





INSIGHTS

KHUZDAR











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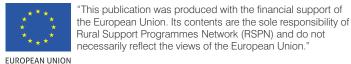
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INSIGHTS KHUZDAR



THE INSIGHTS FROM THE BRACE PROGRAMME

Balochistan Rural Development and Community Empowerment (BRACE) Programme completes its five years in 2022. The Programme is currently in its No-Cost Extension (NCE) phase. In the inception phase, the Rural Support Programmes Network, (RSPN), the National Rural Support Programme (NRSP), and the Balochistan Rural Support Programme (BRSP) conducted a widespread Poverty Scorecard (PSC) census which helped with the identification of the potential beneficiaries according to their poverty status. This European Union-funded Programme is the largest community empowerment programme in Balochistan and it covers 240 rural union councils in ten districts: namely Chaman, Duki, Jhal Magsi, Kech, Killa Abdullah, Khuzdar, Loralai, Pishin, Washuq, and Zhob. This document focuses on district Khuzdar and presents stories and profiles from the community leaders and field teams.

The journey through these five years is documented in the form of stories from the field after multiple activities. These human-interest stories have been titled "The Insights of BRACE" which reflects the efforts taken by the community members and the implementing teams in helping each other tumbling their household-level issues and taking a step toward reducing the poverty in each district under the BRACE Programme.

RSPN's BRACE documentation team worked with the respective RSP teams to reach out to the beneficiaries and obtain a story of the transformations the BRACE Programme has facilitated. This series does not only focus on the financial empowerment of the community members but also reflects on the legal and economic empowerment in the target districts of the programme.

Preface

With its vast geography, Balochistan has abundant mineral and energy resources, untapped human potential, and offers opportunities to change the existing situation. However, Balochistan's population suffers disproportionately compared to the rest of the country. This is due to the inequitable distribution of resources, political instability, weak public policies, poor governance, displacements due to security issues, and a burdening influx of refugees.

The Balochistan Rural Development and Community Empowerment (BRACE) Programme, funded by the European Union (EU), is a strategic development initiative to alleviate rural poverty by building on community mobilisation and citizen empowerment. Rural Support Programmes (RSPs) provide social, technical, and financial assistance to improve and expand income sources for targeted community households.

In collaboration with the BRSP, the beneficiaries interviewed under the BRACE programme in district Khuzdar provided insight into how the idea of community-driven development is realised and how it has benefited the people in the district.

The focus of BRACE is to enable poor rural men and women to reduce poverty at the household level through social organisations. This starts at a small level, organising Community Organisations (COs) among neighbouring households, and at the larger village level bringing them together into Village Organisations (VOs) to deal with village problems. VOs eventually gained enough momentum to establish Local Support Organisations (LSOs) at the Union Council level, some of which became a member of the Joint District Development

Committee (JDDC) at the Tehsil and District levels in which there is the participation of the line departments and the district authorities which directly bring to the attention of local governments and negotiate with them. The insights of the BRACE programme bring a series of stories of the beneficiaries as well as the implementation team with a focus on the challenges they face during the execution of the BRACE Programme.

KHUZDAR (2017-22)



80,393Number of Households with PSC survey completed



59,329No. of Households Organised



7,107No. of community members trained in CMST



3,310 Women (47%)



No. of COs formed



2,038No. of Female COs (38%)



1,138 Number of Community members trained in LMST



Women (45%)



vos 0 1,121
No. of VOs formed



520 No. of Female VOs (46%)



Number of community members trained as Communty Resource Persons (CRPs)



Women (55%)



No. of LSOs formed





3,425Number of HHs Benefiting from Completed CPIs



Number of LSOs managing CIF



62 million (PKR) Total amount of CIF with LSOs



17,126
Individual Beneficiaries of Completed CPIs







438 Number of community members Trained in TVET

for CPI with VOs

65.7 million (PKR)



37.9 million(PKR) Total amount of CIF disbursed to poor households by VOs/LSOs (0-23)



