pakistan, the vital importance of the process of listening and relationship building,

especially for a woman, became clear. As the new person on staff, I needed to listen and follow through on everything I said while working hard to embrace the unfamiliar and sometimes uncomfortable cultural norms and expectations of a woman in an Islamic country. The process of relationship building with the school staff, especially with the all-female staff in the girls' schools, included listening to their needs and discussing future solutions to their problems. As Mortenson foresaw, my first two years were spent building relationships and assessing the needs of the communities and school programs, exactly what was needed for my work with CAI to be accepted and effective.

During both of my two visits to Pakistan in 2007 I spent a great amount of time with the female staff of the schools. I learned that a significant need of the teachers was access to resources and training to improve their confidence and teaching skills. As the discussions developed I learned more about the teachers' level of education, little or no access to resources, and complete lack of professional development opportunities. It was apparent to me that the teachers needed access to long-term teacher training programs. The process of learning appropriate approaches to developing trainings for female teachers while being attentive to the cultural context and providing opportunities for community ownership of the program became the focus for this study.

I chose Azad Kashmir, Pakistan as the region to conduct my research with teachers, schools and community. The villages of Azad Kashmir are extremely isolated and share similar geographic, cultural and societal context, just as the other regions where CAI has worked in Pakistan. So I found it to be an appropriate case study site based on the cultural, social and educational similarities with other CAI-based regions. I also chose

Azad Kashmir as my study site because of its proximity to Pakistan's capital city, Islamabad, and the accessibility to the schools in the winter. All of the other program regions are inaccessible for months during winter and I would be able to frequent Azad Kashmir more than the others during my two years of research.

CAI began building schools in Azad Kashmir in 2005 after a massive 7.8 earthquake destroyed at least 5,000 school buildings. After the earthquake destroyed the school structures, roads, and killed nearly 74,000 people, access to education dropped dramatically. Students and teachers attended class in tents or outside. Three years after the earthquake only a few hundred of the 5,000 schools had been rebuilt. Since the earthquake, very few students have left the villages to pursue higher education, and very few well-educated teachers from the cities are coming to the villages to teach in the schools. Even prior to the earthquake, teachers were struggling with little access to resources or workshops to improve their teaching practice. After the earthquake, those were even less available.

Prior to the earthquake, the level of education was relatively high compared to other regions of remote Pakistan, though access to professional development for village teachers was limited. Most teachers from Azad Kashmir villages had never received professional development training during their one to two decades of teaching. Before the earthquake, village teachers needed to travel from one to five hours by public transportation to the capital city of Muzaffarabad for any educational resources, including workshops. The roads and distance to the city were particular deterrents for females to travel alone. The earthquake destroyed the paved roads and the unpaved mountainous

roads often washed-out, so the average time to travel to the local city for resources was unreliable. This exacerbated the problem for the teachers. Local government officials claimed to provide workshops and other professional development opportunities, but they said that village teachers did not seek these resources even before the earthquake. During one of my first meetings with local government officials in charge of education in the villages, I asked why they had not provided workshops or focused on improving resources for teachers in the villages. They replied, “Why would we do that if we provide all of that here [in the city]; the teachers know that there are resources and workshops here.” The lack of government and community support for female teachers was clear.

Statement of Problem

The female adult literacy rate in Pakistan is as low as 36% (with Pakistan and Afghanistan having some of the lowest rates globally for female adult literacy rates). In remote villages that figure is much lower. Some consequences of women’s illiteracy in Pakistan are infant and maternal mortality rates among the highest in the world. In northern Pakistan the neonatal mortality rates were at 60 per 1,000 live births and maternal mortality at 500 per 100,000 live births in 2006 (World Health Organization, 2006). (In comparison, the United States rates of neonatal mortality in 2007 were 4.5 per 1,000 live births and maternal mortality at 1 per 4,500 live births.) Barriers to female education have great consequences for family health, potential income, agricultural productivity, and the future of the children’s educational opportunities. Even when girls

are allowed to attend primary school there is a shortage of well-educated female teachers. As a result the primary schools rarely produce students with the skills to go on to middle or high school. Breaking this cycle of depriving girls an education equal to boys needs to start with the community supporting access to schools and providing skilled teachers to allow girls the best opportunities to succeed. Community support for providing access to and improving the quality of girls' education is crucial within the cultural and religious context of Azad Kashmir, Pakistan.

Significance of the Study

This study will (a) assess the educational needs of the teachers, students, and women of the Seri Valley (SV) School community (pseudonym) in Azad Kashmir, (b) address the cultural, social, and religious obstacles that girls, women, and teachers face, and (c) identify appropriate recommendations for girls, women and teachers to improve their level of, and access to, educational opportunities.

Research Questions

The central research question is: What are the processes involved in addressing the educational needs, obstacles and opportunities for girls, women and teachers in remote Pakistan? The sub-questions are:

1. What are the major recommendations from the literature to improve the access to, and quality of, learning opportunities for girls, women and teachers in the future?

2. Who are the stakeholders involved in educational programs in the SV School community, and how does one identify their needs, opportunities and potential barriers?
3. What cultural, social and educational issues need to be taken into account when promoting education for girls, women and teachers in the SV School community?

Background of Central Asia Institute Schools

English as a Preferred Language of Instruction

Pakistan is a linguistically diverse country with over 300 dialects and approximately 57 languages spoken throughout the country's four main provinces (Ministry of Education, 2009). Almost all Pakistanis, whether in rural or urban regions, prefer to study in English-taught schools over Urdu-taught schools. English is the language that leads to better job opportunities and is necessary for furthering one's education. CAI's schools are a mixture of English- and Urdu-taught schools, and the decision for the primary language of instruction is made by the local government and the local school committee. CAI supports the schools' decision of language of instruction, and CAI is also a necessary resource for the English-taught schools as most teachers in rural areas are not fluent in English. Most English-taught schools depend heavily on English text books for instruction, and most students become sufficient readers but insufficient speakers lacking comprehension skills in English.

Curriculum and Content

Most of CAI's schools are government schools where the government appoints and provides salaries for teachers, ensures final decisions on the grade level of the school, administers exams, and helps the schools follow the Pakistan National Curriculum which is similar to the United States' curriculum in content areas, benchmarks and standards. The major content area difference is the Islamic Studies coursework for middle and high school students. National exams are administered every year for students to pass to the next grade. At present, more than 60% of students do not pass exams to go on to a middle school education.

Nationally, according to a 2005 government survey, the enrollment rate in schools is 86% at primary level (grades 1-6), 46% at the middle school level (grades 7-8), and 44% at the secondary level (grades 9-10) (Ministry of Education, 2009). The total public sector spending on education in 2007 was 12% of the federal budget. Very few of these school funds reaches the rural regions of Pakistan, so government schools in these remote areas are rare. A significant reason why CAI builds schools in the most remote and isolated valleys of Pakistan is that there may not be a school there otherwise.

Pakistan-controlled Kashmir: Brief Overview

Early in 2005 India and Pakistan negotiated a ceasefire and the Line of Control (LOC) between India-controlled Kashmir and Pakistan-controlled Kashmir. It was the quietest it had been along the LOC in the 58 years since India became independent from Great Britain in 1947 and was partitioned into the two countries of India and Pakistan. The latter was claimed as homeland for Muslims. The LOC became a fighting ground for

the 58 years after the partition, and in October, 2005 it was the site of one of the worst earthquakes the region had seen in over 75 years. The earthquake's casualties in Pakistan included 74,000 fatalities, 18,000 of them children because the earthquake happened when most children were in school, and a total of 2.8 million people were displaced. India suffered as many as 12,000 fatalities. The months that followed were full of chaos. Aid groups swarmed in, but there are many stories of corruption, aid money wasted and people dying in remote villages due to roads being destroyed.

CAI began building temporary shelters for schools for immediate relief, and now uses an earthquake-resistant prefabricated building material for all of the schools in this region. I have felt small tremors during my visits to Azad Kashmir, especially in the Seri Valley near the epicenter of the 2005 earthquake where most of CAI's schools in that region are located. A half-century of fighting along the Indian border and the rebuilding efforts after the earthquake inspired many stories of hardship from the people in the villages surrounding our schools. Even the children have stories of not being able to go to school for weeks at a time because of the fighting along the LOC. There were times of ceasefire and months of forced black-outs to avoid nighttime raids. The men also tell stories of needing to quit smoking cigarettes at night so as to not draw attention and become targets in the dark.

The LOC is a region of great focus for the United States government. Pakistan is an important ally for the United States and is in a precarious position between India and Afghanistan, fighting wars on both borders. Discussions in Pakistan about the current economic state of decline (Pakistan took its first loan from the World Bank in early 2009)

end up coming around to the causes: wars on their east and west borders. With so much energy and focus going into military conflicts along the borders and a recent change of political leadership that has the potential of another coup, the Pakistani government and the local government of Pakistan-controlled Kashmir have not put much funding or energy into the education system. Politically, Azad Kashmir is in conflict and disarray; economically, the region is impoverished; culturally, the region is polarized within its Muslim sects and has a long history of fighting with non-Muslims. The capital of Azad Kashmir, Muzaffarabad, is a city that I pass through on my way to the villages. Some local government officials involved in rebuilding efforts after the earthquake have called the government a pseudo-democracy with a military heavy-hand. There was a military coup during my December, 2008 trip which at the time seemed to secure safety in the cities.

The following study is set in this context of political, economic, and cultural turmoil. The stories from the girls, women, families, teachers, local government officials, Mullahs, Imams, and CAI staff all share themes of hunger, despair, survival, oppression, and deep desire for a hopeful future for their children.



Figure 1: Map of CAI Projects: Azad Kashmir is Project Site #12

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

The following literature review provides a framework and foundation for understanding key topics in education-based development work in a remote region of Pakistan.

The literature review is organized into the following topics:

1. The current status of girls' education in Pakistan and current reform efforts: what the research and literature show as the current status and what has been identified as the best practices for reform.
2. Defining successful schools and quality education: how this has been defined by United States-based educational literature, studies conducted in Pakistan, and what we can use as measurable indicators to define the level of success in schools in the future.
3. Professional development: what effective practices found from research based in Pakistan and in the United States can be used to guide programs developed to serve remote schools, teachers, administrators and communities in Azad Kashmir?
4. Participatory approaches to educational development work that lead to community engagement and empowerment.

To explore these topics, this literature review drew upon four categories of literature: (a) reports from the Pakistani government and international organizations

providing current quantitative data on education in Pakistan, (b) research studies on education- and development-based projects in rural Pakistan and similar remote, rural settings, (c) best practices for teacher education in Pakistan and the United States, and (d) current literature from Pakistan and the United States proposing frameworks and strategies for educational reform. Thus the literature frames the topics through the perspectives of the education and development community first and foremost in Pakistan, but also introduces perspectives from relevant work in the United States and other nations.

Current Status of Girls' Education and Reform Practices

This section of the literature review will address the current status of girls' education, specifically in the remote northern regions of Pakistan. It will also address findings for the economic, health and social benefits of providing and improving education for girls. Research that has been conducted in regions of Pakistan and other developing countries will also be reviewed and will offer approaches to providing access to education, especially for girls within the significant cultural, social and religious context of conservative Islamic communities in rural Pakistan.

Gender Differences

The Ministry of Education (MOE) defines literacy as “the acquisition of basic skills of reading, writing and numeracy” and describes a literate person as, “one who can read a newspaper and write a simple letter in any language” (Ministry of Education, 2009, FAQ section, ¶ 1). MOE's 2007 Population Census data identified the literacy rate

in Pakistan as 56% for all adults with the female adult literacy at 36%. In remote villages of the northern regions the female literacy rate can be as low as 7%, while it is common to find the literacy rate for men in the rural areas at least triple that of women (Ministry of Education, 2009).

Recently, there has been a movement in Pakistan to tackle the women's deprived status by providing them with access to literacy. In 2002, the National Commission for Human Development (NCHD) literacy center was formed by the former president of Pakistan, Pervez Musharraf, to provide support for education, literacy and basic healthcare services. NCHD aimed to accelerate the literacy rate by 3.3% per year to achieve Goal 4 of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) from the adult literacy rate of 56% in 2007 to 86% by 2015. The MDG Goal 4 aims to achieve universal primary education for girls and boys. Despite past government-mandated programs to improve access to education there has been little reported progress, especially in the remote regions of northern Pakistan (Ministry of Education, 2009; World Bank, 1996).

Data shows that girls need extra support for schooling in remote Pakistan, and there are successful approaches to provide education in similar contexts elsewhere. A number of global studies address girls' education and successful reform efforts in developing countries. The studies I will focus on address school quality differences, girls' achievement rates, poverty and health as indicators related to girls' education, and recommendations for improving the quality and access to girls' schools. Girls worldwide lack access to education. Some recommendations have been made by the World Health Organization (WHO), World Bank (WB), United States Agency of International

Development (USAID), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and other government and non-government (NGO) agencies that outline the necessary steps for successful implementation of girls' schools in developing countries. This review of government agency and NGO reports includes powerful data on how and why educating girls to the primary and secondary levels has dramatic affects on the health and economic future of the family, community and country.

Urban and Rural Context

There is a striking difference in the quality and access of education for women and men in rural versus urban areas. In Pakistan, the completion of primary school is three times higher for boys than for girls in rural areas. In the urban areas of Islamabad, Lahore, and Karachi, the completion rate is twice as high for boys as it is for girls (World Bank, 1996). Students take Pakistan National Exams at the end of primary school (Grade 6). Nationally, the pass rates are 30%; in the rural areas they are even lower. It is common for students to drop out of school during primary education if they are not receiving top scores. The expectation for students not achieving high marks in school is that they are better off working at home or out earning a wage. The exam failure rates and high dropout rates have become a primary focus for government and NGO-driven educational reform efforts. The Pakistan Ministry of Education in 2006 declared that interventions needed to be developed to curb these staggering rates of exam failure and drop-outs. It is currently seen in government and NGO education reform reports that drop-out rates in rural areas need to be a target for intervention efforts (Ministry of Education, 2009; USAID 2007b).

Benefits of Girls' Education

Economic. The benefits of providing a basic primary education for girls are clear: (a) increased opportunity for higher wages, (b) faster economic growth regionally and nationally, (c) more productive farming, (d) smaller, healthier families, and (e) more empowerment for women (UNESCO, 2003; USAID, 1998; World Bank, 1996). Studies have found that educating girls may lead to great income gains. For example, one additional year of education past primary school means that girls' eventual earnings will increase by 10-20% (Psacharopoulos & Patrinos, 2002). Increased education of girls at the secondary level has shown to increase earning potential by 15-25% (Schultz, 2002). The numbers tend to be higher for women than men, showing that girls' education in developing countries will have positive effects on the economy as a whole. A study by Smith and Hadden (1999) noted "more productive farming due to increased female education accounts for 43% of the decline in malnutrition achieved between 1970 and 1995" (p. 3).

Health. An increase in girls' education will have marked effects on fertility and infant mortality rates. It was found that "when women gain four years more education, fertility per woman drops by roughly one birth" according to a 100-country World Bank study (Klasen, 1999, p. 4). It has been argued that an increase of female secondary education may be the "single policy for achieving substantial deductions in fertility" (Subbarao & Raney, 1995, p. 109). Subbarao and Raney (1995) conducted a 65 country-

wide analysis and found that when the number of women with a secondary education was doubled, average fertility rates dropped 26% from 5.3 to 3.9 children per woman.

Some of the world's highest maternal and infant mortality rates are found in northern Afghanistan and northern Pakistan. In northern Afghanistan a woman has 600 times the risk of dying in birth than in North America, and more than 20% of children in Afghanistan die before their fifth birthday (WHO, 2006). Northern Pakistan shares many of the same contextual factors as northern Afghanistan (social, economic, cultural, religious, and geographic) that directly influence these staggering rates (WHO, 2006). The most effective treatment for this problem is to educate girls and women, as declared by the United Nations in the Millennium Development Goal. An extra year of education for a girl can reduce the infant mortality rates by 5-10% globally (Schultz, 1993; WHO, 2006). Healthier families, fewer children per family, and increase of wage opportunities are significant indicators of improving conditions in developing countries as outlined by the United Nation's MDGs, and all can be influenced by increased educational access for girls and women.

Empowerment. One of the eight MDGs is to promote gender equality and empower women. Increased female education is one of the most useful tools to empower women within the family and society (World Bank, 1996). The United Nations defines empowerment in this context as "all those processes where women take control and ownership over their lives" (Strandberg, 2001, p. 4). This empowerment leads to an improved well-being for the entire family, reduces domestic violence and fosters democracy and women's political participation (Barro, 1999).

Obstacles. The cost of education is one of the primary obstacles to educating girls (USAID, 1998). In most developing countries there are fees for public primary and secondary education. In rural Pakistan, for example, annual fees for primary school may be from \$50 to \$250 a year per student, where an annual income for a family is rarely higher than \$500 (Farah, 1996; Ministry of Education, 2009). For many families in remote villages, these fees keep parents from sending all of their children to school. There are also indirect fees: costs for uniforms, books, food and transportation, as well as costs to the family in losing a hand around the home and in the fields. Many large families need to choose and pay for a select few children to go to school (Schultz, 1993). Social and cultural norms determine that boys are the first to receive a good education. Girls often marry out of the family and there is less of a direct benefit for the family if the girl is educated (Subbarao & Raney, 1995). In rural villages the expectation for a new bride is often to be a housewife and bear children. In addition to the cost, parents may be skeptical about allowing their daughters to attend school away from the home.

Best Practices Found for Educating Girls in Developing Countries

Studies have found four areas of intervention to address the barriers and obstacles to providing girls an education: (a) make schooling affordable, (b) build local schools with community support and flexible schedules, (c) make schools more girl-friendly, and (d) focus particularly on the quality of education (Hertz, 2002; USAID, 2007b; World Bank, 1996).

Making School Affordable. An obstacle for education in poverty-stricken regions of the world is the basic cost of tuition, books, travel, uniforms and shoes. In these regions, children may stay at home to work in the fields or will need to go searching for work or beg donations (Subbarao & Raney, 1995). Often families choose to keep their children out of school because of these opportunities for them to help the family financially. Providing financial assistance to schools is more than lowering direct and indirect fees for students (Schultz, 1993). This area also includes educating parents about the short-term opportunity costs versus the long-term economic benefits of wage increases. If parents understand the financial benefits of a basic primary education for their children, they will be more likely to support their offspring going to school over working the fields or begging in the streets (World Bank, 1996).

Community Support and Flexible Schedules. Building schools with community support and flexible schedules is essential in rural agricultural-dependent regions (World Bank, 1996). Community-based schools that are sensitive to agriculture-based schedules will show a higher level of community ownership and support for student enrollment (Hertz, 2002). A study in Pakistan found that rural community-based schools increase girls' enrollments more than four times the provincial average (World Bank, 1996). A flexible schedule for a community-based school provides more opportunities for enrollment. For example, in the Northern Areas in Pakistan there are a number of successful girls' schools that provide a choice of morning or afternoon school sessions (Hertz, 2002). This allows families the flexibility to make decisions on how to balance an education for their daughters with the duties of home and the fields (Hertz, 2002).

Girl-Friendly Schools. There are a few school necessities that need to be in place for parents to feel comfortable sending their girls away from the home. First, they need girls-only schools with female teachers (USAID, 1998). Second, they need to be within the community but away from the public bazaar to ensure close-proximity access yet with privacy and low-exposure to the public (USAID, 1998). Ensuring privacy and security within cultural, social and religious expectations is a significant component of providing successful access for girls' schooling. Third, the school must have a high boundary wall for privacy and security, as well as working, clean latrines and running water within the facility (USAID, 1998; World Bank, 1996). Strategies for addressing this challenge will be discussed in Chapter Four.

