INSIGHTS

LORALAI
Stories by:
Muhammad Idrees Khan, Young Development Professional, BRACE, RSPN

Contributors:
Abdul Samad, Senior Social Organiser, BRACE, BRSP

Acknowledgment:
Akbar Khan Achakzai, Manager-HID, BRSP
Haseena Ibrahim, Capacity Building Officer-HID, BRSP

Content Managed and Edited by:
Sanober Shaikh, Documentation & Reporting Officer, BRACE, RSPN

Reviewed by:
Sajjad Hussain Changezi, Programme Manager, BRACE, RSPN

Photography by:
Muhammad Omer Farooq, Communications Officer, BRACE, RSPN

Designing and Printing:
Abdul Qadir, Masha ALLAH Printers, Islamabad.

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Balochistan Rural Development and Community Empowerment (BRACE) Programme completes its five years in 2022. The Programme is currently in its No-Cost Extension (NCE) phase. In the inception phase, the Rural Support Programmes Network, (RSPN), the National Rural Support Programme (NRSP), and the Balochistan Rural Support Programme (BRSP) conducted a widespread Poverty Scorecard (PSC) census which helped with the identification of the potential beneficiaries according to their poverty status. This European Union-funded Programme is the largest community empowerment programme in Balochistan and it covers 240 rural union councils in ten districts: namely Chaman, Duki, Jhal Magsi, Kech, Killa Abdullah, Khuzdar, Loralai, Pishin, Washuq, and Zhob. This document focuses on Loralai and presents stories and profiles from the community leaders and field teams from this district. The journey through these five years is documented in the form of stories from the field after multiple activities. These human-interest stories have been titled "The Insights of BRACE" which reflects the efforts taken by the community members and the implementing teams in helping each other tumbling their household-level issues and taking a step toward reducing the poverty in each district under the BRACE Programme. RSPN's BRACE documentation team worked with the respective RSP teams to reach out to the beneficiaries and obtain a story of the transformations the BRACE Programme has facilitated. This series does not only focus on the financial empowerment of the community members but also reflects on the legal and economic empowerment in the target districts of the programme.
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With its vast geography, Balochistan has abundant mineral and energy resources, untapped human potential, and offers opportunities to change the existing situation. However, Balochistan's population suffers disproportionately compared to the rest of the country. This is due to the inequitable distribution of resources, political instability, weak public policies, poor governance, displacements due to security issues, and a burdening influx of refugees.

The Balochistan Rural Development and Community Empowerment (BRACE) Programme, funded by the European Union (EU), is a strategic development initiative to alleviate rural poverty by building on community mobilisation and citizen empowerment. Rural Support Programmes (RSPs) provide social, technical, and financial assistance to improve and expand income sources for targeted community households.

In collaboration with the BRSP, the beneficiaries interviewed under the BRACE programme in district Loralai provided insight into how the idea of community-driven development is realised and how it has benefited the people in Loralai.

The focus of BRACE is to enable poor rural men and women to reduce poverty at the household level through social organisations. This starts at a small level, organising Community Organisations (COs) among neighbouring households, and at the larger village level bringing them together into Village Organisations (VOs) to deal with village problems. VOs eventually gained enough momentum to establish Local Support Organisations (LSOs) at the Union Council level, some of which became a member of the Joint District Development
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## Loralai (2017-22)

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Category</th>
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<tr>
<td>with PSC survey completed</td>
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<td>No. of Households Organised</td>
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<td>No. of COs formed</td>
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<td>No. of LSOs formed</td>
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<td>No. of Female VOs (45%)</td>
<td>260</td>
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<tr>
<td>No. of Female VOs (45%)</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of community members trained in CMST</td>
<td>1,387</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of community members trained in LMST</td>
<td>502</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Community members trained as Community Resource Persons (CRPs)</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Beneficiaries of Completed CPIs</td>
<td>248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Community members Trained in TVET</td>
<td>647</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of beneficiaries received assistive devices</td>
<td>482</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Number of HHs Benefiting from Completed CPIs: 773

