

**Lost at Inception:  
A Sociological Analysis of Development Effectiveness**

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## Chapter I

### **Introduction and Historical Background**

*“...Charity is no longer just an idiosyncrasy of some good guys here and there, but the basic constituent of our economy...”*

- Slavoj Žižek<sup>1</sup>

With the aim of making Pakistan, “prosperous, secure, and stable,”<sup>2</sup> United States development assistance to Pakistan has been increasing over the last decade, and has reached a historic high. However development indicators<sup>3</sup> for Pakistan are not showing any appreciable improvement. Why has this development assistance not achieved the ostensible normative goals set for it?

Over the last decade, United States development assistance to Pakistan has gone from under \$100 million in 2000, to a historic high of \$1.5 billion in 2010. To gauge the significance of the amount of U.S. development assistance to Pakistan, it is useful to note that the \$1.5 billion the U.S. has spent in Pakistan is ten times the amount pledged to Bangladesh, which as the Center for Global Development points out, is a country in the same region that has a similar population size as well as similar development needs. In addition, the Enhanced Partnership

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<sup>1</sup> Slavoj Žižek, “First as Tragedy, Then as Farce,” Royal Society of Arts, November 24, 2009, available at: <http://www.thersa.org/events/vision/vision-videos/slavoj-Žižek-first-as-tragedy,-then-as-farce>.

<sup>2</sup> <http://transition.usaid.gov/pk/about/index.html>.

<sup>3</sup> See Appendix A for a brief background on development indicators.

with Pakistan Act of 2009 (also known as the Kerry-Lugar Bill), will lead to \$7.5 billion being spent in Pakistan between 2010 and 2014.<sup>4</sup>

Yet, over the same time period, development indicators in Pakistan have shown only modest improvement, and their trends have lagged far behind those for the South Asia region, as well as global trends.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, development forecasts for Pakistan are bleak, and worsening. As a Center for Global Development report on U.S. development strategy in Pakistan pointedly notes,

“There are as many Pakistanis under the age of 25 today as there are people in Egypt, Libya, and Tunisia combined. By 2030, Pakistan will have the fourth largest population of any country in the world. The millions of young Pakistanis who enter the work force each year are poorly prepared to find well-paying, skilled jobs...Economic growth would have to exceed 8 percent per year simply to create jobs for Pakistan’s rising population. It has instead slowed, and high fiscal deficits are generating inflation at levels that are worrying. A severe power crisis limits growth and investment, with unpredictable outages lasting up to 18 hours a day. Inefficient water use and the growing population continue to deplete ever shrinking supplies of fresh water, threatening the agricultural backbone of the country.”<sup>6</sup>

The 2012 Pew Global Attitudes survey for Pakistan reinforces the negative outlook: 87% of Pakistanis are dissatisfied with conditions in the country; 54% are pessimistic about the country’s future; 64% believe the economy is very bad, and a plurality of 43% believes it will worsen over the next year. These numbers have worsened since 2011.<sup>7</sup>

Therefore, it appears that even as U.S. development funding to Pakistan has increased, the stated normative goals of U.S. development assistance to Pakistan, namely helping it become

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<sup>4</sup> Please note that this trend is mirrored in overall donor assistance to Pakistan. All multilateral donor agencies have increased development assistance to Pakistan (and have pledged to continue doing so), with the World Bank providing a record high of \$1.7 billion in 2009. Other bilateral donors have also followed suite, for example the United Kingdom has pledged to double its development assistance to Pakistan. See: <http://www.cgdev.org/section/initiatives/active/pakistan/numbers>.

<sup>5</sup> See Appendix B for trends in selected development indicators for Pakistan.

<sup>6</sup> Center for Global Development, *Beyond Bullets and Bombs: Fixing the U.S. Approach to Development in Pakistan*, available at: [http://www.cgdev.org/files/1425136\\_file\\_CGD\\_Pakistan\\_FINAL\\_web.pdf](http://www.cgdev.org/files/1425136_file_CGD_Pakistan_FINAL_web.pdf).

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.pewglobal.org/2012/06/27/pakistani-public-opinion-ever-more-critical-of-u-s/>

“prosperous, secure, and stable,”<sup>8</sup> are either not being achieved, or are (more charitably) far from being achieved. Indeed, U. S. government audits on U.S. development programs in Pakistan have reached the same conclusion. A December 2010 Office of Inspector General’s audit found that United States development assistance to Pakistan was not achieving its goals.<sup>9</sup> The Inspector General’s December 2011 audit report confirmed the trend.<sup>10</sup>

So we return to the puzzle we began with: why do development forecasts for Pakistan not improve in spite of the increase in United States development assistance (indeed, donor assistance in general) to the country? The importance and timeliness of this question is underscored by the Congressional Research Service, which noted that the current Congress is focused on measures to reduce the federal deficit, and members are anxious to cut spending that does not produce results.<sup>11</sup> Therefore, it is not surprising to find that a number of think tanks and research institutes have engaged with the question in an effort to understand why U.S. development assistance to Pakistan is not achieving its goals, and to provide recommendations to improve U.S. development strategy and operations in Pakistan.<sup>12</sup>

These reports draw attention to planning and implementation errors that reduce the efficacy of U.S. development projects in Pakistan. For example, the Center for Global Development report notes that the “U.S. approach cannot yet boast a coherent set of focused development priorities or the organization and tools to manage and adjust those priorities as

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<sup>8</sup> <http://transition.usaid.gov/pk/about/index.html>.

<sup>9</sup> [http://transition.usaid.gov/oig/public/special\\_reports/pakistan\\_quarterly\\_report\\_as\\_of\\_dec\\_31\\_2010.pdf](http://transition.usaid.gov/oig/public/special_reports/pakistan_quarterly_report_as_of_dec_31_2010.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> [http://transition.usaid.gov/oig/public/special\\_reports/Pakistan\\_Quarterly\\_Report\\_as\\_of\\_31\\_Dec\\_2011.pdf](http://transition.usaid.gov/oig/public/special_reports/Pakistan_Quarterly_Report_as_of_31_Dec_2011.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> *Pakistan: U.S. Foreign Assistance*, Congressional Research Service, April 10, 2012, available at:

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/R41856.pdf>.

<sup>12</sup> See for example, this report from the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, *Aiding Without Abetting: Making Civilian Assistance to Pakistan Work for Both Sides*, available at:

<http://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/WWC%20Pakistan%20Aiding%20Without%20Abetting.pdf>; and

this report from the Center for Global Development, *Beyond Bullets and Bombs: Fixing the U.S. Approach to Development in Pakistan*, available at: [http://www.cgdev.org/files/1425136\\_file\\_CGD\\_Pakistan\\_FINAL\\_web.pdf](http://www.cgdev.org/files/1425136_file_CGD_Pakistan_FINAL_web.pdf).

conditions require.”<sup>13</sup> Other factors frequently cited by these reports include a hostile security environment, staffing concerns, and the lack of robust benchmarks to monitor progress.<sup>14</sup>

This dissertation contributes to the discussion about why U.S. development assistance to Pakistan is not achieving its own stated developmental goals. I demonstrate that the continued failure of U.S. development efforts in Pakistan, and their expansion despite this continued failure, is not an exceptional or isolated example, but in fact, it is an identifying characteristic of the development enterprise itself. Therefore, using the example of U.S. development assistance in Pakistan, and a case study of a United States Agency for International Development (USAID) project in the country, I engage with the larger inquiry about the effectiveness of the international development enterprise.<sup>15</sup> Namely, the puzzle presented by the facts that whilst the development enterprise has witnessed tremendous expansion and transformation over the last 50 years, there is little robust evidence to support the assertion that international development initiatives actually achieve their stated normative goals.

### **The Puzzle of International Development**

We get an idea of the scale of the expansion and transformation of the development enterprise by the fact that at its start in 1944 it was dominated by the World Bank, and its first “initiative,” was a concessionary loan to finance rebuilding in France, to the tune of \$250 million (which amounts to roughly \$3.3 billion in 2012 dollars).<sup>16</sup> However, today total development aid exceeds \$500 billion, of which a little over \$300 billion comes from private flows, i.e. from

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<sup>13</sup> *Beyond Bullets and Bombs*, p.1 available at: [http://www.cgdev.org/files/1425136\\_file\\_CGD\\_Pakistan\\_FINAL\\_web.pdf](http://www.cgdev.org/files/1425136_file_CGD_Pakistan_FINAL_web.pdf).

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/R41856.pdf>.

<sup>15</sup> In the following chapter I provide a comprehensive literature review on the concept of “international development,” and the manner in which I am employing the term.

<sup>16</sup> <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/EXTABOUTUS/EXTARCHIVES/0,,contentMDK:20113929~pagePK:36726~piPK:36092~theSitePK:29506,00.html>.

sources other than national development agencies and multilateral institutions.<sup>17</sup> Therefore, not only has the development enterprise expanded monetarily, but its prime movers and shakers are no longer public institutions, rather they are private actors, most notably philanthropic ventures like the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.<sup>18</sup> Furthermore, the enterprise now operates in virtually every aspect of life, from the traditional areas of infrastructure development (e.g. roads and bridges) and food security, to more contemporary areas like financial literacy or the use of mobile technologies to enable people to adapt their lifestyles to climate change.<sup>19</sup> Hence the material and spatial boundaries of the international development enterprise have undergone significant expansion in the last five decades.

Indeed, scholars of development observe that the diverse entities and actors involved in international development – the multilateral institutions, national development agencies, private foundations, corporate donors, NGOs, for-profit contracting firms, and grassroots organizations and the global networks of experts and staff that populate them - increasingly deliberate, make, and implement decisions that have a deeper and more profound impact on the lives and fates of people than do the local authorities that surround them (Duffield 2002; Ferguson 2006; Goldman 2005; Li 2007; Mosse and Lewis 2005; Sridhar 2008). Such ‘non-local’ authorities also underline the emergence of a whole new set of international actors that literally did not exist five decades ago. One needs to further analyze the emergence of these actors on the one side and the

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<sup>17</sup> <http://www.oecd.org/statistics/>.

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.gatesfoundation.org/Pages/home.aspx>.

<sup>19</sup> See for example, this primer from the United Nations Development Program which highlights the cutting edge uses of mobile technologies in various development initiatives:

[http://www.undpegov.org/sites/undpegov.org/files/undp\\_mobile\\_technology\\_primer.pdf](http://www.undpegov.org/sites/undpegov.org/files/undp_mobile_technology_primer.pdf).

efficacy of what they promote on the other. In this study, I bracket the former question, and focus on the latter.

Despite the substantial expansion of the development enterprise, and the many transformations it has experienced in the process, there is scant robust evidence that development initiatives *actually work* (Easterly 2001; Easterly 2006; Ferguson 1994; French 1996; Moyo 2009). In fact, repeated studies have shown a lack of correlation between aid and development in recipient countries (Boone 1995; Mosley 1987; Roodman 2007). The lack of evidence supporting the success of development initiatives has prompted ex-World Banker, William Easterly, to disavow the aid enterprise as a source of development. Instead, he extols the virtues of “the pragmatic use of time-tested economic ideas – the benefits of specialization, comparative advantage, gains from trade, market-clearing prices, trade-offs, budget constraints – by individuals, firms, governments, and societies,” which he believes are the sources of the rapid development we have witnessed in “emerging countries,” like China, rather than development assistance (Easterly 2007: 37).

Here, following Ferguson’s example (1994) I want to make explicit that this study is *not* about how “societies change.” Therefore, I neither engage with, nor do I address questions raised in, the truly enormous literature on socio-political and historical transformation – what causes such transformation; what prevents it; why do some societies seem to achieve it, whilst others do not, etc (see for example, Amsden 2001; Baran 1982; Brenner 1977; Bunker 1985; Coronil 1997; Evans 1979; Frank 1966; Göçek 1996; Huntington 1968; Inkeles 1960; Lenin 1939; Moore 1993; Rostow 1971; Trotsky 1936; Wallerstein 1974).

Similarly, this study does *not* aim to address the question about why Pakistani society does not, or has not achieved its developmental potential, or what are the development prospects for the country. Therefore, I do not engage with the growing body of literature that focuses on these issues, a corpus that has recently witnessed a flurry of additions (see for example, Cohen 2011; Constable 2011; Lieven 2011; Lohdi 2011; Schmidt 2011).

Instead, this study is concerned with the social entity that is the “development enterprise,” – the set of institutions, and actors that do “international development,” work, and their practices - and I examine it with a case study of a development project that operated in Pakistan. Most specifically, the focus of this study is on the cognitive framework development actors utilize. And I engage with the puzzle that is the development enterprise by addressing the two central questions it confronts us with:

- a) Why does the development enterprise fail to achieve its own stated normative goals?*
- b) Why does the development enterprise expand despite the fact that it does not achieve its stated normative goals?*

I shed light on the contribution of micro-level mechanisms of the development enterprise itself that play a part in producing the enterprise’s failure to achieve its stated goals, and that simultaneously create the conditions for it to expand despite this failure. Specifically, I demonstrate how the particular ways that development actors think about the problems they want to solve, and then go about solving them preclude them from solving these problems on the one hand whilst also creating conditions for the expansion of the development enterprise on the other. Indeed, once the development enterprise is created on particular premises, it assumes a life-course of its own, one that survives and reproduces itself despite its inefficacy.

I have been able to empirically investigate the development enterprise by studying the life-history of a prominent United States Agency for International Development (USAID)<sup>20</sup> funded development project in Pakistan from conception to culmination. This development project named, the Pakistan Legislative Strengthening Project (PLSP), was funded by USAID and implemented by a development contractor, Development Alternatives Incorporated (DAI).<sup>21</sup>

The PLSP is a “governance assistance” project. Such projects are the “new, new thing,”<sup>22</sup> in international development, and exemplify a method used by development actors to inculcate “Good Governance” in societies. I follow the approach taken by Gerhard Anders and refer to Good Governance in capitals throughout this dissertation, so as to indicate I am using the term as interpreted and applied by the World Bank, which corresponds to the way it is understood within the development community at large (Anders 2005: 56).

To provide context, and give an idea of the substantive transformations that have occurred within the development enterprise to bring the issue of governance to the forefront, in chapter IV, I present a discussion on how development actors construe the concept of Good Governance. And I provide an overview of how governance came to be seen as a development problem, and a focus of development activity.

I have examined the operations of the various development actors involved in the PLSP (USAID staff, DAI staff, as well as independent consultants involved with the PLSP) to observe how it was designed, implemented, and evaluated. I have accomplished these tasks through a close reading of project documents, semi-structured interviews with representatives of the

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<sup>20</sup> See Appendix B for a brief background on USAID.

<sup>21</sup> See Appendix C for a brief background on DAI.

<sup>22</sup> Nunberg 2007.

organizations who worked on the project, and visiting project sites in the Pakistani National Assembly in Islamabad, as well as Provincial Assemblies in Karachi and Lahore. What makes my empirical study original is my analysis of the entire process of development thinking, from the inception of the PLSP at USAID in the United States, to its actualization and impact in Pakistan. All too often, such empirical studies focus on either the creation of development projects, or their implementation, thereby overlooking the disjuncture between vision and actualization, as well as the puzzle posed by the continuation of such projects in spite of this disjuncture (and related inefficacy).

Alongside my investigation of the PLSP in relation to its conceptualization and implementation by development actors at USAID, DAI and independent consultants, I have conducted interviews with individuals drawn from a wide spectrum of Pakistani civil society. I have obtained their narratives vis-à-vis the problems the project aimed to solve, with the intent to capture the extent of congruence between the vision articulated within the project, and the reality on which the project acted upon. The strategic move of obtaining representations from PLSP development actors, as well as representations from Pakistani civil society actors enabled me to compare these two sets of narratives and to illustrate the wide gulf between the tactics, rationales, calculations and actions of the PLSP on the one hand, and on the other, the ideas and steps enunciated by leaders of Pakistani civil society as necessary to address the problems the project aimed to solve.

Utilizing theoretical insights from two strands of sociology of knowledge literature – world society and post-colonial scholarship – I argue that there was a significant disjuncture between two frameworks: (i) the cognitive framework employed within the PLSP by

development actors to identify, diagnose and solve problems; and (ii) the structural framework of the context in which they were operating. This ultimately led to the PLSP not achieving its stated normative goals. Yet the PLSP's failure to achieve its goals was not interpreted as final and irreversible; instead, it was negotiated within the same cognitive framework merely as a temporary setback: as evidence that the project had not done enough of what it was doing, and that there was a need for a follow up development project that would complete the work the PLSP had begun. In this way, the PLSP's own cognitive apparatus led both to its inevitable failure, whilst also creating the conditions for more (similarly conceived) development projects to follow in its footsteps. Hence the cognitive framework that underpins development projects generates an independent life-course of its own that enables such projects to self-sustain in spite of their failure to achieve their stated normative goals.

In this chapter I have provided an introduction, the central puzzle that I am exploring, as well as historical background for my study. In the following chapter I will highlight scholarship that provides an exceptionally fruitful way of understanding the contemporary landscape of the development enterprise. I will also provide an overview of the theoretical frameworks I will utilize in my analysis.

## Chapter II

### Development: Theory

*“Parallax...is the apparent displacement of an object (the shift of its position against a background), caused by a change in observational position that provides a new line of sight...The parallax gap is thus not just a matter of shifting perspective (from one stand point, a building looks a certain way – if I move a little bit, it looks different); things get interesting when we notice that the gap is inscribed into the “real” building itself – as if the building, in its very material existence, bears the imprint of different and mutually exclusive perspectives.”*

- Slavoj Žižek<sup>23</sup>

The literature on development has recently grown substantially – reflecting in no small measure, the growth in size and significance of international development within global political economy (Mosse 2005). To reiterate, when I talk about “literature on development,” I mean something quite precise - literature that “aims to understand, explain, analyze, or make sense of the ‘development’ industry itself” (Ferguson 1994). In other words, I specifically refer to research that explicitly takes as its object of investigative analysis the institutions, ideas, mechanisms and actors that comprise the ontology of “international development.” The literature on this topic is, broadly speaking, split into two camps: instrumentalist and critical (Ferguson 1994; Gastel and Nuijten 2005).

#### **Instrumentalist Approach to International Development**

“Instrumentalists,” as Van Gastel terms them, conceive development institutions as “machines” that aim to generate “policy...as a rational problem solving instrument, and as a neutral, technical means to steer social processes” (Gastel and Nuijten 2005). Instrumentalists

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<sup>23</sup> Žižek 2010:244-245.

tend to either be part of the development community, or are “sympathetic outsiders,” and they see the institutions and initiatives of international development, “as part of a great collective effort to fight poverty, raise standards of living, and promote one or another version of progress” (Ferguson 1994).

Instrumentalists study the entities and actors involved in development so as to provide them with advice on how to function better and achieve their goals (Ferguson 1994). Influential works within the instrumental genre include Jeffrey Sachs’s, *The End of Poverty* (2005), and Paul Collier’s, *The Bottom Billion: Why the Poorest Countries are Failing and What Can be Done About it?* (2009).

In terms of a theoretical paradigm of political and economic transformation, the instrumental approach leans heavily on modernization theory, borrowing (with modifications) its boundless optimism and belief in endogenous, progressive, uni-linear social change in all countries, and in particular, its emphasis on experts utilizing scientific methods to devise solutions for socio-economic progress (Escobar 1995; Gastel and Nuijten 2005; Long and Ploeg 1989).<sup>24</sup>

Instrumentalist accounts about the failure of development initiatives in achieving their stated goals simply focus on the “policy not being right,” or not being properly implemented (Gastel and Nuijten 2005; Long and Ploeg 1989). The question of why the development enterprise continues to expand despite its failure to achieve its goals is not considered within the literature because the underlying assumption is that those goals should be met, provided the

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<sup>24</sup> For a representative sample of modernization theory, see for example, (Eisenstadt 1964; Hirschman 1977; Huntington 1968; Inkeles 1960; Lipset and Solari 1967; Rostow 1971).

correct strategy and plan are devised and well implemented. Therefore, a failure to achieve those goals is simply reason to develop superior policy and implement it better (Ferguson 1994; Li 2007).

Whilst instrumentalist approaches to the study of the development enterprise are helpful in providing chronological details of the evolution of development thinking and practice, they are conspicuously thin in providing substantive analyses of them. Fundamentally, instrumentalist accounts do not inquire into the assumptions and premises that undergird development activity. Moreover, the technical approach that instrumentalist scholarship utilizes with the aim of identifying the planning or implementation problems that may prevent a particular development initiative from achieving its goals, mirrors the cognitive approach that development actors themselves use.

As I will demonstrate in Chapter VII, this cognitive approach is *the root cause* of why the development enterprise fails to achieve its normative goals. Simply said, the approach to problem solving that the instrumentalist approach employs, utilizing models, and operationalizing complex, multi-dimensional socio-political factors as static variables, is in and of itself the flaw in development thinking. Since instrumentalist accounts utilize the same approach, they are not able to identify the error in it, and furthermore, instrumentalist scholarship functions to normalize this cognitive framework and increase its spread.

In addition, the instrumentalist approach shares with development thinking, the faulty premise (indeed, a hope and desire) that the concepts, institutions and practices of modernity that evolved from a very particular history of Europe will spread across the globe, in the same form, bearing the same substance. And that if this spread does not happen, these concepts, institutions

and practices can be grafted with success. Of course, as dependency theorists, have earlier demonstrated, such a uni-linear view fails to take into account that when Europe (or the “West” writ large) was undergoing the changes that mark its becoming “modern,” there had not been a “modern West” present. Rather, there were colonies whose exploitation produced the supremacy of the West, and this supremacy was a key historical factor for the development of political modernity in the societies of the “West” (Wolfe 1997: 394-397).

Indeed, the idea of grafting institutions and practices that are a product of a particular history and a particular dynamic of social and political contestation (which undergirds both instrumentalist scholarship and development thinking), into another society is fundamentally implausible. As Chakrabarty has poignantly noted, “No country...is a model to another country, though the discussion of modernity that thinks in terms of “catching up” precisely posits such models. There is nothing like the “cunning of reason” to ensure that we all converge at the same terminal point in history in spite of our apparent, historical differences. Our historical differences actually make a difference. This happens because no human society is a tabula rasa. The universal concepts of political modernity encounter pre-existing concepts, categories, institutions, and practices through which they get translated and configured differently.” (2000: xii).

### **Critical Approach to International Development**

The critical perspective differs from instrumental interpretations of international development because of the central importance the former accord to questions of power and history. As such, these approaches represent a welcome advance to instrumental approaches. Critical theorists argue (and as we have noted) that instrumental approaches either do not

consider issues of power and history at all, or that they do not sufficiently take account of their highly complex and multi-dimensional nature. In particular, critical theorists observe that instrumental explanations do not reflect the fact that policymaking is itself deeply embedded in, and profoundly inflected by, structural power relations and history, and is far from being a techno-scientific endeavor that occurs within a pristine vacuum (Shore and Wright 1997).