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BEHIND **BRACE**

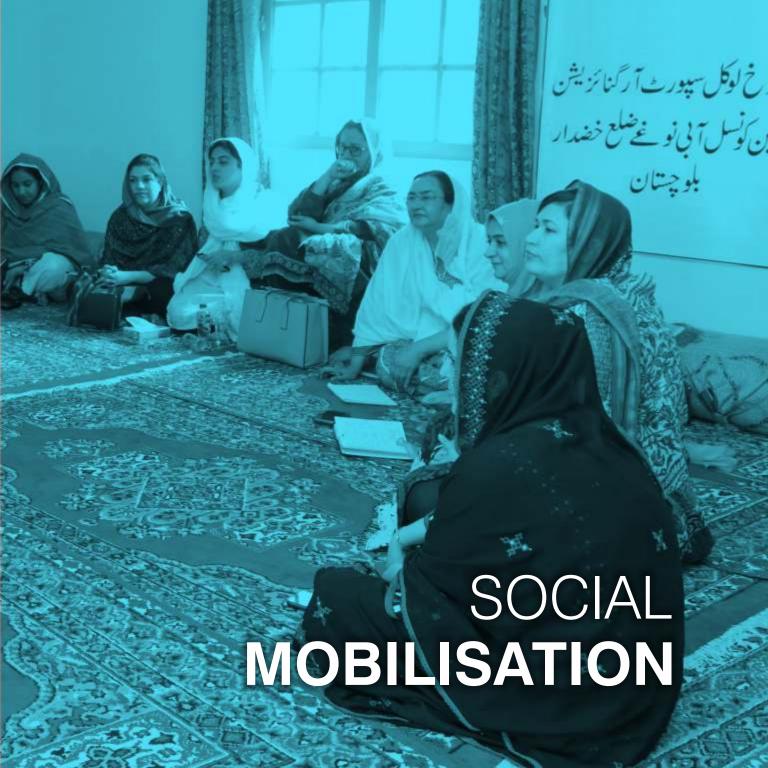
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District Programme Manager (DPM)

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Social Organiser & Livelihood Officer





COMMUNITY ORGANISATION (CO)

NAWAB KHAN UNION COUNCIL BAGHBANA-I

awab Khan is a resident of the union council Baghbana-I of Khuzdar district. It is home to a diverse population and is known for its beautiful natural landscape. The union council like the rest of the district faces various challenges related to education, basic health facilities, and infrastructure and that is why he could not study beyond primary.

Khan has nine children, and he is now working hard to get them a quality education as he himself could not.

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All I want my kids to do at the moment is to get a good education first. That's what I always tell them because without the education I don't see them progressing in the race of life.

Khan serves the Community Organisation (CO) called Shahdab as its president. The CO was formed in 2017 and Khan was elected as president, and he is still performing his duty with the same integrity. He is serving the community ever since the formation of the CO and helping the needy people as much as he and his team in collaboration with the Local Support Organisation (LSO) can.

Upon inquiring about the challenges faced, he replied "Lack of education has kept the community unaware of the outer world. The community members are unaware of their basic rights and have no idea where to turn to and whom to ask for help when they need any."



Nawab added that "Many couples do not have marriage certificates and they are unable to apply for Computerised National Identity Cards (CNICs) for themselves. They have no idea where to apply for birth registration of their kids and without these important documents, they are deprived of many rights and schemes provided by the government." According to Khan, he and his team has so far entertained more than five hundred individuals in the area and have helped them get these documents.

Apart from the registration, he and his team has provided needy residents with water tanks as access to clean drinking water is also one of the main issues in the town. Though he didn't remember the exact number of water tanks distributed.

As the leader of the CO, Khan has sent people for Technical Vocational and Education Training (TVET) and has also supported resident women with sewing machines.

Nawab Khan believes that the European Union-funded BRACE programme which is being implemented by the Balochistan Rural Support Programme (BRSP) in the town, has a positive impact on the lives of the residents as he knows a few beneficiaries who started from zero and are now earning at least some amount for their families.





LOCAL SUPPORT ORGANISATION (LSO)

ALLAH BAKHSH Union Council Baghbana-1

A multi-talented man, an electrician, solar panel installation expert, a newly elected local government member, and a father, Allah Bakhsh is the president of the Local Support Organisation (LSO) Rehbar under the European Union (EU) funded BRACE programme, Union Council Baghbana 1 district Khuzdar. He has been serving this LSO as president ever since the beginning of the BRACE programme in the district.

