
Preface

Stakeholder Remarks

During informal visits to or at community meetings in PERRP project locations, stakeholders frequently made remarks about the project to me. I have included many such comments and opinions in this book's chapters, but here are a few other samples quite representative of what people said.

Vice Principal and Committee General Secretary at Government Girls' High School Kheral Abbasian: With the first jolt, I ran out of the office and the school building collapsed just behind me. I turned back and was terrified to see fallen rubble with so many students buried beneath. It was a horrific scene when we found eighty-six students of this school dead and many others were seriously injured. Now with the new school we have learned a little about earthquake resistance in buildings. If we'd had it before the quake many of the departed souls would have not met this fate. Students' parents have seen that the new building is being constructed according to the earthquake code and this helps them shed their fears. (PERRP 2011/12: 10)

Teacher at Government Boys' Higher Secondary School Jared: Since 2005 when the earthquake happened, many NGOs have been visiting us and saying that they would rebuild our school, but then nothing would happen. So we are very happy that the PERRP project did make this happen for us. The children here are very eager to have a roof over their heads to study again. (PERRP 2011/12: 19)

Student at Government Girls' High School Behali: We hardly remembered anything teachers told us when we were studying in the open air because there were so many distractions but now with this new building we can focus on what teachers tell us. (PERRP 2011/12: 19)

Committee Chairman at Government Girls' High School Jaglari: What we like about this project is that it is open and transparent, we know the construction details, schedule and quality of material being used. This kind of standard of construction we are seeing for the first time. (PERRP 2011/12: 15)

Principal at Government Girls' High School Chatter #2: Community participation has led our people to be aware of standards and transparency. (Murphy Thomas 2013b: 12)

Student at Government Boys' Chaknari, AJ&K: After our old school collapsed and before this school was constructed we were attending class by sitting on stones on the ground, and in the rainy season it was a big problem. Now we have a beautiful new building and a library with interesting story books. We love our school very much! (PERRP 2013: 13)

Coordinator of the KP Provincial Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority (PERRA): This USAID project has worked very well in post-earthquake reconstruction in this district. The project started construction by involving the stakeholders and partners and completed its work in the stipulated time. It will be remembered due to the quality buildings and excellent social coordination among stakeholders. This model should be replicated by every donor-funded construction project because due to community involvement, people have a sense of ownership and this helps ensure their durability and proper maintenance. (PERRP 2013: 15)

Lady Health Visitor at Basic Health Unit Harighel: This new Basic Health Unit (BHU) building is much better than the previous one. It is facilitating patients from far-off areas. (PERRP 2013: 14)

Student at Government Boys' High School Pinyali: When the earthquake struck, everybody rushed outside and I fell down in the stampede and then my school building collapsed. To my luck, I survived but got wounded badly. Since then we have been studying under the sky, but now I am graduating. I am very happy to see the new school constructed thousands of times better than the previous building. (PERRP 2013: 17)

Community Member at Dhal Qazian: In this project we have set up School Management Committees that we now think are necessary because they act as coordinating bodies between the people and school management. They discuss how the education system can be improved, what kinds of difficulties are faced by the teachers and what types of problems con-

tractors face during construction. These bodies help resolve all problems. (PERRP 2013: 20)

Manager at Manshera District Reconstruction Unit: This project was unique due to its coordination with all departments, including ERRA, the District Reconstruction Unit, KP's Provincial Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority and especially communities. This enabled the construction to go smoothly and on time as there were efforts for conflict resolution at every stage. PERRP succeeded in completing construction well in time. (PERRP 2013: 15)

Mr. Saradar Qamar-Uz-Zaman Khan, Minister of Health and Bagh District Member of Legislative Assembly: I made a presentation about this project in a session of the AJ&K Legislative Assembly which led to the up-grading of some of these newly constructed schools, because they are spacious buildings constructed in accordance with international standards. For example, the Government Girls' Inter-College at Rerra has been up-graded to a degree college which means that girls can continue the education into a degree granting institution without leaving home, a major advantage for them and their families. Another is the government girls' High School at Thub, located in such a far-flung area. It has been upgraded to an Inter-College and several other upgrades are underway. (PERRP 2013: 16)

Teacher at Government Girls' School Juglari: This was the first time that the community was involved in construction and we found that the engineers gave weight to our opinion, and sometimes adjusted the design according to our wishes. Reciprocating their initiative of giving us importance, we extended all possible help including provision of extra land and water to help facilitate this construction. (PERRP 2013: 18)

Student at Government Girls' High School Chatter #2: The number of students in our school was sharply dropping as we were being taught in the open air after the earthquake destroyed our school. Even our desks [had] been ruined, so we sat on the ground or on stones, and it was miserable for all of us attending class like this in the rains. Many of my school fellows left the school and some families migrated out to the city for the sake of education. But with construction of this school, now the number of students has risen more than even before the earthquake. That's because it has been constructed so well, with all facilities that are now attracting students not only from this village but from the nearby places too. (PERRP 2011/12: 9)