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Running head: REDUCING MARGINALIZATION OF GIRLS

WESTERN UNIVERSITY

How can the marginalization of girls be reduced in a provincial primary rural school in a  
developing country in Asia?

by

M. Kashif Memon

AN ORGANIZATIONAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE AND POSTDOCTORAL STUDIES

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE

DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

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## REDUCING MARGINALIZATION OF GIRLS

### Abstract

This Organizational Improvement Plan (OIP) examines a sensitive yet significant problem of practice (PoP): How can the marginalization of girls be reduced in a provincial primary rural school in a developing country in Asia (Country A)? Using the Capability Approach (Sen, 1992, 1993, 1995, 1999), which argues for embracing human diversity, the plan calls attention to the plight of girls in rural areas of Country A, analyzing the tensions and apprehensions associated with female education. Perspectives on the problem are understood by examining existing gaps through application of a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis, suggesting a practical solution of a nongovernmental organization (NGO) adopting the school as a two-year pilot project. The strategies provided in the plan guide the change team by using a blended model of Cawsey, Deszca, and Ingols Change Path Model (2015) and Kotter's Eight Stage Model (1996). The plan recommends using servant and transformational leadership strategies to guide the village community and school through the change process, building trust, and empowering followers, while at all times respecting indigenous values. This OIP will be of interest to the province in implementing similar change initiatives in other schools to reduce marginalization of girls.

*Keywords:* marginalization of girls, capability approach, servant leadership, transformational leadership, Cawsey, Deszca, and Ingols' Change Path Model, Kotter's 8 Stage Model

# REDUCING MARGINALIZATION OF GIRLS

## Executive Summary

Educating girls in developing nations is one of the most leveraged investments that a country can undertake, bringing about long term social and economic benefits (Lewis & Lockheed, 2007). This Organizational Improvement Plan (OIP) presents suggestions for addressing the following Problem of Practice (PoP): How can the marginalization of girls be reduced in a provincial primary rural school in a developing country in Asia (Country A)? The province (TP) has performed poorly in education indicators, with lowest results in learning outcomes, and largest decrease in learning scores in Country A (Siyal, 2016).

This OIP suggests three possible solutions to address this PoP: (1) maintaining status quo; (2) undertaking reform in the provincial education department; or (3) adoption of the school by a NGO. The OIP evaluates all three options. It recommends a practical solution, arguing that Country A rural girls should have access to equal and fair pedagogical opportunities, which respect and value their capabilities (Sen, 1999). Since the province is fully committed to reducing marginalization of girls, but deficient in effective execution, there is an opportunity to undertake a practical endeavor by partnering with an external agency, namely a NGO. The NGO by adopting the school under Nongovernmental Organization Sub-district Education Project (NGOSDEP) executes a two-year pilot project that represents a rational account of the problem, addressing five important aspects. First, recognize and leverage community support. Second, use existing school resources, without threatening teachers and staff careers or positions. Third, gradually introduce girls' participation in various school activities. Fourth, leverage informal mother networks (IMNs), moderate religious scholars, progressively increase fathers support, and reason with hardline feudal and religious elements. Fifth, move forward with an action plan

## REDUCING MARGINALIZATION OF GIRLS

that is robust and manageable in execution, yet flexible to meet any contingencies that may arise operating in a dynamic environment.

Addressing the problem of marginalization of girls, using transformational and servant leadership frameworks begins by convincing the community that the vision for change is not an intrusion upon their cultural practices, but an authentic partnership that values each group's ideology. Building trust lays the foundation to gradually develop relationships and communicate our vision for change, articulating goals and activities that navigate through challenges to achieve a sustainable reduction in marginalization of girls (Laub, 1999). Each of these frameworks working in combination assists the change team in focusing on the followers, gaining commitment towards change objectives (Stone, Russell, and Patterson, 2004). A blended model consisting of Cawsey, Deszca, and Ingols' Change Path Model (2015) and Kotter's 8 Stage Model (1996) is used to guide the overall change process.

The real success of NGOSDEP does not lie within the initial two-year scope, but beyond in its ability to present a sustainable solution to reducing marginalization of girls, to be replicated in other schools of the province. Therefore the community, whether supportive or resistant towards girls' education is not only embedded within the entire process, but is an active participant, helping the change team in learning and progressing towards defined SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound) goals.

In a society that has very low confidence in government institutions, the provincial leadership must act on the overwhelming evidence that old cultural traditions, conservatism, and misinterpreted religious beliefs impacting female education have to change, so that a sustainable reduction in marginalization of girls can take place in the school and the province (Ahmad, Said, Hussain and Khan, 2014).

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### Dedication

This journey has been grounded in thankfulness to God, humility, and self-reflection. Thankfulness, as I have been blessed in life to receive education and work across the world, learning from the greatest teachers: People who operate in the field at the grassroots level. First and foremost, I thank those unnamed, everyday grassroots heroes in my life.

I am blessed to have the support of my family. My wife, Uzma, who believed in my work and critically discussed each aspect of my OIP, without caring if I took time away from her during days and nights of work. My son, Uzair, who has been blessed with a patient and loving heart, in understanding that I will not be able to play soccer or cricket with him on some days, as I was working on my OIP. Thanks both. Without you two I would not be writing this, and so this dedication is for you. I dedicate this work to my parents, a mother who stood out as a strong individual as life tried to marginalize her. My father, who never compromised his principles, and whose vision and life journey gave me a lesson in celebrating equality of human beings, reflected in his support for my mother and sister's literary journey. His experience and countless discussions with me helped me understand the meaning of marginalization of girls, and are assets to this work.

To all my professors who were with me throughout this doctoral journey. Your feedback and guidance helped me choose an OIP topic that ignited the passion of giving back to community, so that this work can be meaningful and purposeful.

Finally, I thank my advisor, Dr. Scott Lowrey. Your belief in my mission has been the greatest strength that a student could have asked for. Time and again you reaffirmed your trust, giving constructive critique that made me reflect and then refine. You sir, are a teacher, mentor, and I am proud to have you as a friend.

I am honored to know all of you. God bless you all!

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### List of Acronyms

Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

Communication Unit (CU)

District Education Board (DEB)

District Education Officer (DEO)

District Education Plan (DEP)

Informal Mother Networks (IMNs)

Monthly progress reports (MPRs)

National Commission for Human Development (NCHD)

National Educational Policy (NEP)

National Educational Policy (NEP)

Nongovernmental Organization (NGO)

Nongovernmental Organization Sub-district Education Project (NGOSDEP)

Organizational Improvement Plan (OIP)

Parent Teachers' Meetings (PTMs)

Plan Do Study Act (PDSA)

Political, Economic, Social, Technological (PESTE) Analysis

Primary School (PS)

Problem of Practice (POP)

Quarterly progress reports (QPRs)

School Gender Plan (SGP)

School Management Committee (SMC)

SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-Bound) Goals

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Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities Threats (SWOT) Analysis

Sub-district Reading Program, SDRP)

Sub-district Education Officer (SDEO)

Terms of References (TORs)

The Province (TP)

The World Conservation Union (IUCN)

Training Support Unit (TSU)

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Volunteer Student Teacher Community Clusters (VSTCCs)



## **Chapter 1: Introduction and Problem**

This Organizational Improvement Plan (OIP) first provides an organizational context and then defines the Problem of Practice (PoP) that guides the plan. Chapter 1 frames the PoP by listing the questions that emerge from the PoP. The chapter also articulates a leadership-focused vision for change, addressing organizational change readiness, and outlining a leadership position statement.

### **Organizational Context**

The first section introduces the school in this OIP, outlining its vision, mission, values, purpose, and goals. It describes the organizational structure and explains current leadership practices in the school. Lastly, this section gives a brief organizational history.

### **Organization Introduction and Context**

The school, referred to as Primary School (PS) falls under the jurisdiction of Education & Literacy Department in a province, referred to as The Province (TP) of a developing country in Asia, referred to as Country A. PS is a medium sized coeducation school in a village in the rural district of TP. The district comprises a total of 2,991 schools of which 2,876 are functional, 71 are temporarily closed, and 44 are non-operational. The total primary school-age population is 148,469 males and 132,243 females; with enrollment of 76,172 and 40,582 respectively. There are 3,927 primary school male teachers compared to 745 female teachers in the district (TP, 2015-16). The current scenario exists at a time when the government is working towards its Vision 2030, which endeavors to permanently eliminate gender inequality in education, defined by the province as a combination of academic and professional excellence (TP, 2014-18).

**Vision, Mission, Values, Purpose, and Goals**

The provincial government strives to enhance the professional and academic excellence of all students, so they contribute to the development of the province. In 2009, the National Educational Policy (NEP) found two key weaknesses at all levels of education: low quality and low access to academic opportunities and gaps in implementation and commitment (Bajoria, 2009). Therefore, Country A's federal government in 2010 passed a constitutional amendment X, abolishing the Federal Ministry of Education, devolving full authority for education to the provinces. This amendment went into practice in April 2010 (Bari, 2018). Two key components of the devolution were to promote equity in education and achieve universal and free education by 2015. However, both educational components have not been achieved in the post constitutional amendment scenario due to lack of clarity on provincial roles and weak institutional capacity of provinces (TP, 2014-18). Marginalization of girls can be attributed to the provincial government's weaknesses to implement its mandate from three broad policy guidelines: (1) the provincial government's mission statement to "universalize education, unfold strong policy actions for raising literacy to hundred percent and reform education" (TP, 2018, para 1); (2) "empower women and girls, with equal access of women and girls to all services" (TP, 2014-18, p. 26); and (3) the strategic objective of improving "access to literacy and non-formal education, especially for girls in rural areas" (TP, 2014-18, p. 164).

In practice, TP has fared poorly in education indicators, achieving sixth position out of seven in Country A, with the lowest indicators in learning outcomes and the largest decrease in learning scores (Siyal, 2016). The situation for girls in TP is particularly alarming, whose average stay in schools is limited to only 5 years, 61% never attend a school, and have a dropout rate at the primary level of 50% (Alif Ailaan & SDPI, 2016). The provincial government's

mission and strategy all focus on reducing marginalization of girls, but the school does not have the capacity to bring about the changes needed to achieve this, as it requires support and training in the area of effective teaching practice, specifically for male teachers (Halai, 2011; Holmes, 2003).

### **Organizational Structure and Current Leadership Approaches**

Set in a feudal, religiously conservative society, the mixed coeducation school confronts male dominated centrally controlled patriarchal social structures (Jamal, 2006; Niaz, 2003). The education structure emphasizes “strategic apex” (Bolman & Deal, 2013, p. 76) policy based “system wide” (Bolman & Deal, 2013, p. 277) activity rather than grass root school specific improvement plans. The organization of this government run school is based on a formalized hierarchically directive, authoritarian, and masculinist view of leadership (Blackmore, 1989; Northouse, 2015). Authority is vested in the male headmaster, who refrains from participative leadership. Management in the school has a highly bureaucratized top down structure (Blackmore, 1995; Martin, 2009; Northouse, 2015). This style of management gives credibility to the headmaster and provincial education department without challenging their authority or providing the capacity for growth to both staff and students (Argyris, 1990).

The school presently suffers from “bureaucratic inertia” (Simkins, Sisum, & Memon, 2003, p. 279), sustained through dominant male narratives and morality, perpetuating gender inequalities, and masculine local power base (Bolman & Deal, 2013; Giroux, 2010; Skrla, Scheurich, Garcia, & Nolly, 2004). The system of governance in the school is politicized as most teachers are hired on the basis of their political affiliations rather than merit (Northouse, 2015). The political interference is so severe that the provincial chief minister labeled teacher unions as political parties where “leadership positions in teachers’ associations and unions across

provinces tend to be dominated by economic elites, propertied classes, and men. This is directly a consequence of the weakening of associations as transparent, representative institutions over time that is a result of deliberate policy and legal actions undertaken by governments.” (Rashid & Zaidi, 2015, p. 18). Memon (2007) calls this phenomenon “rent seeking” (p. 49), because teachers serve as workers of political parties and include only a few female teachers (Halai, 2011). Halai (2011) and Warwick and Jatou (1994) reinforce the existence of bias against female teachers, arguing that Country A’s rural schools exhibit a strong gender gap that favours male teachers. Headmasters, teachers, and staff are selected based on their accountability to area feudal politicians and length of service, with limited job training and no job description (Hoodbhoy, 1998). The feudal mindset of male control within school administration, use of religious moral code, and low priority towards female education has institutionalized deep-rooted barriers toward girls (Jejeebhoy & Sathar, 2001; McCutcheon, 2007).

As noted the bureaucratic, authoritarian structure, and politically conservative, religious internal and external environments make it challenging to implement gender friendly programs within the existing framework of the school. At present no formal program aimed at reducing the marginalization of girls exists within the school. While there have been attempts by the province to run training camps to encourage stakeholders to accept females in the school, efforts have been inconsistent, disjointed, and have had limited success. Previous trainings, School Management Committee (SMC) workshops, and focus groups offered for teachers and the village community received little support, with low attendance, no accountability, and no follow up. Because of this lack of current support and capacity of the school to undertake improvement in marginalization of girls, there is an opportunity to create a unified plan where a nongovernmental organization (NGO) adopts the school, addressing the unique needs of girl

students, so as to support females within and outside the school. (Hunzai, 2007). Figure 1.1 presents the organizational structure of the primary school. As can be seen, the hierarchy is complex, with many levels of bureaucracy which makes it difficult to create and implement unified school programs, as they need support from various layers of provincial bureaucracy.

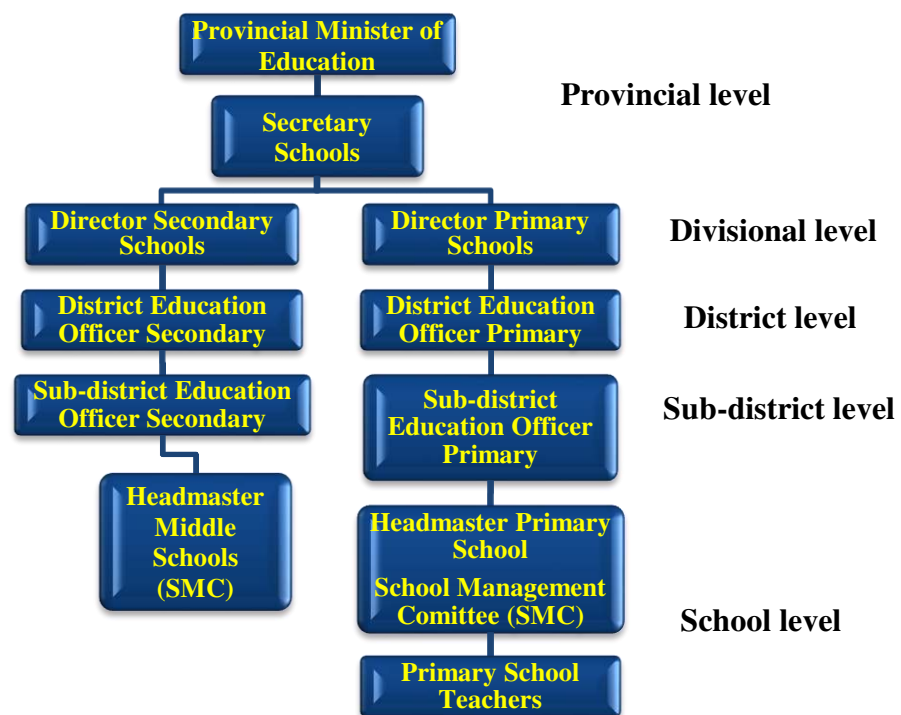


Figure 1.1. Present management structure of government school system in TP.

Adapted from *TP Education and Literacy Department*, 2018.

The school is supposed to be managed by a SMC consisting of a headmaster and committee members, acting through a chairman. The school administration through its headmaster reports to the district bureaucracy via a sub-district education officer (SDEO), and a district education officer (DEO). The DEO and SDEO in turn report to the divisional director (primary schools), secretary, and the minister, who control the whole structure from the provincial capital. In order to successfully implement a gender friendly program in the school, the powerful provincial district bureaucracy needs to be supportive of the initiative. Support is

also needed from the local feudal politicians, clerics, headmaster, teachers, and SMC. The provincial education and literacy department needs to be involved as it creates and implements school wide programs. Historically, the education and literacy department, provincial district bureaucracy, and SMC have not worked collaboratively, and this has been one of the reasons that past programs aimed at encouraging girls have not been successful.

### **Organizational History**

Although the school has tried to encourage increased girls' participation in the village school, the province has not conducted a formal needs assessment. Male teachers' attitudes, community participation, and parents' involvement have not been explicitly defined or recognized (Mujahid & Noman, 2015). In summary, the context for the OIP is complex, due to problematic cultural and societal norms and values. Leadership and local factors contribute toward keeping girls out of mainstream primary education. The next section explores my leadership position statement, where the organizational context provides guidance on my position as a leader and my agency from three perspectives, to successfully implement suggested actions proposed in this OIP.

### **Leadership Position Statement**

I examine my leadership through three perspectives. The first is through my personal leadership philosophy. The second is from my experiences as an indigenous individual, who grew up, studied, and worked in Country A. The third is through the constraints that I face while practicing my leadership viewpoints. I seek guidance from all three perspectives throughout the OIP, so as to implement a realistic plan of action.

**Perspective 1: Personal Leadership Philosophy**

My leadership philosophy is based on integrity, achievement, and influence shaped by following and leading in the United Nations, World Bank, Asian Development Bank, civil services, military, and educational institutions in Afghanistan, Canada, China, Country A, England, and United States. These experiences, along with my values, courage to confront injustices, take action, and develop relationships discussed below are entrenched in servant and transformational leadership ideologies (Northouse, 2015).

**Values.** I was born in a society in Asia where people achieved their objectives through nepotism. Hence, my first value, integrity, was a reaction to the injustices in my surroundings. Another value that I hold is taking risks to serve and transform the community. I have achieved the satisfaction of spreading education to people at various developmental levels, from Canadian, Chinese, and Country A classrooms to farmers in Asia and fishermen in the Indian Ocean. However, in order to practice transformational leadership, I have to be objective, so that I understand peoples' motivations, based on their respected opinions (Bolman & Deal, 2013; Spears, 2004).

**Courage to take action.** When I started working for Country A's civil service, I found myself in an authority-compliance situation (Northouse, 2015). My personal values of honesty were misaligned with those of my bosses; leading to tension that prompted me not to join the prevailing organizational culture. As an honest officer, I was accountable for my actions, and I began to challenge the beliefs of my superiors. I see the world from a critical lens, aiming to confront inequalities in my sphere of influence (Kellnar, 2003). I experienced injustice when I saw my mother having to continuously prove her educational competence in a patriarchal culture, challenging me to re-examine societal gender biases. In order to challenge injustice from

large feudal land holders in rural parts of Country A, while working for the United Nations I have taken action to give rights to small land holding farmers, developing fruit farm packing houses and educating them on reefer transport, fruit picking, and packing techniques.

**Relationships and communication.** I develop relationships and communication from a respectful, relationally shared perspective. My students and colleagues know me as a team player inspiring confidence in joint objective settings. My relationships are based on the servant leadership style used in developing people, power sharing, and community building (Greenleaf 1977). I value fairness by setting standards of performance, while working collaboratively.

