MID-TERM EVALUATION REPORT

STRENGTHENING FOOD SECURITY AND NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT IN JAWZJAN PROVINCE IN NORTHERN-AFGHANISTAN

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In Afghanistan, 31% of the population is affected by food insecurity, and 23% is at risk of food insecurity. The food insecurity tends to be higher in rural areas (39%) and among nomads (46%). Under normal conditions, the nutrition of the more vulnerable people is characterised by a lower quantity of food and less food diversity. In disaster times (particularly during the recurring drought period, when water is limited and diseases arise), families tend to switch over from nutrient-rich food (meat, vegetables and fruits) to staple foods. According to estimates, in the province of Jawzjan in particular, 19% of the population eat less than the daily minimum calorie amount, 43% of the population have a low nutritional diversity and a poor to very poor food supply.¹ The 2015 Humanitarian Needs Overview² confirms this and reports that Sever Acute Malnutrition is still very highly widespread in the province (on a scale from very low to very high). Representatives of all three districts have confirmed the frequency of the food insecurity and the low nutritional diversity. In all three districts children and women are worst affected. In Khanaqa, approx. 30-40% of the families are at risk, particularly households led by women or elderly men. In addition, in this district, individual groups such as disabled persons, poor day labourers and children are most highly at risk.³

In Jawzjan the access to drinking water, sanitation facilities and hygiene awareness is low. Currently, 44% of the population has access to drinking water. There is a significant difference between rural and urban areas. In rural areas only 6% of the population has access to safe drinking water, and in the cities 64% of the population has access to safe drinking water. The situation concerning hygiene and healthcare is similar. 1.5% of the rural population and 33% of the urban population has access to toilets. Therefore, along with low production, unsuitable care and a lack of access to water and hygiene also contribute to undernourishment.⁴

To address the situation WHH is implementing "Strengthening Food Security and Natural Resource Management in Jawzjan province in Northern-Afghanistan".

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¹ Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development, National Area-based Development Programme. No date. Jawzjan Provincial Profile.


³ Consultation with district and community representatives in Khaniqa on 7th March 2015

⁴ Consultation with district and community representatives in Khaniqa on 7th March 2015
The food and nutrition security is the overall objective of the project. The specific objective of the project includes; “Population in three districts of Jawzjan Province is able to restore and improve its livelihood”. The project started on December 1, 2015 and will be ended on October 31, 2018.

This report presents the results of mid-term evaluation of the project. The evaluation was conducted by Green Afghanistan Agriculture and Livestock Organization (GAALO) from November 1, 2017 to February 26, 2018. GAALO is a non-government, non-political and nonprofit organization providing services in a range of sectors (i.e. research and evaluations, agriculture and livestock, capacity building trainings and drug prevention) in various parts of Afghanistan since its establishment in 2006.

The mid-term evaluation focused on assessing the Relevance of the project to the beneficiary needs, measuring its Effectiveness in achieving the expected outcomes and checking the Efficiency of the intervention in terms of quantity, quality and timeliness, by making a comparison against what was planned and what was achieved. The evaluation also assessed the Sustainability of the project intervention and results achieved and finally it made an appraisal of the overall Impacts of the intervention about the extent to the project outputs positively/negatively impacted the lives of the target beneficiaries.

The evaluation noted a very high level of beneficiary satisfaction with WHH intervention and a high success rate in achieving results with its various initiatives.

II. RELEVANCE

The mid-term evaluation was assessing the relevance of the project by evaluating the extent to which the objectives of the intervention were consistent with beneficiaries’ needs. Project documents examined by this evaluation showed that the four sub-objectives of intervention have been highly relevant to the needs of the targeted groups. The project design is oriented at the Afghan National Solidarity Programme (NSP), which spends funds on infrastructure developments at the community level. In order to achieve maximum synergies, this measure supplements the NSP projects, by engaging and supporting the CDCs and DDAs in development and political leadership.

The project objectives are also in conformity with it and supplement the "National Agriculture Development Framework" and the "Sector Strategy for Rural Development" of Afghanistan

In terms of beneficiaries’ involvement, their active participation in the NRMCs formation, training, and awareness raising sessions reflects a high level of beneficiary ownership of the project. Views collected from the respondents showed that beneficiaries not only expressed
their satisfaction with project's areas of intervention, but a majority of them desired the extension of project duration as well as the implementation of similar projects in other areas of the Province.

III. EFFECTIVENESS

The views and opinions collected from the respondents reflected a very high level of satisfaction of all categories of project beneficiaries.

The project focused on the most important needs of beneficiaries taking into account the currently available resources. The beneficiaries were selected based on well-defined selection criteria in close coordination with relevant government departments and local communities.

