

Community's self-help initiative

Village 29 Heeral is located on a distance of 25 kilometres from the main city of Umerkot in Sindh province. The village suffered infrastructural losses during flash floods and monsoon rains in the past. There was no safe place where the villages can gather during floods. Villagers had to depend on rescue teams coming from other parts to save them from floods.



It was a time when RSPN introduced USAID/OFDA funded Community Based Disaster Risk Management (CBDRM) Tahafuz project in the area. Zahid, a local resident of village 29 Heeral, was selected as the Community Resource Person (CRP) and underwent training sessions. He says, "We have been living in the same difficult situation for generations. We had been affected by floods every year, with major losses to our houses and access roads. That was the reason we wanted to join Tahafuz project and learn on mitigation and preventive measures."

He further said that after receiving training on disaster risk assessment, planning and management, they formulated a Village Disaster Management Plan (DRMP), which gave them confidence to respond to any future disastrous situation in an optimal way.

Training provided by project implementation team helped them realize the importance of elevated abodes to avoid losses to life and assets during floods. They had already learnt about elevated platforms in the training and made it a crucial component of DRMP. They collectively decided to construct their mud houses on elevated places. He continued, "As a part of DRMP we took an initiative to construct our houses at raised places. Therefore, a total of 15 out of 25 houses of the settlement were constructed on raised platforms, providing a protected shelter to over 105 households. The community is grateful to USAID and RSPN for awareness raising on disaster risk reduction and hopes to provide shelter to other villagers during floods as well.