



ECHES

DISTRICT DADU

2019



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THE ECHOES OF SUCCESS

In 2019, as the European Union funded Sindh Union Council and Community Economic Strengthening Support (SUCCESS) programme completes its three-year mark, the project is already halfway through. When it began in 2015, the RSPs associated with it, National Rural Support Programme (NRSP), Thardeep Rural Development Programme (TRDP), Sindh Rural Support Organisation (SRSO), and Rural Support Programmes Network (RSPN), conducted an incredibly comprehensive Poverty Scorecard Survey to gauge the level of poverty, financial standing, and needs of potential beneficiaries.

Three years later, the SUCCESS team has conducted multiple activities to not only track the progress of the programme but also document the stories of beneficiaries from the field. This series of success stories titled 'The Echoes of SUCCESS' is a compilation of human interest stories which narrates the experiences of the beneficiaries and the implementing team regarding various interventions under SUCCESS in each district.

The SUCCESS documentation team at RSPN, in collaboration with the associated RSPs, have tried to talk to beneficiaries and their families to glean first-hand accounts of the changes SUCCESS has brought to these communities. These stories, more than any reductive method that measures only financial condition, allows a glimpse into the lived experience of women empowerment in the target areas of SUCCESS. In this regard, they are imperative to learn what empowerment in this context may look like and what processes precede it. These lessons will prove to be vital as SUCCESS forges its path ahead and prepares to wrap up later in communities that will soon learn to sustain themselves.

Preface

Woman empowerment is a multidimensional concept that refers to the process of enhancing the capacity of women to make choices which are then transformed into concrete actions. In the case of rural women empowerment, the focus is on expanding women's assets and capabilities to influence institutions that affect their daily lives. Empowerment is therefore integral to achieve benefits for women at the individual and community level (Page et al., 1999).

The European Union (EU) - funded Sindh Union Council and Community Economic Strengthening Support (SUCCESS) programme aims to instil economic, social, political and legal female empowerment through its three-tier community institutions structure and interventions. The Rural Support Programmes working in the eight districts of Sindh provide technical, financial and social guidance to increase and diversify the source of income for the target communities and households.

The Echoes of SUCCESS series brings individual stories of beneficiaries and implementers of the programme to try to capture the socio-economic and legal empowerment triggered through its interventions. This particular booklet focuses on Dadu, headed by Thardeep Rural Development Programme (TRDP). The goal is to offer a source which depicts the impact of the programme for individuals on the ground; to discover their challenges and accomplishments, enabling learning and inspiration.

Economically, social mobilisation through SUCCESS encourages savings and the programme's direct interventions such as funds and grants (Community Investment Funds and Income Generating Grant) allow the most vulnerable members to restructure their prescribed roles in their household and community. CIF and IGG allow for beneficiaries to establish their bargaining position within the household as they begin to take a more active role in the financial situation of their families. For example, Shahida a recipient of CIF from Village Haji Bagh Ali Qureshi explains her newfound economic

independence by claiming “I felt my son at 20 years of age had now matured and should be able to contribute to the family. Two years ago I took a CIF for my son worth Rs. 18,000 and bought a scooter (motorbike). I asked him what he would like to invest the money in, I will decide if it is feasible. He replied that he would like to sell milk”.

This economic independence has had a social impact especially on gender relations. Most beneficiaries are now supported by male family members allowing them greater opportunities to seize. Kulsoom, a Joint Development Committee (JDC) member from Village Thariri Jado Shaheed insisted that the team take her picture with her husband. She claimed that he had been her biggest supporter ever since she joined the programme. Although she has achieved much by forming linkages with the local government, NGOs and donors, it would not have been possible without him.

The change in the social landscape has led to greater mobility and access to resources for women, which has in turn had political and policy implications. Women especially in leadership positions such as heads of community institutions or members of Joint Development Committees (JDCs), have developed the confidence to demand public services (such as opening schools), conflict management and accountability. Shahida, the President of her LSO Insaf elaborates, “I truly have become a different person since joining SUCCESS. Before I could never talk to anyone and now I hold meetings to discuss various issues. I wasn't brave enough to speak in front of a man, but now I am aware of my rights.”

As SUCCESS completes its third year of implementation, the team recognises that they need to focus on sustainability of the programme, so that its impact can outlast its tenure in 2021. Plans of institutional sustainability through savings and rotating funds are already in place. However, the change in the very fabric of society with outspoken and empowered women will be the programme's biggest lasting impact.

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A blue-tinted photograph showing a woman sitting on a patterned rug. She is wearing a dark, patterned shawl. In the foreground, the head and eyes of a young child are visible, looking towards the camera. The background is slightly out of focus, showing a doorway and another person standing. The overall mood is contemplative and focused on the subjects.

SOCIAL **EMPOWERMENT** OF WOMEN



In 2017 TRDP's Social Organiser (SO) Zulekha visited Malooka's village of Muhammad Siddique Gunn to establish a Community Organisation (CO) in her neighbourhood. Malooka instantly took an interest and gathered all the women of the neighbourhood in her home. They successfully established a CO and when it came time to deciding on a President the members unanimously chose Malooka as their leader.

To explain her leadership style Malooka says, "I give all my effort and time to my CO as a good leader should. Initially, when we started working in the village, people underestimated us and laughed at our efforts. They honestly did not think we would achieve anything. But I didn't listen to anybody and just focused on what I have to do for my community".

One of her many accomplishments include constructed a road through the Community Physical Infrastructure (CPI) scheme. Malooka was instrumental in getting the approval of the CPI. An issue arose when the Union Council (UC) Chairman refused to give a No-Objection Certificate (NOC) to the engineer responsible for working on the road. Malooka along with her CO members barged into the UC Chairman's office and demanded the NOC. Inspired by their unity and strength the Chairman relented and issued the NOC, eventually leading to the construction of the road. She exclaims ecstatically "As women this was probably our proudest moment. We did something that the men in our village couldn't do for years".

Malooka's positive interventions were not limited to just one incident. She realised that people in Muhammad Siddique Gunn did not have access to polio vaccines, in fact polio teams were usually turned down at the door in most homes. Therefore, Malooka began informing women of the importance of polio vaccines in her CO meetings. Many women changed their minds and began to allow polio teams to vaccinate their children. Malooka, herself, joined lady health workers, visiting homes to make sure that every child in the village was vaccinated.

