

WSU Development Projects in Afghanistan and Pakistan

DR BARBRA

RASCO:

Well, thanks for coming out on this beautiful, Pullman spring afternoon. And tonight, I want to talk a little bit about some of the work and some of the amazing people I met that have helped the country, Pakistan, and also countries in Central Asia, primarily through agricultural development and also in STEM education fields-- so talking about both some Americans and also some Pakistanis.

I've had the good fortune to work in 37 countries around the world, in Afghanistan from 2005 to about 2012, on and off, and then in Pakistan from 2009 through 2013 when, due to security reasons, had to move our project into Sri Lanka, which was recovering from a Civil War of 29 years. But I would like to recognize a couple of people. First of all, for Malala, I'm wearing pink. I understand that's her favorite color, right? [? Niantarra, ?] who brought this nice [? shela camis. ?] This is the latest fashion in Karachi, I understand. She was able to come and give a presentation at a microbiology conference in Washington DC, called me up and said, I'm going to be in the US, can I come and see you?

And so I said, sure, I'll be in Chicago. I'll fly there. And so she bought me this outfit. And I went and purchased a whole suitcase full of books to send home for her three kids. She's a wonderful individual I'll talk about today. And the [? Subzori ?] family, who are a Muslim minority group in Pakistan, who gave me this necklace and were also very kind in hosting our project in many, many ways, including opening their home to us to stay in over a four-year period.

So with that, I'll get started and talk about Pakistan. I do think Pakistan is a very enigmatic place. This is Pakistan. For anyone who hasn't had a chance to take a look at a map of the area here. Primary provinces are Punjab, this is Lahore, Faisalabad, which I'll talk about, is down here. Islamabad is the capital. I've also worked in Karachi, also over in Quetta, and down here in Gwadar, a little bit in Peshawar, which is up here, and have had some contacts with folks in the tree fruit industry up here in Gilgit. This is Afghanistan over here. And then over here, down here, is Iran. And then over here, primarily, is India. And then China sort of sneaks its way up here. And then some of the Soviet Central Republic's up in that general area.

So this is Pakistan. I had a chance to work all across the country, initially, until security tightened up enough that we're pretty much restricted in our recent project with the Trilateral

Commission for Afghanistan, Pakistan, and the USA into Karachi and, to some extent, into Lahore. So this is another map, just to give you an idea of what the geography is of the area. And this is the Indus River coming through here. So this is their major source for agricultural water across the country.

Just some general information, a very large country, very large population, which is growing-- in 2016, at about 1.5% per year, is an estimate. I think this estimate might be a little bit low. Literacy is about 56%. But when you start getting up into areas like KPK, the female literacy rate, as you might remember from the book, is much, much lower. We've worked with women from parts of KPK, Waziristan, and eastern Afghanistan where the female literacy rate is less than 5%.

Life expectancy is not all that great. A lot of folks work in agriculture. And that's the area that we were most focused on. Linked to the site for this presentation tonight is also going to be a tape from President French, a university president here at WSU in the 50s and 1960s. So he actually initiated a program between Washington State University and what is now the University of Agriculture Faisalabad-- started off as an agricultural college and then became a full-fledged university that's about twice as big, now, as Washington State, as far as overall enrollment.

And there is a tape from him. We had a Doctor Ghazanfar from University of Idaho, who was head of the Pakistan Student Association. Back in the 60s, they would have student functions. And he taped Dr. French. And we do have a copy of that historical archive available for you to listen to. Quality isn't very good, so we don't want to play it tonight.

What I want to focus on is the programs that Washington State University developed, initially, in Pakistan. This was a time when the universities were doing economic development and human capacity-building the right way. Here is a picture of a group of faculty members from WSU who moved to Pakistan in the late 1950s and stayed for several years.

And the gentlemen I'm going to talk about a little bit tonight-- about him and his family, because they came here with the families. Maybe their kids went to boarding school somewhere, either in India or in a larger town. But the families moved to the country and stayed there. And that has a very big impact on how much you can get done. And I think the programs that I've been associated with over the years that involve putting technically capable, qualified, dedicated, people in the field for a long period of time are the ones that work.