Critical scholars “analyze development bureaucracies and aid policies in the context of a hegemonic global order” (Gastel and Nuijten 2005: 86). Critical theorists view development institutions and development activities as being constituted by, and in the last instance, serving the interests of, “macro-structures of power and control” (Gastel and Nuijten 2005: 87). They argue that development practices do not function to create an egalitarian global order, but in fact, to institutionally maintain relations of dominance, and to discursively depoliticize issues that are profoundly related to the sources and distribution of power, so that the true political nature of development is veiled behind systems and discourses of rational planning (Escobar 1995; Ferguson 1994; Gastel and Nuijten 2005).

In their work, critical theorists endeavor to shed light on the mechanisms by which development institutions, policies and activities normalize, legitimize and consolidate constellations of power (Gastel and Nuijten 2005). Important works in the critical genre include Arturo Escobar’s, *Encountering Development: The Making and Unmaking of the Third World* (1995), and Michael Goldman’s, *Imperial Nature* (2005).

With regards to theoretical paradigms of political and economic transformation, the lineage of critical theorists can variously be traced to marxist, dependency, world systems, and/or neo-marxist accounts that emphasize the mechanics of capitalist accumulation, uneven

development, structural power relations and hegemony in explaining prevailing socio-economic conditions and transformations in them (Ferguson 1994).<sup>25</sup>

Since critical scholars essentially view the development enterprise as a “singular, monolithic form of self-interested Northern economic imperialism,” (Simon 2006: 12), they are not surprised that it does not achieve its stated normative goals. Critical scholars suggest that the latter are mere rhetorical cloaks that hide and sanctify the development enterprise’s real agenda of exploitation of the Global South (Crush 1995; Escobar 1995). Furthermore, they opine that the expansion of the enterprise despite the fact that there is little evidence to suggest that it works is evidence that it is a tool for neo-imperialism (Crush 1995; Escobar 1995).

Critical accounts have certainly done well in providing a necessary corrective to the instrumentalist view that interprets international development in a de-politicised, techno-scientific manner and which does not account for the realities of structural power, historical casuistry and hegemony. However, a more recent wave of critical scholarship argues that older critical approaches can themselves be faulted for producing a uni-dimensional and overly deterministic interpretation of the development industry and its practices (Gastel and Nuijten 2005; Mosse 2005).

Indeed, the central premise of much of the older set of critical writing – that the development enterprise coercively and intentionally maintains North-South domination – is strongly critiqued for lacking the very same complexity and multi-dimensionality which those

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<sup>25</sup> For a representative sample of these paradigms, see for example, (Amin 1972; Arrighi, Silver, and Ahmad 1999; Baer 1962; Baran 1982; Brenner 1977; Cardoso 1972; Evans 1992; Foucault 1971; Frank 1966; Lenin 1939; Trotsky 1936; 1936 [c1933]; Wallerstein 1974). Marx and Engels frame the general mood in *The Communist Manifesto*, “The bourgeoisie...compels all nations, on pain of extinction, to adopt the bourgeois mode of production...to become bourgeois themselves. In one word, it creates a world after its own image” (Marx and Engels 1978: 477).

scholars find missing in instrumental scholarship (Anders 2005; Gastel and Nuijten 2005; Mosse 2005). Mosse notes that this central premise of the older wave of critical scholarship relies on a set of claims that are simply not borne out in empirical investigation (Mosse 2005: 13). Upon reviewing recent empirical literature on development he finds that: the assertion of omnipotent multi-lateral development institutions is “poorly substantiated”; claims of institutional homogeneity are “implausible”; arguments about donor coordination are “scarcely credible”; and statements about “discursive stability” are flatly contradicted “by the fact of prolific policy change” (Mosse 2005: 13).

Further, it is argued that the older set of critical writings fundamentally view the global landscape – with development institutions and nation states in the Global South as “unified and distinct actors” locked in an antagonistic battle - in an anachronistic way (Anders 2005: 55; see also Ferguson 2006). Gould points out that today, “...the boundaries between sovereign national governments and self-governed external agencies have become blurred beyond distinction...”, and that policies are designed and implemented by a select group of local and transnational technocrats, who frequently exchange (and otherwise shift) positions (Goldman 2005: 62; see also Gould 2005; Harrison 2001).

This recent wave of scholarship has utilized insights from sociology of knowledge literature, in particular, discussions on the nexus between knowledge and power, as well as Peter Haas’s concept of “epistemic communities,” (Haas 1992) to understand the contemporary development landscape. They postulate that the expansion of the development enterprise is related to the fact that it today operates through networks of transnational experts who share a common discourse, and a pool of underlying assumptions which structure the way they think

about problems, devise solutions and take actions(Ferguson and Gupta 2002; Goldman 2005; Li 2007; Sanyal 2007) .

In order to build upon these macro-level accounts, development practices need to be studied empirically to investigate the process through which they (in and of themselves) contribute towards their failure to achieve their normative goals, whilst at the same time spurring the expansion of the development enterprise. Towards this end, valuable work has been conducted by Li (Li 2007). However, this vast and rich terrain remains otherwise untouched. It is precisely this gap in research that I address by examining the material practices of the development enterprise through close study of the highly celebrated “new, new thing”<sup>26</sup> in development - governance assistance programs, with a particular focus on how development actors “think.” I draw on two strands of sociology of knowledge literature, namely world society theory, and post-colonial theory, to explain the puzzle of international development, i.e. that it continues to expand despite its failure to achieve its stated normative goals.

### **World Society Theory**

World society theory is most closely associated with the work of John Meyer, and draws heavily on sociological institutionalism literature (Drori and Krucken 2009). In particular, its arguments that the social contexts of actors define their identities and goals (DiMaggio and Powell 1983; Meyer and Rowan 1977), and that their actions are shaped by prevailing “cultural” scripts, or “the taken-for-granted...organizational forms and practices” (DiMaggio 1988: 4).

World society theory seeks to explain the global landscape and changes within it as a consequence of the emergence of a common “world culture,” which has its roots in the “West” and Christianity (writ large), but which has become universal and secularized particularly since

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<sup>26</sup> To borrow from Barbara Nunberg (2007: 60).

the end of World War II, and which serves as the encompassing context within which all actors are today embedded (Meyer et al. 1997: 164). World society theorists point to the fact that structural, and institutional similarities, as well as broad agreement on principles, definitions and purposes across societies operating in disparate contexts around the world evidence the presence of a “world culture” (Boli and Thomas 1997: 173). These scholars argue that “world culture,” provides global scripts or “taken-for-granted” conceptions and practices, often embodied in models, templates and ideas of what is “appropriate,” which produce these similarities across societies or *isomorphism* (Boli and Thomas 1997; Meyer et al. 1997; Strand and Meyer 1993). Isomorphism is evidenced, for example, by education systems across the world using a similar curriculum (Meyer, Ramirez, and Soysal 1992; Meyer 1992). As Meyer explains, “Many features of the contemporary nation-state derive from worldwide models constructed and propagated through global cultural and associational processes...Worldwide models define and legitimate agendas for local action, shaping the structures and policies of nation-states and other national and local actors in virtually all of the domains of rationalized social life...” (Meyer et al. 1997: 145).

World Society scholars argue that although “Western Christendom,” provided the early foundation for these worldwide models, they are today secular and characterized above all, by the principles and precepts of rationality and science (Meyer et al. 1997: 164). As Boli and Thomas note, “At all levels, progress is assumed to depend on rationalization. Rational social action is the route to equality, comfort, and the good life. Rational production and distribution achieve all sorts of collective purposes. The scientific method, technique, monetarization,

logical analysis – these are the favored *modi operandi*” (Boli and Thomas 1997: 181). This is particularly true with regards to models and ideas relating to public policy (Haas 1992).

These worldwide models spread or diffuse across the globe by three processes. First, nation-states copy each other, replicating structures and practices that are deemed to be successful in terms of allowing societies to achieve progress (Meyer et al. 1997: 160). Second, diffusion occurs through global associations like international nongovernmental organizations or multilateral institutions. As Meyer remarks, these “world organizations are...primarily instruments of shared modernity” (Meyer et al. 1997: 161). Third, but perhaps most importantly, via scientists, professionals, and consultants, who are “legitimated experts,” who provide advice to decision-makers generally, but government functionaries in particular, and whose “authority is rooted in universal, rationalized ultimate principles of moral and natural law,” and who facilitate the spread of worldwide models when they “define virtuous instances, formulate models, and actively support their adoption” in societies across the globe (Meyer et al. 1997: 161).

However, World Society scholars note that even as these models and ideas of formal institutions, rules and procedures rapidly diffuse and are adopted in societies across the globe, they most often neither create changes in practices, nor do they address underlying socio-political problems and concerns. This phenomenon, which is termed, *decoupling*, is especially observed in developing societies and occurs because the worldwide models are not appropriate for local contexts. As Meyer notes, “Decoupling is endemic because nation-states are modeled on an external culture that cannot simply be imported wholesale as a fully functioning system” (Meyer et al. 1997: 153). For example, Hafner-Burton and Tsutsui (2005) demonstrate that the signing of human rights treaties did not, in fact, lead to a reduction in human rights abuses. And

Boyle et al (2002) found that anti-genital cutting reforms enacted in many societies in order to adhere to a global standard, did not lead to a reduction in the practice.

In Chapter VII, I will use the analytical framework provided by world society theory to first, demonstrate that the puzzle of international development can be explained by a fundamental disjuncture between the way that development actors think about the problems they are attempting to solve, and the structural (socio-political) characteristics of those problems. Second, I will utilize world society theory to shed light on why development actors continue to engage in practices that are self-defeating. However, world society theory by itself is not sufficient in explaining the resilience of the ill-conceived approach to problem solving that development actors employ. In order to understand this resilience, in the last instance, we have to utilize insights from one other genre of sociology of knowledge literature – post-colonial theory.

### **Post-colonial Theory**

The substantively “thick” contribution of post-colonial scholarship to social theory is the insight that the growth of modernity in Europe occurred not despite, but in fact, in conjunction with European colonialism and the encounter with the colonized. The processes, the birth, the formation, and the maintenance of modernity, and its categories (e.g. rationality, bureaucracy, capital), were never simply endogenous to Europe. Said writes in *Orientalism*, "I have begun with the assumption that the Orient is not an inert fact of nature. It is not merely there, just as the Occident itself is not just there either...as both geographical and cultural entities - to say nothing of historical entities - such locales, regions, geographical sectors as 'Orient' and 'Occident' are

man-made" (Said 2003; [2003], c1994: 5). In other words, the binaries of modern/non-modern or west/non-west are not natural or inherent, but are produced.

Crucially, these binaries are mutually constitutive of each other, and so the growth and salience of each depends on the presence of the other. Chakrabarty argues that the narrative of modernity, structured by the historicist logic best exemplified as "first in Europe, then elsewhere," demonstrates the assumption that the "elsewhere" is non-modern, but that over time it will follow the "European experience," and will become modern (2000: 7). This belief animates the "spirit of modernity": the motivation to constantly seek spaces and peoples that are identified as non-modern and needing help to be "modernized." As Chakrabarty notes, "some people [are] less modern than others, and the...former [need] a period of preparation and waiting before they [can] be recognized as full participants in political modernity" (2000: 9).

In Chapter VII, I will utilize the core insight of post-colonial theory about the relentless "spirit of modernity," and its pursuit of its non-modern, "other," to explain why development actors are inextricably bound to keep employing an approach to problem solving that leads them to failure, and I will unlock the final piece of the puzzle that is international development.

In this chapter I have critically reviewed literature on the development enterprise, and highlighted scholarship that provides an exceptionally fruitful way of understanding the macro aspects of the contemporary development landscape. I have also introduced the theoretical frameworks that I will utilize in my own analysis. In the following chapter I discuss the specifics of how I went about conducting the present study.

## **Chapter III**

### **Methodology**

*“...The concrete is concrete because it is the concentration of many determinations, hence unity of the diverse...”*

- Karl Marx<sup>27</sup>

Empirical studies within the instrumental approach of studying the development enterprise either focus on macro policies of international development, and the design process (see for example, Sachs 2005; Collier 2009), or they use quantitative methodologies, narrowly defined models, and static variables to assess the efficacy of development interventions (see for example, Amare 2012; Phillips and Sanghvi 1996). As such these studies are not able to capture the cognitive framework that underpins development projects, nor are they able to highlight gaps between vision and actualization.

Empirical studies within the critical approach focus on either discourse analysis of planning documents to uncover how domination and control are hidden behind neutral terminology (see for example, Escobar 1995; Crush 1995), or they focus on investigating multilateral institutions like the World Bank, in an attempt to uncover how these institutions work behind the scenes to dominate and control societies in the Global South (see for example, Goldman 2005). Whilst this is a positive advance from instrumental approaches, these studies are not able to isolate the cognitive framework that underpins development activity, and crucially, they are not able to set this framework against the context being acted upon.

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<sup>27</sup> Marx, Engels, and Tucker 1978: 237.

Ferguson (1994), and Li (2007), provide welcome and fruitful steps forward, and in no short measure, their embedded designs have inspired my approach. I have employed an embedded qualitative case study approach, in order to capture the cognitive framework employed within the PLSP, and to place it within the structural (social and political) realities of Pakistan as enunciated by leaders of Pakistani civil society. Such a design makes my empirical study original, because a) it captures the entire process of development thinking, from the inception of the PLSP at USAID in the United States, to its actualization and impact in Pakistan, b) because it captures the features of the local context that leaders of Pakistani civil society expressed as essential to address in order to solve the problems the PLSP endeavored to solve, and c) it highlights the degree of congruence between the landscape of the problematic as envisaged within the PLSP, and the landscape as envisaged by leaders of Pakistani civil society.

An embedded qualitative case study is appropriate for my inquiry because, as Yin notes, “case study approaches are preferred when ‘how’ or ‘why’ questions are being posed, when the investigator has little control over events, and when the focus is on contemporary phenomenon within some real life context” (Yin 1994: 1).

A case study approach utilizes analytical generalization to establish external validity (Yin 1994: 1). This research design demonstrates the specific complex interactions of a particular case, but also highlights attributes that may be both conceptually and empirically seen as paradigmatic of a general set. To the extent that the latter can be established, the implications of the study will have wider relevance and will provide insights on phenomenon at large.

In the case at hand, the fact that development projects are designed, implemented and evaluated in almost the same way across widely different contexts (in a pro-forma template

fashion), suggests that close study of one project – i.e. the PLSP - will yield important observations about development practice in general because the cognitive framework that underpins the PLSP, is common to all development projects (Goldman 2005; Li 2007; Sridhar 2008).

For my case study I chose the PLSP, and I examined the operations of all development actors involved with the project. These actors were spread across the domains of the project's funder, USAID, its implementers based at DAI, as well as independent development consultants some of whom are based in Pakistan, whilst others do not have a base as such and simply travel to where ever their current or next project operates.

My purpose was not to take stock of the thick multitude of socio-political effects of the PLSP. Instead, my aim was to explore the project's "rationale, its diagnoses, its calculations, its tactics", and its actions (Li 2007: 231). I accomplished these tasks through a close reading of the following: a) documentary archive of the project, b) semi-structured interviews with PLSP staff (the development actors who were involved with the PLSP in any capacity, e.g. in designing, planning or implementing the project), as well as visits to project sites (various facilities in the Pakistani parliaments in Islamabad, Lahore and Karachi).

I embedded my case study within the socio-political context of Pakistan. Alongside my investigation of the USAID project, I conducted interviews with leaders drawn from a wide spectrum of civil society in Pakistan, and obtained their conceptualizations of the problems present in Pakistani legislatures, the causes of these problems, and their recommendations on how to solve these problems. I then compare the responses that emanate from the PLSP, to those

that emanate from leaders of Pakistani civil society to see whether the “view from development space,” accords with the “view from local context.”

### **Data Collection and Analysis**

The study is multi-sited and transnational, ranging from USAID and DAI offices in the metropolitan area of Washington D.C., to project sites in Pakistan at the National Assembly in Islamabad, and the Provincial Assemblies in Lahore and Karachi. Data collection and analysis occurred over a period of 16 months, between September 2010 and January 2012. To achieve internal validity, I employed the strategy of triangulation (Patton 1987).<sup>28</sup> I utilized two different qualitative methods for data collection, so as to have multiple sources of evidence that allowed me to cross check and verify my observations:

#### ***Text Analysis***

I closely reviewed the documentary archive of the project, first, in order to ascertain the organizational structure of the project and its chronology. Second, I conducted discourse analysis of texts in order to understand how reality was conceived within the project.<sup>29</sup>

#### ***In-Depth Interviewing***

I utilized semi-structured interviews (see Appendices F and G for sample templates) to collect data from PLSP staff members, and from leaders of Pakistani civil society. I interviewed as many participants as was required to reach “saturation.”<sup>30</sup> This amounted to 15 PLSP staff members,<sup>31</sup> and 40 leaders of Pakistani civil society.<sup>32</sup> The latter were drawn from a wide

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<sup>28</sup> “Triangulation,” refers to the use of more than one method to collect data. This strategy lends greater credibility to findings as data can be cross-checked for consistency.

<sup>29</sup> For a full list of documents reviewed, please see Appendix E.

<sup>30</sup> “Saturation is the point at which there are few or no new items or themes,” Workshop on Interdisciplinary Standards for Systematic Qualitative Research, National Science Foundation, 2009, p. 48.

<sup>31</sup> See Appendix H for an anonymous list of participants.

spectrum of Pakistani civil society, and included political party activists, judges, lawyers, journalists, commentators, labor organizers, corporate leaders, NGO workers, academics, parliamentarians, and educationists. I obtained this sample of participants by identifying and reaching out to individuals and organizations that are particularly active in issues of democratization, and human rights in Pakistan, and I also employed a snowball sampling method. Whilst I recorded interviews, I also took detailed notes, and I wrote down my impressions during and after the interviews. Please note that due to the politically sensitive nature of the interviews, all participants – PLSP staff members, as well as participants drawn from Pakistani civil society – requested full anonymity.

### **Research Questions**

My inquiry was guided by the following questions: *How did PLSP staff/leaders of Pakistani civil society, conceptualize the problems of governance in Pakistan with respect to its legislatures? How did they diagnose these problems? What were their solutions to the problems they had identified? How did they interpret their results? (only applicable to PLSP staff)*

### **Subjective Experience**

My ability to gain interviews with leaders of Pakistani civil society is, first of all, testament to the fact that I was born in Pakistan, and I am fluent in Urdu. Therefore, I possess the cultural capital that is imperative to foster the trust that allowed participants to agree to meet with me and discuss these (very politically sensitive issues) with candor.

Second, it illustrates how the perception of “expertise” provides access to information, as well as respect and authority. I was perceived as an “expert” due to the fact that I was a doctoral

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<sup>32</sup> See Appendix I for an anonymous list of participants.

researcher from a top ranked social science department in the United States, i.e. the University of Michigan's Department of Sociology. In Chapter VII, I will demonstrate how the authority that is granted to perceived "expertise," is an important source of power and access in the contemporary era, and the implications this has for the puzzle of the development enterprise.

My perceived "expertise," was also important in gaining access to the development actors involved with the PLSP. Furthermore, I had spent the previous year in Washington D.C. on a research fellowship at an international development institute, and this experience turned out to benefit me tremendously in my ability to carry out research for this study.

First, it allowed me to build valuable social capital, and gain the trust of important "gatekeepers," within the development community that allowed me to effectively conduct the study. This included helping me establish contacts with PLSP staff across the various domains of the project (USAID, DAI, independent consultants in Pakistan).

Second, working within the development community allowed me to immerse myself within that space, and gain an "insider's" knowledge of the industry, its discourse and its practices.

Third, it helped me in identifying an increasingly prominent practice (governance assistance) and an appropriate case (the PLSP) with which to study it and the broader field of international development.

### **Case Choice**

I chose the PLSP for study because it was a governance assistance project (a cutting edge development practice) whose embedded features (it operated in Pakistan), ostensible goals (improving democracy in Pakistan), and organizational structure (it was implemented by a

private development contractor, DAI), make it an ideal case for an analysis of the development enterprise.

In the following chapter (IV), I will discuss why I chose a governance assistance project for my case study, after providing background on the emergence and the central salience of the issue of governance in development. Below, I elaborate on the other features of the PLSP that make it ideal for my case study.

### **Empirical Setting - Pakistan**

As I have discussed above, Pakistan is a fertile setting for studying development effectiveness in general, and in particular, for examining U.S. development efforts in the country. Pakistan has emerged as a frontline state within the United States foreign policy constellation.<sup>33</sup> In December 2009, United States President Obama underscored the importance of assistance to Pakistan when he announced that the core element of the administration's "Af-Pak" policy is a long-term and committed, "effective partnership with Pakistan," which comprises "substantial resources to support Pakistan's democracy and development."<sup>34</sup>

The President's strategy statements have been supported by a sharp increase in the flow of development assistance to Pakistan. As I noted, the administration provided \$1.5 billion in development funding in 2010,<sup>35</sup> and it supported and signed into law the Kerry-Lugar bill which increases non-military aid to Pakistan to \$7.5 billion between 2010 and 2014.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> See for example, [http://www.whitehouse.gov/the\\_press\\_office/Remarks-by-the-President-on-a-New-Strategy-for-Afghanistan-and-Pakistan/](http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Remarks-by-the-President-on-a-New-Strategy-for-Afghanistan-and-Pakistan/).

<sup>34</sup> <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-address-nation-way-forward-afghanistan-and-pakistan>.

<sup>35</sup> <http://transition.usaid.gov/pk/about/index.html>.

<sup>36</sup> <http://transition.usaid.gov/pk/about/klb.html>.

USAID operations currently span five key areas in Pakistan: energy, economic growth, stabilization, education, and health, with “good governance” and gender empowerment serving as cross-cutting themes.<sup>37</sup> However, at the time the PLSP operated in Pakistan (2005-2010), USAID operated “Democracy and Governance,” as a separate area (rather than a cross-cutting theme).

