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**APPROACHES TO CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT:
A STUDY OF SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONS IN PAKISTAN**

by
Victoria E. Carlan

A Thesis Submitted to
the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfilment of
the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts
The Norman Paterson School of International Affairs

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The undersigned hereby recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research acceptance of this thesis submitted by VICTORIA ELIZABETH CARLAN partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to examine how three support organizations in Pakistan have translated the concept of capacity development into meaningful activities. Three support organizations were invited to participate in this study including: South Asia Partnership - Pakistan, Strengthening Participatory Organizations and NGO Resource Centre in Lahore, Islamabad and Karachi respectively. Using a case study method and employing a participatory research approach, the study explores how capacity development is defined and examines the activities that support the capacity development process. Detailed case studies capture each support organization's relevant history and organizational attributes such as structure, governance, partnerships and resources. They also present capacity development strategies and activities as well as report on the preliminary results witnessed to date. A cross-case analysis extracts the similarities and differences of the capacity development approaches. The results of this analysis aim to improve the development community's understanding of the capacity development of community based organizations in Pakistan as well as provide insight on how the concept has been operationalized within the current development environment.

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*To David
who witnessed (almost all of) the transformation.*

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background

In November 1993, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the Institute On Governance and the Aga Khan Foundation Canada brought together 13 individuals from the international development community to debate and discuss the concept of capacity development¹. "The workshop was devoted to looking specifically at the challenges to donor organizations arising from their work in capacity programmes. This choice arose from the composition of the workshop² and the obvious need for donors to think through the implications of capacity development for their own operations" (Morgan and Carlan 1994: 3). Throughout the three-day workshop, participants struggled with perspective and definitions (as many of us still do), sometimes pointed fingers (usually at the World Bank), exchanged experiences, and applauded new ideas. By the end of the workshop, two main conclusions emerged: first, that capacity development, broadly defined, should be seen as a strategic objective of the donor community; and second, that capacity development (as we were beginning to understand it) would demand profound changes to policies and procedures of both donors and developing countries (Morgan 1994b:155).

¹ For a summary of the results of this workshop see Morgan, Peter and Carlan, Victoria (Eds.). (1994). Emerging Issues In Capacity Development: Proceedings of a Workshop. Ottawa, Ontario: Institute On Governance.

² All but two participants were either from or working with bilateral or multilateral development agencies.

For all the participants, the workshop was an excellent opportunity to reflect on our progress and to identify issues for further consideration. We made progress, but there was still a long way to go. Absent was a perspective from those whose capacity donors were trying to help to develop. What would this workshop have been like if we had involved more developing country partners in the debate? Would representatives from developing countries view capacity development differently? What would they think of the complex conceptual frameworks, ambiguous definitions, increasing emphasis on participatory approaches, etc.? How many would welcome this new orientation of development assistance as an effective strategy to improve sustainable development within their individual context? While donors have the time and resources to study these issues, a larger crowd around the table (ie. representatives from developing countries and those on the front lines of capacity development programs) may have made for a more interesting and, perhaps, useful debate. After all, it is their capacity that most donors seek to develop.

Research Objective

This curiosity for a developing country perspective of capacity development led me to this study. In 1994, I received a CIDA Award to travel to Pakistan to work with three support organizations and their partners. I would learn from the practitioners themselves about capacity development. In particular, I would examine how three "capacity builders" (support organizations in Pakistan) had translated the concept into operational activities by exploring how they defined capacity development and examining the activities that supported their capacity development process. With their cooperation, I would provide an outsider an

insider's view of the process at the grassroots level, in other words, a view of capacity development in action.

Why Pakistan?

While this study is primarily about the concept of capacity development, it is also a study about Pakistan's social sector and its nongovernmental organizations (NGO) community. Over the past forty years, Pakistan has had an impressive record of economic growth. Despite this success, Pakistan ranks lower than average in all key human development indicators tracked by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) (128th out of 174 countries) (UNDP 1995). The benefits of an increasing gross domestic product simply have not reached the majority of Pakistan's population. The statistics on human development in Pakistan speak for themselves: 46 per cent of children under five are malnourished; only 55 per cent of the population has access to basic health services (35 per cent in rural areas); literacy rates are 47 per cent for males and 21 per cent for females; and so on.

Recognizing that economic development will be limited by the progress of human development, the Government of Pakistan (GoP), donors including the World Bank, UNDP and CIDA, and the international NGO community are concentrating their efforts on developing Pakistan's social sector. In particular, the GoP, in cooperation with provincial governments and representatives from the NGO community, has prepared a five year Social Action Program (1992-95). Through the Social Action Program, the GoP aims to improve the delivery of social services by devolving decision making to the district level and

strengthening links to the NGO community. How to implement these ideas and mobilize Pakistan's NGO community, however, remains the subject of much debate and discussion.

Pakistan's NGO community is relatively young and significantly underdeveloped compared with that of India and Bangladesh. Despite its youth, government records indicate that there are literally thousands of NGOs working in all areas and levels of society. The majority of them are community based organizations (CBOs) which work at the grassroots level and have limited access to financial and technical resources. Most CBOs maintain a welfare orientation and, like their counterparts around the world, suffer from lack of professional, management and implementation skills. Too often, their existence is dependent on one or two dynamic individuals who have the ideas and energy to get things started but are less successful in sustaining long-term activities. Despite these weaknesses, CBOs represent an important resource for improving Pakistan's social sector.

In recent years, support organizations have also emerged in Pakistan with the financial support and encouragement of the donor community. Support organizations help create and strengthen the organizational capacity of CBOs as well as forge links between CBOs and remote levels of government, donors and financial institutions. Many people in the development community believe that these organizations are an important link to the development of Pakistan's social sector. It will be through their efforts that energies at the local level will be channelled to facilitate human development in Pakistan. Hence, Pakistan's development goal of enhancing human development with the cooperation of its NGO

community and the subsequent need to strengthen the NGO community to fulfil this role provides an ideal opportunity from which to study capacity development.

Organization of the Study

This study begins with an overview of the concept of capacity development (chapter two).

In particular, I examine how this concept is different from other institutional ideas of the past.

I also define and describe the concept in order to provide a starting point from which to begin this study. Chapter three summarizes my research approach. It explains how I employed a case study method with a participatory research approach to capture the real life events of each of the three support organizations. The case studies report on the key historical events that affected the evolution of each support organization, its organizational features, the capacity development process itself, and the preliminary results achieved to date.

My analysis begins with an examination of the forces that have shaped Pakistan's NGO community and the resulting impact. This contextual overview, found in chapter four, provides the necessary background information to appreciate and understand fully the capacity development approaches examined in this study. Detailed case studies follow in chapter five.

Finally, using the results of the case studies, I complete a cross-case analysis in order to extract the similarities and differences among the support organizations' conceptual and operational approaches to capacity development. In particular, I address the central questions

of this thesis. Specifically, how capacity development is defined? And, what activities under what conditions contribute to capacity development? Using the results of this cross-case analysis, I then return to the original definition and conceptual framework presented in chapter two to explore some of the lessons learned by the support organizations and myself in doing and studying capacity development. Chapter six and seven contain the results and conclusions of this study respectively.

Clarifying the Terms

As will become evident, the study of capacity development is complicated by the fact that the international development community has yet to arrive at a comprehensive definition of the concept or a thorough understanding of the approaches that lead to its successful implementation. Part of the problem lies in the confusing and sometimes conflicting terminology (also known as jargon) that inevitably complicates any discussion about capacity development. For example, capacity development has often been equated with institutional development, organizational development has been mistaken for institutional development, and the terms institution and organization have been commonly (although again mistakenly) used interchangeably by many development practitioners. To reduce this confusion, I begin this study by clarifying the terms institution and organization and the difference between institutional development and organizational development. Chapter two will examine in greater detail the difference between capacity development and institutional development.

For the purposes of this study, institutions are defined as stable patterns of behaviour that are recognized and valued by society (Fowler 1992:14). According to Uphoff (1986), "institutions, whether organizations or not, *are complexes of norms and behaviours that persist over time by serving collectively valued purposes*. Institutions can be concrete, like a nation's central bank, or quite diffuse and general such as the institution of money" (Uphoff 1986:9, emphasis in original).

"Organizations are purposeful, structured, role-bounded social units" (Fowler 1992:15). As such they "can only become institutionalized as they acquire social value and stability" (Fowler 1992:15). As Uphoff (1992) explains, "organizations can become more 'institutional' to the extent that they enjoy special status and legitimacy by satisfying people's needs over time and meeting their normative expectations" (1992:5). Hence, "not all organizations are institutions and not all institutions are simply aggregations or organizations" (Fowler 1992:15).

Given these distinctions, the difference between institutional development and organizational development is evident. The former refers "to changes that are intended to *occur outside of any single organization*, in patterns and arrangements of society" (Fowler 1992:15, emphasis mine). For example, how NGOs, in general, relate to government agencies. The latter refers "to activities that are aimed at change *within an organization*, even if those changes are meant to help in its own institutionalization" (Fowler 1992:15, emphasis mine).

Finally, there has been considerable discussion within the development community about whether to use the term capacity development or capacity building. According to the donor community, "the word 'building' may not be ideal as it has connotations of starting something from scratch and implies a blueprint approach" (James 1994:5). To avoid the implication (and perceived paternalism) that developing countries have no capacity, donors use the term capacity development. Individuals in Pakistan's development community use the terms interchangeably (and were often perplexed when I asked them to explain how the two terms were different). For consistency, I use the term capacity development unless individuals have made explicit reference to capacity building. The terms, however, have the same meaning.

Now that we have the terminology in order, what does the concept of capacity development mean? The next chapter answers this question and in so doing provides a useful starting point from which to examine the concept of capacity development.

CHAPTER TWO

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT: AN OVERVIEW

Capacity development—a process which frustrates the program officer, challenges the academic, mystifies the politician, and confounds the local consultant (journal entry, August 18, 1995).

The study of capacity development is no easy endeavour. Despite a great deal of interest in the concept, the development community has not arrived at a clear, comprehensive definition nor a consensus on how to do it (Morgan and Carlan 1994:3). Part of the reason for this lack of clarity is the concept's complexity. For example, capacity development has been described as "a process by which people and systems, operating within dynamic contexts, enhance their abilities to develop and implement strategies in pursuit of their objectives for increased performance in a sustainable way" (Universalia 1994:22). Definitions such as this yield a rather daunting picture for any practitioner commissioned to go forth and "develop capacity". In addition, how it is defined and practised depends on one's perspective and interests (Honadle 1986:9). For example, capacity development has been defined broadly (ie. synonymous with development), narrowly (ie. consisting primarily of training and human resource development) and somewhere in between (ie. concentrating on organizations and their networks) (Brinkerhoff February 6, 1995:personal communication). While donors claim to have been involved in capacity development for over 40 years (Adamolekun 1994, CIDA 1994, UNDP 1994a), it has only been within the last five years that they have given it serious attention. The concept is still in a developmental state and struggles, like any new idea, with meaning, relevance and acceptance.

In this chapter, I provide an overview of the concept of capacity development. In particular, I explore why the development community, in particular donor agencies, are increasingly interested in the concept. I also examine how it is different from institutional issues used in the past. Finally, in order to provide a concrete starting point from which to begin this study, I define and describe the concept.

Capacity Development: The Key to Overseas Development Assistance

Many donors claim that capacity development has been the goal of the donor community since the 1950s (Morgan and Carlan 1994:3). While this may be true, it has only been within the last five years that specific capacity development interventions have been introduced into their policies and practices. The UNDP, for example, maintains that "UNDP-funded technical cooperation has had the objective of capacity strengthening for self-reliance throughout most of its existence" (UNDP/DAI 1993:3). However, it was not until 1990 that the UNDP tried to arrive at an agreed definition for and approach to capacity development by establishing an internal Task Force on Capacity Building (Smith November 28, 1994:personal communication).

The World Bank also claims that it has had a long history of dealing with capacity issues. According to Adamolekun (1994), a Public Sector Management Specialist, the Bank's efforts can be traced back to the 1950s when the Economic Development Institute was established in response to the Bank's concerns with the capacity of its borrower members to effectively

manage economic development (1994:75). Over 30 years passed before the Bank returned to more specific capacity issues. According to Adamolekun (1994),

The next major initiative of the Bank, relating to what is now called capacity building, was the *World Development Report 1983* on management in development. This publication was followed by the establishment of Public Sector Management units or divisions in the different regions of the Bank as well as at the central level. In 1989, the Bank published *Sub-Saharan Africa: From Crisis to Sustainable Growth : A Long-Term Perspective Study* in which capacity building was specifically highlighted as a critical issue in promoting social-economic development (1994:75).

Since 1989, capacity building has been featured prominently in a number of research initiatives¹. The World Bank has also modified its internal processes to support capacity development (Adamolekun 1994:75) and has created new technical divisions such as Capacity Building and Implementation Division in the Africa Technical Department.

Bilateral donors also profess to be long-time supporters of the concept of capacity development. For example, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) claims that "capacity development has always been an implicit objective of the Canadian development cooperation programme since the early years of the External Aid Office in the 1950s" (CIDA 1994:1). It has only been within the last two years, however, that the agency has attempted to explicitly articulate what is meant by capacity development and since 1994 that bilateral branch programs began to address specifically capacity development issues (Baser September 12, 1995:personal communication).

¹ See *Managing Technical Assistance in the 1990s* (World Bank 1991).

If donors have been involved in capacity development for all these years, why then this new or renewed interest? There are two related reasons that explain this explicit shift towards capacity development. First and foremost is the perennial debate on aid effectiveness. Aid or overseas development assistance as practised for the last forty years has still not produced the impact or results anticipated. While donors have made positive contributions to both economic and social development, the majority of development programs designed to help the poor have failed or are unsustainable. According to the UNDP (1994a),

During the past 50 years, developing countries have received significant flows of technical cooperation resources, much of which has been aimed at supporting institution building or human resource development. While some important skills and institutions have been supported, it is clear that there have been problems of their sustainability. It is also clear that some of the ways in which technical cooperation resources are utilized have not supported capacity development and may even in some cases have contributed to the process of capacity destruction (UNDP 1994a:2).

Donors have still not got it right. As a result, they continue to search for ways to improve the effectiveness of development assistance and to ensure sustainable development. It is the disappointing results of development assistance that compels donors to ask what should or could they do differently. For many, capacity development represents a possible solution.

While development assistance has not produced the results anticipated, all efforts have not been lost. Over time, the development community has learned a great deal about the development process itself. Hence, the second reason for this increasing preoccupation with capacity development--to advance our understanding of development.

Development experts consider capacity development to be the next phase in our understanding of institutional development (Morgan 1994a, UNDP 1994b)². As noted by the UNDP (1994b), capacity development offers something more than previous approaches.

Capacity building involves two new perspectives over institutional approaches of the 1970s and 1980s. The first is the strategic objective of sustainable development which gives rise to issues of "interconnectedness" and the need for a wide range of actors to participate and contribute. The second is a related conception of management which focusses on the development of collective capabilities and the critical importance of endogenous ownership and control of the development program (UNDP 1994b:3).

Capacity development, therefore, offers a broader view of development. Unlike any other time before, issues such as ownership (ie. who drives the development process) and the importance of inter-institutional relationships, are being given greater attention as are the political, cultural and social realities that affect the development process (Grindle and Hilderbrand 1994, Loubser 1994, Morgan and Qualman 1996).

Building on the knowledge and experience of the past forty years of development cooperation, the concept of capacity development offers the development community, in particular donor agencies, a new (and perhaps more relevant) starting point from which to plan and provide development assistance. Excited by its prospects (despite limited understanding of all its implications) donor agencies are promoting it to be the "missing link in development, the primary objective of aid and a precondition to achieve sustainable development impact" (European Centre for Policy Development and Management 1995:1).

² For a brief history of institutional ideas in development see "Capacity Development - An Introduction" in Emerging Issues in Capacity Development: Proceedings of a Workshop (Morgan 1994a:8-10).

As will become evident in the next section, it also challenges donors as well as national governments, NGOs and the private sector to look differently at the process of development and their respective roles in it.

Capacity Development Defined

There has been no easy path to develop a comprehensive definition of capacity development or to identify approaches that would lead to the successful implementation of the process. Donors are struggling with its complexity and the respective challenges to the current mode of development assistance that it demands. While definition is difficult, it is nevertheless important particularly in an environment where participant interests are diverse and relationships complicated by politics and culture. For the purposes of this study, I will use the following definition of capacity development,

a process by which groups, institutions and individuals increase their ability to understand and deal with their development needs within a broad context and in a sustainable manner (Canadian Partnership Branch 1996:4).

Many practitioners argue that definitions like this one are too broad to capture the conceptual dynamics of capacity development let alone its operational significance. While this is true, it does offer a starting point from which to begin this study. Questions, however, remain on how to *do* capacity development. Where to begin? How to assess progress? Who should be involved and how? To further explore these questions and the concept itself, I present a conceptual framework from which to view the concept at a more practical level. First,

however, I examine how capacity development is different from other development concepts of the past.

A Case of Mistaken Identity

For some practitioners, the concept of capacity development is "simply the latest designer label for what they have always been doing" (Morgan and Carlan 1994:3): a new name for the same "old" activities, commonly technical assistance, training and human resource development. For example, Fowler (1992) states that " 'capacity building' is the term commonly used to describe the official aid systems (technical assistance) and a training approach to institutional development" (1992:3). Capacity development has also been reduced to organizational and institutional development. In a study of Northern NGO approaches to capacity building of their Southern partners, the International NGO Training and Research Centre (INTRAC) defined capacity building as "an explicit outside intervention to improve an organization's performance in relation to its mission, context, resources and sustainability" (James 1994:5). According to INTRAC, this definition is "to all intents and purposes,...the same as organization development, but avoids the argument over institution and organization" (James 1994:5). While training, technical assistance, and organizational and institutional development may comprise a capacity development intervention, a closer examination of the concept reveals that they are only part(s) of a larger, ongoing process which involve a wide range of players from various sectors and levels of society.

Morgan and Qualman (1996) in their examination of recent donor thinking about institutional

and capacity issues offer some insight into how capacity development is different from previous institutional theories. According to Morgan and Qualman (1996), capacity development "represents a more 'macro' institutional approach than any of its predecessors including traditional institutional practices which focussed on management analysis and organizational development" (1996:7). Greater attention is now being given to political issues, creating institutional incentives that encourage specific individual and institutional behaviours, and an increasing awareness of informal organizations and institutions in enhancing or inhibiting the development process (Morgan and Qualman 1996:7-8).

More than any other perspective, "capacity development looks at creating capable 'states' (ie. as opposed to governments) and looks at the enhancement and development of broad functions of public management such as policy formulation and public sector reform" (Morgan and Qualman 1996:9). As such, it recognizes and responds to problems that are inherently complex and multifaceted and that demand the involvement of many organizations to solve. Hence, the development process involves simultaneously the development and management of government, private and volunteer sector organizations and their respective relationships.

Capacity development also extends beyond organizational re-engineering to consider the conditions under which institutional and societal change can occur (Morgan and Qualman 1996:9). According to Morgan and Qualman (1996),

It is becoming apparent that simply 'building' or 're-engineering' organizations will have little effect in the absence of supportive conditions--a greater sense of accountability, transparency, social trust,...capacity programs are as much exercises in social innovation as they are ones in technical improvement (1996:9).

There is also growing recognition that networks or clusters of both formal and informal organizations "play a crucial role in determining the rate and the direction of development" (Morgan and Qualman 1996:9). In particular, the donor community has learned that performance improvements to individual organizations (no matter how successful) are limited when the institutional environment and related networks are ignored. Hence, it is important to deal with "whole systems in action" (Morgan and Qualman 1996:10) which makes for a complex and frustrating task for anyone wanting to support or to measure capacity development.

Finally, capacity development is viewed as "a process of personal, organizational and even societal *change* that depends upon indigenous energy, commitment, and ownership to give it momentum and sustainability" (Morgan and Qualman 1996:11, emphasis mine). Organizational change theorists such as Jick (1995), French, Wendell, Bell and Zawacki (1995) and others argue that key ingredients for large scale organizational transformations are commitment, leadership, resources and time. While donors can support the development of local leaders and provide urgently needed resources they cannot create or sustain local commitment. As Loubser (1994) notes "capacity development is not what is done for a society, but what a society does for itself" (1994:27). As such the process must be initiated,

designed, managed and sustained from within (Foote North 1994, Jaycox 1993, Rondinelli 1994). For donor agencies and national governments this means significant changes to how development assistance is currently managed. The traditional supply driven and control oriented environment of the past must be transformed into a demand driven, responsive environment for the future.

Change of the magnitude envisioned by national governments and donor agencies will likely take many years to realize. While it is extremely difficult (if not impossible) to determine precisely how much time is required for the successful implementation of capacity development programs, there is a growing consensus that it is a long term, ongoing process (Grindle and Hilderbrand 1994, James 1994, Loubser 1994, Morgan and Carlan 1994). "Long" however is a relative term that depends on the sector and the capacity needs of the organization, institution and country at any one time. For example, capacity issues in the case of public sector reform may take 15 to 20 years to address (Morgan 1994a:12). On the other hand, the Katalysis Foundation, an American NGO that works to strengthen the institutional abilities of its partners in Central America, maintains that partnership and the capacity development process is for life (Jones 1993 in James 1994:15). Capacity development challenges donors to look beyond projects and programs to an ongoing process of change where the point at which a capacity development initiative (ie. the extent to which development assistance) should begin or end may be difficult to determine.

Clearly, the 1990s bring the development community a new perspective on institutional and capacity issues. While it can intellectually understand these changes, the development community remains unclear on how to put these ideas into practise (at least within the current structures within which development assistance is administered). A more concrete, practical model is required. The next section provides such a model.

The Dimensions of Capacity Development

In 1994, the UNDP and the World Bank commissioned the Harvard Institute for International Development to develop an analytical framework by which to study building sustainable capacity in the public sector³. The study produced useful insights on public sector management issues as well as offered an innovative framework from which to view the capacity development process regardless of a thematic focus⁴. A simplified version of this framework is presented here.

The model is based on the assumption that capacity development refers to the specific improvements in the ability of organizations, either singly or in cooperation with other organizations, to perform appropriate tasks (Grindle and Hilderbrand 1994:3-4) or to achieve specific development goals. According to Grindle and Hilderbrand (1994) "appropriate tasks

³ For the preliminary results of this study see Building Sustainable Capacity in the Public Sector: What Can be Done? (Grindle and Hilderbrand 1994).

⁴ This framework was developed to help donor agencies (ie. external agents) to explore capacity issues related to the public sector. It therefore has been developed with donor's needs and interests in mind. It can be useful to map out the key players, analyze the broad nature of the problems and decide upon an intervention point. It does not, however, describe how or when to intervene. It also says very little about the dynamics of the different dimensions.

are those defined by necessity, history or situation in specific contexts" (1994:4). The capacity development process therefore begins by asking the question: capacity for what? (Rondinelli 1994, UNDP 1994a). Answering this question provides a critical point of reference from which to formulate coherent and effective strategies for capacity development (UNDP 1994a:4). For their part, donors are pursuing sectoral specializations based on their own policy priorities (Morgan 1994b:162). For example the UNDP helps to build the capacity of a sustainable public sector (Grindle and Hilderbrand 1994); the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's Development Assistance Committee examines capacity development in environment (OECD/DAC 1994); and the World Bank concentrates on policy analysis and development management (World Bank 1991). Regardless of donor priorities, however, the need for and practise of capacity development depends on a country's economic, political, social, cultural, environmental and historical conditions (Grindle and Hilderbrand 1994, Loubser 1994, Morgan 1994a, Saldanha 1994). Hence, defining what tasks or development goals a country should pursue is a critical first step during which interests of donors, national governments as well as other stakeholders (ie. the public and other development organizations such as NGOs) must be balanced with abilities.