This is Ken Gross. Ken Gross was a Dairy Extension faculty member at Washington State University. His family is still in the area. And unfortunately, Mr. Gross passed away this spring. He was in his early 90s. But he'd been in Pakistan in the 50s and 60s, and then had gone back in the 1980s as well, to continue some of his work. And these are some of the pictures-- historical pictures-- from the 1960s here, early 1960s. This is Dr. Larson up here, working on some development of cereal crops and then students learning about food science, conducting sensory panels.

You'll notice here that the student population is exclusively male-- quite different at the University of Agriculture Faisalabad now, where the female enrollment is probably about 60%, quite a change. But just to give an indication of the 50 years that we've been working with this particular university, right now, the University of Faisalabad was established in '73. Whenever our faculty were there initially, it was the Western Pakistan Agricultural College. And because of the efforts of our faculty there in the 60s, they were able to build capacity and get the university to a point where it could actually attain university status.

The campus is located in central Faisalabad, on, of all things, Jail Street, and is about 85 miles west of Lahore. So we spent an awful lot of time here as part of our project in the past few years. And we'll show you some pictures here. So this is Mr. Gross several years ago at an event that we had. I think this was in 2009 or 2010. The councilmans are right here. So I know Jessica is still-- Rob was-- he pretty much ran the international student center for longest period of time. If we ever had any questions, Rob was the guy we called. And Jessica, now you're working with international programs in the College of Business. So thanks for coming out this evening.

And this is Molly Gross. So she was with Ken for several years in Pakistan, along with their three children. A wonderful people did an awful lot of good. One of the things that Ken did, which I thought was very amazing is, people would always come to get some technical assistance. And his idea was, OK, we'll help you once. And then you've got to go out and help other people.

So if you were trying to raise some crops and you went and got some seed from the project, you had to come back and bring back at least one quantity of seed that was equivalent to what you had taken out of the project. That way then, everybody's farm could get bigger and better, with the theory that a rising tide raises all ships.

Couple other folks here in this picture, this is the current president of the University of Agriculture Faisalabad. This is me. This is Dr. Tahir [? Zahoor, ?] who is our collaborator at the University of Agriculture Faisalabad, on a PhD program that we'd established here in 2009. And this lady is Mary Francis Gross-Lopez, who is a nurse and is working in the community of Pullman now, a very wonderful lady, and did a lot to sponsor and assist our graduate students that came over from Pakistan.

So this is just some pictures of the university as it is today. A very modern facilities-- some of the facilities sort of fall out of the old British architectural system, but classic buildings that might be old but they've been recently renovated, some brand new facilities for horticultural science and studies, and also for the food science program, with which we worked very closely. And we're still collaborating with faculty at this institution.

This is a signing of a memorandum of understanding with University of Agriculture Faisalabad. This is President Floyd, who passed away recently, Warren Bailey, former provost, President Kahn, and then Dr. Zahoor. So this meeting occurred, I think about 2009. So here, we are looking at an old copy of Chinook, the yearbook-- we still have Chinook here? People still writing yearbooks? Tell me there's still a yearbook.

SPEAKER 1: There is.

DR BARBRA RASCO: Ah, good news. OK, perfect. And then some more faculty, here. So here is Dr. Shakas Ghazanfar, from the University of Idaho who provided us with that tape that you can listen to later on, Dan Bernardo, [? Sean Sablani, ?] Mahmoud [? Miman-- ?] who is a very good colleague of Pakistani descent at our vet school who recently retired, very active with our international programs, particularly on animal reproduction-- and then [? Pat Sterko ?] and Barry Swanson.

So here is just one of the events that-- Mary is in here, I think. Yeah, here is Mary, again, at her home, sponsoring some of our students. So this is her brother, Phil. So Phil and Mary were raised in Pakistan. This is Phil's wife. And then two of our students, [? Haliid Naviid ?] and [? Rizrana Makbul, ?] who worked with Dr. [? Hanupapu ?] and Dr. Clavendar-Gill for their doctorates here at WSU. And now they're back at Faisalabad, teaching. So it just gives you an indication of the impact that long-term associations can have.

