F2F 2015: Integrated floods management: Acting locally, linking beyond!

Country/Region: Pakistan /Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
Institution: Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)
Time Frame: 2011-2015
Partner(s): UN-World Food Programme and Malteser International (INGO)
Beneficiaries: 44 villages (4,500 HHs/35,000 people) of Chail Valley, Swat of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
Key words: CBDRR, Resilience, Cash for Work
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Context and rationale

Pakistan is one of the most **natural-disaster** prone countries in the world with catastrophes going back as far as 1935, when more than 60,000 people lost their lives in an earthquake in Balochistan. Since then, numerous floods and earthquakes have struck the South Asian nation and the consequences of the most recent disaster - the 2010 floods - can still be seen across the country. The floods began in late July 2010, resulting from heavy monsoon rains, which affected approximately one-fifth of Pakistan's total land area. With 2,000 deaths about 20 million people were directly affected. In order to assist the Government of Pakistan (GoP) in its effort to minimise the impact of disasters, the SDC launched its **Community Based Disaster Risk Reduction (CBDRR)** project in the Chail Valley, which is one of the most affected areas in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP).

Description of intervention

This project seeks to enhance the local communities' **resilience** to flood disasters and improve **food security** of about 35,000 flood-affected people through a **Cash for work (CfW)** programme. The project adopts a **holistic** approach by addressing the root cause of flash floods i.e., controlling water runoff and stabilizing slopes against landslides and treating the main river at critical points that will protect widely spread livelihoods in the valley bottom. The upstream structures and stabilizing structures with bio engineering measures proved to be a successful measure. Sufficient **awareness** and disaster **preparedness** among the communities have been raised by CBDRM component. CBDRM interventions also enhanced level of understanding of the communities for the operation and maintenance of the measures and to initiate similar structural and non-structural measures on self-help basis. The capacity of the Government line departments was built to ensure the sustainability and possible scaling up.

One project – two outcomes

The SDC lends its DRR and quality management expertise to a community-based Cash-for-Work (CfW) project of the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP).

Local villagers of 44 communities in Chail Valley build, or learn how to build DRR structures for the long-term protection from floods and landslides in exchange for cash assistance from WFP (unskilled workers) and SDC (skilled workers). During the first three years of the project, 20% of the unskilled workers were able to increase their pay by improving their skills and being promoted to the 'skilled' category.

Lessons learnt

The Food Security interventions integrated with CBDRM as an innovative approach has been very much appreciated by the local communities and all the stakeholders. There is a greater recognition that still a lot more efforts would be needed to reinforce the holistic valley approach as there are other sides of the valley that need similar interventions. Some of the lessons learnt from the project are;

- CBDRM program has been very effective in terms of DRR awareness and Disaster preparedness
- The holistic approach of integrating CBDRM into food security and livelihood assets protection is proved effective

Slope Stabilization with Bio-engineering

Slop Stabilization

Entry points for scaling up the approach

The CBDRR project has received a lot of appreciation from the Government as well as other donors. Its has been replicated in other parts of the country by other donors. SDC has planned to up-scale this model to the two agencies Bajaur and Mohmand of Federaly Admnistered Tribal Areas (FATA) which is the **most underdeveloped region** in Pakistan plagued by high poverty rates, unemployment and rudimentary infrastructure. It is ranked the lowest in Pakistan across key human development indicators such as health, education, water and sanitation. Besides recurring natural disasters, man-made disasters like militancy and conflicts have further contributed to dislocation of population to other parts of country. The project will protect the population (IDPs/returnees/stayees) and their livelihoods assets and infrastructure from natural disasters, especially floods. The prevention of these losses and creation of income generating opportunities in the area through **Food/Cash for work (F/CfW)** program of WFP will reduce their economic pressure and will contribute to social cohesion and stability in the area.