When a starting point is not clearly evident, Rondinelli (1994) suggests to begin with broadly stated capacity development objectives and to "work backwards to define the kinds of capacities required to achieve these objectives" (Rondinelli 1994:70). For example, in the study noted above, Grindle and Hilderbrand (1994) identified two broad functions that governments are called upon to perform--the management of the macro economy and the

delivery of services (1994:4). For each, Grindle and Hilderbrand further specified tasks that must be performed in the overall function. For the macroeconomic function, capacity to formulate a budget was assessed. For the service delivery function, the capacity to deliver agricultural extension and maternal child health services was assessed. Once the tasks or development goals are defined, it is easier to consider the five dimensions or levels of analysis of capacity development: the action environment, the institutional context, the task network, organizations and human resources (see figure 1). Each of these points of analysis or capacity development dimensions are briefly described below.

Figure 1: Dimensions of Capacity Development

(Source: Grindle and Hilderbrand 1994)

Action Environment: "Development tasks are carried out in complex environments" (Grindle and Hilderbrand 1994:5) referred to in this framework as the action environment. This dimension places the overall context in the forefront of capacity development initiatives. Conditions within the action environment can facilitate or constrain the performance of specific activities. For example, in Pakistan the long standing tradition of a feudal society has a significant impact on the direction and speed of the development process. Any effort that threatens the economic, political or social position of the feudal landlords will most likely be met with great resistance regardless of the long-term development potential that these changes may hold. Any effort to change the action environment by either external or internal agents such as donor agencies or the national government will focus on altering the basic economic, political and social structures of a society. Understandably, this can take years if not decades to achieve.

Institutional Context: This dimension includes but is not limited to the laws, regulations, policies and programs, structures of authority, and informal power relationships that allow some organizations to acquire resources or influence policy more effectively than others (Grindle and Hilderbrand 1994:8). In particular, it is important to understand what rules and procedures help (formal and informal) organizations to perform specific tasks versus those that lead to inflexibility and unnecessarily complicated requirements that stand in the way of accomplishing them (Grindle and Hilderbrand 1994:8). In addition to performance, roles and responsibilities for development are particularly important aspects within this dimension. How a national government views its role and supports the roles and responsibilities of others has

a significant impact on whose capacities will be developed and in what order. For example, in countries like Pakistan where local governments lack the ability to deliver social services, national governments have a choice to further develop the institution of local government, an alternative institution such as NGOs, or both. The choice is not always clear (or easy) especially when development of one institution may harm the power and control that another possesses (ie. devolution of power reduces resources and control of the central government). Capacity development interventions at this level involve changing structures, procedures, incentive systems of many institutions (Grindle and Hilderbrand 1994:8) and as a result can take a long time to achieve.

The Task Network: "Development tasks are rarely performed by one organization in isolation" (Grindle and Hilderbrand 1994:11). To complete a task demands the coordination of a number of activities among a range of organizations⁵. Attention must be given not only to the organizations which deliver services but the interaction among organizations (Grindle and Hilderbrand 1994:11). Weaknesses within the network exist because of an absence of organizations to fulfil the needed roles, the inadequate performance of organizations within these roles, and/or the lack of effective interaction among organizations (Grindle and Hilderbrand 1994:12). For example, in Pakistan, the absence of community based organizations that can effectively plan, implement and evaluate sustainable development

⁵ Grindle and Hilderbrand (1994) distinguish among "*primary organizations* that have a central role in performing a given task; *secondary organizations* that are essential to the work of primary organizations; and *supporting organizations* that provide important services or support that enable a task to be performed" (Grindle and Hilderbrand 1994:11). Depending on the task (or development goal) and the context (ie. the expressed role of the state) organizations can belong to the public, private and voluntary sectors.

projects and interact with other development organizations such as donors and government make it difficult (if not impossible) for the government to use these organizations to deliver social services to rural communities. To achieve the effective delivery of social services, efforts to develop the organizational capacity of community based organizations to manage social service activities and to work with other development organizations is required. The development of a policy framework that specifies the objectives and mechanism for a particular task as well as improving the quality of communication and coordination among organizations are critical interventions within this dimension (Grindle and Hilderbrand 1994:12-14).

Organizations: Traditionally the most common level of analysis, organizations represent the fourth dimension of capacity development. They also represent the basic building block from which institutional change can occur and the most logical point of intervention for many capacity development initiatives. Both internal and external factors can affect the performance of organizations. While external factors are often beyond the control of organizations, internal factors such as structures, processes, resources, and management styles can be enhanced in order to shape the behaviour of individuals who work in organizations (Grindle and Hilderbrand 1994:14).

Human Resources: Finally, this analytical framework also recognizes the significance of having qualified human resources available to undertake development activities. "Training, recruitment, utilization, retention of managerial, professional and technical talent" are

therefore critical components to the capacity development process (Grindle and Hilderbrand 1994:18). In particular, there is a close connection between human resources and organizations. While training is important, it is not sufficient to address capacity issues at this level. As Grindle and Hilderbrand (1994) have observed, "much of the 'problem' of human resources is a problem of utilization--what jobs individuals are assigned to and what kinds of incentives shape their behaviour in those jobs" (1994:20). Hence, capacity issues at this level should focus on not only training and performance but also incentive systems, problem solving skills, job satisfaction, management and demand creation, and linkages between institutions that train professional and technical resources and the organizations that recruit them (Grindle and Hilderbrand 1994:20). Developing human resources can provide the most immediate and measurable results within a relatively short period of time. However, as many developing countries have witnessed through the "brain drain" of competent individuals, emphasizing the development of human resources has limited impact without equal if not greater attention to the organizational, institutional and societal context in which individuals operate.

This analytical framework illustrates the most important aspects of the capacity development process. It highlights the importance of an appropriate starting point from which to assess and plan for capacity development. It also recognizes the different dimensions or levels of capacity, the interconnectedness among these dimensions and the involvement of a range of actors in the development process (ie. government, private sector organizations, donors, and NGOs). A closer examination of the framework also illustrates how one's perception or

understanding of the capacity development process can depend on one's perspective. For example, local development practitioners involved with the development of organizations or the training of individuals will most likely view capacity development differently than donors (including donors' consultants) and national governments. Limited to a field's eye view, practitioners are more likely (although mistakenly) to equate capacity development with training, human resource development or organizational development. Missing is a macro perspective on which the understanding of capacity development in a particular context depends. This macro perspective (especially in developing countries where public consultation is virtually nonexistent) is reserved for donors and national governments. To arrive at a complete and relevant picture of capacity development, however, will depend on the ability of development community to marry these different perspectives.

Conclusions

In this chapter, I reviewed why the concept of capacity development has become increasingly popular within the lexicon of the international development community. I have also tried to reduce the confusion surrounding the concept by examining the difference between this concept and other institutional theories of the past. Finally, I defined and describe the concept borrowing a conceptual framework developed by the Harvard Institute of International Development in collaboration with the UNDP and the World Bank. I will return to this definition and framework when I compare and contrast the support organizations' understanding and operational interpretation of the concept.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlines how I approached the study of capacity development. I begin by introducing my research partners. I then outline my approach and summarize the details of my field work.

Research Partners

Three support organizations⁶ participated in this study: NGO Resource Centre (NGORC), South Asia Partnership - Pakistan (SAP-PK), and Strengthening Participatory Organizations (SPO) located in Karachi, Lahore and Islamabad respectively. They were invited to participate in this study for a number of reasons. First, they share the same mandate: to develop the capacity of community based organizations (CBOs) in Pakistan. Second, they have been engaged in capacity development activities for relatively the same amount of time--between three and five years⁷. Finally, each organization maintains some relationship with the Canadian international development community. NGORC's activities are funded, in part, by contributions from the Aga Khan Foundation Canada and CIDA. SAP-PK belongs to the

⁶ In this study, a support organization is defined as an NGO which provides a variety of support activities (eg. training, networking, advocacy, research, etc.) to grassroots development organizations, groups or individuals engaged in promoting voluntary development initiatives (see also Institute for Development Research 1990:3). Support organizations may also provide services to other NGOs that support the grassroots organizations or perform coordinating or networking functions.

⁷ Although each support organization involved in this study was established more than five years ago, it has only been within the last three to five years that they have focussed their efforts on capacity development activities specifically. The study begins at this point in their histories.

South Asia Partnership network which includes South Asia Partnership - Canada as one its network members and CIDA as its donor. SPO also receives support from CIDA in the form of financial and technical assistance. Consequently, this study not only provides an opportunity for the three support organizations to reflect on their progress to date and to share their experiences with the broader development community but also an opportunity to reflect on Canadian contributions to social development in Pakistan.

In addition to working directly with the support organizations, the study also involved their clients or "partners"--the CBOs⁸. By meeting with the CBOs in their communities I was able to examine, first hand, the results of the capacity development process and to understand better the conditions under which the process occurs. CBO selection was the responsibility of the support organization. A minimum of three CBOs from different geographic regions were selected in order to develop a greater appreciation for the range of capacity issues addressed. In the end, I met with 15 CBOs in all four provinces of Pakistan.

The Research Questions

In order to develop an understanding of how support organizations operationalized the concept of capacity development, I explored the following questions:

- How was capacity development defined?
- What activities under what conditions contributed to capacity development?

⁸ In this study community based organizations are defined "as the smallest aggregation of individuals or households that regularly engage in some joint development activity as an expression of collective interest" (see also Carroll 1992:11).

The first question provides a starting point from which to begin to understand how and why the organization performs as it does. Answers to this question should shed some light as to how development practitioners view capacity development. The second question addresses how the support organization has operationalized the concept. Answers to this question should capture the activities (ie. tools, techniques and processes) which support capacity development efforts as well as the conditions under which these activities are implemented.

Approach

To answer these questions, I employed a participatory research approach with a case study method. I chose a case study method in order to retain the "holistic and meaningful characteristics of real life events" (Yin 1984:23) as well as provide a structure to guide my research activities. By involving my research partners in all aspects of the research process, from the design to the evaluation of the results and maintaining ongoing dialogue, I learned how they (and their partners) experienced specific problems and responded to various opportunities.

Maguire (1987) argues that participatory researchers must "be with the people" (1987:7). With this in mind, I decided to immerse myself in the lives of the support organizations and their partners. Like Putnam (1993), in his long-term study on institutional evolution of regional government in Italy, I used a "soak and poke" approach to enhance the participatory aspect of the research process. According to Putnam (1993),

"Soaking and poking",... requires the researcher to marinate herself in the minutiae of an institution - to experience its customs and practises, its successes and its failings, as those who live it everyday do. This immersion sharpens our intuitions and provides innumerable clues about how the institution fits together and how it adapts to its environment (1993:12).

Therefore, in addition to conducting interviews, reviewing reports, meeting with representatives from Pakistan's NGO community, I worked along side my research partners in their offices. I attended their meetings, workshops, lunches, and informal gatherings. I also spent time in the communities of their partners learning about their pasts, presents and their hopes for the future. In so doing, I developed a greater appreciation of the complexity of Pakistan's social environment within which the support organizations operate. I also developed insights into the capacity development process that may not have been obvious during a more structured and predefined set of research activities.

Like Putnam, I also recognized the importance of differentiating between insight and evidence (Putnam 1993:12-13). While the exploratory nature of this study did not lend itself to quantitative techniques or statistical analysis, I believed that some form of empirical evidence was necessary to validate the capacity development process. In the absence of baseline data, I interviewed CBO representatives and support organization staff to determine if the CBO's capacity had improved over time and, if so, which of the support organization's interventions most likely contributed to this change. Capacity was defined using the respective development goals of each of the support organizations. For example, one support organization aimed to work with CBOs to develop their capacity to undertake development projects in a sustainable manner. Relying primarily on the accounts of CBO members

regarding their activities before and after they began working with the support organization, I determined whether they possessed this capacity prior to working with the support organization as well as the degree to which they developed this capacity as a result of the its interventions. For the purposes of this study, the degree of success (ie. amount of capacity developed) was less important than the indication of it.

Finally, to ensure accuracy and relevance of my results, I consulted with the support organizations throughout the study to verify the information that I collected. Cunningham (1993) refers to this ongoing consultation as a "back and forth approach": an initial description is developed; it is subsequently compared with a second observation and/or other sources of information (ie. people or documents); the process ends with a modified, more realistic final description of the situation (Cunningham 1993:146). To minimize errors in interpretation and researcher bias caused by cultural and language differences, I asked the same question in different ways. I also used multiple sources of evidence (ie. interviews, site visits, and documents) and obtained feedback from interviewees and outsiders (eg. community leaders, other NGOs) to verify my interpretations and perceptions.

Field Research

The research study took place throughout 1995. I spent approximately six months in Pakistan working with my research partners and their partners and the remaining six months in Canada preparing for the visit to Pakistan or completing the analysis, reporting and follow-up activities. The study comprised three phases: *Phase I - Preparation for Field Work:*

Understanding the Context, Phase II- Information Gathering: Building the Picture of Capacity Development and Phase III - Analysis and Reporting: Sharing Our Experiences.

These phases are described below.

Phase I - Preparing for Field Work: Understanding the Context

The study begins by providing an contextual analysis of Pakistan's NGO community--the forces that have shaped it and the resulting impact. This contextual review increased my sensitivity to the complexity of Pakistani society and the local environment within which NGOs operate. To complete this phase, I conducted a literature review and interviews with experts on Pakistan's development progress and its NGO community (see Appendix B: List of Individuals, Groups and Organizations Interviewed). Results of this phase are found in chapter four.

Phase II - Information Gathering: Building a Picture of Capacity Development

In Phase II, I systematically collected information on each the support organization's strategies and activities in order to construct a picture of the capacity development process. To do this, I first developed a macro view of the organization (ie. organizational structure, processes, management style, areas of operation, etc.) and its capacity development strategies and activities. To complete this task, I conducted individual and group interviews with management, program staff and other supporters of the organization such as board members (see Appendix A: Interview Questions and Appendix B: List of Individuals, Groups and Organizations Interviewed). I used open-ended questions and a semi-structured interview

format and reviewed relevant documents such as annual reports, strategic plans and relevant documentation. I then visited the support organization's partners (the CBOs) to examine the process at a local or micro level. Here, I produced a more specific or micro view of the capacity development process. Again, I use open-ended questions and a semi-structured interview format in addition to participatory techniques such as story telling and field observation. I interviewed representatives from the CBOs and, when possible, members of the community (both men and women).

Since many of the CBOs with whom I met spoke very little English (and I very little Urdu), it was necessary to employ interpreters to complete my field research. With the help of my research partners, I selected interpreters who were familiar with the region and who had some experience working with the NGO community and/or on social development issues. Because of the range of local languages⁹ used in Pakistan, it was necessary to employ different interpreters for every region. I briefed each interpreter on the goals of the study and the research process. I described the general themes that I wanted to investigate and discussed the relevance of each of the case study questions. At the end of the day, we reviewed the results of the visit and discussed the cultural and social issues that were pertinent to my understanding of the community and the CBO's activities. To complete this phase, I returned to the support organization to present my findings and clarify my understanding of

⁹ While Urdu is the national language in Pakistan, there are also four other commonly spoken languages--Punjabi, Baluch, Pushto and Sindhi and hundreds of dialects that correspond to the different regions of the country. Many people in rural communities understand one of the four main local languages although not all people understand Urdu.

the needs and progress (or lack there of) of the CBOs.

Phase III - Analysis and Reporting: Sharing Our Experiences

Analysis of the field research began with preparing individual case studies of each support organization (see Appendix C: Case Study Reporting Format). Individual case studies were reviewed by the respective organization for accuracy and relevance. Results of this phase are reported in chapter five. Using the results of the case studies, I also completed a cross-case analysis to extract the similarities and differences among the support organization's conceptualizations and approaches to capacity development. The results of this analysis are found in chapter six as is an examination of how these operational perspectives relate to the current conceptual understanding of capacity development presented in chapter two.

Limitations

This chapter presented my approach to the study of capacity development including introducing my research partners and the research questions which guided my analysis. Before I report my findings, it is important to acknowledge the limitations of this study. First, the result of this study is a single snapshot of a process that aims to develop the capacity of CBOs in Pakistan. While the organizational capacity of many CBOs has changed, it is unclear whether it will be sustained especially since many of the CBOs still depend (to varying degrees) on support and guidance from the organizations involved in this study. The results reported in the individual case studies, therefore, should be viewed as preliminary at best. Further research (eg. longitudinal evaluations) is necessary to explicitly link activities with

results and to draw definite conclusions on the value and impact of the capacity initiatives undertaken.

Second, the study fails to fully articulate the conditions under which the support organizations operate. Out of convenience and necessity, I met only CBOs that were accessible (ie. located in rural communities close to urban areas) and experienced (ie. CBOs who had been previously exposed to foreigners). They spoke skillfully about their efforts and experiences and, for the most part, were positive about their relationship with the support organization. More remote CBOs, with less experience dealing with or being influenced by outsiders, may not have been so articulate. On the one hand, this situation helped me to collect information at the field level quickly and easily. On the other, this limited sample produced a narrow view of the capacity development process. More in-depth research within specific social class structures and ethnic communities would greatly enhance the results of this study.

Finally, although the study involved the support organizations throughout the research process, it ultimately represents the efforts of a research team of one. I initiated the study and I drove the research process. Consequently, the results of the study reflect *my* understanding of the capacity development process.

CHAPTER FOUR

UNDERSTANDING THE CONTEXT

Pakistan's NGO community is 25 years behind other countries in the region. For the first 25 years of our existence, people were more interested in creating a country. Ideological battles were fought on the political front. No one had time for the NGO community (Dr. Anis Dani, Rural Development and Institutional Specialist, March 12, 1995:personal communication).

As recently as ten years ago, few individuals would have pursued a profession in Pakistan's NGO community. As Smillie observed in his 1988 examination of Pakistan's NGO community,

There are few jobs in the field that pay what professionals would consider a living wage, and there are virtually no career prospects in the field. In recent years, this has changed dramatically in other countries of the region, but in Pakistan it is generally thought that those who work full-time for NGOs are either crazy or, more likely, unable to get a job anywhere else (Smillie 1988:6).

Today, this perception is rapidly changing. The number of NGOs is multiplying¹⁰, financial resources available to support their activities are increasing, knowledge about NGOs is improving, and the number and quality of people attracted to the profession is growing (Smillie and Branch 1994, Society for Participatory Research in Asia 1994). Unlike 25 or even ten years ago, almost everyone in Pakistan has time for the NGO community.

In this chapter, I examine the forces that have influenced the evolution of Pakistan's NGOs

¹⁰ Less than 50 years ago Pakistan reported approximately 150 NGOs. Today, there are thousands. For example, there are over 20,000 NGOs including cooperatives reported in the province of Sindh (Salahuddin 1994:113).

and the resulting impact. This overview of Pakistan's NGO community provides the necessary background information to understand the capacity development approaches examined in this study.

Evolution of Pakistan's NGO Community

Political forces that were underway after partition, a change in government priorities regarding social development and global trends in overseas development assistance have significantly influenced the size, activities and operations of Pakistan's NGO community in the 1990s. There are more NGOs than ever before involved in a range of activities in a variety of sectors (ie. environment, education, health, etc.). However, internal forces such as Pakistan's feudal society have prevented NGOs from realizing their potential. A review of these forces and the resulting impact is provided below.

Political Forces

In the past, the size and function of Pakistan's NGO community was most influenced by internal political forces. Prior to Pakistan's independence, the majority of NGOs were run by Hindus and Sikhs (Haseeb-ur-Rehman 1991:5). These organizations, however, disappeared as many of their leaders left the country during partition. In their place, new organizations emerged to address the needs of thousands of displaced Muslims. NGOs focused on relief and rehabilitation while the newly formed government concentrated on building new political institutions. With little external or internal support, the NGO community remained small with only 151 voluntary organizations reported in 1951 (Haseeb-ur-Rehman 1991:5).

During the 1950s, the Government of Pakistan (GoP) with the assistance of the United Nations formulated the country's first national social policy, developed village social welfare programs and created national and provincial Social Welfare Councils to provide the necessary administrative infrastructure for social development. Despite these efforts, the NGO community remained virtually unchanged in size, function and orientation. Government policies and programs established during this period, however, institutionalized the welfare orientation of NGOs that is still prevalent today. For example, grants-in-aid programs supported only welfare activities such as the creation and maintenance of welfare homes, orphanages, widow homes, the prevention of beggary, prostitution, and juvenile delinquency, the burial and cremation of paupers found dead within the local area, etc. (UNDP 1991:4-5).

It was not until 1961, with the introduction of the Voluntary Social Welfare Agencies (Registration and Control) Ordinance that the NGO community experienced any measurable growth. Under this ordinance every voluntary social welfare agency had to register with the Social Welfare Department (UNDP 1991: 6). In return, the GoP gave financial support to organizations that provided welfare for children, youth, women, juvenile delinquents, socially handicapped, beggars, the aged and infirm as well as family planning, recreational and social education programs (UNDP 1991:6). According to a study on Pakistan's NGO registration laws,

There was suddenly a flood of new agencies hastily organizing themselves and queuing for registration. Many others who had previously been registered under existing legislation, also sought this new form of registration (NGO Resource Centre 1991a:5).

Spurred on by the financial resources available, the NGO community grew in size although its functions and orientation remained unchanged.

During the 1970s, Pakistan's NGO community continued to grow not only in size but also in focus and sophistication. In 1976, in response to the activities surrounding the United Nations Decade for Women, a number of NGOs dealing with women's issues emerged (Dani March 12 1995:personal communication). In 1977, the composition of the NGO community changed dramatically with the beginning of martial law and a crack down on society. According to Dani (1995), a rural development and institutional specialist, "the policies and practices of General Zia resulted in a number of political activists gravitating to the NGO community in search of an alternative means to achieve their political objectives" (Dani March 12, 1995:personal communication). Further changes in the NGO community occurred in 1978 when the military government decreed that in order to be a nominated to a provincial or national assembly, candidates had to be "social workers" (Smillie 1988:2). In 1979, numbers continued to grow and interests continued to diversify with the creation of a Women's Division within the Department of Social Welfare and the institution of project funding (Smillie 1988:2). By the end of 1970s, the NGO community had grown significantly in size and complexity with different levels of experience, knowledge, and incentives for participation.

Changing Government Priorities

During the 1980s, a number of external forces began to influence the NGO community, in

particular its relationship with government. First, like many developing countries around the world, Pakistan experienced a sharp decline in public development resources which necessitated a search for more cost-effective alternatives to conventional public services and development programs (Amjad-Ali et al. 1994:2). With the demonstrated success of a few prominent organizations such as the Aga Khan Rural Support Organization, the Orangi Pilot Project, and the Edhi Foundation, NGOs became a viable service delivery option. Second, the GoP's inability to improve the basic welfare of its citizens began to overshadow the economic accomplishments of the past 25 years. With the population increasing 3 per cent per year (the highest in the region) and economic growth on the decline, social concerns could no longer be ignored. With limited government resources and a poor track record in social development (especially at the local level), the GoP had few places to turn but to the NGO community.

In response to these forces, the GoP launched a five year national program to improve the social sector. Efforts began in 1987 with a grants-in-aid program followed by a comprehensive Social Action Program in 1992. The purpose of this program was to make progress in primary education, nutrition, primary health care, population welfare, rural water supply and sanitation (Morgan and Simpson 1992:14). With the support of the international donor agencies, a US\$7.7 billion five-year program was established for the development and delivery of these social services. At the time, the GoP and donors believed that the success of the program would depend on the participation and involvement of Pakistan's NGO community. Through very little effort of its own, the NGO community had become a central

player in Pakistan's national development activities.

Global Trends in Overseas Development Assistance

The increasing interest and heightened status of the NGO community coincided with changes in the nature of overseas development assistance. In response to years of criticism of aid effectiveness, donors were becoming increasingly interested in improving their impact "on the ground". NGOs which were supposedly "closer to the people" represented a new and potentially more effective channel for bilateral assistance (Smillie January 12 1995:personal communication).

In Pakistan, for various reasons including the nature of its relationship with the GoP and the socio-political environment (Haseeb-ur-Rehman 1991), international donors (including international NGOs) had all but overlooked the NGO community. With the new orientation of overseas development assistance, this situation was about to change radically. Between 1987 and 1994 donor agencies would channel more money to Pakistan's NGO community than ever before. In fact, it has been noted that "there can be few countries in the world where so many donors are pursuing such a small NGO community with so much money, and with so much eagerness to support, strengthen and build" (International Union for the Conservation of Nature [IUCN] 1992:19).

