

Surviving on the Faultline

Omar Asghar Khan Development Foundation

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Omar Asghar Khan Development Foundation

Established in 1999, Omar Asghar Khan Development Foundation is creating opportunities for people, particularly the vulnerable, to collectively secure human and livelihood rights by strengthening their asset base and making institutions and policies pro-poor. The Foundation's work is primarily based in the Hazara region of NWFP. Its advocacy of pro-poor policies and action has a national focus. The Foundation has offices in Islamabad and Abbottabad.

Acknowledgements

This publication is based on the analysis and assessment carried out by women and men in 57 villages of 15 union councils of Districts Abbottabad, Battagram and Mansehra that were devastated by the 2005 earthquake. They presented, examined, and evaluated the realities of their lives, and defined their priorities for rehabilitation and development in an astute and candid manner. Their contributions, interest, time, and patience are gratefully acknowledged. This analysis was facilitated by more than 50 female and 100 male activists drawn from affected areas. Their diligence, devotion, and determination are also duly acknowledged.

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They helped local people affected by the quake to define their Charter of Demands. Their dedication and hard work is acknowledged. Mr. Zaigham Khan supported the compilation of the report; and, Dr. Kaiser Bengali and Ms. Debbie Budlender provided technical advice. Their contributions are also acknowledged.

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This report is the responsibility solely of Omar Asghar Khan Development Foundation. The views expressed here should not be attributed to any other institution.

Acronyms

AJK	Azad Jammu & Kashmir
BHU	Basic Health Unit
CGI	Corrugated Galvanized Iron
ERRA	Earthquake Reconstruction & Rehabilitation Authority
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NIC	National Identity Card
NOC	No Objection Certificate
NWFP	North West Frontier Province
PC-1	Planning Commission-1
PERRA	Provincial Earthquake Reconstruction & Rehabilitation Authority
PO	People's Organization
RHC	Rural Health Center
UC	Union Council
URAP	Union Council Rehabilitation Action Plan
VRAP	Village Rehabilitation Action Plan

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Chapter 1

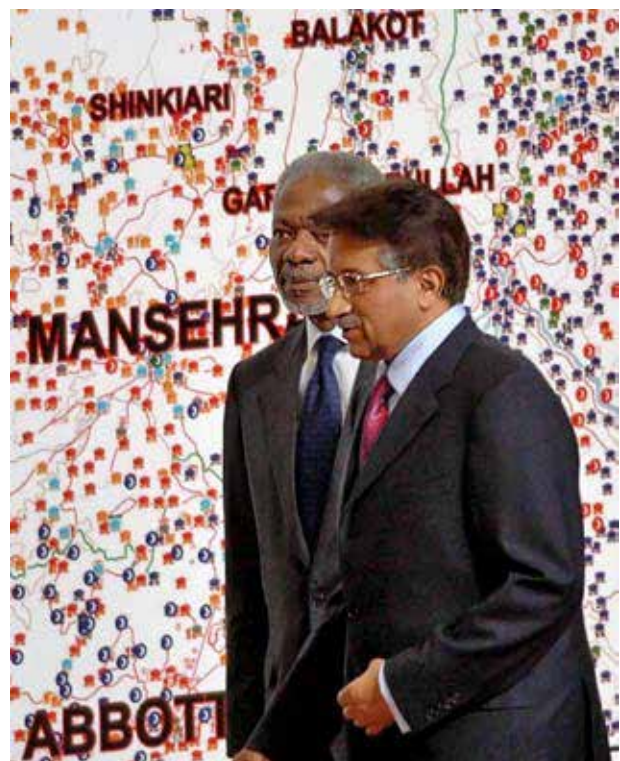
Government promises to “build back better”

Following the devastating 2005 earthquake, the Government of Pakistan promised extensive rehabilitation, consistently reiterating that their firm commitment was to “build back better.” This chapter presents an overview of the government's vision that shaped rehabilitation policies. It also presents government claims of implementation. This chapter sets a context against which subsequent chapters will present people's analysis that expose that government promises are a mirage and its claims a convenient smokescreen to hide the grim realities of people's lives, three years after the 2005 earthquake.

Soon after the October 2005 earthquake, the Government of Pakistan established the Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority (ERRA) and vested it with authority to spearhead the rehabilitation process. An international Donors Conference was held on 19 November 2005 to attract funding for reconstruction. More than 75 international delegations, representing various governments and organizations participated in the conference.

During his speech at this event, General Pervez Musharraf, the then President of Pakistan asked for US\$5.2 billion to support rehabilitation including US\$1.6 billion to sustain relief operations for 12 more months. “We need your assistance in rebuilding; brick by brick; day by day. It is a long journey. We are seeking long term partnership and multi-year commitment,” said the President.

President Musharraf presented his government's plans which included “one primary school in every village cluster; one middle school in every four villages, one high school in every 12 villages and one college in every 50 villages. That is three to four colleges in each sub district or a tehsil.” For healthcare, he said, “we will have a Basic Health Unit in each village of hundred households. We will then have the second structure i.e. the Rural Health Center and there will be one health center for each four villages.” He also committed that “we will provide safe drinking water to these quake-hit places, to every village there.”



President General Musharraf and UN secretary General Kofi Annan walking past a map showing planned rehabilitation.

Pakistan received pledges of aid totalling US\$6.2 billion. The then Prime Minister, Shaukat Aziz, described the response as a "tremendous vote of confidence" in his government." "We are prepared to do and are doing our share," assured the PM.



PM Shaukat Aziz receiving a cheque of US \$ 1 million from China Development Bank

In March 2006, ERRA announced an extensive three-year plan including 11 development sectors with a special focus on housing, health, education and livelihood and earmarked US\$3.5 billion. The then ERRA Chairman, Altaf Saleem, explained the salient features of the plan in a news briefing. He said that allocations made by the government include US\$1.5 billion for building 600,000 houses on an owner-driven basis, US\$303 million for health, US\$472 million for education and US\$32 million for water and sanitation projects.

ERRA promised to complete the rebuilding phase within five years. It committed to rebuild over 1,500 educational institutions by 2007. "We plan to finish 80 percent of the reconstruction work within the first three years of the rebuilding process", stated ERRA's Chairman. It would be a remarkable achievement as even an "advanced country like Japan took nine years to rebuild the areas devastated by the Kobe earthquake," he added.

ERRA's task was to implement promises made by President Musharraf. At the November 2005 Donors Conference, the President had specified: "we cannot impose a solution on the people therefore we would like it to be owner driven (initiative)."

He further went on to say, "it has been decided to give roughly US\$3,300, which comes to a maximum of Rs.200,000 to each affected and that is four hundred thousand people. And then we would like to guide them, to facilitate them, to construct better houses, earthquake-proof, (that) meet weather challenges in a much better way than they lived in. We would like to create models of these houses in all those areas..... people in thousands will be sent forward to the military battalion areas for their administrative support and from their base fan out, reach out to the people and guide them on how to utilize the money that we are giving in a manner that their houses are better, they are earthquake-proof and improve their living standards."

ERRA issued multiple designs for construction over a period spanning more than two years after the quake and also altered instructions for construction from time to time. In December 2005, ERRA prepared four different designs of quake-resistant houses as well as detailed instructions for construction. ERRA authorities brushed aside public objections to these housing designs.

"I don't know why people are complaining about the building codes. It is in their interest to reconstruct their houses in accordance with ERRA building codes," said Chairman ERRA. "Look, we cannot afford to allow another devastating earthquake — not an entire impossibility — to again raze hundreds of thousands of houses to the ground." After consistent protests from affected people ERRA conceded changes in the designs. Building designs using wood was allowed for high-altitude areas where ERRA-specified building material was difficult to transport and subsequently, ERRA also agreed to public demands to allow timber, RCC frame and Bhattar design including the Lipa Valley design. This flexibility gave people greater choice and increased the pace of house reconstruction, admitted ERRA.

President Musharraf had assured donors that stringent measures will be taken to ensure transparency and accountability of ERRA. On 30th December 2005, Dr. Sher Afgan Niazi, the then Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, informed the Senate of Pakistan that the auditor-general would conduct an annual audit of ERRA's accounts. A reputed firm of chartered accountants would also audit ERRA.

The Chairman ERRA explained on one occasion that compensation was being distributed among the affected people through banks in a transparent manner. An effective system of checks and balances was in place, leaving no room for irregularities and a mechanism for redressing grievances was also in place where people could file appeals.

In March 2007, ERRA claimed that about 98 percent of the victims of the 2005 earthquake had been compensated while those who had signed the memorandum of understanding would be paid by 31st May 2007. Four months later, it was claimed that 99 percent of the earthquake-affected people had been compensated.

Talking to journalists, Mr. Altaf Saleem said, "ERRA has paid housing grant to approximately 600,000 quake-affected people and now only 3,700 remain and they will be paid soon after the completion of the necessary procedures." The Chairman added that ERRA had provided funds to the National Highway Authority to construct 7,000 km of roads in every nook and corner of the quake-affected region.

In September 2007, ERRA Chairman, Altaf Saleem, and Deputy Chairman Lt-General Nadeem Ahmed claimed that life had returned to normal in the quake-affected areas with the construction of infrastructure, houses, roads, schools, health and communication sectors. Mr Saleem said reconstruction work was progressing satisfactorily and people in the affected areas were now living a better life as compared to the pre-quake period.

The Deputy Chairman said almost all educational institutions were now functional in the affected areas. The newly constructed medical centres were built on modern lines and had state-of-the-art equipment. He said the New Balakot City, being constructed at Bakhrial, would be completed in three-five years.

