

Society for Human and Environmental Development (SHED)

A Journey from NO VOICES to CITIZENS VOICES- Formation and Capacity Building of Village Organizations in Remote Village

A Success Story



Village Organization (V.O) Bilborhi meeting in progress

Village Balbori Umar Said is a small hamlet/ village comprising of 48 households and is located in union council Bartuni of tehsil Judba, district Torghar. A narrow jeep able track bifurcates from the main Battagram road and leads to the village which is the main source of transportation for the villagers for their social and economic activities. The road leading to the village is extremely uneven and bumpy and takes about an hour from main Battagram road to the village. The road is so narrow that only Jeeps can be used to reach the village. Torghar District is not fully connected to the national grid and many of its parts including Bilborhi village plunges into darkness the moment sun sets in the mountains. Due to lack of basic needs and infrastructure and

visible poverty of the households and intense need of power, the village was selected by SHED for pilot project with the thematic area of Renewable Energy

focusing on social mobilization for formation of Village Organizations, Provision of Health Education to Women and installation of Solar System.

Life in the village is stagnant and encompassed with enormous problems ranging from lack of infrastructure, Education, Health, Livelihood opportunities and ignorance on the part of local inhabitants for raising their voices through an effective platform.

The people were not aware on their rights to education, health and dignity of life that they were entitled to being citizens. The area is deprived of health facilities, schools, metal road, electricity, WASH, markets and other basic human needs. Due to lack of education and lack of information, the local people never thought of changing their lives and never struggled for better and quality life and were struggling for life with hostile environment around.

SHED with financial support of Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF) at the start of the pilot project focused on formation of Village Organizations (VOs) (Men and Women) and their capacity building.

The local population was involved in the process of formation of VOs at each step from Broad Based Community Meetings (BBCMs) to corner meetings and selection of office bearers to the formation of VOs.

It was quite a new idea for them to conduct meetings of the VOs, discuss needs and problems of the area and come up with way forward for the solutions of the identified problems.

The social mobilization and capacity building process of VOs continued throughout the project period and the local community was kept engaged not only in the project activities ranging from survey conducted for selection of beneficiaries, passing resolutions, CDDP Procurement, selection of Community Resource Persons (CRPs) for solar technical Training to installation of solar system but they also started developing linkages and coordination with line departments to advocate their needs to concerned departments.

The situation in the village has started changes from No Voices to Citizens Voices in the form of Men and Women V.Os. The V.Os are now conducting regular monthly meetings, discuss their needs and solutions, recording minutes, maintain documentation of the meetings and come up with resolutions to strengthen coordination with line departments for the solution of their problems.



President of Village Organization Bilborhi presents resolution to V.O members

and formation of V.Os and their capacity building. ***“SHED and PPAF put us on the path of community development, built our capacity to think and act collectively, develop linkages with District Government and other line departments. This is the first pebble thrown in the stagnant water and we are hopeful that the waves will spread out and will bring changes in our live, he added”***

The V.Os have recently decided and have passed a resolution that they will generate community fund with contribution from each household which will be utilized on community development projects to be initiated on Self Help basis. The community fund will be utilized in a transparent manner and utilization will be made after resolution which will be passed by all members of the V.Os. Record of the contribution from each household will be maintained in a register and all the expenses from the fund will be shared with community members in general body meetings.

President of the organization was thankful to SHED and PPAF for selection of Village Bilborhi for the pilot project