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Discussion Paper 3: Comparative Report on Cases of NSP-State Relationships in Pakistan

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Comparative Report on Cases of NSP-State Relationships in Pakistan

1. Introduction

This report attempts to provide an understanding of the evolution and nature of the relationship between the three NSPs under study and the relevant state authorities. The report attempts to identify the key factors shaping the relationship and if and how the relationship has influenced the working or agendas of the participating organisations over time.

1.1. Methodology

The information and analysis provided in this report is based on documentary evidence, in-depth interviews with staff within the NSP and the relevant government agencies and the observation of the realities witnessed during the fieldwork conducted with the NSP and the relevant state agencies during November 2006 to September 2007. The report also draws upon analysis of the evolution of the state-NSP relationship in Pakistan and the programme analysis for each sector conducted during stage 2 of this research project. Drawing on those reports was important to identify the over all conditioning factors shaping the relationship under study.

In developing an account of the conditioning factors the report draws upon government policy documents, Five Year Development Plans, interviews with prominent civil society members who have seen the NSPs evolve, academics, and senior officials within the ministry of education, health, and social welfare. The analysis also drew upon the country strategy plans of the multilateral and bilateral donors based in Islamabad to understand their role in the evolution of state and NSP relations in Pakistan. Most of these interviews were conducted during stage 2 of the research project. At the first stage of the fieldwork, the obvious players within each sector were identified. These in particular included the government, the leading NGOs working within education, health, and water and sanitation, and international donor community. Interviews were initially conducted with the main focal point/ ministry spokesmen within each ministry to help identify those government programmes within which there are some obvious relationships with the NSPs. These exploratory interviews were followed up with in-depth interviews with the heads or senior officials of the relevant programmes. Interviews were also conducted with many NSP providers in all the three sectors especially those, which are involved in some form of relationship with the state in service provision. Some big NSPs, with a national or regional presence, which were not involved in a relationship with the state, were also interviewed to get a critical perspective on the partnership programmes. At the same time, interviews were conducted with sector specialists in leading development agencies, including the multilateral and bilateral organizations like the World Bank and DFID.

This was in recognition of the fact that the government development plans and sector strategy papers, as well as initial interviews with the government and non-profit providers, made it clear very early on that the international donor agencies were often key players behind initiation of many of these partnerships. The international literature on partnerships had also suggested the likelihood of finding a strong donor influence on the– 'partnerships' being a key objective of the millennium development goals. Reports of independent research think-tanks on each of the three sectors were also consulted. Where possible, a few seminars and conferences on the related subjected were attended. For example, the Second South Asian Conference on Sanitation (SACOSAN) provided a valuable opportunity to identify the programmes within water and sanitation and to verify the information gathered from different sources. Similarly, a workshop organised by an INGO in Islamabad with leading education NGOs from across the country was utilised to help identify the various types of relationships/programmes that exist among them and the state in the provision of education services. The country strategy plans of the bigger donors were also consulted. All these stages of the fieldwork, help identify the broader conditioning factors shaping state-NSP relations in each sector and the key programmes and prominent cases to pursue for in-depth investigation.

The next stage of the fieldwork focused specifically on the chosen case-study. During the time spent on the specific case, it was felt important to get perspective of not just the leadership of the NSP and the government departments but also those of the middle and field level staff and of any actors in the wider network who influence the relationship. Thus, in addition to the NSP leaders, staff members, and government officials, interviews were conducted with the community and the representatives of the NGO networks if they had a role in the shaping of the relationship.

Since prior to zooming in on one case study, an exploratory fieldwork was conducted with two NSPs included the one under study, at few places this report has also drawn upon the experiences of the second case where it is felt that the experience of the second case helps highlight the importance of a specific factor shaping the relationship. In section 4 of the report, which deals with factors shaping the relationship, where possible evidence is included also from these second cases.[1]

1.2. Selection of cases

In identifying the potential programmes of study in the three sectors and the specific cases for analysis what became quite clear was that education has a much larger number of NSPs than health or water and sanitation. Even the Pakistan Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) notes: "Unlike other developing countries, there is a limited presence of NGOs in the (health) sector and reluctance on the part of government agencies to collaborate with NGOs," (p. 77, PRSP). Water and Sanitation have even fewer NSPs. At the same time, government budgetary

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[1] The authors of the final papers might not want to draw upon the supporting evidence from the other case, but since we have this information, I am putting it here as I feel it helps strengthen the argument in some cases.

allocations for the three sectors vary: within Social Action Programme (SAP), 64 per cent of the budget was allocated for primary education, 19 per cent for primary health care, and 14 per cent for rural water supply and sanitation, and 3 per cent for population welfare (SPDC 1997; 2000). However, despite the difference in the number of NSPs in the three sectors, what was most interesting was that all the three sectors irrespective of the number of NSP players provided equally interesting case studies for understanding NSP state relationships.

In terms of selecting the actual cases for analysis in each of the three sectors, the common principle applied was that they should ideally present the most complex or dense form of relationship so as to provide opportunity to capture maximum dimensions to state-NSP interactions. Also, the selection was made in a way that the three cases compliment each other in terms of the nature of interaction. Therefore, while in case of health, the NSP selected was one where it was working on the model of take over of management of state service delivery, in case of education, the NSP selected was one which was intervening with state service delivery without taking over the management of its facilities. In case of water and sanitation, on the other hand, the case selected was such that unlike the other two models, here the focus was on showing the state agencies the possible solutions to the problems of service delivery but leaving the responsibility of implementation on the state rather than acting as an implementer itself. Thus, the three cases were carefully selected to present maximum complexity of state-NSP relationships yet at the same time covering different models of state-NSP interaction.

2. Organizational profiles, vision and conditioning factors

2.1. The organizations today

The three organizations under study have slightly different organizational structure though all three maintain a national level recognition. OPP its main office plus a field office located within Orangi settlement. Its philosophy is to consolidate its efforts in one area and to take the learning from there to other areas through building partnerships with other NSPs willing to adopt similar philosophy. It therefore works through partner organizations to facilitate replication of its model in other cities and provinces.

The government departments dealing with OPP are also different than the other two sectors. Within health and education, the government line of command is more clear as both sectors have federal level ministries with similar structure following at provincial and district level. The policies are developed at the federal level while the implementation takes place at the provincial and district level. As compared to that there is no federal ministry dealing exclusively with water and sanitation. Ministry of Environment is one of the main links followed at times by Ministry of Health. The main government authority responsible for water and sanitation is the municipal corporation and in case of big cities at times especially developed agencies like Karachi Water and Sewerage Board (KWSB). Therefore, in case of OPP the relationship was cultivated with two parallel government bodies: City District Government of Karachi, Works and Services Division and the KWSB.

As opposed to OPP, in case of both ITA and PRSP, the main focus of the partnership was at the district government level, the bottom tier within the federal ministry structure, which after the introduction of local bodies system in 2002 is the main implementing authority. While negotiations at the provincial government or federal government levels were important in getting the permission to work with the district government authorities, the main interaction in both these cases was with the district government officials.

In terms of organizational structure, PRSP has its head office in Lahore but it also maintains offices in the districts where it operates. When PRSP took over the BHUs programme, it had to develop a separate unit, physically located in a different building, to look after the programme as it recruited focus and designation of separate staff. These separate units were built both at the head office level in Lahore and in each of the districts where PRSP was given permission to take over the BHUs.

In case of ITA, the head office is in Lahore, but a regional office is maintained in Islamabad and district offices are maintained in the six districts where ITA operates. These district offices are staffed according to the nature and demands of the particular projects ongoing in that district. Kasur and Sheikhupura were the two districts where ITA in collaboration with Sudhaar developed big district offices. However, whether the staff within the offices or the offices themselves will be retained once the funding for the Sudhaar-ITA alliance project finishes is unclear.

2.2. How it got there: the conditioning factors
The three studies show that many factors condition the shaping of the organisation. The most important ones include: new opportunities with change in policy environment, interests represented within the organisation, sources of finances, the leader's preferences and the philosophy of work.

The three cases showed different interests reflected within the three organizations and this has had impact on the organisational cultural. In the case of ITA, the leadership seems to have a clear interest in shaping the working of the organisation as the clout that the leadership wants within higher government ranks and within the international development discourse on education is shaped by the working of the organisations. Also, prevalent within the organization are interests of the middle level staff members who are young development professional trying to use this experience with ITA as a learning for securing better paid jobs within the development sector. This is thus led to a formal staffing structure but with relative autonomy to the staff.

