ELIXIR OF DEVELOPMENT

A Case Study of Baltit Rural Support Organisation (BRSO)

Aga Khan Rural Support Programme

Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada
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Elixir of Development

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“On visit to Baltit Rural Support Organisation, my heart elated beyond measure to see how the Local Support Organisation had translated the vision of the institutions of the people into a remarkable vehicle of development. The one factor which gave the LSO its present shape was the formation of Youth Organisations and giving them representation in LSO along with Village and Women Organisations.”

Shoaib Sultan Khan’s NFR, on visit to BRSO, November 7, 2014
UNION COUNCIL PROFILE:

Baltit town is situated in the heart of Hunza Valley at a distance of 106 kilometres from Gilgit in the north and almost 100 kilometres from Sost (border town with China in the south). The Union Council has 1,185 households and is inhabited by 9,480 souls – 3,792 men and 5,688 women. The community of Baltit is divided into 14 distinct settlements, which are well organised under Village Organisations (VOs), Women organisations (WOs), Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and Youth Organisations (YOs) to accelerate socio-economic development in the respective union council.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT:

Historically Baltit served as the official capital of former Hunza state for more then eight hundred years. Owing to its close proximity to the power centre, Baltit developed indigenous tribal, social and governance system. The indigenous base of local institutions and rootedness of governance system in the kinship based society contributed to the emergence of sustainable economy amidst the harsh climatic conditions and geographical terrain. That system started to wither away with the arrival of the British rule during the last decades of the 19th century.

Despite drastic changes in the Indian subcontinent and Central Asia, the social and governing fabric of Hunza remained intact. The major change occurred in
1974 when the princely state of Hunza was formally abolished by the then Prime Minister of Pakistan - Zulfiquar Ali Bhutto. Concomitant with the change at state level, the region witnessed opening of Karakorum Highway (KKH). It has exposed the hitherto isolated society of Hunza, including Baltit, to modernisation, market forces, new ideas and lifestyle.

CHANGE AND CHALLENGE:

One of the consequences of abrupt change in the traditional structure of governance and exposure to market forces is that the society was left with no viable alternatives. Though the government introduced modern institutions, they were in a nascent stage and would have taken long time to take root in local communities who did not have experience of working under an exogenous system. The institutional vacuum in the society could have aggravated the situation and made the people more vulnerable to forces of disruption. In order to tackle with the challenges in new order of things and modern institutional arrangements, it was imperative to build resources and capacities by mobilising local communities. AKRSP emerged on the development scene of Hunza precisely when the society was on the cusp.
INSTITUTIONAL HISTORY:

Being the centre of power in traditional power dispensation and social arrangements, Baltit was always the first to be exposed to forces of change in modern period. It has the honour of having the first male primary school established in 1912. This school has played an instrumental role in spreading basic and primary education among rural masses of Hunza. It is in Baltit that the first Village Organisation (VO) was formed in 1983 under the Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (AKRSP). In the subsequent years the local community of Baltit established 24 VOs and WOs (12 VO and 12 WO). The grassroots institutions of V/WOs not only proved instrumental in preparing the communities to embrace change and benefit from the opportunities offered by evolving socio-political, economic and administrative context of the region, but also enabled them to complete transition from kinship to association based society. By the end of 2004, V/WOs in Baltit managed to save PKR 9,004,803. In addition, these organisations enacted a pivotal role in connecting local communities with development initiatives undertaken by AKRSP and line departments of the government. As a result, development in the particular local context of Baltit has become participatory in nature.
BALTIT RURAL SUPPORT ORGANISATION:

Over the years, grassroots VOs/WOs felt the need of an umbrella organisation to work on issues of common interest that were beyond the scope and capacity of individual VOs and WOs. Therefore, VOs and WOs federated into formal local development organisations in the shape of Baltit Local Support Organisation (BRSO) in 2011. Now BRSO functions as the representative and downwards accountable apex body of V/WOs, CSOs and YOs in the locality. It aims at improving the living standard of the programme population by reducing poverty through working in close collaboration and co-ordination with Government, Non-Governmental Organisations, and national and international donor agencies.