USAID/Pakistan’s work is organized by four Strategic Objectives (SO) that are presented below:

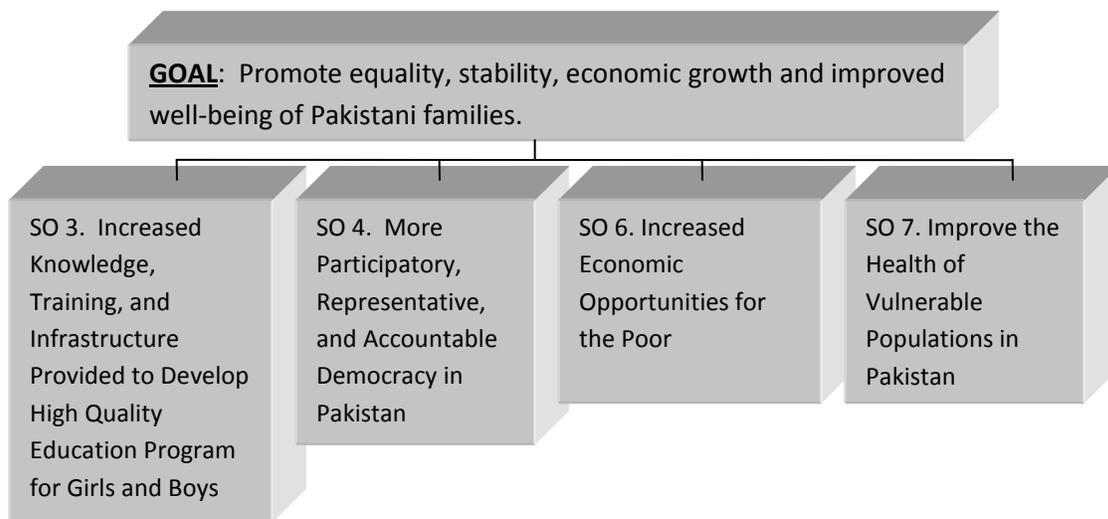


Figure 1: USAID/Pakistan Strategic Goals and Objectives<sup>38</sup>

Pakistan is also a particularly relevant setting for examining a governance assistance project. Since its inception in 1947, the country has experienced political instability, manifested in direct military rule for 35 of the 65 years of its existence, with the military predominantly ruling from “behind the scenes” during the remaining years (Jalal 1990; Jalal 1995; Lieven 2011; Noman 1990; Siddiqa-Agha 2007). This has resulted in a “failure to establish enduring and credible political institutions” (Cohen 2002: 111). As a consequence, the Pakistani state has not

<sup>37</sup> <http://transition.usaid.gov/pk/about/>.

<sup>38</sup> USAID/Pakistan, Strategic Plan.

been able to secure fundamental resources for its citizens, e.g. food, water, shelter, justice, protection (Cohen 2002; Hussain, Kemal, and United Nations Development Programme. 2003).<sup>39</sup>

For these reasons, Pakistan is seen as a “failing,” “fragile,” or “failed” state.<sup>40</sup> As a consequence, the country’s “need” for governance assistance has been widely proclaimed within the development community, as well as in wider policymaking circles. For example, Barbara Nunberg observes that the, “...U.S. 911 Commission’s report put...Pakistan on a “governance watch,” urging proactive foreign and international development policies that would bring [this nation] squarely into the fold of states with well-functioning institutions” (Nunberg 2007: 78).

This view resonates at the World Bank which recently noted,”...Ultimately, governance challenges lie at the heart of most of Pakistan’s economic development priorities. The achievement of Pakistan’s development objectives depends on improved governance of the public sector – greater transparency and accountability, strengthened legal and regulatory framework especially for private sector activity, improved responsiveness, and a better interface with citizens.”<sup>41</sup> As a result, governance assistance efforts have been prominently featured and well-resourced within development activity in Pakistan.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> In 2010, Pakistan was ranked 125 out of 169 countries on the UNDP’s Human Development Index, <http://hdr.undp.org/en/statistics/>; and at 139 out of 176 countries on the Food and Agricultural Organisation’s State of Food Insecurity Report, <http://www.fao.org/docrep/013/i1683e/i1683e.pdf>; and in 2009, Pakistan was ranked 100 out of 133 countries on the UNDP’s Human Poverty Index, <http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/indicators/97.html>.

<sup>40</sup> See for example, the Fund for Peace’s “Failed State Index,” where in 2012 Pakistan was ranked as the 13<sup>th</sup> most failed/failing state in the world. Available at: <http://www.fundforpeace.org/global/?q=fsi-grid2012>.

<sup>41</sup> Pakistan: Country Partnership Strategy, FY 2010-2013, p. 14: <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/PAKISTANEXTN/Resources/293051-1264873659180/6750579-1279901350261/Ch3PakistanCPSJuly2010.pdf>.

<sup>42</sup> The United Nations Development Programme operates eight governance assistance programs in Pakistan, <http://undp.org.pk/democratic-governance.html>; USAID operates three, <http://www.usaid.gov/pk/sectors/democracy/>; and in 2009 the United Kingdom’s Department for International Development allocated 20% of its expenditure in Pakistan to governance (second only to humanitarian assistance), <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/where-we-work/asia-south/pakistan/>.

The U.S. administration has placed special emphasis on capacity building as a development activity in Pakistan. The administration elaborated in its 2010 Afghanistan and Pakistan Regional Stabilization Strategy Report that a key initiative for Pakistan was to provide, “assistance to build capacity in Pakistani government institutions at the national, provincial and local level...”<sup>43</sup>

Furthermore, these representations have been supported by increased funding for governance assistance programs in Pakistan. From 2009 to 2010, USAID roughly doubled the percentage of their requested foreign assistance budget for Pakistan dedicated to governance assistance. This amounts to almost a quadrupling of funding available for this purpose.<sup>44</sup>

### **Empirical Project – Pakistan Legislative Strengthening Project (PLSP)**

The PLSP is the most significant governance assistance project that USAID has operated in Pakistan. Furthermore, according to a PLSP staff member, it is “The largest legislative strengthening project that has ever been implemented in Pakistan.”<sup>45</sup> The project was awarded in September 2005 and was supposed to be completed in two years, at a cost of approximately \$8 million.<sup>46</sup> However, its completion date was extended to May 2010, and it cost \$17 million in taxpayer funds.<sup>47</sup> In addition, USAID has also provided all of the funding for the construction of the facility that houses a new institution that was developed by the PLSP, the Pakistan Institute of Parliamentary Services (PIPS), which separately amounts to almost \$11 million.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> See p. 26, <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/135728.pdf>.

<sup>44</sup> <http://www.usaid.gov/policy/budget/>.

<sup>45</sup> PLSP Participant 4.

<sup>46</sup> See <http://islamabad.usembassy.gov/pakistan/h06120201.html>, and <http://islamabad.usembassy.gov/pr032008b.html>.

<sup>47</sup> <http://transition.usaid.gov/pk/sectors/democracy/plsp.html>.

<sup>48</sup> [http://transition.usaid.gov/pk/db/sectors/cross-cutting/project\\_96.html](http://transition.usaid.gov/pk/db/sectors/cross-cutting/project_96.html).

The PLSP was implemented by Development Alternatives Incorporated, an “inside the beltway” development contractor based in Bethesda, Maryland (with additional “global offices” in London, Jordan, Mexico, Palestine, Pakistan, and South Africa).<sup>49</sup> Since DAI is a for-profit private contractor, it gave me the opportunity to study different forms of transnational actors that occupy the international development domain.<sup>50</sup>

The aim of the PLSP was to “...help the Government of Pakistan strengthen its legislative systems,” by providing technical assistance, “in target areas such as: drafting legislation, parliamentarian procedures, budgeting and oversight.”<sup>51</sup> The PLSP operated in all legislatures of Pakistan – the federal, National Assembly, as well as the four main provincial assemblies (Sindh, Punjab, Balochistan, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa). The PLSP was designed and implemented to contribute most directly towards the accomplishment of USAID Intermediate Result (IR) 4.1 which supports USAID SO4.<sup>52</sup> This framework is presented below:<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> <http://www.dai.com/>.

<sup>50</sup> For a detailed PLSP organization chart, see Appendix J.

<sup>51</sup> <http://www.usaid.gov/pk/sectors/democracy/plsp.html>.

<sup>52</sup> USAID/Pakistan, Interim Strategic Plan.

<sup>53</sup> For a more detailed framework, please see Appendix K.

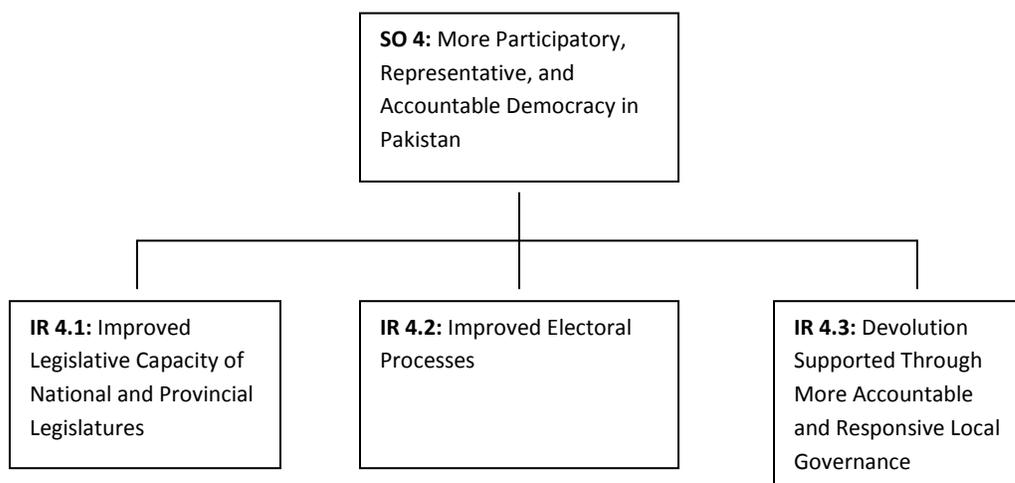


Figure 2: Overview of USAID/Pakistan SO4 Intermediate Results Framework<sup>54</sup>

Given the checkered history and enduring challenge of democratic institution building in Pakistan, the project’s stated normative goals are laudable, and make the project appealing to study, especially since it has been showcased as a success.<sup>55</sup> Indeed, the PLSP final evaluation stated, “The evaluation team believes that the program has proven to be a very good and very wise investment for the United States and for Pakistan in terms of its potential for helping the country to build the performance capacity of its National Parliament and Provincial Assemblies” (Final Report, 3). Furthermore, according to a PLSP staff member, DAI was awarded a contract for a legislative strengthening project in Azerbaijan on the basis of its success with the PLSP.<sup>56</sup>

<sup>54</sup> Pakistan Legislative Strengthening Project, Performance Management Plan, October 2005.

<sup>55</sup> See for example, these news reports celebrating the success of the PLSP:

<http://www.usaid.gov/pk/newsroom/news/democracy/100617.html>;

<http://www.usaid.gov/pk/newsroom/news/democracy/080902.html>;

<http://www.usaid.gov/pk/newsroom/news/democracy/080822.html>;

[http://www.dai.com/work/success\\_stories\\_detail.php?stid=61](http://www.dai.com/work/success_stories_detail.php?stid=61);

[http://www.dai.com/work/success\\_stories\\_detail.php?stid=29](http://www.dai.com/work/success_stories_detail.php?stid=29);

[http://www.dai.com/work/success\\_stories\\_detail.php?stid=52](http://www.dai.com/work/success_stories_detail.php?stid=52).

<sup>56</sup> <http://dai.com/our-work/projects/azerbaijan—parliamentary-program-azerbaijan-ppa>.

However, indicators strongly suggest that governance in Pakistan, in particular, the performance of the Pakistani legislatures, and citizens' perceptions of them are worse today after the implementation of the PLSP. The 2012 Pew Global Attitudes Survey for Pakistan noted that 84% of respondents gave negative reviews of the President, Asif Ali Zardari, and just 24% of respondents believe that the national government plays a positive role in the country – the latter percentage has been on a decline over the last few years.<sup>57</sup> These trends are supported by Transparency International Pakistan's 2010 survey, which found that Pakistani citizens believed that the federal government under former dictator President Pervez Musharraf was more responsive to their needs, and less corrupt.<sup>58</sup> Furthermore, the increasing dysfunctionality of the Pakistani parliament is highlighted by the recent disqualification of ex-Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gilani for contempt by the Pakistani Supreme Court for not pursuing corruption charges against the President.<sup>59</sup>

Therefore, it seems that the PLSP did not, in fact, achieve its stated normative goals of “improving” the Pakistani legislatures on its way to making Pakistani democracy “more participatory, representative, and accountable.” Yet, the project is interpreted as a success. Why did the project fail in achieving its stated normative goals? And despite its failure why is it seen as a success within the development community, so much so, that it has been replicated? This study answers these questions in turn by examining the way that PLSP staff thought about the problems they were addressing.

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<sup>57</sup> <http://www.pewglobal.org/2012/06/27/pakistani-public-opinion-ever-more-critical-of-u-s/>

<sup>58</sup> <http://www.transparency.org.pk/report/ncps%202010/ncps2010A5.pdf>.

<sup>59</sup> <http://www.economist.com/node/21557374>.

In this chapter, I have discussed the specifics of how I conducted this study. I have provided details on how I collected my data, when I collected it, and where and whom I collected it from. I have explicated how I have analyzed my data. I have also presented the case I have chosen, and my reasons for choosing it. In the following chapter, I discuss the practice features of the PLSP that motivated me to choose it, i.e. I discuss why I chose to examine a governance assistance project. In order to provide background on my choice, I first discuss how and why governance has emerged as a key problematic for the development enterprise. I turn to this next.

## **Chapter IV**

### **Transformations of the Enterprise: Governance as Development**

*“When I use a word,” Humpty Dumpty said, in a rather scornful tone, “it means just what I choose it to mean—neither more nor less.”*

*- Through the Looking-Glass (Carroll 1872: 172)*

International development has undergone a “dramatic reconfiguration” (Gould 2005: 61) over the last decade or so, resulting in what has been termed a “new architecture of aid” (Mosse 2005a: 3). The primary characteristic of the new framework is that the focus of development activity has expanded from investment in projects, to providing financing to recipient governments strictly in return for changes in substantive policy decisions (Gordon Crawford 2003; Mosse 2005).

This new “reform agenda,” of development goes beyond the domain of purely economic or sectoral (e.g. health or education) policymaking of recipient governments, to governance in and of itself – i.e. dealing with questions about the nature of the institutions, actors and practices that are involved in the exercise of rule and authority (Gordon Crawford 2003; Mosse 2005a).

It was in 1989 that the term governance was first spotted within official development discourse, when the World Bank suggested that “deteriorating governance” was a factor of economic and social malaise in Africa. This was quickly followed by increased attention to the nature of public institutions in the World Development Report in 1991, titled *The Challenge of Development* (The World Bank 1991), and then in 1992 came the booklet *Governance and*

*Development*, which was the World Bank's "first general statement of the new development agenda" (Anders 2005: 43).

The World Bank has generally defined "governance" to mean: "The manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social resources for development" (The World Bank 1992: 1). The World Bank has also recently formulated a more comprehensive definition as part of its Worldwide Governance Indicator project: "Governance can be broadly defined as the set of traditions and institutions by which authority in a country is exercised. This includes (1) the process by which governments are selected, monitored and replaced, (2) the capacity of the government to effectively formulate and implement sound policies, and (3) the respect of citizens and the state for the institutions that govern economic and social interactions among them."<sup>60</sup> According to the World Bank, "Good Governance...is synonymous with sound development management" (The World Bank 1992: 1), and it is in this manner that the term is understood within the development community at large (Anders 2005).

The creation, fostering, and maintenance of Good Governance have today become a primary end of development activity (Anders 2005; Gordon Crawford 2003). For example, in 1998 then United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan stated, "Good Governance is perhaps the single most important factor in eradicating poverty and promoting development" (Annan 1998: 114). This is a far cry from earlier practices of development institutions when they stayed well clear of commenting on the merits of recipient governments (Mosse 2005a: 4).

Today, the implementation of Good Governance measures by recipient governments has become a (tacit, if not explicit) pre-requisite for obtaining aid (Anders 2005: 37). These efforts to inculcate Good Governance aim to "build" the "capacity" of state institutions in recipient

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<sup>60</sup> The World Bank, Worldwide Governance Indicators, <http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/faq.htm#1>.

countries, or in the representative words of the World Bank, “build efficient and accountable public sector institutions.”<sup>61</sup> An example of the centrality of Good Governance within contemporary development activity is that in 2004, United States President George W. Bush’s administration created an entirely new development agency called the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) that provides funding to recipient governments only if they have demonstrated Good Governance per the criterion established by the agency (Krasner 2004: 97; Soederberg 2004: 279).<sup>62</sup>

But how did the question of governance emerge within the development community? And why has it gained such prominence? In *Redefining Development at the World Bank*, Martha Finnemore notes that when international development endeavors were initially conceived, their goal was strictly limited to raising a country’s gross national product, but over time poverty alleviation, sustainability, gender empowerment and human rights (amongst others) were added to their list of objectives. She then explores the processes by which poverty came to be defined and conceptualized as a development “problem.” It is only after this that the development community could (and did) devise solutions to address poverty (1997).

Similarly, for our purposes, we proceed by answering the questions: *Why did governance come to be defined as a development “problem” in the first place? And why has it become a central focus of development activity?* Not surprisingly, instrumental and critical scholars differ greatly in their explanations about why governance became a development “problem” and why it has become a central focus of development activity. I review each approach in turn.

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<sup>61</sup> The World Bank, Public Sector & Governance, *Overview*, <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTPUBLICSECTORANDGOVERNANCE/0,,contentMDK:21552798~pagePK:210058~piPK:210062~theSitePK:286305~isCURL:Y,00.html>.

<sup>62</sup> See Millennium Challenge Corporation, <http://www.mcc.gov/pages/about>.

## **Governance as Problem: Instrumental View**

*“Borrowers and lenders often fail to take full account of the institutional social and political rigidities that restrict a country’s capacity to adjust.”*

- The World Bank (1985: 2)

Barbara Nunberg, in a 2007 piece surveys instrumental perspectives on why the problem of governance emerged within development thinking. She outlines several factors but suggests that the central reason is, “As evidence increasingly showed that institutions mattered to economic development, governance and public sector management programs became the ‘new, new thing’...” (Nunberg 2007: 60).<sup>63</sup> She explains that in earlier incarnations of development thinking the models for economic growth and prosperity that were used to guide development policy and activity had been conceived without regard to variables for political (or indeed, social) realities. However, new development research showed that political and social factors do, in fact, have a substantial impact on the fortunes of society. At this point it became important to take them into account and they were operationalized within the development community through the concept of “governance” (Nunberg 2007).

Nunberg points out that the discussion on governance within the development community first began in the late 1980s, in the context of the fall of the Berlin wall, and the demise of the Soviet bloc, as well as stagnating economic growth in recipient countries (Nunberg 2007: 60). Within the development community, these events were interpreted to indicate the triumph of neo-liberalism and the “Washington Consensus”<sup>64</sup> which castigated “state led” approaches to

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<sup>63</sup> For example, former World Bank Chief Economist Lawrence Summers stated in 2004, “...the most significant lesson of the previous decade was the transcendent importance of institutions to development.” Available at: <http://info.worldbank.org/etools/bspan/PresentationView.asp?PID=1015&EID=328>.

<sup>64</sup> The term describes a set of economic policies that were prescribed to recipient governments and which were composed of three main elements: the privatization of state resources; de-regulation; and trade liberalization, i.e.

economic growth, and which promoted “lean, mean government” (Nunberg 2007: 65-69; see also, Williamson 1990; Williamson 2000).

The development aid that Eastern and Central Europe subsequently received came along with prescriptions for dramatic institutional reform and recommendations which “emphasized radical privatization schemes with high social costs, and were coupled with a minimalist, under-resourced state” (Nunberg 2007: 69). The scholarship that undergirded this advice came from the “new institutional economics” as well as from “public choice theory” schools of thought, both of which viewed the state “essentially as an amalgamation of firms,” and which recommended applying “market incentives” to public institutions (Nunberg 2007: 67-70).

In short order, therefore, the issue of governance was emerging within international development but it was a particular conception of, and approach to, governance. Namely, a conception that, “assigned little importance to intangible, political concepts of statehood that hinged on the quality of the social contract between government and the governed” (Nunberg 2007: 69-70). And an approach that sought to fundamentally alter the nature of state institutions (which were decried as a cause for economic decline) by sharply reducing their responsibilities and functions (Nunberg 2007: 69-70).

Attention to issues of governance continued to grow within the development community through the 1990s. First, as a result of democratization movements in Latin America, Asia, and Africa. Nunberg suggests that these democratization movements prompted development institutions to consider questions of governance in their work (2007: 73).

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reducing tariff and non-tariff barriers to entry of goods and services. For a more detailed discussion on the Washington Consensus, see for example, Rodrik 2006; Williamson 1990.

Second, and perhaps more importantly, as economic prospects in recipient countries failed to improve, development institutions blamed corruption within their governments, “which had been quietly understood as a major obstacle to developmental reforms for years but had been considered off-limits” for development institutions (Nunberg 2007: 70-73).<sup>65</sup> This focus on corruption, which had to be addressed by “governance reforms” in recipient countries, was given further impetus by the Asian financial crisis of the late 1990s, which was understood by many within the development community to have been caused by “cronyism between government and business elites” (Nunberg 2007: 70-73).

Finally, the September 11, 2001 terror attacks in the United States catapulted governance into becoming a central problematic of development because terrorism was seen to be connected to “development failures and fragile states<sup>66</sup>” (Nunberg 2007: 76; see also Crocker 2003; Friedman 2002).<sup>67</sup> In particular, it was understood that “governance dysfunctions...can be vulnerable to the kind of disaffection that breeds anomic, nihilistic behavior associated with terrorism” (Nunberg 2007: 77; see also Bloom 2005; Collier 2009; Krasner 2004). Therefore, Good Governance was “transformed into a full-fledged global public good” and state building

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<sup>65</sup> Nunberg notes that the word “corruption,” was first officially used within the World Bank by former World Bank President James Wolfensohn in his address to the Annual Meetings of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund on October 1, 1996 (Nunberg 2007: 96).

<sup>66</sup> The World Bank defines “Fragile States” as: “countries facing particularly severe development challenges such as weak institutional capacity, weak governance, political instability, and frequently on-going violence or the legacy effects of past severe conflict,” available at: <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/EXTABOUTUS/IDA/0,,contentMDK:22356311~pagePK:51236175~piPK:437394~theSitePK:73154,00.html>.

<sup>67</sup> For example, USAID’s 2002 report titled, *Foreign Aid in the National Interest* stated, “When development and governance fail in a country, the consequences engulf entire regions and leap around the world” (United States Agency for International Development, 2002: 1).

rose to become “among the most important challenges facing the development aid community”

(Nunberg 2007: 76).<sup>68</sup>

### **Governance as Problem: Critical View**

*Europe is literally the creation of the Third World. The wealth which smothers her is that which was stolen from the underdeveloped peoples...So when we hear the head of a European state declare with his hand on his heart that he must come to the aid of the poor underdeveloped peoples, we do not tremble with gratitude. Quite the contrary, we say to ourselves: 'It's a just reparation which will be paid to us.'*

- Frantz Fanon (1963: 102)

As noted earlier, the critical perspective differs, and is a welcome advance on, instrumental interpretations of international development because of the central importance the former accord to questions of power and history – these questions are not considered when instrumental scholars discuss the emergence and salience of the issue of governance in development, and as such their absence highlights a profound deficiency of instrumentalist accounts. This deficiency is addressed by critical theorists when they consider the emergence and rise to prominence of the issue of governance in development.

Drawing attention to the contingencies of history and structural power, critical theorists note that it is significant that governance first emerged in development thinking at the end of the Cold War. The addition of post-Eastern bloc societies to the pool of countries lining up for development assistance meant that aid money had to be divided up amongst many more recipients. Therefore, additional criterion had to be used to filter out some recipients - the concept of governance fit the bill perfectly, in particular, since it resonated with the rising

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<sup>68</sup> For example, USAID's 2005 report titled, *Fragile States Strategy* noted, “There is perhaps no more urgent matter facing USAID than fragile states...” (United States Agency for International Development, 2005: 1).

prominence of democracy and human rights discourse within the global community (Schmitz 1995).