We now have two good faculty here. And we also have about five more individuals that have completed this program. And that's my daughter. So we did have one of the things that

University of Faisalabad did was recognize the 50 years of collaboration that they'd had with WSU. So this was an event we had in 2011. And we were hoping that the Gross family were going to be able to come over. And Phil was planning on coming, except he got stuck on Hokkaido because of the Fukushima earthquake, tsunami event that happened at that time. We were able to actually stream him in a little bit.

But that was an event to recognize the collaboration, but also to recognize their family for the contributions that they made to the university. So here is a number of the older alumni, people from the 60s that had graduated and had worked with our faculty, initially, as students. This is our provost, beamed him in live. He wasn't able to make the event. It was interesting to have-- what technology can do and how technology has helped us to collaborate and continue collaborations, even 12 times zones away. And then here is Dr. Ghazi, who was able to come over. He's retired now, living in Georgia, great guy-- and also some more of our alumni from that time.

This man is Warren Weinstein. We'll talk a little bit about Warren a little bit later. He was the chief of party, meaning the country director for an aid organization called JE Austin, and did lots of wonderful work in Pakistan. Anybody ever hear of his-- anybody know anything about this man? He was kidnapped by a bunch of thugs and sold to al-Qaeda, up a chain, into Waziristan, where he was killed in a drone attack in January of 2015-- 73 years old, a wonderful man.

Warren originally studied to be a rabbi. So you can imagine what it would be like to be an Orthodox Jew living in Pakistan-- spoke fluent Urdu. He'd gotten his doctoral degree in international economics from Columbia and had dedicated his life to public service working in primarily west and east Africa. And then the last tour of duty for him was Pakistan. I'll share a little more about Warren's work in a minute.

Here's a ribbon cutting ceremony for a new building that was inaugurated at the event that we were at, that 50 year anniversary, again with President Khan. Dancing horses-- anybody seen these? These horses, they walk up and down these steps. I don't know how they train these animals to do this, but absolutely amazing. Huge event celebration, but the culture, of the Punjab region particularly, is very, very interesting. And then two other colleagues here, Dr. Hagerty, who was our program director at Idaho and had spent lots of time in Pakistan, primarily in the 80s, on cold weather crop production, and food science, food safety-- and then Dr. Bledsoe, here with a group of Pashto students, again at University of Agriculture

Faisalabad. Most of these students are Afghani.

Sitting with women on the floor, kind of common-- one of the things I'd always do when I go into a country is check out the ladies room. That's one of the easiest ways to figure out what the status of women are in a country. First of all, one, is there a ladies room? Two, is it functional? Three, is it clean? If all three of those things exist, probably in pretty good shape functioning as a woman in society there. But if you're missing two of those things, maybe all three, you know that maybe there's a lot of work to be done in-- I don't want to call it empowerment, female empowerment, but raising the status of women in society.

One of the things that I appreciate about our colleagues from the 50s and 60s is that they were focused on empowerment issues as well, but realized that you can't eat empowerment-- that the way women's status is going to increase in a society is if they have an education, if they can start and run their own businesses, and if they can become employed in a community.

I don't know, I just like this picture of camels in Balochistan This is Balochistan, outside, a town called Gwadar. Walking down the highway-- believe me, if they're on the road, you're not going anywhere until they decide to-- you can't pass a pack of camels. They get crazy and they can really do a lot of damage to a car.

This is an arrest station on the highway going across the country between Lahore and Islamabad. And I always thought this is great. Very ingenious, Mr. Areeb's fast food, Dunkin' Donuts, OK. SubDay, isn't that great? So apparently, for some reason, he couldn't steal that trade name. I thought this was great. So I thought you'd appreciate that.

We were bringing a number of students over from Pakistan to start programs, not just in agriculture but also in hotel and restaurant management. And what I wanted to do was to show you this slide here. Because we had a gentleman who was going to start the PhD program in hotel and restaurant management, who was working in this office, behind this front desk here, at the Islamabad Marriott Hotel. Mr. [? Vihear, ?] father of four children, was killed in this attack. And he was planning-- we had him set up to come to WSU for his studies.

So you can see what happened here in 2009. A truck came through a gate. And then there was an initial small explosion, then a major explosion which tore the front off the hotel here. It was quite a disastrous event. This is the hotel after it was rebuilt. And what they did here is,

there was a gate here that was blocked off. This used to be the gate. This was the gate where the truck had come in. And the major explosion was right here. But you can see here, there's guards here. There's guards here.

