

STORIES FROM THE FIELD

2021





Stories from the field - 2021

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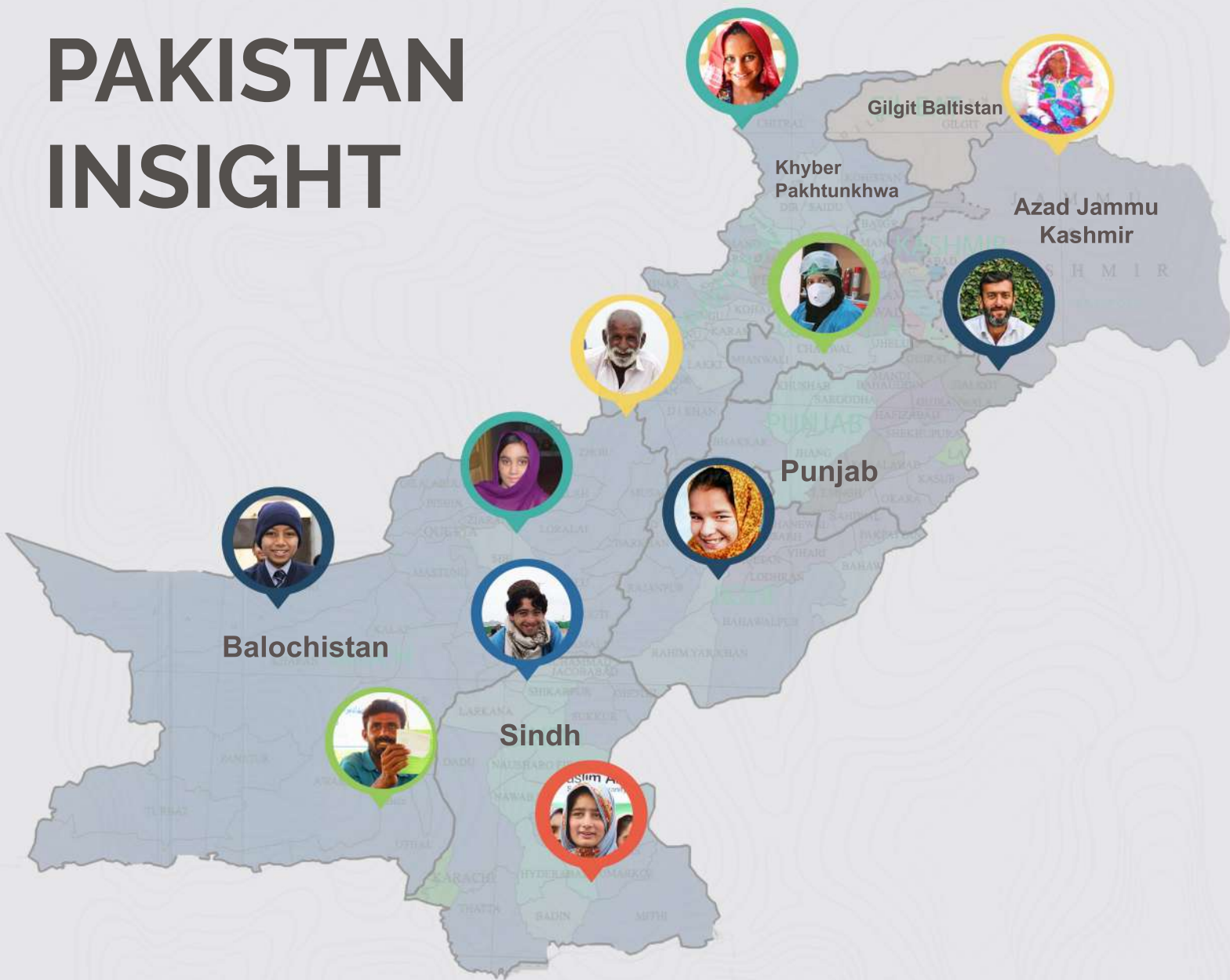
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PAKISTAN INSIGHT



MULTI-SECTORAL RESPONSE



HEALTH



EDUCATION



WATER, SANITATION, AND HYGIENE (WASH)



FOOD SECURITY AND LIVELIHOOD (FSL)



RISK COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (RCCE)

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HEALTH

This pandemic has magnified every existing inequality in our society – like systemic racism, gender inequality, and poverty
- Melinda Gates





STRENGTHENING THE CAPACITY OF GOVERNMENT HOSPITAL BANNU, KP

Khalifa Gull Nawaz Memorial Hospital is one of the biggest hospitals in District Bannu in southern KP, which provides healthcare services to people coming from North Waziristan, Karak, Lakki Marwat and South Waziristan. The catchment population is almost 200,200, while daily turnover of patients visiting the facility is 650-700 per day.

On detailed assessment of the health facility, we found that a small part of a ward was designated as High Dependency Unit (HDU)/Isolation Ward for COVID with limited and insufficient medical equipment. There was a competent panel of consultants including pulmonologist, cardiologist, pediatrician, general physician and paramedical staff, but due to insufficient stock of essential medical equipment, they were unable to cater to the full load of COVID cases in their area. Due to this, majority of the serious COVID cases were referred to Peshawar.

As per the request of Director General Health (KP), Cesvi, through its ECHO-funded COVID-19 response, strengthened the health facility and provided them 10 BiPAPs, 10 Cardiac Monitors, 15 Oxygen Concentrators, 02 ABG Machines and 02 Defibrillators along with due orientation and training of relevant staff exclusively for management of COVID cases.

Getting inspiration from this contribution by Cesvi, the hospital director established a new, well-equipped, and separate designated unit within



Cesvi strengthened the hospital in September 2020. Since then, none of the COVID cases have been referred to Peshawar. This fully functional new HDU can treat and successfully manage all the COVID patients that come to this hospital.

the premises with special measures for COVID management and installed all essential medical equipment over there.

Cesvi strengthened the hospital in September 2020. Since then, none of the COVID cases have been referred to Peshawar. This fully functional new HDU can treat and successfully manage all the COVID patients that come to this hospital.





A DREAM COME TRUE



High up in the hills of Janial, a remote village of Mirpur, Azad Jammu and Kashmir, nine-year old Nayab Mehfooz lives with her parents. Her father is a shopkeeper in local market, while her mother is a housewife. Nayab has lymphatic disorder, and her muscles are weak, which means that she never enjoyed a 'typical' childhood. "I cannot run or jump or play on the swings. I have weak legs." She says

Nayab's limbs did not function normally, due to which she was incapable of walking independently. Every day her mother used to carry her to school. Due to expensive medication and health procedures, Nayab's family was unable to continue her treatment. Now she is nine years old and her urge to walk is growing with her.

Under Islamic Relief's Mirpur Earthquake Emergency Response, Nayab has been treated and provided with orthotics. Now Nayab is able to walk and can participate in games with other children and is excited to go to school.



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“I cannot run or jump or play on the swings. I have weak legs.” – Nayab Mehfooze

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SAVING LIVES

A 32-year-old Fouzia was brought to the 24/7 Basic Emergency Obstetric and Neonatal Care (BEmONC) center of Rural Health Center Gomal in Tank district in active labor. The BEmONC center is supported by Medecins du Monde (MdM) with the financial assistance of German Federal Foreign Affairs. Fouzia appeared to be in severe labor pain, and her high blood pressure made things more challenging. She came from a small village Kot Azeem in Tank District, located one hour from the health facility. She shared her previous experience of two miscarriages, both of which happened in her second trimester. But it was for the first time in her life, she came to the health facility for ante-natal consultation and delivery.

MdM clinical team received Fauzia and realized that she was expecting twin babies. Such a case is usually referred to be handled in a Comprehensive Emergency Obstetric and New-born Care (CEmONC) set-up, considering the potential complications. However, there was no time for a referral as she was brought to the clinic at the last minute.

The medical team continued to observe the condition of the mother for another two hours before she became stable and later was discharged from the clinic. The next day, the team followed-up and learned that both babies and their mother were in good health and stable.



The team informed the attendants of the patient about the situation and potential complications. The trained professional team of MdM, was able to handle the situation skillfully, and both babies were delivered safely within 20 minutes.



The family expressed gratitude for the services provided by MdM with dignity, respect, and care.





ENABLING WOMEN TO LEAD HEALTH INTERVENTIONS IN THEIR COMMUNITIES



The drought in Balochistan has affected over 4.4 million people. Particularly, women and children remain in dire need of health interventions with a high incidence of communicable disease in the communities. As per the NDMA Assessment Report of October-November 2018, the crisis has led to an alarming rate of suicidal tendencies among women.

With an aim to complement Government efforts in providing immediate lifesaving and life-sustaining assistance, Muslim Aid Pakistan (MAP) has adopted an integrated Multisector Response Approach to tackle the effects of drought in 25 villages across three Union Councils (UCs); Ziarat Balanosh, Amuri, and Nokundi of District Chagai, located north-west of Balochistan. MAP has reached out to a total of 8,968 individuals directly and 9,600 indirectly, through an integrated response in Water, Sanitation & Hygiene (WASH), and Food Security.

In this regard, Muslim Aid Pakistan, in partnership with UN-OCHA, implemented the Pakistan Humanitarian Pool Fund (PHPF) Program working on an integrated approach with women in the community. Hygiene tool kits were distributed in women older than 15 years of age, followed by a tutorial on its use and an elaborate hygiene session on reproductive health, critical hand washing times and techniques, menstrual cycle, and good menstrual hygiene. The sessions dispelled misinformation and superstitions about menstruation and hygiene and worked on building women's capacity for safe and hygienic practices.



“When I would get my period, I stayed home until it ended. It’s the same here for all women menstruating. They are not let near other people for they are considered unclean. For managing the menstruation, we have been using rags or leaves,” shared Fatima Bibi.



40-year-old Fatima Bibi is a resident of Killi Fakeer Badaad, an impoverished village of Ziarat Balanosh. With poor menstrual hygiene and an absence of toilets, health risks threatening her community posed a major challenge. MAP reached out to Fatima Bibi's village with its integrated approach as part of the drought response project.





REBUILDING RESILIENCE - PROVISION OF INTEGRATED & INCLUSIVE HEALTH ASSISTANCE TO AFGHAN REFUGEES IN PAKISTAN



This is the story of 37-year-old Shakila who lives in a hut of an Afghan Refugee camp. She is married, with 6 children and lives with her in-laws while her husband lives in other city for business. Shakila works as a craftswoman in the camp. This fear kept her restless and always alert. She also feared that sharing this with her husband may bring stigma, , social isolation, and the blame of being the woman who 'entices men'.

The psychologist called her for a follow up session, during which he sensitized her on the concept of Gender-Based Violence (GBV). She was given insight about her problem and how she could change her circumstances.

The psychologist performed a short therapy with her for anger management and emotional intelligence to better equip her for addressing the matter. In the next sessions, the psychologist examined the situation to proceed further in the matter. The session was wrapped up after Shakila had a clear plan on how to proceed yet avoid persecution.



