



ORGANIZATION FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

From the Desk of Aasim Siddiqui:

Our newsletter has become a good reflection of our work and puts well in perspective the issues relating to poverty and our efforts in financially empowering poor communities. Mobilization of rural communities, which have been in poverty for centuries, has now become the focus of OSDI. We aim to achieve this by organizing more consultative workshops for our communities. OSDI's strength lies in our highly qualified and experienced workforce which is embedded in the focal communities to come up with the best customized poverty alleviation projects in order to meet the needs of the poor rural communities of Pakistan. We are happy that our Livelihood, Education, and Hepatitis Prevention & Control projects are doing extremely well. Moreover, we are now designing sustainable Food Security and Clean Water projects. Even though the rains and floods in Sindh have disrupted and destroyed a lot of rural livelihoods, we cope, manage, re-assess the needs of our communities and then move forward with our plans. We at OSDI look forward to any feedback from our readers.

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Improving Lives

Greetings from the OSDI team!

Organization for Social Development Initiatives is a project based think tank targeting sustainable economic development and poverty alleviation in rural Pakistan. Recently, it has made considerable progress in its ongoing projects in 15 focus villages. Details of updates on OSDI's projects serving the rural poor in 4 districts in Sindh and Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa are enclosed in this newsletter. This is OSDI's second quarterly newsletter.

Food Security Program

Rural households that are susceptible to socio-economic shocks are facilitated with means and resources that enable them to grow their own food at home. This ensures that extremely poor and vulnerable families are provided with food security in times of crisis as well as an improved quality of nutrition intake during normal circumstances.

Community Development Program (CDP)

This program aims to reduce poverty by providing access to services and resources such as improved education, health, drinking water and community infrastructure. Recurring expenditures in each of these tend to exacerbate inter-generational poverty. OSDI has made community contribution a part of each project in order to ensure ownership and sustainability.



LAP: Fazal Banbhro is expecting high profits from the sale of his livestock purchased with loan from OSDI. Training, proper dietary needs and health of the livestock as well as better breeding practices have been introduced to him for the first time.

Food Security: Highlights

25 Households provided with seeds and fertilizer.

44 animals distributed



Livelihood Assistance Program (LAP)

The purpose of LAP is to alleviate poverty through increasing the income and saving potential of rural households through a process that integrates best agriculture farming and livestock rearing practices in the field with micro-credit. OSDI provides farmers with affordable loans along with thorough guidance on how to improve crop yields, better care of their animals and invest in asset creation to enhance savings in the future.

Livelihood Assistance: Highlights

489 Acres Financed in Total

121 Animals Financed in Total

284 Acres in Phase IV

81 Livestock in Phase III

Community Development: Highlights

2 Temporary Learning Centers

108 students enrolled

2 Primary Healthcare Centers

407 beneficiaries of PHCs

4,495 screened for Hepatitis B&C

1000 patients treated in mobile camps

150 toilets under construction



CDP: Temporary Learning Centers are set up where there are no government schools in the vicinity. Currently 78 boys and 30 girls are enrolled in OSDI's TLCs. They have been provided with textbooks, uniforms and school shoes. The Sindh Education Foundation curriculum is being taught to these children for the first time.

CASE STUDY I: VEGETABLE GARDEN

In the village of Mari Muhammad Khan, rising food prices present a daunting challenge for Rehmat Bibi's family as three meals a day are unaffordable for this landless household.

Since February 2011, Rehmat Bibi along with her husband, three sons and three daughters have been the beneficiaries of OSDI's Food Security Program. Seeds provided to the household under this program reaped fresh vegetables in three months, providing sustenance to a family of 8 members.

Memon Buksh proudly claims that they have been self sufficient in their food consumption for the last 8 months. Now their daily consumption includes vegetables rich in essential proteins, vitamins and calories. Savings made in excess of Rs 2000 monthly from the program are being used to repay previous outstanding debt to the local shopkeeper. Much to Rehmat Bibi's delight, she can now entertain guests at her house again, serving them food made from the ready supply of fresh vegetables from her backyard orchard.

FOOD SECURITY PROGRAM

Family Nutrition Packages

In the village of Mari Mohammad Khan in District Matyari, 25 food packages containing seeds and fertilizer have been distributed amongst vulnerable households.

This package is a pre-assembled kit used for kitchen gardens to grow vegetables for home consumption.

