



Life through Skills



Government of Sindh Women Focused
Union Council Based Poverty
Reduction Programme

Government of Sindh





Introduction

The Government of Sindh launched, Union Council Based Poverty Reduction Programme (UCBPRP), an initiative for reducing poverty through conceptual package of Rural Support Programmes in three of the most impoverished Districts of Sindh namely Shikarpur, Kandhkot and Jacobabad.

Unemployment is one of the major challenges in the target Districts. Lack of marketable skills is one main factor contributing to widespread rural unemployment, hardest hit being women. Vocational Training Programme (VTP) has been outsourced to NRSP-Institute of Rural Management to impart vocational and technical skills to the underprivileged rural community of the target area and empower them economically.

Vocational training programme of N-IRM contributes to poverty reduction by creating employment either through the start up of new enterprises or the expansion of existing ones. Job creation provides income to the poor. Trainings are conducted by the N-IRM team at Kandhot, Shikarpur, Sukkur, Peshawar and at Rawalpindi/Islamabad.

This booklet provides an overview of success stories of the poorest of poor trained under the Vocational Training Programme of UCBPRP. It also compares pre- and post training scenarios of the beneficiaries in terms of social, behavioral and economical changes in their lives.



Learned to live with lost Hand

Ms. Atiqa is self employed and utilizes her embroidery skills to generate income for her poor family. She is grateful to N-IRM for enabling her to earn in decent manner despite she lost her hand. Read more...

Embroidery Training



Learned to live with lost Hand

Atiqa shows the Feed Chopper Machine where she lost her hand Ms. Atiqa lives in Union Council Mongrani of District Shikapur. Her father is farmer and his earning is far too less to smooth out the expenses at his household. She is twenty years old and lives in a single-room house with parents and eight siblings. Ms. Atiqa is the eldest of her siblings. She wanted to continue her education when she was in grade eight; however hurdles that limited her from continuing her education include lack of money, and distance from school, beyond that, pressure for her to drop out increased with the onset of puberty and related problems, like harassment by male teachers and parental pressure to marry. Due to rising poverty at her household she availed the opportunity to earn something for her family by crushing the feed for cows in the neighboring house of Wadera. She used crush feed all day long and earned rupees 30 to contribute to her capacity to her household income as she lacked skills to find any descent employment to tackle poverty at her household. One day she was crushing the feed, she crushed her right hand too in the machine, it took just a moment to lose her hand when she did not keep her wits while crushing the feed. She fainted at the spot after a moment she had pulled out her arm from the machine. Her hand got completely crushed. More than 5 years later, it still bugs her. Continual pins and needles, is a common illusionary sensation, along with phantom hand – the sensation that the lost hand is still there.

Her talent and natural abilities were assessed, by N-IRM screening staff and she was given an opportunity to receive training in vocation of Machine Embroidery under Union Council Based Poverty Reduction Programme.



A Secure Future

Ms. Mehtab is thankful to SRSO and N-IRM for giving her opportunity to realize her talent. She received “Nursing Attendant Training” at Islamabad. She feels her future is secure now. Read more...

A woman with dark hair, wearing a red and white patterned shawl over a blue and white patterned top, is using a stethoscope to check the blood pressure of a patient lying in a bed. The patient is wearing a pink garment. The setting appears to be a simple, possibly rural, medical facility.

Nursing Attendant

A Secure Future

Mehatab belongs to Shikarpur where usually women rights are restricted in the name of modesty, protection. Male family members keep a strict eye on the female family members in the name of "honor". Mehtab Soomro is married to primary school teacher who was the only meager source of income to support his big family including his parents, seven siblings and his wife. It has been four years since they got married and they are childless till now. For last two years Mehatab kept bearing the taunts of being childless and was living her life cleaning the house, cooking, washing and the many other forms of labor in which she was involved is a full day's work. The cultural, social, moral and ethical roots of society are devised in such a manner that she was kept in the labor for free and was taken for granted. Adding to her misery she had to face constant taunts for being childless. This condition developed in her psychology of alienation.