They've rebuilt the lobby. And I just wanted to show you what it looked like when the hotel had been restored. It took them about two years. It was quite amazing. And the only thing that was kind of sad about the hotel after they remodeled it is they took out all the bathtubs. So now all the rooms have showers. And they were able to put more rooms on each floor.

And then here's Warren again. Let me tell you a little bit about some of the work that Warren had done in Pakistan. He was probably the greatest promoter of small-medium enterprise development and agriculture in horticultural areas and also in dairy science. We would sit together in meetings with Pakistani colleagues, particularly with the Army, which is an interesting group if you ever had to deal with discussing various aspects of programs in Russian. Because it's the language they didn't know. So I can remember just sitting there with Warren, talking about various projects that we were both engaged with, and working together between our universities, our USDA project and his group, to try to get projects done.

One of the last times I ever saw Warren was in a hotel lobby where he was on a RNR, able to get out of the country every couple of months. And so he was showing me a present he'd bought for his wife, Elaine. And we were looking down out of the window and saw the streets of Karachi during the monsoon, and trying to figure out how the heck he was going to get through this to be able to catch this plane and get out of the country. So routinely, the streets would flood in parts of Karachi. And then here's the 2013, after he was kidnapped in 2011.

We were actually at his home, Thursday before he was kidnapped, which was a Sunday morning, anticipating that he might be able to actually rent his house and move our project to that particular location. And so you can see here, this is the place where he was kidnapped. This is [? 49th's ?] [? sea ?] model town, Lahore, and then some of the messages that came out from him when he was in captivity, and then a recent picture before he died in 2015-- one of the most amazing men I've ever met. I miss him a lot.

This is another gentlemen I want to talk a little bit about. This is Dr. Glenn Bledsoe, working overseas for the last 20 years, one of the most practical engineers I've ever met. He can make anything out of anything and get it to work, tough as nails, and smart. I've never met anybody quite this smart, in a practical way. So here he is in a part of the Khyber Pass area. I'm not

sure which side of the path he is on. He always dressed locally. He could actually get away with looking like a Pashto leader. He is part Native American, so his cheekbones are oriented the right way. And he could develop the shuffle and the walk, picked up a little Pashto. Dresses well-- and as long as he usually keeps his mouth shut, he's OK.

But here we are with Amena, the smoking camel. This is great. She would really get upset when she started getting-- needed that nicotine hit. And this was her buddy up here. This is Dr. Bledsoe, here, at a market in Kabul. We're trying to get that renovated-- trying to get basic water services, both for sewage so that people have toilets and then also for the ability to wash and keep the areas clean and also the produce as well.

So he always wanted to go and see Kim's Gun. So if anybody who's familiar with Rudyard Kipling, this is Kim's Gun. It's sitting in the middle of an island, a major traffic thoroughfare in the city of Lahore. This is the museum where Rudyard Kipling's father was the curator for the longest time. But there really is Kim's Gun and it is Lahore. And you can go see it. It's kind of cool.

Other projects Dr. Bledsoe worked with were a lot of small, agriculture enterprises. These are pine nuts. So how do you make this project more sanitary? Well, you take it off the ground and you put it on some mats. And then you provide hand-washing facilities, you provide toilet facilities, you take things one step at a time to make him safe. People will say, these are kids working. That's bad the kids are working. Well, if these kids can sell these pine nuts and make some money, it might be the only cash income that family has that day. So maybe it's not a bad idea as long as all of the children can go to school.

This is the sort of thing we would see outside Jalalabad, children getting forced down from the villages into town. And these are a couple young boys. The oldest one here in the middle, he's about nine years old. And so they're obviously not growing very well. And they hadn't eaten in three days. So found these children, were talking to them because they'd run up to a chicken processor and picked the entrails-- raw entrails out of the market and ran away to eat them. And so what's the solution to a situation like this? Well, maybe we can help the boys find a trade.

So one of the projects that we were involved with is getting boys into trades. So the deal was, with each of these guilds, is your young men could work and learn a trade, in this case baking. So these young men here would make the products that were sold in this really nice looking

bakery. But they had to go to school. So during this period of time in Afghanistan, a school day was four hours, six days a week. And that's the amount of schooling these guys got. And they were able to get all the way through their a-levels-- no, o-levels-- first level of high school, this way. This is very important. And if the people in the guild didn't comply with this requirement, then they were blacklisted in the community.