Within OPP, the strongest interest group seems to be the community as the organization has constantly evolved in response to community needs. The staff also comes mainly from the community so even their motivation is partly linked to the preferences of the community. The leadership comes from more affluent background and is not from Orangi. They are ideological driven individuals who

want to be known for having run a successful programme and it is the effectiveness of this programme that seems to best preserve their interests as due to its success and respect within the community and the government officials, the leadership gets a lot of moral authority, which seems to hold a strong attraction for the leadership. The working culture is just very relaxed in terms of actual working hours that people maintain and the ownership they feel of the organisation.

In case of PRSP, the main interests represented are those of ex-bureaucrats who are leading PRSP and want to be known for having implemented successful projects. In case of officials within the PRSP's BHU management unit, who were mainly public servants on secondment the main interest again was the desire to develop a model which is known for its efficiency and brings much professional credit to those involved in implementing it. The organisation thus has a more professional culture relying on technocrats and their expertise.

On the government side, across the three programmes, it is clear that there are two main interest groups: one is the elected elite, and the other the bureaucracy. The bureaucracy controls the day to day implementation while the elected representatives influence the over all policy. Thus, while it might be important for an NSP to lobby the elected representatives to get a policy shift, for day to day working it has to develop effective links with the bureaucracy. What the experience of the three cases highlights is that eventually for a long term stable relationship the NSP has to take care of the interest of both the elected elite as well as the bureaucracy. While the former is more tempted by engagement opportunities which bring it public limelight with minimal effort, the latter is the more interested in collaboration that assist in service delivery without taking away the resources or power at its disposal.

New opportunities with changing policies

All the three cases also highlight that the changing policies of the state as well as the opportunities in the external environment due to socio-economic shifts have been critical in conditioning the NSPs as well as the partnership. In case of OPP, the rising number of slums and the state's inability to respond to this need were critical for the rise of OPP, in case of ITA, the changing policy environment in which the state was accommodating NSP leaders to engage in policy dialogue in collaboration with international donors was critical to its birth, and for PRSP, the rising push from the donors to work with NSPs was critical in creating that friction which made one of the Chief Ministers pick up the idea of RSPs, which could help the government claims some of the moral space as well as the development aid going to NGOs.

Role and vision of the leadership

Despite the role of the opportunities in the external environment in shaping the NSPs and its relationship with the state, across the three cases, it is also very clear that the philosophy of the leadership has great influence on shaping the NSP. OPP was established in the 1980s, at the time when the donor funded NGO culture initiated in Pakistan. Despite remaining engaged with the donor funded culture,

and drawing upon many leftists activists like other NGOs, OPP was able to build a very different repute for itself due to its philosophy of low-administrative spending, low salaries and physical placement within the slum area. This outcome has been the direct consequence of the philosophy and towering personality of Dr Akhtar Hameed Khan, who established OPP. On the other hand, the PRSP from the start being in the hands of the bureaucrats was able to successfully manoeuvre a special access within the state agencies, and the very birth of ITA as an organisation aiming to work on supporting state education facilities rests in its leader's engagement with state policy planning.

Funds
The three cases understudy difference in their sources of funding and their financial independence. The security of funding and selectively in selecting the donor is clearly important in shaping its autonomy and agenda. ITA asks funds from donors as well as individual philanthropists. It claims that last year, individual philanthropists (mostly expatriate Pakistanis) contributed over 60% of the budget. This year, however, the Punjab Education Foundation contribution is expected to become a major share (the exact figure not yet available). It takes money from all kind of development agencies and though ITA leadership refuses to admit that it pursues development projects and shifts its focus with them, all the projects visits were development aid funded and ITA had no strategy for continuing those project beyond the time of the project even when there was clear need to continue the project to have any meaningful impact. This seems to have direct link with the type of engagement it maintains with the state agencies where it engages with them only for the time of the project and with pre-set agenda already defined in the project documents.

In case of PRSP, apparently, donor money did not have a role in the relationship. PRSP was basically transferred the district government budget of the BHUs. However, World Bank has publicised this project as a successful example of improving service delivery by handing over government facilities to private sector. This is thus the model where the resources for the partnership were being provided by the state while the resources for PRSP own survival also come through a combination of grants from the government and the development agencies. In this model, there was stability of interest from the side of the NSP, however since the state agencies were losing the money and the power, there was never a willing acceptance of this model. Relationship relying on government resources is thus clearly more exposed to challenges by the state agencies.

The case of OPP was again different as OPP as a policy does not engage with multilateral and bilateral donors. It takes money only after the prospective donor has stayed engaged with their work for some time and the two sides have gotten to know each other. Even then is very selective and has very low-costs as compared to its operations. This independence from control of any one big donor or the pressure to keep running after donors to sustain its work is one of the biggest strengths of OPP in developing a sustained relationship with the state agencies. However, OPP case also demonstrate that attaining such an independence requires

a lot of self-disciple from the NSP as above all it requires the self-discipline to be able to say no to big donor projects, lucrative consultancies, and quick jump to fame and stardom within the international development circuit and stay very committed to certain core principles and ethics of work.

Staff

Across the three case studies, it is also very clear that to meet its goals and to maintain good relations with the state, a committed and motivated work force is very important. However, the three cases also demonstrate that the methods or incentives used to motivate the staff can vary. In case of ITA, it is very clear that the staff is motivated by the learning opportunity of working in a dynamic organisation and by Baela's leadership but underlying these apparent factors is the knowledge that this learning and Baela's reference can lead to more lucrative jobs in the development sector especially with INGOs and donor agencies. Also, the pays are slightly better than the market and working conditions much better than the government offices. Thus, the incentives for the staff are mainly of material nature.

In case of PRSP staff appointed to BHU project, again the incentives were mainly material. As a policy, PRSP recruited public servants who wanted to come on three-year secondment to a private sector organization. The idea behind this recruitment was the public officials familiar with the state working are best placed to make this partnership work, as bureaucrats are unlikely to listen to private sector people. The motivation for these public servants to join PRSP project was mainly better salaries than their in government positions, better working environment, and interestingly as highlighted by some of the senior officer, the long term professional benefit of being associated with a project which was generally considered to be successful in reforming state service delivery system.

In case of OPP on the other hand material incentives, though present, were least important in motivating the employees. The material incentives mainly constituted in being employed in a community where many were jobless. Most of the OPP field staff comes from within Organi and has low educational background so they are mainly trained once they join the organization and secure a job, which earns them a living. But, the pays are modest the way the leadership motives the staff is by developing strong personal relationship where the leadership acts as mentors for the junior staff, there is close interaction, and flexibility of work accordingly to personal and family obligations of the staff members.

Conditioning factors for the state

The working of the various tiers of the Ministry of Education is constrained by numerous factors. The state infrastructure in terms of offices, vehicles and running costs for fieldtrips is much bleaker than what is available to the NGO staff especially at the lower ranks. The overall incentive structure to deliver the goals is thus much more conducive for the NSP as opposed to the state agencies.

This sense of difference is reflected in interview with the Mohammad Rafiq Wariq, District Officer, Social Welfare, Sheikupura: 'The office is supposed to have 7 positions but they haven't been able to recruit due to a ban on recruitment.......
The District Office is keen to work with NGOs. Government doesn't have the resources – for example, there is a computer with no printer so letters have to be handwritten.'

Further, it is important to understand the conditioning factors that led to devolution as they have relevance to opening up of space for the three NGPs to work with the district government— the level at which ITA has most extensive partnerships. The government claims it to be sign of its commitment to genuine reform and establishing an accountable system of governance. The motive of the state are, however, much more complex and need to be recorded as they then influence the functioning and achievements of the district governments. The first important point is that all military governments in Pakistan have sought legitimacy by attempting to establish local government but they have not had the intention to actually devolve power. Thus, despite the devolution, the power remains concentrated at the centre. In 1959 Field Marshall Ayub Khan passed the Basic Democracies Order for Local Government reforms, devolving representation to the village level; in 1979, Zia ul Haq promulgated the Local Government Ordinance to activate local governments.

The current devolution programme has been viewed by many as a means to win international legitimacy for the military regime of General Musharraf as donor agencies operating in Pakistan were now emphasising the need for devolution, a trend being followed internationally. Decentralization was seen critical to the macro-level reforms including poverty reduction strategy and all the donor agencies invested heavily into it and thereby developed high stakes in ensuring its success. The active involvement of donor agencies with the devolution plan meant that the NGOs in turn came to have great influence and stakes in devolution process as senior NGO leaders were appointed as experts for designing devolution plans and were also given large contracts to train the district government manpower and also to deliver projects at the district level in association with the local government officials. Thus, the current government structure for delivery of education, where the emphasis is at the district government for actual service delivery, has been heavily influenced by the donor agencies and the larger NGOs, thereby giving them better access to the system.