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Lack of interest from the people was also a challenging task as they did not believe in our interventions until they saw the interventions being practically initiated and implemented in the town. The LSO Rehbar's performances on the ground were promising and we observed that the community members were proud of their own organisation.

The said LSO was organised under the Balochistan Community Development Programme in 2016 and was merged into the EU-funded BRACE programme after the Poverty Scorecard (PSC) survey.

Allah Bakhsh added "I have been into social work for many years and because of my profession (electrician and solar panel installer) people know me and they trust me and that's why we have been doing our job without any resistance or obstacle."

LSO Rehbar is in good hands and the activities done in the area so far are the shreds of evidence of how passionate and dedicated Allah Bakhsh and his team are.

"Apart from this I and my team have helped people with food items, cash grants, and nutrition supplements during and after the disastrous floods in collaboration with different organisations working in Khuzdar back in 2022," Allah Bakhsh uttered.

Furthermore, he and his team have kept women on top of their priority list when considering beneficiaries for the Income Generating Grants (IGG) and the Community Investment Fund (CIF) as fifty-eight out of sixty-one of the CIF beneficiaries are women and most of the amount received by beneficiaries (IGG and CIF) is invested in livestock.

"Our plan is to continue our work voluntarily for the sake of our community. It doesn't matter if the programmes conclude or if we are or are not part of any such programmes or projects in the future", Bakhsh shared enthusiastically.



The lack of girls' schools in the area has forced parents to stop sending their daughters to schools. Since the BRACE programme, I along with my fellow members have initiated three informal schools, including one for girls in Baghbana using our linkages with different authorities.

Allah Bakhsh has enjoyed working with his team under the EU-funded BRACE programme and he wishes the BRACE programme to continue for longer time periods. Meanwhile, he understands that such projects are never going to last forever.







COMMUNITY RESOURCE PERSON (CRP)

LIAQAT ALI VILLAGE QAIMKHANZAI

iaqat Ali, 47, serves his community as a Community Resource Person (CRP). Liaqat comes from a small village Qaimkhanzai located in the Union Council Baghbana district Khuzdar.

Liaqat completed his Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree from Balochistan University back in 2001 and due to a lack of opportunities he started to work as a labourer in the fields to earn his family two-times meals.

"Yes, 14 years of education is a decent level, but you cannot do much when there's no opportunity around and by then I found this local task as the best available option", he replied when asked why he worked a different job after completing his bachelors. He still works and earns for his family of ten including seven of his school-going children.

Though I have worked with the Balochistan Rural Support Programme (BRSP) team

before for some other projects but as a CRP, I joined the BRACE programme in 2017", told Liaqat about his journey with the BRSP and the BRACE Programme.

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Illiteracy and lack of awareness have been the top challenges so far. People didn't want to support me because a few organisations in the past had not really fulfilled the promises that they had made.

Conversely, through his efforts, he slowly gained the trust and respect of the community and people started to trust him when they saw the value of programme and its interventions. "Getting people's trust was an honor for me", Liaqat shared proudly.





Liaqat holds community meetings on regular basis and awareness sessions on different topics to educate the residents about their rights as well as responsibilities. Sessions based on the Community Awareness Toolkit (CAT) are one of the key things he does as a CRP during the monthly meetings. These sessions under the BRACE programme are a source of awareness that educates the community about health, hygiene, family planning, human rights, and other important issues.

Liaqat has played an important role in promoting girls' education in his community through mobilising parents and organising school enrolment campaigns which have resulted in the enrolment of many girls in different schools of the union council. He also organises tree plantation campaigns every season and plants trees along with his