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Gradually – after four sessions – she was able to focus on her job again and regain control of her life. With the help and support of HI’s psychologist, Shakila no longer lives under the threat of sexual assault and gender-based harassment.

“

Shakila shared that due to the previous session, she was able to confidently communicate her issue to her husband. Despite initial resistance, her husband trusted her and moved her out of his father’s house into a safer separate home. She shared that she was managing her symptoms well through the techniques taught by the psychologist.



 International
Medical Corps

MATERNAL HEALTH PROJECT SAVES MOTHERS AND INFANTS IN UNDERPRIVILEGED AREAS OF PAKISTAN

30-year-old Fahmida lives in Urmar Payan—an underprivileged rural village in District Peshawar with few opportunities of advancement. For 26 years, maternal health services were not available in this community, and women had to travel almost 20 kilometers for childbirth, antenatal and postnatal care. Although there is a health center in the village—Basic Health Unit Urmar Payan—its labor room was closed because no local women doctors were available to provide services there.



“When I found out I was pregnant again, I was upset,” Fahmida said. “I already had a child, and I was worried that this time, I would not survive the delivery.”

Her last delivery was conducted at home by an unskilled birth attendant, as a result of which Fahmida suffered heavy bleeding and was so critical that she almost died. She did not want to want to go through the same traumatic experience in her second pregnancy, but due to financial constraints could not afford to go to a hospital. Fahmida and her family are among the disadvantaged in her community; her husband being uneducated and unskilled.

Fahmida went to visit her friend in the neighborhood to discuss her situation. When she arrived, her friend was getting ready to go to an awareness session on maternal health and asked Fahmida to join her. To raise awareness about mother and child related health issues, different sessions are being organized in the community with the help of International Medical Corps’ field staff.

Fahmida and her friend attended the session and received information focusing on reproductive health, including the importance of antenatal care



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“I never thought that one day I would deliver my baby in a health center with a skilled birth attendant without problems or spending a single penny” -Fahmida

“

visits during pregnancy, delivering in a health center and family planning services. They also learned that International Medical Corps was supporting the health center with a woman doctor on-board and providing free of cost services. This information greatly helped Fahmida and the next day she visited the health center with her friend. The female doctor not only examined Fahmida but performed an ultrasound as well. She also ordered a few laboratory tests to ensure that Fahmida was not suffering from any disease or infection.

After her appointment, Fahmida received her antenatal registration card and scheduled a checkup. Finally, when she went into labor she went to the health center and gave birth to a healthy baby boy. The labor room was functional after 26 years, which was a sigh of relief for the community.

A couple of months later, she returned to the health center for the family planning services.

PROTECTING THE VULNERABLE AGAINST EXTREME COLD

With the arrival of the winters in Balochistan, the weather gets extremely cold with every passing each day, leading to unbearably low temperatures. Muslim Aid Pakistan (MAP) distributed winter and hygiene kits among the most vulnerable families of Balochistan and Sindh province under its seasonal winterization project. This year, the focus was on COVID-19 and flood-affected communities. Village Zangiwal of District Loralai, Balochistan was one of the targeted areas.

44-year-old Dad Muhammad is a resident of Village Zangiwall. His family of four is illiterate and lack a consistent source of income. Dad's father and sister are both disabled. His sister is entirely dependent on his elder brother who lacks a proper source of income to ensure his family's livelihood.

Dad continues to live a hopeless life. Being disabled, he is unable to carry out daily activities like a normal individual. His disability is a huge obstacle in earning a reasonable livelihood for his family. Before Muslim Aid intervened in Dad's village, he and his family were struggling to cope with extremely cold weather, primarily because they did not have adequate resources to keep themselves warm. Lack of warm blankets, mattresses, pillows, floor mats and other essentials made this winter difficult to bear. With no financial support, the family was also at high risk of contracting the lethal COVID-19 virus.

In an effort to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 in search of essentials, Muslim Aid supported Dad through the provision of winter and hygiene kits to overcome his difficulties and survive the harsh winter. With persistent lockdown situation and slack in the economy due to the looming COVID-19 outbreak procuring food was nearly impossible.

"I seek help from my fellow community members to meet the exigencies of daily living."



 **Muslim Aid**
Serving Humanity

”

“I am extremely thankful to Muslim Aid and the donors who are supporting Muslim Aid, for their support to the affected families just like mine. I hope that Muslim Aid will continue protecting people of my area against future disasters.” – Dad Muhammad

“

Dad shared with Muslim Aid's team and requested for provision of food packs during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. He further expressed his interest to acquire marketable skills to earn a decent living and fulfil essential needs and live a better life.





VISHAL CASE STUDY PINS

Sakeena and her family hail from Bheel community Village Ram, District Tando Allahyar. She has four sons and 9 family members and their main source of livelihood is daily labor. Sakeena and thousands of families in Sindh are affected by malnutrition owing to extreme poverty, insufficient food intake, lack of dietary diversification, low purchasing power, poor sanitary conditions and hygiene practices.

Vishal the youngest child of Sakeena is 12-months old. The child was suffering from severe acute malnutrition as identified by the ACF trained community health worker, Parvati during home visits. In further examining Vishal's condition, it was observed that Vishal was deprived of the first milk (colostrum), a nutrient rich 'Pre-milk' that is produced from the mother's body after the delivery of newborn. Vishal's Mid upper arm circumference (MUAC) was 11 cm which is way below the threshold indicated for acute malnourishment. Sakeena was weak and did not produce enough milk to fulfil her child's feeding requirement, and initiated complimentary feeding at the age of 3 months. Sakeena's family had also inadequate access to clean drinking water and sanitation and open-defecation was widely practiced in her community including her own family, due to which, Vishal and the entire family was at risk of diarrhoeal infection.

Vishal was immediately enrolled at OTP site BHU Sultanabad in district Tando Allahyar. On the day of admission, Vishal's Mid upper arm circumference measurement was 11 cm and his weight was 6.2kg.



"We thank everyone who has helped my son regain his strength and pray that he continues to grow and become a healthy child always"



He was discharged from the program after eight weeks with Mid upper arm circumference (MUAC) 11.9cm and a weight of 6.9 kg. During treatment, Vishal was provided Ready-to-use therapeutic food while Community health worker advised his mother on complementary feeding and nutritious diet, post-pregnancy diets, care during the first 1000 days - from conception to 2 years of age, life-saving vaccinations for infants, balanced diet and counselling on environmental and WASH practices for a profound impact on child health outcomes.



Community health workers conducted recurring visits to follow-up with Sakina after her first visit to the OTP site to gauge the consumption of therapeutic food and nutritional supplements. The treatment at the OTP site reflected a visible improvement in Vishal's health. Within one month, Vishal went from severe acute malnutrition to moderate acute malnutrition. This experience gave Vishal's mother the confidence in OTP treatment and confided her trust in ACF's activities. She is now encouraging other mothers in her village to visit OTP and screen their children as well.

ACF under the Program for Improved Nutrition in Sindh (PINS) project has set-up Outpatient Therapeutic feeding Program (OTP) sites jointly in partnership with PPHI in Tandoallah Yar, to bring the services for the treatment of Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) children, closer to communities by making services available at decentralized treatment points. ACF and PPHI provide free of cost ready-to-use therapeutic foods to malnourished children under the age of 5, combined with distribution of micro-nutrient powders for infants among mothers whose children are identified as moderately malnourished during initial screening and Iron folic acid supplementation for pregnant and lactating women.

ACF and its partner PPHI, have set-up operational OTP care sites for communities in seven other districts of Sindh as well including (Matiari, Tando muhammad khan, Thatta, Sujawal, Larkana, Qambar Shehdadkot, Shikarpur. These decentralised OTP care sites provide free of cost services and treatment, under the supervision of trained medical specialists, for malnourished young children.



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“We thank everyone who has helped my son regain his strength and pray that he continues to grow and become a healthy child always”

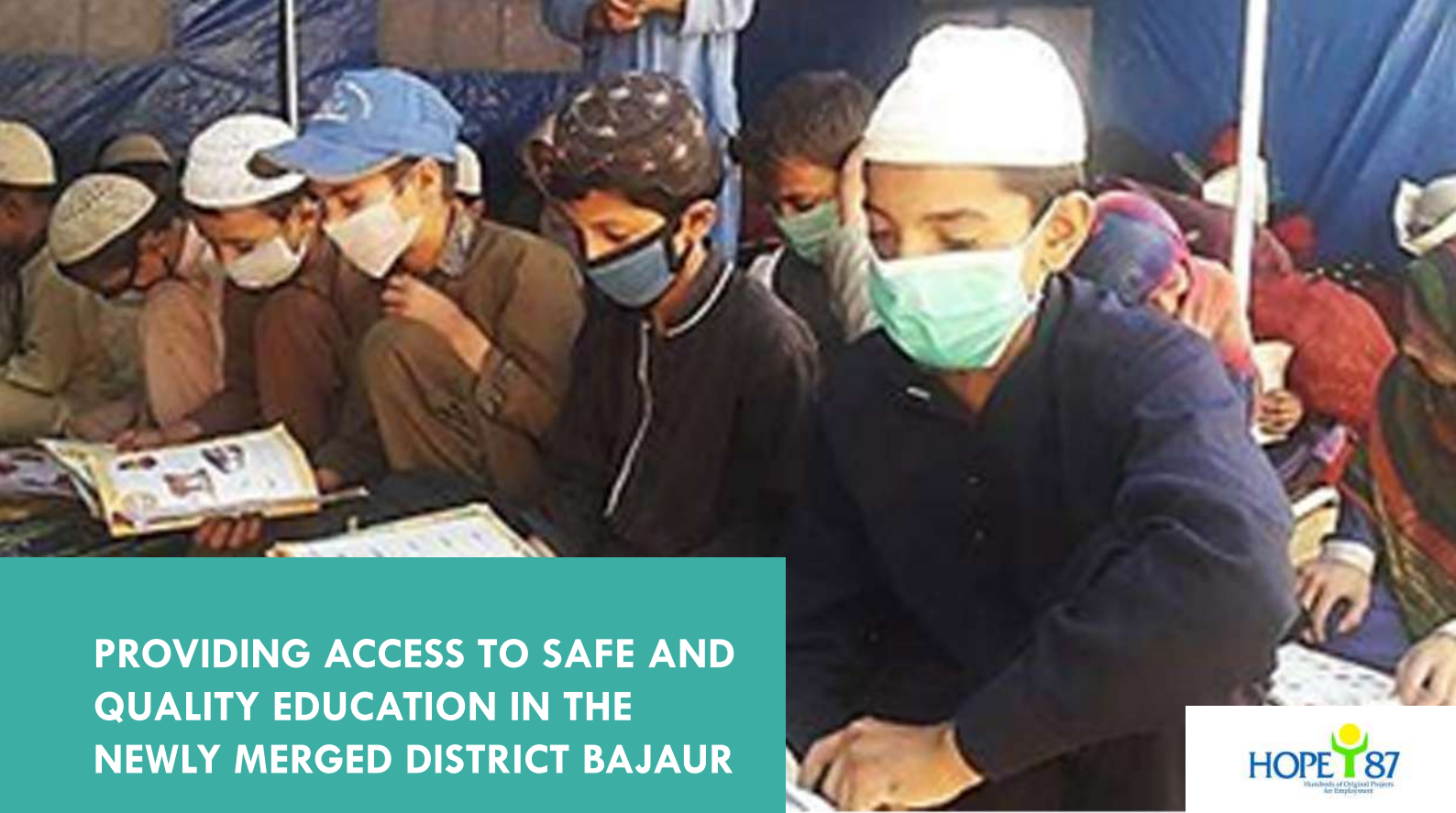
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EDUCATION

Education is the most powerful weapon which
you can use to change the world – Nelson Mandela





PROVIDING ACCESS TO SAFE AND QUALITY EDUCATION IN THE NEWLY MERGED DISTRICT BAJAUR



In Pakistan, most of tribal areas do not have access to safe and quality education. Literacy rate of the newly merged districts (ex-FATA) of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province is quite poor, being only 33% out of which only 13% of them are girls. Gardi Bagh is a remote village of the newly merged District Bajaur and is adjacent to PaK-Afghan border. There are 58 households in this village. Due to non-availability of schools in the village, approximately 78 children were unable to get proper education.

