



Helping to build a world without hunger

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Link road in Gulmera village Talhatta UC under rehabilitation with Community Investment Funds of ERRA

Investing in livelihoods: water reservoirs secure irrigation for 110 ha

Water reservoirs form a part of the Agricultural Water Conservation Demonstration Initiative (ADI) that maximizes surface water use efficiency from the diversion of water at the streams to consumption of water by the crop.

The topography of Balakot tehsil varies from mountain with terraces to flat agriculture land alongside Kunhar river forming the land base for farming. The perennial springs that irrigated the farmlands in the hilly areas dried up consequent to the earthquake 2005. This put a stop to the farming activities in the affected areas.

To restore the agriculture activities in the earthquake affected areas of Balakot tehsil, FAO together with the District Office for On-farm Water Management Mansehra initiated the construction and rehabilitation of water reservoirs for irrigating the agriculture lands.



Water reservoir at Darra Shoal Najaf Balakot tehsil under CBLRP.

The capacity of water reservoirs constructed at feasible locations, ranged from 50,000 to 100,000 litres and these proved as a substitute irrigation source for the farmlands of the area. This intervention resulted in irrigating 110 hectares of terraced agriculture land in the mountainous areas of Balakot tehsil benefitting 3,172 people belonging to the local farming communities. There was an unprecedented 279% increase in the irrigated area as a direct outcome of water reservoir facility. In addition, there was a shift from growing rainfed cereal crops to irrigated crops and vegetables. Further there was an average increase in yield from 220% to 400% for maize and wheat crops as a result of this facility.

The activity was carried out as a part of the project 'Communities based Livelihoods Recovery Programme' and was funded by the European Commission and United Nations Development Programme.

FAO works with partners to empower poor rural women and men to improve their food security and increase their incomes

Participatory planning and budgeting

Innovations towards planning processes are imperative if delivery of services is to be improved, especially if the poor farmers are the targets. As such participatory planning and budgeting would appropriate the delivery of services that are sought and needed by the farmers. Engaging farmer communities in planning processes results in their empowerment and involvement in decision making. Community involvement in local budgeting process improves accountability and responsiveness of programmes and projects that are actually delivered.

For a number of development projects and programmes unable to meet their objectives is attributed mainly to the lack of farmers' expected responses. The usual excuse of blaming farmers' ignorance and backwardness has lost its credibility because the resource constraints make it impossible for many farmers, particularly the women headed households, to respond as expected. However, the participatory development approaches, addressing the locally prioritized needs, have demonstrated the success of community development programmes.

Community participation in the planning process is, therefore, becoming increasingly important to provide information for overall planning by conducting participatory problem analysis, setting community priorities and preparing action plan that can be carried out by them either independently or with external assistance, creating a sense of ownership. Workshops have been held in all the districts of Pakistan Administered Kashmir making the public sector service providers and representatives of the civil society sit together to review the last year's performance and plan for the financial year of 2009-10 on the basis of village development plans.



Workshop participants review performance and discuss next years' plan; Programme Director and Deputy Programme Director addressing the workshop participants.

FAO response to the humanitarian situation in Pakistan

The recent influx of Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) from Bajaur, Malakand and Mohmand agencies due to the insurgency in the tribal belt and the North West Frontier Province alongside the Afghanistan border has created another emergency situation in Pakistan. It is estimated that around 0.8 million people have been displaced and this figure is expected to rise as the military operation against the Taliban militants intensifies. The Pakistan Government is forecasting the return of IDPs to their areas of origin after the military action and has identified the support required in restoration of livelihoods of IDPs. Since majority of the affected population relies on agriculture and livestock production for their livelihoods and FAO, being the lead agency in these sectors, is closely collaborating with Government, other UN agencies, NGO partners and exploring the possibility of facilitating IDPs return and support to their livelihoods. FAO has proposed project profiles in the agriculture cluster for about USD 5 million in the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) rolled out earlier this year.



Food being distributed to the IDPs NWFP.

However, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs plans to review the HRP by the end of May, FAO is therefore in the process of revising the profiles so as to effectively respond to the changing humanitarian scenario in the country. In close coordination with the National Disaster Management Authority and the provincial government, FAO is also involved in contingency planning for NWFP, crucial when return of the IDPs materializes and support to the host families is agreed upon. FAO has proposed agriculture input packages that could meet the needs for the returnees and the host families for the next Kharif planting season to help them recover from the crisis and build back stronger and more resilient agricultural livelihoods. FAO has proposed capacity building in kitchen gardening, dairy processing, post harvest handling, nutrition and improved irrigation techniques for the IDPs residing in 11 camps. Likewise FAO suggests assistance in poultry, livestock, forestry and strengthening of farm production systems for host families and communities.

Within the Early Recovery Cluster framework, Emergency unit of FAO recently participated in a UNDP-led early need assessment mission in Peshawar and conflict affected areas of Swat and Federally Administered Tribal Areas and proposed agriculture, livestock and forestry interventions with an estimated cost of US \$ 11.67 million to rebuild agriculture and restore livelihoods of around 200,000 affected population. FAO has already assisted around 33,300 flood affected IDPs with critical agriculture inputs, poultry restocking and livestock support for food security and restoring livelihoods in Peshawar district in late 2008.