Number of LSOs managing CIF: 16

Total amount of CIF with LSOs: 32 million (PKR)

Number of HH benefiting from CIF: 1,034

Total amount of CIF disbursed to poor households by VOs/LSOs (0-23): 21.4 million (PKR)

No. of beneficiaries received assistive devices: 647

Male: 165

Women: 482

Individual Beneficiaries of Completed CPIs: 3,860

Total amount of sub-grants for CPI with VOs: 20.03 million (PKR)

Number of community members trained in CMST: 1,387

Women (46%): 222

Number of Community members trained as Community Resource Persons (CRPs): 66

Women (67%): 502

Number of Community members trained in LMST: 3,860

Number of community members Trained in TVET: 647

No. of beneficiaries received assistive devices: 647

Male: 165

Women: 482
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## 01

### SOCIAL MOBILISATION

03 Community Organisation (CO)

06 Local Support Organisation (LSO)

## 02

### LEADERSHIP

13 Community Resource Person (CRP)
ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

18 Income Generating Grant (IGG)
23 Community investment Fund (CIF)
26 Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)
31 Adult Literacy and Numeracy Skills (ALNS)

PEOPLE BEHIND BRACE

36 Senior Social Organiser (SSO)
41 Social Organiser (SO)
SOCIAL MOBILISATION
Ayesha, 34, a dedicated lady is a resident of Union Council Shabozai, district Loralai. Despite belonging to a poverty-stricken family, she is firmly fighting her war. She is married to Allah Dad who works as a daily wage labourer. The couple has six children, and they send all four (04) children of school-going age to schools. This is no less than a constant struggle for a poor rural family who has been working hard to manage the educational expenses of four children against the rising inflation.

Ayesha decided to work to help her husband with the expenses, but she lacked skills and a higher degree in education, so she was botched. “There is a woman behind every successful man” is truly reversed in this case as Allah Dad, Ayesha’s husband, is a man with an open mind and broad vision. He encouraged her to appear and attempt her matriculation exams which will at least get her a job in a private school. He is the only man in his family who has encouraged her wife and helped her get her matriculation degree after four years of marriage.

“I cleared my matriculation exam and got a job in one of the private schools nearby which continued for four years before joining the BRACE Programme. I was selected as the president of the Community Organisation (CO) Gul Khawateen,” shared Ayesha. “I consider myself so lucky that I have a husband like Allah Dad, who’s been very supportive and encouraging.”
Bibi Ayesha, 34, a dedicated lady is a resident of Union Council Shabozai, district Loralai. Despite belonging to a poverty-stricken family, she is firmly fighting her war. She is married to Allah Dad who works as a daily wage labourer. The couple has six children, and they send all four (04) children of school-going age to schools. This is no less than a constant struggle for a poor rural family who has been working hard to manage the educational expenses of four children against the rising inflation.

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“I consider myself so lucky that I have a husband like Allah Dad, who’s been very supportive and encouraging.”
Ayesha joined BRSP in 2020 as a Community Resource Person (CRP), but before joining she was a little worried and reluctant as both she and her husband were unaware of this organisation. “My family opposed my decision and wanted me to resume working with the school but this time it wasn't me alone facing them, Allah Dad stood by my side and encouraged me to take the next step in my professional career. This really built and boosted my confidence,” she admitted.

Mobility and traveling to the field were her main concerns but her husband never let her down. With dedication, he picks and drops her wherever she goes.

“I took the risk and left my job as a teacher and decided to work with BRSP and I must say it was worth taking that risk.”

It is not easy for working women in Balochistan to go to the field. There are not many opportunities for them yet when someone like Ayesha steps out and challenges the societal norms, they must go through a lot of hurdles. Their characters are questioned in an extremely conservative society. Few women have their families, especially husbands supporting them, and Ayesha is one of those lucky women.

She focuses on women's empowerment through education. During her field visit, she tries to convince parents to equally treat their boys and girls. Like boys, parents should send their girls too to school, and support them the same as the boys.