### **Perspective 2: An Indigenous Rural Individual of Country A**

In my current role working as an external consultant with the provincial government, I provide educational leadership to bring about social change in rural communities in accepting marginalized groups, specifically girls in primary schools. My experience in mobilizing rural communities includes advising and educating indigenous Country A fishermen and women on understanding how their produce flows in business supply chains. This helped them get access to capital to install ice flake machinery on boats and understand their share in economic benefits. Therefore, I understand how to mobilize support from dominant village groups and NGOs, developing links between internal and external stakeholders, strengthening SMC, and giving voice to parents, specifically mothers via parent-teacher associations. Tajik (2008) conducted a study on the role of the external consultant in the developing world arguing that these individuals: (1) “demonstrated sincerity to their own work and respect for others” (p. 262); (2) brought new ideas to school learning, playing the role of a bridge by bringing administrators, teachers, and community together for collective purposes; and (3) developed a horizontal leadership style with “respect breeds respect slogan” (p. 262). Tajik (2008) identifies various



leadership roles of an external consultant, which include educational reformer and innovator, linking agent, catalyst, caring interventionist, community mobilizer, guardian, pedagogue, and a critical friend. Tajik (2008) also highlights tensions in the work of external consultants, but argues that they bring substantial benefits via three important leadership skills: (1) they help in developing leaders in communities of learners they work with; (2) they are able to apply and sustain pressure to unfreeze the system; and (3) they have the ability to either empower or control teachers. In light of my positionality, servant, transformational, and social justice ideologies are well suited to provide guidance in successfully implementing the OIP.

Transformational leadership will provide a dynamic, empowered culture. Servant leadership fits well with my philosophy of social justice, where I am not going to be in a position of status. I am an indigenous individual whose origins are from the rural area of Country A, and one who sees opportunity in developing others in the community.

### **Perspective 3: Practicing My Leadership**

I realize that realities of life involve human dynamics where I cannot assume that people will have the same values as me. My assumption is that since I am honest, I can inspire people to become ethical does not hold true in all cultures. I understand that I can only have the agency to change my immediate surroundings, not entire systems. I am therefore on a journey of self-reflection undertaking a periodic personal audit by applying SWOT analysis on myself. I aspire for a perfect world based on fairness, but recognize that to be effective I need to adjust my leadership within my threshold of integrity. Therefore, I have to be persistent against frustration, reflecting on how I influence people, so that they can grow to become ethical leaders. In summary the three perspectives and my value system help me in understanding the PoP, and therefore play an important role in effective implementation of the OIP. The next section

discusses the leadership problem of practice, and distinguishes between the organization's current state and the desired future state.

### **Leadership Problem of Practice**

The problem of practice (PoP) for this study is: **How can the marginalization of girls be reduced in a provincial primary rural school in a developing country in Asia (Country A)?**

As previously indicated, attempts by the school to encourage girls' participation in the pedagogical process have been inconsistent and disjointed. Currently, no data exists that allows the school to demonstrate whether girls are getting equal access to educational opportunities. Insofar as this gap remains, the school stands compromised in TP's mission of providing access to literacy and non-formal education, especially for girls in rural areas.

Research in this area identifies that exploitation of women is deep rooted in rural Country A culture and has become institutionalized in education, as girls are marginalized in societal hierarchy (Sathar & Kazi, 2000; Niaz, 2003). Niaz (2003), in a study on Country A cultural norms exploring gender roles, concludes that inequalities towards women not only exist at the individual level, but also at the family, community, and in a broader social context. Marginalization of girls in the school is therefore entrenched in social and cultural traditions of suppression, guided by male controlled conservative and religious ideologies (Argyris, 1976; Gutek, 1997; Tyms, 1950). Males with privilege and power are able to get access to schools while girls are either excluded from mainstream education or try to survive under a "patriarchal bargain" (Unterhalter, 2005, p. 114). The feudal mindset of male control within school administration and use of religious moral code has institutionalized deep-rooted barriers towards girls (Jejeebhoy & Sathar, 2001).

TP through its Vision 2030 is fully committed to permanent elimination of gender inequality in education, with the strategic objective of improving literacy access for girls (TP, 2014-18). Although the government does not have the capacity to undertake girls' access to literacy, there is a high degree of support for the implementation of this important initiative within the provincial education leaders. There is an opportunity to create a unified plan where a nongovernmental organization (NGO) adopts the school as a two-year pilot project, NGO Sub-district Education Project (NGOSDEP), consisting of adopting NGO Chief Executive Officer (CEO), external consultant, District Education Officer (DEO), Sub-district Education Officer (SDEO), district religious clerics, member provincial assembly, and the school headmaster. The OIP will thus undertake the challenge of addressing leadership capacities necessary to develop in a headmaster and teachers, within the primary rural school, a readiness for change, necessary for reducing marginalization of girls. The long term intent is to spread this philosophy in other schools in the district and province. Addressing this PoP, will not only support girls in the school, but will also bring about a social change through institutional and community engagement, thus bringing greater benefit to the village, families, and the country.

### **Framing the Problem of Practice**

This section provides perspectives on the PoP, considering the problem through theoretical and historical lenses. It looks at the PoP from the capability approach framework. This section provides an analysis of the PoP through the political, economic, social, and technological (PESTE) analysis. This analysis is used in framing the PoP and applied to the institution, to assist in reducing marginalization of girls in the school. The section also explores relevant external data, articulating the researcher's leadership perspective on the PoP.

### **Historical Overview of the PoP**

As noted earlier in this chapter, the bureaucratic, authoritarian structure of the school and politically conservative religious internal and external environments make it challenging to implement gender friendly programs. Attempts by the province to run focus groups and training camps to encourage stakeholders to accept females in the school were not marketed properly, and did not give power to the SMC. They were thus poorly attended, without active participation of external and internal stakeholders. Sessions were offered inside feudal politicians personal community rooms, where many stakeholders such as mothers and bureaucracy were uncomfortable in attending. Previously offered school and community sessions did not prepare groundwork for hiring more female teachers, a gender inclusive plan, and a fully empowered SMC. For example, the last District Education Plan, formulated in 2005, undertook a situational analysis of the schools' education scenario leading to identification of major gaps in providing equal pedagogical opportunities to girls (DEP, 2005). It was claimed by the province that the plan was aligned to realities of district schools. However, there was little evidence of accountability, periodical assessment or modification as per the emerging needs of the schools. Any improvements that occurred focused on increasing the number of students through makeshift programs. There was little concentration on vital factors, such as, appropriate gender skills for male teachers, equity, participatory teaching methods, hiring of female teachers, community participation, infrastructure development, and support for girls. Attempts to introduce changes to female student policies are not encouraged by the school administration. Hattie (2015) calls this "politics of distraction" (p. 2), where political leaders focus on "politically attractive" (p. 1) policies, with little impact on classroom practice. In 2005, TP tasked the district government bureaucracy with increasing the overall literacy rate from 24% to

54% by the year 2009 and achieving 100% enrollment of children aged 3 to 7 years (DEP, 2005). The focus of these measures was to undertake efforts to reduce gender disparity. Although the province was not able to achieve the above milestones, the government accepts deficiencies in the system. Therefore, under Vision 2030 the province wants serious improvements and action to eliminate gender inequality in education (TP, 2014-18). Priority areas include teachers' development, hiring more female teachers, and eliminating gender bias.

The government is ready to change the current state, specifically by having the school adopted by a NGO. The NGO will cater to the underserved girl population of the village by converting the government school into a community institution, in partnership with the village community. My agency is reinforced by the NGO, which is a catalyst, assisting in unfreezing current marginalization practices, bringing about systematic change readiness. The scope of this OIP is narrowed to reducing marginalization of girls as explained in Chapters 2 and 3.

### **PoP Framed Using Sen's Capability Approach**

One of the significant challenges impacting this PoP is the deliberate sidelining or lack of realization amongst stakeholders that the female population presents a valuable resource with capabilities that can benefit society. Amartya Sen's work on the capability approach is important in framing the PoP as it focuses on inequality, social justice, and equity analysis (1992, 1993, 1995, 1999). Sen (1992, 1993, 1994, 1999) notes that we should concentrate on people's capabilities, and not just their financial welfare to evaluate their freedom, giving individuals the liberty to undertake activities such as education, working, and general well-being. Dejaeghere and Lee (2011) in their study on Bangladesh extend the capabilities approach to gendered inequalities by examining social and material tensions that are associated with female empowerment. They distinguish the approach from other analyses that concentrate on

attainment of basic goods as the end goal, such as the degree of education. They argue that capabilities are to be examined through the social conditions lens, where societal norms, culture, structures, voice, and safety are precursors to how people use opportunities to develop tangible well-being. Unterhalter (2005) lends credibility to the approach by noting that it offers support to women's neglected education conditions, such as access to schooling and learning processes. Fukuda-Parr (2003) argues that the approach provides the theoretical foundation to the human development paradigm.

Robeyns (2003) notes that situated within the critical and liberal strands the capability approach possesses three strengths: (1) by focusing on lives that individuals choose to live, it measures gender inequality in terms of functions and capabilities; (2) it is not limited to the market economy, examining gender inequality in both market and nonmarket settings; and (3) it explicitly recognizes human diversity, such as gender, sexuality, and ethnicity, accepting the fundamental concept of equality (Sen, 1992). The author goes on to highlight the importance of Sen's capabilities approach through three conversion factors. First, personal conversion, which in this OIP is the girls' ability to convert characteristics of education into a function. Since girls are not exposed to education, as they are discriminated against due to their sex, they do not understand the full utility of pedagogy. Second, social conversion, which in this OIP examines how girls are marginalized through social norms and societal hierarchies. Third, environmental conversion, where there is a controlling dominant societal culture which prevents girls from going to school. It is immediately clear that the capability approach has the potential to address marginalization of girls, as it presents an opportunity to address feminist themes concerned with women's welfare. These themes will continue to inform future chapters of this OIP.

**PESTE Analysis**

To better understand the school, an analysis of key factors is undertaken. A PESTE analysis reveals three factors bearing the greatest impact: political, economic, and social. These three factors require greater focus and consideration when making suggestions for change and organizational improvement (Cawsey, Deszca, & Ingols, 2015). This analysis is used in framing the PoP and applied to the school, to assist in reducing marginalization of girls in the school.

**Political factors.** Politically, I am able to leverage international and national forces. Country A's government is under pressure from United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to promote inclusive growth, with special attention to girls and other marginalized groups (Subohi, 2015). Local educational experts are critical of government progress on SDGs that ignores female friendly educational policies (Subohi, 2015; Khan, 2016). There are two main issues connected to the political frame in this school system. The first is male suspicion of change and reaction to liberal movements aimed at educating girls (Raven, 2005). Women are considered personal property of males and feminism is criticized publicly as a western concept ("Women as Property," 2016). This suspicion contributes to the second issue where males adopt women exclusionary policies. These policies are implemented by hiring very few or no female teachers, and the use of symbols that deter girls from going to school (Latif, 2009; Nazir, 2010; Sathar & Kazi, 2000). Conservative and religious elements preach to young men and teachers about exclusion of women from jobs, education, and positions of power through male defined moral codes. This anti female thought process permeates educational institutions, often making girls feel stigmatized and unsafe attending classes. My leverage, and support from local government and district bureaucracy who have stakes in the political process, is key to the

success of this OIP. Joint action by all stakeholders gives political ownership, direction, and foundation to a sustainable school improvement strategy.

**Economic factors.** A critical issue to address is how parents and schools reinforce a marginalization narrative in terms of excluding girls due to economic factors. Parents see better return on investment by supporting male education, thus reinforcing cultural and religious values that undervalue girls' schooling, placing marriage and motherhood as prime female responsibilities. Aftab (1994), in research in the rural areas of TP's region, found that 76.5% girls never attended schools. Poverty (28.6%) was highlighted as the foremost reason, followed by family norms (15.4%), father's opposition (14.2%), girls' disinterest (14.2%), distance to school (3.6%), and household work (2.8%). In order to encourage change, this OIP highlights to parents, the school, and the community the long-term socioeconomic rewards of educating girls, economic autonomy that supports families, higher socioeconomic standards, and increased labour participation.

**Social factors.** Gu (2015) argues that Country A girls have to politically negotiate with cultural traditions that marginalize them from "mainstream society and also their own ethnic community" (p. 1936). The sociocultural norm of Country A's society puts girls in a situation where their interpretation about themselves is led by a belief system of being objects for the patriarchal world. Fathers, teachers, and male staff members in the school supported by self-proclaimed religiously indoctrinated clerics wage ideological battles against girls seeking education (Flanagan, 2000). Measures of oppression such as rape, kidnapping, and violence continue to be symbols that marginalize girls in the society. These are compounded by male teachers prejudiced attitudes within the school (McCutcheon, 2007). Other overt symbols that are



evident are lack of feminine facilities and lack of privacy. Acid throwing and harassment during menstruation are behaviours which stand in stark conflict with critical pedagogy.

### **Analysis of Internal and External Data**

The provincial Vision 2030, a policy document drafted by the government mandates that there should be permanent elimination of gender inequality in education, providing quality education at the primary level, and improving enrollment (TP, 2014-18). The provincial autonomy provided through the constitutional Amendment X transferred educational powers from federal to provincial governments, through Article Y, which states, “The State shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of five to sixteen years in such manner as may be determined by law” (TP, 2014-18, p. 42). Primary school in the province includes grades 1 to 5. Some schools are open for morning and evening shifts while others are only morning or evening. These schools are co-education, girls only, or boys only. Table 1.1 shows fewer all girls primary schools (16%) in the province compared to all boys and mixed schools.

Table 1.1

#### *Number of Primary Schools in TP by Gender over a Five-Year Period*

<b>Year</b>	<b>Boys only</b>	<b>Girls only</b>	<b>Mixed / coed</b>	<b>Growth Rate (%)</b>	<b>Boys enrollment</b>	<b>Girls enrollment</b>
<b>2007</b>	10,155	7,487	26,673	Base year	2,001,910	1,333,261
<b>2008</b>	14,792	7,298	22,428	0.23	1,994,676	1,332,058
<b>2009</b>	10,416	7,283	27,345	0.86	2,016,185	1,386,206
<b>2010</b>	11,406	7,112	26,004	-1.44	1,942,476	1,349,498
<b>2011</b>	10,331	6,471	26,287	-2.94	1,748,862	1,231,584

*Note.* Adapted from TP, by TP Education Sector Plan, 2014-18, TP, Country A.

Although there are many mixed schools, the average percentage of enrollment for girls is only 25%. There are 16 districts in the province where more than 50% of females are illiterate, with the highest drop-outs occurring in grades 1 to 6. Efficiency indicators in the province show that only 60% of students transition from grade 5 to 6. This means that over one third of students

do not continue their education after primary level. The retention rates from grade 1-5 is 49%; for grades 1-8, only 27%. In the district where the school is situated, 78.12% of girls are illiterate and 60% never attend school (TP, 2014-18).

### **Leadership Philosophy**

As discussed earlier, my leadership philosophy is based on integrity, looking at the world through the critical approach analyzing the inequalities in education via transformational and servant leadership. In practicing transformational leadership, I am influenced by work of Burns (1978) and Bass (1985). I am inspiring followers by sharing my vision, and at the same time providing the resources to develop individual potential, and having the school adapt to its external environment. I am also influenced by Greenleaf's (1977) servant leadership, where I facilitate followers to achieve the shared vision. As I belong to the rural area of country A, I can be a part of the village culture without status, helping to build a community that strives for common good of all individuals. My position as an external consultant to bring about change in the school is unique in that I have experienced and examined Country A's education system, first as a student and then as a policy making civil servant. My local roots, experience of working in the developing and developed world, and a strong personal network within the district bureaucracy, with politicians, and religious clerics place me at a distinct advantage, with insight into key issues in the education system. I therefore have the agency to bring about a change in the village primary school, where the majority of female students face social discrimination, stereotyping, and male teacher resistance.

### **Guiding Questions Emerging from the Problem of Practice**

The main issues resulting from this PoP are interconnected and can be evaluated from two perspectives: external and internal. The first issue as discussed previously is the influence of

external community on the school administration, which is guided by conservative and religious ideologies that seek to perpetuate patriarchal structures, widely recognized as gender discriminatory. Werbner (2007) explains male resistance to female freedom in terms of political and religious movements that are used to “assert a wider agenda of authoritarian political and cultural social control” (p. 162). Niaz (2003) calls gender discrimination a feature of agriculture based societies of Asia, where tribal feudal and patriarchal structures relegate girls to second class status. Niaz (2003) also explains this from the perspective of the Country A male who considers female emancipation as “loss of control” (p. 180). The second issue is the lack of governance in the school due to head teacher’s insignificance as a social actor in the provincial education administrative hierarchy. The school is controlled from the provincial capital where major decisions are made by the bureaucracy. The school’s male centered administration is thus detached from the provincial department exhibiting authority-compliance management with a self-protective leadership style, monopolizing resources such as staffing, location, land acquisition, admissions, and administrative decision making.

Internally, the top-down bureaucratic environment in the school leaves little room for any joint strategy that assists in pedagogical improvement programs. This is also true for undertaking any educational programs targeted towards understanding gender differences. As discussed before, any attempts by the province to undertake improvement in marginalization of girls have achieved limited success. Disengagement of the headmaster from pedagogy has created tensions in the school system leading to a lack of integrative thinking and weaknesses in organizational structural capacity to respond to environmental challenges. Teaching is seen as the sole responsibility of male teachers who are detached from the administration. These male teachers have been brought up and live in an environment which considers boys to be superior, and thus

are resistant to the education of females, exhibiting a bias towards having girls in their classrooms (Shah & Shah, 2012).

One very clear problem in the school is the shortage of female teachers. Buzdar and Ali (2011) note that cultural norms dictate that girls should only interact with female teachers. Due to cultural inhibitions, female students find interaction with males highly uncomfortable to the point of withdrawing from school activities, ultimately dropping out. Male teachers in the school, supported by self-proclaimed religiously indoctrinated clerics in the society, wage ideological battles against girls seeking education. Education and other opportunities in life are considered unnecessary and an impediment to marriage and household chores. Instead of using religious teachings as a positive training ground to understand students' developmental and personality needs, religion is used as an excuse to implement a marginalization agenda. Girls therefore attend school in fear, where teachers do not understand their social and academic needs. This causes them to suffer from a sense of inferiority leading to confidence issues and irregular attendance.

Thus, the six key questions arising from the above analysis include the following:

1. How can girls' enrollment be increased in the school?
2. What challenges/barriers could affect the NGO adoption process?
3. How can village society and School Management Committee (SMC) be mobilized and strengthened to negotiate with feudal and conservative elements?
4. How can parental and community involvement in the school be encouraged?
5. How can more female teachers be employed in the school?
6. What kind of mentoring programs can be introduced in the school to enhance skills of primary teachers in understanding individual needs of learners?

The questions presented above are interrelated and are laid out in an order that addresses highlighted gaps in the school. Participation of stakeholders is crucial in meeting the change objectives. A review of models and support needed in the school is examined in Chapter 2. This chapter also details a gap analysis with the goal of identifying opportunities for close collaboration amongst stakeholders. Chapter 3 puts the plan into action, outlining a detailed strategy, which identifies what is needed by the school to implement the change, describing how to close the gaps, with the aim of bringing the school in line with the vision for change based on the proposed OIP framework.

### **Leadership Focused Vision for Change**

#### **The Existing Gap between the Present and Future State**

Brass (2011) highlights three major reasons for lack of female access to education in developing nations: (1) inefficient and corrupt state run developmental programs; (2) lack of governmental and political accountability; and (3) weak state governance mechanisms. Referring to the organizational context of the school analyzed through the PESTE analysis, the environment of the school is complex, historically based in cultural and societal norms, which reinforce female marginalization. Patriarchal leadership dominated by male centric pedagogical approaches in the school contributes towards a system of governance which discourages female participation in the educational process. Through the provincial Vision 2030 (TP, 2014-18), the government is fully committed to permanent elimination of gender inequality in education, with the strategic objective of improving literacy access for girls in rural areas. However, marginalization of girls in the school can be attributed to provincial government's weaknesses in implementing the mandate entrusted to it. There are current gaps in the educational system, which exist within the community and amongst school teachers' reluctance to accept girls in

their classrooms. For most of the history of the district where the school is situated, girls primary school enrollment and retention, creation of female friendly environment and infrastructure, as well as employing more primary female teachers has not matched policy guidelines laid down in provincial education plans. Efforts by the provincial government have seen less overall success as girls are still seen as a second priority to boys, with their access at best limited to only religious education (Rizvi, Khan, & Shaikh, 2014).

