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Different Proximities and Conflicts Related to the Setting of Big Infrastructures: The Case of *DiamerBhasha*Dam in *Pakistan*

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Abstract Land use conflicts are recognized as the result of mismanagement of infrastructural development projects. Several issues have been conferred related to infrastructural projects in Asia and South Asia, like corruption, mismanagement, cronyism and adverse socioeconomic impacts. The paper focuses particularly on land use conflicts related to *Diamer-Bhasha* dam project in northern Pakistan. Keeping in view this peculiar case, it goes into the concept of conflicts and proximity, e.g. types of proximity and the role they play in conflict generation, conflict resolution and modes of conflict prevention. We provide the different types and expressions of conflicts due to *Diamer-Bhasha* dam project, their impact on local population and the territory, e.g. unfair land acquisition, improper displacement, compensation, resettlement and livelihood issues. Contiguity problems due to geographical proximity as well as mechanisms of conflict resolution through organized proximity are also discussed. Finally, we conclude and recommend the strategies for better governance and the way ahead for upcoming studies on similar issues.

16.1 Introduction

Land due to infrastructural projects has been subject to conflicts in several parts of the world and greatly influenced the socioeconomic position of different actors (Oppio et al. 2015; Magsi and Torre 2013) through compensation issues, displacement of local population, ineffective policies of resettlement (Williams and Porter 2006) and negative influences on their livelihood (Barron et al. 2004). About 80 million people around the world have been displaced due to infrastructural projects like construction of dams (Scudder 2005; WCD 2000). This situation led to socioeconomic disturbance in the form of unemployment and landlessness etc. (Brown

et al. 2009). Several studies discussed the resettlement problems due to infrastructural projects like Hydropower Development in *Viet Nam* (Bui et al. 2013), Three Gorges Dam in *China* (Sun 2013) and their Socioeconomic Impacts like Hydroelectric Dams in *Turkish Kurdistan* (Moran 2004).

A significant basis of conflict due to infrastructural projects like dam is the behavioural difference and varying expectations among different stakeholders, which are often centralized at various governance levels. Land acquisition and related activities of the project could be much more difficult due to local values and traditions. Social and cultural differences among different stakeholders raise several issues, tension among different actors and ultimately conflicts. One of the important dimensions of conflicts is over compensations (in the form of monetary compensation, employment alternatives, social security assurance, etc.) which are either due to directly geographical disagreements or to difference in values and opinion and lack of understanding among actors over land use. Studies like Qian (2015) and Hui et al. (2013), emphasized that even single land compensation have been improved, people still suffer from uncertainties like competing in labour markets and adapting a new life.

In order to ease the tensions and conflicts, various studies on water projects put emphasis on identification of network of actors, participation of stakeholders and especially participation of affected people in decision making like in *Manwan* Dam (upper *Mekong* River in southwestern *China*), *Lesotho Highlands Water Project* in *Southern Africa* (Tilt et al. 2009) and *Pak Mun* Dam project in *Thailand* (Awakul and Ogunlana 2002). Big land use issues like poverty, malnutrition, displacement, flawed resettlement and unemployment have been evolved by lack of coordination between stakeholders (Mahato and Ogunlana 2011). On the other hand several aspects of corruption, mismanagement and cronyism have also been noticed (Swain and Chee 2004; Magsi 2012; Awasthi 2014).

Conflicts arising over land use, by anyway, require careful approach by policy makers. Policies concerning land can hardly be "unbiased" in terms of conflict management, and should carefully treat sensitivities and unfairness, in order to handle the violent conflict in a better way (Vignon and Lecomte 2004). As, because of such reasons many projects in developing countries are facing resistance, because of violation of land acquisition, compensation rights and negligent treatment of stakeholders (Magsi and Torre 2012). However, studies like Drazkiewicz et al. (2015) for different case studies in *Germany* showed concrete results and significantly positive influence under factors like conflict resolution, fairness of process, accommodation of interests, inclusion of Veto players etc.