OBJECTIVES:

Objectives of Baltit Rural Support Organisation are:

- to strengthen and build the capacity of member VOs/WOs/CSOs and YOs to respond to the changing needs of the area and organise all households in the union council;
- to work to increase production of various crops and establish agriculture processing units, agriculture marketing system and other enterprises for the local community;
- carry out research in the field of production, development, marketing and export of raw and un-polished precious and semi-precious stones and its allied matters;
- to frame rules and regulations governing export trade in rough and unpolished precious and semi-precious stones and make alterations and value additions therein from time to time, and
- to conserve the natural resources of the area for their sustainable use with the affiliation of specialised agencies.
ORGANISATIONAL PROFILE:

As of now BRSO has 12 VOs, 12 WOs, 6 YOs and 1 CSO as its members. Out of 1,185 households in the union council these organisations cover 1,125 households, representing 95% of the population of the Karimabad Union Council (UC). Every member organization has two representatives in the general body, which has total 104 members. In the general body Youth Organisations and Civil Society Organisation have 12 and 02 members respectively. 42 founding members are also members of the General Body of the BRSO. At governance level it has 15 Board Members, Chairman, Vice Chairman and General Secretary. The organisation is managed by Programme Manager who supervises accountant, social mobiliser and office secretary. Since its inception BRSO has taken initiatives in community/social mobilisation, resource mobilisation, linkages and partnerships, infrastructure development and capacity building.

SOCIAL MOBILISATION:

Women and Village Organisations were formed in the decades of 1980s and 1990s. The social, economic and political context during the period of their formation was different from the contemporary age. This change is brought about by assortment of endogenous and exogenous factors converging in the same space. As a corollary, development needs of the communities have also changed. By the time the society in Gilgit-Baltistan and Chitral (GBC) reached the twenty first century, development dynamics have taken a different turn. Since Baltit also share the overall context of the region, it had to undergo another period of transition in the first half of the last decade - 2000.

During the formative period and the subsequent two decades, in the words of Shoaib Sultan Khan (the first General Manager of AKRSP), saving provided glue which kept V/WOs active. In
2004, Baltit had 21 V/WOs. When the First Micro Finance Bank (FMFB) was established in 2004, savings and credit of most of V/WOs in GBC were transferred to the bank, but V/WOs in Baltit did not transfer their savings. The transitional phase of shifting of saving base from local and informal base to formal base has robbed the organisations of the glue that bound diverse members under one platform. It resulted in lack of supervision, which ultimately manifested in all except 2 WOs and 1 VO, which became dysfunctional.

During the same period (2004) AKRSP started to support the formation of Local Support Organisations (LSOs) as representative and downwards accountable apex bodies of V/WOs and other CSOs at the union council level. It provided a broader platform for local organisations to engage in development at wider scale with diverse development partners. However, local organisations in Baltit remained dormant until the establishment of Baltit Local Support Organisation (BRSO) in 2011. The organisation exerted great efforts in bringing together array of actors and institutions that could potentially play a positive role in resolution of issues stemming from dormancy of once active V/WOs. According to Chairman BRSO, Mr. Anwar, the first measure taken by BRSO was reactivation of dormant organisations within its jurisdiction.

Another salient feature of social mobilisation strategy is engagement of youth section of Baltit, particularly women. While engaging with community members for reactivation of dormant organisations youth has been made focus so that new blood could be inducted into governance structure with organisation. It served twofold purposes. First, it injected new blood into the V/WOs. Second,
The endeavours of BRSO got a great boost with its engagement with Enhancing Employability and Leadership in Youth (EELY) Programme of Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (AKRSP) funded by Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development (DFATD), Canada. Through EELY BRSO trained female members of V/WOs in Participatory Development, Social Mobilisation, Gender and Development, Training of Trainers (ToTs) and record keeping by multiplication of sessions. Supplementation of efforts for reactivation of dormant organisations with inclusion of youth, governance and capacity building of office bearers provided multiple sources for organisational strengthening. The cumulative result appeared in the reactivation of 19 organisations.
SAVINGS AND CREDIT

Reactivation of dormant organisations was essential primarily for the reason that within dormant V/WOs eight million rupees were lying unaccounted. Given the increasing need for local resources for strengthening institutions, the savings of organisations would be a great source for resource mobilisation and taking the organisation out of dormant state. This could only be done by adopting a pro-active approach for social mobilisation. For that purpose BRSO engaged loanees and local communities in dialogue for the resolution of chronic issues within their respective organisation. In order to resolve conflicts and other issues, localised strategy for conflict resolution was adopted.