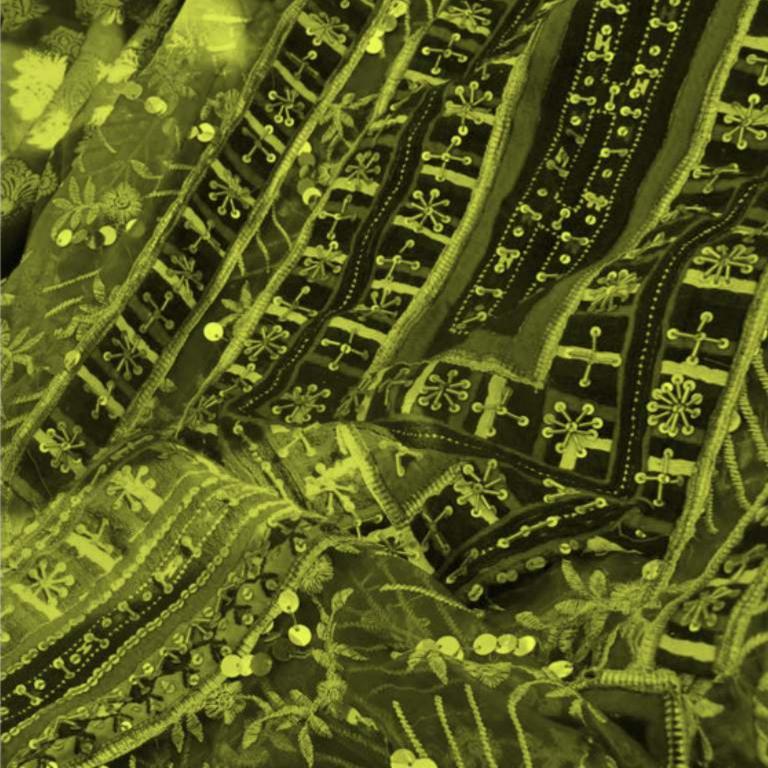
fellow community members. His connects with the forestry department who provide him with trees free of cost every season for which he is thankful to the department.

Liaqat Ali would always be remembered as a man who selflessly dedicated his life to serving his community.

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I plan to continue the work I have been doing even after the completion of the programme as I know that there is still much work to be done and I am resolute to make an impact.







INCOME GENERATING GRANTS (IGG)

ABDUL NABI Village Rindabad, Khuzdar

Abdul Nabi hails from Rindabad, one of the unprivileged villages of district Khuzdar. He looks after his family of seventeen and with his labour income, it is not an easy job to look after such a big family in this current time of inflation. With such a minimal amount, he was not able to meet his family's necessities.

"My life took a positive turn when the European Union-funded BRACE programme was introduced by the Balochistan Rural Support Programme (BRSP) in the district. This programme started its interventions which included Community Physical Infrastructure (CPI), Community Investment Fund (CIF), and Income Generating Grants (IGGs) and each of these interventions has a different impact on the community in different ways", shared Nabi with a positive note.

Nabi was among the nominees short-listed for the Income Generating Grant (IGG), a

grant that supports the poorest in the community to improve their livelihood. Like the other IGG beneficiaries, he received three goats in 2019. Initially, he wasn't sure how this would help his family's situation, but he decided to take the opportunity and put his efforts into raising the goats.

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Having decided to raise the goats, I was hopeful yet unsure if it would change my financial status, but the way things turned in my favour over time has literally been unbelievable.

Over a time period of two years, Nabi's herd of goats grew from three to eleven. It took him a while to feel a sense of purpose and pride and a sense of ownership and responsibility towards his goats. It also enabled him to work tirelessly to ensure their well-being. So

far, Nabi has sold four of his goats for profit and it has enabled him to provide better for his family and improve their lifestyle.

He further expressed, "With the additional income from my goats, I am able to provide better food and clothing to my family. Not only this, but I am also able to send money to three of my kids in Panjgur for their educational expenses."

This grant under the EU-funded BRACE programme not only provided financial support to Nabi but has also enabled him to expand his sources of income. His journey is full of struggles and setbacks but nothing in the way could stop him from believing in himself and his progress. He made sure to work hard enough to keep himself going. His story serves as a reminder that sometimes all it takes is a small push, which could be financial or moral support to make a significant impact on someone's life. His journey is a motivation for us and a testament to the fact that hard work can lead to a better life if done with dedication.





COMMUNITY INVESTMENT FUND (CIF)

FIDA HUSSAIN UNION COUNCIL BAGHBANA-I

hen there's hope there's life. Hope is the only way that shows you light in the darkness. We often come across such quotes written somewhere but I found this example practically existing in district Khuzdar. While on my field visit to the district, I met Fida Hussain in Union Council Baghbana-I. He is a 27-year-old man and a father of three.

Hussain is the only breadwinner who takes care of his family, feeds them, and pays for his children's school fees and other expenses. He had a small mobile shop. He would purchase food commodities, and other confectionery items of daily use from Khuzdar city and then visited villages on his bike aka the mobiloe shop to sell the stuff and earn bread and butter for his children.

