

A tale of struggle for sustainable growth

Farzana Bibi, 33, is a resident of Basti Kotha Gali, Union Council Ranjhay Khan of district Rahim Yar Khan. Farzana taught at a primary school for two years after completing her matriculation. She is married with two school going children. She started working with National Rural Support Programme (NRSP) in 2008 in different projects. She was selected as Community Resource Person (CRP) in the PSI funded



RSPN's Provision of Reproductive Health Services through Social Marketing project in 2013. Farzana then registered 300 married women of reproductive age in her catchment area and is now providing family planning services to 66 users.

In the first phase of the project, the Punjab government announced the opening of Community Health Worker (CHW) courses. NRSP team shared the course description with all CRPs and encouraged them to apply. Minimum education criterion was matriculation, thus Farzana was also eligible to apply. She already had developed a lot of interest to work in her area as a CRP in reproductive health services project so she applied for the course and was selected. She was paid Rs. 3500 monthly honorarium which she used to cover her living expenses.

Farzana cleared her course with securing second position and obtained a diploma and license to open her own clinic in her village. She was also given a delivery kit which she keeps in her clinic, the only healthcare facility of her area. Her monthly reporting of the clinic is made to Executive District Officer (EDO) Health and Basic Health Unit (BHU), which is the in-charge of her clinic. Registration of clients in her clinic is checked by EDO Health. Moreover, she also reports to Tehsil Headquarter Hospital on monthly basis. She is required to report for three consecutive years. After that, her clinic would become independent. In addition, she also runs a polio campaign which is usually for 5 days, for which she gets paid by the World Health Organization (WHO).

One of her teachers informed her about a vacant position at Al-Munir Hospital. It was a contract based job where she applied and got selected. She has been hired for Rs. 10,000 per month. In the morning, she comes to the hospital and in the evening she runs her own clinic. With provision of reproductive health services, she also performs deliveries in her area charging only Rs. 1500 – 2500. Overall now she earns up to Rs. 15,000 each month. Farzana utilizes this money for her own living expenses and her children's education. Her husband is a driver who cannot afford the schooling cost of his children.

Despite her other responsibilities, she continued working with NRSP as a CRP with the same passion. She says, "I am very thankful to NRSP who showed me a way to achieve all this! NRSP team always guided me and refined my skills. I want to continue flourishing in the field I chose after meeting NRSP people."