She was identified by SRSO and assessed by N-IRM for training in vocation of Nursing Attendant in Islamabad. Initially to get social appraisal was very difficult however N-IRM screening staff counseled her family that the skilled woman of their family would give a better chance for them to combat the potential extreme poverty. As Ms. Mehtab after being trained can become earning hand for their family. They expressed their consent and afterwards she received training in "Nursing Attendant" in Islamic Medical Complex that has collaboration in medical trades with N-IRM.

After getting training she got a job in Ghosia Clinic in Shikarpur Market and earns rupees 5000 per month. I was cornered in my in laws extended family because of my being childless, and my husband was continuously being pressurized by them for second marriage. However, now that I am working I am considered as one of the major decision makers in my family and I regained my place in my family. I would thank SRSO and N-IRM for giving me the opportunity to not only realize my talent but bringing hopes to me for my future security as well.



Return to Life through Skills

Mr. Barkat is now running his own mobile repairing shop in District Kashmore due to the training of Mobile Repairing he received at VTEC Rawalpindi of N-IRM. He is now a skilled person and a satisfied breadwinner for his family, who will never think of suicide again.
Read more....

Mobile Repairing

Return to Life through Skills

Suicide has been increasing among young men and apparently rising in areas of high unemployment. Possible sources of emotional support fall away, such as the extended family and neighbors when one is idle. Being isolated, not being part of a work community at all can increase feelings of vulnerability. Barkat Ali belongs to Kashmore which is one of the most impoverished Districts of Sindh. He got married prematurely in the age of nineteen.

Being poor he was constantly stressed about his financial situation at his household as he was the family's potential breadwinner. His family was banking upon him financially as his father's daily earnings had been decreasing daily because of enfeebling old age, and the family lived on the brink of extreme poverty. He could not earn for his family and used to take financial support for himself from his father when they were expecting him to support them financially. Moral, social and economical pressure kept mounting on him while he fought with his family one day about financial issues and fled his home, only to return a while later with empty pesticide bottle in his hand.

The death of family member is always a painful event, but the grief of his family members and friends was deeper as the cause of expected death of Barkat was suicide. The family took him to hospital soon after they found that he had consumed the poison, where doctors managed to save Barkat's life. He remained hospitalized for two months.

After he recovered properly he was assessed by N-IRM screening staff as one of the most deserving poor to receive scholarship in form of vocational training under Union Council Based Poverty Reduction Programme in District Kashmore. Screening staff counseled Barkat that if he finds some sort of purpose in life, that would be one way of maintaining self-esteem and we recommend something that would give you a purpose and some contact with others. He received the training in the trade of Mobile Repairing from Vocational Educational and Technical Center of N-IRM in Rawalpindi and came back skilled and more likely to become breadwinner for his family. Afterwards he took some loan from his father in law and opened the small shop of Mobile Repairing near "Sabzi Mandi" (Vegetable Market) of Kashmore.

Now he earns rupees 1000-1500 daily and supports old feeble parents and his siblings financially. He is thankful to N-IRM for imparting skills that helped him generate income for his family and step out of vicious poverty. His happiness is beyond any measure and the glint of emotions was observed in his eyes while he regretted his act of committing suicide.



I Found Life

I am supporting myself and my family, since I learned tailoring at N-IRM. It's something I never thought I could do. I am simply glad that I am not as poor as I used to be.
[Read more...](#)

Dress Designing

I Found Life

The vulnerability of the poor to be disabled and for disabled people to be poor is very high. Ms. Barbara lives in the poor village of Hoti in Union Council Bhirkhan of Shikapur. She was born as a normal baby and became disabled during childhood as she was malnourished, and exposed to preventable childhood disease of polio. Simple information and measures for disability prevention such as immunization were not accessible for poor family of Ms. Barbara.

“As I was growing up I felt left out as I could watch other children playing in the village lanes or going to school, and I didn't join in”, Ms. Barbara said with teary eyes. She grew older and due to rising poverty at her household she was considered to be a burden on her family. Now she is nineteen years old and can not walk because both her legs are very weak due to Polio.

