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BRACE
BALOCHISTAN RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMME

BRACE Programme Annual Lesson Learning Visit and Workshop

Locations:

Pishin and Quetta, February 07-08, 2019

IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS FOR THE BRACE's GRANT COMPONENT

RSPN

BRSP
بلوچستان رورل سپورٹ پروگرام

NRSP
National Rural Support Programme

PROGRAMME TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PARTNER

human dynamics
public sector consulting

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OVERVIEW

To promote cross-learning and experience sharing regarding RSPs niche of promoting and implementing the social mobilisation approach to Community Driven Development (CDD) in Balochistan and involve all development stakeholders including people from political, administrative and social (socio-economic) pillars in the decision making and development process, Rural Support Programmes Network (RSPN) under Balochistan Rural Development & Community Empowerment (BRACE) Programme organised a two-day Lessons Learning and Experience Sharing Visit and Workshop in districts Pishin and Quetta on 7-8 February 2019, with the facilitation from the Balochistan Rural Support Programme (BRSP).

Day-one of the event started with a comprehensive and thought provoking first dialogue by Mr. Shoaib Sultan Khan, Chairman RSPN on the RSPs approach towards rural development and poverty reduction with the community members gathered in the snowy cold morning at Yousuf Kuch village, Rood Mulazai Union Council, at District Pishin. The first dialogue is the initial step of the social mobilisation process towards organisation of rural households into their own-led community institutions. In this dialogue, the RSP's objectives, approach and methodology are presented to the community members. This dialogue also seeks to enlist communities' consent for accepting and adopting the core principles of the RSP social mobilisation approach. Later, a formal terms of partnership between the newly set up Community Organisation and RSP is signed, setting out the respective roles and responsibilities of the two partners.

Participants of the first day of event at village Yousuf Kuch also included Dr. Rashid Bajwa, CEO National Rural Support Programme (NRSP), Mr. Nadir Gul Barech, CEO BRSP, Mr. Khaleel Ahmed Tetlay, Chief Operating Officer RSPN and BRACE Programme team members from RSPN, BRSP and NRSP.

The focus of the dialogue was on how the community members can identify and harness their own potential to make improvements in their own households. The first step is for the households to agree to foster their own organisation, elect their own leadership, conduct regular meetings and initiate a savings programme based on each household's capacity to save. RSP will invest in the newly set up community institution providing training to the newly elected leaders, including in preparation of Micro Investment Plans at the household level. RSP will also provide targeted support for income generation activities, awareness raising, community physical infrastructure, etc. In order to ensure that the three-tiered network of community institutions is sustainable, RSP will provide a Community Investment Fund (CIF) as a revolving fund. CIF is to be used and not consumed. Small capital amounts are provided to member households to undertake activities identified and priorities in MIPs. Sound management of CIF is as important as the management of the community institutions; for both are essential for the long term sustainability of the development efforts at the community level. RSP also supports fostering of close linkages between the community institutions and the political and administrative pillars. These are essential as resources for public service delivery are with line departments.

After the dialogue, the delegation under the leadership of Mr. Shoaib Sultan Khan held a productive meeting with the key stakeholders of district Pishin including Member of National Assembly of Pakistan (MNA), Members of Provincial Assembly of Balochistan (MPA), representatives of all the political parties, and official of district administration including Deputy Commissioner and Additional Deputy Commissioner (Revenue). The aim of this joint meeting was to take all these stakeholders on board regarding the objectives of the of BRACE Programme in their district and nudge them to advocate and legislate on the formulation and implementation of Local Development Policy Framework for the province of Balochistan, adopt and scale-up RSP approach of social mobilisation and institutional development for the poverty reduction and better services delivery, and strengthen local governance mechanisms all across the province by forming and strengthening robust linkages amongst political, administrative and social pillars.

The field visit was followed by an experience sharing and learning workshop on February 08, 2019 at BRSP's head office in Quetta in which Chairman RSPN, CEOs of BRSP and NRSP, BRACE Programme staff from RSPN, BRSP and NRSP, EU TA Human Dynamics,

Government Officials from Local Government and Rural Development (LGRD) Department, and members of the RSP fostered community institutions participated. The purpose of the workshop was to share experiences, learning and lessons that the participants learnt during the programme implementation and from the lessons learning field visit. The participants shared their learnings and got to know about the success of RSP social mobilisation approach to CDD. Representatives from two Local Support Organisation (one from district Loralai and one from district Kech) made presentations on the work and achievements of the respective LSOs, including fostering linkages with local line departments.

