

A resilient girl out to serve her community

Musarat Shaheen is a young educated girl living in village Akor of Union Council Dei Jarkas, located at some 40 km distance from district Badin. Natively from Pashtun tribe of Dera Ghazi Khan and settled in badin, her family is agriculturist like majority of the area.

In 2010, flashfloods destroyed their crops of cotton and chili pepper. Due to heavy rain and overflowing of Left Bank Outfall Drain (LBOD) their area was badly affected. Musarat's house was also damaged. Her family shifted to a safe location where they lived for three months and returned back to their home after the water receded.



In 2012 USAID's funded Community Based Disaster Risk Management (CBDRM) project titled Tahafuz started its interventions in village Akor. Musarat, with an ambition to make her flood hit communities resilient, became member of Village Disaster Management (VDMC) of her village. She received training on CBDRM approach. She was very active and remained fully involved in the participatory disaster risk assessment and planning of her village.

Her active involvement in community development initiatives especially in Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) work qualified her to become the president of Union Disaster Management Committee (UDMC), an extended arm of VDMCs. After the integration of UDMC into Local Support Organization (LSO) as special committee, she became Joint Secretary of the LSO. The LSO is a network of people's own organizations at union council level. She has been involved in various DRR activities. In 2013, a Provincial Workshop was held at Karachi under Tahafuz project in which she presented her VDMC/UDMC DRR initiatives. She was also actively involved in fundraising for UDMC/LSO that could be used during emergencies. Under her leadership the UDMC collected a sum of Rs. 43, 230 for the Earthquake affected communities of Awaran, Baluchistan.

Due to her DRR knowledge, good communication and leadership skills, she was selected as Community Resource Person (CRP) to conduct DRR awareness sessions in the community. She conducted DRR awareness sessions in an effective way. She played vital role in transferring DRR knowledge to grassroots level.

In 2015, Musarat was selected as Community Mobilizer in Thardeep Rural Development Programme (TRDP). Now she is working in the Tahafuz project in District Umerkot and is playing her role in social mobilization and capacity building. Musarat says, "Tahafuz project capacitated and enabled me to work for the vulnerable communities of Sindh." She is committed to transfer DRR knowledge to disaster prone and vulnerable communities.