

Compiled by RDF Quality and Research Unit

Quarterly Highlights

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Inauguration of Solar Powered Schools and Health Facility



RDF has electrified 25 off-grid villages, 10 elementary and secondary schools, 10 hospitals and 10 deep dug wells with solar power in desert area in district Sanghar and Tharparker of Sindh with the assistance of KNH and co-financing of German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

Deputy Commissioner Sanghar **Dr. Imran Ul Hassan Khuwaja** inaugurated solar power scheme at Government Girls Lower Secondary School Hathungo and Gynecological Ward and Trauma Center at Civil Hospital Khipro, under "Lighting Up Lives" project. The inauguration ceremony was attended by District Education Officer Sanghar **Mr. Naseer Jogi**, ADHO Sanghar **Dr. Ali Muhammad Junejo**, medical staff of Taluka Khipro, students, teachers and notables of the area. Dr Imran Ul Hassan said that solar energy in the schools would increase enrollment of girls and would enhance the quality of education in Govt schools. Students and teachers of Hathungo Town were delighted to have solar energy, which has made the environment comfortable for learning and teaching at their school.

Government High School (GHS) Sachal Jhinjhi, which is situated in deserted region of district Tharparker, faced irregularity of students due to lack of basic facilities such as safe drinking water, proper sanitation and power supply, as it has never been connected to national grid which causes numerous challenges. "The government has provided very limited resources to the school which creates a lot of hindrances in leading an educational institute in a deserted area and that is a big challenge for him", uttered Mr. Sohrab Jhunghi, Principal of school. The school has now received a heavy-duty solar power system under RDF's "Lighting Up Lives Project", which is the solution to many problems that have been faced by the management and students of the school. Mr. Jhinjhi was delighted and highly thankful for the assistance of RDF and expressed high hope for the brighter future of his students and school.



Provincial Seminar on Improving Tomato Value Chain

A day long seminar was organized by RDF together with GRASP ITC on April 1, 2021 in Karachi to discuss tomato value chain challenges and prospects, surface the perspective of growers and delineate its economic potential in Sindh. The seminar was attended by tomato growers, farmer representatives, government officials, academicians, entrepreneurs, chamber of commerce and CSO representatives. **Dr. Fateh Muhammad Marri**, Vice Chancellor Sindh Agriculture University presided the seminar. Eminent economist **Dr Qaiser Bangali**, Farmer Leader **Mahmood Nawaz Shah**, GRASP ITC Lead for Sindh **Ms Shabnam Baloch**, **Mr. Ashfaq Soomro**, Prof. **Dr. Muhammad Ismail Kumbhar**, **Mr. Mahboob Ul Haq** CEO Sindh Enterprise Development Fund, **Mr. Mohsin Azam Soomro** of GRASP ITC and Dr Tahmina of SAU Tando Jam and talked on the issues in tomato production and discussed value chain prospective. Speakers identified major production including high seed cost, poor seed quality, lack of disease and harsh climate resistant hybrid seed varieties, incidence of severe pest attack due to low quality pesticides, lack of proper training regarding production technologies and labour shortages



particularly at the harvesting time. It badly affects farmers and the markets. Therefore, there is a need to look into this issue with a value-chain approach and find out ways to protect growers and marketers' interests.

Increasing Business Opportunities under Self Help Approach (SHA) Approach for the Women

Women Cluster Associations formed under "Sustainable Empowerment of Women Project" in Tando Allahyar organized 'Meena Bazar' (Occasional Sale and Exhibition Market) at village Allah Rakhyo Pathan of district Tando Allahyar with the support of KNH and BMZ. Four stalls of readymade clothes, hand bags/ladies' purse, shoes, sleepers, decoration pieces and dresses with applique work were set up in event. More than 150 women and children of surrounding villages visited the exhibition and purchased various items from women artisans. The event went quite successful as the poor artisan women earned well from the sales of their products.