This is another interesting project just to show how some of these ties with WSU can move a little further afield. So here's Dr. Bledsoe, again. This little shark-- this is a whale shark-- it's 40 feet long. Or 40 tons and 20 feet long, I can't remember which way it is. It was drug in on a fishing boat in Karachi. So the problem was, these guys didn't know how to move it. So being an engineer, Dr. Bledsoe figured out how to move it-- helped them figure it out using various two-point, three-point loading techniques, and putting some cushions under here so we could actually move that whale shark where it could be safe. And then tissue samples could be taken, it could be examined.

And some of these tissue samples came back here to the vet school. Wanted to try to figure out what killed this whale shark. We were also able to recover some ovaries because these particular shark bear live young. And so we were able to recover some ovaries and get them to a researcher in the Chicago area who studied these particular animals. And what had actually happened here is, you can see that there is a rope here. Somehow this rope got affixed to the tail of this shark, and it got pulled backwards into the harbor. So the shark actually drowned. That's how it died.

And here's one of the produce markets, too, that we'd worked with. You see how clean it is, nice and clean. Where before, they hadn't had covers or fresh water. Not real fancy, but it's safe and clean. Here's another operation of a program that Dr. Bledsoe was leading along with a number of our colleagues. These are ladies, illiterate women, mostly widows-- either they're widows because their husbands really are dead or because they went to Pakistan to get work and never came back and forgot they had a family in eastern Afghanistan. These communities, the border is pretty porous across the Khyber Pass. And so it's fairly easy for local people on one side of the border and the other to move around.

Anyway, these ladies didn't have any work. And so what Dr. Bledsoe had done is sit down with the leaders in the community, and with the local religious leaders as well, to try to determine what would be the best way to help these women become independent, and retrofitted this particular vegetable processing facility. So some of the ladies would raise seeds until they got

about big enough to plant out, give them to men who, would then take them into the fields, plant them, raise the crop until it was ready to go, harvest the crop, and then bring it back. And these ladies would process that food.

Also had orphans living with women in this particular facility. And the products were actually featured-- this program was featured by a national US media team. Anybody recognize who this is? Maybe the older folks more-- it's Dan Rather. So he came through this facility, accompanied by this individual who was part of the US State Department in Afghanistan. First thing he did is pick a tomato off the line and eat it. That's how comfortable he was.

This had more impact on the ability of these women to sell their produce, both in Afghanistan, and then to the ISAF, forces and then into Dubai, than probably anything else that happened. So here, a famous American guy comes in, eats the vegetables, it's all good. And then this is a project, too, where he was able to coordinate the shipment of the vegetables and fruit these ladies had helped to produce, and ship it out to Dubai on this old [? Antonov ?] airplane. So stuff would come in and go out on these Russian planes from the field adjacent to the military airbase up in Jalalabad.

This is another project I think was pretty significant. So here, making a fried noodles snack. And so these guys-- eh-- they're kind of into it, but not really, pretty messy, kind of sloppy. So the owner of this facility originally did not want to hire women to do this because he just didn't want to. But the women, as soon as I got in here-- again, these are village ladies. This might be their only first job-- the first time they've had the opportunity to earn money on their own-- cleaned it up, had it running real nice, nice packages, putting it in boxes when it's done. So after a little while, the owner of the facility came back and said, hi, can you get me some more women workers? Because now they're willing to work and they're getting some economic independence and being able to gain status within their community.

So here, I just wanted to show you a picture of what the bus was probably like that Malala was on the day she was shot, very common form of convenience here. Another picture of girls going to school. These girls are actually in Waziristan. So it was kind of nice to see ladies, young ladies, being able to go to school.

Now I want to tell you about a couple of the-- or three of the most amazing women I think I've ever met in my life. This young lady here, who's [? Niantarra, ?] who bought me this outfit, gave it to me in Chicago a couple of weeks ago, came to see me. Dr. Shahana Urooj Kazmi,

vice chancellor of the University of Karachi, one of the biggest institutions in the country, got her PhD in microbiology at the University of Maryland. And then this young lady here, [? Shabana. ?] So [? Shabana ?] is Pashto. Dr. Urooj Kazmi is Siddi. And now, Dr. [? Niantarra ?] is Punjabi.

