

Balochistan Rural Development and Community Empowerment (BRACE) Programme

Newsletter

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BRACE Programme Creating Steady Revenue Streams For Rural Women in Balochistan



IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS FOR THE BRACE'S GRANT COMPONENT



PROGRAMME TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PARTNER



BRACE Programme Creating Steady Revenue Streams For Rural Women



Bakhtawara Mai with her grandchildren

Income Generation Grants (IGG) initiated by the BRACE programme have been a very important means of empowering rural women at the household level. The EU-funded project provides small grants of PKR 30,000 to 50,000 to the beneficiaries. Realising its importance, the European Union funded BRACE Programme has also integrated the initiative of Income Generating Grants (IGGs) to support the rural women in 9 districts of Balochistan. Under this initiative, the community women begin a livelihood activity. To identify those most in need of this support, they use the Poverty Score Card (survey) which assesses their assets, no matter how meagre.

To date 1498 IGGs have been disseminated. Bakhtawara tells us what these have meant to her. Bakhtawara, is an elderly widow

from Union Council Nasarabad in district Loralai. Her family includes two sons who work as coalminers working as daily wage earners. Each of the sons have their own children. The family is still struggling to pay off debts accumulated during the prolonged illness of Bakhtawara's husband.

"I couldn't sleep at night thinking about the debt we have to pay back," says Bakhtawra, sitting in the midst of her grandchildren in a windowless room.

Today she hopes the Income Generating Grant Support (IGG) she received will get her through this. Knowing well the needs of her community, Bakhtawra set up a small shop in the corner of her mud-constructed home. The shop offers various hosiery items and stitching supplies to the women of the village, who cannot themselves go to the market for shopping.

"I earn up to 300 rupees from the shop each day," she says, proudly displaying her wares. "Once the business picks up a little further, I am hoping to save enough to pay back our debts."

Like many other women facilitated by the BRACE programme, this is the first time that she has earned any money of her own. Her sons say, this is not something we ever considered, but "we are very grateful for all that our mother has ever done. It is nonetheless astonishing to see her earning a living. We admire her even more."



Managing her shop

Provincial Secretary Vows Support to BRACE



Secretary for Local Government of Balochistan in a meeting with the RSPN team

The newly appointed Secretary for Local Government of Balochistan, Mr Saleh Muhammad, visited RSPN office in Islamabad for a day-long orientation session for the BRACE programme. The team gave a detailed presentation of the work and history of RSPs and their ongoing projects, especially the EU-funded BRACE and SUCCESS Programme in Sindh and Balochistan.

Mr Saleh Muhammad appreciated the cooperation between the EU and RSPs for community-led development, particularly the initiative to organise and strengthen communities through various livelihood and income generation based interventions.

He said the department of Local Government will be happy to work hand in hand with the RSPs and EU to achieve the shared goal of poverty reduction and inclusion of marginalised and excluded rural communities under BRACE programme.

Easing Access to Sustained Development

The BRACE Programme is being implemented in close collaboration with the Government of Balochistan. Under this collaboration, the BRACE Partners are finding ways to mainstream developments that are being driven by, and working for, communities. The formation and registration of community institutions is considered to be a 'key performance indicator' (KPI) for the overall goals of the programme. However, the fee to be paid to register a Local Support Organisation has been a key challenge for many communities. They are not eligible to receive any development funds unless their LSO is registered with the Social Welfare Department. That policy was put in place to facilitate a free and fair transfer of funds to recognised organisations. Nonetheless, impoverished communities find it difficult to collect the money to pay the registration fees.

To overcome this challenge, BRACE Programme partners held several rounds of meetings with the Social Welfare Department, and due to the pivotal role of Secretary Social Welfare Mr Rauf Mengal, the fee has been reduced from PKR 10,000 to 500 rupees.

This remarkable concession has paved the way to mainstream the local institutions which are essential to the implementation of BRACE programme.

Meetings with Provincial Stakeholders

Aiming to further strengthen the collaboration with the provincial stakeholders, the BRACE Programme partners arranged meetings with the provincial government office, including the newly appointed Secretary Local Government and Rural Development Department, and the Additional Chief Secretary Local Government, Balochistan in Quetta. The main objective of these meetings was to orient the Provincial Secretaries over the ongoing progress of the BRACE Programme and a way forward to meet various issues and challenges. The meetings resulted in improved coordination between the BRACE programme partners who revived their commitment to work together for the marginalised communities.



