



Paving Potential Pathways for Poverty Graduation

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) Report 2021-2022



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Executive Summary

This Key Performance Indicator (KPI) report is published annually under the EU funded, Balochistan Rural Development and Community Empowerment (BRACE) Programme. This is the fifth annual KPI report presenting progress on the KPIs as of year five (June 2022) of the Programme. The aim of this report is to present progress and highlight the impacts that have emerged because of various interventions and communities' efforts under the Programme.

The Balochistan Rural Development and Community Empowerment (BRACE) is a five year Programme with a 12 months no-cost extension. The Programme is being implemented in 10 districts of Balochistan with the joint efforts of the Balochistan Rural Support Programme (BRSP), National Rural Support Programme (NRSP), Rural Support Programme Network (RSPN), and the Technical Assistance team from DAI for the period July 2017 to June 2023.

The overall objective of the BRACE Programme is to support the Government of Balochistan in its efforts to reduce the negative impact of economic deprivation, poverty, and social inequality. The role of BRACE partner RSPs, in collaboration with RSPN, is to help the communities to form and effectively run three-tiered community institutions on a sustainable basis in partnership with the local authorities. Once people are organised into properly functioning self-governing institutions, the government and other development organisations can use these community institutions as a conduit to provide their supply and services to the poor households.

The Programme also has a policy component led by the Technical Assistance team from DAI. The role of DAI, technical assistance, is to enable the Government of Balochistan to strengthen the capacities of local government/ authorities in managing and involving communities in the statutory local public sector planning, financing, and implementation processes. The Public Finance Management (PFM) component, led by Oxford Policy Management (OPM), will assist the Government of Balochistan in costing and funding the community-led development policy framework.

At the inception of the Programme, a Poverty Scorecard (PSC) survey was conducted and the poor households with PSC score bands (0-23) and the non-poor households with PSC score bands (24-100) were identified. The beneficiaries of the BRACE Programme are poor households falling in the 0-23 PSC bands. The Programme interventions include Community Investment Fund (CIF), Income Generating Grants (IGGs), Technical and Vocational Educational Training (TVET), Adult Numeracy and Literacy Skills (ALNS) and building Community Physical Infrastructure (CPI) schemes.

The three-tiered social mobilisation structure includes formation of Community Institutions (CIs). Community Organisations (COs) are formed at the household level. A CO is participatory institution with membership of 15-25 households. The members are like-minded people, who are ready to tap their common resources collectively with cooperation and unity amongst themselves to overcome their common and individual household's social and economic constraints. One of the main features of the CO is its saving programme that provides financial access to the poorest. These COs are organised into Village Organisations (VOs) at the village level, which are then federated into Local Support Organisations (LSO) at the Union Council (UC) level. **As of June 2022, BRACE Programme has organised 286,117 households into 25,787 Community Organisations (COs), 5,617 Village Organisations (VOs) and 237 Local Support Organisations (LSOs).**

The efforts of the RSPs, implementing partners and the community members have laid critical ground work for communities to effectively run three-tiered community institutions fostered under the BRACE Programme in partnership with the local authorities. The impact of these institutions is already evident as several line departments and federal organisations, including NADRA, Ehsaas/BISP, and those responsible for health, social welfare, agriculture, forestry, and livestock recognise that use of community institutions leads to more efficient service delivery and greater capacity for meeting their objectives.

As of reporting period, the BRACE Programme has trained a cadre of community institution leaders including women. **At the Community Organisation level, 34,128 elected leaders are trained in Community Leadership and Management**

Skills (CMST) to serve their communities effectively and sustainably. At the Village Organisation (VO) and Local Support Organisation (LSO) levels, 5,836 executive body members received Leadership Management and Skills Training (LMST) and Management Advocacy and Leadership Training (MALT). The training modules include implementation and management of Community Investment Fund (CIF), Income Generating Grant (IGG) and Community Physical Infrastructure (CPI) schemes. It also focuses on consolidation of Village Development Plans (VDPs) and forming linkages with the government. For the effective management of Community Investment Fund (CIF), 181 community bookkeepers have been trained on accounting, bookkeeping and financial management.

As of year five, 1,071 Community Resource Persons (CRPs) have been trained on cross-cutting themes that include maternal and child health, education, sanitation, HIV/AIDS, climate change adaptation, child protection, gender mainstreaming and civil and political rights. These capacitated CRPs conduct awareness sessions in the community using the Community Awareness Toolkit designed by RSPN. As of June 2022, a total of 78,883 sessions have been conducted with 445,382 community members including 65 percent women participants. Using the network of community institutions to create awareness on citizen rights through the community awareness toolkit has resulted in 60,012 beneficiaries getting their CNICs made, 51,038 registered as voters, 5,204 birth certificates, 16,827 women vaccinated and 26,450 children vaccinated, 4,004 registered marriages, and 41,923 trees planted.

The RSP ideology is centered around the belief that poverty exists at the household level and hence, planning for poverty reduction must be focused on the household. As of June 2022, the members of the Community Organisation have developed 279,980 Micro Investment Plans (MIPs) involving 11,032 women community organisations. At the village level, 3,494 Village Development Plans (VDPs) have been developed involving 3,518 VOs in planning. At the Union Council level, 236 Union Council Development Plan (UCDPs) have been prepared. These UCDPs are then presented at the Joint Development Committees to create synergies between the RSPs, Community Institutions and local administrations/departments. As of year five, 09 district level and 31 tehsil level Joint Development Committee forums have been established and 118 dialogues have been conducted at the District and Tehsil levels.

The study on citizen and state linkages (2022) affirms the effectiveness of the development planning under the BRACE programme. According to this study, these thorough development plans and the subsequent resource mobilisation plans developed by the community institutions serve as a bridge, effectively articulating the demand side from the community and linking it to the service providers on the supply side. Through capacitating the community leaders and community institution members in making these development plans using bottom-up development approach, the BRACE Programme has succeeded in narrowing the gap between the demand and supply side, paving way to benefit the most marginalised members of the community.

The purpose of the **Community Physical Infrastructure (CPI)** projects is to improve basic community level infrastructure. After the development plans are prepared and consolidated at the Union Council level. The top prioritised need and type of infrastructure scheme is identified. The BRACE Programme funds development of one of the top prioritised Community Physical Infrastructure (CPI) scheme per union council. The engineering team of the RSPs provide technical support to the Local Support Organisations to design and implement these CPIs. As of year five, 186 schemes have been completed. These 186 completed CPI schemes benefit 20,438 households.

According to the study on assessment of outcomes of the CPI component (2022) the social impacts of the community physical infrastructure schemes on women empowerment are prominent. Overall 50 percent of the beneficiaries of the assessed CPI schemes are women.

In terms of economic benefits, access to clean drinking water has led to a decrease in average annual expenditure of PKR 3,600 per beneficiary household. The drainage and sanitation schemes have also positively impacted the health of the beneficiaries through prevention of contagious diseases and outbursts associated with the poor sewer management. Thus, contributing to 50% reduction of the total households expenditure on health. The construction of flood protection walls has additionally resulted in the increase in land value of the beneficiary households, increasing the overall value of the assets owned by the beneficiary.

The **Community Investment Fund (CIF)** is a revolving fund which is managed independently by the community institutions. It is a capital grant from the EU funded BRACE programme to the bank accounts of the community institutions, mainly local support organisations. The LSO further disburses the grant to the eligible poor households in PSC scorebands 0-23 based on their household micro investment plans. The LSOs have their bank accounts to keep the funds. A small percentage of the administrative fee is charged on each loan to sustain the cost of running CIF effectively. This cost includes the payment of the community bookkeeper and the operational cost for the Local Support Organisation. The RSPs provide technical and monitoring support during the project and are focused on capacity building of the community institutions to run the CIF effectively. *As of June 2022, the total number of households benefitting from CIF are 8,840 (68% women).* The research study on livelihood enhancement through BRACE interventions found that with provision of average loan size of PKR 29,226 the average nominal income of CIF beneficiaries increased by 11 percent of their monthly household incomes.

Out of 8,840 CIF beneficiaries, 37 percent beneficiaries invested in livestock, 29 percent invested in agriculture, and 34 percent invested in setting up their own enterprise. The data reflects that the overall highest number of beneficiaries invest the community investment fund in livestock.

The **Income Generating Grant (IGG)** is a one time grant for the extremely poor members of the organised households in PSC scorebands 0-18. The IGG support is provided according to the need identified in their household micro investment plan. The identified eligible households are provided a three days enterprise development training. The training capacitates the IGG beneficiaries to prepare a sound business plan for utilisation of the grant fund in a sustainable and profitable manner. *As of June 2022, the income generating grant has been provided to 12,054 beneficiaries.* The research study on livelihood enhancement through BRACE interventions reports that with provision of average grant size of PKR 44,296 the income of beneficiaries of the income generating grant increased by 23 percent, of their monthly household incomes.

Among IGG beneficiaries, the highest investment that is 73 percent of the beneficiaries have invested in livestock, 24 percent beneficiaries have invested in setting up their own enterprise, and 3 percent have invested in agriculture.

In both, overall CIF and IGG cases, investment in livestock has remained a preferred choice for beneficiaries. The participatory action research (2022) reports that the livestock holding pattern has increased from 2020 to 2021 and 2022 across ultra-poor category (PSC bands 12-18) and transitory poor category (PSC bands 19-23). This is a key factor contributing to the intra-poor category movement and movement from poor to non-poor category.

The programme ensures inclusion of marginalised members of the community such as **Persons with Special Needs (PWSN)**. Members are provided assistive devices based on medical screening and the need identified in their micro investment plans. These assistive devices enable them to participate in livelihood activities. In addition, Persons with Special Needs are also prioritised in other Programme interventions such as IGGs and CIF. *As of June 2022, 6,056 beneficiaries have been provided 6,776 assistive devices.*

The purpose of **Technical, Vocational and Education Training (TVET)** is to design and implement demand driven training programmes that provide access to the labour market and enhance income generating opportunities, diversification of income and self-employment to members of households with PSC score band 0-23. *As of June 2022, 2,487 members have been trained in TVET. These include 63 percent women beneficiaries.*

The emerging impact of technical and vocational education and training is evident through the fact that almost two-thirds of the graduates of this programme apply the learned skills to earn their livelihoods. The IPOR study on livelihood enhancement reports an average income increase of 16 percent of the average monthly income of the technical and vocational education and training beneficiaries. This increase in income was utilised on better food consumption, access to healthcare and children's education.

The purpose of the **Adult Literacy and Numeracy Skills (ALNS)** programme is to provide basic and practical literacy and numeracy skills to women community members to engage in systematic and sustained self-educating activities in order to gain new forms of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values. Priority is given to the members of households that fall within PSC score range of 0-23. As of year five, 12,104 women have been trained in adult literacy and numeracy programme.

The adult literacy and numeracy skills and technical and vocational training of women contribute to a significant emerging impact in influencing positive gender roles, and mainstreaming the role of women in social and economic empowerment

On the Policy level, in 2022, the TA team secured approval of the proposed amendments to the Balochistan Local Government Act 2020. Section 87 of the BLGA provides a legal cover for linking Community Institutions fostered under the BRACE Programme with the elected local governments. The sections states that “a Local Council, subject to approval of the Local Government Board, may engage Registered Community Based Organizations (CBOs)/ Community Institutions (CIs) in its local area development or execute such projects funded by the Donor Organizations/ Agencies”.

Under the **Research and Advocacy** component of the BRACE Programme, 'Evidence based policy recommendations generated and disseminated to support Community Led Local Governance (CLLG) for Balochistan', RSPN completed Participatory Action Research, and three thematic/sectoral studies. To facilitate dialogue among different stakeholders including policymakers, donor agencies, programme practitioners and researchers working on Community Driven Development programmes in Pakistan, advocacy and public policy events at the national and international levels were held.

