Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund
Delivering Prosperity

Newsletter
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Islamabad
www.ppaf.org.pk

PPAF Celebrates Women's Day 2025

As part of a nationwide campaign to commemorate International Women's Day 2025, the Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund through its partner organisations, organised over 64 events across all four provinces, Azad Jammu & Kashmir, and Gilgit Baltistan. The campaign engaged stakeholders from diverse backgrounds—including political leadership, academia, civil society, and local communities—enhancing PPAF's visibility as a leading organisation dedicated to inclusive socio-economic development and community resilience.

The campaign not only highlighted women's contributions to development and resilience but also significantly enhanced PPAF's visibility as a leading organisation committed to broader socio-economic progress, community empowerment, and inclusive, sustainable growth. Among the standout events, WORDS Pakistan organised a high-profile celebration at the Governor House in Balochistan, where Governor Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhel stressed the importance of equal opportunities and access to resources for women to thrive in all sectors.

In Punjab, AGAHE hosted a powerful event in Lahore, attended by Ms. Kanwal Liaqat, Parliamentary Secretary for Environment, PPAF CEO Mr. Nadir Gul Barech, and several members of the Punjab Assembly. The discussion focused on women's leadership in sustainable development and climate resilience.

Other notable events included a major gathering in Sindh by Marvi Rural Development Organisation (MRDO) with the participation of government officials and community leaders; a first-time celebration in Neelum Valley (AJK) by Basic Education Reform & Development Foundation (BERD) and an International Women's Day Conference by Gilgit Baltistan Rural Support Programme (GBRSP) in Gilgit Baltistan, attended by over 200 stakeholders.









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LACIP Building Futures Through Skills Training



Under the KfW-funded Livelihood Support and Promotion of Small Community Infrastructure Programme Phase II (LACIP II), PPAF's implementing partner Sarhad Rural Support Programme (SRSP) organised two key events to mark the completion of technical and vocational training in the districts of Tank and Dera Ismail Khan (D.I. Khan) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

In D.I. Khan, a special event aligned with International Women's Day was held at the Government Polytechnic Institute for Women. The success of 66 women graduates was recognised as they completed vocational training in fashion design, machine embroidery, and bead embroidery. Certificates and toolkits were distributed, and Deputy Commissioner Ms. Sarah Rehman highlighted the importance of such initiatives in promoting women's economic empowerment.

In Tank, 52 individuals, including 27 women from targeted households successfully completed a three-month training in trades such as mobile repairing, crocheting, and ribbon work. They also appeared in an examination conducted by the Trade Testing Board, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, ensuring the certification met the recognised standards. A closing ceremony was held at the Government Technical and Vocational Center (GTVC) Tank to celebrate the completion of the training. The graduates were awarded certificates and related tool kits by the Principal of GTVC Mr. Kiramat Ullah to support their journey into self-employment and entrepreneurship.

To date, 851 individuals, out of a targeted 2,000, with equal representation of women have been enrolled across Tank, D.I. Khan, and Lakki Marwat, supporting income generation, gender inclusion, and long-term community resilience through skill development.





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GRASP 4th Matching Grant Cycle Attracts Applications from Across Sindh and Balochistan

Under the Access to Finance component of the European Union-funded Growth for Rural Advancement and Sustainable Progress (GRASP) project, PPAF launched the 4th cycle of matching grants, inviting applications from 22 target districts across Sindh and Balochistan. In a remarkable response 499 applications were received, 226 from Sindh and 273 from Balochistan Notably, nearly 30% of these came from women and persons with special needs reflecting GRASP's growing outreach to marginalised communities.

The shortlisting process was led by PPAF's implementing partners working on the ground. Each application underwent a thorough review process, including in-depth evaluation of business plans and mandatory document check. As a result, 148 promising small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) have been shortlisted for the next phase of due diligence, where field teams will verify claims to ensure transparency and accountability.

In this fourth cycle, GRASP is awarding matching grants in four tiers—PKR 2.5 million, PKR 5 million, PKR 10 million, and PKR 20 million. Notably, the PKR 2.5 million and PKR 5 million categories are reserved exclusively for women, minorities, and persons with special needs, further reinforcing GRASP's commitment to inclusive and equitable rural development.

To date, GRASP has awarded 371 matching grants worth over PKR 847 million through its previous three cycles. With this targeted and inclusive approach, GRASP continues to empower high-potential SMEs, especially those led by underserved groups—to scale their businesses, create local employment opportunities, and contribute to sustainable economic growth in rural Pakistan.





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Empowering Adolescent Girls Through Hygiene Support



As part of its ongoing commitment to community well-being, PPAF under its Restoring Social Services and Climate Resilience project launched a targeted initiative to address the personal hygiene needs of adolescent girls and women in 19 districts across Pakistan.

With an allocation of PKR 29 million for a total of 9,718 Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) kits for distribution across the country, a total of 8,467 kits have already been distributed to young girls and women through partner organisations. The regional distribution included 2,040 kits in Balochistan, 1,680 in Sindh, 1,232 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 2,099 in Punjab and 1,416 in Gilgit Baltistan.

Each MHM/hygiene kit was thoughtfully designed with essential hygiene items, alongside informational material promoting cleanliness and safe personal care. The effort aimed not just to meet immediate needs but to reinforce preventive health practices and improve attendance in schools.

The response from communities was overwhelmingly positive. Students expressed appreciation for an initiative that acknowledged both their physical and psychological well-being—areas often overlooked in education-focused programmes. Teaching staff noted its contribution to creating a more secure and inclusive learning environment, while local partners reported increased awareness and openness in addressing topics previously







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Promoting Inclusion and Empowerment Through Skills and Dialogue

Under the project "Economic Empowerment of Marginalised Communities Through Strengthening the Technical and Skills Sector in Punjab and Sindh, Pakistan", funded by PPAF and implemented by The Hunar Foundation in collaboration with Saiban-e-Pakistan, a series of impactful community awareness and empowerment sessions were conducted.