“Additionally, many girls drop out of school due to various reasons. There is no middle school facility for them. They must travel to far-flung areas and cities to get admission to educational institutions. They do not have transport facilities to go to schools or colleges. They leave their education before completion or their parents withdraw them from school,” discussed Ayesha.

“The number of girls' schools is very low. The government should set up more schools for girls and at the same time upgrade the existing primary schools so that the education of girls does not remain incomplete.”
Ayesha is sending all her girls to school, and she teaches them when they are at home. She doesn't want her kids to go through what she and several girls like her in the area have been through. Her journey of growth in perspective and impact inspires many women in her community and she continues to lead and support her fellows through the 'Gul Khawateen' platform.
“I have been doing social work for the last ten to twelve years,” shared a thirty-five-year-old social worker hailing from a small village called Chaplai in the Union Council Zingiwal Jogezai, district Loralai.

Ever since his joining, Naimat has been actively conducting and participating in training regarding leadership and how should he play the role of a bridge between his community and the Balochistan Rural Support Programme (BRSP).

“Despite the challenges, we have accommodated fifty-seven people with Income Generating Grants (IGG)” and our Community Investment Fund (CIF) recovery is far better than the rest of the LSOs,” added Naimat Ullah with a certain degree of pride mentioning 100% of the recovery for the interest-free community loans.

While discussing the challenges faced by him throughout the execution of the BRACE Programme, he disclosed that “It was very difficult to get people on one page during the appraisals for the CIF and IGG. Everyone wanted to have IGG rather than CIF.”

Naimat Ullah has been in social services since he was a student. When the EU-funded BRACE programme was introduced, he initially joined it as a volunteer and later served as the Community Resource Person (CRP). Naimat continues to serve his community as the General Secretary of LSO Zingawal Jogezai.

“I run my own school since 2012, we charge a very minimal fee and there are students enrolled with us free of cost.”
Local Support Organisation (LSO)

Naimat Ullah
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I run my own school since 2012, we charge a very minimal fee and there are students enrolled with us free of cost.
COVID-19 disturbed life a lot. To avoid the spread of this pandemic, a country-wide lockdown was imposed by both the federal and provincial governments. These lockdowns multiplied challenges for poor people, particularly in Balochistan where a large proportion work as daily wagers. Recalling the difficult phase, Naimat added that many families could not manage even one meal a day.

“We had built good linkages with authorities not only inside Loralai but also outside. We distributed ration packs among sixty-one families during the pandemic in collaboration with Deputy Commissioner Loralai,“ he continued. “During the floods earlier this year, I along with my team helped over a hundred and forty families with ration packs. The major contribution was from the Pashtun council of the Quaid e Azam University Islamabad.”

Apart from these activities, Naimat Ullah and his team helped seventy-five residents with solar plates after a meeting with the elected leaders of their constituency.

“However, with years of experience as an activist and social worker, I knew how to deal with such situations. That’s the reason my LSO is considered one of the best LSOs in district Loralai with a 100% CIF recovery rate.”

“I shall continue this work even after the completion of the BRACE programme. I believe that my good track record and people's trust in me will help me in the future to continue what I have been doing for the past ten to twelve years.”

Naimat Ullah's top priorities remain health and education and he would like to see both local and foreign Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) take these areas as their priorities.

“We need to pay more attention to health and education, especially girls' education and women's health.” Reiterates Naimat.

The strong will of Naimat Ullah reflected that he will be there whenever his community needs him. His efforts are bound to have an impact on the lives of people in his community.
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LEADERSHIP
Community Resource Person (CRP)

Asia, 30, belongs to a family where leaving home and working for a woman was taboo. Before joining the BRACE Programme as a Community Resource Person (CRP), she worked as a teacher in a nearby private school for three years. She, like the other girls in the area, had to quit her studies after getting married.

Keeping her family’s financial conditions in mind, Asia decided to work and start searching for a job, but her family was not sure whether they should allow her or not. Finding a job and working in such a society was not an easy job. Additionally, the negative perception regarding the foreign-funded organisations in her area did not give her an easy time!