In Pakistan, planning about water related issues was not always supported by all political parties. As a matter of fact the water availability for irrigation and other purposes is continuously declining, and the Country lacks facilities related to irrigation and other purposes, which dams provide (GOP 2012-13). Pakistan is already one of the world's most water stressed countries and this condition is becoming more and more alarming due to increasing population growth; in addition to that, it

is also facing electricity and gas shortage (Daily Times 2015). Looking at the circumstances, Government has set its priority to invest on developmental projects, especially dams. Previously, several developmental projects *Tarbela* and *Mangla* Dams and *Chotiari* water reservoir had caused dislocation of a lot of families even though their value for overall economy cannot be ignored. Despite of all the claims of the Government to provide benefits and raise living standard of local affected people, many of these projects caused poverty and low living standard (Dawn 2008). These issues comprise social instability and government's unpromising claims about human benefit from developmental project.

This article highlights the conflicts arising due to land use and especially to construction of dams, using observations on a peculiar case study: the project of construction of *Diamer Bhasha Dam* in *Pakistan*. We identify the conflicts arising due to this infrastructural project, the network of actors involved and how these actors are engaged with each other. We then discuss the different type of conflicts among different actors, and their impact on the local people and ultimately on the project. The main focus of this study is to analyse the different conflicts in terms of geographical and organized proximity. Different kinds of ethnic groups, their social issues and geographical problem are also discussed along with geopolitical problems of this project. Finally, in the light of this analysis and discussion, we provide some recommendations related to the setting of new projects like Dams construction in developing countries.

16.2 Case Study: Diamer Bhasha Dam Project in Pakistan

This part provides the information concerning *Diamer Bhasha* Dam case study, including geographical area and economic activities as well as presentation of social characteristics of local people. Moreover, it gives the plan, key features of the project and estimated (by Government) benefits. Significance of the project and some main issues in the form of socioeconomic impacts and conflicts between different actors are also highlighted.

16.2.1 Area profile and economic activities

Diamer Bhasha dam is one of the major projects in *Pakistan* to deal with water and electricity shortage which is named after *Diamer* (a district in northern areas of *Pakistan* called *Gilgit Baltistan*) and *Bhasha* (a village in *Kohistan* in the province of *Khyber Pakhtunkhwa*).

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) is a province of Pakistan with about 17 million populations and 74,521 km² of total stated area (Pakistan Bureau of Statistics 2016). The province has strong agricultural potential, offers a diverse climate and landscape for variety of tourism activities (Comprehensive Development Strategy, KPK 2010). *Kohistan* is a district of KPK and according to 1998 census whole population

of the area is about 472,570. Total reported area of district *Kohistan* is 7492 km² (Pakistan Bureau of Statistics 2016). *Bhasha* is a village of *Kohistan* and part of this project, which is why; it is named as *Diamer Bhasha* Dam Project. The government has obtained some land from this village for the project, but there is no effect on any household in this area, as a main part of the dam is located in the *Diamer* district of *Gilgit Baltistan*.

Gilgit Baltistan (GB) officially known as the northern areas of *Pakistan* has an area of 72,971 km². This region is connected with *Khyber Pukhtunkhwa* province of *Pakistan* to the west, *Afghanistan* to the north, *China* to the east and *Indian* administered *Jammu and Kashmir* to the south west. The estimated population approaches approximately 1,000,000 (GOGB 2010). *Diamer* is a district of *Gilgit Baltistan* which has an area of 10936 km². The region has an estimated population of 0.2 million. The capital of the district is *Chilas* (Ali 2013).

Major portion of the dam project and activities are located in *Diamer* district of *Gilgit Baltistan*. Most of the land acquisition and all the people who are going to be affected socially and economically are from *Diamer* district. Total number of households in this area is 12039 in which directly affected households are about 4228. They are dispersed into 20 different valleys and more or less 32 villages in the form of different ethnic groups with different local values, traditions and caste system. These valleys are located geographically in a tough mountainous area, difficult to access due to rough terrain. During some months of rainy season, situation becomes even worse because of landslides and it is extremely difficult to access these areas by road. However, people in the valleys over the mountains connect with each other by rough paths (there are no proper roads). In winter, people living in valleys over mountains, has to migrate to lowers parts of this district like *Chilas* etc. due to extreme cold. As a local tradition people especially owners prefer to live in valleys during summer because according to local law land of whole area is entitled to owners.