### **Priorities for Change**

Improving girls' education in rural areas of TP depends upon the availability of trained teachers, parent-teacher partnerships, and the will of the provincial government. In 2014, for the first time in its history, the provincial government embarked upon a 5-year student enrollment and literacy strategy under the TP (2014-18), with gender equality as one of the priority areas of the plan. However, reducing marginalization of girls does not mean merely increasing their number in the school through recruitment drives. Marginalization of girls is a complex two-way process between school and community, whereby there are concerns about female equity and human dignity. Hence, the marginalization process needs practical implementation of plans with support at the grassroots level. As an external education consultant, I am accountable to the provincial education department, the NGO, school, and the village community. It is my responsibility to:

- Support the nongovernmental organization (NGO) in successfully adopting a school,
- Take the lead role in formulating gender policy and strategies,
- Improve curricula to suit the needs of girls,
- Implement teaching approaches that are gender-sensitive,
- Develop teachers as role models in the community,

- Enhance awareness among males about female education & community participation, and
- Recruit more female teachers, and invest in their training.

The progress made in this OIP is being shared with the NGO and provincial authorities, with elements such as SMC already in initial operational phases.

### **Envisioned Future State**

By the end of 2018, primary schools in TP are required to increase primary net enrollment rate of students from 59% to 77% with annual growth rate of 3% to 4% per year (TP, 2014-18). From past policy analysis the target of achieving universal primary education has been an elusive one, with a realistic understanding since 1998 that the government does not have the necessary capacity to achieve its defined targets. The government run primary school therefore needs external support from a NGO in the village to provide support and address marginalization of girls. Through adoption of the school by the NGO, the strategic plan for the school addresses leadership, cultural, and personal capacities in a headmaster and teachers, necessary to implement a change in order to reduce marginalization of girls. The proposed plan is one where an NGO adopts the school as a two-year pilot project. NGOs, unlike the private sector, are not seen in direct competition with governments, but as alternatives that can effectively partner with and sustain governments' efforts to reach marginalized populations. The NGO will cater to the underserved girl population of the village by converting the government school into a community institution, in partnership with the village community. The NGO school adoption pilot project will facilitate the school and village community in developing gender sensitivity spread over a period of two years. This will help in planning strategic interventions based on analysis and tracking of various components. For example, quarterly progress, impact on students (specifically girls), assessing headmaster and teachers' effectiveness and efficiency,

enhancing accountability and transparency, data collection and verification, databanks, team capacity building, school infrastructure, and tracking harmony between the community and school. Regular evaluation will provide a framework to assess whether the partnership between the school, NGO, and community is achieving its desired objectives at the sub-district level or needs alignment to achieve its goals. The NGO will thus be a catalyst (Adelman & Taylor, 2007), assisting in unfreezing current marginalization practices (Cawsey et al., 2015).

The envisioned future system under the NGO presents a preferable alternative to the present status-quo, as it realizes the vital importance of gender development as well as accepts the sensitivities surrounding female education. By engaging teachers (female and male), students (girls and boys), the school assists the community in realizing that by disempowering women, society suffers long term negative consequences, which become evident in healthcare costs, economic deprivation, illiteracy, and scarce opportunities.

### **Organizational Change Readiness**

This section outlines how the Change Path Model (Cawsey et al., 2015) and Kotter's Eight Stage Process (1995, 1996) are used to analyze organizational change readiness. The section also uses Lewin's (1951) Force Field Analysis Model, addressing competing internal and external forces, identifying key stakeholders who shape change, examining ways to overcome their resistance.

### **Understanding the Need for Change**

It is important to assess change readiness of the school before identifying specific requirements and making recommendations. The issue of marginalization of girls and the underlying discriminatory social practices in the school need to be understood from multiple perspectives. Bolman and Deal (2013) identify this as "multiframe thinking" (p. 21), namely



structural, human resource, political, and symbolic. Bari (2000) supports this by arguing that male social rank, power, and privilege need to be uncovered by examining the power struggles that exist in terms of dominant male narratives. As seen in Figure 1.2, this problem of practice is framed through two theories of change blended together in a single model.

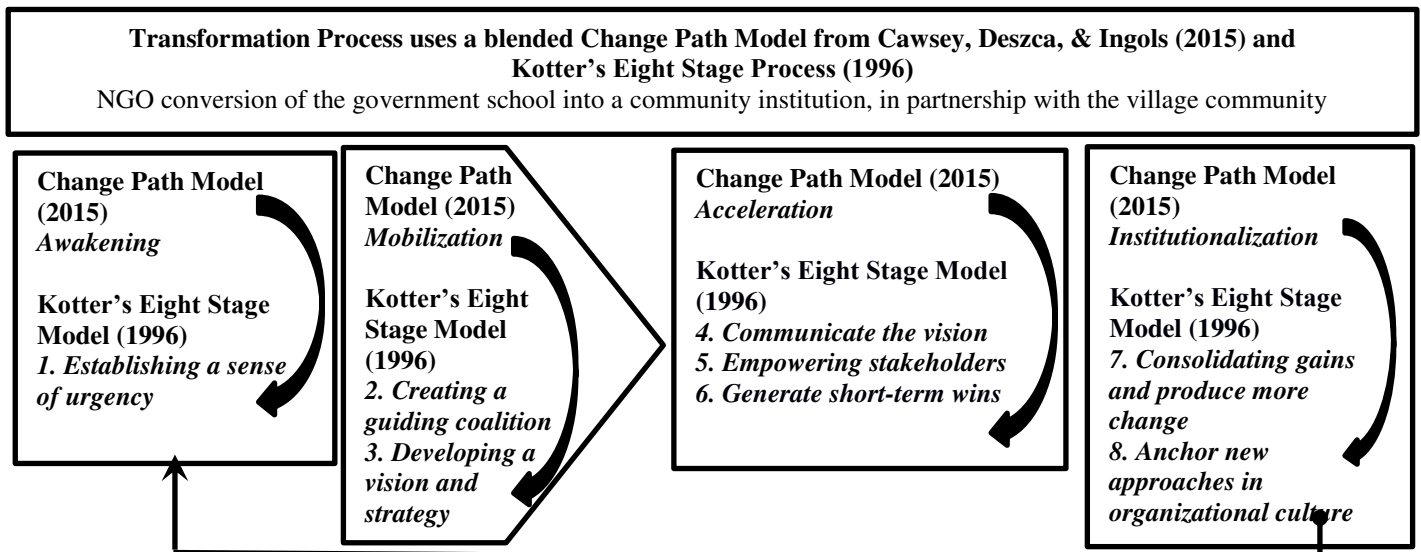


Figure 1.2. Blended model of Cawsey et al. Change Path Model and Kotter Eight Stage Model.

Adapted from *Organizational Change: An Action-Oriented Toolkit*, by T. Cawsey, G. Deszca, & C. Ingols, 2015 (3rd ed.). Los Angeles, CA: SAGE

The first model is Cawsey et al. (2015) Change Path Model which provides guidance to those helping the primary school change from marginalizing girls to a more inclusive environment. The Change Path Model (Cawsey et al., 2015) provides guidance and structure to move the OIP forward. The first stage of the model, awakening, is very helpful in assessing change readiness of the school. Cawsey et al. (2015) note the importance of change readiness as part of the change management process, identifying it as a critical precursor to successful implementation. They note the importance of energizing the system by communicating to people the need for change. They suggest seeking and making sense of external data, perspectives of other stakeholders, internal data, and personal concerns and perspectives (Cawsey et al., 2015).

They caution that, “many change-management programs fail because there is sustained confusion and disagreement over: (1) Why there is a need for change; and (2) What needs changing” (Cawsey et al., 2015, p. 96).

The second model is Kotter’s Eight Stage Process (1996), which prescribes a step-by-step movement towards leading and managing change. Kotter’s (1996) change process assists the change agent with “how” (Cawsey et al., 2015, p. 39) to change. The sequential and prescriptive nature of Kotter’s model is helpful, keeping in perspective political and cultural sensitivities surrounding education of girls in Country A. By combining the two models, the OIP develops a process for long term democratization of education in the school. By combining Kotter’s (1996) creation of a sense of urgency, and Cawsey et al. (2015) awakening phase, it is anticipated that the organization will be shaken out of the current status quo, laying the foundation for “mechanisms for governance” (Adelman & Taylor, 2007, p. 63) and community buy-in. External intervention, in the form of a NGO acting as a catalyst, will provide support in unfreezing current marginalization practices, bringing about systematic change readiness. The proposed structure is one where the NGO will cater to underserviced girl population of the village by converting the government school into a community institution, in partnership with the village community.

Kotter’s (1996) creating a coalition, developing a vision and strategy, and Cawsey et al.’s (2015) mobilization phase will help in creating a sense of belonging for stakeholders. The envisioned future system presents a preferable alternative to the present status-quo (Cawsey et al., 2015, p. 375). Feudal thinking maintaining marginalization will be changed and long-term benefits of girls’ education communicated. This is done when the NGO develops integrated community mobilization through network building, trust, shared leadership and empowerment. In order to help the school reduce marginalization of girls, NGO policies will be instruction

oriented based on data analysis which will cater to equal provision for girl students, classroom monitoring, and teacher appraisals. The NGO mandated change will not just be a top-down imposition, but a partnership between the NGO, government, community, and school to train empowered teachers, who understand gender inequalities.

Incorporated within Kotter's (1996) communicate and empower employees' stages, and Cawsey et al.'s (2015) acceleration phases will be critical in leading and developing successful change initiative to understand organizational dynamics and its performance. This cannot be done without diagnosing the intensity and nature of the problems in the enterprise. To break feudal control the first change is to be within the school. Hargreaves (2000) identifies that teachers need help if they are to change their class practices, making individuals contributing members of the community. Therefore, with the assistance of the NGO, external bureaucratic controls will be decentralized to an independent and accountable SMC (Members: Parents of children in school, district bureaucracy, teachers, headmaster, area feudal politicians, religious clerics, and NGOSDEP). A very important focus of change will be engagement of parents. Buzdar and Ali (2011) note that fathers hold an important exalted position in the Country A's society. They need to understand the importance of educating their daughters. Getting parents, particularly fathers, on board will relax family opposition, gradually dissipating feudal and religious control within the home, encouraging girls to gain confidence in the schooling environment. Lastly, Kotter's (1996) short term wins, consolidation and anchoring new approaches stages, and Cawsey et al.'s (2015) institutionalization phase will be used so that classroom barriers between male teachers and female students are diminished. A clear emphasis will be on teaching excellence with particular attention on girls' achievement. In the short term, existing male teachers will be trained, so as to be more accepting of girls as equals in their

classrooms. Mothers who are very concerned about their daughter’s education and adult women will be an asset to the change plan. Informal mother networks (IMNs) in the village will be leveraged to accelerate change, overcoming the shortage of female teachers. IMNs will also work with the headmaster in developing indigenous best practices manuals containing curriculum which is relevant to rural women’s lives, such as reproductive health, human rights, marriage decisions and career planning. The Change Path Model (2015) and Kotter’s Eight Stage Process (1996) are used in Chapter 2 to select the best change path forward, identifying what needs to be changed and why.

**Competing Internal and External Forces**

In assessing the school’s readiness for change, Lewin’s (1951) Force Field Analysis Model is used. Although dated, the model is foundational in comprehending level of school change readiness. As seen in Figure 1.3, key forces impacting this change include the provincial government and the NGO.

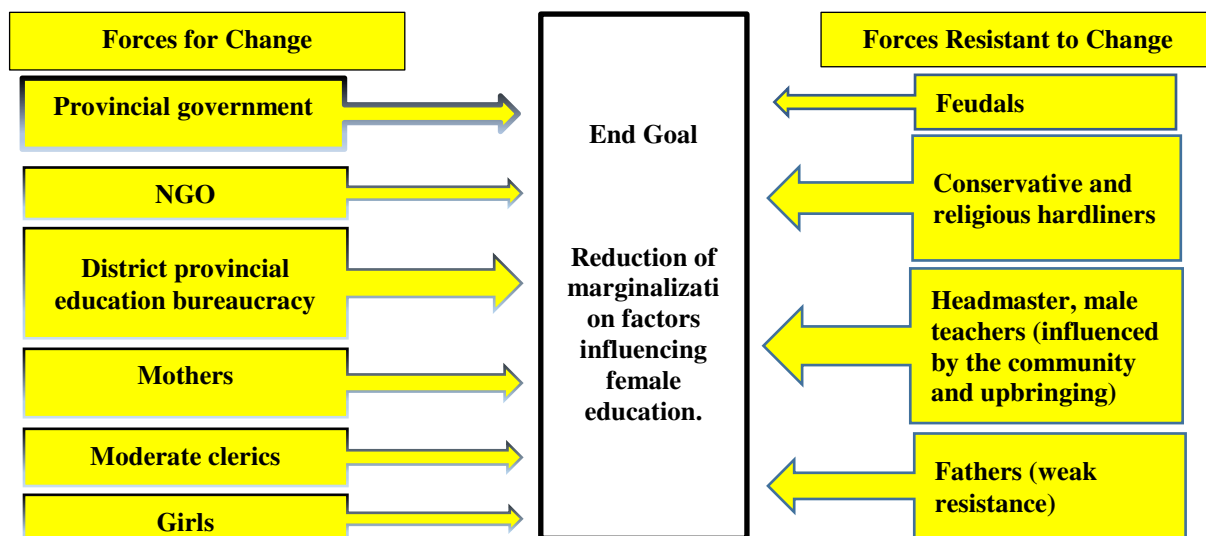


Figure 1.3. Forces for and against organizational change.

Adapted from *Field Theory in Social Science*, by K. Lewin, 1951. New York, NY: Harper Row.

Other supporting forces include the bureaucracy (to which the headmaster reports in the provincial education department). The bureaucracy is highly powerful and educated with potential to facilitate change at policy level, and can be an innovator (Cawsey et al., 2015) in the process. At present it is neutral in terms of marginalization of girls and will shift support towards educating girls, provided its power base is not threatened. Mothers who have undergone marginalization themselves are particularly concerned about their daughters' future. In my rural Country A experience, mothers are "early adopters" (Cawsey et al., 2015, p. 203) facilitating the path to change. Moderate clerics have the ability to reason with hardliners, providing strong support to the success of the OIP. Girls are a key force who want to be innovators (Cawsey et al., 2015), but are acted upon by forces that are resistant to change.

There are three major forces of resistance acting against girls in the school: (1) girls omission from school's mainstream culture; (2) marginalization of girls in the subcultures of their respective classes; (3) girls own interpretation of how society's "external reality" (Connolly, James, & Beales, 2011, p. 425) treats them as objects, ostracizing them. Female support is dependent on how their parents react to the change process, and presents a leverage in the form of mothers in the household.

Restraining forces include village feudals (who support hardline religious and conservative clerics, pressurizing fathers to keep girls out of schools). While conservative elements are informed skeptics (Cawsey et al., 2015), hardline religious clerics are resistant to change. The conservatives have a high potential of threat or support. However, religious hardliners can present opposition. The headmaster and teachers are culturally pressured with intentional resistance towards girls in classrooms. This OIP invites teachers into discussion with moderate clerics, provincial bureaucracy, and parents via SMC, focus groups, and Volunteer

Student Teacher Community Clusters (VSTCCs). NGO gender experts mediate these sessions, as they are crucial to the success of this OIP. The sessions are used to facilitate discussion, where current gender best practices, legislation, empowerment, and concerns are raised. Fathers are crucial to the success of the OIP, but are “laggards” (Cawsey et al., 2015, p. 203), under societal forces and provide an effective channel to feudal and religious clerics to exercise direct influence inside the household. The impact of each force is different, yet the influence of each is raised to address female marginalization in the school.

Shafa, Karim, and Alam (2011) recommend that change initiatives should include the entire school as a unit of change, understanding key forces that influence school culture. To bring about formal changes in the school, the headmaster and teachers must receive support from the provincial bureaucracy. As an external education consultant in the NGO, I am working with identified officials to implement school wide changes to reduce marginalization of girls (details in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3). To achieve this, it is imperative to gain and maintain the trust of the village community and provincial bureaucracy, which has expressed support for this change.

### **Chapter Conclusion**

Chapter 1 identifies the importance of this PoP, and the organizational improvement to the school, village, and province. The plan highlights importance of teacher training and critical pedagogy with a focus on learning needs of girls, in partnership with local community and provincial bureaucracy. The NGO adoption process responds to global and national requirements, bringing benefits to the social and economic life of the area. Chapter 2 focuses on the planning and development for this OIP, with specific analysis on framework for leading the change process, critical organizational analysis and possible solutions to the problem of practice.

## **Chapter 2: Planning and Development**

Chapter 2 builds on Chapter 1 of this Organizational Improvement Plan (OIP) by providing a framework for leading the change process. Chapter 2 is divided into five sections. The problem of practice (PoP) for this study: How can the marginalization of girls be reduced in a provincial primary rural school in Country A provides the basis to examine the five sections. The first section, frameworks for leading a change process offers an analysis of how change occurs in the school and identifies theories about organizational change. The second section undertakes a critical organizational analysis exploring what to change by reviewing models that isolate gaps between the current organizational state and the new vision. Solutions for addressing the problem of practice are reviewed. Lastly, an analysis of leadership approaches to change and ethical responsibilities of organizational actors are identified.

### **Leadership Approaches to Change**

Marginalization of girls is a complex two-way process between school and the community, whereby there are concerns about female equity and human dignity. Hence, the marginalization process needs careful consideration of several tools and critical factors, such as improving overall infrastructure of the institution, technical and academic support incentives for teachers, focus on gender specific skills and content, participatory teaching and learning, meaningful community participation, and formation of School Management Committee (SMC). Hence, within the context of the school the situation is dynamic, needing people-oriented leadership perspectives, which aim not only to achieve organizational objectives, but also to develop human resources, so that followers become leaders of the future, bringing sustainability to the pilot project (Williams, 1998). There is a need for leadership styles that open lines of communication, empowering followers. The clear message should be that the leader strongly

believes in girls' capabilities and is an ethical individual, so that faith and dignity are restored in education.

As indicated in Chapter 1, I see myself as a servant and transformational leader in life and within the context of this OIP. Stone, Russell, and Patterson (2004) argue that the transformational leader concentration is on the organization, where followers' commitment towards change objectives is derived from leader's behaviour, while servant leader's focus is on the followers. This PoP needs a combination of servant and transformational leadership approaches so that trust is built up with stakeholders, followers are empowered, and communication channels flow openly and smoothly. I have had the chance to travel extensively in Country A, specifically its rural and tribal areas. Every household I have visited, including the village this school is situated in, girls are seen as subservient individuals, who must remain behind closed doors, following what males tell them. Therefore, as an external consultant, I am providing leadership to address a sensitive issue that not only seeks to change the organization, but also challenges followers' mindsets. I therefore aim to be humble, but at the same time seek commitment to organizational change from followers.

### **Transformational Leadership**

Burns (1978) argues that transformational leaders focus on reforming organizations by influencing the moral values of followers. Bass & Steidlmeier (1999) support this and emphasize that a truly transformational leader exhibits morality, ethics, and authenticity. They note that the inspirational part of the style "provides followers with challenges and meaning for engaging in shared goals and undertakings" (p.188). As mentioned in Chapter 1, while serving in the civil service of Country A, I refused to join the unethical culture and therefore am known as an honest officer in the country, who can leverage stakeholders (bureaucracy, village clerics, parents, and



moderate clerics) to join me on the proposed change. Northouse (2015) supports my thought process by noting that transformational leaders are strong role models, with a highly developed set of moral values that builds trust among followers. Avolio, Waldman, and Yammarino (1991) note four behaviors that constitute transformational leadership: (1) idealized influence; (2) inspirational motivation; (3) intellectual stimulation; and (4) individualized consideration. In this OIP, these four behaviors help me in operationalizing the goals emphasized in reducing the marginalization of girls. They help in developing trust between followers and consultant, helping in communicating the vision and inspiring stakeholders to the futuristic state. Once trust is built, communication lines open up developing relationships in the community, which assists in knowing expectations within the school and community. Once expectations are known, a rational account of issues confronting girls is clarified. This not only questions conservative and religious thought processes that marginalize girls, but also challenges followers to try out new ways of bringing girls into mainstream education. Once followers are exposed to newer thought processes, the external consultant along with nongovernmental organization (NGO) gender experts mentor various stakeholder groups by communicating with them individually. This stage also sets the tone for empowerment of girls and other female participants, while observing how change is progressing from one stage to another. By doing so, the community realizes that I am not interested in status, but totally dedicated to their service and betterment (Laub, 1999).