“I never wanted to work for Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) as being part of the same society, I also had misperceptions,” Asia confessed. “But as soon as I joined the BRACE Programme, my opinions were completely changed. I was very happy when I was selected as a CRP for our Village Organisation (VO). But the challenge was there: my mother-in-law did not want me to work in an organisation funded or run by foreign aid donors.”

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In those three years, there was not a single day that I saw pride in the eyes of my family as I left for school and contributed to my family and my own aspirations.
After a while of struggle, I managed to conditionally convince my mother-in-law. She personally visited the workplace and made sure it was an appropriate setup for a woman to work in. She was surprised to see women already working there under safe circumstances.

“That's how I got the permission to work with BRSP and now I encourage my fellow women to come forward and participate,” Asia added.

After joining the EU-funded BRACE programme, she's been with the field teams and has been playing a vital role in educating the community and spreading awareness regarding their rights, responsibilities, sanitation, health, and education.

She coaches parents to send their daughters to school because she knows what an educated woman is capable of. According to Aasia, lack of awareness is one of the key reasons why parents do not believe in their kids' abilities. Not only abilities, but society also doesn't allow conversations on women’s rights and serious health problems.

Balochistan has the highest mortality rate in the world as 700-plus mothers die per 100,000 pregnancies. But Aasia is now educating mothers on how to take care of themselves as well as of their babies at every stage during pregnancy and about pre- and post-natal care. This is the reason women in the area now come to her and discuss problems regarding their health.

Women also face great difficulties in obtaining their Computerised National Identity Cards (CNICs). At National Data Base and Registration Authority (NADRA) offices, only one day (Friday) is reserved for women while only one mobile van is available for different areas. Aasia visits the NADRA office and helps women and girls in the application process.

I suffered through a miscarriage because no one ever guided me during my pregnancy. I did not know how to take care of myself. I feared discussing the issue as I thought it would have a bad impact on my character.
She proudly takes partial credit as the people of Union Council Shahkarez are sending their girls to school. Every parent wants their daughters to get quality education but the situation of schools in the area leaves much to be desired. There are buildings without teachers and the few girls who do go to school come back without learning because of the unavailability of teachers.

“This is a huge loss. Authorities should take it seriously and projects regarding better and quality education not only for girls but also for boys should be approved and implemented immediately to minimise this loss,” suggested Aasia. She wants the government to improve teachers' attendance so that the children get quality education.

“I believe no one can change our fate but we, ourselves must step out and work for it.”, she concludes with a tagline.
Saleh Mohammad, 31, owns a small grocery store from which he not only manages his household expenses but also his kids' educational expenses. He was a daily wage laborer, but the increasing inflation rate enforced him to think about an alternative source of income.

“Things do not change overnight,” he shared. “With very limited items available at my shop, I hardly managed to earn around PKR 300 a day which was not enough.”

It's been three years since he opened the shop. To meet his family's needs he had to grow and extend his business at any cost.

“No matter how poor and needy you are, why would anybody give you the capital? Even if they facilitate some amount, how can they not ask you to return it back,” expressed Muhammad sharing how he was not ready to believe such a grant i.e., Income Generating Grant (IGG) existed under the Programme.

Mohammad shared, “When the EU-funded BRACE programme was introduced by the Balochistan Rural Support Programme (BRSP) in our district, I and my family played a very vital role in the formation of Community and Village organisations.”

Hailing from a small village New Killi, Union Council Kudezai, Loralai, I had never thought of getting grants to set up a business.
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Due to financial crises and being the sole earner in the family, bearing the educational expenses of five children was not an easy job for Mohammad. He borrowed a small amount from one of his friends and opened a tuck shop in his village.

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Nonetheless, his mother was short-listed for IGG and received an amount of PKR 50,000 which they invested in their existing small business. Time never remains the same and good things happen to those who work hard and have faith in themselves. Mohammad's situation changed and today he is living a much better life.

Saleh Mohammad is not the only person that has benefited from the BRACE programme, there are many others like him who have changed their fates and are now living a better and independent life.

“I am now earning around PKR 750 a day which is enough for me and my family.”