The demise of the Soviet Union reconfigured the global geo-political landscape and allowed Northern donor countries greater latitude to intrusively dominate and control the countries of the Global South. Through broaching questions of governance, recipient governments could be overtly challenged if they did not follow policy prescriptions dictated by development institutions and donor countries (Abrahamsen 2000). Moore goes even further, and suggests that development institutions deployed the very particular neo-liberal concept of governance to coercively discipline the state elite of recipient governments “in the realities of global capitalism,” by setting them up in a race to see who would “institutionalize market mechanisms,” and deconstruct state institutions quicker for the benefit of the (now unchallenged) “world economic czars” (1995: 15-20).

The role of democratization movements in putting governance on the development agenda (a point that Nunberg raised) is acknowledged (Moore 1995; Schmitz 1995). However, the manner in which this happened is strongly contested. It is argued that the narrative of governance was embraced by development institutions to co-opt mass movements whose calls for participatory politics and accountability were raised against not just their own repressive governments, but also against the development institutions and donor countries that had supported and financed them during the Cold War (Gills and Rocamora 1992; Schmitz 1995).<sup>69</sup>

Moreover, the narrative of governance is seen as a cynical tool to deflect criticism away from the development enterprise itself. Particularly under the Washington Consensus,

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<sup>69</sup> To quote Gills and Rocamora, “Everyone applauds democracy, those who in practice oppose it applaud most loudly” (1992: 503).

development had begun to be viewed as, “modernization in a hurry (typically justifying elitist, coercive patterns of growth)” that had “visited enough horrors upon peoples” (Schmitz 1995: 55). Growing criticism of the development industry followed, not just from the populace of recipient countries, but also from high profile non-governmental organizations who had begun raising a “relatively coordinated attack on the credibility of [development institutions] as poverty-oriented institutions” (Gould 2005: 74). Therefore, “...the eventual resort to ‘governance’ was driven by a recognition that something had to be done to forestall the impending crisis of the development model...” (Schmitz 1995: 73).

On the flip side, the narrative of governance is also seen as crucial for garnering support for the development agenda within donor countries. The narrative, construed broadly, with its ostensible normative claims of supporting democracy, freedom, human rights and “clean” governments, provides donor country governments (most notably in the United States) a post-Cold War rationale to generate (otherwise fickle) domestic political support for development aid budgets that are necessary for the achievement of realpolitikal ends (Schmitz 1995).

### **Governance as Problem: Recent Scholarship**

*One must entertain the possibility that the “development” apparatus...may do what it does, not at the bidding of some knowing and powerful subject who is making it all happen, but behind the backs of or against the wills of even the most powerful actors. But this is not to say that such institutions do not represent an exercise of power; only that power is not to be embodied in the person of a “powerful” subject. A “development” project may well serve power, but in a different way than any of the “powerful” actors imagined; it may wind up, in the end, “turning out” to serve power.*

- James Ferguson (1994: 18-19)

The new wave of critical scholarship argues that older critical approaches, whilst being an advance on instrumental accounts, still do not adequately explain the current salience of governance in development. As Gerhard Anders pointedly notes, their explanations at times

revert to describing the narrative of Good Governance as nothing more than a “clumsy attempt at ‘newspeak’” on the part of the development institutions and donor countries that is deployed in an attempt to further their “neo-colonial or neo-imperial agenda” (2005: 38).

Engaging with insights from sociology of knowledge literature, these scholars argue that the fact that it took more than fifty years for development thinking to acknowledge that social and political factors and institutions (“governance” writ large) play a role in the wellbeing of society, is not just an exceptional failing on the part of the enterprise, but rather it demonstrates fundamental deficiencies in the way development actors approach problems. Development thinking views its object, “population,” through the narrow lens of planning models which are deemed legitimate because of the “social authority” possessed by the experts who devised them (Ferguson 1994; Goldman 2005; Li 2007; Mitchell 2002).

Moreover, even when considering social and political factors, development models do not take their complexity into account. These models continue to conceptualize such factors as enclosed, endogenous “variables,” rather than living, multi-dimensional realities that are profoundly shaped by, and that shape, global political economy (Gastel and Nuijten 2005: 86). For example, the rhetoric of “anti-corruption” within the development community does not take into account the fact that the phenomenon of “corruption” is an evolving practice that results from and is structured by the contingencies of global political economy, and that it has two sides to its equation, with one side located in a space outside the recipient society - e.g. a donor country, a transnational corporation, or indeed, a development contractor (Ferguson 2006). Indeed, as I will demonstrate in Chapter VII, the way development actors conceive of

“corruption,” obfuscates the true nature of the acts that are construed as “corrupt,” profoundly misdiagnoses their causes, and therefore ultimately results in inappropriate remedies.

The new wave of critical scholarship observes that the embrace of Good Governance by the development community illustrates the profoundly myopic paradigm of international development, a paradigm that leads to the identification of more problems but not the resolving of their root causes, and in the process, the creation of new problems for the development community to solve (Anders 2005). In other words, according to these scholars, Good Governance emerged within the development community, and has taken center stage as a focus of development activity because it is the development enterprise’s fix, their latest panacea, for the unintended yet foreseeable (to observers outside development) negative consequences of past “development interventions,” (for example, the weakening of state institutions in the 1990s). However, since “development interventions,” such as those promoting Good Governance are themselves purely technical fixes, they in turn will produce a plethora of unintended consequences which in turn will become new problems for the development enterprise to address (Anders 2005: 55).

This macro account of the way that Good Governance emerged and became salient within the development community sets the stage well for the present study. As I will demonstrate in the following chapters through a micro examination of development practice, it is the cognitive framework upon which the development enterprise is premised that leads it to misidentify problems, which results in it not being able to achieve success in its endeavors, yet this process also ultimately leads it to identify more problems for it to solve.

Since Good Governance is at the center of development activity today, I thought it would be appropriate to choose an initiative that promotes Good Governance for my case study. It is for this reason that I chose to examine the PLSP. The PLSP is a governance assistance project, and governance assistance projects are one of the most important interventions used by development actors to promote Good Governance. In the following section I elaborate on the practice of governance assistance.

### **Governance Assistance Projects**

Governance assistance projects (also referred to as “capacity building” or “institution building” programs) are of particular importance in the development “toolbox” of Good Governance. These projects comprise the direct provision of training, advice and technical assistance to recipient governments to “build” their state and civic institutions, and make them more transparent, accountable and participatory (Grindle 1997; Nunberg 2007; Smillie, Humanitarianism and War Project., and International Development Research Centre (Canada) 2001).

Typical activities that fall under the rubric of governance assistance include: the training of judges and lawyers; drafting and/or re-drafting of legislation; developing audit and budget systems; promoting press freedoms; monitoring elections; broadening citizens’ avenues of engagement with legislators and policymakers; and increasing citizens’ access to legislative and policy-related information (Hope 2006; Krasner 2004).<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> For a representative sample, see The World Bank, Public Sector & Governance, <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTPUBLICSECTORANDGOVERNANCE/0,,contentMDK:21552798~pagePK:210058~piPK:210062~theSitePK:286305~isCURL:Y,00.html>; United Nations Development Program, Democratic Governance, <http://www.undp.org/governance/>; United States Agency for International Development, Governance, [http://www.usaid.gov/our\\_work/democracy\\_and\\_governance/technical\\_area\\_s/governance/index.html](http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/democracy_and_governance/technical_area_s/governance/index.html); United Kingdom Department for International Development, Governance Services, <http://www.gsdrc.org/>.

Statements from prominent members of the development community, and recommendations made in recent development reports indicate that governance assistance projects will come to play a central role within development activity.<sup>71</sup> As Barbara Nunberg has noted, “state building has emerged as among the most important challenges facing the development aid community” (Nunberg 2007: 76; see also, Dobbins 2003).

These gestures have been matched by significant increases in the amount of funds allocated to these projects (Nunberg 2007: 60). For example, in 2009, governance assistance projects accounted for the largest percentage (36%) of the United Nations Development Programme’s (UNDP) expenditure.<sup>72</sup> Whereas, USAID has substantially increased its funding of governance assistance project from \$165 million in 1991 to almost \$1.5 billion in 2008.<sup>73</sup>

The marked growth of governance assistance projects is interesting because their empirical record of success is ambiguous (Gould 2005; Krasner 2004; Nunberg 2007). Recent reports on “governance indicators” in Africa indicate negative trends,<sup>74</sup> even though the continent has received a large share of governance assistance resources.<sup>75</sup> Therefore, their importance grows whilst their record of success appears dubious. This characteristic combined

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<sup>71</sup> For example, Hugh Bredenkamp, Deputy Director, International Monetary Fund, emphasized the role of institutional building measures in development activity, <http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE68F0ND20100916>. And for an example of a report that lays stress on institution building efforts, see the Food and Agricultural Organisation’s 2010 State of Food Insecurity report: <http://www.fao.org/docrep/013/i1683e/i1683e.pdf>. See also, this article from Tony Blair where he highlights building government capacity as the solution for Africa’s problems, [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/tonyblair/making-government-work-ca\\_b\\_797367.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/tonyblair/making-government-work-ca_b_797367.html).

<sup>72</sup> United Nations Development Programme, Annual Report, 2009/2010, pp. 8-9, available at: <http://www.undp.org/publications/UNDPAction2010/pdf/wUNDPinAction-E-full.pdf>.

<sup>73</sup> USAID Budget & Policy Reports, available at: <http://www.usaid.gov/policy/budget/money/>. See also, (Carothers 2009).

<sup>74</sup> See for example, this news report, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-11466525>.

<sup>75</sup> See for example, United Nations Development Programme Democratic Governance Report 2007, p. 3, available at: [http://content.undp.org/go/cms-service/stream/asset/?asset\\_id=1547890](http://content.undp.org/go/cms-service/stream/asset/?asset_id=1547890).

with their salience within the development community, make governance assistance projects a particularly interesting development practice, inviting attention and deserving study.

Therefore, since the PLSP is a governance assistance project, and one that operates in Pakistan (which, as I discussed earlier, is a country that is seen in development circles as having an acute governance crisis), it was ideal for my case study of the development enterprise.

In this chapter, I have provided background on why I chose to study a project, the PLSP, which exemplifies a cutting edge development practice – governance assistance. In order to accomplish this task, I discussed how the issue of governance emerged as a development problematic in the first place, and why it today occupies center stage as a focus of development activity, and how governance assistance projects are used as a “cutting edge” intervention by development actors in order to promote Good Governance.

In the following two chapters, I provide empirical data from my study, and then I provide an analysis of that data utilizing insights from the theoretical frameworks of world society theory, and post-colonial theory. I turn next to an examination of the development project under study – the Pakistan Legislative Strengthening Project (PLSP), with a specific focus on the cognitive framework that undergirded it, i.e. its premises.

## Chapter V

### **Translocal Cognitive Construction of Development: PLSP Development Actors**

*“An ideology always exists in an apparatus, and its practice or practices.”*

- Louis Althusser<sup>76</sup>

#### **Cognitive Framework: The Translocal Context**

As I have discussed earlier in Chapter III, the PLSP sought to make Pakistani democracy more “participatory, representative and accountable,” by increasing the “legislative capacity of National and Provincial Legislatures” (Scope of Work, 3-4). Why was the PLSP (as manifested in the specific initiatives that comprised it) seen as an appropriate solution to the perceived deficiencies of Pakistani legislatures?

In order to understand why PLSP staff thought that the PLSP would improve Pakistani legislatures (and in so doing, improve the quality of democracy in Pakistan), we have to examine how the problematic of the Pakistani parliament – its perceived deficiencies or weaknesses, diagnoses of their causes, and solutions to them - were conceived and understood within the PLSP. We gain this insight by observing how the following questions were answered within the PLSP:

- a) What are the deficiencies of Pakistani legislatures?*
- b) What are the causes of these deficiencies?*
- c) What are the solutions to these problems, or how do we address these deficiencies?*

In the following section, I detail how these questions are answered within the PLSP.

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<sup>76</sup> Althusser 1971: 66.

I will then set these representations alongside responses to the same questions obtained from leaders of Pakistani civil society. This exercise reveals that a wide gulf exists between the landscape conceived by the PLSP, and the landscape it endeavored to improve.

### **Cognitive Construction of the Problems**

The Scope of Work (SOW) document captures the core rationale that guides any development project. It identifies the problems the project aims to solve, diagnoses these problems (i.e. examines the nature and causes of these problems), enumerates solutions, lists activities that operationalize these solutions, and sets objectives, the achievement of which is understood as solving the problems identified. Therefore, for this study the SOW is the most important document for examination, i.e. the document of primary concern.

The PLSP SOW notes that the “ability to perform the basic functions of a legislature – representing constituents, shaping laws, and overseeing the executive branch – is central to the development of a pluralistic state that can govern effectively, enforce the rule of law, and promote economic growth” (Scope of Work, Supp, 1). The SOW then provides an answer to the question - *What are the deficiencies of Pakistani legislatures?* The document notes that Pakistani legislatures are deficient in precisely the aforementioned core functions of legislatures - representation, lawmaking, and oversight (Scope of Work, Supp, 1).

### ***Representation***

According to the PLSP SOW, “representation,” means that, “communication must flow in both directions: [Parliamentary] Members need to be able to tell citizens what they have – and have not – accomplished; citizens need to be able to express their concerns and interests [to Members]” (Scope of Work, Supp, 2). It then notes that in Pakistan the legislatures do not

perform their representative function adequately, “citizens know little about key legislative issues, there is little input from citizens or civil society organizations during parliamentary consideration of these issues and the budget, and the media coverage of Parliament and issues before Parliament is minimal and sometimes inaccurate” (Scope of Work, Supp, 2). In other words, according to the PLSP, the Pakistani parliament does not adequately function as a forum where the wishes and desires of constituents can be voiced. In addition, constituents are not adequately provided information on legislation and policy that affect them. This point was strongly emphasized by a PLSP staff member who noted:<sup>77</sup>

“Parliament should be accessible. Information should flow outwards from it, and come inwards into it. It should not be an insulated echo chamber, which frankly speaking, is what the Pakistani parliament is.”

I asked PLSP staff members to describe how the Pakistani parliament was lacking in its representative function. One PLSP staff member provided the example of a lack of access to the parliamentary record:<sup>78</sup>

“...for legislative transparency and representation the publication of parliamentary proceedings is very important, as these are the parliamentary record, but unfortunately in the Pakistani parliament, these are not public.”

Another PLSP staff member drew attention to the public’s lack of access to the parliamentary meeting calendar:<sup>79</sup>

“Well...there is simply no calendar of meetings available for the public. I mean, this is a really simple thing that should be accessible to the public...how will they know what is going on without having access to a calendar?”

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<sup>77</sup> PLSP Participant 11.

<sup>78</sup> PLSP Participant 3.

<sup>79</sup> PLSP Participant 9.

These examples illustrate that the PLSP focused on infrastructural, procedural and technological deficiencies of the Pakistani parliament that reduced or prevented information dissemination between Members of Parliament (MPs) and constituents, to determine that Pakistani legislatures do not adequately perform their representative function.

### *Lawmaking*

The SOW notes that, “most parliamentary democracies consider lawmaking...to be a prime legislative responsibility” (Scope of Work, 5). However, it observes that Pakistani legislatures do not perform this lawmaking function adequately. The SOW states, “the capacity for legislative drafting and moving legislation through the parliaments has not been well developed [in Pakistan]...the majority of the legislation originates in the executive branch and ‘private-member bills’ are not encouraged. Most bills do not undergo proper scrutiny by members” (Scope of Work, 5). Furthermore, the SOW adds that the rare legislative initiatives and policies developed in parliament are not supported by “reliable research” (Scope of Work, Supp, 7).

These points were emphasized by PLSP staff members during interviews. One of them explained:<sup>80</sup>

“The legislative initiative lies entirely with the executive branch [in Pakistan] rather than with parliament, which should not be the case. The vast majority of legislation comes from the executive branch. More than 60 percent, much more even, of legislation comes in the form of [Executive] ordinances not in the form of bills of parliament.”

Another PLSP staff member talked about the bad quality of legislative drafting in Pakistan:<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> PLSP Participant 2.

<sup>81</sup> PLSP Participant 1.

“Pakistan’s main problem perhaps is that the laws in parliament, they are extremely poorly drafted.”

Therefore, according to the PLSP, Pakistani legislatures do not adequately perform their lawmaking function, in that a) the amount of legislation originating in parliament (without executive branch impetus) is extremely low, and b) legislation is poorly drafted and ill researched.

### ***Oversight***

Lastly, the PLSP observes that Pakistani legislatures do not perform adequate oversight of the actions and decisions of the executive branch of government (the prime minister, members of cabinet, and the president). The SOW notes, “oversight of executive and state actions is arguably the most important function of the Parliament of Pakistan. Oversight entails the parliaments informal and formal scrutiny to ensure laws serve citizens and are implemented in accordance with their intent that the budget reflects citizens’ priorities and is applied with transparency and efficiency, and that through these processes the Constitution is strictly observed” (Scope of Work, Supp, 10). However, it observes that in Pakistan, “oversight of national and provincial programs and agencies by the legislatures is weak,” and that in fact, “oversight works at the margins, if it takes place at all” (Scope of Work, 5).

These assessments were highlighted in my interviews with PLSP staff members. One staff member described their observations of interactions between members of the cabinet and MPs in the following way:<sup>82</sup>

“I observed members [of Parliament] interact with representatives of the executive, and I noticed that members are just extremely compliant to the executive branch. I mean, they do not take them to task at all.”

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<sup>82</sup> PLSP Participant 12.

Another PLSP staff member spoke about their observations regarding MPs who led important parliamentary committees yet who did not know that members of the cabinet were answerable to them:<sup>83</sup>

“I was surprised, extremely surprised to see that committee chairs are not aware of their role, their responsibilities, but most importantly, their authority vis-à-vis members of the executive.”

Therefore, we note that according to the PLSP, Pakistani legislatures do not adequately perform their oversight function, in that MPs are unaware of their authority vis-à-vis the executive branch of government, and are too deferential to members of the executive branch.

Having reviewed the problems the PLSP identified within Pakistani legislatures, we now turn to what the PLSP diagnosed as the sources of these problems.

### **Cognitive Construction of the Causes**

In this section I will review how the PLSP diagnosed the sources of the problems it identified within Pakistani legislatures. In other words, how did the PLSP answer the following question:

*Why are Pakistani legislatures deficient in their performance of their representative, law making, and oversight functions?*

PLSP’s fundamental answer to this question is that Pakistani MPs and their staff lack the “skills,” namely the training and expertise, and the legislatures themselves lack the “resources,” primarily technological and infrastructural, but also management systems and procedural rules, that are necessary for them to adequately perform the functions of representation, law making, and oversight (Scope of Work, 5-7). This is well exemplified by the following statement from a

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<sup>83</sup> PLSP Participant 11.

PLSP staff member responding to my question about what they thought were the sources of the problems present in Pakistani legislatures:<sup>84</sup>

“The legislatures simply do not possess trained and qualified members and staff, and the systems, the processes, and the technology necessary for an effective, well-functioning institution that can serve the needs of citizens.”

This argument is underscored when the SOW specifically discusses why MPs do not fulfill their representative function adequately. It notes that these members lack the “skills and resources to build robust channels of communications with their constituents” (Scope of Work, Supp 4). It states that it is because of the lack of these channels that constituents are not informed of activities within parliament, and that constituents are unable to provide input towards legislation (Scope of Work, Supp 4). A PLSP staff member discussing why parliament was deficient in its representative function highlighted the lack of media and communications access:<sup>85</sup>

“The public and media had no proper meeting space in the parliament. Members had to go outside the parliament building to give announcements and provide information and news to the media and the public. This really decreases the public’s ability to access important information.”

Similarly, when the SOW discusses why legislatures were deficient in their law-making function it notes that MPs lack requisite skills and that important systems and procedures are missing. It notes, “the majority of legislators still do not have the skills and resources necessary to develop original policy ideas or shape government proposals. On an institutional level, the Assemblies are unable to process legislation in a timely, efficient, and transparent manner”

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<sup>84</sup> PLSP Participant 11.

<sup>85</sup> PLSP Participant 7.

(Scope of Work, Supp, 6). A PLSP staff member underlined the argument that members lack necessary skills, explaining:<sup>86</sup>

“[Pakistani] Parliamentarians do not know how to draft laws and legislation. They do not know how to assess it, and that is their role! This is because there are very few who have a law degree. And generally, there is simply a dearth of good legislative draughtsman in Pakistan...and that is because there are no proper institutes that teach it.”

Finally, when discussing why the legislatures do not adequately perform their oversight function, the SOW states that it is due to the fact that members have not understood this role, and that requisite systems and procedures are absent. It notes, “members are still internalizing this [oversight] function, and the parliamentary institutions have yet to build the processes that ensure checks and balances” (Scope of Work, Supp, 10). Furthermore, the document says that standing committees, “the most important and active units in conducting proper [parliamentary] oversight...barely function and suffer from an almost total lack of human and financial resources” (Scope of Work, Supp, 10). During my interviews, PLSP staff members highlighted the argument that MPs’ lack of training and expertise reduced parliament’s ability to perform its oversight function. One staff member used their experience with the Budget Oversight Standing Committee as an example:<sup>87</sup>

“The budget...it is in 8 thick books, and it is very difficult for members to understand it and make decisions about it. So how can they provide oversight on it?”

Another PLSP staff member also used the example of the Budget Oversight Standing Committee to underscore the argument that MPs neither understand their oversight role nor do they take it seriously:<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> PLSP Participant 2.

<sup>87</sup> PLSP Participant 1.

<sup>88</sup> PLSP Participant 12.

“I was shocked...the budget process was seen as boring. Members were like, ‘who wants to be on that committee!?’ Whereas in the States, politicians would do anything to get on that committee!”

One PLSP staff member highlighted the lack of trained researchers available to staff on the Standing Committees as a reason that parliament is unable to adequately perform its oversight function. The staff member noted:<sup>89</sup>

“The number of researchers compared to the number of parliamentarians...there is a huge gap between the two. There are just not enough researchers available to staff the committees.”

Having seen how the PLSP diagnosed the problems it had identified, we now turn to the solutions it provided to address these problems, i.e. the steps it took to “fix,” Pakistani legislatures.