22 out of 25 have been very successful in growing okra, green chili, cluster beans and other nutritious vegetables.

The crop yield is estimated at 500-1000 grams twice a week, which provides a balanced diet to a family of 10-15 members for 8 months.

Following this successful trend, the extra space outside schools in

all districts will also be utilized to set up vegetable gardens in the future.

Income Security for Women

OSDI provided 22 goats with one kid each to female-headed households to produce milk used primarily for domestic consumption of milk, butter and lassi.

Women generally do not have the tools and resources for planting crops each season. They require special assistance in ensuring food security for their families.

Today these women are able to use goats provided by OSDI to produce milk for consumption and improve their children's nutrition intake.



LIVELIHOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Agricultural Project Phase IV

82 households covering 480 acres have been financed to grow cotton in Khairpur & Matiari, and rice in Shikarpur over four crop cycles. Fertilizers and pesticides have been administered on the crops. The cotton crop will be harvested in October 2011.

Expansion into more profitable cash crops is also encouraged. For instance, it was observed that apple gourd (*tinda*) was likely to reap higher profits than crops currently being cultivated. With OSDI undertaking almost all of the risks associated with

unexpected crop failure, 3 families were financed to grow apple gourd (*tinda*) over 13 acres in village Mari Mohammad Khan of District Matiari, Sindh.

Livestock Project Phase III

The Livestock Project's Phase III was started in March 2011 with 81 animals. Proper vaccination, breeding and fattening processes are being encouraged and supervised by OSDI's field teams to maximize animal weight using modern technology supplemented with conventional knowhow.

CASE STUDY 2: LIVESTOCK DEVELOPMENT

For the better part of his life, Shameer Marejo, aged 46, had to borrow at exorbitant interest rates under the traditional shared livestock system to make ends meet for his family of ten. The household's combined income of Rs. 3,500 was inadequate to cover an average monthly expenditure of Rs. 4,500.

Shameer Marejo recalls that he often had to ask friends and family for financial support. He states that, "My fortune has changed ever since I became a part of OSDI's Livestock Development Project. I was provided with interest free loans for the procurement of farm animals. I can sell these animals for a hefty profit after ensuring maximum animal fattening. Through OSDI's financial assistance I have purchased two female goats and two oxen."

Shameer Marejo estimates that if all goes well he will sell the oxen at a significant profit, bringing his average monthly income in Phase II to Rs. 5,000, a 500% increase from an income of Rs. 1,000 he was previously earning. Shameer Marejo has been able to improve his living standards and provide his family financial security for the first time.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Education

Temporary Learning Centers:

OSDI facilitated teacher training in partnership with CHANGE, a local NGO committed to educational improvement and policy reform.

Teachers were taught various teaching, motivational and interactive techniques along with lesson planning & student evaluation.

In addition, the overall capacity of Temporary Learning Centers (TLCs) is being expanded with new blackboards and facilities to cater to the increasing number of students.

On the occasion of Independence Day, the Education District Officer visited OSDI's TLCs. Free textbooks were provided for the children by the Sindh government.

OSDI also distributed free uniforms and shoes for the school year to commemorate the event.

School Adoption:

OSDI has adopted a government school in Godho Shar, Shikarpur. Renovation and cleaning of the school is ongoing for which the community is being mobilized to contribute. It is intended to make the school functional while ensuring regular classes are held so that the surrounding households can have access to education.

CASE STUDY 3: PROVIDING LITERACY TO EACH CHILD

The three children of the household of Veeram Shah have never had access to education. Mohammad Salah aged 8, Abida Bibi aged 7 and Subhana Bibi aged 6, were inducted in OSDI's Temporary Learning Center in village Malhee, district Shikarpur. For the first time going to school has become a part of their daily routine.

This family was one of our focused households throughout various phases of the Livelihood Assistance Program, under which sending children to school is a pre-requisite for receiving microfinance for agriculture or livestock.

In Shikarpur, government schools exist though often geographical distance and lack of insight into the significance of education make it unlikely for parents in these villages to send their children to school. The cost of transport to distant schools is high and difficult to bear.

OSDI has also collaborated with the government to fill the gaps where the current incomes of parents fall short. The government has provided free textbooks to these children. Moreover, OSDI has distributed uniforms and shoes in order to make the school-going experience a source of pride and achievement for the children and parents alike.