2.3. What it proposes to do: its vision of public action
The three organisations have a slightly different view of public action. In case of ITA, the emphasis is on making all the actors (state/non-state) with potential to contribute towards education to work together to provide technical solutions to education challenges.

In case of PRSP, the vision is that communities should be mobilised for self-help and linked to government line departments. The emphasis is on community mobilization but the belief is that the community needs to be led. The vision of the

BHU project was a bit of deviation from the overall organizational philosophy where the emphasis was that non-state actors could help the government understand how best to improve the management of government services.

In case of OPP on the other hand the vision of public action really revolves around unleashing the latent energies within the community and making it exert pressure on the state to meet community needs while being equipped with possible solutions. The approach is that the community knows its problems and also the solutions what it lacks is the technical know how to turn their local knowledge into technical solutions. OPP views the role of the NSP to help provide the community that technical knowledge so that the community can then effective lobby the state to deliver given that it is in a position to provide effective implementation strategies.

3. Partnership: Nature & Conditioning Factors

3.1. Initiation and evolution of partnership: the institutional factors
Pakistan today has a large number of NSPs: the total number of registered non-governmental organisations is estimated to be 45,000 (PCP 2002). The most quoted survey of Pakistani NGOs shows that only 18 percent of the registered organisations are involved in advocacy, thus an overwhelming majority is involved in service delivery (Ghaus-Pasha et al 2002). Also, the concentration of NSPs is not equal across the three sectors. In fact, the highest concentration is of FBOs involved in religious education (madrasas), which form 30 per cent of the total registered organisations. After that the next biggest concentration is of NGOs/voluntary organisations involved in secular primary education (8 percent) followed by health (4.5 percent) (Ghaus-Pasha et al 2002). The survey does not categorise NGOs on the basis of water and sanitation thus making it difficult to estimate the scale of NSPs involved in this sector. There is also currently a lot of emphasis within government documents on 'partnership' between state and non-state providers in all the three service sectors. The Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, which is the key policy document feeding into sector strategies for each of the three sectors, notes public-private partnerships as one of the six fundamental principles of the reform strategy: "it (PRSP) is public-private partnership oriented," (GoP 2003).

At the same time all the key international development donors in Pakistan are actively supporting these partnerships. For example, the design of the National AIDS programme in Pakistan, which makes NSPs a critical player in implementation of the programme, largely draws upon a World Bank loan, where the Bank played a key role in the design of the programme (PNCA 2006). It looking at the factors shaping the evolution of NSP state partnership across the three sectors what appears significant is that the sectors' characteristics do not seem to make a difference to the way State-NSPs relations have evolved; as will be seen below, the difference in approach was really linked to changing state ideologies and international development discourse over time.

Rise of NGOs and their relationship with state

Though voluntary organizations had been active in the region constituting Pakistan even prior to partition, their dramatic rise and close engagement with the state really is a post 1970s phenomenon. The timing of the third military take over in Pakistan's political history was important for the shaping of the voluntary sector as the shift coincided with important international events: Afghan Jihad, the weakening of the Soviet Union, rising international influence of neo-liberal thinking through the Bretton Woods Institutions, and the influx of international development aid to non-governmental organisations as opposed to the state in developing countries (Bano 2005). All these factors played an important role in shaping the voluntary sector in Pakistan. It is in the early eighties that Pakistan registered the birth of 'NGOs' as a specific form of NSP, and a dramatic shift of prominent leftist workers to this platform. What this new term represented was a new way of funding social or voluntary organisations, where these organisations could apply for development aid. Zia ul Haq, military general encouraged NSPs due to their non-political nature, though he openly suppressed the leftist, women rights and other advocacy based groups (Mumtaz and Shaheed 1987). Zia period also witnessed a high influx of aid to both state and non-governmental organisations in Pakistan due to the government's willingness to support the US in resisting the Soviet war in Afghanistan (Zaidi 1999a). According to the estimates of a survey of about 2000 non-profit organisation, over 27 percent of currently active organisations surveyed were established during 1978 to 1987 (Ghaus-Pasha et al 2002). The fact that NGOs arose as a distinct phenomenon during this period largely in response to availability of donor aid, is reflected in the statement of the head of one of the biggest NGOs in Pakistan, who was once an active member of the left: "I came across the term NGO for the first time in 1982 in the Dawn newspaper. I called up a friend in the government ministry to ask what this really means." Similarly, as Munnoo Bhai, a prominent public intellectual and columnist, adds: "The term NGO came to Pakistan after the 1970s. It came to Pakistan in *Lunda* (second hand items like clothes and shoes sent from west to the developing countries)." Also, many argue that in the first decade the main NGOs were set up by people from the left (Bano 2005).

As for the reasons for this shift, interviews with and journalistic writings of prominent activists and thinkers in Pakistan indicate that Zia ul Haq's repression of the left as well as internal weakening of the leftists groups due to the Sino-Soviet split and the gradual decline of the Soviet Union were important factors (Bano 2005). After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, many prominent members of the left joined NGOs, argues Dr Mehdi Hasan, a prominent academic and member of the left.

It appears that the internal weakening of the left due to internal and external factors coincided with the influx of aid for non-governmental organisations through international development organisations. "The donors were looking for individuals who talked of public concerns and the left was most trained in that jargon," adds Rana Shafiq ur Rehman. For the people from the left who were tired of internal political repression and slightly disillusioned with the socialist ideology, the idea of

getting funds to set up organisations where they could do the work they wanted was very tempting. "Many leftist leaders joined the NGOs because they realized that it is difficult to mobilize people purely on basis of ideas; it is much easier to build a relationship when you go to them with a school and a dispensary. Many therefore opted for NGOs," argues Dr Nayyer, a prominent physicist and activist in Pakistan.

However, all these observers also note that this shift towards NGOs led to a change in the way these people worked. When talking of their former leftist colleagues who have now joined NGOs, there are often concerns about the high salaries that they draw as heads of NGOs and lack of any ideological commitment due to having to keep shifting with the donor agenda. In August 2006, a seminar on NGOs' accountability, organized by Action Aid Pakistan in collaboration with the Human Right Commission of Pakistan, noted many of these concerns. The Seminar, which brought together leading NGO practitioners from across the country, saw many senior NGO officials acknowledge the negative repute of NGOs among the public, and questioned NGOs' performance and lack of commitment to an ideological agenda due to dependence on donor aid.

But, it is also a fact that, despite these concerns about NGOs, they have continued to expand since the 1980s, and their number and influence on government policy and planning has continued to increase and formalise over time (PCP 2002). Whether this rise in NGOs is a result of genuine public action or a result of incentives provided by development aid, and whether the Pakistani state has willingly given a bigger role to NGOs in policy and service delivery or has done so under pressure of the international community are debateable questions. But, as discussed above and as will be seen in the next sections, the role of international development institutions has been one important, if not the sole, factor leading to these shifts.

The 1990s saw continued proliferation of NSPs, with increased availability of development aid being challenged through them. It is also in the 1990s that the first attempt at establishing a formal relationship between the state and NSPs in delivery of basic social services across education, health and water and sanitation was witnessed under the Social Action Programme (SAP). Initiated in 1992 at a cost of $7.7 billion, SAP became the main social sector reform initiative in Pakistan for the 1990s (SPDC 1997; 2000). Though the Government of Pakistan provided 76% of the funds, the international donor community had a great say in shaping the project primarily because all the key multilateral and bi-lateral donors formed a consortium to pool their funds through this programme. It was made a condition within SAP design that a certain portion of social service delivery must be ensured through NSPs. The emphasis on involving NSPs was largely normative where the idea was to involve NSPs in order to ensure accountability and community participation. In reality, SAP, unlike the current programmes, did not recognise the private for-profit sector as a partner (SPDC 1997; 2000). NGOs were also treated with mistrust where they were engaged under contractual rules set by government with little adaptation to the NGOs' orientation, policies and interests.