### **Cognitive Construction of the Solutions**

In this section I review the solutions that the PLSP developed and applied in order to solve the problems it had identified within Pakistani legislatures. Therefore, I examine how the PLSP answered the following question:

*How do we address the deficiencies of Pakistani legislatures, and improve their performance?*

Fundamentally, the PLSP came up with two broad solutions for the problems it had identified. First, it resolved that Pakistani MPs and their staff had to be provided with the “skills” the project had assessed them to be lacking. This was to be accomplished through training workshops, and the development of a parliamentary research institute. Second, the PLSP resolved that the legislative bodies themselves had to be provided with the “resources” they had been assessed to be lacking. This was to be accomplished by installation of

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<sup>89</sup> PLSP Participant 4.

communications technology as well as infrastructure enhancements. As a PLSP staff member noted:<sup>90</sup>

“Through the provision of training and technology we sought to raise the capacity of members, their staff, and the institution, so that it could adequately respond to the demands placed on a professional parliament.”

The PLSP organized its solutions according to the three sets of deficiencies it identified within the Pakistani legislatures, namely – representation, law-making, and oversight.

### ***Representation***

Project documents note that, “PLSP’s approach to improving representation will focus on assisting [Pakistani] parliaments provide citizens greater access to the parliamentary process”

(Work Plan Year 2, 15). This was to be accomplished through two primary activities:

a) **Websites** – parliamentary websites were to be enhanced, in particular, to add viewable and downloadable legislative records on these websites, e.g. the parliamentary record.

A PLSP staff member explained that the websites will improve parliament’s representative function because:<sup>91</sup>

“You see, the parliamentary debates can now be posted online within 24 to 48 hours. Before it used to take a month! So, this will help the public get greater access to parliament, and make MPs more responsive to them.”

According to the PLSP Final Report, the websites of all Pakistani legislatures were successfully upgraded, and legislative content was added to them. PLSP also provided training for the management and maintenance of these websites (Final Report).

b) **Telecasting** - provision and installation of telecasting equipment in the national parliaments to enable live television broadcasts of parliamentary proceedings.

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<sup>90</sup> PLSP Participant 11.

<sup>91</sup> PLSP Participant 10.

Explaining how live television broadcasts will improve parliament's representative function, a PLSP staff member stated:<sup>92</sup>

“The telecasting equipment will really help the members communicate with citizens, and let the citizens know what is going on in parliament. Right now, you cannot watch parliamentary sessions.”

The PLSP Final Report noted that telecasting equipment was provided to the parliaments. However, at the time the final report was submitted to USAID it was not functional, and there is ambiguity about whether it had been fully installed (Final Report, 23).

### ***Law Making***

Project documents state, “PLSP support of lawmaking will be to assist members and staff of the national and provincial assemblies play a more active and informed role in the formulation and deliberation of legislation” (Work Plan Year 2, 30). This objective was to be reached through two primary activities:

a) **Pakistan Institute of Parliamentary Services (PIPS)** – PIPS is a professional development training institute and research center devoted exclusively to providing support to the members and staff of the national and provincial assemblies (Work Plan Year 2, 30).<sup>93</sup> PLSP sought to create and develop PIPS. Project documents note that, “PLSP served as the catalyst in bringing the idea [of PIPS] to fruition, serving as a surrogate secretariat for the institute and playing a major advisory role in working out the details of its organization and infrastructure” (Final Report, 24). USAID also funded the construction of the PIPS building, although that funding was independent of PLSP funding and did not fall within the project's aegis (Final Report, 24-25).

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<sup>92</sup> PLSP Participant 7.

<sup>93</sup> See the PIPS website, available at: <http://www.pips.org.pk/>.

A PLSP staff member explaining the law making improvement that would accrue from PIPS, noted:<sup>94</sup>

“The establishment of this institute is a huge achievement, and it will improve legislation in Pakistan. The judiciary has a research institute, and the civil services has one, and the parliamentarians needed one too.”

The PLSP Final Report notes that PIPS has been successfully established through a formal act of parliament. Construction of the PIPS building has recently been completed. However, since the operational costs of PIPS are to be borne by parliament through its annual budget, some PLSP staff members voiced concerns about whether PIPS will continue to receive funds indefinitely. One staff member stated:<sup>95</sup>

“Well, it has been officially established by parliament now, and the building will be up and running soon. The question is whether parliament will continue to fund it. Lets see.”

b) **Workshops** - Legislative drafting training workshops were conducted for the benefit of members of parliament and their staff. These training sessions were seen as imperative to improving the law making function of Pakistani legislatures. A PLSP staff member (who has worked on other legislative strengthening projects in Pakistan funded by other donors, e.g. the United Nations Development Program) explained the rationale behind these workshops:<sup>96</sup>

“Many trainings were provided to parliamentary staff and members on legal drafting. And this will help improve the quality of bills. To fix the parliament, legal drafting is always highlighted as one of the most important things to concentrate on by the donors.”

Project documents indicate that PLSP hired international consultants to provide parliamentary staff training in legislative bill drafting. The core of the training was provided in a two month long distance learning course conducted by the International Consortium for Law and

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<sup>94</sup> PLSP Participant 8.

<sup>95</sup> PLSP Participant 9.

<sup>96</sup> PLSP Participant 2.

Development (ICLAD), which is affiliated with the Boston University School of Law (Final Report, 24). One PLSP staff member described the content of the training in this manner:<sup>97</sup>

“We trained the staff to pay attention to legislative wording, and we showed them how to bring research and ideas into legislation.”

Project documents report that the goals of the training activity were fully accomplished. To demonstrate the success of the activity, the Final Report noted, “Forty-two staff members from the national and provincial parliaments took the two week ICLAD course, and from this number, twelve staff members have emerged as trainers capable of training other parliamentary and government ministries in this critical skill” (Final Report, 25).

### *Oversight*

Project documents note, “To address the issues of legislative oversight and accountability, PLSP will assist MPs improve their access to information and make use of the mechanisms available to hold government accountable” (Work Plan Year 2, 45). This objective was to be achieved through two primary activities:

a) **Budget Analysis Tool**<sup>98</sup> – a computer based budget analysis application was developed and presented to MPs and their staff. The application tracks and displays the government’s budget, its annual revenue and expenditures. This application was provided to MPs and their staff with the objective of assisting them in making informed decisions about the budget (Work Plan Year 2, 45). A PLSP staff member explaining the importance of the budget analysis tool in helping improve the oversight function of parliament, noted:<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> PLSP Participant 12.

<sup>98</sup> <http://transition.usaid.gov/pk/newsroom/stories/democracy/072006.html>.

<sup>99</sup> PLSP Participant 10.

“Members were so excited to get the budget tool. They were surprised to see the allocation of funds and expenditure. It was a completely new thing for them. I think it will definitely help them question the government.”

b) **Workshops** - budget process and budget analysis training workshops were conducted for MPs and their staff. At the conclusion of these workshops attendees were provided copies of a publication titled, “A Guide to Understanding the Budget in Pakistan” (Work Plan Year 2, 22). A PLSP staff member explained the significance of the budget training workshops in helping improve the oversight function of parliament:<sup>100</sup>

“We had budget training workshops, especially during the budget recess period, to help members and their staff understand the budget. We made them realize that they need to closely study and debate it, and hold the government accountable.”

According to project documents both activities were successfully accomplished.

However, the documents do not indicate whether the budget analysis tool will be maintained and updated for subsequent budget cycles (Final Report, 26).

Table 1. PLSP Cognitive Framework

<b>Problems</b>	<b>Causes</b>	<b>Solutions</b>
Inadequate Representation	MPs/staff lack communication skills	Websites
	Lack of information and communications technology	Telecasting
Inadequate Law Making	MPs/staff lack research and legislative drafting skills	PIPS Workshops
Inadequate Oversight	MPs/staff lack understanding of role, and the skills to enact it	Budget Analysis Tool
		Workshops

<sup>100</sup> PLSP Participant 1.

In this chapter, I have presented the ways that the PLSP conceptualized the deficiencies of Pakistani legislatures, the causes of these deficiencies, and the solutions to them. How do leaders of Pakistani civil society conceptualize these same issues? I address this question in the following chapter.

## Chapter VI

### **Local Structural Articulation of Development: Leaders of Pakistani Civil Society**

In this chapter, I present responses from leaders of civil society in Pakistan (heretofore referred to as “PKCS”) vis-à-vis the problems the PLSP aimed to solve. In other words, I present their responses to the following questions:

- a) *What are the deficiencies of Pakistani legislatures?*
- b) *What are the causes of these deficiencies?*
- c) *What are the solutions to these problems, or how do we address these deficiencies?*

These responses were obtained through in-person, semi-structured interviews conducted in Pakistan. Due to the fact that the interviews contain sensitive political content, all participants requested anonymity. Therefore, names of participants and the organizations they work with cannot be disclosed.

I will present statistical data for the sample. Please note that I do not aim to statistically generalize the data presented here to establish the attitudes and views of civil society in Pakistan. I am only comparing the views that are present in this sample of leaders of Pakistani civil society with the views that existed within the PLSP.

#### **Structural Articulation of the Problems**

In this section I will review what leaders of Pakistani civil society identified as the deficiencies in Pakistani legislatures. In other words, how did these individuals answer the following question: *What are the deficiencies of Pakistani parliaments?*

Table 2. PKCS Articulation of the Problems

<b>Problems</b>	<b>Percentage of Participants (N=40)*</b>
Lack of Representation	100
Lack of Oversight (of Executive)	100
Lack of Lawmaking	100
Lack of Accountability	100

*\*Percentages do not sum to 100, as participants provided more than one response.*

All participants stated that Pakistani legislatures were characterized by the same problems that the PLSP had identified namely inadequate representation, inadequate oversight, and inadequate law making. However, participants understood and talked about these problems in starkly different ways than they were understood and talked about in the PLSP.

When discussing the inadequacy of Pakistani legislatures in performing their representative function, unlike the way this problem was discussed in the PLSP, participants did not talk about a deficiency in information exchange between MPs and constituents. Instead, participants stated that MPs did not serve the interests of their constituents in parliament and that they did not advocate on behalf of their constituents. Participants explained that MPs served their own interests, or the interests of the elite socio-economic class they belonged to. For example, one participant stated:<sup>101</sup>

“These parliamentarians, well first of all, they are all elites, and they do not give a single care about the people, other than during elections. And the minute they get elected, they forget about the people. The first thing on their agenda is to recoup the money their party has spent on getting them elected. And then the second item is to ensure that they spread the benefits of their office to other elites so that they can maintain their alliances. That is how it works, and that is why the parliament is a joke.”

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<sup>101</sup> PKCS Participant 27.

Similarly, when participants discussed the inadequacy of Pakistani legislatures in performing their lawmaking function, whilst they noted that too few bills are initiated in parliament (which the PLSP had also identified), unlike the PLSP, participants did not talk about the legislation being badly drafted or ill researched. Instead, participants explained that MPs do not work to create legislation that would benefit their constituents or the general populace. For example, one participant noted:<sup>102</sup>

“Few bills are passed that benefit the populace. There are many laws that should be passed...we need legislation for land reform, we need laws against extremist organizations, we need laws for the protection of women, we need laws to increase wages, but these do not come. I mean, there is just no support for them within the parliament. There is support in society, but not in parliament. Laws are passed, but those that benefit the elite class...it is not that laws cannot be passed! There is just no political will for the laws that the populace needs!”

When participants discussed the inadequacy of Pakistani legislatures in fulfilling their oversight function, unlike the way this was discussed in the PLSP, participants did not say that MPs are deferential towards members of the executive branch, nor did they state that MPs are unaware of their authority vis-à-vis the executive. Instead, participants explained that MPs intentionally collude with the executive branch to further their own interests, against the interests of their constituents. For example, one participant said:<sup>103</sup>

“You see this is a matter of elites working together. And these alliances are made across all the levers of government...you know the executive, the parliament, and the military, to make sure that they have a hold on resources. This whole idea of separation of powers and check and balances, this is just bogus in trying to understand Pakistani politics. That is just not how it works...and I am not talking about some big conspiracy theory here...it is just that policies are crafted by elites working together....and mostly directed from down the road in GHQ.<sup>104</sup>”

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<sup>102</sup> PKCS Participant 6.

<sup>103</sup> PKCS Participant 1.

<sup>104</sup> Referring to General Headquarters, these are the headquarters of the Pakistani army and are based in Rawalpindi, the sister city of the capital, Islamabad, where the interview took place.

Lastly, participants noted that Pakistani legislatures lacked accountability. This problem was not identified by the PLSP. Participants explained that MPs act with impunity. They commit crimes like fraud and embezzlement, and are rarely, if ever, successfully prosecuted. Furthermore, participants expressed a perception that MPs are not held answerable for their legislative record. For example, a participant noted:<sup>105</sup>

“There is simply no accountability. These politicians exploit their power, they help each other, they make money, they all have foreign bank accounts, and very rarely are they held liable for their crimes. And they do not do anything in parliament for the people....but I guarantee you, tomorrow there is an election, and all of them will again be elected.”

Having reviewed the problems leaders of Pakistani civil society identified within Pakistani legislatures, we now turn to what they diagnosed as the sources of these problems.

### **Structural Articulation of the Causes**

In this section I will review how leaders of Pakistani civil society diagnosed the sources of the problems they had identified within Pakistani legislatures. In other words, I will examine how these individuals answered the following question: *What are the causes of the deficiencies in Pakistani parliaments?*

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<sup>105</sup> PKCS Participant 32.

Table 3. PKCS Articulation of the Causes

Causes	Percentage of Participants (N=40)*
Patronage Politics	95
Deep State	87.5
Lack of Education of Populace	55
Negative Role of United States	35
MPs/Staff lack skills	0
Lack of Technology/Infrastructure in Parliament	0
Lack of Parliamentary research/training institute	0

*\*Percentages do not sum to 100, as participants provided more than one response.*

Nearly all participants indicated that the reason that Pakistani legislatures do not serve the needs of the populace is that the vast majority of members of parliament are feudal landowners who practice patronage politics, whereby they channel resources to other elites in exchange for political support. This process allows for the maintenance of networks of privilege which results in a class hierarchy where power and resources are concentrated in the hands of the landed elite, and their allies in the military and industry. For example, one participant stated:<sup>106</sup>

“You look at the parliament, and it is still very much dominated by feudals. And this has been the bane of Pakistan’s existence, because unlike India, we never had land significant land reforms. And these feudals, first of all, they make sure there will be no land reform in Pakistan, because that is against their interests, and then they give each other favors in order to maintain their power as a class, and they create alliances with the military and big industrialists, which is why what you have in Pakistan is a classic case of elite capture – all the resources of the country are taken by the elites through the use of the state.”

Almost as many participants also stated that Pakistani legislatures are marred by dysfunction because substantive policymaking and resource allocation decisions lie in the hands of the country’s powerful military. They termed the broader military and security establishment

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<sup>106</sup> PKCS Participant 14.

the “Deep State,” to reflect the fact that it influences policies from behind the scenes. A paradigmatic quote is:<sup>107</sup>

“You have to understand that parliament here is really just a puppet show. The real decisions are made at the level of the deep state. You look at who really has power, and it is not Gilani,<sup>108</sup> but Kiyani.<sup>109</sup> Gilani is just Kiyani’s ‘yes man.’ Who makes the real decision on the budget? You think the parliament can reduce the defense budget? You think the Prime Minister can create the foreign policy? They cannot do that, if they try, they will be thrown out!”

A majority of participants cited the low level of education in Pakistan as a reason. They noted that lack of education fundamentally leads to the disempowerment of citizens, reducing their ability to organize, and mobilize for their rights, and hold MPs accountable. They also stated that lack of education leads citizens, especially those in the rural areas, to keep voting for representatives regardless of the latter’s performance in office. For example, one participant explained:<sup>110</sup>

“There is so much illiteracy in Pakistan. How can you have a viable democracy with so much illiteracy and poverty? This is why you see the same crooks come into parliament over and over again! You see, they buy their votes with food...just a simple promise of a meal, and you can get your vote. If people were more educated they would demand accountability.<sup>111</sup>”

Last, a little more than a third of participants also stated that Pakistani legislatures are dysfunctional because members of parliament serve the interests of the United States above the interests of the Pakistani populace. One commonly cited example was that according to documents released by Wikileaks, MPs had given tacit approval to the United States to conduct

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<sup>107</sup> PKCS Participant 18.

<sup>108</sup> Referring to former Prime Minister, Rousaf Raza Gilani.

<sup>109</sup> Referring to current Chief of Army staff, General Ashfaq Parvez Kiyani.

<sup>110</sup> PKCS Participant 33.

<sup>111</sup> Referring to the uprising in Egypt that overthrew the regime of former dictator President Hosni Mubarak.

drone strikes in Pakistan, whilst issuing public condemnations against the United States. One participant explained:<sup>112</sup>

“Pakistan is a frontline state...do you know what that means? Do you think anything happens here without prior approval from Washington D.C.? You know about the drones,? There will be a drone strike, and Gilani will come out huffing and puffing and saying that the U.S. cannot violate our sovereignty, and then we get documentary proof that the U.S. has been given the “green light.” What sovereignty? Do you think we are a sovereign state? We are not...our leaders serve other masters.”

Not a single participant stated that lack of skills and training of MPs or their staff, or even general incompetence on the part of MPs and their staff, was a cause for the fact that the legislatures did not serve the needs of the populace. Similarly, no participant cited a lack of technology or inadequacy of infrastructure as reasons for the dysfunction of the legislatures. Finally, the lack of a parliamentary research institute was also not cited as a reason for the fact that the legislatures did not fulfill their obligations. Please note that when my open ended questions did not elicit any of these responses, I followed up with direct question prompts to see if participants would provide any of these as reasons. However, all participants responded in the negative. A paradigmatic quote<sup>113</sup> is:<sup>114</sup>

“No no no! This is not about incompetence! This is about interests! These politicians are not idiots! They are two steps ahead! They know what they are doing – exploiting the people, and robbing this land, and they are good at it!”

Having reviewed how leaders of Pakistani civil society diagnosed the sources of the problems they had identified within Pakistani legislatures, we now turn to the recommendations they offered to solve these problems.

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<sup>112</sup> PKCS Participant 28.

<sup>113</sup> Referring to a type of response that was very frequently provided.

<sup>114</sup> PKCS Participant 35.

## Structural Articulation of the Solutions

In this section I review the solutions that leaders of Pakistani civil society offered to address the problems they had identified within Pakistani legislatures. Therefore, I examine how these individuals answered the following question: *What are the solutions to the deficiencies in Pakistani parliaments, or how do we address these deficiencies?*

Table 4. PKCS Articulation of the Solutions

Solutions	Percentage of Participants (N=40)*
New Political Parties	70
Media	65
Education	65
Land Reform	62.5
Positive Demographic Changes	55
“Pakistani Spring”	45
Judiciary	42.5
Changes in U.S. Policies	37.5
Training workshops for MPs/Staff	0
Technological upgrades for parliament (e.g. websites or live telecasting)	0
Development of Parliamentary Research/Training Institute	0

*\*Percentages do not sum to 100, as participants provided more than one response.*

A large majority of participants cited the advent of new political parties, if they were not headed by members of the feudal class, as a solution for the deficiencies that mark Pakistani legislatures. Amongst this pool of participants, a party most frequently mentioned as an element of hope was the Tehreek-E-Insaaf, headed by former cricketer, Imran Khan. Participants explained that new political parties if headed by non-feudal leaders, would bring representatives of other classes into parliament and this would lead to a decrease in both patronage politics and the concentration of power and resources in the country. In a similar vein, a significant majority

of participants stated that substantive, significant, and wide ranging land reforms were necessary in order to improve the ability of parliament to serve the needs of the populace, as this would reduce the feudal dominance of the legislatures. For example, one participant explained:<sup>115</sup>

“I think the attention and support Imran Khan, and his party are getting is a good sign. He is not a politician like the others, so it will be something new. You see, if he succeeds, others will follow. And then as long as we keep on having elections, hopefully we will get more new blood into the parliament, then we can get land reforms finally, and break the power of these feudals.”

A majority of participants noted that improvements (access as well as quality) in education were a necessary factor in improving the performance of Pakistani legislatures, as a more educated populace would demand accountability from their elected representatives. An equal number of participants also cited an active media, in particular television as a means to making Pakistani MPs fulfill their roles and obligations. This pool of participants explained that although the Pakistani media can also have a negative effect in that some channels appear to promote the interests of the “Deep State” (which seeks to discredit democracy in the country), in the net analysis, in particular in the long term, a free and active media will help to hold MPs accountable for their time in office. One participant stated:<sup>116</sup>

“I think the increased openness in the media has been extremely beneficial for democracy in Pakistan, and I think it will continue to play a good role. It also can play a bad role, mind you. You look at some of these T.V. channels, and it is clear from the kinds of comments some of these journalists make that they are in the pay of the ISI<sup>117</sup>...ok, so these politicians are crooks, but that does not mean that democracy is bad, which is what some of these journalists immediately try to jump the conversation to. But, still, just the fact that we now have journalists asking, frankly very direct and embarrassing questions to these politicians, has been great. And you know that these political talk shows are the most popular programs on t.v.! So, they are being watched, and they will make a difference. “

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<sup>115</sup> PKCS Participant 4.

<sup>116</sup> PKCS Participant 26.

<sup>117</sup> Referring to the Inter-Services Intelligence, which is the primary intelligence agency of the Pakistani state.

A majority of participants cited three demographic changes underway in Pakistan as a factor that will over time lead to improvements in the performance of MPs and Pakistani legislatures. The three demographic changes identified were: 1) rapid urbanization; 2) a “youth bulge” and 3) the empowerment of women. This pool of participants explained that these changes will inevitably erode the electoral power of the feudal, patriarchal class, and will bring younger, more urban, and more female MPs into parliament who will tend to serve the interests of a commercial and entrepreneurial middle class, and who will in general be more attuned to the needs of the populace. One paradigmatic quote is:<sup>118</sup>

“You look at the changes that are happening. There is a rapid urbanization in progress, especially in the Punjab. People do not realize this but Punjab is becoming increasingly urbanized..you go to these cities like Gujrat and Sialkot...they used to be sleepy towns, but now they are becoming industrial, urban hubs. Then there is the fact that Pakistan, you know, is a very young country. I mean, the majority of our population is under the age of 30, and this youth will bring new ideas, and they will force the institutions to change. Also, our women are joining the workforce more, and playing a more active part in the public, and you know whenever women become more empowered, societies change, for example, the birth rate falls, there is more education, etc...so in the near future the electoral space will start to change.”

A large minority of participants cited the need for a “Pakistani Spring,” akin to the 2011 uprising in Egypt that toppled the regime of former President Hosni Mubarak. This pool of participants explained that the 2007/2008 “lawyers movement,” proves that the Pakistani populace can mobilize en masse to hold their leaders accountable, and that a similar but more broad based movement needs to be re-ignited to make parliament serve the needs of the populace. For example, one participant explained:<sup>119</sup>

“You are seeing what is happening in Egypt? We need Pakistan to be next. The conditions are the same...there is so much polarization. The very rich and powerful few,

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<sup>118</sup> PKCS Participant 11.

<sup>119</sup> PKCS Participant 16.

and the very poor and marginalized many. On the one hand you have these weddings where they are spending thousands and thousands of rupees, and then on the other you have people who are not able to eat even a single meal. How long can we allow this to last? It will not last. The people will rebel, it is just a matter of time. ”

A significant minority of participants also stated that an active and independent judiciary, such as the one currently being led by Chief Justice Iftikhar Chaudhry, will serve as an important check on parliament. They noted that an active and independent judiciary will make MPs more accountable, and will force them to serve their roles and responsibilities towards the populace.