The nearest schools to the village are the Government Primary Schools, Gardi Bagh, which are almost 2 km away from the village. Due to long distances to educational institutes, and security threats, access to the institutions becomes challenging, especially for girls, who are not allowed to travel unaccompanied.

The people of Gardi Bagh understand the importance of education and wanted to equip their daughters with safe quality education close to their homes. In this regard, the villagers wrote an application to the Assistant Director of the National Commission for Human Development (NCHD), Bajaur, for the establishment of a school in their village. NCHD is a federal government statutory organization that has been working in Pakistan under education in emergency (EiE) field for the provision of quality education.



HOPE'87 and NCHD jointly organized enrolment campaign events at district, tehsil and household level in September 2019 to achieve 100% enrollment. Currently, 46 boys and 55 girls are enrolled in FS Gardi Bagh with 2 Feeder Teachers.



Establishment of Feeder School in Bajaur

After receiving application from villagers, AD followed INEE's analysis standard 1 and visited Gardi Bagh for the verification. INEE's community participation standard 1 and 2 were used to involve community members for establishment of the school. Volunteer teachers were selected as per the INEE's teachers and other education personnel standard 1.

HOPE'87 and NCHD jointly organized enrollment campaign events at district, tehsil and household level in September 2019 to achieve 100% enrolment. After the successful enrolment campaign, Feeder School (FS) Gardi Bagh was established in October, 2019. The FS Gardi bagh is now helping both boys and girls to get quality education. Currently, 46 boys and 55 girls are enrolled in FS Gardi Bagh with 2 Feeder Teachers.



TAKING UP THE MANTLE

In times of crisis, people look up to individuals who can lead them from the front. Some take up the mantle to lead the way, as others trust and follow the leaders in their community to find some semblance of assurance in the wake of an unfolding crisis. The spread of COVID-19 has created a similar predicament, where community leaders around the world are taking up the mantle to make a difference. These are unsung heroes which often go unacknowledged and desire no recognition. Farzana is one such individual, who has been guiding her students in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Farzana is a teacher at an IRC supported Alternative Learning Program (ALP) Center in her village Killi Zareefazabad in Pishin District of Balochistan province. A while back Farzana had to deal with the dilemma of either continuing her education after completing secondary education or to support her family. She had little choice but to opt for the latter amidst her family's poor financial circumstances. This however became a blessing for children in her village once the COVID-19 pandemic was recognized as an active threat in her area.

Farzana had been teaching at the IRC supported ALP center run by IRC's partner organization SEHER in her village. After the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in a surge in nationwide cases, all education institutes were shut down in February 2020. During this time, Farzana aimed to tackle the dual challenge of continuing classes for her students, as well as to raise COVID-19 related awareness.

This, however, was not easy, as the spread of the disease was coupled with the lax attitude of people in her village towards taking COVID-19 precautions.



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As lockdowns begin lifting across Pakistan and children return to school, Farzana is cautiously welcoming students back to IRC's ALP center, amidst a tight protocol.

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Farzana started by instructing both students and parents to adhere to COVID-19 precautions, explaining the use of masks, hand sanitizers, and the frequent need to wash hands. She established ground rules as a pre-condition for her students to continue homeschooling by following COVID-19 protocols.

Within a short period of time, Farzana was able to help students organize classes across different nearby houses while ensuring that only a handful of students attended each class, while practicing social distancing and wearing a mask. She also provided students with hand sanitizers and masks to further reinforce the COVID-19 protocols. During the lockdown, Farzana taught 25 students by venturing to different community designated homes for classes. This was a tiring and at times, nerve-racking experience for Farzana, as she reinforced COVID-19 protocols for students and by educating parents.

CHANGING PATHS

Salma Ashiq had been begging on the streets for two years. Deprived of education, she had understood at an early age that this was not the future that she wanted. Belonging to a family which practices beggary, she revolted the day a team of social mobilizers came to her house to convince her father to let her study.

There was immense pressure from the community surrounding the ALC; it was demonized by people who believed that their income would be affected if their children would study rather than earn money on the street through begging - a deep rooted mindset which seemed impossible to change until social mobilizers from Save the Children and their implementation partners initiated the dialogue.

Through numerous meetings with community members, elders, and families, slowly and gradually, the team was able to convince a few families to send their girls to the ALC under the supervision of the learning facilitators.

“When we were establishing the ALC, people would taunt us by saying we are building an institution where we would take away their girls and leave the families on the streets” – Mahira Memon (Learning Facilitator – ALC Lemo Jogi).



”

Salma dreams of becoming a doctor one day and says “I will treat everyone in my village for free”. Salma could not contain her excitement at the prospect of teaching other girls like her.

“

“I did not want her to study, we would starve otherwise, how do we afford food? These were the thoughts that crossed my mind, so I said I would send her to study for a few months, if she can write my name on a piece of paper after that, I will allow her to continue her studies” , said Ashiq Ali, father of Salma

Salma took it upon herself to make sure she breaks the cycle of beggary in her family. Within a short span of time, she wrote the name of her father and family members on a piece of paper, solidifying their trust in what she was doing.

“He drops me to the ALC himself. Infact, in the morning he is the one who teases me and says don’t you have to go school today, why are you sleeping?” she said. With the passage of time, Salma convinced her father to give up beggary as well. Ashiq Ali now works at a motorcycle repair shop in the city where he earns a dignified living. “It is all her, she is the one who showed me a better way to live through her conviction to study” Ashiq Ali said.





handicap
international

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“The playground helped us retain our students and attendance become regular.” - Local schoolteacher

“

Finally, in Jalozei, the plot adjacent to Rashid Shaheed Foundation school was offered for the pilot playground, which was further assessed for child protection and accessibility point of view.



INSPIRING CHILDREN TO PARTICIPATE THROUGH 4 INCLUSIVE PLAY SPACES

In Peshawar, neither boys nor girls get a chance to play outdoors. This is primarily because of lack of play spaces. During the Child Photo Project baseline, discussions revealed that most children cannot access playgrounds as they are too far away from their homes, and that playing in the street is limited for boys, whereas girls can only play at home.



Both boys and girls reported that they had limited time to play because of schoolwork and long distance of the playground from their home. They further shared that children with disabilities cannot access the playground. Those who are visually impaired have a high chance to fall and sustain injuries, and those who are wheelchair bound cannot enter the playground because the entrance is too narrow.

Considering the findings from the discussions with children during the Child Photo Project and community consultations, it was analyzed that children in the targeted communities don't have playgrounds close to their homes and play spaces are not accessible for children with disabilities. Therefore, an idea of inclusive playground was presented to fulfil the gap.

Learning through play and child participation are the key pillars of the Growing Together project. A suitable site was identified, which was accessible and safe. The vacant plots in the village premises were not easily available. Community's willingness to convert them into 12 playgrounds was another consideration.



Detailed consultations with children and community members were held for the design, and an international consultant was engaged to build a design based on children's feedback. The consultant also led the construction of the ground along with the local vendor and built the capacity of the local vendors on accessibility and inclusive standards.

Different events including sports were held in the playground to raise awareness and sensitize communities on inclusive spaces. The school's security guard shared that "there are lot of families who come in the evening with their children and enjoy the playground. Similarly, school children were very happy to have a space for just play and fun and to enjoy their breaks.

At times, the teacher brings classes out in the playground for some activity based learning which further motivates children further helps more children to attend school. A local school teacher shared that "this playground helped us to retain our students and attendance become regular. Children wait for their turn to play in the ground, moreover, it is also helpful for teachers to create interest in students through activity-based learning".

The playground is usually very busy, where children from adjacent areas visit and play. Community members, especially mothers are happy, because they have a place where they can spend some time with their kids. Families are more supportive of children playing outside; mothers also enjoy the swings along with their children and feel relaxed. For maintenance and management of the playground, a committee was formed which has members from community adults, children and school.

The committee's role is to ensure that playground has a safe environment and is clean and accessible to all. The committee is also responsible to repair any broken equipment. This pilot playground helped generate discussion among other communities and possibility of establishment of more playgrounds.

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“There are lot of families who come in the evening with their children and enjoy the playground” – School security guard

“

Community members identified more sites, where design is prepared with support of international consultant and implemented through local vendors. This is done with the support 8985of HI Engineer, who has been integral in sharing the knowledge and providing technical guidance to local community, schools and landowners. A total of 8 playgrounds are established at community level and handed over to the communities. Similarly, three playgrounds were established in Hayatabad Education Complex, Deaf school for Boys and Government institute for Blind keeping in view the children's needs.



PAYING BACK TO COMMUNITY

Guddi Ponjo, a preprimary school teacher from Sindh, had always faced discrimination and stigma because of her physical disability, resulting from childhood polio virus. She had sad memories of her childhood. She could only recall, children making fun of her and imitating her.

Guddi studied from Tearfund funded primary school and completed her further studies from nearby secondary school. This school was the only school in her village, educating children for a nominal fee. Many children like Guddi, would not have learnt to read and write if it's not for Tearfund's support.

"I would not have studied if it had not been for the only primary school in my village. I have seen ups and downs in my life. Being raised in poverty, I am optimistic that one day I will transform my community through continuous dedication. The community has accepted me, and respects me. Being able to pay back to my community gives a sense of empowerment. I am shaping the nation's future by teaching young children. I am a member of the Women Empowerment Group (WEG). I aspire to become a role model for young girls so they can believe in themselves", said Guddi.



tearfund

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The community has accepted me, and respects me. Being able to pay back to my community gives a sense of empowerment. I am shaping the nation's future by teaching young children. I am a member of the Women Empowerment Group (WEG). I aspire to become a role model for young girls so they can believe in themselves", said Guddi.