Under the **Communication and Visibility (C&V)** component of the BRACE Programme, capacity building of RSPs in communication and regular support by RSPN in implementation of the C&V strategy and plans contributed to enhanced visibility and a steady growth in terms of social media presence and user engagement. As of year five, the BRACE Facebook page has 77,446 followers and users who visit the page. BRACE tweets have reached 62,133 visitors. In addition, 50 case studies and success stories, 14 newsletters and 30 Local Support Organisation Initiatives have been published on the BRACE Programme's website.

The community institutions fostered under the BRACE Programme, a trained cadre of community leaders, improved level of empowerment among women, and the Community-Led Local Governance (CLLG) policy, which is yet to be approved and operationalised, provide hope for sustainability and continuity of engagements between local governments and community institutions leading to potential pathways to graduate the marginalised community members of the target districts out of extreme poverty.

Structure of the Report

This Key Performance Indicator (KPI) report is published annually under the EU funded, Balochistan Rural Development and Community Empowerment (BRACE) Programme. This is the fifth annual KPI report presenting progress on the KPIs as of year five (June 2022) of the Programme. The theme of this report is to present progress and highlight the impacts that have emerged because of various interventions and communities' efforts under the Programme. The report presents gender disaggregated data with a focus on women empowerment and provides evidence-based research findings under each section.

The report is divided into nine sections. The first six sections capture different themes of development and the BRACE Programme's contribution to these through their associated interventions. Each of these sections is further divided into two parts, the first part reports progress on the KPIs, and the second part highlights the emerging impact. These sections are described below.

The first section signifies the theme; **Social Mobilisation**. This section discusses progress on number of Community Institutions (CIs) fostered under the BRACE Programme. Training and capacity building of the community leadership, and the collective efforts of the Community Institution members to form linkages with the government.

The second section highlights the theme of **Development Planning** where we look at bottom-up development approach through development of Micro Investment Plans (MIPs) at the household level, Village Development Plans (VDPs) at the village level and Union Council Development Plans (UCDPs) at the union council level. It will also elaborate on the participation of women and marginalised groups in these plans.

The third section specifically discusses **Access to Public Goods** which entails initiation, and completion of the Community Physical Infrastructure (CPI) schemes identified through the village development plans, and its impact on the lives of the poor.

The fourth section highlights the theme of **Access to Financial Services**. This section includes details on the Community Investment Fund (CIF) and Income Generating Grant (IGG) provided to the Programme beneficiaries and its impact on the lives of the poor.

The fifth section highlights the importance of **Economic Empowerment through Skills Development** and how it has benefitted the community members to integrate in the job market, diversification of income, increase in income and cost saving.

The sixth section discusses the **Policy Reforms** and highlights the efforts of implementing partners in addressing policy gaps, making amendments in the Balochistan Local Government Act 2010 (BLGA) and efforts to finalise the Community Led Local Governance (CLLG) Policy

The last two sections highlight the efforts of the BRACE Programme under the **Research and Advocacy** and **Communication and Visibility** components.

The last section will provide the **Challenges and Way Forward**, discussing how we intend to sustain the action, what impacts are expected from the communities and our commitment to continue the efforts.

Background of the BRACE Programme

Balochistan is Pakistan's largest province in terms of the land area, however, this also remains the least populated. The region has an abundance of natural resources, yet 71 percent of Balochistan's population is multidimensionally poor.¹ The province has not been able to optimally capitalise on its potential owing to a myriad of issues, like failed public policies, poor governance, the unstable geopolitical situation, influx of refugees, rising militancy, security issues, and crippling poverty.

To facilitate the communities to overcome the challenge of poverty, the European Union (EU) and the Balochistan Rural Support Programme (BRSP) launched the Balochistan Community Development Programme (BCDP) in 2013 in 40 Union Councils (UCs) of four districts namely Zhob, Loralai, Khuzdar, and Jhal Magsi in Balochistan. Upon successful pilot, the BCDP efforts were scaled up in June 2017 to 240 union councils in ten districts that are Kech, Chaman, Killa Abdullah, Duki, Pishin, and Washuk, Zhob, Loralai, Khuzdar, and Jhal Magsi. This programme was titled Balochistan Rural Development and Community Empowerment (BRACE) Programme. It is a five year programme with a further 12 months no-cost extension. The Programme is being implemented with the joint efforts of the Balochistan Rural Support Programme (BRSP), National Rural Support Programme (NRSP), Rural Support Programme Network (RSPN), and the Technical Assistance team from DAI for the period July 2017 to June 2023.

The overall objective of the BRACE Programme is to support the Government of Balochistan in its efforts to reduce the negative impact of economic deprivation, poverty, and social inequality. It aims at making multidimensional impact on the lives of Balochistan's poor through mobilising them into robust grassroots institutions, emphasising the strength of collective action. The members must first organise themselves, identify a dedicated leader, adopt the discipline of savings to generate their own capital, and meet on a regular basis to identify the potential of each poor household, through development planning at different tiers.

At the inception of the Programme, a Poverty Scorecard (PSC) survey was conducted and the poor in PSC score band (0-23) and the non-poor in PSC score band (24-100) were identified. The beneficiaries of the BRACE programme are poor households falling in the 0-23 PSC band. The role of BRACE partner RSPs, in collaboration with RSPN, is to help the communities to form and effectively run three-tiered community institutions on a sustainable basis in partnership with the local authorities. The interventions aim at improving the level of empowerment among women and their access to entitlements and financial services through various interventions including Community Investment Fund (CIF), Income Generating Grants (IGGs), Technical and Vocational Educational Training (TVET), Adult Numeracy and Literacy Skills (ALNS) and building Community Physical Infrastructure (CPI) schemes.

The role of DAI, technical assistance, is to enable the Government of Balochistan to strengthen the capacities of local government/ authorities in managing and involving communities in the statutory local public sector planning, financing, and implementation processes. The Programme also has a Public Finance Management (PFM) component, led by Oxford Policy Management (OPM), which will assist the Government of Balochistan to cost and fund the community-led development policy framework.

¹ https://www.pc.gov.pk/uploads/report/MPI_4pager.pdf

IMPACT OF BRACE PROGRAMME

Social Mobilisation



286,117

Households Organised



25,787

Community Organisations



5,617

Village Organisations



237

Local Support Organisations



58%

Community Institutions CIs are in category A and B



Category A



Category B

Social Indicators



445,382

Community members sensitised



65%

Women Participants



60,012

beneficiaries getting their CNICs made



51,038

Registered as voters



5,204

Birth Certificates



16,827

Women Vaccinated



26,450

Children Vaccinated



4,004

Registered Marriages

Community Physical Infrastructure (CPI)



186

Completed CPI schemes



20,438

Households Benefitted



Access to clean drinking water has led to a decrease in average annual expenditure of PKR **3,600** per beneficiary household



The economic analysis of the drinking water supply schemes indicate positive Net Present Value (NPV).



Reduction of the total households expenditure on health due to drainage and sanitation schemes

Community Investment Fund (CIF)



8,840

Households benefitting from CIF



68%

Women



37%

Beneficiaries have invested in livestock



29%

Beneficiaries have invested in agriculture



34%

Beneficiaries have invested in setting up their own enterprise



11%

CIF beneficiaries increased their monthly household incomes

Income Generating Grant (IGG)



12,054

IGG has been provided to beneficiaries



73%

Beneficiaries have invested in livestock



24%

Beneficiaries have invested in setting up their own enterprise



3%

Beneficiaries have invested in agriculture



26%

IGG beneficiaries increased their monthly household incomes

The participatory action research (2022) reports that the livestock holding pattern has increased from 2020 to 2021 and 2022 across ultra-poor category (PSC bands 12-18) and transitory poor category (PSC bands 19-23). This is a key factor contributing to the inner category movement and movement from poor to non-poor category.

Technical, Vocational and Education Training (TVET)



2,487

Members have been trained in TVET



63%

Women



Two-thirds of the graduates of this programme apply the learned skills to earn their livelihoods



An average income increase of **16%** of the average monthly income of the technical and vocational education and training beneficiaries

Adult Literacy and Numeracy Skills (ALNS)



12,104

Women have been trained in ALNS

The **224** learners from **9** centres obtained an average of **122** marks out of **200**, which translates to **61%**

Out of a total of **50** marks, They scored an average score of **22** in English, **32.3** in Urdu, **35** in Life Skills and **40.8** in Math



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Balochistan Rural Development and Community Empowerment (BRACE) Programme

BRACE Programme is funded by the European Union

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Section 1. Social Mobilisation

The Rural Support Programmes' social mobilisation approach to community driven development centers around the idea that people - including traditionally marginalised groups - have an innate potential to realise their skills and help themselves. This approach assists the poor and marginalised people to efficiently manage their locally available resources, improve their access to social and financial services and strengthens their participation in local decision making. Once people are organised into properly functioning self-governing institutions, the government and other development organisations can use these community institutions as a conduit to provide supply and services to the poor households.

1.1 Fostering Community Institutions

The three-tiered social mobilisation structure includes formation of Community Institutions (CIs). Community Organisations (COs) are formed at the household level. A CO is participatory institution with membership of 15-25 households who live together and share common interests. The members are like-minded people, who are ready to tap their common resources collectively with cooperation and unity amongst themselves to overcome their common and individual household's social and economic constraints. One of the main features of the CO is its saving programme that provides financial access to the poorest.

These COs are organised into Village Organisations (VOs) at the village level, which are then federated into Local Support Organisations (LSO) at the Union Council (UC) level. Each tier has representation of its people irrespective of the race, culture, or language and ensures that the most marginalised including persons with special needs and poorest households are members of it. This was also recognised by the external monitoring mission hired by the European Union.

Under the BRACE Programme, 0.28 million Pakistani citizens that is 98 percent of the target households in 240 union councils have been organised into a network of people's own institutions. Among these 50 percent household are in the poor category PSC score bands 0-23 and 50 percent are non-poor with PSC score above 23. Despite the socio-cultural barriers in mobility and access of women in development planning, the overall community institutions have 42 percent of women participation. At the community organisation level, women participation is 42 percent. At the village organisation level, women participation is 40 percent. However, the participation of women at the union council level stands only at 8 percent.

As of June 2022, BRACE has organised 286,117 households into 25,787 Community Organisations (COs), 5,617 Village Organisations (VOs) and 237 Local Support Organisations (LSOs).

Table 1: Achievement on Indicators of Social Mobilisation

Indicator	Overall Target	Overall Achievement	Achievement in Percentage
Number of Households Organised	294,713	286,117	97
Number of COs Formed	19,129	25,787	135
Total number of CO members		392,668	
Male members in COs	Up to 50%	226,265	58
Female members in COs	At least 50%	166,403	42
Number of VOs Formed	3,085	5,617	182
Total number of VO members		40,389	
Male members in VOs	Up to 50%	24,178	60
Female members in VOs	At least 50%	16,203	40
Number of LSOs Formed	243	237	98%
Total number of LSO members		11,318	
Male members in LSOs	Up to 50%	10,363	92
Female members in LSOs	At least 50%	955	8

Source: Monthly KPI report as of 30th June 2022

1.2 Training and Capacity Building of Community Resource Persons (CRPs)

The common lack of awareness around social issues and areas of important citizen rights not only make the rural population of the province more vulnerable but also acts as a deterrent to break the shackles of deep-rooted poverty. Therefore, to create awareness among the community members about critical social issues, RSPN in consultation with the RSPs developed a Community Awareness Toolkit (CAT) to use and implement under the BRACE Programme.