### **Servant Leadership**

Greenleaf (1977) notes that a servant leader does not view leadership as a status, but as an opportunity to serve the community, developing potential of followers and learning from the process and feedback. While it is important that the followers in this OIP see me as an ethical individual, it is equally essential that stakeholders are not antagonized so that they see change as

an intrusion in their cultural practices. It is imperative that the proposed change values all parties, addressing their concerns. Sendjaya and Sarros (2002) argue that servant leaders put others' needs before their own, taking the harder path to achieve goals. Laub (1999) identifies six components of servant leadership: (1) valuing people; (2) developing people; (3) building community; (4) displaying authenticity; (5) providing leadership; and (6) sharing leadership. The components listed above assist me in undertaking the endeavor of reducing marginalization of girls, which is fraught with personal risks for me, but stems from my commitment to this cause, which has roots in my childhood. I have been blessed in life and career to have come from the same underdeveloped area where the school is situated. Sen (2006) provides me with guidance, as I place myself at the servitude of the people of the village and children of the school, so that girls' lives can be positively transformed, so that their talent and capabilities are not wasted.

Since I am in a position of leadership, exercising power over followers who look up to me for guidance, I must be careful not to fall prey to limitations of both leadership styles. Stone, Russell, and Patterson (2003) note that transformational leadership presents personal power in the shape of charisma and loyalty, which makes followers trust the leader blindly. The authors also highlight limitations of servant leadership in the form of followers wanting to psychologically reciprocate service that may lead to their manipulation by the leader. The OIP mitigates against such manipulation by way of NGO checks and government oversight. It also diminishes such behavior at my personal level as I move change forward by respecting village clerics and feudals, encouraging followers, delegating power to them to serve each other and overall school's objectives of reducing marginalization of girls.

### **Framework for Leading the Change Process**

Addressing marginalization of girls in one primary rural school has a much broader intention which specifically addresses the topic of social justice in provincial schools (Furman, 2012). Given the scope and sensitivity of the intended change, the process has the potential to become complicated. The OIP requires what Fisher (2016) notes as taking a broader view, drawing from multiple leadership perspectives by creating a model for engaging stakeholders. Two relevant models for organizational change, Cawsey, Deszca, and Ingols Change Path Model (2015) and Kotter's Eight Stage Model (1996) provide guidance in effectively assessing the school's response to change, as attempts are made to shift the culture from its present state.

The first model Cawsey, Deszca, and Ingols (2015) Change Path Model includes four stages: Awakening, Mobilization, Acceleration, and Institutionalization. This model was chosen as it combines both process and instructions. With its practical and actionable steps it is characterized so that change agents are able to awaken the organization by scanning the internal and external environments. Its mobilization phase provides the specifics of what needs to change by engaging people, thus deepening our understanding of the gaps that exist in the school. The model's acceleration phase provides the action items that need to be implemented, culminating in transitioning the organization to the new state under institutionalization. The second model Kotter's (1996) Eight Stage Model was chosen due to its highly prescriptive nature. Although Kotter (2012) updated his model via the 8 accelerators, his older 8 step model is more appropriate for this OIP. This is due to the traditional hierarchy of the school and rural agrarian setting of the province, which requires cautious step-by-step incremental and linear change. Kotter (1996) explains that the first four steps: (1) establishing a sense of urgency; (2) creating the guiding coalition; (3) developing a vision and strategy; and (4) communicating the change

vision all deal with softening the status quo. Steps (5) empowering stakeholders; (6) generate short term wins; and (7) consolidating gains introduce newer approaches culminating in step (8) anchoring new approaches in the culture of the organization. Table 2.1 shows how the two models can be blended to work together.

Table 2.1

*Blended Model of Change Path Model and Eight Stage Model*

Change Path Model (2015)	Kotter’s Eight Stage Model (1996)
<p style="text-align: center;">Awakening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying the need for change</li> <li>• Gap analysis</li> <li>• Vision for change</li> <li>• Communicate the vision</li> </ul>	<p>(1) Establishing a sense of urgency</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Mobilization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make sense of change through formal systems and structures</li> <li>• Assess power and cultural dynamics</li> <li>• Communicate the need for change</li> <li>• Leverage change agent personalities, knowledge, skills etc.</li> </ul>	<p>(2) Creating the guiding coalition (3) Developing a vision and strategy</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Acceleration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Systematically engage and empower others</li> <li>• Use appropriate tools to build momentum, accelerate and consolidate progress</li> <li>• Manage the transition and celebrate small wins</li> </ul>	<p>(4) Communicating the change vision (5) Empowering stakeholders (6) Generate short term wins</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Institutionalization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Track changes periodically to gauge progress and make changes</li> <li>• Develop and deploy new structures, systems and knowledge to bring life to the change</li> </ul>	<p>(7) Consolidating gains (8) Anchoring new approaches in the culture</p>

*Note.* Adapted from *Organizational Change: An Action-Oriented Toolkit*, by T. Cawsey, G.

Deszca, C. Ingols, 2015 (3rd ed.). Los Angeles, CA: SAGE.

Kotter (1995) argues that change fails when the foundation steps are poorly understood. Keeping in view sensitivities surrounding girls’ education in rural areas of Country A, Kotter’s (1996) foundation steps, and instructively direct model plays a vital role in this OIP. The Change Path Model (Cawsey et al., 2015) on the other hand provides flexibility, analyzing the school from inside, with a diplomatic tone. By embedding within the four stages of Change Path Model, the eight prescriptive stages of Kotter, the OIP can move forward incrementally to achieve a

planned organizational change. The following section addresses why and how the frameworks are valid for addressing marginalization of girls in the school.

### **Awakening and Kotter's Stage 1**

These two stages combined address the sense of complacency that besets the organization, giving reasons as to why the school needs to change. Through the awakening stage and creating a sense of urgency, the problem of marginalization of girls is uncovered. Before awakening can take place, the school and community need to understand how this problem not only affects girls directly, but the overall social fabric of the village. A sense of urgency provides the propelling external neutral force in the form of a NGO which then mediates amongst stakeholders, understanding differing point of views, awakening the organization out of its present status quo. Bano (2008) in a study from Country A shows that NGOs present an effective alternative to inefficient government run programs, playing a crucial role in educating rural primary school children by mobilizing parents and communities in the country. Rose (2009) in a critical analysis draws on the experiences of India, Ethiopia, Ghana, and Bangladesh. She says that NGOs "provision as complementary to state provision is becoming apparent in national education plans" (p. 231).

### **Mobilization and Kotter's Stages 2 and 3**

Once the external and internal challenges are identified, the change consultant mobilizes the community by identifying formal and informal dynamics of the school. This is important for this OIP as the consultant needs a coalition that will later help in supporting and spreading the vision for change. The guiding coalition helps in understanding the internal strengths and weaknesses while analyzing the external opportunities and threats confronting the school. This understanding helps the external consultant in communicating change to the right people who

can then become opinion leaders in the community. The structure of the guiding coalition is formed in such a way that it includes a diverse set of stakeholders who can mobilize change. They include the following: NGO gender experts; Provincial DEO and SDEO; Community (moderate religious scholars, village feudals, and hardline religious clerics); SMC; and parents (specifically mothers and fathers). Once the guiding coalition is in place, I as the external consultant will introduce a planned vision for change that assists in moving the organization from its present to a future state. These stages are expected to counter resistance as they start to challenge the existing deeply entrenched culture within the school.

#### **Acceleration and Kotter's Stages 4, 5, and 6**

After the common vision and strategy is set in place, the next challenge is motivating individuals so as to build momentum and accelerate the change process. This is done by communicating the vision. This is a crucial stage where the school and the community start to understand what the future entails, so that all are driven by the common end goal: successfully reducing marginalization of girls in the school. A variety of methods are used to communicate the change vision: village council meetings via SMC, conducting focus groups and questionnaires (with the headmaster, teachers, moderate religious scholars, parents, and students), and class observations (so as to gauge the level of opposition and support that exists in implementing change). Acceleration will be hampered if the headmaster and teachers are not empowered to welcome girls in the school. Any obstacles (such as school control from the provincial capital, teachers hiring, absence of females in the school, and power of hardline clerics) have the potential to put brakes on the change process. Tajik (2008) alludes to his study of five external consultants in Country A; who confronted "political concepts of power, authority, influence, voices, and rights" (p. 265). He goes on to identify that these external

consultants mitigated adverse circumstances by being facilitators, technical experts, critical friends, and holding moral values (accountability and dedication towards change). At the operational level these consultants engaged stakeholders through dialogue and observations, but were able to customize their role as per the circumstances of different situations. Kotter (1996) makes it clear that production of short-term improvements is an important step in the change process. In this OIP, celebrating short term wins is crucial to manage a successful transition as it reinforces a strong message for the resisting parties, while instilling confidence in supporters of this change.

### **Institutionalization and Kotter's Stage 7 and 8**

Proving to the community and school via short term wins builds further momentum over a long term producing more consolidation in the change process, which assists in institutionalizing change. This stage in the models is extremely important for this OIP as it proves to the community that change is possible and assists the external consultant in tracking and measuring indicators of girls' success in the school. Examples of short-term wins include getting feudal and religious hardliners into a dialogue by obtaining their support via moderate religious clerics. This will be done by communicating the socioeconomic rewards of education. Maletta (2003) in an analysis from Afghanistan supports economic benefits of female education, arguing that girls with schooling are twice more likely to be employed than girls who never attend school. Aikman and Unterhalter (2005) highlight social rewards by arguing that educating women leads to increased immunization for their children and reduction in birth rates. The change term will emphasize to the hardliners that gender inequality, and lack of women empowerment are impediments in economic growth of their community (Ahmad, Said, Hussain and Khan, 2014). Other examples of short term wins include holding funfairs, establishing a travelling

library, and hiring at least two female teachers. In the medium term, running advocacy campaigns led by mothers, teachers training, and increasing girls' enrollment are important steps. Optimal utilization of human capital in the community and improving infrastructure for girls are some long-term indicators.

Edwards (1999) studied the impact and sustainability of four NGO led projects in India and Bangladesh, which he called "dynamic and complex" (p. 361). He measured their success and failures by observing NGO collected data, consisting of secondary literature, semi-structured interviews, and direct observations. He concluded that in the Bangladeshi case the results were not positive. This was due to lack of social mobilization, demonstrated by village community capacity building activities lacking connectivity with the grassroots efforts, and concentration on "heavy handed interventions" (p. 371). In the Indian case, the NGO's with government oversight were given more freedom to implement the projects at the grassroots level, which included "vertical links" (p. 370) between village stakeholders and government, "horizontal links" (p. 370) between people, collaboration with NGO's, and access to bureaucracy. In addition to handing over control, gradually delinking the NGO from the organization to boost confidence of indigenous population, taking a long-term approach, and being flexible as strategy evolves were instrumental to success of these projects. Therefore, in this OIP, involvement of community and SMC are important aspects that set the basis for succession planning for a transfer of the school back to the government, with the NGO and external consultant working in the background. In case of problems in sustainability, there is a contingency plan which extends the pilot project to a time frame agreed upon by the government and the NGO, with the external consultant proactively engaged to further support the change process. The next section undertakes a critical organizational analysis of the school, specifically addressing what to change.



### **Critical Organizational Analysis**

For the NGOSDEP to receive buy in from stakeholders, it must present a convincing case on what needs to be changed. This section explores the importance of gap analysis and helps in identifying what change needs to occur so that awakening and mobilization can take place. For example, Cawsey et al. (2015) discuss “gap analysis” (p. 52) as a means to contrast the current state with the proposed vision for change. This helps in knowing what part of the school can readily undergo change and where change will be complex. Thus, the emphasis of the analysis is to address “entanglements” (Cawsey et al., 2015, p. 199), seeking change to achieve gender justice, assisting the school in accepting marginalized girl students in classrooms in a progressive and constructive environment (Blackmore, 1999).

In this scenario, framing change is crucial to success. This OIP uses Nadler and Tushman’s (1980) Congruence Model to conduct a gap analysis and understand what steps need to be taken to achieve the desired future state. Nadler and Tushman (1989) explain the relationship between the organization and its external environment, arguing that external factors affect entire organizations as well as its members whose value system is tested during the change process. Cawsey et al. (2015) via the Nadler Tushman model challenge external consultants, like myself, by observing that “an ability to analyze the organization’s external environment and see implications for action in the organization is a central change skill” (p. 69).

Since the school is acted upon by external and internal forces, reduction in marginalization of girls in the school requires a “fit between the organization and its environment” (Cawsey et al., 2015, p. 74). Achieving this necessitates stakeholders’ commitment to the cause and realities that exist in the school and the village. Program objectives can be achieved when change leaders and coalition members work together to meet the needs of girls,

within the boundaries of cultural realities, while responding to domestic and global demands. As illustrated in Figure 2.1, the village school congruence model depicts a basic framework with relevant inputs, throughputs, and outputs. The model presents variables which lay the foundation for sustainable reduction in marginalization of girls in the school, bringing about a social change, through institutional and community engagement. The school and its components are critical in understanding how they interact to perform the transformation functions. The four parts of the transformation process help in undertaking a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis of the school. The final phase of the model, outputs, considers three factors at the organizational level, (1) goal attainment (based on strategy meeting organizational objectives); (2) utilization of resources by building up capacity; and (3) adapting to environmental dynamics of the school, determined by the nature of the strategy, the individuals who are members of the organization, and the informal processes and structures. Nadler and Tushman (1980) emphasize that the question is not to find “one best way” (p. 46), but to manage effective combinations that fit together. Hence, the congruence model is action-oriented with practical outputs that consider not only visible structures, but also invisible and subliminal political undertones that engulf the school as a whole. In keeping with province’s Vision 2030 (TP, 2014-18), that seeks to provide equal pedagogical opportunities for girls, the more the strategies impacting marginalization of girls align with ground realities (inputs), external formal and informal forces (transformation process), the more feasible and sustainable is the change. In order to permanently anchor change into the new envisioned culture of the school, various constraints, as seen in Figure 2.1 should be kept in perspective, as they can manifest themselves throughout this OIP (outputs).

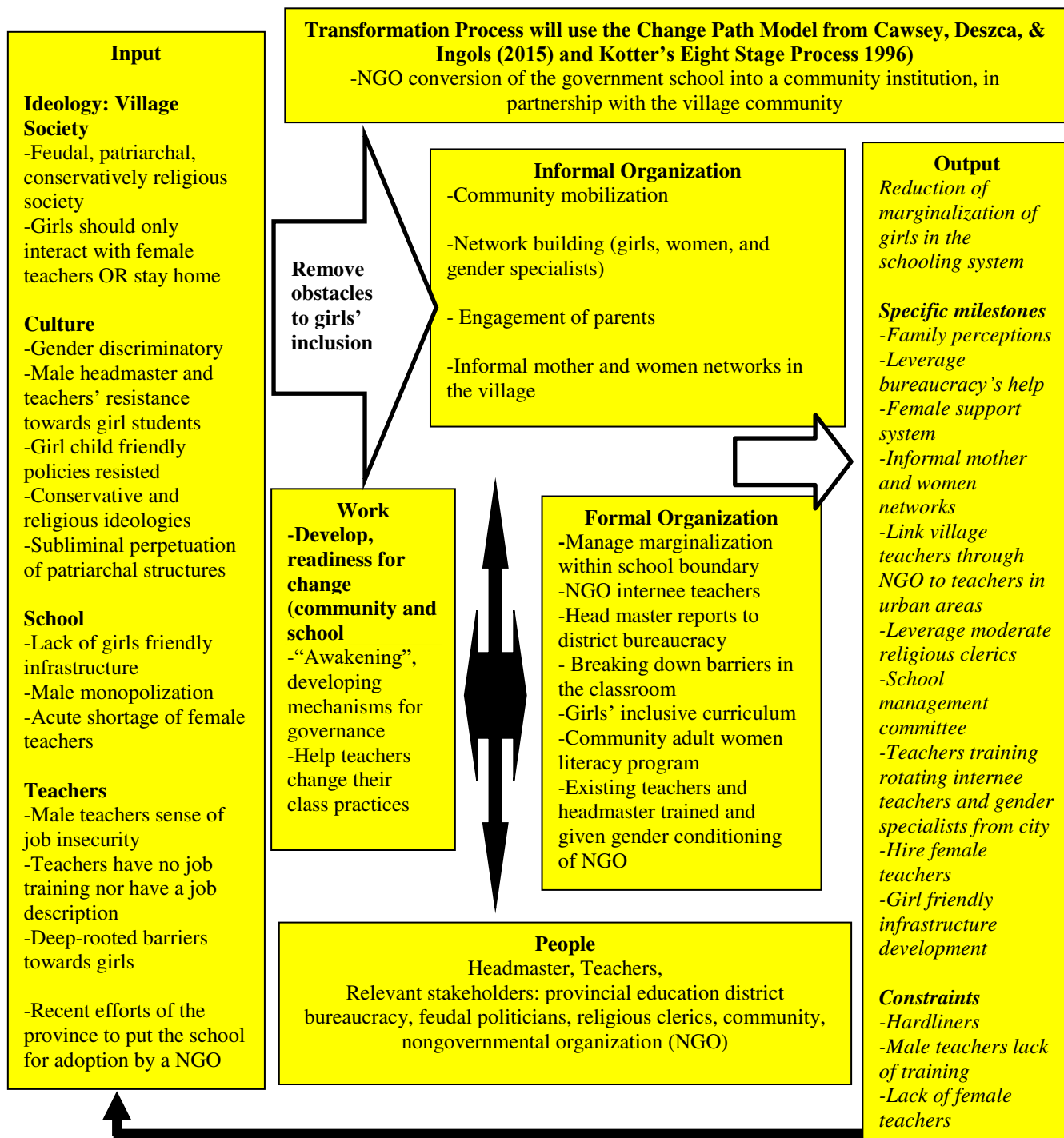


Figure 2.1. Village school congruence model.

Adapted from "Organizational frame bending: Principles for managing reorientation," by D.

Nadler, and M. Tushman, 1989, *Academy of Management Executive*, 3 (3), p. 195.

Detert, Schroeder, and Mauriel (2000) explain that the congruence model provides a good basis for describing “various fits, such as between individual and task, between task and the organization, and between formal and informal organization, all potentially useful explanations of micro level and macro level behaviors and outcomes” (p. 858).

### **Inputs**

Nadler and Tushman (1980) describe inputs as “givens” (p. 39). They are divided into four categories. First is environment, which situates the school within the larger context of the environmental forces that create opportunities or exert pressures impacting performance of the organization. Second is resources, which include the school’s tangible and intangible resources. Third is history, where the school’s present behavior is influenced by how values and norms evolve over time. The above three are classified as basic inputs. The fourth is categorized as the “derivative” (Nadler and Tushman, 1980, p. 41) input, known as strategy that determines how the school uses its inputs to respond to change, achieving desired outcomes. Since its establishment, the school has been plagued with the sidelining of girls. Given the low literacy rate in the village, economic pressures on parents (who are largely farmers), lack of effective teachers training, and an outdated curriculum, girls from disadvantaged backgrounds are in danger of remaining marginalized. In response, for the first time in 2005, civil society with support of TP, National Commission for Human Development (NCHD), The World Conservation Union (IUCN), and District Education Board (DEB) initiated a data collection exercise aimed to target low levels of literacy, especially for females in rural areas (DEP, 2005). Considering the recent efforts of the province under Vision 2030 and adoption of the school by the NGO as resources that form inputs, the district is committed to eliminating gender inequality in education, with the strategic objective of improving literacy access for girls (TP, 2014-18).