The occupational status of the affected households in project area is as follows:

Table 16.1. Economic activities of the local actors

Occupation of local actors	% share of Occupational Status
Agriculture/Farming	33.5
Unskilled workers (Construction Mostly)	10.5
Skilled Workers	16.6
Government Service	19
Business	15.1
Private Employment (in enterprise, e.g. Agriculture)	4.7
Security forces	0.6

Source: WAPDA Survey, 2007-08.

16.2.2 Case study description

The project of *Diamer Bhasha* Dam was included in the water vision 2025 of Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA), in *Pakistan*. Government started its feasibility study in the year 2001, considering it as priority (Dawn 2006); as the *Kala Bagh* dam project was knotted in inter provincial politics. The estimated cost of the project was US $ 13.684 Billion approved in July, 2012 and detailed engineering design was completed up to June, 2008. To complete the funding needs of this project, intentions of the Government are towards different donor agencies, i.e. Asian Development Bank (ADB), World Bank and USAID, etc. However, there has been no assurance of funding from donor agencies so far. The project is at its land acquisition stage and construction of dam has not been started yet.

The dam is located on the River Indus, about 315 km upstream of Tarbela Dam and 40 km downstream of *Chilas* city. It is supposed to be in such a way that right abutment and right power house are in *Gilgit Baltistan* and left bank and left power house are in *Khyber Pakhtunkhwa*. It has maximum height of 272 m and is roller compacted concrete (RCC) dam. The project would cover an area of 110 Km2 and the reservoir would extend 100 km upstream of the dam (GOP 2012-13).

This project is supposed to have a contribution of 4500 MW of electricity, US $ 2.216 billion per annum revenue generation and to supplement the current shortage of electricity in a considerable way. It could hold a reservoir of 8.1 MAF (Million Acre Feet) and with live storage of 6.4 MAF annual surface water worth of US $.63 billion. Moreover, this dam will contribute in increasing the life of Tarbela dam by 35 years with increasing its further annual electricity generation capacity by 1111 GWh worth of US $ 118.3 million (GOP 2012-13). Construction of *Diamer Bhasha* Dam clearly comes into view as an important sign towards water and energy shortage of *Pakistan*.

According to government this dam will create employment during construction and subsequently in agriculture, industry and commercial sector (GOP 2012-13). Many skilled and unskilled workers in *Diamer* district will be given preference for employment. The project also includes up gradations of hospitals in *Gilgit* and construction of schools in other districts of the region (The Express Tribune 2010).

In spite of the importance of this project in the country's increasing electricity and water demand, benefits from the dam is also carrying some heavy costs in the form of low living standard of affected people, conflicts among different actors and instability in the region. The dam will swamp about 32 villages and 4228 households. 30,350 people are going to be affected due to this project. It will affect the major occupation of the area and living standard of the people by submerging the 2660 acres of agricultural land.

Construction of this project has faced tough local resistance and there have been protests on small and large scales. A number of issues have been seen resulting from tensions between local people, local resistance against the project and conflicts. Affected people staged several protests demonstrations against Government and people blocked the roads, especially Karakoram Highway, in an attempt to intensify

their protests. Even in some cases people threatened the contractor working on site and project work had been stopped for almost one year. People also threatened to bulldoze the structure in the project area. Moreover, there is legal action of affected people over Government about land measurements, but cases are still pending in court (Pamir Times 2015; Mir 2012).

However, the most painful incident of the project so far is the death of people for some reasons. Three people died and several were injured when police opened fire on protesters, who were protesting for land rates and compensation rights (GB Tribune 2010; Mir 2012). This matter has been resolved after several meetings by increasing compensation. In another incident 7 to 8 people died and several were injured because of boundary issues between two provinces. People from both *Khyber Pakhtunkhwa* and *Gilgit Baltistan* claim 7 to 8 km long territory over the boundary of these two provinces, which led to clash between both sides and death of people. Security forces had been deployed at that moment to stop the conflict and the matter is still in court. This boundary issue might lead to delay in project and there is fear of another bloody clash if this matter has not been resolved soon (Dawn 2016; Muhammad 2013).