As a result of this interest, the size of the NGO community mushroomed and its activities expanded to meet the growing supply of resources. New mechanisms of support were

created including new funding programs administered directly by embassies and private organizations such as the Swiss Embassy's NGO Program Office and CIDA's Social Sector Fund administered by a Canadian Executing Agency and a locally managed Small Project Office. The donor community's interest also led to the creation of large support organizations such as USAID's Trust Voluntary Organization which was established to disburse project funding and to provide training and technical assistance to the NGO community.

Like the GoP's Social Action Program, donor supported programs served primarily donor policy and programming priorities and not necessarily the interests or needs of the NGO community (IUCN 1992:3). With too much money and too many donors problems began to arise as the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) observed,

For larger NGOs, managing a portfolio of projects and donors requires great skill and dexterity. Some do it reasonably well, some do not. For most it is a blur of forms, monitors, evaluators and visitors,... Inflexible time lines and the stop start business inherent in the project approval all conspire to weaken, rather than strengthen NGOs (IUCN 1992:19).

As a result, NGOs were beginning to spend more time managing donors than they were responding to the needs of their constituents.

Dealing with Institutional and Cultural Realities

In addition to the external forces noted above, there have also been a number of internal forces that have influenced the evolution of Pakistan's NGO community. In particular, institutional and cultural realities have affected the capacity of NGOs to undertake

development activities and its potential to improve institutional performance.

Lack of Local Institutions to Support Development

As noted above, the GoP and the donor community plan to address the social development needs of the country by involving communities in the delivery of social services. While this devolution of responsibility is an admirable pursuit, a closer examination of the institutional capacity of the GoP to support local initiatives demonstrates the significant challenges associated with this approach. For example, District and Union Councils, Pakistan's lowest levels of government, do not have the capacity to lead or support development initiatives--their own or those of NGOs. The meagre development funds raised or received by these bodies are distributed equally among members of the local councils, rather than with reference to properly costed plans and projects (Husain 1992:14). The result, as IUCN observed,

... is that only a small part of small projects are implemented at a given time. The identification of projects is at the discretion of local council members, rather than by the explicit consent of their constituents. There is no forum at the local level for discussion of development priorities or the implementation of projects (Husain 1992:14).

With no accountability system in place, development decisions are left up to the discretion of a few individuals. Even if NGOs function effectively at the local level (which many do), the broader institutional infrastructure required to guide and support their activities is absent.

Coordinating Councils, which are established to coordinate the activities of social service agencies (ie. NGOs), also fail to provide individuals (through their local NGOs) with an opportunity to influence the development process. Chaired by the social welfare officer, these

councils are essentially extensions of the Social Welfare Department designed to control, monitor and implement the GoP's policies and programs (Haseeb-ur-Rehman 1991:20). They do not, therefore, represent or support the needs of the NGO community. In addition, many NGOs refrain from participating in the Coordinating Councils due to the level of corruption that is typical of most government departments. Animosity between NGOs and government prevails, resulting in a lack of communication and understanding between the two groups. As a result, neither understands the other and collaboration and cooperation are generally avoided.

Influence of Feudal Society

The feudal nature of Pakistani society has also influenced the evolution of its NGO community. This mentality (ie. landlord-tenant/patron-client relationship) guides virtually all relationships in Pakistan. It breeds dependency, self-seeking behaviour, lethargy and suspicion (South Asia Partnership - Pakistan in Freedman 1994:4-6) as well as dishonesty, distrust and isolation (Putnam 1993:177). As such, Pakistan's feudal society is a formidable resisting force for anyone who seeks to encourage sustainable development or to empower communities to participate in local development. Its influence should not be underestimated.

The hierarchial, exploitative nature of a feudal society is a self-perpetuating, cumulative force that is difficult to alter once embedded in the social and cultural traditions of a society. As noted by Petrusiewicz (1989),

peasants [tenants or clients] in fact fear exclusion from the patron-client system, for it alone assures their physical subsistence, along with the necessary intermediation with distant state authorities and a primitive kind of private welfare program (pensions for widows and orphans and occasional "gratuities"), so long as the peasant-client remains obedient, "faithful" to the estate, and "available" to perform chores as required by the landlord-patron (in Putnam 1993:145).

Regardless of its obvious drawbacks (ie. exploitation, coercion, dependency), it is a rational strategy for survival (Putnam 1993). A feudal society, therefore, is in a state of equilibrium which maintains a strategy to "never cooperate" (Putnam 1993:177). Isolation remains an enduring quality and vertical communications and exchanges predominate. This reality is also evident in Pakistan as observed by Smillie (1988),

Because people have historically relied on the rich and powerful for their livelihood and survival, the predominant NGO mentality is the one that relates almost entirely to government priorities and to tiny government grants-in-aid. Group formation is less an attempt at self-help, than an effort to gain recognition and help from above (1988:5).

What is absent in Pakistan as in other societies characterized by feudal relations is social capital—"features of social organization such as trust, norms, and networks, that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions" (Putnam 1993:167). Without it, collaboration among citizens is impossible and the performance of institutions is limited (Putnam 1993)¹¹. While the creation of social capital is a means to alter the negative effects of a feudal society and to ensure economic progress, it is much easier said than done. According to theorists of economic history "where you can get to depends on where you are

¹¹ For a more detailed explanation of how civic traditions have fostered economic growth see *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy* (Putnam 1993).

coming from, and some destinations you simply cannot get to from here" (Putnam 1993:179)¹². As Putnam's (1993) study on the institutional evolution of regional government in Italy demonstrates,

once development has been set on a particular course, organizational learning, cultural habits and mental models of the social world reinforce that trajectory. Cooperation or shirking and exploitation become ingrained. Informal norms and culture change more slowly than formal rules, and tend to remold those formal rules, so that external imposition of a common set of formal rules will lead to widely divergent outcomes (1993:179-180)¹³.

The creation of social capital, therefore, is not necessarily guaranteed. As Putnam (1993) observes,

where no prior example of successful civic collaboration exists, it is more difficult to overcome barriers of suspicion and shirking. Faced with new problems requiring collective resolution, men and women everywhere look to their past for solutions (1993:174).

In the case of Pakistan, individuals turn to their landlords and political elites before they will turn to each other to solve problems even when mutual benefit is possible. Changing this condition of social behaviour will require time (most likely decades), resources and commitment to ensure that formal changes take root and corresponding, supportive informal changes occur (especially since there is a great deal that we do not know about how institutional reforms affect the deeper patterns of culture and social structure). Hence, there remains a high degree of uncertainty as to how the NGO community in Pakistan will evolve

¹² See also *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance* (North 1990).

¹³ Since attitudes and practises are mutually reinforcing behaviours, more positive characteristics of a society such as social trust, norms of reciprocity, networks of civic engagement and successful cooperation are also mutually reinforcing and cumulative.

to undertake not only development activities but also build the social capital that economic growth and sustainable development demand.

Pakistan's NGO Community in the 1990s

Where have all these changes and underlying forces left Pakistan's NGO community? This next section provides both a micro and macro perspective of Pakistan's NGO community in the 1990s.

The Micro Perspective

As a result of the increasing interest by donor agencies and government, the number of NGOs has increased dramatically. In 1994, registration authorities reported that nearly 12,000 voluntary agencies have been given legal entities throughout the country (Salahuddin 1994:112) (over 80 times the number of NGOs reported in 1950). How many of these organizations are active, however, is difficult to determine. Registration laws for voluntary agencies do not require renewal. Once registered, "an agency remains in the books forever even if the founding members have forgotten about it" (Salahuddin 1994:112). In addition, non profit social groups are registered with different labels under five laws: the Voluntary Social Welfare Agencies (Registration and Control) Ordinance of 1961 (under which most are registered), the Societies Registration Act of 1860, the Trust Act of 1882, the Cooperative Societies Act of 1925, and the Companies Ordinance of 1984. Poorly maintained records make it difficult to discover the exact number, location or the year of registration of these organizations (Salahuddin 1994:112).

What is certain is that the majority of NGOs are community based organizations (CBOs). On the front line of development, these relatively small, local organizations exist for the betterment of their communities, maintain a welfare orientation, and rely on volunteers for the implementation of their activities (Salahuddin 1994:113). Since CBOs have been traditionally isolated from one another as well as the broader development community, very little is known about their needs and how best to work with them (Salahuddin 1994:113).

Technical and financial resources made available by the donor agencies and the GoP have also lead to an increase in the number of mid-level NGOs and to the creation of support organizations. Mid-level NGOs exist mainly to serve others, engage in development activities with a sectoral focus such as health or the environment and benefit from professional, paid staff (Salahuddin 1994, Smillie and Branch 1994). While support organizations also serve others they do so by working directly with CBOs, mid-level NGOs and other development organizations in order to strengthen the NGO community as a whole.

In its 1991 study of NGOs in Pakistan, the UNDP found that NGOs (CBOs and mid-level NGOs) were involved in a variety of activities including education (which ranked highest at 38 per cent), family planning, medical services, water supply, emergency relief, arts, sports programs, etc. (see table 1) (UNDP 1991:91-92). While welfare-oriented activities continue to dominate (Morgan and Simpson 1992, Salahuddin 1994), there is evidence that NGOs are beginning to diversify their activities and alter their orientation. As noted during a 1994 workshop evaluating the activities and progress of South Asian support organizations,

There is an emerging shift in NGO strategies from 'welfare' to 'development',...as well as greater gender consciousness as seen in Pakistan with the encouraged formation of more women's organizations at the grassroots level (Society for Participatory Research in Asia 1994:61-62).

Table 1: Summary of NGO Activities

Activity	Percentage of NGOs
Education: formal education, sports, coaching, religious education, adult education, organizing workshops	38
Community: women and child development, rehabilitating orphans, family planning	25.2
Health: medical care services, narcotics prevention, rehabilitating the disabled	22.1
Infrastructure: community centres, water supply, emergency relief, road construction, sanitation installations	8.4
Motivation: community development, promoting self help, eliminating social evils, promotion of the arts, coordinating with NGOs	6.3

(Source: UNDP 1991:92)

NGOs are also becoming more involved in advocacy activities. In 1994, Smillie and Branch observed that,

...the level of voice permitted or assumed by NGOs is growing. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, for example, the IUCN coordinated a broad cross sectoral group of NGOs, private sector and government organizations in creating the National Conservation Strategy. Since then, a number of follow up programs have emerged. Many of the smaller development NGOs involved in that process have become very active in advocacy and policy-related environmental issues including species protection,...road diversions,...the construction of illegal high rise buildings (1994:12).

New NGO legislation proposed in July 1994 has also prompted NGOs to become more involved in policy matters by building coalitions and province-wide federations (eg. Sindh

NGO Federation, Balochistan NGOs Federation, NWFP NGOs Coordinating Council, etc.).

Despite an increase in the number of programs offered to improve the management effectiveness of NGOs (ie. to broaden leadership within NGOs), NGOs continue to operate under the leadership of one or two key individuals. For the most part, executive committees continue to be "nothing more than a documentation formality fulfilled in order to obtain registration with the Department of Social Welfare" (UNDP 1991:40). In 1991 community participation remained limited as did the involvement of women with only 11.4 per cent reported as principal officers of an NGO (UNDP 1991:34). While this reality is changing, it is unclear whether the increase in community participation (including the involvement of women) is a result of an institutionalized change in operations or a short-term response to funding conditions established by donor agencies.

Similarly, networking among and between NGOs and other development organizations was virtually nonexistent prior to donor interest (Smillie 1988, Taylor 1986). Networking is now occurring more and more because of the efforts of support organizations and the availability of financial resources to support this activity. Again, it is not known whether the NGO community will be able to sustain these changes especially without the external resources provided by support organizations and donor agencies.

Finally, NGOs (with few exceptions) continue to lack a long term perspective (Smillie and Branch 1994:6). Whether it is due to an aversion towards formal structures associated with

an ineffective and corrupt government and private sector, the resulting behaviours caused by long-standing traditions of a feudal society, or the operational pressures caused by the short time frames demanded by donor supported projects, few NGOs look beyond their immediate projects (Smillie and Branch 1994). As a result, the dependency on support organizations and donor agencies for funding and technical assistance remains.

Based on the above description, the future of Pakistan's NGO community appears positive. With external assistance, there are more and more NGOs actively involved in a range of development activities at both local and national levels. Their skills and knowledge of development practise are expanding and opportunities to participate in the development process are increasing. The journey, however, is far from over as a closer examination of Pakistan's NGO community demonstrates.

The Macro Perspective

As noted previously, Pakistan's political history and the changing priorities of both the GoP and the international donor community has led to an increase in the size of the NGO community, the expansion of its functions and the seeds of change in orientation. While a large number of NGOs at the community level maintain a welfare mentality, a growing number of professionally managed NGOs are linked to government and donors for political and financial reasons. It is important to remember that it is external pressure that motivates many NGOs to grow, diversify and improve its performance and not necessarily a demand or reaction by the people that NGOs represent or serve. Critical questions arise regarding the

long-term sustainability of strengthening the NGO community (especially in light of the obstacles to institutional change created by a feudal society) and the ability of relatively young and experienced NGOs to manage multiple interests.

Equally important to note is that the origins of the NGO community in the 1990s lie in the welfare mentality of community based organizations that were established to take advantage of grants-in-aid programs, a highly educated group of political activists that gravitated to the NGO community when the political arena could no longer serve their interests or a group of individuals who participate in "social work" as a requirement in order to fulfil their political ambitions. Issues such as poverty alleviation, development management and capacity development are as foreign to the recently arrived political activists and opportunists as they are to the welfare-oriented NGO established in the 1950s and 1960s. Organizing themselves to undertake development as envisioned by donors and the GoP is not so simple or straightforward a task. In addition to organizational weaknesses such as the lack of long-term planning practises and the absence of qualified personnel, NGOs must also contend with evolving an understanding of development itself. For donors and their cadres of NGO experts it is easier to provide project funding and training programs than to change long standing attitudes, beliefs and behaviours.

While there are examples of excellent performing NGOs in Pakistan (ie. the Aga Khan Foundation, IUCN, the Orangi Pilot Project, Edhi Foundation), few donors have taken the time to understand fully the conditions for their success. While donors and the GoP

enthusiastically support the NGO community with promises and financial and technical resources, neither have the experience of working directly with NGOs (especially CBOs). Systems to support the NGO community are absent. At one time, small grants-in-aid programs that provided financial support for welfare-oriented government programs had been the only form of institutional support. Large donor-financed support organizations with no models to emulate or to learn from may not necessarily guarantee the long-term results that either donors or the NGO community seek. Despite good intentions, donors may do more harm than good in their enthusiasm to strengthen and develop the capacity of the NGO community. Absent are discussions surrounding the long-term financial sustainability of the NGO community and the associated institutions required to support their participation in national development.

Finally, the enthusiasm of the donor community has inadvertently increased tensions between the GoP and the NGO community. In particular, the GoP has begun to question whether the large volumes of financial and technical resources channelled directly to the NGO community are in addition to past funding allotments or are taking from funding allotments that the GoP might otherwise draw on. Consequently, control has become an important issue which has manifested itself with the GoP proposing new NGO legislation designed to more closely control and monitor NGO activities.

The NGO community opposes this legislation because of the excessive and arbitrary control that it places in the hands of the GoP. For example, the legislation is poorly written with

many terms undefined. This ambiguity leaves considerable discretion for its enforcement up to government officials who, if history suggests, are likely to harass NGOs (Azhar et al. 1995:1). The legislation also provides additional powers to the GoP to cancel or restrict registration of NGOs, hence creating the possibility of NGO monopolies or unpredictable government influence over NGO activities and operations. As well, the legislation forbids NGOs from receiving money directly from foreign agencies. While the GoP claims that this condition is to protect people from the insurgence of militant fundamentalist movements, NGOs fear that channelling funding through the GoP will likely result in corruption, peddling, favouritisms, delays and lack of transparency (Azhar et al. 1995:3).

The consequence of donor agencies' good intentions, therefore, has fuelled tensions between the GoP and the NGO community. This hostility perpetuates the mistrust that prevails within Pakistani society and, in some cases, acts as a counter force to the positive contributions that donor agencies can provide. As a result, it makes institutional change (ie. expanding and supporting the role of NGOs in national development) more difficult to achieve and sustain.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have reviewed the main forces that have stimulated the rapid growth and change of Pakistan's NGO community. I have also highlighted some of the critical cultural and institutional realities that have affected the capacity of the NGO community to undertake development activities. The impact of these forces has been extraordinary with greater numbers of NGOs engaged in development related activities than ever before. Assuming

financial resources and technical assistance continues, the future looks promising for NGOs with positive changes already underway at the micro level. At the macro level, however, more difficult questions remain including: How long will it take to institutionalize the kind of change envisioned especially with the most significant forces propelling this change are external (ie. donor interest in NGOs, GoP interest in alternative delivery systems, etc.) rather than internal (ie. people demanding more public space to participate in development)? What kinds of support mechanisms are best suited to develop and strengthen the NGO community? How long will it take for donors, governments and the NGO community, who have little experience working together, to achieve long-term sustainable solutions to Pakistan's social development problems? Are the current strategies to strengthen the NGO community sustainable given the long-standing social traditions of a feudal society?

These questions and more will be the subject of ongoing debate, discussion and research as Pakistan's NGO community continues to evolve. Of particular interest in this study are the approaches that support organizations are employing to develop the capacity of the NGO community in general and CBOs in particular. The next chapters report on how three such organizations support this development goal and the lessons that they learned along the way.

CHAPTER FIVE

BUILDING A PICTURE OF CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

In this chapter, I build a picture of capacity development by reporting on the activities, both organizational and operational, of the three support organizations involved in this study. In addition to providing detailed information on the capacity development process itself, I summarize the specific historical context in which these organizations and their capacity development approaches have evolved. Organizational attributes such as organizational structure, relationships and resources are highlighted as is the rationale of each support organization's capacity development activities. In order to capture the subtle differences in approach and orientation, I describe in considerable detail the capacity development process itself. Noting how training or networking is conducted and for whom is, therefore, as important as identifying the information to be shared and the skills to be developed. I also identify some of the results of the support organizations' efforts and in so doing I validate the usefulness of the capacity development process itself. Results are preliminary at best. As noted previously, more time and resources would be required to assess effectiveness of the support organizations activities and/or explain cause and effect relationships. Despite this limitation, the individual case studies provide a useful starting point from which to begin the study of the capacity development of CBOs in Pakistan. Case studies are reported chronologically based on when the idea of the organization was conceived. The chapter, therefore, begins with South Asia Partnership - Pakistan. The experiences of Strengthening Participatory Organizations and NGO Resource Centre follow respectively.

Case Study One: South Asia Partnership - Pakistan

History

The history of SAP-PK begins in 1984 when a leading group of Pakistani NGO activists invited a mission from South Asia Partnership - Canada (SAP Canada) to explore the possibility of integrating Pakistan into the South Asia Partnership (SAP)¹⁴ network. In 1987, after years of deliberation, the Canada-Pakistan NGO Support Program (SAP-PK's initial identity) was established with the goal "to improve the quality of life of the poorest segments of the Pakistan population" (Freedman 1994:3).

The program was based on two critical assumptions. First, NGOs were considered "the most effective instruments for implementing development activities in Pakistan" (Management Plan 1987:2 in Freedman 1994:1). Implicit in this assumption was the belief that customary channels of delivering development assistance (ie. government to government) were less effective than channels which linked less formal bodies such as voluntary agencies (Freedman 1994:1). Second, the NGO community's greatest need was access to financial resources (SAP-PK May 1994c:7). By establishing a mechanism to channel Canadian funds to Pakistani NGOs, the NGO Support Program would increase the number of projects managed by local NGOs and therefore provide an urgently needed mechanism to support social and

¹⁴ South Asia Partnership (SAP) is a coalition of Canadian and South Asian volunteer organizations supporting long-term development of socially and economically disadvantaged people in South Asia. Established in 1981, SAP has grown to include 25 member agencies in Canada and more than five hundred village-level partner organizations in five South Asian countries (Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka). In South Asia, SAP forges partnerships with grassroots NGOs working at the village-level and, through long-term programs, strengthens their capacity to manage community development programs (South Asia Partnership Canada 1995:1).

economic development in Pakistan's poorest communities (Freedman 1994:3).

By the end of 1989, Pakistan's NGO community began to feel SAP-PK's presence. The program had linked over 20 urban based organizations with Canadian NGOs (South Asia Partnership - Pakistan [SAP-PK] 1992). The organization had also begun to evolve with the development of policies and procedures and the recruitment of additional staff. The program, however, fell short of funding disbursement targets. Many NGOs were too young and inexperienced for the kind of support that program organizers wanted to extend. According to SAP-PK (1994a),

Although a considerable number of groups of activists, charged with the desire to alleviate poverty, were emerging, they had no understanding of participatory methods of development. They confused development with charity and lacked both the capacity and the vision to act as agents of change (1994a:6).

Consequently, in 1991, SAP-PK's role changed and expanded. Greater emphasis was given to raising the awareness of NGOs, in particular CBOs, regarding the virtues of participatory development and self reliance; working with rural communities in the greatest need of financial and technical support; and addressing the deep rooted problems that inhibited communities from fully participating in Pakistani society. Rather than a mere conduit of Canadian funding, SAP-PK became a "NGO capacity building catalyst" (SAP-PK 1994a:7). While disbursement of funds would continue, it would become only one part of a program that emphasized training, the formation of networks and partnerships, and the implementation of long-term community programs (SAP-PK 1994c:7).

The Organization

SAP-PK's structure, management and systems are as dynamic, progressive and participatory as its mission and its programs. As a promoter of participatory development, the Executive Director actively encourages and supports the full participation of all 13 members of SAP-PK's staff in the decision-making process. A flat organizational structure enhances SAP-PK's participatory management approach and supports its iterative planning process.

Four divisions comprise SAP-PK (see figure 2): the Capacity Building Division conducts SAP-PK's training programs for CBOs; Program Partnership Division provides financial, technical and organizational support to SAP-PK's partners; the Development Support Communications Division prepares and disseminates information to the NGO community; and the Administration and Finance Division maintains the day-to-day administrative and financial requirements of SAP-PK and its partners (SAP-PK 1994d:3). While SAP-PK appears neatly divided into four distinct divisions, it operates "as a living organism in which each division both complements and supplements the others" (Program Partnership Division, April 2 1995:personal communication). As such, SAP-PK's success is dependent on the relationship among these divisions.

Governance

The SAP network's International Council, comprised of the executive director and two National Council members from each national organization as well as representatives from SAP Canada, governs SAP-PK's activities. In addition to its policy making role, the

International Council provides a forum to address global, regional and national issues that confront the entire SAP network. For more specific direction, SAP-PK turns to its National Council which is comprised of 13 members elected every two years by the General Body also comprised of 13 members. National Council and General Body members are Pakistani volunteers who have extensive experience in development. They are either well-known leaders in Pakistan's development community or individuals who have worked voluntarily with SAP-PK at the grassroots level. At this time, participation is only possible by invitation of SAP-PK. The National Council meets at least four times a year to make policy and to approve program proposals. Individual committees, which correspond to SAP-PK's four divisions, provide advice to staff on an ongoing basis.

Figure 2: South Asia Partnership - Pakistan Organogram

(Source: SAP-PK 1995c).

Partners

Over 80 percent of SAP-PK's resources are devoted to established CBOs in socially and economically disadvantaged areas of Pakistan. SAP-PK's remaining resources support developmental and advocacy NGOs¹⁵ that share SAP-PK's vision and are likely to benefit from its experience and network.

Although based in Lahore, SAP-PK is active throughout Pakistan. Limited financial resources, however, restrict SAP-PK's activities to only two provinces per year. For example, SAP-PK targets CBOs in Balochistan and the North West Frontier Province (NWFP) in one year and CBOs in Sindh and Punjab in the next. Between 1991 and 1994, SAP-PK has worked with 120 organizations across the country (see table 2) and trained 190 individuals (see table 3).