Mr Rajendra Aryal, FAO Senior Regional Emergency Coordinator for Asia, was here on a visit to meet to Rashid Khalikov, Director of OCHA New York and express FAO's commitment to support the ongoing efforts of the UN agencies in Pakistan to respond to the current humanitarian situation in the country. During the mission, the Regional Emergency Coordinator also met with representatives from other UN agencies and the Government, and discussed issues related to humanitarian situation and the need for a coordinated response in agriculture and livelihoods sectors.

Training for sustainable farmer practices in Shangla

The workshop provided training to the farmers in contemporary maize planting techniques to promote sustainable agriculture practices.

Within the overall framework of the FAO commissioned project to assist Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority (ERRA) and its implementing partners' capacity to implement the Livelihoods Rehabilitation Strategy, FAO has developed a capacity building programme to strengthen the capacity of selected staff from NGOs, government line departments and farmer communities.

About a hundred farmers from Shahpur Union Council and neighbouring UCs participated in the one-day workshop. The training held in Shahpur Union Council, Shangla on on-farm techniques was a brain child of Livelihoods Coordination Unit aiming to improve the way farmers plant maize so as to increase yield, improve maize seed variety and decrease the risk of disease and insect infestation in the crop. Farmers themselves identified the need for this training so that they could find appropriate solutions to their problems. The whole thrust of the workshop was to create an understanding and awareness in sustainable farmer practices in maize cultivation.



Farmers participating in the workshop on on-farm techniques.

The training was developed in consultation with Agriculture and Livestock advisor PERRA along with SLMC PERRA and LCU team. The on-site training on maize demonstration plots is followed by an on-farm assessment, where participants must show they understand and are using what they have learned. The workshop is expected to help create a farm culture that promotes a good understanding of on-farm agriculture practices, thereby positively impacting the agriculture production of the area.

FAO consultant feted

Lincoln University International honoured Professor Mohammad Hanif Quazi, a Senior FAO Consultant for his outstanding contributions in plant science. He was awarded the Lincoln University International Alumni Medal in New Zealand, where he worked for many years after graduation from Lincoln and completion of a post-doctoral fellowship in the United Kingdom.

Significantly, in his work can be seen the transfer of many New Zealand-based technologies to the Pakistan context. These range from specific plant science examples to models of social and community services, such as the Lincoln Community Centre and New Zealand's Karitane Nursing model, which he has adapted for use in the province of his birth (North West Frontier Province).

Lincoln University International honoured Professor Mohammad Hanif Quazi, a Senior FAO Consultant for his outstanding contributions in plant science by awarding him the Lincoln University International Alumni Medal in New Zealand.



Professor Mohammad Hanif Quazi.

Complementing his contributions to academia and the scientific community, Hanif has used his experience and wisdom to benefit poor farming communities in a number of ways using practical "Kiwi" insight into problems to get results. This combination of Kiwi and Pakistani methods has been a potent formula for advancing human betterment in Pakistan.

Workshop on Livelihoods

“Review of the Implementation of the Livelihoods Rehabilitation Strategy of ERRA: Project Experience”

The Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority (ERRA) and the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations will be conducting a two-day workshop next month on the “Review of the Implementation of the Livelihoods Rehabilitation Strategy of ERRA: Project Experience” with funding by the Swedish International Development Agency. The workshop will bring together a cross-section of expert practitioners and representatives from Government Ministries, line-departments, donors, UN agencies, NGOs and community people to share experiences and knowledge, and discuss the way forward of the implementation of the Livelihoods Rehabilitation Strategy of ERRA.

DFID partners with FAO to help the flood affected farmers

As a result of 2007 flooding of Balochistan and Sindh provinces, harvested crops, food, fodder and seed stocks were destroyed and an estimated 367,000 ruminants were killed. With funding from the Department of International Development (DFID), FAO distributed seeds and fertiliser to 20,000 households in the flood affected districts to restore lost agricultural productivity. In all, FAO assisted 40,856 flood affected families.

Nearly two years on, in Nowshera village farmers gathered to tell stories of the destruction caused by the floods. Boran, a veteran farmer, joined the discussion by saying that he lost tens of thousands of kilos of wheat in the floods. Sitting beside Boran, another farmer, Shah Nawaz, appeared still shaken by the loss of his property and nine cows, but was happy he was able to get his children to a nearby hill to safety. Showing off a field to demonstrate the difference in the quality of crop, another elderly farmer said the seed they had obtained from FAO had given great results. When the wheat was harvested the following year - and added together with grain purchased using traditional moneylenders - farmers in Balochistan achieved a harvest that produced nearly 60 percent of their pre-flood wheat production.

Following the 2007 floods disaster, DFID provided £16.8m in core funding to FAO with £750,000 for the livelihoods early recovery programme in Balochistan. DFID evaluation found that early recovery interventions after the floods met immediate beneficiary needs, were timely, appropriate and resulted in considerable cash savings to households in need. FAO has been running a food security and poverty alleviation projects there since 2004 - and agricultural training as far back as 1983.

(Story is based on excerpts from a DFID case study dated 23 April 2009)



Seed and fertilizer distributions to the flood affected farmers in Balochistan.



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