Her father transports vegetables from Vegetable Hubs of Shikapur to main market on Gadha Gari (Donkey Cart) and is sole bread winner of family. One day he was on his way back to his place after day long labor he got injured in an ambush laid by two rival tribal groups near Bhirkhan. He was only a passer by; his right arm got seriously injured and consequently it became ineffective. The incident made his daily earning decreased as after the incident he had to work with single hand and it added more misery to the life of poor house hold of Ms. Barbara.

Ms. Barbara was assessed by SRSO for Vocational Training Programme initiated by N-IRM. She received training in trade of tailoring at VTEC Sukkur (GPIW). Vocational training according to abilities for inclusiveness of disables is an important part of curriculum of our VTP.

“When I returned to my place everyone was amazed at how confident I became” Ms. Barbara said. She stitches the cloths of the villagers and earns 6000 rupees on average per month. On special occasions like weddings, religious events and other social events she earns more than she does normally. She is extremely exalted over the fact that she generates income for her family and grateful to N-IRM for providing her an opportunity to get involved in the life socially and economically as normal people do. She said, not only I acquired skills in the training at N-IRM and generate income for my household but through interaction with educated trainers I understood the significance of Polio drops at early age of the child and will spread this awareness in my village about it.



Breaking the Shackles of Poverty

Life threatening incident of father of Mr. Nayaz made him choose Nursing as profession. Luckily he got selected in vocation of Nursing Attendant by N-IRM in accordance with his aptitude. He is currently employed in the clinic and has the ambition to be enrolled in four years Nursing Course in some reputable hospital.

Read more...

Nursing Attendant

Breaking the Shackles of Poverty

Mr. Nayaz is 22 years old and is resident of District Kandhkot of Sindh. He lives in one room house with his parents and seven siblings. His father namely Ali Hassan was a driver of Wadera (Landlord) of particular tribe who had old enmity with his rival tribe. One of the most pressing problems in the District Kandhkot is that of conflicts between different tribes and their petty tribal feuds, which take the lives of many people.

One day Mr. Nayaz's father was dropping Wadera (land lord) at his place, while the Wadera was getting off from his car he was shot dead when two motorcycle-borne men of rival tribe opened fire on him. In the incident Mr. Nayaz's father got critically injured and received three bullets. He was immediately taken to the hospital and miraculously doctors managed to save his life.

The incident affected the personality development of Mr. Nayaz, through a family stress process in which poverty was one of the major factors. Poverty caused family dysfunction, stress among caregivers and inadequate parenting. The harmful impact of poverty on family of Mr. Nayaz came from the stress and alienation connected with having a very low income; and the sense of being different and less worthwhile. His father again started working with another wadera after complete recovery however his income is way to less to meet basic needs of his family. They had no other option but to live within their meager resources and due to soaring poverty at his household, Mr. Nayaz had to quit studying further.

Afterwards, Mr. Nayaz was selected for vocational training under Union Council Based Poverty Reduction Programme initiated by Sindh Government and implemented by SRSO, while the training component including vocational training is outsourced to N-IRM. He did his F.Sc in pre-medical and was assessed and selected in vocation of Nursing Attendant by N-IRM in accordance with his aptitude. A month after completion of the training he got employed as Nursing attendant and earns Rupees 3500 per Month in the clinic of Dr. Shafi Bhutto near Risaldar Road Kandhkot. He is very happy now as he contributes to the household income now and has the ambition to be enrolled in four years Nursing Course in some reputable hospital.



Hope lights up in Sameena's Eyes

Being hopeful for her future, Ms. Sameena said, " I will help my parents financially and would support them tackle the poverty." Read more...