Table 2: Number of South Asia Partnership - Pakistan Partners by Province

Year	Province									
	Sindh		Punjab		Baluchistan		NWFP		TOTAL	
	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W
Yr 1991-92	20	10	18	3					38	13
Yr 1992-93					6	12	12	4	18	16
Yr 1993-94	16	5	10	4					26	9
Total	36	15	28	7	6	12	12	4	82	38
Total by Province	51		35		18		16		120	

M = men's organizations which may have women's wing W = all women's organizations

(Source: SAP-PK 1995e).

¹⁵ SAP-PK defines a developmental NGO as an organizations that addresses long-term issues such as community organization, participation and empowerment and deals with specific sectoral problems such as health, literacy and environment. Advocacy NGOs address the root causes of poverty by developing the capacity of CBOs to identify development goals, formulate strategies, and effectively implement projects (SAP-PK 1994c:18).

Table 3: Number of Participants by Gender and Province

PROVINCE	FEMALE	MALE	TOTAL
Sindh	24 (30%)	57 (70%)	81
Punjab	12 (25%)	36 (75%)	48
Balochistan	21 (60%)	14 (40%)	35
NWFP	8 (31%)	18 (69%)	26
TOTALS	65 (34%)	125 (66 %)	190

(Source: SAP-PK 1995e).

SAP-PK has been particularly successful stimulating the involvement of women in development activities in areas that have traditionally opposed women's participation outside the household. For example, in Balochistan 60 per cent of the individuals trained have been women--a significant figure considering the region's conservative traditions.

External Relationships

In addition to building and maintaining relationships with its partners, SAP-PK also manages relations other NGOs and the GoP. By working with other NGOs, SAP-PK builds a collective voice on critical policy issues such as labour laws, human rights issues, etc.. While it welcomes the opportunity to provide advice to government officials on policy-related issues, it is cautious about its relations with the GoP. In particular, SAP-PK does not work directly with government to implement development programs nor encourage its partners to do so. According to SAP-PK, government-sponsored social programs "become part of the dependency game and serve to discourage, rather than encourage a sense of personal or social

responsibility" (Freedman 1994:10). Any effort that promotes this dependency is not development as SAP-PK defines it.

Resources

In 1995, SAP-PK's operational budget was 5.3M rupees (CAN\$212,000) supported entirely by the CIDA. Canadian NGOs, which raise funds from the Canadian public, provide funding for CBO project activities as did CIDA until recent policy changes terminated this type of funding practise.

Future Plans

In the future and assuming additional resources from CIDA can be secured, SAP-PK will expand its activities to other socially and economically disadvantaged areas of Pakistan and add technical components (ie. sector specializations in health, water and sanitation, income generation, etc.) to complement current training and program support activities. SAP-PK also plans to improve its communications practises by adding additional staff and evolving new practises that promote learning (SAP-PK 1994d:8-20).

SAP-PK's Capacity Development Process

SAP-PK's capacity building strategy is based on a social analysis of Pakistan which links the country's inability to sustain traditional success in stimulating national economic growth to the lack of social development¹⁶ (Freedman 1994:9). According to SAP-PK, Pakistani

¹⁶ For a more detailed description of SAP-PK's social analysis see also (Freedman. 1994:9-10).

society is stratified into two tiers: a privileged tier made of a small minority of landed and monied families and another tier which includes everyone else. This two tier system guides virtually all relationships in Pakistan. It also leaves only two options for economic growth: extortion or dependency. Since only a few individuals are in a position to extort, dependency becomes the most pervasive of all social relationships in Pakistan. Dependency, however, creates an environment in which individuals have very little control over their own lives. The only kind of sensible behaviour under these conditions is self-seeking. To break this dependency cycle, SAP-PK believes that Pakistan needs to develop a social environment in which people are encouraged and capable of working collectively to solve community related problems. Hence, SAP-PK aims to build the capacity of CBOs to engage in collective action and to undertake activities that support self-sufficiency.

Capacity Building Defined

SAP-PK defines capacity building as the process by which CBOs are "empowered to undertake activities to address the long term development/social needs of their respective communities" (SAP-PK 1994c:30). More specifically, SAP-PK aims "to enable people to realize their own human potential" (Capacity Building Division, April 3, 1995:personal communication) by "working with individuals and organizations to help them to understand and exercise their human [intellectual], technical, financial, management and organizational resources in order to identify and solve their problems" (Program Partnership Division, April 2, 1995:personal communication).

Strategies

To build the capacity of CBOs, SAP-PK works closely with individuals to promote an understanding of the root causes of underdevelopment in Pakistan and a development orientation that advocates collective action and self reliance. Individuals or social activists (as they are more commonly called) are placed at the centre of all SAP-PK's activities.

According to SAP-PK (n.d.),

...once the capacity of the CBO activist is built, he or she could become a cost effective or programmatic resource for the capacity building of his or her CBO,... The underlying idea is that if SAP-PK initiated a dialogue that could conscientize the activist, he/she would, in turn, be imparting the acquired capability (ie. awareness and skills) to other activists in the organization (SAP-PK n.d.:2).

To help individuals and their respective communities to pursue a life without dependency, SAP-PK provides individuals with the appropriate tools (ie. information, skills and resources) to undertake development projects. SAP-PK also focuses on enhancing the institutional environment of NGOs in order to create a larger public space in which they can operate.

Activities

SAP-PK's capacity building approach consists of five main activities: training, program support (including technical and financial assistance), information collection and dissemination, networking and advocacy. These activities are used to varying degrees depending on the needs of SAP-PK's partners and the opportunities that arise. As a minimum, SAP-PK works for one year with each of its partners raising awareness on development issues and providing a comprehensive training program which includes both

developing the individual capacity of social activists and the organizational capacity of their CBOs. In many cases (although not all), SAP-PK continues to work with CBOs on an ongoing basis to reinforce change through its program support initiatives and networking opportunities. Figure 3 provides a conceptual timeline of SAP-PK's capacity building process. A detailed description SAP-PK's capacity building process follows.

Figure 3: Conceptual Timeline of South Asia Partnership - Pakistan's Capacity Building Approach

- Making Contact: Selecting Program Participants

As a first step, SAP-PK identifies communities with significant social and economic needs (ie. community without access to basic services such as water and sanitation systems, education, etc.). SAP-PK then consults Social Welfare Department's registration lists as well as their own contacts in the community to identify CBOs and/or community leaders in the area who may be interested in SAP-PK's program. Once located, SAP-PK invites CBOs to send two individuals to participate in a day long orientation meeting to introduce SAP-PK's philosophy and its program. Individual field visits follow. Only those individuals which express a sincere interest in learning more about SAP-PK's approach to development are invited to participate in SAP-PK's program.

By inviting two individuals from each CBO to participate, SAP-PK hopes to reduce the burden on individuals to share information with other CBO members and to ensure that knowledge and experience are not lost should one person leave the community or no longer participate in the CBO. Where CBOs are not active but social and economic needs of the community are great, SAP-PK invites individuals, in particular women, who are considered leaders in their communities to participate.

- *Raising Awareness Through Training: The Resource Development Program*

Once program participants are selected, the Capacity Building Division begins its Resource Development Program. During this year long program, SAP-PK works closely with participants to achieve the following:

- to help participants develop an understanding of the causes of underdevelopment in Pakistan in general and in their communities in particular;
- to change participant attitudes from welfare to development, short-term to long-term, individual action to collective action, and women having no role in development to women having an active role in development;
- to create an awareness of the organizational requirements (ie. systems and structure) needed to solve development problems in an integrated, self sufficiency, participatory manner; and
- to acquire basic skills in program design, program implementation and, organizational management.

To realize these objectives, SAP-PK conducts six workshops, which are delivered at a location that is easily accessible by all participants, every two to three months (see table 4). Capacity Building Division staff work as a team (one male and one female) as workshop facilitators. After each workshop, facilitators visit with participants in their communities to address specific technical and conceptual problems. To broaden the impact of the training program, participants are encouraged to share information, skills and experience with other members of the CBO.

- *Reinforcing Change: Program Support*

Upon completion of the Resource Development Program, Program Partnership Division steps in to provide individuals and CBOs with an opportunity to experiment with new concepts and to develop a deeper understanding of the individual and organizational changes required for collective action and self sufficiency. To do this, the Program Partnership Division team (one male and one female) coordinate a series of community meetings, known as development dialogues, to provide a forum for the community to discuss development issues. During the first development dialogue, SAP-PK invites the whole community to meet with the Program Partnership Division team to identify community problems and to review concepts introduced during the Resource Development Program. Additional meetings are held with smaller groups to ensure that the entire community identifies with the conceptual and practical problems brought forth during the larger community meeting. As many as six development dialogues can be held before the Program Partnership Division team feels confident that the CBO understands development concepts and, if interested, is ready for funding.

Table 4: Summary of South Asia Partnership - Pakistan's Resource Development Program

Workshop	Purpose and Activities	Resources	Duration
Mutual Acquittance Workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - introduce participants to SAP-PK staff and program - select final participants 	SAP-PK staff	1 day
Development Orientation Workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - introduce development concepts such as participatory development, self reliance, etc. - develop an understanding of the root causes of underdevelopment and relevant problem solving skills - develop a community survey instrument 	SAP-PK staff	3 days
Capacity Building Workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - report on results of community survey - develop management and project development skills (ie. problem identification, setting objectives, etc.) - link development problems to organizational abilities - reinforce development concepts - begin developing preliminary project proposals 	SAP-PK staff	5 days
Technical Workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - continue to development project proposals by meeting with technical experts in sector specific areas - stimulate linkages between CBOs, technical experts and other NGOs 	SAP-PK staff, technical experts, other NGOs	3 days
Financial Management Workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - develop financial management skills to promote the effective use of resources - develop organizational systems of accountability 	SAP-PK staff	3 days
Interprovincial Workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - provide networking opportunities with other CBOs, NGOs and donor agencies - develop strategies that address common problems among CBOs 	SAP-PK staff, other NGO, donor agencies	1 day

An important indicator for such readiness is whether the CBO engages in participatory development. For example, CBOs must demonstrate that their development activities involve the entire membership, decision making is democratic, and their practises are well understood and transparent to their members. Hence, funding is used to help a CBO to address development problems as well as to provide an opportunity to put new skills and knowledge into practise.

Once development dialogues are completed, SAP-PK invites interested CBOs to submit a project proposal. During this stage, Program Partnership Division works with the CBO to prepare viable projects by facilitating the collective action process and providing technical support. Once completed, the Program Partnership Division presents proposals, on behalf of CBOs, to the National Council for approval¹⁷. Approved proposals are sent to SAP Canada which identifies a Canadian NGO to fund the CBO's activities.

Once a project is underway, Program Partnership Division helps CBOs monitor their activities by providing advice, linking CBOs with other organisations involved in similar activities and, should the need arise, mediating between the Canadian NGO and the CBO. For example, correspondence between the Canadian NGO and CBO is required in English. Since many CBO representatives cannot write English well and Canadians

¹⁷ Criteria for SAP funding includes but is not limited to programs that support women's role in the development process, human resource development programs, and income generating programs that promote community participation rather than individual entrepreneurship.

(generally) cannot read Urdu, SAP-PK translates correspondence accordingly. For CBOs which do not pursue Canadian funding through SAP-PK, SAP-PK provides technical assistance to support their activities in the form of ongoing training and links to sector specific experts.

- *Promoting Understanding: Information Collection, Dissemination and Networking*

SAP-PK believes that information and knowledge are valuable tools in the capacity building process. As such, SAP-PK collects and disseminates development information and provides networking opportunities through a variety of media to facilitate the exchange of ideas, promote the spirit of collective action, and raise awareness on a range of issues that impact Pakistan's NGO community (see table 5).

Table 5: South Asia Partnership - Pakistan's Communications Media

Case Studies: Case studies are the basic medium to share lessons learned among CBOs. They are prepared in Urdu and distributed to interested CBOs. SAP-PK is evolving a strategy to more actively involve CBOs in the preparation of case studies in order to facilitate the internal learning process and to develop CBO's skills in self-evaluation.

Interprovincial Development Dialogues: Held annually, Development Dialogues provide a forum for Resource Development Program graduates and other representatives from the development community to exchange information and discuss common problems. At the end of this one-day event, an English publication is produced and distributed.

Partnership and Communication Exchange (PACE): PACE brings representatives from Canadian and Pakistani development community together to exchange information on development issues of mutual interest such as women's rights, education, literacy.

Networking: As opportunities arise, SAP-PK invites a variety of CBOs and NGOs, in one geographic area or with a particular development interest, to meet and to share their experiences and information.

(Source: SAP-PK 1995b)

Information flows both horizontally and vertically. By providing a medium for CBOs to share lessons among one another (ie. horizontal information flows), SAP-PK helps strengthen CBOs by inspiring and supporting them to improve their performance. By creating opportunities for CBOs to meet with other development organizations, SAP-PK creates important vertical information flows that can improve the level of understanding among development organizations and create a more supportive institutional environment. It is the combination of the two that creates the greatest impact since performance improvements are limited by the degree to which the institutional environment permits NGOs to participate in the development process.

- *Broadening the Impact: Working with Other NGOs*

SAP-PK also works closely with NGOs which can complement its efforts. Support comes primarily in the form of funding, although training, networking opportunities and ongoing advice and guidance is also provided. As opportunities arise, SAP-PK will also work with other NGOs to influence public policies related to the NGO community and the social sector. For example, SAP-PK has been actively involved with other NGOs in Lahore preparing a response to the Government of Pakistan's proposed NGO legislation.

Increasing SAP-PK's Capacity

Finally, SAP-PK recognizes that its effectiveness is limited by its capacity to identify and solve its own organizational problems. Emphasis is given to improving management systems, streamlining administrative procedures, and enhancing staff knowledge and skills.

In addition to formal training opportunities, SAP-PK's participatory management approach provides a mechanism for staff to share experiences, to discuss and debate relevant issues and to evaluate individual and collective performance. SAP-PK also participates in the SAP network which provides an opportunity for member organizations to share information and experiences on a range of issues including best practises and policy issues impacting NGOs in the region.

Results

During the past four years, SAP-PK's guide has been its vision--to transform Pakistan into a nation that encourages, supports and permits equal opportunities for the realization of human potential. To achieve this end, SAP-PK has primarily focussed on both the human resource and organization dimensions of the capacity development framework presented in chapter two. As a result of its efforts, CBOs are adopting a new development orientation and developing skills to promote collective action and self sufficiency. Social relations are also changing with an increase in women's participation in training programs and development projects and NGOs are more aware of the environmental and organizational factors that limit their effectiveness. A brief description of each of these changes is provided below.

Change in Development Orientation

SAP-PK has changed attitudes and behaviours of many women and men across Pakistan regarding development. Individuals are more aware of the root causes of

underdevelopment and the benefits of working collectively to solve development problems. For example, the Rafahi Committee Roras (RCR) in the District of Sialkot has a "broader vision of what is possible and why it is important" (Rafahi Committee Roras, April 8, 1995:personal communication). Prior to meeting SAP-PK, RCR's activities were charity-based (ie. paying for student tuition, purchasing school materials for children who could not afford to, etc.). Only after Resource Development Program did participants understand the benefit of developing human resources within their own community (Rafahi Committee Roras, April 8, 1995:personal communication). As a result, RCR now supports a women's vocational training project coordinated by RCR's newly established women's wing and is expanding the primary education program for girls. In Killi Weria, Balochistan, Tanzeem Ittehad Naujawanaan used its new skills in community mobilization and democratic decision making, in addition to SAP-PK funding, to construct an irrigation system which has greatly improved the economic and social well being of the community. According to Tanzeem Ittehad Naujawanaan (1995), "SAP-PK has taught us how to plan more effectively and make decisions that the whole community can be satisfied with" (Tanzeem Ittehad Naujawanaan, April 18,1995:personal communication).

Not all of SAP-PK's efforts have proven successful. Some CBOs have resisted change. For example, the Community Development Council in Jhelum has been SAP-PK's partner since 1991. Currently, it is receiving funding from SAP-PK to support a Women's Uplift Program designed to develop leadership skills in women and promote women's role in

local development. While program coordinators understand the principles of participatory development, they have failed to integrated these new values into their daily activities. A welfare mentality prevails with program coordinators resisting sharing responsibility and decision making with program participants. A visit to the rural communities confirmed that women have little ownership in the project. Most saw it as a temporary means to increase family income and nothing else.

Transform Social Relations

The SAP-PK program has also transformed social relations within many communities. Every year more and more women are participating in SAP-PK's Resource Development Program. Women's wings of traditionally all male organizations are being established and all women organizations are emerging in many parts of Pakistan (Capacity Building Division, April 13, 1995:personal communication). Women and men from Sindh and Balochistan who originally received training separately now participate comfortably together (Freedman 1994:22). SAP-PK attributes its success to delivering a consistent and clear message to both men and women about the important role that women play in the development process. It also communicates this message by example by working in teams of one male and one female with female staff often leading the process.

Improved Institutional Environment

Finally, SAP-PK's approach is helping to improve the institutional environment for NGOs in Pakistan. Promoting self sufficiency and encouraging networking has lead to an

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increase in the collective activities of Pakistan's NGO community. NGOs including CBOs are more concerned about the long-term future of their organizations. They are also more aware of the problems within Pakistan that limit their effectiveness and the need to work together to address community needs. In particular, SAP-PK's partners have begun to organize themselves in the form of NGO Coordinating Councils (not to be confused with government organized councils) as a means to keep the discussion, debate and ideas flowing. These councils have been established in all four provinces and are in the process of finalizing their mandates, systems and procedures. While the councils' roles in the NGO community may differ (ie. some are involved in advocacy others in training), SAP-PK believes that CBOs working together is a positive first step in creating an environment that recognizes their value and supports their interests.

Case Study Two: Strengthening Participatory Organizations

The story of Strengthening Participatory Organizations (SPO) is a complicated one complete with a large cast of external actors and a series of unexpected circumstances that have influenced greatly its activities, organizational structure and current direction. At first glance, SPO appears to be a large professional organization striving to increase the capacity of CBOs to undertake sustainable development projects. A closer examination, however, reveals that SPO is an organization that is struggling with the demands of large scale organizational change. Hence, to understand SPO's capacity building process, it is important to understand its history and the organizational transformation that is underway.

*History*¹⁸

In December 1985, the Governments of Canada and Pakistan signed a Memorandum of Understanding to establish a Social Sector Fund¹⁹ that would make available a CDN\$15M line of credit for the purchase of Canadian energy equipment. Through this Fund, CDN\$12M would be available to finance social sector projects included in Pakistan's Annual Development Plan and CDN\$3M to finance social sector projects proposed by local NGOs (Cowater International Inc. [Cowater] 1991:4). Over a five year period, the Fund would promote projects in education, health and population welfare with emphasis on women and the development of rural areas (Cowater 1991:5). The Small Projects Office (SPO's initial identity) would administer the Fund and facilitate the development of projects by NGOs.

The Social Sector Fund's (and therefore SPO's) early years (1985 to 1991) were difficult ones. The Government of Pakistan's misunderstanding of its role and funding procedures (ie. the Government of Pakistan viewed SPO as an extension of itself while CIDA viewed it as a separate entity), and a poorly performing Canadian Executing Agency (CEA) resulted in the slow disbursement of funds and an erosion of the Fund's purchasing power (Cowater 1991:2-8). Early in 1991, after a long period of great uncertainty over whether

¹⁸ For a more detailed description of SPO's history see *Status Report and Initial Workplan 1991-1993. Pakistan Social Sector Fund Small Project Office* (Cowater 1991) and *SSF:SPO Pakistan Final Report Phase 1, May 1991 to March 1994* (Cowater 1994).

¹⁹ The Social Sector Fund uses counterparts funds (local currency proceeds generated by the sale of Canadian energy equipment provided by a line of credit from CIDA) to mitigate the adverse impact of structural adjustment programs on vulnerable group by funding social sector projects initiated by the Government of Pakistan or Pakistan's NGO community (Cowater 1991:1-2).

to continue an apparently failing project, CIDA decided not only to extend its support to June 1993 with a new CEA, Cowater International Inc. (Cowater), but also to include within the CEA's mandate "the building of some form of an institution to carry on beyond the project period the work which SPO was, and would be, initiating" (Cowater 1994:39). With this decision, the Small Projects Office would live on although its form, shape and specific activities were still to be determined.

When Cowater began its work, the Small Projects Office consisted of 19 staff who were mostly young and inexperienced in key functional areas including organizational and project appraisal, project design and management, and training techniques (Cowater 1991:27). There was also a large backlog of project proposals. In almost six years of operation, the Small Projects Office had processed only 44 of 257 proposals (17 per cent) received (Cowater 1991:30). According to Cowater (1991), only one third (15) of these were considered "safe" (ie. the NGO was reliable, the project justified and the organization had the capacity to implement it) (Cowater 1991:34). CIDA's belief that if it "set up a fund they (NGOs) will come" had proven unrealistic. As a result, CIDA and Cowater began a rebuilding process that would include improving administrative systems to more efficiently process project proposals, temporarily centralizing activities in order to build up staff resources, and developing a long-term vision that would guide SPO's future activities (Cowater 1991:34, Cowater 1994:8).

To lead this process, Cowater recruited a Canadian Director who would determine a proper course of action to improve the effectiveness of the Social Sector Fund and the nature of the resulting organizational transformation of the Small Projects Office. Within a short period of time, SPO was on track. For the first time, it had a mission statement-- "to strengthen NGOs to assist low income communities achieve their own goals through sustainable development" (Cowater 1991:53). SPO's capacity building process was also beginning to evolve. Not only would SPO provide funding to NGOs but it would also broaden its activities to include strengthening and sustaining their organizational, technical and managerial competencies (particularly in planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of development projects), and promoting networking, information sharing and policy reforms to support the NGO community (Cowater 1991:54).

During the rebuilding process, CIDA and Cowater had assumed that SPO would support rural communities through existing NGOs (Cowater 1994:27). The Canadian Director quickly learned, however, that many of its potential partners were urban based, sector specific and not motivated, mandated or equipped for outreach to rural communities (Cowater 1994:27). Working with SPO would demand a change in mandate that many NGOs were not willing or capable to make (Cowater 1994:27). In addition, while SPO dealt with critical internal issues, other support organizations had emerged (Cowater 1994:34-36). In the absence of an established constituency and in order to avoid duplication, SPO decided (almost by default) to work directly with CBOs. While it could easily do this as a project, Cowater and CIDA believed that it "would be able to continue

even more credibility as a local NGO" (Cowater 1994:36). Hence, the decision to establish SPO as a local, autonomous NGO and to concentrate its efforts on rural CBOs.

Despite a new lease on life (funding secured to 1993) and a new long term vision (the capacity building of rural CBOs), SPO still faced a number of obstacles before it could begin to achieve results. In particular, there was little internal commitment and ownership to the new vision and staff lacked necessary conceptual understanding and skills to implement its new approach. According to Cowater (1994), "the process of Institution Building began based on a vision and commitment shared by CIDA and the CEA but not yet, in any sense owned or understood by the Government of Pakistan, the staff of SPO or the NGOs and CBOs with whom SPO had been and would be working" (Cowater 1994:39). The successful transformation of a centralized, highly administrative, funding project to a decentralized, participatory, local support organization would not only demand the development of new structures, systems and competencies but also the commitment to and ownership of the new vision especially by SPO's staff. With few models available to emulate or learn from (Cowater 1994:65), organizational transformation would not come easily nor quickly. In the years that followed, SPO, with the help of Cowater and a number of external consultants, would build a team of qualified staff through training and recruitment, develop a core program of support for CBOs (ie. SPO's capacity building contact cycle) and begin to decentralize its operations to the regions.

On January 15, 1994, SPO became a registered Pakistani NGO with a new name-- Strengthening Participatory Organizations--to reflect its new vision. A Pakistani Director now leads the organization. The rebuilding process, however, continues as SPO searches for the most effective ways to strengthen rural CBOs.