The New Balakot City would be constructed as a tourist resort. He claimed that the government's vision to provide a better life to affected people was translated into reality with ERRA's efforts in collaboration with international agencies and NGOs.



PM Shaukat Aziz laying the foundation stone of New Balakot City, December 2005

ERRA's impressive public relationing has extensively used and publicized a few star projects to create an image of its performance. These include the Boys High School in Chakothi, constructed at the cost of Rs.30.46 million. The school has 11 classrooms, book and tuck shop, libraries for junior and senior sections, computer laboratory, playground and sports equipment, modern water and sanitation system besides a multi-purpose hall for teachers and students.

On the second anniversary of the earthquake, a press release announced that in Chakothi a rural health centre and two high schools, one each for boys and girls, was completed in the record time of seven months under proactive facilitation and guidance by ERRA. Constructed at the cost of Rs.28.12 million, the RHC has state-of-the-art facilities including a filtration plant based on the technology developed by NASA for its space operation, full-time patients care, facilities of family planning, dental care, gynaecological and obstetric care, pharmacy, laboratory for various tests, emergency, ENT facilities and a 24-hour ambulance besides accommodation for the staff.



President General Musharaf inaugurating Chakothi school

Chapter 2

People Analyze their Realities

This chapter presents people's analysis of the post-quake realities of their lives, three years on. They assessed public policy and support. The analysis is based on 37 Village Rehabilitation Action Plans prepared by local people in 37 villages of 15 union councils of Districts Battagram, Mansehra and Abbottabad of NWFP. It also draws on the findings of a questionnaire survey and 30 case studies that estimate the cost of accessing the government's housing subsidy. The findings of this analysis are categorized under the key sectors included in the government's framework policy on rehabilitation. They portray people's realities against the image of success relentlessly presented by the government through a carefully crafted information campaign.

Three years after the quake, many families are still struggling to pick up the pieces of their shattered lives. Difficulties in accessing the government's housing subsidy have delayed reconstruction. Many were unable to access the subsidy and were forced to take loans, rely on relatives, or migrate. A few continue to live in tents or temporary structures. Urban settlements like Balakot are still in a state of limbo. Although many are provided with temporary housing their condition remains tenuous.

The promised New Balakot City at Bakhrial is still a distant dream. Reconstruction of planned education and health facilities is yet to be completed. Disrupted and unrepaired water supply continues to place excess burden on women who now walk longer distances to fetch water. Many roads damaged were subsequently also battered by seasonal rains, snows and landslides making them even more hazardous and restricting people's access to services.

These realities paint a grim picture of the lives of people affected by the 2005 earthquake. Three years since the disaster, their condition is characterized by a lack of basic facilities, livelihood insecurity, and high anxiety. Not surprisingly, public discontent with government policy and rehabilitation support is high in the areas affected by the 2005 earthquake.

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Housing

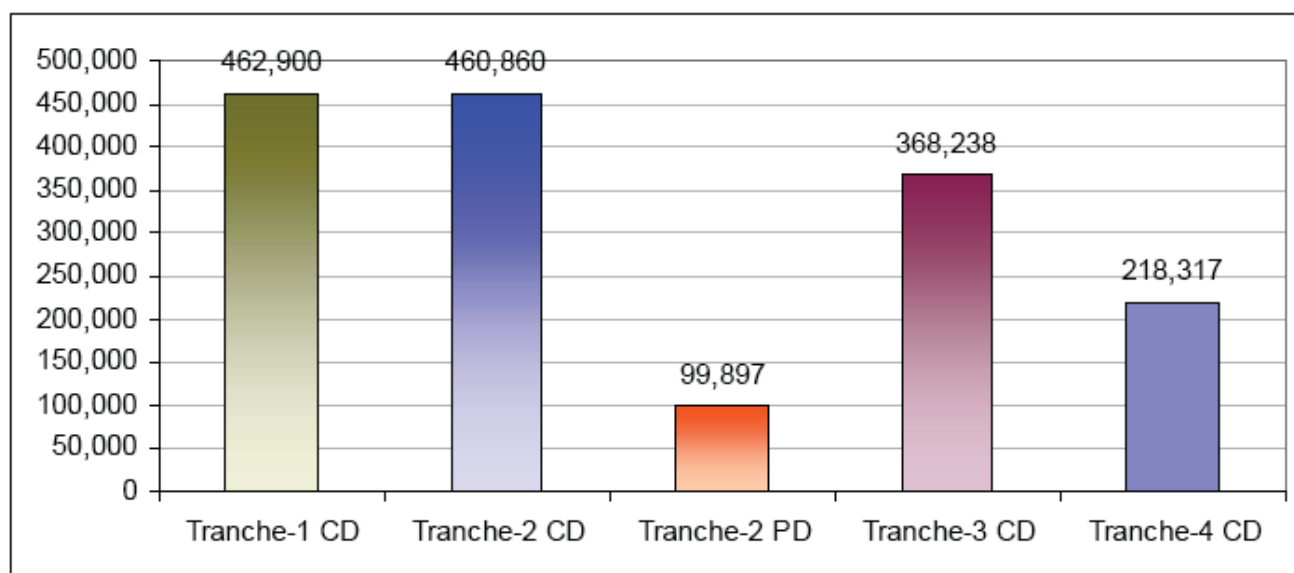
In the largely poor areas affected by the quake, a house is a valued asset, and a source of security, well-being and prestige. It provides shelter for households and their livestock, and also storing space for grain and fodder.

Government estimates indicated that more than 600,000 houses were affected by the quake. The scale of destroyed houses located in difficult mountainous terrain presented one of the greatest challenges to rehabilitation.

The government's initial promise of compensation for house destruction was replaced by an offer of subsidy, i.e., providing a helping hand rather than fully recompensing damages. In 2006-07 ERRA carried out an assessment of all houses in the earthquake-affected areas. Completely destroyed houses were eligible for a subsidy of Rs.175,000, partially damaged houses would receive Rs.75,000, and those that were categorized as having negligible structural damage were not eligible for any subsidy.

In March 2007, ERRA's then Chairman, Mr. Altaf Saleem, claimed that about 98 percent of the victims of the 2005 earthquake had been compensated. Four months later, he confidently announced that the figure had increased to 99 percent. These claims are not supported by ERRA's own records of August 2008.

ERRA's report states that construction has been completed on 409,613 houses, 118,406 houses are under construction while no work has yet started on 35,972 houses. From the same report, however, it becomes clear that 462,900 persons have received the first tranche of housing support and that 244,583 (52.84%) people have not yet been able to access the last tranche.



Source: ERRA, 2008, Progress Report as on 1st August, 2008 <<http://www.erra.gov.pk/Reports/ProgressReportaugust08.pdf>>

Behind ERRA's statistics are hidden the tribulations of people who have tried to access the subsidy. Claims against houses missed by the survey were categorized as grievance cases. These included cases in which the claimant was dissatisfied with the survey's results. The fate of the grievances cases remained tenuous for many months forcing claimants to desperately chase the subsidy or at least seek clarification on their status from every possible source they could reach.

"Our entire village was left out by the survey – what will happen to us?"

A local man, District Abbottabad

Some claimants gave up and made the tough decision to migrate to other areas, while others took loans for reconstruction. Yet others, generally the poorest, unable to pursue any of these options continue to live in tents or other makeshift arrangements.



Tenants could access subsidy if they had an NOC from the owner of the house. Many owners refused, opting to directly access the subsidy. Some owners agreed on the condition that the subsidy would be shared with them. Conflicts erupted between numerous owners and tenants with many approaching courts to settle matters.

The government subsidy is given in installments on compliance with ERRA's stringent house reconstruction specifications. ERRA defends the specifications by claiming that they ensure earthquake-resistant (though not earthquake-proof) housing.

The first set of designs was issued in December 2005, followed in early 2006 with more detailed specifications. Several revisions were issued over the next two years, some contradicting earlier versions. For example, after construction had already begun it became clear that a six-inch block would not be acceptable and an eight-inch block would be required. After months of pleading by claimants, it was agreed that for structures already built with six-inch blocks will be issued compliance certificates if complex and expensive retrofitting requirements were met. The designs and their different versions created much confusion and frustration. They also added costs.



“The government’s claim that the conditional payment of subsidy is to ensure our safety sounds hollow. It was our children that were killed under collapsing buildings – we have the greatest interest in ensuring safer structures. The government’s conditionalities are creating harassment and opportunities for rent-seeking. If it had given the subsidy in one lumpsum payment and focused their efforts on training us, all houses would be rebuilt by now and corruption would also be controlled.”

A local man, Union Council Pattan Kalan, District Abbottabad

Tear down and rebuild

Gul Khitab's house in Battagram was completely destroyed by the quake. His family was rendered shelterless. He took a loan from a relative and began rebuilding as quickly as possible. ERRA's specifications were issued after Gul Khitab had nearly completed reconstruction. He was relying on the subsidy to repay the loan. He was dismayed to find out that according to ERRA he was not eligible for subsidy because he had already rebuilt his house. Moreover, his house built with beams and columns did not comply with ERRA's specifications. He was given the incredulous advice to tear down the reconstructed house, access the subsidy, and then once again rebuild following ERRA's specifications. After several months of chasing ERRA and others, Gul Khitab was allowed to access subsidy if he built an ERRA-compliant structure next to his rebuilt house.

According to data collected by the Foundation, the cost of accessing subsidy was often quite substantial, including expenditures incurred on transport and documentation. It often also included bribes and other forms of rent-seeking -- from the relatively innocuous "chai-pani" (tea-water -- a term used for small sums of money paid or a meal provided as "bribe.") to more blatant bribes of upto Rs.25,000 paid to assessment teams at different stages of inspection. Remote areas were worse-off as rent-seeking was higher and the cost of follow-up of cases much greater.