One participant stated:<sup>120</sup>

“We now have a better and more independent judiciary. And this will help. You are already seeing that the judges are challenging the politicians...more and more corruption cases are being opened, and this will weed them out. Maybe slowly, but it will help. So we need to make sure that the judges stay independent and keep challenging the politicians.”

Finally, a little more than a third of participants stated that changes in United States policies towards the region were necessary to improve the functioning of the Pakistani parliament. This pool of participants cited two United States policies in particular that needed to be changed: a) United States links to and support for the Pakistani military and security establishment; b) United States military actions in Afghanistan and the tribal areas of Pakistan (including drone strikes). These participants explained that reduction of United States support for the Pakistani military would reduce the latter’s ability to influence policymaking in parliament, thus allowing more resources to be allocated to non-military uses. Similarly, a reduction in United States military action in Afghanistan and the tribal areas of Pakistan, would

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<sup>120</sup> PKCS Participant 7.

allow MPs more political space to reduce defense and security expenditure. One paradigmatic quote is:<sup>121</sup>

“We need the U.S. to change its policies. What is it doing in Afghanistan? This bombing of our country, it has to stop. Who does it benefit? Only the military, because you know the civilian leadership has to take the flak for it. And they keep talking about democracy, but who was supporting Musharraf when he was in power? Even now, why is it that U.S. officials meet Kiyani more than the PM? You see...this is it...you keep supporting the military and making the civilian government look weak, and then you expect that it will help democracy in Pakistan? No, no...the U.S. will have to change its ways.”

Not a single participant cited training workshops for MPs (or their staff), technological/infrastructural improvements of parliament, or the development of a parliamentary research institute, as solutions to improve the performance of MPs or the functioning of parliament. Again, please note that when my open ended questions did not elicit any of these responses, I followed up with direct question prompts to see if participants would provide any of these as solutions. However, all participants responded in the negative. One participant explained:<sup>122</sup>

“Workshops! This is the typical, stupid thing that these development agencies do. They love them...they have this workshop fetish. For everything, they recommend a workshop. No, absolutely not – these workshops do nothing! The defense budget in Pakistan will not get reduced because some parliamentary staff are shown how to do Excel! MPs will not start passing laws to protect minorities because of some workshop! I get invitations from these development agencies to come to these workshops and seminars all the time. They are a complete waste of time. They are all in five star hotels, and they have great food there, and that is why people attend them! I mean, why not!?”

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<sup>121</sup> PKCS Participant 25.

<sup>122</sup> PKCS Participant 15.

Table 5. PKCS Structural Articulation

Problems	Causes	Solutions
Inadequate Representation Inadequate Law Making Inadequate Oversight Inadequate Accountability	Patronage Politics Deep State Lack of Education of Populace Negative Role of U.S.	New Political Parties Increased & Improved Education Media Land Reform Positive Demographic Changes “Pakistani Spring” Judiciary Changes in U.S. Policies

In this chapter, I have presented the ways that leaders of Pakistani civil society conceptualized the deficiencies of Pakistani legislatures, the causes of these deficiencies, and the solutions they offered to address these deficiencies. How congruent are these responses to those emanated from within the PLSP? I address this question in the following section.

**Comparing Translocal Cognitive Construction and Local Structural Articulation**

“...And never the twain shall meet...”

- Rudyard Kipling

In this section I compare the way the following questions were answered by the PLSP, with the way they were answered by leaders of Pakistani civil society:

- a) *What are the deficiencies of Pakistani legislatures?*
- b) *What are the causes of these deficiencies?*
- c) *What are the solutions to these problems, or how do we address these deficiencies?*

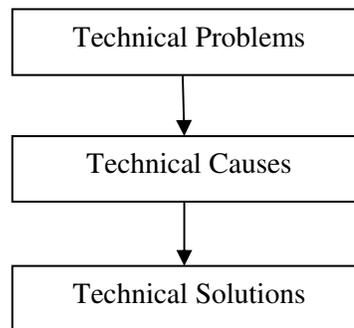
When we place the two sets of representations side-by-side, we note a substantive difference between the way the problematic (deficiencies, causes, solutions) of Pakistani legislatures is conceived in the PLSP, and the way it is conceived by leaders of Pakistani civil society.

Table 6. PLSP Cognitive Framework vs. PKCS Structural Articulation

	PLSP	PKCS
Problems	<p>Inadequate Representation: Insufficient information exchange between MPs and constituents</p> <p>Inadequate Lawmaking: Little legislation; legislation badly drafted and ill researched</p> <p>Inadequate Oversight: MPs deferential to executive</p>	<p>Inadequate Representation: MPs do not serve interests of constituents</p> <p>Inadequate Lawmaking: MPs do not produce legislation to benefit constituents</p> <p>Inadequate Oversight: MPs collude with executive branch to further their own interests against interest of constituents</p> <p>Inadequate Accountability: MPs act with impunity</p>
Causes	<p>MPs/staff lack communication skills</p> <p>Lack of information and communications technology</p> <p>MPs/staff lack research and legislative drafting skills</p> <p>MPs/staff lack understanding of oversight role, and the skills to enact it</p>	<p>Patronage Politics</p> <p>Deep State</p> <p>Lack of Education of Populace</p> <p>Negative Role of U.S.</p>
Solutions	<p>Websites</p> <p>Telecasting</p> <p>Workshops</p> <p>Training Institute</p>	<p>New Political Parties</p> <p>Increased &amp; Improved Education</p> <p>Media</p> <p>Land Reform</p> <p>Positive Demographic Changes</p> <p>“Pakistani Spring”</p> <p>Judiciary</p> <p>Changes in U.S. Policies</p>

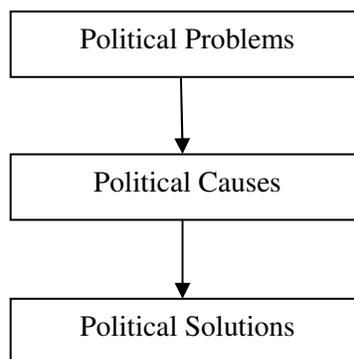
Within the PLSP, even though the project’s ostensible goal is *normative and political*, i.e. making Pakistani democracy more “participatory, representative and accountable” [Scope of Work, 3], the problematic of Pakistani legislatures is conceived in purely *technical* terms. For example, when the PLSP noted and analyzed the fact that Pakistani legislatures do not fulfill

their representative function, it identified the problem as one of information exchange between MPs and constituents. It then explained that this is because MPs lack communication skills and that the legislatures lack the technological infrastructure that would allow information to flow between it and the public. Therefore, the PLSP offered a purely technological/infrastructural solution to the problem, namely building legislative information rich websites for parliaments, and equipping them with telecasting equipment. This example illustrates that within the PLSP it is understood that if a) the technological infrastructure of Parliament is enhanced, and b) the communication, leadership, drafting and research skills of MPs and their staff are improved, then Pakistani legislatures will provide better representation, lawmaking, and oversight, in not only positive terms but also *normative* terms. The following flowchart demonstrates the logic that animates the PLSP:



In stark contrast, leaders of Pakistani civil society conceived the problematic of Pakistani legislatures in purely *political* terms. For example, when they noted and analyzed the fact that the Pakistani parliament does not fulfill its representative function, they said that MPs do not serve the interests of their constituents, and explained that this is because MPs work to siphon resources away from the public, and towards themselves and their allies among the landed elite,

the military, and industry. They therefore offered political solutions to the problem, for example, a mass uprising against the ruling elite. When asked whether parliament’s technological deficiencies may be hampering its ability to perform its representative function, and that therefore a website may help improve parliament, participants in our sample responded in the negative, stating that such diagnoses and measures do not go to the root cause of the problem, which is political. They did not believe that improving the technical “capacities,” of Pakistani parliament, either through technological enhancements or through training workshops for MPs/staff, would improve its political content. Instead, these participants argued that the deficiencies in the Pakistani parliament are of a *political* nature, and that only *political* solutions would solve them. The following flowchart illustrates the logic that animates the representations from PKCS:



Therefore, we note a large substantive gap between the way the problematic of the Pakistani legislatures was conceived within the PLSP, and the way it is conceived within PKCS. How do we explain this gap? I address this question in the following chapter, utilizing insights from world society theory and post-colonial theory.

## Chapter VII

### Making Sense of the Development Disjuncture:

### Translocal Cognitive Construction vs. Local Structural Articulation



*"The United States wants you to become a democracy."*

- *The New Yorker*<sup>123</sup>

As we noted, there is a substantive gap between the way the problematic of the Pakistani legislatures was conceived within the PLSP, and the way it was conceived by leaders of Pakistani civil society. We observed that this gap stems from the fact that PLSP development actors conceived the problematic in purely technical terms. Indeed, the PLSP did not tackle any

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<sup>123</sup> [http://www.newyorker.com/humor/issuecartoons/2012/07/30/cartoons\\_20120723#slide=9](http://www.newyorker.com/humor/issuecartoons/2012/07/30/cartoons_20120723#slide=9)

of the political questions and concerns that the leaders of Pakistani civil society focused on when considering how one goes about improving the “representative, lawmaking, and oversight” functions of the Pakistani legislatures.

This is particularly interesting since PLSP documents do acknowledge these political factors when describing the political context of Pakistan. For example, the introduction section of the Scope of Work document provides a lengthy quotation from Stephen Cohen’s book, “The Idea of Pakistan,” (Cohen 2004), that sheds light on the fact that Pakistan has not had a single instance of successive elected governments, and that barring the Zulfikar Ali Bhutto government in 1977, every civilian government has been deposed via military coups, or through presidential action made at the behest of the military since Pakistan’s founding in 1947 (Scope of Work, 4). Yet, as we observed earlier, when that same document identifies the problems that make the Pakistani parliament weak, diagnoses their causes, and develops solutions for them, somehow these (and all other) political factors are neatly put aside and are not factored into the thought process.

In his landmark study of development work in Lesotho, James Ferguson observed precisely this depoliticizing nature of development practice. It led him to label the development enterprise an “anti-politics machine” that functions by “whisking political realities out of sight” . (Ferguson 1994: xv). Furthermore, he observed that not only do development actors remove “the political,” from their analyses; they go a step further and frame the problems they are attempting to address in purely technical terms. He argues that the development enterprise “insistently reposes political questions of land, resources, jobs, or wages as technical ‘problems’ responsive to the technical ‘development’ intervention” (Ferguson 1994: 270).

Building on his analysis, Li identifies this practice of “rendering technical”<sup>124</sup> and non-political, as paradigmatic of the way that development actors think. She notes that they “frame problems in technical terms,” so that they are amenable to the kinds of diagnoses and solutions that “fall within their repertoire” of expertise (Li 2007: 7). Therefore, it is no wonder that they “exclude the structure of political-economic relations from their diagnoses and prescriptions” as these are issues they do not have the capacity to address (Li 2007: 7). Instead, they focus on questions like “the capacities of the poor,” i.e. questions for which they presumably have solutions at their disposal and the ability to implement these solutions. However, as Li demonstrates in her study of an “integrated conservation and development” project in Indonesia, since the projects that result from these technically rendered analyses have “faulty premises,” it is no surprise that development projects do not achieve their goals (Li 2007: 155).

Returning to our original puzzle, we now have an answer for the first question we posed – *why does the development enterprise not achieve its stated normative goals?* The answer is that it does not achieve its stated normative goals because development actors conceive, and attempt to solve, socio-political problems in a completely technical manner.

Since the urge to “render technical” goes to the heart of the reason that development actors do not achieve their stated goals, why do they engage in this practice? Li points out that contra to the arguments of critical scholars, development actors do not engage in the practice of rendering technical, “merely as a tactic to maintain dominance of particular classes, or to assert control by the global North over the South” (Li 2007: 9). That, in fact, development actors are

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<sup>124</sup> A term she borrows from Nikolas Rose (1999).

well-intentioned, and can be taken on their word that they are working and aiming to improve conditions in the areas where they act (Li 2007: 9).

My own observations of the development actors I interacted with and interviewed, strongly support her assertion. PLSP staff members appeared earnest, and were strongly motivated by their desire to improve democracy in Pakistan. Claims of North-South domination rang hollow as a) important players in the PLSP design and management hierarchy were either Pakistani or from another country in the “Global South”, and b) a majority of PLSP staff were from the “Global South,” with a large pool from Pakistan. Indeed, the organization and staff make-up of the project mapped perfectly onto the description of the development landscape resembling a network of transnational experts (Harrison 2001; Li 2007; Robinson 2002; Sanyal 2007). Furthermore, PLSP staff members often risked their personal safety by being involved with the project.<sup>125</sup>

So, if it was not a clandestine strategy to keep the Pakistani legislatures dysfunctional and allow for them to be dominated by outside forces, why did PLSP development actors engage in the practice of “rendering technical” since it was counterproductive to their own stated goals? I argue that we can best understand this urge to “render technical,” through insights from world society literature.

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<sup>125</sup> For example, a few staff members described being followed and receiving death threats. And see for example, this story about the recent killing of a USAID staff person in Afghanistan: [http://thecable.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2012/08/09/usaid\\_foreign\\_service\\_officer\\_killed\\_in\\_afghanistan](http://thecable.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2012/08/09/usaid_foreign_service_officer_killed_in_afghanistan).

## **Development as Agent of Diffusion**

*A man will be imprisoned in a room with a door that's unlocked and opens inwards; as long as it does not occur to him to pull rather than push.*

- Ludwig Wittgenstein

The analytical framework provided by world society theory allows us to understand why the individuals who planned, designed and implemented the PLSP, “rendered technical,” the problematic of the Pakistani legislatures. As Meyer explains, “the many individuals, both inside and outside the state, who engage in state formation and policy formulation are enactors of scripts” (Meyer et al. 1997: 149). Furthermore, Boli and Thomas note, that “technique and the definition of problems as technical are themselves *cultural processes* [emphasis mine]” (Boli and Thomas 1997: 179), and that such cultural processes “provide social identities, selves, and roles by which individuals pursue interests” (Boli and Thomas 1997: 179). Therefore, the practice of “rendering technical,” i.e. conceiving problems in purely rationalistic and scientific terms is a cultural script that constitutes individuals as “legitimated experts,” which is a necessary condition for them to function as development actors. Hence the individuals who planned, designed, and implemented the PLSP, got the opportunity to do so precisely *because* they conceived problems (and their causes and solutions) in the purely technical terms we observed in the PLSP documents and their statements, as that provided them the cultural authority to function as “legitimated experts,” who could provide advice to Pakistani policymakers and solve their problems.

As “legitimated experts,” PLSP staff enacted a script and functioned to bring ideas, structures and institutions of world culture in Pakistan in two important ways. First, in an intangible manner, through their very practice of “rendering technical,” they diffused a highly

rationalistic, scientific, and importantly, de-politicised way to approach profoundly political problems within an institution of governance in Pakistan. In doing so they furthered a paradigm that is aptly captured by Harvey Brooks, “Much of the history of social progress in the Twentieth Century can be described in terms of the transfer of wider areas of public policy from politics to expertise” (Brooks 1965: 68).

Second, in a more tangible manner, through the activities of the PLSP they put in place formal structures and practices in Pakistani legislatures to make them conform to those of a “model legislature.” For example, the PLSP developed PIPS which was based on the idea that all parliaments should have a research institute for parliamentarians, like the Congressional Research Service in the United States. As another example, through training workshops PLSP staff attempted to inculcate universal “best practices,” (e.g. in legislative drafting) amongst Pakistani MPs and their staff. Truly, a PLSP staff member captured it well when she noted:<sup>126</sup>

“Well, it is very simple. Our aim was to make the Pakistani legislature look like a proper legislature. There are things that a proper legislature should have, and practices that should be followed in it, and the Pakistani legislatures did not have them, so our objective was to make sure they had them.”

Examples of what a “model legislature,” looks like can be seen from USAID’s legislative “handbook,”<sup>127</sup> which provides USAID Democracy and Governance professionals with blueprints and templates that they can use to assess whether a particular legislature meets international standards and “best practices,” as well as the steps they need to make them conform to these standards.

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<sup>126</sup> PLSP Participant 9.

<sup>127</sup> See, *USAID Handbook on Legislative Strengthening*, available at: <http://www.agora-parl.org/sites/default/files/USAID%20-%20USAID%20Handbook%20on%20Legislative%20Strengthening%20-%20Feb%202000%20-%20EN%20-%20PS.pdf>.

Indeed, the PLSP and its initiatives were conceived using a template that USAID utilizes to design and plan legislative strengthening projects. I had a sense that it was crucial to identify the “original source,” of the ideas that undergird the Scope of Work document, since that gives us the ultimate clue to whether or not the PLSP was based on the template of a “model legislature.” Therefore, I questioned all PLSP participants about the “original source,” of the SOW, and finally, I received an answer - a PLSP participant explained:<sup>128</sup>

“First, we have a template that we utilize for legislative strengthening projects, using guides that we have established in-house...with the guidance, of course, of experts in the field. Second, we have done many legislative strengthening projects in the past, for example in Bolivia and Guatemala, so we drew from what we did there, and used that knowledge to create the PLSP.”

This demonstrates that PLSP staff believed that *form is equal to content*. The underlying premise here is that if the Pakistani legislature looks and sounds like a “model legislature,” (e.g. the United States Congress) then it will fulfill its normative functions as well (e.g. providing representation for citizens, etc.). Of course, they are making two crucial errors here, and both manifest “decoupling.”

The first is a historical one. The truth is that the form of a “model legislature,” for example, what the United States Congress looks like today, is an outcome of profound political and social contestation. If the vast scholarly literature on the state definitively attests to anything, it is the fact that the mechanisms and processes of state formation and consolidation, the achievement of the normative ideals of transparent, accountable and/or participatory government, occur over the “long duree,” are ongoing, and are deeply complex, chaotic, and at times profoundly destructive (see for example, Mann 1988; Moore 1993; Poggi 1978; Skocpol

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<sup>128</sup> PLSP Participant 7.

1979; Steinmetz 1999; Tilly, Ardant, and Social Science Research Council (U.S.) 1975). As Brinkerhoff pointedly notes, whilst critiquing governance assistance programs, “The United States provides a model for open and rational-legal rule in our day; however, the historical record shows that these supposedly modern institutions evolved incrementally and during a long period” (Brinkerhoff and Goldsmith 2005: 211).

The second demonstrates a “decoupling,” from the socio-political context of Pakistan. Just because the Pakistani parliament today has a new research institute, and updated websites, and that in general it satisfies more items on a checklist for the form of a “model legislature,” it does not mean that it is serving the needs of citizens any better. In fact, as we have seen, the evidence shows that its track record has worsened. For example, Pakistani citizens today have less faith in the parliament, and believe it is less representative and less accountable than it was prior to the enhancements introduced by the PLSP.<sup>129</sup>

From the foregoing analysis we can conclude that the PLSP was doomed at its very *inception* to not achieve its normative goals. The very practice that allowed individuals to be able to partake in the development activity that was the PLSP (i.e. “rendering technical”), and the underlying premises of the PLSP’s activities (i.e. replicating the form of a “model legislature” in Pakistan) ensured that the project would not be able to address the underlying political factors that weaken democracy in Pakistan, and specifically, the political factors that lead to the Pakistani legislatures not serving the needs of the people. Simply said, it is hard to imagine how the budget training workshops, or indeed, PIPS will lead to MPs decreasing defense spending in Pakistan, even though they make the Pakistani parliament look more like a “model legislature.”

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<sup>129</sup> See, <http://www.pewglobal.org/2012/06/27/pakistani-public-opinion-ever-more-critical-of-u-s/>; <http://www.transparency.org.pk/report/ncps%202010/ncps2010A5.pdf>.

However, even though the PLSP did not achieve its normative goals, it is seen as a success. Recall that DAI were awarded a contract to implement a similar project in Azerbaijan on the basis of their “success” with the PLSP. Indeed, the PLSP Final Report noted, “The evaluation team believes that the program has proven to be a very good and very wise investment for the United States and for Pakistan in terms of its potential for helping the country to build the performance capacity of its National Parliament and Provincial Assemblies” (Final Report, 3). Furthermore, when I asked PLSP staff members about their assessment of the PLSP’s performance, without an exception they responded that the project was a success because it had completed its targeted activities (e.g. it had delivered the budget analysis tool to parliamentarians). In other words, the project is seen as a success by development actors simply because it succeeded in making the Pakistani parliament look more like a “model legislature,” despite the fact that accomplishing this task did not lead to fulfillment of its normative goals.

In addition, the fact that the normative goals were not accomplished was seen to be a result of the project not going far enough in making the Pakistani legislature look like a “model legislature.” The evaluation team who drafted the PLSP Final Report suggested extending the project so that it would carry the Pakistani parliament further down the road to becoming a “model legislature” (Final Report, 3 & 32-42). In other words, the fact that the project did not achieve its normative goals is not interpreted as being a result of the way the problem it was trying to address was fundamentally conceived (as I have argued), but instead because the project’s technical remedies were not sufficiently or appropriately applied. For example, the Final Report notes that, “there were some expressions from a few participants in the research training workshops provided by a highly experienced two-person international team from the

United States and Canada that the training might have been more tailored to the particular conditions and circumstances of Pakistan's parliamentary bodies. This could be addressed in the future by bringing the international consultants to the country for a week of orientation and meetings, and discussion before the commencement of training activity" (Final Report, 30).

When individuals enact the script of "legitimated expert," negative outcomes of their activities are interpreted within the parameters of the script itself, i.e. in a technical manner. As Haas notes, "We identify and interpret problems within existing frameworks and according to past protocols and then try to manage the problems according to operating procedures that we have applied in analogous cases. Aspects of the situation that cannot be dealt with in established ways are only incompletely perceived and processed, with the result that salient dimensions of a problem or issue at hand are often ignored" (Haas 1992: 28). This explains why even though the PLSP did not achieve its normative goals, no attempt was made to ask whether the fundamental premises of the project should be questioned. Instead, the project is set to be replicated and enhanced when it is implemented elsewhere, e.g. in Azerbaijan. Here Meyer's observations are prescient, "relative ineffectiveness in reducing poverty and inequality promotes welfare-system expansion or reform...practical problems reflect...crises of action and technical systems, provoking further cultural theorization" (Meyer et al. 1997: 166). In other words, the specific ways of conceiving the weaknesses of legislative systems that were manifested in the PLSP, and the activities that the PLSP conducted, are set to be enhanced, not *despite* the fact that they failed to achieve their normative goals in Pakistan but precisely *because* of it.

Therefore, we now have an answer to the second question in our puzzle – *Why does the development enterprise expand, even when it does not achieve its stated normative goals?*

Unlike other endeavors, paradoxically it is the failure of the development enterprise in accomplishing its normative goals that leads to its expansion, as this failure is interpreted by development actors enacting the script of “legitimated experts,” using the same technical schemata that caused the failure in the first place. As a consequence, the failure is interpreted to have been caused by development actors not having done enough of what they were supposed to do. Hence the take away is to do more of the same, more intensely. In this way, each development project creates the conditions for the next one, and the development enterprise expands without achievement of its normative goals.