The Organization

SPO is one of the largest intermediary support organizations in Pakistan with 72 staff including 28 professionals, 14 administrative and 30 support staff (ie. chowkidars, drivers). Resources are divided among four regional offices in Lahore, Peshawar, Quetta and Hyderabad and one sub-office in Markan, Balochistan which administers a village education program (see figure 4).

Located in Islamabad, the National Centre concentrates on strategic planning, coordination, management, administration (Strengthening Participatory Organizations [SPO] 1995a:6), as well as secures and manages the funding of SPO's operations. Its involvement in program activities is limited to the provision of support services to the regions including providing technical support to regional staff in the form of training and program development, collecting and disseminating information related to social development and Pakistan's NGO community, and administering project funding (see table 6). The National Centre is also developing a management information system that will help SPO to monitor and evaluate the impact of its capacity building activities in the field. By processing, analyzing and generating information on each of SPO's partners, SPO's

Learning Information System will assist program staff to determine which interventions are contributing to the capacity building process (National Centre, June 6, 1995:personal communication).

Table 6: Summary of Strengthening Participatory Organizations' National Centre's Program Support Services

Function	Description
Technical Support	Designs and delivers training programs to support regional staff activities (eg. gender issues, financial management, proposal writing, etc.); conducts staff orientation training programs and train-the-trainers workshops; in collaboration with regional staff, develops training programs for CBOs; and collects and disseminates development information through SPO's Development Resource Centre.
Learning Information System*	Gathers, analyzes and generates information that monitors projects in the field, improves the capacity building process and aids in SPO's strategic planning process.
SPO Network (SPONET)	Develops and maintains four databases: 1) an NGO database which contains organizational and program related information on NGOs; 2) a human resource database which contains information on development experts working in the social sector field; 3) a support organization database; and 4) a resource materials database. Introduces new technology to support SPO's activities.
Project Support**	Manages project approval process; administers project support contracts; disburses funds; monitors project activities; and prepares regional and national reports on project funding activities.

* in its developmental stages ** in the process of decentralization

(Source: SPO 1995a)

SPO's regional offices are responsible for implementing its strategy. They decide the geographic focus in the region, identify appropriate partners, provide training, facilitate project support, and encourage linkages and networking among and between CBOs and other development organizations. The regional director provides overall leadership and

liaises with other development organizations in the region while one male and one female program coordinator conduct SPO's programs.

SPO's sub-office in Markan, Balochistan manages SPO's village education program. Sponsored by UNICEF, this program coordinates local village education committees (Anjman-e-Zanana Taleem) to promote female education (SPO 1995a). SPO also manages the Integrated Basic Education Project in Nowshera District, also sponsored by UNICEF, through its SPO-NWFP office. This project aims to increase village awareness about female education in order to rejuvenate schools in rural areas (SPO-NWFP 1995).

SPO's Chief Executive Officer promotes the active involvement of staff in the evolution of SPO's program activities. Senior Management Committee meetings, held quarterly, bring together regional directors and National Centre staff to plan and review SPO's strategic and operational activities. Every six months, SPO conducts a Program Management Review. This three-day meeting provides an opportunity for staff to share experiences, to reflect on the effectiveness of program activities, and to maintain coordination and continuity among regional activities.

Figure 4: Strengthening Participatory Organizations' Organogram

(Source: SPO 1994a)

Governance

A 12 member board of directors, comprised of professionals who have extensive experience in social development, govern SPO's activities. Given SPO's national focus, the board maintains equal regional representation and a gender balance. It meets at least once a year to make policy decisions and approve annual workplans. A Project Approval Committee (PAC), comprised of six board members and SPO's Chief Executive Officer, approves project proposals and monitors project activities on a quarterly basis.

For additional advice on strengthening and expanding its capacity building activities, SPO relies upon a 35 member general body. SPO only invites individuals who manage their own NGO or have some association with a Pakistani development agency to participate. Similar to board member selection, the general body maintains equal regional representation and a gender balance. SPO plans to establish regional councils in order to provide specific guidance to regional offices which, like its board, will be elected from its general body. In the long term, SPO aims to increase the size of the membership to 100 and invite experienced CBOs to participate (National Centre staff, June 4, 1995:personal communication).

SPO also maintains an advisory committee (formerly Small Projects Office's Joint Committee), comprised of SPO's donors (currently CIDA), government representatives and SPO's Chief Executive Officer. The advisory committee meets at least once every

three years to approve SPO's new board of directors. It also provides support to the board on development issues and, if necessary, is used as a pressure group at the donor and government level to influence policy decisions that may affect the NGO community.

Partners

SPO's partners are established CBOs located in rural communities across the country. Regional staff identify priority districts and potential partners based on socioeconomic need and the willingness for CBOs to work together. In order to avoid duplication, SPO targets areas where no other donors or support organizations are present.

In 1995, SPO was working with 138 CBOs in 15 clusters (ie. small groups of CBOs) with the greatest number of CBOs (36 per cent) found in NWFP (see table 7). CBOs range in size from 23 to 5000 members and are involved in a range of sectors including education, training, community health, population welfare, sanitation and water supply. Over 200 individuals from 71 CBOs have completed the Development Planning and Management Program, SPO's core training program (SPO 1995a:6).

Table 7: Number of CBOs by Province

Province	NWFP	Balochistan	Punjab	Sindh	TOTAL
Number of Clusters	4	4	3	4	15
Number of CBOs	49 (36%)	30 (22%)	24 (17%)	35 (25%)	138

(Source: SPO 1995a:6)

As part of its gender equity practises, SPO ensures that women have equal opportunities to participate in the development process. This practise is encouraged by example in the number of female staff that SPO maintains (14 out of 28 professional staff) and promoted through its funding policies (ie. SPO only funds projects that involve women).

External Relationships

SPO develops and maintains positive relations with other NGOs in order to build a collective voice of NGOs in Pakistan and to improve the effectiveness of its own activities. For example, SPO-NWFP is working with other NGOs to establish a Frontier Resource Centre which will provide training and technical support to the province's growing NGO population. Other regional offices support similar efforts including participating in NGO coalitions that have formed or that SPO has helped form (eg. Sindh NGOs Federation). SPO also considers other support organizations as a potential resource. For example, SPO has contracted South Asia Partnership - Pakistan to train its staff on how to develop a CBO's financial management skills and has consulted other support organizations to obtain information and feedback on effective monitoring practises (National Centre staff, November 21, 1995:personal communication).

SPO's relations with international donor agencies and the Government of Pakistan focus primarily on the need to keep key stakeholders involved and informed of its activities. This is particularly important as SPO is dependent on the financial and technical support that these institutions offer. SPO is also fortunate in that its association with CIDA

provides access to other donors and government officials that many other NGOs do not have. This "credibility through association" has resulted in both donors and government officials approaching SPO for advice on how best to work with Pakistan's NGO community as well as assistance implementing policy and program activities.

Resources

Currently, SPO is funded by the CIDA until 1999. In 1995, its annual operating budget was 17.6M rupees (CDN\$800,000). SPO also generates revenues by implementing donor projects that are closely aligned with its mission. For example, SPO manages two UNICEF sponsored projects: the Village Education Program in Markan, Balochistan and the Integrated Basic Education Project in Nowshera District, NWFP. It has also secured a World Bank contract for the Salinity Control and Reclamation Project (SCARP) which is designed to encourage community involvement in the installation and maintenance of 15 tube wells in rural areas in Sindh (SPO 1995a:27).

Future Plans

SPO plans to complete the rebuilding process that began in 1991. This will require completing the decentralization of all its program activities including project funding responsibilities and the establishment of regional councils. To better serve CBOs, SPO's National Centre staff will also work with the regions to improve its training programs and monitoring systems. Equally important will be securing additional staff and ongoing financial support to respond to the growing demand for SPO's services.

SPO'S Capacity Building Process²⁰

SPO believes that inefficient and inappropriate economic, social and political systems are the root cause of poverty and underdevelopment in Pakistan (SPO 1994a:1). While it cannot correct these inefficiencies at the macro level, SPO can improve systems at the micro or community level through CBOs. By working closely with CBOs to develop their knowledge, skills, experience, networks, and confidence, SPO helps them to address local development problems in a sustainable manner. As the capacity of individual organizations to undertake local development activities improves, so too will the capacity of the NGO community to influence the progress and direction of national development in Pakistan (SPO 1994a).

Capacity Building Defined

Capacity building, as defined by SPO, is a process by which CBOs improve their technical, organization and managerial competencies to undertake sustainable development projects (National Centre staff, June 4, 1995:personal communication). It reflects an organizational development process (hence maintains an organization dimension of capacity development) that aims to develop the capacity of CBOs to:

- plan development activities;
- increase community participation;
- improve members' management skills;

²⁰ Information in this section is based on interviews conducted and reports presented by National Centre and SPO- NWFP regional staff and partners.

- train leaders and members;
- involve women in development;
- find and share information with other development organizations;
- address environmental concerns; and
- locate funds and other needed resources (SPO-Sindh 1995:3).

Strategies

SPO's capacity building strategy focuses on responding effectively and efficiently to the needs of CBOs by working in small groups known as clusters, guiding relationships through formal agreements, building organizational capacity through development projects, and ensuring sustainability through the promotion of participation.

- Responding to CBOs' Needs by Working in Clusters

To respond to the growing and urgent needs of the CBO community, SPO organizes its partners into clusters--small groups of six to eight CBOs located in the same geographic area. According to SPO (1994), clusters are cost effective mechanisms to provide training and information and to foster interaction and cooperation among CBOs (1994:9). They also create a greater sense of identity as CBOs begin to relate to a larger community of NGOs which share similar problems and interests (SPO 1994a:9).

- *Developing Relationships Through Partnership Plans*

To ensure that capacity building process is driven by the CBO, SPO and the CBO develop a Partnership Plan to define capacity building goal(s) and associated roles, responsibilities and tasks (SPO-NWFP, November 18, 1995:personal communication). Training, technical assistance, project support and networking activities are included in the Plan as requested and required by the CBO. SPO is responsible for the delivery of the program inputs while the CBO is responsible for tasks such as participating in courses, completing assignments and producing timely progress reports.

- *Building Organizational Capacity Through the Use of Development Projects*

To provide a focus for SPO's capacity building efforts as well as to take advantage of the financial resources remaining in the Social Sector Fund, SPO concentrates on developing the organizational capacity of CBOs to plan, implement and evaluate development projects. In addition to new skills, knowledge and experience, the successful completion of a relevant project provides CBOs with the necessary confidence and motivation to address other problems within their communities independent of SPO's participation.

- *Ensuring Sustainability Through Participation*

Finally, to ensure the sustainability of development activities, SPO advocates the principle of participatory development in all its capacity building activities. This principle is based on the belief that

no development program or strategy can fully achieve its targets without meaningful and democratic participation of the people. And that "people's participation" can only be achieved by self sustaining, broad based, development oriented institutions at the community level (SPO 1994a:7).

Activities

SPO's capacity building process consists of a combination of training, technical assistance, project support, and networking activities delivered within an implementation framework known as the Capacity Building Contact Cycle (see figure 5). Through frequent interaction over a three year period, the contact cycle exposes CBOs to a range of development concepts, develops skills in project planning, implementation and evaluation, promotes participatory development and encourages CBOs to address development problems on a continuous and collective basis. The design and delivery of specific program activities are the responsibility of regional program coordinators although regional directors and National Centre staff provide additional support as required. To respond to the unique needs of the cluster, SPO's program coordinators often modify the sequence or the content of specific program activities. To facilitate the participation of CBOs, SPO finances travel, facility and material costs. The cost to the CBO, therefore, is minimal. An overview of SPO's capacity building contact cycle is provided below.

- Strategic Planning

Every year, program coordinators undertake a strategic planning process to identify the location, scope and direction of SPO's activities in the region. Using information

collected during site visits and from the Social Welfare Department (ie. statistics, reports and NGO registration lists), program coordinators identify priority districts and CBOs which are not receiving financial or technical advice from other support organizations or donors. During this time, program coordinators also recruit regional resource persons to work with SPO to organize and deliver training programs and to facilitate networking among CBOs. In many cases, resource persons are members of the local NGO Coordinating Councils (ie. an NGO coordinating body organized by the provincial government). When necessary, SPO will train resource persons in areas such as adult education, training, communication skills, etc..

Figure 5: Strengthening Participatory Organizations' Capacity Building Contact Cycle

(Source: SPO 1995a)

- *Selection of CBOs and the Formation of Clusters*

The selection of SPO's partners is based on information obtained from individual dialogues with CBOs and community leaders in a targeted area. Through this information gathering process, SPO develops a list of potential partners using the following criteria:

- commitment to community;
- well-respected in the community;
- interest in or involvement of women;
- awareness of community needs;
- nonpolitical affiliation; and
- willingness to learn (Rafiq 1994a:6).

Once identified, SPO invites representatives from eight to ten CBOs within the same geographic region to participate in an orientation meeting. During this half day meeting, SPO introduces its program and continues the discussions on development and partnership. SPO also clarifies the nature and conditions of its funding practises. For various reasons (most often the lack of guaranteed funding), one or two CBOs do not return. A cluster is established with those that remain.

To keep the numbers manageable, SPO asks CBOs to select up to three individuals to participate in the cluster on behalf of the CBO. Individuals must be literate, active CBO members (although not necessarily executive members), full time community residents and available to travel to SPO's training programs (Rafiq 1994a:6).

- *Participatory Organizational Reviews and Partnership Plans*

Shortly after clusters are established, SPO begins its year-long Development Planning and Management (DPM) training program which exposes participants to the concepts of participatory development and develops skills in project planning, implementation and evaluation (see next section on training and technical assistance). All cluster participants must participate in DPM as a condition to receiving ongoing support from SPO.

During DPM, SPO continues to meet with representatives from CBOs to further explore development problems in their communities and organizational and management related issues affecting their organization. A participatory organizational review technique²¹ is used to stimulate discussion on the range of organizational needs in particular the CBO's current and desired capacity level. The results of these discussions provide the basis for the Partnership Plan which identifies the CBO's capacity building goal(s) and sets in motion a range of support activities including training, technical assistance, networking, project funding and monitoring activities (SPO 1995a:8). Plans can be either simple or comprehensive depending on the needs and wishes of the CBO and can last anywhere from one to three years (interview with SPO-NWFP, May 15, 1995). In addition to guiding the SPO/CBO relationship, the process of developing Partnership Plans helps CBOs to develop an understanding of the skills, resources and time required to undertake

²¹ Participatory organizational reviews is an organization development technique used to engage the organization in analyzing which qualities are desired and essential for an effective organization and which qualities should be avoided. By using examples of other well performing organizations and facilitating discussions with a range of individuals within the organization, an organization is able to determine the appropriate qualities given the context in which the organization operates (interview with SPO-NWFP November 18, 1995).

development activities (ie. development is more than funding) (interview with SPO-NWFP, November 18, 1995).

- *Implementation of Partnership Plans*

As noted above, Partnership Plans consist of a combination of training, technical assistance, project support and monitoring activities delivered over an agreed period. An overview of these activities is provided below.

- Training and Technical Assistance

SPO delivers two types of training: its Development Planning and Management program (DPM) which is SPO's core training program and specialized training tailored to the needs of individual CBOs. DPM is comprised of three 2 day workshops held throughout the year to expose CBOs to "the process and the set of tools,... available to organizations to improve the way they plan, design, implement and evaluate development projects" (see table 8) (Rafiq 1994a:5). Follow-up meetings provide participants with an opportunity to share results and lessons learned from training assignments and for SPO to reinforce the concepts of participatory development.

SPO also designs and delivers specialized training programs (eg. leadership development, community motivation) to help CBOs to address problems unique to their communities and CBOs. Specialized training programs are most often part of ongoing cluster meetings. SPO also coordinates technical assistance in the form of feasibility studies, technical training and

market research. When in-house resources are not available, SPO contracts external consultants to complete these tasks.

Table 8: Summary of Development Planning and Management Training Program

DPM I:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Explores concepts such as development planning, management, participatory development. - Examines the role of rural organizations in development projects - Develops skills in analyzing group dynamics, developing objectives and setting priorities and identifying local resources.
DPM II:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduces logical framework analysis focussing on how to develop objectively verifiable indicators, means of verification and activity planning. - Develops skills in planning and project implementation.
DPM III:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develops skills in problem solving, project report preparation, monitoring and evaluation.

(Sources: Rafiq 1994a, SPO 1995a:12-13)

- Project Funding

SPO provides project funding to CBOs that demonstrate an urgent need for external resources, are ready (ie. have the capacity) to undertake a development project in a participatory manner and have completed DPM. During the proposal preparation stage, program coordinators work closely with CBOs offering advice, coordinating technical assistance and ensuring that project proposals satisfy SPO's project approval criteria. SPO gives particular attention to ensuring that the CBO and the community are committed to the project. For example, the SPO-NWFP will only consider a project proposal that has been reviewed and approved by the entire community.

Regionally approved project proposals are sent to SPO's Project Approval Committee (PAC) which carefully scrutinizes each proposal for feasibility, accuracy of budget figures, contribution to CBO's organizational capacity, and sustainability as well as offers constructive feedback to further improve the project. Currently, the Deputy Chief Executive Officer presents proposals to PAC on behalf of the CBO although, in the future, SPO aims to devolve this responsibility to the CBO (National Centre staff, June 4, 1995:personal communication).

SPO does not fund recurring costs such as salaries, vehicle costs, etc. and funding disbursements are contingent upon receipt of completed progress reports. To verify the accuracy of the progress reports and to assist CBOs with problems that arise during implementation, program coordinators conduct regular follow-up visits.

- Monitoring

SPO also monitors the activities of CBOs who receive SPO funding. As CBOs implement projects, SPO will meet with CBO representatives to discuss organizational problems, trouble shoot and also share information about development issues in the region. In addition to ensuring that project resources are spent appropriately, these meetings help SPO to identify additional training needs and to informally monitor SPO's organizational capacity building process (ie. the impact of the Partnership Plan).

- **Networking and Linkages**

During the course of the contact cycle, SPO also promotes networking and facilitates linkages among and between CBOs and other development organizations such as donor agencies, other NGOs and government departments. For example, SPO invites donors to speak to clusters regarding their program activities and funding priorities and development experts to share their technical expertise in sector specific areas such as health, education, etc..

- ***Support Clusters***

Once DPM is completed (approximately 12 to 18 months after SPO's initial contact), clusters continue to meet on a monthly basis to share information and build solidarity. At this time, SPO encourages the cluster to manage itself. As a result, SPO becomes an advisor to the cluster rather than a prime organizer.

Results

After only two years of its first three year capacity building contact cycle, CBOs are showing signs of change including the ability to more effectively design and implement development projects. In many communities, participation has also broadened and organizational practises have improved to sustain this change. There is also evidence that SPO's cluster approach is encouraging CBOs to share experiences and knowledge and to address problems of mutual interest on an ongoing, independent basis. A brief description of these changes is provided below.

Improved Development Project Design and Implementation

Prior to SPO's training programs, "CBOs were ill-equipped to plan or implement projects" (National Centre staff, June 4, 1995:personal communication). For example, one CBO requested funds to purchase an ambulance for a project designed to improve primary education for females. According to the CBO, the ambulance would help transport teachers to the school as well as villagers to the hospital. While this multipurpose solution may make sense financially (given the limited resources of the community) it fails to address the long-term issues related to the inability of the village to retain qualified teachers or the inaccessibility of basic health services. With the help of SPO, development projects are more strategic and well thought out (National Centre Staff, June 4, 1995:personal communication).

While the quality of development projects is improving, a long-term view and the understanding of a CBO's internal capacity are not always present. For example, the Social League Safi Abad has benefited greatly from SPO's training programs and its information sharing practises. Armed with new project planning skills, including proposal writing, the Social League now "chases" donors to fund a range of development projects. The Social League, however, has not considered how the individual projects relate to each other or how the organizations will implement them if all proposals are successful (Social League Safi Abad, May 18, 1995:personal communication).

Greater Participation of Community Members

SPO's capacity building interventions also result in the greater participation of community

members in CBO activities. For example, per SPO's guidance, CBOs such as Darul Falah Takht Bhai holds annual meetings to consult the community about priorities and to discuss viable solutions to their problems. Prior to working with SPO, community members had never gathered together to discuss development issues. Today it is a common practise especially after the successful implementation of a sanitation project (funded by SPO) in which 75 additional latrines (over the 100 target) were installed with additional resources (ie. time, labour and ideas) provided by the community (Darul Falah Takht Bhai, May 17, 1995:personal communication).

SPO has also helped to increase the number of individuals involved in leadership positions in CBOs. For example, the Social League Safi Abad maintains a large executive committee that has become more inclusive and participatory since SPO's involvement. Senior executive members train new executive members and project planning is often completed collectively (Social League Safi Abad, May 18, 1995:personal communication). Few general body or community members, however, are involved in project planning and implementation. According to the Social League, it is more important that the executive learn to plan and manage projects before they share these skills with the community (Social League Safi Abad, May 18, 1995:personal communication).

Increased Collaboration and Cooperation Among CBOs

SPO has also witnessed that some of its clusters have become self sustaining mechanisms for ongoing dialogue and information sharing among CBOs as well as an effective tool to

broaden its impact in the field. For example, within two years, Darul Falah Takht Bhai has taken the initiative to increase its size from six to 13 CBOs and to expand its activities to include training and CBO coordination in the district--activities that SPO had once undertaken (SPO-NWFP, November 18, 1995:personal communication).

Case Study Three: NGO Resource Centre

Established by the Aga Khan Foundation Pakistan, NGORC offers Pakistan an unique approach to strengthening its NGO community.

History

In 1990, after years of study and consultation²², the Aga Khan Foundation approved a one year grant to the Aga Khan Foundation Pakistan (AKFP) to establish the NGO Support Project (NGOSP) in Karachi's South District. Through NGOSP, AKFP would explore whether a non funding model to organizational capacity building would strengthen Pakistan's NGO community (NGO Resource Centre [NGORC] 1990). Before the year was over, NGOSP had established relationships with 28 of 37 active NGOs in the district. NGOSP had also started networking with a range of local government officials and development organizations, published and distributed its first newsletter, and encouraged coordination among NGOs (NGORC 1991b:1). Based on the success of its first year, it appeared that

²² Between 1982 and 1990 the Aga Khan Foundation commissioned a number of studies on Pakistan's NGO sector including a study of philanthropic activities in Pakistan (1982), *Support Services for Non-Governmental Organizations in Pakistan - A Proposal for a Resource Centre* (Taylor 1986) and *A Pakistan Resource Centre for Non-Governmental Organizations* (Smillie 1988). The Aga Khan Foundation also held consultations with a range of individuals and organizations including policy makers to elicit ideas and support on how to best strengthen the NGO community.

skills, knowledge and networking opportunities were proving as important to NGOs as funding. As a result, the Aga Khan Foundation approved a three year grant to expand and strengthen NGOSP's activities by establishing a professionally staffed NGO resource centre (NGORC).

Between 1991 and 1994, NGORC developed new training programs, established new partnerships and expanded its activities to include working with other support organizations, the media and government departments across the country. The organization grew in size (from two to nine professional staff), in number (from 27 to over 100 partners) and in stature (NGOs from across the country approach NGORC for advice on capacity building practises). With the assistance of another five year (1994-98) grant from AKFP, NGORC continues its work with the goal of transforming Pakistan's development culture from one that excludes people and their organizations from the development process to one that encourages and supports their participation.

The Organization

Although legally still a project of the Aga Khan Foundation Pakistan (AKFP), NGORC functions independently with its own facility, staff and budget. In 1995 it supported 15 staff including eight professionals (three women and five men). Four sections representing NGORC's main activities comprise the organization: research and documentation, training, information services and programs (see figure 6).

Staff work as a team to achieve the goals and objectives of NGORC. For example, working with the training coordinator, field coordinators (ie. program staff) design, deliver and evaluate training programs, network with government and other resource organizations and disseminate information to NGORC's partners. Research and documentation staff undertake research such as situational analyses, area profiles and investigative reporting which support the field coordinators' activities. Once research studies are completed and when appropriate, the information services unit distributes this information to decision makers, donors, the media and other interested individuals and organizations. Research and documentation staff publicize and promote the results accordingly. To ensure consistency in program efforts and the effective coordination of resources, all sections report to both the Director and the Program Coordinator.