CASE 4: QUALITY HEALTHCARE

Several members of the Manthaar family in Matiari experienced fatigue, recurring fever and loss of appetite which took a huge toll on the family physically, psychologically and financially. This mysterious illness remained undiagnosed for years. Through OSDI's Hepatitis Control and Prevention Program in January 2011, the infection was finally detected and the cure administered to six members of the Manthaar family including the father, mother and their sons. After the infection was discovered, they were immediately scheduled for treatment. The father and his three sons have since been fully cured from Hepatitis through program while the mother is scheduled to undergo second line of treatment in the near future.

The successful hepatitis treatment has resulted in monthly savings of Rs 2,500 previously spent in poor quality healthcare. Moreover, a steady stream of Rs 15,000 income per month is now generated by the men of the family who were struggling to earn even Rs 9,000 due to poor health. Once the mother is cured of the infection, she too can also fully participate in agricultural activities further enhancing their livelihood.

Water & Sanitation

More than 50 additional water filters have been distributed in all focus villages as OSDI continues to raise awareness on the importance of clean drinking water.

Construction of 150 toilets is set to start next month in Jamal Hajano, Matyari after the shelters are completed.

Healthcare Program

Hepatitis Prevention and Control Program was carried out in four villages in district Khairpur in July.

Prior to the camp, mass awareness campaigns regarding Hepatitis were held with community leaders and women separately. The patients found to be infected are currently undergoing treatment.

Additionally, meetings with district health officials and focal persons were also conducted to ensure full support on the government level.

Almost 1800 vaccines were administered to men, women and children alike over four days. Nearly 4500 persons visited the Hepatitis camp.

Recently, a polio campaign took place from 18th to 20th July 2011, organized by the Government Health Department in district Shikarpur. Children in the village of Malhee, along with students from TLCs were given polio drops.

Part of the ongoing health and hygiene campaign efforts in the villages include public announcements, flyers and information sessions. Pictorial evidence and constant feedback has proven especially successful.

Disaster Relief

International Organization for Migration: 450 out of 568 one-room shelters have been completed and occupied.

UN-OCHA: 118 out of 182 shelters have been completed.

In September, 568 households in Shikarpur were provided with toolkits containing materials for construction work for one-room shelters in flood affected areas.

The remaining shelters will be completed in October, 2011.



OSDI is also providing food ration to households in Badin affected by the floods in 2011.

Upcoming Plans

Food security: OSDI is launching a Kitchen Garden project for approximately 50 families in all focus districts in Sindh. The purpose is enable rural households to produce vegetables and fruits on a small-scale for domestic consumption.

Livelihood Assistance Program: The Agricultural Development Project will be expanded to finance 500 acres in the upcoming phase. Moreover, enterprise development will be initiated for the educated, unemployed youth by financing small businesses such as milk distribution, rickshaws and grocery shops with the help of loans.

Community Development Program:

- OSDI is planning to distribute Life-Saver jerrycans in each school to provide access to clean drinking water to school-going children in all focus areas. Further, OSDI is distributing aqua-tabs that clean water instantly to all 1600 households in its focus villages.
- Construction of a new Primary Healthcare Center will start in Mardan.

- In all the 3 districts of Sindh, a program will be launched soon to train traditional birth attendants and mid-wives on better maternal and child health-care to reduce infant mortality and dispense important medical advice to young mothers.
- The Hepatitis campaign is being extended to District Shikarpur and Mardan in the upcoming months.
- As per earlier practice, children attending TLCs will be a part of the Hepatitis campaign and frequent medical checkups.
- A school-based de-worming campaign is being launched next month to mitigate health problems in children and create awareness of better health and hygiene.

Tools for Measuring Impact

A two-day training workshop on “Measuring Impact: Tools for Reporting, Documentation, Monitoring and Evaluation” for OSDI’s field staff was held from June 3 to June 4, 2011 in Karachi.

The objective of the training was to increase effectiveness in measuring impact. Topics covered were social mobilization, field data collection, standard procedures, as well as specific updates in the design of the programs. To make the training interactive and fun, several teambuilding exercises were also incorporated.

All participants received a training certificate at the end.



Be a part of OSDI

Partner With Us

OSDI provides many opportunities to potential organizations and individuals for partnership. Some of these possibilities for can be in the form of:

1. Donor
2. Implementing partner
3. Research support
4. Volunteer
5. Knowledge-sharing

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