At the same time, the nineties witnessed other state experiments with the NGO sector in

Pakistan. A critical emergence in the NGO sector was the establishment of Rural Support Programmes (RSPs) in the nineties. Inspired by the success of AKRSP, a project of the Aga Khan Foundation in the Northern Areas of Pakistan, the government of the time sought to emulate the programme by creating a National Rural Support Programme plus four provincial Rural Support Programmes, with the help of grants from multilateral and bilateral donor agencies. It can be argued that part of motivation for setting up the RSPs was to balance out growing influence of NGOs by setting up these semi-autonomous structures. Similarly, Education Foundations were established at national and provincial levels. The RSPs as well as these Foundations act as semi-autonomous bodies and are often referred to as GONGOs (Government NGOs). The catch here, however, was that these organisations became competitors for the same donor funds as were available for the NSPs. As a consequence, RSPs have their supporters as well as critics. Critics argue that they are stepping on the space and resource ideally meant for NGOs. Supporters argue that their connection with the government helps better delivery of social services, and provides more opportunities to bring subtle changes within the state system. In view of an official at the World Bank Pakistan office, engaging with the state through the RSP kind of model provides more opportunity to bring change within the social service delivery within the state system than working through NGOs who stay outside the system. For donors, RSPs due to their huge structure understandably provide a much safer bet. RSPs' ability to attract development funds has resulted in their continued expansion and today they are dominating major partnerships with the state across the three sectors – education, health, water and sanitation.

Another occurrence of the 1990s has been the evolution of NGO support organisations. These organisations, themselves registered as NGOs, provide capacity building training to smaller NGOs. Examples are Strengthening Participatory Organisations (SPO), South Asia Partnership Pakistan (SAPPK), the NGO Resource Centre and the Frontier Resource Centre. Also, in 1997, the Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF) was set up as a non-profit and autonomous private company to mobilize and assist poor communities in developing income-generating activities through human resource development and micro-credit programmes. This placed greater emphasis on water and sanitation projects. Similarly, Khushal Pakistan, established in the Musharraf era, is one of the most important sources for financing and developing sanitation infrastructure.

However, there is little to suggest that the changing democratic governments of Nawaz Sharif and Benazir Bhutto willing gave this increased space to NSPs. Rather the democratic governments resisted the rising influence of these organisations as they were seen to be unaccountable; also the NSPs could be seen to threaten the constituencies of the politicians through their development work in that area. In 1996, the government proposed a law regarding registration and working of non-profit organisations (PCP 2002). An NGO Bill was proposed, which was resisted

by the NGOs, many of whom came together to form the Pakistan NGO Forum (PNF). The Bill was eventually not pushed through due to multiple factors including the change in government. Nuclear tests by Pakistan in 1998 led to reduction in aid flows to the country, which also affected the level of NGO activity. But, as will be seen, the dramatic surge in aid flows post-September 11 has dramatically expanded NSP activity in Pakistan at the current point in time. Moreover, the emphasis on the millennium development goals has moved the emphasis from involving them in government social service projects due to the normative value of community participation to outright talk of partnership and resource mobilisation.

NGOs have continued to grow in Pakistan under the present government. More importantly, the state has explicitly adopted the language of 'Public-Private Partnership': the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper as well as sector reform plans explicitly use this term (GoP 2003). The NSPs, for-profit as well as not-for-profit, are being seen as key partners in PPP. The emphasis on PPP runs across the three sectors. The Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) maintains:

"Recognizing immense contribution of the private sector and NGOs in the social sectors, the ESR is anchored in development of partnerships between the private sector, civil society organisations, and the public sector. Public-private partnerships are critical to reaching the goals of access ad quality at al levels of education creating possibilities for both voice and choice and improved service delivery" (p. 70, GoP 2003).

One obvious reason for induction of PPPs is that the sitting government is pro-market. But, the influence of the international development institutions is also very clear given that many of these strategy documents frame PPPs within the Millennium Development Goal No. 8 of Forming Partnerships in Development (GoP 2003). Moreover, the Musharraf government inducted leading NGO personalities as ministers and advisors within the social sector ministries at national and provincial level from the very outset. The strategy was obvious: these development practitioners gave the military regime a civilian face, which it badly needed in the initial days to win support of foreign donors and the international community in general. Either way, the familiarity of these NGO people with the donor language clearly had an impact in the drafting of the strategy papers.

This was most obvious within education where the Federal Minister for Education and one of her key advisors (Baela Jameel), came from an NGO background with a prior history of engagement with the donor community, and were highly regarded by the donor community. For example, the head of UNESCO in Pakistan wrote an article in The News, a leading national daily, appreciating the Minister's commitment to education and her understanding of the challenges. It was more than a coincidence then that the social sector policies, especially within education became increasingly a reflection of thinking of the international development institutions. This Minister, who was later removed, actively promoted the idea of privatisation of education, including primary education, and the Education Sector

Reform Strategy (ESRS) prepared under her team of advisers gave great emphasis to 'public-private partnership'.

At the same time, the government has undertaken devolution to establish its democratic credentials, and claims to have increased opportunities for engagement between the state and non-state providers at all levels. As part of Pakistan's Local Government Ordinance 2001, there is also an attempt to formalise many aspect of informal community participation mechanisms through formation of Citizen Community Boards (CCBs). Local governments are required to allocate 25% of their annual development budgets to CCB projects. CCBs are citizens' groups of at least 25 members that register with government and undertake projects with public funds. By July 2005 there were over 16,000 CCBs registered in Pakistan. Of these 10,150 were in the Punjab. However, the CCBs are currently marred with numerous problems and are yet to establish their credentials. Thus highlighting that while the shift towards community empowerment and participation is happening in the policy documents, the shift in reality is not that easy given the existing institutional structures.

A recent independent evaluation of CCBs in five districts of Punjab (Lahore, Hafizabad, Jhang, Faisalabad, Narowal) commissioned by the World Bank found that the informality and flexibility required to work with community groups is lacking in government. Local governments are not equipped to deal at a micro-level with community needs and are governed by rules and procedures that do not allow flexibility. Processes of CCB registration and project execution are unclear to communities; they are complicated and lengthy. Rent-seeking commonly delays and discourages CCBs from forming or surviving. Technical departments are required to subscribe to procedures and standards, not taking into account community capacities to implement or maintain projects. CCB members have little information about which department deals with their project type and are often frustrated that they need to make repeated visits to various offices.

A review of the evolution of state and NSP relations in Pakistan shows that while advocacy NGOs and political groups have been consciously snubbed, the NSPs have generally received support from the changing regimes in Pakistan expect during Bhutto's socialist era, which preferred a greater role of the state in provision of basic services. The non-political nature of NSPs was critical for retaining this support in the first two decades after independence, while from the 1980s onwards the role of the international donor community became critical in the shaping of the relationship. What we see is that military governments have actively courted the NSPs because they do not challenge their rule, and yet at the same time provide the military regime an opportunity to demonstrate its liberal credentials and show its concern for the well-being of the ordinary people. At the same time, we see that donor aid has had a great influence in encouraging or obliging the government to involve NSPs in formal partnerships first through the SAP programme and then through the current emphasis on 'public-private partnerships.'

3.2. Organizations and their agendas: the proximate factors

In terms of more proximate factors, what the three cases shows is that the source of funding of the organization has an influence on the type of relationship it develops with the state. The comparison also shows that positive incentives from the government and donor agencies make more NSPs move towards partnership with the state.

ITA has clearly benefited from the opportunities created to interact with the government under the present government with its push on PPP. It has also benefited from donor funds by engaging with PPP programme, which were being encouraged by the donor agencies. For instance, Baela is Dfid appointed consultant on the PPP cell established as part of local government strengthening initiative in Faisalabad district. The PRSP experience also seems slightly motivated by this new environment and opportunities created by the devolution process where donors were willing to put their support behind projects, which could strengthen the newly developed local government bodies. OPP experience on the other hand arose irrespective of the current opportunities as the programme developed prior to state move towards PPP and even today OPP is not directly involved in any intervention resulting from donor or government led partnership initiatives. Comparison of the three cases thus highlight that government incentives and backing of the donor agencies for PPP thus motivate more NSPs to enter partnerships with the state.

Also, as interviews with Baela highlight, the donors' shift towards direct budgetary allocations and the corporate sector's interest in funding projects that focus on government service delivery facilities are other factors shaping the motivation of the NSPs to engage with the estate.

4. The shaping of the relationship

4.1. Formation of the relationship
In the three cases studies, there are three different types of relationships between the state and the NSP and they are also at different stage of their life cycle. With ITA, the relationship is still in a flux with the relationship is maintained at multiple levels with different government offices at any given point in time depending on the specific project. There is little evidence of systematic cultivation of relations with concerned government officials in any district.

In case of PRSP, the relationship is nearing a forced end. Despite having had quick access to government and getting the relationship shaped according to its plans, PRSP has been unable to sustain the relationship with the government and the Ministry of Health Punjab government has informed PRSP to hand over the BHUs to PRSP before the end of 2007.