Focus on the Quality of Education. Parents will be more likely to send their girls to school if the teachers are: (a) well-educated and thus capable of providing their daughters with access to a quality education, and (b) if the attendance of both the teachers and the other students is high (Farah, 1996; Hertz, 2002). The curriculum should be accessible to the parents so there is little concern over cultural, social, religious or gender issues. This is a significant issue for foreign education-based NGO's because they must resolve any community concerns that the curriculum in foreign-funded schools intends to indoctrinate students in order to promote a religious agenda (USAID, 1998). Illiteracy among parents of students in rural areas is a common issue that needs to be addressed when making curricula accessible to the community (World Bank, 1996).

Summary

Improving access to education and providing even a basic level of education for girls fosters great economic, health and social benefits (Smith & Hadden, 1999; Subbarao & Raney, 1995; UNESCO, 2003; USAID 1998; World Bank, 1996). The recommendations and practices addressed above will provide helpful approaches when working with a community to improve the access and quality of education for females. As described above, providing access to education specifically for girls is much more than building a school. Entire communities need to be involved and aware of the benefits to their female children's education. Approaches that can be taken to promote community involvement and participation in educational development will be addressed in the following section.

Defining Successful Schools and Quality Education

In Pakistan, especially in remote, isolated mountain regions in the north, many children do not have access to primary education. Even where a primary school is available, the quality of education is such that students do not pass exams that allow attending higher grade levels (Farah, 2006; USAID 2007b). A purpose of this Seri Valley School case study is to assess the needs of the teachers and girls while providing recommendations to help improve their access to an education, and the quality of that education. This section of the literature review will address indicators of successful schools, and approaches schools can take to improve the quality of education. First, I will address research studies and other categories of the literature that characterize

successful schools and provide indicators and recommendations to create positive change in schools. Using the literature to define what student and school success look like, we can identify characteristics, best practices and recommendations for the improvement of educational quality for schools in remote Pakistan. For this section of the review, I will introduce key themes in the literature today from a variety of sources. I will also address a specific study conducted by Farah (1996) in Pakistan. This research study was recommended to me by staff in the Azad Kashmir Department of Education in Muzaffarabad. Farah studied characteristics of successful schools in Azad Kashmir and provided recommendations that other schools should follow to reach the designation of a successful school. Although this study was conducted over a decade ago, the findings are relevant and often referenced by practitioners in Pakistan. Farah (1996) provides some of the most recent findings from research conducted in the northern provinces of Pakistan.

Approaches with Teachers Central to the Process

There are numerous approaches to defining a successful school. Some suggest that a successful school is defined mostly by its students' strong performance on high stakes state or national exams. Others hold that a successful school should be rooted in community values with a purpose to produce responsible and prepared citizens (Fullan, 1993, 1999; Goodlad, 1990; Sarason, 1996). This literature review will provide an appropriate foundation for the SV School case study and will address processes that lead to school success in a community-based model. Thus, I will identify themes in the literature representing successful schools as producing both high achieving students as well as schools founded upon and guided by community values.

Education rooted in community values and teachers being central to the process of positive change are significant themes that identify successful schools' program development and reform (Fullan, 1993, 1999; Fullan & Hargreaves, 1991; Goodlad, 1990; Sarason, 1996). Teachers need to be supported at all levels, from the pre-service teacher training to communication with school administrators. The culture of the school needs to also include the values of the surrounding community (Fullan, 1993; Fullan & Hargreaves, 1991; Goodlad, 1990; Hargreaves, 2009; Sarason, 1996). Improving teacher education, fostering community support of schools, and having community values central to school curriculum are all components of effective program design and provide for flexibility within important contextual factors (Fullan, 1993; Fullan & Hargreaves, 1991; Goodlad, 1990; Sarason, 1996). Educational reform efforts, from the design stages through tracking and evaluating the process and progress, should include these components of teacher education, community support and awareness of community values (Fullan, 1993, 1999).

Quality of Education and Successful Schools

The following section will address indicators of successful schools that could be used to guide community-based reform efforts. Farah (1996) conducted a national study that encompassed data from the four major provinces of the Northwestern Frontier Province of Pakistan. The purpose of this study was to examine factors contributing to successful school reform efforts, as well as indicators of successful schools including the perceptions of students, community members and school personnel (Farah, 1996).

To identify schools for this study, Farah (1996) gathered data from school administrators from four provinces of rural Pakistan that deemed their schools either successful (declared by local school administrators as functioning well and showing improvement over time) or designated them unsuccessful schools (declared as low-functioning with little improvement over time). After school administrators identified their schools as successful or unsuccessful, an extensive selection process was conducted by educational researchers using the following qualitative and quantitative indicators: *student attendance*, especially for girls, and *student achievement*. *Student attendance* was defined as “the percentage of enrolled students attending class and length of daily attendance at school” (Farah, 1996, p. 5). *Student achievement* was defined as “the quality of student work,” quantitatively represented by exam scores and qualitatively represented by teacher assessments of student learning. Thirty-two schools, half girls’ and half boys’, were then identified as successful or unsuccessful schools by the local administrators and the educational researchers. After 16 successful and 16 unsuccessful schools were identified, interviews and surveys were used to gather further data from numerous sources (school, community, administration) on what influenced each school’s level of success.

The following sections will identify *indicators* specified by Farah (1996) for successful schools that foster student success from the perspectives of parents, educators and the community. These indicators resulted from the data collected from the parents, teachers, administrators and community members. Literature on teacher education, leadership, community values and school reform also address needs, perspectives and

discussions with the community (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1991; Sarason, 1996), as Farah (1996) does in this study.

Parents' Perspective

The study found that parents of the students attending 16 successful schools were committed to their children's education and stressed regular attendance. Surveys from the 16 unsuccessful schools, however, did not reveal the same commitment from the parents, and both students and teachers attended school less regularly. A survey of parents from the 32 schools studied by Farah produced a set of basic criteria for a successful school:

- “The school possesses its own premises, has a boundary wall, and especially for girls' schools, is in an appropriate location in the community.
- The school has facilities including water and toilets, is clean, and has a pleasant environment (for example, with plants and flowers).
- The teachers come to school regularly and are punctual.
- The students like to go to school and are punctual.
- The children can read and write.
- The children behave well inside and outside the school” (Farah, 1996, p. 7).

These findings from Farah (1996) are consistent with the concept of parental involvement and support affecting educational opportunities of children as discussed by Jun and Colyar (2002). They discuss how a majority of social and educational research on parent involvement in a child's schooling indicates how children have better opportunities to succeed in school and will likely continue their education further than

children who are not supported by parents (Jun & Colyar, 2002). Taking a student's chances for educational success beyond supportive parents, research has shown that a parent's level of education affects the level of education the child may attain. McNeal (1999) explains that a child's "attainment is highly correlated with the education of the child's parents" (p. 177). Therefore, when addressing student attendance and continuation of schools in communities, parental involvement and the level of education parents have received will have implications on student attendance, success and continuation of schooling (Farah, 1996; Jun & Colyar, 2002; McNeal, 1999).

Educators' Perspective

Through interviews and surveys of teachers and administrators, Farah (1996) established additional indicators of successful schools. For example, teachers and administrators felt that a successful school needed to have a competent head teacher and a vigilant and supportive community. This is also central to United States-based literature on teacher leadership and positive school reform (Fullan, 1993; Fullan & Hargreaves, 1991; Goodlad, 1990; Sarason, 1996). Data from Farah (1996) showed that positive change in any of the 32 schools, whether one of the successful schools or an unsuccessful school, required both qualities. Competent head teachers are defined to possess "leadership and participatory skills, and apply them not only within the school but also within the wider community" (Farah, 1996, p. 9).

One request from the teachers and administrators in this study was to provide short in-service training courses in leadership and participatory techniques for head teachers (Farah, 1996). The following is a summary of the educators' perspectives on the

content for in-service training courses that would work towards improving leadership and skills development for head teachers and teacher-leaders:

- Strategies of community participation (developing and maintaining community contacts).
- Working towards motivating parents.
- Fostering team building and leadership within the schools.
- Coaching teachers professionally.
- Keeping accountable school records (student and teacher attendance, school budgets, curricular needs and supplies).
- Timely school and student assessment using participatory research methods.

Fullan and Hargreaves (1991) provide recommendations to foster teacher leadership similar to these recommendations provided by Farah (1996). They suggest that teacher leaders need to have qualities similar to those outlined above, as well as a supportive administration and surrounding community, especially when considering reform efforts and teacher trainings (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1991).

Farah (1996) states that teacher trainings should be run by both professional trainers and competent head teachers to make them field based and practical. Local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community based organizations (CBOs) may be able to assist in the organization, implementation, and follow-up of the training in communication with the local government (Farah, 1996). Studies conducted in Azad Kashmir tracking the impact of teacher trainings conducted by a USAID program also

provide similar findings and recommendation as discussed in further detail in this literature review (USAID, 2007b).

Community Involvement Findings

Farah (1996) characterizes successful schools by a positive learning culture and a sense of shared goals among all community stakeholders, including teachers, parents, students, religious leaders, and local government officials. Shared goals are the foundation of ownership of the school, and only if the goals are stakeholder-wide do they bring the necessary accountability to ensure responsibilities are met (Farah, 1996). The participants of this study describe community support in different forms: monetary donations, land contributions, donations for buildings and other facilities, school fees, contributions, or providing school supplies or other needs (Farah, 1996). Other sustainable and empowering ways community members may support schools are through responding positively to teachers' requests for support, staying informed about problems faced by the school and informally monitoring teacher and student attendance and behavior (Farah, 1996).

Community members surveyed in Farah's study also discussed how successful schools need both community support and an active school committee. Responsibilities of an active school committee include assessing the physical needs of the school and using funds provided by the government to fulfill them, developing a school plan to be shared with the District Education Officer (DEO) and other local education officers, raising funds locally to fulfill recurring school needs, and promoting the school within the community (Farah, 1996).

Summary

Farah (1996) found that the most significant indicators of successful schools were school and classroom climate, teacher ownership and commitment, and teacher mastery and competence. It is important to note that teacher attendance is included in teacher ownership and commitment as that is a significant problem in most rural schools in Pakistan.

Farah (1996) concludes his study with a discussion on ways to incorporate characteristics of successful schools with ways to promote positive change in educational reform.

Continuation and sustainability of positive change in a school depends upon the continued presence of a committed head and teaching staff, the presence of teachers who have some experience managing a school, and the vigilance (informal monitoring) and support of the community. (Farah, 1996, p. 19)

The concept of the effects of community involvement and support on the success of a school is widely discussed and supported by the literature and studies cited throughout this literature review. A focus on teacher leadership and teacher education as well as involved and supportive school community are all significant factors leading to school success and positive school reform (Farah, 1996, Fullan, 1993; Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009; Goodlad, 1990; Hall & Hord, 2005; Sarason, 1996).

Teacher Professional Development

This case study addresses the question: *What are the processes involved in addressing the educational needs, obstacles and opportunities for girls, women and teachers in remote Pakistan?* The following section is intended to identify themes that have emerged from the current practices in Pakistan, what lessons have been learned, and what recommendations have been provided for other teacher training programs. In addition to addressing current practices in Pakistan, I have reviewed the literature on professional development in the United States, some of which may be transferable and appropriate to teacher training program development and school reform efforts in rural Pakistan. The overview of recommendations for effective professional development practices as found in research studies and other professional literature based in Pakistan and the United States are found on Table 2. After identifying the evidence of best practices from both Pakistan and the United States, I can apply them to a sound framework for my approach to developing a program in Azad Kashmir.

Present Day Professional Development Practices in the United States

Recent education reform efforts in Pakistan have used the United States' framework for education, curriculum, policy, and teacher education as a model for adapting new practices (Ministry of Education, 2009). Practitioners and policy-makers at the national and regional levels have used government and international aid funding to work with the United States on policy reform and teacher training efforts. Therefore, it is important to understand the United States teacher training practices that are influencing

Pakistan reform efforts. These current practices in Pakistan and the United States will help practitioners and researchers to know what has been tried, what works, and may help to identify logical next steps for professional development in Pakistan. The following section provides an overview of professional development practices in the United States, lessons learned from those practices, and recommendations that can be made for future programs. I will also identify what practitioners in Pakistan have identified as useful practices or future recommendations for teacher trainings and professional development programs.

Professional workshops developed during the 1970s in the United States (Grossman, Wineburg, & Woolworth, 2001) were presented by outside experts and were meant to promote a “teacher proof” curriculum. These practices are still widely used in the United States and in Pakistan but have been found to be quick fixes with a need for follow through. Suggestions made for improving these professional development practices focus on follow-through as a key factor of success that fosters a community of collaborating teachers during or following a workshop (Grossman et al., 2001).

In the 1980s and early 1990s, some professional development programs focused on facilitating group goals with strategic planning, but neglected what the classroom teacher needed for a successful practice (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001; Schmoker, 2005). Many programs, despite involving teachers in goal-setting, continued to give teachers prescribed methods of teaching. During the next two decades theories of professional development were adapted to engage teachers in collaborative learning experiences with the goal of improving student learning and achievement (Louis, Marks, & Kruse, 1996).

There was a transition from the “transmission of knowledge” approach to the “experiential learning” approach for teachers in professional development. In the 1990s practitioners recommended that teachers be given more content rich professional development experiences and less prescriptive teaching practices. By the beginning of 2000, professional development practices were pushed to become more focused on using collaboration and experiential learning.

Current research- and policy-supported recommendations are to promote more experiential learning, student centered learning and collaborative learning in professional development for teachers in the hope that these practices will be transferred into their classrooms. In my review of United States-based literature and studies conducted in Pakistan, there has been a trend toward implementing these practices in both professional development and regular classroom settings.

Synthesizing United States Practices for a Framework

Professional Development Features from Loucks-Horsley and Garet. One influential and effective framework for professional development widely referenced in the United States is presented by Loucks-Horsley, Love, Stiles, Mundry, and Hewson (2003). Table 1 outlines the key effective practices of professional development as defined by Loucks-Horsley et al. (2003) and compares those with findings from a large-scale study conducted by Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman, and Yoon (2001) that is specific to the needs of mathematics and science teachers. Findings in Pakistan show a great need to focus on mathematics and science for teacher trainings, so addressing

recommendations from a widely-known professional development resource (Loucks-Horsley et al., 2003) and a study on professional development for mathematics and science teachers (Garet et al., 2001) has provided a relevant framework for professional development for the contexts in Pakistan.

Garet et al. (2001) gathered information on effective professional development practices from 1,027 mathematics and science teachers who previously participated in the federal government's Eisenhower Professional Development Program. These teachers identified key characteristics of professional development that increased their knowledge and skills and improved their teaching practices. At the time, this study was one of the most extensive investigations focused on extracting the best practices in professional development from experienced teachers. Three core professional development features and three structural professional development features were identified in the study.

Findings from Garet et al. (2001) are consistent with Loucks-Horsley et al. (2003) that effective professional development must include internal coherence of the content presented, an in-depth reflective processes, and incorporate follow-through for continuous learning experiences. Table 1 provides an overview of the features of professional development as discussed by Loucks-Horsley, et al. (2003) and Garet et al. (2001).

Table 1. Professional Development Features as Identified by Loucks-Horsley et al., and Garet et al.

Effective Practices for Professional Development (Loucks-Horsley et al., 2003)	Effective Features of Professional Development Specific to Mathematics and Science Educators (Garet et al., 2001)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provides opportunities for teachers to build their content and pedagogical content knowledge and examine their practice. 2. Is research based and engages teachers as well as adult learners in the approaches they will use with their students. 3. Provides opportunities for teachers to collaborate with their colleagues and other experts to improve their practice. 4. Supports teachers to serve in leadership roles. 5. Links with other parts of the education system. 6. Has design based on student data and is continuously evaluated and improved. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Focuses on content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge. 2. Has a high degree of active learning and participation modeled during professional development. 3. Provides a clear coherency of the activities, consistency, and alignment with teacher goals and state standards. 4. Structurally designed to promote positive change and reform. 5. Has an extended timeframe for program follow-through. 6. Includes appropriate participants and is influenced by teacher characteristics, grade and content level, or status of duties (including volunteers).

Rural Context Recommendations. Little research has been done on what affect professional development has had in rural, isolated school communities in the United States or Pakistan, or how professional development might be designed for such settings. One study conducted by Arnold (2002) discusses a framework for mathematics teachers in the United States and how the rural context might affect teaching and learning. In his study, Arnold identifies the subsystems that greatly affect teaching and learning: (a) bureaucratic expectations, (b) political power relations, (c) individual stakeholder motivations and cognition, and (d) cultural orientations. These subsystems are part of the

contextual framework that must be addressed for successful and effective professional development in rural regions (Arnold, 2002).

Knapp, Copland, Ford, and Markholt (2003) conducted a study of best practices of professional development that may be helpful when working within rural contexts. Their work through the University of Washington's Center for the Study of Teaching and Policy states that student learning is dependent on "what the teacher knows and believes and what school and district leaders know and believe about teachers' and students' learning" (Knapp et al., 2003, p. 11). Knapp et al. focus on three key areas of learning: student learning, professional learning, and system learning. Each component or learning agenda is connected to the other two throughout the professional development learning processes. Knapp et al. used a framework that also included the larger context of the three learning agendas, especially in rural communities: families and communities, organizational contexts and larger policy and professional environments (Knapp et al., 2003). The framework includes five areas of action that must be addressed for all three learning areas (student, professional and system) in rural contexts. The five areas of action are: 1) an established focus on learning at all levels, 2) engagement of external environment, 3) a coherent curriculum, instruction and assessment, 4) a shared leadership among teachers and administration, and 5) the use of professional learning communities (Knapp et al., 2003). These rural context recommendations from various sources are synthesized further in Table 2.

Research-Supported Recommendations for Pakistan

USAID is one of the leading international organizations funding efforts to improve the status of education in Pakistan. USAID has funded programs in Pakistan that focus on educational quality development, specifically in the area of teacher training and professional development. Some of their reports on program development, successes and areas for improvement have been influential in identifying current needs of teachers and schools. Some of this research and program implementation was conducted in Pakistan-controlled Kashmir. The USAID project implementing professional development programs in Pakistan-controlled Kashmir is named Revitalizing, Innovating, and Strengthening Education (RISE). The aim of RISE was to increase student learning in English, mathematics and science and to improve the quality of classroom instruction (USAID, 2007c). The project was based upon formal assessments of the needs of teachers and students, further defined current needs, and resulted in recommendations for future teacher development programs.

The following are three goals of the teacher training programs in Azad Kashmir based on USAID needs assessments conducted in 2006 in that region:

1. Improving financial and human resource management in district education offices (measured by evaluating the degree to which district education officials engage in effective management practices).
2. Improving teacher performance in the classroom by establishing and implementing a sustainable system of teacher instructional support (two measures used to assess improvement: the percent of teachers trained by RISE in child-

centered, active learning techniques and the percent of trained teachers who put these techniques to use in their classrooms).

3. Improving community participation in schools and education by training community members to be involved in successful decision-making experiences (based on local school and education issues), and involving communities in helping to prepare and implement School Improvement Plans (SIPs) (USAID, 2007c).

Prior to the RISE program implementation, USAID funded researchers conducted a study of teachers in rural Azad Kashmir, specifically in Bagh and Mansehra provinces. The researchers observed classroom pedagogy employed by primary teachers. From April 23 through May 5, 2007, 225 teachers were observed (114 male and 111 female) from 85 primary schools. The study did not focus on teacher absenteeism, but it did note absenteeism as a significant problem in the introduction of the findings (USAID, 2007c). The study found that primary teachers use traditional methods of instruction. Traditional methods are defined as lectures, reading from books or using the blackboard (USAID, 2007c). The researchers rated the teachers overall as less than satisfactory in fundamental pedagogical skills and use of multiple methods. Most teachers did not plan lessons before class, and instructional delivery was weak due to lack of student involvement or absence of varying teaching methods (USAID, 2007c). Less than half of the teachers were rated as having a satisfactory command of subject matter. The RISE training program, therefore, aimed at improving teachers' command of English,

mathematics and science and reinforced the use of a variety of pedagogical methods (USAID, 2007c).