“Today, I am sending my kids to school again which they had left a couple of years ago due to the worst financial crises,” expressed Mohammad with a heavy heart.

Mohammad thanked the BRACE programme for the positive change in his life today. He uttered that without the support of this programme he would have not been able to bear his family's expenses and his kids would have remained deprived of basic facilities like education.
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Community Investment Fund (CIF) Abdulla Khan Village Zangiwal Jogezai District Loralai is the sixth poorest district in Balochistan and lacks facilities like health, education, and better opportunities. The standard of living has been below average in Loralai compared to the rest of the country. The lack of employment opportunities has particularly troubled younger residents. Abdullah Khan, 18, a young, energetic, and the only breadwinner of his family is a resident of Zangiwal Jogezai district Loralai, Balochistan. After the poverty scorecard (PSC) census, Abdullah was evaluated as eligible for the community investment fund (CIF) loan since his PSC score stood at 17. He runs a very small tuck shop located beside a petrol pump on the highway that connects Loralai to Quetta. He applied for a loan to boost his business because his existing income could not meet his family's expenses.

"Access to capital is not easy through the bank. I still cannot believe how easily I got the loan through my community organised under the BRACE Programme" Abdullah shared. He received a loan of PKR 20,000 in 2019 and invested the money to renovate his tuck shop.

"My family is completely dependent upon me. It was very difficult to manage expenses as I could only manage to earn around PKR 2,000 a month." He added.

"Not only I had to look after the monthly expenses but also to look after my sisters' educational expenses." exclaimed Abdullah.
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“Not only I had to look after the monthly expenses but also to look after my sisters' educational expenses.”, exclaimed Abdullah.
With rising inflation, it is impossible for someone like Abdullah having a family of seven, to run the whole family with an income of a few thousand per month. With strong willpower, Abdullah believed that he could change things. With an instalment of PKR 1,750 a month, it took Abdullah two years to pay the CIF loan back in 2021.

As per policy, he was now eligible to re-apply for the loan again, but his time was for a greater amount. “I re-applied for the loan and with my credit history built with my community organisation, I received the amount of PKR 30,000 and like earlier, I invested the amount to further strengthen my ongoing business,” Abdullah uttered.

Abdullah admits that his achievements are greater than he had expected in such a short period.

“My monthly income now is around PKR 15,000 a month and it doesn’t end here. I am sure it will increase a lot with time.” Abdullah comments confidently.

With these earnings, Abdullah not only runs his household but has also saved enough for his sister’s marriage. He aims to send three of his sisters out of district Loralai for higher education.

“I am hopeful that someday in near future I will be able to fulfill my dream of providing quality education to my siblings.”, says a determined Abdullah.

Abdullah suggested that the amount of CIF should be at least PKR 50,000 as in our current financial situation, starting over a business with an amount of PKR 20,000 to PKR 30,000 is not enough. People like Abdullah are just an opportunity away from making their impact. There are many people like him who are desperately looking for such financial support so they can stand tall on their feet and live a better life.
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Shahid Khan hails from China Alizai of the Loralai district with an unprivileged background. He is the eldest among all his siblings and had to quit his studies as the family did not have the resources to support him. His father works as a daily wage labourer and earns a minimal amount which was not enough for the entire family.

Looking back at his unfortunate past, Shahid stated, “It was my dream to pursue higher studies and make my parents proud, but I didn't see many opportunities ahead of me.” Right after completing primary school, Shahid started working with his father so he could play his part in the family’s domestic expenses.

In 2019, when the interventions by the BRACE programme, funded by European Union and implemented by Balochistan Rural Support Programme (BRSP) were started, Shahid who was a member of his Community Organisation (CO) Zalmi Tanzeen. He was nominated for the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and was sent to the Institute of Rural Management (IRM) for a period of two months where he learned carpeting skills.

These two months changed my direction completely. Today I am a person with a particular technical skill. I do not mind if I get a job or not, I use my skill to get myself going in hard times.