On the other hand, for OPP the partnership is going steady with a stable relationship developed across the government hierarchy in the relevant departments. Out of the three cases, OPP is definitely the most extensive and consultative partnership between an NSP and the state.

4.2. Purposes and motives of the relationship

In all three cases, it is clear that the primary responsibility for providing the service rests with the state. The officials within the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, and the Karachi Water and Sanitation Board plus the City District Government Karachi were very clear that the provision of these basic facilities of education, health, and water and sanitation were primarily the state's responsibility. Also, they were very clear that the scale of need is such that only the state can make a difference as no NSP even the biggest one can make much of a difference in terms of scale of provision. Across the three sectors however there was a willingness to engage with the NSPs mainly on two grounds: one, if the NSP can bring in additional resources to help the state agencies provide the services, as happens in case of school improvement programmes; two, if the NSP has specialised technical expertise in the field then it can be engaged to facilitate the government officials. But, across the three sectors, the government officials were not willing to let go of their own power or transfer their resources to NSPs. Thus, it is not a surprise that the PRSP access to BHUs and the government funds was negotiated only due to higher political intervention and could not be sustained for long.

The reasons for the evolution of the three partnerships under study were thus a combination of the above factors. ITA evolved a relationship with the state because its leadership believed that change can only come in the country's education system if the state education provision is improved as state is the biggest provider of education. The fact that ITA's head was also an advisor to the Federal Education Minister at the time the organisation was being established helped cultivate the links with the government sector that enabled the organisation to gain good access to government officials across the federal, provincial and district government. From the government side, it appears that the main reason for engaging with ITA was that it was seen to be bringing in additional resources and was making no demands on the Ministry of Education (a position visible in the MOUs) and it was also seen to have some technical expertise which could help the department staff especially in the context of devolution where the establishment of district governments in Pakistan from 2002 onwards led to new positions and reporting lines and thus developed new training needs.

PRSP on the other hand evolved the relationship with Ministry of Health because Jehangir Tareen, advisor to Chief Minister of Punjab, was also sitting on the PRSP board and thought it would be good if PRSP could demonstrate how government facilities can be run more efficiently given the constant complaints about the poor performance of BHUs. The Ministry of Health was not enthused about this idea as this meant giving over power whereby the BHUs were to go out of the bureaucracy's control and they were also to lose the control of the finances for running the BHUs as they had to be handed over to PRSP. But, given the order was coming from the Chief Minister it had to be followed. For the Chief Minister and his advisor the reasons for wanting the turn around of BHUs were partly political as to establish a good name for themselves in their constituencies. For

PRSP the reason for starting the relationship was that when approached by Jehangir Tareen, it appeared like a good opportunity to reform the state system and to demonstrate a model which they hoped would win them respect as a development agency.

In case of OPP, the relationship, however, evolved entirely indigenously in response to constant efforts by the OPP leadership and the state. The motives for OPP to engage with the state was that it realised that the sanitation facilities require infrastructure which cannot be all provided by the NSP or the community on its own. At some point the state agency has to be involved. Thus, it was clear that even in developing a low cost model it has to bring in the government to share part of the load. For the government on the other hand there was not an active desire to engage initially mainly because OPP was in a Katchi abadi, an area on the outskirts of the city, which they could afford to ignore. Further, they were initially not very convinced of OPP's component share model. However, as OPP was gradually able to demonstrate its mapping skills and the benefits of its component-sharing model the government officials came around to develop a relationship. The main reason for this was the realisation that OPP is being able to provide technical expertise that they don't have or can only get at a very high cost. Thus, the realisation that OPP has knowledge and expertise from which they can benefit without having to pay anything for it was critical in the state agencies' decision to turn to OPP.

Thus, the reasons for engaging with public action for the leaders in the three organizations are different. Baela is driven by the desire to influence national and international policies on education. She does not take a salary from ITA. However, she clearly thrives on the limelight and the opportunities that come with this high profile work. She accepts consultancies from the UN and other donors and the government. She sits on advisory boards for many donor funded initiatives that have evolved during the devolution process and this high profile indirectly builds the pressure on the officials within the Ministry of Education to engage her in policy debate as she has become one of the figures whose approval helps the government impress the donor agencies. Her work with ITA definitely increases her personal profile and thus her demand as a consultant. So, there is some bit of material gain for her in this work.

In case of PRSP, it was a partnership driven by political figures (Chief Minister and his advisor) apparently for public good but given that the project was eventually terminated because the same Chief Minister eventually thought that his former advisor (now a federal Minister) was getting political mileage out of it, shows that political motives or politics of votes had some role in its initiation.

The OPP leadership is known for very humble offices, low-salaries, and deliberate decision to stay away from high monetary compensations or consultancies. It is therefore difficult to attribute any material aspirations to their motives. They seem to be driven by commitment to certain ideals, which to them are more important than the monetary compensations.

4.3. Individuals and factors shaping the relationship

Prior contacts with the government system were helpful in all three cases in developing a relationship with the government at times in form of networks formed during that time or in form of information about running of the state system and the best way to engage with it. Baela had worked with the government on a UNICEF project at district level and then as an advisor to the Federal Minister at the Federal level. According to her, her learning from these experiences of how the state education system works was tremendous. PRSP is anyway a government set up NGO with many top officials coming on secondment from the government thus it was very familiar with the government system. Akhtar Hameed Khan had entered the British civil service in the colonial India and was very well respected within the Pakistani bureaucratic elite.

In addition to knowing the system, in all three cases, the NSP had to have a strategy to sustain through the initial period. ITA was fortunate to have philanthropic contributions from expatriate Pakistanis that helped initiate the work with the state without having to ask it for funds. This facilitated the entry into the state system. In case of PRSP, the organisation's entry strategy mainly rested on using political backing where the Chief Minister's intervention plus personal relations of Jehangir Tareen with the District Nazim of Rahim Yar Khan enabled a smooth transfer of power over BHUs and the government funds to PRSP. In case of OPP, however, the strategy was different and relied on patience, commitment to the same community, and continuous engagement and innovation. There was no attempt to win quick entry points into government either through promising material incentives or using political clout. Rather the strategy was to build the relationship through demonstration of its effectiveness to the government agencies.

Across the three cases, the importance of technical expertise and innovation has proven critical in winning cooperation of the government. On unpacking technical expertise some of the factors that appear important are: higher qualifications and technical training, responsive to local needs, knowledge of government system, ability to innovate, etc. ITA claims it to be a technical specialist and wants to become the leading provider of all kind of technical skills to the government within the education sector. During the fieldwork, however, from the government side neither the teachers nor the district government officials viewed them to be providing a specialised service. PRSP did not provide very specialised technical services, what it did was to provide good managers, as better management has been viewed as critical for the improvement of the BHUs. Also, it benefited from not having to face the bureaucratic red tapism nor the pressure of the market forces. OPP is very strong on technical side. The ability to undertake mapping at low cost has been critical to building a genuine demand for its services within the bureaucracy because it provides a service, in which the government lacks the skills.

The relationship developed by the three NSPs with the state varies. ITA approaches the government officials when needed; also special emphasis is on engaging them in public ceremonies/functions held by ITA. It can be argued to be

a vertical partnership with ITA engaging with the government selectively when it needs them rather than engaging with them in developing the programme. ITA's ability to distribute computers and other material benefits enabled formation of such a relationship.

PRSP's was also a vertical partnership where PRSP had special power to spend the government budget as it thought fit. However, the source of this power was political authority and no genuine relationships were developed with the government ministry.

OPP's model represents a horizontal partnership. The government officials are neither being motivated through promises of new computers nor through a political figure rather they have been impressed over time by steady performance and the two sides voluntarily engage across the tier (top, middle, plus field staff) on regular basis to collectively design plans.

All three NSPs also engaged the community as an important factor in developing the partnership but varied in their emphasis. In case of ITA, the community is mobilized through group meetings to send their children to school plus some of the community members are requested to form a group to monitor the working of government schools in which ITA is intervening. However, the community is not consulted in discussions as to what form of partnership should develop with the government.

In case of PRSP model, the community participation is important for monitoring of the staff at the BHUs and thus has played an important role in improving the services within the BHUs. It however does not seem to have had much bearing on the relationship itself as despite the community being quite happy with PRSP, it has made no attempt to attempt to pressure the government to extend the programme.

The role of community in shaping the actual relationship between the NSP and the government agencies has been most visible in the case of OPP. OPP maintains multiple levels of relationship with the community. The community is mobilised but at the same time the pre-existing/independent local advocacy groups are partnered with to build demands on the government, and then OPP provides the technical solution for the government to meet that demand. The community in this model is an active partner in lobbying the government to listen to OPP's proposals and to address the problems faced by the community.