Taking guidance from Fullan's (1992, 1991) advice on working with stakeholders, my objective is to open lines of communication, which can be seen as a short-term win. However, strategy must be aligned with how resources are matched to meet requirements of the school. This is achieved by undertaking a SWOT analysis in the transformation stage.

### **Transformation**

Nadler and Tushman's (1980) transformation phase helps the school in determining how various components interact to perform the transformation function. While moving from the input to the transformation stage, the model helps the external consultant in highlighting gaps in the current state of the school. This determines deployment of appropriate decisions in response to environmental opportunities and threats, understanding the strengths and weaknesses of the organization. The school is coeducational, but as evidenced by enrolment numbers, over the past five years, girls have been consistently dropping out. The next section undertakes a SWOT analysis, which will inform the change agent on how to proceed with the change process.

**SWOT analysis.** By undertaking a SWOT analysis, it is observed that within the transformation stage, the school and community have various strengths. These strengths play a significant role in making the change process effective. For example, in terms of school strengths, existing teachers and the headmaster have the experience, capacity, and leverage to add real value to the system. Martin (2009) identifies this as integrative thinking, searching for solutions within the human architecture of the whole organization. Given gender training by the NGO, this group is positioned to lead the guiding coalition, advancing a clear vision for girls' education by being in touch with stakeholders (comprising of area feudal politicians, religious scholars, and girl students). With support from TP, enhanced district government commitment, and mothers support towards girls learning opportunities, the school is well positioned to be

adopted by the NGO. Recognizing economic difficulty of parents, the government is providing free textbooks, uniforms, and scholarships to minimize dropouts.

There are four areas of concern that need to be highlighted, as the school moves forward in its adoption process. As noted in Chapter 1, the first weakness is that the school is engulfed by conservative and religious tensions (Latif, 2009). A direct consequence of this is what Shah and Shah (2012) note as a major weakness, a “gender barrier” (p. 183) that precludes girls from participating in educational activities. The second weakness is the lack of parental and community involvement, economic deprivation, and gender sensitive learning curriculum. The third weakness is data tracking and monitoring mechanisms in enrollment and attendance. Even if data is collected, it is not housed in a single database nor distributed across various provincial departments, like finance and human resources, leading to weaknesses in program evaluation, resource sharing, and decision making. Lastly, the loss of credibility of public schools leaves people no choice but to keep daughters at home, giving priority to boys’ education. The school knows it is unable to recruit or retain girls and female teachers, because of internal and wider community issues. The biggest opportunity therefore lies in the recognition of the weaknesses and action by TP to create a District Education Board (DEB) in 2004 (DEP, 2005). The first task of the board was to start collecting data on school demographics holding intensive stakeholder consultative meetings involving civil society, NGOs, civil bureaucracy, politicians, and international development institutions. This helped in identifying key issues that were proving to be hurdles in eliminating gender disparity. Additionally, loosening control from the provincial capital and by devolving power to the NGO at the sub-district level towards improving girls’ access to schools, there is potential to reduce marginalization of girls.

I see three threats in the adoption process. First, the challenge this change will present to feudal and conservative control. Action cannot be radical as it will further marginalize girls. The change has to be gradual, empowering girls, yet aligned with political and symbolic realities of rural society of Country A. Second, the political landscape of the district. Many fathers are farmers working on feudal lands. However, political feudal lords depend on farmers to vote them into political power, and so have a robust vote bank in parents of girls. Third, NGO adoption can be seen as a threat. Petras (1997) argues that NGOs undermine the welfare state in colluding with the World Bank and western neoliberal supporters. Adoption can therefore be perceived by stakeholders as colonial intrusion from an external agency.

### **Outputs**

By identifying challenges and applying SWOT analysis, the school is able to focus on moving to its future state. The ultimate objective is to create gender balance, appreciating individual differences, and reducing the marginalization of girls. Marginalization reduction process needs careful consideration of a cultural shift by considering several critical factors. They include improving overall infrastructure of the institution, technical, and academic support incentives for teachers, focus on gender specific skills and content, participatory teaching and learning, meaningful community participation, and formation of a SMC.

### **Possible Solutions to Address the Problem of Practice**

Three possible solutions to address this PoP are explored: (1) maintaining status quo; (2) undertaking reform in the provincial education department; and (3) adoption of the school by a NGO. Each alternative outlines the resources needed, detailing how each is different, describing their advantages and disadvantages. One solution is recommended, and this solution is used to move forward with the implementation, evaluation, and communication plan in Chapter 3. Shah

(2010) argues that educational solutions should respect indigenous “cultural and belief systems” (p. 28). The option chosen in this OIP proposes a context specific indigenous solution, within the rural context, where women’s social interaction is controlled by males (Bari, 2000).

### **Possible Solution 1: Maintain Status Quo**

Although there is a push from provincial leaders for change, the first solution considered is to maintain status quo. As mentioned in Chapter 1, the school is embroiled in a bureaucratic quagmire with an ineffective SMC. Support from the province is fragmented, which may be meeting the needs of those who want to perpetuate the status quo (e.g. feudal politicians and conservative religious clerics), but with little strategic direction. This option will also not address lack of governance at the school level and integrative thinking targeted toward understanding gender differences (McInerney, 2009; Simkins, Sisum, & Memon, 2003).

**Resources needed.** This solution requires the least amount of resources. However, society loses out on resources that girls could contribute as educated professionals and mothers. In the long run, Sen (1999) notes the economic effects of this solution, “what people can positively achieve is influenced by economic opportunities, political liberties, social powers, and the enabling conditions of good health, basic education, and the encouragement and cultivation of initiatives” (p. 5).

**Financial resources.** Since the school is controlled by the provincial education department, maintaining the status quo will keep burdening the provincial capital in sending its officers to monitor the institution. This necessitates covering travel, hotel, and meal costs. The efficacy of such travels is questionable, as most of the time such trips turn into pleasure excursions for officials vacationing in rural areas, putting extra burden on the school to entertain



them. In addition, recurring resource disbursement by the province is not transparent, subjected to questionable audit practices marred by frequent corruption scandals.

***Time resources.*** There is a substantial time commitment needed from the education department to hold meetings by sending its officers to the village. Lack of transparency and clarity takes a lot of time to communicate decisions to school management and teachers, as they are not part of the decision making process. There is also a lack of information and communication technologies making it hard to communicate and retrieve relevant information.

***Human resources.*** Under this option human resource needs are not a priority item. The provincial administration's human resource department has minimal connection with the education department. This is evident from a few officers controlling the entire provincial education hierarchy with minimal input sought from the headmaster. At the school level, lack of female teachers, lack of accountability and training of male teachers, and wider consultation with successful NGO models highlight lack of human resource and succession planning.

***Technological resources.*** Under the status quo option, the school lacks even basic technological resources. Any equipment needs assessment and purchase is subjected to pilferage and financial irregularities.

**Benefits and disadvantages.** It is clear from the above discussion that this solution does not need additional human or technological resources. Internally, male school teachers continue to ignore girls in classes and the headmaster shares no accountability, as they are not part of the provincial education department hierarchy. There is no priority to hire more female teachers. Consequently, people continue to lose faith in the public-sector schooling system. Status quo is the most comfortable option, not requiring a change. However, in a province where 57% of

primary girls never go to school, the school needs change that contends with external and internal influences, which dictate girls' education policies (Bajwa, 2011).

### **Possible Solution 2: Undertake Reform in the Provincial Education Department**

This option seeks to strengthen the provincial education department so that it can build capacity in individual schools. Since this solution is undertaken at the provincial level, one of the many purposes of this reform is to reduce marginalization of girls across the province. The overall goal of this solution is to dilute power at the center by disbursing authority at the provincial district level. McDonnell (2005) is careful in advocating for such devolution as it makes the provincial government dependent on districts which can have "highly variable priorities and capacities" (p. 34), while at the same time trying to maintain consistency in educational standards. This option aims to create a new cadre of education officers bringing them closer to schools and reporting directly to the district administrators.

**Resources needed.** While this solution is a sensible alternative, it presents great challenges in terms of scale and overcoming entrenched interests within the education department and the school, that are in favour of the status quo. The success of this solution assumes that education administrators are appointed on merit from within the education hierarchy, thus challenging culture of corruption and requiring provincial legislative changes.

**Financial resources.** This solution requires developing mechanisms that ensure equitable transfer of funds to the district level, which would be required to disburse resources to sub-districts. This can present grave challenges in a province where rural districts are far behind urban areas in terms of development. This option also requires developing specific formula based models, ensuring that every school under a sub-district has equal access to the pool of money. The above scenario requires substantial financial commitment from all tiers of the government.

***Time resources.*** Time is a significant issue in this solution. It will require time commitment from the province to reengineer the provincial education structure, requiring sustained efforts that aim to change the value system of officers and individual schools. Watson and Khan (2005) are critical of wholesale reengineering approaches. They point to Country A's National Rural Support Programme Network with community organizations being beneficial to education, but weak in connectivity to citizen community boards. This is because the model is robust on paper, but takes a lot of time to mobilize in rural communities.

***Human resources.*** It is clear from time commitments that this solution needs heavy investment in human resources. Since funding will be divided between federal, provincial, district, and sub-district levels, there is the added challenge of who is responsible in what proportion for school training, communication, and community engagement. Moreover, this solution not only needs investment in the education department, but also needs citizen capacity to actively participate in school governance and complex district budget management.

***Technological resources.*** This option requires intensive investment in technology. Automation is key to implementation of this option as a number of departments need to be virtually connected. However, this poses a challenge considering the present state of education, with weak coordination between the province and its far flung rural districts.

***Benefits and disadvantages.*** In addition to creating an opportunity for the province to revamp its faulty structure, this presents a chance to automate the entire education bureaucracy. Honey, Culp, and Carrigg (2000) note that education improvement is not an isolated phenomenon, but part of a greater plan to address challenges in schools. Hence, this solution has the potential to run into serious sustainability problems such as: (1) reform will be solely entrusted with the same feudal politicians holding political offices; (2) addressing

marginalization of girls will not be the sole mandate for the province; (3) funding model runs the risk of financial embezzlement and inter-district conflict; and (4) before such a solution is implemented, schools need to have necessary infrastructure, which they presently lack.

### **Possible Solution 3: Adoption of the School by an NGO**

This option offers an optimal solution to make a significant change in the school. First, this solution is manageable as it targets one school as a two-year pilot project. Second, NGOs are solely dedicated to educational improvement in rural areas of the province, providing a transparent system with a neutral forum to voice discontent on gender inequality (Blackmore, 1989). Bano (2008) notes that NGOs have proven to be a strong force that have exposed government's lackluster performance in the education sector, highlighting responsibilities of the state. She elaborates that NGOs have strong accountability measures for resource use that has exposed corruption in developing nation's academia. Edwards and Hulme (1996) note that NGOs have multiple accountabilities, "downwards to their partners", and "upwards to their host governments" (p. 967). In collaboration with the NGO, existing school administration, teachers, provincial bureaucracy, and village community, a step-by-step process is followed to introduce respectful integration of girls in the school culture, gradually reducing their marginalization.

**Resources needed.** Reduction in marginalization of girls is not just about increasing their number, but by building capacity in the school to accept them as equals. It is about the experience of these students when they enter their village school. Moreover, it is about integrating girls in the school culture while respecting indigenous practices and values. It is about creating an optimal learning environment for teachers and sustained support for SMC and the community through financial, human, and material resources. Moreover, it is about taking the community on board, which has a crucial role to play in this change plan (Nasir, Farooq, & Ali,

2013). In Chapter 1, I identified major gaps that exist in the school. This then led to identification of my responsibilities and actions that need to be undertaken in order to address those gaps.

***Financial resources.*** As the school adoption starts, the provincial government earmarks funds for the NGO to use in the school. Involvement of bureaucracy is important as they will disburse funds to the NGO via a financial board comprising of DEO, SDEO, SMC, and NGO representatives. Since government departments will not be responsible for spending money, there is less chance of financial mismanagement. By using existing resources efficiently within the school and the community, this option presents an effective way to make people valued assets in the adoption process.

***Time resources.*** Although this solution requires the most amount of time, it is controlled as a two-year pilot project. The adoption process requires formal connections between the NGO, community, government, and politicians. It therefore implements reform, not only top down but also bottom up. As an external consultant, the biggest challenge I will face is to learn from success and failure at different points in time, so that the adoption process is flexibly fine-tuned with timely feedback into the implementation and monitoring processes, discussed in Chapter 3.

***Human resources.*** The human resources required in this solution need careful consideration of reorientation of existing human assets within the school and in the community. As indicated in Chapter 1, as an external consultant and an indigenous individual of the province, I know that an effective strategy requires involvement of indigenous people of the village. This resource base is complemented by NGO gender experts and staff who will come at a cost, and will need to be paid, transported, and housed in the village. Moreover, this solution needs hiring of female teachers, training of existing males, tapping into formal, and informal networks in the community, and formation of village volunteer clusters.

**Technological resources.** The school is situated in a rural area with technology in the form of legacy systems. Any upgrade must undergo a needs assessment, matching present human understanding and future usage. NGO IT experts will work with the external consultant to bridge the gap between latest systems and how can they be customized to fit in the schooling environment, as per end users' requirements.

**Benefits and disadvantages.** This solution provides an organizational design that encourages participative change. It provides the often missing local accountability and clarity of roles that plague the public sector in the province. This model is cost intensive in terms of financial and time resources, posing a challenge to motivate a demoralized human aspect, which has lost faith in public sector institutions. As a change agent, I need to be cognizant of maintaining a balance between quality and quantity, not scaling the project too quickly; otherwise there are many detractors who may hinder the momentum of change. Table 2.2 summarizes the possible solutions capturing the essence of and comparing each option.

Table 2.2

*Possible Solutions to Address the Problem of Practice*

Possible Solutions	Solution Features	Resources Needed	Benefits and Disadvantages
<b>Solution 1: Status quo</b>	Reinforces conservative and religious elements.	Needs considerable resources as it stifles female human freedom.	Continues to drain public exchequer in terms of financial and time resources.
<b>Solution 2: Undertake reforms in provincial education department</b>	Seeks to strengthen the provincial education department so that it can build capacity in individual schools.	Presents great challenges in terms of scale and overcoming entrenched interests within the education department.	Creates an opportunity for the province to revamp its faulty education structure. Solution has the potential to run into serious sustainability problems.
<b>Solution 3: Adoption of school by NGO</b>	In collaboration with the NGO, partnering with existing school administration, bureaucracy, and community, a gradual process is followed to integrate girls in the school.	Requires significant resources. However, the burden will not fall on one institution alone, but shared amongst various community actors.	Provides an organizational design that encourages participative change, giving ownership of the project to the community and raising self-respect of teachers.

**Solution selected.** The solution chosen to move forward with this OIP is the third one: Adoption of the School by a NGO, as it has the greatest potential to deliver results in reducing marginalization of girls in the school. As indicated in Chapter 1, under guidance from the NGO, the SMC in the school has already been finalized and is in its initial phases of operationalization. At this point in time, the education department and the school lack the capacity to effectively operationalize change tools and policies. This capacity is coming from the autonomous NGO which has close ties to district and sub-district level governments and the school. The NGO is in a very good position to create the capacity in the school to manage human resources, budgeting cycles, technology needs, while being cognizant of time commitments. The next section introduces the Plan Do Study Act (PDSA) model which is used to monitor and evaluate the selected solution as it moves forward through implementation phases.

**PDSA Model**

This OIP change process is implemented by using Deming’s scientific method (Moen & Norman, 2010), later called the Plan Do Study Act (PDSA) model, shown in Figure 2.2.

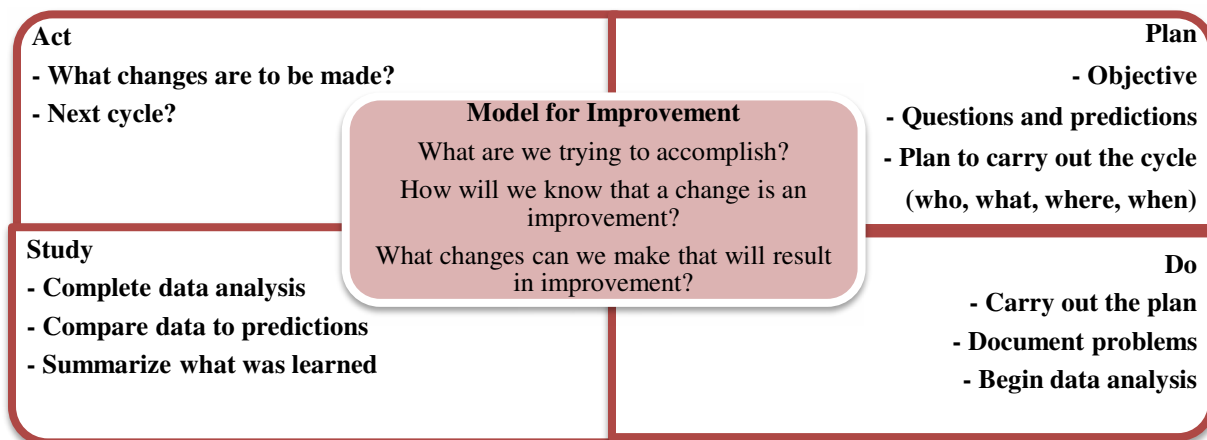


Figure 2.2. Clearing up myths about the Deming Cycle and seeing how it keeps evolving.

Adapted from *Circling Back*, by R.D. Moen, & C.L. Norman, 2010. Retrieved from

<http://www.apweb.org/circling-back.pdf>. Copyright 2010 by [www.qualityprogress.com](http://www.qualityprogress.com)

The PDSA model helps the NGO and external consultant to assess the effectiveness of the change plan, adjusting it, ensuring that every part of change follows continuous improvement.

**Plan.** The problem of practice in this OIP is: Reducing the marginalization of girls in a primary rural school in Country A. In the planning stage, specific questions to be considered are: (1) what is the opportunity for improving marginalization of girls in the school; (2) who should be involved in the change process; (3) what is the current situation; (4) who will the NGO serve by making this change; (5) once stakeholders are identified, I ask: What do identified stakeholders want; (6) what potential actions can be undertaken; and (7) what is the proposed solution and action plan.

**Do.** This stage is about the actual implementation of the change plan, asking to what extent are we following the change plan and collecting relevant evidence. This is done first via operationalization of NGO Sub-district Education Project (NGOSDEP). The schema includes a detailed investigation with answers to six guiding questions (identified in Chapter 1) in the planning stage. For example, activities include the operationalization of SMC, the study of meeting agendas and minutes, the creation of a School Gender Plan (SGP), evaluation of teacher performance, observation of classes, and collection of student and parent feedback (through home visits, house surveys, and focus groups via participatory rural community advocacy and village community clusters).

**Study.** This stage provides the feedback and evidence that tells me how implementation is moving forward. This approach undertakes the before and after change methodology. The NGOSDEP as the governing body is instrumental in inviting the newly constituted SMC executive body to identify the degree to which they understand that girls are marginalized in the



school. Results of this activity will be compared to the results after the school is adopted by the NGO. The SMC executive body (members: SDEO, headmaster, two female and two male teachers, two moderate and two hardline clerics, one feudal village politician, two NGO gender experts, three mothers, three fathers, two male students, two female students, and the external consultant) will discuss all six guiding questions (identified in Chapter 1) and share findings with SMC members.

**Act.** A report of recommendations and findings will be shared by the NGO and external consultant with the provincial government. The key decision here is presenting the province with tangible evidence that the adoption process has indeed helped in reducing marginalization of girls, creating an inclusive environment in the school. Moving forward the province will have two choices. One is to decide whether the two-year pilot project needs to be extended. The second is to analyze if a sustainable capacity has been built within the school and the community so far as the SMC is ready to take charge and work with the government to return the school under the province, continuing to work toward eliminating marginalization of girls.