She doesn't like to take all the credit of all the accomplishments carried out. Overall, she views her CO as positively impacting the lives of women in this rural region. She recalls previous pregnancy of women in the village, where they only depended on the *dai* (midwife) and carried out home deliveries, leading to complications. After attending various sessions in the CO, they learnt the importance of taking care of themselves and their children, and how they need to be treated and deliver in a hospital.

Malooka's own personal life has also been impacted since joining the CO. She explains, "Before this, I had never really left my house, hadn't seen offices or ever talked to officials. Today I conduct meetings, and after discovering my rights, go to government offices to discuss issues pertaining to our community".

Her plans for her community do not end here. In the future Malooka wants to open a school in her village. Currently, the children attend a school in another village which is a 30 minute walk. The VO Manager Shahzana added that "we also want to open a TVST centre for the women of our village". If she demonstrates the same determination and strength that she has shown in previous endeavours, it will not be surprising that Malooka achieves her goals for her community in the future as well.



Zeenat seems reserved at first glance, feeling conscious of all eyes on her as she talks.

However, as she begins to talk about her community and her experience in the EU funded SUCCESS programme, her confidence picks up. It then became obvious why she was chosen as the head of her Village Organisation (VO).

Zeenat first joined VO Naseeb in 2017 when it was first formed in her Village Mian Jo Goth. Soon after she was elected as its President. She had only studied till the 5th grade, but was considered the most educated and qualified to run the Community Institution. Today there are 20 COs under her VO.

However, this success did not come easily and she had to overcome obstacles, especially family objections. Zeenat explained her family response claiming, "Initially, my family

refused to let me join any *tanzeem* (Community Institution). They insisted that I would find it tough and that I would have to go out of the village for meetings which was unacceptable to them".

She managed to overcome family objections by involving her family in her meetings and the work she was carrying out for the village. She explains, "My mother-in-law came with me in a meeting and saw how the other members of the VO praised me and all the work that I was doing. She actually felt proud of me and allowed me to continue my association with the *tanzeem*. With her confidence in me, my father-in-law also came around and now fully supports me as well".

When listing her achievements, she stresses on the Community Physical Infrastructure (CPI) schemes that led to the construction of

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a vital road for her village and a drainage system that reduced illnesses. She has also been actively distributing Income Generating Grant (IGG) and Community Investment Fund (CIF) to the targeted beneficiaries. "When I work for the people and they encourage me and pray for me it gives peace to my soul" Zeenat exclaims.

Girls' education is close to Zeenat's heart, as she feels that the only reason she has managed to achieve what she has in life is through being educated. She explains "There actually was a girl's school in my village and it had teachers as well. However, parents refused to send their girls to school, making the school non-functional. Hence, I arranged a VO meeting and convinced parents to allow their daughters to attend school. I also went to other people's homes convincing them to enrol their daughters. I gave my example saying that I had only passed the 5th grade and I am serving this community. Can you imagine what a girl can achieve who has completed her education? Educated girls can initiate change in society making an impact in her life and on society." Zeenat's empowering speech seemed to motivate

most parents, and they agreed to send their daughters to school. Today, the school has 118 enrolled from the village.

Another issue that Zeenat feels strongly about is domestic violence. She claims that society tends to turn a blind eye towards domestic violence. She iterates, "Sometimes men physically abused their wives, but nobody would intervene since she was considered his property. Today, we take action against such domestic abuse and have formed a specific committee. If we become aware of any case of domestic violence, CO and VO members bring the husband and wife to the committee to solve their issues".

Zeenat has personally witnessed the positive impact that the programme has had in her village. She claims that in the past if a child got ill and men were not at home, the mother was not allowed to go to the hospital on her own. After attending various VO meetings and carrying out interventions of the VO on their own, women have gained the confidence to increase their mobility.

Personally, her proudest moment since joining the programme was attending the experience sharing workshop in Hyderabad on February 2019. She excitedly explains “I had to give a speech about my VO in front of over 100 people. I was nervous and frightened since this was the first time I had travelled so far from my village and had to speak in front of educated senior officials. However, once I began speaking, I started gaining confidence and felt like I was speaking in front of my family”.

She laughs, “When I came back to my village all my VO members wanted to know about my experience. At that time I didn't have a mobile phone to share pictures. However, I now have a smartphone so Insha'Allah next time I will take many pictures and show them”.





Local Support Organisation (LSO)

Shahida Parveen

Lolja

When one meets Shahida Parveen they could never imagine that a few years ago she had never spoken to any of the people in her village. Her confidence radiates from her when she smiles and says 'welcome' to us in English. It shouldn't be a surprise on why she was elected as President of her Local Support Organisation (LSO) Insaf, in Lolja.

As she sits comfortably on her *charpoy*, with little prompting she launches into the many different things her LSO has managed to achieve. From being able to hand out CIF and IGG, helping women invest in a livelihood such as buying a sewing machine, or opening up shops in their homes, Shahida has been incredibly busy. Not only is she the President of her LSO, but she is also a teacher in a school nearby. Before TRDP began the programme in her village, Shahida casually mentions how she was able to open the

school in her region, which only highlights how she has always been a fighter.

Education is of paramount importance to Shahida and she makes education a focal point in her work. "I studied till matric class so I know the importance of education. I make sure that both my children get the best education. One of the main things I do is to ensure that as many children can be enrolled in school as possible. I called a meeting once and invited a number of mothers whose children were not enrolled and discussed just how vital it was for their children to go to school and get an education."

"The main thing that I have got out of this whole programme and working my way up being the CO President and then the VO President is just becoming aware of my surroundings and learning about my sister's plights too. Everyone had different issues but by creating COs, VOs and LSOs we were able to collectively talk about these issues and create solutions to overcome them." It is not hard to miss the passion in Shahida's eyes as she talks about her neighbours. It does not just stop

to her village though but extends to the neighbouring villages and it makes sense why the people chose her, electing her from CO President to LSO President.

She elaborates, "I truly have become a different person since joining SUCCESS. Before I could never talk to anyone and now I hold meetings to discuss various issues. I wasn't brave enough to speak in front of a man, but now I am aware of my rights and how a woman should actually live her life."