More Power to Women Through Income Generating Grants (IGGs)



Sana Bibi of district Turbat received 33000 rupees to set up the only grocery shop in her village

The BRACE Programme held a distribution ceremony of Income Generating Grants to selected beneficiaries of Assistive devices to Persons with Special Needs in District Zhob.

The chief guest of the ceremony, Mr Mitta Khan Kakar, Provincial Minister Livestock and Dairy Development referred to IGGs as a life changing initiative for many recipients who would otherwise never be able to set up their own businesses or purchase livestock on their own. He added "after witnessing the quality of work being done under this (BRACE) Programme, I would like collaborate further in terms of funds pooling for the development schemes in the BRACE areas."

CEO of RSPN, Ms Shandana Khan briefed the audience about the history of the RSPs and the Community Driven Development approach. She emphasized on the need for the inclusion of women in the development process, and urged the authorities as well as the communities to come up with more initiatives, such as the IGGs, which could mainstream role of women in combating household level poverty. The event was also attended by the Secretary Livestock Mr Dostain Jamal Dini, DG Livestock Dr Ghulam Hussain Jaffar, Assistant Deputy Commissioner Kakar Khorasan, Assistant Commissioner Zhob, CEO of BRSP and other notables from the district and provincial administration, political leadership and communities.

Assessment Camps of Persons With Special Needs

Week-long assessment camps were set up in districts Zhob, Loralai, Khuzdar and Washuk to identify beneficiaries for Orthotic and Prosthetic devices. This resulted in the distribution of 1,004 of orthotic and prosthetic devices among the communities of this war-ravaged community. Additionally, assessments were carried out of people with hearing impairments in all 8 BRACE districts. 703 beneficiaries were provided with hearing aids.



Mr Mitta Khan Kakar, Provincial Minister Livestock and Dairy Development, helping to distribute IGGs in district Zhob

Driving Local Development Through Organised Communities

Districts Loralai, Jhal Magsi, Zhob and Pishin conducted their 3rd successful Joint District Development Committee meetings in this quarter. JDDC meetings are meant to provide local authorities and community institutions a single platform to share, discuss and review the various development initiatives from village to district level. This participatory planning approach serves as a learning platform for all participants and also helps in avoiding duplication of efforts hence creating a greater impact with shared responsibilities.



Knowledge Exchange Through Exposure Visits

With the aim to achieve a cross-learning approach, the BRACE Programme's Washuk team took a group of 40 community members on an exposure visit to districts Loralai and Dkuki. The members met with the BRACE communities and the representatives of the LSO Lahore. The guest team gave a detailed presentation to the visitors, enabling them to witness the real life impact of self-help initiatives taken by the LSO under the Community Driven Development approach.

Government and LSOs Representatives Visit SUCCESS Programme

Field visit of Government and LSOs representatives to SUCCESS Programme NRSP Kech office arranged a one-day exposure visit of the district government officials of Balochistan and LSO representatives to the field of Sindh Union Council and Community Economic Strengthening Support (SUCCESS) Programme, in district Tando Allay Yar. The visit was aimed to provide the 12 member-delegation comprising 6 males and 6 females, an opportunity to witness the work and progress of community driven development with an aim to empower rural women under EU supported SUCCESS Programme. The delegation visited UC Shah Pur Rizvi to meet an LSO. The most interesting part of their meeting at LSO Shah Pur Rizvi was to see the presence of Hindu community, promoting interfaith harmony at these local institutions. The delegation was given a presentation on by Ms Rani, the General Secretary of the LSO.



Group photo of the government and LSOs representatives during their exposure visit to SUCCESS Programme.

Women Learn to Stitch and Make a Livelihood



A women trained under BRACE smiles while painting over a shirt for a female client

NRSP organised a technical training for the community women in Turbat. Under this TVST programme a batch of 180 women have completed their selected trainings. Until now, 90 women have trained in fashion designing, dress cutting and stitching, 30 women in digital printing, tie dye & block printing, while 60 women have trained as beauticians. During the trainings, participants were also oriented on business management skills and how to channelize their skills for getting opportunities in the job market as well as making a home-based livelihood.