So let me just tell you a little bit about [? Shabana. ?] [? Shabana, ?] fortunately, now, is in California. She's helping immigrant women to get adapted to the community college life in northern California. So she was a translator for us on a project, a very, very smart young lady. So she was born in Pakistan when the Taliban took power and was raised in refugee camps in eastern Pakistan.

During the time of the Taliban, things got so bad for her family, for her mom, that her mom almost gave her up to another family because they couldn't afford to feed her. She managed to get through 10 years of education in the Pakistani system. And we had her admitted to Washington State University. Come in to IALC just for a little while, and then come into a program. Because she wanted to be a doctor. Her father was a doctor and he died. Her brother was a doctor and he also died. And so she wanted to be a doctor too. And we have it all set up, ready to go.

Went to Washington DC to see Patty Murray. Said, Senator Murray, can you help us get this young woman a visa? And one of her staff members said, well no, we can't do that because she may emigrate to the United States. So after that happened, she was forced into an arranged marriage with a cousin, still was working, supporting a large family, and then had three children in the intervening period between whenever she was forced to get married and was able to make it to the United States, the end of last year.

So even though we're supposed to be helping talented young women get out of bad situations-- and all she wanted to do was go back and help her people. Here again are our ladies in the facility. [? Shabana ?] was very instrumental in helping getting these ladies trained. Because the only lady in this whole facility of 80 women who could read and write was the manager, here-- this young woman, here, who had about four years of education. Nobody else could read or write.

So here she is getting the approval of the elders about the food safety plan for this facility. So the ladies implemented the food safety plan, but we got the elders in the village to agree that this was the proper thing to do, including a story about worrying about gloves. We got the

ladies to wear gloves so that they could work during the entire month without having to take any time off.

This young lady, this is [? Niantarra. ?] She was an excellent instructor. She still is. She's now working as an instructor at the University of Karachi. She had gone through college and her family wanted her to marry a cousin back in her village in Punjab. And she said no. Her dad got upset with her and would not speak to her for over 10 years. She said no, I want to marry this other young man. And after a long period of time, they were finally able to marry.

And so, in these cultures, one of the things that a husband will do is say, under what conditions are you going to put on our marriage? You know, do you want me to give you money, land, jewelry, what do you want? And she says, I want you to let me go to school. Said, I want to get my PhD in microbiology. And she was able to do that. So she got married, has three kids. We're sort of like her honorary grandparents for her three children, and has recently completed her PhD and is teaching at the University of Karachi. Very amazing young lady to be that determined to tell your family, no.

And one of the reasons she had the strength to do that was because of Dr. [? Shahana, ?] here. I've never met a woman that was this strong. She can look you down and that's the end. She can ask you to do something and you will do it, she's so convincing. And whenever [? Niantarra ?] was one of her students and she said, Dr. [? Shahana, ?] what can I do? My family wants me to get married. She says, tell them no. It will be a bad match, and gave her the strength to get through that terrible situation.

Dr. [? Shahana ?] is now the president of a private university in Pakistan. After you hit a certain age, you have to retire. So when she retired at 60, she then went to become president of this new university. And obviously, it's a very, very successful program. This, I thought was very funny. We were working with the University of Idaho and a number of these projects. So we signed an agreement between the University of Karachi and the University of Idaho. It's in Moscow, Idaho.

So this is the Karachi paper. So they give that the university's from Russia because it's from Moscow. It's just one of those things-- kind of cute. But we still have collaborations with a number of folks from the University of Karachi. And we're hoping to be able to continue those collaborations. Dr. [? Shahana ?] would be everywhere. So here she is at a trade convention, trying to build contacts for her students for jobs. Employment is kind of tough. A lot of people

are going to college because they don't have a direct connection to the workforce. So she's always out there trying to provide contacts for her students so that they can become employed after graduation.