Inauguration of Public Water Supply Scheme

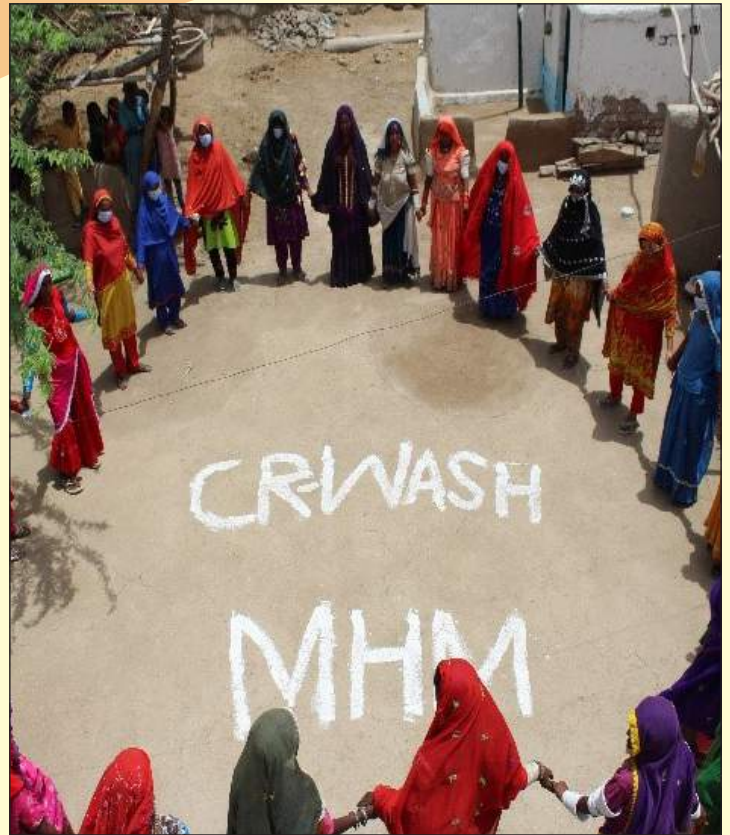
A solar power water supply scheme in village **Ali M.Qambrani** in Tehsil Sinjhero district Sanghar was inaugurated by Ex-chairman District Council **Raees Khadim Hussain Rind**. The Scheme has a capacity to store the 13,500 litres drinkable water. The scheme along with two water distribution points makes it convenient for villagers to collect the water at their door steps.



Global MHM Day Celebration and Training for women

To raise awareness about the personal hygiene of women/ adult girls living in remote areas where they do not have easy access to proper menstrual hygiene management in normal as well as in the critical situation of disasters, training on MHM was organized. Team focuses to break persisting taboos around menstruation and raise awareness about the importance of menstrual hygiene management (MHM) for women and adolescent girls. Team conducted two TOTs for the 50 adolescent girls and women from 13 villages; these trainers will train the 500 young girls and women about proper menstrual hygiene management.

The Global Menstrual Hygiene Day was celebrated in Sanghar on 28 May 2021 at BHU Wali Mohammad Keerio Sanghar in collaboration with PPHI under CR WASH Project, to create awareness on good and bad practices of Menstrual Hygiene Management, raise awareness among adolescent girls / women who face challenges to manage the menstrual hygiene.



Low-Cost Sanitation Facilities Through Subsidy Model

RDF has been promoting affordable and appropriate sanitation facilities in rural areas of Sanghar through a subsidy and component-sharing model to improve public health and reduce health risks. Community mobilization is overarching strategy in order to achieve open defecation free status in the project area. The project has constructed 150 sanitation facilities in vulnerable communities.



Consultation Workshop for new Market Demand Based Trades & Market Linkages

Under the project, RDF is already providing the skill development trainings in tailoring, applique and needle work and beautician trades with the assistance of KNH and BMZ. A day long consultation was held with the CLAs and SHG members to analyse other potential trades for women in project areas, where they could easily produce their products or provide their services and earn easily for to overcome the high inflation rates.

To determine markets needs and appropriate trades, distance from the main market, population of the village, access with surrounding area, already business and demand and supply chains were discussed with women.



Local Markets in Tando Allayar are also being frequently visited and women are linked with where they can sell their products, particularly the applique work, hand embroidery and stitched cloths.