At the end of the workshop, Mr. Shoaib Sultan Khan reiterated that poverty lies at household level and that poverty reduction efforts can only be successful if households are organised and fostered into Community institutions and linked with local authorities including political and administrative pillars for better services delivery and for sustainable local development and poverty reduction.

Mr. Shoaib Sultan Khan also highlighted the role of RSP approach of social mobilisation to CDD and how it is based on the work of

Dr. Akhter Hameed Khan at Comilla, Bangladesh, in 1950s/60s. Later this approach was adopted across the whole of Gilgit Baltistan and Chitral in 1980s in northern Pakistan by the Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (AKRSP). In 1990s, under the South Asian Poverty Alleviation Programme (SAPAP) the approach was taken to Andhra Pradesh, India, where 10 million households have been organised into three-tiered community institutions. From 1989, the replication of AKRSP started in other regions of Pakistan, with the setting up of the Sarhad Rural Support Programme (SRSP). Today there are eight RSPs working in 145 districts of the country having mobilized and organised nearly 8 million households in to 449,000 Community Organisations, 30,000 Village Organisations and nearly 2,000 Local Support Organisations (CO/VO/LSO).

Mr. Shoaib Sultan Khan also emphasized on the role of a committed and honest community leadership. These leaders are identified and elected by the community members themselves and are indispensable for managing the Community Institutions. They manage the meetings, the savings and support member households to prepare Micro Investment Plans. They also foster the spirit of self-help among

the members, for there are many activities that the communities can and should undertake own their own. A key responsibility of leaders is to undertake sound management of the Community Investment Fund (CIF), to be used and not consumed. CIF is a revolving fund and CO members access small amounts of capital to meet their needs for income generating activities at the household level.

Delegates on Visit

- Mr Shoiab Sultan Khan, Chairman Rurual Support Programmes Network
- Dr. Rashid Bajwa, CEO National Rural Support Programme (NRSP
- Mr Nadir Gul Barech, CEO BRSP
- Mr Khaleel Ahmed Tetlay, Chief Operating Officer RSPN
- Ms Shahida Jafri, Board Member BRSP
- Mr Ahmed Ullah, Programme Manager BRACE-RSPN
- Mr Khurram Shehzad, M&E Specialist RSPN
- Dr Shah Nawas Khan, Programme Manager BRACE-BRSP
- Mr Ghulam Rasool Baloch, Programme Manager BRACE-NRSP
- Mr Raheem Khetran, Research Coordinator, BRACE-RSPN
- Mr Akbar, Manager BRSP
- Ms Savaila Hunzai, Reporting and Documentation Officer
- Mr Asmat Kakar, M&E Officer BRACE-RSPN
- Mr Assad Abbas Malik, Communications Officer, BRACE-RSPN

THE FIRST COMMUNITY DIALOGUE BY SHOAIB SULTAN KHAN, CHAIRMAN RSPN

On snowy cold morning, hundreds of community members were gathered in the Community Hall at Yousuf Kuch village, Union Council Rood Mullazai, at district Pishin to have a first community dialogue by Mr. Shoaib Sultan Khan, Chairman RSPN. After recitation from the Holy Quran, the community dialogue started with a welcome note by one of the community representative who then invited Mr. Shoaib Sultan Khan for the first community dialogue with the community members.

Shoaib Sultan Khan conducting first dialogue with the community

Mr. Shoaib Sultan Khan expressed his gratitude to all the members of the local communities and representative from the local authorities. He then asked the community members about what is poverty? How it can be reduced? And what expectations the community has from the BRSP? And what can they do to get their households out of poverty? Some of the community members mentioned lack of high schools, other mentioned lack of regular electricity, and some referred to the poor condition of roads. Mr. Shoaib Sultan Khan responded that to address these issues there are various government departments. Then,

the question was asked again: What can the households themselves do to improve their own economic condition? One person responded that he can further improve his agricultural land. Another one responded that he can do goat farming. Still another one said that he can set up a small shop. Mr. Shoaib Sultan Khan replied that the focus of BRSP is at the household level, and that means supporting households to improve their own economic situation through their own efforts. BRSP will support households to undertake income generating activities that they can implement and manage themselves.

