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PPAF Participates in National Summit Advancing Women-Led Social Enterprise Ecosystem





Women empowerment, especially their economic empowerment, remains central to PPAF's vision of inclusive and sustainable development. Recognising that when women thrive economically, entire households and communities prosper PPAF has been working and collaborating with various initiatives to further women's economic empowerment.

In line with this commitment, PPAF supported the International Summit on "Building a Women-Led Social Enterprise Ecosystem in Pakistan", organised under the Social Innovation Academy Summit 2.0 in collaboration with the Prime Minister's Youth Programme (PMYP).

The summit brought together more than 300 participants, including policymakers, entrepreneurs, investors, development partners, academia, and youth leaders, with strong representation from women-led enterprises across the country. The event served as a national platform to discuss challenges faced by women entrepreneurs and to explore scalable, impact-oriented solutions for fostering a more enabling entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Addressing the summit as Chief Guest, Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan reaffirmed the government's commitment to empowering youth and women through entrepreneurship, skills development, and inclusive policy measures.

Speaking at the Summit, Mr. Nadir Gul Barech, CEO PPAF, stressed on the importance of creating enabling environment for women entrepreneurs so they have better access to opportunities, networks and support systems. He emphasised that sustainable progress depends on collaborative and community-centered approaches and we must work together for social uplift and empowerment of women.

Through such engagements and partnerships, PPAF continues to champion initiatives that expand women's access to skills, finance, and leadership opportunities enabling them to become active drivers of resilient and thriving communities.









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Partnership for Integrated Services



PPAF has entered into a strategic partnership with Sona Welfare Foundation (SWF) – Fauji Fertilizer Company Limited to implement the Integrated Health, Rehabilitation and Inclusive Education Initiative in rural communities of Rahim Yar Khan (Punjab) and Ghotki (Sindh), aiming to benefit more than 27,000 individuals.

The initiative was formalised through an agreement signed by Air Commodore (R) Syed Farooq Ahmed Bokhari, COO–SWF, and Mr. Nadir Gul Barech, CEO PPAF, in the presence of senior representatives from both organisations. Under the initiative, eight E-Clinics will be established to provide primary and specialist healthcare services, including telemedicine support, diagnostics, and referral linkages for rural populations. A Limbs Centre will offer prosthetic, orthotic, and physiotherapy services for persons with disabilities, while a Teaching Satellite School for Deaf Children will provide sign language-based education delivered by trained special educators.

The initiative is structured on a co-financing model between SWF and PPAF and is designed as a pilot with strong potential for replication. It will also incorporate community engagement, integration with public systems, and adaptive learning mechanisms to support sustainability and scale-up.

Through partnerships with civil society and the corporate sector, PPAF continues to support integrated, community-centred solutions aimed at expanding access to healthcare, rehabilitation, inclusive education, and livelihood opportunities for underserved communities.







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LACIP II Expands Solar Powered Clean Water Access



Sustainable and climate-resilient community infrastructure developed through PPAF-led initiatives continues to strengthen service delivery and improve living conditions in climate-affected rural areas. Among these efforts, solarised drinking water schemes under the KfW-funded Livelihood Support and Promotion of Small Community Infrastructure Programme (LACIP-II) are enhancing communities' access to safe, reliable, and sustainable water services. Besides other interventions under the programme, nine Solarised Drinking Water Supply schemes have been approved, of which six have been completed to date. Collectively, these completed and ongoing interventions are expected to benefit more than 3,000 households across target areas by improving access to essential services in underserved communities.



One such intervention is the Solarised Drinking Water Supply Scheme in the flood-prone village of Hayat Bochra in Dera Ismail Khan, serving 211 households. Fully operational since its completion in 2023, the scheme was identified as a community priority through a participatory Village Development Planning process, with local residents contributing land and facilitating on-ground implementation activities.



The scheme comprises a 7,000-gallon overhead water tank, a 25-kW solar-powered pumping system, four water distribution points, and the plantation of 250 indigenous trees to support environmental sustainability. By integrating solar energy, the initiative ensures a reliable and uninterrupted supply of safe drinking water while reducing dependence on conventional energy sources and lowering operational costs.