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WASH

Access to safe water is a fundamental human need and
therefore a basic human right - Kofi Anan





Diakonie 
Katastrophenhilfe

DKH BRINGS A SMILE ON THE FACE OF MOMAL AND HER FAMILY

Life was miserable for Momal, a mother of four (3 girls and 1 boy), living with her husband. Her daily job besides household chores includes fetching water from a traditional dug well, half a kilometer away from her home. This traditional dug well is more than 200 hundred feet deep with a rope attached to a rotational wooden log. It is used to pull a rubber pot of water while a few people pull the rope. Her life was changed when she came to know that a local humanitarian organization has installed two solar submersible water pumps in her village “Sakrio Old” to meet personal and domestic water needs of 150 households. This area is mainly rain-fed and each year a large number of people affected by drought migrate to the nearby barrage in search for fodder and water for their families and animals. Due to lack of attention by the government departments, very less development work has been done in these areas to minimize their sufferings related to drought and seasonal migration.

DKH has installed eight more solar submersible water-pumps in other drought affected villages as part of their project titled “Integrated Emergency Response through WASH, Livelihood and Food Security Intervention to COVID-19 and Drought affected communities in District Tharparkar, Sindh Pakistan” Before installation of solar water pump in our village, it would normally take more than 1 hour to go there, get water, and come back home, but now it only takes 15 minutes to fetch water with my children.

Now there is no manpower required to pull the rope from a traditional well. There are hundreds of women like Momal, whose lives have been transformed with the installation of a solar submersible water pump in their village. Now these women can save more time to spend in income generating activities.



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“I used to work to earn for my family only on alternate days, as I had to carry water home with my children” says 31-year-old Momal.

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Momal who contributes to the family income by doing embroidery and sewing clothes will now be able to earn more. Momal has also learnt that it is important to contribute 100 rupees each month as a fund to ensure operations and maintenance of the water pump.

Ever since one of the few and perhaps most innovative solar- powered pumps started pulling out water for the people of village Sakario Old in Tharparkar District, Sindh, life has changed for the residents. For the women of this village who normally spent an average of four hours every time they went to fetch water from wells, the solar pump is Godsent.

“Drop-out rate of children is high in Tharparkar, as children are engaged with their families in a time-consuming task of fetching water for their families. With the installation of a solar submersible water pumps, we can send our children to school to get education. “-Kanji Mall – Village Committee Member



IMPROVED SANITATION IN RURAL THARPARKER, SINDH

Village Sarah is one of the rural, remote areas of Tharparkar, in Sindh province, where annual drought and famine spells force thousands of families to migrate in search of food & water for their families and livestock.

The wells get drier and women carrying infants walk barefoot for miles on sand dunes in scorching heat of more than 50 degrees Celsius in search of water. It is a full day exercise for a few liters of water-that too insufficient to last for a whole day. Lack of water leads to poor sanitation and contamination, subsequently causing transmission of diseases like cholera, dysentery, typhoid etc. Insufficient or inadequately managed water and sanitation facilities and services expose individuals to a host of health risks which in many cases are preventable.

Children and young people are often the most severely affected by inadequate sanitation and open defecation practices. By virtue of their developing immune systems, they are affected by numerous illnesses and conditions ranging from physical and mental stunting to cholera and malnutrition. When considered at the scale of drought-hit Tharparkar, this means thousands of children in the district suffer from the various physiological complications that arise from open defecation and inadequate access to sanitation facilities.

Same is the story of Ghulam Haider, a resident of Sarah Village in Tharparkar who lives in a thatched hut with his wife and four children. He narrates his story "our community had no concept of toilet/latrine, we all (men, women & children) practiced open defecation; defecating in open fields or bushes. Our girls and women had to travel to far-off distances to search for an abandoned place or bushes to defecate, because of which they had to wake-up in the dark early in the morning or wait till the sun sets to meet their needs".



"We practiced traditional ways of feeding soup or water to a diarrheal patient, as the nearest health facility is more than 50 miles away from this village. We have lost many children, young boys and girls fighting against cholera, diarrhea, and malnutrition. We always considered it as a matter of fate and divine will that we could not resist or fight but now we have realized that we were responsible for all those losses and we could have saved many lives if we were aware earlier", Lalan Ghulam's wife narrated with a broken voice.



Moreover, the villagers had no information on handwashing with soap as normally they used only water or ash to wash their hands and majority never washed their hands before cooking, having a meal or feeding children.

Villagers never considered personal or domestic hygiene important for their health and lives, the food remained uncovered, and water containers were never cleaned. Resultantly, children, young boys and girls suffered from diarrhea and cholera most often.

For girls and young women, the lack of access to private latrines and toilets also rendered them vulnerable to violence, number of snake-biting incidents and depriving them of a healthy and productive life. This is not only a major public health concern but a vital human rights issue as well.

Human Appeal has trained local villagers as masons on construction and rehabilitation of latrines and has trained selected young girls and boys as community resource persons on health & hygiene awareness. The selected local group is a great resource pool to make communities self-reliant and self-sustained. They not only share the same language and culture, but their community members also feel comfortable consulting with them when needed.

“We have lost many children, young boys and girls fighting against cholera, diarrhea, and malnutrition. We always considered it as a matter of fate and divine will that we could not resist or fight but now we have realized that we were responsible for all those losses and we could have saved many lives if we were aware earlier.”-Lalan

Post-KAP (Knowledge, Attitude and Practices) survey of Human Appeal further analysed project results and indicated that 100% of the households had now access to toilets as compared to just 3% before the project. More than 90% households had improved behaviour change towards handwashing with soap and around 96% reported covering their drinking water and eatables appropriately. Based on memory recall of last one month, the incidence of diarrheal cases was reduced by 21% after the project. Further, 100% of the households are aware and practiced feeding ORS to diarrheal patients.



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We have been living in darkness and have paid the price in terms of our health and lives. Our lack of awareness and unhealthy hygienic practices caused us to suffer, but now we have learnt. Every household has its own private toilet, our children always practice handwashing with soap. We feel safer and protected; we have learned the true essence of cleanliness” -Ghulam Haider

“

With this initiative, Human Appeal has achieved the aim of empowering rural communities through improved sanitation & hygiene practices in one of the targeted villages. The programme was acknowledged by the local government which awarded the village with an “Open Defecation Free (ODF) Village Certificate”.

According to 2017 Joint Monitoring Report, two third of the households in Tharparkar do not have access to toilet facilities, which means an approx. 1.1 million people are in need of toilets.

The initiative of Human Appeal was acknowledged by the local government which awarded the village with an “Open Defecation Free (ODF) Village Certificate”.





PANKHUDI A LITTLE GIRL STRIVING TO IMPROVE HYGIENIC PRACTICES IN HER VILLAGE

One humid September evening, in a remote Union Council (UC) of District Sanghar, Sindh, Pakistan, just when I was about to take a glass of water from a woman, a five-year old girl standing next to me shrieked, “Mummy, let’s sanitize his hands first.” Without waiting for my consent, she gestured me to take a small amount of sanitizer on my palms to disinfect my hands. Meanwhile, she asked all those who shook hands with me to follow suit. The focus of her conversation during the entire ritual centered on the importance of hygiene in routine life and especially during pandemics. She sounded as articulate and confident as any professional hygiene expert practicing in Paris, Berlin, or New York.

The province of Sindh is situated in the South of Pakistan. This little girl was Pankhudi, a resident of Jam Nawaz Ali – one of Sanghar’s most underprivileged talukas (tehsils). Rasheed Khan Marri, a remote village in UC Hout Wassan of Jam Nawaz Ali is her entire universe. When a Hygiene Promoter of Malteser International Pakistan informed her about the deadly hazards of COVID-19, she felt her ‘universe’ was about to collapse. Hence, she took upon herself to save the lives of her near and dear ones.

Since the emergence of COVID-19 earlier this year, Pankhudi has repeatedly instructed everyone in her village to maintain social (physical) distance and to wash hands with soap frequently. “In our home and the entire nearby neighbourhood, when Pankhudi orders, everybody obeys,” told Rajia, Pankhudi’s mother while giving this scribe a glass of water.



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“I had four best friends: Aastha, Jaman Das, Dilip and Mahesh. Now I have five. This hand sanitizer is a new addition in my best friends’ list. Drink water without hesitation, Uncle. We boil it daily for drinking,” Pankhudi concluded with a patronizing smile that lit up her whole face.

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It was under Rajia’s strict guidance that Pankhudi had already been adhering to a hygienic routine when the Malteser’s project team visited village Rasheed Khan Marri and distributed hygiene-kits in addition to conducting awareness sessions on COVID-19. In all, 4,000 hygiene kits have been distributed so far among as many households under this project. Contents of the hygiene kit aided Pankhudi’s family and other villagers in adapting hygienic practices.

“Don’t you worry Sir, we’ll continue using these useful items when the ones distributed by the Malteser are finished. I’ll work extra hours to buy them even though they will be of inferior quality,” pledged Saroop Chand, Pankhudi’s father who is a labourer.





CONSTRUCTION OF A WATER POND TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO WATER

Statistics reveal that approximately 53,000 children die every year due to water-borne diseases, resulting in a very high stunting rate of 44%, mostly in children under five. District Jhang is among the poorest districts of Punjab and is ranked 5th from the lowest in the province in terms of unavailability of safe drinking water. Qatar Charity implemented water & sanitation project in Tehsil Shorkot, District Jhang, in collaboration with UNICEF, Accelerated Sanitation & Water for All (ASWA-II) from 2018-2020.

District Jhang is challenged with extremely poor quality of drinking water. 40 % of the population has limited or no access to sweet drinking water, as most of the underground water is saline and marshy and is not fit for drinking purposes.

Village 489-JB is one of the villages located in Shorkot, where underground water is not fit for drinking purposes. The people of the area fetch water from a nearby canal which is mostly the women, resulting in waste of time and resources. Due to unsafe drinking water, there was a prevalence of common diseases including diarrhea, vomiting, typhoid and skin and eye allergy. The great pie of the total expenditure is spent on medical treatment cost.

Keeping in view the dire need of clean drinking water in the target village, Qatar Charity constructed a water pond in the same village with total project cost of 32,500 QAR. The slow sand filter mechanism is used in construction of water pond, in which water is collected from a nearby canal and is passed through series of filtration galleries.

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“My friends and I are now able to spare time to play cricket and not worry about bringing water on motor bike. We happy to have water at our doorstep”- Local student

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The total population of 174 households and 977 beneficiaries are benefitting from clean drinking water on sustainable basis. Women and children are the main beneficiaries of the project, as now they do not have to travel miles to fetch clean drinking water for their households. Now children have quality time to spend on the studies, while women also spend time in other productive household tasks, thus resulting into improvement of their quality of life.





INSTALLATION OF A WATER SCHEME TO TACKLE WATER SCARCITY IN BADIN



Mr. Mohammad Ramzan hails from Village Bachal Mallah, UC Pir Bodlo, Taluka Tando Bago, District Badin, which is approximately 65 kilo meters from District Head Quarter. Water scarcity for drinking purposes is a major challenge faced by the rural communities in Sindh. He visited local administration offices several times and reached out to NGOs and influential persons in the community, but despite submitting many applications he did not receive a positive response. Although he faced many roadblocks, he did not let it deter his spirit and continued his efforts.

