



PHOTO & CAPTION

Rebuilding Schools in Remote Villages



Photo: USAID/Kaukab Jhuma Smith

The devastating earthquake that struck northern Pakistan in October 2005 damaged or destroyed nearly 450 schools and more than 37,000 homes in Batagram District in the North-West Frontier Province. As winter approached, many people descended from remote mountains surrounding the Allai Valley to seek shelter at the Mehra Relief Camp near the Indus River. With USAID's help, 1,550 children — including those pictured here — enrolled at three schools in the camp, some of them sitting in a classroom for the first time. After people began returning home to the Allai Valley, students and parents hoped that schools in their villages would be rebuilt or, in some remote areas, built for the first time.

Schoolchildren who survived the October 2005 earthquake in Pakistan wait inside their tent school in the Mehra Relief Camp. As students began returning home, USAID helped open 50 temporary schools in villages in the Allai Valley to be used until permanent schools are rebuilt.

In response, USAID helped 50 government schools in the Allai Valley get back on track to recovery. The schools were set up in temporary shelters or tents while permanent buildings are rebuilt. USAID provided teaching materials for each school, including a “school-in-a-box” comprised of flip charts, globes, maps, colored paper, and scissors. USAID also began work with local governments to support teacher training programs.

Mehra Camp school officials kept records of where students came from to allow USAID to track children back to their villages. Such records will allow USAID to select further sites to build schools if none exist there.

During the months following the earthquake, USAID ensured children could continue studying throughout this challenging time. As Pakistan recovers and rebuilds over the next several years, USAID aims to help students continue pursuing their formal education.