



### Fading Memories Still Remember

“Janbaza Bibi’s memory is fading. One of the sentences she repeats “May God bless LP, the project benefited us in the hour of need”. Once well off, Janbaza’s family was pushed into poverty cycle due to a fatal illness of Janbaza’s husband; the assets were sold as the sole earner was on bed. She became destitute and nothing left with her after his death. In 2008, for Janbaza the LP’s cow distribution to the most destitute families was like a sunbeam. The day she received the cow she was overjoyed. The cow turned up to be a good source of income as she sold milk and butter and managed her family. The cow also gave birth to calf which was later sold at good price, shared Shahina, the daughter in law of Janbaza.” Janbaza Bibi recipient of a calf, LP Phase 1, in village Jhangri, Thal valley, district Karak.

Janbaza Bibi’s memory is fading but she remembers the name LP and smilingly blesses it each time. One fine morning of August 2016 we started towards village Jhangri in Thal valley of district Karak to meet Janbaza Bibi. As one of the beneficiaries of the LPH interventions since 2008, she had been given a cow to become self-sufficient. We wanted to catch-up on that and any other observation she could share with us. Once at her home, we were sad to find out that Janbaza’s memory was slowly fading away and she was not able to talk much anymore. Her only answer when asked about the LPH was a sudden big smile (as if she recognized us) and a loud “May God Bless



you". Janbaza resides with her son, daughter in law and two grandchildren in a small mud house. Her daughter in law, Shahina narrated the story the way she had heard and seen it:



My in-laws were considered financially better off as they had some agricultural land. My father-in-law was a farmer. The income was enough for a family of three (Janbaza, her son and husband). Then suddenly in 2009 my father-in-law fell ill; his health condition was deteriorating day by day. To meet the expenditures of his bills, the family started to sell their main asset: land, the sole source of income. Janbaza found it very hard to

keep the hearth going by herself. But one day she came to know of a project named LP which had come to the village and was providing livestock to the destitute people for making a decent start in their lives. Janbaza approached the staff, heard the criteria and found herself to be worthy as a beneficiary. So somewhere in 2008 a cow was allotted in the name of Janbaza.

Janbaza was very happy. She took great care of the cow's needs and fed the cow from communal pastures. She would sell the milk and butter and would earn some money. The cow gave birth to a calf which fetched a good price in the market. In the meanwhile, the treatment of Janbaza's husband continued however he could not make it due to kidney failure and died. Janbaza felt she had lost her everything. According to Shahina, this shock was what made her lose her memory. Now in her 60's, she could not take better care of her cow, so eventually it contracted a disease and died in 2011.

It is very hard for us to make do; my husband works as a daily wager. So it depends on the work he gets; sometimes he earns good while sometimes he cannot secure work and that becomes really hard. We have only a small piece of land left with us that is not even the size of one Kanal; some of the land was sold for my father-in-law's treatment and the rest was forcefully embezzled by my husband's paternal cousins. We are poor, powerless and my husband has no brothers to support him, so there is little we can do for recovery of our land. To keep the hearth alive, I also stitch clothes and get PKR 100 per stitched suit. People in the village also help us by giving Zakkat 1. I have one calf and a goat which I take care of. I pray that as my children grow they have a happy and secure future. We do not lose hope and strongly believe that God will pay back for our efforts.

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<sup>1</sup> Zakatis a form of alms-giving treated as religious obligation in Islam. As one of the Five Pillars of Islam, zakat is a religious obligation for all Muslims who meet the necessary criteria of wealth.

In the initial phase of LP2 , on a trial basis the poorest of people in a village (selected through a certain criteria) were awarded either a calf, a goat kid or poultry, to help start off a chain of enterprise(s). Preference was most certainly for very poor women (even men). As in this case the intervention of providing cow did mitigate the vulnerability of the family temporarily however it was not sustainable and



ultimately the family lost the cow. Similar experiences lead to reconsideration and refinement of approach for future interventions in the second phase. The story of Janbaza provides a visible ground and justification for transition of approach from delivering services and packages in the time of LP to Market system development approach in the LPH Phase.

It was interesting, though, when Shahina says it was a good turn on LP's part to provide a cow to her mother in law, observing "If I were here then, I would have taken good care of it". She carried on to suggest, "I think in the future if some similar intervention is planned, it would be more sustainable to dole out a flour grinding machine instead of livestock!"

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<sup>2</sup> In LPH Phase II, this particular approach was modified from delivering services and packages to the 'development of market system development approach