Shoaib Sultan Khan terms reactivation of savings and internal loaning as the most important step and ‘elixir for revival of VOs/WOs.’

After a thorough social motivation and dialogues, all the stakeholders of the locality loaness and communities agreed to the solution provided by LSO. Within the span of two years V/WOs of BRSO constituency not only managed to recover loans, but also increased savings from PKR 9,004,803 in 2011 to PKR 13,152,487 in 2014 and initiated internal loaning. Shoaib Sultan Khan terms this as the most important step and ‘elixir for revival of VOs/WOs.’ Figure 1 clearly illustrates the V/WOs saving mobilisation before and after LSO formation in the financial terms:
Figure 1: Status of saving before and after (2011) the formation of BRSO area

Now member V/WOs of BRSO provides three kinds of loans: business, health and education. The interest rate for different loans depends upon the nature of loan. While deciding interest rate, social priorities and context is kept in mind. That is why interest rates of loans for health and education is 7 and 8 percent respectively, whereas interest for business loans stands at 14%.
Venturing into venture

Naik Perwar is a housewife from a hamlet in Baltit. Since her tying to nuptial knot she had an earnest wish to contribute to the well-being of her family through her own earning. There were some like-minded women in the hamlet. Finally, the like-minded group decided to establish a business by borrowing PKR 50,000 from their organisation. They managed to return the loan after one month in 2007. Their business was doing well, but the women faced insurmountable pressure from family and local people for venturing into profession of business, which has hitherto been an exclusive domain of males. Consequently, they had to close their business.

Despite all odds and social constraints she continued to harbor the dream of starting her own business. After some time her children started their formal education. To support her family she needed extra income in addition to the earning of her husband. Naik Perwar’s husband allowed her to start a new business. She borrowed money from the Women Organisation of the locality and started a business of vegetable, but the single item shop was insufficient to generate enough income. So she expanded the business by including stationary items and opening a canteen as well. Since the shop was in proximity with educational institutions, her business has done really very well. With the income she bought a calf and fridge. The income from her business empowered Naik Perwar economically and well as socially, because the earning enabled her to make decisions about domestic and commercial affairs.

The benefits of empowerment has not remained confined to the household and shop only. Her empowered status proved conducive to expand her sphere of influence beyond the boundaries of home and provided her opportunity to enact an active role in society. Now she has sound saving deposited in a local cooperative society. Her husband helps in the business too. Commenting on her condition Naik Perwar said, ‘when we have money in hand, then we really attain our self-esteem. Economic empowerment of women provides strong foundation for their social empowerment.’

In future she intends to expand her business and want to cater to bigger markets than Baltit. But the challenge is that big businesses are squeezing space for nascent and small businesses. Despite these challenge she and other small business women have a plan to tackle. ‘From our collective work experience with Women Organisations’ we have learned that by coming together we can form synergies for bigger business’ she asserted. She hopes that once the proposed Women Entrepreneurs Group is established by BRSO, then she will be able to achieve her future goals.
YOUTH MOBILISATION AND INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In addition to activating some of the inactive V/WOs, BRSO has played a significant role in broader institutional development within its constituency. After bringing all the existing V/WOs in Baltit within its ambit, BRSO continued to invest for their development. Besides supporting local business and trade groups, it also provided membership to other Civil Society Organisations, Youth Organisations and local cultural and tribal institutions. To overcome the factors that caused inactiveness in local organisation, BRSO has introduced their members to new approaches and strategies for institutional development and strengthening. A case in point is point Khurukushal Women Organisation. With the support of BRSO, this WO imparted training to 150 women in agri-processing. The material prepared in training was sold in the market in bulk. Interestingly, the members decided not to take their portion of profit. Instead, they unanimously decided to deposit the earning in endowment fund of the organisation. Now Khurukushal Women Organisation is in a financially strong position and provides credit to its members for business and educational purposes. Hence, the membership of the organisation has almost tripled, and amongst them, over 70% are youth.
Youth in Baltit now make over 67% of the overall population of Karimabad union council. For the success of any development initiative, it is indispensable for the LSO to harness energies and potential of youth through institutional arrangements and mainstreaming in the development process. BRSO’s dialogues and meeting with youth of Baltit locality yielded good results as it convinced the youth to form their own organisations on the one hand, and provided an opportunity for member YOsto become member of BRSO General Body on the other. Today, BRSO has six Youth Organisations as its member and 12 of their representative are in General Body.