Installation of a water scheme to tackle water scarcity in Badin. It was during this time that contacted the Muslim Hands team and shared the various challenges of water scarcity faced by the community. Engaging with the MH team he further shared the perils of women who had to walk 2-4 km every day to collect water, which not only endangered their safety but also impacted their health.

Due to lack of resources, the community was unable to install any water scheme at the village level. After listening to his concerns and assessing village Bachal Mallah, the MH team installed a water scheme to cater to the community's need for safe drinking water and availability of water for domestic use.



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Although he faced many roadblocks, he did not let it deter his spirit and continued his efforts.

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Mohammad Ramzan and all villagers were relieved and thanked the MH team for their efforts. MH team further delivered health and hygiene sessions to raise awareness at the village level. Mohammad Ramzan and other people actively participated in the events and encouraged the community members to do the same.



A SAFE SPACE

Tearfund through local partners; is working in remote communities like Umerkot and Tharparkar, where people are not used to change and have used the 'open air' for waste disposal for decades. This is not achieved by the simple act of building facilities. The most important aspect of any sanitation intervention, is to make people aware of the dangers of leaving faecal matter lying about and of the values of sanitation and hygiene in promoting healthy living, dignity and cleanliness.

As a husband and father; Mitha Ram always wanted to do something for his daughters and wife; who used to go before sunrise and after sunset to defecate. In the dark, women go in groups to ensure each other's safety. Mitha Ram, is one the several beneficiaries who have learnt to construct latrine.

"I had no courage to challenge the normal practice but thankfully, people are becoming aware now. With Tearfund's help and training; I constructed a pit latrine at my house and saved money for concrete structure to make it more durable. This latrine has not only added comfort to our lives but also provided safety and privacy for women. I am delighted that I took this step, for the betterment of my family" says Mitha Ram.

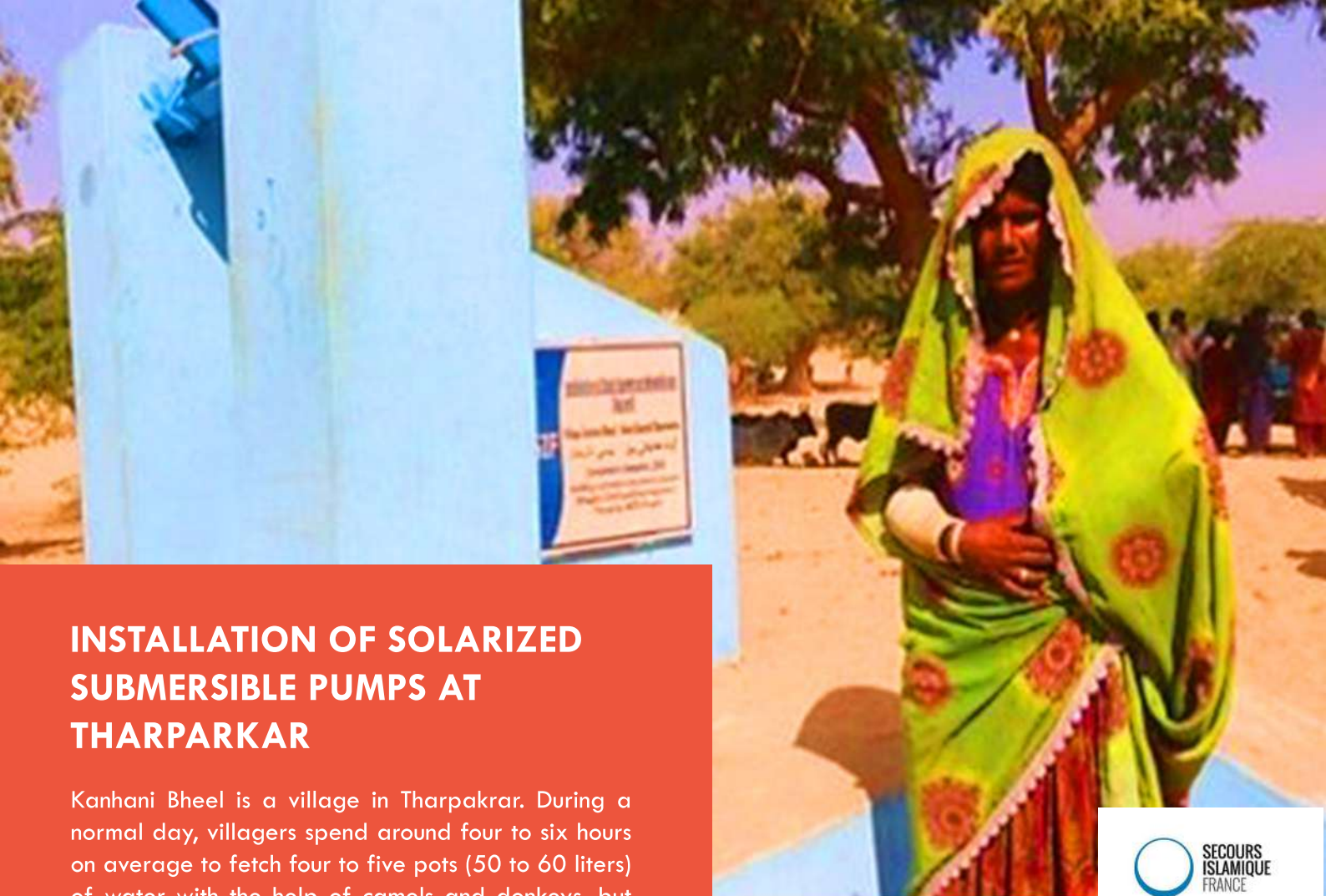


tearfund

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“This latrine has not only added comfort to our lives but also provided safety and privacy for women. I am delighted that I took this step, for the betterment of my family” says Mitha Ram.

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INSTALLATION OF SOLARIZED SUBMERSIBLE PUMPS AT THARPARKAR

Kanhani Bheel is a village in Tharpakrar. During a normal day, villagers spend around four to six hours on average to fetch four to five pots (50 to 60 liters) of water with the help of camels and donkeys, but most of the population is very poor and cannot purchase animals for purpose of fetching water. Most of the families spend a whole day for extracting water from dug wells which are situated far and wide. The threat of Cholera and Acute Watery Diarrhea (AWD) still looms over in Kanhani Bheel like many other villages in district Tharparkar.

In Kanhani Bheel village essential services such as WASH are not available or accessible, people are more susceptible to WASH-related illness and child death due to malnutrition. What makes the matters worse are the open wells, where most of the inhabitants trek long distances to reach them in search of water, which is usually contaminated from exposed boreholes.

The groundwater with TDS greater than 3,000 ppm, is much higher than permissible limit of WHO for human consumption and may be one of the reasons for the poor health of the inhabitants. SIF conducted water tests in targeted villages and identified the potential dug wells which have appropriate limits of TDS for drinking purpose.

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“After installation of solar pumps, I can take better care of my livestock, my children and my whole family. Earlier my kids used to fetch water and it was very difficult to fill the buckets by pulling up the rope by hands.” -Rodi, a housewife

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They were rehabilitated and equipped with advanced technology like solarized submersible pumps installation in addition to water storage tanks which have capacity of about 5,000 liters in one hour.

FSL

Innovations that are guided by smallholder farmers, adapted to local circumstances, and sustainable for the economy and environment will be necessary to ensure food security in the future - Bill Gates





A RAY OF HOPE FOR DAILY WAGERS IN SINDH

50-year-old Safooran lives with her three children in village Bheenriyo Bheel, in District Umerkot, Sindh. Despite being swamped with responsibilities of domestic work, looking after her children and fetching water from long distances, she also works as a daily wage labourer for road construction. Her day is spent toiling under the blistering heat, crushing stones and melting pitch.

Working under the scorching heat of the sun has made her life quite arduous and challenging. Since such a labour opportunity is only available in urban or semi-urban areas, far away from where she lives, Safooran spends most of the day out of the house to meet the basic needs of her family.

Owing to the long distances, she has no choice but to celebrate Holi (religious festival of Hindu community) away from her loved ones. Explaining the challenges of the pandemic, she said that due to Corona virus and subsequent lockdowns, there was no work opportunity available and the entire community faced problems regarding income generation and providing meals to the family.

One day ACTED team called us to collect our money. I went there and received cash assistance of PKR 21,000. Words are insufficient to express how I felt at that moment. It was like a ray of light in the darkness of my life. I cannot thank ACTED and WFP enough for providing much-needed assistance in this difficult time of my life."

 **ACTED**

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I went there and received cash assistance of PKR 21,000. Words are insufficient to express how I felt at that moment. It was like a ray of light in the darkness of my life.

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FOOD FOR DAILY WAGE WORKERS

Muhammad used to rely on charity to feed his family like many other deserving people. Now, thanks to a project run by local partner and supported by Care International in food ration, which provides enough food for two months. *“The food package was like a miracle for me and my family in this crucial time.” - Muhammad*



Food packages were distributed to protect vulnerable community members from starvation due to absence of livelihood options and food insecurity. The project adopted Door to Door (DTD) mechanism for distribution of food packages and hygiene kits. This approach ensured adherence to government prescribed social distancing, so that the beneficiaries were not exposed to the virus while receiving the goods.

Now with the help of food ration provided to him, his brothers and sisters get three meals a day and their diet is more varied. “I dropped out of class IV to support my family but I always wanted to resume my education, as I wanted to become a doctor. Now I would want my brother and sister to pursue their education after schools are re-opened” says Muhamad.



“The food package was like a miracle for me and my family in this crucial time.” says Muhammad.



COVID-19 RESPONSE FOOD DISTRIBUTION

COVID-19 FOOD DIST

TANDO ALI

HELPING HAND FOR RELIEF AND DEVELOPMENT



TRANSFORMING LIVES THROUGH ORPHAN SUPPORT PROGRAMME

Sharafat Ali belongs to Madian Swat and lives with two brothers and four sisters. His father died in his childhood and his elder brother bore all household expenses. It was a very challenging time for his family because the earnings were not enough to fulfill basic needs of his family. When Sharafat was in Grade-VII, he was enrolled in Orphan Support Program (OSP) as a Sponsor Child, after which he received food/ration packages and cash grants that helped him continue his education and meet his expense.

He was overjoyed when Helping Hand for Relief and Development (HHRD) team ensured continuation of his education. Thus, in 2011, he was adopted by Orphan Support Program of HHRD. He was a bright student and worked hard to pass the Matriculation exam in 2013 with A grade. He was able to continue his education in 2015 and passed Intermediate, yet again with flying colours, scoring an A Grade, that landed him a scholarship in Helping Hand Institute of Rehabilitation Sciences (HH-IRS), Mansehra. He completed Doctorate of Physiotherapy (DPT) with 3.64 CGPA.