Then Mr. Shoaib Sultan Khan gave a detailed and inspiring history and background on the RSP social mobilisation approach to CDD for sustainable poverty reduction. He said to the community members that each and every households' member have the potential to change their own destiny provided that they get organised into community institutions, prepare their Micro Investment Plans (MIPs) at household level, develop their Village Development Plans (VDPs) at village level, and Union Council Development Plans (UCDPs) through participation and consultation. VDPs and UCDPs are then to be share with local authorities.

He further said that without the consent and active participation of households in their own-led community institutions, even RSPs cannot do anything for them. Therefore, it is for all households to decide where they want to make improvements in their own lives; if they want to do so, then then they have to agree to set up their own CO, elect their own leaders who are honest and committed, hold regular meetings and initiate savings programme, with each household savings according to its own capacity. Once COs are set up, they are federated in to VOs, and later VOs are federated into union council level LSOs. These community institutions foster the spirit of self-help, self-management, as well as linking up with local authorities for improved services delivery. The niche of BRSP is to reach out to each and every rural households and mobilise them to foster their own organisations.

In a very simple words, Mr. Shoaib Sultan Khan explained the responsibilities of BRSP and the communities in a participatory way. He said to the village audience that in the beginning its BRSP responsibility to provide you social guidance, technical and financial management skills to you. Afterwards, it is your responsibility to get organise, manage your resources, start savings, hold regular

meetings, and develop robust linkages with the local authorities for solving your problems related to education, health and means of livelihood.

He asked the members of the community audience about the result of the Poverty Scorecard (PSC) census conducted by BRSP under BRACE Programme. Some of the community members shared their respective PSC score bands. Then Mr. Shoaib Sultan Khan asked, the community members who fall between 0 to 11 score, to share their potential and constraints they face in improving their lives.

While interacting with community members whose PSC score were below 11, Mr. Khan asked them:

"Can you do anything to improve your households 'economic condition?" The community member replied "Yes". Mr. Khan then asked them, "What can you do?" The community members replied, "I can raise goats." Mr. Khan asked, "Then why are you not doing so? What constraints are you facing?" The community member responded, "I don't have the money to buy goats." Mr. Khan told them, "The basic and main purpose of this dialogue is to introduce the successful model of RSP approach of Social Mobilisation to Community Driven Development so that you also utilize your innate potential for changing your households' socioeconomic conditions by organising your households into your own Community Institutions, start savings, hold regular meetings, use your CIF and other resources for income generation and other sustainable activities through CIs which can benefit your community on sustainable basis."

After sharing of the potential and constraints by the community members, Mr. Shoaib Sultan Khan explained that how BRACE Programme, which is designed on the RSP social mobilisation approach of CDD, will help them realise their own potential and help them in their sustainable socioeconomic development.

Mr. Shoaib Sultan Khan briefed the community members present at the occasion about the BRACE Programme and importance of social mobilisation as stepping stone for their socioeconomic development. He emphasized that the poverty lies at the household level and it can only be reduced once the rural communities get organised at the grassroots level into their own led community institutions.

He further said that the government does not have the capacity and resources to reach to each and every household to address their issues. Reaching each and every households is the niche of RSPs to support government in attaining its goals and objectives. Through BRACE Programme, when the communities get organised themselves in their own institutions, every community member will be able to develop their development plan, called Micro Investment Plan (MIP), at household level. RSPs will help the community member in implementation of the MIP. Through CIF, households will access small loans to implement their income generating activities identified in MIPs.

Mr. Shoaib Sultan Khan addressing the community

The interactive community dialogue marked the beginning of a process that will lead to, with the willingness and active participation of the rural communities, organising the communities in Community Institutions, which forms the base of the three-tiered social mobilisation approach to Community Driven Development practiced by the RSPs.

Mr. Shoaib Sultan Khan asked the community members about their willingness for fostering of Community Institutions, and their commitment in allocating their free time for CIs meetings. To this, the assembled members showed their interest and agreed to get

organised into CIs. He told the community that implementing BRSP will support them in understanding how to get organised in CIs. He emphasized on the importance of holding regular meetings of the COs, and saving money for personal and collective benefit.

Mr. Shoaib Sultan Khan then said that every poor household, including the poorest of poor, has ability to identify an income generating activity that can be undertaken by them and that would benefit the household to get out of poverty. He invited the community members to think about such productive activities for their households.

Community members group photo with Chairman RSPN, Management RSPN, BRSP and NRSP after successful dialogue

Mr. Khan then left it to the community to decide about utilization of the limited resource available under BRACE Programme for the communities. One of the community member stood up and said, "We should priorities the households whose poverty score is in the lowest band of the PSC survey result."