As of year 5, a total of 1,071 Community Resource Persons (CRPs) have been trained on cross-cutting themes which include maternal and child health, education, sanitation, HIV/AIDS, climate change adaptation, child protection, gender mainstreaming and civil and political rights.

The capacitated Community Resource Persons (CRPs) under the BRACE Programme conduct CAT sessions in the community with a vision of sensitising and capacitating the rural women and men on cross-cutting issues that require immediate attention. As of June 2022, a total of 78,883 sessions have been conducted with 445,382 community members including 65 percent women participants trained on CAT.

1.3 Training of and Capacity Building of Community Institution Leaders on Community Management Skills Training (CMST), Leadership Management Skills Training (LMST) and Management Advocacy and Leadership Training (MALT)

At the Community Organisation (CO) level, the elected president and vice president of the CO are trained in community leadership and management skills to serve their communities effectively and sustainably. This training is called Community Management Skills Training (CMST) under the BRACE programme. At the Village Organisation (VO) and Local Support Organisation (LSO) levels, the presidents and managers receive Leadership Management and Skills Training (LMST) and Management Advocacy and Leadership Training (MALT). The training module includes implementation and management of Community Investment Fund (CIF), Income Generating Grant (IGG) and Community Physical Infrastructure (CPI) schemes. It also focuses on consolidation of Village Development Plans (VDPs) and forming linkages with the government. These trainings are designed to be interactive, provide context-based examples and inculcate skills of problem solving, effective decision making and people management to the community leaders.

As of June 2022, 34,128 people have been trained for Community Management Skills Training and 5,836 have been trained for Leadership Management Skills Training and Management Advocacy and Leadership Training. In total 17,377 women leaders have been trained in leadership roles through these trainings.

1.4 Training of and Capacity Building of Community Bookkeepers

For the effective running and management of the community investment fund, the local support organisation hires one community bookkeeper. In union councils with a scattered population over a large area, more than one community bookkeeper may be hired. The community bookkeeper is responsible for maintaining community investment fund, records and accounts and plays a crucial role in the recovery of the CIF. These community bookkeepers are trained on accounting, bookkeeping and financial management.

As of June 2022, 181 community bookkeepers have been hired and trained.

Table 2: Achievement on Indicators of Training and Capacity Building

Indicator	Overall Target	Overall Achievement	Achievement in Percentage
Number of community members trained as (CRPs)	823	1071	130
Number of participants trained in CMST	40,258	34,128	85
Number of participants trained in LMST and MALT	6,656	5,836	88
Number of Community Bookkeepers trained	243	181	74

Source: Monthly KPI report as of 30th June 2022

Emerging Impact

The emerging impact of the social mobilisation component under the BRACE programme is evident through the collective savings of the community organisations and its easy access to the member households and especially women. It is observed that women have limited access to financial services due to socio-cultural norms restricting their mobility and lack of services available in the rural areas of Balochistan. This often leads to borrowing money from money lenders, or shop keepers who charge high interest rates pushing the already vulnerable into deeper poverty. Through fostering Community Institutions, inculcating the discipline of saving at the household level and the value of collective saving, poor members of the community and especially women are now able to better cope with health and economic shocks through access to these savings in emergency situations. Effective management of the saving programme at the community organisation level has also led to improvement in financial management skills of organised members.

The fifth external monitoring mission reports the mushrooming of a generation of female leaders as a remarkable achievement of the BRACE programme. The Community Institutions (CIs) enable women to form a collective. These CIs serve as forums for discussion pertaining to women and their needs. Providing a platform for women to share their stories, socialise, voice their concerns, and represent themselves. For most women living in conservative settings, these opportunities were either forbidden or unavailable. The BRACE programme has provided an opportunity for these women to take up leadership roles and consequently ignited hope in young girls that they are fully capable of representing themselves and their communities.

A tangible manifestation of improved levels of women empowerment is the formation of Village Organisation Networks. These are networks of multiple village organisations where women independently run these and represent themselves. Initially, women in most BRACE programme districts were not allowed to sit with men at the LSO level, and it led to serious underrepresentation at the union council level bodies. The RSPs recognised this gap and addressed it by piloting a new tier in the social mobilisation structure especially catering to representation of women. A total of 14 Women VO networks are formed which represent 266 VOs. Under the aegis of these networks, women leaders now represent their community at the Joint District Development Committees (JDDCs) where they engage with the government departments and present their needs. The EMM took note of this and reports this as a positive change in gender inequality.

“A recent initiative, the women's VO networks, while not a mirror of the male-dominated LSOs will enable women leaders to come together and engage with one another, at an even higher level – that of the union council. Such networks have already started participating in the quarterly joint district development committee meetings. The positive change in gender inequality that is occurring should not be under-emphasised.” (May 2022)

The formation of community institutions and the efforts to train a cadre of community leaders to effectively run these, has fostered independent linkages with the government departments. The EMM further affirms that these trainings and exposure visits have developed skills and understanding among Community Institution leaders to build linkages and collaborate with the government and other development partners for development initiatives. The report titled 'The Power of Social Capital; A Report on LSOs Fostering Development Linkages with Government and Non-Government Agencies in BRACE Programme Districts of BRSP' found the CIs to have successfully mobilised approximately PKR 1.34 billion to implement hard component interventions (including education, climate change, drinking water and healthcare initiatives) and PKR 56.22 million for soft component activities (including civil registrations and entitlements, youth development, and COVID awareness etc.)

The Institutional Maturity Index (IMI) survey of 2021 where a sample of 444 community institutions were assessed, revealed that 58% of the CIs are in category A and B (10% in A and 47% in B). This reflects that the community institutions have matured over time and are becoming institutionally independent. This positive trend indicates that these institutions can be run independently and effectively to deliver services to the poorest community member's post-project.

Using the network of community institutions to create awareness on citizen rights through the community awareness toolkit has resulted in 60,012 beneficiaries getting their CNICs made, 51,038 registered as voters, 5,204 birth certificates, 16,827 women and 26,450 children vaccinated, 4,004 registered marriages, 41,923 trees planted, and 6,056 beneficiaries provided 6,776 assistive devices. These outcomes have led to improvement in the social indicators and contributed to empowering the communities to access their citizenship rights. It also provides evidence on the budding use of these community institutions as a conduit to provide supply and services to the poor households.



Section 2. Development Planning

2.1 Micro Investment Plans (MIPs)

The RSP ideology is centered around the belief that poverty exists at the household level and hence, planning for poverty reduction must be focused at the household level. After the formation of the community institutions, the next step is to encourage development planning. The CO develops Micro Investment Plans (MIPs) for each of its member households. MIPs are developed by both men and women community organisations. While developing the MIP for the household, the CO members are guided that they should conduct self-reliant planning keeping in view their own conditions and resources. The CO Leaders are trained to facilitate development planning through the following.

- a. Discuss with the household member the potential economic resources they have and constraints they face at the household level
- b. Discuss and identify potential new economic activities that the households may be willing to carry out
- c. Discuss and identify the human and material resources available to the household to carry out the new economic activity
- d. Discuss and identify the human and material resources that are required to initiate the new economic activity identified for the improvement of the household; and
- e. Discuss and estimate the expected income from the new economic activity identified

As of year 5, a total of 279,980 MIPs has been developed involving 11,032 women community organisations.

2.2 Village Development Plans (VDPs)

A VDP is a plan which includes development initiatives at the village level, as identified by the Village Organisation and its member Community Organisations. It consists of activities (large and small, cash and cash-less) which the VO aims to achieve. Social mobilisation, outreach, poverty reduction, the inclusion of poor and women, persons with special needs, and gender mainstreaming are the common themes in the VDP. The VDP serves as an essential mechanism for achieving the purpose of Village Organisations becoming self-regulated and sustainable organisations of the communities. The VDP process is instrumental in developing the Village Organisation members' capability to undertake analysis of existing situation and to identify and prioritise women's and men's needs, mobilise resources, and implement these at the village level.

As of year 5, a total of 3,494 VDPs have been developed involving 3,518 VOs in planning.

2.3 Union Council Development Plans (UCDPs)

A UCDP is a plan which includes development initiatives at the UC level, as identified by the Local Support Organisation and its member Village Organisations and Community Organisations. Separate UCDPs are prepared by women and men LSOs. Later, the social mobilisation teams consolidate both UCDPs into one. The common activities are counted as one, while the different activities prioritised by men and women LSOs remain intact in the common UCDP. The approved UCDP and its subsequent Resource Mobilisation Plan (RMP) that identifies the resources and means of resource mobilisation are the basis for Local Support Organisations to implement development initiatives at the Union Council level. The LSOs share their UCDP at the Tehsil and District level with the relevant government authorities and other development organisations to include their needs in the development planning.

As of June 2022, 236 UCDPs have been prepared and presented at the JDCs involving 3 women LSOs in planning.

2.4 Joint Development Committees (JDCs)

The key objective of Joint District Committees is to create synergies between the RSPs, Community Institutions and local administrations/departments and externally supported development investment in the programme districts in the planning of BRACE programme interventions. This participatory planning approach provides a learning platform for all actors concerned to avoid duplication of efforts and monitoring of efforts to facilitate improved development results.

As of year five, 09 district level and 31 tehsil level Joint Development Committee forums have been established and 118 dialogues have been conducted at the District and Tehsil levels.

Table 3: Achievement on Indicators of Development Planning

Indicator	Overall Target	Overall Achievement	Achievement in Percentage
Number of Micro Investment Plans developed	294,729	279,980	95
Number of Village Development Plans developed	2,467	3,494	141
Number of Union Council Plans developed	243	236	97
Number of JDC forums established (District + Tehsil)	40	35	87
Number of JDC meetings held	190	118	62

Source: Monthly KPI report as of 30th June 2022

Women at the Higher Tier



A meeting of the Joint District Development Committee was held at the District Meeting Hall under the chair of Assistant Deputy Commissioner of Khuzdar Mr. Siraj Kareem Baloch. Besides the Line Departments operating in the District Mr. Muhammad Darjat & Mohsin Ayub from Reenriga and Mr. Iqbal ur Rehman from Venture Momentum who were conducting the CPI Assessment and BRACE impact also participated. In another first the members from Women Network also participated in the JDDC. Miss Noreen from Bright Futures Women Network UC Tootak also informed about the work done by women networks and highlighted the needs of women in her community.