16.3 Methodology

16.3.1 Conflict analysis

The study focuses on proximity analysis of conflicts between different actors at different levels. In order to fulfil this objective, network of different actors and conflicts among them have been identified through various interviews of affected people and Government agencies etc. Finally the data have been collected on various conflictual issues among different actors including differences of their culture and values, their engagement with each other, land acquisition and compensation and ethnicity in the area etc. Both primary and secondary sources were included as a source of data collection on desired issues. Primary source include interviews with experts of different backgrounds and local stakeholders. 61 interviews have been conducted during a field work of three months, mostly from the project area (*Chilas* and other valleys) and some other parts of *Pakistan*.

Table 16.2. List of interviewees

Background of the Interviewee(s)	Number of Interviewee(s)
Water & Power Development Authority (main Government agency to carry out this project)	10
Planning Commission (Government Organization)	7
Private Consultants for Bhasha Dam & other related projects	9
District Administration & Police	6
Diamer Poverty Alleviation program (NGO)	5

Local Leaders/representatives	10
Legal Advisors	5
Journalists & Social Workers	9

Source: The authors

Secondary sources include daily regional press and public and private published literature. This source of information has been used by some studies (Admasu 2015) and it is also a better source to cross check the information and carry out better analysis (Torre et al. 2014; Awakul and Ogunlana 2002; Mahato and Ogunlana 2011; Mann and Jeanneaux 2009; Ali and Nasir 2010). This source of information is essential for obtaining information in some dimensions, particularly to realize the public view when two parties are in disagreement.

Moreover public and private literature between project related information, were also collected as next secondary source in order to attain more widespread results. Public literature includes different brochures and financial information released by WAPDA online, from time to time to give updates on project activities. These project activities include geographical information, main features, benefits, plans about land acquisition and resettlement etc. Further data and information through field survey of WAPDA is also obtained which contain economic activities in project area, ethnic groups, number of households in each village and their ethnic attachments etc.

It is essential to take into consideration the different ethnic groups in the study area on the basis of their common ancestry, local traditional laws and common history. A major distinction among ethnic groups is on the basis of their rights to access the land and natural resources. This distinction is known as “original settlers” termed as “Owners” (who settled first time in this area) and late comers termed as “Non-owners” (who arrived late in this area after owners). Further there is also distinction of upper caste and lower caste. Most of the “non-owners” belong to lower caste but “owners” are divided into upper caste and lower caste. According to traditional law, which is accepted by Government also, all public lands (forests, water, pastures, barren land and non-timber forest which are termed as “common lands”) belong to mostly owners. Non-owners can claim the land, only they purchase for their residence and business.

Table 16.3. Social Status of the respondents in the study area

Ethnic Group	Social Status	Caste	Number in %
Shin	Owner	Upper	39.5
Yashkun	Owner	Upper	24
Kamin	Owner	Lower	11
Dom	Non-owner	Lower	1.4
Gujar	Non-owner	Lower	6.5
Mruts	Non-owner	Lower	7.4

Others	Non-owner	Lower	10.2

Source: WAPDA Report on Diamer Bhasha Dam, Accessed in 2015

People of each ethnic group recognize most of the people of their own group in the specific area and always marry within their own ethnic group. They can easily recognize the ethnic characteristics of a person and respond accordingly. They prefer to live within their own ethnic group that is why a specific area is dominated by a specific ethnic group with respect to population.

16.3.2 Proximity relations

Concept of proximity was elaborated in the framework of either regional science renewal or birth of economic geography, leading towards two major categories of proximity i.e. geographical and organized proximity (Torre and Gilly 1999; Torre and Wallet 2014).

Geographical proximity relates to spatial differences between economic actors not only through physical factors but also social constructions like transport infrastructure or telecommunication technologies. It expresses the physical distance between two entities and also includes parameters like Km, time, price and some other perception of the actors. Geographical proximity plays central role in generation of conflicts and it can be undesirable and desirable. It is undesirable or unwelcomed when different categories of users disagree on land use in three ways: Superposition (when different users desire to use single piece of land for different purposes), Contiguity (when individuals disagree on the boundaries between their respective properties) and Neighbourhood (a situation in which undesirable effects are diffused into air, water or under the effect of gravity over to actors located in proximity) (Torre and Zuindeau 2009). Under desirable proximity land users seek proximity to other social or economic actors or to natural or artificial resources. It can be of two types: Permanent geographical proximity leads to location or relocation of actors in an area which is likely to provide what they need and temporary geographical proximity, which does not call for location or relocation of activities as it can be done through trips and visits of varying duration and momentarily face to face interactions.