Shahid now works in a shop and helps his father with household expenses. He is planning to save enough so his siblings can live a better life than he lived in his teenage.
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TVET has a clear impact on the lives of the people and it is improving by increasing their livelihood sources. A third-party research conducted by the Institute for Public Opinion Research documented that TVET beneficiaries reported a greater increase in their nominal household incomes compared to IGG and CIF beneficiaries. Investments in human resource yields better results and youngsters are actively participating in economic activities after getting TVET training. Women have equally gained access to opportunities of earning income after receiving Technical and Vocational Education and Training.

“I have enrolled my brothers in school to get them quality education. I will spend more on their education once I have enough savings,” Shahid said joyfully.

He is earning around PKR 8,000 a month and shares the household expenses with his father. However, he plans to grow his income so he can save a little for his brother's studies.

“All this happened just because of a single skill which has not only enabled me to earn but also to play my part effectively in improving my family's financial condition and get my siblings quality education.”

Shahid encourages his fellows to either study hard or learn technical skills, so they do not have to rely on others for financial support. Shahid is admired for he did not give up and rather worked hard for an improved livelihood.
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Razia Bibi, a resident of village Yarak Abad in Union Council Asgharloon, district Loralai, is a mother of four school-going children. Her husband works as a daily wage labourer and earns bread for his family.

Razia shared that “When I was a kid, I wanted to get quality education but due to the unavailability of girls' schools in my area, I could not.” A person who has never been to school can understand the importance of education and this makes Razia become visibly upset as she recalled her childhood. Lack of schools and quality education can shatter your dreams and ruin your life, she commented sorrowfully.

“It makes me feel helpless when my kids want me to help them with their school’s homework,” Razia disclosed how it feels being an uneducated mother. She had to seek help from her fellows for counting even a small amount, expiry dates written on medicine packets, and other relevant things in her daily routine.

When the EU-funded BRACE programme was introduced in her village Yarak Abad, she became a member of the Community Organisation (CO). Later one day, during the Village Organistaion (VO) meeting, she came across the component of Adult Literacy and Numeracy Skills (ALNS) where the women can learn non-formal education in their own union council.
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"Develop a passion for learning if you do, you will never cease to grow."
I personally feel the duration (six months) is not enough for someone who has never been to school before and it should be extended to a period of one year at least,” added Razia.

Razia’s story gives us a strong sense of gratification that a woman can change the fate and future of the entire family if she is supported and given access to quality education with appropriate opportunities.

After getting six months of classes, she learnt many basic skills like reading names, and numbers and can help her children in finding books and even teaches them sometimes at home.

Razia bibi concluded her story by admitting that the Adult Literacy and Numeracy and Skills (ALNS) centers are the places for women who have never been to schools for certain reasons but are now willing to learn and educate themselves. She suggested that the ALNS centers should be established in every possible village so the resident can go and attend the courses without any hustle.

I decided to get admission to the ALNS center and started regular classes on daily basis. This gave a hope of making my dream come true. The ALNS center has changed my life. I feel proud of myself. I firmly believe that the learning phase in one's life never ends until you don't give up.
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PEOPLE BEHIND BRACE
Abdul Samad serves the Balochistan Rural Support Programme (BRSP) as a Senior Social Organiser and belongs to the Loralai district of Balochistan. He is a gentleman with strong character, dedication, and passion for the work he has been doing for his people. Samad holds a master's degree in Political Science from the University of Balochistan and after completing his degree in 2010, he joined the National Commission for Human Development (NCHD) as a social worker and worked there for six months before joining the BRSP as a social organiser for a project regarding reproductive health back in 2012.

He then worked with Balochistan Education Foundation for two years and with BRCDP for five years. When the EU-funded BRACE programme was introduced, Samad was assigned the role of Senior Social Organiser (SSO) in district Loralai.

“The hardest part as a SO was to organise and establish women Community Organisations (COs) or Village Organisations (VOs) since there is a misperception about women's participation and involvement in the NGOs.” Shared Samad.