Concluding his dialogue with the community, Mr. Shoaib Sultan Khan underlined the three main responsibilities of the community: it is imperative to get organised in to their own CIs, choose honest, committed and sincere CI

leaders, hold regular meetings of the COs, save money and to make MIPs for their households and develop VDPs for their respective villages and start establishing linkages with local authorities to reduce poverty. The dialogue concluded with appreciation of BRACE

Programme and CDD approach of the RSPs by the community members and agreed to get organised, start savings, hold regular meetings and approach local authorities for solution of their problems.

Later the community elders of the area presented traditional *TURBANs* to the male members and *CHADDAR* to the female members of the delegation. At the end of the dialogue, a community elders expressed their gratitude to the visiting team and appreciated their efforts. They said that they look forward to partnering with BRSP in days ahead.

After the dialogue, RSPs delegation under the leadership of Mr. Shoaib Sultan Khan held a productive meeting with the key stakeholders of district Pishin including Member of National Assembly of Pakistan (MNA), Members of Provincial Assembly of Balochistan (MPA), representatives of all the political parties, and official of district administration including Deputy Commissioner and Additional Deputy Commissioner (Revenue). The main purpose of this meeting was to take all these stakeholders on board regarding implementation of BRACE Programme in their district and nudge them to advocate and legislate on the formulation and implementation of Local Development Policy Framework for the province of Balochistan, adopt and scale up RSP approach for poverty reduction and better services delivery, and strengthen local governance all across the province by forming and strengthening robust linkages amongst political, administrative and social pillars.

Mr. Shoaib Sultan Khan shared his experience of working with rural communities in Bangladesh, India, Gilgit Baltistan and in Pakistan and explained how RSP approach of social mobilisation to CDD have brought about positive changes in the lives of millions of rural poor households. He further introduced and advocated for the support of all the stakeholders towards the BRACE Programme in the nine districts of Balochistan. The stakeholders were appreciative of the BRACE Programme in the district and assured their full support and cooperation in implementation of the programme in district Pishin. He especially appreciated BRSP, and thanked them for taking collaborating with government authorities for the empowerment of the rural poor households and supporting them to improve their own lives through their own actions.

Remarks from the Representatives of the Administrative and Political Pillars

Mr. Aurangzeb Badini, Deputy Commissioner District Pishin appreciated RSPs and their unique and unmatched Social Mobilisation model and assured full support in implementation of BRACE Programme in district Pishin. Syed Mohammad Fazal Agha, Member of Provincial Assembly from District Pishin said that the Programme will help linkages between communities and local authorities and assured every possible support to RSPs in attaining the objectives of the Programme. Maulvi Kamal Ud Din, Member of National Assembly from District Pishin appreciated BRSP Programmes in district Pishin and the financial support from European Union for Balochistan. He assured full support from his party to the RSPs Programmes in the province and to the policy advocacy efforts under BRACE Programme.

BRACE LESSON LEARNING WORKSHOP

BRACE LESSON LEARNING WORKSHOP:

The field visit was followed by an experience sharing and learning workshop on February 8, 2019 at BRSP Head Office Quetta in which BRACE Programme staff of implementing RSPs, Programme TA Human Dynamics, Government Officials of Local Government and Rural Development, Chairman RSPN, CEOs of BRSP and NRSP, and members of the community institutions participated. The purpose of the workshop was to share experiences and lessons that the participants learnt during field visit and learning from the one and half year of programme implementation. Participants of the visit shared their learnings. Two LSO representatives (one from Kech district and one from Loralai district) made presentation on their work and achievements.

WELCOME NOTE BY CEO BRSP:

Mr. Nadir Gul, CEO BRSP, commenced the workshop by welcoming everyone to be a part of the event. He explained the purpose of the workshop, which was to share the learning of the visit and listen to the presentations of community institutions (CIs) representative about the successful implementation of RSP approach in their respective communities and how through it they have transformed their communities. After the welcome note, BRACE introductory documentary was screened which showed the overall purpose of the BRACE Programme intervention logic, targeted population, impact, outcomes and outputs to be achieved. The online link of the video as below:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QCfYLDxx3qk&t=309s

PRESENTATIONS BY COMMUNITY LEADERS:

