



AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT IN BALOCHISTAN, PAKISTAN

South Western Balochistan is characterized by high levels of rural poverty. Crop and livestock productivity is low, markets are undeveloped, household food and nutrition insecurity is common, and household livelihoods are vulnerable and fragile. At the same time, agriculture will remain the mainstay of household livelihoods for the majority of households in rural areas in Balochistan for generations to come. There is thus considerable need and scope to increase household incomes by improving crop and livestock productivity and strengthening market access and value chain linkages. This would enable smallholder farmers to enjoy increased returns from crop and livestock production in the province. The Australia Balochistan Agribusiness Programme was formulated as an adequate response to the urgent need to increase household incomes and to enhance food security by improving crop and livestock productivity and strengthening market access in the project area, with a special focus on female farmers.



WHAT DID THE PROJECT DO?

The goal of the project was to make a significant contribution to the reduction of poverty and economic inequalities for some 175 000 impoverished people from six western border districts through sustainable agriculture development. The envisaged programme outcome was a significant improvement in food and nutrition security and a significant increase in income of 30 600 poor households from 340 rural communities in these six districts. To achieve this outcome, the programme helped to develop provincial agricultural policies and regulatory frameworks, market-led and community-driven investments, strategies and processes and women’s empowerment in agricultural development. It enhanced crop and livestock productivity, increasing the gross value of agricultural produce in the six districts by almost USD 9.24 million during the lifetime of the programme through the introduction of improved agricultural technologies and management practices, and community-based water management. Finally, it established small local agribusiness enterprises and strengthened market linkages in order to increase the sales of surplus produce and improve the competitiveness and sustainability of value chains. Women’s empowerment and gender sensitization were cross-cutting interventions in all project activities.

IMPACT

The project directly improved food and nutrition security for 10 200 rural households and indirectly for a further 20 400 households in 340 target communities through developing community organizations, increasing crop and livestock productivity, building capacity in marketing and post-harvest skills, and empowering women. Mother of twelve children, Murad Bibi, who received two sets of chicken on a cost-sharing basis, said: *“In a time span of two years, not only did poultry provide nutritious food to my family but also helped me generate income of PKR 93.500 by selling our eggs and chickens. I have opened a bank account for the first time in my lifetime using the money earned from backyard chicken farming. I now tell other women I meet to look at how poultry keeping has changed my life.”*

KEY FACTS

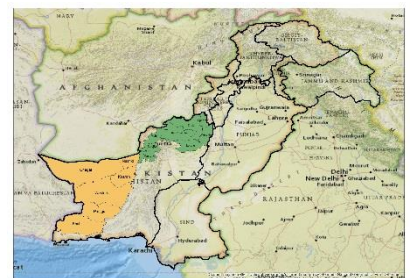
Contribution
USD 10 993 301

Duration
May 2012 – June 2017

Resource Partner
Government of Australia

Partners
Federal Ministry of National Food Security and Research, Government of Balochistan, Department of Agriculture and Cooperatives, Department of Livestock and Dairy Development; Centre of Research and Development

Beneficiaries
Around 30 600 poor households engaged in crop and livestock production from 340 rural communities in six targeted districts



ACTIVITIES

The Australia Balochistan Agribusiness Programme:

- Trained 35 community development and marketing facilitators and deployed them in the project districts.
- Established 596 community organizations (COs; 361 male, 235 female) and provided training in technical and community management skills.
- Formed six social apex organizations for 180 members from 30 COs.
- Provided technical training to farmers and government staff in various topics, including water resources management (WRM), post-harvest management and basic marketing.
- Conducted a series of WRM interventions.
- Introduced high-yield improved crop varieties and improved cultivation practices, using a farmer field school (FFS) approach; 70 season-long FFS were conducted.
- Established 53 kitchen gardens for women beneficiaries.
- Introduced cost-sharing with beneficiaries and distributed fertilizer on a cost-sharing basis in two districts.
- Distributed 348 kg of onion seed to 116 CO members on a cost-sharing basis.
- Distributed 4 195 50-kg bags of animal feed to 503 households.
- Provided 15 350 poultry pullets to 3 734 women CO members and trained 900 women in poultry management.
- Conducted training in vaccination for 708 farmers, and vaccinated 137 637 animals.
- Developed solar-powered egg incubators and constructed six of these locally.
- Trained community animal health workers.
- Developed wool sector by improving marketing of raw wool, introducing new spinning and dyeing techniques, and training 130 shearers.
- Organized a round table conference on wool for the private and public sectors and organized two National Wool Days.
- Established 47 farmers’ marketing collectives (FMCs), nine of which subsequently registered as mutual marketing organizations (MMOs)
- Conducted commodity specific market exposure and pre-season missions for 33 FMCs.
- Carried out value chain studies in among others onion, date and wool.
- Built farmers’ capacity in business planning.
- Provided training in agribusiness and value chains for 24 participants; post-harvest management for 15 participants and cost benefit analysis for 17 participants.
- Supported the formulation and implementation of the Balochistan Agriculture Sector Policy and Strategy.
- Organized, together with the Government of Balochistan two conferences: “Agriculture Development in Balochistan: Farmers First” for 130 farmers; and “Livestock Development in Balochistan” for 100 male and female livestock farmers.
- Revised legislation governing agricultural cooperatives in Balochistan.



Project Code

FAO: GCP/PAK/126/AUL

Donor: 63218

Project Title

Australia Balochistan Agribusiness Programme (AusABBA)

Contacts

FAO Office in Pakistan

FAO-PK@fao.org

Anthony Bennett (Lead Technical Officer)

Anthony.Bennett@fao.org