In a separate large-scale teacher training project in Pakistan, a partnership was created with United States resources and Pakistan teachers. The Pakistan Teacher Education and Professional Development Program (PTEPDP) is government funded by Pakistan with some United States funding and resources. The PTEPDP is well developed, has a number of teacher training programs in Pakistan, and participates in United States-based teacher training exchanges. USAID funded research to track the PTEPDP progress and to develop future goals and recommendations. The joint United States and Pakistan efforts for the PTEPDP were implemented and tracked by USAID researchers from June, 2003 through October, 2006. Researchers tracked 372 teachers; 172 Pakistani teachers who participated in a United States exchange, and 200 Pakistani teachers who stayed to train in the cities of Pakistan (USAID, 2007b).

The goals and desired teachers' experiences were identified jointly by the PTEPDP and the USAID researchers, and researchers from both organizations monitored the outcomes. Their work resulted in formal recommendations for teacher trainings in Pakistan. These goals and targeted outcomes for teachers in the PTEPDP teacher training program are as follows:

1. Learn new teaching methods.
2. Learn to incorporate new techniques and utilize educational technology in developing and applying these new teaching methods.

3. Experience an alternative to the traditional education system in Pakistan where the teacher acts as a lecturer and the students are passive recipients of lectures.
4. Become active participants and learners in the fields of science, mathematics and English.
5. Learn effectively with minimal lecturing from the teacher trainers.
6. Achieve and enhance cultural understanding between Pakistan and the United States (USAID, 2007b).

It is necessary to take a broad look at teacher training institutes in Pakistan to understand how they influence the training of future and current teachers. In early 2005, an NGO focused on solving global issues through education, the Academy for Educational Development (AED), conducted a three-year study in which they hired consultants to provide government, private and non-government agencies a thorough analysis of teacher training institutions. In 2007 there were 203 teacher training institutions in Pakistan, offered by university and government-managed training facilities. The report explains that there are nearly 300 Teacher Resource Centers. This indicates a proliferation in teacher training and resource centers, but the AED in Islamabad as well as the USAID official report on Pakistan state that there is still a great need to ensure the quality of education provided in these centers. The report explained further the lack of communication between institutes regarding how they were training teachers, what goals and benchmarks influenced the trainings, and what sort of follow-through there was with the teachers after the training programs (USAID, 2007b).

The major findings of the AED study were developed into a set of recommendations for teacher training institutes across the government, private and non-government sectors. These findings were reported in the annual USAID (2007b) report.

A summary of the recommendations follows:

1. Clearly define the functions and responsibilities of core teacher education institutions to avoid replication and duplication of efforts and to encourage close collaboration between these institutions.
2. Structure of institutions needs to be more uniform and a cadre of teacher educators needs to be maintained.
3. Teacher educators need to be retained and unnecessary transfers avoided.
4. Incorporate state of the art content knowledge and pedagogy skills in teacher education courses.
5. Produce quality textbooks and reference and supplementary materials and equip libraries with teaching materials that facilitate research and professional development.
6. Facilities should be repaired and renovated.
7. Introduce a regular appraisal system to assess the performance of teacher educators and introduce a system of institutional performance evaluations.
8. Improve physical and resource environment of classroom to encourage group work and activity-based learning (USAID, 2007b).

Summary of Rural Context and Institutional Context

These USAID (2007b) reports provide useful recommendations for the teacher professional development at the institutional level. Aligning these recommendations with those provided by research specific to rural contexts, teacher leadership, and mathematics and science needs allows for an appropriate framework for approaching educational reform through professional development for teachers in remote Pakistan (see Table 2 for a framing of these recommendations).

The Framework

The combined best practices provide the main themes for the framework specific to rural Pakistan, and include only the best practices in the United States education system that are consistent with recommendations from the literature for successful programs in regions like Azad Kashmir. Incorporating these practices in the design and implementation of a professional development program in Azad Kashmir should lead to more successful programs. The discussion below, organized by main themes found in both Pakistan and the United States best practices (from Table 1 and Table 2), are: (a) program content, (b) timeframe, (c) professional issues, (d) policy, curriculum and local government, and (e) a sustainable and community-owned program (Table 2).

Table 2: Framework for Professional Development in Azad Kashmir

Framework Element	Summary From Literature	Literature Sources
Program Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Balance content and pedagogical content knowledge b) Increased content focus in areas of math, science and English* c) Use effective pedagogical practices (student-centered, collaborative and experiential) 	<p>American Institute for Research (AIR), 2005;</p> <p>Arnold, 2002;</p> <p>Darling-Hammond, 1998;</p>
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Implement a consistent and coherent design with an extended timeframe and follow-through b) Effective timeframe and follow-through to improve teacher use of learned content and methodology in classroom 	<p>Fullan, 1993; 1999; 2001;</p> <p>Fullan & Hargreaves, 1991;</p> <p>Garet et al., 2001;</p>
Professional Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Encourage professional and collaborative learning communities of teachers b) Decrease teacher absenteeism and increase teacher motivation* c) Work to retain teacher educators for more consistency 	<p>Hall & Hord, 2005;</p> <p>Halverson, 2003;</p> <p>Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009;</p> <p>Knapp et al., 2003;</p>
Policy, Curriculum and Local Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Address professional and political influences in policy and decision-making (connecting policy with curriculum) 	<p>Loucks-Horsley et al., 2003;</p> <p>USAID, 2007b;</p>
Sustainable and Community-Owned Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Include cultural, socio-economic, and social factors influencing teachers and school b) Cultural, religious, social and economic awareness for locally owned and locally relevant programs* 	<p>USAID, 2007c;</p> <p>USAID, 2008</p>

* These recommendations are specific to Pakistan-based literature and research.

Program Content

English, mathematics and science at both primary and secondary levels are the content areas recommended for improvement through teacher training programs (USAID, 2007b; USAID, 2007c; USAID, 2008). Pedagogical methods that have been recommended and are aligned with successful practices in Pakistan as well as in the United States are student-centered, collaborative, and experiential (American Institute for Research, 2005; Arnold, 2002; Darling-Hammond, 1998; Garet et al., 2001; Halverson, 2003; Knapp et al., 2003; Loucks-Horsley et al., 2003; USAID, 2007b; USAID 2007c; USAID, 2008). Connecting content and pedagogical methods within the context of daily experiences of local teachers in local schools is an effective method as well, especially in rural and isolated regions with less access to teaching materials and resources (Arnold, 2002; Darling-Hammond, 1998; Knapp et al., 2003; USAID, 2007b; USAID, 2007c; USAID, 2008). This is where the use of low-cost or no-cost methods, where teaching materials are drawn from the local environment, is effective (USAID, 2007b).

Timeframe

Teacher trainings must work within the timeframe needs of teachers, school and community, based on vacation time, seasons and agriculture-based time constraints for families (Farah, 1996; Hertz, 2002; USAID, 2007b). Another timeframe related need is for consistency and coherence in teacher training workshops, follow-through and support of the teachers between workshops and to continually assess and provide for teacher needs throughout the year (Arnold, 2002; Garet et al., 2001; Knapp et al., 2003; Loucks-Horsley et al., 2003; USAID, 2007b; USAID, 2007c; USAID, 2008).

Professional Issues

The Pakistan government and local studies have found that teacher retention and absenteeism are great obstacles to the improvement of the quality of education in the schools and the improvement of teacher professionalism (Farah, 1996; USAID, 2007b; USAID, 2007c; USAID, 2008). Improving teacher motivation and decreasing absenteeism can be addressed by making work meaningful, creating accountability and follow through and by providing professional growth opportunities within the education and school systems (Arnold, 2002; Darling-Hammond, 1998; Garet et al., 2001; Halverson, 2003; Knapp et al., 2003; Loucks-Horsley et al., 2003). Providing better access to resources for continued learning, implementation of new practices, and being part of a collaborative professional group in the school environment will also help empower and motivate teachers (Arnold, 2002; Darling-Hammond, 1998; Garet et al., 2001; Halverson, 2003; Knapp et al., 2003; Loucks-Horsley et al., 2003).

Policy, Curriculum and Local Government

Teachers need to be exposed to changes made at the government level. For example, reform efforts, changes in the curriculum, and any decisions made that affect teachers' careers should be communicated to teachers (Arnold, 2002; Knapp et al., 2003; Loucks-Horsley et al., 2003). Currently in rural Pakistan there is a lack of communication between the education system decision makers, school administrators, teachers and parents due only in part to geographic isolation (USAID, 2007b). A two-way sharing of knowledge and resources needs to occur between the regional and local levels.

Sustainable and Community-Owned Program

Ensuring effectiveness, success and sustainability of a program in a remote community in Pakistan will be dependent on connecting it to the contextual framework - the local teachers, the community and the local educational system. Cultural, religious, socio-economic and social community factors need to be accounted for and addressed (American Institute for Research, 2005; Arnold, 2002; Loucks-Horsley et al., 2003; USAID, 2007b; USAID, 2007c; USAID, 2008). The program needs to meet the needs of the community while fostering empowerment and ownership (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1991; Sarason, 1996).

Summary of the Professional Development Framework

The professional development framework (Table 2) addresses the recommendations provided by the literature to meet the elements of a successful professional development program in a region like Azad Kashmir, including the content, timeframe, professional issues, policy, and community engagement.

Participatory Approaches that Lead to Community Engagement and Empowerment

The three previous sections reviewed the current status of girls' education, needs for and steps to take toward educational reform in Pakistan, and recommendations for professional development practices specific to the current needs of teachers in Pakistan. The following section will discuss steps that a facilitator can take in approaching development work in communities with a focus on engagement, empowerment and

participation. Based on the current status of education in rural Pakistan, there is a great need for school reform efforts.

The literature I have reviewed based on program design, participatory development, community empowerment and cultural responsiveness provide four recommendations for working within a community. The following steps should be part of the entire process that begins with identifying and assessing the problem through program implementation and evaluation.

1. Relationship building within the community.
2. Stakeholder identification.
3. Creating multiple paths and levels of community engagement.
4. Work toward an outcome of community empowerment and ownership over the program.

This review draws upon participatory and empowerment evaluation practices as discussed by Fetterman (2001, 2005), Cousins and Whitmore (1998), and the National Science Foundation (NSF) (2002), and from utilization-focused evaluation methodology discussed by Patton (2008). It also addresses culturally competent practices in building relationships with indigenous communities as outlined by LaFrance (2004). Although this literature focuses on the work of program evaluators, it is equally relevant for those who seek to design and implement participatory programs, and are not necessarily engaged in evaluation aspects of such programs.

Cousins and Whitmore (1998) describe participatory evaluation as a process when “researchers, facilitators, or professional evaluators collaborate in some way with

individuals, groups, or communities who have decided stake in the program, development project, or other entity being evaluated” (p. 5). Community participation in approaching program design and educational reform take into account a similar process of working with individuals and groups with stake in the program (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1991; Sarason, 1996).

Participatory development approaches as described by international development organizations like United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and USAID will also be addressed in this review. The literature from international development organizations provides a strong foundation for program design and implementation, including goals and methods for sustainability and community-ownership over educational reform programs. These design and implementation recommendations are consistent with the recommendations from United Nations and other relevant literature and will be addressed further in the section discussing participatory development.

Relationship Building within the Community

To facilitate some of these initial relationship-building activities, LaFrance suggests facilitated workshops to draw on the voices of all community members. One outcome for a workshop like this would be a group-developed conceptual model for the future project that would be aligned with the stakeholders’ “beliefs, values and hopes for the program” (LaFrance, 2004, p. 45). This important initial step initiates the process of participatory practice with stakeholders to work towards ownership and sustainability of a program. “Once ownership is created, stakeholders value the knowledge they gain from the evaluation” (LaFrance, 2004, p. 49). This process creates a solid foundation of

trust-and equity-building and also provides the facilitator with the opportunity to identify the key stakeholders of the community.

Stakeholder Identification

Stakeholder identification is an essential step in the process of fostering community involvement, participation and ownership in a program (Fetterman, 2005; Fullan, 1993; NSF, 2002; Patton 2008) whether the work at hand is the design, implementation or evaluation of the program. Fetterman (2005) refers to this process as inclusion, where as many stakeholders as can be represented in the process have a voice. There can be multiple stakeholder groups and multiple levels of power between them and this awareness and identification of power levels within and between stakeholders is an essential component of this process (Cousins & Whitmore, 1998). The NSF Handbook (2002) and Patton (2008) discussed the importance of choosing appropriate stakeholders for the participatory community-based work. This process takes time and commitment from both facilitator and stakeholders.

The process of selecting key stakeholders for community projects such as the development of teacher training programs requires exposure to peoples' ideas, beliefs, values and needs (Fetterman, 2005; Patton, 2008). Initial conversations like this will help promote understanding, trust and relationships needed to ensure that all stakeholders' voices are represented. Program designers need to let all of these voices be heard, while being aware of the level with which the stakeholders' voices and opinions are represented (Fetterman, 2005; Patton, 2008).

Levels of Community Engagement

The United Nations (UN) developed a continuum for stakeholders' participation that identifies four levels of activity. In the first level, *passive participation*, stakeholders welcome the project but are cautious about the process and possibly do not have a trusting relationship with the facilitator. The next stage, *increased involvement*, is where stakeholders begin to develop trust and contact with the project, facilitators and other stakeholders, and begin taking on responsibilities. The third stage moves into *active participation*, where stakeholders are active partners. Finally, the fourth stage is *ownership* where stakeholders reach empowerment and are willing to sustain and further develop the project. Figure 2 addresses stakeholder participation in relation to the six steps of the project cycle as defined by the United Nations: problem identification, project design, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluating, and impact assessment. This model developed by the United Nations identifies steps taken in the process of program development while identifying levels of participation and engagement with stakeholders; however, this model is very linear and not structured to allow for the dynamic and flexible process needed. Practitioners of participatory development, empowerment evaluation and educational reform understand that the project cycle (however phrased) is not always linear (Fetterman, 2005).

Community-empowering and -owned projects are based in the balance between respect and power. As stakeholders move through the participatory continuum, they work towards *self-management* and *ownership* of the program (UNDP, 2006).

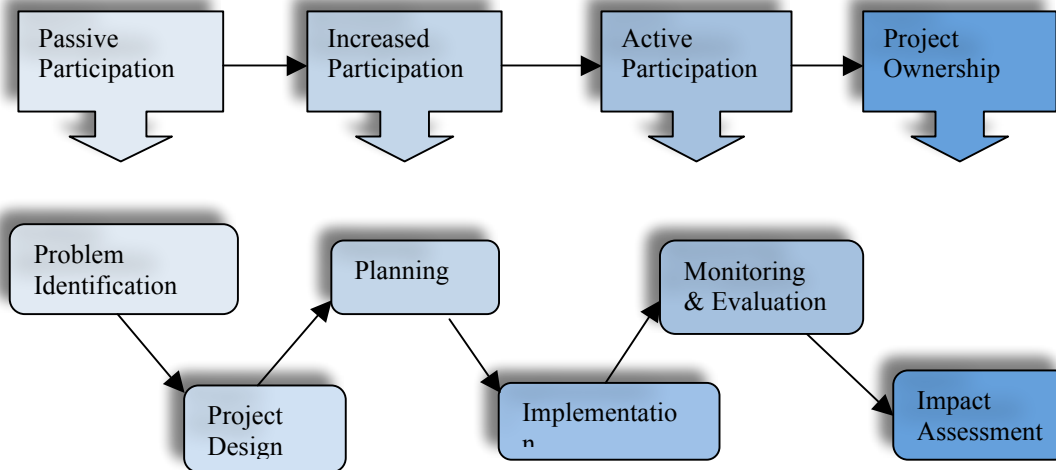


Figure 2: Relationship Between Levels of Participation and the Project Cycle (adapted from UNDP 2006).

Figure 3 illustrates how the project cycle and participation continuum flow together to promote eventual community ownership of the program. The continuum should allow more flux within the levels of participation and the levels of the project cycle. To allow diversity and multiple levels of involvement within a community, a framework needs to provide tools for a non-linear approach. The Cousins-Whitmore (1999) model for community engagement allows for the dynamic movement through the continuum of stakeholder engagement and ownership (Figure 3).

Community Empowerment and Ownership

The ultimate goal of all levels of the process is community-empowerment through a balanced, participatory approach, eventually leading to community ownership of the programs. This goal is identified in all of the literature and approaches cited (Fetterman, 2001, 2005; LaFrance, 2004; NSF Handbook, 2002; Patton, 2008; UNDP, 2006). Only when empowerment and program ownership is achieved will community members value

the ongoing process of education and change and provide for sustainability of continuous community-based education. Also, if teachers and administrators are empowered during the process of developing, implementing or evaluating a program, many of the important needs and goals of the community and the school will be met (Fullan, 1993; Sarason, 1996).

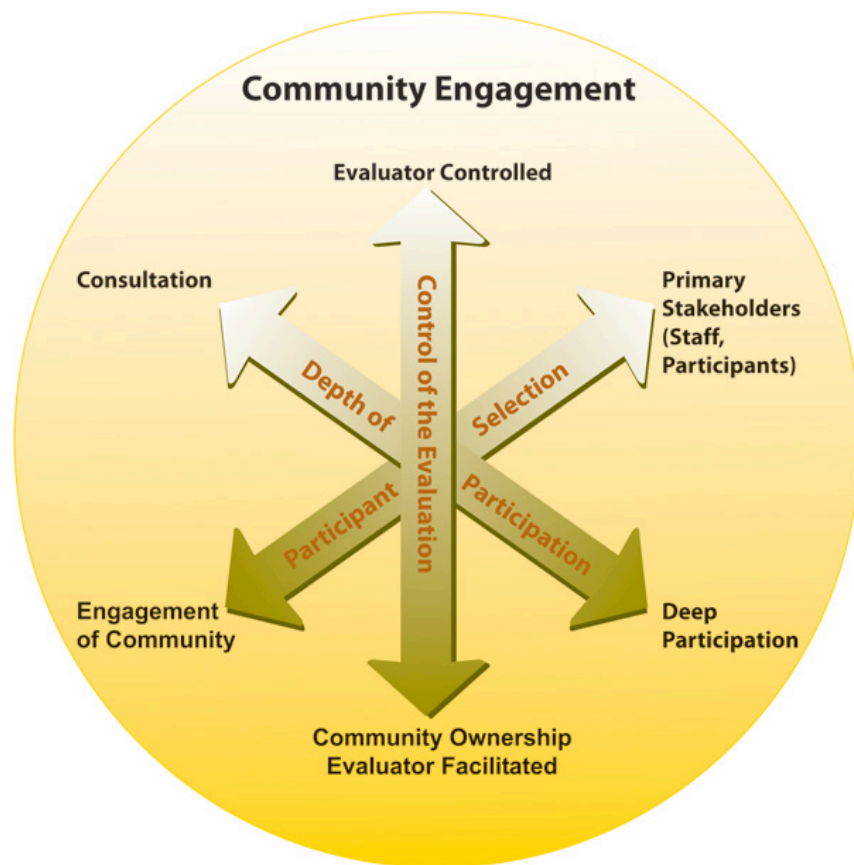


Figure 3: Community Engagement: Ranges of Stakeholder Involvement (American Indian Higher Education Association (AIHEC), (2009).

Summary of Participatory Approaches Literature

Participatory development work leads to community ownership in a cultural responsive way and will allow time for building trusting relationships with the

community members and stakeholders (LaFrance, 2004). Such work should also facilitate careful consideration in the selection of the stakeholders (NSF, 2002), allow for a balance of stakeholder participation over time, and evolve towards community and stakeholder ownership of the process. These factors in culturally responsive and participatory practices will allow for equity, diversity, and individuals' voices to be heard (Fetterman, 2001; NSF, 2002).

