

A farmer's gift of education to his sons

Barocho Baloch as a child was denied education along with so many other farmers like him across Pakistan. He has spent most of his life toiling away in the fields to support his household of fourteen comprising of his parents, three brothers, two sisters, a wife, three sons and four daughters. Being unlettered has restricted him only to farming as his sole means of income. His monthly income of Rs 5,000 per month was extremely inadequate in face of rapid inflation in recent years.

Nevertheless, like any concerned parent he also had high aspirations for his children's future. Unable to get the gift of education in his youth, Barocho Baloch wanted to give the opportunity of a good education to his sons yet was forbidden to do so by his financial constraints.



Instead, his sons had to serve as domestic servants at a local landlord's house wasting the promise of their youth. Unable to get the gift of education in his youth, Barocho Baloch wanted to give the opportunity of a good education to his sons yet was forbidden to do so by his financial constraints.

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Things have dramatically improved ever since he came under OSDI's Agriculture Development Project two years ago. Interest free loans under this project are doled out to deserving farmers like him, which are spent in timely procurement of fertilizer, seeds, pesticides and other farm inputs. Additionally, informal workshops conducted under OSDI's auspices for training and knowledge sharing of advanced farming techniques among the farmers, have led to a steady rise in Barocho Baloch's crop yields. He was overjoyed to harvest a bumper crop of thirty mounds of wheat in the last crop cycle.

As per OSDI's stipulation, the children of any farmer receiving these interest free loans have to attend school. Through these loans not only is Barocho Baloch been given a steady boost in his income through savings amounting to Rs 16,000 every crop cycle with a bumper stock on his wheat harvest in the previous crop cycle valued at Rs 27,000. For the first time, he is able to fulfill his dream of providing his children a quality education.

His two sons regularly attend school learning English and Mathematics among other subjects. Barocho Baloch proudly points out about his sons performing well at school. He hopes that both of his sons someday through their education earn a decent living and get all the opportunities that were denied to him when he was young.