Sharafat Ali is a bright and happy young man. Expressing gratitude to the team of HHRD, he said, "it is a great pleasure for me that the donors of Helping Hand for Relief and Development have sponsored me, and thousands of other children like me to help them fulfill their dreams. May Allah Almighty give the best reward for this act of kindness."

9,000 children are sponsored under the Helping Hand for Relief and Development's Orphan Support Program and many of them are serving humanity across Pakistan after completing their education.

"It is a great pleasure for me that the donors of Helping Hand for Relief and Development have sponsored me, and thousands of other children like me to enable them fulfill their dreams. May Allah Almighty give the best reward for this act of kindness." –Sharafat Ali

Twelve children are currently serving as doctors after doing MBBS. Thirty-five have become engineers, while about seventy are working as teachers. In addition, many are working in the Pakistan Army, police and other government institutions.





MEN CHAMPIONING WOMEN'S RIGHTS DURING THE PANDEMIC

Jamil-ur-Rehman, 32, being a differently-abled child, was raised in a toxic, discriminatory and often-times violent environment, in a society which is strongly biased towards individuals with disabilities. He always wanted to transform his circumstances and the perspectives around his disability but did not know how.



Jamil is married with 2 children and lives in refugee village Chakdara, District Lower-Dir, KP. He is a member of community-based group of volunteers known as Gender Support Group (GSG) for the prevention of Gender Based Violence (GBV). Gender Support Group is a part of the three-year project called "Expanding MHPSS and Strengthening GBV Prevention and Response for Afghan Refugees in KP Province", funded by Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM). It aims to increase the utilization of GBV prevention and response services integrated with mental health and psychosocial support services for Afghan refugees in selected Refugee Villages, as well as community members for the improved protection status of women and girls.

Impact of COVID-19

COVID-19 has greatly influenced community well-being and increased the risks of gender-based violence (GBV) in communities and is expected to have long term negative consequences for people, their families and communities. Those who are directly affected may be reluctant to report the abuse because of fear, influence and power differences between victims and perpetrators of abuse during these challenging times.

Pre-existing economic and social stress in the refugee communities and further fear and anxiety caused by the pandemic, coupled with limited movement and social isolation measures, have led to an increase in GBV incidents.



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“I still remember the day when a friend of mine introduced me to the International Medical Corps and its work around GSG in January 2019. For the first time, I felt I can do something...something to aspire, change and make a difference.” - Jamil

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Growing up in an environment where women always felt discriminated and alienated from household decision making was something Jamil could relate to, as a physically challenged adult. That is the reason he feels so strong for the cause and decided to join the voice for women's rights. Through GSG he has been sensitized on gender-based violence, its causes and consequences, human rights and harmful traditional practices.

During the pandemic, he continued to raise awareness online on GBV and provided telephonic services for those seeking psychological aid “When government announced complete lockdown, I felt there is a need to raise awareness about the issue of gender-based violence during pandemic as well as about the practices that can replace the conventional in-person support”.” Jamil

Aid, counseling, or any other kind of support with the help of International Medical Corps' Project, funded by PRM. Since the COVID-19 outbreak, he is actively engaged in different activities and provides help to the communities who feel disconnected from their support networks to reduce the prevalence of gender-based violence in communities.



STRENGTHENING LIVELIHOODS

Rehmat Ullah belongs to a poor family in Balochistan. He has four sisters and two brothers. His older brother earned only 2,000 per month, which is why he was unable to get education after doing matriculation. Rehmat Ullah applied for admission in hardware course in Muslim Hands Informatics, Quetta. After verification, he got free admission in DIT, hardware and networking courses and completed them in 2007.

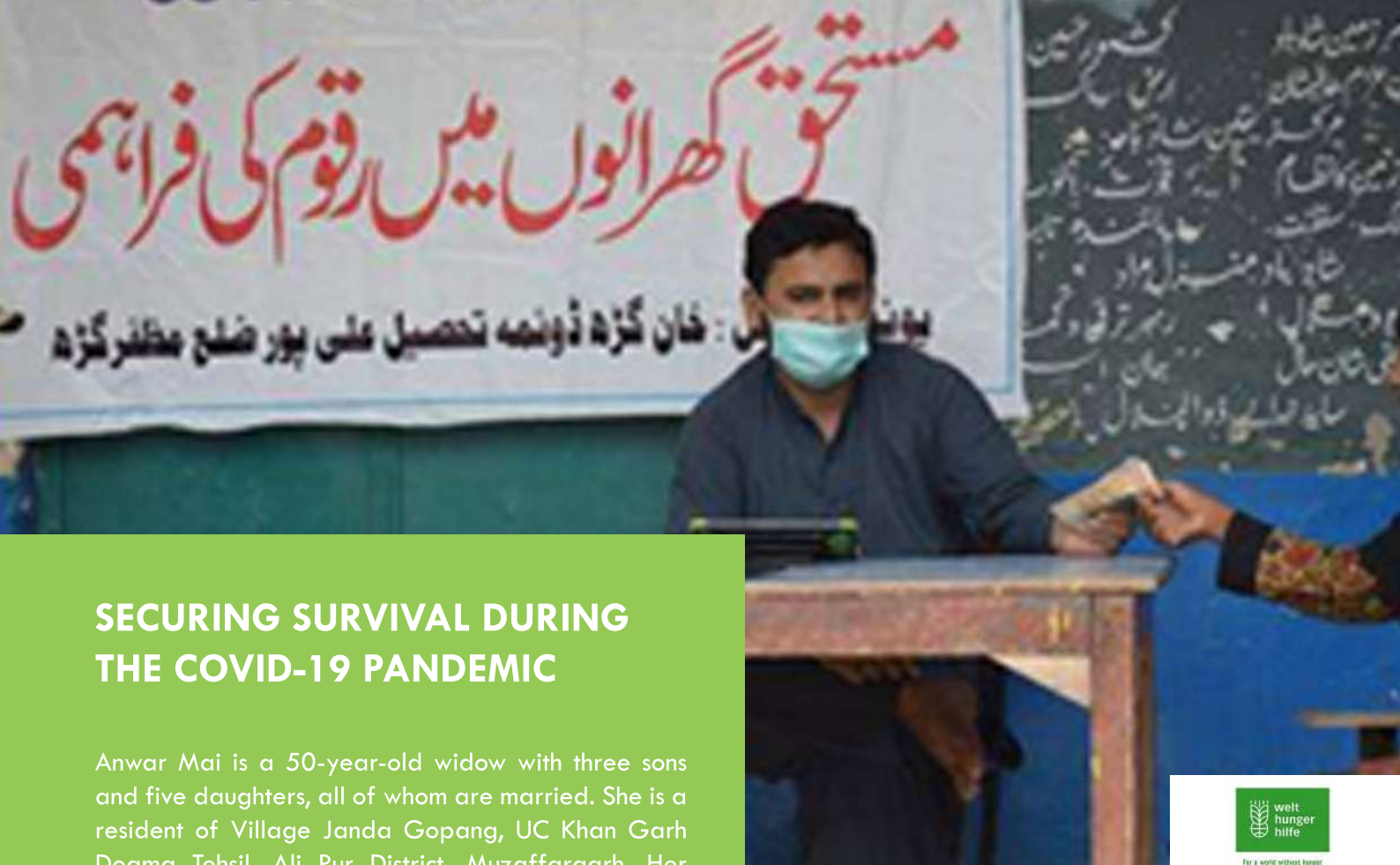
Muslim Hands Informatics provided him free technical education through Orphan Sponsorship Program. He was a position holder and after the completion of courses, MHI appointed him as a Lab Assistant in Aug 2007. He proved himself as an asset for the organization and is currently teaching DIT classes and earning 13,000 PKR per month to support his family.

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SECURING SURVIVAL DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Anwar Mai is a 50-year-old widow with three sons and five daughters, all of whom are married. She is a resident of Village Janda Gopang, UC Khan Garh Doama Tehsil, Ali Pur District, Muzaffargarh. Her village is situated in band area of Indus River which is highly prone to floods. During mid-level flood in Indus River, she lost two kanals of agricultural land due to land erosion, which was the key source of livelihood for her family. Unfortunately, she also lost her house later in the 2015 floods. After losing their mud house, her family members decided to work as daily wagers.

Anwar Mai started agri-labour in the nearby area along with her sons, while her husband decided to go to Karachi to work as labourer in Korangi area. Gradually, the financial condition of the family improved, but during the same year her husband suffered from liver and kidney problems, and his condition rapidly deteriorated. Soon after, he passed away, leaving her as the head of her family. Anwar Mai worked day and night, as her children grew and got married. For the past year, she has been living with her older son Akbar, who is also a labourer.

Life became hard again when heavy rains, storms and flood ravaged the wheat crop on farmlands where they were working. One disaster followed another and to make matters worse, Coronavirus pandemic broke out in March of the same year; the government imposed strict lockdowns in Karachi, which forced her family to move back to their residential village.



“This was the happiest moment for me in the last 6 months, because I was able to provide timely food to my family in a timely maner” said Anawar Mai, with tears in her eyes.



They found it hard to make ends meet due to non-availability of agri and other labor in surrounding areas. It was then that the team of Doaba Foundation visited their village and the village Disaster Management Committee nominated Anwar Mai as one of the beneficiaries of cash grant of PKR 7,500, which made it possible for her to purchase food items.





A DREAM THAT BECAME A REALITY FOR MAI SADOORI

Pakistan is a disaster-prone country, vulnerable to unpredictable weather patterns and other effects of climate change, such as unusual rain patterns, glacial melting, rising temperatures and drought. During the first spell of heavy rainfalls in early August 2020, massive flooding occurred in Karachi, Hyderabad, Shaheed Benazirabad and Dadu districts of Sindh province. Tehsil Johi in District Dadu was severely affected by flash floods. Crops, houses and infrastructures were extensively damaged on a large-scale, which led the Government of Sindh to declare 80 villages in the district as “Calamity Affected.”

Monsoon was exceptionally hard for 52-year-old Mai Sadoori and her family hailing from Village Molvi Noor Muhammad Roodhani, UC Sewaro, Taluka Johi, District Dadu. Mai Sadoori and her husband along with their daughter-in-law and granddaughters took refuge in a relative's house after their home collapsed during the heavy rains.

Mai's husband Yaqoob Roodhani who was alive during that time decided to get a loan for rehabilitation of their home. The construction of the house started but Yaqoob's health deteriorated, and he passed away. As a result of which, the construction was put to a halt. The loan was spent mainly on Yaqoob's medical expense and funeral proceedings.

The project ‘Early Recovery Intervention for Flood Affected Population in Sindh’ under Natural Disasters Consortium (NDC) funded by Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) started in January 2021 in 05 UCs of Dadu and 05 UCs of Tando

CONCERN
worldwide

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“The shelter assistance has come at a time when I had lost my husband, leaving the only bread winner, my son, behind. Being an unskilled labour, he is barely able to make ends meet. Resuming the construction of our house was merely a dream for us. I am extremely thankful to TRDP team to select my house and help us complete the construction of our home.”
-Mai Sadoori


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Mohammad Khan. The field teams of the local partner of Concern Worldwide, Thardeep Rural Development Programme (TRDP), conducted beneficiary selection process for the distribution of shelter packages among vulnerable beneficiaries to enable them to repair or rehabilitate their damaged shelters.