Summary of Literature Review

This review of literature provides a framework identifying opportunities for education reform, obstacles to accessing education, and a thorough needs assessment for girls' education in Pakistan. The themes that guided the review were to identify how we can define successful schools, the current status of girls' education, the participatory approaches to development work, and the best practices for providing teacher professional development. Each section of the review addressed necessary recommendations and needs assessments that will guide my research and work in Azad Kashmir.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The Seri Valley region of Azad Kashmir is the focal point for this case study of teachers, students and community members (the names of the case study participants and school have been changed). This area had closed borders and consequently no western influence leading up to the 2005 earthquake. Geographically the Seri Valley is isolated with few roads and with high peaks surrounding the region. These factors created a unique environment for this case study. The social and religious context also serves as a unique and significant background for this study. The Seri Valley of Azad Kashmir has traditionally been a more conservative and isolated Muslim region. Social opportunities for women are not equal to those of men, and as shown in this study, women are completely dependent on the decision of the male members of the family and surrounding community. This study will focus on the voices of the females within this context to identify opportunities that may provide access to better educational options. The participants of this study are the female teachers of the SV School, the administrators and local decision makers influential in school policy, the 1st-12th grade female students attending the school, and the families and community members of Seri Village and surrounding areas.

The purpose of this study is to assess the needs, obstacles and opportunities of the teachers, women and girls of the SV School community, and to identify recommendations to improve the quality of education in the community. The following

is an outline of the research methods used to gather, organize and analyze the data for this case study of SV School.

Research Procedures

The research design follows a case study approach. Creswell (2007) defines a case study as “the study of an issue explored through one or more cases within a bounded system.” The *bounded system* in this case is the Seri Village community surrounding SV School in the Seri Valley of Azad Kashmir, Pakistan. By studying this *bounded system*, I was able to use case study research methods to identify, collect and analyze data from stakeholders to represent the community. By presenting the findings as a case study through stakeholder narratives, the results can potentially reflect conclusive themes or practices that may be used in similar contextual communities that CAI works within. This case study is *holistic* and *context sensitive* as defined by Patton (2002) and the collection, organization and analysis of the data will be aligned with strategies outlined by Patton (2002) and Creswell (2007).

The methodology and data collection included formal and informal interviews, surveys and field notes gathered over a two year period for the following stakeholders: school teachers, school administration, students, parents, village elders, community leaders, local government officials, development organizations based in the region, and local organizations focused on education or community development. I used purposeful and snowball sampling methods (Creswell, 2007) and a variety of data analysis methods to code data and identify emergent themes. The sampling and data analysis methods that

I used for the formal and informal interviews, field notes and surveys are described in each section below.

Data Collection Methods

The following research matrix is meant to clarify the data collection methods used to answer the sub questions of the central question: *What are the processes involved in addressing the educational needs, obstacles and opportunities for girls, women and teachers in remote Pakistan?*

Table 3. Research Matrix

Research Questions and Sub Questions	Data collection methods	Timeline
What are the processes involved in addressing the educational needs, obstacles and opportunities for girls, women and teachers in remote Pakistan?		
According to the literature, what are the major recommendations to improve the access to, and quality of, learning opportunities for girls, women and teachers in the future?	Comparison of literature and research on best practices in the U.S. and in Pakistan, compared to researcher's data collection, to develop a framework	5/07-5/09
Who are the stakeholders involved in educational programs in the SV School community, and how does one identify their needs, opportunities and potential barriers?	Observations/field notes/informal interviews	6/07, 1/08, 4/08, 5/08, 12/08
	Formal interviews	4/08, 5/08, 12/08
	Surveys	12/08
What cultural, social and educational issues need to be taken into account when promoting education for girls, women and teachers in the SV School community	Observations/field notes/informal interviews	6/07, 1/08, 4/08, 5/08, 12/08
	Formal interviews	4/08, 5/08, 12/08
	Surveys	12/08

The following table provides more information on the dates, lengths and general details of each visit to the SV community. As a CAI staff member, I was also working on

other project sites around Pakistan, but the focus of my work for CAI and my doctoral research was based in Seri Valley. The future of the teacher training programs as well as the scholarship program for girls was a focus of all of the visits to Pakistan, but initially started in Seri Valley. The table below shows the month and year of each visit to Pakistan as well as how long I spent in the SV community during each visit.

Table 4: Timeline and Duration of Visits to Seri Valley Community

Month, Year	Details and Length of Visit
June, 2007	Initial visit, one-week long. First meeting with the principal, head teachers, and students. First observations and journal entries made. Initial research designs were based on the needs of the region and the women of the region.
December, 2007 – January, 2008	One-week visit staying with a local family near the school. First visit with structured research design and sample questions for interviews.
March, 2008	Five-day visit continuing data collection, program development for surrounding CAI projects and more social visits with surrounding community members.
May – June 2008	Three separate visits to the SV community, each visit lasting 3-6 days. Total trip in Pakistan lasted six weeks to other program regions. Initial development of teacher trainings needs and scholarship program. One trip to the community was with my husband Doug, furthering the development of relationships with influential male community members.
January, 2009	Five-day visit continuing data collection, analysis, and member-checking. Assessing initial scholarship program and teacher training needs.
May, 2009	Four-day visit to S.V. community to further develop scholarship program and teacher training.

Formal and Informal Interviews

I used formal and informal interviews to collect data from stakeholders to help answer the research questions and also to help the process of building relationships and trust. It was important for me as the researcher to make sure that all voices were heard and that all stakeholder groups were identified. Purposeful and snowball sampling

(Creswell, 2007) methods were used to ensure all stakeholders were identified. Pattern identification and coding were also used during the two-year data collection process to help focus further data collection and analysis. Sampling techniques, pattern identification and coding will be discussed in greater detail below.

The interviews were not recorded or transcribed. Prior to formal interviews I would ask the participants if they would allow me to record the conversation. Most of the interviewees felt uncomfortable about being recorded and I learned from some of the community members that they were nervous about saying the wrong things if they were recorded. The relationship and trust building process was important to this research so I took extensive detailed notes or short-hand notes when appropriate, depending on the comfort level of the interviewee. If I noticed that the participant was distracted by my note-taking, I would refrain from recording too many direct quotes. After every interview, when appropriate, I would sit down with my notes and record as much information as I could remember. I was able to record some direct quotes as found in the Chapter Four narratives, but most of my interview notes were paraphrased. Many of the interviews needed a translator present. I would identify an appropriate translator depending on the gender or background of the interviewee. Throughout the interview I would request direct translation over paraphrasing and sometimes needed clarification on vocabulary. When appropriate, I would take notes on the process of translation, whether I was getting information from the translator in the form of their own interpretations of the information, or if I was getting a direct translation. Often the translator was able to provide an interpretation on the topic and I would note that for later data analysis.

Sampling. Purposeful sampling and snowball sampling were methods that I used to identify stakeholders for formal and informal interviews. Initial purposeful sampling was influenced by the primary stakeholders that I needed to work with in the schools and community to develop a teacher training program. These stakeholders included the school administration, head teachers, and any local leaders that were influential in the school community. The stakeholders and key informants would either identify themselves, were identified by others, or had a leadership or official role in the school or community. Key informants were often the individuals who were more outspoken and willing to share their knowledge and experiences, and they were also supported or chosen by groups to speak for them. For example, if I would ask a group of teachers a question about how they were trained to assess student learning, the group of teachers would often look to one or two of the senior teachers to speak for them. I would find this with the students as well. If the individuals did not agree with the person speaking for the group, I found that the individuals would often speak up. During interviews or informal discussions, I would often ask the quieter individuals in the stakeholder groups if their experiences or opinions were aligned with the key informant that had been speaking for them. Details from these discussions are identified further in the results section.

For further purposeful sampling, I sought out community members who had not been identified or who had not approached me. These were often mothers, women at home, or non-dominant group members like new teachers at the school or persons representing the non-dominant religious group in the region. As I spent more time in the communities, I was approached by more people and was able to gather additional

information from, and work more closely with, the stakeholders. For snowball sampling, I asked stakeholders for recommendations for whom I should speak to next, and I was often approached by members that felt strongly about sharing their voice. I used snowball sampling throughout the process of identifying stakeholders, but I did not rely on this because of the strong family loyalty and bias toward people's own religious or social groups in the community. Table 5 illustrates the type of data collected and how many participants there were for each stakeholder group.

Table 5: Numbers of Stakeholders and Types of Data Collected

Stakeholder Group	Participants	Data Collected
Teachers	4 head teachers (key informants) 25 teachers from SV School 18 primary school teachers from other remote Seri Valley schools	2+ interviews for each head teacher, survey of 23 teachers, discussions and informal interviews with most other teachers
Students	6 female key informants (primary and secondary aged students) 30+ female students	2+ formal interviews or structured discussions with key informants, discussions and other data collected from 30+ other students from SV School
Women	4 women in community (key informants)	1+ interview or structured discussion with each woman
Families	4+ involved families (key informants)	1+ interview or structured discussion with families several times throughout the study
Principals	1 head principal (key informant) 1 past principal 3 principals of surrounding schools	2 interviews and 8+ structured discussions with head principal, discussions and informal interviews with other administrators
Local religious leaders	3 male religious leaders (2 key informants)	3+ interviews/structured discussions with key informants, 2+ informal discussions with each
Regional Director of Education	1 Director of Education (key informant)	1 formal interview

Data Analysis. I organized my notes according to the broad category of stakeholder groups the individuals belonged to. I grouped the notes together into stakeholder categories. For example, if they were part of the school administration (principal, secretary, or committee member) I took notes on conversations either during or after our time spent together, depending on the depth of information being communicated. In the evenings I studied the notes and wrote questions that I had for the stakeholders, either as a group or for the individuals. It was during this process of reviewing interview notes that I was able to identify patterns and themes and was able to go through and begin coding the data. These patterns and themes would then influence the next round of formal and informal interviews.

The protocol that I developed to direct the formal and informal interviews (Appendix A) continued to change and develop throughout this process. I would modify and continue to develop the protocol after reviews by two doctoral committee members or my Pakistani colleagues. Each stakeholder did not get asked each question, it was meant as a guide for me when interviews arose. The process of organizing the interview notes and the further development of questions helped to identify topics and themes that were used to further code the data during the analysis and findings. Topics that were identified throughout the process included: 1) cultural, social and religious influences on educational development work, 2) educational and development needs in the region, and 3) historically significant events that have influenced community development and education in the region. As more themes emerged, they would often fit into these broad

categories (above), but if not, they would be included and explained in the findings. The topics above can also be broken down further into the following broad themes:

- Access to education.
- Gender and social equality.
- Poverty and isolation.
- Post-earthquake trauma.
- Influence of development organizations on education.
- Local leadership and influence on expectations of teachers.
- Culture, religion and gender as obstacles to providing equal opportunities.

I used these broad themes to organize and code the data for the narratives, and for the overall cross-case analysis of the findings.

Stakeholders Represented in the Narratives

During the time that I spent at SV School, in the surrounding schools and villages, and in Muzaffarabad's education departments, I was able to gather information from key informants representing various stakeholder groups. In some cases I was able to develop a close relationship which resulted in many interviews and detailed field notes. In other cases, like with the Director of Education for Azad Kashmir, I was only able to meet once, but still gathered information for this study. From my experience in the communities, I found that many of these individuals, teachers, students, principal, parents, and NGO staff spoke to multiple themes that emerged throughout the data collection and analysis. Chapter Four addresses the perspectives of particular individuals and groups of community members regarding the themes above and their implications for

education of girls and for supporting teacher workshops in SV School and similar settings.

The two groups of stakeholders that are most central to this case study of SV School are the teachers and the students. I was able to spend more time with the teachers and students than any other stakeholder group in the community. The central narratives of this case study are the teachers' and students' experiences in the SV School and with the influential community. Woven into the narratives are the effects of, and interactions with, the surrounding community members, families, and other stakeholder groups.

Teacher Survey

During the initial interviews and discussions with the teachers during my winter and spring visits of 2008, it became clear that I needed to develop a survey to collect information from all of the teachers in the SV school. I was learning that there were different needs and obstacles that the teachers faced depending on their level of education, experience teaching, and interests for future teacher trainings. I wanted to make sure that I was able to gather this information from each of the teachers, so I developed a survey based on the topics and themes that had emerged thus far from the interviews, discussions, and field notes. Many of the survey questions were developed based on the information I needed for the teachers' backgrounds, levels of education and methods they used for instruction and assessment. I also wanted to learn more about what the teachers had been exposed to for professional development experiences, as well as what they were interested in learning in future workshops. I piloted the survey with Kashmiri students at Montana State University (MSU) and reviewed it with some

teachers in Pakistan in January, 2009 before administering it to the teachers in May, 2009.

The survey was also meant to help facilitate the building of relationships and trust between me and the teachers. During initial meetings with the teachers, they expressed that they have never been asked what they want or need in professional development. They wanted their voices to be heard and were excited for the opportunity to do so with the surveys. This process of developing a program to suit this specific teacher population follows the recommendations identified in the literature review for fostering participatory and community owned projects. During informal and formal interviews, the teachers claimed that they needed more support in the content areas of English, mathematics and science. Many claimed that an increase of content knowledge was much more important than learning pedagogical skills. The teacher survey gathered information about the teachers' use of pedagogical skills as well as specific qualities of teacher training they hoped to develop. All of the data collected would help to provide general recommendations for future training programs as well as specific content areas and methods to include in trainings. The survey (Appendix B) asked teachers specific questions about:

1. Teacher background.
2. Experiences with professional development.
3. Perceptions of their school environment.
4. Teaching practices and use of various techniques.
5. Use of various assessment methods.

6. Preparation for lessons and assessments.
7. Teacher input on future teacher training workshops.

Survey Piloting, Translating and Administering. The survey was piloted in the United States by Kashmiri students at MSU. The students shared ways I could clarify the questions based on what they already knew about the opportunities for teachers in Azad Kashmir. For example, it was recommended to me to ask about the teachers being interested in transferring from the school they were teaching. I learned more about how some teachers were not interested in teaching in the village schools and they were just waiting to be transferred to a city school. After the piloting of the survey, discussions with some SV school teachers as well as my Pakistani colleagues in January, 2009, I modified the survey questions to gather the information I needed for the teachers' backgrounds, experiences, needs and interests for future trainings.

The survey was translated by one Kashmiri university student and checked for errors by three Kashmiri teachers in Pakistan prior to administering the survey. I met with the administration of the various schools to garner support for the research and survey process. I had good relationships with the administration and received full support from the school staff for the data collection and research. The teachers responded in English or Urdu. The completed surveys were translated from Urdu to English by a CAI staff member from Kashmir, and the translation was checked by three Urdu-speaking students at MSU.

Survey Sampling. Those surveyed were not a sample population, but, rather, represented the individual teachers that would eventually participate in CAI's teacher training workshop. It was administered to all of the teachers at the SV School, including primary, middle and secondary teachers. There were 25 teachers employed at SV School the time the survey was administered, and 23 teachers were present the day of the survey.

Survey Data Analysis. The teachers had an option of taking the survey in English or Urdu, and half of the teachers chose English, but with Urdu answers for clarification. The teachers also had the option of completing their survey anonymously. All of the teachers chose to use their names on the survey, so I was also able to organize the survey answers with interview and observation notes of that I had gathered during my eight trips to the region. After the surveys were translated into English, I compiled and organized the data into the survey's broad categories: background information, experiences with professional development, teachers' perceptions of their school environment, current teaching and assessment methods, preparation for lessons and assessment, and their recommendations for future teacher training workshops. The survey questions were open-ended and elicited detailed responses that, paired with interviews and field notes, provided a rich set of data to represent the teachers of SV School.

Observations and Field Notes

My initial data collection methods consisted of taking notes throughout the day, especially during tea breaks or when the men sat around to smoke and discuss "important matters" while I sat quietly and "waited" (actively observed). After the first day, the

notes were modified into two-column pages, the left side for reflective notes and more of a journal entry of my responses to the experience, the right side for more descriptive notes. I wrote down people's names, descriptions of their clothing or features for later recognition, names and locations of villages and schools, and other factual or descriptive-style notes.

This is the method that I continued to use during subsequent trips over the next two years. My notes were single-sided because I often used the backside of the notes to sketch maps of the locations of homes or schools along walking paths, adjacent valleys or side roads. I also had teachers sign this notebook with their names and how many years they have been teaching at the schools. This was a great resource for me to go back to during my evening reflections and organization of the notes, interviews and surveys. There were from five to sixteen teachers at a time during any of my school visits, so having them record their names helped me with proper spellings and how long they had been teaching.

Data Analysis. I identified themes and patterns in my field notes during every trip to Azad Kashmir. I would organize and code my field notes concurrently with my formal and informal interview notes. My field notes would either fit into a broad category of a stakeholder group, description of the setting, or one of the topics driving this research: cultural, social, and religious influence on educational development. After coding my field notes in the margins, I would copy and group the data with the appropriate stakeholder group and themes that were represented. Some of the data from the field

notes was used for the background information to this study or was used to help develop more interview questions or topics to explore during the following visits to Pakistan.

Data Analysis Summary

Analysis of the data was ongoing and patterns were identified as they emerged from the interviews, observations, and surveys, within and across stakeholder groups and individuals (Creswell, 2003, 2007; Maxwell, 2005). A guideline for constructing a case study (Patton, 2002) was used to guide this data analysis process, and his descriptions of using a case narrative as a *readable, descriptive picture* of the case was used to report the findings. The findings were also represented as a *holistic* case and *context sensitive* as discussed by Patton (2002).

As the themes emerged during interviews, they would influence how the observations and field notes were organized. During my eight visits, the themes from the various participants in the study became more developed and consequently affected future interview questions and surveys. My ongoing data analysis and coding became more specific as the data provided more details for the themes. As I gathered more data from interviews, observations and field notes, I was able to group the data in themes for each of the various stakeholder groups. Through the process of coding the data from all data sets (interviews, observations, field notes and surveys) while continuing to gather data from individuals that represent a group, the structure and analysis for the narratives developed further. The narratives are a compilation of the data from various sources, and various methods that have been organized and analyzed in a way that tells the story of the

teachers, students, community members and other groups involved with girls' education at SV School.

Validity

This triangulation process as described above was used to increase the validity of the findings (Patton, 2002). This involved comparing data from various sources including interviews, observations and filed notes, informal interviews and discussions, and surveys. I also compared common themes within and across stakeholder groups. This allowed cross-participant analysis and triangulated the themes from the data. Comparisons of themes across data sources did not always show agreement. For example, there were discrepancies in the survey data and some interviews. These discrepancies are discussed in the findings. Other convergences and divergences of the cross-participant analysis are discussed as well. Another form of validation of the themes I used to code the data was peer review. I provided the raw data to twelve graduate students in my Qualitative Research Methods course at MSU. They found themes very similar to those identified in my analysis.

Credibility

The credibility of the qualitative findings was established by a member check of the raw data and of the subsequent analysis of the data from stakeholder groups (Creswell, 2003, 2007). During the data analysis processes I traveled to the Seri Valley twice and was able to meet with members of the stakeholder groups to member check the findings. I presented the various cultural, social and religious themes that emerged for

each stakeholder group to representatives of that group, as well as opportunities, needs and obstacles the group had identified. I was also able to fact-check the background information and some of the specific findings for each stakeholder group. This member checking and fact checking would often happen over tea or a meal with the teachers or families, or with the students in the school library or courtyard. They would be in the form of a discussion where I would ask the participants about direct quotes, themes or conclusions that I had recorded from my time spent with them.

The member checking for the teacher survey was done with a representative group of teachers at the school using the compiled overview of the survey responses. After I collected the surveys, I compiled all of the teachers' answers for each question. I then had one master survey with all of the teachers' responses. After I coded the responses to appropriate themes that had emerged from interviews, discussions and field notes, I created a document of the compiled themes with the specific survey responses. When I member-checked the responses with the teachers, I would share the specific responses and the themes that were represented. In some cases, I had questions or direct quotes from an individual's survey that I would ask about. But for most of the member checking, I asked if the teachers' felt the compiled responses coded with themes were a good representation of the SV school teachers. Most of the member-checking happened during my spring and summer of 2009 visits to the Seri Valley. The member-checking did not identify any teacher concerns about the results of the survey.