Organized proximity concerns about different ways and means by which different actors are close to each other in non-spatial terms. Such proximity refers to arranged nature of human activities. Organized proximity is based upon two ideas: The logic of belonging, in which two or more actors belong to similar relationship or network, whether their relation is direct or intermediate. It may depend upon sector in which they are operating, such as engineers or researchers who belong to same network etc. Logic of similarity corresponds to mental adherence to common categories. People can be connected through common projects, same cultural or religious values or symbols, social norms and common languages etc. It makes easy

the interaction among various individuals, researchers etc. who did not know each other before but share the same reference.

Geographical proximity can benefit in conflict resolution by avoidance and imposed solutions and necessitated by cooperative solutions i.e. give and take solution and concerted solution. But it should always be combined with organized proximity. Organized proximity is zero when solution of avoidance is adopted, less affective when solution is imposed and increases significantly when give and take and concerted solutions are activated. Thus temporary geographical proximity and organized proximity are complementary and enables the actors to find the process of negotiation and compromise (Gallaud and Torre 2004). Further, among the modes of conflicts prevention involvement of third party could also play an important role to promote negotiations and to adopt non-judicial rout. The solutions could involve technical acts, compensation in the form of financial, natural and technical, land use planning, eliminating the activity or moving it somewhere else etc. (Torre et al. 2014).

16.4 Results and Discussion

16.4.1 Main conflicts: Land use issues

The project has a number of small and large scale impacts on the area and the affected people. These impacts of the project are creating conflicts among different actors in different dimensions i.e. between different groups of affected people at local and provincial level and between Government and affected people. When the project started passing through its different phases, various actors engaged in a variety of conflicts.

Issues among local population and Government started arising on the basis on cultural differences when Government agents/outsiders came to this area for project activities. Although there is great element of hospitality among local people they usually do not accept outsiders (Government agencies) interfering their social and economic life. There is lack of understanding between local people and Government due to social and cultural differences. Although Government hired some local people to deal with local population and project activities but according to opinion of some experts these efforts are not enough and Government should have hired local experts and NGOs etc.

Moreover, people were not properly informed about different project phases and activities and Government also ignored their proper participation in different project activities. According to WAPDA the *Diamer-Bhasha* dam project is approved by council of common interest for national consensus in 2010 (The Nation 2010) and according to minister of planning and development all political parties are backing up the project (Iqbal 2013). However, the consensus meeting was attended by Prime Minister of *Pakistan*, Chief Ministers of four provinces and representatives from *Gilgit Baltistan*. So, there was not much scope under discussion because this body

was either to vote in favour of dam or against it. It has also been observed that consultation with affected people has not been taken place at local level about the construction of the dam (Singh 2012).

Some of the experts and stakeholders we interviewed discussed that there was proper information dissemination about land rate compensations and employment opportunities in the form of workshops of stakeholders, interviews and tribal meetings, seminars and cadastral surveys etc. Public was encouraged to participate in the project in the form of a 27 member committee including mainly local leaders and religious leaders etc. However, lack of information dissemination and at some places wrong information dissemination by Government agents about over-evaluation of people's lands has been noted. So people expected more compensation and this situation led to conflicts when Government announced original land rates as compensations.

Table 16.4. Consent of affected people

Consent of Affected People	Response of Experts in Percentage (%)	
Information Dissemination	Yes	25%
	No	64%
Public Participation	Yes	23%
	No	57%

Source: Authors' Calculation

Experts' and stakeholders' opinion over information dissemination and public participation

Majority of the experts argued against these views, as there was no proper information dissemination and public participation especially on the basis of equal participation of all actors such as owners; non-owners etc. in major project activities i.e. land measurement, land category decisions and ownership of lands at provincial level and also on the basis of different ethnic groups etc. Several other conflicts arose on the basis of these project activities, among the affected people and also between affected people and Government.