In two of the three cases, the role of advocacy is also visible in shaping the relationship. For ITA, advocacy is important to build networks within the government, which lead to service delivery projects. However, advocacy is mainly focused on seminar and workshops, rather than mobilising the community to put demands on the government or engaging with already existing advocacy groups like teacher unions.

Similarly, for OPP, successful advocacy has been critical to mobilising the government to work with them. They also liaise with the independent advocacy groups within the community to build the required pressure on the government so that it listens to their plan.

In case of PRSP, advocacy was, however, never a key feature. Since the relationship developed due to interest of a political personality, who also negotiated access, PRSP did not have to engage in advocacy to highlight to the government, the need for engaging with them.

The role of bureaucracy in shaping the relationship is also visible in all the three cases. The elected or bureaucratic leadership only supports partnership if they are allowed to take the credit of the work and their own powers are not challenged. In case of PRSP, since the Nazim is able to take the credit of the work, he generally became supportive overtime. However, since in this model the powers have been taken away from the bureaucracy they are continuing to resist. Similarly, in case of OPP and LPP, since the nature of service is such that the municipal bureaucracy is supported by their work without losing any of its powers, it is generally more supportive. The case studies show that elective leadership is more responsive to good projects because public opinion matters to them. Bureaucracy is less concerned about public views as public response does not affect it; it is more concerned with holding on to its administrative powers. ITA case shows that both elected elite as well as the civil servants can play an important role in advancing the cause but the main hurdle is caused by the bureaucracy. Similarly, although the decision to terminate the contract is taken on political grounds, PRSP also shows that the real challenge in building a partnership comes from the bureaucracy. OPP on the other hand is a good example of how challenges in dealing with bureaucracy can be handled effectively

The experience of the three cases, also highlights that having people from within the government system working with NSP or having people who at least know about the government working helps in developing the relationship. ITA does not engage staff from the government as a means to facilitate the partnership. However, some of the staff members have prior experience of working with the government.

In case of PRSP, the project had an explicit policy of recruiting top managers in each district from the government service as their knowledge of the government operations and networks within the bureaucracy were seen to be critical to working of the project.

OPP itself has not employed staff from the government, but it realises the importance of this and in its replications in other cities (for example Lodhran) has encouraged appointment of the local official from the city government to run the project. The founder of OPP, Dr Akhtar Hameed Khan was an ex-bureaucrat.

4.4. Formal rules governing the relationship

The three cases represent different types of formal understandings. ITA model is very heavy on written contracts and ITA takes great pride in developing MOUs with the government. The contracts, however, never bind the government. Any expectation from the government is stated as if possible rather than an absolute commitment.

In case of PRSP also, the relationship is based on a MOU signed by the two parties. More or less the same template was used when the partnership was replicated in different districts. However, the MOU does not specify too many details.

In case of OPP, there is no written contract. OPP finds formal contracts confining, which in the long term leads the organisation away from its main agenda. OPP initially entered into a tri-party agreements involving a donor agency and the government but based on the initial experiences came to the conclusion that such agreements shift the attention away from the real objectives and thus wont be pursued.

The flow of funds and the nature of responsibilities have also varied across the three cases. In case of ITA, the NSP provides the financial input into government schools either through mobilising corporate donations or securing projects from development agencies. However, in some instances ITA also acts as a paid service provider to the government by bidding for government contracts. In terms of accountability and control it seems that two are closely linked to the money flows. In programmes where ITA is providing the financial input, it seems to have more clout in the relationship than the concerned government officials. However, where ITA is implementing a government project as a service provider who has won a government bid, the power is with the government officials as they define the rules of the projects.

In case of PRSP, the funds were directed from the government to PRSP. PRSP was provided a one-line budget, which means that not only was it given the funds but also the authority to spend it under heads that it felt best. From PRSP's side the only financial contribution to the project was the cost of managers at the provincial and district level appointed to run the BHUs under the PRSP umbrella. This was an insignificant cost as compared to the total budget put under PRSP's disposal through the government transfer.

In case of OPP, there is no direct financial flow between the government and the NSP. OPP provides all its services to the government entirely free of cost. It does not charge government for its services even when the government officials approach them for their technical expertise as OPP's philosophy is to assist the state agencies in meeting the community needs and not to make money out of it. Its philosophy is to make the government shoulder its responsibility and to make the community take and active role in its well-being. Thus, in this model, the actual financial contributions come from the government and the community. OPP's role is to develop and improvise the component sharing model that regulates the inputs of the government and the community.

5. The relationships in practice

5.1 Relationship in practice: day-to-day routine and in critical incidents
In terms of day to day interactions, in case of ITA the head office especially Baela maintains contacts across the three tiers of government: federal, provincial and district and travels to the districts often. However, real interaction is maintained at the field level between the ITA district office staff and the district government officials and teachers within the government schools. The interaction is quite frequent both with the district government and with the teaching staff in schools.

In case of PRSP, again the main point of interaction was district government officials and the PRSP officials at the district level. Even the permission to work in a district was secured from the district nazim and not from the provincial government officials. However, in getting the district nazim this authority PRSP had to work through the provincial government to approve the project in principle. The PRSP top management in Lahore had to deal with all the sensitive policy issues or tensions with the provincial government. Thus the relationship had to be developed skilfully at both the provincial and district level though the actual day-to-day interaction remained focused at district level.

In case of OPP, the interaction was intense both at the top management level as well as the field staff level. The top leadership of OPP holds regular fortnightly meetings with KWSB officials and those of City Government. Also regular contact is maintained on the telephone. At the same time, there is active interaction at the field staff level on both the sides where the OPP field staff and the government staff interact on daily basis. Also, OPP leadership maintains direct contact with the field staff by holding weekly meetings with government field staff at OPP office.

In terms of claims made and the actual reality of the relationship, OPP came out the strongest. The top government officials as well as the field staff were positive about OPP's contributions and its method of engagement with the state agencies. In case of ITA, however, the response of the government officials was more mixed and it appears that ITA's relationship with the government departments is more temporary and mixed than the organization claims. In case of PRSP, on the other hand, while the claims of its success in the reforming the BHUs model was borne out during the fieldwork as well as through independent evaluation reports, it turns out that in terms of actually cultivating a partnership this was the weakest case where PRSP failed to develop an acceptance within the bureaucracy and was pushed out as soon as PRSP lost its political backing.

5.2. Who dominates and how?
In case of ITA, it is clear that the relationship is dictated mainly by the NSP and the government officials have limited input in actual design of the project. The day to day running decisions about the project are all taken by the ITA staff members and the government staff are only included when their input is specifically

required: for example, when signing teacher training certificates for ITA's trained teachers and for public speeches in the ITA held functions. The government officials especially at the district government level are rarely involved in the actual design of the project. Basically, ITA's approach falls between cooperation and complementarity where it engages the government officials successfully for issues where it thinks it can benefit from government intervention but does not feel the need to engage with the government on every step of the project. It does not really aim for joint ownership of the project rather the focus is on getting ITA's inputs introduced in the government schools in a way that ITA's finds most fit.

In case of PRSP, again the relationship was vertical. For the time of the partnership, PRSP was given entire control of the BHUs. They had complete control over the management of the BHUs, the hiring of new staff, and they had complete control over the planning of the budget. They did, however, have to keep the district government officials within the ministry of health as well as finance informed of their activities. They also send monthly financial accounts to the concerned government officials for audit. PRSP was careful about meeting all these obligations and thus there were mechanisms in place to check the PRSP activities. However, the reason it still was arguably a vertical partnership is that when it came to actually planning and management of BHUs and changes brought to them the EDO and other government officials had limited input. Decisions were mainly taken by the PRSP management and since they had the Chief Minister's backing they were not much resisted by the bureaucracy in the day to day working despite the fact that the bureaucracy did not really want this programme to function. It was a relationship, which on the face was cooperative but was inherently confrontational.

In case of OPP, the relationship is horizontal where there is real cooperation between the government and the NSP. The two sides meet on regular basis both at the senior management as well as field staff level. They engage and deliberate about the already existing problems or those likely to emerge in near future and develop mutually agreed solutions. Often OPP takes the lead in identifying a potential problem, for instance water drainage problem during heavy rain, maps it and develops a possible low-cost solution to it for the government side to take on for consideration. Similarly, in the field the government and OPP staff discuss existing expansion work or future plans based on community's inputs and suggestions.