Emerging Impact

The evidence of improved participation of women in development planning is marked by representation of women in the JDDCs where these rural women from often poor households are taking up their development needs with the office of the Deputy Commissioner. In the context of Balochistan, the role of women has traditionally been confined to households and undertaking domestic responsibilities. These women were provided with limited opportunities of education, exercising civic rights, participation in social interactions or decision making. However, the BRACE Programme has been a catalyst in providing an opportunity to these women to engage in socio-economic activities and development planning. The development plans and the number of people represented by these women leaders play a critical role in them being appreciated and accepted in these meetings. The fifth EMM reports an instance where the Deputy Commissioner of district Jhal Magsi appreciated the clarity and vision of women representatives in the JDC meeting presided by him. Participation of women in these activities has been a significant milestone towards empowering women and challenging the existing inequalities. However, the continuation of these efforts is crucial to provide an enabling environment to encourage more women to actively participate in decision making. The EMM report reiterates,

“These are significant dents in inequality and disempowerment which will certainly bring about broader and meaningful women participation in future” (May 2022)

The study on citizen and state linkages conducted by a third-party consultant affirms the effectiveness of the development planning under the BRACE programme. According to this study, these thorough development plans and the subsequent resource mobilisation plans developed by the community institutions serve as a bridge, effectively articulating the demand side from the community and linking it to the service providers on the supply side. Through capacitating the community leaders and community institution members in making these development plans using bottom-up development approach, the BRACE Programme has succeeded in narrowing the gap between the demand and supply side, paving way to benefit the most marginalised members of the community. A significant emerging impact towards developing sustainable linkages is the community leader's pursuit of exploring non-formal pathways to press their demands, as reported

LSO leaders found a pathway for pursuing their infrastructure priorities by making state actors more responsive. They realised that district-level officials could not respond to their priorities and focused, instead, on provincial and national assembly members from their areas. The legislators took cognisance of the vote bank represented by the organised communities and took LSO priorities to the highest levels of the provincial political leadership and relevant federal authorities, which included them in relevant departmental PSDPs.²

The most significant emerging impact of capacitating the communities to undertake development planning is reflected through their ability to independently develop linkages and mobilise resources. Highlighting the emerging impact of developing expertise in resource mobilisation and undertaking self-help initiatives to strengthen the public service structure and contribute to improving the local governance, a study was conducted by the RSPN Social Mobilisation Specialist, with the support of BRSP, to look in detail at the resources mobilised by the LSOs.³ The report found the CIs to have successfully mobilised PKR 1.34 billion to implement hard component interventions and PKR 56.22 million for soft component activities. The money was accessed by the LSO for education, environment/climate change initiatives, drinking water scheme, electricity supply and healthcare initiatives. It benefitted 222,820 beneficiaries through drinking water schemes, followed by 113,787 health care beneficiaries. The sources of funds include MNA/MPAs, health, education, and energy departments. This directly reflects priorities of the communities' and their independent efforts to undertake development initiatives.

² Assessment of the Fostering and Strengthening of Citizen-state Engagement: Achievements, Lessons Learned and Way Forward (2022)

³ The Power of Social Capital; A Report on LSOs Fostering Development Linkages with Government and Non-Government Agencies



Section 3. Access To Public Goods

3.1 Community Physical Infrastructure (CPI) schemes

The purpose of the CPI projects is to improve basic community level infrastructure. After the development plans are prepared and consolidated at the Union Council level. The top prioritised need and type of infrastructure scheme is identified. Following this, the field engineers at the RSP level conduct a detailed technical survey of the project that includes environmental & social clearance of the proposed Community Physical Infrastructure scheme. The BRACE Programme funds development of one of the top prioritised Community Physical Infrastructure (CPI) scheme per union council. The engineering team of the RSPs provide technical support to the Local Support Organisations in designing and implementing these CPIs. Each LSO forms three committees including, Procurement Committee, Audit Committee, and Operations and Maintenance Committee. In addition, three percent of the total cost is contributed by the community members in the form of labour or in kind as per agreement with the community. Participation of the community members not only creates a sense of ownership among community members but also helps in building their capacity to implement and maintain the CPI schemes.

As of year five, 1,707 CPI schemes have been identified out of which technical feasibility studies of 342 schemes were conducted. As a result, 278 schemes were initiated out of which 186 schemes have been completed.

Table 4: Achievement on indicators of Community Physical Infrastructure

Indicator	Overall Target	Overall Achievement	Achievement in Percentage
Number of CPIs initiated	363	278	77
Number of beneficiary households of initiated CPIs	17,660	28,949	191
Number of CPIs completed	363	186	51
Number of households benefiting from completed CPIs	17,660	20,438	115

Source: Monthly KPI report as of 30th June 2022

Out of 186 completed CPI schemes, 121 drinking water supply schemes were constructed, 26 renewable energy schemes, 11 irrigation schemes, 10 government services facilities were rehabilitated, and 15 flood and other disaster protection schemes were constructed. The 186 completed CPI schemes benefitted 20,438 households. The details of this are presented below.

Table 5: Beneficiary Households for different types of CPI schemes under the BRACE programme

Types of CPI schemes	Number of Beneficiary households	Percentage of Beneficiary households
Drinking Water Supply Scheme (DWSS)	15,390	75%
Renewable Energy	1,985	10%
Floods and other Disaster protection and Check Dams	1,537	8%
Rehabilitation of Govt Services Facilities	912	4%
Irrigation	500	2%
Drainage & Sanitation	114	1%

Source: Monthly KPI report as of 30th June 2022

Emerging impact

The fifth external monitoring mission reported improvement in the design, construction, and maintenance of the CPI schemes. It was verified that the implemented infrastructure projects are technically and environmentally feasible and carefully designed under the expertise of the Pakistan Engineering Council engineers at the RSP level. These infrastructure projects contribute to direct economic and social benefits to the community members. The participation of community members in the implementation of these schemes has borne economic benefits such as employment opportunities in the form of daily wages, profit for businesses through local procurement of construction materials, technical and financial skills enhancement through engagement in the procurement process and acquiring experience through implementation of the infrastructure project under the supervision of RSP engineers. The social benefits of this exercise include conflict resolution during the construction and social cohesion among the community members in implementing and maintaining the CPI scheme. The common benefit of the prioritised infrastructure schemes is recognised by the community members and is reciprocated through their increased contribution to the cost of the schemes and improved post implementation operations and maintenance. The CPI assessment reports,⁴

The Households have also participated in the need identification process for the CPI scheme indicating that the scheme implemented is highly relevant to the community's needs. The need was indicated in VDPs and UCDPs.

According to the study on assessment of outcomes of the CPI component under the BRACE programme conducted in 2022, social impacts of the community physical infrastructure schemes on women empowerment are prominent. Overall 50 percent of the beneficiaries of the assessed CPI schemes are women. This is a result of including women at two levels (a) participation in needs identification exercises and (b) being part of the committees for project implementation, procurement, audit, and operations and management. This evidence is also supported by the external monitoring mission that reports that women are consenting to the identified prioritised schemes.

Under the CPI assessment study (2022) survey with a sample of four hundred households including fifty percent women beneficiaries was conducted to assess the relevance of the CPI schemes with their actual needs. In terms of relevance of the type of CPI schemes, the schemes were found to be highly relevant to the identified priority needs of the community members and especially women. This finding signifies the success of bottom up development planning and inclusion of the marginalised in infrastructure development initiatives under the BRACE programme. The impacts of each type of scheme is presented below.

Drinking Water Supply schemes were a top priority need for 89 percent of the beneficiaries including fifty percent women. These schemes have contributed significantly to empowering women who previously had to travel longer distances to fetch drinking water. With the construction of CPI schemes at a shorter distance, the average distance is reduced from 2 km to 0.2 km resulting in the saving of time reducing the labour involved in accessing clean drinking water. The CPI study further adds that this saved time is utilised by men and women to engage in productive household, economic and social activities. In some areas women were found engaging in plantation and sustenance agriculture activities due to easy access to the water source.

Beneficiaries of these scheme have reported a significant reduction in their monthly expenditure on health services. The access to clean drinking water has led to a decrease in average annual expenditure of PKR 3,600 per household. This type of scheme has also contributed to improved health and hygiene practices such as handwashing among the beneficiaries. The report affirms,

The HHs reported that there was no safe drinking water before the implementation of DWSS, which frequently caused water-borne diseases such as diarrhea, hepatitis, and other gastrointestinal issues. However, water is tested before the implementation of each BRACE Programme DWSS for its physical and chemical qualities; thus, water quality proved, and it is fit for health.

⁴ Assessment of Outcomes from the Community Physical Infrastructure (CPI) Component of the EU-Funded BRACE Programme (2022)

The economic analysis of the drinking water supply schemes indicate positive Net Present Value (NPV). The Net Present Value simply accounts for the time value of money. An estimate calculation based on the sample of thirty two CPI schemes where an investment of PKR 45 million was made, suggests a NPV of PKR 100 million.

Drainage and Sanitation schemes have directly contributed to social and environmental benefits. These schemes result in reduced sewerage infiltration of the ground water and bad smells, land and water pollution. It has also led to a cleaner appearance of locality contributing to an improved level of self-worth.

The drainage and sanitation schemes have also positively impacted health of the beneficiaries through prevention of contagious diseases and outbreaks associated with the poor sewer management. The CPI assessment reports that these schemes have contributed to reducing 50% of the total households expenditure on health.

The impact of **Flood Protection Walls** is visible through the improved sense of security and the community members willingness to invest in further development reported during household survey. These investments include housing and sustenance agriculture. Construction of flood protection walls has additionally resulted in the increase in land value of the beneficiary HH increasing the overall value of the assets owned by the beneficiary.



Section 4. Access to Financial Services

4.1 Community Investment Fund (CIF)

The community investment fund is a revolving fund which is managed independently by the community institutions. It is a capital grant from the EU funded BRACE programme to the bank accounts of the community institutions, mainly local support organisations. The LSOs further disburse the grant to the eligible poor households in PSC scorebands 0-23 based on their household micro investment plans. The LSOs have their bank accounts to keep the funds. A small percentage of the administrative fee is charged on each loan to sustain the cost of running CIF effectively. This cost includes the payment of the community bookkeeper and the operational cost for the community institution.

The RSPs provide technical and monitoring support during the project and are focused on capacity building of the community institutions to run the CIF effectively. “CIF is to be used and not consumed” and “it should serve maximum number of eligible poor households” are the main principles around which the policies and procedures of the implementation are based. The CIF serves three major purposes.

- I. Improving the effectiveness, managerial capacities and relevance of these community institutions on a sustainable basis and keeping the community institutions functional and active;
- II. Using the grant to provide capital to CO members for income generating activities and revolving it to benefit maximum number of poor households; and
- III. Empowering women beneficiaries socially and economically at household and community levels.

The eligible households are provided CIF based on their micro-investment plans. The average loan size of CIF under the BRACE programme is PKR 29,000. The community institution leaders and the beneficiary agree on a repayment schedule depending on the beneficiary's ease of repayment. The community bookkeeper is responsible for recovery and maintains a proper record. A total of 181 community bookkeepers are trained. The recovered amount goes back to the LSO account, and another eligible beneficiary can benefit from it. A beneficiary can access the loan multiple times if they have a sound investment plan. The LSO members decide if the beneficiary is eligible for the second loan.

Out of 8,840 CIF beneficiaries, 37 percent beneficiaries invested in livestock with 61 percent of these being women, 29 percent invested in agriculture with 69 percent of these being women, and 34 percent invested in setting up their own enterprise with 76 percent of them being women. The data reflects that the overall highest number of beneficiaries invest the community investment fund in livestock. However, overall the highest number of female beneficiaries that is 2,258 invested in enterprise.

As of June 2022, the total number of households benefitting from CIF are 8,840. Out of the CIF loans granted, 6,043 (68%) loans are granted to women beneficiaries.

Table 6: Achievement on indicators of Community Investment Fund

Indicator	Overall Target	Overall Achievement	Achievement in Percentage
Number of LSO/VOs managing CIF	243	191	
Total amount of CIF with LSOs/VOs (PKR in million)	477.7	407.7	85
Total amount of CIF disbursed to poor households by (VOs/LSOs) (PKR in million)	477.7	235.8	49
Number of households benefitting from CIF	19,550	8,840	45

Source: Monthly KPI report as of 30th June 2022

Breaking Barriers Ms Sammi Hussain Jan from Kech (CIF beneficiary)

Ms Sammi Hussain Jan, a female member of Local Support Organisation Rahshoon in district Kech has set a high example of breaking barriers. She took a loan from the Community Investment Fund and set up a small tyre repair shop along the Kech-Karachi highway. Ms Sammi manages the finances of her business and hired a migrant labour, Muhammad Ali, to run her tire repair shop. It was inspiring to see that a woman in Kech, with little to no formal education was able to set up a non-conventional business and exercise her wisdom and skills of financial management to run this entrepreneurial venture which is traditionally occupied by men only.