Potential Limitations of the Study

Many of the potential limitations of the study were due to my role as an outsider to the community, specifically being a white, non-Muslim young female from the U.S. There was not a great deal of public support for the U.S.'s policies and impacts on Pakistan's politics and government instabilities at the time of my research. During the relationship building and research processes, I needed to overcome many of these barriers to collect data for this study. Men, especially, were not accustomed to discussing important matters like the topics addressed in my research with a woman, and I had to be sensitive and aware of that dynamic throughout the process. Working with respected male staff that showed public respect for me helped with this process of garnering male trust. Also, I learned that it was significantly helpful that two of my visits to the community were with my husband, Doug, who was quickly welcomed into the male community involved with the SV School. Both the men and women were able to see me in the position as a wife with a respectable husband which, I was told, gave me a more honorable reputation in the community. But the foundation of building a trusting relationship with so many of the girls, women, teachers and community members was that I kept my promises, I returned when I said that I would, and I would give my time to help people.

No matter how much effort I gave to building relationships, however, there were still community members who would not interact with me. I believe that due to the nature of educating and empowering girls and women in a conservative Islamic community, some community members avoided any interactions with me. This is an

example of a potential limitation of my research, especially my effort to portray all stakeholder voices. I worked to address this issue by asking the case study participants how they felt the absent community members would address certain questions, issues or experiences. Often the case study participants would know someone in their family who was representative of the population that did not support girls, women and female teachers furthering their education.

Another limitation was the use of a translator for some of the data collection methods and my process of observing and note-taking in a non-English speaking setting. Because of the regional dialects, I used local translators who were non-professionals and may have influenced some of the interviews with their own translations. I always carried a small tape recorder but found that everyone I interviewed felt very uncomfortable being recorded and so was unable to tape my conversations. I relied on extensive note taking and member checking for possible details lost without recordings.

Researcher Perspective

There were a number of obstacles and potential limitations for me to work and research within the Seri Valley communities. My ability to build relationships while working in a challenging environment and my access to mentors in the communities helped me to overcome many of these obstacles. Because of the foreign nature of the context, I spent more time observing, learning and reflecting throughout the process that greatly benefited the analysis portion of this case study. When I had questions or concerns about different cultural, social or religious issues, I had a few close mentors from the Seri Valley community or from the CAI staff to go to for answers or support. I

approached this research as an outsider to the community, but I had many insiders supporting me and mentoring me throughout the entire process.

I also benefited from five years of experience as an educator in developing countries, as well as a semester as a student teacher with a Maori tribe in New Zealand. Prior to my work with CAI in Pakistan, I taught for five years with a United States-based study-abroad program for high school girls in southern Africa and South America. I not only taught academic courses focused on the region of travel, but helped to facilitate community service projects and immersion experiences with tribal and local populations. My experience living with and working in a local Maori school in New Zealand also exposed me to the process of developing skills needed to build relationships and trust when working as an outsider in a foreign and tight-knit community. These experiences provided me with the skills and the comfort for my work with CAI in Pakistan and for my research with the rural and isolated communities in the Seri Valley.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS OF THIS STUDY

This Seri Valley School case study draws upon the experiences of teachers, students and community to address central themes surrounding the education of female teachers and students in a conservative, geographically isolated Islamic community. The teachers and students are central to this discussion as the most time was spent with them. As a woman and a teacher I was able to integrate more comfortably with the school community within the boundary walls. I will also discuss the community outside the school grounds, how it influences the school, and the role of the school within the greater community. The results of this study are organized as follows:

1. A description of the school, including the social, cultural and religious context, and the effects of the most recent earthquake of 2005.
2. A discussion of the teachers' experience with the school and a review of their needs, obstacles and potential opportunities.
3. A discussion of young women's and girls' experiences at SV School and the opportunities and the obstacles they face.
4. Recommendations for improving the opportunities for the teachers and the girls of SV School.

A Description of Seri Valley School

My First Visit to SV School

We entered Seri Village, where Seri Valley School is located, after a ten-mile hour-and-a-half long Toyota Land Cruiser drive from Muzaffarabad up the Seri River valley. The dirt roads were scarred with landslides that the driver informed us were frequent in this area since the earthquake. The road was perched on cliff walls of loose, unconsolidated glacial outwash from the surrounding peaks. Along the narrow road public buses, herds of goats and sheep, men on motorcycles and women carrying bundles of sticks all dodged each other, either choosing to skirt the cliff wall on the inside or cliff's edge overlooking the river. Seri was the first terraced opening in the valley, the landscape green and lush with mid-summer corn, potato and grain crops. We drove through Seri's market street where a few dozen shops lined either side of the main street on both sides of the river. We crossed the fast-moving and boulder-strewn glacial river where women in eddies washed clothes. Only men were in the market, many of them squeezed into a shelter selling vegetables, butchered meat and live animals. We arrived to SV School at the end of the main market street.

The school was the only visible new building. All of the other buildings were either four-wall tents with organized piles of rubble from the earthquake left-over's or lean-to's using mud stone building walls that had not fully collapsed. The Central Asia Institute school was a white walled, red trimmed, prefabricated building that reminded me of a large storage container. The CAI staff member who worked with Greg

Mortenson to find these earthquake-resistant structures stood tall and proud as he pointed out the new school.

We entered the school via a dirt-sloping pathway from the road. I hung back as the men charged ahead into the school. I noticed a few other women doing this and understood that women go last, often times with their eyes down. As we entered the school courtyard I saw that there was a circular design to the school. There were cement foundations under the prefabricated buildings, about ten classrooms in all, surrounding the courtyard. There were high boundary walls, but I could hear that we were next to the river. Though school was in session, the teachers quickly became busy preparing tea and a meal for the visitors while students sat quietly and waited. I met a few of the female teachers with a brief “Asalaam o Alaikum” greeting, but there was no English or other greetings exchanged.

We sat in plastic chairs around plastic tables outside in the courtyard. I sat with the six men (two new village men joined us, but I was not introduced) while the teachers served us sweet milk tea and fried potatoes wedges “American-style,” one man commented. We sipped tea for about 45 minutes, the men speaking Urdu, occasionally explaining something to my husband Doug in English. I gathered most of my information by listening in as the men rarely spoke directly to me. I learned that 103 students died in this school during the earthquake, that the government built the previous school as a two-story high 1st-12th grade school, and that the students are still too scared to attend classes in the new buildings even though they are earthquake-resistant. One

CAI staff member spoke of plans to build a shelter with no walls and a light-weight metal roof with beams so that students would feel safe attending classes.

This information gave me more contexts for my observations. We sat for another two hours. I was with Doug apart from the other men, and mostly sat quietly and watched the students in their classes outside, watched some of the teachers sit and meet with each other, watched the groundskeeper continue to cut the grass by hand.

Around the courtyard I noticed that separate classes had different aged girls, about ten students in each class, all sitting on plastic chairs with many sharing desks. Some students also shared books and pencils when reading or taking notes. They were all quiet, watching the teacher or reading in their books. I watched when the teachers lectured. As a teacher, I found it significant that not once did a student raise her hand or ask a question. The teachers also came and went from the group of students to tend to other business like the visitors.

Students all wore the same uniform of a white and blue *shalwar kamiz* with a white *dupatta* headscarf. Whenever I caught a student staring at me I would smile and they would shyly pull their headscarf in front of their faces. I would also look around and catch groups of students looking at me and they would giggle together.

Just before we left to visit another school, the principal arrived. She was a large woman with a beaming smile wearing a bright pink *shalwar kamiz* (I later learned she was from Muzaffarabad: a *city girl*). She immediately and confidently greeted the CAI staff of men and then came straight to me and spoke in English. She was the first woman I met in Pakistan to act so confidently and with such good English skills (she later

became my strong ally in the community). She took my arm and walked me around the school, introducing me to the teachers in English and translating some greetings for us in Urdu. A few of the younger students approached me as I walked with the principal and said a few words in English: “Hello. How are you?” “What is your name?” Some reached out to shake my hand, but kept their headscarf wrapped around their hand so that our skin did not touch. (I learned later that they had been taught not to have their skin directly touch non-Muslims or men outside of their direct family.) Most of the younger students’ faces, hands and uniforms were very dirty. The older students stayed quietly in their groups without approaching me. The older middle to high school aged students were notably clean and well groomed with washed and pressed uniforms.

The principal apologized for not being there earlier to greet me. She explained that it was rude of her since she knew that none of the teachers spoke enough English or were confident enough to welcome me. Most of the teachers stepped forward while I walked with the principal to introduce themselves. Some of them were very young, barely over 18 years old. A few of the teachers completely covered their faces before nodding their head in a gesture of acknowledgement.

During this initial one-week visit in 2007 I was based at the SV School, sleeping at night on the concrete floor of the principal’s office, and meeting with community members at the school or surrounding villages during the day. The staff, Doug and I also made a few day trips to some of the six primary schools CAI had rebuilt in the villages further up the Seri Valley. It took over an hour to reach some of these schools on the treacherous dirt roads, winding and switch-backing their way to the hanging valleys. I

was initially shocked that all of these village schools fed into the SV School (the school serves 1st-12th grades while most of the remote village schools only go through 5th grade). It began to make sense to me that very few girls from these remote villages would leave their village to go to middle or high school.

Over the following two years of this study I attempted to visit these remote villages at least once during my eight trips to Azad Kashmir. By the end of 2008 CAI had rebuilt fourteen schools in the remote villages up the Seri Valley, so it was often the case that the villages would come to the SV School for a meeting with me or the other CAI staff. By the summer of 2009 I had visited each school at least twice and met with the local community members for tea, discussions and meetings about teacher trainings, scholarship students, libraries and other requests. During every visit to the SV School, however, I was able to meet with some of the teachers, students, parents and community leaders from each of the surrounding villages. It was more convenient as the surrounding communities, no matter how remote, used Seri village's market as the central location for the buying, selling and trading of goods. Anyone going to the capital city has to travel through Seri and past SV School which is just off the main street between the market place and the raging Seri River.

During these visits to Kashmir, my relationships with the women and even some of the male community members grew closer. One of the teachers told me on my fourth visit in 2008 that the teachers like me very much. "And they all trust you now because you return like you say you will." From these women I learned more about how many NGO's and agencies came in to help after the earthquake then left abruptly after the

funds ran out. The communities had lost trust in these organizations after this lack of follow through. Over time, as I built these relationships, I learned more about culture, history and personal stories that shed light on everyone's role in this community.

I asked for feedback on my "cultural appropriateness" several times from the women and men with whom I had developed trusting relationships. While in the community, I was very sensitive to cultural nuances and gender expectations. I felt it to be incredibly important to show my respect and awareness and to foster close, more trusting relationships. The feedback I received was always positive, often with a few suggestions. For example, when I visited a new village project or met a new family or village elder, I sometimes learned there may be someone that I should not offer a handshake to, or there may be a way I should show respect to one person in the group if he were a religious leader. Or there may be a family that I visited where I immediately went into a room with the women rather than being invited into the meeting room with the men. I approached each situation sensitively, especially when building trust and relationships with new people. I often had someone tell me what to be aware of, but I still had to remind them that I needed some guidance on the local cultural nuances. Sometimes after meetings or visits I would ask a trusted woman or the male CAI staff if I acted and responded appropriately. They understood that I wanted to learn how to show respect and in turn learn more about the people and culture.

I later learned how significant it was that my first trip to Seri was with my husband Doug and the already respected male CAI staff member, Sarfraz. I was told by some women and two male village elders that being introduced to the community through

respected men allowed the villagers to be more trusting and open to sharing their lives and community with me. During my seven subsequent trips I always traveled with Sarfraz, especially every time I went to a new home or village. However, as I grew closer to the community I often spent my days working and traveling alone with the women, girls and their families. As a 55-year-old Pakistani male, Sarfraz became a father figure and guided me through all my experiences with advice and wisdom. He was my sounding board for questions about gender, social, religious and cultural issues. Sarfraz was influential throughout this entire study as my oftentimes silent partner. He led me to meetings with teachers and then disappeared to “let the women talk.” He advised me on situations of power struggles or political plays within the SV School and surrounding community that I had not yet seen. Throughout the data collection process, the interviews, field notes and surveys, Sarfraz was close by. Besides his overall cultural and social advising, I believe Sarfraz’s role as my male CAI counterpart allowed me into the lives of the women, girls and community. As a woman alone I would have been too foreign and too disregarding of the significant social expectations of all women having a male escort in public. Throughout the following case study, Sarfraz is often nearby. Not close enough to be within earshot of conversations, but close enough to represent a public presence.

The following sections will detail my work, conversations, interviews and surveys of involved and influential participants in the education of girls in Azad Kashmir. The groups and individuals discussed below are all involved in the SV School, the central

school for the education of girls, the central meeting headquarters, and place of work for me as a CAI staff member.

A Discussion of the Teachers' Needs, Obstacles and Opportunities

Teacher Survey Discussion

Discussions and interviews with the teachers during all of my visits to SV School from the summer of 2007 to December 2008 prompted the development of a survey (Appendix A). In going over my notes and interviews I identified teacher wide patterns which helped me understand the teacher dynamics, backgrounds, needs and opportunities. My role with CAI was to help the teachers in whatever capacity they needed, for example with trainings, workshops or materials, I used this opportunity to really understand the role of teachers in the school and community. This survey provided a structure to study what I learned from discussions and interviews with individual teachers during my time at SV School.

For example, when I met with teachers prior to the survey they told me that they needed trainings in science and mathematics. I also received similar comments from student representatives who felt their science and mathematics courses were not effective in helping them pass national exams for high school or college. To understand this completely, I developed questions on the survey to determine if all the teachers identified science and mathematics as their weakest subjects, and what they would recommend for teacher workshops to support improvement in these areas. I also needed to identify the teachers' backgrounds and their perception of their role in the school and what sort of

support they were receiving as educators. The survey helped me to see the big picture from the entire group of teachers. The interviews and discussion prior to and after the surveys provided even more details.

The teachers came to SV School the day of the survey knowing that I was going to be meeting and asking the group about their backgrounds, needs and requests for future workshops. Twenty-three out of twenty-five teachers were present the day of the survey. This was a high attendance for teachers, the principal explained and as I had seen before, because there is normally an average of six teachers absent every day. I mentioned to quite a few of the teachers that I was impressed with the attendance. They all said it was because they knew the survey was a way that their needs could be heard. One teacher explained, “We are very happy because now we can all tell you what we want for teacher workshops because before maybe only a few teachers would talk to represent us all.” The teachers were all able to express themselves and it was empowering for them.

Grade Levels, Years Teaching and Levels of Education

Of the 23 teachers present, nine were primary school teachers, nine were middle school teachers, and five were secondary school subject specialist teachers (11-12th grade). Nine of the teachers had been teaching for over 18 years. Five had been teaching between 10-17 years. Five had been teaching between two to five years, and four teachers had been teaching for under a year.

I found it interesting that four out of the five secondary school specialists were currently living in Muzaffarabad (an hour from Seri Village), where they lived permanently throughout their higher education. This theme has been consistent as most members of the community with the access to higher education were able to travel to or live in Muzaffarabad. Not only are there better quality high schools and the only girls' colleges in the region, but it was more acceptable for women to continue their education if they lived with family members there. It was more common to find boys and men traveling by bus or private car from the villages surrounding SV School for higher education, but it was not as common to find women doing so. So, learning that all the primary school teachers were mostly from the villages and graduated from SV School was not a surprise. The middle school teachers need a higher certificate from a college in Muzaffarabad to teach, but that may only take one year and families were more willing to allow their daughter to study for one year past SV School if they could stay with a family in Muzaffarabad.

Most of the primary teachers completed 12th grade at SV School, but there were a few that had taught in the more rural villages before SV School was established that had only graduated from the 10th grade. This was a common story. If a woman had the opportunity to study to the 10th grade, she was often chosen to be the village school teacher. In some of the most remote areas women with the highest education, which may have been 6th or 8th grade, became the girls' teacher.

One of the teachers, Rosa, explained to me that when she was going to school in a village a few hours from SV School, her teacher had an 8th grade education. The girls

would go to the teachers' houses during school to help do chores like cooking and cleaning. This was completely acceptable, she explained, and many of the girls' parents felt it was appropriate that they learn woman's duties at school. Rosa said she was lucky, though, that she had brothers and her mother allowed her to go to the boys' primary school with her brothers. By the time Rosa was testing into 6th grade at SV, she was able to pass her test scores. Most girls from the primary school could not pass the exam to get into middle school at SV School, so they would drop out of school. "This is a common story with the primary school teachers here," another teacher, Anila, explained. "Many of the women from the villages who did well in primary school made it into SV middle and high school and became well educated for the villages. Then they become teachers if their husbands allow."

A question that I would ask if I were in a comfortable conversation with the teachers, but that I did not ask on the survey, was how supportive their husbands would be if they continued their education now as adults. Answers varied from teacher to teacher but fit one of three opportunities. This was important for me to know, because I knew that CAI could support individual teachers with scholarships to continue their education and training in Muzaffarabad if the teachers' families were supportive. Individual teachers able to expand their experience and education would ideally become teacher leaders and mentors for the other teachers at SV School, ultimately improving the quality of education. All of the teachers said their husbands and families would be supportive of them continuing their trainings and education if it were at SV School and not during the hours when the teachers were expected to be at home helping with the

family. Four teachers who lived in Muzaffarabad already said they definitely wanted to continue their education and that their husbands and families would support them, but they did not have the financial ability to do so. I only met with three teachers living in the villages around Muzaffarabad that felt their husbands might support them in studying further in Muzaffarabad, but they were unsure. Those three did say, however, that they were pretty sure that they would be allowed to participate in teacher workshops for a few days at a time in Muzaffarabad, but it would be a lot easier if the workshops were held at SV School.

It is important to note here that the nine teachers who were living in Muzaffarabad were more interested in teaching in the city, not at SV School. Four of those teachers are secondary subject specialists. One of the teachers explained:

The only teaching positions available for them were at SV School. Since they were originally from surrounding villages, they decide to come back to teach at SV school but hoped it was only temporary.

They still live with their families in Muzaffarabad, though, and expressed interest in teaching closer to home so they did not have to commute for over an hour each direction on dangerous dirt roads. Anila told me that the four teachers from Muzaffarabad, as well as the current principal who also lives in Muzaffarabad, were often absent from school. The secondary students also made comments about how some of the teachers would not regularly come to school to teach.

Teacher's Perspective: Strongest
Subjects and Weakest Subjects Taught

During discussions with teachers leading up to administering the survey, most teachers said that the weakest subjects taught at SV School were science and mathematics. The survey responses from all of the teachers indicated that mathematics was the weakest subject taught, while English and science were also included for seven of the teachers. I asked a few of the teachers why only seven responded with English and science, when I had assumed that most teachers thought these were weak subjects. One woman explained that, "There were only a few teachers that taught science, but most teachers in primary and middle school would teach some mathematics, so they all knew that was a weak subject." Not all of the teachers were exposed to science, so they did not respond with that as a weak subject. Now that SV School was a designated English Medium School, most classes needed to be taught in English. The teachers were not all skilled or qualified enough to do this, however, and the new expectations were not enforced. Although only seven teachers responded that English was the weakest subject taught, most of the teachers responded that it was very necessary that all teachers become more proficient in English.

Twenty out of the twenty three teachers wrote that Islamic Studies was the strongest subject taught at their school. They clearly explained that Islamic studies was a subject that every teacher grew up with, that it was their culture and religion and they did not need to learn it well in school to be able to teach it well. They learned at home and in school all of their lives, so they were "able to teach Islamic studies without having the opportunity to get a good education in the city."

Teachers' Experiences with Professional Growth Opportunities

The teachers' background and experience with teacher trainings and workshops had been completely limited up until 2008 when a USAID program, RISE, was implemented in the region. This was also when CAI organized its first workshop. Only nine of the 23 teachers were invited to participate in the RISE training while all teachers attended the CAI training. There were positive responses all around from the teachers about both trainings. In general, the trainings were characterized as RISE being the "big-NGO professional training," and CAI was a "local community teacher training." There were benefits claimed for both. RISE was a ten-day workshop that focused on low-cost, no-cost methods of instruction for mathematics, science, and English. The teachers enjoyed the content and the methods of instruction, and the instructors' philosophy of empowering local teacher leaders was something that the teachers have claimed to be important. During a follow-up discussion with some of the teachers, they explained that they felt RISE was a big program that the teachers adapted to for the training, and the CAI training came more from the teachers and was developed from the teachers' needs.