The beneficiaries were provided with both inputs and trainings to get maximum benefits from available resources. As a result the per jirib agricultural production of beneficiaries have been increased. 83.9% farmer respondents answered that their cultivable area has been increased with restoration/construction of irrigation infrastructure. 99.32% farmer respondents manifested positive outcomes of new knowledge contributing to improvement in their agricultural production. The livestock production of the beneficiaries has been increased due to trainings, animal vaccination and provision of veterinary services. Women beneficiaries are getting good vegetables production from their kitchen gardens which are not only sufficient for their home consumption but they sell the surplus production in the markets. The most important point was the involvement of relevant stakeholders in the project implementation phase. Overall, WHH has been able to implement the project effectively to meet the needs of the targeted population in terms of improving and restoration of livelihood resources.

IV. EFFICIENCY

The efficiency of this project was assessed to an extent to make the comparison against what was planned and what was achieved within the timeline. All the project targets were achieved in terms of quality, quantity, and timeliness. It was noted that the project inputs were carefully selected, efficiently employed and closely monitored. The project was executed smoothly within the objectives and according to schedule.

Overall, the high level of beneficiary satisfaction showed that the assistance provided through this project has been going smoothly and did not face major challenges.
V. OUTCOMES AND IMPACTS

The final focus of this evaluation was to study the project's overall impact by making a judgment about the extent to which the project changed the lives of the beneficiaries, assessing how the project met its objectives, and ultimately, confirming whether or not the project outputs positively impacted the lives of the target beneficiaries. This is, necessarily, a question about the overall contribution of the project and difference it was able to produce, in the lives of the beneficiaries through its various interventions.

Responses of the beneficiaries show that the project has been able to make both tangible and intangible contributions, towards bringing about a change in the lives of the beneficiaries in the three targeted districts of Jawzjan province.

Table 1: Outcome Examples for Baseline and Midline Comparison

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No</th>
<th>Results</th>
<th>Comparison Grounds</th>
<th>Baseline</th>
<th>Midline</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Result 1</td>
<td>Increase in agricultural production (Wheat)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>38.30%</td>
<td>As per the midline the respondents were asked about production of wheat (Per Jerib in Kgs) before support provided by WHH and after support provided by WHH which indicated a significant increase of 38.30% (Per Jerib in Kgs) in wheat production.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Use of improved seeds</td>
<td>1.00%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>As per baseline only 1% of respondents were using improved seeds whereas as per midline 100% respondents have been using improved seeds provided by WHH.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Result 2</td>
<td>Access to animal health care services in community</td>
<td>1.00%</td>
<td>47.20%</td>
<td>As per the baseline only 1% of respondents had access to animal health care services in their community whereas as per midline 47.20% of respondents have been having access to animal health care services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Vaccination of animals against diseases</td>
<td>33.00%</td>
<td>69.90%</td>
<td>As per baseline only 33% of respondents were vaccinating their animal against diseases. However as per midline almost 70% of respondents have vaccinated their animals against diseases.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Result 3</td>
<td>Kitchen Gardening Activities</td>
<td>1.00%</td>
<td>99.30%</td>
<td>As per baseline only 1% of respondents were involved in kitchen gardening activities whereas as per midline 99.3% of respondents have established kitchen gardens.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>HH Consumption of more than Four food categories in last 24 hours</td>
<td>16.00%</td>
<td>95.30%</td>
<td>As per baseline 16% of respondents had consumed more than four food category in the last twenty four hours whereas as per midline 95.30% have consumed more than four food category in the last twenty four hours.</td>
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</table>
VI. SUSTAINABILITY

Another aspect of this evaluation was to gauge the sustainability of the results achieved by examining as to whether or not the changes brought about by the project improved the lives of the targeted population, and how likely would the benefits continue even after completion of the project. A vast number of respondents reported that, as a result of this project, they have been able to increase agriculture productivity. Farmer respondents pointed out increase in the quantity of agriculture production. The women beneficiaries have established their kitchen gardens which will provide vegetables for long years. The effects of skills trainings imparted to farmers, livestock owners, and NRMCs members will continue after completion of the project.

VII. MOST IMPORTANT RECOMMENDATIONS

- The findings of the project indicate that no further diversity in agriculture production could be achieved as a result of WHH intervention. Some of the beneficiaries described that theoretical trainings for cultivation of different varieties of crops have been conducted but improved seeds and fertilizers have not been provided for the increase in diversity of production. Improved seeds and fertilizers have been provided for wheat production only. More focus is required in this area to achieve the targets.
- The capacity building trainings could not be arranged for government departments’ officials especially DAIL and DRRD staff till writing of the report. The capacity building of government official will increase the sustainability of the project.
- Developing market linkages can be very much effective for farming and women kitchen gardening beneficiaries.

VII. GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND “LESSONS LEARNT”

- Trainings, capacity building and dissemination information through awareness sessions is the key to ensuring success and sustainability of such interventions.
- Good coordination and the active participation of local stakeholders/implementing partner is the key to successful, effective and efficient project implementation. This also improves the sustainability of project initiatives and the accrual of b
- Benefits to communities long after the phase out of the project. On the other hand, observations from the ground indicate that with the NRMCs training and capacity building communities can effectively and efficiently manage their own resources.
- Training on Urea treatment has reduced shortage of fodder for animals.