Shahida's work did not start out as smoothly though as it is currently as there was quite a bit of opposition in the beginning. She had to first convince her family members to let her attend meetings. Fortunately, her brothers supported her and persuaded the rest of the family. Her family-members would sometimes attend her meetings as well. Later, she had to convince people to allow their women to attend meetings/sessions. "They didn't see the benefits, they thought it was us wasting time. With patience though we changed their minds," explains Shahida.

With a touch of finality in her voice Shahida expresses, "For the future now I just want to help people. I am not rich and am on the same level as many of my neighbours, but it doesn't matter. That is the definition of a community. It is important work because then it helps my children, especially my daughter who I want to go far in life. That is all I really want."



WOMEN LEADERSHIP



Trainings

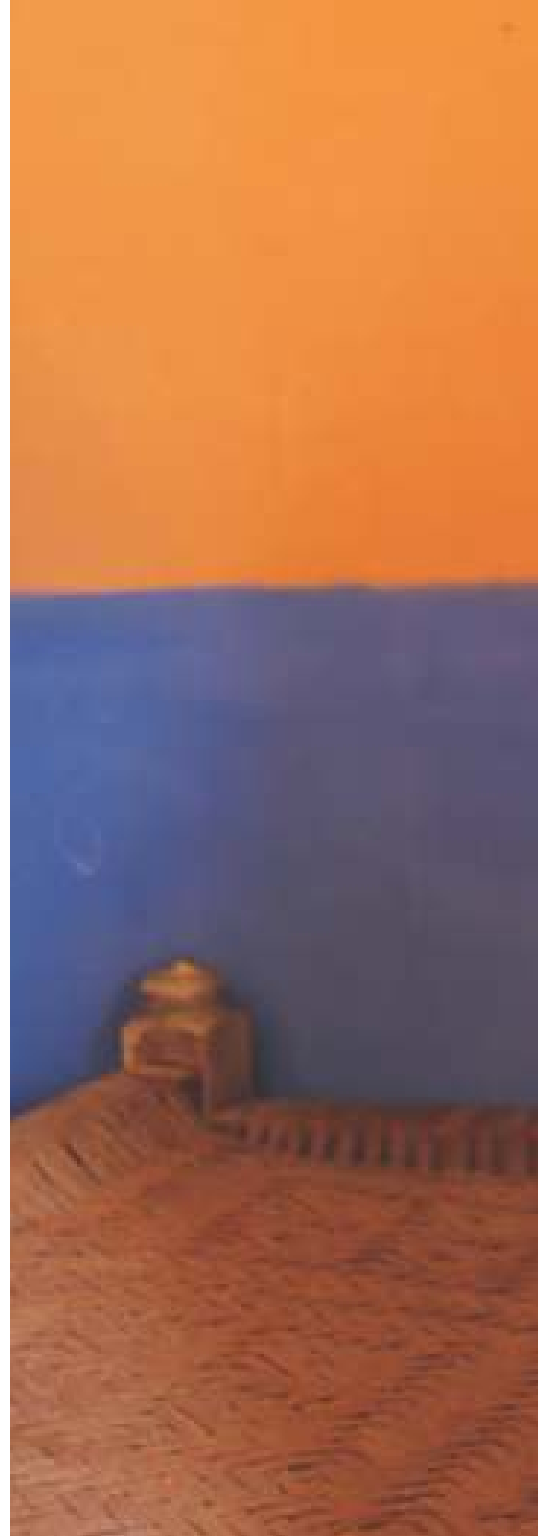
Mahmuda

Raza Muhammad Rind

With a school right next to her house in Village Raza Muhammad Rind, Mahmuda can hear the children playing in the ground. Her own children, two daughters and a son are enrolled in the primary school.

As a member of the *tanzeems* (Community Institutions) and Community Resource Person (CRP) Mahmuda described her village's reaction when she started providing Community Management Skills Training (CMST) for the EU - funded SUCCESS programme three years ago. "When I went for meetings or sessions, people used to ask me about the CO, VO and their functions".

She has personally witnessed a change in women's life in her village after attending the sessions. She claims that her in-laws family and another family had an old feud lasting generations. Once, they actually had hurt her husband quite badly,





and the two families were not on talking terms. When the representatives of TRDP came to the village they began organising Community Institutions which united the two families. Mahmuda smiles claiming, “I actually went to their house when they were hosting a meeting. Later they came to mine, when I hosted a session”.

According to Mahmuda, one of the most important training session is on savings, where she explains establishing a savings box. This money can be used by the community in times of emergencies such as a woman's delivery.

Mahmuda recalls her first session, claiming that she was hesitant to speak to people. “I was nervous about what they might think of me and how they would react to my teachings. I had multiple concerns at the time”, explains Mahmuda. However, since she was so well-received, she no longer concerns herself with people's reactions. She focusses on her teachings and improving these sessions.

She has witnessed this change in attitude in her personal life as well. Previously, she rarely ever left her house alone, but now she confidently talks to TRDP's

representatives attending various meetings outside her village. However, she insists that her endeavours would not have been possible without her in-laws support. Her mother-in-law tends to her young children when Mahmuda leaves for sessions.

Mahmuda realised that she needs to work for a better future herself, and needs to become more financially secure. She took CIF and opened a grocery shop which she runs from her house. She manages to save up to Rs. 1,500-2,000 each month. She encourages other women to follow her example and do the same, since most women tend to be scared of repaying back the loan. She elaborates, “I explain to these women that they should use that money to start a business like me. They can pay it back in instalments which makes it easier. They can save more and become financially independent from their husbands”.

Clearly, Mehmuda has set herself as an example in the community, influencing women around her to become emotionally and financially independent. She seeks to continue to work for the benefit of women in her community.





When seeing Aziza conducting a Community Awareness Toolkit (CAT) session the enthusiasm and enjoyment is palpable. Engaging and allowing everyone to speak, while also swooping in when anyone needed help Aziza is born to be a Community Resource Person (CRP).

Aziza used to teach at a NGO-funded school, but then left because of the long distance. Soon after she learnt about the SUCCESS programme when SOs came to her village to create the *tanzeems*. "I was a CO member initially, but then they wanted a CRP and thought I would be perfect as I was educated. I was hesitant at first as I didn't think I would get permission from my brothers." Aziza reveals she lives with her two brothers, their wives and their children. Her mother however sadly passed away, "This is why my brothers gave me permission

because they wanted me to be busy. I was just sitting at home lost and they were concerned." Aziza's eyes become vacant as she speaks about her mother, it takes effort for her to talk about her mother and she quickly changes the conversation back to her job.