"They inspected my plinth and demanded a bribe that I could not pay. They did not complete my form. My house remains partially reconstructed and the subsidy due to me is not yet paid in full."

A widow, Union Council Pattan Kalan, District Abbottabad

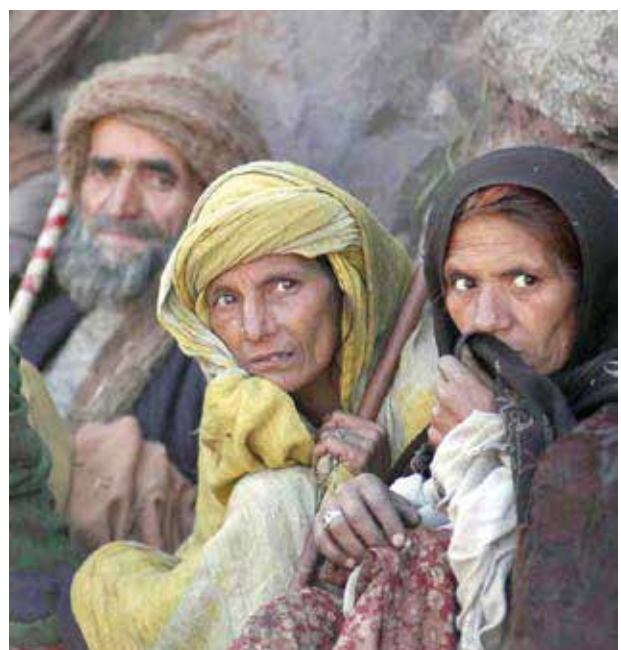
Many resorted to loans to meet reconstruction costs. This placed a greater burden on households that had lost their source of livelihood due to loss of land or off-farm employment. In the largely rainfed areas of Hazara, off-farm employment is the most common source of income.

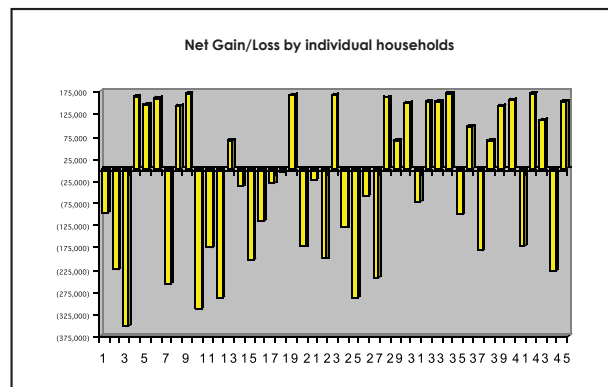
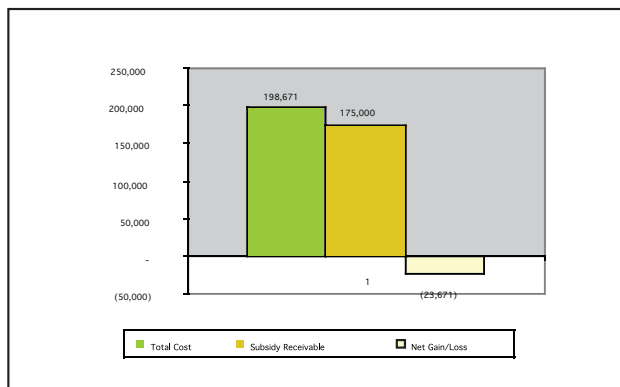
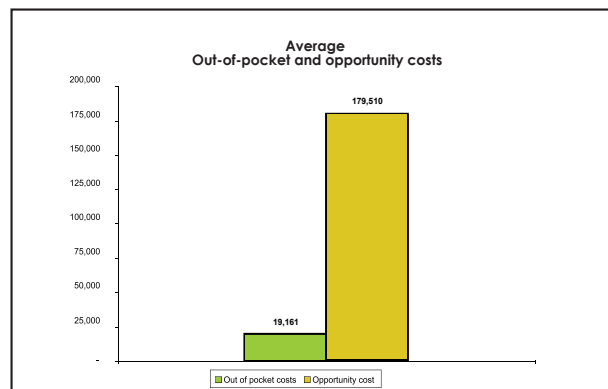
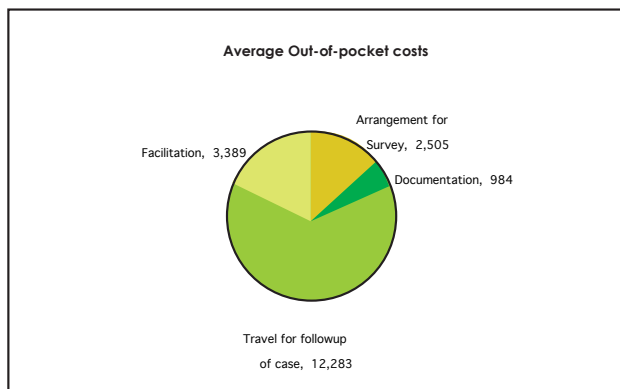
Soon after the quake, people employed in cities within and outside Pakistan returned home to be with their families. They stayed to meet requirements of the damage survey, to pursue the cumbersome and protracted process of accessing subsidy, and to rebuild houses for their families. Most lost their jobs in the process. Similarly, those that ran shops, clinics, schools or other services from their homes faced financial hardships as the destruction of homes entailed loss of income.

"I was working in a factory in Hattar earning Rs.5,000 per month. I came back to the village to rebuild my demolished house. It has been three years and I am still trying to get the promised subsidy. If I had any idea that it would take this long I would not have bothered with the subsidy. I am not stupid. ."

A local man, Union Council Garlat, District Mansehra

For many, losses outweighed the gains from the subsidy offered by the government. This analysis questions the effectiveness of the government's policy on housing subsidy, and its stated objective of supporting people to rebuild their houses. It appears to have placed greater burden on people affected by the quake.





The arduous process of accessing subsidy become even more problematic if the claimant expired in the process. Transferring the claim to the next of kin added another bureaucratic layer further delaying access to funds. This additional hassle could have been easily avoided if information on next of kin was included in the form. Transfers also generated conflicts if more than one person claimed to be next of kin.



High costs of chasing subsidy

Razzaq worked as a tailor in Islamabad earning around Rs.12,000 per month. His family, including his wife, six daughters and four sons, lived in a small mountain village in District Abbottabad. His house was demolished by the quake. An NGO provided CGI sheets that Razzaq used to construct a makeshift shelter. He also purchased basic household utensils worth Rs.1,000. Razzaq's destroyed house was among 180 houses "missed" by the initial survey carried out by military personnel and the patwari. He traveled with delegations to Abbottabad demanding the inclusion of missed houses and the disbursement of the first installment of Rs.25,000. These visits cost Rs.5,000, but the houses remained excluded.

Razzaq's house was included in the second more detailed survey after he paid Rs.5,000 as bribe to the assessment teams. He opened a bank account with Rs.2,000 and spent another Rs.3,000 in repeated trips to the bank to check on receipt of the second installment. Many weeks passed but the funds did not arrive. Razzaq went to the ERRA office in Abbottabad and spent two days waiting in queues. When his turn finally came, he was informed that ERRA's records did not include his case, and that it was categorized as "no record." He completed required forms and returned home after spending Rs.2,000. For the next two months he made consistent inquiries but his case still appeared as "no record". He went back to ERRA's office in Abbottabad where he was told that his case was transferred to PERRA in Peshawar for correction. The followup visit cost another Rs.1,000. More weeks passed but the correction was not processed. Razzaq now started pursuing PERRA in Peshawar. He made five visits to PERRA Peshawar, costing Rs.8,000. On the fifth visit, he was informed that his case was sent to ERRA in Islamabad. Razzaq made six trips to ERRA Islamabad – incurring a total cost of Rs.11,000.

In March 2007 he received the second installment of Rs.75,000 and used it to rebuild his house upto the plinth level. In April 2007, the plinth was inspected and certified after payment of Rs.5,000. For the next three months Razzaq waited for the next installment, and made more followup trips to Abbottabad, Peshawar and Islamabad, with a total cost of Rs.16,000.

In December 2007, he received the third installment of Rs.25,000 to which he added Rs.50,000 taken as a loan to construct his house to the lintel level. After paying another bribe of Rs.5,000 he received certification approving the lintel level construction. In June 2008, he received the final subsidy installment Rs.50,000 and used it to repay some of his debts. His house is rebuilt to the lintel level, but Razzaq is unable to complete the roof.

Razzaq's relentless pursuit of the Rs.175,000 subsidy over a 32-month period or nearly three years yielded Rs.150,000 which cost him nearly Rs.70,000. In this period, his estimated loss of income was Rs.384,000. He also has a loan of Rs.50,000 to repay. According to ERRA, the full subsidy is paid to the victim of the earthquake and it is assumed that he now has an earthquake-resistant house. The reality behind these statistics is that Razzaq's family continues to live in a makeshift shelter.



ERRA's data records this structure as a completed and compliant house

The arduous process of accessing subsidy become even more problematic if the claimant expired in the process. Transferring the claim to the next of kin added another bureaucratic layer further delaying access to funds. This additional hassle could have been easily avoided if information on next of kin was included in the form. Transfers also generated conflicts if more than one person claimed to be next of kin.

Transferring claim

Zarifan bibi lived in District Mansehra with her two sons, Abbas and Iftikhar. Her husband, Javed, worked in a flour mill in Havelian. The quake killed Iftikhar, her younger son, and injured the older Abbas. The injury led to kidney failure.