From the surveys and later discussions with the teachers I learned that their favorite part about the RISE workshop was that it provided "lots of examples for how to get students involved in the learning process." The teachers all claimed that they really did not get much of these methods in their teacher certification or degree programs. What the RISE program was lacking, many teachers explained, was the individualized attention to the teachers' needs in remote regions. There was also a lack of follow-

through with the program, and the teachers felt that what they learned in the workshop was more difficult to apply to their real-life teaching environments.

This was where the CAI process for developing a workshop was excelling in the teachers' perspectives. The teachers are the ones helping develop the program to suit their needs, rather than a program coming in from the "outside." Many of these teachers desire to be heard and to have their needs met. One teacher who participated in RISE expressed how:

RISE was a good program, but they did not know us as teachers, and they did not ask what we needed or about the problems we face being in isolated areas. The CAI training included all the teachers and was based on learning what the teachers needed while also giving leadership to some of the teachers. This is what we need. We need it to be local and based on what we all need.

Teachers' Current Instruction and Assessment Practices

"Teachers use the same methods to teach that they grew up with in school," Saida, the principal of SV School explained to me one afternoon during my summer visit in 2008. I had asked her what her personal philosophy was on effective teaching methods and if she felt like her teachers excelled in these various methods. The question came from my classroom observations that the teachers lecture out of books, use the blackboard for exercises for the students, and without much interaction between teacher and student. Saida explained that her teaching philosophy centered on the best way that students learn is not always sitting in a classroom listening to their teachers lecture or by reading out of a book. "I learned about active teaching methods, and getting students to participate in the classroom. I think most of the teachers here have learned these

methods.” Saida continued to explain how it is very different learning these skills in school and then applying them in the classroom. “None of these teachers have experienced this sort of education, how to teach it, or what it really looks like.” I had become comfortable and close with a number of teachers, including the principal, and was able to continue conversations about topics ranging from teaching methods to cultural and societal influences and expectations that transfer into the classrooms.

On the surveys, all of the teachers responded that they lecture everyday to their classes and that was the most frequently used method of instruction. Twenty out of the twenty five teachers responded that they also use class discussions, group work, and student presentations once or twice a week. All of the teachers reported that they never leave the school grounds with the students and rarely give students a project to complete, other than bookwork, outside of school. The most common assessment methods were to have quizzes and exams at the end of the units or chapters, but the most important method of assessment for teachers was the annual exam for students to move on to the next grade. Nineteen teachers reported that their goal for the annual exam was to have at least 60% of the students pass the exam to move to the next grade. When I asked a few teachers about this, they explained that “60% is the benchmark that the principal gives us. We shouldn’t get lower than that, but nothing would happen if we did. We want most of our students to pass.” The annual exams are developed by the department of education and are aligned with the benchmarks set by the national curriculum that all public schools use.

I asked the teachers on the survey what methods they were most interested in learning during a teacher workshop. More than half of the teachers responded with the following three methods: active learning techniques, new techniques for teaching English and mathematics, and new alternative methods that work. This was an open-ended question on the survey and twenty-two of the teachers answered with the term “active learning techniques.” I learned that the RISE workshop was focused on “active learning” and the nine teachers that participated were impressed with the activities they learned and told many of the other teachers about “active learning techniques.” I asked a group of teachers about the RISE training and one of the teachers, Rita, explained:

The RISE training was really good with teaching us the active learning techniques. We all were able to participate in the activities like we were students and we like that very much. It was effective. But I think it is difficult to change the way you teach. I do not feel like I can just change the way I am teaching to make it more active. I think they were all great ideas, but it is hard to do this in the classroom, I think.

I asked Rita and the other teachers what they meant by “active learning.” Rita explained, “When students move and they are more involved in lessons with activities and educational games.” The other teachers were nodding their heads as Rita spoke. A few other teachers spoke about how the active learning techniques were really fun and interesting and they can see how it would be effective in the classroom, but actually applying the new skills in the classroom has been a challenge for all the teachers. I asked the teachers what needs to happen to help support them in using new methods of teaching in the classroom. Anila responded with a suggestion that the group of teachers agreed with.

I think that if there were teacher-mentors or teacher-leaders that were trained in these good methods, then they could help in the classrooms and help the teachers make those transitions. I would need some help while teaching classes. We need some more help or support when school actually starts. It is easy to go back to normal after a training instead of working to practice new methods.

I asked the principal of the school about this suggestion. We were sitting in her office a few days after I administered the survey and by that time I had confirmed with most of the teachers that they would really benefit from having “Master Teacher Trainers” to shadow them in the classrooms and help with trainings. The principal thought this was an ideal suggestion, but “Where would they get the master teacher trained, and how would they fund this?”

Reflections on the Empowerment Process

Problem solving that comes directly from the group of people being served has been the most effective and empowering approach to community development that I have experienced. These processes take time, patience and good listening and questioning skills. The teachers needed time to think and consider what would work for them as a group, what their goals are for teaching, and what changes could be made to help them reach those goals. The teachers and the principal have commented a few times on the lack of teacher motivation and morale, but if the teachers as a community decide on an approach to improving their teaching and opportunities for professional growth, they will own this change and that ownership will help to foster motivation and dedication to the process. The process that I went through with the teachers leading up to and preceding

the surveys and discussions is aligned with the project cycle and participatory development cycle discussed in Chapter Two.

Conclusive Themes:

I was able to clarify the following themes from the teacher survey with additional discussions and interviews:

1. *A female teacher's level of education is dependent on her access to higher education.* A woman's access to quality higher education is limited to her father's or husband's willingness to allow her an opportunity to continue school and possibly travel to go to school.
2. *Almost all female teachers in the remote villages of Seri Valley are bound by the level of education they can receive at SV School.* Village teachers rarely have the opportunity to receive any additional education or training.
3. *Most teachers perceive science, mathematics and English as the weakest subjects taught in their schools.* This is primarily due to teachers being exposed to limited levels of these subjects during their studies at SV School. Islamic Studies and Urdu are the strongest subjects because of the exposure at home and at school.
4. *Most teachers request workshops that are based on their needs and that inspire new methods and techniques.* Teachers also request follow-through and mentorship after workshops to help with the transition of new skills into the classroom.

A Discussion of a Young Woman's and Girls' Experiences

Shakila: Young Teacher and Emerging Leader

The following in-depth narrative of a young teacher and emerging leader expands many of the themes that drive this study and describes the experiences that many teachers, as women, have in this community.

Shakila is representative of young, unmarried women in the region who desire a higher education, have some opportunities for education, but who are also influenced by cultural, social, familial and religious obstacles. She, like most young women, is heavily influenced by her family and their education and experiences, as well as by such significant events as the 2005 earthquake that created both opportunities and obstacles for Shakila's future. The discussion below includes notes from my informal and formal interviews, as well as my observations and reflections after spending time in her community over a two-year period.

I met Shakila on my first visit to Azad Kashmir. She was taking evening courses from one of the local male teachers, Ali Khan, who was also a religious leader involved in local politics. She and ten other 18-22 year old women were taking evening courses in economics, English, Islamic studies and mathematics. They all taught at local schools during the day.

Shakila's mother died when she was young. She is the oldest of five sisters and lives with her grandmother and rarely sees her father, a well-educated *Imam* (religious leader), because he lives in another town about a day's travel away.

Shakila speaks fluent English and is a very out-going 22 year-old with no children and no immediate plans for marriage. We met numerous times over the two years of this study, including a number of informal interview discussions and one formal interview in May, 2008. Over time, Shakila indicated that she was comfortable talking with me as friends, and she enjoyed sharing discussions with me about education, culture, religion and her dreams and challenges.

Cultural, Social and Religious Context:
Opportunities and Obstacles

Cultural and Social Opportunities. Young women in Kashmir need the support of their fathers if they want to further their education. In some cases, girls can even be deterred from a formal primary education if their fathers are not supportive. In Shakila's case, her father is well-educated and understands its importance. The religious and social pressures of the community often set the tone for the stance that the father may take, but if the father has a higher education he will often be supportive of his daughters also receiving a good education. This has been the case for many families and communities all over the Northern Areas of Pakistan. The fact that Shakila's father has a university education and that he is an Islamic scholar gives him the political and religious power to support his daughters' higher education, even when it is not completely accepted in the community.

Shakila explained that a man educated as an Islamic scholar is often supportive of girls' education. She explains that "the Koran teaches that all people should get an education." Her father's support has provided her with many opportunities for education

that other girls and women in the community do not have because of the decisions of the dominant male in the family.

Shakila believes that community support is important for girls and women to get an education and they still need to balance their duties at home. “Just because a woman has an education does not mean she should become *modern* and neglect her family duties,” she explains, then continues to expand further:

Women should receive an education, but they should not leave home to pursue careers if that means they will neglect taking care of the family; women should find the balance of doing both. With education, girls will learn to balance their duties. With that is enhanced knowledge, confidence, courage, and also power.

From Shakila’s perspective, women would have more of an opportunity for education if they did not make the mistake of neglecting their social and family duties. She believes that women can balance both: education and family responsibilities.

A community member influential in Shakila’s educational opportunities was her current teacher, Ali Khan, who was also a religious and community leader. I asked Ali Khan how he felt about Shakila’s opportunity to receive a scholarship to go on to a university in Islamabad or Muzaffarabad. He said, “It would be fine, but maybe only to Muzaffarabad so that she could come back to the village every day.” He explained:

It is so difficult for young women to study away from home like that. Unless, of course, if they studied at the Islamic University in Islamabad. That would be fine if the girls went to school there. The girls and the boys are separate and it is a respectable religious school.

This is an example of the opportunities with strings attached that exist for young women like Shakila. If Shakila has the family support, she has some opportunities and options for an education, and if the greater community and influential people in Shakila’s

life are to support those options, she may be required to adapt her opportunities to satisfy everyone. This may mean going to a local community college so she can return home in the evenings, or attending a private religious school in the city with strict guidelines and an Islamic-focused curriculum.

Another example of decisions Shakila and women can make to appease the community so they can receive a higher education is to wear a *hijab*, or full head scarf that covers the face. She explained (within earshot of Ali Khan) that she wore the *hijab* because she does not want to be judged for what she looks like and she does not want people to make decisions about her based on what she looks like. She said, “I feel free when I wear the *hijab* in public.” She always took it off when she was teaching at the school or in class (some of the other women do not take it off.) A few minutes later Ali Khan was not nearby and I asked her when she started wearing the *hijab*. She said she started wearing it last year because many of the men would harass her when she had to walk through the markets to come to Ali Khan’s evening class. They would shout things or hiss at her. She started wearing the *hijab* and it stopped. She explained that it was a way for her to get what she wanted, an education, while appeasing the community and her influential teacher.

Cultural, Social and Religious Obstacles. Many of the cultural and social opportunities discussed above are ways that Shakila and other women who strive for a higher education can work around obstacles. In many cases, there are opportunities for women to somehow maneuver, with community and family support, through and around obstacles.

Some obstacles in Shakila's life are representative of a greater theme that the level of education adults have, whether men or women, influences the support they will give to the education for girls. In Shakila's case, her grandmother is uneducated and is one of her greatest obstacles. Shakila has explained that her grandmother is representative of most of the older women in the region. They never received an education and they all believe in women being housewives. They believe, "With an education women will only get confused." Shakila goes on to explain:

I think the big problem is that women are uneducated and they do not understand that the Koran teaches that all people deserve an education and that it is the best thing for the communities and families. Uneducated women are old fashioned and believe that the only place for women is in the home taking care of children. They do not support women having any other role in the community outside of being a mother, and possibly a teacher for young girls. My grandmother does not even think that women teachers need an education if they are teaching girls; they only need to be good caretakers.

Shakila explained that her grandma claims that "Women's jobs are in the home. If they have an education, their daughters may think it is alright to have an education, and it is not. They must stay in the home or no one will do the work." Shakila's grandmother is an influential voice as an obstacle for higher education, but "Because my father is completely supportive, my grandmother cannot argue with my father's decisions." She did say, however, that her grandmother would make Shakila's life at home very difficult if she decided to continue studying. She would have more chores and her grandmother would try and make it "difficult" in other ways. Shakila, however, is dedicated to providing an opportunity for her sisters and to lessen the obstacles for them to receive a higher education.

In addition to family or community obstacles, Shakila and young women like her have social and cultural obstacles that may hold them back from receiving an education. Shakila explains that the two greatest obstacles for women are marriage and the lack of career opportunities. Marriage, she explains, will prevent women from going any further in their education. Once they marry, the women stay home and raise a family and possibly balance a job as a teacher. I asked her what the normal age was for marriage. She said that maybe 15 or 16 without further education, and maybe 22 or 24 if education is continued. I also asked about what other jobs there were for women. She explained that:

In rural Kashmir, women work only as teachers. There are no other formal jobs that women do. Some women will work in community vocation centers making clothes for families and all women tend to the fields, but these are not income-generating jobs. Even women who have received a good education will need to return home and be housewives after marriage. Many women try to get a good education for as long as possible because it delays marriage.

Education: Needs and Desires,
Opportunities and Obstacles

Shakila has expressed a great desire to continue her education as long as she can. More than just to delay marriage, she really wants an education so that she can better serve her community in the future. She expressed two ways that she wants to use her education: “I want to be an inspiration for my sisters to continue their education, and I really want to start an education center for women that is focused on literacy and learning how the Koran supports girls and women in education.” With a higher education, Shakila hopes to educate the older population of women in the region about the importance of

girls' education. She wants to combine religious studies with women's empowerment, as her father does for the family, so that women will be educated, that it is supported in the Holy Koran, that education is for all. She seems so passionate about using her education to work with the older generation of women.

Continuing her education to be a better teacher for school children is not her primary goal. She does believe that teachers need a good education and opportunities for higher education, but that is not the path that she would take with her education. I see this as a theme for many women who want to receive a higher education or who have received a higher education. Teaching is not the occupation that they would choose to use their education. From my observations, interviews, surveys, and from Shakila's examples, there is a lack of desire or commitment to being a good teacher with a good education. I feel that this is a significant obstacle for girls' education because they lack teachers who are motivated to improve their education, and they lose teachers who have received a better education.

Historically Significant Events

The effects of the October 2005 earthquake on education and access to education were extensive. For Shakila and other girls and young women who desire and may have opportunities for higher education, the earthquake created more obstacles for them in a few ways. For one, the earthquake made it more difficult for people to travel to the nearby capital, Muzaffarabad, which has the closest university and good high schools in the region. Another significant obstacle is that people are fearful to go too far from home in case another earthquake hits and the roads wash away once again.

Shakila explained that the roads were really bad after the earthquake and that, “Either families will not allow women to travel there or the women do not want to go because they are scared of the bad roads.” Although there was more difficulty getting to the city and the roads and fear were obstacles for women, after the earthquake people in the rural regions were more exposed to the benefits of education. Prior to the earthquake, Pakistan-controlled Kashmir was closed-off to foreigners. After the earthquake, the borders were opened and the region was flooded with foreign aid workers. Shakila said that this exposure helped people see that higher education provided the opportunity for men and women to become doctors, engineers and pilots. Many of these foreigners were women, Shakila explained. And now a lot of young girls and women in the region want to become doctors, engineers and pilots. In the short-term the earthquake seems to be an obstacle for women’s access to education, but in the long-term the earthquake provided more exposure for people to see what careers women can have if they receive a good education.

Summary of Themes that Shakila Represents

1. *Young and unmarried women completely depend on their father’s support to continue their education, even if their mothers or grandmothers may disagree.*
2. *Community support is also necessary, so women often need to conform to appease the community.*
3. *Many women do not choose to be teachers. It is their only option. This creates a situation where teachers are unmotivated to be good teachers and both students and teachers suffer. The motivated teachers will go teach in the city if they can.*

Students at Seri Valley School: Girls' Perspectives

The students who were first to approach me at SV School and continued to befriend me throughout my visits were the middle school and high school girls. As I learned about their lives and began meeting their families, our discussions would end up focusing on the girls' dreams. These discussions often led to what has or will hold the girls back from reaching their dreams.

Introduction to the Students' Backgrounds

I found three young girls to be powerful voices and representative of their peers at SV School. Two girls from middle school, Indra and Fousia, often talk about their dream of becoming doctors, but really feel they need to change the minds of the adults in their villages that hold them back. A young woman from high school, Fahira, eloquently shares her understanding of her community and the social change that needs to happen to support girls' progress and education with her peers in a number of group interviews and discussions. Below is a brief introduction to the girls followed by narratives of the three girls and how their experiences expand on the themes that have been representative of girls' education at SV School and the influences of the surrounding community.

Fousia: Fousia was in the seventh grade at SV School when I first met her in June, 2007. She was the top student in her class, had been all throughout primary school, and continued to be so into the eighth grade. She was one of the first students to return to SV School after the earthquake, motivating other students to attend classes in a tent. Her

mother was a teacher who died in the earthquake, along with some of her siblings. Her older sister and younger brother survived the earthquake, but her older sister dropped out of school to take care of their father, Sabir, who has been paralyzed on the entire left side of his body from a stroke more than ten years ago. Since the earthquake, twenty family members stay at Sabir's brother's home which is a compound of tents and their badly damaged home. I quickly learned that Fousia still holds a lot of anxiety about the existing structures and, like many students I met, avoids going into these old buildings. They would rather live in tents that won't collapse and kill them in another earthquake.

Indra: Indra's father is a nurse in Muzaffarabad, and her mother stays home to take care of the family and the home, "as is expected," Indra once told me. She is one year older than Fousia and was in the eighth grade when I met her in 2007. She has three younger sisters and two brothers. Her family lives comfortably in a village about a half hour from the SV School in a house that was rebuilt soon after the earthquake. Indra explains that her family is in a good position because her father has a regular job, and she feels so fortunate that he is supportive of the girls in the family getting an education. A head teacher explained to me that Indra's family comes from a lineage of pre-Partition land-owners, so although they have little cash income they have the security of owning land and having a respectable reputation.

Fahira: Fahira's family is from a very remote and conservative village, Beni, a few hours up a narrow tributary of the main Seri River Valley. While growing up she went to a local village school with boys and eventually made it to middle school at the

SV School. She had to travel for a few hours a day to and from school. She is the youngest in her family. Her two sisters stopped going to school after 5th grade when they would have transferred to SV School but were not allowed to go because of the distance they would have to travel. Fahira continued her education and has been able to travel to school because her older brother is an escort. When high school started at SV her father moved into Muzaffarabad for work, but her mother and sisters stay in the remote village to tend to the crops and animals.

The following discussion will describe how these three girls represent the cultural and social opportunities, obstacles, educational needs that many girls experience in and around SV School.

Cultural and Social Opportunities

Similar to most young women's experience in these communities these girls are very dependent on their father's decisions. Like Shakila, Indra and Fahira's fathers are well educated, and therefore are supportive of them continuing their education. Fousia, however, does not have the same opportunities because her father is not as supportive. He is also uneducated and dependent on his family for support.

Indra and Fahira discussed this one afternoon when we were sitting talking about their opportunity to receive a scholarship from CAI to go to high school in the city. Indra explained that, "even if my village does not support my studies, my father knows this is best for me." Fahira completely agrees with this, saying, "Yes, education gives you an open mind, and my father is educated, so he has an open mind to let me have an education, too."

Fahira shares her insight on how this change of attitude and support from parents may take time.

Parents give education to their daughters. Changing the parents' minds to give education to girls maybe takes some time, maybe generations. Maybe their minds will change when they are the educated girls that raise the families. Maybe their minds will change when parents see me with an education. Now it is difficult because there is not a good education in the villages. But that is changing now.