Aziza is certainly made busy now though with eleven COs under her. She enthusiastically claims that nothing about being a CRP and conducting CAT sessions is difficult. Without arrogance she informs us, "Even back when I was studying in a co-education school, I always came first in class." Her achievements credit her immensely, she reached intermediate level and indicate why "nothing is hard."

She then continues on to explain what inspired her to become a CRP. "I had this urge to do something. There was a restless feeling in me and this

work makes me feel more fulfilled. My mind is now busy and I am not sitting idle. I am not rusting away anymore, the things you learn within the CO, you can forget it if you are not active. You always have to be active.”

“My favourite thing to teach is about women’s rights and our rights living in this country. I see this really striking a chord with the women. One woman received the IGG and bought goats to support her household. Before she didn’t think she could do anything except to sit at home, but now she has this newfound strength.” Aziza continues on even more impassioned than before, “These women now tell their husbands they have rights, they are also contributing to the household and with young girls many more are attending school.”

There is just pure joy when Aziza talks about why she loves what she does and how it is has helped her. While her favourite session is about women’s rights, she has also given sessions about the importance of Computerised National Identity Card (CNIC) and registering, children’s health i.e.

vaccinations for children and regular check-ups.

When mentioning her inspiration, Aziza mentions how her *chachi* (aunt) has been her biggest supporter. She fondly says, “She views me as her daughter and while I also have my brothers’ support, she takes the extra step and comes with me to my sessions. She tells me she’s proud of me and this motivates me more”.

When asked about the future Aziza tells us in a resigned voice, “While I am content with being a CRP, I have thought about the future, but I am still constrained by my village. I have had other job offers such as working with the Benazir Income Support Programme [BISP], but the office is quite far. My brothers said I can go, but people will talk and they won’t be able to face them. So I decided not to take the offer.” There is no anger in her voice and Aziza ends with saying, “The confusion I felt with my mother being gone has slowly dissipated and my mind is occupied with a good cause that is helping women. What more could I want?”



A photograph of a cluttered storage area, possibly a warehouse or a small shop, with shelves and a wall covered in plastic bags and various items. The image is overlaid with a green tint. The text "ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN" is written in white, bold, sans-serif font on the left side of the image. The word "EMPOWERMENT" is significantly larger and bolder than the other words. The background shows shelves with various containers, bags, and boxes, and a wall covered in plastic bags. The overall scene suggests a storage or distribution point for goods.

ECONOMIC
EMPOWERMENT
OF WOMEN





Shahida sits in her bedroom trying to find respite from the hot Dadu mid-day sun. She shares that one bedroom with her husband and six children, five sons and a daughter in Village Haji Bagh Ali Qureshi. She shares the house with her in-laws that also includes her brother-in-law and his family. She may seem reserved at first but as she continues speaking, she becomes more and more outspoken, her true personality shining through.

She first heard about the SUCCESS programme when her sister-in-law and other women in the village joined the programme. Shahida explains the process, saying “Sana Bajji (Social Organiser) explained the programme to us and interventions like the CIF to us, convincing me to join SUCCESS”.

Her husband used a cycle to sell milk, but he wasn't able to travel far and was not making enough to support his large family. “My husband really doesn't listen to me. My husband works a bit for landlords as well, but is mostly unable to support such a large family. I felt my son at 20 years of age had now matured and should be able to contribute to the family. Two years ago I took a CIF for my son worth Rs. 18,000 and bought a scooter (motorbike). I asked him what he would like to invest the money in, I will decide if it is feasible. He replied that he would like to sell milk” explains Shahida. With the motorbike, her son is able to travel to further villages.

Sometimes, they have their own milk that they sell as well and then sell the milk in Gothabad.

The overall profit of the enterprise is infrequent as sometimes they suffer losses as well. She explains “In winters we actually suffer a loss, because people don't buy cold milk. They don't make products like ice-cream either”. Yet, every day she would save a bit of money (10-20 or even 50 rupees) and divide it equally between paying off her loan and saving for the future in earthen pots. Overall every month they are able to save Rs. 10,000 which is sometimes utilised towards groceries, but most are for long-term investments.

Her enterprising spirit did not just end with the motorbike, she bought a goat for Rs. 5,000 and then sold it further for Rs. 8,000. They have invested the money in solar panels to get electricity in the room. She gleefully goes on to say “I've already told my son, I plan to fast this coming *ramadan*, so get me a cooler for the room. We have bought an earthen pot, and now he has bought a second one, to save money in”.

For Shahida, the improvement in their quality of life was brought about the little things in life that make her children happy. She elaborates, “My children used to always complain about not having a television. They used to go to their relatives houses to watch any show. So when I started saving, they asked if they could buy a television, which I allowed”.

She has successfully repaid all the loan she had originally taken from the CIF. Initially, she was afraid of taking the loan because she did not feel that she would be able to repay it back. She realised that her in-laws families were receiving money through the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), however, she did not have a card to receive the grant. Shahida claims that it took her a whole year and she had to travel all the way the Dadu city to get her papers in order to receive the card. However, eventually she was able to receive cash transfers from Benazir Income Support Programme. She is currently on her fourth instalment of cash transfer which she has partially used to pay off her CIF loan. That way she was able to

save the money her son was making to fill other necessities around the house.

Shahida pragmatically explains that only two of her children are currently in school. Although, she would have liked all her children to get enrolled, but it was not feasible. She candidly says “In the future, I aim to make my own house for my own family. Currently, this one room for the whole family is a little cramped for us”. Her son that sells the milk has made plans to eventually shift to Saudi Arabia in search of better opportunities. However, she seems to be against the idea “Honestly, I feel there are opportunities here as well. He should aim to better his life here”.

Technical and Vocational
Skills Training (TVST)

Afsana

Juma Chohan

Already at 18 years old Afsana has made a name for herself in her village of Juma Chohan as the resident beautician. Indeed she has a lot to be proud of, as she is currently in the 10th grade, but is also successfully running a beauty parlour inside her home.

Afsana narrates, “To have a beauty parlour was always a dream of mine, but it was something my family could not afford. I used to tell my mother to check in Dadu city to see if I could get training. My mother did check for me but when told that just the advance would be Rs. 20,000 for training, I decided to put my dream on hold.”