Zarifan bibi used the Rs.100,000 received as compensation on the death of her younger son to treat the older one. She also took a loan of Rs.80,000 for this purpose. Her husband, Javed, had returned home after the quake and remained in the village with his family resulting in an estimated loss of income of Rs.96,000.

Javed was able to access the first two installments of housing subsidy after incurring expenditures on documentation and other formalities. Akbar died in December 2007. Zarifan bibi now had the additional task of transferring the housing subsidy claim from her deceased husband to herself.

Delays in the transfer forced her to take another loan of Rs.35,000 to rebuild her house to the lintel level. In the meantime, despite all her efforts, Abbas died in March 2008. Zarifan bibi is now alone, heavily indebted, and homeless. The transfer of subsidy claim is still in process.

Disbursement of installments was conditional to compliance with ERRA's reconstruction specifications. The delays in issuing specifications, ensuring that its information reaches people, and the multiple changes made to them also caused delays in house reconstruction.

The government announced arbitrary deadlines for completing construction creating panic among affected people. Officials privately admitted that the deadlines were not "serious" and were issued to push people to complete house reconstruction.

"There is an announcement in the newspapers that no more plinth level inspections will be made after 30 June 2008. I went to the bank again today and they said my installment money has not been received. I do not have funds to complete the plinth level construction – what should I do? I will not be able to rebuild now."

A local man, Union Council Garlat, District Mansehra



Akbar cgacha helped other in his life time his still family await subsidy upon his death.

ERRA also justified the imposition of these conditionalities by stating that they will ensure that the subsidy is only used for house reconstructions. But some needed money to meet more urgent needs. Others made more prudent choices, which strictly-speaking, was a "mis-use" or non-compliant use of the subsidy .

Housing subsidy: non-compliance “misuse”

Mehboob lived near Balakot and worked as a barber. The quake destroyed his house and shop. Falling debris injured his wife's spine paralyzing her. Mehboob used the house reconstruction subsidy in addition to a loan for his wife's treatment. Indebted, with no source of income and homeless, Mehboob lives in the hospital where his wife is receiving rehabilitation support.

Kamran's home was assessed as “completely destroyed” and eligible for a subsidy of Rs.175,000. He used Rs.100,000 received in two installments to secure a job in Dubai. Kamran worked there for two years and returned to his village in 2007 with a net income of Rs.500,000. He has now rebuilt his house – which is better than the one destroyed by the quake – and enhanced his family's well-being and security.

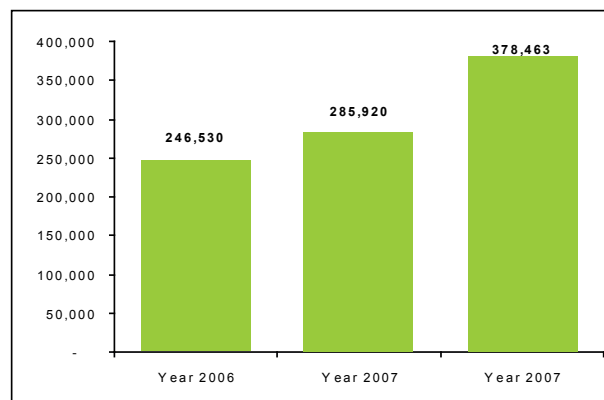


ERRA's data records this structure as a completed and compliant house

Items	Quantity	Unit	House Construction Cost		
			2006	2007	2008
Steel	500	KG	20,500	24,000	32,500
Cement	175	Per Bag	47,250	56,000	75,250
Sand	600	Cubic feet	18,000	18,000	24,000
Crush	400	Cubic feet	10,000	12,000	16,000
CGI Sheet (24 Gauge)	500	Square feet	20,000	25,000	45,000
Timber	80	Square feet	16,000	28,000	36,000
Skilled Labour	60	Person days	30,000	30,000	36,000
Un Skilled Labour	120	Person days	30,000	30,000	36,000
Stone	490	Cubic feet	5,880	7,350	9,800
Concrete Block	1550	Block	27,900	31,000	37,200
Paint	1	Lumpsum	7,000	8,190	10,238
Plumbing	1	Lumpsum	6,000	7,020	8,775
Electrification	1	Lumpsum	8,000	9,360	11,700
Total Cost			246,530	285,920	378,463

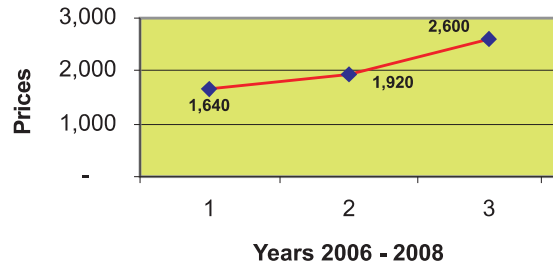
Note: Quantity estimated according to an ERRA-compliant house having covered area of only 400 sq/ft. Figures are based on cost of materials relate to Village Sirla in District Abbottabad accessible by metalled road.

The size of subsidy was also widely criticized, and was considered insufficient to construct an ERRA-compliant house, especially in remote, inaccessible mountain villages which constitute a larger proportion of areas affected by the earthquake. The subsidy became even more insignificant as the cost of construction escalated, exacerbated by the drastic rise in transportation costs.

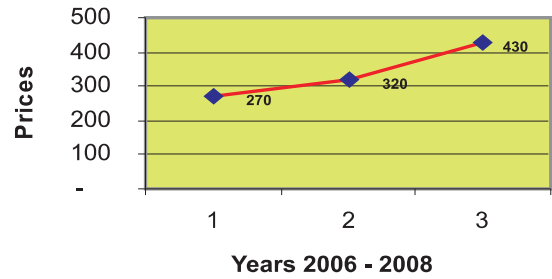


Escalating cost of building an ERRA-compliant 400 sqft house, Village Sirla, District Abbottabad

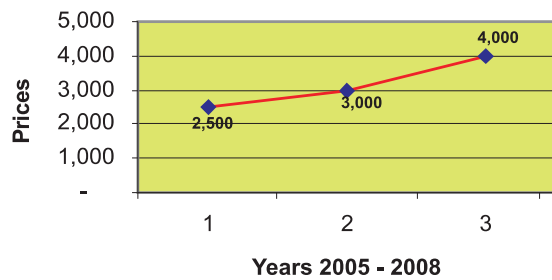
Steel (40 kg)



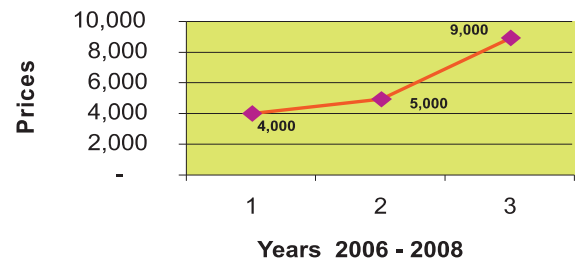
Cement (Per Bag)



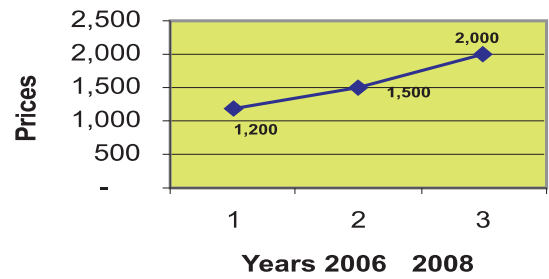
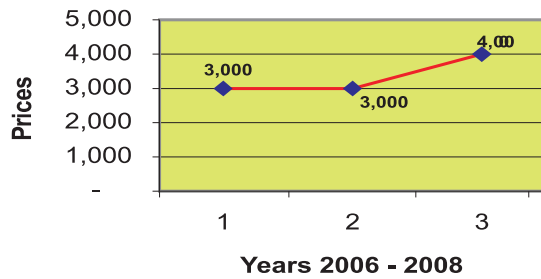
Crush (100 Cubic Feet)



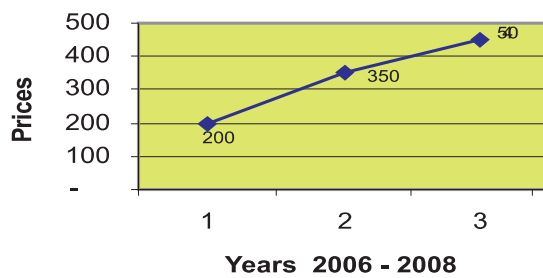
CGI Sheet (24 Gauge) 100 Square feet



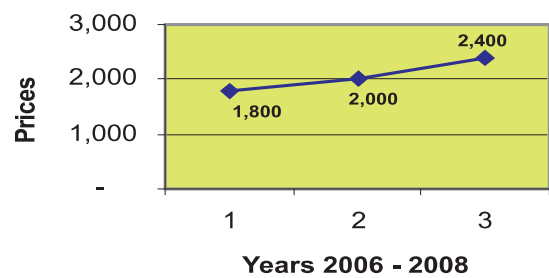
Sand (100 Cubic Feet)



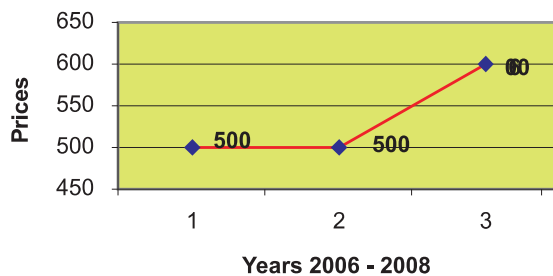
Timber (Cubic Feet)



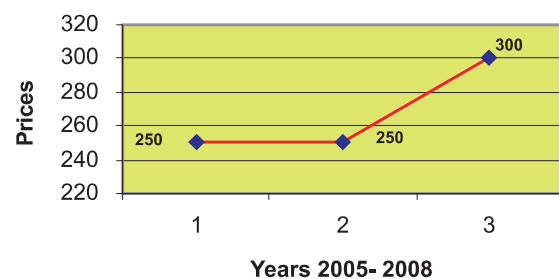
Concrete Block (Per 100)



Skilled Labour (Man-day)



Un Skilled Labour (Man-day)



I was working in Lahore and came home after the earthquake. More than two years have passed. I was able to access the first two installments after consistent chasing. My plinth was inspected three months ago, but I am still waiting for the next installment while the costs of materials continue to rise daily. I feel as if I am paying a heavy price for the government's inefficiencies. They say they are helping us. Which world do they live in?"