Indra and Fahira go on to address that higher education will become more acceptable once girls like themselves provide good examples for families and students. Fousia is one of the students that hope her family and community will change their minds because of girls like Indra and Fahira who excel with these opportunities.

I asked Indra to explain what the benefits were for her community if she receives a good education. She explained, "I want to be a doctor and there are no girl doctors in this community, so where are the girls supposed to go for a doctor?" These cultural and social expectations between women and men often do limit women's exposure to medical attention because of the lack of local women studying medicine.

Fahira and Fousia concurred with this explanation that many mothers who are supportive of their daughter's education hope that there will be more women doctors in the future. There is a clear need for this.

Cultural, Social and Religious Obstacles and Opportunities

Fousia's experience represents common obstacles many girls and women in the region encounter with their family and community. "My father, uncles and aunties still have the mind that most of the village has – they do not yet think it is so important for

girls to go on for a good education.” Fousia hopes that some girls, like Indra and Fahira who are allowed to study in higher education, will help change the minds of her family and community. “In seeing their success and how they are still honorable daughters, I hope my family will change their ideas about this,” she explained in the school courtyard while sitting with Indra and Fahira. She hopes that she can soon get the approval of her father to receive a CAI scholarship to go to Islamabad for a better education. “This change of the mind can be slow,” she said, “but I hope it happens before it is too late.” *Too late* often means being married off or forced to quit school to work at home.

I inquired about the experiences of the girls when their opportunities for education are limited because of family and community resistance. Fahira, living in one of the furthest villages that feeds into SV School, explained that most girls stop going to school after 5th grade. There is no longer a school nearby and families do not want their daughters traveling for two hours to get to SV School. “The distance is unacceptable for most families” she said, and then quickly added how lucky she was because she could travel with her brothers to SV School. “Some girls are now married and have babies, and we are like sisters, born at the same time, but now I am still in school.” The girls all concurred with a few points about the value of daughters in a family.

Yes, our parents love us, but daughters cost money. So, it is the best for a large family for the father to find another family to take the daughter as a bride for a son. Then the daughter leaves the home to live with the new family.

Indra and Fousia discuss this with an added emphasis on how their father and mother really do love them. It is “just the way that it is.” A girl continuing her education is the only thing that will delay a marriage. But some families cannot *afford* to delay the

marriage while supporting their girls with more education. Fahira explains this as “old-mind people” and “old-culture people” who think this way. But they all agree that most of the generation above them is “old-mind, old-culture people” and that their generation is the first one to really change this.

I have asked a number of girls and women throughout the two years in Pakistan if they are nervous or afraid to be *change agents* in their communities and families by pushing the boundaries and expectations of educational opportunities for women. The answers I hear most follow a theme. The girls and women who have more opportunities for education because their family is supportive still feel like they are creating change. There are always people that disagree and try to create problems for them or harass them, but overall they have strength and power from their family’s support. This does not mean, however, that the entire family is supportive. The most important support comes from the father and the mother. The girls and women who do not have support from their family or spouses explain that they do not have an opportunity to create any change in their lives as far as opportunities for education are concerned. If they tried to fight to get a better education, they could be exiled from their family. They know about girls and women who fight their family’s decisions about their lives concerning school or marriage. Fahira says, “Those who fight their families will be exiled from the home and village and may also be physically abused as well.” These young women stress the theme that I have heard many times. Women who go beyond the normal levels of education or opportunities in the community will likely have the support of an influential

family member. Otherwise, there is no chance for a girl or woman to create opportunities for herself.

Girls' Perspectives on Education

Fousia, Indra, Fahira and I sat in the SV School courtyard after school one afternoon during the summer of 2008 and began what turned into a long conversation about the quality of education in remote village schools like SV and how that influences their opportunities. Other girls joined our small group and for most of the conversations there were eight girls present. Fousia and another eighth-grade student, Farzana, spoke the most as others nodded and agreed. They both explained to me how the level of science education was not good enough in the village schools for students to go onto a higher science track to study medicine. They both dreamed of being doctors, so the lack of science courses was a personal issue for them. At SV School, students have to choose what academic track they want to be in after 10th grade. In 11th and 12th grade the students choose to study science or the arts. Most of the girls study the arts because it is most socially acceptable and it leads to a teaching certification after the 12th grade, though some start teaching after 10th grade in the very remote primary schools. Farzana expands on this:

If you study science, then you can go on to a higher education for medicine, but the schools in the cities all require entrance exams. No one from a village school has passed one of those exams, though it doesn't sound like many girls are really trying to go in to medicine anyhow.

It does not sound like there is much of a rigorous science opportunity in the school. I asked Fousia why this is and she said because they only study science from the

books. She said, “There is no practical part of it. It is all theory. And the teachers do not have a good science education because they studied the arts and do not know more than what is in the books.” Farzana laughed and said that was true, “Chemistry class is taught from the book only and the teacher has no idea what anything means.” Fousia explains this through her personal experience:

I think that the schools here [in the village] are not as good as in the city. We have a hard time getting good scores on our exams because our schools are not as good. I am the top of my class in 8th grade but I am afraid that I might not get to pass the entrance exams for a city school. We just are not as good here. Maybe because we don't have much in our schools like for science class. And the teachers don't know really how to speak or teach English which is important. And maybe the teachers don't really come to school much, or really want to teach us all in a good way. I learn mostly from reading my books.

Many comments like this come from students when discussing their teachers and education in the schools. I spent time with the teachers as well and wanted to better understand these dynamics of girls' perceptions and teachers' perceptions of these issues. Girls complained that they did not have good teachers, or that their teachers did not have a good enough education to teach the students science or math well enough to get good marks on exams. The teachers explained, however, that their administration or the local ministry of education did not provide them with opportunities, trainings or materials to be effective teachers.

When looking at the bigger picture of the education of girls and women, I see that the quality of education provided for the girls' schools depends completely on the community acceptance of women receiving a higher education. SV School is very dependent on local women as teachers, but because of their own limited education their

students in turn receive less of an opportunity for an education. Women in the cities often have many more opportunities for a good education, but I learned from the teachers that “city-taught” teachers never want to stay and teach at a village school.

It was clear to me that the lack of rigorous mathematics, science, and English courses were due to the lack of opportunities and support of the local women to have a quality education or continuous trainings. None of the students had expressed anything more than, “my teachers are bad,” referring to their lack of exposure to a better education. During the courtyard conversations in the summer of 2008, I was curious how they would respond if I approached the issue from that direction.

I was impressed with the girls’ empathetic response towards their teachers, and with their sense of responsibility to create change. “We are the next generation of teachers, right? Well, then we need to get a good education so that we can help improve the chances for the next group of girls at SV School,” Indra exclaimed. Fousia said that she had talked about these issues with her mother before she died in the earthquake:

I think it is good to give our teachers a better education because then they give it to us. I want my teachers to be good because right now our teachers might not be so good so we are not given an education good enough to go on to high school or university. My mom wanted to be a good teacher but there really wasn’t a chance for her to learn how to get better. She was a good teacher because she cared about it, but she would have been better if she had some more education.

Family’s Response to Educational Opportunities

Indra and Fahira were able to accept the opportunity of a CAI scholarship to study in a high school in the city of Islamabad, six hours from SV School, because their fathers supported them. I was able to sit with both of their families two separate times, once

before the girls started their scholarships and once during midterms when the girls were home for a short vacation. Their fathers were very happy that their daughters were able to have an opportunity for such a good education. Indra's father explained that, "Now my daughter brings great honor on our family and on the future family that she will have." I asked why there is such resistance for girls' education in his community and why he provides such positive support:

Many fathers and mothers are uneducated themselves and they do not know the importance of a good opportunity like what Indra has. I have an education and I know that I have a bright daughter with good potential. Allah has a purpose for her and I have faith that education will help her fulfill her purpose. I am a religious man and I believe that this is Allah's purpose for Indra. Her name in Arabic means "to read" and that was the name given by God.

Indra beamed when hearing her father say this about her. She sat up when her father looked at her and she responded:

I'm feeling proud because scholarship helps me, gives me a chance. It is good for girls to get a better education so they are stronger in the home and can have opportunities for work.

Indra turned to me quietly and continued to talk about her dreams of being a doctor to help her community.

Fahira's father was a little more reserved when talking with me at his home. I spent time with her mother and sisters while Sarfraz and the father spoke in the meeting room. Fahira and Sarfraz both explained to me that her father is a very religious and conservative man, but believes that the only way to help these communities improve their lives, especially since the earthquake, is to provide opportunities for social services and more job opportunities. Sarfraz told me that Fahira's father explained that:

Women can do more than just raise a family and home. It is to everyone's benefit if they are also skilled in social services like health care or teaching. I feel honored that my daughter will receive these opportunities.

Fahira feels incredibly lucky that her father is supportive of her. He is the only man in the conservative Beni Village to allow his daughter to leave and go to Islamabad for an education.

Fahira, Indra and Fousia are representative of the population of girls that attend SV School and desire to have a good education. For many girls, continuing their education through high school at SV is an exceptional success of academics and shows support from their families. For other girls, SV School does not provide them with the opportunities for college trainings and degrees because the level of academics does not set them up to pass the important exams. For some girls that dream of higher education and college opportunities there are options like a CAI scholarship to help them do so. Fahira and Indra's families are great examples of those families that are supportive and send their young girls off to the city for a good education. Fousia continues to have the obstacle of a father who does not allow her to go to the city for school. She continues to dream, though, like many girls her age at SV School.

These girls are also a good example of the desire to learn that exists in the general population of students at SV School. They represent a common voice of girls wanting a better education and their teachers to provide a better experience for them. An increase of the level of education and opportunities for the teachers at SV School will ultimately trickle down to students like these.

Conclusive Themes the Girls Represent

1. *Well educated parents will be more supportive of their daughters receiving a higher education, even if she needs to travel from home.*
2. *The girls who are currently able to go and study in the city will open opportunities for other girls by providing a good example for parents who were otherwise resistant.*
3. *Most girls study arts because of social appropriateness and lack of quality science education options in rural schools.*
4. *Providing a higher level of education for girls from villages surrounding SV School will help increase the quality of education taught at the school, assuming the probability that some of these young women will become teachers.*
5. *The current generation of girls receiving a higher education will open more career opportunities for women outside of the teaching profession.*
6. *Once a girl marries, her chance for continuing her education usually stops. Also, fathers will delay a girl's marriage if she is supported to continue her education.*

Conclusions

Throughout my experiences at SV School I was able to identify some of the important themes and circumstances that shape the needs, obstacles and opportunities for teachers, young women and girls. In clarifying these themes, I can present some possible guidance for educational development programs for organizations such as Central Asia

Institute and other institutions with similar goals. The following themes emerged from the teachers, young women and girls:

1. Teachers and students identify problems with the level of education, specifically in the content areas of science, mathematics and English. Teachers also need guidance and continued mentorship in improving their instructional methods.
2. There are significant factors to consider with the quality of education at SV School:
 - a. Most girls and women are bound to the education they receive at SV School as it is most likely their only educational opportunity.
 - b. Teaching is currently the only acceptable profession for women in the surrounding communities.
 - c. The only opportunity for a girl or a teacher to receive a higher education is by going to the city, and those decisions are heavily dependent on the father, husband or other influential males in the family.
3. It is more likely that a teacher, young woman, or girl can receive additional higher education if the following conditions exist:
 - a. Support from the father, husband and community.
 - b. If the opportunity is closer to home, for example, with local teacher workshops.

Summary

As the preceding findings and conclusions have addressed, teachers, girls and women in the Seri Valley community face many obstacles to reaching their goals of attaining educational opportunities. These narratives, conclusive themes, and the following recommendations help to clarify this need for providing educational opportunities. These findings are also representative of a larger population of women sharing similar cultural, social and geographic contexts. Chapter Five will continue to discuss further recommendations based on the findings of this study.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS

My primary focus of this study was to assess the educational needs of students, women and teachers in Azad Kashmir, while addressing the obstacles and barriers the girls, women and teachers face in their communities. In this chapter I will provide appropriate recommendations for the support of educating girls in remote, isolated communities like the SV School community.

Addressing the Research Questions

Through a case study of SV School, this primarily qualitative case study sought to clarify the following research questions. My central question was: *What are the processes involved in addressing the educational needs, obstacles and opportunities for girls, women and teachers in remote Pakistan?* The sub-questions were:

1. *What are the major recommendations from the literature to improve the access to, and quality of, learning opportunities for girls, women and teachers in the future?*
2. *Who are the stakeholders involved in educational programs in the SV School community, and how do I identify their needs, opportunities and potential barriers?*
3. *What cultural, social and educational issues need to be taken into account when promoting education for girls, women and teachers in the SV School community?*

These research questions were examined in depth through my process of data collection during eight visits to SV School and surrounding communities between May, 2007 and May, 2009. Throughout my visits, work and research, I focused on developing substantial relationships with the community, especially the teachers, students and other women and families of SV School. From the themes that emerged as discussed in Chapter Four, and from my immersive experiences in Pakistan, I will attempt to provide appropriate recommendations for the following:

1. Providers of professional development for communities such as SV School.
2. Organizations with similar goals to those of Central Asia Institute.
3. Larger government and non-government organizations with educational development goals in remote communities.
4. Administrators, teachers and leaders in remote and isolated school communities.
5. Researchers conducting long-term immersive studies.
6. Areas for Further Research.

Recommendations

Providers of Professional Development

The literature review in Chapter Two addresses recommendations for professional development programs, specifically those practices which have been shown to be effective in rural communities in the United States and in remote Pakistan. The following recommendations from my research confirm many of the recommendations

drawn from the literature review. My findings can be applicable to remote, isolated communities such as the SV School community. The recommendations may be suitable for people or organizations developing and implementing professional development programs with goals of improving the quality of education in the schools, as well as providing more locally or regionally accepted opportunities for teachers, young women and girls. These recommendations are not limited to rural communities in developing countries. Many of the features of effective professional development are aligned with the United States-based literature as discussed in Chapter Two and outlined in Table 6.

Table 6: Framework for Professional Development Consistent with Findings

Framework Element	Summary From Literature (see sources on p. 41) Consistent with Findings from this Study.
Program Content	d) Balance content and pedagogical content knowledge e) Increased content focus in areas of math, science and English* f) Use effective pedagogical practices (student-centered, collaborative and experiential)
Timeframe	c) Implement a consistent and coherent design with an extended timeframe and follow-through d) Effective timeframe and follow-through to improve teacher use of learned content and methodology in classroom
Professional Issues	a) Encourage professional and collaborative learning communities of teachers b) Decrease teacher absenteeism and increase teacher motivation* c) Work to retain teacher educators for more consistency
Policy, Curriculum and Local Government	a) Address professional and political influences in policy and decision-making (connecting policy with curriculum)
Sustainable and Community-Owned Program	a) Include cultural, socio-economic, and social factors influencing teachers and school b) Cultural, religious, social and economic awareness for locally owned and locally relevant programs*

* These recommendations are specific to Pakistan-based literature and research.

Teacher Workshops. The following recommendations are aligned with the literature sources identified in Chapter Two that explore professional development, teacher leadership and school reform. The teachers at SV School embrace the opportunity to be empowered as a group of professionals. Although some women teach because it is their only career option, almost all women desire to have opportunities to learn more skills and content. These teachers desire to have their specific needs met, to be listened to, and also to be provided with leadership opportunities. Teacher workshops should be developed through the process of teacher-driven needs assessments, teacher participation in the workshop development process, and the continuous support of teacher leaders and mentors emerging from the workshops. There should be a long-term goal of supporting local teacher leaders who will continue the trainings and foster a community-owned approach to improving the level of education. This process will ultimately empower the teachers and foster an increased sense of ownership, motivation and community participation. Often in these remote and conservative regions in Pakistan, the school community is the only venue for women to increase their exposure to education, skills and professional development.

Recommendations to Meet the Teachers' Needs. An effective professional development program meets the needs of the individual teachers as well as the community of educators in the region. The teacher recommendations for a successful professional development design aligned with the literature explored in Chapter Two that were confirmed in the findings of this study are as follows:

1. Improve content and pedagogical content knowledge.
2. Engage teachers in a professional community and have leadership opportunities within that community.
3. Identify and address personal values, beliefs, culture and other groups and individual needs.
4. Open each teacher's access to resources as this leads to professional empowerment.
5. Identify and build upon each teacher's history of professional development.

Recommendations to Engage the Community. It is important to engage the community in supporting teacher professional development in a manner consistent with key local characteristics including specific values and processes for communication and decision-making. The greater community is often identified in the literature (see Chapter Two) as a significant contextual factor. The community must be involved, engaged and empowered if a program focused on educating female teachers is to be implemented. The leaders, including men and women, must be involved and supportive of the program. To ensure local support, members must be involved in the development of the program and recognize the benefits of an improved education from well-supported and trained teachers. Goals pertaining to community involvement in supporting teacher professional development include:

1. Reduce isolation and improve communication to provide for community empowerment.

2. Respond to cultural, religious, gender and language factors important to the community.
3. Engage key stakeholders of the community to ensure support.
4. Identify community resources and prior community involvement and exposure to continuing education.
5. Identify community development needs, levels of poverty, and implications for teacher professional development.

Greater Educational System. The greater educational system includes professionals at the level of policy creation (termed *officials* in the SV school community) to principals and teachers in the schools implementing curricular changes. My experience in the rural village schools of Pakistan showed me there is a great amount of isolation and lack of leadership within those schools at local and national levels. Principal and teacher absenteeism is a significant problem identified by USAID research and my own observations. I placed the local school systems and the educational system for the entire region in this third category. My experience and USAID research shows that local school politics and the politics of the regional and national government are often greatly removed from the knowledge and desired directions of individual teacher and community. The principals often are from the local cities, creating a significant disparity between the village based teachers and the politics of the school and greater education system. A successful professional development program needs to have communication between high level decision-makers, the officials, and the individual

teachers. The following are the subcategories and goals of the educational system identified in the literature and in my observations:

1. Foster communication between officials and school staff about curriculum, instruction and assessment needs, and encourage annual modifications.
2. Address local, regional and national educational policies to ensure clarity among local staff.
3. Identify cultural, religious, gender and language issues important to local school community and regional official decision-makers.
4. Improve the availability of resources and identify local expertise for future professional development opportunities.
5. Identify local school community politics and leadership to provide for opportunities for empowerment.

A summary of the recommendations discussed above to meet the needs of the teacher, engage the community and draw upon the resources of the educational system at all levels is found in Table 7.

Student Opportunities. Central Asia Institute should continue to provide opportunities for girls whose fathers support them to receive a higher education. Over time this will continue to foster a trusting relationship between CAI and the influential community members (fathers, uncles, and religious leaders), and provide the experience that girls' education can ultimately benefit the entire community. Some of the girls that do go to the city for a higher education will also become teachers at SV School, improving the level of education and experience among the teachers. If CAI can support

girls to study in the fields of science and mathematics, they may influence the level of content being taught to the next generations. This support will also provide opportunities for girls to enter careers other than teaching.

Ultimately all changes will be slow and depend on the support of the community, especially the influential males. Anyone in the position of supporting educational development work should focus on building trusting relationships while also listening to the needs and suggestions of the different stakeholders. By listening to the teachers, girls, mothers, fathers, administrators, local government officials, and other influential community members, it is possible to identify most of the educational needs, opportunities and obstacles the community faces. Only then can solutions be found.

Jun and Colyar (2002) and McNeal (1999) found that parents with a higher level of education are more involved and supportive of their children's education. This is very consistent with my findings in the SV community as illustrated in the teachers', women's and girls' narratives. In the SV community, those teachers, women and students who were most supported had an educated father. I would recommend that organizations work closely with parents who are uneducated so that they understand the importance and value of educating their offspring. This process of working with parents can happen one-on-one during home visits (an effective way to reach parents who are not involved with the school or who live far way from a road) or in group parent meetings (an effective way to reach parents who are somewhat involved in the school). This has been found to be an effective process for CAI staff when working within very remote communities with little exposure to education.