5.3. Changes to relationship: disputes or turning points
Out of the three cases under study, only in case of PRSP do we see a clear change in the relationship. The government has decided to terminate the relationship and has asked PRSP to hand the BHUs back to the government. From its side, PRSP lobbied actively to make the government change its mind. During the fieldwork, the senior management of PRSP at the headoffice as well as district level was clear that they were arguing with the government to let them carry on and they were hopeful that they would be able to get their way. However, towards the end of the fieldwork it was already clear that the Chief Minister has made up his mind as an announcement was made that BHUs are to be taken back. The method PRSP used

to resolve the tension was internal lobbing with the senior political figures through relying on the contacts of its senior management many of whom are senior ex-bureaucrats and on the backing of Jehangir Tareen. But, it was clear that the decision was in some way non-negotiable as it was being based on political considerations and personal vendetta of the Chief Minister and not on the merit of the PRSP performance in the relationship.

In case of ITA, there is as yet no clear example of a major dispute with the government. ITA has had problems within specific officials or nazims in some places but in such cases it has preferred to change the design of the programme in a way that it could exclude that individual. It has tried not to follow the course of direct confrontation. As Baela also explained that once they were very frustrated with a nazim in one of the districts who despite having signed the MoU was not letting ITA implement its programme. ITA did initially make a plan to sue him in court but then withdrew from the idea given that it would waste energy and also spoil the reputation within the government circles. The leadership is keen on getting its demands met by the government without having to confront it.

OPP has the longest relationship however even here there is no significant point of confrontation rather there are significant points in terms of break through with the government as the relationship evolved. OPP's approach is clear that confrontation wont help as it would make the government officials eventually cut you out. OPP believes in showing maximum flexibility in working with the government and engaging in advocacy very tactfully through networks and community rather than going for a head on collision with the government officials as that would block all dialogue. Thus, in all three cases it is clear that even when there is a problem from the side of the government, the NSPs have preferred to use the route of negotiation or avoidance rather than direct confrontation in dealing with the government as the NSPs' leaders feel that direct confrontation will block possibility of any meaningful future exchange with the government.

6. The effects of the relationship on the organizations

6.1. Changes to organizational agendas or working
In neither of the cases in Pakistan, there is evidence of the relationship changing the ideologies, identities and goals of the NSPs or the concerned government agencies. There are signs of small adaptations but no dramatic shifts.

In case of ITA, it is difficult to see if the organisation has changed under the relationship as ITA's vision, agenda, and approaches to meetings it target of improving education provision in Pakistan is so all encompassing that it is difficult to classify anything as against its original mission. ITA keeps getting involved in new projects and getting out of the older ones on their completion but this movement is based more on the funding patterns for the projects than to do with the relationship itself. Also, ITA leadership does not acknowledge any pressure on it to change in any direction that it does not want to. Baela is very confident of her position and her ability to mobilise funds and get government access for the

projects and there is no impression given that the government or donor agencies are being able to influence ITA's agenda or activities. On the government part, ITA's interventions are generally supportive of the current education reform policies, which have largely been shaped by donors and NGOs.

In case of PRSP, there is evidence that the relationship did bring slight organisational changes within PRSP organizational structure. The relationship got PRSP to move beyond its traditional areas of activities to undertaking a new venture where it had to manage government facilities directly. In the past, its work was mainly to do with community mobilization building community's links with the government line departments but not their management. Thus, when PRSP took over this project it made a lot of demands on its existing management staff and eventually PRSP had to establish a separate unit to manage the BHUs, which was housed in a separate building in Lahore as well as within the districts. But, this deviation did not shift the basic ideology or philosophy of PRSP as PRSP is too big a structure to shift its identity with one project. This deviation was more of an expansion of PRSP's portfolio where PRSP aimed to demonstrate an additional expertise. It later also pursued similar programme within education by adopting more than 1600 government schools in Punjab. Thus there is little sign of change to PRSP own philosophy and method of working on a permanent level due to this relationship. Similarly, on the government side the relationship did not change the philosophy or the working of the ministry of health. There is no evidence that the reforms brought about to the BHUs under the PRSP management are going to be sustained when they are returned to the Punjab Health Sector Reform team.

In case of OPP, there is no sign of change within the NSP due to its relationship with the government. From the beginning OPP believed that the state and the community are the two key actors that need to work together to meet the basic sanitation needs of the community and OPP is just a facilitator of the process through its technical inputs and to date the view remains the same. The main difference during the relationship has however been within the government thinking where the officials within the City District Government Karachi and KWSA eventually approved of OPP low-cost component sharing model despite initially resisting it as inefficient. The relationship has thus helped change the philosophy within the government officials that sanitation is too technical a sector to be dealt purely by the government officials. There has been growing recognition within the government of the benefit of involving the community is addressing water and sanitation problems. Also, as part of this relationship the government has become a bit cautious of taking loans from international financial institutions because of the successful campaign run by OPP about the inefficiencies and the burden of such loan projects.

6.2. Impact of relationships on NGPA

6.2.1. Views about current experiences
In the three cases under study, the views about current experiences varied according to the stages of the relationship. In case of PRSP, since by the time of the final

round of interviews with the PRSP top leadership, the Chief Minister had already announced the termination of the BHUs project with PRSP, the leadership was quite honest about the strategic mistakes it made in entering the partnership. There was generally a very strong sense of disappointment within the PRSP and RSP Network leadership as they all felt that they had technically been so strong in this programme and had been so successful in reforming the BHUs yet all their efforts were to go to waste because of political reasons. In a way, the failure of the partnership had also made PRSP take account of their relationship with the government bodies given that RSPs are at one level very close to the government as they are government established NGOs, having bureaucrats on the board of directors as well as on top positions. It is due to this closeness that the entire BHU programme had been possible to begin with and it was again due to this that the PRSP leadership was very confident till the end that they will get to retain the BHUs. Therefore, the disappointment for them has been great as apart from giving back the BHUs to Punjab government, the whole experience has made them stop and think as to how far they should go in developing projects with government line departments.

For ITA on the other hand, the relationship is currently relatively smooth so there were no strong views on how the relationship could be different. The general view was that if the NSP knows what it wants to get done and engages with the government officials with due respect rather than dictating them then there are not many challenges in working with the government.

For OPP, the relationship has over the years matured into a very reliable level of interaction. Unlike ITA, with OPP there is never the feeling that they want to get some things done by the government officials rather the focus is always on supporting the government officials in meeting the stated targets. Thus, in many ways OPP supports in fulfilment of the needs that become apparent by the interaction with the community and state agencies, while ITA on the other hand seems to have a preset agenda of engagement with the state and is less responsive to the needs and views of the government officials and the community. In OPP's view the relationship was currently working smoothly but they have to constantly work on lobbying as well as developing technical solutions to remain relevant for the government as well as the community.

6.2.2. Notion of the 'Ideal relationship'
It is interesting that there is a difference in what the three NSPs under study would consider to be the ideal relationship given that the nature of relationships that the three formed with the state were very different. In case of PRSP, the focus was on taking over the state delivery mechanism. Though it was meant to be a temporary arrangement to demonstrate a model but clearly within PRSP there was desire and conscious effort to get extensions beyond the initial period in all the districts where the programme was being implemented and to expand it to maximum number of districts not just in Punjab but in other provinces too. Thus, this was in some way a problematic notion of partnership anyway as the ideal scenario for PRSP seemed

to be to minimise government role in management of service delivery and act as a private agency to replace the state in this role.

On the other hand, in case of ITA the conception of an ideal relationship is one where it maintains multi levels of interaction with the state and where the NSP keeps changing the focus of its intervention to suit its changing priorities or the given projects it has in hand at any give point in time. Here the focus is not on either taking over the state's role neither in service provision nor on strengthening a particular need within the ministry of education in a sustained manner. Rather the focus is on shaping the over all vision and policies of the Ministry of Education in different educational matters and linking up with the concerned authorities when and where needed. This is a model where the NSP starts its very work with an ambition of national level interventions.

The case of OPP is different. Here the focus is on building a sustained relationship with the government based on in-depth experience of one community context and then coordinating with other organisations to share that learning in other regions while retaining its focus on the original community. Here the vision of ideal type relationship with the state is that the NSP become a supporting arm of the state agencies in meeting the demands of the community. But, through this support, it also makes the state adapt to NSP's philosophy and appreciate community needs. It is a model where the NSP starts small with humble ambitions but its commitment, hard work and consequent successes make it a very influential player in the field.