Mohammed Fazail, founding member of Baltit Youth Organisation, sees the establishment of YOs in Baltit as a potential platform to voice aspirations and needs of the youth. “YO help bringing youth of the area under its umbrella for positive engagement in the society. Presence of such youth led organisations will definitely help to produce leaders for society” he said. This vision resonates with the objective of AKRSP’s EELY project to enhance youth leadership and participation in the civic institutions and organizations in Gilgit-Baltistan and Chitral.

In the case of Itehad Youth Organisation, it has immensely benefited after becoming a member of BRSO. Through BRSO, the organisation has succeeded to get several trainings in citizen journalism, agriculture, language and proposal writing. Members of the Youth Organisations appeared to be very clear about their role in society and nature of relationship of their organisation with BRSO. They are of the opinion that LSO’s existence is very crucial in connecting them with various development initiatives as well as playing its role as a mentor for their nascent organisation.

Overall, Baltit Rural Support Organisation has enabled Village and Women Organisations, CivilSociety Organisations and Youth Organisations to articulate their development needs in a participatory and consultative manner, and engage with the formal sectors of the state and the private sector as well as other development partners to address those needs.
SKILL DEVELOPMENT

In the age of globalisation and market economy, no society can keep itself immune from the winds of change that is sweeping across the globe. During the last two decades Baltit has witnessed drastic changes in its economy and society. Exposure to new lifestyle has coincided with dwindling landholdings. At the same time sustenance agriculture and old system of economy cannot cater to the diverse needs of modern age. In order to manage change and make successful transition, it is imperative to build on the existing local resources by building human capacities to govern and manage their own affairs locally, and develop a cadre of local leadership.

Realising the importance of human capital, BRSO has taken several initiatives since its inception. Through different initiatives BRSO has trained 1,958 community members (896 men and 1,062 women) of Baltit locality in different productive and technical skills including leadership and organisational management skills. The very process of human capital development is not an exercise in isolation, rather the integrated nature of activities has ensured success of different initiatives undertaken in different sectors. The themes of trainings range from Community Mobilisation, Institutional Development, Resource Mobilisation, Gender and Development, Financial Management, Record Keeping, Entrepreneurship Development, Capacity Building of
Entrepreneurs in Gilgit-Baltistan, to Institutional Policies and Advocacy and Lobbying. Latter learning in the trainings were applied and replicated in the jurisdiction of LSO, and in some cases the trainings were provided to areas that are outside the ambit of BRSO. It provided an earning opportunity for the trained professionals whose expertise is in great demand in neighbouring union councils.

The application and multiplication of trainings proved successful as it helped in enhancing the quality of work, services and products. Success cases of BRSO in capacity building are technology transfer project and women entrepreneurs. Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and Government of Gilgit-Baltistan have started a joint project of technology transfer, of which BRSO was implementing partner. Through this project the organisation succeeded to train 1,787 professionals (842 male and 951 female) in 45 training sessions in pre and post harvesting and marketing skills. Seven BRSO activists received training in Japan as Training of Trainers (TOT).

The trainers returned and provided trainings in pre and post harvesting techniques, organic pesticide, organic fertilizer, and enterprise management for other members. Then the trainers have transferred their technology and learning to local community members, mostly women. Similarly under EELY young community leadership program two youth facilitators from BRSO received one month training. Upon return they provided training to 11 young men and 29 young women members of Baltit in youth mobilisation, gender and development, record keeping and participatory development. These young community members enacted a crucial role in mobilising youth for the formation of six YOs in the locality. “The leadership training exposed me to new ideas, provided opportunity to meet different participants from other regions, and gave me the skills to apply in my LSO to mobilise youth. We returned and mobilised over 600 youth, formed 6 new youth organisations under the umbrella of BRSO.” Karim, Programme Manager BRSO