After successfully completing the first cycle of CIF repayments, Ms Sammi Hussain Jan gained confidence and applied for a second loan of PKR 50,000. Using this loan, she booked on instalments a costly machine albeit second-hand, used in repairing heavy tires. As the business and the profits expand, she has now entered into a partnership to split the profits with her business partner and employee, Muhammad Ali. She reported a net profit of PKR 15,000 per month after paying back the CIF instalments.



Heavy vehicles tire repair shop established by a women CIF borrower, Ms Sammi in Kech, Balochistan

4.2 Income Generating Grant (IGG)

The income generating grant is a one time cash grant for the extremely poor members of the organised households in PSC scorebands 0-18. The IGG support is provided according to the need identified in their household micro investment plan. The identified eligible households are provided a three days enterprise development training. The training capacitates the IGG beneficiaries to prepare a sound business plan for utilisation of the grant fund in a sustainable and profitable manner.

The highest proportion that is 73 percent of the beneficiaries have invested in livestock with 76 percent of this investment from women beneficiaries. 24 percent beneficiaries have invested in setting up their own enterprise with 74 percent of them being women, and 3 percent have invested in agriculture with 56 percent of these being women. As compared to the highest investment in enterprise by women beneficiaries of the community investment fund, the highest number of women beneficiaries that is 6,738 preferred to invest the income generating grant in livestock.

As of June 2022, the income generating grant has been provided to 12,054 beneficiaries.

Table 7: Achievement on indicators of Income Generating Grant

Indicator	Overall Target	Overall Achievement	Achievement in Percentage
Number of LSOs managing IGG sub grant		204	
Number of VOs managing IGG sub grant		35	
Total amount of IGG sub-grants with LSOs/VOs/COs (PKR in million)	642.1	607.8	95
Total amount of IGG sub -grants disbursed to poor households (PSC 0-18) - (PKR in million)	642.1	602.8	94
Number of households benefiting from IGGs	13,632	12,054	88

Source: Monthly KPI report as of 30th June 2022

When There is a Will, There is a Way (IGG beneficiary)

Bibi Masooma a 28 years old girl with special needs is an epitome of strength and courage. Masooma actively participated in the community organisation AMAN fostered under the BRACE Programme at the household level. She also represents the women of her community at the village organisation level in the VO GULSHAN.

Masooma's father, who was the sole bread winner for her family passed away recently. His demise left the family financially unsupported. Under these circumstances, Masooma stood the test of time. Masooma decided to break the chains of poverty and support her family. Masooma proposed to open a cosmetic shop in her Micro Investment Plan and was nominated for the Income Generating Grant. Since her PSC score was 11, she was shortlisted for provision of Income Generating Grant. Masooma requested BRSP to procure cosmetic items for a make-shift shop which she runs from her house. BRSP provided her cosmetic items of PKR 50,000. She reportedly earns 700-800 per day which is almost 18000 per month. She also saves money and re-invests these savings to expand her business. Within a year, her shop has done well, and she now has products worth PKR 200,000 in her home-run business.

4.3 Provision of Assistive Devices to Persons with Special Needs

The programme ensures inclusion of marginalised members of the community such as persons with special needs. The members are provided assistive devices based on medical screening and the need identified in their micro investment plans. These assistive devices enable them to participate in livelihood activities. Beneficiaries and their families are sensitised on proper use and care of these devices. They are also motivated to register with the Social Welfare Department (SWD) to access benefits including social protection provided by the state authorities. The beneficiaries are also linked with other NGOs and service providers for repair and maintenance of their devices. The details of the type of assistive devices provided as of June 2022 are given in table 7. In addition to provision of assistive device, Persons with Special Needs are also prioritised in other Programme interventions such as IGGs and CIF.

Table 8: Achievement on indicators of Persons with Special Needs

KPI	Overall Programme Target	Overall Achievement	Achievement (%)
Number of identified PWDs (Orth/Prosth) for Provision of assistive devices	3,856	6,776	175.73%
Total beneficiaries received assistive devices	6,271	6,056	96.57%

Source: Monthly KPI report as of 30th June 2022

Emerging Impact

The external monitoring mission endorses the impact of CIF on empowering women, socially and economically at the household level. The community investment fund provides access to financial services to the poor (PSC 0-23) members of the community and especially women. These women, in the context of Balochistan have limited access to financial resources and are unable to secure investments to initiate income generating activities. With the availability of CIF through the community organisations, these women are now able to tap into their potential and take part in income generating activities. Since the CIF is unlike the conventional microcredit programs that charge a high markup, the community members recognise the need for this fund, and increased demand for CIF is reported among them. The external monitoring mission reports the following two case studies.

Women borrowers who used CIF loans themselves also informed that their income increased substantially. For example, Ms Kulsoom from Kund Shahar of Khuzdar bought a sewing machine; she gets orders from Khuzdar, and her husband was helping her in marketing. She earns at least 6,000-8,000 PKR per month. Similarly, Bibi Zainab from UC Abi Zawang received CIF two times; with one loan she bought a sewing machine and with another loan she purchased 3 small goats. She earns 8,000 PKR per month. (EMM 5 May 2022)

The CIF intervention has improved managerial capacities of community institutions through training the LSO office bearers and community bookkeepers to manage the fund effectively. This training has equipped them with financial knowledge and standard record-keeping skills. The process of technical and social appraisal to disburse the CIF to eligible households according to their micro investments has also led to improved decision-making and inclusion of marginalised members of the community.

The active involvement of the community institutions in CIF disbursement, recovery, monitoring, and record-keeping further strengthens the community institutions and fosters a sense of ownership, builds trust, and creates sense of empowerment among its members. At present, 191 number of LSOs are managing the community investment fund. The latest institutional maturity index survey reveals that 58 percent of community institutions are institutionally independent. These provide evidence that the CIF strengthens the process of turning these grassroots organisations into stronger, functional, and more mature organisations of the people and emphasises that these organisations will remain active as long as there is a need for CIF and they keep revolving it. The effective management of the CIF can be leveraged as the community institution's capacity to manage grants from other donors through resource mobilisation.

The CIF under BRACE programme is aimed at reaching maximum number of poor (in PSC bands 0-23) community members. An interesting observation that has emerged through managing CIF is that multiple rounds of CIF loans to a single beneficiary aid in poverty graduation. In district Kech, mature local support organisations have practiced this and provided up to three rounds of loans to some beneficiaries, contributing to poverty graduation. The impact of CIF and its sustainability is also evident through the local support organisations successfully revolving the complete CIF amount twice, increasing the CIF net portfolio. This also ensures that the amount is increased over time and can benefit maximum number of people.

The research study on livelihood enhancement through BRACE interventions found that the average nominal income of CIF beneficiaries (receiving PKR 29,226 on average) increased by 11 percent while the average nominal income of beneficiaries of the income generating grant (receiving PKR 44,296) increased by 23 percent, of their monthly household incomes. The participatory action research attributes the movement from ultra poor into upward categories to the support provided by the BRACE programme in the form of livestock and micro-enterprise based income generating activities.⁵

Among CIF beneficiaries, the highest percent that is 37 percent have invested in livestock which includes 61 percent women. Among IGG beneficiaries, 73 percent have invested in livestock which includes 76 percent women. In both, overall CIF and IGG cases, livestock investment has remained a preferred choice for beneficiaries. The participatory action research reports that the livestock holding pattern has increased from 2020 to 2021 and 2022 across ultra-poor category (PSC bands 12-18) and transitory poor category (PSC bands 19-23). This is a key factor contributing to the inner category movement and movement from poor to non-poor category.

⁵ PAR Wave 3 Report for Participatory action Research on Dynamics of Household Poverty and Inclusive Development in Balochistan with a Focus on women's Empowerment



بلوچستان دیہی ترقی و سماجی تقویت پروگرام

Balochistan Rural Development and Community
Empowerment (BRACE) Programme

تعلیم بالغان اور عددی مہارتوں کا سینٹر

برائے خواتین

Adult Literacy & Numeracy Skill Center

Functional
English

Section 5. Economic Empowerment through Skills Development

5.1 Technical and Vocational Educational Training (TVET)

One of the key activities under the BRACE programme is to provide Technical, Vocational and Education Training (TVET) to poor community members, especially women. Male and female members of households with PSC score band 0-23 and of the age 18-45 years are eligible for TVET training. The purpose of TVET is to design and implement demand driven training programmes that provide access to the labour market and enhance income generating opportunities, diversification of income and self-employment. The training is provided by the fully accredited structure in line with the EU-Funded TVET programme, resulting in the beneficiaries receiving a certificate/diploma that is recognised by the State and has real value in the marketplace.

The top three skills for males are Electronic and Computer, Mobile Phone Repair and Auto Mechanic and for females are Garments (Fashion Designing and Dress Cutting & Stitching), Hand Embroidery and Beauty Industry. The type of training is decided based on the need identified by the community members themselves in their micro investment plans. After completion of the training, the beneficiaries are provided necessary tools and equipment to initiate self-employment activities.

As of June 2022, 2,487 members have been trained in TVET. These include 63 percent women beneficiaries.

Table 9: Achievement on indicators of TVET

KPI	Overall Programme Target	Overall Achievement	Achievement (%)
Number of beneficiaries trained in TVET	3,098	2,487	80
Men trained	Up to 50%	1,045	42
Women trained	At least 50%	1,442	58

Source: Monthly KPI report as of 30th June 2022

Table 10: Skills Categories in TVET

KPI	Overall Achievement	Achievement (%)
Garments (Fashion Designing and Dress Cutting & Stitching)	1,171	66
Beauty Industry	76	4
Digital Printing (Tie and Dye)	43	2
Hand Embroidery	317	18
Crops, Poultry and Livestock	36	2
Mobile Phone Repair	174	10
Electronic and Computer	238	13
Auto Mechanic	98	6
Auto Electrician	22	1
Motor winding	68	4
AC and Fridge Repair	46	3
Laptop Repair	12	1
Plumbing	41	2
General Electrician	45	3
Others	100	6

Source: Monthly KPI report as of 30th June 2022

5.2 Adult Literacy and Numeracy Skills (ALNS) Training

The purpose of the Adult Literacy and Numeracy Skills (ALNS) programme is to provide basic and practical literacy and numeracy skills to women community members to engage in systematic and sustained self-educating activities in order to gain new forms of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values. Priority is given to the members of households that fall within PSC score range of 0-23. The final lists of selected beneficiaries are prepared at the community organisation level and this information is compiled at the village and union council levels. The RSPs then arrange a community teacher, training venue and provide teaching material to conduct this training.

The BRACE Programme is working in close coordination with the provincial government. The Education Department at provincial level has commissioned the Balochistan Assessment and Examination Commission to assess and certify the ALNS Training learners at the end of the course.

As of year five, 12,104 women have been trained in adult literacy and numeracy programme.

Table 11: Achievement on indicators of Adult Literacy and Numeracy Skills

KPI	Overall Programme Target	Achievement	Achievement (%)
Number of beneficiaries of ALNS trained	12,064	12,104	100%

Source: Monthly KPI report as of 30th June 2022

Sherbano, a pillar of strength (TVET beneficiary)

Sheherbano, a 24-year old girl from Union Council Abad in district Khuzdar, is a beneficiary of Technical Vocational and Education Training (TVET) offered by the European Union (EU) funded Balochistan Rural Development and Community Empowerment (BRACE) Programme.

Having lost her father at only the age of twelve, Sheherbano's four (04) brothers were forced to become the bread winners for their family. As all her brothers were daily wagers, they often faced financial constraints for meeting their basic needs. Even though she was loved and supported by her family, Sheherbano was hesitant to become a financial burden to her brothers. Seeing her family struggle, she was driven to become financially independent and improve the conditions for the family.