The Presidents of LSOs Mushtarika from district Loralai and Mirani from district Kech gave detailed presentations about the socioeconomic status of the Union Councils and history, profile, composition and interventions the LSOs have undertaken for the socioeconomic development of their Union Councils. There has been a great success of these LSOs in their communities evident by their savings, self-help initiatives, and linkages with the local government and other departments and civil society organisations. They explained how they address issues and challenges in their Union Councils relating to ensuring immunisation, enrolment of children in schools, waste disposal, poverty targeting, civic registration (Computerised National Identity Card, birth registration certificates, Nika registrations, etc.), tribal conflicts, gender inequalities, basic public facilities. Furthermore, it was explained during the presentation that how LSOs are engaged in undertaking interventions that will contribute in uplifting the socio-economic conditions in their respective Union Councils. These activities include addressing social issues like early child marriages, awareness about health and hygiene, education, sanitation, etc. While on the other hand they are busy in organising communities, savings, managing Community Investment Fund, providing support to the differently abled persons, and engaged in rescue and recovery during natural disasters. Both LSO Presidents highlighted the importance of social mobilisation. After getting organised, they are now in a better position to support their member organisations as well as to foster linkages with others. They are now recognized as key stakeholders in their respective Union Councils.

WHY WE NEED RSPs? REMARKS BY SHOAIB SULTAN KHAN

Mr. Shoaib Sultan Khan started his introductory remarks by asking the reasons behind existence of RSPs when government departments exist for provision of every service;

“Why do we need RSPs?”

Mr. Shoaib Sultan Khan emphasized that the RSP philosophy and approach to poverty reduction is based on the fact that poverty lies at the household level and that to reach every poor household to harness their inherent potential can only happen if they are organised in to

their own network of community institutions (CO/VO/LSO). He said that he has learned this from Dr. Akhter Hameed Khan and his years of experience show that unless one does not reach the poor households, poverty reduction is not possible. He said that only RSPs have the capacity to reach to household level by forming the institutions of the people. RSPs have demonstrated the approach of social mobilisation therefore facilitates rural households by creating a mechanism with which these community institutions can then be linked up with the local authorities for improving services delivery. The established and empowered institutions of the local communities that form the social pillar can complement the works of the administrative and political pillars, triggering a sustainable process of change and development.

Talking about poverty situation in Balochistan he said that according to the recent survey 56% of household live under the poverty line. In this programme the initial responsibility is on rural poor communities that if poor communities show their willingness in organising themselves or not. He said,

"BRACE Programme is an auspicious opportunity to establish Social Pillar in the province of Balochistan and it can be only viable through the support and cooperation of Political and Administrative Pillars. If we become successful in this effort, then that means we have met RSPs objectives."

Talking about the CIF, Mr. Shoaib Sultan Khan said that CIF is a revolving fund that belongs to the entire households managed by the CIs. CIF is to be used and not consumed; it must be continuously revolved. Member household should access CIF to implement their income generating activities that they have identified in their MIPs. He asked the participants, "What is one factor behind a successful community institution?"

Community institutions representatives responded honesty, dedication and commitment. CI leadership can make his/her organisation successful and productive for the whole community, for segments of the community.

Mr. Shoaib Sultan Khan emphasized on the importance of having active and a responsible SOs for effective implementation of the Programme, as they are the backbone of the Programme. He said,

"In the field, if your SO and field workers are able to make community members understand that the CIs leaders are the ones from their own community who are active honest and committed to the development of their community, success is guaranteed. If the leaders are not active, honest, and committed then success is impossible."

Mr. Shoaib Sultan concluded his discussion by underlining that success of the Programme depends on willingness of the rural poor to get organised and presence of honest, dedicated and committed leaders amongst them to lead the community institutions. The challenge for BRSP is to support the communities to identify such leaders and then to build their capacities to managed the network of community institutions.