Table 1 provides the details of activities related to training and skill development.
### Table 1: MANAGEMENT AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT TRAININGS (BoDs, MANAGEMENT, V/WOS & YOs MEMBERS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title of Trainings</th>
<th>Training Institute</th>
<th>No of Trainings</th>
<th>Duration (days)</th>
<th>Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Mobilisation:</td>
<td>AKRSP</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity Building: (in Pakistan)</td>
<td>JICA/BRSO</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>836</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity Building: (in Japan)</td>
<td>JICA</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Development:</td>
<td>BRSO</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource Mobilisation:</td>
<td>KADO</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender and Development:</td>
<td>AKRSP</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Management:</td>
<td>AKRSP/BRSO</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Record Keeping:</td>
<td>AKRSP</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrepreneurship Development</td>
<td>AKRSP</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity Building of Entrepreneurs in Gilgit-Baltistan</td>
<td>AKRSP</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Policies</td>
<td>Greenacre UK</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy &amp; Lobbying</td>
<td>Plan Pak</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total**: 96 | 298 | 896 | 1062 | 1958

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**PRODUCTIVE SKILLS TRAINING:**

Another major training imparted by BRSO’s trainers was related to agriculture. Women have an important role in agriculture in Hunza. Traditionally, their role in fruit production was confined to picking only. Even today women’s role is visible at the start of value chain, they tend to disappear at the tail end of chain. Therefore, they could not accrue the benefits from sale of apples in bigger
markets outside Baltit. BRSO’s master trainer trained 29 women in apple picking, grading and packing. Out of these, 16 were selected to complete a business assignment of supplying two trucks of apple. It not only ensured their participation in the chain, but also resulted in good quality products.

Since these women were involved from growing to packing, they requested Chairman BRSO to carry apple cartons to suppliers themselves. Traditionally, carrying load by women is looked un-favourably by the male section of society. In this case they were allowed to carry the cartons. Their expertise in picking, training and packaging helped them to become active participants in value chain. Now this group of women in Baltit want to open a training centre for school dropouts by themselves. Voicing the aspirations of women, Farida Amin, an entrepreneur and founding member of YO Ulubasi Khawateen Tanzeem, stated, “We want to establish a women group of entrepreneurs so that we can take charge of things in our hands and get directly linked with end markets. For that purpose we need support from LSO. Once we get linked with markets we will develop our own system.” Farida Amin from Ulubasi Khawateen Tanzeem.
Though Baltit has been rapidly transforming into a town with increasing number of markets and shops, the mainstay of economy still remains agriculture, which absorb most of the workforce mainly women. Hence, capacity of women has direct bearing on agricultural output. Because of rampant use of chemical pesticide during the last couple of decades, fruits in Karimabad UC have been affected by different diseases. In order to tackle with this problem, BRSO trained its social mobiliser in fertilizers with the support of JICA in Japan. After getting training in organic fertilizer, the social mobiliser reached out to member WOs of BRSO and trained more than 500 women who in their turn applied new techniques and technology of organic fertilizer and pesticide. As a result, this year’s yield of fruit is much better with quality, colour and ripeness. These qualities of local fruit enabled local farmers to sale fruit in greater quantity and better price than previous year. The story of Lal Shahzadi in the success story “Organisation Endeavours” provides glimpse into this successful initiative.
Organic Endeavours

With the formation of Baltit Rural Support Organisation, I have started to actively participate in the process of social mobilisation in Baltit locality. With clear guidance from BRSO and support of local communities we have managed to activate dormant Village and Women Organisations. However, rejuvenation without a proper mechanism for active engagement in development and absence of incentives for member organisations and their members can be a great disincentive at the same time. That is why BRSO continuously provides opportunities for the community members of its constituency by taking different initiatives and providing trainings.

Since I have played an active role in social mobilisation and have close connections with local community members, I was fortunate to be selected for two months course in Japan with the support of JICA. During my stint in Japan I got training in Bokashi, which includes technique of Micro Organism Liquid, Biological Control Liquid, pruning and thinning. Though I had been engaged in agriculture since childhood, these techniques were novel for me. After undergoing training I felt a new zeal within me to transfer new learning and knowledge to women folk in Baltit.