To support them, she used to stitch clothes, but they were not up to a standard to be sold at the market. When Sheherbano got to know about TVET from her Community Resource Person (CRP), she took the three months training in her UC on Stitching and Sewing and started working soon after. In hopes of expanding her business, Sheherbano worked hard for a year and earned enough money to buy a machine for embroidery purposes also known as a 'Zigzag Sewing Machine'. Utilising that machine, Sheherbano started creating beautiful Balochi embroidery pieces after which her business started to flourish.



Sheherbano in her self-made Balochi dress

"I earn PKR 40,000 a month now and during the Eid season it doubles up to PKR 80,000. I have started to help in the household expenses and now I no longer feel like a burden on my brothers. My family is very happy and supportive of my work, which gives me much joy." -Sheherbano

Sheherbano is now the main earning member of the household and has taken the responsibility to provide for her entire family. She bought a fridge from her earnings and provided for the expenses to build a kitchen in her house. Sheherbano is an inspiration for the women of her community who now wish to take TVET to elevate their financial statuses and become financially independent.

Emerging Impact

The adult literacy and numeracy skills and technical and vocational training of women contribute to a significant emerging impact in influencing positive gender roles and mainstreaming the role of women in social and economic empowerment. The assessment on Emerging Outcomes of Adult Literacy and Numeracy Skills training reports that the learning center has become a source of inspiration for the women in these communities. It reports,

Mehr Khatoon, 45, a very active learner of the ALNS Centre in Killi Yar Muhammad insisted that her fourteen-year-old granddaughter Asiya, who was not enrolled in a school, join her at the ALNS Centre. She was able to convince her daughter to allow Asiya to enroll in the ALNS Programme as she believed that the Centre was a good place for women and girls. Now, Asiya is inspired to enroll in formal education. Owing to her improved level of learning, teachers at the local school have informed Asiya that as she has a good grasp of the concepts thus, she is able to skip grade four and start school with grade five directly. Asiya aspires to be a teacher when she completes her education. In this manner BRACE Programme is also encouraging and fostering an upcoming batch of potential teachers in areas which previously did not have qualified teachers in the locality.

The IPOR research study on adult literacy and numeracy skills iterates that the females who took ALNS training can now spell out words and write their names. While this may seem a small achievement, the training contributed to a sense of empowerment among women. The external monitoring mission also iterates that this training has boosted the level of confidence among women. It also identifies that there is an increasing demand for these centers because they also provide a space for social interaction among women. It reports,

The programme is reported to have sparked an interest in some women to complete their primary school education. Four ALNS learners in Shapuk village, district Kech aim to appear for Grade 5 examinations, following which they would be able to attend regular classes in the school in their village.

The emerging impact of technical and vocational education and training is evident through the fact that almost two-thirds of the graduates of this programme apply the learned skills to earn their livelihoods. The IPOR study on livelihood enhancement reports an average income increase of 16 percent of the average monthly income of the technical and vocational education and training beneficiaries. This increase in income was utilised on better food consumption, access to healthcare and childrens education. The external monitoring mission further adds that the trainees are either engaged in the job market or self-employment. And those trainees who are not engaged in income generation have reported to utilise the learnt skills such as stitching and embroidery to the money spent on buying clothes from the market earlier.



The BRACE Programme Policy Advocacy Workshop

**Presenting Evidence from the
Field on Community-Driven
Development to Policy Makers
in Afghanistan**



QUETTA SERENA HOTEL



Section 6. Policy Reforms

The DAI Consultants implement the EU BRACE Technical Assistance (TA) component to achieve Specific Objective 2 of the BRACE programme, which is focused on fostering an enabling environment for strengthening the capacities of local authorities to manage and involve communities in the statutory processes of the public sector planning, financing, and implementation process on provincial and district levels. To achieve this, the Technical Assistance facilitates the Government of Balochistan (GoB) in designing, adopting and implementing an innovative Community Led Local Governance (CLLG) Policy and the supporting the fiscal framework to allocate the required GoB and Development Partner resources for its implementation. This GoB CLLG policy and the fiscal framework will be fully aligned with the GoB Public Financial Management (PFM) systems, that will enable and regulate the devolved resources and budgets in support of implementing the CLLG Policy at District level and below, facilitating, and empowering citizens to get institutionally organised and participate in a Community Led Local Development and Local Governance dialogue.

6.1 Community Led Local Governance (CLLG) Policy

The technical assistance component is facilitating the Government of Balochistan in designing and implementing the Community-led Local Governance (CLLG) Policy with firm commitment to allocate fiscal resources and implementation of provincial and district Public Finance Management (PFM) systems. This commitment is critical to ensure availability of a budget and resource allocation from the Government of Balochistan for development partners to undertake community led local development initiatives.

In 2020, GoB notified the sector coordination committee on community led local governance policy to ensure GoB leadership and initiate the policy reform dialogues. In addition, a supervisor Sector Coordination Committee (SCC), four working groups were notified to work on the following.

- 1) Legal context for the GoB Community-led Local Governance (CLLG) Policy
- 2) The public finance management systems and financial regulations in support of CLLG Policy,
- 3) The Institutional context for a CLLG Policy, and
- 4) Capacity-building requirements for effective implementation of a GoB community driven CLLG Policy and community led development programmes.

On 26th October 2021, after four sector coordination committee and working groups meetings, the working-group on legal context of the community led local governance policy, achieved its objective through the adoption of a 2021 amendment in the Local Government Act, that recognized the role of Community Institutions. The fourth working group on identifying capacity building requirements for effective implementation of CLLG Policy also achieved its objective by developing a capacity building plan in collaboration with the Balochistan Rural Development Academy (BRDA), under the Local government and Rural Development Department. The remaining two working groups were merged into one and continued their deliberations through the Sector Coordination Committee (SCC).

Over the period of project implementation, the formulation of the GoB Community Led Local-Governance (CLLG) Policy and the CLLG Policy implementation arrangements were finalised in consultation with key policy makers that include Local Government and Rural Development Department, Planning and Development Department, Social Welfare Department, Women Development Department, Finance Development, and the Rural Support Programmes through plenary and bilateral meetings. To simplify the institutional structure under CLLG Policy, a subcommittee, composed of three members, one from LGRDD, TA, and BRSP, was tasked with revising and suggesting a simple institutional framework under CLLG Policy to be implemented at the province, district, and subdistrict levels. This was followed by a unanimous endorsement of the GoB CLLG Policy by the sector coordination committee under the chairmanship of Secretary Local Government and Rural Development Department.

Securing staffing and funding the CLLG policy are the crucial next steps for operationalisation of the Community-Led Local Governance (CLLG) Policy. To streamline CLLG policy grant management and fund flow mechanism, a series of bilateral consultative meetings have been held with the government departments (that include Planning and Development Department, Financial Department, Social Welfare Department), non-government entities (Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund) and with the Oxford Policy Management/Public Finance Management Consultants. These discussions are held in alignment with Government financial regulation and accounts/audit rules.

The draft CLLG Policy was endorsed by the BRACE Strategy & Policy Dialogue Committee (SPDC) chaired by ACS/Development, in September 2022 and is scheduled for submission to Cabinet for adaptation in Q4-2022. The approved draft of the Community-Led Local Governance (CLLG) Policy, and the CLLG Policy Framework, will be operationalised through a CLLG Policy Implementation Manual (PIM) that presents clear detailed CLLG Policy implementation arrangements, required for policy operationalisation both at the provincial and the district levels.

6.2 Balochistan Local Government Act (BLGA)

The TA submitted proposed Local Government Act (LGA) reforms to secretary Local Government Rural Development Department in September 2020 for submission to Cabinet sub-committee LGA Reforms. The LGA reforms on CLLG and Rural Development were shared with stakeholders, including MPAs. In the first quarter of 2021, the Cabinet Sub-Committee on LGA Reforms held internal deliberations and considered adoption of the proposed reforms in relevant clauses/sections, thus providing a legal context for more inclusive Community Development, and formally recognising the position and role of Community Institutions, in GoB Local Governance and Rural Development (LG & RD).

In September 2021, consensus was built on the proposed amendments and recommendations, after legislative drafting and scrutiny by the Law and Parliamentary Affairs Department. This exercise was done in an all-Parties conference on Local Government Act 2010 Amendments in presence of treasuries benches and opposition parties on the advice of the CM Balochistan. The key amendment stating the recognition of the role of community institutions in the local governance remained intact.

The Standing Committee on LGRDD Reforms met on 27 July 2022 with the Provincial Assembly (PA). The proposed amendments under Section 87 remained the same formalising the recognition of the role of Community Institutions (CIs) as important actors in local governance. All the members not only agreed but appreciated the proposed amended Section 87 and unanimously endorsed. Following this, the Committee presented the BLGA 2010 amendments to the Provincial Assembly for final approval wherein the GoB has notified the Balochistan Local Government (Amendments) Act 2022 including the amendments proposed in Section-87. This provision will provide legal coverage to the proposed Community Led Local Governance (CLLG) Policy, and this is a major achievement of the LG&RDD and the Government of Balochistan. The Section 87 in the Balochistan Local Government Act now states the following.

“Provided that a Local Council, subject to approval of the Local Government Board, may engage registered Community Based Organizations (CBOs)/Community Institutions (CIs) in its local area development or execute such projects funded by the donor organizations/agencies”.

6.3 Public Financial Management (PFM) Reforms

The aim of the public financial reforms proposed under the BRACE programme is to include community institutions in community-based Public Private Partnership (PPP) that would (a) allow the CI to be a recognised budget partner of the Local Government, and (b) allow for community identified schemes to be (co-)funded from GoB Budget.

To implement the action, the TA facilitated discussions and review on adjusting district financial regulations that will enable district funding of the community institution investments and to identify how the GoB PFM Act can allow the implementation of a GoB CLLG Policy. In this regard, the TA is engaged in understanding the CLLG Policy fund flow, from Province to District, and then from District to UC/Community could be channeled. The TA also collaborated with the Oxford Policy Management (OPM) Consultants, who are supporting the FD on PFM reforms through their participation in the sector coordination committee working group.

Legal cover can be found in Section 141 of the amended LGA Act 2010, on the Balochistan Local Council (Account) rules 2018, and sub section 1 of section 122 of the LGA Act 2010, on the Balochistan Local Government (Fiscal Transfer) rules 2018.

During the No-Cost-Extension year 2022-23 the LGRDD will finalise how the budgets and cash flow to CIs can be regulated following GoB District Financial Rules, in particular under a) Balochistan Local Council (Accounts) Rules 2018, b) Balochistan Local Council (Budget) Rules 2018, and c) the Balochistan Local Government (Fiscal Transfer) Rules 2018.

6.4 Joint District Development Committees (JDDC)

At District level, the TA targets two strategic Outputs 1) the Joint District Development Committee (JDDC), being the forum where the LG Authorities, the Local Bodies, and the CIs (Village Organizations/Local Support Organizations) meet to discuss their Village, Union Council (UC) and District Development, and 2) the District Development Plan (DPP) being the procedures and formats that allow alignment of the bottom-up demand-driven CI-prioritised development activities, with the top down LG or other Departmental GoB Rural Development budgets/projects and local development investments.

The TA has designed systems and procedures and provided on-job capacity-building support, to ensure that local government/authorities become "developed" and are able to mobilise and allocate their resources in support of communities, and systematically involve CIs in planning, co-resourcing and managing local development activities and investments. From 2019, JDDCs were held, irregularly, in the BRACE Districts, under different JDDC Terms of reference (ToR). In 2020, the first step by the TA, was to streamline the various different JDDC ToR, and prepare a consolidated version for re-notification by GoB Competent Authority, the P&DD.