However, as luck would have it her mother soon became a part of their Community Organisation which is where she learnt about the Technical and Vocational Skills Training (TVST). As family members were allowed to be part of the TVST, Afsana's mother enrolled her to take part in the beauty course. Afsana was able





to undertake training for one month in different beautician aspects.

Additionally, Afsana's mother received an IGG of Rs. 20,000 since their poverty scorecard was only seven (the poorest score band). Rs. 12-13 thousand was given to Afsana for her to be able to create her beauty parlour, once her training was complete. Usually many families entrust the money to their sons to create a livelihood for the family, however, Afsana's mother had complete faith in her daughter to create and sustain something that she loved. Even now, Afsana's mother praises her daughter, but then leaves early on only indicating her confidence in her daughter to manage guests by herself.

As Afsana slowly opens up about her parlour she becomes more animated talking about how much she charges and the different services she can offer. She laughingly admits "eyebrow were extremely difficult for me," her business seems to be doing exceedingly well. "It is not only brides that come to the parlour, but little children too to get henna, which I charge Rs. 50 for one hand", Afsana tells us smilingly. "Generally there are about one or two

people a day, but during wedding season I have so many brides in which I wax their eyebrows, thread, give facials and do their henna. It gets so busy that I get my cousin to help me." This has allowed her to make around Rs. 10,000 a month and with that she buys more things for her parlour and the rest she gives to her mother.

There are times when girls are seen as a burden and are only seen to be married off, but Afsana also helps out her mother and father with her earnings that only contradicts this antiquated thought. Afsana's entrepreneurship has not gone unnoticed and in fact inspired her aunt and cousin to also undertake the one month training course through TVST to also train as beauticians. Her beauty parlour was met with praise and no opposition as it is the only one in her village. It has become quite popular as now people in neighbouring villages such as Mansi which is 2 km away also come to Afsana's parlour.

Like every 18 year old, Afsana is not clear about her future but she knows that she wants to continue with her beauty parlour. "I want a huge billboard on the main road

with the name of my parlour, so I get an even bigger clientele. The only thing I'm struggling with is the name of the parlour. My younger siblings insist that I name it after my youngest brother and call it 'Ali', but I don't think that is such a wise name for a woman's parlour" she laughs.







Income Generating Grant (IGG)

Zameera

Koro Qambrani

With an infant on her hip, Zameera, moves about restlessly, trying to control her other children in Village Koro Qambrani. She has eight children, seven boys and a girl, all under the age of 15. As she talks, she keeps tending to her infant son, asking for questions to be repeated as she remains distracted.

Zameera first joined the EU funded SUCCESS programme three years ago. TRDP carried out a survey in her village, made COs and VO, in which they became members. Zameera too joined VO Makhdoom Bilawal and became an active member.

The SUCCESS programme and the subsequent Income Generating Grant (IGG) could not have come at a better time for the family. Zameera's husband works as a labourer, driving trollies for a living. However, his work remained infrequent, barely making Rs. 300 a day which would prove difficult for the growing family.

It is not surprising then, that she received a poverty score of 8 (which is considered the poorest score band). Before receiving the IGG, she struggled to make ends meet and making any savings seemed far-fetched. She received an IGG of Rs. 19,500, which she managed to utilise enterprisingly. Zameera explains her rationale behind utilising her grant, “There was a shop in our village that sold grocery items, and made a tidy profit. I realised that our village has enough demand for a second shop. This would benefit us and I knew we would soon start to profit from it”.

Hence, she spent Rs. 10,000 on setting up a grocery store near her house. The grocery store has an array of items from candies and chips packets for children to flour, sugar and cooking oil for household utilisation. The shop seems to cater to a wide range of clientele. Zameera buys the items at a discounted rate from outside the village at Makhdoom Bilawal, and then sells at slightly higher prices in her store in the village. She explains, “I roughly increase the price by five rupees per children's items and ten rupees per household grocery

item”. Owning the store has been a family enterprise. She sits herself selling the items at times, otherwise her husband, or his brother take turns minding the store. Her gamble proved successful as she now manages to save Rs. 500 each day from the grocery shop.

However, she did not limit herself to a shop alone. With some of the remaining IGG amount she spent Rs. 5,000 and bought a goat. That goat then gave birth to two other goats. When the goats have matured enough, she plans to sell them for a profit. Zameera wants to explore multiple opportunities and never wants to be financially constrained again.

In order to break the cycle of poverty, Zameera has learned to depend on herself. Despite her growing family and preoccupations at home, she seeks a brighter future for herself and her children. She never wants her children to suffer the hardships and tribulations that she has had to go through.



“Don't the children seem happy?” beams Bashira. True enough, the children gathered around the neat clean pathways in the village of Pejaho, are chatting, playing games and eating fresh fruit such as watermelons. Although, this might not seem like an unusual visual to a person from the outside, but for the people of the village, it was something to be thankful. Bashira, a member of the VO Syed Hussain Shah, credits the community itself that aimed to make the village change for the better.

When the VO members first heard about the Community Physical Infrastructure (CPI) intervention, they had a long list of schemes that they wanted to carry out. However, they unanimously decided that their first priority should be to make proper pathways within the village. Bashira explains

“An engineer from TRDP came to discuss options, but we knew instantly that we needed cemented pathways for the village”.

The four pathways within the village were previously heavily littered with dirt and filth. During the rainy season it would become worse as these alleyways flooded with water making it impossible to navigate. These lanes actually proved dangerous as children got hurt playing on the uneven surface and people suffered from various illnesses because of the filth that was collected there. There had also been incidents of people being bitten by strange insects or scorpions.

Overall, it took about two months to build the four pathways and cost roughly Rs. 4 lakhs. Achieving the pathways proved a collective



effort, as Bashira elaborates, “We all came to clean up the streets before the work started. Therefore, maintaining the pathways clean is a big source of pride for us now”. This has proved beneficial as illnesses especially amongst children have reduced in the community. These pathways have made walking within the village a lot more accessible.

Pejaho Village already has access to a road right outside their village, linking them to the network of roads in the area. However, they felt the government would not provide funds for pathways within a certain village. Bashira explains “The government deals in bigger infrastructural projects that impact the most people. They do not utilise their funds on community level projects, on an issue that only a single community faces”.

