

Stories from the District Development Strategy and Plan (DDSP) assignment on the role of the Joint District Development Committee (JDDC)

The LG&RD Department and the BRACE TA Project implemented in 2021, a short-term District Development Strategy & Plan (DDSP) Assignment, in three pilot Districts (Kech, Loralai/Pishin), to develop in a participatory manner streamlined JDDC Meeting Procedures, to ensure that the GoB Top-down development investments and Community Bottom-Up development plans and activities, are coordinated and integrated, by the JDDC Chair. The final report of DDSP Assignment can be accessed on <https://brace.org.pk/resource-category/ta-project-and-dai-hd-resources/>. The selected District Stakeholder expressed their opinions on the streamline role the JDDC is to play, and these are captured below.

“We know that we do not have enough resources available, and therefore it is even more important that we use and coordinate our scarce resources and the JDDC Forum provides a unique opportunity to do so”, says Dr Ateeq ur Rehman, Deputy Commissioner, Loralai

“We know that we are facing limitations in providing resources to union councils (UCs). Some of the UCs do not have office spaces, furniture and other basic facilities”, shared Dr Ateeq ur Rehman, Deputy Commissioner, Loralai.

He added that “I observed during the JDDC meeting held on 28 Sep 2021 that BRSP through BRACE Program is providing similar facilities and resources to the Local Support Organizations (LSOs), working in the same UCs. So, I advised Mr Qutab Mandokhail, District Manager BRSP and Mr Kaleem, Assistant Director Local Government to guide LSOs and UCs to share resources for efficiency”.

“On the direction of the Deputy Commissioner Sahib, I and the Secretary Union Council, Lahore now set in one office. We share the same office space, furniture and other resources provided by the BRACE Programme. This direction by the DC Sahib enlightened us that our area, issues, and people are common and we are now working even more closely”, says Gohar Khan, President LSO Etihad, Union Lahore.

It was generally concluded that the JDDC Forum could identify and then activate synergy, that would yield more value for money and/or more sustainable joint investments made by the district stakeholders. The JDDC Forum could proactively identify and activate these synergies and avoid duplication.



Figure 1 JDDC Meeting, Loralai, 28 Sep, 2021



Figure 2: UC Secretary Taj Mohammad at LSO Etihad Office, UC Lahore.

“If only the district stakeholders would have coordinated their investments and efforts better, then my wife would still be alive” says Abdul Hayee, a community representative from Pishin.

This heartbreaking statement was made when the wife of a Local Support Organization representative passed away because primary health facility at Kamalzai was not operational and timely medical assistance could not be provided to his wife.

Mr Abdul Hayee added that “this happened to many other women”. He added that “later on, I raised the issue of our dilapidated health facility in the JDDC. On the direction of the Deputy Commissioner, District Health Officer approached provincial health authority



Figure 3. Mr Abdul Hayee sharing his JDDC

and upgraded the health facility into Basic Health Unit and handed over it to PPHI who turned the facility into fully functional BHU with doctors, para medical staff, medicines and other health facilities available. Our LSO representatives were following up, coordinating and facilitating the entire process. Now, the poor rural women are treated in this BHU and they do not need to visit secondary or tertiary hospital in the urban areas”.

In his opinion and with relevance to the JDDC, Mr. Abdul Hayee concluded that, “better public service delivery, in similar manner can be achieved, through collaboration between the bottom-up community identification of the service delivery issues and top-down government intervention in resolving service delivery issues”.

BRACE Program triggered JDDC forums in nine BRACE targeted districts. These JDDC forums are being streamlined through the development of standardized guidelines and templates followed by a capacity building and on job technical assistance by the BRACE Program.

“JDDC can bring radical changes and can be an innovative forum to *figure out the community issues and problems*”, says Mr. Shah Faisal

Mr. Shah Faisal is President of District-LSO Network District Kech. He appreciates representation in the Joint District Development Committee (JDDC) forum initiated by the Balochistan Rural Development and Community Empowerment (BRACE) Program, where they can raise actual and main issues with the help of LSO network representation in the JDDC.

Quoting a success story, Mr. Shah Faisal President DLSO Network shared that *“our village (houses and agriculture land) is located on western side of the Chapkol river. There used to be rain floods destroying their houses and crops.*

Being member of the JDDC forum, I raised the issue in the JDDC forum in its meeting held dated 29 Sep 2021 where the Sub Divisional Officer, Irrigation Department responded that the Chapkol River area was surveyed and building of the protection wall was started. However, the Irrigation Department started constructing a flood protection wall on eastern side of the river instead of the western side. The Department did not take the people of the area in confidence and started constructing the protection wall on the eastern side of the Chapkol River instead of the Western”.

On Mr Shah Faisal request at the JDDC Meeting, the JDDC treated the issue as urgent and called a meeting and constituted a committee including representation from the District LSO Network and LSO members Koshk Buleda and the notables of the area. The committee contacted the contractor and had a negotiation with Irrigation Department. The committee convinced Irrigation Department to do a survey before constructing further the flood protection wall.

Mr Shah Faisal concluded that *“finally, a team was sent to the area for a new survey in the presence of District LSO Network & LSO members Koshk Buleda and the notables and the location of the protection wall was shifted from the eastern side of the river to the western side. The people of the area became thankful to JDDC members, District LSO Network & LSO members Koshk Buleda for its untiring efforts”.* He further added that *similar kinds of issues can be raised in this innovative JDDC forum where the Government authorities take quick actions on our inputs and issues are resolved more swiftly”.*



Figure 4. Shah Faisal during community meeting on the issue



Figure 5. Flood Protection Wall Initiated by PHED Department on Eastern Side of the Chapkol River

“The JDDC connects community in public forums to share ideas, gain insight, encourage public exchange and resolve conflicts”, says Aziz Khan, LSO President, Shah Karez, Loralai.

“District Loralai experiences the most severe water shortage and such shortage at village level have been determined as vital issue for the prosperity of district”, shared by Aziz Khan-President of LSO, Insaaf Shah Karez.

He added that “most of the existing water infrastructure in rural setup is decentralized based on community water collection point. In our setup, the rapid growth of the population causes shortage of water and community disputes to fulfils the need of water. The same case we faced in union council Shah Karez where EU funded Drinking Water Supply Schemes (CPI) was approved by the community institution but due to the conflict between two villages, the process was halted”.



LSO Insaaf Shah Karez members meeting RSPs, UC Shah Karez, District Loralai.

“In the Joint District Development Committee (JDDC) meeting, we presented the issue in front of Deputy Commissioner and line departments where DC Loralai instructed Public Health Engineering (PHE) department and BRSP team to visit the site and submit the report on priority basis”.

“On the directions of Deputy Commissioner, a joint team of PHE and BRSP visited the UC and met with the community chiefs where the reservation was shared by the community chiefs/members. It was concluded that both villages need water supply scheme and decided in the meeting that in one village, BRSP would go with the same approved CPI funded by EU and in the second village, while PHE department would give the Drinking Water Supply Scheme (DWSS) and BRSP would assist the department in the solarization process”. Hence, the situation was handled cordially.

“We are thankful to DC sahib, PHE, BRSP, and JDDC members for resolving the matter amiably”- Message from one of the community chiefs.

Mr. Aziz Khan – LSO president concluded that *“we appreciate the community representation in the JDDC forum, triggered by the BRACE Program, where we can express our views and concerns”*