A local man, Union Council Balakot, District Mansehra



ERRA's data records this structure as a completed and compliant house

Women face greater hardships

Ruqaiya lived in a village of District Abbottabad across Muzaffarabad. Her husband, Pervez, worked as a carpenter earning an estimated daily wage of Rs.400. Her eldest son Raheem was 19-years old and was learning carpentry by assisting his father. Ruqaiya had two other sons and a daughter who were studying in the local school where she worked as a sweeper with a monthly income of Rs.1,500. They lived in a three-room kutcha house.

On 8th October Pervez and Raheem were working at an under construction hotel on the bank of Neelum River in Muzaffarabad. Pervez's body was recovered from the site, but there was no trace of Raheem. Ruqaiya desperately sought help in Muzaffarabad and also Abbottabad to find her son. She spent Rs.8,000 in this process, but was unable to find out what had happened to Raheem. Till today, she is not sure whether he survived the quake or not. Ruqaiya received Rs.100,000 as compensation for her husband's death. Her father-in-law took half of this amount. She also repaid Rs.8,000 that her husband owed before his death. No compensation was received for Raheem. Her kutcha house alongwith her every household possession was demolished by the quake. In the first survey, her house was not included as Ruqaiya did not have an NIC. She made three trips to Abbottabad for the NIC which cost her Rs.6,000, half of which was paid as a bribe for issuance of an urgent NIC.

The second round of survey included her case after she paid Rs.200 as chai-pani money to inspecting military personnel. Ruqaiya received Rs.75,000 as the second installment and began reconstructing her house. More red tape followed, for which she had to make repeated trips to Abbottabad and the army's camp in Berote. This process stretched over many months during which Ruqaiya's family faced increasing financial hardships. Though Ruqaiya has received the subsidy for house reconstruction, she has only been able to reconstruct upto the lintel level. She has run up a debt of Rs.35,000 and lives with her surviving family in a one room rented house.

The long drawn-out implementation procedures delayed access to subsidy. Monitoring, verification, and data entry at every stage had high margins of error where cases were lost and termed as "no record." Banks were ill equipped to handle receipt and distribution of large funds and some decided to sit on funds as long as possible. This resulted in long waits for transfer and encashment of funds.

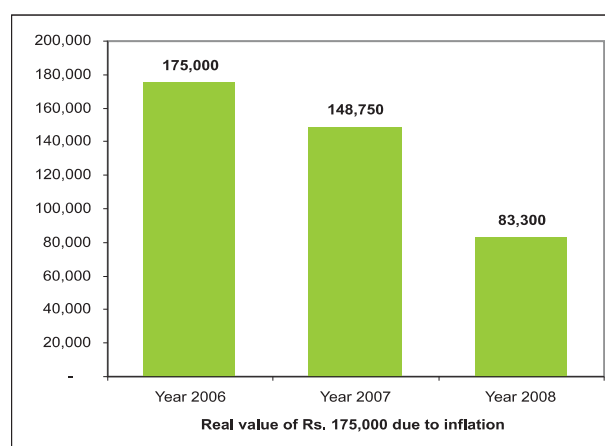
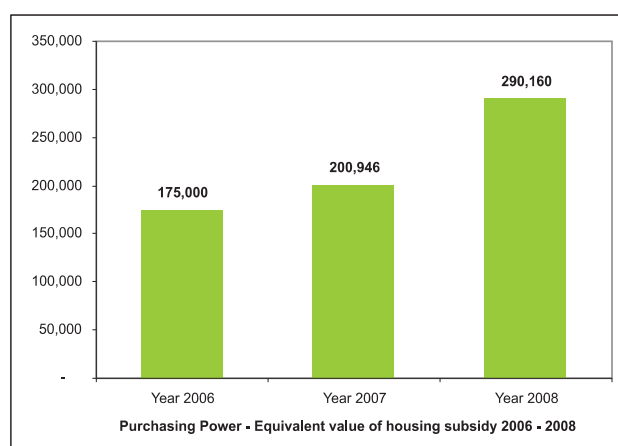
"Last winter, 76-year old Shahji from our area waited all night outside the bank so that he would be on the front of the queue the next morning. He caught pneumonia and died the following day in a local hospital. And there was also 70-year old Gul Badshah who sustained injuries during the police's lathi charge outside the bank. He fell down the steps of the bank and was killed on the spot."

A local man, District Battagram

The value of the subsidy over a two-year period in terms of its buying power reduced to half. These inflationary pressures which had drastically increased prices added a new dimension to the race against time to complete construction. It is no surprise that people hold the government responsible for their burden and feel that those affected by the disaster should not be further penalized for the inefficiencies of policies and procedures.

Items	Unit	Rates			Weighted Values		
		2006	2007	2008	2006*	2007*	2008*
Steel	40 KG	1,640	1,920	2,600	149.08	174.53	236.34
Cement	Per Bag	270	320	430	56.70	67.20	90.30
Sand	100 Cubic feet	3,000	3,000	4,000	240.00	240.00	320.00
Crush	100 Cubic feet	2,500	3,000	4,000	110.00	132.00	176.00
CGI Sheet (24 Gauge)	100 Sq feet	4,000	5,000	9,000	352.00	440.00	792.00
Timber	100 Sq feet	200	350	450	14.20	24.85	31.95
Skilled Labour	Person days	500	500	600	66.50	66.50	79.80
Un Skilled Labour	Person days	250	250	300	33.25	33.25	39.90
Stone	100 Cubic feet	1,200	1,500	2,000	31.20	39.00	52.00
Concrete Block	100 Block	1,800	2,000	2,400	223.20	248.00	297.60
Total Weighted values					1,276.13	1,465.33	2,115.89

Weighted average inflation in building materials cost		1.15	1.44
Real value of Rs. 175,000 due to inflation	175,000	148,750	83,300
Purchasing power–Equivalent value of housing subsidy 2006 - 2008	175,000	200,946	290,160



Education

The largest proportion of casualties of the devastating earthquake was school children, trapped in collapsing school buildings. Schools that survived the quake were razed to the ground.

At the November 2005 Donors Conference, President Musharraf had committed that his government will rebuild “one primary school in every village cluster; one middle school in every four villages, one high school in every 12 villages and one college in every 50 villages.”

Three years since the quake, most school children continue to attend schools in crumbling tents that have faced repeated seasonal onslaughts.

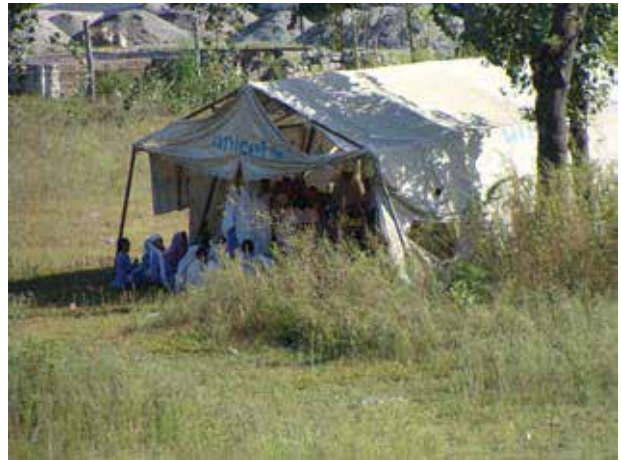
“The quake destroyed the only government school we had. Its reconstruction has not started as yet. We desperately need government or private schools, a technical school and, if possible, a college in the area for our children.”

