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SUCCESS STORY | Shahil Khatoon with New Hope

Bahaal Project | Emergency Relief and Early Recovery for the Flood Affectees Across Pakistan

Shahil Khatoon still has not forgotten the devastating memories of the flood of 2010. She explains her emotion by saying: “When I remember those moments I still find tear in my eyes”.

Shahil Khatoon, an inhabitant of village Gari Dakho, District Shikarpur, Province Sindh, is one of the flood affectees who lost all of her belongings and sources of livelihood during the 2010 floods. She is a widow, living with her five youngest children, and her main source of income is derived from agricultural land and livestock. She herself cultivates ten acres rented land to earn a livelihood for her family. She says that “I was working in my agricultural field for the cultivation of rice crop when I heard that flood water had entered our neighboring villages. So I rushed towards my home with haste to save my children and domestic belongings. I was in such a rush that I forgot to wear my *dupatta* while running toward home.” The flood waves struck Shahil Khatoon’s village with tremendous force and swept away all her belongings. Shahil was shocked to see that there was nothing left of her whole property as all cultivated land had been submerged in flood water. She says: “My possessions were drowned in front of my own eyes, which was very heart breaking for me”.



“Shahil Khatoon a flood affectee widow of district Shikarpur (Sindh) shows her gratitude to USAID-Bahaal”

“By grace of Allah my empty hands were filled again by USAID’s *Bahaal Project*”

Shahil Khatoon told that the rice crop had been planted on ten acres land and that she had invested Rs 35,000 (about US \$ 410). When the flood came, all of the effort and investment was lost in flood in one moment and she was left empty handed.

Shahil Khatoon said: “When I returned to my village, I had little hope that anyone would support me. You can imagine my delight when one day the USAID *Bahaal* team visited my village for beneficiary assessment for the provision of agricultural inputs. They came into what remained of my house and talked about my damages during the floods and listened to all my miseries. After becoming satisfied that I was a deserved case, the team registered me for agricultural inputs and consoled me by saying that after some days they would supply me agricultural-inputs for growing wheat”. After one week, the USAID *Bahaal* team gave me one bag DAP, two bags urea, 50 kg wheat seed and Rs 2000 in cash for the cultivation of wheat crop on 1 acre land.

USAID took great initiative to help the flood affected people of Pakistan by initiating many projects of relief and early recovery. The project named *Bahaal* (which means: Recover) is one of them. The main objective of *Bahaal* project is to provide emergency relief to flood affected households in Sindh, Punjab, Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, with its project interventions ranging from agricultural inputs, animal feed supplement for livestock, and shelter to non food items and WASH services.

Shahil also expressed her gratitude to the USAID-*Bahaal* team by saying that “It was very first visit of any organizational representative in our area and I hoped that once they visited and registered me they would definitely provide me some aid so that I could rehabilitate my agricultural land. The USAID *Bahaal* Team fulfilled its promise by providing the agri-package to me. I was very glad when I got the agri-package and I thanked Allah for the fulfillment of

our prayers by sending USAID *Bahaal* team to help us”.



“Shahil Khatoon in her wheat cultivated fields with a smile and hope”

Shahil Khatoon is very hopeful for future. She expressed her satisfaction and says that now I have cultivated my wheat crop in fields again, which will be ready in coming months of April-May. After the flood, I was empty handed and now I am satisfied that after 3 to 4 months I will be able to get economic benefit from the wheat crop.

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