Government negotiated the land rate compensations with local people after deadly conflicts in 2010, in which three people died and several were injured in clash with forces (GB Tribune 2010; Mir 2012). Although these negotiations seem successful and no conflict has been seen over land rates after 2010, according to some stakeholders the representative committee of local people was forced to accept the land rates with fear of further causalities of local people if another clash with forces becomes inevitable. After negotiations with local people three land categories have been decided, including cultivated land, cultivable land and barren land. Compensations for private lands and common lands are being provided on the basis of these land categories. People, in some areas, are claiming that their cultivable lands have been shown as barren lands in order to reduce the compensation rate.

According to expert views, because of this land category conflict, land for resettlement of affected people could not be acquired, which in return is causing delay in resettlement, socioeconomic disturbance and ultimately delay in project.

Conflicts between Government and affected people are also on land measurements and land record preparation. This is tribal area and there had been no record of land/area hold by people for all types of lands including residential, agricultural and commercial etc. All the land transactions and conflicts over lands were handled by local leaders. After decision of this project activity, Government agents (land administers) called "*Patwaris*[1]", first time prepared the land record. According to experts and stakeholders there have been corruption, mismanagement and favouritism reported over land measurement. Conflicts arose between local people from *Gilgit Baltistan* and Government over less land measurement, as local people were not satisfied for land/area measured by Government agents. Their records have limited accessibility and reliability indicating the room for corruption and un-official change in land records. In the literature, land right change, informal land rights, political favouritism and mismanagement by local land managers have been addressed as main source of conflicts (Anaafo 2015; Zhu and Simarmata 2015; Admasu 2015).

Territory conflict on much larger scale has also been observed in this project. Territorial conflict (boundary issues) between *Gilgit Baltistan* and *Khyber Pakhtunkhwa* is over about 7 Km long area on the left bank of *Indus River*. Almost, all of the experts and stakeholders reported violent conflict over this issue, 7 to 8 people died and several were injured. The majority of the experts and stakeholders reported this issue mainly because of the compensation. But if this territory comes under *Khyber Pakhtunkhwa,* there will be share in royalty from electricity generation after construction of dam; otherwise *Gilgit Baltistan* will get the whole royalty.

Table 16.5. Major Conflicts

Conflicts	Response of Experts in Percentage (%)	
Land Measurement Conflicts	No	0%
	Yes	75%
Land Category Conflict	No	2%
	Yes	51%
Ethnic Conflict	No	8%
	Yes	82%

Source: The authors

Another important dispute started among the affected people, mainly between the two main ethnic groups (i.e. owners and non-owners) over compensation for common lands. This significant issue is affecting seriously socioeconomic of local people and is based on several places, mainly in *Thak Das* (Site for the model village

[1] Local land administrator and government official who keep the record regarding land ownership.

with the same name) and *Chilas*. Majority of the non-owners have less land, limited work opportunities and low income. The amount, most of the non-owners are going to receive for acquisition of their personal lands will not be sufficient for their re-settlement. Due to this project activity when Government decided to provide compensation for common lands, non-owners claimed their share from compensations, which according to local law are not eligible. This issue of compensation from common lands started conflicts between actors of different ethnic groups and Government. Violent conflicts have been seen over these issues. Non-owners threatened the contractors working on site and project work had been stopped for one year.

Almost all the lower caste groups, most of the times, are not allowed to take part in decision making activity. This is also a conflicting point between owners and non-owners. Among the two distinguishing groups, Kamin and Dom, Kamin are already owners and getting their share in compensations from common lands. On the other hand Dom and also the Kamin provide the services to the upper caste owners, so owners compensate the Dom also from common lands, which leaves no conflicts between these actors. So lack of ability to take part in decision making is not a problem for both Kamin and Dom. However, lack of decision making ability of other non-owners is creating conflict, mainly for the purpose of no share from common land compensations.