During 2021 the TA, LGRDD and P&DD reviewed the Consolidated JDDC ToR and it was concluded that the streamlined and consolidated JDDC ToR could be notified and activated under the cover of an adopted CLLG Policy. The streamlined JDDC ToR transparently prescribe the JDDC Forum Membership and spell out clearly the 12 JDDC ToR functions and for each function a clear Guideline has been worked out. The JDDC ToRs and the JDDC Guideline will be integrated in the CLLG PIM.

6.5 District Development Strategy and Plan (DDSP) Guidelines

GoB-led comprehensive District Development Plans are not in operation in Balochistan. The BRACE TA implemented a pilot assignment in which District Development Strategy and Plan guidelines in 3 Districts namely, Kech, Loralai, Pishin. The DDSP are consolidated UCDDPs at the district level. After a thorough situational analysis, the DDS&P consultants facilitated a series of consultative meetings, workshops and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with district administrations, LG&RDD officials, relevant line departments, BRSP/NRSP/RSPs staff, LSO members, Ex-Councillors, Union Council Secretaries, and various minority groups. DDS&P guidelines, formats, and tools were developed to streamline the JDDC meeting proceedings further.

The proposed DDSP Guidelines were tested in actual JDDC meetings in the three pilot districts. A major key finding, and conclusion was that there was a "great appetite" and need for an institutionalized JDDC forum which will bring government and citizens closer to each other. At the end of the DDS&P Assignment, the DDS&P findings and recommendations were presented in a Quetta based DDS&P dissemination workshop, with participation of (i) key GoB Policymakers (LGRD/FD/PBB/SWD/WDD), (ii) (NRSP, RSPN, and BRSP), and selected District Officials, and representatives of Civil Society organizations, and (iii) other key stakeholders including key development partners and politicians. It was agreed that public service delivery enhancement can be achieved, through a streamlined JDDC forum, which integrates the Bottom-Up Community Development Plans with the Top-Down Government local development plans and investments.



Section 7. Research and Advocacy

Under the Expected Result 3, “Evidence based policy recommendations generated and disseminated to support Community Led Local Governance (CLLG) for Balochistan”, RSPN team had a productive year researching and publishing evidence on the effectiveness of the Programme interventions. RSPN conducted one Participatory Action Research, and three thematic/sectoral studies.

7.1 Participatory Action Research (PAR)

The Participatory Action Research (PAR) is longitudinal research spanning over three rounds. As of reporting period, the PAR study has been completed. The objective of the study was to analyse the dynamics of poverty as experienced at the household to support the formulation of the Government of Balochistan's Community-Driven Local Development (CDLD) policy and inform poverty reduction interventions based on evidence from the field. The study explores poverty dynamics and identify key 'drivers' in household demographics and gender relationships, intersecting inequalities, human development, livelihood strategies and risk management, and location, considering what leads to resilience. Key findings of the first two rounds of study are summarised below.

In terms of the likelihood or probability of events **pushing a household into poverty**, natural disasters (droughts, lack of water for agricultural use, earthquakes, etc.) have a 50% likelihood of being a poverty push factor. Death shocks and illiteracy are likely to be poverty-push events, with a probability of 29% and 23%, respectively. There is a 22.5% chance that the household will fall into poverty due to unemployment and reduced income

Human resource development or skill training, income generated from livestock, decreased dependency ratio, and availability of water for agricultural production are the main **poverty pull factors**. Similarly, the government-provided social safety net (as mentioned by 4% of the respondents) is another pull factor. A decrease in dependency ratio and increase in income from livestock have a likelihood of 17% to be a poverty pull factor. The social safety net provided by the government has a 14% probability of being a poverty pull event. Literacy and education have a likelihood of 9.3% of being a poverty pull determinant.

The research provides convincing evidence that **social mobilisation** is an effective approach to enhance awareness and strengthen the role of women in rural Balochistan. Social mobilisation can harness the human potential and ensure human resource development, especially through skill development for income generation and literacy programmes.

Continued deterioration of the law-and-order situation and a sense of insecurity are some of the key obstacles in the way of inclusive development. Another key reason for the government's weaker service delivery is non-inclusive development program policies.

The following policy recommendations were suggested in the study and suggestions from the participants of the advocacy workshop:

- a. Girl education, youth skill development, and adult literacy programmes should be introduced and further strengthened
- b. Government departments should be strengthened through a consistent policy of inducting, retaining, and developing competent human resources involved in service delivery for basic services (health, education, skill development, mining, agriculture & livestock, public health engineering)
- c. Conducive policies for growth-based policies in Balochistan for poverty reduction market development (both local and international) should be introduced to help in selling the outputs in a value-added manner
- d. The existing infrastructure of basic services (health, education, skill development, mining, agriculture & livestock, public health engineering, etc.) should be strengthened

7.2 Thematic/Sectoral Studies

7.2.1 Community Livelihood Enhancement through CIF, IGGs, and TVET for Poor Households under the BRACE Programme

The objective of this study was to assess outcomes and livelihood impacts related to the three primary household-based interventions of the BRACE Programme – Income-Generating Grants (IGGs), loans from the revolving Community Investment Fund (CIF), and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) that the BRSP and NRSP implement. In addition, the study also includes an assessment of social cohesion, trust in institutions, and women's empowerment.

Based on survey data, the average household income per month in 2021 was reported to be Rs 16,800 for all beneficiaries and Rs 7,100 for the female beneficiaries. However, real income decreased between 2018 and 2021 by an average of 12 percent. This means that the rate of inflation exceeded the increase in rupee income over this period, and the poor were left poorer. They would have been even worse off without the BRACE interventions, through which the beneficiaries increased their incomes to some extent:

The beneficiaries' main uses of net income were expenditures on food, clothes, healthcare, and children's education. Qualitative evidence from female and male beneficiary focus groups consistently pointed to several ways beneficiary income helped improve food consumption for all household members (including children), access to healthcare, and children's education. There is also evidence of increased mobility of female beneficiaries (but not regarding banks and government offices). The key findings of the study are summarised below

- a. IGG beneficiaries reported an average increase (net of cost) of PKR 3,100 per month, equivalent to 23 percent of their average monthly household income.
- b. CIF beneficiaries reported an average increase of PKR 1,600 per month (11 percent of their average monthly household income).
- c. TVET beneficiaries reported an average income of PKR 3,300 per month (16 percent of their average monthly household income).
- d. Survey data suggest that income from IGGs and CIF positively correlates with the amounts made available to the beneficiaries for these interventions (income is greater when the assistance is greater). Therefore, in future programmes (if not in BRACE), the average amount of assistance could be determined with reference to a target increase in average real income over a given period.
- e. The lack of livestock disease control adversely affected livestock investments, and some beneficiary households reportedly lost a considerable amount of their scarce assets due to livestock deaths. Thus, providing timely veterinary advice and services during procurement, livestock reproduction, and management cycles needs attention.

7.2.2 An Assessment of the Fostering and Strengthening of Citizen - State Engagement under the BRACE Programme: Achievements, Lessons Learnt, and Way Forward

The key objectives of the study were an in-depth assessment of citizen-state engagement under the BRACE Programme and to explore the ways community institutions particularly Local Support Organisations forge linkages with state institutions. The study results present significant insights into the development of formal and nonformal linkages of the Local Support Organisations with external agencies, especially with provincial and federal Government Departments and political leaders. These results can be utilised for different purposes by RSPN, RSPs, and the Government of Pakistan for developing policies. The key findings of the study are presented below.

- a. BRACE includes a well-defined three tiered social mobilisation approach and a participatory process for organised villagers to discuss their development needs and establish priorities for VDPs and UCDPs. The priorities were established through broad-based consultation, with women being included directly. These

plans play an essential role in linkage development. These plans help articulate effective demands on the community side and motivate them to take action to contact Government departments and their political leaders for its implementation.

- b. The Community Awareness Toolkit (CAT) sessions in the COs play a significant role in linkage development in the social sector because these sessions help a lot in widening the community leaders' vision about their development. Several line departments and federal organisations, including NADRA, Ehsaas/BISP, and those responsible for health, social welfare, agriculture, forestry, and livestock, worked with community institutions on soft components/non-infrastructure activities. These organisations find that cooperation with community institutions leads to more efficient service delivery and greater capacity for meeting their objectives.
- c. LSO leaders found a pathway for pursuing their infrastructure priorities by making state actors more responsive. They realised that district-level officials could not respond to their priorities and focused, instead, on provincial and national assembly members from their areas. The legislators took cognisance of the vote bank represented by organised communities and took LSO priorities to the highest levels of the provincial political leadership and relevant federal authorities, which included them in relevant departmental PSDPs.
- d. The JDCs represent one of the pathways for citizen-state engagement in BRACE. JDDCs exist in all 10 BRACE districts and held 70 meetings between January 2019 and December 2021, with an average attendance of 20 persons per meeting, increasing to 23 in 2021. However, linkages developed by the LSOs with Government Departments are through informal ways and means. This proves that, on its own, the informal linkage development mechanism is a successful tool for the communities to access Government services and supplies.

In the light of these findings, the following recommendations were made.

- a. The government should institutionalise line departments' cooperation with organised communities for all such activities in which community involvement could generate mutually-beneficial results for the state and the citizens. The most feasible way of moving ahead with this is through executive orders.
- b. The RSPs should invest in increasing the number and enhancing the capacities of LSO activists, such as those identified in this assessment, who can successfully establish linkages with elected representatives leading to infrastructure development through the PSDP.

7.2.3 An Assessment of Outcomes from the Community Physical Infrastructure (CPI) Component of the European Union funded BRACE Programme

The objective of the research study on Community Physical Infrastructure was to assess the relevance of CPIs especially for women implemented under the BRACE Programme and to quantify and document the immediate socio-economic and environment outcomes of these schemes. The key findings are presented below.

- a. The implemented schemes were highly relevant to the community members. The implemented schemes were identified and prioritised by men and women members of the community institutions in their union council and village development plans
- b. The social impact of the implemented CPIs and the overall identification process has led to empowerment of women through active participation in decision making, improved mobility, health and hygiene behaviors and strengthening of the community institutions
- c. The economic impact of the CPI schemes is reflected through securing public assets, increase in land value, and improved quality of life
- d. The environmental benefits of the implemented schemes include healthier and clean environment, reduced water borne diseases due to improved sewerage and sanitation and availability of clean drinking water.

7.3 Emerging Outcomes of Adult Literacy and Numeracy Skills Training under BRACE Programme, Khuzdar district

A study on Emerging Outcomes of ALNS Training under the BRACE Programme was conducted in district Khuzdar. This qualitative study utilised the method of Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with two groups and in-depth, semi-structured interviews conducted with six women who attended the ALNS training. The team interviewed three Community Resource Persons (CRPs), a teacher and held FGDs with 38 village women. The key findings of the study are presented below.

- a. The 224 learners from nine centers obtained an average of 122 marks out of 200, which translates to 61%. Out of a total of 50 marks, they scored an average score of 22 in English, 32.3 in Urdu, 35 in Life Skills and 40.8 in Math. Students who obtained a minimum of 30% marks were able to graduate.
- b. The results show that the respondents scored better on an average in assessments for Life Skills and Math. One of the reasons for lower marks in Urdu is that the women are not Urdu speakers. Thus, learning Urdu remained a challenge.
- c. The adult literacy and numeracy skills component contribute to improved physical well-being of women through improved knowledge and understanding on information about maternal health, vaccinations dates, medicines' intake dose/measurements and expiry date. It also contributes to improved psychological well-being among women through reducing loneliness, isolation and boosting self-confidence.
- d. The ALNS component contributes to economic outcome through capacitating women to understand training material in TVET and preparing them to manage their CIF and IGGs at the household level. It also improves learning about importance of savings and form saving committees
- e. The social outcomes of the ALNS are reported through enhanced social skills among women, effective time management, and increased level of trust among participants and community.