### **Leadership Ethics and Organizational Change**

Chapter 1 and Chapter 2 have clearly laid out that ethics play an important role in the successful implementation of this OIP. Kanungo and Mendonca (1996) note that without leadership ethics, an organization is at risk of corruption and ineffective change. Morgan (1993) argues that a leader's ethics are directly proportional to followers' perceptions. Islam (2004) notes that ethical malpractices in the form of cultural norms continue to marginalize women in Country A's education, a phenomenon he calls the "ghettoization" (p. 325) of institutions. The public's confidence in provincial government run schools is at an all-time low with little hope that there will be any change in government run institutions towards gender equity, due to

corruption in plan execution, nepotism in hiring, and cultural biases. Mohammad and Kumari (2007) in a case study analysis targeting seven teachers from rural Country A note moral and ethical responsibilities of educators, highlighting that they help in undertaking self-reflection, promoting a “meaningful learning environment” (p. 371). Therefore, with a strong belief in the dignity and empowerment of girls, the school needs to incorporate ethics into the NGO adoption process. Husselbee (2000) highlights the importance of ethics when NGOs enter into partnerships with institutions, emphasizing that primary stakeholders should not be ignored in the negotiation process. Bano (2008) challenges ethical practices of NGOs in school management, where their leaders claim to be driven by social justice, but have personal stakes, such as flow of development aid, salaries, and donor agencies political priorities. I understand that every solution has pros and cons and while there is no perfect answer, given the circumstances of the school, its external and internal environments, the NGO adoption is the optimal solution.

Therefore, when leading with transformational and servant leadership, the NGO and I need to be guided by a very high level of ethics and morality, providing cultural, structural, community, and individual support (Silins, Mulford, & Zarins, 2002). By doing so we will be challenged by a culture which discourages girls from seeking pedagogical opportunities. Bass (1985) notes that transformational leadership is a process through which followers respect, appreciate, and trust their leader. However, Yukl (1998) is cautious arguing that in transformational leadership the leader’s vision and personal motivation play an important role in steering followers toward ethical behavior. Smith, Montagno, and Kuzmenko (2004) develop commonalities between transformational and servant leadership via “high ethical standards and concern for the individual” (p. 87). They argue that in servant leadership the primary

organization goal is human dignity while in transformational leadership an ethical basis is the foundation for success.

The solution of NGO adoption of the school to support marginalized girls, encouraging their intellectual and social development, lends itself to the high moral ground, advocating that the school should provide a caring and nurturing environment to every student. The outstanding feature in the OIP is not to challenge men, but to work with them as partners and facilitators of change. The process is not easy, but fraught with challenges, requiring me to use all my leverage with the bureaucracy, parents, clerics, and girls. The NGO adoption provides me with the ethical platform to guide the change. World Bank (2003) notes that NGO's have an advantage over public sector institutions as they are not bound by civil service rules. The school, at present, needs strategic direction and leadership, which are free from corruption, political, and religious pressures operating openly and honestly, while respecting human dignity.

### **Five Principles of Ethical Leadership**

Northouse (2015) states that leaders must follow five principles of ethical leadership: respect, service, justice, honesty, and community. These principles are explored below.

**Respect.** Respect is important for girls who attend the school. In Chapter 1, sociocultural factors identified how girls are marginalized via overt and covert symbols. Girls are sensitized from a very early age that their education has lowest priority in society. They face challenges in getting educated, either by being an economic liability or being hounded via prying eyes of feudals and hardline religious clerics. NGO gender experts and the external consultant need to be very careful in navigating the state of these primary school girls. They must promote respect, equal participation, leveraging strength of moderate religious clerics, mothers, and bureaucracy, and reassure stakeholders to encourage girls to attend and stay in school.

**Service.** It is the ethical responsibility of the external consultant and NGO to create a culture of service that assists girls at every step to overcome limitations that create barriers to their entry and survival in the school. Brown and Ashman (1996) note that NGO mediated intervention creates bridges among “donors, government, and grassroots populations” (p. 1476), delivering services that solve problems, not requiring long drawn investments from grassroots stakeholders. The authors go onto highlight that such “bridges” (p. 1472) lead to recognition of not only common problems, but bring stakeholders together to discuss mutual interests.

**Justice.** Andrabi, Das, and Khwaja (2002) take up Country A’s case noting that the country’s history in gender educational disparity is well documented, where girl enrollment in schools has been much lower than boys. The school is dominated by men, where female teachers are not given the opportunity to serve and male teachers are not part of the pedagogical improvement process. Saito (2003) supports this social justice cause via Sen’s Capability Approach, noting that commitment towards improving educational practice requires “a fair distribution of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and educational success and qualifications” (p. 108).

**Honesty.** When students enter the school, they are promised very little. School administration and teachers go through the motions of sporadic teaching, with little honesty in their educational practice. Children are at their mercy, with parents having no choice in schooling options. Girls’ overall experience in the school is not the best and as alumni they have few good stories to share. Under the adoption process the NGO and consultant need to give an honest message to parents and students on the existing situation, while at the same time letting them know how the two-year pilot project intends to gradually overcome marginalization.

**Community.** The symbolic frame examines how “humans make sense of the chaotic, ambiguous world” (Bolman & Deal, 2013, p. 244). Gu (2015) sheds light on Country A girls’

culturally defined gender roles that limit their socialization with local communities. At present, girls feel a sense of inferiority, lack of community building, leading to mental wellness issues and irregular attendance. With the participation of stakeholders, servant leadership facilitates the emergence of village community as partners, which along with transformational leadership sets the tone for overall change in the school.

### **Chapter Conclusion**

As noted in Chapters 1 and 2, reducing marginalization of girls in the school is a challenge. Chapter 2 specifically addressed planning and development, where I emphasized two important points: (1) alignment of strategy with changing school contexts; and (2) to be careful as not to impose a short-sighted solution. I am therefore approaching change from a moral purpose, leveraging my agency, and integrating my philosophy at every stage of the change process. This complemented with transformational and servant leadership creates an enabling environment in which to develop local capacity to take charge of the school as a sustainable entity (once the NGOSDEP exits the project). In Chapter 3, a change implementation plan, methods of communicating the changes, process for monitoring and evaluation, and future steps are discussed.

### **Chapter 3: Implementation, Evaluation, and Communication**

This chapter connects theory and practice, building on the organizational context and vision for change presented in Chapter 1, as well as the analysis and theoretical frameworks in Chapter 2. The problem of practice (PoP): How can the marginalization of girls be reduced in a provincial primary rural school in a developing country in Asia (Country A) provides the basis to examine Chapter 3. The chapter outlines the design of a practical implementation, evaluation, and communication plan that assists the external consultant to mobilize change in the school, and at the community level. The chapter concludes with next steps and future considerations.

#### **Change Implementation Plan**

##### **Goals and Priorities of the Planned Change**

Brown and Ashman (1996) and Fowler (1997) argue that sustainable development in developing nations requires mobilization of different actors, including grassroots level stakeholders, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and government agencies. Brown and Ashman (1996) share experiences from Lesotho, Country A, and Philippine grassroots and NGO supported programs, contending that cooperation with local groups in solving problems increases long term project sustainability and produces “social turbulence” (p. 1475), challenging actors who want to maintain status quo. Hannay, Jaafar, and Earl (2013) argue that such practical approaches help organizations in effectively sharing knowledge at all levels, generating opportunities for the system to create sustainable cultural change. Keeping in focus the overall environment of the primary rural school, the change implementation plan in this chapter uses the revised model of organizational change developed in Chapter 2, which combined the Change Path Model (Cawsey, Deszca, & Ingols, 2015) and Kotter’s 8 Stage Model (1996).

**Strategic organizational chart.** The current organizational chart presented earlier in Chapter 1 shows a complex hierarchy with many levels of bureaucracy. Within the pilot project, a School Management Committee (SMC) is created which is given the task of developing the strategic plan that aims to address current gaps in the school. This dedicated committee’s focus is to develop a program that brings together stakeholders identified in Chapter 2, first addressing their concerns, and then moving the goals forward in a proactive manner. The adoption process proposes a revised reporting structure, so that the school and its SMC become sustainable future entities, without the NGO and external consultant, once the two-year pilot project ends. Moving forward, I propose a new chart as shown in Figure 3.1, which delays the bureaucratic hierarchy, gives a primary role to the SMC, and recognizes the role of community members, parents, Informal Mother Networks (IMNs), teachers, students, and Volunteer Student Teacher Community Clusters (VSTCCs) in the new structure. The new chart supports girls, as the community, government, and school are collaborating in promoting inclusive primary rural education (Arif and Saqib, 2003).

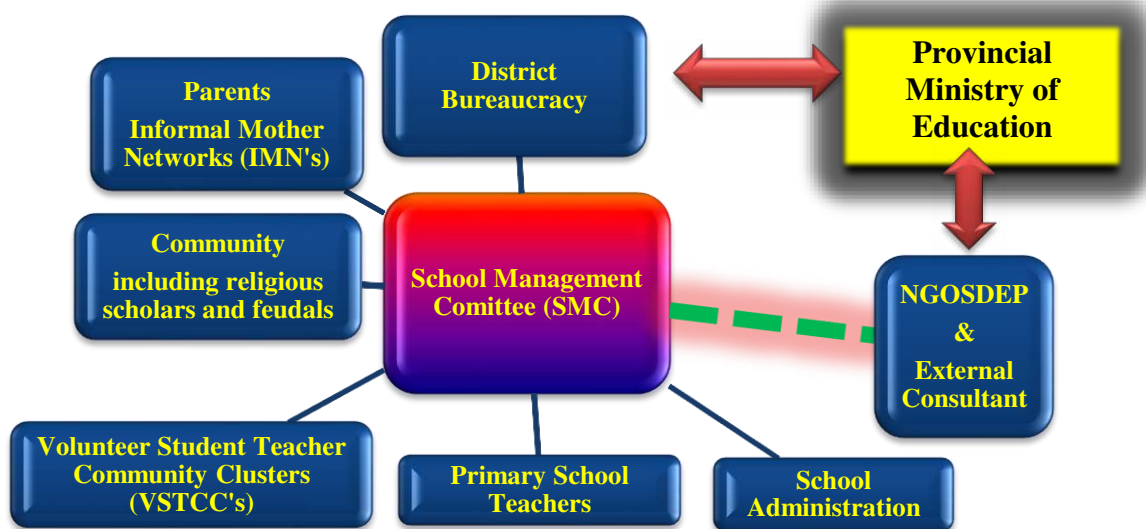


Figure 3.1. Rural primary school proposed structure.

In light of the above, this OIP needs guidance from what Conzemius and O'Neill (2002) identify as SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound) goals. Table 3.1 outlines five SMART goals presenting a broad formal program design.

Table 3.1

*Nongovernmental Organization Sub-district Education Project (NGOSDEP) SMART Goals*

Goals	Preliminary Targets
<b>Goal 1</b> -Set up a School Management Committee -Design a 2-year pilot project	-Start participatory rural advocacy campaigns to negotiate with hardline religious scholars and feudal lords -Immediately open lines of communication with the village community -Develop terms of references (TORs) for a School Gender Plan (SGP) -Develop a student travelling library (Sub-district Reading Program, SDRP)
<b>Goal 2</b> -SMC to develop and launch the SGP -Teachers development to maximize opportunities for student development	-Develop a teacher coaching and mentoring plan -Provide opportunities for teachers to interact with NGO gender experts -Collaborate with global education agencies (United Nations) -Initiate female teachers hiring -Start data collection on school enrollment, and student performance -Encourage Volunteer Student Teacher Community Clusters (VSTCCs), Informal Mother Networks (IMNs)
<b>Goal 3</b> -SMC to improve quality of education for girls The NGOSDEP intends to achieve the following results in 2 years	-Institutionalize, track, and share data collection on enrollments, retention, and out of school girls. Increase enrollment of girls by 20% in the first year to reach 30% by end of second year. -Achieve a retention rate of 40% for female students in the first year and increase it to 50% in the second -Design tools and measures to track and assess change -Create incentives for teachers and girl students -Develop policies to transition girls from one grade to another
<b>Goal 4</b> -Establish a Communication Unit (CU) -SMC's Village community communication and engagement strategy	-Facilitate partnership between SMC and community, specifically parents -Engage mothers and coach fathers -Guest speakers from farmers, feudal, and religious scholars -Form 4 VSTCCs in the first year led by girls, boys, and school teachers as outreach of SMC targeting 8 major areas of the sub-district. By second year, VSTCCs to be increased to 8, increasing their reach to 16 areas -VSTCCs in the sub-district to achieve a 20% student reading benchmark in year 1, to be increased to 30% in year 2 -Village-school funfair festival: Hold this festival every 6 months (includes a science fair, games and award gala for students). The fair is to be held on rotation basis on a feudal farm, religious places, and government rest house -Share student learning and assessments with parents
<b>Goal 5</b> -Build school and SMC capacity for project sustainability	-NGOSDEP to transfer budgetary powers to SMC at the end of first year -NGOSDEP and SMC to continuously assess whether change initiative is successful or repeat the cycle (condensed in one year) -Conduct a quarterly evaluation of student, specifically female records, adopt data informed decision making -Strengthen SMC by collaborating with other SMC's, NGO's and schools -Equip school with technology, build databanks, train relevant staff, develop provision for future programs



Conzemius and O'Neill (2002) argue, "because SMART goals provide a basis for assessing progress, and a tool for assuring that team efforts are focused on strategically important targets, they become the engine that drives continuous improvement and learning" (p. 6). The five goals stated above provide opportunities for the school and government to consider current practices as leaders, and adapt school practices to best support teachers, girls, and community.

### **Implementing the Plan and Managing Transition**

This section outlines ways to comprehend stakeholders' reactions, engage and empower stakeholders, determine support and resources, anticipate potential implementation issues, build momentum, and acknowledge change plan limitations.

**Stakeholder reactions.** In light of the vision for change, the implementation plan needs to be mindful of stakeholder reactions. In the initial awakening phase a sense of urgency is created with supportive stakeholders, so as to start the transition from status quo toward reducing marginalization of girls in the school. In this change, the most affected stakeholders are the girls. Their participation is crucial in the change process, which must be carefully planned, and gradually executed, within an enabling structure provided by NGOSDEP. As suggested previously in this OIP, girls will be part of larger bodies, for example VSTCCs, funfairs, travelling libraries, and the SMC executive body. At no time during the pilot project will girls be involved in any direct activity, but will work in the background. This is essential so that stakeholders are not antagonized. Ahmad, Said, Hussain, and Khan (2014) argue that Country A girls face educational challenges from other stakeholders, such as male dominance, conservatism, religious perceptions, female segregation, and parents' reluctance. Therefore, this OIP needs to consider external and internal stakeholders, being mindful of their responses to reducing marginalization of girls. For example, some religious hardliners may not be willing to

support this change as it erodes their leverage in the community. Alternatively, some feudals who have a political power base in the village may feel threatened by having educated women from their communities. It is at this stage that change leaders and I use components of transformational and servant leadership.

In a rural society that has very low confidence in government institutions, my personal moral purpose and modelling, network with feudals, bureaucracy, and moderate religious clerics is used to create trust in the community. Working as one of the community members, not intruding in cultural practices, leveraging the community's local power, I will have discussions with each stakeholder group, soliciting feedback. This assists me in knowing various reactions on the ground, helping in adapting the plan as per local aspirations, thus gradually opening communication lines and presenting a rational account of the problem. The mobilization phase (Cawsey et al., 2015) is critical in creating a guiding coalition of opinion leaders who have leverage to support me in formulating the change vision and moving it forward (Kotter, 1996).

**Engaging and empowering stakeholders.** Hesselbee (2000) emphasizes the importance of common goals where change leaders need to “encourage communities to define their own targets” (p. 383), allowing time to consult primary stakeholders. The author also argues that such consultative partnerships give rise to accountability among stakeholders, reducing risk they would not take alone, and increasing their adaptability to the change process. As part of the guiding coalition (Kotter, 1996) and mobilization (Cawsey et al., 2015) phases, the success of the plan requires the participation of opinion leaders from the community, who are able to champion the cause of reduction of the marginalization of girls.

Tajik (2008) states that for the purpose of sustaining and developing school capacity, external consultants as leaders have shown to have great influence and “create a collegial culture

in schools and develop linkages between schools and local communities” (p. 254). Therefore, I will identify key champions from the community and the school (among teachers and students). For example, externally, mothers and elderly women (IMNs), and moderate religious scholars command great respect in the community. In addition, VSTCCs can also encourage participation by running initiatives like a travelling library, mentorship programs, and advocating for girls’ education in various areas of the sub-district. Smith, Stockbridge, and Lohano (1999) shed light on the importance of networks in rural areas of Country A. They note that informal networks and an individual’s societal position are found to be important determinants for achieving positive results. By leveraging the influence of the village networks, I will be able to coach them, by demonstrating transformational leadership. Internal to the school, gender conditioning training is targeted at school teachers, who are important stakeholders when it comes to ensuring project sustainability. There is going to be a gradual change in the current approach towards teaching in the school. Currently, teachers have limited capacity to support female students in their classes. The NGO and external consultant provide the support and opportunity for teachers to be innovative and apply new approaches in the school (Smith, Montagno, and Kuzmenko, 2004).

**Identify required resources.** As mentioned in Chapter 1, reduction in marginalization of girls is not just about increasing numbers of female students, but building capacity and integrating girls in the school culture, while at the same time respecting indigenous practices and values. As the change process moves into the acceleration phase, resources are needed to consolidate progress. Edwards (1999) argues that successful community supported projects spend at least 50% of resources on “community level training and awareness raising” (p. 369). Currently, the school is dependent on the province for resources, with no separate planning to run female centric programs. Moving forward, it is recommended that the government channels

resources directly to the SMC, which will be trained by the NGO in resource management during the two year pilot project.

Chapter 2 identified that the realistic and manageable solution lies in adoption of the school by a NGO. This solution requires significant resources in terms of finance, human, and time, but the burden is shared among various community actors. In order to have transparency in financial disbursement, the NGO will have oversight along with the bureaucracy's support. Defining a span of two years for the pilot project helps in controlling the scope of the adoption process. Reduction of marginalization of girls requires putting NGO resources at the disposal of the school, while at the same time using effective mechanisms to optimally use existing school resources. For each of the defined goals in Table 3.1, NGO facilitators work with and coach various stakeholders. For example, NGO gender experts will be working with male and newly hired female teachers, facilitating the formation of VSTCCs, and encouraging the creation of IMNs. The NGO's mediation assists as a catalyst for participants to learn from each other, engaging in productive discussions, reaching consensus over points of disagreement, and consolidating points of agreement (Loyarte and Rivera, 2007). Since the senior provincial government administration is on board in undertaking the NGO adoption process, initiatives outlined in this OIP will be approved and resources made available for the NGOSDEP.

**Potential implementation issues.** Two potential implementation issues will be discussed below. First, within the awakening and mobilization phases, there may be resistance from village feudals, hardline religious clerics, the headmaster, male teachers, and fathers (Shah & Shah, 2012). Without their participation, change will not be possible. A significant barrier is male insecurity against female empowerment (Critelli, 2010). Therefore, Kotter's (1996), establishing a sense of urgency among supportive stakeholders, and developing a coalition are important

steps. Hannay, Jaafar, and Earl (2013) state that as various levels of the organization become engaged, it places a positive pressure on others to also change. During the communication phase creating awareness about benefits and the value of educating girls and their engagement are important steps in the change process. The NGO and external consultant have an existing leverage with multiple stakeholders in the village community, and are able to approach supportive and resisting parties, requesting them to at least initially engage in dialogue, so that benefits of educating girls are communicated. The second barrier is related to those who want to maintain status quo. Due to this, self interest groups, such as hardliners, and resistant male teachers may act as barriers to girls' education and community involvement in the school. As the NGO starts the adoption process, budgetary power will be decentralized, accountability mechanisms put in place, and gradual pressure on the community (increased via leverage from mothers and moderate religious scholars) will increase the urgency to reduce marginalization of girls', becoming a central theme of the process.