There is a second crucial mechanism that produces the outcome whereby the development enterprise grows because of its failure to achieve its stated normative goals, and moreover that explains, indeed, provides resilience to the technocratic script that development actors enact as “legitimated experts.” This mechanism is highlighted by way of post-colonial theory.

### **The Inexorable Spirit of Modernity**

*“...This behavior [of the colonizer] betrays a determination to objectify, to confine, to imprison, to harden. Phrases such as ‘I know them’, ‘that’s the way they are’, show this maximum objectification successfully achieved...There is on the one hand a culture in which qualities of dynamism, of growth, of depth can be recognized. As against this, [in colonial cultures] we find characteristics, curiosities, things, never a structure.”*

- Frantz Fanon<sup>130</sup>

I asked PLSP staff members about their thoughts about why performance indicators for parliament and the public’s perception of the parliament were worse after the successful implementation of the PLSP. They first responded by saying that the PLSP needed to be continued, or that other similar projects need to continue in Pakistan because the parliament still

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<sup>130</sup> Fanon 1967: 35.

does not satisfy all the features of a “model legislature.” This, of course, further supports our aforementioned argument – the indicators are worse because the PLSP did not go far enough, and more of what it did needs to be done.

However, the staff members also gave a second reason for why their stated normative goals were not achieved. They said it was due to “corruption” in Pakistani politics. They stated that citizens do not trust the parliament because the politicians are corrupt and are engaging in politics in a self-interested manner, at the expense of their constituents. What is interesting about this response is that the PLSP’s core normative goal was to make Pakistani parliamentarians less self-interested and more responsive to the Pakistani people, i.e. make the Pakistani parliamentarians accountable to, and representative of, the people’s interests. So, the fact that they would use “political corruption” – an issue they were ostensibly supposed to be addressing – as the reason for their failure, at first glance, seems rather odd. Simply stated, had there been no “corruption” in Pakistani politics, and specifically amongst Pakistani MPs, the PLSP would not have existed in the first place. However, as I will demonstrate using insights from post-colonial theory, not only does their response make sense, but it is inextricably linked to and supports their first response, i.e. that they need to do more of what they were doing.

Homi Bhabha illustrates how within the discourse of modernity the “non-modern” are interpreted via the ambivalent concept of the *stereotype* (1983: 18). The non-modern as stereotype possess the paradoxical features of being existentially different, fixed, timeless, and unchanging, yet at the same time being eminently capable of being changed, improved, to become modern, through the processes of forced modernization (Bhabha 1983). The non-modern therefore produce *ambivalence* because whilst their backwardness and degenerateness,

their *non-modernness*, are seen as an existential marker of their identity and their difference (this is who they *are*, this is why they will *always* be different from us, the moderns), the possibility that they could be changed produces the desire to correct and fix (they can be made to become *like us*, they can be *improved*, they can be *modernized*) (Bhabha 1983: 18-20). Precisely due to this ambivalent conception of the non-modern, when modernization processes fail to make them “modern,” or to improve them, the first response is to source the failure to the fixed, existential nature of their backwardness. But then the second response is to reiterate that they are changeable, and can be modernized, and to reaffirm with renewed gusto, the commitment to fix and modernize them (Bhabha 1983). Bhabha demonstrates that colonial conquest was based on this same ambivalent logic, “The objective of colonial discourse is to construe the colonized as a population of degenerate types on the basis of racial origin, in order to justify conquest and to establish systems of administration and instruction” (1983: 23). The logic is: we must modernize them, but remember that they *are* non-modern, therefore modernization will fail, but we must continue to modernize them. The non-modern therefore are irredeemables, who nevertheless must be redeemed.<sup>131</sup>

This concept of the *stereotype*, and its feature of *ambivalence*, not only explain but anticipate the two responses PLSP staff provided as to why the project failed to achieve its normative goals, namely, a) because of “political corruption”, and b) because the project needed to do more (not necessarily in that order), and sheds light on the resilience of the technocratic script that development actors enact.

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<sup>131</sup> The metaphysical process at play here is what Hegel connotes as the “negation of the negation” (Hegel and Knox 1967).

The mechanism is aptly demonstrated in the following paradigmatic quote from a PLSP staff member explaining why the PLSP failed to achieve its stated normative goals:<sup>132</sup>

“There *is* just so much corruption in politics here. What can you do? But you know, that is exactly why this kind of work [legislative strengthening] needs to continue in Pakistan [emphasis mine].”

As we can see, “political corruption,” is conceived by the PLSP staff member as an essential feature, an *attribute* of the Pakistani political landscape, and the actors who inhabit it. It has a fixity, it is existential. It is not seen as an outcome of socio-political dynamics. The fact that Pakistani MPs are acting against the interests of their constituents to enrich themselves is not seen as a result of power dynamics or class interests. Instead, it is seen as simply “the nature of things.”

The manner in which leaders of Pakistani civil society conceive of the issue of corruption highlights the “fixity” in the way in which PLSP staff viewed “corruption.” Leaders of Pakistani civil society conceived of corruption as a product of political and class dynamics, which could be altered over time through political and social contestation. Whereas PLSP staff members conceived of it as an innate attribute of the Pakistani body politic. The stark difference in conceptions is well demonstrated if one compares the previous paradigmatic quote from a PLSP staff member with the following paradigmatic quote from a leader of Pakistani civil society:<sup>133</sup>

“These development folks simply do not understand! What they call “corruption,” is simply the political landscape, the incentive structure that politicians and administrators in Pakistan face. You see, if a politician were not “corrupt,” which is to say that he would not be taking money from the exchequer to give to elites, and to give private favors to constituents, then that politician will not stay in power for very long, and they will not get elected again!..I mean, that is the name of the political game here! If you are a political actor and you face this incentive structure, and you want to

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<sup>132</sup> PLSP Participant 12.

<sup>133</sup> PKCS Participant 10.

remain in politics, then you have to do these private favors! You know, even constituents care less about whether a certain law is passed, and more about the fact that if they call to ask for a job, that they will be given the job. If they do not get the job, then the politician will lose the vote...that's it. Simple as that. And this is just not understood by these development people trying to end "corruption" in Pakistan...I mean, the way this political game will change is when the incentive structure for politicians changes...and that kind of change happens over time...and through struggle."

Yet, what is perhaps even more interesting is the fact that even though PLSP staff members view corruption as a fixed attribute of the Pakistani body politic, they also paradoxically see it as changeable, and removable. In fact, with the same approach that has been proven to not work (a legislative strengthening project like the PLSP). Therefore, whilst the attribute is acknowledged, it is acknowledged with ambivalence, and becomes the source for renewed effort - "A backwardness exists and has thwarted our efforts, but this is why we must do more! And when we fail again, it will be because a backwardness exists, and that is why we must do more still!"

This example illustrates how the concept of the *stereotype* gives ultimate resilience to development's rational script, its technical schemata – at the last instance, the failure of the development enterprise is sourced to the existential, fixed "irrational" nature (e.g. political corruption) of the local context. Fundamentally, development's "rational" script is constituted by the assumed "irrationality" of the context it operates on. The implication is this: *the technocratic script development actors enact as "legitimated experts," at its very outset assumes the failure of their efforts because of the assumed existential irrationality of the context it operates on, but sources the need for these efforts on the possibility of "fixing" this irrationality. Therefore, when a project fails to achieve its normative goals, it is interpreted as confirmation of the assumed existential irrationality of local context, but also provides justification for further*

*projects*. Rational development space's irrational "outside," local context, is the irredeemable, that nevertheless must be redeemed.

It is for this reason that even whilst "political corruption" was the *raison d'être* of the PLSP, the project's staff cited (without any hint of irony) "political corruption," both as the reason for its failure to achieve its normative goal, as well as the reason for the continuation of legislative strengthening activities (a la PLSP). The assumption of "irrationality," as being the essential nature of development space's "outside," the local context, is on the one hand the crucial element that prevents self-reflexivity amongst development actors, because their failure to achieve their normative goals is inscribed within the technocratic script they enact as "legitimated experts." On the other hand, the presence of "irrationality" in development's outside, is also the *raison d'être* of the enterprise, therefore its continued presence spurs the enterprise's expansion and penetration into more spheres of human activity. Ultimately, it is the assumed "irrationality" of the local context that prevents development actors from being able to question their technical schematic, and from re-thinking the way they think, but which also motivates them to keep doing what they do. It is for these reasons that the development enterprise is at its very inception, fundamentally structured to always lose its battles, but also condemned to continue fighting them.

## Chapter VIII

### Conclusion

*“The owl of Minerva spreads its wings at the gathering of the dusk”*

- Georg Wilhelm Hegel<sup>134</sup>

Why does the development enterprise fail to achieve its stated normative goals? And why does it continue to expand despite failing to achieve those goals? Not because of the “Tyranny of the North,” as critical scholars may argue. My investigation of the PLSP showed that not only was its staff transnational, but a majority of them were from the “Global South.” I also did not find within the PLSP, any intent or design to dominate or to exploit Pakistani society. The PLSP’s activities, like the building of websites for parliament or the budget analysis tool, may not address the project’s stated normative goals (as we observed), but they also do not lead to the exploitation of the Pakistani parliament, or Pakistan in general. Moreover, I did not find any evidence of coercion on the part of the PLSP. Indeed, the PLSP was roundly welcomed and appreciated by Pakistani parliamentarians and their staff, many of whom (especially the latter) stated that they wished it would continue, or that it would be followed by another legislative strengthening project. Indeed, some of these individuals even asked me to request USAID and DAI to “please bring another similar project to Pakistan.”

The puzzle that the development enterprise presents us with is also not explained by instrumentalist accounts, which would argue a) that projects are being badly implemented, or b) that incorrect models of growth, welfare and change are being utilized. As we saw, regardless of

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<sup>134</sup> Hegel and Knox 1967.

how well the PLSP would have been implemented, it would not have achieved its normative goals of improving the “representative, oversight, and law-making,” functions of the Pakistani parliament (and for the record, the final evaluation for the PLSP noted that it was exceptionally well implemented). Furthermore, it is precisely the approach to problem solving that utilizes models and that operationalizes complex, multi-dimensional socio-political factors as static variables that is in and of itself the mistake in the first place.

### **The Tyranny of Science in Rendering Technical**

*“Power resides where men believe it resides. No more no less.”*

- A Clash of Kings, George R. R. Martin<sup>135</sup>

The development enterprise fails to achieve its normative goals because fundamentally socio-political problems are conceived by development actors in purely technical terms. Therefore, the resulting development projects are built on faulty premises, in which the technical means being used are at complete odds with the political ends being pursued.

Development actors continue to engage in the self-defeating practice of “rendering technical,” (conceiving problems in purely rationalistic and scientific terms) because the practice in and of itself, constitutes individuals as “legitimated experts,” which is a pre-requisite for them to function as development actors. As such, the practice of “rendering technical,” serves as a “gate pass,” that allows one to participate in the development enterprise. Functioning as “legitimated experts,” development actors transplant “model forms” of institutions (and codes) into societies around the world, in the belief that the mere presence of these “model forms” will lead to changes in normative practice, to changes in behavior. The hoped for changes do not

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<sup>135</sup> Martin 2002.

occur, and therefore, the normative goals that the development actors are seeking are not achieved.

However, development actors interpret the failure to achieve their normative goals within the same technical schemata that they used at the outset, when they conceived the relevant development project. Therefore, the failure is interpreted by development actors to be a result of either inadequate or ineffective implementation of the project's activities. Hence, the take-away becomes that a new, enlarged, similar, yet perhaps better designed project should follow the previous (failed) one – i.e. do more of the same, but maybe a bit differently. In this way, paradoxically, the development enterprise expands not despite its failures but because of them.

Why is the technical schemata, i.e. the practice of “rendering technical,” so resilient, even though it produces so much failure? Critical scholars may argue that it is because the practice is sponsored, taught, promoted and funded by the World Bank, the United Nations, USAID, or a whole host of other “Northern” institutions, as part of their grand conspiratorial, neo-imperial agenda to exploit the Global South. I argue against such a reading. Instead, I source the resilience of the technical schemata to the global order of modernity, and its secular religion of science.

Recent events in Syria vindicate Mao, and amply demonstrate that political power still grows out of the barrel of a gun. However, through reference to doctrines of science, and through enactment of its rituals (e.g. “rendering technical), individuals today come to be seen as “experts,” and are allowed to make claims to authority, and they are granted legitimacy and deference. In the contemporary era, without reference to science and enactment of its rituals, individuals do not have the power to name, diagnose, and authorize.

Therefore, if our development actors were to abandon the “technical schemata,” and the practice of “rendering technical,” their statements and advice would not be acknowledged, let alone followed. So, ironically, they are forced to continue engaging in the very practice that leads them to fail. It is for this reason that I identify the development enterprise as a manifestation of the implacable spirit of modernity, whose unrelenting march is fueled by its desire to redeem its irredeemable “other,” the irrational. This then is the ultimate reason as to why the development enterprise expands even when it does not achieve its stated normative goals – rational development’s failure to succeed, only serves to confirm the existence of its “irrational other,” and motivates the former’s expansion. The implication of this is that it is implausible to critique the failure of the development enterprise, without mounting a critique of the techno-scientific nature of the contemporary global order, indeed, without mounting a fundamental critique of modernity. However, as Charkabarty has compellingly demonstrated, even the very critique of modernity cannot do without, indeed, relies on the universal concepts and ideas that are the legacy of modernity and, “without them there would be no social science that addresses issues of modern social justice” (2000: 5).

### **Taking Stock: Form versus Content**

*“The struggle itself toward the heights is enough to fill a man’s heart. One must imagine Sisyphus happy.”*

- Albert Camus<sup>136</sup>

I did not set out to decipher the puzzle that the development enterprise confronts us with, in the hope of demonstrating that it is a “misbegotten enterprise.”<sup>137</sup> In fact, that is categorically not my aim. Rather, my purpose is to understand the enterprise and to initiate a dialogue that will empower its gallant practitioners to, “clarify to [themselves] the meaning of [their] own

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<sup>136</sup> Camus 1955: 123.

<sup>137</sup> Parpart and Veltmeyer 2004: 51.

struggle and [their] own desires” (Marx 1978: 15). In other words, the objective here is to open up a conversation that allows development actors to identify and understand who they are, who they want to be, what they want to do, who they can be, and what they can do.

At present, development actors are aiming to achieve social and political transformation using technical means. No matter how hard they try, they will not achieve those normative goals, because those goals require not only the changing of behavioral patterns, but the changing of behavioral patterns en masse, and that requires resolving social and political questions, i.e. the type that the development enterprise is structurally precluded from addressing. Therefore, whilst development projects certainly can build schools, they cannot raise the level of education in a society because the latter requires fundamental changes in the behavior of the populace at large, which is something that the development enterprise cannot affect.

The development enterprise is, in actuality, in the business of doing form, not doing content. As we have discussed, it cannot do the latter. There is no doubt that the Pakistani parliament today has a research institute, PIPS, a product of the PLSP. However, PIPS will not lead to Pakistan becoming more democratic, nor will it make the Pakistani parliament a better law-making body. To conceive otherwise, is to trade in impossibles. However, it is possible that in the future, the political landscape in Pakistan may change, let’s say due to a confluence of a more educated, and urban, middle class populace, and the decline in the influence of the military (maybe due to a decrease in support from the Pentagon). The changed political landscape may bring new members to parliament who may in turn want to utilize PIPS for more informed decision making. At that point in time, the efforts of the PLSP will be appreciated because it provided the Pakistani parliament a form, which the latter (buttressed by a democratization

movement) will suffuse with content. I argue that if the development enterprise acknowledges that it cannot do *content*, and resolves itself to simply doing *form*, it will recognize itself for what it truly is, it will find itself.

Of course, the removal of normative goals does not mean that the development enterprise could not or would not play a part in social, economic or political transformation. For example, if project implementation were to be fully sourced in the local environment and recruit from disadvantaged groups, projects would provide a good source of employment.<sup>138</sup> This would have multiple benefits - the wages and salaries that the project would provide its staff during its implementation period; and the future wages and salaries that would become possible due to the skills and social capital garnered through working on the project. In this way, the development enterprise will be playing a part in providing livelihoods, and creating a skilled class, that will be more likely to challenge entrenched elites, and will have the resources to succeed in that challenge.

Furthermore, if the development enterprise were to broaden the parameters of its “technical schemata,” to include the forms of expertise that are present in the contexts in which it operates, it would be able to gain a profoundly better understanding of the problems it is engaged in solving. The leaders of Pakistani civil society I interviewed, possessed a certain form of “expertise,” – a mastery and know-how of the structural socio-political context of Pakistan. Had the PLSPP tapped into this form of expertise, it would have been conceptualized in a fundamentally different manner. Of course, the million dollar question is whether the development enterprise, structured on the technical premises that it is, would be able to not just

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<sup>138</sup> Towards this end, USAID is on the right track in Pakistan, as it is increasingly sourcing all implementation efforts to local entities. See: <http://transition.usaid.gov/pk/about/index.html>.

acknowledge, but incorporate input from the structural expertise possessed by local actors (like the leaders of Pakistani civil society I interviewed)? Or would such input simply be interpreted within the same cognitive technical framework, so that political issues would once again be whisked away?

Regardless of how development actors respond to the question of incorporating local structural expertise into their schemata, two things they do have to reconcile with are that social changes always occur over the long duree, and they come about through a confluence of a multiplicity of factors. Therefore, it is implausible to attribute them to any development project, or indeed, to the development enterprise at large, to assess “effectiveness”. In acknowledging and reconciling with this, the development enterprise would only be jettisoning its impossible normative illusions, its hubris.

Thus, to argue that the development enterprise should adopt a *non-normative approach*, is to accept and reconcile with the Sisyphean nature of the undertaking. This may prompt some to question its worthiness. However, as Camus memorably argued, in the end Sisyphus’s perpetual, futile struggles up the mountain would be meaningful in and of themselves, and inevitably they would leave the mountain, his rock, and Sisyphus himself, resolved for the better (Camus 1955).

\* \* \* \* \*

## Appendix A

### Brief Background on Development Indicators

A “development indicator,” is a statistical measure of the quality of life, and improvements in it, for a given society, a region, or even the globe. Development indicators span and measure a wide array of the elements that make up the “quality of life” (Adams 2000). For example, indicators measure incomes, life expectancy, fertility, nutrition, law enforcement, pollution, etc. Development indicators are compiled from officially collected statistics. One of the largest collections of development indicators is the World Development Indicator database, which is housed at the World Bank. This database includes 800 indicators covering more than 150 economies.<sup>139</sup>

Perhaps the most commonly used development indicator to assess the quality of life in a society is a measure of poverty – “Population living below \$1.25 PPP per day (%)”. This indicator measures the percentage of the population in a society that is living below the international poverty line of \$1.25 (in purchasing power parity terms, i.e. in terms that equalize purchasing power across societies) a day.<sup>140</sup> Another commonly used development indicator is a measure of income – “GDP per capita in PPP terms (constant 2005 international \$)”. This indicator is a per person measure of the value of all output produced in a society.<sup>141</sup>

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<sup>139</sup> <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator>.

<sup>140</sup> <http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/indicators/38906.html>.

<sup>141</sup> <http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/indicators/20206.html>.

A commonly used development indicator that assesses the health of individuals in a society is, “Life expectancy at birth (years)”. This indicator measures, “the number of years a newborn infant could expect to live if prevailing patterns of age-specific mortality rates at the time of birth stay the same throughout the infant’s life.”<sup>142</sup> And a commonly used indicator that assesses the level of education of individuals in a society is, “Adult literacy rate, both sexes (% aged 15 and above)”. This indicator measures the percentage of the 15 and older population of a society, that can with comprehension, both read and write a short statement concerning their daily life.<sup>143</sup>

In recent years, the development indicator that has most widely been used to assess the overall “quality of life,” in a society, has been the Human Development Index (HDI), which was developed by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) (Adams 2000). The HDI is a “composite index measuring average achievement in three basic dimensions of human development—a long and healthy life, knowledge, and a decent standard of living”.<sup>144</sup>

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<sup>142</sup> <http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/indicators/69206.html>.

<sup>143</sup> <http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/indicators/101406.html>.

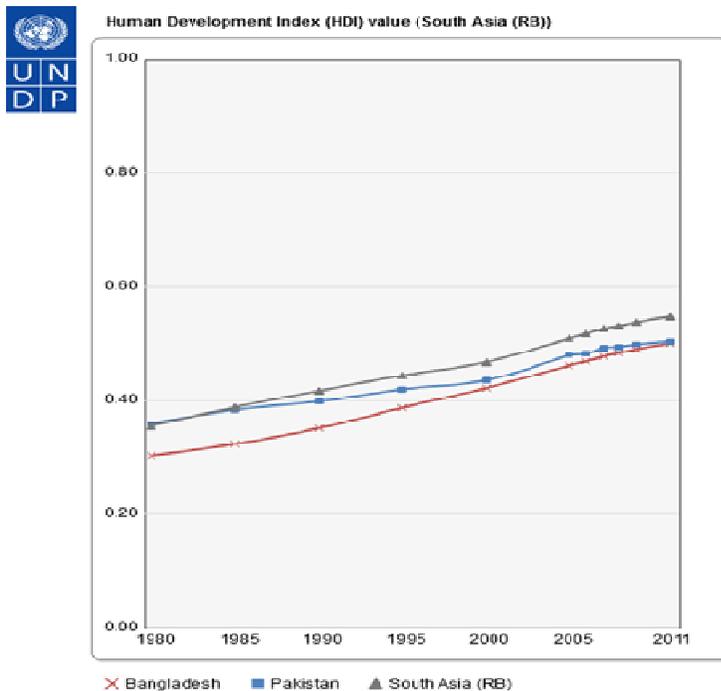
<sup>144</sup> <http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/indicators/103106.html>.