Held across key locations including Lahore, Faridkot, and Gojra in Punjab and New Shanti Nagar, Mirpur Khas and Umerkot in Sindh. The sessions engaged over 300 participants, primarily youth and leaders from religious minority communities. These events focused on promoting interfaith harmony, skill development, and economic inclusion.

Participants were introduced to vocational training opportunities, encouraged to explore their aptitudes, and engaged in discussions around the social and economic challenges faced by marginalised groups. The initiative placed a special emphasis on peacebuilding and reconciliation, particularly in historically sensitive areas, contributing to stronger community bonds and long-term social cohesion.





CEO PPAF Participates in Talk Show on Pakistan Day

To mark the significance of Pakistan Day, CEO, PPAF, Mr. Nadir Gul Barech, participated in a special talk show aired on TV One and moderated by renowned presenter Mansoor Qazi. The session brought together distinguished voices to reflect on Pakistan's journey since the historic Lahore Resolution.

Mr. Barech emphasised the importance of national unity, social justice, and inclusive development. He highlighted that true progress lies in empowering communities through sustainable solutions, rather than short-term aid. Sharing PPAF's community-driven model, he underscored how targeted initiatives like skill development, asset transfers, and interest free loans help people escape the cycle of poverty and build resilient livelihoods.

The discussion served as a timely reminder of the values that inspired Pakistan's creation and the collective responsibility to uphold them.

Watch the full talk show here:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zhfUwWJ9ivE&ab_channel=NewsOne



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Stories from the Field

Rising Beyond Barriers

In the quiet village of Union Council Saeed Pur in Tando Muhammad Khan, Sindh province, Misri Faqeer, a transgender woman, has defied the odds to become a symbol of resilience and empowerment. Once abandoned by her family and relying on neighbours for food and shelter in return for goat-tending, Misri dreamed of a future where she could stand on her own.

Now 56, with over 20 years of experience in livestock rearing, she had the skills but not the means to grow. That changed when she was introduced to the Growth for Rural Advancement and Sustainable Progress (GRASP) project—funded by the European Union and implemented by the International Trade Centre, in partnership with PPAF and FAO. With local support from PPAF's partner, the Research and Development Foundation (RDF), Misri applied for and received a matching grant of PKR 500,000.

With this support, Misri built a proper shelter for her animals, protecting them from extreme weather and disease. She invested in healthier and high-yield breeding goats, installed a solar-powered water pump to ensure clean drinking water for her livestock, and adopted improved feeding techniques to enhance growth and productivity. These changes not only increased her herd size but also enabled her to sell livestock at better market rates, significantly boosting her income and stability.

Today, Misri is a proud entrepreneur whose success is inspiring women, men, and transgender individuals in her community to pursue their ambitions. "Goat farming has given me independence and dignity," she says.







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Interest Free Loan Turns Shazia's Dream into Reality

Shazia Bibi, a 35-year-old mother of four from Mandi Yazman in District Bahawalpur, Punjab, is the wife of a daily wage labourer. Determined to support her family and provide a better future for her school-going children, she always dreamed of running a home-based business. Using her skills, she started offering basic beauty services from her home. As her client base grew, Shazia aspired to expand and establish a proper beauty parlour but lacked the financial resources to do so. Upon learning about the Prime Minister's Interest Free Loan (PMIFL) programme, she reached out to AGAHE Pakistan, the implementing partner of PPAF, and successfully applied for the loan.

After completing the necessary process, Shazia's interest free loan of PKR 40,000 was approved, and she received the amount within a few days. With this support, she set up a small beauty parlour, allowing her to put her skills to use while generating a steady income. As her business began to grow, Shazia expanded her services by stocking branded makeup products and hair colours to attract more customers. Encouraged by the response, she applied for a second loan—and is now successfully running her business in the third loan cycle.

Shazia now earns between PKR 40,000 to 50,000 per month, enabling her to support her husband financially and enrol her children in quality schools. Grateful for the opportunity, she credits the PMIFL programme for helping her turn a long held dream into a thriving business. With renewed confidence and financial stability, Shazia takes pride in the improved quality of life she has created for her family.





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Restoring Sight, Renewing Hope

Faqeer Muhammad, a resident of the flood-affected village of Hajipur in District Rajanpur, Punjab, is a hardworking member of the Community Organisation in Basti Save Rah. As the sole earner for his large family, he works as a daily wage labourer on nearby farms, determined to provide his children with a better future. However, limited income and a chronic eye infection that severely affected his vision, especially at night, restricted his ability to work and worsened his family's financial situation. Despite several local consultations, his condition showed no improvement, leaving him disheartened.

Things began to change when the Rural Community Development Society (RCDS), in collaboration with the District Health Department, organised a free medical camp in Hajipur under the PPAF-funded Restoring Social Services and Climate Resilience (RSS&CR) project. At the camp, Faqeer underwent a thorough eye examination, received treatment, and was referred to a specialist for further free medical care. With follow-up support, he accessed treatment from an ophthalmologist in the city.

This timely intervention restored Faqeer's eyesight and renewed his ability to earn a living with dignity. He is among over 5,000 patients who have benefited from 233 free medical camps held across 19 project districts in all four provinces, including 74 in Punjab under RSS&CR project. He considers this effort a lifeline and is deeply grateful to the teams behind the initiative for helping him regain hope and