"I was earning around PKR 15,000-17,000 per month, which would help me meet the needs of my family but this amount gradually

proved insufficient as inflation failed me. I was trying to manage the expenses when an unpleasant incident impacted me and I almost lost everything", Hussain added. "I was mugged on my way home from the nearby village. They snatched everything. My bike, things I had with me, and the cash I was carrying in my pocket."

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I returned home with great disappointment. That night the only thing I brought to my family was a feeling of sadness and I barely can forget it in my life.

He continued his story "The next morning as I woke up, I went straightaway to the LSO office and met the president Allah Bakhsh and asked for help after sharing the incident. My Poverty Scorecard (PSC) made me



eligible for the Community Investment Fund (CIF) which is a loan that supports residents in their income generation".

After the documentation process, he was among the finalists who were going to receive the CIF in the coming distribution cycle and would start new setups or improve their existing setups by investing in the CIF.

"It has been a month now since I got CIF. I have started the same work I was doing before. I bought another bike in used and went to the market, bought confectionery items, and started my business again" shared Hussain.

He is glad he didn't give up and the community helped him continue his fight. His business is improving, and he is earning even more than what he used to earn earlier.

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My current monthly income is around PKR 30,000 which is almost double what I used to earn.

Fida Hussain is not settling for less, and he aims to extend and earn more by extending his setup. He paid thanks to Allah, the Almighty, and to the LSO leaders who helped him when he needed them the most.





PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (PWDS)

MUHAMMAD RAFIQ VILLAGE KANDOZAI

"Despite my physical limitation, I was determined to earn and provide for my family. I worked hard to earn, but it was always a constant struggle for me to make ends meet", told Muhammad Rafiq, 22. Muhammad Rafiq, a victim of poliovirus is a resident of village Kandozai in Union Council Baghbana-I in the Khuzdar district.

At such a young age, he has already been through a lot. He is the second generation in his family who has fallen victim to poliovirus. Although the virus is not hereditary, the disappointing socio-economic conditions have been. His father was also a person who carried a disability because of the poliovirus. His whole family was dependent upon his brother over the years but due to an unfortunate accident, he too had lost one of his legs and was now physically challenged.

Rafiq, despite his physical status, is the bread-earner for his family. He never lost

hope as a physically challenged person but the opportunities available for daily-wage earners in the town were very limited, which always added to his difficulties.

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With my skills and status, I hardly would earn around PKR 5,000 to 6,000 and with that amount, meeting my household expenses was not easy at all.

After the introduction of the European Unionfunded BRACE programme, implemented by the Balochistan Rural Support Programme (BRSP), it provided support and assistance to people with disabilities alongside its other interventions. Rafiq was hopeful that he might benefit from it.

To his delight, Rafiq was found eligible and was provided with a tricycle a year ago which

was supposed to minimise his difficulties and facilitate his mobility. The tricycle is specially designed for people with disability. It gave him the freedom and mobility he needed to move around and earn a living for his family.

Rafiq disclosed that "I would load goods on my tricycle with the help of others and transport them to the desired destination, where I had to unload it again with the help of others and that is how it is working."

Though he now earns a decent amount his struggle continues. He has noticed a positive change in his mobility and movement and is grateful to the EU-funded BRACE programme.

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With my newfound independence and income, I can support my family and provide for their basic needs at least. I am proud of myself and my struggles for the betterment of my family and so is the family.

Today, Rafiq is trying his level best to prove that with consistent hard work and dedication, anything is possible, even for those facing seemingly insurmountable challenges.









DISTRICT PROGRAMME MANAGER (DPM)

BILAL GICHKI DISTRICT KHUZDAR

Bilal Gichki has always been a man with a mission. From a young age, he had known that he wanted to help people in need, and he pursued this passion with a determination.

"I was working with the Marie Stopes in Quetta as the Project Manager which was one of the first projects being funded by EU That I was offered a position to work with UNDP as Community development supervisor in my home town of Khuzdar Now, I am serving as a District Programme Manager (DPM) for the district of Khuzdar under the European Union-funded BRACE programme implemented by the Balochistan Rural Support Programme (BRSP)", Gichki shares his journey.

He has vast experience in the development sector and has worked with different wellknown organisations before taking over his current role at the Balochistan Rural Support Programme (BRSP) as a DPM in March 2016.