6.2.3. Conditions for effective relationships

The experience of the three cases shows that eventually the most important factor in shaping an effective relationship is the approach of the NSP towards engagement with the state rather than any other factor. In the three cases under study the NSPs had different means of access to the government: one was through long-term perseverance, the other through material incentives, and the third through using political influence. All three made entry into the system but the one with lasting impact is the one, which was based on long-term perseverance, patience, and demonstration of competence on the part of the NSP. Also, OPP started at a time when PPP was still not actively being promoted by the donor agencies nor was it so explicitly stated in the government policies, as it was when ITA and PRSP partnerships were being formed. Yet, OPP was able to cultivate a willingness within the bureaucracy to engage with it in a regular manner, something not achieved by the other two NSPs. What this shows is that perhaps the most important conditioning factor for shaping an effective relationship is the approach of the NSP rather than external factors or state policies.

7. Conclusions

In the case of Pakistan, we have three cases that vary in a very interesting way on the partnership continuum. OPP is no doubt the most effective partnership in terms of the NSPs' ability to cultivate long-term relations within the government

to advance its goals. ITA rests in the middle, where it gets the government to respond successfully to its demands, but fails to (or does not even want to) cultivate long-term relationship within the government system or involve the government in the design and planning of the programmes. It suffers from the typical NGO dilemma of revolving around projects with the result that it invests in the government staff for the time of the project but hardly retains any contact beyond the project cycle. PRSP is the other extreme where the partnership has failed despite great performance on the part of the NSP. It is a case where no genuine relations were ever developed as the whole programme relied first on the political backing and then on the individual credibility and networks of the government bureaucrats hired on secondment by PRSP to lead the District teams.

Looking at the three cases, it seems that they can be classified in three difference categories: moral, material and political. In the OPP model, the NSP cultivated a relationship with the state agencies over time on certain clear principles and by cultivating a respect for its work within the government officials; in the ITA model, the NSP cultivates the relationship through providing direct material incentives to the government officials concerned (for example by providing computers) and technical expertise; in case of PRSP model, the NSP tries to create a relationship simply on bases of political backing and demonstration the professional efficiency of its model. Interestingly, these features of the relationship are also reflected in the very working of the organization and the motivation of the staff and the leaders.

Summing up the key themes emerging from analysis of the three NSP in Pakistan the following are important:

1: The source of funding of the organization, which is often linked to the leadership style and motivation, affects the organizational culture and priorities and also its motives and patterns of interaction with the state agencies.

2: The government agencies suffer from bureaucratic hurdles and red tapsim, which make their working more cumbersome than the NSPs. Within government two interest groups operate: those of elected representative and those of bureaucracy. An NSP can only work successfully in the long term by addressing the demands of both these groups. The elected representative demand that the partnership leads to visible results in the community and the elected leadership is given credit for it. The bureaucratic leadership on the other hand demands that NSP provides financial and technical support to facilitate the service delivery but does not try to take away the financial resources or power from the bureaucratic structure.

3. Relationships are of different types and there is no one model that can be called the most successful. In evaluating the effectiveness of the relationship it is important to remember is objectives. ITA model though less impressive in terms of cultivating long-term relationships with the state might be the best strategy if the idea is to intervene in multiple projects at the same time. PRSP model of relying on political backing to get maximum access within the state despite the problem of

continuity might be the best way to demonstrate a model of reform. And OPP is clearly the best model if the criterion is establishment of long-term partnership and active community mobilization.

4. A relationship does not have to have written contracts to be effective. In fact, relational contracts can be more powerful and enduring if they are based on genuine trust between the two parties.

5. In relationships where an NSP is not acting as a contractor to the government, there are fewer chances that the relationship will affect the original agenda or vision of public action of the NSP. In none of the cases, were the relationship under focus such that NSP was a contractor so in such cases in case of extreme difference the NSP can consider quitting rather than having to change its agenda. Thus acting as contractors puts more strains on NSP's vision of public action.

6. While macro conditioning factors do affect NSP-state relationship by increasing or decreasing incentives for such interaction, the real determinant in shaping the relationship is however the nature of the NSP. OPP's case demonstrates how relationships can be cultivated irrespective of macro environment.

7. Across the three cases, it is clear that technical expertise of the NSPs are central in building demand for their inputs within the state agencies.

8. Relationships are easier when the NSP is putting the resources in the partnership. When government has to reallocate its funds to NSP under a partnership, such a relationship faces severe challenges.

9. Sector issues: Looking at the three cases, it is difficult to identify any specific sector differences in shaping the state-NSP relationship. The main difference seems to be more in terms of importance of the sector as reflected by the number of NSPs working in that sector and the state and donor agencies' investment in it. In this respect, education is the strongest sector with maximum number of NSPs and maximum funds from donors and state, followed by health and then water and sanitation. Also, given the diversity of the education activities, there is more potential for NSPs to get an opportunity to engage with the state agencies. The opportunities for such intervention are more limited and often get more technical (requiring either longer technical training or infrastructure facilities) within health and even more so in water and sanitation thus creating less opportunity for state-NSP interaction. Thus, in terms of sector differences, the main differences seems to be more in terms of the scale of opportunities that are likely to arise where the NSP can assist the state agencies rather than the actual nature of the relationship itself.

It also seems that whether or not a relationship needs formal MoUs could be linked to the nature of the sector. It case of education MOUs were critical because the nature of service is such that without formal permission ITA could not enter the government schools. On the other hand OPP could afford not to enter formal

agreement because it works in public areas and does not have to operate inside government facilities. However, since Pauline has found the reverse in case of Bangladesh, where formal contracts in health are more common than in education, may be these are then not sector differences but the difference in the nature of the service even within the same sector.

Annex: Pakistan Case Studies

Idara-Taleem-o-Aagahi's (ITA)

Established in 1998, ITA is a prominent NSP within the education sector in Pakistan. It has a multi-pronged approach to addressing the problems of quality and access to education in Pakistan thus being involved in multiple projects. The flagship programme is the Whole School Improvement Programme (WSIP) where ITA adopts government schools with the help of corporate donors to improve the infrastructure as well as the quality of teaching within these schools. The next main programme is focused on non-formal education. ITA is an interesting case because its very birth is embedded in the idea of public-private partnerships thus most of its programmes have some collaboration with the government departments. The WSIP is entirely focused around government schools while the NFE schools are run in the government school buildings in the evenings. ITA has been very successful in gaining permission at all three tiers of government in Pakistan. The head of ITA, Dr Baela Jameel, was advisor to the Federal Minister for Education during 1999 and was instrumental in incorporating the PPP component to the Education Sector Reform plan.

Punjab Rural Support Programme

PRSP is a government established NSP, which works across the social sectors including education, health and sanitation. PRSP is modelled on the Aga Khan Rural Support Programme and specializes in mobilizing self-help groups in rural communities to improve the basic social services in collaboration with the government line departments. During 2003 under the influence of one of the Board of Directors, who happened to be the advisor to the Chief Minister of Punjab, it ventured into a new experiment within the health sector whereby it established a contractual agreement with the district governments in Punjab to hand over the management of the Basic Health Units to PRSP. Under this programme, the district government transferred the entire government budget for the BHUs to PRSP. PRSP was also free to reallocate the resources under different budgetary heads as it deemed fit and had very little reporting requirements to the district government. This special access was, however, all politically manoeuvred with the result that as political alliances changed, the partnership began to break. The government of Punjab has taken the decision to terminate the programme and has asked PRSP to start preparing for handing back the BHUs to the district government during 2009.

Orangi Pilot Project (OPP)

OPP is the most reputed NSP in Pakistan within the sanitation sector. Established by Akhtar Hameed Khan, who is widely respected in the development circles for his work at the Comilla Pilot project, OPP specializes in low-cost component sharing model for urban sanitation. In this model, the latrine in the homes, the lane sewers and secondary sewers known as 'internal development' are financed, managed and maintained by the people, while the trunk sewers and treatment plants known as 'external development' remains the responsibility of the government. The programme has had much success: through the programme

1,45,466 houses have invested Rs 191.5million (US$3.2 million) in latrines in the homes and lane sewers with government investing more then Rs 276 million (US$4.6 million) on trunk mains. OPP's relationship with the government developed very slowly and gradually over a long period of time with constant effort on the part of the OPP management to cultivate the relationship. It was only with time when OPP was able to demonstrate its ability to provide low cost sanitation solutions and was able to establish strong roots within the community that the government officials started to engage with it seriously. Since then the partnership has steadily grown where OPP works very closely with the Works and Services Department of the Karachi City Government and the Karachi Water and Sewage Board.