Training of Trainers for Community Resource Persons (CRPs)

RSPN organised a Training of Trainers session on Leadership Management Skills Training (LMST) for community resource persons in Quetta. The training will contribute to the sustainability of Community Institutions (CIs) formed under BRACE Programme. The participant trainers trained under this TOT will impart these trainings to the office bearers of Community Institutions at field level.



Community Physical Infrastructure Schemes

The BRACE Programme focuses on multi-sector Community Physical Infrastructure Schemes, designed and linked to the needs prioritised by members of the BRACE communities. Provision of drinking water services under Community Physical Infrastructure Schemes is one of the key needs that was identified and being addressed on demand from the local women. During the reporting period, Community Institutions have identified 211 CPI schemes which will address the water needs for an estimated 150,000 people in BRSP led districts.



A nearly completed Water Supply Scheme in district Turbat

Sports Galas in Pishin Zhob and Loralai



Players of the local football team participated in a sports gala arranged by the BRACE Programme in district Zhob

Sport is a tool for personal transformation and character building for youth. It also teaches them important life values such as teamwork, perseverance and goal setting. Sports have long been touted as a way to engage the youth in a healthy way in order to expedite their physical wellbeing and prevent them from getting involved in any unwanted activities such as illicit drugs and crime. BRACE Programme funded by European Union in Pakistan organised youth recreational events in district Zhob, Loralai and Pishin.

Youth Development Through Skills Building

A batch of 300 youth from Balochistan completed Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) under BRACE at the vocational centre of Institute of Rural Management in Rawalpindi. The trainees of various 22 trades were selected from 08 BRACE districts. The trades were selected keeping in view the local needs and demands for these skills such as auto mechanic, auto electrician, general electrician, mobile phone repair, motorcycle repair, plumbing, refrigeration, solar system installation and repair.



A trainee under BRACE TVET component expressing his views on the graduation ceremony

The European Union Funded BRACE Programme

Balochistan Rural Development and Community Empowerment (BRACE) programme is supported by the European Union (EU) and being implemented in close collaboration with the Local Government and Rural Development (LG&RD) Department of the Government of Balochistan (GoB). The Grant component of this five year (2017-2022) Programme is being implemented by Rural Support Programmes Network (RSPN), National Rural Support Programme (NRSP) and Balochistan Rural Support Programme (BRSP) in nine districts of Balochistan. BRACE is working in Jhal Magsi, Kech, Khuzdar, Killa Abdullah, Loralai, Pishin, Duki, Washuk and Zhob. The programme is technically supported by Human Dynamics (HD), an Austrian company that will support Government of Balochistan in fostering an enabling environment for strengthening the capacities of local authorities to manage and involve communities in the statutory local public sector planning, financing and implementation processes.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) (as of September 30, 2019)

Total population covered under PSC survey	1,865,520
Number of households organised	177,570
Number of COs formed	12,176
COs membership	178,636
Number of VOs formed	2,487
VOs membership	16,442
Number of LSOs formed	110
Number of LSO networks formed at district level	2
Number of community members trained in CMST (2/CO)	14,727
Number of community members trained in LMST.	2,212
Number of community members trained as Community Resource Persons (CRPs)	369
Number of community members trained in MALT.	54
Prepare and deliver training on CAT & CIF for CRP's	369
Number of community members trained in technical and vocational skills (TVET)	630
Number of community members (specially women) trained in literacy and numeracy skills	1,090
Number of LSOs managing CIF	40
Total amount of CIF with LSOs/VOs (PKR)	78,400,000
Total amount of CIF with LSOs	78,400,000
Total amount of CIF disbursed to poor households	68,090,000
Number of households benefiting from CIF	310
Number of LSOs managing IGG sub-grants	31
Number of VOs managing IGG sub-grants	32
Total amount of IGG sub-grants with LSOs/VOs/COs (PKR)	78,212,800
Number of households benefiting from income generation grants (IGGs) for productive asset building and income generation	1,498
Total amount of IGG sub-grants disbursed to poor households (PSC 0-23) - (PKR)	8,698,800
Preparing household level MIPs (247,956 HHs),	117,589
Preparing VDPs and (2685 VDPs)	965
Preparing UC Development Plans (211 UCDPs)	39
Community needs identified for basic infrastructure in the VDPs and UCDPs CPIs	574
Prepare technical, financial and environmental feasibilities of infrastructure schemes	153
Initiation of approved infrastructure projects.	87



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