Mai Sadhoori was selected as the beneficiary of partially damaged shelter category. Mai's family is among the 600 households in District Dadu receiving Shelter package for partially damaged shelters which includes 01 iron girder, 11 bamboos, 04 chicks, 04 bags of lime, plastic sheet, rope and nails along with cash assistance of 5,000 PKR.



CASH GRANTS OFFER SUPPORT TO VULNERABLE PEOPLE DURING COVID-19 LOCKDOWNS



Venus BiBi -a widow - is the only bread earner in her family and has 5 daughters. She lives in Islamabad and works at MCI-Islamabad as a sanitary worker. During COVID-19 she lost her job for 3 months. Nonetheless, she continued to inform people about the SOPs to protect against the disease. As job opportunities became scarce due to lockdowns she was overwhelmed with an all-consuming despair and hopelessness.

It was during this time that Help in Need took the initiative of disbursement of cash grants to the most vulnerable households in order to meet their food needs. 2,300 families were identified and verified, of which 1,500 households were recommended for cash grants of 7,500 PKR per family.

Venus Bibi's family was one of the 1,500 households. Although her job was retained later, she was not paid her salary for 3 months. Venus Bibi received the cash grant in December 2020 which helped her purchase month's ration for her family.

She said during the time when her daughters slept hungry without a morsel of food all day, she felt so helpless that the only thing she could do was look up to the sky and ask God to send help for her family.



Diakonie
Katastrophenhilfe

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“When I received the verification call, I jumped with joy and thanked God for sending Help in Need and DKH to our aid. I have been through very difficult times, but I am ever grateful to the people who came to our aid at the time we needed it most.” -Venus Bibi

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HelpAge
International

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“The livelihood of my whole family depends on my son who is working on daily wages. We have no other source of income; my son is the sole breadwinner of my family.” - Hawa

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“My son feels they have received food assistance because of me and now he prefers to spend more time with me.” -Hawa



EMPOWERING OLDER WOMEN EMPOWERS US ALL

90-year-old Mai Hawa lives in Ibrahim Hyderi, Karachi, with her 13 family members and belongs to a poor fisher community. Her husband was a fisherman who died nine years ago. “The livelihood of my whole family depends on my son who is working on daily wages. We have no other source of income; my son is the sole breadwinner of my family,” Hawa said. Her son is a fisherman who earns 200 PKR per day, and yet there are days when he does not find work.



“When my son returns home without work, I begin to wonder what the family will eat. I am living with multiple diseases. Recently I had an eye surgery, because of which there is so much pain in my eyes. I cannot afford to visit a hospital for checkup. I am worried for my family and have lost all hope,” she said with teary eyes and a deep sorrow in her voice.

COVID-19 pandemic had brought more hardships for her family. Her son lost his job. “We had no money to buy food, and we starved for two days. I was desperately looking for help.


One day, Pro-People Project staff from HelpAge and SRSO visited our community and provided people with food items and hygiene kits free of cost. We received food ration that has given us a huge relief at this time in our lives. My family now respects me.

Hawa believes Older People Association is a good platform for older people. “We want to resolve our issues. We have this platform in the shape of Older People Association where we can discuss our issues,” Hawa said.



THE TOIL OF A STORMY WINTER

A glance at the blue-collar workers of Pakistan presents people who are the very embodiment of fortitude and resilience. These include individuals who perform the most challenging tasks, without any hesitation. Be it hard weather conditions or an injury, nothing seems to stop them. This perseverance is perhaps the result of two things. One, the conditions of extreme poverty that leaves them with little choice but to weather any storm that comes their way, and the second is their belief of earning their bread through honest and hard work.



The textile weaving industry of Village Islampur in Swat District serves as a source of employment for many people looking for semi-skilled labor. 40 year old Mohammad Bashar has long been employed in this industry, earning a daily wage after a hard day's work. He is the breadwinner for his family of eight, including ailing parents and four children. Despite being unable to use one of his hands due to a life-long disability, his weaving skills haven't let him down. However, the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in extended lockdowns and loss to many local businesses which could not withstand the economic shock. As a result, Bashar found himself unemployed, unable to find regular work due to the slowdown of the weaving industry. This was coupled with a stormy winter, as snowfall engulfed Swat amidst falling temperatures. The rising inflation resulted in a major economic crisis for Bashar's family. Suddenly, the toil of a stormy winter was not enough to make ends meet.

Mohammad Bashar was identified as one of the clients eligible for cash transfer under IRC's 'Delivering Cash Assistance to Highly Vulnerable Populations in Pakistan' (DCAP) project. Bashar's family is among the 47,088 families who are receiving unconditional cash payment under the project. The assistance is aimed at providing people like Bashar the financial capability to weather the storm amidst natural disasters and the COVID-19 pandemic, to regain financial stability.



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***“I will use the money to pay my rent which was long overdue, as well as buy food and warm clothes for my family. This should get us through the winter and help me better plan things ahead.”
-Muhammad Bashar***

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At the time of receiving PKR 22,500 cash assistance, Bashar expressed his gratitude for IRC in the following words: “This cash assistance has come at a time when I was exhausted and out of options. I’m thankful to IRC, as I’m now relieved of the major stress of the possibility of my children sleeping hungry. I will use the money to pay my rent which was long overdue, as well as buy food and warm clothes for my family. This should get us through the winter and help me better plan things ahead”.

As the COVID-19 pandemic has increased the vulnerability of many marginalized families, the cash assistance under DCAP is helping them find their way back to normalcy. For many, the DCAP project is not just a nudge in the right direction. As it would enable many families to survive the winter and hopefully in a few months, step into the blossom of spring.



PROVIDING SHELTER TO THE MOST VULNERABLE FAMILIES IN SINDH & PUNJAB



Approximately 20 million people, majority of whom are living below the poverty line in Pakistan are living without a permanent shelter they can call home. Qatar Charity took the initiative to provide shelters to the most vulnerable communities, particularly orphans. These shelters are constructed by QC with the support of its expert engineers, consultants, and technical staff. Qatar Charity constructed 2 shelters in district Badin and 1 in Tando Muhammad Khan Sindh whereas one shelter was handed over to an orphan family in district Rawalpindi-Punjab.

In Punjab, one shelter was handed over to an orphan and his family who were living in a slum area in miserable conditions in a mud house. A dirty stream of water close to his house caused diseases and skin allergies. Mr. Bralley's (Orphan) father died when the roof of the mud house collapsed. Qatar Charity provided house to him along with necessary household items i.e., bedding, utensils, and some electronics. He and his mother and siblings were so happy when they shifted in new home and thanked to his donor and people of Qatar for providing him new home, where he can live hygienic and healthy life and focus on education.



Appreciating the work of Qatar Charity, Mr. Abdul Gaffar Khoso, Deputy Director Social Welfare Department, Badin said, "I remember last year we recommended two applications for house construction which were completely destroyed by fire. Last week, we came to know that Qatar Charity has completed and handed over these projects to the beneficiaries along with bedding and crockery items for daily use. I am thankful to Qatar charity Team working in the field and donors from Qatar who have supported vulnerable families".





SMILE PROJECT CHANGING LIVES IN PESHAWAR & CHARASADA



Gul Pari is one of the beneficiaries of kitchen gardening and poultry birds under SIF SMILE project. She is a 47-year-old residing in Afghan refugee camp Hajizai. She is a widow and has 6 children. Her husband died 12 years ago.

After the death of her husband, her children suffered greatly from gross negligence and mistreatment by her family. Although, for a long time she tolerated their behaviour but never give up hope decided to work as a maid in the neighborhood and started earning PKR 2,000 per month. Although her earnings were minimal and insufficient to feed her children properly, it helped her take care of them children to some extent.

She was assessed and selected considering her need and vulnerability. Gul pari was assisted through provision of kitchen gardening seeds, tool kit and poultry birds. She also participated in capacity building trainings related to kitchen gardening techniques and management organized by SIF. After the training, she started to apply her new skills on a small piece of land and converted it into a kitchen garden to cultivate vegetables. Her hens lay 3-4 eggs everyday and she is able to sell each egg for PKR 15.



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“This small garden is a source of nourishment for my family. We eat fresh and free vegetables. Now I am spending less on food and earning money from vegetables and eggs.” -Gul Pari

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FACILITATING SMALL FARMERS WITH AGRICULTURAL INPUTS

Aftab Gul s/o Anar Gul is a permanent resident of Village Gul Mula Kalay, UC Ghala Dher, Tehsil and District Mardan. He is a daily wager and belongs to a poor farmer family consisting of 7 members including his mother, wife, three daughters and two sons. They live in a small mud house which is almost 10 km away from the main Mardan city. He is the only bread earner in his family and is currently working in a small outlet of sugarcane crushing plant on daily wages.

During the identification process, he was identified by IDEA staff as a prospective case eligible for assistance for agricultural inputs for a small land holder farmer. He told the IDEA staff that the land that he is looking after is on half payment called Nema in local language.

He sows and takes care of the seed only. Due to poverty and many mouths to fill, he did not have enough resources to purchase quality seeds for sowing in the upcoming wheat season. He was facilitated by Welthungerhilfe with agricultural inputs comprising of wheat seeds 50 KG, 50 DAP and 100 KG Urea.

After one and a half month of the distribution, the WHH Project Manager visited Village Gul Mula Kalay and met Aftab Gul who was working in a Gurr making outlet. He was very happy and grateful for receiving the agricultural inputs that he had already sowed. The

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***“Aid provided by WHH and IDEA has helped a lot of poor people in the area who were badly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic related lockdowns.”
-Aftab Gul***

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WHH's agriculture assistant has really improved his financial situation, after which he can now provide necessities to his family. He further said that the aid provided by WHH and IDEA has helped many poor people in the area who were badly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic related lockdowns.





LIFESAVING FOOD RATION ASSISTANCE FOR COVID-19 AFFECTED FAMILIES IN PESHAWAR



“When the lockdown was announced we had lost our means of survival. I was the only person working as labourer in a building under construction to support my family of 10 persons” says Muhammad, 17-year-old resident of Peshawar, with uncertainty in his eyes clearly visible.

According to ILO, due to the economic crisis created by the pandemic, almost 1.6 billion informal economy workers (representing the most vulnerable in the labour market), out of a worldwide total of two billion and a global workforce of 3.3 billion, have suffered massive damage to their capacity to earn a living. This is due to lockdown measures and because they work in the hardest-hit sectors. Without alternative income sources, these workers and their families will have no means to survive. Children like Muhammad are particularly at risk.

“My father is a heart patient from the past 5 years, so as the elder son I had to take the responsibility of earning and taking care of my father; due to this, I also had to drop out of school” he says.