Figure 6: NGO Resource Centre's Organogram

(Source: NGORC 1995b)

Decision making at NGORC is a collective practise with staff providing substantial input on the strategic direction of the organization. Frequent staff meetings are held to plan activities, monitor individual and collective progress, discuss ideas and share lessons learned. Internal memorandums are also used for these purposes with the added benefit of capturing NGORC's activities in writing. These practises and NGORC's commitment "to learn" help it to identify and incorporate lessons learned into new programming efforts and ongoing operational activities.

Governance

Although governed by AKFP's board of directors, NGORC turns to its steering committee for advice and guidance on issues of strategic direction and policy. This nine member committee is comprised of experts from the development community including individuals from United Nations agencies, the private sector, other Pakistani support organizations and the Aga Khan Development Network. It meets, as required, to monitor NGORC's progress, set its policy research agenda and develop strategies to promote NGORC's involvement in public policy dialogue. The diversity of its members ensure that the interests of all of NGORC's stakeholders are kept in the forefront of all its planning activities.

Partners

NGORC works only with development NGOs "that have begun to address long-term sustainable development issues or that are in the process of moving towards involvement in

development concerns" (Salahuddin 1994:113). Within this group, NGORC has identified three kinds of NGOs: community based organizations (CBOs), mid-level NGOs, and support organizations of which NGORC is one. While NGORC works with all three groups, its most important partners are CBOs which NGORC believes are in the greatest need of organizational and technical support.

NGORC is also committed to working with the Social Welfare Department in order to enhance the capacity of its officers to play a more effective role in strengthening NGOs especially in Sindh (NGORC 1993b). This kind of partnership is particularly valuable in rural areas where "many of the problems faced by CBOs are related to a lack of contact with government officials...or a lack of knowledge about the work of line departments" (NGORC 1993a:8).

While NGORC maintains a national perspective, it concentrates its efforts in two well-defined geographic regions known as modules. Currently, NGORC maintains an urban module in Karachi's South District (Lyari and Mansoor Colony) and a rural module in Khairpur District, Sindh. Module site selection was based on the following criteria:

- easily accessible to enable NGORC to make frequent visits;
- socioeconomically and ethnically diverse to provide NGORC with an opportunity to work with a range of communities and associated development problems;
- populated by a large number of CBOs and mid-level NGOs to permit

replication and substantiate research findings; and

- a relatively stable law and order situation.

In the rural module, the absence of social services, other support organizations and the demonstrated interest of Social Welfare Department officers to work with NGORC were also important criteria.

Since 1994, NGORC has worked with over 100 CBOs (see table 9), 48 mid-level NGOs and 17 government departments (NGORC 1994c:foreword). In October 1995, NGORC reported that it trained over 150 Social Welfare Department officers (Baig October 31, 1995:personal communication). NGORC also reached hundreds of other development organizations and individuals across Pakistan through networking, the circulation of its newsletter, the distribution and promotion of its publications, press releases and personal contact.

Table 9: Number of Partner CBOs in Urban and Rural Modules

MODULE	FEMALE	MALE	BOTH	TOTAL
Urban: Karachi South	2	48	3	52
Rural: Khairpur	4	49	0	53
TOTALS	6	97	3	105

(Source: NGORC 1995a)

Over the years, NGORC has become increasingly involved with women's organizations. For

example, prior to NGORC's arrival in 1993, no women's organizations were registered in Khairpur. Two years later, the district boasts ten independent women's organizations and four men's organizations which support women's wings (NGORC 1995d:45).

External Relationships

To promote the role of NGOs in the development process and to improve the institutional environment within which they operate, NGORC is actively involved with international donors, government officials (both civil servants and politicians), the media, other support organizations, and the Aga Khan Development Network²³. NGORC's relations with international donors, government officials and the media concentrate specifically on increasing interest in the NGO community and providing information on how best to support NGO efforts. In particular, NGORC shares its research findings with key individuals and organizations in order to stimulate debate and discussion on policy and program issues that impact NGOs.

NGORC also works with donors and government departments to improve the quality of development programs by introducing CBOs and mid-level NGOs to appropriate donors (and vice versa), contributing to project designs, providing training support and, if required, monitoring project activities. By simplifying the relationship between donors and NGOs (ie.

²³ The Aga Khan Development Network is an international group of institutions whose social, economic and cultural activities span sub-Saharan Africa as well as South and Central Asia. Pakistan is home to many of the most extensive social services systems in the Network including the Aga Khan Health Services and Aga Khan Education Services

removing the support organization's role as an implementing agency) NGORC believes that, over time, donors and government will understand better the needs of the local community, in particular the conditions under which CBOs must operate.

To improve its own capacity, NGORC works with other NGOs and support organizations in Pakistan and elsewhere. For example, NGORC shares information with other support organizations through its publications and training programs as well as its participation in SINDNET²⁴, an association of six other support organization working in Sindh. NGORC also works with the International NGO Training and Research Centre, a support organization based in Oxford, to deliver training programs on capacity building and undertake related research.

NGORC's relations with the Aga Khan Foundation Pakistan (AKFP) and the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) are also important. Both AKFP And AKDN offer NGORC over 25 years of experience managing social development projects in Pakistan. At any time, NGORC can call upon a range of development organizations for advice on technical issues such as rural development, credit and savings programs, health programs, etc.. Conversely, organizations within AKDN can consult NGORC for advice on how to work effectively with CBOs .

²⁴ SINDNET provides a forum for its members to exchange ideas and experiences, develop a consensus on policy issues, network and participate in professional development programs. In 1995, participating members including the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, National Rural Support Program, Trust Voluntary Organization, OXFAM, Strengthening Participatory Organizations and NGORC.

Resources

Currently, NGORC receives funding from the CIDA, Aga Khan Foundation Canada, NORAD and USAID. In 1995, NGORC's annual operating budget was 9.6M rupees (CDN\$436,000). While NGORC remains dependent on donor funding for its survival, it has taken measures to offset some of its operational costs through consulting contracts, training programs and the sale of information from its databases, publications and training materials.

Future Plans

In 1997, AKFP will complete an institutional evaluation at which time it will decide the future of NGORC (eg. become a separate legal entity). Until then, NGORC will continue its capacity building efforts in both urban and rural modules. New support staff for the information services unit and a female field coordinator will be added to respond to the increasing demands for information and training support. A number of publications will be produced including a study which traces the evolution of CBOs in both the urban and rural modules. NGORC will also continue to conduct policy research such as a study on the fiscal framework of Pakistan's NGO sector (NGORC 1995d:23) as well as continue to network with government officials, international donors, media and policy makers.

NGORC's Capacity Building Process

NGORC has observed that Pakistan's development process has excluded local communities (ie. the majority of Pakistan's population) from participating in both national and local development. Not only has there been very little political will to involve local communities

in the process, but the institutional infrastructure to support public participation is nonexistent. Corruption guides most relationships and confrontation and distrust between the people and government prevails. As a result, few development programs (if any) have been planned with an understanding of the specific needs of a community or its capacity to support a program once it is in place. Schools are empty. Clean water supply, sanitation systems and electricity are virtually nonexistent. Medical services are infrequent at best. Hence, Pakistan's development potential remains unrealized.

To support Pakistan's social and economic development NGORC believes that the NGO community must be strengthened in order to involve more fully a broad range of people in the development process. To accomplish this, NGORC aims to improve the organizational capacity of NGOs as well as enhance the institutional environment within which they operate. Hence, NGORC aims to enable a more active and effective NGO community--one that is welcomed and supported at both national and local levels.

Capacity Building Defined

NGORC defines capacity as "the ability of people to achieve their specific objectives or to perform specific tasks" (Salahuddin and Khandwalla 1995:2). In the organizational context (which is the level at which NGORC operates) this means "the measure of an organization's ability to achieve its objectives" (Salahuddin and Khandwalla 1995:2). The process of organizational capacity building requires not only the development of human resources but also well defined objectives, financial resources, linkages and systems. No single element is

more important than the other as Salahuddin and Khandwalla (1995) explain,

If the focus is only on human resource development, there is a danger of some members becoming over-qualified for the organization or outgrowing the organization. This might lead to employee frustration or high turn over resulting sometimes in the weakening of organizations. Similarly, if abundant financial resources are available, but the objectives are unclear, the human skills are not up to mark and organizational systems are not developed, it is possible that resources are not utilized in an optimum manner... developing organizational systems without financial backing to support those systems would be futile (1995:2).

Strategies

To strengthen Pakistan's NGO community, NGORC focusses on building organizational capacity through a non funding approach, creating an enabling environment and continuously learning. Each of these strategies is summarized below.

- Building Organizational Capacity through a Non Funding Approach

One of NGORC's most important strategies is its non funding approach to capacity building. Unlike many other support organizations, NGORC does not see funding for NGOs as a fundamental problem. Rather managerial and technical capacity constraints are much more pressing for NGOs than financial ones. In addition, NGORC believes that project funding only complicates the relationship between the NGO and the support organization. For example, many NGOs become more preoccupied with obtaining funding than addressing difficult, often time consuming, organizational issues. They also hide their weaknesses or adopt priorities that respond to a donor's development priorities rather than those of the community. Without the ability to effectively manage these resources, the benefits of

financial resources can go unrealized. To avoid this potential problem, NGORC does not provide funding to its partners.

A non funding approach to capacity building also encourages CBOs to decide for themselves what they will do, how to do it and at what speed. NGORC therefore does not follow a predefined or structured capacity building process with training milestones or project funding cycles. Its goal is to be more responsive to the changing needs of the NGO community and use organizational effectiveness (ie. performance) and sustainability as criteria for success rather than funds disbursed or technical outputs produced (ie. number of training programs delivered).

- *Creating an Enabling Environment*

NGORC also believes that increased performance or capacity can only be realized when the environment expands to allow NGOs to participate more fully in the development process. To achieve this end, NGORC commissions research on selected topics and creates forums for policy dialogues among and between NGOs, government officials, donor agencies and the private sector.

- *Continuous Learning*

Finally, recognizing that little is known about the needs of CBOs and how best to work with them, NGORC has evolved a "learning" strategy that involves working directly with a select number of CBOs, mid-level NGOs and other development organizations in well defined

geographic areas (ie. modules). NGORC aims to grow vertically by continuously building on the knowledge that it develops with its partners--a form of continuous learning through experimentation. While a horizontal expansion (ie. replicating the same model in different areas) can directly serve more NGOs, it does not offer NGORC the same kind of "learning" results. Instead NGORC creates a national impact by passing on its experiences and knowledge to other development organizations in Pakistan through the distribution of its publications, the delivery of seminars and workshops and personal contact.

Activities

NGORC's approach to capacity building consists of an intensive program of four active, interconnected and synergistic activities: explorations, networking, information exchange and training (NGORC 1993a:7). It is an ongoing process that involves dialogue with and cooperation from NGORC's partners (ie. CBOs, mid-level NGOs and government officials). Throughout the process, NGORC is responsive to the needs of the CBO and proactive in a way that provides NGORC's partners with a range of opportunities to address local development projects. An overview of the process and related activities is described below.

- Understanding the Context Through Explorations

NGORC's capacity building process begins by conducting "explorations" or diagnostic surveys in order to obtain information on the state of NGO development in an area. Using Social Welfare Department registration lists and interviews with the area councillors, local activists and NGORC's own development network, field staff collect information about NGO

activities in the area as well as compile a list of potential partners (both registered and nonregistered CBOs) and other development organizations in the area. Explorations also involve ongoing dialogues with potential partners which begin with NGORC stating unequivocally that it "does not provide or channel any funding" to the NGO community (NGORC 1993a:7). This "separates those CBOs who are genuinely interested in institutional strengthening from those who might have expressed interest in NGORC's work solely on the expectation of monetary assistance" (NGORC 1993a:7). For the CBOs that remain, NGORC will work with them and their communities as long as the CBO requests support.

- *Building Relationships Through Information Sharing*

In the early stages of the capacity building process, NGORC provides CBOs with information on relevant development issues and exposes them to a range of development approaches. This is accomplished through personal meetings (ie. ongoing dialogues) and NGORC's newsletter. Written in Urdu, the newsletter shares information on NGORC and its partners' activities, discusses a range of development issues and reinforces the view that NGOs play an important role in the development process. A solutions oriented "library" which maintains several databases (eg. Social Welfare Development NGO registration lists, Sindh NGO census, NGORC's mailing list of NGOs) and other resource materials (ie. books, journals, videos) also helps NGORC provide information not only to CBOs but to interested mid-level NGOs, researchers, international donors and their consultants.

- *Mobilizing Resources Through Networking*

NGORC also facilitates networking among NGOs (in particular CBOs) and between NGOs and other development organizations including donors, other NGOs, government departments and private agencies. According to NGORC, networking increases a CBO's awareness of similar work being done by other development organizations as well as creates a supportive NGO community (NGORC 1993a:8). Through workshops, informal meetings and ongoing discussions, an NGO explores ways of improving its performance by sharing information, contacts and experiences. In many cases, networking also helps NGORC introduce CBOs to appropriate resource organizations.

- *Improving Performance Through Training*

An important component of NGORC's capacity building approach is training which provides NGORC's partners with skills and knowledge needed to design and implement sustainable development projects. While considerable resources are devoted to this activity, it is important to note that the success of NGORC's capacity building process rests on the combination of training, information sharing and networking. Each activity reinforces the other. Hence, training by itself cannot improve performance no matter how successful it is (NGORC 1995d).

Because of the diversity of the CBO community, NGORC does not support a prepackaged training program (NGORC 1995d:56). Instead it "designs, conducts and evaluates training programs and then remolds them to attend to the needs of another set of apparently similar

trainees" (NGORC 1995d:56). Follow-up activities are also based on the participant's needs and success is evaluated by assessing how effectively and efficiently participants apply new concepts and skills in their respective communities.

Over time, NGORC has developed a set of core training programs that focus on improving managerial and organizational performance (see table 10) as well as a set of guiding principles or values which synthesize the training lessons that it has learned over the years (see table 11). Training programs are continuously upgraded to incorporate lessons learned from the delivery of other training programs and NGORC's own research. For example, NGORC has developed a new training intervention called mini-workshops to help CBOs that are having difficulty prioritizing development objectives or developing realistic action plans. By holding workshops in the community, a larger number of people benefit from the training program rather than the one or two that are normally available to attend in NGORC's training programs (Field Coordinator, November 1, 1995:personal communication).

While the majority of NGORC's training programs focus on improving the organizational capacity of CBOs, NGORC also provides technical training although only in areas in which it or the Aga Khan Development Network has experience such as education, community development, and health (NGORC 1993a:9). When technical expertise is not available, NGORC links CBOs to other organizations (NGORC 1993a:9) and, whenever possible, with one another. This kind of linkage promotes collaboration among the NGO community rather than temporary relationships between a CBO and an external consultant who may or

may not be familiar with the specific conditions of the region or particular needs and capacity of the CBO.

Table 10: NGO Resource Centre's Core Training Courses

Management Training for NGOs: Offered to all CBOs in the modules, this training program develops skills in problem identification, strategic planning, goal and target setting, budgeting, action planning, team building, community mobilization, leadership development, interpersonal relations, time management, conflict resolution, consensus building, etc..

Assessing Organizational Capacity (AOC): This two-day course is for individuals working directly with CBOs. Participants will learn about the nature of organizations (ie. life cycle), the characteristics of CBOs, organizational capacity as well as explore methods to assess the capacity of CBOs.

Project Development Workshop: This three-day program familiarizes participants with the various phases of the project life cycle including project identification, objective setting, budgeting, planning for implementation, monitoring, working with donors and project sustainability.

Training of Trainers: A seven-day training program is offered to CBOs, mid-level NGOs, and government officials to improve their understanding of adult learning, to learn how to plan lessons/ training programs and to enhance their presentation, facilitation and negotiation skills.

Social Welfare Department Training: This training program helps sensitize social welfare department officers to the needs of NGOs and enhances their capacity to respond to those needs. Topics discussed include characteristics of good NGOs, the difference between welfare and development and current NGO activities in the region.

(Source: NGORC 1995d)

Table 11: NGO Resource Centre's Lessons Learned in Capacity Building Training

The best training programs are those with content that relates to the context in which participants work or live.

The development of core teams (3 or 4 members/leaders in CBO) can widen the leadership base of a CBO and develop a core group of supporters for the implementation of programs and new management procedures.

Follow-up activities, such as action plans developed by participants, are critical to the effectiveness of training program.

A long-term meaningful relationship between the support organization and the CBO enhances the training process.

Participants who share in the costs of the training program (eg. transportation, meal costs, room rental) often take on greater ownership and responsibility of the training process and the results that follow.

Increased participation occurs when training venues and schedules are determined by the mutual consent and convenience of the trainees.

(Source: NGORC 1995d:55-59)

NGORC also believes strongly that training is a continuous process. It, therefore, designs programs to build a CBO's training capacity beginning with the CBO taking responsibility for the logistics and coordination of its training programs and often ending with training CBO members to be trainers in their communities. "This approach eliminates the possibility of going to five star hotels, paying training incentives, adopting expensive techniques, using fancy training aids, hiring consultants and following other similar trends" (NGORC 1995d:57). As a result, CBOs learn that training is something that can be done in their communities using local resources.

Finally, NGORC does not limit its training activities to only CBOs (although they make up the largest number of training recipients). Mid-level NGOs, other support organizations, the media and government departments participate in NGORC's training programs. For example, training helps government officials offer better services and support to CBOs and in so doing provides NGORC with another resource for CBOs to turn to for support.

- *Creating an Enabling Environment Through Research, Analysis and Documentation*

In addition to its capacity building activities which focus on individual organizations, NGORC is committed to creating an enabling environment for NGOs (NGORC 1993a:9). In this regard, NGORC commissions research studies that can have a positive impact on the formulation or modification of policies. For example, in 1992 NGORC undertook a comprehensive study on NGOs legislative framework. The results of this study have helped government officials, donor agencies and the NGO community develop a better understanding of the problems associated with overlapping NGO legislation. It has also stimulated debate and discussion on how to improve public policies and practises that support the NGO community.

NGORC's research agenda, which its steering committee develops with the assistance of program staff, includes policy research on development issues related to NGOs. The majority of these studies are completed by Pakistani academics or development experts. Results are disseminated broadly to donors, government officials, the media, other support organizations and are often accompanied by follow-up seminars and workshops in order to stimulate

interest and discussion about NGOs. To encourage a parallel discussion among NGOs themselves, publications are printed in local languages and disseminated to NGORC's partners and other interested organizations.

Results

Within a relatively short period of time, NGORC's capacity building model is proving to be a viable approach to strengthening Pakistan's NGO community. A review of NGORC's progress reports and field visits with its partners suggest that NGORC has helped increase the organizational effectiveness of many CBOs and mid-level NGOs, evolved gender relations in a direction towards greater equality, and improved relationships among and between NGOs and other development organizations leading to a more dynamic and inclusive development environment. NGORC has also contributed to the development community's understanding of the needs and capacities of Pakistan's NGO community and the knowledge of the capacity building process itself. A brief description of these results is provided below.

Improved Organizational Effectiveness of NGORC's Partners

A review of NGORC's progress reports and interviews with NGORC's partners reveals that many (although not all) CBOs and mid-level NGOs are better organized than they were before meeting NGORC. For example,

- CBOs, previously dormant, have resurrected themselves and are beginning to plan long term development activities (Young Welfare Association of Hussainabad 1995);
- CBOs have broadened their leadership base to include other men, often younger, to

help manage the organization (Lyari Community Development Project 1995);

- CBOs have learned how to assess their own capacity in preparation for expanding their activities (Lyari Educational Advisors 1995);
- women have learned new organizational skills which have helped them to start their own CBOs and plan their own projects (Marvi Rural Development Organization 1995);
- local community support for CBO activities has improved as reflected by an increase in CBO membership (Makan Kubar CBO 1995); and
- CBOs have become more effective in making claims on external agencies such as government departments, banks, other NGOs and the private sector (Anjuman Falah-o-Behbood Mansoor Colony 1995).

While the above list indicates that change is underway, the impact of NGORC's efforts and the degree to which organizational change has become institutionalized is still to be determined.

Changing Gender Relations

NGORC has been instrumental in changing gender relations, especially in NGORC's rural module. For many women in Khairpur District, it is no longer unthinkable to organize themselves and to interact independently with individuals from other communities. Women are not only meeting regularly to discuss issues of common concern but they are actively participating in the implementation of development projects. In some communities (usually single clan communities), women's participation exceeds that of men. For example, in Makan

Kubar, a single clan village of 1100, 65 of Kubar Welfare Association's 100 members are women. Many women are actively involved in planning and managing activities such as vocational training and primary education programs (Kubar Welfare Association, November 12, 1995:personal communication).

Marvi Rural Development Organization (MRDO) is another example of how gender relations are changing as a result of NGORC. Established in 1994 in the single clan village of Arab Solangi, MRDO was the first all women organization in Khairpur District to register with the Social Welfare Department. Through NGORC's training programs and encouragement, MRDO has undertaken a series of initiatives designed to improve the condition of women in Marvi including implementing an economic development program (see below), managing a rose plantation project sponsored by OXFAM, and conducting an adult literacy program (President MRDO, November 12, 1995:personal communication).

NGORC also facilitates changes that extend beyond individual communities. For example,

There was a time when access...to these women's group was restricted. Initially separate training courses had to be organized especially for them. Now in many cases these women participate in the regular workshops with their male counterparts (NGORC 1995d:45).

For women to travel outside their village is a significant achievement in a culture which discourages women's public activity and traditionally restricts their mobility.

Improving Relations Among and Between NGOs and Other Development Organizations

By creating networking opportunities and facilitating linkages among a range of development organizations, NGORC is creating a more dynamic institutional environment in which development can take place. In particular, CBOs are no longer victims of isolation. Their accomplishments have given them confidence and a clearer sense of their own identity to begin to work with other development organizations including other NGOs, government, and donors. For example, in collaboration with the International Labour Organization, NGORC and its partners have pioneered the Economic Development Program²⁵, an innovative saving and loan scheme designed to improve the economic well being of rural communities. Prior to the program, CBOs in Khairpur District had never worked with donors let alone with one another. Economic development problems are now being addressed collectively and local communities are directly benefiting from these efforts.

Khairpur's Social Welfare Department officers testify to improved relations between CBOs and government. Prior to NGORC's involvement, CBOs rarely visited social welfare officers and vice versa. Today, as a result of increased confidence and competence, more and more CBOs are approaching government officials for advice, information and services (Social Welfare Department, November 12, 1995:personal communication).

²⁵ Economic Development Program, which is sponsored by International Labour Organization with financial contributions from the Government of Japan, was established in 1994 in the form of a credit and savings scheme program in four villages in Khairpur District. In less than one year the program has grown to involve men and women from eight villages. The ILO provides "seed money" directly to CBOs while NGORC monitors the program. CBOs are actively involved in management of the program and its expansion.

While relations between NGOs and government are improving, there is still a long way to go before government and NGOs treat one another as equal players in the development process. For the most part, NGO-government relations remain confrontational as many NGOs continue to distrust government officials (Field Coordinator, November 8, 1995:personal communication).

Contributing to the Development Community's Understanding of Capacity Building

NGORC's activities are documented in biannual progress reports and its research and training publications are broadly shared with a range of development organizations including donors, policy makers, the media and other NGOs. Hence, its impact can and does extend beyond the limited number of NGOs in its modules. For example, having learned of NGORC's early successes, NGOs in NWFP contacted NGORC for assistance in developing their own provincial resource centre (NGORC Director, November 15, 1995:personal communication). The director now serves as an advisor to its board of directors. NGOs in Punjab have also expressed interest in a similar initiative (NGORC Director, November 15, 1995:personal communication).