Interventions under LACIP-II reflect ongoing efforts to promote resilient, community-driven infrastructure in underserved and climate-vulnerable rural areas, with a focus on improving access to essential services through sustainable and locally owned solutions.

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Social Innovation and Enterprise Opportunities Explored





PPAF continues to expand its engagement with international partners to promote inclusive development through knowledge exchange and collaborative action. Recent efforts also reflect its growing focus on partnering with innovation-driven organisations to broaden the reach and impact of its service delivery.

As part of these efforts, it welcomed Mr. Basel Al-Aghbar, Head of Impact Investment and Entrepreneurship at Arweqah Alreyadah (Riyadh, Saudi Arabia), along with representatives from the Social Innovation Academy, for discussions on future collaboration and knowledge exchange.



The delegation was briefed on PPAF's ongoing work in community empowerment and poverty alleviation across Pakistan. Discussions focused on identifying opportunities for partnership in areas such as research and development, institutional knowledge sharing, and learning from each organisation's experiences and best practices.

The engagement also explored avenues for strengthening ecosystems that support social enterprises, promoting entrepreneurship, and facilitating access to broader opportunities, including pathways to global markets.



The meeting concluded on a positive note, with both sides expressing interest in advancing discussions toward a meaningful and results-oriented partnership that contributes to sustainable and inclusive development.

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PPAF–IRCRA Organises Dialogue on Peace and Social Cohesion



Strengthening trust between state institutions and communities remains critical for fostering sustainable peace, inclusive governance, and social cohesion. In light of this context, PPAF in collaboration with the International Research Council for Religious Affairs (IRCRA), convened a Regional Dialogue Conference on State–Society Dialogue, Peace and Social Cohesion at the Governor House, Peshawar.

The conference was graced by Honourable Faisal Karim Kundi, Governor of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as Chief Guest. During the conference, Mr. Arshad Rashid, Chief Programmes PPAF highlighted PPAF's outreach and development impact at both national and provincial levels, and shared key recommendations emerging from the dialogue sessions, along with the proposed way forward.

The dialogue brought together a range of stakeholders to reflect on the importance of strengthening trust, collaboration, and communication between the state and society. A central message emerging from the discussions emphasised that sustainable peace is achieved through consistent, inclusive dialogue that translates into practical action.

Participants also underlined the importance of ensuring that communities feel heard, youth are empowered to play an active role in civic processes, and institutions remain transparent and accountable in delivering services. The conference builds on earlier engagements, including a similar dialogue session held at FATA University, Dara Adam Khel, further reinforcing PPAF's commitment to fostering peace and social cohesion through inclusive engagement.





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Rebuilding Balochistan's Livestock Sector

In the aftermath of devastating floods that disrupted livelihoods across Balochistan, recovery efforts are now focused on moving beyond relief but towards long-term resilience. Through the EU funded Post-Floods Resilient Recovery and Strengthening of the Livestock Sector in Balochistan project, PPAF along with its partner organisations is strengthening systems and skills, to help livestock-dependent communities rebuild stronger and better prepared for future shocks.

A key priority in this recovery phase has been building the capacities of frontline teams responsible for working directly with affected communities. For this, a two-day Training of Trainers (ToT) was conducted for teams from PPAF's Quetta Office and Balochistan Rural Support Programme's six district offices. The training focused on enhancing their knowledge and facilitation skills to deliver community-based learning on livestock entrepreneurship, value chains, and digital literacy to better support livestock communities across the flood affected districts.

Alongside capacity building, the project is also strengthening evidence-based and forward-looking interventions to reduce vulnerability. A debriefing session on 'Feasibility Study for Introducing Livestock Insurance in Balochistan' explored practical mechanisms to protect farmers from climate-related shocks. The discussion highlighted the importance of financial risk protection tools as part of a broader resilience framework for MSMEs in livestock sector.

Lastly, to ensure effective project implementation, a refresher on orientation training workshop was also held for teams. Rather than standalone training, the session served to align project ideology with institutional legacy and strengthen implementation systems. To ensure same operation readiness level for all team members special focus was given on monitoring and evaluation systems, management information systems (MIS), IGP development, community and village network strengthening, and compliance with procurement and financial procedures.