After two months training in Japan, I came back to Baltit and trained women in Micro Organism Liquid and Biological Control Liquid. Unlike chemical pesticides, these techniques rely mostly on indigenous and organic material. That is why these techniques proved to be cost effective as well as environmental friendly. In Micro Organism Liquid indigenous material are used to make medicine and urea. The ingredients of medicine and urea are: ash, manure, dry leaves and rotten fruit. Biological Control Liquids comprised of vinegar, chillies, garlic and ginger. Pruning and thinning training was imparted with an objective to make women understand the whole science behind keeping space between leaves, cutting and picking.

The trained women have geared their learning into practice. The technique involved curing of organic disease of trees without spray. Its application on local fruit trees proved very beneficial, for it resulted in increase in both quantity and quality. Before this, people used to get quantity without quality. It is because of new technique we have fruits without any diseases. This year women of Baltit were able to provide two trucks of apple to Islamabad vegetable and fruit market. Today we are in a position to cater to market demand in Gilgit and Islamabad.

At the moment we felt hemmed in because of lack of linkages with markets. BRSO arranged an exposure visit to Metro store in Islamabad for the women who are engaged in the production of fruits. Now we have strong comprehension of how the market functions. This year our role has remained confined to production, picking and packaging. Next year we intend to engage with end markets not individually, but collectively by establishing a group of women farmers cum entrepreneurs. Once we are able to create a niche in every stage of value chain, than we will be able to reap benefit offered by every stage of value chain.
INTERNAL RESOURCE MOBILISATION

A major challenge to the organisation is financial sustainability. For this purpose BRSO has chalked out a plan that aims at diversifying its sources of income. Although it receives financial support for the projects from multiple local, national and international sources, its main thrust is to develop an indigenous support base so that the organisation could be run on sustainable basis. That is why it has established an internal mechanism of resource mobilisation. The internal resource mobilisation includes array of individuals, initiatives, institutions and activities. Total income of organisation from indigenous resources is Rs. 716,416. This makes the monthly average of internal resources PKR 59700, which is sufficient to run the expenses of the organization. Figure 2 shows sources that have contributed financially to BRSO.
As is evident from the above table, the major local sources of income is through fee for service for vocational training, indigenous donations, income from managing various local cultural events, board members’ donations and income from bulk buying and sale of potato seed to farmers. However, BRSO has taken an initiative in 2014 to collect monthly contributions through V/WOs from organised households which will be the main sustained income source of the LSO.
LINKAGES AND PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

One of the objectives of establishing LSOs in GBC was to develop linkages and partnership with development agencies, donors, service providers, markets, enterprises and government line departments. BRSO has succeeded to implement various initiatives for local development because of its extensive linkages and successful efforts to mobilise external resources. It proved helpful in increasing organisational portfolio as well as addressing the needs of local communities. Through linkages with diverse range of institutions, BRSO has succeeded to impart trainings to local communities, Board of Directors, staff and member organisations. It is through diverse linkages and partnership, BRSO is able to build four main water channels, one sub-channel and a footbridge. The total cost of these and ongoing infrastructure projects are PKR 9.7 million.

The diversity of linkages are evident in the number of institutions, which ranges from government, non-government, and private sector agencies at local, national and international levels. Examples are JICA, KADO-HiMaT, ILDP, Sihat Foundation, Star Farm Pakistan, UN Habitat, Agri-Business Support Fund (ASF), Metro Pakistan, Sungi Foundation, Civil Society Human & Institutional Development Program (CHIP), Youth Eye Citizen Journalist, Universal Birth Registration (UBR), The International Foundation for Fairtrade and Development (IFFAD), The United States Agency for International Development (USAID), The Aga Khan Planning and Building Service, Pakistan (AKPBS,P), and Greenacre UK to JLI.
Table 2 provides details of Linkages and partnerships through which different activities were carried out by BRSO