LEARNING VISIT'S LESSONS:

The participants shared following lessons learned during experience sharing and learning visit and workshop;

- Reconfirmation that it is RSPs' niche to reach each and every rural household to mobilise and organize them into a network of community institutions. The replication of the RSP approach across Pakistan and other regional countries testifies to this.
- Abraham Lincoln talked about government by the people, government of the people and government for the people. RSPs talk about institutions by the people, institutions of the people and institutions for the people. These community institutions (CO/VO/LSO) are the social pillar. Key learning emerging from the presentations made by the two LSO representatives was that with the social pillar in place, it can complement and supplement government public service delivery at the local level.
- Dialogue with communities by senior management is very fruitful in motivating the RSP staff as well as mentoring them in how to conduct such dialogues. RSPs support households in income generating activities that they can implement and manage on their own. Community members have to identify honest, dedicated and committed persons as their leaders.
- When community institutions develop confidence and capacity, they begin to take self-help initiatives and do not restrict their selves to project and programmes. This was evident by the self-help initiatives presented by LSO Mirani (Kech) and Mushtarka (Loralai) in the workshop. Therefore, in regular interaction with CIs, RSP staff has to encourage them to undertake self-help initiatives and foster linkages.
- As a result of a successful dialogue, community households begin to realise that poverty in not their natural state; that they have inherent potential, that they face some constraints; and that by coming together they can begin to ease their constraints and begin to improve their own lives. The first dialogue is critical in defining the roles of households, CIs and RSPs. This also allows the management of expectations from the community's side.

- Lesson learning visits help the top tier senior management to know more about the Programme implementation activities, communities' expectations and field staff experiences and therefore are in a better position to take informed decisions.

- Evident by the LSO Mirani presentation, linkages of community institutions with key stakeholders, including, government line departments, local government and civil society organisations are critical in addressing community development issues. It is important to have the support of local authorities by involving them in addressing the issues at field level. In this way, they not only own the programme but also extend their help and support whenever needed. Similarly, the other civil society organisations should also be engaged in order to create synergies. For example, LSO Mirani met Education Minister and convinced him for the upgradation of Boy's Primary School and constructed Girls Primary School in their area through linkages with the Education Department. They have also met Chief Minister, MNA, MPA and DCO and addressed the issue of land payment of Mirani dam to communities.

- It is learnt from experiences that organised communities are very effective in addressing disasters and emergencies in their areas and can further help and guide rescue and recovery organisations to do their job in effective and efficient manner, e.g. LSO Mirani, Kech has done a tremendous job during the 2007 floods. They rescued affected population, formed aid committees, and distributed food and drinking water. They also surveyed and registered the flood affected population and shared data with humanitarian organisations. They also raised funds amounting to PKR 133,000 by self-help for the restoration of electricity in their areas.

- Community institutions are also very helpful in addressing social issues of their areas like early child marriages, honor killings, lack of education, diseases, law and order and security etc. e.g. Mushtarka LSO Loralai has been very active in distributing mosquito nets in 836 households after conducting Malaria awareness Behavour Change Communication (BCC) sessions in Loralai. They also provided a wheelchair, white stick and tricycles to differently abled persons in their union council.

- Sustainability is very important for the community institutions. CIF plays a vital role in this regard. LSO Mirani received CIF PKR 2,000,000 in 2007 from NRSP, and since then, the LSO has given loans amounting to PKR 14,952,500 from the revolving fund to 807 households. According to president LSO Mirani, CIF plays an important role in the sustainability of the LSO.
- Community organizations are also very good at savings after being mobilised by RSPs. The savings are great financial sources used for any unexpected shocks, e.g. deaths, health, education, and natural or man-made disasters.

Other lessons and challenges related to BRACE Programme implementation are:

- During the first year of implementation, BRSP's pace of Programme implementation was slow. Target for the year one were moved forward to year two and there is good progress against targets in year two. Currently BRSP is making efforts to solve the challenges related to the registration of the newly formed community institutions.
- All District Managers will make efforts to expedite the process of registrations and revitalization of bank accounts of the new and existing community institutions so that the process of sub granting of Income Generating Grants (IGG), Community Investment Fund (CIF), Community Physical Infrastructure (CPI) can begin.

Enhancing BRACE'S Communication, Visibility & Advocacy

The events will help BRACE in the advocacy efforts to be undertaken with key stakeholders including policy makers and government officials for the development of Local Development Policy Framework and Public Finance Management (PFM) reforms for Government of Balochistan. At the end of the learning visit, a detailed meeting was held with the key stakeholders of district Pishin in which the overall objectives of the Programme and its expected results were discussed. Below mentioned policy makers, and representatives from district administration attended the meeting with RSPs senior management and BRACE team;