For Bashira and the community, they do not just want to end improving their livelihood with just pathways. The next issue that they want to tackle is the supply of clean water. “Currently, the water available is salty and contaminated, which I believe causes illnesses in the village. So clean water supply is the next thing on my list” exclaims Bashira.







Micro-Health Insurance (MHI)

Rahila

Allahdad Khoso

A clay storage is seen at the entrance of Rahila's house which she uses to store wheat to protect it from insects. Rahila lives with her husband and 11 children - five sons and six daughters.

Rahila's daughters have never attended schools, with the elder two already married, while the younger ones help out their mother at home. In contrast all her sons have been to school as they have access to a boy's school in the village. In her village the importance of education is stressed on boys as they are considered to take the responsibility of the family and earn a living in the future.

In 2018 Rahila joined the CO of her Village Allahdad Khoso. Based on her poverty score of 12 (considered within the poorest score band) she was given Micro Health Insurance (MHI) card. MHI is a social protection measure that allows for access to free

healthcare to protect families from being pushed deeper into poverty by health shocks.

Rahila used her MHI card on her son, pointing to him she explains, “My younger son Abdul Ghafar was suffering from chlamydia (sexually transmitted disease), that causes a swelling of the urethra, since birth. With time as he grew older, the pain became more severe. Eventually, he struggled to play or even walk properly. He had to drop out of school, as he had to walk considerable distance to go to school. The pain became unbearable for him to walk twice a day to school”.

She took him to the hospital to find a cure, with the doctor determining that he needed surgery. This proved problematic as they did not have enough money to perform the surgery. The family's only source of income is her husband who works as a carpenter. Both elder sons have completed their education (intermediate level) but are currently unemployed. One of them is married with a pregnant wife, who are all dependent on their father's carpentry salary.

Rahila exclaims solemnly, “We were already struggling to eat three times a day, how could I afford to operate on my son? Every night he would cry out of the pain but I was unable to help him. The only way I could console him was to cry with him.”

However, she soon discovered that she was eligible for an MHI card that could be used for her son's surgery. The very next day, her two older sons took Abdul Ghafar to the hospital in the local bus. He was admitted in the hospital for 24 hours before the operation. Rahila wanted to go with her son, but as a diabetic patient with high blood pressure, she was unwell herself to go with him. She recalls how stressed she was about her son's surgery and kept praying for him.

She was only able to breathe a sigh of relief when his surgery was a success and came home after a week in the hospital. Seeing her son, she first thanked God and then TRDP for enabling her son to get the surgery and relieve his pain. Her son is now a healthy, happy child and has enrolled back in school, walking the distance with ease. All the expenses of the operation was

within the limit of MHI card so she didn't have to pay a single penny from her pocket.

Rahila's only wish for all her children is that they should be financially secure, so they don't have to suffer or see their children experience hardships in the future. Her older sons had previously worked with Janbaz force, a paramilitary force. However, as the need reduced, they were sent back home and they are currently jobless. "Due to poverty I reluctantly sent my two older sons to such a dangerous place to get a government job. However, even that didn't work and they were sent them back home," Rahila said with tearful eyes. Regardless, she still feels that with a good education and in time better opportunities they would eventually be able to break their cycle of poverty.



LEGAL
EMPOWERMENT



Bakhtawar's pride and joy are her two daughters. As somebody who never went to school, she made sure her daughters went to school and currently both have passed their intermediate exams and work as Community Resource Persons (CRPs) for the EU-funded SUCCESS programme. One of her daughter sits nearby with a bright sash with the words CRP inscribed on it.

It is not surprising then that she has never missed a single Community Awareness Toolkit (CAT) session in her village, since they are all taught by her daughters. To date, she has participated in 24 CAT sessions, taught once every month. She not only attends these sessions to support her daughters but also to learn about issues that are

important to women. "I have learnt so much about my rights as a woman after these sessions. I actually went to the bank recently to open an account and visited a hospital for an ailment for the first time in my life", Bakhtawar iterates.

After attending CAT sessions Bakhtawar and other women apply what they learn in a practical way. For example, they once had a session on cleaning and hygiene, so all the women began picking up litter from their local streets and motivated others to do the same. There was especially piles of garbage right outside the local mosque, making it difficult for people to pray. The local women decided to clean the area outside the mosque together, which was highly



appreciated by the community. "I further preach to the women of my community on the importance of cleanliness of ourselves, homes and roads", explains Bakhtawar.

By far, her favourite session has been on education. She has always felt conscious about the fact that she never attended school, and felt that it limited her capabilities and opportunities. Although, she has always been a huge proponent of her own children to gain education, she never realised before the session that it is a fundamental right of each child to access free education. Currently, her village has a girl's school but only till the 5th grade since they do not have a teacher for high school. In order to study further girls have to leave the village and travel much further. Therefore, most girls in her village drop out of school. She has seen first-hand the impact education has had on her daughters. She does not regret stitching and sewing to earn a living to get her children get the education they deserved. Bakhtawar hopes "that there be a teacher in high school for the girls so they could

get higher education and serve their community in a better way, like my daughters". She further elaborates "Look at my daughter here, the only reason she was selected as a CRP was because she was educated".

However, her daughters have not had it easy. "The people of my village are extremely conservative. Whenever my daughters went to other villages for CAT sessions, most people started talking behind their backs, accusing them of acting shamefully. But I never took heed and actively supported my daughters. I fought these accusations, and explained to these people how my daughters are carrying important work in conducting sessions in other villages" Bakhtawar narrates. Her support for her daughters seemed to work, as criticism against her daughters ended. With such a strong mother, the future seems bright for the family.







Joint Development Committees (JDCs)

Kulsoom

Thariri Jado Shaheed

Kulsoom sits calmly on her *charpoy*, smiling often when narrating her story while her husband looks on proudly nearby. Together they have five children, three daughters and two boys, all of whom attend school except the youngest who is not old enough to attend school yet.

Kulsoom, as a member of her LSO, had 11 VOs and 111 COs under her LSO. Although, she only studied till the 5th grade she became an integral part of her LSO. Whenever they had officials or members of TRDP visit their organisation, she would take charge to talk to them. Therefore, it was not surprising that when it came time to nominate a member to the Joint Development Committee (JDC), Kulsoom was selected. Her fellow members felt that she had the confidence to establish linkages with the local government.