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Institution</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JICA</td>
<td>• BODs &amp; Farmers Trainings in Japan and Pakistan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The project for the promotion of Value Added Fruit products (Value Chain of Apple)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HiMaT ILDP</td>
<td>• Development of 10 years Strategic Plan Processing (Under progress)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sihat Foundation</td>
<td>• One Day Free Medical Camp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Star Farm Pakistan</td>
<td>• 10 Days training on Capacity Building of Entrepreneurs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN Habitat</td>
<td>• One Day Seminar on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) on District Level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agri Business Support Fund (ASF)</td>
<td>• Installation of Solar Tunnels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metro Pakistan</td>
<td>• Exhibition of fruit products of Hunza</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sungi Foundation</td>
<td>• LSOs networking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil Society Human &amp; Institutional Development Program (CHIP)</td>
<td>• Session on development of Special Persons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Eye Citizen Journalist</td>
<td>• Training on Youth Journalism, Script Writing, Editing and Film Making etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UBR</td>
<td>• Awareness and registration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IFFAD</td>
<td>• Meeting on Value chain of Agri Products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USAID</td>
<td>• Proposal submitted on Micro Hydel Power Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AKPBSP</td>
<td>• Masonry training for Youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greenacre UK</td>
<td>• Training on Institutional Policies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JLI</td>
<td>• Health Insurance of V/WOs members</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With support of AKRSP, Government line departments and other development partners, BRSO was able to mobilise external resources to complete various community productive and social infrastructure projects in the Union Council. Notable projects include 6 irrigation channels (Rs. 7.2 million) with support from CARITAS, establishment of Youth Adolescent Centre (Rs. 1.2 million RHIA/Plan Pakistan) and Agri processing training and tools (Rs. 1.5 million ASF), Silk Route Festival (Rs. 0.5 million Tourism Department), besides provision of support from AKRSP for youth mobilisation, entrepreneurship training and LSO support (1.2 million).
LESSONS LEARNT:

- Identifying and investing in honest, committed and energetic local leadership and management cadre is pre-requisite for fostering sustainable community institutions;

- Mobilisation of local income sources, including membership fee, local donations and fee for services are necessary to achieving financial sustainability for the BRSO, however it requires initial incentives and matching support from support programs to cultivate and mature local income streams;

- In order to understand emerging needs and demand and address them, it is imperative to ensure change in governing bodies by inducting young cadre in leadership positions.

- Non-formal organisations needs constant guidance about formal requirements of internal lending and processes.

- Introduction of female segment of society in new vocations and trades paves the way for economic empowerment and ultimately social empowerment.

- An overarching platform like LSO helps harnessing scattered human resources in a coordinated way for human development and helps avoiding replication of activities.
REFERENCES:

Interview with the following individuals:

6. Itehad Youth Organisation, Baltit.

NOTES

8. Shoaib Sultan Khan’s NFR, on visit to Baltit Rural Support Organisation (BRSO) November 7, 2014
Annex 1: List of member organisations of Baltit Rural Support Organisation (BRSO)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VOs</th>
<th>WOs</th>
<th>YOs</th>
<th>CSOs</th>
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<tr>
<td>UlloBasi</td>
<td>UlloBasi</td>
<td>Japan Chowk football association</td>
<td>Hunza Arts and Culture Council</td>
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<td>Khurukshal Upper</td>
<td>Khurukshal khan</td>
<td>Baltit Youth Organization</td>
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<td>Khurukshal lower</td>
<td>Al Zahra Diramshal</td>
<td>Ithaad Youth Organization (female)</td>
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<td>Diramshal</td>
<td>Barashal</td>
<td>City Capital Youth Development Organization</td>
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<td>Barbar</td>
<td>Bronoshal</td>
<td>New Generation Youth Organization</td>
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<td>Brarashal</td>
<td>Ghaimash</td>
<td>Sun Rise Youth Development Organization</td>
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<td>Brongshal</td>
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<td>Shanukushal</td>
<td>Sammarkun</td>
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<td>Gharabares</td>
<td>Al Barkat</td>
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Aga Khan Rural Support Program

Aga Khan Rural Support Programme is a private, non-profit company, established by the Aga Foundation to help improve the quality of life of the villagers of Gilgit-Baltistan and Chitral (GBC). It was established in 1982 with the mandate to focus on economic and institutional development in collaboration with government departments, elected bodies, national and international development agencies and commercial institutions. Although AKRSP’s own emphasis on the productive sectors, it is also expected to assist others agencies in promoting social sector programmes. AKRSP was established to act as a catalyst for rural development, organizing local human and financial resources in order to enable the communities to bring about their own development in an equitable and sustainable manner.

AKRSP is a non-communal organization, working with all the people of its project area, and recruiting its staff from all over Pakistan.

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