

First draft

Making ends meet

By

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RDPI/Indus Consortium

While thousands of villages across the country grope to regain normality lost in recent floods, she is perfectly poised and sure of herself.

Averse to become a liability on family or society, she loathes becoming part of the problem. She loves to make part of the solution.

With about 2.5 feet in height, she is lucky in the sense that unlike millions of women around the globe whose work in homes and fields go unrecognized, her contribution in the economy counts. Her work is visible and pays her back in monetary and social terms.



“She works very hard. She opens the shop early and sits in it until dusk,” tells Abdul Ghafoor 80 of the same village. Children get sweets, candles and toffees from this shop. She has some basic items for instance ghee, beads,

washing powder, tea, salt, and sugar even. “It’s good to earn ones living than to be a worthless person of a society.”

“It takes me four to five days to knit (pointing towards a finished work) this piece. It can fetch me Rs 250/ piece,” tells Zhura with a bit of shyness initially.



Who has taught you to weave? When asked she told although it’s but natural for every women of the area to know knitting, but,” I my case, chances were great that I might have missed it, with parents thinking I’m disable. My Grandmamma who lives in Deraghazi Khan purposefully equipped me with this art.

My father invested Rs 40,000 to help me open the shop. “I’m not sick of creditors. I’m bit unhappy with those who never pay me back the due amounts. You cannot just ignore creditors. It’s a business. Most will pay you back one day or the other. I can differentiate between chronic, habitual and needy creditors. I avoid investing on habitual.” The chronic and needy pays you back but not the habitual, she adds.

The floods played havoc with our lives. The water was double my height deep. The extent of losses is unthinkable. “Still I feel, life during floods was difficult but it’s rather more difficult as the water has receded.”

“The dry food distributed by NGO (HELP/Indus Consortium) in the village meant my regular customers would never come to me for some

time. The floods have reduced the buying capacities of my customers. This has marginalized me further,” she reveals.

Its two years now since I last met my grandmamma. I wish to see her again. The money required to travel isn't the problem; travel of course is. I cannot travel at my own and everybody else is busy always in his or her work. I wish I could fly!

With broad face and open forehead she has tiny hands that contribute in the economy of her village. She supplements her family's income and is never a helpless victim of floods 2010.

Her shop is located around six kilometers from Kot Mithan at Basti Khuda Baksh, inside the Kacha of district Rajanpur.

Despite her extraordinary small stature, Zhura BB, 26 stands tall meeting post-flood rehabilitation and reconstruction challenges.



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