## Appendix B

### Trends in Selected Development Indicators for Pakistan

#### *Human Development Index*

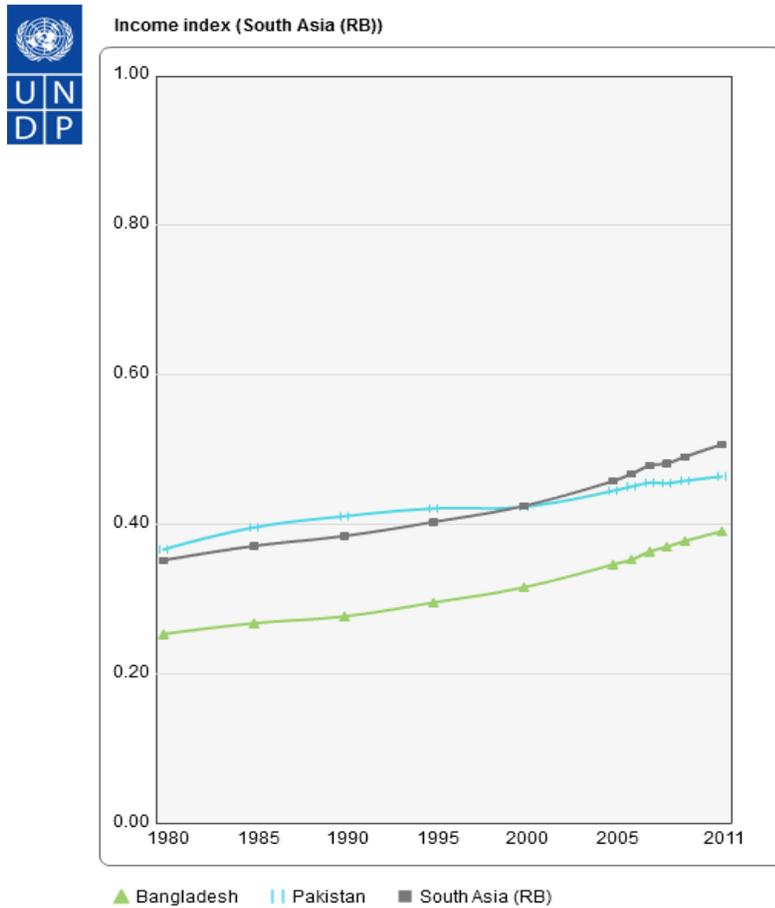
Trends in the human development index for Pakistan demonstrate that whilst the index has risen modestly, it remains far below regional and global trends, and the rate at which it has risen has also been below the regional and global rate. Indeed, Bangladesh, which as I point out, receives much less development assistance, but which is in the same region, has a similar population size and development needs, has witnessed a far greater rate of improvement in its HDI.<sup>145</sup>



<sup>145</sup> <http://hdr.undp.org/en/data/trends/>.

## Income Index

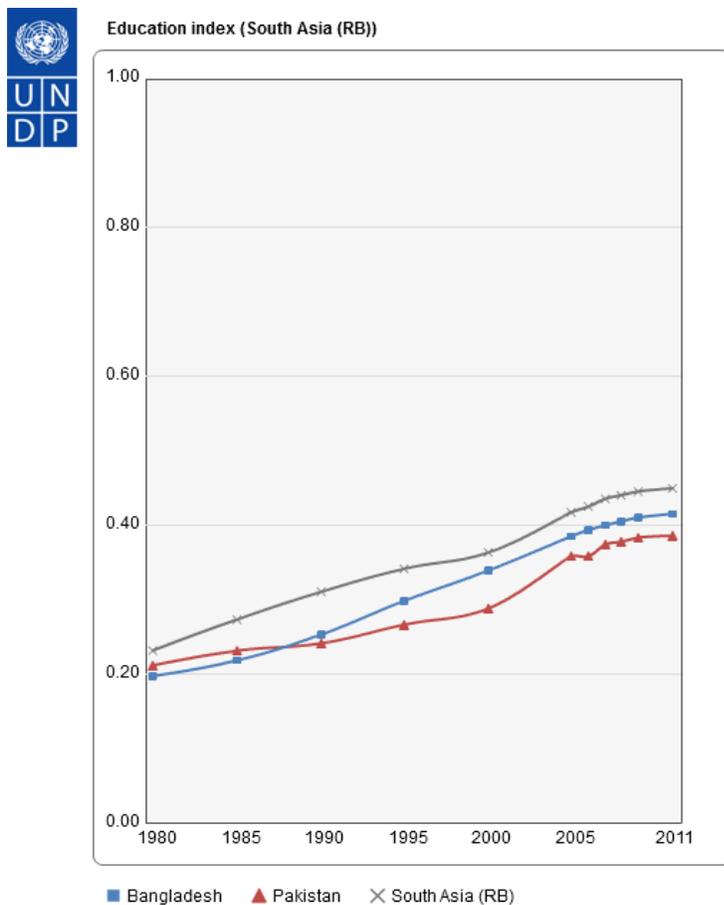
Trends in the Income Index for Pakistan demonstrate that whilst the index has been on a sharply rising trend for the region, it has been on a declining trend for Pakistan. And whilst Bangladesh's index remains below Pakistan's, the former's has experienced a sharp rate of improvement, whilst the latter's is indicating a downward trend.<sup>146</sup>



<sup>146</sup> <http://hdr.undp.org/en/data/trends/>.

## Education Index

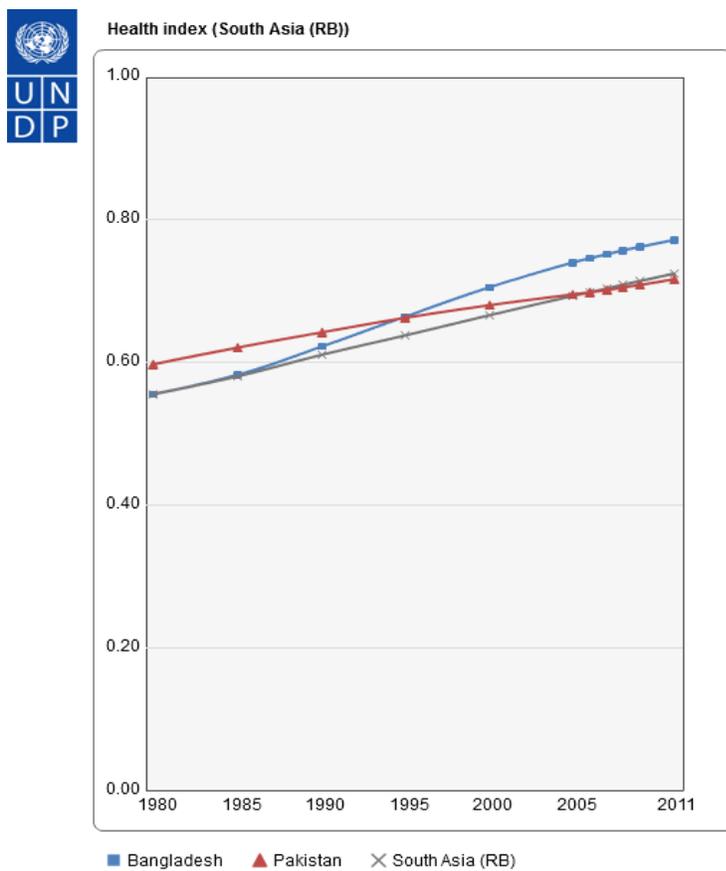
The Education Index for Pakistan is below the regional index, and its trends are unhealthy - the index is experiencing a downward trajectory. This is especially disconcerting because the trends in the index for the region are experiencing an upward movement. The education index for Bangladesh mirrors the trends in the regions, and is on an upward trajectory.<sup>147</sup>



<sup>147</sup> <http://hdr.undp.org/en/data/trends/>.

## Health Index

The Health Index for Pakistan is below the regional index, and most disconcertingly, it is on a downward trend. This is especially worrying since the regional index is experiencing an upward trend. The health index for Bangladesh is far above the index for Pakistan, and is experiencing a sharp upward trajectory.<sup>148</sup>



<sup>148</sup> <http://hdr.undp.org/en/data/trends/>.

## Appendix C

### Background on the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)

On September 3rd 1961, President John F. Kennedy established the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), as mandated in the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961. The Foreign Assistance Act required the separation of military and non-military aid, which reorganized US foreign assistance programs, and created USAID<sup>149</sup>.

Presently, USAID is an independent federal agency, receiving foreign policy guidance from the US Secretary of State. USAID is charged with supporting long-term and equitable economic growth and advances in U.S. foreign policy objectives by supporting economic growth, agriculture and trade; global health; and democracy, conflict prevention and humanitarian assistance<sup>150</sup>. USAID has gone from performing major development work in 30 countries in 1965, to 88 counties as of 2007<sup>151</sup>.

USAID is organized into geographic bureaus, which are responsible for the activities within the specific countries USAID operates, and functional bureaus, which conduct programs which are world-wide or involve multiple countries. The five geographic bureaus are Sub-Saharan Africa; Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean; Europe and Eurasia; and the Middle

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149 About USAID: USAID History, [http://www.usaid.gov/about\\_usaid/usaidhist.html](http://www.usaid.gov/about_usaid/usaidhist.html).

150 About USAID, [http://www.usaid.gov/about\\_usaid/](http://www.usaid.gov/about_usaid/).

151 Supporting the USAID Mission: Staffing Activities from Inception to Present Day, [http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/PNADM027.pdf](http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNADM027.pdf).

East. USAID's three functional bureaus are Global Health; Economic Growth, Agriculture, and Trade; and Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance<sup>152</sup>.

During the Regan Administration, the use of private contractors instead of doing development work directly was incorporated as a "Pillar" initiative by the agency<sup>153</sup>. To carry out this initiative, and also deal with staff shortages, hiring freezes, and reduction in force mandates through the 1980s to present, USAID has "continued the shift from directly implementing development projects to overseeing contractors and grantees who carried them out."<sup>154</sup>

As a result of these requirements, USAID's staff levels have shifted dramatically over the years. USAID reached its staffing peak in the 1960s and 1970s with almost 7,000 U.S. staff members<sup>155</sup>. In the late 1970s staff levels began to decrease. By 1990 there were 3,488 U.S. staff members, and in 2005 there were only 2,398 US staff members<sup>156</sup>.

Changes are being made to the way USAID operates. Rajiv Shah, the current Administrator for USAID, has spoken of reforming the contracting process, saying that reform of USAID contracting will mean accelerated "funding to local [non-governmental organizations] and local entrepreneurs, change agents who have the cultural knowledge and in-country expertise to ensure assistance leads to real local institutions and lasting, durable growth."<sup>157</sup>

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152 About USAID: USAID Organization, [http://www.usaid.gov/about\\_usaid/usaidorg.html](http://www.usaid.gov/about_usaid/usaidorg.html).

153 Supporting the USAID Mission: Staffing Activities from Inception to Present Day, [http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/PNADM027.pdf](http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNADM027.pdf).

154 Supporting the USAID Mission: Staffing Activities from Inception to Present Day, [http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/PNADM027.pdf](http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNADM027.pdf).

<sup>155</sup> U.S. staff member count does not include staff on USAID payroll hired in foreign countries.

<sup>156</sup> Supporting the USAID Mission: Staffing Activities from Inception to Present Day, [http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/PNADM027.pdf](http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNADM027.pdf).

<sup>157</sup> Pincus, Walter: "USAID Leader Outlines his Change in Strategy" [http://voices.washingtonpost.com/federal-eye/2011/01/usaid\\_leader\\_outlines\\_his\\_chan.html](http://voices.washingtonpost.com/federal-eye/2011/01/usaid_leader_outlines_his_chan.html).

## Appendix D

### Background on Development Alternatives Incorporated (DAI)

Development Alternatives Incorporated (DAI), was founded in 1970. They are a private firm, whose mission is to “make a lasting difference in the world by helping developing nations become more prosperous, fairer and more just, cleaner, safer, healthier, more stable, more efficient, and better governed<sup>158</sup>. DAI is a top 100 government contractor, earning \$379.6 million in federal prime contracts in 2009<sup>159</sup>. It is also the second largest international development contractor<sup>160</sup>. DAI is split into six “sectors”: Economic Growth, Environment and Energy, Governance, Health, Stability, and the Corporate Sector<sup>161</sup>.

DAI has had a presence in Pakistan since 1982, and in 2009 opened up an office in Islamabad<sup>162</sup>. According to DAI, their work in Pakistan encompasses “economic and agricultural development, water and irrigation management, microfinance, narcotics awareness and control, fiscal decentralization, legislative strengthening, and other sectors.”<sup>163</sup> They have

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<sup>158</sup> About DAI: Mission, <http://www.dai.com/about/>.

<sup>159</sup> Washington Technology: 2010 Top 100 Government Contractors, <http://washingtontechnology.com/toplists/top-100-lists/2010/development-alternatives-inc.aspx>.

<sup>160</sup> Hubler, David. “Contractors Finds Fertile Fields Abroad”, <http://washingtontechnology.com/articles/2010/06/01/top-100-international-contracts.aspx>.

<sup>161</sup> Our Work: Sectors, <http://www.dai.com/work/index.php>.

<sup>162</sup> About DAI Pakistan, <http://www.dai.com/pakistan/>.

<sup>163</sup> About DAI Pakistan, <http://www.dai.com/pakistan/>.

performed over 30 short and long projects in the country.<sup>164</sup> Their clients for project in Pakistan include the U.S. Agency for International Development, the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, the United Nations Development Program, the Japan International Cooperation Agency, and the U.K. Department for International Development.<sup>165</sup>

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<sup>164</sup> About DAI Pakistan, <http://www.dai.com/pakistan/>.

<sup>165</sup> About DAI Pakistan, <http://www.dai.com/pakistan/>.

## **Appendix E**

### **List of Documents Reviewed**

- a) DAI PLSP Scope of Work and Task Order, 2005
- b) DAI PLSP Supplemental Scope of Work, 2009
- c) DAI PLSP Year One Work Plan, 2005
- d) DAI PLSP Year Two Work Plan, 2006
- e) DAI PLSP Work Plan, 2009
- f) DAI PLSP No Cost Extension Work Plan, 2009
- g) DAI PLSP Quarterly Reports, 2005-2010
- h) DAI PLSP Performance Management Plan, 2005-2010
- i) DAI PLSP Performance Management Matrices
- j) PLSP Final Report, 2010
- k) USAID/Pakistan Strategic Plan

## **Appendix F**

### **Sample Interview Template - PLSP**

#### *Work History*

1. Have you worked on previous governance assistance projects? Other international development projects? If so, please describe.
2. When did you become involved in the PLSP? In what capacity?
3. Who did you work with?

#### *Personal Interpretations*

4. I am interested in how experts conceptualize governance. How would you define governance?
5. How would you describe the problems of governance in Pakistan?
6. How would you describe the state of Pakistani legislatures?
7. What are the causes of the problems you have identified in Pakistani legislatures?
8. What are the solutions to these problems?

#### *Actualization*

9. How were these solutions manifested in the PLSP?
10. What were the ultimate goals of the PLSP?
11. Was the PLSP successful in achieving its goals?
12. Surveys and indicators show that the Pakistani parliament is performing worse today than it did prior to the PLSP – what do you think explains this?

## **Appendix G**

### **Sample Interview Template – Pakistani Civil Society**

1. How would you describe the problems of governance in Pakistan?
2. How would you describe the state of Pakistani legislatures?
3. What are the causes of the problems you have identified in Pakistani legislatures?
- 3a. Do you think [causes listed by PLSP] might be reasons for the problems you have identified?
4. What are the solutions to these problems?
- 4a. Do you think [solutions listed by PLSP] might solve the problems you have identified?

## Appendix H

### Anonymous List of PLSP Participants

Participant	Organization
1	DAI
2	USAID
3	USAID
4	DAI
5	USAID
6	USAID
7	DAI
8	DAI
9	USAID
10	DAI
11	DAI
12	DAI
13	Independent Consultant
14	Independent Consultant
15	Independent Consultant

## Appendix I

### Anonymous List of PKCS Participants

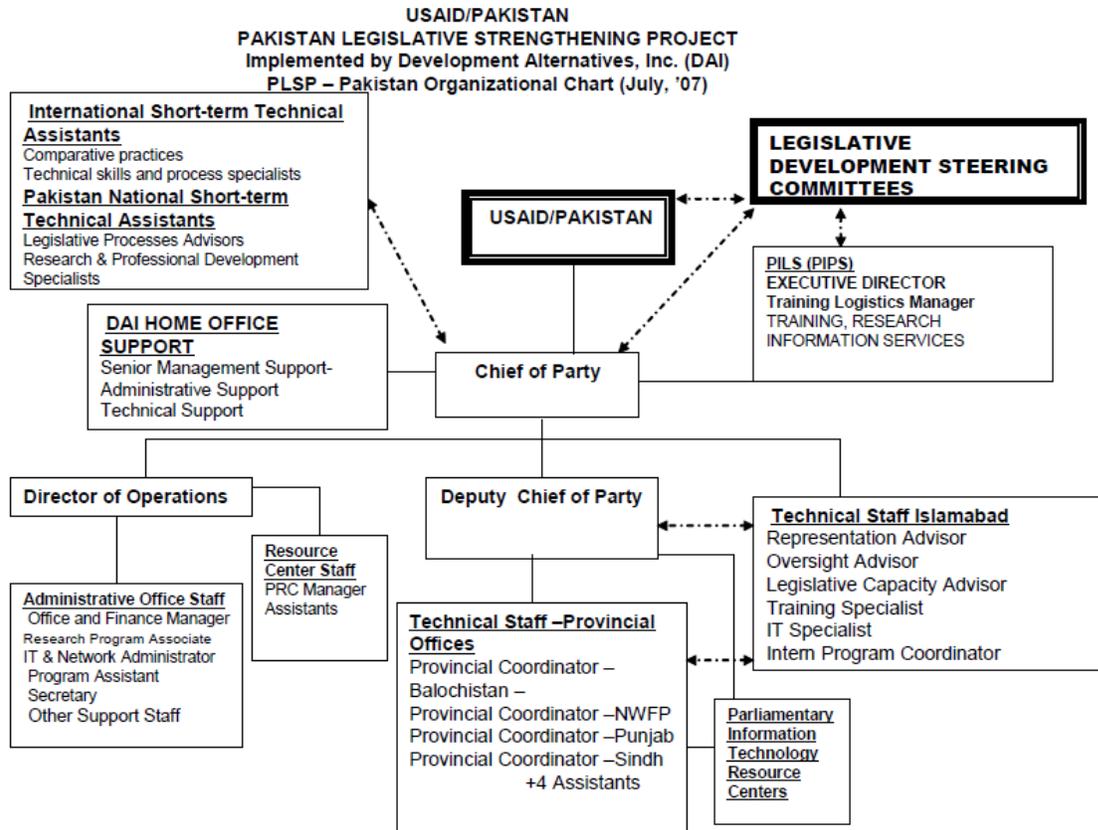
Participant	Profession
1	NGO Staff
2	Lawyer
3	Political Party Representative
4	Armed Services
5	Political Party Representative
6	Public Intellectual
7	Lawyer
8	Lawyer
9	Public Intellectual
10	Political Party Representative
11	Academic
12	Lawyer
13	Public Intellectual
14	Government Functionary
15	Public Intellectual
16	Political Party Representative
17	Academic

18	Journalist
19	Corporate Leader
20	Trade Association Leader
21	Labor Organizer
22	Corporate Leader
23	Public Intellectual
24	Academic
25	Corporate Leader
26	Journalist
27	Academic
28	Trade Association Leader
29	Educationist
30	NGO Staff
31	NGO Staff
32	Educationist
33	Academic
34	Journalist
35	Academic
36	Judge
37	Educationist
38	Judge

39	NGO Staff
40	Labor Organizer

## Appendix J

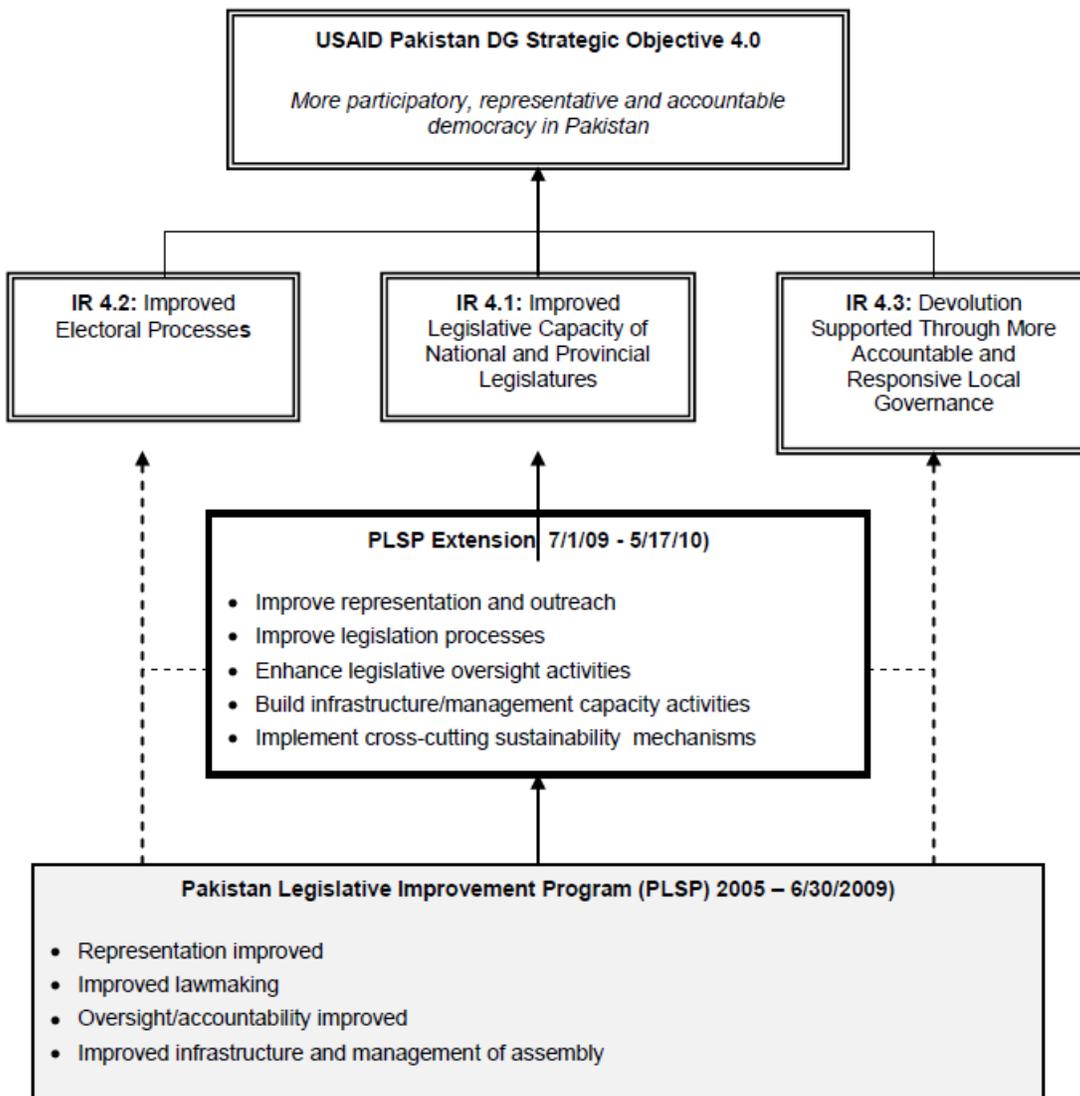
### Detailed PLSP Organization Chart



*Source: Pakistan Legislative Strengthening Project, Final Report*

## Appendix K

### STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR PAKISTAN LEGISLATIVE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM AND EXTENSION SHOWING CONTRIBUTIONS TO USAID STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4.0 (DOUBLE LINES)



Source: Pakistan Legislative Strengthening Project, Performance Management Plan, July 2009

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