Training of Women in Tailoring, Beautician and Applique Work

During the current quarter, 63 self help group members in Tando Allahyar were provided with a three months training in advanced tailoring skills, 27 were trained in beautician course and 45 in applique at various places in Tando Allahyar. So far, the S.H.A project has trained more than 500 women in Tando Allahyar.



Coordination and Linkages Development with Government Departments

Under S.HA projects Cluster Level Associations (CLAs) are formed and linked with the Government departments, CSOs and markets and therefore it is mandatory for each CLA to have a coordination meetings with them. During the current quarter 13 members from 06 CLAs conducted the meeting with Education, Social Welfare departments, Child Protection unit and with Disability and Empowerment Department. These meeting were conducted by representatives of CLAs in there respective offices regarding to brief their work in the cluster and to know the opportunities or new project by the respective department.



Meeting with Sector Chief GRASP ITC: Implementing partners in Sindh meeting with chief sector and enterprise competitiveness



RDF participated in a joint meeting with Chief Sector and Enterprise Competitiveness ITC Mr. Robert Skidmore held by GRASP in Karachi on 22nd June 2021. Various implementing partners of GRASP-ITC in Sindh attended this meeting. The meeting was aimed to discuss the progress of the GRASP project with Sector Chief and to develop coordination among various partners and stakeholders. Mr. Ashfaque Soomro, Executive Director RDF shared the key achievements, challenges faced and impacts of GRASP COVID-19 Response plan implemented in district Thatta and Khairpur Mirs by RDF.

Participation in EU-GRASP ITC Annual Hackathon

RDF participated in EU-GRASP ITC Annual Hackathon held in Islamabad from 28th June to 2nd July 2021 in Islamabad. Mr. Ashfaque Soomro, Executive Director RDF presented achievements of the ITC COVID Response Plan in the event and discussed issues faced by the small growers and MSMEs in Sindh during COVID pandemic.



Virtual Discussion with International Rescue Committee (IRC) on the Resilience Building in Sindh

A consultative meeting was held with the team of IRC International on 25th June 2021 to discuss climate-induced disaster risks and resilience building in Sindh. Ms. Hannah from IRC discussed the resilience building measures of IRC in Pakistan and explored how it can help

people to survive, recover and rebuild their lives after facing severe crises and disasters. RDF also shared its risk management and resilience building strategies that it has been implementing since its inception.

Research on COVID-19 Impacts on Education

RDF, in collaboration with Sukkar IBA University, has initiated a research on COVID-19 impacts on primary and secondary education sector in different districts of Sindh, with an aim to analyze the emotional and mental health impacts of COVID-19 on students, impact on the quality of education during closure of schools, students' access to online education and provision of family support for facilitating learning and education opportunities to their

children during COVID-19. The research will also identify if there were any counselling mechanisms in rural areas to help children address mental health impacts of COVID-19. The findings will assist the education department and other relevant decision makers to develop child friendly strategies and policies to mitigate such challenges while also building a more resilient system that can withstand future crises.

Research on Arsenic Surveillance in Sanghar District

RDF has signed MOU with MUET USPCAS-W for conducting a research on Arsenic Surveillance in District Sanghar to identify the arsenic contamination in ground water sources and assess its health impact on general population of different districts of Sindh. The findings will help decision makers to ensure provision of safe drinking

water and water safety plans to the general population of districts of Sindh. This research would also contribute to RDF's goal to improve the quality of the life of the people by reducing the incidence of death and illness caused by waterborne diseases.

Installation of Hand Pumps under Water Well Project

RDF is making efforts to provide an access to safe drinking water to underprivileged communities, hence contributing in achieving SDG #6 that says to ensure access to clean water for all. RDF has been implementing its UMR supported "Water Well" Project in districts Mirpurkhas, Sangahr, Hyderabad and Sujawal of Sindh province since last year and has so far installed a total of 48 hand pumps in most vulnerable villages. Currently, 12 hand pumps are under construction in district Sanghar and will be completed on mid of July 2021.