Taken together, these interventions contribute to broader efforts to rebuild the livestock sector through a systems-based approach. The focus is on strengthening long-term resilience and improving preparedness and recovery capacity in flood-affected communities across Balochistan.









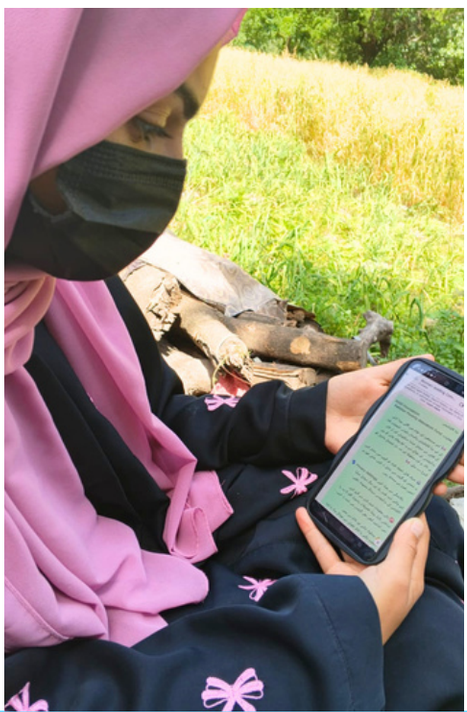
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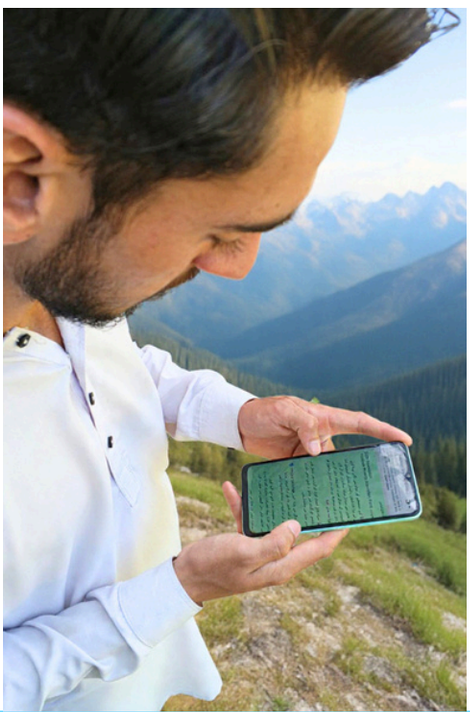
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Community Connectivity through Digital Engagement in Neelum Valley





Under the Azad Jammu & Kashmir Local Area Development Programme, funded by PPAF, the Basic Education, Reform & Development (BERD) Foundation has introduced a unique, community-led digital engagement model in the Union Councils of Athmuqam and Sharda in District Neelum Valley through the formation of WhatsApp groups, including a dedicated women's group. Given the Valley's remoteness and difficult terrain, the digital space provides a simple, direct and inclusive communication platform, serving as a community connection hub for coordination, awareness, and participation, making engagement more people centred. Regular digital safety awareness of community ensures that digital space does not become a source of misinformation and social harm.

In the groups, community members regularly share updates on ongoing activities and receive announcements of upcoming events, training schedules, community meetings, and emergency information. After each activity, participants share their thoughts and feedback and key learnings, from disaster preparedness, early warning systems, and emergency response to climate-resilient crops, improved farming techniques, kitchen gardening, and plantation. Members help identify appropriate locations for activities based on need and accessibility and support the selection of deserving beneficiaries, such as women farmers for kitchen gardening or small farmers for climate-smart agriculture training.

Beyond keeping communities informed and adapting to climate impacts, the platform has become an important channel for community alerts, preparedness and incident reporting, leading to strengthening community readiness and camaraderie. With 75 members and a separate digital space of 17 women, the platform is accessible, familiar, and easy to use. It has reduced barriers of distance, travel, and formal communication channels, enabling men, youth, and vulnerable households, to stay informed, connected and engaged.

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Stories from the Field

Floating Vegetable Rafts Bring Climate-Resilient Farming to Thatta

In Union Council Domani, Thatta, where recurring floods and waterlogging have increasingly disrupted traditional agriculture, communities are beginning to explore new ways of growing food in challenging conditions.