7.4 Institutional Maturity Index Survey

To assess the maturity of the community institutions, annual Institutional Maturity Index survey is conducted. The IMI survey determines the strengths and weaknesses of the community institutions which help social mobilisation teams to improve areas where these institutions need support. The latest IMI survey for the reporting period indicates 58% CIs in category A and B. Out of these, 10% are in category A and 47% in category B.

7.5 Advocacy/ Public Policy Events

Four National LSO Conventions, three Annual RSPs Strategy Retreats, a Provincial Convention of LSOs, and an Advocacy Workshop have been undertaken for advocacy as of June 2022. These events facilitated dialogue among different stakeholders including policymakers, donor agencies, programme practitioners and researchers working on CDD programmes in Pakistan. These advocacy events helped identify successful approaches and mainstream and scale up CDD; increased visibility of the EU's support to RSPs' work on CDD, and exchange lessons/knowledge with a broader group of stakeholders

7.6 Learning and Exposure visits

One regional cooperation visit, against the target of three, has been undertaken. The first visit was undertaken in year one of the Programme, this regional experience sharing and learning visits was undertaken in collaboration with RSPN core staff, Programmes staff from the Sindh Union Council and Community Economic Strengthening Support (SUCCESS) Programme and the Aga Khan Foundation's Mountain Societies Development Support Programme (AKF-MSDSP) in the Republic of Tajikistan. Members of the delegation included strategic stakeholders of the BRACE Programme, e.g. Minister for Planning and Development GoB Minister for Local Government and Rural Development GoB, former Chief Minister and Member of Provincial Assembly, Additional Chief Secretary (Development), Secretary Finance, Secretary, Local Government and Rural Development Department GoB and RSPs' senior management.

In Year 5, a national exposure and learning visit to AKRSP in Chitral was also arranged for senior government officials from the Government of Balochistan. Participants included senior representatives of GoB Departments, as well as representatives from RSPs and RSPN.



Section 8. Communications and Visibility

Under the Expected Result 5, 'Achievements, lessons and successful development approaches drawn from the BRACE Programme widely disseminated through developing and implementing harmonised Communication and Visibility Strategy and Plans', Capacity building of RSPs in communication and regular support by RSPN in implementation of the C&V strategy and plans contributed in Programme communication to the stakeholders through Facebook page, BRACE webpage on RSPN Website, media coverage of the Programme events in electronic and print media, BRACE Video documentaries, newsletters and annual KPI reports and through successful provincial and national LSO conventions and RSPs Annual Strategy Retreats. Moreover, EU's support is acknowledged in all communication with the stakeholders and all internal and external Programme-related communication and documentation display the EU logo.

8.1 BRACE Social Media Presence

Over the years BRACE Programme has witnessed a steady growth in terms of social media presence and user engagement. As of year five, the BRACE Facebook page has 77,446 followers and users who visit the page. On Twitter, 320 tweets were posted on the platform that were reached and seen by 62,133 visitors. In year five, 233 unique visitors mentioned European Union and BRACE Programme in their tweets.

The BRACE Programme also has a presence on LinkedIn and Instagram to target development partners and young audience respectively. A dedicated website for the BRACE programme was created and is regularly improved to ensure open access of information for the donors, implementing partners, various stakeholders and beneficiaries.

8.2 Print and Electronic Media Coverage

To increase BRACE Programme's reach and share inspirational stories to a wider audience, RSPN has engaged national and local media for the coverage of different events including BRACE experience sharing and learning visit and workshop covered by various TV channels and newspapers. Till date, 28 news articles on the BRACE Programme have been published. These articles are published in national and local newspapers including Dawn, The News, Chitral Today, Chitral Times, Chitral Express, Sindh Courier, Blog site of London School of Economics, HumSub, Roznama Bolan, Daily Mashriq, Roznama 92 News, Daily Intekhab, Roznama Jang, Bakhabar, Qudrat, Daily Express.

8.3 Publications on the BRACE Programme Website

More than 50 case studies and success stories, 14 newsletters and 30 Local Support Organisation Initiatives have been reported and published on the BRACE Programme's website. These knowledge products serve as vital tools of communication with national and international audience including government officials, policy makers, donor agencies and other stakeholders. The Local Support Organisation initiatives is a crucial series to highlight the success of these organisations in strengthening agency of the people who have little to no voice in public policy decision-making.



Section 9. Challenges and Way Forward

Fifth year of the BRACE Programme proved productive and efficient as major progress were achieved against the respective Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) by all implementing partners. The reporting period of 2021-22 offered its own challenges which have been addressed and resolved through collaborative processes involving all stakeholders including the External Monitoring Missions (EMM) team, the officials from the European Union Delegation (EUD) as well as Government officials.

Barriers in registration and opening of bank accounts of the Community Institutions due to new and stricter government regulations in place, Local Support Organisations (LSOs) and Village Organisations (VOs) suffered major challenges and delays. Without these procedures, these community institutions were not eligible for sub-grants involving major programme interventions such as Community Physical Infrastructure (CPIs), Income Generating Grants (IGG) and Community Investment Fund (CIF). BRSP, NRSP and RSPN as well as the TA teams played a critical role in promoting mutual understanding and establishing excellent working relationships with the Social Welfare Department and the Balochistan Charities Registration and Regulation Authority (BCRRA). As a result, 237 LSOs and 874 VOs have been successfully registered with the government. Similarly, the network of RSPs also collaborated with non-governmental entities such as private banks to work out solutions for people's institutions to have operational bank accounts so that beneficiaries could receive funding.

On the policy front, absence of active and empowered elected local government has been a cause for dismal progress in establishing sustainable and meaningful platforms for engagement between communities and the local tier of governance. Under the RSPN, third-party research completed in 2022 shows that Joint District Development Committees (JDDCs) have yet not been able to actualise bottom-up development. The Communities are linking up with administration and political leadership, but their development needs are materialised mostly through centralised and top-down development models.

In the face of political uncertainty that prevails in Balochistan, TA's securing of some legal cover for community-local government engagements is an admirable step. In 2022, the TA team has been able to secure approval of the proposed amendments to the Balochistan Local Government Act 2020. Amongst the many amendments (2022) to the Balochistan Local Government Act 2010, Section 87 provides a legal cover for linking Community Institutions fostered under the BRACE Programme with the elected local governments. The sections states that "a Local Council, subject to approval of the Local Government Board, may engage Registered Community Based Organizations (CBOs)/ Community Institutions (CIs) in its local area development or execute such projects funded by the Donor Organizations/ Agencies". Together with a Community-Led Local Governance (CLLG) policy, which is yet to be approved and operationalised, these policy breakthroughs provide some hope for sustainability and continuity of engagements between local governments and community institutions nurtured by the RSPs under the Programme.

The prevalent economic and political instability at the federal level as well as the province of Balochistan undermine sustainability of the BRACE Programme. Multiple research studies under the BRACE Programme, undertaken by third-party research firms, warn that inflation rates as high as 12% have seriously undermined efforts of the RSPs aimed at helping poor households graduate out of poverty. The "*Community Livelihood Enhancement through CIF, IGGs and TVET for Poor Households in Balochistan*" reveals that despite significant increase in the nominal average monthly household income of the Programme beneficiaries, their "actual income decreased between 2018 to 2021 by 12%".⁶

Macro-level challenges such as high rates of inflation, unemployment and political instability, certain programme interventions have suffered setbacks. RSPN-managed Participatory Action Research (PAR), titled "Dynamics of Household Poverty and Inclusive Development in Balochistan with a focus on Women's Empowerment" involving 288 households in three programme districts across three years show that the proportion of ultra-poor households have

⁶ Community Livelihood Enhancement through CIF, IGGs, and TVET for Poor Households in Balochistan, Institute for Public Opinion Research (IPOR), Pg. 5.

increased in our sample from 2021 to 2022. These findings clearly show that poverty eradication has become a rather uphill task during the life of the Programme.

This is a huge **Resource Gap** and for government to make a serious dent to prevailing level of poverty in Balochistan, ten times more resources will be required to cover each poor household in these areas. In the face of the challenges discussed above, BRSP and NRSP have empowered rural poor households through the financial interventions under this programme. As of Year 5, 12,214 poor households have benefitted from the Income Generating Grant (IGG) which is 89.6% of the total target. However, this should not keep us from realising that only 9.2% of the poorest households with PSC score 0-18 can be facilitated with current resources available.

The most challenging of Programme interventions has been the **Community Investment Fund (CIF)**. BRSP and NRSP have expedited the Community Investment Fund (CIF) and as of Year 5, 9,838 poor households have benefitted from this revolving fund. This is roughly 50% against the total target. The bigger problem is the gap of resources as even achievement of 100% target would mean only 9.14% of coverage of the poor households with PSC 0-23 in these areas. Again, much more resources will be required to reduce poverty effectively. The latest round of External Performance Monitoring has indicated, the implementing RSPs have an uphill task of maintaining a decent recovery rate as the poor households are losing their capacity to earn profit, save and pay back. In the face of these challenges, RSPN facilitated RSPs to develop Exit and Sustainability Strategies for overall programme as well as for specific programme interventions e.g. CIF. These strategies have been approved as part of the agreement on the No-Cost-Extension and are being regularly reviewed and reported.

Environmental Challenges and Disasters such as COVID-19 and the locusts attacks have adversely affected the communities. The COVID-19 pandemic paralysed life in 2020 and 2021, a series of disasters have hit rural populations in the Balochistan province in 2021 and 2022. Khuzdar and several other districts were hit hard by locust attacks in 2021 which resulted in significant financial and agricultural losses for farming communities. The COVID-19 outbreak and subsequent lockdowns and restrictions on gatherings and mobility caused serious disruption of life and livelihoods as well as a slow-down of economic growth from 1.9% per year in 2018-19 to -1.5% in 2019-20. Food inflation in rural areas, combined with unemployment exacerbated poverty. Balochistan, which already had the highest incidence of poverty in the country, was affected particularly terribly.

Although just outside the reporting period, the recent months of August and September 2022, however, call for a fundamental reflection on the impact and outcome level assumptions and assessments of the Programme since Pakistan in general and the province of Balochistan in particular, has been severely affected by the worst floods in the recorded history of the province. It must be noted that the federal Government of Pakistan officially recognised the country-wide floods as the 'national emergency' on 25th August 2022. More than 1,300 people have died and 30 million people have been rendered shelter less across Pakistan. The situation is worst in the provinces of Balochistan and Sindh which have received 469% and 522%, more than the normal downpour this year. A calamity of this scale is bound to impact all indices of human development and it is highly unfortunate that at the conclusion of Year 5, we are yet required to be optimistic that the efforts gone into pulling the rural poor households out of poverty might not have been washed away by the floods.




In the face of these record calamities and macro-economic challenges, a further deepening of the programme interventions in the programme areas and **expansion of this programme** to the remaining two-third of Balochistan should be an area of consideration for the provincial Government of Balochistan, the federal Government of Pakistan and the donor agencies such as the European Union. The Prime Minister of Pakistan, the Secretary General of the United Nations and all humanitarian organisations have called for urgent assistance for Balochistan and Sindh provinces. BRACE Programme has earned remarkable outcomes for its beneficiaries but the historical floods and macro-economic challenges seriously questions sustainability and continued support is the urgent need of the rural poor communities. Consultations with the top government officials are underway and it is hoped that similar interventions aimed at empowering the Government of Balochistan and rural poor communities will be further strengthened.



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