**Building momentum.** Avolio and Hannah (2008) highlight the importance of leaders making sense of “events, challenges, and opportunities that can stimulate and accelerate positive leader development” (p. 332), leading to organizational change. As the plan moves forward, my leverage along with the NGO team will help us to learn from the community via positive and negative experiences, identified as “trigger events” by Avolio and Hannah (2008, p. 335), which in turn assists us in building genuine momentum with stakeholders. Building momentum is related to the acceleration phase of the Change Path Model. Embedded within the acceleration phase are Kotter's (1996) three crucial steps that were presented in the combined model in Chapter 2, communicating the vision, empowering stakeholders, and generating short term wins. Short term wins are important as they show the community, specifically the resisters the

importance of educating girls. For example, getting IMNs to start advocating for the plan, getting fathers, feudal, and religious hardliners to participate in dialogue, hiring female teachers, and increasing enrollment of girls in a safe school environment are benchmarks that ensure momentum is maintained in the medium and long term. Another way to assess short term wins is to measure actual enrollment and retention rates defined within Goal 3 in Table 3.1. In addition, monitoring the number of female students who participate in mobile reading campaigns, and sign up as volunteers for school VSTCCs, is crucial for mobilizing the community and making change sustainable.

**Limitations of the plan.** Bringing girls into mainstream education in the school is a challenge to the existing status quo. This OIP brings forward a crucial, yet sensitive issue of the marginalization of girls in the school. While care has been taken to control the scope of the initiative and make it manageable by developing and implementing five goals, realistically there are variables that are beyond the scope of the project, leading to three limitations. First, the opposition to girls' education by hardline religious indoctrinated clerics (Flanagan, 2000). One form of mitigation of this perpetual resistance may be addressed via strong leverage of moderate religious and IMNs, who understand that religious teaching does not stop girls from acquiring education. They appreciate that similar educational interventions have created greater opportunities for urban women in Country A (Atasoy, 2006; Qureshi, 2003). Second, the political landscape of the district presents a limitation. Many fathers are farmers working on feudal lands. However, political feudal lords depend on farmers to vote them into political power, through a parliamentary system in which the executive and legislature are elected directly by public voting in their constituencies. Therefore, this resistance may be mitigated as a political bargain. Third, as a catalyst for bringing about change, the NGO adoption process seeks to bring

attention to a socioeconomic, and political problem. However, realistically, its scope is confined to one school. The plan may therefore not see immediate results, taking a longer span of time to realize its full potential in other schools. As part of the implementation plan, it is suggested that the empowered SMC continues its networking among the community to seek out views on gradually integrating girls in the school. This can be achieved by consistent data collection, developing integrated strategies to bring stakeholders together, and communicating the benefits of female education to stakeholders.

However, action cannot be radical as it will challenge the very basis of feudal and hardline religious strongholds, which risks further marginalizing girls. The change must be gradual, with a clear understanding of contextual factors, based on a model that streamlines existing school structures empowering girls, yet aligned with political and symbolic realities of the rural areas of Country A (Bolman & Deal, 2013).

### **Change Process Monitoring and Evaluation**

Cawsey et al. (2015) emphasize that measurement and control mechanisms increase the likelihood of successful change. To determine the success of this OIP, it is necessary to propose tools that will gauge progress and periodically assess change, so that the implementation plan may be adjusted as per the emerging needs of the school. An effective monitoring process supports new structures and goals of the change plan, with the strategic objective of gradual, yet sustainable reduction in marginalization of girls within the school. Equally important is presenting tangible proof of success to the community, so that stakeholder support remains strong and consistent, within and beyond the two-year pilot project. Throughout this OIP, the combined model representing Cawsey et al.'s (2015) Change Path and Kotter's (1996) 8 Stage Model is used to guide the change process in reducing marginalization of girls. The Change Path

Model's final phase, institutionalization (Cawsey et al., 2015) along with Kotter's (1996) consolidating gains and anchoring new approaches in the culture assist in tracking change, making modifications, and controlling risk factors. In addition, these steps assist the NGO and the external consultant in infusing life into change, while stabilizing the transformed school structures.

Empowering locals gives rise to what Husselbee (2000) calls "social monitoring" (p. 382), which gauges progress through the project life cycle on attitudes, educational impact, and family socioeconomic lifestyles. This strengthens monitoring and accountability mechanisms, which provide each stakeholder with equal power to evaluate and question progress of the change plan (Husselbee, 2000). Fancy and Razzak (2017) are more cautious, noting that in Country A, "power dynamics between different actors require careful trust building strategies and intensive collaboration" (p. 13). In this final stage of the plan, the NGO and I, as external consultant are able to comprehend how to make the project sustainable by making modifications by acting to "clarify expected outcomes and enhance accountability" (Cawsey et al., 2015, p. 340). Given the internal and external factors acting on the school, discussed in Chapter 1 and 2 of this OIP, it is vital for change leaders to carefully choose measures that not only "enhance ownership of change" (Cawsey et al., 2015, p. 361), but also celebrate achievements of stakeholders, aligning with the leadership approaches of change leaders.

Given the stakeholders involved and the variables acting on the school, the project uses and triangulates a diverse set of metrics to effectively capture change. Each component needs a different tool to measure change, which may require adjustment as the project moves forward. Based on the five goals laid out earlier in Chapter 3, Table 3.2 shows a comprehensive monitoring plan. The plan highlights measurement tools, sets specific responsibilities, provides



timelines, and tasks to achieve goals, sets success indicators, and outlines sources that will provide resources for each component.

Table 3.2

*Two Year NGO Sub-district Education Project (NGOSDEP) Monitoring Plan*

<b>Activity 1: Establish joint NGO Sub-district Education Project (NGOSDEP)</b>						
<b>Component</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Time Line</b>	<b>Monitoring Tools</b>	<b>How?</b>	<b>Success Indicators</b>	<b>Resources</b>
1. Establish NGOSDEP	Adopting NGO CEO + External consultant + District Education Officer (DEO) + Sub-district Education Officer (SDEO) + District religious clerics + Member provincial assembly + School headmaster	Month 1, 2 and ongoing monthly review meetings	Reports, meeting agendas and minutes	SDEO and NGO experts convene meetings with members of bureaucracy, politicians, religious clerics, school headmaster, and community	-Stakeholder involvement -Province limits its role to regulation -District bureaucracy responsible for policy execution support -Headmaster and school supported by NGOSDEP responsible for day-to-day running	-Provincial funds
2. Establish School Management Committee (SMC)	NGOSDEP	Months 3, 4, 5 Ongoing rural advocacy and community mobilization program	Member lists and community members feedback	-NGOSDEP to undertake social mobilization and partner with dominant groups -Communicate benefits of girls' education	-Empowered SMC -Greater community involvement	-Provincial and District funds -NGO gender experts
3. Design school gender plan (SGP)	NGOSDEP + SMC to address gender issues	Months 6,7	School Gender Plan	NGOSDEP develops the plan	-Linkages development between district administration, school, community, and girl students -Appreciation of diversity embedded in school culture	-District funds -External consultant -NGO gender experts

<b>Activity 2: Teachers Recruitment &amp; Training Program</b>						
<b>Component</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Time Line</b>	<b>Monitoring Tools</b>	<b>How?</b>	<b>Success Indicators</b>	<b>Resources</b>
1. Collect data on school teachers -Fill ghost teacher positions -Design selection criteria to achieve gender balance	NGOSDEP + SDEO + SMC	Months 8,9,10 Ongoing	-Compare pre vs. post selection criteria. -Evaluate and monitor teacher performance -Undertake class observations -Conduct a seminar series	NGOSDEP, DEO, and SDEO to design recruitment and training policies	-Improved school environment -Hiring at least 2 female teachers -Lessening of resistance from males	-District funds, -External consultant -NGO human resource experts
2.Observe existing curriculum and teaching practices in classes	NGOSDEP + DEO + SDEO + SMC	Months 10,11, 12 Ongoing	-Observation reports -Checklists -Needs assessment questionnaire -Database of trainings	NGOSDEP, Teachers' representatives, feudal, and religious dominant groups review and implement designed programs	Lesson plans, and content changed to reflect gender focused strategy	-District funds -NGO urban teachers' expertise -External consultant
3.Design a teachers leadership, mentoring program and master teachers training	NGOSDEP + Mentors from urban centers + SMC	Months 12,13, 14 Ongoing	-Manual development and on-site teacher trainings	NGOSDEP to form a Training Support Unit (TSU) -Understand individual needs of girls and boys in learning	-Headmaster and teacher's motivation and attendance -Identify motivated teachers (part of Guiding Coalition) -Master teachers trained	-District funds -NGO urban teachers and master mentors expertise -External consultant
4.Develop databank of teacher trainings and development	NGOSDEP information technology cell + SMC	Months 15,16, 17 Ongoing	Quarterly progress reports (QPRs)	NGOSDEP to consolidate and categorize data files	Usage of databank with a focus on gender conditioning	-District funds -NGO and teachers expertise -External consultant
5.Undertake teacher exchange visits to urban and rural schools in three Country A provinces	Provincial education department + NGOSDEP + DEO + SDEO + SMC	Months 10,12, 14, 16,18, 20,22, 24	-Social media -Focus groups -Learn from successful and best practices -Community and teacher interaction -Design teacher appreciation award	-NGOSDEP and NGO gender experts facilitate these collaborative discussions and compile results for analysis -Recognize gender sensitivity	-Reflection of best practices in school -Exchange visit learning	-District funds -NGO partners -External consultant

<b>Activity 3: Community Participation</b>						
<b>Components</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Time Line</b>	<b>Monitoring Tools</b>	<b>How?</b>	<b>Success Indicators</b>	<b>Resources</b>
1.Undertake training of SMC 2. Establish Communication Unit (CU)	NGOSDEP + SDEO + Headmaster + Teachers' representatives committee to address gender issues	Months 4,5	-Monitoring of SMC (engaging village community and dominant religious and feudal groups) -Student and parent feedback through home visits, house surveys, and focus groups -Ongoing participatory rural advocacy -Quarterly progress reports (QPRs)	-The SDEO and NGOSDEP engage dominant groups, parents in monitoring and training via SMC  -Informal Mother Networks (IMNs)	-Improved quality of education -SMC starts taking over responsibility to make the project sustainable	-Provincial funds -NGO managerial expertise -External consultant
2.Weekend -School discussion forums -Advocacy and communication events	NGOSDEP + SMC + CU	Ongoing every month  Months 3 to 24	-Observations -Reports, -Checklists -Student feedback -Identification of possible topic discussions -Database of VSTCCs	-SMC establishes separate girls and boys discussion forums -Discussions led by mothers, fathers, religious scholars, and feudal lords -VSTCCs	-Greater contact with community and parents -Increased participation and attendance monitoring in Parent Teachers' Meetings (PTMs)	-District funds -NGO gender advocacy team -External consultant

<b>Activity 4 Student Achievement Analysis</b>						
<b>Components</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Time Line</b>	<b>Monitoring Tools</b>	<b>How?</b>	<b>Success Indicators</b>	<b>Resources</b>
1. Data collection on student dropout and enrollments, specifically girls  2.Assess secondary data from census, available databanks and reports	NGOSDEP + SMC + NGO information technology cell	Month 2 and ongoing every month	-Evaluate programs and assess available options -Develop databank of dropout, enrollments and out of school girls and boys -Monthly progress reports (MPRs)	-NGOSDEP to launch village consultative and student recruitment campaigns (posters, district FM radio and TV advocacy campaigns) -NGOSDEP to collaborate with Provincial Statistics & Information Departments	Girls: -Improved attendance -Greater motivation -Academic performance -Increased participation in extra curricular activities	-District funds -NGO computer expertise -External consultant -Provincial government (Statistics and Information Departments)

Four key themes are identified through selecting measurement tools. First, making education relevant, so that it responds to village context. This means that the metrics chosen must consider accuracy and timeliness. Second, Islam (2004) using Hofstede's fourfold typology on cultures concluded that Country A, as a whole, exhibits a high power-distance, where people accept societal hierarchies. This means that I am dealing with "passive followers" (Smith, Montagno, and Kuzmenko, 2004, p. 81). This allows me to demonstrate servant leadership, listening, persuading, and explaining to stakeholders the importance of how the project team intends to measure change, by using various qualitative, quantitative, formal and informal metrics (Smith, Montagno, and Kuzmenko, 2004). Therefore, communication with stakeholders should be simple, for example, in their native provincial language. Through subsequent PDSA iterations, the aim will be to develop local capacity and potential of internal and external stakeholders and future leaders, so that responsibility is transferred to local people, developing and strengthening collaboration between NGO and village community. Third, create forums that enable stakeholders to discuss points of agreement and disagreement. This means enhancing school learning by flow of information across its external and internal boundaries (Silins and Mulford, 2002). This enables me to identify dysfunctionalities, proactively correcting them, a key characteristic of transformational leadership. Fourth, building capacity in the school to become a sustainable entity.

### **Enact PDSA Cycle**

The purpose of this OIP is to design programming that reduces marginalization of girls in a primary rural school in Country A. Therefore, change leaders must understand how to refine the change plan as necessary, enacting the four stage, Plan, Do, Study, Act (PDSA) cycle, which is used for repeating and adapting the school change improvement plan (Moen & Norman,

2010). This plan represents the first in ongoing change cycles that may need fine-tuning as the project moves forward. Figure 3.2 presents each stage of the PDSA cycle, outlining components that must be enacted to reduce the problem of marginalization of girls.

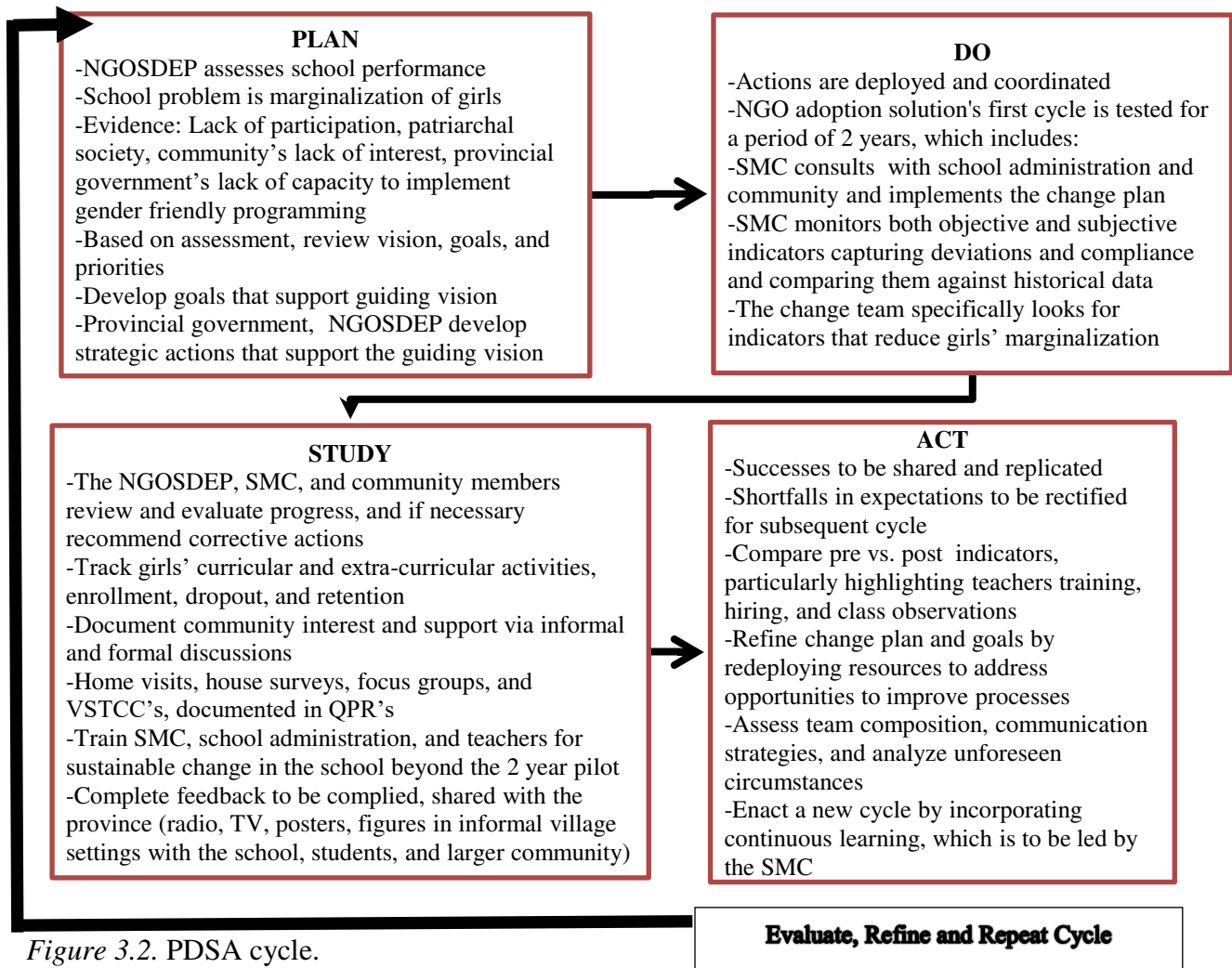


Figure 3.2. PDSA cycle.

Figure 3.2. Clearing up myths about the Deming Cycle and seeing how it keeps evolving.

Adapted from *Circling Back*, by R.D. Moen, & C.L. Norman, 2010. Retrieved from

<http://www.apweb.org/circling-back.pdf>. Copyright 2010 by [www.qualityprogress.com](http://www.qualityprogress.com)

Given the socioeconomic and political context of this OIP, change leaders may need multiple iterations involving testing the change plan in the school and community, by planning and doing it, observing results, and acting on lessons learned. This may then involve adaptations

of the cycle and strategies to engage a diverse group of stakeholders, to reach the stated goals of the project (Ahmad, Said, Hussain, and Khan, 2014).

**Plan.** The first step of the PDSA cycle is planning, wherein the team achieves an understanding of the current processes, identifies the stakeholders affected by change, and keeps them updated for an initial test. This stage considers the problem we are trying to solve, what we are trying to achieve, our options, and our desired outcomes. Stakeholders' gendered perspectives in the school are strongly influenced by sociocultural and political environments, and reflect the larger cultural context (Halai, 2011). In this scenario, research from Bangladesh demonstrates that with "time and effort on multiple fronts" (Lewis & Lockheed, 2007, p. 12), communities have shifted their behaviours toward girls' education by proving that educated females have become economically independent. In addition to targeting community change efforts, change leaders are prepared to experiment with various options to engage girls who are marginalized in the community (Lewis & Lockheed, 2007). This OIP is now at a point where action is ready to be taken and includes a multi-pronged approach that suggests strategies based on best practices, similar country cases, and realities that surround the school.

**Do.** In the second stage, change leaders test out the solution to marginalization of girls in the school. The NGO and the external consultant, along with support of the newly constituted SMC implement the change that was outlined in the Change Implementation Plan of this chapter. Halai (2011) argues that Country A schools need to design development programs that are aimed at raising school teachers' gender awareness, calling this a critical "element of social justice in education quality" (p. 45). During each activity, the adoption process requires that the SMC records qualitative and quantitative indicators. This is done by consulting the community, developing a guiding coalition, mobilizing stakeholders, while documenting motives for

resistance and making efforts to open dialogue with resisters, if we are unable to overcome them in the first cycle of ongoing change.

**Study.** During this stage, the indicators are analyzed to examine if the strategic plan is contributing towards the desired change. Doing this allows the team to observe if there was an improvement, considering the following points: (1) If there is no improvement, then what have we learned, identifying gaps, and what should we do in the next cycle to achieve our objectives; (2) If there is improvement, then, do we need additional inputs before institutionalizing change; and (3) The team shares and celebrates results with community, school, and the provincial government by displaying data of key indicators every month, updating stakeholders, while soliciting input from them (Varkey & Kollengode, 2011).