Table 7: Recommendations Made to Meet Needs of Teachers, Engage the Community, and Draw Upon the Resources of the Education System at All Levels.

Teacher	Community	Education System
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve content and pedagogical content knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce isolation and improve communication to provide for empowerment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster communication between officials and school staff about curriculum, instruction and assessment needs and encourage annual modifications
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage in a professional community and have leadership opportunities within that community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond to cultural, religious, gender and language issues important to the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address local, regional and national educational policies to ensure clarity among local staff
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and address personal values, beliefs, culture and other individual needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage key stakeholders of the community to ensure support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify cultural, religious, gender and language issues important to the local community and regional official decision-makers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open each teacher's access to resources as this leads to professional empowerment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify community resources and prior community involvement and exposure to continuing education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the availability of resources and identify local expertise for future professional development opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify each teacher's history of professional development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify community development needs, levels of poverty, and implications for professional development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify local school and community politics and leadership to provide for opportunities for empowerment

Organizations with Goals Similar to
Those of Central Asia Institute

Working Within a Community. There are terms used by development organizations for the type of approach that worked successfully during my research within the communities surrounding SV School; terms called “bottom-up,” “asset-based,” and “community-empowerment” or “participatory” approaches. These terms define approaches which are rooted in working intimately with a community in order to support them reaching certain goals. This can be in the field of education, health care, and agriculture. Fostering community ownership, participation and empowerment are imperative for community development work. My recommendations to organizations working in this field would be to follow steps similar to those addressed in the literature review: (a) relationship and trust building, (b) identification of influential and involved stakeholders, (c) engaging stakeholder participation in all program processes, and (d) fostering long-term, sustainable community involvement and ultimately ownership.

As a program designer, implementer and facilitator of communication between stakeholders, it is important to work toward that equity in participatory development. This is necessary throughout the development, needs assessment and the program evaluation stages of the development process. In many rural communities in Pakistan, community involvement and ownership over programs are a significant achievement. Often times the communities, including teachers, parents, and religious and political community leaders are not working together towards the sustainable improvement of the quality of education in girls’ schools. I have seen that this is often due to a lack of

leadership in garnering community support for a program that all stakeholders are invested in, at least with their voices. Only a community-wide and community-owned program would be sustainable for isolated communities like Seri Valley.

Empowering Teachers. Literature and research provided in Chapter Two characterize successful schools by school and classroom climate, teacher ownership and commitment, teacher mastery and competence, and student achievement (Farah, 1996; Fullan 1993, 1999; Goodlad, 1990; Sarason, 1996). Providing opportunities for teacher leadership and ownership over positive change processes will help lead to teacher empowerment (Fullan, 2001; Hargreaves, 2009). The perspectives and needs of parents, educators and community members provided detailed recommendations of how to develop and support opportunities for students to succeed in school. One common theme in the literature was to work closely with teacher leadership and teacher education to help create a more successful learning environment for students. I would also concur from my findings that empowering teachers to continue their education was not only a desire expressed by the teachers, but also positively influenced student learning and student opportunities to attend higher education.

Providing Education for Girls. Further barriers to educating girls in the SV School community include the cost of schooling and creating culturally and socially appropriate school environments. Organizations with missions to provide educational opportunities for girls should attempt to mitigate these costs with scholarships and reduced or zero fees. Central Asia Institute's practices have proven to be successful in

communities that would otherwise keep their daughters home from school because of the cost. Other recommendations being implemented by CAI would be to provide boundary walls, clean latrines, and a private location away from the main bazaar but close enough to town so that the school is just a short walk from home.

In conclusion, an organization with a similar mission to CAI's should be committed to learning about all of the obstacles and barriers to education in each individual community, while also listening to the community members about what opportunities are available. Assessing the needs and barriers, along with the potential assets in the community, will lead organizations down a path of community-empowered work that effectively meets the needs of the population being served.

Larger Government and Non-Government Organizations

Government funded agencies such as USAID, or large-scale NGO's such as the Aga Khan Foundation, work with similar education, health care and poverty reduction goals in remote regions of Pakistan. The recommendations below come from my experiences working with USAID, World Health Organization, World Bank and Aga Khan field staff in Pakistan. In January 2009 I participated in a United States-based three-week intensive course for staff from large government and non-government organizations. The focus of the course was on improving development work using participatory and community empowerment approaches. The following recommendations were also influenced by this training.

Empowering Field-Based Staff and Participants. A common problem voiced by planners and implementers in these larger organizations is that they rarely have the opportunity to spend time in the communities they are serving, yet they are responsible for writing the policies and action goals for these programs. Continually focusing on and improving the communication between the field staff and the home office is essential to ensure that the voices from the communities, shared through field staff reports, are included in program development. Bridging this gap between the needs in the field and the allocation of funds for projects is a difficult task for small and large scale organizations. But it is an essential component to working towards sustainable and community empowering program development.

Communication Across All Levels. Larger organizations mostly compile reported information into cookbook style forms and templates. For certain general, broad-brushed accountability it is an effective reporting method. However, a great deal of information is typically left out, most notably paths of communication that are essential for community based program development. I would recommend that larger organizations need to be aware that all levels of staff contribute to the pool of information for their programs. Requiring staff to fill in forms inevitably loses the richness and appropriateness of hard earned information. Staff conferences that include stakeholders are one way to share this valuable information. This recommendation has the purpose of ensuring that voices are heard from all levels of staff, including the population of people being served.

Commit to a Dynamic Process When

Designing and Implementing Projects.

There were times during my research in Pakistan that my work with CAI overlapped with projects being conducted by United Nations-funded agencies like USAID or UNICEF. I found that many of the programs implementers were using a formal process for designing and implementing development programs. The United Nations uses the Project Cycle model to outline steps taken in approaching development projects (see Figure 2). The Project Cycle is one model for guiding processes in educational reform programs, though it needs to be used in a dynamic way so it is not too constraining. The United Nations model begins by first identifying the problem. The next steps of the cycle are project design and planning which are significant to begin working towards community empowerment. The last three steps, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, followed by impact assessment, will lead to eventual community empowerment and ownership, a goal for most development programs. My recommendation to larger government organizations is to advise staff not to be bound or restricted by this Project Cycle. This process should be iterative and fluid and field staff should avoid following a rigidly linear model when approaching new community development projects.

Administrators, Teachers and Leaders in Isolated Communities

Regardless of whether a school community receives outside assistance or internal leadership to enhance the quality of education, I can recommend the following:

Using Participatory Approaches. Leadership within the school community should use the recommendations that I have discussed in the literature review and results to empower stakeholders to share their voices. This includes the communication of their needs, potential obstacles to reach goals, and other opportunities or assets within the community that can be utilized. Following these will improve the level of community support and community participation in any program. Whether internal or external leadership is used to promote change in a community, all affected stakeholders should be involved in the process with various levels of participation.

Networking to Improve Resources. I would also recommend that isolated school communities network with available outside resources. Creating a dialogue with a larger community will enhance opportunities and resources in the future. This networking may be with other school communities, aid organizations, advocates for education in remote settings, or other communities or groups with similar circumstances or missions to help support isolated communities.

Supporting Opportunities for Higher Education. Lastly, I would recommend to administrators, teachers and leaders in remote school communities to invest in providing higher levels of education for students. This may be in the form of seeking and collecting scholarship funds for students, providing teachers with opportunities for higher degrees or trainings, or inviting other visiting teachers or outside experts to provide local professional development opportunities. Higher education depends on the school

community supporting this endeavor at all levels, from the young students to the most experienced teachers and administrators.

Researchers Conducting Long-Term Immersive Studies

Allow Time for Tea. The approach that I took in my research in the SV School community was very immersive and participatory. The information that I was attempting to gather was influenced by cultural, social and religious factors and difficult for a western woman to obtain. I felt that because I was inquiring about personal information from girls and women, (traditionally a less dominant group in the community) I needed to build trusting relationships. My recommendation for researchers approaching this type of study in a foreign community would be to create plenty of time for immersive experiences. For example, in Azad Kashmir when I walked home from SV School, I was often invited into people's homes for a cup of tea. Even if I were heading elsewhere, I would make time for building relationships in the community. Helping women cook dinner, or attending a local ceremony were ways I built trusting relationships. Consequently, the depth of personal data that I was able to gather from the girls, women and surrounding community was due to my commitment to spending time building trusting relationships.

Review, Reflect and Organize. Researchers conducting long-term studies should continually review, organize, reflect upon and categorize data as often as possible. I found that when I took the time to review and organize my notes from field observations and interviews in the evenings, I would be more prepared the next day. Reviewing my

notes regularly allowed me to go deeper in the data collection process and also created thoughtful and reflective questions and topics for discussion. The process of reviewing cannot be overstated. For a long-term immersive study, my modifications and reflections became more succinct and valuable the more I reviewed. This resulted in continually coding and organizing the data into conclusive themes. Patton (2002) and Creswell (2007) discuss these effective research approaches in further detail and provide strategies and methods for data collection, organization and analysis.

Areas for Further Research

Throughout this research process and from discussions with my doctoral committee and other colleagues, I have identified some areas for further research.

Conceptualize “Education Knowledge.” Data from this case study illustrates the importance of community and parental influence on students’ educational achievements. There are fields of educational and social literature that address this concept as *status attainment*, *social capital*, and *college knowledge*, to name a few. Findings from the SV community could confirm, disconfirm or add to these concepts, potentially developing a new conceptual model of *educational awareness*. This could be developed further from the interviews with girls, women and teachers about their future aspirations, educational expectations and how their families and the surrounding community influenced their opportunities and preparedness for learning.

Technology Expanding Learning Opportunities. During my two years visiting Azad Kashmir programs, CAI funded a computer lab for the SV School. CAI funded a

computer instructor to train the teachers how to use technology, but I have seen that the teachers do not use the computers or expose the students to learning opportunities. I discussed this phenomenon with numerous teachers and the principal to understand if this was a cultural or social issue (exposing students to a western agenda through technology) or if the teachers did not feel comfortable with the new machines. The teachers and the principal confirmed the latter; there was an overwhelming hesitation to learn how to use computers, period. From this experience, and from my limited exposure to the programs developed for teacher trainings or student curricula, I think there are great opportunities to work with teachers to feel comfortable with unfamiliar technology so that professional development modules can be easily accessed through the school computer lab. This easy access to information would help to reduce many of the obstacles girls, women and teachers face in receiving a higher education.

Findings Applied to Rural Settings and Professional Development. Throughout the past two years I have discussed my experiences in the SV School community with my colleagues in the teaching profession, as well as my professors and committee members at Montana State University. Discussions would often lead to a consensus that many of the findings from this study are consistent with challenges or needs those rural school communities in Montana and elsewhere face. Teachers and students deal with isolation, a lack of resources or funding for professional development opportunities, and a possible lack of community or parental involvement in the schooling process. There have also been connections made with teachers in Montana's small urban communities, such as Bozeman, that their professional development experiences were not based on their needs

and that there has been a lack of follow-through or support after teacher workshops conclude. Further research could develop these connections and consistencies with schooling rural areas and professional development opportunities for teachers. Recommendations from this study could possibly be applied to working within other communities or when developing professional development programs.

Summary

Barriers to female education have great consequences for family and community health, potential home and community income, and the following generation's educational opportunities. As this study shows, even when girls are allowed to attend primary school, there are still many barriers that keep them from continuing on to higher education. Those barriers are: a shortage of well-educated female teachers, a supportive community that is open to girls continuing their education, and the significantly important approval of the influential male in the family allowing the girl or woman to continue her education. This results in female students in rural, isolated regions of Pakistan rarely advancing to middle or high school for their education, which stifles education of female teachers and future generations of girls. Breaking this cycle of depriving girls an education equal to boys needs to start with local communities supporting access to schools, educating families about the benefits of educating their female population, and providing opportunities for women teachers to continue their education and professional development.

When I began this study in 2007, I was dedicated to and passionate about the mission of Greg Mortenson and Central Asia Institute. I had studied the effects of a basic level of education for girls for the improvement of a basic quality of life for individuals, families and communities. In 2007 I completely embraced the theory and philosophy behind the power of education in the reduction of poverty and the improvement of life. Over the two years that I conducted this study, immersed in field data, personal narratives, and new friendships, I finally learned what the importance of providing an education to impoverished communities really meant. It meant that the little girl who is now in sixth grade will have a chance at a healthier life. She will raise a healthier family and may be inspired to work as a volunteer at the local school. Her children will have more opportunities for education, and the obstacles they may face in the future will be reduced. I know that this study changed the course of my life and the life of others. And I feel responsible for continuing the purpose of this study through the development of educational opportunities for teachers, for the support of the scholarship student program that developed from my work in the community, and for continuing to listen to the needs of the teachers, women and girls. I have learned that there may be literature and theory supporting social work, but the reality of the situation will be left unknown until the voices, especially of those rarely heard, are truly listened to.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Personal Background Information:

1. Tell me about your family: your parents and grandparents educational experiences, where they are from and any significant life experiences.
2. What is your educational background? (Probe for details on locations, experiences, community and family support.)
3. Do you wish to continue your education, or change the current situation with your career? (Probe for how they think this could be accomplished and if they have family or community support to do so.)
4. What has been your role in the community? (Probe for areas of focus on education and leadership).
5. How do you see your community changing in the future? (Probe: with education, health, higher education for students, business and economy? What role do you see yourself having with the community in the future?)

Perspectives on Education in Azad Kashmir: Past and Present:

6. What has been your experience with education in this community, before and after the earthquake in 2005?
7. How have you experienced change in education before 2005 and since the 2005 earthquake?
8. How would you describe the current status of education in Azad Kashmir?

Perspectives on Teacher Trainings, Women Empowerment and Scholarships:

9. What is your personal philosophy of the education of girls?
10. How do you feel about the empowerment of women leaders in a community?
11. What are your views on furthering the education of teachers through workshops and higher education?
12. How do you believe a community is affected by the education of girls? The empowerment of women leaders? The education of the community's teachers?

Perspectives on Community Development and Education Support in Azad Kashmir:

13. Can you describe the history of community development projects in your community? Before and after the earthquake?
14. What changes do you hope to see in your community with the availability of education?
15. What kind of aid, if any, would your community benefit from the most? (Probe: what types of aid, water, education, or health? How would the aid be set up and organized, for how long, and how involved would the community be in the sustainability.)
16. What examples are there, if any, of successful projects in the areas of education, teacher trainings, or higher education scholarships?
17. What examples are there, if any, of projects that have not been successful? (Probe: sometimes I have heard from other villagers that NGO projects have failed or created problems for the people.)

Perspectives on Central Asia Institute Past, Present and Future Involvement:

18. What changes have you seen in this community since 2006 when Central Asia Institute built the local K-12 school?
19. How should organizations such as Central Asia Institute best support your local school? At the level of administration, teachers, and the students?
20. How should organizations such as Central Asia Institute best support your local leaders? Elders and women?
21. How should organizations such as Central Asia Institute help support sustainability of community projects? (Probe: with the school, teacher trainings and girl's scholarships?)
22. Is there anything else you would like to share with me?

APPENDIX B

TEACHER SURVEY

TEACHER SURVEY

I. Teacher Background Information:

1. What is the name of your school?

2. How many years have you been a teacher?

3. What grade level and/or subjects do you teach?

4. How many years have you been teaching this grade or subject?

5. What were your previous grades and subjects?

6. What certification and/or degrees do you have? Please list all here:

7. Do you plan on transferring from your current teaching position in the next three years? If so, why and where will you transfer?

II. Teacher's Perception of School Status

1. What are the strongest subjects taught at your school? Why?

2. What are the weakest subjects taught at your school? Why?

3. Research has shown that in rural Pakistan and Pakistan-controlled Kashmir, the content areas in most need for teacher training is in mathematics, science and English both at the primary and secondary levels. Do you agree or disagree with this? Please explain in a few sentences why or why not based on your experiences.

4. Are you encouraged by your principal or other administrators to improve your teaching practice? If so, how are you encouraged?

5. Are there expectations place on you as a teacher to improve the exam scores or grades of your students?

III. Teacher's Experience with Professional Development

Have you participated in a teacher training workshop during your teaching career? If yes, how many? _____

If you have attended workshops, please include the following information for each workshop: if you have attended more than one workshop, please ask for another paper if needed.

a. Name of workshop sponsor, coordinator, or hosting organization:	
b. Length of workshop:	_____ days, _____ hours per day
c. Location of workshop:	
d. Focus of the workshop: (was this a content-based workshop, were there specific themes, and was there a focus of methods learned?)	
e. How, if at all, did this workshop change or improve your teaching practice. Explain what changes you made as a teacher.	
f. What were the most effective parts of the workshop? Would you want to attend other workshops if it had these effective components?	

g. What improvements could have been made with the workshop?	
h. Your level of satisfaction from the workshop and why:	(1) very satisfied (2) satisfied (3) not very satisfied (4) Not at All Satisfied Why:

IV. Teacher's Experience with Teaching Techniques and Alternative Methods

1. How often do you use the following teaching methods:

teaching methods	every day	a few days a week	about once a week	about once a month	never
a. lecture from prepared notes					
b. lecture from textbook					
c. lecture and use of whiteboard or blackboard					
d. class discussions: students openly share their ideas and have a public voice in class, conversations between teacher and student on subject or material being learned.					
e. collaborative learning or group work: students work in teams and are encouraged to share ideas with other students.					
f. student presentations: students prepare a lesson, assignment, or project to present to the class either solo or as a group.					
g. active learning techniques: teacher prepares activities or projects, students are working with materials and projects rather than listening to lecture or taking notes.					

h. field trips: teacher takes students outside of the classroom or school to learn from a new environment.					
i. low-cost or no-cost materials: teacher makes instructional aides from low-cost materials or uses materials found in nature to teach lessons.					
j. other method you use: _____					

2. What are the obstacles or reasons why you may not practice the above teaching methods more frequently?

3. How often do you assess student learning by having students do the following:

assessment methods	every day	a few days a week	about once a week	about once a month	about once a year	never
a. answer questions in class orally?						
b. answer questions in class on paper?						
c. answer questions while participating in a group?						
d. answer questions with take-home work or assignments?						
e. teacher-prepared quizzes given in class?						
f. teacher-prepared exam or test given in class?						
g. quizzes or exams prepared by someone else (ie. textbook) given in class?						

h. a national exam or test given in class?						
i. other method of assessment: _____						

3. What are the obstacles or reasons why you may not practice the above assessment methods more frequently?

4. How much time do you spend preparing for your classes? (please circle)

not frequently 1-2 hours/day 1-2 hours/week 2-5 hours/week

other:

5. How much time do you spend grading papers, assignments or exams? (please circle)

not frequently 1-2 hours/day 1-2 hours/week 2-5 hours/week

other:

V. Teacher's Comments on Future Teacher Trainings:

Central Asia Institute hopes to support your school with teacher training workshops. They will be designed on your needs and our ability to support your needs. It will be helpful if you provide the following details so that we may best design a teacher training workshop for you and your fellow teachers:

a. Location of workshop: (examples: Gundi Piran School, Muzaffarabad, etc.)	
b. Length of workshop: (how many days, hours per day, etc.)	
c. How often the workshop should be provided for teachers: (once a year, twice a year, etc.)	

d. What <i>content areas</i> should be the focus? (please list in priority).	1. 2. 3.
e. What <i>teaching methods</i> should be the focus? (example: should the training focus on teaching you new lecture techniques, methods using new materials, etc.).	
f. Who would you like to run the workshop and why? (examples: local master teachers, trainers from Muzaffarabad, other sources, etc.).	
g. Can you provide names of skilled teachers that you feel should be trainers for specific topics or content?	
h. Can you provide names of teachers that you feel should receive trainings to help lead future teacher training workshops?	
i. What kind of long-term compensation do you feel teachers should receive for attending teacher workshops? (examples: certificates, money for attending, increase of salary, etc.).	

Is there anything else about a future teacher training workshop that you would like to share with me?