“Apart from the conservative mindset of the society, few religious people considered Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) as in conflict with religion and people not only avoided working with such organisations but also sometimes refused the support provided (in any form) by the organisations.” He added.
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Samad further shared that “The Poverty Scorecard (PSC) survey was another challenge for my team. People would not provide accurate data which later led to difficulties while implementing the programme. With that inaccurate data, it was very difficult to identify the truly deserving people for the interventions i.e., Income Generating Grants (IGG) or Community Investment Fund (CIF). However, my team and I worked hard to make sure no deserving person is left behind.”

Samad had reserved some critical feedback on the resource gap under the programme. “I personally think the amount for both the interventions e.g., Income Generating Grants (IGG) and Community Investment Fund (CIF) in particular - should have been greater than it is now so people could make it much more profitable by investing it into some kind of small business”.

“Before the BRACE programme, villages in the area did not benefit from collective infrastructure schemes but now there is a solarised Drinking Water Supply Scheme in most villages and the Community Physical Infrastructure (CPI) has been an effective component of this Programme.” Samad ended proudly.

So, there was a Masjid (Mosque) under construction in my village and I gave them some amount in cash as a donation for the construction, but they refused because they observed that the donation was from some NGO. I had to tell and convince them that the donation was personally on my own.
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Social Organiser (SO)
Shamim Naz
Killi Bawar, Loralai

"Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) or development sector was considered a taboo for women, and I could not even imagine working in this sector," said Shamim Naz, starting the conversation.

Naz is from Dera Ghazi Khan, but she has now settled in the Loralai district of Balochistan. Loralai is in the south-eastern part of Balochistan and lacks facilities which make life challenging for people, especially women.

She completed her matriculation from a government school in her village named Killi Bawar and wanted to go to Quetta and pursue her higher education but due to the financial status of her parents, she couldn’t realise her dreams. She continued appearing in private exams (it is a term used for exams attempted by students who are unable to take regular classes and only appear in the final exams) and finally completed her masters in Urdu.

She further added, "I started applying for jobs and came across the Balochistan Rural Support Programme (BRSP). I joined the EU-funded BRACE programme implemented by BRSP as a Livelihood Officer back in 2020."

She served as a Livelihood Officer for a year and is now working as a Social Organiser. In our society, it is not easy for a woman to work outside of offices. The community does not appreciate women at work and going to remote villages is something considered inappropriate. Shamim Naz described she had to go through many ups and downs when she joined the BRSP both on and off the field.

Being the eldest of my siblings, I had to work to support my family financially. Personally, I wanted to work with an NGO, but my family opposed this ambition.
“Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) or development sector was considered a taboo for women, and I could not even imagine working in this sector,” said Shamim Naz, starting the conversation.

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wants every employer to provide pick and drop facility for their female staff so that they do not have to worry when leaving their homes for work.

“My job has eased our financial crises and made me able to be a support to my family,” Naz shared merrily. “It is the EU-funded BRACE programme that has given me the confidence and courage to face the societal barriers and I am now educating other women and girls in my community to come out of their comfort zones and take the lead of their lives.”

Naz with her courage and dedication is on a mission to change the lives of her fellow women not only in her own village but also in district Loralai.

We embody the message that women can play an important role in the progress of any society if they are provided with opportunities. Many women like Shamim Naz are waiting for opportunities to realise their potential and play their roles in the development of their communities.
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She has attended training on the Community Awareness Toolkit (CAT) through Rural Support Programme Networks (RSPN) and ever since then she is delivering community awareness in the field or in the office.

Though I somehow managed to convince my family to allow me to work, it will take years or even decades for our society to accept working women.

"Being the eldest of my siblings, my family is totally dependent on me. With my income, not only I run the household chores but have also financed my younger brother to another city for higher studies. I bear all his educational expenses", she added with a degree of pride.
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Bolochistan Rural Development and Community Empowerment (BRACE) Programme
IRM Complex, 3rd Floor. Plot# 7, Sunrise Avenue (Off Park Road), Near COMSATS University, Islamabad, Pakistan
Phone: +92-51-8491270-99, Fax: +92-51-8351791
- [www.rspn.org](http://www.rspn.org) | [www.brace.org.pk](http://www.brace.org.pk)
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