

The International Center for Ethics, Justice and Public Life at Brandeis University

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Brandeis 1998 Ethics and Coexistence Student Projects Fellows

Syed Nageeb Mustafa Ali ('99) Dhaka, Bangladesh

An Inquiry into Poverty Alleviation: Rural Credit in the Northern Areas of Pakistan
Internship with Aga Khan Rural Support Programme
Skardu, Pakistan

Project Goal

To create strong village institutions that can effect change and create systems of self-sufficiency, by:

Building infrastructure.

Providing credit in rural areas.

Consulting on environmental issues.

Personal Goals:

I wanted not just to witness rural poverty, but to engage actively with poor people and the organizations working to support them.





Activities

I interviewed villagers in twenty rural villages.
I read extensively on the region and on the operations of rural credit markets.
I am now in the process of compiling a report.td>

Key Dilemmas:

At what level does the provision of rural credit foster income inequality?
Why does such a system of poverty alleviation work in some cases and not in others?
What are the advantages of having an NGO perform such work?



Important Learnings:

Though large-scale institutional state-sponsored change is often necessary for development and poverty alleviation, NGO efforts are important because they save lives in the short-run.
Over the summer, as my social analyses developed, I saw myself changing from being simply a consumer of knowledge, to being also a producer of knowledge.