And then this is just one of the conferences we held at University of Karachi. And so you can see Dr. [? Shahana ?] is here, Dr. Bledsoe, me, and then [? Niantarra ?] is over here as well, along with a number of wonderful colleagues, including a number of individuals that were on faculty here that have left Pakistan because of the unpleasant situation, including this gentleman, here, who is one of the best scientists I've ever had the chance to work with in an applied microbiology field.

So why are we doing this type of work? It's not easy. Sometimes it's not pleasant. Sometimes it's dangerous. It's because of the future. You know, this is the future of the world, these children, you guys here, today. So if we're not trying to make the world a better place for these young people and young people here as well then, I don't think we're doing our job. But I do want to recognize, here, my colleagues who have been very supportive of international work here at this institution and around the country, and also to, particularly, the faculty who came before us in the 50s and 60s to lay the groundwork for successful programs around the world-- not just Pakistan, but many other places.

So with that, I'll be happy to take any questions if anybody has any. No questions? No question-- but yes, sir?

SPEAKER 2: What was the main focus in the University of Faisalabad in terms of-- because you said you guys worked together. What would you guys bring to the--

DR BARBRA RASCO: Well, we would bring some technical expertise that they didn't have-- so in a lot of different agricultural fields. So another issue was being able to write, being able to access scientific literature, being able to design experiments, and being able to provide them with some of the infrastructure support to get experiments done. So that's what we would try to do to help them out. And we did a lot of teaching at Faisalabad and also at Karachi. Yes, sir?

SPEAKER 3: Did you guys actually train professors down there?

DR BARBRA RASCO: Yes, we did. Actually, part of the tri-lateral program that we had in Pakistan was to train trainers. So we trained people for their food inspection service within the nation and also within the Sindh province. And we also trained a number of junior faculty and lecturers in

microbiology, food chemistry, food law, and just basic food safety and processing technologies. Yes, sir?

SPEAKER 4: I know you had some graduate students that are here from Pakistan. And are we sending any of our graduate students for temporary research or anything studies there, exchange-wise in that program [INAUDIBLE]

DR BARBRA RASCO: We wanted to. And we tried to get some folks over about 2010. And then about 2011, things started really tightening up. It was really hard to get visas to go into Pakistan. And then the sphere in which we could work started getting tighter and tighter and tighter. So the only way we were able to get as much done on that one project as we could is because, thanks to [? Niantarra ?] and some other folks, we were able to get work visas in Pakistan. Otherwise, every time we went over there, we'd have to fly down to LA to get a visa and fight with the officials to get maybe a 30 or 60-day visa to go in. So if you can't get somebody over into a program for about six months or a year, you really can't get a lot done. So a lot of it was a security issue. Yeah?

SPEAKER 5: Are there any faculty, now, at the [INAUDIBLE] Faisalabad? Or, if there aren't, are there other ways that you continue to collaborate with--

DR BARBRA RASCO: There's nobody there from WSU right now that I know about. We did have some contacts through the College of Agriculture's program back through about 2011, 2012. But these were all short-term assignments. What we do now is, we submit joint proposals to the Higher Education Commission in Pakistan. We review a lot of students' papers, review a lot of dissertations, and we sort of collaborate virtually as much as we can. Yes, ma'am.

SPEAKER 6: We have a question from the live stream that asks, do you have any plans to go back to Afghanistan and Pakistan for new projects?

DR BARBRA RASCO: I'd love to go back. But right now, I'm the director of a school, so I've got this ball and chain on my leg. But hopefully-- I'd really like to. I love working there. It's great. Yes, ma'am.

SPEAKER 7: Another question from the Global Campus is, what are the main needs that people have in regards to science and research?

DR BARBRA RASCO: Scientific research?

RASCO:

SPEAKER 7: Yeah.

DR BARBRA Just generally or in Pakistan?

RASCO:

SPEAKER 7: Just generally, what [INAUDIBLE] to further their research.

DR BARBRA OK so, I think one of the major issues that they have in Pakistan, they're going to have to deal with-- just like we have to deal with here, in the in the desert west, is water resource utilization.

RASCO:

Everything that has to do with having enough water to raise crops and to provide water for cities and water that's clean. So I think that's a major area. Lots of issues with public health, everything from infectious disease control to food safety, those are major areas. And that's where I think a lot of resources need to be directed. Yes, ma'am?

