

Construction of Bridge: reduced miseries and saved thousands of rural communities

Village Qasim Rato is situated in Deh Dolo Sholani Union Council & Taluka Kharo Chhan District Thatta is about 30 km from Garho and 100 km from district Thatta. People of Murghur, Rata and Khaskheli castes are living here for more than last 80 years.

The nearest town to the village is Garho which is source of business and essential commodities center for this village as well as other villages but villagers had been facing great trouble due to unavailability of Bridge to the Garho Town because RD 104 is flowing near the village.



Due to unavailability of Bridge, villagers had to cover 10 kilometers extra route which wasted large portion of their precious time and money in form of transport charges. More than 30 villages are situated on both sides of RD 104. As they have intimate traditional, social and economical relations among each other, therefore villagers have to move frequently to other side, some of them have agriculture land on other side of branch and some of them have to move for earning their livelihood. In case of medical emergency such delivery of women they would pay extremely high fares for vehicle charges. As schools are located on the other side children of the village could not go to schools and if any would go it had long distance to travel. In addition to this, there was great trouble and



Villagers had great difficulty in grazing of animals and there was not any direct access to agricultural products to main market.

In the mean time when villagers were in difficult times, everything that they wanted to do for their socio economic up lift and cultural development was hampered by the problem of communication caused by unavailability of bridge to other parts of Taluka, then Sindh Agricultural and Forestry Workers Coordinating

Organization (SAFWCO) appeared on the scene with financial and technical support of Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF).

First initiative undertaken under Sindh Coastal Areas Development (SCAD) program was to mobilize and sensitize the communities under one platform and capacitate them for taking the self-help initiatives. In this way a Village Development Organization (VDO) was formed. As its process, SAFWCO field team organized a Participatory Community Development Dialogue (PCDD) at village. The major issues causing hindrance in their socio economic and cultural development after safe drinking water was construction of bridge. Taking this fact into account, they submitted the application to Community Physical Infrastructure (CPI) Program for construction of bridge on RD 104.



SAFWCO team carried out technical survey of village. A feasibility report by Engineers and social organizer regarding village “Qasim Rato” Bridge scheme was prepared. The report revealed that people are in dire need of construction of this bridge, which would play vital role to redress their miseries and would significantly contribute to socio economic and cultural development. Finally the bridged was constructed. Total cost spent on scheme was 487,983 with 439185 (90%) share of PPAF and 48798 (10%) share of communities.

When people were asked to narrate benefits of bridge in nut shell, people responded enthusiastically that after construction of bridge life of villagers has changed dramatically, they have no more long distance to travel to access their near and dear ones, distance of hours have reduced into minutes. Children have started schooling. Farmers, laborers and other community members have easy access to local markets for multiple purposes. Extra travel charges paid are now saved in case of normal routine and medical emergency emergencies. Everyone can access to local markets now. Cattle can be driven to the other side very easily. The credit for this goes to SAFWCO for this positive change in our lives. If SAFWCO would not have paved the way in our village, we would have distresses by these miseries for an unlimited period of time.