Kulsoom has interacted with people from various government departments such as agriculture and health, putting forward their issues to them. The most essential on her agenda is to work on women rights. Kulsoom felt that her village did not allow the government to discuss concepts such as family planning or birth spacing. "Our coordination with the health department allowed for concepts such as family planning to be more effectively preached to women in communities. People were more responsive to representatives from the government through CRPs", elaborates Kulsoom.

Kulsoom has so far carried out two meetings. She feels that the JDC has enabled her to directly interact with the government. Explaining her experience she says "With the government, you have to go to them, but in the case of NGOs, they come to you, that's the only difference. However, I hope that if all work together we can accomplish great things".

Her personal life has also changed significantly since joining the JDC. Kulsoom clarifies "Before no one really knew me, now everyone recognises me as

a JDC member and appreciates my efforts". She knew that the JDC would be different from LSO, therefore, she was hesitant and nervous about taking part. She felt the JDC had a lot more educated people and felt incompetent in front of them. However, her SO quashed her fears and told her that she would not be criticised for the way she speaks and people will support her views. With that in mind Kulsoom was able to confidently give presentations. She became so good at public speaking that she was also asked to speak with foreign delegates from the EU as well.

Next on her personal agenda in the JDC is to discuss safe drinking water, which she deems as a basic fundamental right of each individual. Throughout her accomplishments and her goals for the future, her biggest supporter has been her husband. She claims that he supported her since the days she first joined the LSO, taking her to meetings and encouraging her to achieve whatever she set her mind to. She beams "If I have reached to such a high standard in life, it has been achieved through my husband's support and trust".





PEOPLE BEHIND SUCCESS



Social Organiser

Moomal

Dadu

Moomal is only 30 years old, but supports her whole family of five siblings and mother, ever since her father left them to live with his second wife years ago. Equipped with a Masters in Sociology from Sindh University in Jamshoro, she aimed to have a career to achieve her goals and support her family.

Growing up with financial constraints did not restrain Moomal to excel academically. She explains that ever since first year she could not afford the transport cost of her college. Therefore, she mostly studied at home, only going to college to give her exams. It proved fruitful as she eventually passed to achieve where she is today. She recalls that her own father was against her education claiming that girls after primary school do not need to attend school. However, her mother disagreed with her father claiming that

they no longer live in their conservative village but a major city, and unlike them all their children would be educated. Moomal claims, “My goal was never to get a job, but to gain an education for my own self-improvement. But it is funny how life works, and it was only because of my education that I was able to get a job and support my family when my father left us”. She now aims to have all her younger siblings educated, especially till university level.

Before joining TRDP as an SO, she worked as an academy coordinator and later a teacher in an NGO-led girl's school. She later switched to a child marriage project, where she also developed a passion of theatre performances with strong social messages.

She then switched to TRDP in 2016 as an SO, because she felt it was different and could



create an impact in the lives of rural women. “Women don't usually go out in my village so it was nice to work in *tanzeems*. I liked the goals we were given, that seemed new and exciting” Moomal expressed. She was given a target to organise 15,000 women in five union councils.

Initially, the hardest part of her job was to convince women to take part in Community Institutions. She feels the biggest deterrent for most women are the men in their lives. It seemed very hard to build trust within these communities, especially when her job required her to enter their homes to give trainings and arrange for women to leave their villages for further trainings or make national identity cards or bank accounts. However, with time she has felt that they have managed to build that trust and encouraged men to support their women.

She narrates an example “In one of my initial days, I went to a village to form a *tanzeem*, however, this older gentleman kept mocking me. He said that I had come here but I was not aware that none of these women are educated. They won't understand what I was saying about

savings, budget-making or attending meetings. They wouldn't be able to do anything for the community, so I shouldn't waste my time. However I replied with 'you can say what you want, but you will get your response in a few months'. True enough a few months after forming *tanzeems*, a meeting was held to decide on a CPI scheme. The women conducted the meeting successfully, even took recommendations from the men who came to attend and eventually decided to make a road under the CPI scheme. That same man that had criticised my efforts just a few months ago, publically announced that he felt happy that today in their village there were plans for a road and this wasn't carried out by the men but the women of their village”.

With a smile Moomal mentions that she did meet the gentleman again and told him “I didn't need to answer you, you just answered your own question. The women of SUCCESS will do much more in the future and they did not need to rely on men”. She has seen this change in every village she visits.



H.H.S. = 2811
COVERED H.H.S. in Psc
1820
Psc. 0.23 : 1065
Psc : 24.100 : 75
POVERTY RATIO
65

H.H.S. in U.C. 408
TOTAL COVERED H.H.S.
in Psc 2265
Psc. 0.23 : 1156
Psc : 24.100 : 1109
POVERTY RATIO : 51%
VILLAGES in U.C.
27



Social Organiser

Zulikha

Dadu

With her happy demeanour, it was hard not to smile along every time Zulikha spoke. However, her sweet demeanour does not hide her determination and resolve to achieve her professional goals.

At only 30, with a Bachelors degree in economics, she already has a great deal of experience working professionally especially in the development sector. Amongst her various jobs, she has worked on a TRDP microcredit programme, an Aga Khan Foundation survey and a BISP supported school. She even took a beauticians course, and is a trained beautician.

She laughs as she recalls “People had warned me not to join TRDP, because the work was hard. They warned me that organising 40 COs, with 20 members in each CO every month, is impossible. But I replied that I was up to the challenge and believed I could

do it”. Unsurprisingly, Zulikha proved to be correct.

The toughest part of her job has been field-work and even now she prefers office paper-work instead of working in the field. She feels especially uncomfortable when people call them “NGO people” using it as a derogatory term, instead of using their names. She recalls a particularly tough incident when she went to a village to form a *tanzeem*. Usually, SOs work in teams or have drivers with them accompanying them in the field, but on that particular day she was alone. Suddenly, she claims that an older man began abusing her and accused her of stealing their land, since she was taking everyone's national identity cards. When women tried to stop him from coming near her, he slapped two women. She tried to explain her purpose behind taking the

identity cards to form Community Institutions for the women but he did not believe her and refused to let her leave. "Although I was panicking, I tried to calm myself and remembered that I had visited a nearby village recently, where there was a well-respected and well-known man who could vouch for my work to him. I asked for him, and he came to calm this gentleman". He eventually apologised and blessed her efforts, but the incident had really frightened Zulikha. "If he had anything in his hand, he could have severely injured me".