A local man, Union Council Nammal, District Abbottabad

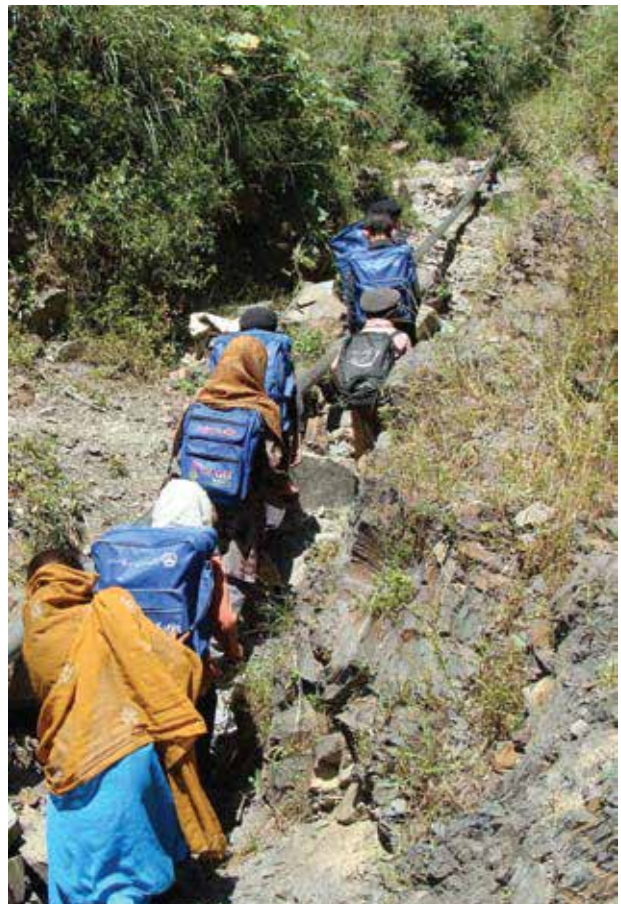


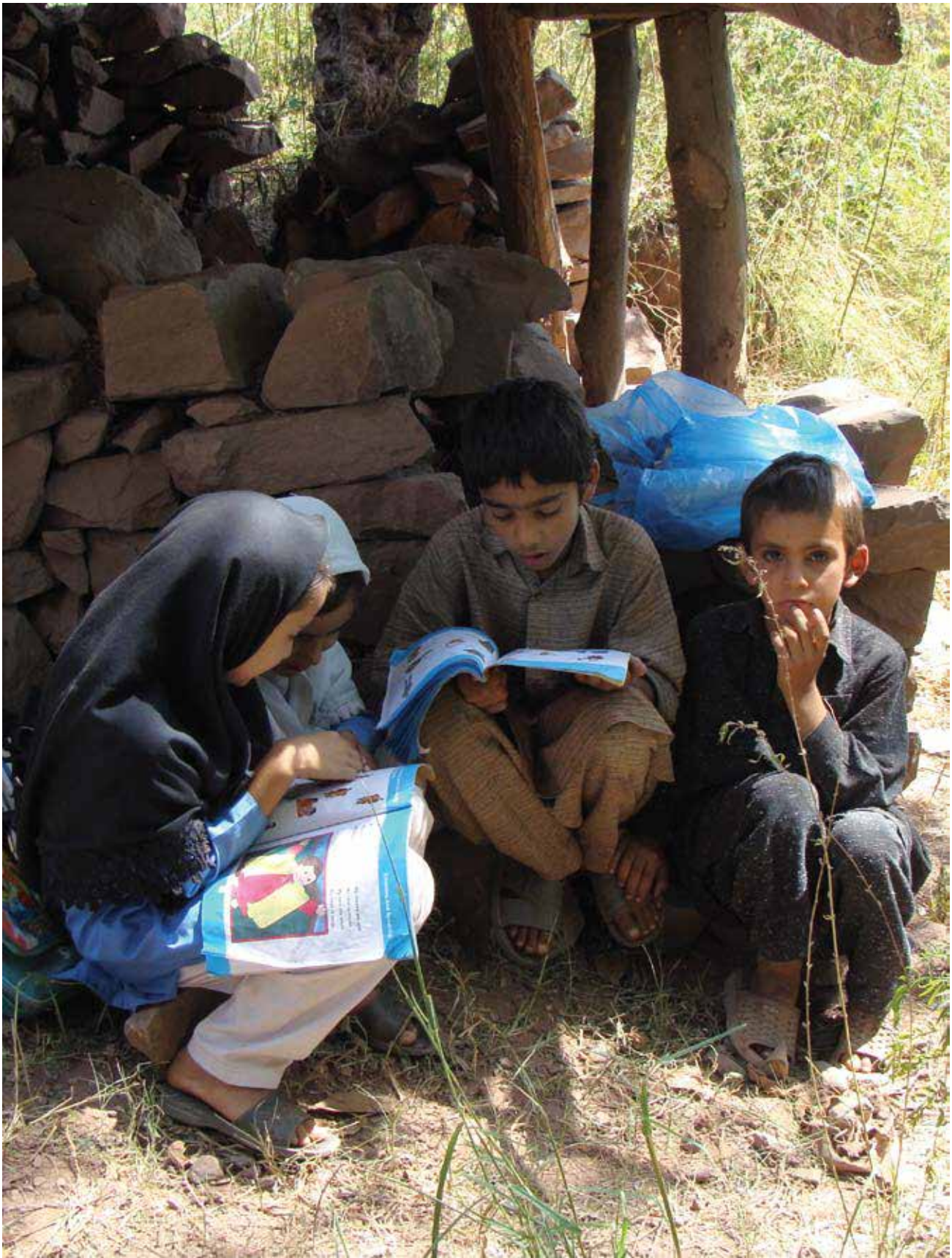
“The building of all thirteen primary schools in this area collapsed in the earthquake. As yet, none has been reconstructed by the government. An international organization provided tents as makeshift schools – but these are now quite dilapidated.”

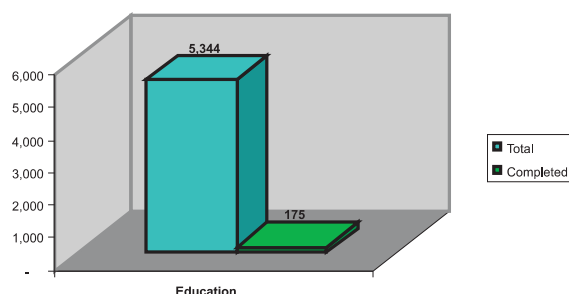
A local woman, Union Council Garhi Habibullah, District
Mansehra



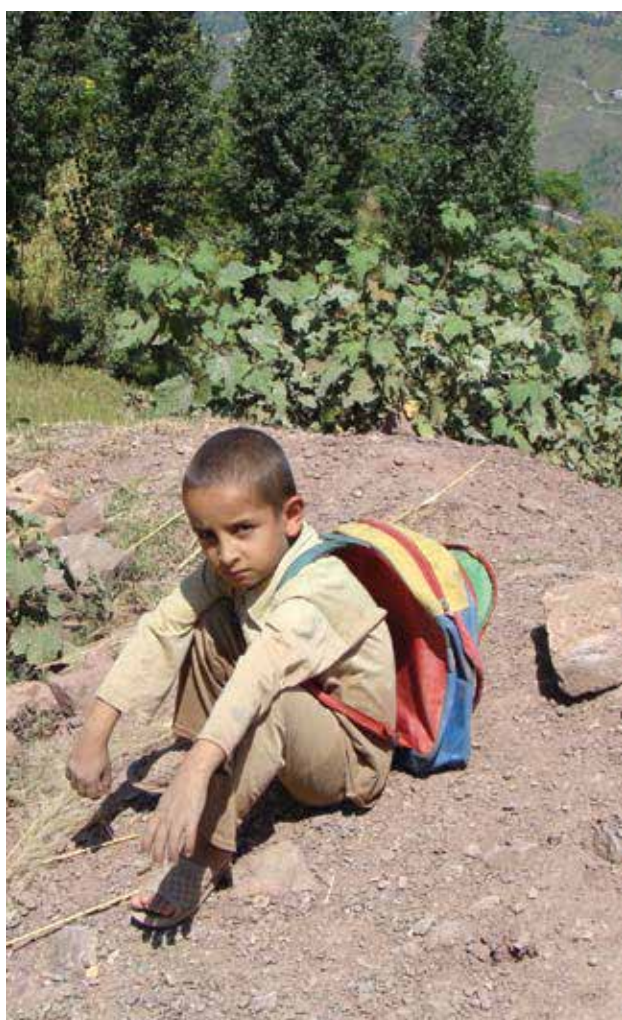
ERRA's August 2008 report corroborates public claims. It confirms that 175 schools have been reconstructed out of a total 5,344 that are to be rebuilt; of which 4,052 schools were due to be complete by 30 June 2008. 998 schools are still at the planning stage, 1,724 are at a tendering stage, and 1,155 are stated to be under construction which could mean that a contract for it is awarded or actual construction has started. These figures do not include 203 schools which were excluded from planning due to land issues.







Lack of schools is affecting education and the future of children in the areas affected by the quake. Children are unable to attend school in bad weather as the tents do not provide adequate protection. Even if they make the effort to reach the school, it is likely that the school timings will be reduced due to bad weather.



“Government must give priority attention to school reconstruction. At present children sit under the sun to study. They are reluctant to attend “tent schools” because they are hot, and if it rains the tents leak, water is also not available. Nearly half of the students in our school have dropped out.”

A local teacher, Union Council Rashang, District Battagram

The pathetic state of public education is also affecting the morale of teachers. Many are unwilling to teach in these circumstances, adding to the pool of absentee teachers.

“Teachers in government schools remained absent from schools for more than a year. Our children are deprived of education which will affect their future”

A local woman, Union Council Ghanool, District Mansehra

Of the schools rebuilt, some lack staff or basic amenities like drinking water. Where schools did not exist prior to the quake, life continues as before.

“Education facilities are in a very bad way. In our union council, only one boys’ primary school has been completed with the help of donors, while work on a boys’ middle school is in progress with support from an international organization.”

A local woman, Union Council Dalola, District Abbottabad



Health

Barely basic facilities for health were operational in some areas before the quake. Many were destroyed by the quake, further reducing the number of facilities available for local people. Limited emergency facilities made the difference between life and death during the short window of search and rescue immediately following the quake. Transporting the injured to the nearest medical facility became a pressing priority.

“Two days after the earthquake, we set up a food camp at Ayub Medical Complex. I will never forget the sight that met us as we walked through the gates of the Complex. Hundreds of injured people were littered in the gardens of the Complex unable and unwilling to enter the building that was declared unsafe. Many of the injured were writhing in pain. Their hapless relatives helplessly watching, hoping someone will provide relief.”

A young male volunteer

Teams of doctors and health practitioners from across the country traveled to the affected areas, providing relief and saving lives. Many also came from other countries. Temporary health facilities continued to provide healthcare after the emergency relief phase had concluded. Many provided facilities that are better than what was available before the quake. Gradually, they were closed down, but reconstruction of facilities is not yet complete.



