

With the support of the American Institute of Pakistan Studies (AIPS) I was able to conduct four weeks of preliminary research on the energy crisis in Pakistan and the cultural politics of energy sector development. This trip was of critical importance for advancing my doctoral research. Before this winter I had never visited Pakistan for research purposes, so my understanding of the Pakistani energy sector was limited to policy reports and news media coverage. My objective for this trip was to move beyond textual sources and to meet with energy sector professionals and fellow social scientists. I am happy to report that I was able to meet with even more people than I had anticipated and I returned to the United States with fascinating insights, new topics for research, and a significantly expanded network of contacts and friends.

While in Pakistan I was able to make connections with a wide variety of institutions working on energy issues in Pakistan. Among my most productive interviews were those with the Government of Punjab's Energy Department, the Center for Advanced Studies in Energy at the National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST), the Center for Research and Security Studies (CRSS), the World Bank, and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Through these and other interviews I was able to gain a better understanding of how energy and development experts are conceptualizing the problems facing Pakistan's energy sector and strategies for addressing them. These conversations also yielded fascinating insights into the ways in which energy sector professionals are understanding the relationship between technological, political economic, and sociocultural systems. My time in Pakistan thus opened up exciting new insights and possibilities for research by allowing me to learn about energy sector development projects from those who are directly involved in conceptualizing and undertaking them. I also had the pleasure to meet with anthropologists, historians, political scientists, and sociologists working on research related to my own. My hope is that the researchers I met at universities like the Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS) and the Information Technology University (ITU) will become important interlocutors as my research in Pakistan progresses.

In sum, the AIPS Summer Research Grant allowed me to take a major step forward in preparing for my doctoral dissertation research. The insights that I gained while in Pakistan have helped me to conceptualize my doctoral research project in new and exciting ways. And just as importantly, I was able to start developing the professional and personal networks that will be critical for conducting long-term ethnographic research in Pakistan in the future.