While it is difficult to evaluate the written word, there is evidence to suggest that the broad distribution of NGORC's research findings is having a positive impact on development practises in Pakistan. For example, in 1994, NGORC compiled a directory of donor organizations which described funding priorities and proposal submission guidelines. Since its publication the number of funding proposals submitted to donors has increased and donors

have begun to more critically examine their funding practises including approval and monitoring guidelines (Brouver, March 7, 1995:personal communication). NGORC's research studies have also been particularly useful in recent discussions on the future of the NGO community. In particular, the National NGO Coalition has used NGORC's 1994 study on NGO registration policies and practises to prepare its response to the Government of Pakistan's proposed NGO legislation.

NGORC also contributes to the understanding of the capacity building process and alternative development practises at the local level. By producing publications, training materials, a newsletter and a weekly newspaper column in local languages, NGORC increases the number of individuals who can participate in the development process.

Conclusions

This detailed examination of three support organizations provide a micro perspective of how the concept of capacity development has been translated into operational activities. As these case studies reveal, there is no single way to organize for capacity development. The detailed case studies also demonstrate that the capacity development process, as currently practised, is a labour intensive, time consuming, ongoing process which involves a range of activities. With only three to five years into the process, it is difficult to assess which combination of activities will prove most beneficial in achieving capacity development goals. Similar (positive) results have been witnessed on various fronts including a change in orientation from welfare oriented activities to development related activities, an improvement to how projects

are planned, implemented and evaluated and organizations managed, an increase in the number of women involved in development activities and an improvement in the institutional environment beginning with an increase in interaction among NGOs (especially CBOs) and between NGOs and other development organizations. Whether these changes will be sustained remains to be seen especially within an environment in which many of the CBOs' activities and all of the support organizations' activities are financed, either directly or indirectly, by external sources (ie. primarily international donors).

The experiences of SAP-PK, SPO and NGORC clearly demonstrate that practise of capacity development is no simple task. In the spirit of evolving our understanding of the concept of capacity development and our interest in improving the effectiveness of overseas development assistance, the next chapter explores, in greater detail, the similarities and differences of the support organizations' activities and the lessons that the support organizations and I have learned in both the practise and study of it.

CHAPTER SIX

SHARING OUR EXPERIENCES

In this chapter, I review the experiences of the three support organizations involved in this study by exploring the similarities and differences among their capacity development approaches. The results of this analysis aim to improve our understanding of the capacity development of CBOs in Pakistan as well as provide insight on how the concept has been operationalized within the current development environment.

In the first part of this chapter, I use the results of the individual case studies to address the two research questions proposed in this study. Specifically,

- How is capacity development defined?
- What activities under what conditions contribute to capacity development?

Answers to these questions reveal how practitioners have operationalized the concept. Conditions for success and activities to support the process are emphasized. The second part of this chapter examines how this operational perspective relates to the current conceptual understanding of capacity development presented in chapter two. As I will demonstrate, capacity development at the level practised by the support organizations represents only one small piece of a larger, more complex process that involves a range of actors and operates at different levels of society.

How is Capacity Development Defined?

An examination of how the support organizations define capacity development not only reveals how the organizations view capacity development but also emphasizes the current difficulty in developing a comprehensive definition of the concept. Table 12 notes the definition of capacity development used by each support organization as well as the definition used in this study (and most commonly used by the international donor community).

Table 12: Definitions of Capacity Development

Organization	Definition
SAP-PK	a process by which CBOs are empowered to undertake activities to address the long term development needs of their communities by helping people to understand and exercise their human, technical, financial, managerial and organizational resources in order to identify and solve their problems
SPO	a process by which CBOs improve their technical, organizational and managerial competencies to undertake sustainable development projects
NGORC	a process by which an organization's ability to achieve its objectives improves
definition used in this study	a process by which groups, institutions, and individuals increase their ability to understand and deal with their development needs within a broad context and in a sustainable manner

A comparison of each of the support organizations' definitions reveals a number of common aspects. First, support organizations defined capacity development narrowly with a focus on organizations and individuals, as in the case of SAP-PK. Absent is any reference to the institutional or multi-institutional nature of capacity development even though each support organization recognized the importance of institutional development to the capacity

development process. Second, for all support organizations capacity development is a process. As will become evident in the next section, it is a process that is ongoing and dynamic.

Finally, the definitions imply that the goal of capacity development is to evolve a range of competencies within an organization to improve its ability to perform specific tasks. Specific competencies and tasks, however, differ depending on the development orientation of the support organization. For example, SPO concentrates on developing the capacity of CBOs to undertake sustainable development projects. Considerable emphasis is given to providing CBOs with information and basic skills necessary to secure and utilize project funding currently available in Pakistan. While similar efforts are also important to SAP-PK, much greater attention is given to developing an understanding of the root causes of underdevelopment and the importance of self-sufficiency and collective action.

The definitions put forth by the support organizations follow logically the "donor's definition" used in this study. As such, they demonstrate that a broad definition of capacity development, while a useful starting point from which to understand the concept, provides little insight or direction on the nature or focus of the capacity development process. Unfortunately, while a more narrow definition helps to operationalize the concept, it fails to capture the complex nature of the process. Capacity development, as practised by the support organizations, is much more than what their definitions imply.

Based on this analysis, it is evident that the development community has yet to arrive at a comprehensive and shared definition of capacity development. Definition, however, is important if we are to develop a vision of what we in the development community are trying to achieve and an understanding of the implications and potential impact of our efforts. Until such a definition evolves, it is important for both donors and practitioners to explain more fully what they understand as capacity development.

What Activities Under What Conditions Contribute to Capacity Development?

In addition to sharing the same mandate--to develop the capacity of CBOs in Pakistan--the three support organizations share a number of other characteristics including:

- targeting the same type of partners--primarily established CBOs in socially and economically disadvantaged areas across the country;
- maintaining a national perspective; and
- engaging in similar activities including training, information collection and dissemination, networking and advocacy.

While these similarities help to further our understanding of the capacity development process by identifying common patterns of assistance, it is the differences among the support organizations which provide the most valuable and, perhaps, most useful information.

As the case studies demonstrate, each support organization approaches capacity development differently even though they engage in similar activities. These differences

depend on the support organization's development orientation as well as the underlying development goals which guide its activities. To explain, SAP-PK maintains a revolutionary orientation to capacity development (in terms of ideology) which aims to strengthen the NGO community from the bottom-up (ie. one person at a time). Its vision is to transform Pakistan into a nation that encourages, supports and permits equal opportunities for the realization of human potential. All of SAP-PK's efforts are aimed at achieving this goal which it believes begins by helping individuals to understand the root causes of underdevelopment and encouraging individuals to adopt social behaviours which support self sufficiency. It is a radical concept given the deeply embedded attitudes and behaviours that discourage this type of behaviour in Pakistan's feudal society.

Greatly influenced by external agents (ie. CIDA and a Canadian Executing Agency), SPO maintains a more technical orientation to capacity development. This is evident in SPO's programs and training materials which reflect the language, tools and techniques most familiar to the donor community. SPO primarily focuses on developing skills and providing information that can help CBOs access and effectively utilize project funding currently available to Pakistan's NGO community.

Finally, NGORC maintains an evolutionary orientation to capacity development. It believes strongly that CBOs should define for themselves what they want to do, how they will do it and at what speed. It, therefore, does not prescribe what CBOs should do or be nor does it follow a predefined sequence of capacity building activities. It focuses primarily on

improving organizational performance which depends on the particular needs, goals and capacities of a CBO and the quality of its relationship with other development organizations.

These fundamental differences result in different development goals and, ultimately, different measures of success. For example, successfully completed projects using a participatory development process is one of SPO's key indicators of success. Since developing new skills is often easier to do and measure than changing attitudes and behaviours, SPO can assess (or at least monitor) its success more easily than, for example, SAP-PK. Hence, in order to effectively support the capacity development process, it is important to not only fully understand what is meant by capacity development (our lesson in Question 1) but to clarify the development orientation and related goals (ie. answer the question "capacity for what?").

Conditions for Success

What makes capacity development interventions successful? This is a difficult question to answer given the relatively short period of time that the support organizations have been working with their partners. Positive change, however, has been reported (see individual case studies) and common conditions for each approach have been observed. The following conditions were those shared by the support organizations involved in this study.

Understanding of the Context

All capacity development efforts began by developing an understanding of the social, cultural, political and economic environment of the communities in which the support

organizations would be working. For example, SPO prepared a detailed strategic plan to justify its site selection in terms of needs and opportunities. SAP-PK targeted communities that were familiar to its staff or one of its partners in order to facilitate collecting information on which CBOs or individuals would be interested in its program and how best to work with them. In addition to expanding its contacts in the area, NGORC's "explorations" helped it to develop an understanding of the state of NGO development in the area. For all support organizations, understanding the context was an important first step in identifying partners and determining if they would be able to meet the needs of the CBOs given existing resources.

Commitment to Change

As the support organizations learned, successful capacity development interventions depended on a CBO's initial and ongoing commitment to participate in the long and sometimes difficult process of organizational change. Measures of commitment varied. For example, SPO and SAP-PK conducted orientation meetings to clarify their purpose and the conditions for participation. In particular, CBOs were informed that funding was not guaranteed and that ongoing support was contingent upon their year-long participation in training workshops. For SPO and SAP-PK, continued participation in their programs, after conditions for participation had been made clear, were key signs of a commitment to the capacity development process. In addition to initial discussions which clarified expectations, NGORC asked CBOs to share the costs of training including the costs for food, accommodation, and transportation. Contributing to a training event in this manner was a

sign to NGORC that the CBO believed that the benefits of participation outweighed the costs. As the support organizations observed, without a commitment to participate in an ongoing, long-term process and the corresponding ownership that can follow, it is unlikely that improvements to an organization's capacity would be sustained.

Credibility of Support Organization

The credibility of the support organizations was also critical to the capacity development process. In all communities, support organizations were perceived as "outsiders" and therefore had to earn the trust of the community in order to gain credibility. To achieve this, support organizations delivered a consistent message and "lived" their commitment to the CBO. Hence, they encouraged women's participation by hiring women staff and managers, demonstrated their commitment to participation by managing their own organizations in a participatory manner, and showed their support by meeting with CBOs on a regular basis.

Once trust was built and credibility gained, support organizations found that CBOs were more willing to share ideas and request assistance creating a more dynamic and productive relationship. Given the social context (ie. influences of a feudal society), it is not surprising that this condition was the most difficult and time consuming to secure. This was especially true for SAP-PK and SPO which targeted CBOs with limited exposure to outsiders such as support organizations and donors.

Ongoing Support

Finally, the support organizations recognized that capacity development is an ongoing and sometimes unpredictable process. It was difficult to determine how long it would take for individuals and organizations to adopt new practises. As Carroll (1992) has noted "the path [to develop capacity] is seldom linear, as there are frequent setbacks caused by both internal and external events" (1992:100). Support organizations also learned that the needs of CBOs rarely decreased as capacity increased. Small accomplishments resulting from newly acquired skills or knowledge often created the confidence and competence to pursue other development goals. In either case, ongoing support was a critical part of the capacity development process. As such, when to begin and end capacity development assistance remains the subject of much debate and discussion especially when resources to support ongoing activities come from external, unsustainable sources (ie. international donors).

As the nature of these conditions suggests, the conditions for a successful capacity development process cannot always be in place before the capacity development process begins or while it is underway. Commitment to change, for example, is a condition that should be continuously monitored. Action should be taken when it begins to waiver (which it often does when the change demanded of individuals or organizations challenges the status quo). The same can be said for ongoing support especially in the current environment in which existing levels of overseas development assistance or government assistance cannot be guaranteed.

Useful Similarities

While support organizations maintain different development orientations and development goals, they (surprisingly) engage in many of the same activities, in particular training, information collection and dissemination, networking, institutional development, and advocacy. A brief description of how these activities contribute to the capacity development process of CBOs is provided below.

Training

Training activities imparted valuable skills and knowledge to CBOs. The specific kinds of skills and knowledge, however, depended on the support organization's orientation. For example, SAP-PK employed training to raise awareness and develop understanding on the virtues of self sufficiency and collective action. Considerable emphasis was given to skills in social analysis and community-building and to knowledge on the linkages between local and national development issues and the importance and practise of accountability. SPO emphasized the more technical aspects of development including working with donors, project planning, proposal writing, etc. as well as knowledge on the current development environment in Pakistan. NGORC evolved a range of training programs that serve a variety of organizational needs and audiences. It, more than the other support organizations, emphasized organizational performance and concentrated on management, human resources and project development related training.

Over the years, the support organizations have developed a better understanding of effective training practises. Table 13 summarizes these lessons. It is important to note that this list is only preliminary and promises to grow as the support organizations continue to improve their training practises.

Table 13: Lessons Learned in Training for Capacity Development

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- To ensure that skills and knowledge will be retained, training programs should incorporate current community or organizational problems into training activities and encourage the use of newly acquired knowledge immediately.
 - To respond to the different levels of competence and confidence of CBOs, standard training programs should be modified to accommodate the specific needs of a community, organization or group of participants.
 - To communicate to CBOs that training is something that they can do for themselves, training programs should use local resources including people, meeting space and training aids.
 - To reinforce new concepts and to address problems that arise during the application of new skills and knowledge, action-oriented follow-up activities should be conducted on a regular basis.
 - To encourage greater participation of CBO members, training programs should be held at times that are convenient for participants and materials and programs should be published and conducted in local languages.
-

Unlike SAP-PK and SPO which encouraged the participation of CBOs in the capacity development process by providing financial assistance for their participation, NGORC was the only support organization that viewed training as an incentive by itself. According to NGORC, financial incentives (to encourage or ensure participation in training programs) do not guarantee ownership of the training process. By offering financial incentives, support organizations run the risk of having individuals interested in only financial gains and/or the

heightened status within the community that can result from their select and paid or sponsored participation in a formal training program. While this study cannot validate this conclusion, it has been noted that beneficiaries who share the costs of services place greater value on the services and are more likely to benefit from them.

Support organizations invited between two and four individuals from each CBO to participate in training programs. As NGORC and SAP-PK observed, the greater the number of CBO members who participated in training-related activities the more likely that new skills and knowledge were shared with other members and that a critical mass of support evolved to sustain the capacity development effort. In terms of the latter, the benefit of community-focussed activities is evident in SAP-PK's practise of conducting community meetings (ie. development dialogues) to clarify and reinforce concepts introduced during its capacity building training program. These collective meetings helped SAP-PK broaden community interest in the CBO's activities and motivate people to work together to identify and solve local development problems--a primary objective of SAP-PK's capacity development goals. Left only to the two individuals who participated in SAP-PK's training program, it is unlikely that broad community participation would have occurred.

The number of participants involved in training activities creates a dilemma for support organizations. On the one hand, working with groups of CBOs and therefore limiting the participation of any one CBO to a select few representatives is a cost effective approach to training as well as an effective mechanism to promote cooperation and trust among CBOs

and facilitate the sharing of ideas and information. On the other hand, training targeted at the entire organization, while more expensive, addresses specific needs unique to the community and ensures that difficult concepts such as community participation and accountability are understood and adopted by the entire community. As James (1994) notes

While training addresses knowledge and skills, sometimes attitudes and individual behaviour, the problem of re-entry into an "untrained" organization remains. There is often not the time, the space or the receptiveness to implement what has been learnt. In this context, the training impact is dissipated and no real change occurs on an organizational level (1994:40).

To overcome this problem, James (1994) advocates more action learning and on-site methods such as in-house training. Currently, NGORC is exploring this training alternative through mini-workshops. In time, the support organizations may evolve a range of programs that build both individual and collective capacity of CBOs in Pakistan.

Finally, in order to enhance the capacity development process, support organizations recognized the importance of combining training activities with other activities such as information dissemination, networking and advocacy. These complementary activities are highlighted below.

Information Collection and Dissemination

Support organizations collected and disseminated information for a number of reasons including:

- to raise awareness on relevant development issues that impacted the NGO community both locally and nationally;
- to share examples of success stories in order to inspire and demonstrate how CBOs can improve performance;
- to communicate information on development opportunities such as donor and/or government funding programs; and
- to build solidarity among and between CBOs and other NGOs by demonstrating areas of common interest and concern across the country.

In all cases, information dissemination supplemented training activities. For example, the degree to which a CBO interacted with other development organizations was dependent on its knowledge of the practises of these organizations. Hence, developing skills in proposal writing was of little value to CBOs that were not aware of local donor opportunities or funding guidelines and conditions.

Information was disseminated in various forms including publications, public events such as seminars or workshops, media releases and personal exchanges. NGORC with its research, documentation and information service functions was the most proactive in this area spending considerable time and resources collecting, packaging and promoting its research findings to a broad audience of development organizations. In so doing, NGORC was able to offer other development organizations valuable information on the current needs of CBOs in Pakistan and knowledge about effective capacity development strategies at the organizational level.

Networking

Networking was another common activity among support organizations. It contributed to the capacity development process by supporting other functions including disseminating information, identifying potential resources, and raising awareness of issues that affected NGOs and/or local communities. As SAP-PK demonstrated in its development dialogues and its NGO-driven Coordinating Councils, networking can also facilitate developing strategies for addressing common problems and strengthening the voice of the poor on issues that affect them.

Networking activities were both formal and informal. For example, SPO encouraged networking through its clusters--formal structures which encourage a small group of CBOs to interact with one another and other development organizations such as donors and government. SAP-PK formalized its networking activities through interprovincial development dialogues which were designed to bring a range of development practitioners together to listen and learn from one another. NGORC supported both formal and informal networking practises including coordinating public events to encourage discussion and debate on relevant development issues and facilitating linkages between CBOs and other development organizations.

In observing networking practises, it was clear that measuring the results and impacts of such initiatives will be difficult if not impossible to measure (at least in the short-term). Quality

of the relationship was much more important than quantity of relationships as CBOs could meet with many development organizations but never evolve meaningful relationships that were mutually beneficial. Networking is an activity that should be measured in the long term by CBOs establishing structures that promote this activity independent of external support or facilitation.

Institutional Development

Support organizations also engaged in a variety of activities to strengthen the institutional environment of the NGO community. The majority of their efforts targeted improving organizational performance including establishing structures, systems and procedures to institutionalize new behaviours such as community participation, democratic decision-making and accountability practises. SAP-PK and SPO also promoted the creation of mechanisms, such as interprovincial development dialogues, clusters and NGO Coordinating Councils, to help NGOs address common problems. According to the support organizations, organizational improvements leading to improved organizational performance ultimately results in greater public confidence and acceptance of NGOs as viable alternatives in the development process.

NGORC was the most active support organization in institutional development activities as observed by the extent to which it separated and formalized activities associated with creating an enabling environment from its activities associated with organizational capacity building. In addition to performance improvements at the organizational level, NGORC

actively researched and analyzed policy issues that directly affected the NGO community, met with government officials to discuss policy improvements related to the enabling environment for NGOs, and worked closely with the media to promote the role of NGOs in Pakistan's development process.

While each support organization recognized the importance of this activity, there was little agreement on how best to achieve results. In fact, support organizations had difficulty in articulating their institutional development strategies and activities. This is not surprising given the dearth of information available in Pakistan or elsewhere on how to effectively develop civic institutions. As noted in chapter four, there is a great deal that we do not know about how institutional reforms affect the deeper patterns of culture and social structure or how formal and informal institutions interact to create positive institutional change.

Advocacy

Finally, all the support organizations were strong advocates of a more active role for NGOs (in particular CBOs) in Pakistan's development process. To this end, support organizations often represented NGO interests, either directly or indirectly, at policy and programming levels. For example, SPO was instrumental in building and supporting NGO coalitions to address the GoP's proposed NGO bill. As opportunities arose, SAP-PK stimulated public discussion on relevant social issues through its contacts with the media. NGORC actively engaged in policy research and sought opportunities to educate and influence the public by

working closely with the media.

Valuable Lessons

In addition to the common patterns of assistance noted above, the support organizations also offer valuable lessons related to how and when to use project funding, the importance of balancing project performance and organizational performance, and the need and practise of effective learning strategies.

Project Funding with Conditions

Primarily created and supported by donors, it is not surprising that many support organizations in Pakistan administer funds as part of their capacity development activities. In this study, both SAP-PK and SPO used project funding as a tool for capacity development. However, as NGORC and other development experts have observed,

When support organizations become donors they...risk changing their relationships to the NGOs they serve. Financial dependence often produces guarded relations and caution by donees in discussing problems areas (Institute for Development Research 1990:22).

As NGORC witnessed, creating an environment in which organizational weaknesses can be openly discussed is much more difficult when the possibility of project funding looms on the horizon. In the pursuit of urgently needed financial resources, CBOs often hide their weaknesses or participate in training activities in which they may or may not be sincerely interested. Securing financial resources (an understandable CBO preoccupation) becomes

the measure of organizational success rather than a CBO's ability to use these resources effectively to solve community problems. As a result, long-term interests in organizational sustainability are sidelined for more short-term project related goals.

Per NGORC's experience, a non funding approach to capacity development encourages CBOs to decide for themselves what they will do, how to do it and at what speed. Dialogue and discussion guides the capacity development process rather than predefined set of activities or a project funding cycle. According to NGORC, a non funding approach to capacity development also ensures that the importance of financial resources does not overshadow other elements of organizational performance, in particular human resources, well-defined objectives, effective and efficient systems and productive linkages.

Balancing Project Performance with Organizational Performance

Through SPO's experience, we learn that an emphasis on using development projects as a means of building organizational capacity can have a negative effect on the capacity development process by limiting a CBOs' understanding of the broader development context. Many of SPO's partners have become competent development technicians who are familiar with many of the tools and techniques used by development organizations (eg. logical framework analysis) and the skills and knowledge required to access external funding (eg. proposal writing). As SPO has discovered, the results do not necessarily lead to the development of sustainable organizations. As one of SPO's National Centre staff observed, "CBOs become effective at copying. In particular, they concentrate more on who is saying

something (eg. donors are saying it, therefore it must be true) rather than on understanding what is being said" (SPO National Centre staff, June 4, 1995:personal communication). Support organizations, therefore, must be careful not to assume that effective project delivery organizations (themselves or their partners) are sustainable, healthy organizations. CBOs can be effective at securing external funding within the narrow framework of the donor-client model but lack the ability to undertake long-term strategic planning activities, to learn from their experiences, or to respond effectively to their constituency. Greater balance between helping CBOs to produce short-term project related results and address long-term organizational needs is necessary to ensure that the sustainability of organizations is enhanced along side project performance²⁶.

Effective Learning Strategies

Since very little is known about capacity development or how to effectively strengthen Pakistan's NGO community, learning and knowledge-building become critical aspects of the capacity development process. A closer examination of each of the support organization's learning practises provides useful insight in how to evolve and support this activity.

NGORC was the only support organization that institutionalized its learning activities beginning with the simple but explicit objective "to learn". A more comprehensive learning strategy followed including:

²⁶ See also "Managing for Performance: Looking Ahead to Sustainable Development" in Improving Development Program Performance: Guidelines for Managers (Brinkerhoff 1991:185-198).

- establishing formal learning structures such as its research, documentation and information service activities to support this activity;
- using NGORC's urban and rural modules as learning laboratories in which NGORC could work closely with its partners to explore the effectiveness of a range of capacity development interventions;
- evolving systems to ensure accurate record keeping of field activities and participation in regular meetings to discuss progress-to-date; and
- promoting ongoing action research.

Through these practises, notions of effective capacity development interventions at the field level were constantly challenged and results frequently reviewed.

NGORC's learning activities also extended to the area of policy research. In so doing, NGORC offered the development community something tangible in the form of discussion papers, research studies, workshops and seminars on relevant issues affecting NGOs. Empirically based research (either policy or program related) not only added to NGORC's internal expertise but also filled a critical information void for government officials and donors interested in evolving policies and programs designed to more effectively support the NGO community.

While SAP-PK and SPO were also committed to learning, their related activities were limited to quarterly staff reviews and informal discussions. Absent were explicit learning objectives, formal structures and procedures to support learning (although SPO had begun to evolve an

information system to help it monitor its activities) and internal incentives to promote its practise. Record keeping was infrequent and often inconsistent as most staff were inspired to do rather than to record, analyze or adapt. While informal discussions provide opportunities to exchange experiences and stimulate new ideas, they cannot replace a systematic analysis directed at improving the technical and institutional practises of the organization.

