



## SUCCESS STORY

### Leading by example...



**Dialogue with CHWs' can  
save a life**

Mah Ganj, married to Abdul Hameed, lives in village Rasool Bux Brohi in district Jacobabad. Her husband is a patient of Tuberculosis and is unable to continue his work as a farmer. Mah Ganj married in a very young age with no knowledge of family planning and birth spacing. She gave birth to eighteen children but only five, two sons and three daughters, could survive. Loss of three children was so upsetting for Mah Ganj that she herself miraculously survived. She narrates that death of her each child was like losing a part of her soul, the physical and emotional pain she endured was devastating for her.

That was the time she was selected as Community Health Worker under the Health Communication Component (HCC) of the Maternal Child Healthcare (MCH) through which 11-day training was arranged. Out of 125 CHWs who have been trained in the district of Jacobabad, Mah Ganj was one of them.

After receiving training she came to know that early marriage was the reason of her children's death and that giving birth at a young age can be life threatening not only for the child but also for the mother.

Mah Ganj's eldest son who is 16 years old now works in a factory in Karachi. He came to his village to get married, for which all the preparations were completed. However, Mah Ganj, knowing the health hazards, postponed the wedding of her son to ensure that the young couple does not go through what she experienced.

When her family members criticized her for her decision, she defended by saying that she would never jeopardize her son's life due to wrong customs and norms. She told them that her life is an example of the consequences of early marriage, and she would never let her son have the same fate.

She initiated this practice against early marriage and set an example for her community members to give priority to one's life and health over traditions. She hopes that in future, many people would follow her example and make decisions which will be beneficial for both mother and the child.