- Maulvi Kamal Ud Din, Member of National Assembly from District Pishin
- Syed Mohammad Fazal Agha, Member of Provincial Assembly from District Pishin
- Asghar Khan Tareen Member of Provincial Assembly from District Pishin
- Essa Roshan, District Chairman, Local Government Pishin
- Sharaf Agha member of District Local Government Pishin
- Maulvi Haji Habib Ullah, Executive Member Jamiat Ulema e Islam, Pishin
- Obaid Ullah Abid, General Secretary Awami National Party Pishin
- Aurangzeb Badini, Deputy Commissioner District Pishin
- Amin Ullah Nasar, Assistant Commissioner District Pishin

These events also helped RPPs communicate BRACE purpose and ensured European Union Visibility and will contribute in advocacy efforts with key stakeholders for local development policy reforms as the events were widely covered in both electronic and print media. The media greatly helped in disseminating the message to the communities and other stakeholders. Following TV channels and Newspapers covered the lesson learning events;

TV Channels

- Dawn News (Urdu)
- Wash News (Balochi)
- Khyber News (Pashto)
- Hum News (Urdu)

News papers

- Express Tribune
- Daily Parliament Times
- The Balochistan Point.

Links to media coverage is given below;

- https://www.dailyparliamenttimes.com/2019/02/15/organized-communities-play-an-effective-role-in-poverty-reduction-say-chairman-rspn brsp/?fbclid=IwAR2tM9nEng6CCVqwNZiWZFBggl2mLOqNatm6nogE31b8SgtUmJmxMKpBOBs#.XJHuvPZuJPZ
- https://tribune.com.pk/story/1907696/1-grass-roots-organisation-key-tackling-household-poverty/
- http://thebalochistanpoint.com/organized-communities-play-an-effective-role-in-poverty-reduction-say-chairman-rspn-brsp/?utm_campaign=shareaholic&utm_medium=facebook&utm_source=socialnetwork&fbclid=IwAR1J_At801Ob6gW4Rj7e88ut-hGGklOKrFNbVtr94_McGxZU1AwtnyyX3M4

TRIBUNE

'Grass-roots organisation key to tackling household poverty'

QUETTA : Rural Support Programmes Network (RSPN) Chairman Shoaib Sultan Khan has said that the goal of poverty reduction at the household level can be achieved by organising rural communities at the grassroots level that would better tap their potential.

He was speaking to the participants of a community dialogue organised by the Balochistan Rural Support Programme (BRSP) with regard to the Balochistan Rural Development and Community Empowerment (BRACE) Programme.

Talking to the community members who specially came from different union councils of Pishin to participate in the dialogue, Khan noted that poverty was a household-level phenomenon.

He said that it could only be tackled by organising at the grassroots level. "The way forward is for them to get organised to harness their individual and collective potentials under the approach of three-tiered social mobilisation for community-driven development," he said.

Urging communities to play an active role for their own development, Khan said that it was beyond means of the government to cater to all needs at the household level. He underlined the need for communities to avail the opportunity to get themselves organised under the programme to streamline their efforts.

Khan highlighted the importance of strengthening linkages between the communities and the authorities, and stressed the need for close coordination among the political, administrative and social pillars of the society.

Eastern Balochistan 'neglected in CPEC'

The network chairman said it was part of its approach to bridge the missing links of development in Pakistan, whereby community institutions work as the social pillar to supplement and complement the political and administrative pillars of the state. He added that with the support of the federal and provincial governments, these institutions, fostered through RSPs' proven three-tiered social mobilisation approach to community-driven development, have done miracles in combating poverty.

While becoming part of the dialogue, the community members took great interest in the discussions and shared their issues and day-to-day challenges with the speaker. The participants also showed inclination for getting themselves organised under the European Union-funded BRACE programme, being implemented by the Local Government and Rural Development Department of Balochistan.

The electronic and print media coverage of the events reached a great number of people not only in Balochistan but also at national level. This coverage helped the people know more about the community driven development work being done by the RSPs in their respective geographic areas.

Moreover, policy makers, including members of the national and provincial assemblies, local government, district administration attended the meetings with RSPs and were very appreciative of the involvement of communities in their own development. They praised RSP's for their efforts in reducing poverty at household level and termed this as great service to the people of Balochistan. They were of the view that the BRACE Programme would not only improve governance at grassroots level but would inculcate a good sense of citizenship among the people of remote areas. This would strengthen the state citizen bond at one hand and on the other hand ensure transparency and reduce corruption, leakages and ineffectiveness. They thanked European Union for the support to Balochistan which would ultimately contribute in changing the fate of the marginalised communities, especially those lying at the lower poverty bands. They offered their unconditional support to all the BRACE partners in future

Pictorial Gallery