“Our local BHU was destroyed by the earthquake. No reconstruction effort is visible as yet. Temporary facilities set up by an international organization are also now closed. We travel to Mansehra or Abbottabad for healthcare, incurring significant expenses.”

A local woman, Union Council Kukhmung, District Abbottabad



Areas that did not have any facility even before the quake, life continues as before.

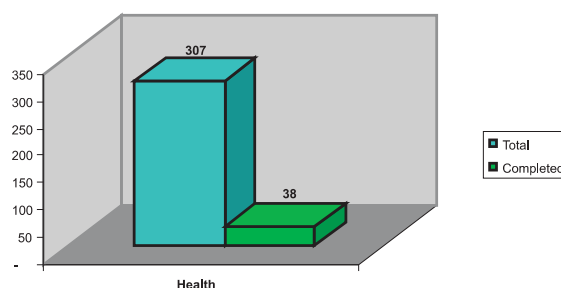
“Even before the quake, there was no facility. We carry the ill or dying on our shoulders to Battagram.”

A local man, Union Council Sakar Gah, District Battagram

Children are the most vulnerable

Aasiya's two-year old son was born soon after the quake. He was running high fever for several days. Aasiya and her husband traveled to Garhi Habibullah with the two-year toddler to consult a doctor. Pneumonia was diagnosed, and medication prescribed. “Keep the baby warm,” the doctor advised. That night heavy rains lashed their home – a CGI-based shelter built near the ruins of their destroyed house. Their son's condition worsened through the night. As the first signs of morning appeared, Aasiya ran barefoot down the mountainside hoping to get help. Before she could reach the base of the mountain, her son's feeble breathing stopped, his limp body still clutched in her arms.

Figures from ERRA indicate that out of 307 health facilities to be reconstructed, 237 were to be complete by 2008. As of August 2008 only 38 are complete.



Water and sanitation

Piped gravity-based systems drawing water from springs are the most common source of water supply in the mountainous regions affected by the quake. In many places the quake destroyed the piped distribution mechanism, in other areas storage tanks collapsed, and in some places the source itself dried up. Women are worse off as they now walk longer distances to fetch water. Limited water supply also delayed house reconstruction.

“Our condition is now much worse. We used to walk half a mile before the quake to fetch water, now we walk more than two miles for water. We are unable to spend much time with our children. Limited time is possible for chores like farming. We have no time for ourselves.”

Local women, Union Council Nammal, District Abbottabad

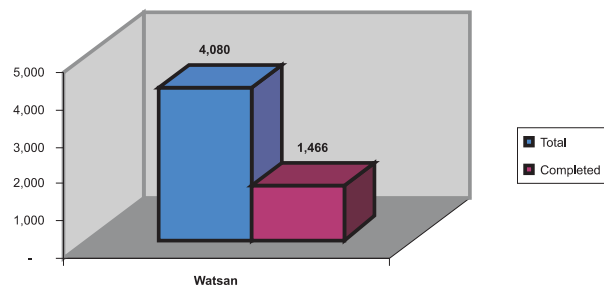
Some organizations helped rebuild community-based water supply systems. But the help was at times not very useful.

“The PVC pipes provided by an organization are still lying around unused. Other organizations started rehabilitating water schemes, but left them unfinished. We urgently need water supply.”

Local men, Union Council Balakot, District Mansehra

In some places, water supply systems were rebuilt without any attention to repairing affected sanitation. In other places, sanitation was repaired without due focus on water supply.

According to ERRA, 4,080 water supply and sanitation schemes affected by the earthquake were to be rebuilt by 30 June 2008. By August 2008 1,466 have been reconstructed. Though lagging behind stated targets, this sector has performed better than all others with an estimated 35 percent completion rate. A probable reason for this is the involvement of organizations of rural people in implementation. Out of the 628 damaged sanitation schemes only 66 have been reconstructed so far. 401 are still being planned, 80 are at the tendering stage and 81 schemes are under construction. None of the affected 23 solid waste management schemes have been reconstructed.



Source: ERRA, 2008, Progress Report as on 1st August, 2008
`<<http://www.erra.gov.pk/Reports/ProgressReportaugust08.pdf>>

Roads

The mountainous regions affected by the quake are remote due to lack of access and a limited road network. It was the most striking characteristic that hindered rescue and relief work immediately after the quake. After a visit to affected areas, the then UN Secretary General, Kofi Anan remarked that he had never seen so much devastation in such a difficult terrain.

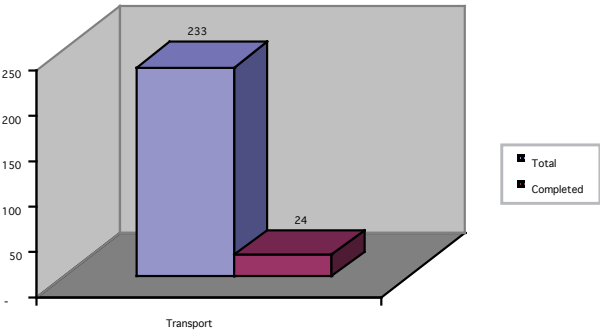
The roads damaged by the quake, were further affected by seasonal vagaries including heavy rain and snowfall. Landslides dangerously narrowed mountain roads, greatly increasing risks.

“Young Javed was killed when the driver of the jeep he was traveling in was unable to negotiate the narrow descent on the dangerous hilly track. Among those injured in the accident was Aslam who was paralyzed from waist down. Due to the road conditions, it was nearly two hours before the injured could be transported to the nearest hospital.”

A local man, Union Council Boi, District Abbottabad

Deteriorating road conditions also make it more difficult to access health, schools, and government offices. They have also raised transportation costs, increasing the cost of construction.

ERRA reports do not specify the length of reconstructed roads. They state that out of 233 planned road construction schemes, only 24 are completed so far. Moreover, the roads that are complete are generally main roads and highways, while the priority of those affected by the quake is roads that service remote areas. Reconstruction of such roads is not visible as yet.



Chapter 3

Urap: Union Council Rehabilitation Action Plan Planning by the people -- for the people

This chapter presents Pattan Kalan's Urap. In 2007-08, Omar Asghar Khan Development Foundation brought together people of different villages of Pattan Kalan to analyze their post-quake situation, and prioritize their needs at the village and union council levels. Interventions proposed to meet these needs and estimated costs of implementation formed the Urap.

The Urap allows citizens to compare their priorities with that proposed by the government through approved budgets. Where priorities match, the role of citizens is to monitor the use of funds and the implementation of plans. In case of a mismatch, citizens can advocate inclusion of their priorities in government budgets and also explore other funding avenues. The process of developing the Urap draws people of a union council into iterative discussions, data collection, analysis, and negotiation. Validation is achieved through People's Assemblies -- open public debate forums. The Urap is a living document, a shared vision of citizens of a union council outlining their minimum needs for rehabilitation and development. It proposes priorities for public financing.

The Pattan Kalan Urap provides a basis for dialogue and negotiation between the people of the UC and the state to achieve synergies ensuring public funds are used for public priorities.

This Urap also provides a model for use in other union councils to promote public participation, accountability and transparency.

The union council is the smallest administrative unit. Pattan Kalan is one of the 51 union councils of District Abbottabad. It is located on the eastern edge of the District where it forms part of the North-West Frontier's border with District Muzaffarabad of Azad Jammu & Kashmir. It also borders with District Abbottabad's union councils Kukhmang and Boi to the north, Kuthwal to the west, Beerangali and Nammal to the south. According to official census figures of 1998, Pattan Kalan has a population of 16,116. Its main villages include Bandi Sarara, Banota, Chamiali, Khokhrial, Larri, Sialkot, Maseena Kalan and Pattan Kalan.

More than 200 union councils were affected by the 2005 earthquake. Pattan Kalan is one of the eight worst affected union councils in District Abbottabad. This was one of the reasons for selecting it for the Urap process in 2007. The other reason was its weak institutional base, which presented challenges to the processes of public analysis and negotiation that an Urap generates. The Foundation was committed to overcoming these challenges by integrating the creation and strengthening of village-based People's Organizations in the Urap process.

In 2006-07, the Foundation assisted people of various selected villages to analyze their situation and propose a Village Rehabilitation Action Plan (Vrap) which was taken to the level of a union council in the form of a Union Council Rehabilitation Action Plan (Urap). In 2007-08, the Foundation initiated the Urap process in Pattan Kalan which is broadly divided into four key stages:

Stage 1: analyzing conditions and situation

Selecting villages for Vrap: The union council comprises of 24 villages and settlements. The Foundation and local people selected four villages in which Vrap would be prepared. The selection of the villages was based on levels of destruction, geographic location, and the existence of effective village-based organizations of women and men called People's Organizations.

Developing a Vrap framework: The Vrap framework developed by the Foundation staff and its partner People's Organizations includes five key questions:

1. **How has the earthquake impacted poverty and the poor?**

What is the impact of the quake on impoverishing households or moving them out of poverty? What are changes within a household, and between women and men – who is impoverished or better-off after the quake? What are changes, if any, in local power dynamics? Has the quake increased or reduced social exclusion? Who is excluded and why?

2. **What are perceptions on rights? How have they changed since the earthquake?**

What are perceived individual rights/entitlement? Have they changed since the quake? Do rights vary between different groups, and between women and men? What is the perceived source of each right?

3. **What is the impact of the earthquake on people's assets?**

What was the effect of the quake on the natural resource base, land, housing, produce, markets, public and private infrastructure, social services including health and education, and sources of livelihood? How did the changes, if any, impact the lives of women and men? How did households cope with the shock? Are there public and social safety nets for the vulnerable, which are preferred and why? What are post-earthquake credit needs? Did the earthquake affect community bonding? Did it generate conflicts? If yes, how were they managed?