He calls it a prestigious programme; "BRACE Programme is one of the largest poverty reduction projects in Balochistan I have seen so far and the important thing is that it is intimately working with the local government."

"I believe that the BRACE programme will have much impact on the livelihood of the people even after its completion. However for that, the society too, has to play its role because ultimately projects end and communities will have to sustain their gains", Gichki expresses.

He narrated "While we were sending the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) trainees to Karachi, I asked them, "Do you have smartphones? Upon

which only two replied NO". Then I came up with another question, how many of you have a water tap at your home. To this, out of twenty, only three raised their hands. It's just because fetching water from far-flung water source is not their job and they are not really concerned but because the job is done by their sisters and mothers."

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If a woman or a girl's day is spent fetching water, when will she study? Without education making an impact on society is impossible.

According to Gichki, the projects cannot make difference until society is ready to contribute. He appreciated the inclusion of women in the EU-funded BRACE programme and believes it will empower women and enable them to take over their individual livelihood and other relevant activities without relying on men.

Gichki shared about a Community Resource Person (CRP) "At the time of the job interview, she was very shy and nervous but later after a few months of working with the BRACE programme, she came to my office, and I found her a completely different woman. Working with this programme had given her the confidence that she, in the beginning, was lacking. That is what we call empowerment!"

He praised the programme interventions, especially the TVET which has not only engaged youth but has also given them the opportunity to acquire the necessary skill and work independently instead of wasting time looking for jobs.



The role of CRPs should have continued and even their jobs after the completion of the programme. CRPs are not only impactful but also extremely active in the community and I wish we could continue with them.

Keeping the role of female CRPs in mind, he suggested that more women should be focused on similar future projects to have better outcomes.



SOCIAL ORGANISER & LIVELIHOOD OFFICER

BILQEES YOUSAF DISTRICT KHUZDAR

Working with Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in Balochistan has been a tough task for both men and women. Despite the realisation of these challenges, we continue to see some bright people working and making an impact on society as well as contributing towards the success of the organisation.

Bilqees Yousaf is one of those individuals who have been on the front for the Balochistan Rural Support Programme. After completing her bachelor's degree, she joined a primary school in Khuzdar as a teacher before joining the National Commission for Human Development (NCHD) for one of its literacy centres. She remained with NCHD for a year and then joined Balochistan Rural Support Programme (BRSP) as a Social Organiser for its Relief Project in 2007.

As a Social Organiser (SO), Bilqees was able

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I was aware of the situation in the town, but you should not let any instability stop you from what you want to do for the family or society.

to work closely with rural communities in Khuzdar and help them improve their lives. She was passionate about her work and devoted herself to finding innovative solutions to the challenges faced by these communities. However, her journey as a SO was never easy-going.

"I had to face resistance from the community. I had to travel from Khuzdar to Wadh daily which also was a challenge for me being a woman", shared Bilqees.

Her life became more miserable as the situation got worse. "My team and I received threats from unknown sources to shut the



office down in Wadh and stop what our organisation was doing. Conversely, upon denying it, a bomb blast at our office took place in 2010", Bilgees shared courageously. "It wasn't the only attack to stop me, I survived in firing attack on our staff van in Union Council Zehri. My team suggested that we should close the office and leave Wadh, but I couldn't as we had struggled a lot to get that office going, people had sacrificed, and I did not want to let all those efforts and sacrifices go in vain."

Additionally, a year later she had a car accident where she was badly injured and according to her, she had twenty-four stitches in her leg. "I am alive, sitting in front of you", she added on a lighter note.

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Overall, I have enjoyed working with the BRACE programme. The interventions under this programme such as Community Investment Fund (CIF), Income Generating Grant (IGG), and the Community Physical Infrastructure (CPI) are something I haven't seen in other programmes. The BRACE programme has empowered women through the formation of Women Community Institutions and has given them some space in society," Bildees praised the programme while sharing her experience.

Over the years, Bilqees has become a well-respected member of both the community as well as of the BRSP's district team, known for her tireless work ethic and her unwavering commitment to helping others. Though her journey has taken her from the classroom to the world of development work, she knew that she was exactly where she was meant to be.







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Balochistan Rural Development and Community Empowerment (BRACE) Programme

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