

# Peace and development must go hand in hand in Hayagay Sharqi Dir upper- An unending valor and commitment of the local communities.

---

## *Village Organization Profile:*

---

Name of Village Organization:	Falahi Tanzeem Sher Muhammad Korona
Village:	Hayagay
Settlement:	Sher Muhammad Korona
Organized HHs:	26
Community Organization:	Falahi Tanzeem Sher Muhammad Korona
Date of Formation:	30-5-2011
Bank/account:	HBL 79000067-02
President and Secretary:	Mr Jamaluddin, Mr Sharfuddin (Cell phone 03469718602)
Activist (Former President):	Sher Muhammad (Cell phone 03459593649)

### **1. Militants refuge in Hayagai Sharqi and support of local communities – A background :**

Hayagay Sharqi is located in middle of mountains some 20 kilometres east of Dir town, the district headquarters and shares borders with Swat and Chitral in the North, and Dir Lower in the South. In the wake of increased and incessant terrorists' activities of anti state elements – the taliban in the northern areas of KPK, the armed forces of Pakistan were compelled to start military operation against the terrorists in 2009. The military operation resulted into mass exodus and the fleeing militants wandered from post to pillar for the search of safe haven. The militants strategically created a support with local communities through ostensibly Islamic and pro-poor initiatives like banning music and stopping barbers to shaving off and providing speedy justice in disputes. The militant groups were trying to find a safe passage and some of them came to the suburbs of Dir Upper including Doog Dara and Hayagay. The people of Dir who are known for their hospitality extended warm welcome to them as they thought they were the victims of the military oppression. The support, they provided to the militants was open and fathomless.

### **2. With-drawl of local support and emergence of local lashkar against militants:**

Once the militants had understandably the great support from the locals, they started their criminal acts of target killing and hurling life threats to the government loyalist elders and government employees. Even one day they carried out the most inhuman act of suicide attack on those assembled for Juma congregational prayer in the Jamia Masjid of Hayagai Sharqi on October 25, 2009. The suicide attack took 49 precious human lives and injured more than hundred-some critical who succumbed later on. This heinous crime changed the mindset of the supporting communities and the support was reverted to animosity against the militants. The people of Hayagay Sharqi spontaneously developed an armed movement called lashkar against the Taliban to avenge the killing of 49 persons in Jamia Masjid suicide hit. Intensifying the offensive against the Taliban militants, the armed villagers of Hayagay Sharqi in Dir Upper,

backed by the people of dozens of other villages, besieged the militants from all sides. It merits mention here that the Taliban militants, led by Afghan commander Amir Khitab, had been operating in Doog Darra near the blasted village. They were believed to be behind the deadly attack to subjugate the people of Hayagay Sharqi. But unlike other areas, where such suicide attacks brought the hostile communities to their knees, the residents of this village decided to launch an offensive to punish the militants for their action and eliminate their roots/bases once for all. The local lashkar comprising of people from Hayagai Sharqi and Ghrbi and other adjoining villages who were armed with sophisticated weapons launched the onslaught on militants a day after the blast.

### **3. People pride in peace building and development:**

Locals said the people of Kilot, Doon, Ganshal, Gurrai, Narkun, Hayagay Sharqi, Hayagay Gharbi and 20 villages of Doog Darra forged unity together to root out the militants. They feel proud of having their own system of peace as pre-requisite to development. They informed that in the presence of lawlessness and weak writ of the government no one would have come for their development. They informed that they would not move an inch forward in restive security situation. Therefore, forging unity at larger scale against anti- state elements was inevitable. While seeing this record social cohesiveness, the people of two villages, Panaghar and Maluk Khwar, who were previously supporting the Taliban, also abandoned them in lurch and joined the Lashkar.

The Lashkar was led by a local community activist Sher Muhammad Khan who united the people of the valley and gave them a clarion to fight against the militant groups' hell bent on promoting violence in the area. It was due to the efforts of these people that the valley did not fall into the hands of Taliban like Swat, Lower Dir and Bajaur. In the local offensive launched by local communities engulfed more than 60 militants in a revenge of 49 innocent villagers. When the situation was a bit improved and militants vanished from the scene the local community activists Mr, Sher Muhammad Khan approached development organizations like SRSP to work for the **sustainable** development with the conflict affected people of the area. He thought that the development interventions can further strengthen their local unity and revive their economy once disturbed in the wake of militancy. The locals, who were desperate for development programs, joined membership in community organizations. The first village organization was formed namely Falahi Tanzeem Sher Muhammad Koruna Hayagay) with its first president Mr Sher Mohammad who was later on replaced by Jamaluddin. At present there are more than 50 community organizations in Doog Valley. The SRSP development interventions in the form of road, improved seeds and linkages with other development projects invigorated the social cohesion and resistance to anti- state elements.

### **4. Impacts of peace building initiative and presence of strong local peace maintenance system:**

- Feeling of security prevails across the valleys with peace committees and active participation in development process.
- Sporadic incidents of attacks on lashkar leaders have taken place with minimum losses. The attackers have been chased by lashkar men and apprehended on the spot for handing over to police or killed in encounter.
- The government has attached great importance to the local peace management system and rewarded the area with development and individual incentives.
- There is a great tendency for new community formations as conduit to mobilization of local and external resources for development.
- The women development workers have increased mobility for women mainstreaming in development programs.

- There is complete elimination of the anti-state activities indicating strongest presence of the writ of the government.
- People are well united and willing to offer sacrifices for the sake of the nation and collective interests of local inhabitants.
- The local are highly receptive to social change and would like many local, national and international organizations for development of their area through tangible program interventions.
- The inhabitants have pledged together to die and live for each other.
- The unity of local communities and their contribution to the strengthening the writ of the government has been viewed as best model of peace initiative for replication by other peace loving communities in restive parts of the province.

-The end-