Part of the problem of evolving learning strategies and practises lies in the dynamic environment in which capacity development occurs. Questions arise including what kind of baseline information is useful? Who should collect information? How should it be analyzed? How to effectively link cause and effect? These are difficult questions that require focussed efforts to address.

Since donors and CBOs are very much a part of the capacity development process, support organizations should also consider their perspectives and needs in relation to learning strategies. For example, donors can offer a great deal to a support organization's learning by facilitating and supporting linkages with other development organizations engaged in similar activities. In addition, donors can share innovative management practises to help support organizations build their own capacity. By engaging CBOs in the learning process, support organizations can gain considerable insight on how to enhance capacity development interventions and institutionalize the learning process within the CBOs themselves.

As the experiences of the support organizations demonstrate, learning requires much more than expressed desire and informal feedback (although both activities help). Learning takes time, resources, design (eg. the identification of learning objectives) structures and systems to both induce and support this activity. In addition, learning can and should involve a range of stakeholders including partners and donors. After all, donors and partners (ie. CBOs) are as much a part of the capacity development process as the "capacity builders" themselves.

Other Considerations

Based on the experiences of the three support organizations involved in this study, we learn that there are as many approaches to capacity development as there are development orientations. As well, within these approaches, there are a number of common and complementary activities that appear to support the process including training, information collection and dissemination, networking and advocacy. Determining the right combinations to support the capacity development process in a specific context remains the challenge.

Looking beyond these activities (as the concept of capacity development demands), it is clear that the combination of contributions is as important as the range of activities that comprise a capacity development intervention. While each support organization is concerned about creating healthy, sustainable CBOs and a more positive environment for NGO activities in Pakistan, individual contributions of support organizations address important but different needs in Pakistan's NGO community. For example, SAP-PK is preparing communities for a more active role in the development process by instilling greater awareness of development

(its practise and its purpose), collective action and social responsibility. SPO is creating confident cadres of development technicians who are helping the government and donors achieve their development objectives (ie. improve the delivery of social services). By engaging in focussed research and sharing its capacity development lessons broadly, NGORC is helping a range of development organizations, including government departments and other support organizations, better serve their partners (or constituents). At this point in the NGO community's evolution, it is impossible to determine which need or contribution is more important than another. Hence, supporting a range of contributions is worth serious consideration for external agents such as donors and the GoP which too often fail to take the time to look beyond broadly stated mandates to the specific contributions and related impacts of individual development organizations.

Again, looking beyond the activities noted above, it is clear that the context is also a critical factor in the capacity development process. As noted in chapter four, the current development environment in Pakistan favours the role of NGOs in local and national development and provides critical support to help strengthen the NGO community's capacity to participate in the development process. Considerable financial and technical resources are available to support NGO activities at both the project and institutional level. As a result, NGOs, including support organizations and CBOs, are not competing for critical resources (at least not yet). A change in public policy in favour of social development and NGO activities in Pakistan has also unleashed a great deal of energy in Pakistan from those individuals who have been struggling for social change. As noted in chapter four, more and

more individuals are gravitating to the NGO community where employment opportunities are growing and the credibility of the profession is improving. While the situation is far from perfect, with issues surrounding the long-term financial sustainability of NGOs and government-NGO relations still unresolved, the development environment in Pakistan is clearly conducive for organizational and institutional change. This observation should serve as an important reminder of the important role that the context plays in the capacity development process.

Brinkerhoff (1991) reminds us that "keeping performance going involves not simply efficient and effective production today, but building up and maintaining the capacity to produce tomorrow and on into the future" (1991:193). While positive short-term results give an indication that the capacity of CBOs to participate in the development process is increasing, not enough time has passed to determine with any certainty whether CBOs have adopted new practises or are adapting to new situations without the ongoing assistance of the support organization. Therefore, although SPO's clusters are becoming self-managing, SAP-PK's social activists are organizing themselves into NGO-led coordinating councils and NGORC remains responsive to its partners' organizational needs, a dependency between the support organization and its partners exists.

Concerns regarding the degree to which support organizations have created sustained change and the consequences of close working relationships has led support organizations to start asking some difficult questions including: How do we know when capacity has been

developed? Is there anything that we are doing (either directly or indirectly) that inhibits the capacity development process? How does success affect our relationship with our partners and their communities (eg. should we be working more or less closely with them)? Answers to these questions have serious implications for the nature of the relationship between the support organization and CBOs, the type of assistance provided and the role of the support organization in the development of local communities. These questions also remind us that there remains a great deal that we do not know about the capacity development process. As a result, the work of the support organizations, their partners and their supporters (ie. donors) has just begun.

Learning from Experience: Returning to the Conceptual

Having "lived" the capacity development experience, the study now returns to the conceptual with the aim of extracting general lessons learned from the practise and study of the concept. In particular, I relate the practical experiences of the support organizations to the theoretical construct of capacity development presented in chapter two. In doing so, it is evident that the concept of capacity development is still in its developmental stages at both conceptual and operational levels.

Despite a great deal of progress developing an understanding of the concept (see chapter two) and the practise of it (see chapter five), capacity development remains a complex, challenging process that is difficult to follow in the current development environment. This reality is particularly evident when assessing the degree to which the capacity development

process is designed, managed and sustained by those whose development is affected by the process. As noted in chapter four, donors and the GoP are enthusiastically supporting and trying to strengthen Pakistan's NGO community. In particular, their analysis of the needs of Pakistan's social sector and its relation to economic development in Pakistan is driving the process much more than the expressed needs of Pakistan's NGO community. While donors (and less so governments) are starting to consult NGOs on their organizational and institutional needs, for the most part, the development environment remains one of donor and government-led priorities. Input from those whose capacity is being developed is limited. Questions and concerns remain as to how to evolve the current mode of development assistance from a donor-driven process to a recipient-driven one.

Further analysis reveals that capacity development, as currently conceptualized and practised, is about the combination of efforts directed (often simultaneously) at different levels of society and, as a consequence, requires the participation of a variety of actors. For example, while support organizations provide critical support to the NGO community, their efforts are dependent on the level and nature of support that they receive from their own donors. As well, the degree to which NGOs and CBOs can grow and participate in development activities is dependent on the institutional context (ie. policies and programs that either enhance or hinder change). Hence, the contributions of support organizations should be viewed as one component of larger process of institutional and societal change. As chapter four reveals, for Pakistan to realize its development potential, attention must also be given to evolving local institutions such as local government and more supportive public

policies and programs to support not only Pakistan's NGO community but also social development in Pakistan.

As noted in our conceptual understanding of capacity development (chapter two), linking the macro perspective to the micro perspective is an important aspect of capacity development--only then will the development process be seen as a whole system in action.

Mechanisms to help development organizations do this, to the extent that the conceptual model implies, have not, however, evolved. As observed, support organizations in Pakistan concentrate on the organizational and human resources dimension of capacity development (recall the Harvard Institute for International Development framework presented in chapter two). Efforts focus on improving individual, organizational and, to varying degrees, institutional performance of NGOs (in particular CBOs). Donors and governments, on the other hand, view capacity development at a more macro level. As demonstrated in chapter four, their interest in strengthening the NGO community is directed at institutional context and, for some donors, the action environment (societal) dimension of capacity development.

As the development community has learned from past experiences both perspectives are important. Changes at the micro level can support broader development goals. Conversely, the institutional and societal context can either enhance or inhibit the speed and direction of change at the micro level.

In Pakistan, after initial interest in how the NGO community could support the broader development goals of the country, this link between micro and macro has not been revisited.

No systematic analysis is being done by either support organizations, donors or government on how the efforts of different development actors at different levels is having an impact on the whole. To move beyond old models of development assistance, linking the macro perspective to the micro perspective throughout the development process is an important area for further consideration. How to effectively make this link (ie. what systems need to put in place to support this activity) and, in particular, who should be involved (ie. the level to which those who are most affected by the process should participate) are equally important issues to explore.

Finally, the support organizations' concentration at the micro level raises questions as to whether they are "doing"²⁷ capacity development in other words are support organizations engaged in a process that is different from past development approaches. I believe that they are engaged in capacity development to the extent that their efforts are linked to larger process of institutional and societal change. Since the root of this transformation is a change at the organizational and ultimately individual level, activities such as training, organizational and institutional development (the support organizations' main areas of activity) are important components of a larger process. In this complexity, it is understandably difficult to determine when capacity development begins and ends especially since capacity development is often viewed as programs or points of intervention. For greater clarity, the

²⁷ The notion of "doing" reminds us that capacity development is more often associated with a donor intervention rather than an endogenous process by which people enhance their ability to perform certain tasks. Unfortunately, in the development community's current preoccupation with conceptual models, analytical frameworks, tools and techniques, the endogenous aspect of capacity development is often forgotten. If change at any level is to occur intervention is necessary.

development community may wish to distinguish more clearly the activities (ie. training, organizational development, etc.) from the larger process of institutional and societal change (capacity development as described in chapter two).

While the cross-case analysis of the three support organizations' activities has shed light on how the concept of capacity development has been operationalized, it has been this (brief) return to the conceptual that reminds us that there is a great deal yet to learn about capacity development and our respective roles within the process.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSIONS

This study began with a desire to capture a developing country perspective of the concept of capacity development. As I ventured forth to learn from the experiences and practises of the "capacity builders" themselves, I quickly learned the incredible influence, both positive and negative, of the donor community. A "local" or indigenous perspective would be difficult to find not only because of the current development environment in Pakistan which is greatly influenced by donor ideas and activities but also because of the degree to which the concept of capacity development is rooted in donor interest and its evolution is perpetuated by donor resources, as a review of the literature demonstrates. While this study does not provide a radical perspective of capacity development (as I had secretly hoped) it does offer a different and, as I learned, unique perspective of a very complex and still evolving process.

I began the study by defining the concept and describing a framework from which to view capacity development. Morgan and Qualman along with the UNDP, the World Bank and the Harvard Institute for International Development contribute greatly to furthering the development community's understanding of the concept. As is evident, capacity development builds on the experiences of the past forty years of development assistance and, in so doing, represents the next stage in the evolution of development practice.

As I learned, translating this complex, dynamic, evolving concept into meaningful operational activities is a challenging undertaking. The individual and collective contributions of the support organizations represent one small component of a larger more complex process of organizational, institutional and societal change. As I witnessed, donors which provide valuable financial and technical resources and governments which establish policies and programs to either inhibit or enhance the process of change are also important players in the process.

Equally challenging was the study of it. Coordinating my research partners, training interpreters, travelling around the country to meet with a variety of CBOs and working in extreme heat were time consuming and personally demanding endeavours. My "soaking and poking" approach to data collection proved extremely valuable in capturing and understanding the range of experiences of my research partners. A case study method provided the necessary structure and my participatory research approach added to the relevance and credibility of the information that I had collected.

My analysis began with an examination of the context within which NGOs operate. In particular, I described the forces that have influenced the evolution of Pakistan's NGOs and the resulting impact. I demonstrated that political forces that were underway after partition, a recent change in government priorities regarding social development and global trends in overseas development assistance have significantly influenced the size, activities and operations of Pakistan's NGO community. At the micro level, there are more NGOs than

ever before involved in a range of activities in a variety of sectors. At the macro level, however, more difficult questions remain including: How long will it take for donors, governments and the NGO community to achieve long-term sustainable solutions to Pakistan's social development problems? Are the current strategies to strengthen the NGO community sustainable given the long-standing social traditions of a feudal society and the uncertain funding levels of donor agencies? Are NGOs the only answer to Pakistan's social development problems? Clearly, these questions raise important issues related to the future of Pakistan's NGO community and should, therefore, be addressed as part of broader capacity development efforts within Pakistan.

In chapter five, I summarize the results of my research activities. Individual case studies present relevant background information on the organizations such as key historical events that have shaped their evolution, organizational structure, governance, relationships and resources. I also describe how the support organizations defined the concept and examined, in detail, the specific strategies and activities that comprised the process. Preliminary results are also reported in order to validate the capacity development process itself.

These detailed examinations of three support organizations provide a micro perspective of how the concept of capacity development has been translated into operational activities. Clearly, the experiences of SAP-PK, SPO and NGORC demonstrate that capacity development is no simple task. As the cross-case analysis suggests in chapter six, there are as many approaches to capacity development as there are development orientations.

Despite the differences in approaches, there are a number of common and complementary activities including training, networking, information collection and dissemination and advocacy, that appear to contribute to the capacity development process at this level in this context. Conditions, however, apply. In particular, support organizations should understand the context within which they will be working. This is especially important in countries or regions which are as culturally rich and diverse as Pakistan. Commitment by those whose capacity is being developed and ongoing support, either formal or informal, from the support organization are critical and necessary throughout. The credibility of the support organization also plays a factor in determining the kind and quality of the relationship that can evolve.

In addition to the common patterns of assistance, the support organizations also offer valuable lessons related to how and when to use project funding, the importance of balance project performance with organizational performance, and the need and practise of effective learning strategies. Progress is also being made in evolving more effective training practises and establishing mechanisms that encourage greater cooperation among and between NGOs and other development organizations. As initial results suggest, the efforts of the support organizations, although time-consuming and labour-intensive, are having a positive impact on Pakistan's NGO community. Whether these changes will become institutionalized and a stronger NGO community and social sector emerges remains to be seen.

In recognition that the capacity development process is a complex, dynamic process which involves different players at different levels of society, it is important to place the contributions of the support organizations in context. In particular, focussing efforts only on strengthening Pakistan's NGO community through support organizations will have a short-lived impact on social and economic development if complementary institutions such as effective local government and supportive public policies and programs are not also in place.

Returning to the conceptual, it became clear that a gap that exists (in both practise and theory) between the donor's macro perspective of capacity development and the practitioner's micro or operational perspective. As well, the development community has still not arrived at a comprehensive and shared definition of capacity development. Both support organization definitions and the donor definition used in this study fail to capture the dynamics of the concept. Absent is an indication of the simultaneous improvement of a host of interconnected factors that the process demands including altering attitudes and behaviours, creating more effective linkages among organizations, strengthening the performance of both private and public sector institutions, etc..

The definitions and related conceptual framework (see chapter two) also neglect to address the most critical tenet of the concept--that capacity development is an endogenous process that begins and is sustained by individuals most affected by the change process and who are ultimately responsible for their sustainable development. Hence, capacity development is ultimately about a *complex process of change that involves improving the ability of*

individuals through their groups, organizations and institutions to identify and solve development problems in the broader context and in a sustainable manner. Evolving mechanisms that support and respect the endogenous aspect of the process should be an important priority.

As the experiences of the support organizations demonstrate, any external agent with the desire to affect capacity development process (ie. the way in which people alter their ability to perform certain tasks) must maintain a fine balance between providing the skills, knowledge and opportunities to realize their development goals and encouraging and supporting individuals to create and recreate their own paths towards development. It is a difficult undertaking and one which the support organizations involved in this study are continuing to evolve.

Considerable potential exists to take this study further. In particular, the support organizations can use the results of this study to evolve cause and effect theories that can be examined over time. More specifically, the activities and outcomes noted in the case studies become the independent and dependent variables from which theories can be developed and tested. Support organizations can also compare and contrast the effectiveness of certain activities under a range of conditions. For example, support organizations could examine how successful were capacity development interventions in same clan villages opposed to mixed clan villages. Longitudinal evaluations and participatory action research practises can contribute significantly in this respect by continuing to evolve the development community's

understanding of effective interventions and involving recipients (the researched) more actively in knowledge building activities (a capacity enhancing exercise in its own right).

Since processes are supported by systems and structures, a closer examination of the organizational attributes that support the capacity development process would also be helpful. For example, an examination of the internal (eg. staff skill sets, management practises, etc.) and external (eg. donor support) influences that affect an organization's ability to perform would be helpful. The results of this would likely be of great interest to donors who continue to search for cost effective mechanisms to support the capacity development process and who seek to establish and more effectively support new partnerships (especially partnerships with NGOs).

In closing, the study of capacity development has been a challenging endeavour. In a short period of time, I have learned a great deal about the concept's potential and experienced first hand its overwhelming complexity. As a result, of my experience I appreciate better the limitations of a single effort--whether as researcher, practitioner or implementing agency. I hope that this point of reflection has also been useful for the support organizations involved in this study, their partners and the donors which seek to further support their efforts.

APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Question	Purpose of Question	Information Source	Technique
<i>Questions for Support Organizations</i>			
How does your organization define capacity development?	- obtain support organization definition of capacity development and a CBO	support organization national and field staff, annual report, strategic planning document	- semi-structured interviews, group discussions, review of documentation
What specific strategies and program activities do you use? How do each of these program strategies contribute to the capacity development of CBO? What conditions are required to implement these strategies? Do you use different strategies for women only groups? What do you do when women are not involved in the CBO? What criteria do you use to measure success?	- develop a list of capacity development strategies and activities - develop an understanding of the rationale behind the Support organization interventions	support organization national and field staff, annual report, annual workplan, project files	- semi-structured interviews, group discussions, review of documentation
How does the organization structure itself to meet its objectives? What is the management style? Who governs your organization? Who are your partners? Describe your relationship with international donors, government, other NGOs? What financial resources do you require? How are you funded? What are your future plans?	- develop an understanding of how the Support organization structures itself to meet its objectives	support organization national and field staff, annual report, annual workplan, project files	- semi-structured interviews, group discussions, review of documentation

Questions (continued)	Purpose of Question	Information Source	Technique
<p><i>Questions for Community Based Organizations</i></p> <p>How old is your organization? Why did you establish your organization? What do you do? (If applicable) Why has your purpose or activities changed? How many members do you have?</p> <p>How are decisions made? How are they communicated to your members? How are women involved in your activities? How are men involved in your activities? How are the elders and the children involved in your activities?</p> <p>What do you need to accomplish your goals (funding, training, time, people)?</p> <p>Can you give me an example of something that you have achieved in the last year? Why was it important to you? What did you learn? What will you do next and why?</p> <p>How did you learn about this support organization? Describe your relationship with the support organization. How have they helped or hindered you in achieving your goals? Will you continue to work with them? If so, why?</p>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - develop an understanding of local context the purpose of CBO, and how the CBO organizes itself to meet its objectives - collect information on the CBO's approach to development - develop an understanding of the relationship between the CBO and the support organization - develop an understanding of the nature of perceived effectiveness of support organization interventions and their impact on CBOs 	CBOs, project files	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - story telling, field observation, group interviews

APPENDIX B:
LIST OF INDIVIDUALS, GROUPS AND ORGANIZATIONS INTERVIEWED

Interviews for Understanding the Context (Chapter Four)

Banuri, Tariq, Executive Director, Sustainable Development Policy Institute of Pakistan. (February 27, 1995 Islamabad, Pakistan)

Dr. Anis Ahmand Dani, Rural Developmenta and Institutional Development Specialist. (March 12, 1995. Islamabad, Pakistan)

Omar Ashgar Khan, Executive Director, Sungi Development Foundation. (March 14, 1995. Islamabad, Pakistan)

Najma Siddiqi, Executive Director, National Rural Support Program. (March 15, 1995. Islamabad, Pakistan)

Andrew Stanley, First Secretary, Delegation of the Commission of the European Communities. (March 12, 1995. Islamabad, Pakistan)

Barbara Brouver, Counsellor (development), Embassy of Netherlands. (March 7, 1995. Islamabad, Pakistan)

Damianos Odeh, Chief, Multi-Donor Support Unit for the Social Action Programme, World Bank. (March 16, 1995. Islamabad, Pakistan)

Interviews for Individual Case Studies (Chapter Five)

South Asia Partnership - Pakistan:

Executive Director. South Asia Partnership - Pakistan. (March 29, 1995. Lahore, Pakistan)

Program Partnership Divison, South Asia Partnership - Pakistan. (April 2, 1995. Lahore, Pakistan).

Capacity Building Division, South Asia Partneship - Pakistan. (April 3, 1995. Lahore, Pakistan)

Development Support Division, South Asia Partneship - Pakistan. (April 4, 1995. Lahore, Pakistan)

Rifahi Committee Roras. (April 8, 1995. Roras, Pakistan)

Community Development Councils Jhelum (Women's Wing). (April 10-11, 1995. Jhelum, Pakistan)

Insan Foundation. (April 13, 1995. Lahore, Pakistan)

Association of Business, Professional and Agriculture Women. (April 15, 1995. Quetta, Pakistan)

Awami Nae Roshni School. (April 17, 1995. Quetta, Pakistan)

Killi Weria (Tanzeem Ittehad Naujawan). (April 18, 1995. Balochistan, Pakistan)

Nasl-e-Nau Talimi Markaz. (April 19, 1995. Quetta, Pakistan)

Punjab Coordinating Council (Network for Community Empowerment). (April 25, 1995. Lahore, Pakistan)

Nigar Ahmed, Chair of Board, South Asia Partnership - Pakistan.(April 27, 1995. Lahore, Pakistan)

Strengthening Participatory Organizations

Regional Director, SPO NWFP. (May 15 and 16, 1995 and November 21, 1995. Peshawar, Pakistan)

Darul Falah Takht Bhai (Sanitation Project Jalab Village). (May 17, 1995. Peshawar, Pakistan)

Social League Safi Abad (Poultry Project). (May 18, 1995. Peshawar, Pakistan)

Deputy Chief Executive, SPO National Centre. (June 4 and 6, 1995 and November 24, 1995. Islamabad, Pakistan)

Project Support Section Head, SPO National Centre. (June 4 and 6, 1995. Islamabad, Pakistan)

Project Support Section Head, SPO National Centre. (June 6, 1995. Islamabad, Pakistan)

Program Specialist (Training), SPO National Centre. (June 6, 1995. Islamabad, Pakistan)

Program Specialist (Learning Information System), SPO National Centre. (June 6, 1995. Islamabad, Pakistan)

Program Coordinators, SPO-NWFP. (November 18, 1995. Peshawar, Pakistan)

Swabi Cluster. (November 20, 1995. Peshawar, Pakistan)

NGO Resource Centre:

Program Coordinator, NGORC. (November 1, 1995. Karachi, Pakistan)

Information Services Division, NGORC. (November 2, 1995. Karachi, Pakistan)

Research and Documentation Division, NGORC. (November 3, 1995. Karachi, Pakistan)

Training Coordinator, NGORC. (November 5, 1995. Karachi, Pakistan)

Lyari Development Project Council. (November 7, 1995. Karachi, Pakistan)

Dr. Asif Ali Zaida, Program Officer, Institutional Development, Aga Khan Foundation Pakistan. (November 7, 1995. Karachi, Pakistan)

Urban and Rural Field Coordinators, NGORC. (November 8, 1995. Karachi, Pakistan)

Anjuman Falah-O-Behbood, Mansoor Colony. (November 8, 1995. Karachi, Pakistan)

Abdul Qadir Mangi, Deputy Commissioner, Khairpur. (November 11, 1995. Khairpur, Pakistan)

Young Welfare Association of Hussainabad and Kubar Welfare Organization. (November 12, 1995. Khairpur, Pakistan)

Social Welfare Department Officers. (November 12, 1995. Khairpur, Pakistan)

Marvi Rural Development Organization, Arab Solangi. (November 13, 1995. Khairpur, Pakistan)

NGO Coordinating Council of Khairpur Subdivision. (November 13, 1995. Khairpur, Pakistan)

Director, NGORC. (November 15, 1995. Karachi, Pakistan)

APPENDIX C: CASE STUDY REPORTING FORMAT

Each case study reports on the following topics:

Background: highlights the key historical events that affected the organization's evolution and describes its organizational structure, management approach, system of governance, partners, significant external relationships, resources, and future plans.

Capacity Development Process: summarizes the rationale behind the support organization's capacity development approach, defines capacity development, and describes the activities that comprise the capacity development process.

Results: identifies some of the results achieved to date in particular those that can be linked in some way to the support organization's interventions. The purpose of this section is to demonstrate that changes that have occurred as a result of the support organizations interventions. It, therefore, does not reflect a comprehensive list of results achieved to date.

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