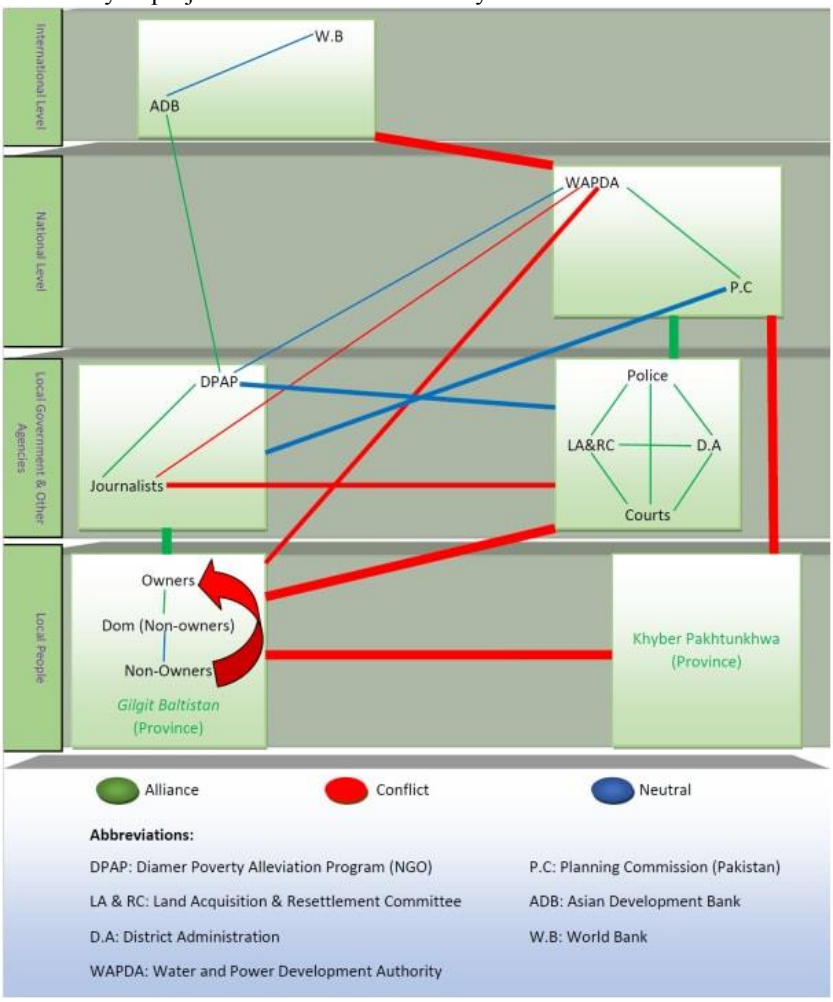
16.4.2 Proximity analysis of Diamer-Bhasha Dam issues/conflicts

Proximity analysis is a useful tool to analyse the conflicts between different actors. It helps to identify the network of actors and the cooperative and conflictual behaviours among them. It also proposes conflict resolution mechanisms. In case of *Diamer-Bhasha* dam project, both organized and geographical proximity have been seen and studied.

Geographical proximity played an important role in conflict process. We found undesirable geographical proximity in the form of “contiguity” which is the basis for conflicts between local actors and Government agencies. It has been observed in case of land measurements by Government agents, as people are not satisfied with the land/area measured. Most of them claim more land than announced by Government after measurement. Moreover, contiguity and superposition of interests have also been observed in case of provincial territory conflict, when people of both provinces (i.e. *Gilgit Baltistan* and *Khyber Pakhtunkhwa*) are not satisfied over the boundary, which led to severe conflicts, mainly over compensation and also on royalty after the construction of dam.

Another crucial cause of conflicts, lack of organized proximity, has also been observed among different actors, at different levels. Two types of significant conflicts, i.e. among the affected people and also between affected people and Government agencies, would never have occurred if there were proper understanding and coordination.

First, this lack was observed among two main groups of affected people, *Shin, Yashkun, Kamin* and *Dom* on the one hand, and on the other *Gujar, Mruts* and "*Others*". All of these groups are on same platform of the project, having some similar goals against other external actors (Government agencies), including payment of cash compensation from Government, construction of model villages for resettlement and ultimately development of this area due to this project. Due to different values, history and local traditions, there exists lack of interaction and understanding among these groups, mainly on the property rights and decision making leading towards delay in project activities and ultimately conflicts.



Source: The authors

Fig. 16.1. Network of actors in the case of *DiamerBhasha* dam

Secondly, a lack of organized proximity has also been observed between local actors (affected people) and Government agencies. Although both parties are in favour of the project, yet there exists conflict over land category between both parties in addition to cultural differences, lack of understanding and trust among each other. Further, in case of land category conflicts, both parties agree on use of land but disagree on structure/category of land on the basis of which compensation has to be provided.