Using PRA for group analysis

4. What is the response of the government and non-government institutions to the earthquake?

Are groups of different people able to influence institutions? How do they rate the response of government, and formal and non-formal institutions? Do people have access to different government departments like livestock and agriculture? Do different groups of people have access to justice?

5. Based on the analysis from the above four issues, please state what are priority rehabilitation needs of the community and how can they be met?

Training of local male and female activists for conducting Vrap: Six women and ten men drawn from four villages of Pattan Kalan selected for the

Stage 2: moving from village to union council

Bringing people of the UC together: In iterative meetings during April 2008 people from different villages of Pattan Kalan came together, and developed a shared commitment to the Vrap concept introduced by the Foundation. They created a social map of the union council, and identified 24 villages and settlements as generally perceived by local people – which often varies from official records that are based on revenue villages. Tasks were assigned to ensure that areas that were not yet represented were included in the process.

Complementing data: The Vrap process generated interesting qualitative analysis and insights. To complement it, a questionnaire survey was conducted using the Vrap framework as a base. The survey was conducted by local activists and urban youth trained and supervised by the Foundation's staff. The survey covered ten percent of total households, with equal representation of women and men as respondents, of each village of the union council. The results of the survey were analyzed and tabulated. Its findings included priorities for rehabilitation and development of each village as well as existing facilities.

Data on government priorities: The Foundation staff through extensive efforts gathered data on government allocations or projects in various

Vraps participated in a series of short training workshops conducted by the Foundation in May-June 2007. The training developed a shared understanding on the Vrap process, and skills in using Participatory Reflection & Action for analysis.

Conducting Vraps: In each village separate groups of women and men analyzed their situation, and identified priorities. The process was supported by trained activists and the Foundation's staff. It involved as many people as possible, though participation of the more vulnerable was given priority. Generally, the process in each village took 10-15 days. The analysis was documented in a format provided by the Foundation. Analysis from different Vraps was synthesized by the Foundation.

for projects in various sectors that had either begun or earmarked through the issuance of PC-1's. This was verified on the ground as far as was possible.

Developing synergies and negotiating priorities: In the period July-August 2008, a series of meetings was held in which women and men from each village of the union council reviewed the results of their analysis and began the process of synergizing needs and priorities. A map developed from the social map was presented for approval and with a few minor changes was adopted representing location of roads and villages. A number of large copies of the agreed map were printed and displayed.



"This is the first time I have seen a map of our union council showing our villages"

A male activist, Union Council Pattan Kalan

Participants were divided village-wise and given lists of priorities identified through the Vrap and surveys. These were also displayed on charts for all participants to view. The groups were given an opportunity to review the priorities.

Each group located their village on the map and placed symbols for the top three priorities on it. These were reviewed and those impacting more than one village were identified and transferred onto another map symbolizing the progression from village to union council planning.

Inter-village dependencies and linkages were analyzed through a networking diagram created on another map. Ribbons were pinned on the map to show different links symbolizing access to facilities and social and political contacts.

The diagram and discussion gave interesting insights into local political dynamics. Based on the networking diagram, villages were grouped in clusters and tasked with reviewing priorities and deciding on the most effective sharing of facilities identified by more than one village including schools, health facilities, roads and larger water supply schemes. Group deliberations were shared in a plenary. The placement of facilities was negotiated using the concept of cost-effectiveness and displayed on a map that represented the Urap. It identified interventions suggested by local people to meet their rehabilitation and development needs. Costing of each intervention was by drawing up estimates through in-house discussions and verified through field visits.



Using PRA for group analysis

Stage 3: Public validation

An estimated 500 women and 700 men were involved in the process so far. It was decided that the findings would be shared with more people and the Urap validated through this process. This was done through two People's Assemblies held in two distinct geographical areas of the union council.

At each people's assembly, participants discussed the concept of a Urap and its role in people's lives. The different stages of developing the Urap in Pattan Kalan were shared and its findings presented for further discussion and validation. Discussion also revolved around the role of Uraps for ensuring public participation and accountability. Finally, a strategy for the use of the Urap for negotiating improved rehabilitation and development policies was developed through an iterative process.



Participants defined a Urap as a plan developed by the people for the people, reflecting their priorities and aspirations for rehabilitation and development over a fixed timeframe. It is able to:

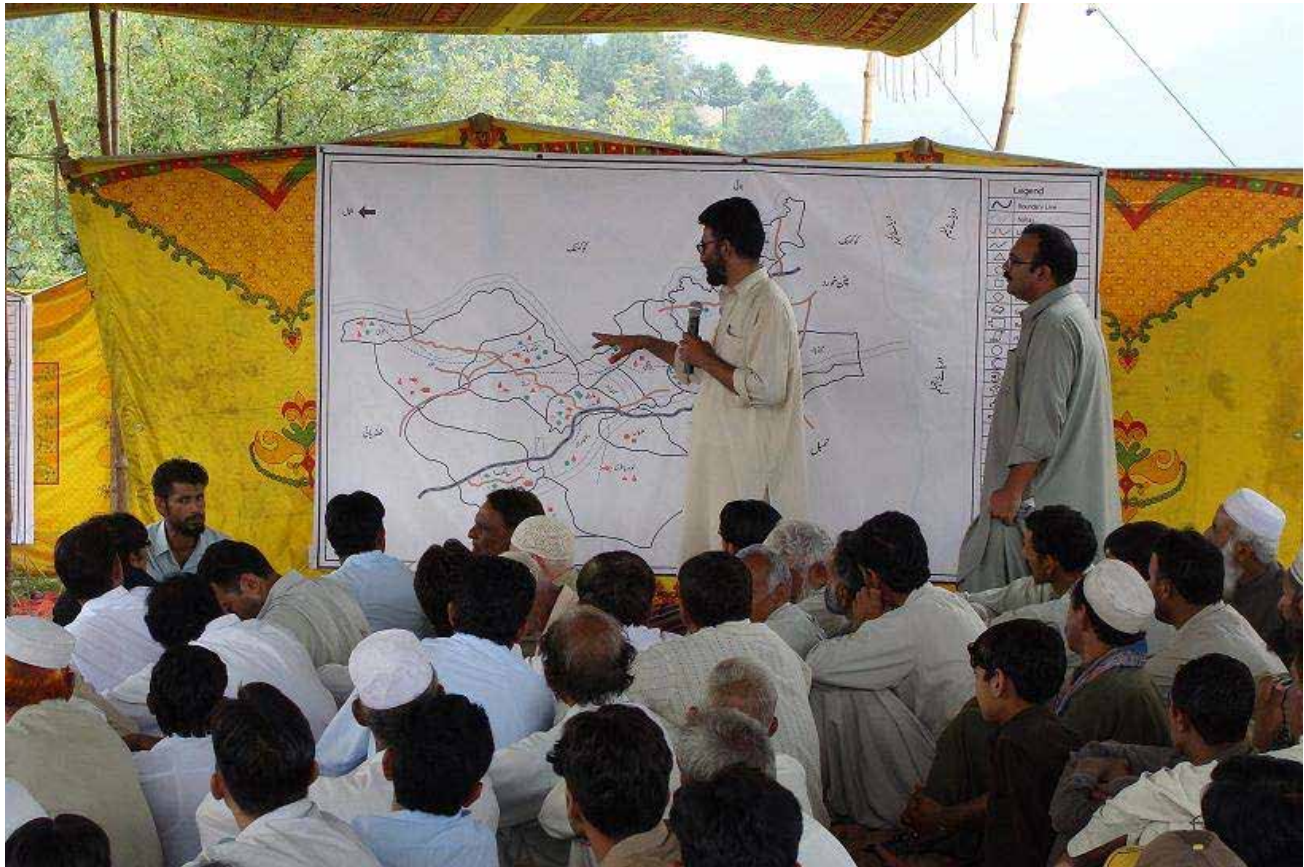
- Ascertain the needs of the union council as seen by the people
- Develop ownership of a development plan for the union council
- Make it a basis for an advocacy campaign
- Use it as a tool for negotiating with various tiers of government
- Provide information to public representatives and other stakeholders

People of the union council involved in the process informed the assembly how the Urap was developed. Steps identified by them included: conducting Uraps and surveys; ascertaining village and union council priorities; synthesizing people's priorities; analyzing needs and making choices; presenting and validating findings and choices.

Activists identified assigned priorities at village level and informed others how these would benefit other villages within the union council. Those that were negotiated were also highlighted and the reasons for changes were shared. This process focused on people's priorities and mainly dealt with the following sectors: schools, health facilities, roads, water, and others. This was followed by presenting sector-wise government allocations, and comparing them against people's stated priorities. Gaps in resources were also identified.

It was stressed that the Urap is a living document. However, to ensure integrity of data and analysis, a methodology was adopted for making changes in it. It was decided if one or more individuals want to propose a change, they should approach the local village organization and move a resolution requesting the change.

The resolution must carry signature of at least 50 percent of total households of the village. The resolution would be tabled at six-monthly union council meetings for approval. These meetings will help monitor progress on projects.



Strategic use of the URAP: next steps

- Strengthen village-based people's organizations of women and men
- Organize village-level meetings to share the process and output, and enhance public ownership
- Organize meetings with the provincial and federal government including ERRA to share the Urap and explain its process. Projects clearly identified and costs estimated will enable better negotiation.
- Present the Urap to donor agencies to seek support and explain the process
- Identify projects that could be implemented in partnership to reduce costs
- Implement phase-wise development within a prescribed timeframe.
- Initiate a communication campaign to focus attention on the Urap process

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