



**Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations**

Yemen

Project update

Enhancing food availability through increased agriculture production for subsistence farmers in Hadramout Governorate in Yemen



Targeted beneficiaries
8 410 households



Budget FAO received
USD 2 million from Kuwait



Implementation period
**15 October 2019–
30 September 2021**



Intervention area
Hadramout Governorate



Project code
OSRO/YEM/906/KUW

Context

Conflicts and natural disasters severely constrain agriculture-related income, which drives farmers, particularly young men, to search for more remunerative sources of income. Before the crisis, at least 70 percent of households in Yemen were dependent on agriculture for their livelihoods, with more than half of the labour force involved in agricultural activities. After six years of armed conflict and widespread displacement, communal agricultural infrastructure has collapsed (such as water catchments and channels). This has resulted in crop failure, leaving families without the income they need to meet their minimum caloric and micronutrient requirements. Repair and rehabilitation of water infrastructure and irrigation networks is one of the most critical aspects that needs to be addressed to tackle the issue of Yemen’s declining agricultural production and increasing food insecurity.

Irrigation faces significant challenges in the Governorate of Hadramout. Water availability and rainfall have declined in the area in comparison to previous years. The growth of Al Sedr and Al Somra trees in the wadi path has caused interruptions of the wadi flow, consequently impacting spate irrigation and causing erosion and degradation of agricultural land. Sediment has accumulated in canals and in fields, wastewater has polluted agricultural land, and there is no protection of traditional canals and agricultural land in spate irrigation areas. Due to a lack of skills and the level of poverty of inhabitants of the area, management of their land, canals and wadi flows is poor, and there is a lack of community participation to maintain these assets. Due to migration of young men to the cities and an increase in the costs of hiring labour, income earned from the agricultural production is not enough to motivate farmers to rehabilitate and maintain their lands.



Objective

The overall project objective is to enhance food security through improving farmers' access to water resources for agricultural production and promoting economic self-reliance in Hadramout Governorate.

The planned outcome of the project is enhanced agricultural productivity and income of targeted households through strengthening of water resources management, improving irrigation technologies/practices, rehabilitation/construction of water infrastructures and reducing the risks of natural hazards.

FAO aims to increase households' immediate access to food by providing sufficient cash to access the minimum expenditure basket in line with the recommendations of the Food Security and Agriculture Cluster through conditional cash transfers because of participation in cash-for-work (CFW) activities linked to the rehabilitation of productive water infrastructure. At the household level, building assets is fundamental to strengthening individual and household coping mechanisms, while at the community level, infrastructure that is shared within the community will strengthen resilience to shocks and stressors. The goal is to decrease the food-insecure population in the targeted area to less than 40 percent. In addition, at least 1 200 of targeted households will increase their productivity and/or income through increased water for irrigation.

Response to date



Disaster risk reduction and community-based flood early warning system

- Conducted a disaster risk reduction (DRR) assessment that examined the main risks, exposure and vulnerability related to natural disasters of selected communities; and assessed the current capacities and identified gaps in capacity to implement and manage DRR interventions.
- The assessment informed the design of the project's DRR interventions and provided a baseline against which the project's impact will be monitored and assessed.
- Conducted awareness-raising meetings on community-based flood early warning systems.
- Training workshops were organized for Water Users Associations (WUA) representatives of community-based organizations on DRR.



Water resources

- Raised awareness among women, farmers and their communities of disaster risks on land and water through consultation/information meetings and interviews in the targeted areas in Hadramout Governorate.
- Conducted an inception workshop in the targeted location to:
 - create a common understanding of the project vision, goals, objectives and implementation plans as well as methodology;
 - exchange knowledge and experiences in agricultural water management;
 - develop a shared vision of the broader opportunities and benefits emerging from the project implementation; and
 - reach out to the community and advocate for and facilitate project activities.
- Conducted a context analysis to support project implementation and serve to validate the project context and inform project operations.
- Conducted and finalized baseline survey data to assist in assessing project progress in conflict reduction rates, social cohesion building processes, water situation changes and the impact of the project in building peace within the targeted communities.
- Created five WUAs and trained representatives on technical, administrative, operational, financial, gender, CFW modality and management issues.
- Conducted a technical assessment of proposed interventions to rehabilitate/construct water infrastructure, modern irrigation and water conveyance systems, including designs and bills of quantities (for the materials and tender documents to start the procurement process).



Planned response

- Improve purchasing power and access to food for 1 700 households through cash-based transfers.
- Enhance capacity of seven WUAs.
- Increase awareness of 230 people, of whom 15 percent will be women, on DRR and community-based flood early warning systems in fragile communities.
- Rehabilitate and construct water infrastructures to irrigate 141 ha of land to improve access to irrigation facilities for 5 820 households.

Challenges encountered and measures taken

- Hadramout Wadi was the most affected area by flash flooding. The community requested that FAO address damages caused by flooding in the context of this project, which is not possible. Extensive negotiations were held with the community to come to the agreement that the first interventions of this project could be implemented with the understanding that FAO would seek further funding to complement the work carried out under this project.
- The Hadramout Governorate and in particular Tarim is a coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) hot spot. The project team therefore focused on initiating and completing preparatory activities in line with the protocols adopted to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and starting implementation of project activities through hiring local technical staff and contracting local non-governmental organizations.

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