Nursing Attendant

Hope lights up in Sameena's Eyes

Ms. Sameena belongs to UC-Thul of Jacobabad. She is thirty eight years old women and was married to her cousin. Childbearing is highly valued and childlessness can have devastating consequences for women in District Jacobabad. Ms. Sameena had to face same consequences for being childless even after twenty years of her marriage. Her husband felt that the childlessness was because of Sameena's inability to procreate. That became the reason for physical and psychological victimization for her from her husband. Poverty and cultural extremism blocked Sameena's way of progressive thinking and financial independence and to break the shackles of poverty by contributing to her household income. Her husband reminded Sameena that her money would mar his dignity and social status. He used to control her movements and behavior. She had to suppress her decisions, and surrender to cultural taboos for the fear of further repercussions. Eventually his husband got married to other woman and divorced Sameena.

Sameena burst in to tears as she told that she used to bore agony and violence in all forms to keep the relation intact with her husband but being childless is great curse that she could not grapple with.

She went back to her poor parents and added misery to their poverty stricken lives, until she was given scholarship in form of Health Training . “Nursing Attendant Training” in Islamabad by N-IRM. She received practical and theoretical training with keen interest. After completion of Nursing Attendant she applied for four years Nursing Course at General Hospital in Sukkur. She passed written test and interview by utilizing the knowledge she had acquired from Nursing Attendant course at N-IRM.

Now she is enrolled in the four years Nursing Course and will become regular Nurse at General Hospital in Sukkur, while she is paid rupees 1500 per month that will go on to increase as she acquires experience. Being hopeful for her future she said that she will help her parents financially would support them tackle the poverty.

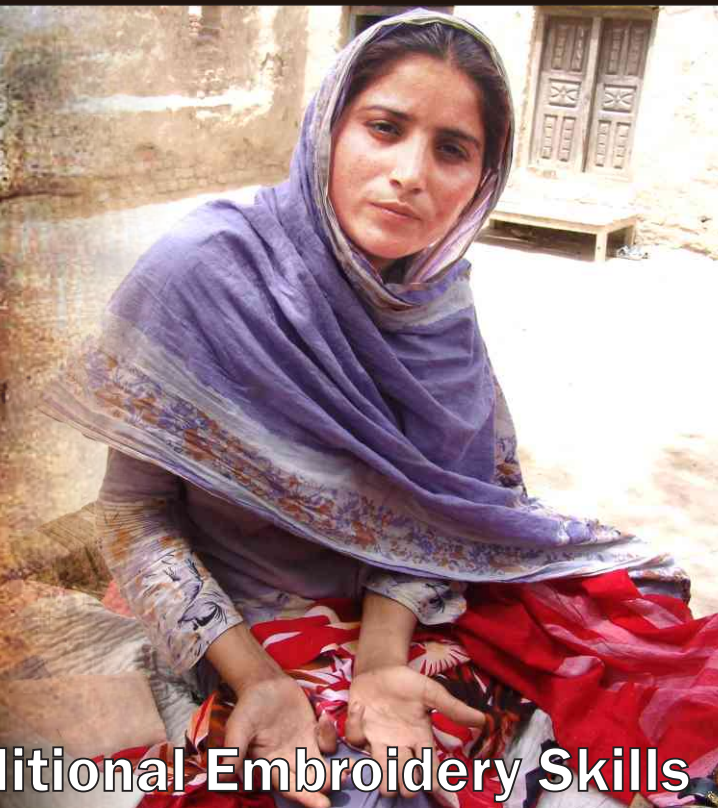


Empowering People with Disabilities

Now on her way to be an independent woman, Kausar is thankful to SRSO and N-IRM for the skills that she received. She is doing traditional embroidery and saving money for her surgery.

Read more...

Traditional Embroidery Skills



Empowering People with Disabilities

In a village in Bhirkhan, Shikarpur, a young woman named Ms. Kausar explained her heart wrenching incident that led her to disability. In rural areas of district Shikarpur, smoke is commonly used almost twice a day as natural mosquito repellent. During her infancy, while she was asleep in her temporary cradle which was hanging from her mother's bed, the same mosquito repelling material fell on to her hands accidentally. The flesh between her fingers melted, which made fused her fingers together. She was rendered disabled by the incident and could not use her fingers separately any longer. After this incident, her own father shunned her due to the disability. Due to her father's despicable behavior, her grandparents took her along and started bringing her up.

