

Income Generating Grant Under BRACE Programme Restoring Hopes and Dreams

45-year-old MsMooza is a resident of village Balochi Bazar, in Union Council Sami in Balochistan. Her husband worked as a daily wage worker in and around her village and she would often help him. Mother of eight, did not possess any productive skill, she would often help her husband in work on others' land. The family did not possess any livestock or land, they lived from hand to mouth, but they had dreams cherished for their children's future. "Our situation was such, when we would have one meal a day, and some days we had nothing. I wanted my children to get education and do a formal job. My eldest son, studied in a government school, felt hopeless when could not afford registration fee for his exam. His father and I felt helpless when we failed to submit his fee" says Moosa.

"Almost two years ago [2019], a team from National Rural Support Programme (NRSP) visited our village and asked us in organising our households into community organisations" under the European Union funded BRACE Programme. "We willingly formed our organisation Sami Balochi Bazar and continued to conduct regular meetings. We also developed the Micro Investment Plans (MIP) of my family with support of community resource person," said Mooza's husband.

"My husband and I could only do farming. For a long time, I had a plan in my mind to cultivate something of my own, we could ask the village land owners to give us a plot for cultivation but never had enough money to buy a solar panel and an electric motor to fetch underground water. My husband wished the same, so we mentioned this in our MIP when we were asked what we wanted to do to improve our household livelihood." Based on the MIP, the Local Support Organisation provided her a PKR 33,200 as an Income Generating Grant (IGG). Meanwhile, her husband talked to a local land owner, who gifted him 2 acres of land to prepare and cultivate. "I finally had the resources to buy solar panels and seeds to start cultivating the land. When we received the financial support and bought two solar panels, all my children, my husband and I worked day and night, prepared land for cultivation and did the proper fencing to refrain others' livestock from entering into the prepared land. Now, we cultivate 2 acres of land. We have made a portion where grow seasonal vegetables such as Garlic, Onion, Tomatoes, Okra and beans. We grow wheat in another portion," she said showing her wheat harvest.

"Beans are very profitable; we earn around PKR 100,000 last season from selling beans," Mooza said with a beaming smile. "My son sells vegetables in different markets in Sami and other neighbouring places. Sale price for beans was PKR 250-300 per kilogram this last season, this made a big profit for us" her husband added with a pride, "We were told that we have to maintain this work and expand it in a three- day training. Therefore, we have added two more solar panels from our earnings now we can cultivate more land. People come to me to buy grass/hay for their livestock, we also grow grass for sale, so I am hoping to make some great sales this upcoming season."

"My eldest son continues his education and he will appear in his Bachelors of Arts exam this year. Other three sons are also going to school. This makes me quite hopeful that our hard work is making a meaningful contribution to our children's lives. Earlier we could barely afford food, now we grow our own food and also make money. We have also bought a refrigerator to keep our seasonal vegetables fresh," she says. BRACE is a big support to poor families like Mooza.

On congratulating him for the success stories in union council, the president of LSO Kumkkar, Abdul Hameed said, “We are grateful for the extensive support NRSP provides in the hard to reach rural areas to uplift deprived families out of poverty, and empower women by providing such support in dire times. NRSP provides grant and also guidance, and we [the LSO] track progress and support beneficiaries to keep their livelihood trajectory improving.”