**Act.** In the final stage of the cycle, if the change plan meets expectations, then the team reflects on what was learned from success and how can the team build on achievement. This includes the school and its SMC becoming sustainable entities, parents' greater involvement, increase in girls retention and recruitment, and teachers' trainings on gender conditioning. From the perspective of this OIP, it is also critical to celebrate and recognize contributions of stakeholders, to ensure continued interest and improvements. Three key points must be considered at this stage. First, document Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) by extensive involvement of SMC and school administration. This includes manual development and training databanks. Second, train school staff in resource management. Third, evaluate key indicators and their effectiveness for subsequent cycles. This includes girls' participation in school activities, as well as academic and extracurricular achievements (Varkey & Kollengode, 2011).

Enacting PDSA cycles on reducing marginalization of girls assists change leaders in breaking activities into components, testing them, and running refined prototypes. This helps in

learning more about the problem, communicating the benefits of change, leveraging the guiding coalition, gently eroding resistance, thus giving confidence to the community on the change initiatives. It is therefore critical to have a strong Change Process Communication Plan, which is discussed next in this chapter. I recommend that subsequent improvement cycles are run by the empowered SMC. If the SMC requires support beyond 2 years, then the external consultant with a skeleton NGO staff deploy a contingency plan. This provides support for 1 more year, enacting a compressed second cycle, completing the handover process to the school administration.

### **Plan to Communicate the Need for Change and the Change Process**

Communicating the need for change is the first critical step in mobilizing and building a coalition. In this section, a case is made for building awareness of the need for change and the role of village community via communication strategies. Demonstrating transformational and servant leadership, the plan seeks guidance from the combined Change Path Model (Cawsey et al., 2015) and Kotter's 8 stage model (1996). The second section presents a comprehensive Change Process Communication Plan, which examines anticipated issues and how to reach out to stakeholders via various modes of communication.

### **Building Awareness**

Earlier in this OIP, Chapter 1 highlighted that there is limited communication between the school, community, and TP. The school has numerous internal and external stakeholders, who may want to perpetuate the status quo or may not recognize that a change is needed. It is therefore important to educate stakeholders, enlarging the pool of opinion leaders, helping to strengthen the guiding coalition, by effectively communicating and advocating to them the need for change (Kotter, 1996). Communication therefore takes place at the external and internal level, taking guidance from Freire (2000) who argues that, "in order to communicate effectively



educator and politician must understand the structural conditions in which the thought and language of the people are dialectically framed” (p. 96). Islam (2004) using Hofstede’s fourfold typology on Country A observes that the society tolerates inequality and is segregated by a masculine culture, emphasizing gender inequality. Due to this segregation, women in rural areas of Country A are conditioned to be subservient (Ali & Gavino, 2008). Maken (2018) argues that in Country A children internalize their parental subservience in a binary way, which teaches them either to be subjected to dominant societal forces or to be in power. Therefore, as the external consultant of the project my language should be framed in such a way, so that I respect existing village culture, but also use leveraging opportunities to bring about a change within the school. Aligning this with transformational leadership, my first concern is to get followers to support the two- year pilot project SMART goals. My second concern is service to followers through servant leadership. Both leadership styles assist in developing an effective communication portfolio for the project, which provides a mechanism for stakeholders to participate and develop mutual accountability.

Demonstrating transformational leadership, the change team and I, the external consultant, become “social architects” (Northhouse, 2015, p. 173) who get involved in the school and village culture, assisting in clarifying emerging values and norms. An integral part of communication is to let people (e.g. mothers) know their importance, explaining to them their greater contribution to their community, and helping them celebrate their achievements (Northhouse, 2015). Transformational leadership also assists in communicating the vision to those who are resistant to change (e.g. hardline religious clerics), encouraging them to adapt their attitudes towards girls’ education (Kanungo, 2001). My positionality in this situation gives me

leverage via critical components of servant leadership, where I am listening to people, making me an approachable mentor in their everyday lives (Northouse, 2015).

**Communication strategies.** As the change plan is put into action, forces supportive and resistant to change will start to get impacted by the change process. Therefore, the change team needs to communicate proactively with stakeholders at the very outset, throughout the project, and beyond. In order to mobilize and accelerate support, create a sense of urgency, and a guiding coalition, the change team seeks direction from the last component of Change Path Model's awakening phase: communicating the vision (Cawsey et al., 2015).

The starting point is a meeting of NGOSDEP members, who formulate a vision supported by the five SMART goals for the two-year school adoption pilot project, intended to reduce marginalization of girls in the primary school. Chasteen, Perkins, Beale, Pollock, and Wieman (2011) suggest that key people should be involved in the early stages of change. In this OIP, change leaders communicate with key community members, who are part of the guiding coalition and exercise leverage with stakeholders. For example, externally, elderly village women, moderate religious scholars, and the powerful district bureaucracy are key groups with leverages. This coalition helps in addressing stakeholder apprehensions and reducing uncertainties (Nelissen & van Selm, 2008). Internally, the roles of each member, for example, teachers, administration, and students are identified and their views recorded. As the NGOSDEP progresses through project SMART goals, participatory rural advocacy campaigns are started, to negotiate with hardline religious scholars, fathers, and feudal lords, thus gradually opening lines of communication with the resistant village external community. These deliberations are expected to be challenging requiring patient listening and giving assurances to resisters that the project is not being implemented to challenge males, but to partner with them for community's

socioeconomic benefit. In order for the project to be sustainable, the change team emphasizes that religious clerics and feudal lords will be involved throughout the project and beyond.

*Communicating with village community.* Ahmad, Rehman, Ali, Khan, and Khan (2014) identify problems with Country A's education system, one of them being "widening gaps and distance between the educational institutions and community" (p. 80). Most of the community is unaware of the importance of education, instead relying on advice of religious clerics on matters of life (Shah & Shah, 2012). Although the community's reliance on religious clerics creates distortion about female education in the minds of the society, the change team must communicate with them. This gradually encourages them to be part of the guiding coalition, understanding their views on girls' education and using their input as critical information and energy to keep the change process moving forward (Cawsey et al., 2015; Jick & Peiperl, 2003). It is therefore vital that the change team openly communicates with the wider village community, framing and supporting arguments with relevant examples, such as socioeconomic success of girls' education in rural areas of similar countries, like Bangladesh (Rose, 2009; Lewis & Lockheed, 2007; Ashraf, Khaki, Shamatov, Tajik, & Vazir, 2005). This kind of open dialogue takes guidance from Kotter's (1996) fifth stage, empowering stakeholders, thus mobilizing support and accelerating change (Cawsey et al., 2015). The above steps progressively give the community a voice, making stakeholders partners in generating short-term wins. For example, village fun fairs, travelling library readership, and girls' academic achievement all involve community input. These wins are shared with the school, community, and province via the local FM radio station, provincial language newspapers, local TV, Parents Teachers Meetings (PTMs), religious places, feudal farms, and school newsletters. By following an integrated strategy throughout the two-year pilot project, the SMC's capacity is gradually developed to become a

self-sufficient entity that takes over the school after two years, thus institutionalizing change and anchoring new approaches in the culture, both reflecting the last stages of Cawsey et al. (2015) Change Path Model and Kotter's 8 Stage Model (1996).

### Change Process Communications Plan

Given the nature of this OIP, it is expected that during communication phases, the project will face resistance (Latif, 2009). This resistance has its roots in a feudal patriarchal society that subjects women to segregation, affecting their participation in the "professional space" (Shah, 2010, p. 38). Therefore, SMART Goal 4 in Chapter 3 recommends establishing a Communication Unit (CU), comprising of NGO communication and gender specialists, external consultant, and the provincial Information Department. Table 3.3 shows a comprehensive School Communication Plan.

Table 3.3

#### *School Communication Plan*

External Stakeholders	Communication	Action Steps	Time Line	Responsible
Religious clerics, feudal lords, and community	-Rural advocacy campaigns -Religious places and feudal farms consultations during and after Friday prayers -Evening consultations at road side cafes -Face-to-face and community focus groups	-Two-way communication lines opened for wide ranging village community deliberations -Feedback documented	-Ongoing every month Months 3 to 24	-CU -IMNs (Informal Mother Networks)
District provincial bureaucracy -Communication of SMC and school with provincial headquarters via District and Sub-district Education Officer	-Linkages developed between district administration, school, SMC, community, and girl students - Share available data and develop mechanisms to collect, tabulate, and share new information	-Analyze weaknesses and strengths in communication mechanisms -Empower SMC to communicate with district and community -Identify gaps	-Ongoing Months 1 to 24	-CU
Parents -Increased participation via monthly Parent Teachers' Meetings	-Parent feedback through home visits, house surveys, and focus groups -Greater contact with community and parents	-Develop trust between parents and school	-Ongoing every month Months 3 to 24	-CU - VSTCCs -IMNs

Internal Stakeholders	Communication	Action Steps	Time Line	Responsible
Students (girls and boys) -Give voice to students and develop connection with them	Via VSTCCs run girls education advocacy -Led by girls, boys, and school teachers target major areas of the sub-district - Travelling library taken to houses in the sub-district -Village-school fun fair festival -Share student success and learning with parents -Develop female and male comic characters to reach out to students	-SMC establishes separate girls and boys discussion forums. -Discussions facilitated by mothers, fathers, religious scholars, and feudal lords -NGOSDEP to launch village consultative and student recruitment campaigns (posters, district radio, TV)	-Start month 2  Ongoing every month	-CU -SMC -VSTCCs -IMNs
Headmaster and male teachers	-Evaluate and undertake class observations -Conduct a seminar series -Manual development and on-site teacher trainings -Teacher provincial school exchange best practices discussions	-Appreciate teachers' potential -Develop teacher capacity to understand classroom diversity -Observations -Need assessment questionnaire -Quarterly progress reports (QPRs) -Focus groups -Learn from successful and best practices -Community and teacher interaction -Teacher awards	-Start month 2  Ongoing every month	-CU -SMC
Internal, External Stakeholders	Communication	Action Steps	Time Line	Responsible
SMC executive body (members: SDEO, head master, two female and two male teachers, two moderate and two hardline clerics, one feudal village politician, two NGO gender experts, three mothers, three fathers, two male students, two female students, and external consultant)	-Communicate a clear message to the community that the SMC is a sustainable successor to the 2-year pilot project -Undertake social mobilization and foster partnerships with dominant groups -Communicate benefits of girls education -Engage village community and dominant religious and feudal groups -Communicate to parents and girls that the school has a caring learning environment -Communicate short term wins via local radio, TV, and school newsletters	-Ongoing participatory rural advocacy -QPRs -Reports, meeting agendas and minutes -Student feedback -Collaborate with Provincial Statistics & Information Departments -Develop strategies for sustainable communication and information sharing beyond 2-year pilot project	-Start month 3  Ongoing every 2 months	-CU -NGOSDEP -IMNs -VSTCCs

The communication plan identifies specific stakeholders, pinning responsibilities, providing time lines, identifying communication modes, and specifying action steps. The CU plays a key role in communicating with external and internal stakeholders and in documenting feedback. Given the influence of the external environment on the school, it is important to engage both external and internal stakeholders simultaneously, and have a forum, the SMC executive body, which brings both together, so two-way learning can take place.

**External stakeholders.** Alavi (1972) and Shafqat (1999) highlight the powerful role of bureaucratic oligarchy in the administration of Country A. Development initiatives not involving the bureaucracy are likely to face sustainability issues. Therefore, as soon as the project is established, the district bureaucracy headed by the DEO and SDEO establish lines of communication between the NGOSDEP, school, SMC, and the provincial government. Doing this early on demonstrates to stakeholders that the project is not an intrusion in their culture, but a partnership, as the bureaucracy exercises strong leverage with village feudal lords and religious clerics (Ali & Ushijima, 2005; Islam, 2004). Religious clerics are “opinion makers” (Ali & Ushijima, 2005, p. 116) and feudal lords in rural areas of Country A are key in establishing links between state and local politics (Islam, 2004; Alavi, 1972). Studies from Jordan and Iran have proven that despite initial resistance from religious clerics, they have been instrumental in making educational programs successful, as well as sustainable (Kridli & Libbus, 2001; Hoodfar & Assadpour, 2003).

Parents are key players in making decisions about daughters’ education. Latif (2009) argues that once parents in rural area of Country A realize the importance of investing in their daughters’ education, many rural areas problems can be addressed. The author also highlights that fathers’ opposition is an impediment in sending girls to school. However, evidence from

Bangladesh shows that by using various communication strategies and outreach activities, fathers realize that educating a girl is good for her future (Lewis & Lockheed, 2007). Mothers and elderly women are an integral component of the communication plan as they have personally gone through the cycle of being marginalized. They not only have leverage with husbands, but also command great respect from sons and religious clerics. The role of IMNs is therefore crucial in communicating the importance of reducing the marginalization of girls, with the message that depriving daughters of education produces a mother who has very little to offer her children (Latif, 2009).

**Internal stakeholders.** Halai (2011) highlights that due to inherent community and institutional biases girls do not have access to an optimal learning environment in the schooling process. The author also questions gender equity and how dominant forces in society shape narratives that present girls as second-class citizens. The communication plan therefore suggests actions that can reduce marginalization of girls with a focus on gradually “changing gendered relations” (Murphy-Graham & Lloyd, 2016, p. 557). These are based on girls’ dignity, a positive sociocultural environment, and grassroots level action (Murphy-Graham & Lloyd, 2016). For example, formation of VSTCCs, holding village fun fairs, and creating comic characters encourages communication between girls, boys, community, and teachers, slowly breaking down inhibitions that are prevalent in the community. Due to lack of gender awareness, education and professional training, teachers carry implicit or explicit biases against girls (Halai, 2011). The change plan proposes empowerment of teachers so that they help students by using pedagogical techniques that impart basic literacy, numeracy, and religious teachings. Other steps include holding focus groups, class trainings, sessions with NGO gender experts, and appreciation of teachers’ previous job experience so that they feel valued, and cooperate in the change process.

**Internal and external stakeholders.** Khan (2007) explains that school councils encourage two-way communication exhibiting leverage with Country A's rural areas in mobilizing change to include marginalized communities in educational processes. The author also argues that such mobilization slowly challenges "traditional social stratification" (Khan, 2007, p. 68). Khan (2007) is cautious suggesting that as school councils have expanded, they have become dominated by powerful stakeholders, for example, feudal and religious elements, taking away voice from the grassroots organizations and students. The communication plan therefore establishes the SMC executive body, which gives representation to all stakeholders to discuss contentious issues, and work on them to find optimal solutions to marginalization of girls. The OIP also suggests the structure of the executive body, under oversight from CU, NGOSDEP, IMNs, and VSTCCs, so that no one stakeholder dominates the SMC.

### **Chapter Conclusion**

This chapter has highlighted how an integrated implementation, evaluation, and communication strategy is used to reduce marginalization of girls in a primary rural provincial school in Country A. The communication plan is monitored and evaluated by the CU after each PDSA cycle. If indicators prove that marginalization of girls is being reduced then the communication plan is moving in the right direction. However, if qualitative and quantitative analysis proves that there is little change, then the team needs to consult with stakeholders and identify problem areas. By moving forward with the implementation, evaluation, and communication plan, the two-year pilot project not only builds sustainable school capacity, but gradually opens lines of communication with the community in giving optimal support to reduction in marginalization of girls. The next section concludes this OIP by addressing potential next steps and future considerations.



### **Next Steps and Future Considerations**

As identified in earlier chapters, the provincial government of Country A realizes the importance of reducing marginalization of girls in schools. The NGOSDEP is conceived as a two-year manageable initiative within one village school and community, with a provision to extend for one more year, if needed. Once NGOSDEP is established, the learning achieved during implementation is used to undertake potential next steps.

#### **Next Steps**

There are four very healthy indicators conducive to the next steps. First, mobilization of the local community is central to the success of this OIP. For the school to become a sustainable entity, the SMC needs continuous support from IMNs, VSTCCs, and moderate religious scholars. Such has been the success of SMCs in mobilizing local support that one province in Country A has ordered all public schools to create SMCs, involving parents and the local community (Ashraf, 2013; Nasir, Farooq, Ali, 2013). By progressively increasing the strength of SMC in the indigenous community, stakeholder empowerment and awareness can be achieved.

Second, developing student capacity by learning from Country A's urban schools through student exchanges. This is suggested as the next step to the successful implementation of teacher exchange visits to urban and rural schools in three Country A provinces. Alderman, Kim, and Orazem (2003) and Qureshi (2003) argue that with support of experienced operators like NGOs, in urban areas of Country A, women have not only challenged marginalization of girls, but have also increased their involvement in schooling and professional domains. This has resulted in greater demand for school infrastructure, including hiring more female teachers. In addition, master teachers from existing teachers that are trained within this OIP, should be used to mentor young female and male teachers so that succession planning becomes a part of school culture.

Third, extending partnerships with religious and feudal leaders in the village. It is important to appreciate that religious scholars cannot be alienated as religion is an integral component of Country A's society. By respecting local culture and holy edicts, religious scholars have given support not only to girls' education, but due to their focal position in society, have also become opinion leaders, lending support within the community (Jamal, 2014).

Fourth, parental support, with special focus on fathers, who are head of households in rural areas. Lall (2009) argues that in Country A once a family understands the economic and social benefits of quality education their commitment to sending girls and boys to school increases. Mothers have always been supportive due to their own marginalization experiences, but a shift has also been observed with fathers who have started supporting girls' education, as they are exposed to the socioeconomic benefits of schooling (Lall, 2009).

### **Future Considerations**

After putting the plan into action and completing one cycle of two years, the NGOSDEP team will gain an understanding of how to reduce marginalization of girls in the school. This learning encountered during the change cycle helps the province and the NGO to plan the following four future considerations.

First, learning is documented for stakeholders. In addition, standard operating procedures (SOPs) are developed to assist the school administration in developing future plans to integrate girls in the school culture.

Second, an important component of experience and observation is that the plan is expected to encounter a diverse set of stakeholders, who have their own priorities and views in terms of girls' education. That is why the change team will need be flexible in appreciating the variety of views and integrate them as the plan is refined through multiple iterations. The team

will also need to be ready for any unintended reactions and be flexible to adjust the plan, even in the middle of a cycle, without waiting to refine in the next iteration.

Third, this OIP is not just limited to efforts undertaken by NGOSDEP, but is a partnership between the school and the village community, who all have stakes in the success or failure of the project. Community is embedded within this OIP, which has the potential to turn NGOSDEP into a sustainable collaboration (Bano, 2011). The result has far reaching implications for girls' education, and for the project to be replicated in other rural schools of the province, strengthening the structure of education in the entire province. As cycles progress, the change team must therefore not only look for innovative ways of engaging the community, but also devise ways to have all stakeholders engage with each other.

Fourth, as the plan iterates through cycles, various other initiatives can be incorporated and tested. For example, the NGOSDEP can assist in setting up counselling services and personal hygiene trainings for girls, in collaboration with local teaching hospitals. This kind of partnership brings a new dimension that has not been addressed due to the controlled scope of this OIP, but given the opportunity is very important.

### **OIP Conclusion**

This OIP represents an integrated plan that addresses marginalization of girls in a primary rural school, recommending actions that can reduce their lack of participation in the pedagogical process. The plan focuses on interventions within the school and the village community, which is based on analysis of the current conditions, identifying gaps that perpetuate marginalization of girls. The purpose of the two-year pilot project (NGOSDEP) is to develop sustainable school capacity so that it can continue to integrate girls in school activities once the change team exits the project. The plan is based on taking practical steps that influence new ways of thinking, yet

do not challenge local norms. Hence, it provides learning and serves as a collaborative tool through active involvement of stakeholders. As discussed in earlier chapters, currently the school is confronted with challenges that preclude it from reducing marginalization of girls. While the change plan does not guarantee that its outcomes will be as per expectations, it will certainly be a move in the right direction, sending an effective message that by marginalizing girls in society, Country A is hindering its overall social and economic progress.

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