If we enter a bit more into the details, it appears that logic of similarity has been observed between owners as well as between most of the lower castes (non-owners). It is also true for other actors working at local and national level i.e. Government agencies. Although they belong to different areas and backgrounds they are bound to same administrative rules and operational goals.

On the other hand, logic of belonging can be observed between upper caste owners and *Dom* (Lower caste non-owners). Although they differ in values and traditions from owners they are normally being compensated by the upper castes on the basis of services they provide to upper caste owners, which leads to no conflict over demand for compensation from common lands. Further, Logic of belonging is also an important aspect for the property right conflict related to land category conflict as different groups of actors working at local level made alliances against Government agencies. Moreover, there exists an alliance network expanding from local actors (from *Gilgit Baltistan*) to other agencies working at local level i.e. journalists and DPAP. This alliance is against Government agencies/actors working not only on local level but also at national level, on all types of property rights issues and also on cultural differences. This logic of belonging can also be seen at local level and international level between DPAP and ADB.

16.5 Conclusion

Big infrastructures like dams are vital need of the time in order to overcome the energy and water shortage problems. Such projects bring also, along with them employment opportunities and put the country on the path of progress to attain the level of development. But they also carry some heavy costs for directly affected local people in the form of socioeconomic disturbance and low living standard, tensions and conflicts among various actors. These conflicts could take several expressions in the form of legal actions, bringing the matter to the notice of the public authorities, mediatisation (bringing the matter to the attention of the media), assault or verbal confrontation, putting up signs and even in some brutal cases death of people (Torre et al. 2014).

It is suggested that government should avoid management weaknesses, corruption and conflicts from infrastructure projects (Magsi and Torre 2014). World Commission on Dams (WCD) condemned that government's accountability led to corruption, misappropriation and discrimination of benefits (WCD 2000). It also gives the principles for resettlement of displaced persons in the form of consultation of

all stakeholders before planning. Unfortunately the point of view of planners is often different from the affected population, particularly in developing countries.

Diamer Bhasha dam project has several impacts on the area and local people raising conflicts in several different dimensions among different actors. The impacts of the project include socioeconomic disturbance in the form of displacement, resettlement, employment and livelihood of affected people. Further, due to this project activity the interaction between actors at local and national level has become inevitable on several project activities like land acquisition, compensations etc. which created social and cultural problems at local level and disturbance in local values and traditions. These matters discussed above have been the reason of conflicts among local people in the form of ethnicity, compensations and territorial rights and also between local people and Government agencies in the form of compensations and property rights.

Both organized and geographical proximity play a key role in these conflicts. Undesirable geographical proximity has been observed in the form of contiguity over land measurement conflicts between local people and Government, as well as over boundary issue between *Gilgit Baltistan* and *Khyber Pakhtunkhwa*. Superposition of expectations for land also plays a role over territory issues between of two provinces, where people are not satisfied over the boundaries. So there is dissatisfaction over land compensation due to dissatisfaction over geographical demarcation. Lack of organized proximity has been observed between two main groups of local actors, as well as between local people and Government agencies. One can observe logic of similarity between upper caste owners and lower caste owners on the basis of same values and thinking over land rights leaving no conflict among them. It also exists between different actors of Government agencies, as they belong to different areas, different backgrounds and working distantly but still having same thinking and decisions because they are bound to same administrative rules. Moreover, logic of belonging is observed between local people of *Gilgit Baltistan* and other agencies working at local level.

Geographical proximity should be associated with organized proximity to manage the conflicts. A highly organized proximity for the purpose of negotiations and compromise is required between owners and non-owners for land right conflicts, territorial conflict between two provinces, cultural and land category conflict. Strong political efforts are required to bring all the stakeholders on same table and to satisfy them by sharing land rights and compensations with proper negotiations. Strong negotiation skills are also recommended to be built among stakeholders at local level in order to protect their rights through NGOs or donor agencies. Involving third party for conflict resolution could also be helpful. This method has already been under consideration by Government to involve religious leaders as third party to resolve territory conflicts between two provinces. It could appear helpful to create understanding among different actors for successful negations and give and take solution between local ethnic groups and other involved groups of actors in the long run.

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