Muhammad lost his job as daily wage worker during lockdown and Muhammad struggled to provide enough food for himself and his family.



***“My father is a heart patient from the past 5 years, so as an elder son I had to take the responsibility of earning and taking care of my father, due to this, I also had to drop out of school”
Muhammad Meal Assistant conducting verification during Spot check- CIP***





TURNING CHALLENGES INTO OPPORTUNITIES

Mehrunnisa, a 35-year-old farmer is a beneficiary of a High Efficiency Irrigation System and the General Secretary of her Community Organisation. She was married at 15 and has four daughters and two sons. After the 2003 floods, the land has been barren and there has been severe scarcity of water. She had to walk for an hour to collect drinking water.

And there had been days when there wasn't enough money for food. Mehrunnisa along with her husband would do labour work on the lands of feudal lords, picking cotton and chillies, barely earning enough to put food on the table. To provide fodder for their livestock, they would cut grass, bundle it up and bring it home. They would sell the surplus to neighbours to earn some extra money.

From the training she received, she has learnt to save every drop of water and grow her own vegetables in a garden near her home. She has learnt the value of recycling water from home to be used in her plot. They have stopped using pesticides from the market and are using natural alternatives like neem and cow dung. These new practices have catered to the scarcity of water in the area, requiring far lesser water and have helped Mehrunnisa and her family take a huge step forward.

Under the Building Resilient Communities in Pakistan Project (funded by the Australian NGO Cooperation Program), farmers and agricultural laborers, especially women like Mehrunnisa, were introduced to Climate Smart Agricultural techniques and trainings to overcome water shortages and tackle low crop yield. Mehrunnisa along with local farmers in the area have adopted High Efficiency Irrigation Systems, requiring the least amount of water needed for crops such as cotton. Mehrunnisa works with her husband on their demo plot, operating the water.



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“I hope to reap the benefits by providing good food to my kids so that I can give them the best nutrition I possibly can. It is my dream to be so independent that I can support and help my family all on my own. I want to stand on my own two feet.” –Mehrunnisa

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They have also adopted techniques such as intercropping for kitchen gardening, orchard farming, and switching to drought-resistant crop types and varieties, such as mud-apples, chilli's, okra, etc. Mehrunnisa has improved her farm yield considerably through Climate Smart Agricultural practices, earning up to PKR 60,000 additional income each season. “I hope to reap the benefits by providing good food to my kids so that I can give them the best nutrition I possibly can. I also want to be able to give them an education and start saving money because I haven't been able to do that before. It is my dream to be so independent that I can support and help my family all on my own. I want to stand on my own two feet.”



RCCE

None of the main issues which humanity is facing
will be resolved without access to information

- Christophe Delorie





COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS TURNING COMPASSION INTO ACTION

Ayaz Ahmed hails from village Basti Gopang, district Muzaffargarh and is a Team Leader of the Union Council Disaster Management Committee, UC Juggi Wala. 30 years old Ayaz is married, has a 2-year-old son and lives in a joint family system with ten other household members including his parents and siblings. He works as a dispenser in BHU Jhuggi Wala and is also a volunteer in government's Corona Tiger Force.

Under the BDRP programme, Ayaz participated in the refresher sessions on Hazard, Vulnerability, Capacity & Risk Assessment (HVCRA), basic life-saving skills and COVID-19 prevention measures. He took a keen interest in the COVID-19 session and was very excited and interested to learn about its symptoms and precautionary measures. Soon after the awareness sessions, Ayaz motivated his like-minded fellow community members and developed an active volunteer group. This group of volunteers from different hamlets worked with the mission to create awareness against social stigma associated with the Coronavirus, as well as addressing common misconceptions/myths related to it.

Ayaz led the group of volunteers and visited fifteen houses a day to deliver door-to-door sessions, using the guidelines shared in the VDMCs refresher and COVID-19 training. He also demonstrated hand-washing practices during each session with men, women and children. Ayaz has delivered 350 sessions in his hometown of 1,600 people to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. As a result of his campaign efforts, the villagers started using face masks, ensured protective hygiene practices and social distancing to effectively respond to the pandemic.

“There were huge misconceptions in the village regarding COVID-19. The door-to-door sessions have helped dispel misinformation about the disease while promoting precautionary measures like frequent hand washing and wearing masks among the community.” – Ayaz Ahmed

“

Under BDRP programme, the COVID-19 banners carrying similar messages are also placed at the public places which help in the reinforcement of the message”, says Ayaz Ahmed.

Due to the tireless efforts of Ayaz and his team of volunteers to address the myths associated with the disease, a sense of responsibility was instilled among the community members and they were able to stay safe during the current pandemic.



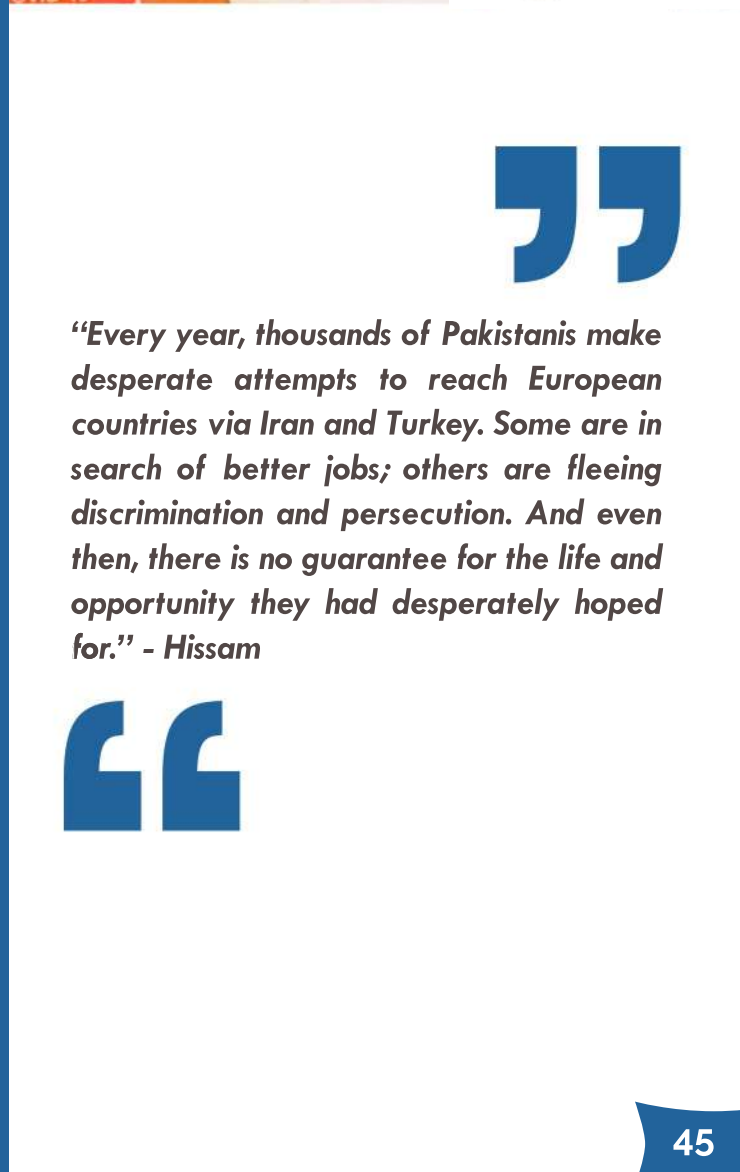


PROVIDING MARKET ACCESS AND CREATING EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH

Hissam's family could hardly make both ends meet. His father was a daily wager and sole earner of the family. Being the eldest, Hissam always wanted to support his father and attempted to join Pakistan Army. Sadly, he was rejected. He then decided to try his luck in another country. Not having enough money to apply for immigration through a legal route, he opted for illegal means to reach his destiny-Europe. He managed PKR 300,000 by selling his room furniture, taking loan from his uncle and friends with a promise to return the money as soon as he starts earning. One of his friends introduced him to an agent who helped him throughout the journey.

My dream of joining Pakistan Army will remain in my heart” says the 24-year-old Hissam. He says that seeking economic opportunities and social security in European countries is an illusion without a legal status. Without knowing the ground realities of illegal immigration, he along with his 3 friends started their journey via Baluchistan to Taftan, Iran on foot. He says, “I saw many dead bodies on my way and felt awful for them. I barely managed to escape the shot fired by security forces on the borders of Iran in cruel weather conditions. From Iran we travelled to Turkey in a coach. During my two years stay in Turkey I started working in a shopping mall and earned PKR. 65,000 a month”.

It may not have been home, but Hissam worked hard and sent money back to his family. He was not caught in Turkey and therefore was able to save money for his next and final destination to Greece. He paid the agent his fee and started his journey.



“Every year, thousands of Pakistanis make desperate attempts to reach European countries via Iran and Turkey. Some are in search of better jobs; others are fleeing discrimination and persecution. And even then, there is no guarantee for the life and opportunity they had desperately hoped for.” - Hissam



He came to know about different training courses focusing on market demanded skills. In September 2018 he applied for the training course of General Electrician offered by Market and Employment Project by Helvetas and got selected. After successfully completing the course in May 2019 he started working with a local employer from 1st June 2019 onwards. He quickly gained hands-on experience during the apprenticeship with the employer. Due to high level of competency and technical knowledge, he soon earned the admiration and respect of people, something he had never experienced before.



Hissam was able to save enough to open his own shop in December 2019 as general electrician. The number of clients steadily grew and now he has hired 2 unskilled persons who are being trained on-job. He says, "I always wanted to earn at least PKR. 30,000-35,000 so that I could provide a decent living to my family. I am glad that I earn PKR. 1,000 – 1,500 per day and fulfill the needs of my family members."

Looking back, he says that he thought life in Europe would be beautiful, but he could not bear the uncertainty and hard times, where he walked endlessly days at end without food and sleep. He is happy to be back home and with family. "Every year, thousands of Pakistanis make desperate attempts to reach European countries via Iran and Turkey. Some are in search of better jobs; others are fleeing discrimination and persecution. And even then, there is no guarantee for the life and opportunity they had desperately hoped for." says Hissam.

Without any prior knowledge and experience, Hissam sailed through the Mediterranean Sea with seven others on their way from Turkey to Greece. "We saw death from close quarters. We were crying and holding on to each other to keep the boat straight. The boat wrecked and we were rescued by the lifeguards. We stayed in a camp for a month and then were deported to Turkey and from Turkey to Dubai and then to Pakistan. We were treated inhumanly in the camp."



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“Every year, thousands of Pakistanis make desperate attempts to reach European countries via Iran and Turkey. Some are in search of better jobs; others are fleeing discrimination and persecution. And even then, there is no guarantee for the life and opportunity they had desperately hoped for.” - Hissam

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The arduous journey of pain made Hissam reconsider his priorities in life and a future in his own country-Pakistan, where he had no job opportunity and was left with no money. To make matters worse, as an elder brother, he was responsible to take care of his 6 younger sisters and brothers.



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