SPEAKER 8: Polly asks from the Chatbox, did you every perceive any detrimental effects [? to prior ?] local systems from WSU development projects in Pakistan or Afghanistan?

DR BARBRA I don't think so. I mean, there are some things I would have definitely done differently. But

RASCO:

most of that has to do with getting people into the field for a long-term so that they can have impact. When you build personal relationships with people, then you can get a lot more done. A couple of weeks here and there are really not that effective. Yes?

SPEAKER 9: [INAUDIBLE] is asking, are there any distinct boundaries between men and women that you have seen, such as education or career?

DR BARBRA You mean in Pakistan?

RASCO:

SPEAKER 9: Yes.

DR BARBRA Well first of all, I will never go up to a man like this. I always go up like this. If he extends his hand, I'll take it. Whatever the ladies wear, that's what I wear. And that includes blue burkas.

RASCO:

So I had a-- for a while there, I had a pair of glasses that would flex in the middle, so I could put the shuttlecock blue burka down over my face and I could still see. So I think the being able to show respect for the culture-- because if you come in and you say, hey, I'm here to change your lifestyle, they're going to say, go get bent. It's not going to happen. But if you respect the culture and you can develop relationships, then we can grow and build together. And I'm sure there's a lot of ladies in this room that have a lot better insight into some of these

issues than I do. Yes, sir?

SPEAKER 10: During your missions in Afghanistan and Pakistan, did you feel safe for the most part or?
[INAUDIBLE]

DR BARBRA RASCO: It depends. First of all, you never go where you're not invited. That's the first thing you do. You try to be very situationally aware. I traveled with my custom-made Kevlar body armor. So I had that everywhere I went if I needed it. Sometimes I did. I was almost kidnapped in Karachi. That wasn't good. Dr. Bledsoe was also almost kidnapped one day. So he just pulled his [? pear ?] shawl over and he started counting. And he said, oh, you scared the poor mullah in the back in this car accident.

There was actually a chief a party that came in after him into a project, into KPK that was assassinated. And I think the bullet was meant for him. He had a \$50,000 price tag on his head because of how effective he was with the projects, particularly women's projects working over there. So yeah, it can be kind of scary. And what I think caused us to constrict our realm of where we worked was, we didn't want to put our local colleagues in danger by their association with us. So that's what finally made us leave. Yes?

SPEAKER 11: Those are the scary commentaries, right?

DR BARBRA RASCO: Yeah.

SPEAKER 11: [INAUDIBLE] suggested to actually work with the universities in Pakistan. And they tell me it's quite safe if you're working at universities there.

DR BARBRA RASCO: It depends on where you are. It depends on where and who you are.

SPEAKER 11: Is it by location?

DR BARBRA RASCO: Yeah. So, it's very much by location. I'd love to get back to work with some of my colleagues in Peshawar, but right now is probably not a good time. If you're in Lahore, things are probably fine. If you're in Karachi, things are probably fine. But even Sargodha, Mohnton, right now, I don't think are as safe as they ought to be. I would definitely not put a single individual there without some additional support. Ma'am.

SPEAKER 12: Sylvia from the Global Campus asks, to what extent has WSU impacted policy in Pakistan, particularly with regards to agriculture or women's empowerment that is due to faculty presence in the area.

DR BARBRA RASCO: I think one of the things that the programs have done is build a technical capability in the country so that people could develop and build their own policies. So one of the things I think was very important, particularly with the small-medium enterprise based programs was providing people with the knowledge about market opportunities that would be able to expand the impact of the sale of their products around the world. And once you do that, you have to influence government policy to be more open to trade. And then there's other tax issues and other things that go along with that I think maybe our faculty had some impact on. Yes?

SPEAKER 12: Also, Sylvia asks, what is the one lesson that you have learned when touring and working in Pakistan?

DR BARBRA RASCO: That we're more alike than we are different, that there are good people everywhere, and that there are more good people than bad people. So I have so many good friends there and so many good colleagues that I just wish would be easier to get back to be able to work more closely with them again. Any more questions? I can hang around for awhile. I know people need to leave. But I'm happy to stick around if anyone has any questions.

SPEAKER 13: Please join me in thanking Dr. Rasco.

[APPLAUSE]