Despite the unpredictability of her job, her family have been her biggest supporters. However, her father warned her that she can do any job as long as people did not talk against her character, especially from their village. When she first joined TRDP she had to travel far and it used to take one and half hours to reach back home. In the process she had to change four types of public transport. She didn't tell her father about her ordeal because she was afraid he might see this as inappropriate for a woman.

Maintaining both her professional and domestic responsibilities has been tough on Zulikha. Being the only daughter in the family, forces her to cook breakfast and pack lunch for them before she leaves for work. After a long day at work, she then cooks dinner for her family. She claims in the beginning "this was difficult but now I have gotten used to the routine". As a trained beautician, Zulikha used to run a parlour previously. However, now she tends to arrive so late, and has so many household chores to complete that she stopped that business.

Zulikha still continues to improve her skills and has greater goals in mind. She wants to take computer classes, to improve her documentation and technical skills. She wants to continue to work in TRDP but would eventually like to make a shift towards the government sector in the distant future. For now, that would have to wait as she notices the time and has to rush to catch her bus to go back home.



District Programme Manager

Ali Nawaz Nizamani

Dadu

Ali Nawaz Nizamani serves as the District Programme Manager of District Dadu for the EU funded SUCCESS programme - TRDP. Despite a packed and hectic schedule, Mr. Nizamani takes time to explain his vision for the programme, which he has been a part of since its inception.

His association with the Rural Support Programmes (RSPs) first began in 1993 when he joined the National Rural Support Programme (NRSP) in 1993. Previously, he served as a government official. He describes his shift from government to the development sector as inevitable, due to his left-leaning politics. He laughs, "Most people in the government that were more left-leaning and had socialist agenda back in the day, eventually shifted to the development sector".

His shift to his current role in TRDP seems even more predictable, as Ali Nawaz explains, "I was working in NRSP and my team suggested that as a senior officer with years of experience I should apply as the Programme Manager for Dadu. So, I went for an interview, got the position and have been working with SUCCESS ever since".

He had initially expected that to escape poverty and encourage income generation, most people would accept initiatives taken by a programme like SUCCESS. However, in a district like Dadu, where most women are not even allowed to step out of their houses, it would be difficult to organise women in *tanzeems*. Even people who were familiar with the three-tier social mobilisation structure told him that establishing



institutions comprising of only women would never work.

Ali Nawaz, however, claimed, "I took it as a challenge to form successful *tanzeems* comprising of only women. Now I look at these women in the district and they understand their rights. Initially, most women considered their village as belonging to their landlord, then the men in their families, but never considered themselves to be a part of their village. However, since SUCCESS and the *tanzeems* formed today these same women consider the village as their own. They participate and think for the betterment and development of their village through different schemes available by their *tanzeems*".

Ali Nawaz was never a sceptic of the programme but even he was pleasantly surprised by the way women of Dadu came forward and mobilised themselves. He was most taken aback by their strength and unity in more tribal regions of Dadu. He gives an example of such a region where a particular caste of people strictly forbade the women of their families to leave their village. The village happened to be

struggling with electricity for a few months as their transformer stopped working. The men of the village tried to fix the transformer by the relevant authorities but were unable to do so. Finally, it was the women of the village that took the matter in to their own hands and met with all the government officials such as Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA). After continuously working for three months, these women were finally able to get a new transformer for their village. He exclaims "These women showed the men of their village what they were capable of, and accomplished what they could not. The men also realised the strength of women mobilisation and unity".

Similar stories of female empowerment could be witnessed throughout Dadu especially when it came to forming linkages with the government. By learning to interact with the government, women have managed to reopen closed schools, carry out livestock vaccinations and health camps.

Through the JDC, SUCCESS provides an innovative platform to build linkages among line departments and these women

in Community Institutions. The JDCs allow women from the community to advocate for public services.

These interactions with government departments has enabled them to utilise these same *tanzeems* to provide services. He elaborates “For example, previously some regions would not allow government polio vaccination teams to visit their houses and vaccinate their children. Today, polio teams are actively supported by Community Institutions, especially CRPs.” TRDP even managed to establish an agreement with the election commission and registered women to vote for the election, by providing national identity cards. For some it was the first time in their life that they had voted.

In Ali Nawaz's opinion “every system can work through information, process, and implementation. Here the information comes from the Community Awareness Toolkit (CAT) sessions because they encourage the women to think about their rights and responsibilities. These thoughts are processed and then change their life through implementation. That's the power of SUCCESS”.

Despite, accomplishing considerable goals through their participation in *tanzeems*, for most women their capacities are still limited because of their lack of education. However, Ali Nawaz feels that “at least they have understood the importance of education for their children. Their daughters can lead a better way which will bring an even greater effective change in society”.

He feels that now the most important word that SUCCESS needs to consider is “sustainability”. Ali Nawaz elaborates “Sustainability is essential for every programme, for example, the SUCCESS programme will conclude in a few years. After that what are the steps we have to take? That's the important point. We are empowering women socially but what about their economic empowerment? Therefore, we are connecting them with the government so that they can continue their efforts towards a better future”.

DADU 2016-19



170,362

Households Covered by
Poverty Scorecard Survey



128,909

Organised
Households



6,437

Women Community
Organisations (COs) Formed



697

Women Village
Organisations (VOs) Formed



63

Women Local Support
Organisations (LSOs) Formed



11,804

Women CO Members
who received CMST



1,320

Women VO/LSO Members
who received LMST



550

Community Resource
Persons (CRPs) Trained



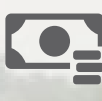
53

LSOs/VOs with Community
Investment Fund (CIF)



6,074

Households Benefitting
from CIF



140.3 million

Amount of CIF (PKR) given to
LSOs/VOs



16

Community Physical Infrastructures (CPIs) Completed



47.9 million

Cost of CPIs (PKR)



14,596

Households Benefitting from CPIs



98.8 million

Amount of IGG (PKR) given to VOs



2,650

Households Benefitting from IGG



355

VOs with Income Generating Grant (IGG)



211,647

People Insured through MHI



30,132

Households Insured through Micro Health Insurance



1,467

Beneficiaries of Technical and Vocational Skills Training (TVST)

* Data is shown as of March 2019



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