Living her life in her grandparents' home, she dealt with her disability positively. She got opportunity to receive specialized skills training, in embroidery, at N-IRM VTEC under UCBPRP in Districts of Kandhkot and Shikarpur.

Training has opened new avenues for her. By interacting at VTEC center she now knows she can get the medical assistance and surgery is possible. She had always dreamed of buying back her normal hands but didn't have access to information and money. Now she is saving money for the surgery of her hands, so that she could get rid of her disability. Embroidery Training proved to be a vital in helping her to have a way to overcome her numbing loss.



From Darkness to Dawn

Ms. Nimani earns Rs. 50-100 daily and will be able to save money once she returns the loan which she took for covering her hospital bills.

[Read more...](#)

A woman, Ms. Nimani, is shown in a rural setting, wearing a vibrant yellow and black patterned sari with a purple headscarf. She is smiling and looking towards the camera while operating a black sewing machine. The background shows a rustic, weathered wall and some outdoor items.

Tailoring Training

From Darkness to Dawn

Life is extraordinarily difficult for most of the women in the poorest regions of Sindh. Women with more significant disabilities are more likely to live a gloomy secluded life. Ms. Nimani is a disabled poor woman who belongs to District Kandhkot. She is married to a person who is idle and this burden of a husband simply adds to her misery. Ms. Nimani despite her disability required the same health services related to reproductive care, as any normal woman but social misperceptions and stereotypes about disability made it difficult for her to obtain information, medical care, and services to ensure that her reproductive needs were met. Fortunately she has one daughter. Her miseries deepened when her second pregnancy got complicated and she lost her child in an unsuccessful C-Section. She got admitted to the hospital and had to pay from her savings while her mother took some loan for bearing hospital cost.

Ms. Nimani received training in vocation of Tailoring in Mobile Training Center of N-IRM near Akhero Union Council of Kandhkot. She kept saving money of her earnings by utilizing skills of tailoring at village level. Ms. Nimani now works with borrowed a sewing machine from her neighbors and is paying back the loan gradually. She knows that she can earn even more if she has her own sewing machine so after paying back the loan she plans to buy one.



Together We Can Defeat Poverty

Through BDGs women micro-entrepreneurs make important contributions to the local economies through their traditional crafts. Economic empowerment also brings decision-making power, and a greater sense of control over their lives. [Read more...](#)

Business Development Groups



Together We Can Defeat Poverty

N-IRM believes economically stagnant rural communities can be set in motion through women empowerment, specifically, through reviving traditional vocational skills so that women can generate income at household level.

Establishment of the Business Development Groups (BDGs) is an exemplary effort by N-IRM to support women after the training by creating productive market links. BDG is basically a group of women that works on marketable fabrics and crafts after receiving vocational training from VTEC-IRM. Business Development Groups are growing in number and are proving to be handy source of income for women at household level in target areas under UCBPRP. The umbrella of BDGs enhances women's productive activities from the household it also brightens up the chances of income-generating employment by linkages to the markets. This is a non-agricultural self-employment and it directly affects women social roles and status.

Traditionally rallis are used for covering, cot and bed spreads, floor covering or even for shade. The number of patterns used on a Ralli quilt seemed to be almost endless. The three basic styles of rallies that BDGs are trained and apt at; are Patchwork, Appliqué, and Embroidered. Embellishments like mirrors, tassels and shells are also being used to adorn Rallis.

There are 136 BDGs and each BDG comprises of 10-15 women. Orders from the “Generation” (brand of stitched clothes) and Marvi (a women organization) are being continuously received by UCBPRP BDGs. Each member of every BDGs is earning rupees 100-150 per day on average. A woman BDG member happily said while expressing her views on BDGs that “it would be a great if our crafts are marketed at local level too because in villages Rallis form an important part of a girls' dowry”.

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Rural Support Programmes in Pakistan



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National Rural Support Programme



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P R S P

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Rural Support Programmes Network



SARHAD RURAL SUPPORT PROGRAMME



SARHAD RURAL SUPPORT PROGRAMME