Through the PPAF-funded Restoring Social Services and Climate Resilience (RSS&CR) project, implemented by Indus Earth Trust in Thatta, farmers have been introduced to climate-resilient kitchen gardening as a form of climate-smart agriculture. The training has also supported the adoption of floating vegetable raft farming, an innovative practice used in several flood-prone countries.

What was once unfamiliar in this remote area of Thatta is gradually taking root, offering communities an adaptive approach to food production in waterlogged environments.The training focused on need-based climate change adaptation and replication of best practices, with participants also engaging in hands-on testing of floating rafts to demonstrate their effectiveness for sustainable kitchen gardening in flood- and waterlogging-prone areas.

At the heart of this pilot is a simple but powerful idea: when land becomes unreliable, farming must adapt. Across six villages in UC Domani, 120 farmers including 50% women are now part of this initiative, learning to prepare seed balls, construct floating rafts, and grow vegetables in conditions once considered unsuitable for cultivation. Six demonstration rafts are currently being developed to refine and showcase the model at community level.

What began as a pilot in Domani carries wider potential. With its low-cost design and reliance on local materials, floating vegetable farming offers a replicable pathway for climate-vulnerable regions seeking to protect food security in an increasingly uncertain environment.







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Value Addition Driving Growth in Date Processing in Panjgur

In Panjgur, one of Pakistan's key date-producing regions, Imran Dates Farm Marketing SMC Pvt. Ltd. once operated mainly as a raw date trader, with limited processing, branding, and market access. Post-harvest losses, inconsistent quality and weak value addition further restricted its reach to local and inter-district markets.

Under EU funded Growth for Rural Advancement and Sustainable Progress (GRASP), Imran Dates Farm Marketing SMC Pvt. Ltd. received a matching grant of PKR 20 million. The financial support, along with existing capital, helped SME modernise date cleaning, grading, and packaging equipment, improved storage facilities, and value-added processing such as hygienic sorting and branding. The enterprise also received financial literacy and value addition trainings and improved compliance with key food safety, sustainable farming, and production quality standards. As a result, the business transitioned from raw trading to a structured value-added agro-processing model. Cultivation expanded from 6 to 10 acres, while production surged from 56 to 135 tons noting a surge of 141%. With improved quality and packaging, the enterprise moved beyond local markets into inter-provincial trade, diversifying its buyer base to include wholesalers, commission agents, input suppliers, producers, and direct consumers. The adoption of formal payment systems such as banking transfers and digital transactions further strengthened business operations.

The growth reflected in financials as well, Imran Dates Farm Marketing SMC Pvt. Ltd. noted annual sales rising from PKR 30 million to PKR 38 million and profit increasing by 55%. Beyond organisational growth, the transformation contributed towards creating employment opportunities for others as well. Employment doubled from around 10–12 workers to over 20 permanent staff, with additional seasonal jobs during peak periods. Increased opportunities for youth aged 15–29 further contributed to local income generation and rural economic strengthening in Panjgur.

Overall, the enterprise illustrates how targeted investment in value addition can transform traditional trading models into competitive agro-processing SMEs: enhancing productivity, profitability, employment, and market integration within Balochistan's date value chain.







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Stories from the Field

A New Beginning for Women in Balochistan Through Solar Drying Innovation

In Hanna Urak, Quetta, where social and cultural norms often limit women's mobility, a quiet but meaningful transformation is taking place within the boundaries of their homes.

Following the devastating 2022 floods that swept away livelihoods, women in the area refused to let their future be defined by loss. Under the Restoring Social Services and Climate Resilience (RSS & CR) project funded by PPAF and implemented by the Institute for Development Studies and Practices (IDSP), Solar Dryer Units and practical training in solar drying, hygiene, and basic business practices were introduced to create home-based income opportunities.

Starting with just six women, the initiative has enabled participants to process and preserve apples, tomatoes, chilies, garlic, and indigenous herbs into value-added products. This approach is helping reduce post-harvest losses, improve household food security, and generate income through small-scale production systems that can be managed from home.

Beyond economic benefits, the initiative is also strengthening skills, confidence, and the role of women in household decision-making, while respecting local cultural contexts. It demonstrates how climate-resilient solutions can also be socially inclusive, offering dignified livelihood opportunities in fragile environments.





