



# Evaluation Summary



International  
Labour  
Office

Evaluation  
Office

## LIVELIHOOD RESTORATION, PROTECTION AND SUSTAINABLE EMPOWERMENT OF VULNERABLE PEASANT COMMUNITIES IN SINDH PROVINCE – JOINT MIDTERM REVIEW

### Quick Facts

**Countries:** *Pakistan*

**Midterm review:** *10<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup> November 2014*

**Mode of Evaluation:** *Independent*

**Administrative Office:** *CO-Islamabad*

**Technical Office:** **FAO**

**Evaluation Manager:** Dr. Robina Wahaj, technical officer (irrigation), Land and Water Division, FAO

**Evaluation Consultant:** Mr. Edgar Guardian

**External and Joint evaluation:** Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; International Labour Organization; and UN Women

**Project End:** – 31 December 2015

**Project Code:** *PAK/13/01/HSF & OSRO/PAK/206/UNO*

**Donor & Project Budget:** UNTFHS (USD4, 689,544)

**Keywords:** Rural development, employment creation, sustainable development, informal sector

### Background & Context

#### Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure

In July 2010, unexpected monsoon rains caused flooding of significant magnitude affecting most of Pakistan. Sindh Province was the most severely affected i.e. approximately 970,000 households.

Close to 90 per cent of the rural population in Sindh Province are engaged in crop production and animal husbandry as their primary occupation. Most of them

are sharecroppers and agricultural wage labourers. Other job opportunities are limited to trades such as blacksmiths, carpenters, water carriers, weavers, barbers and other services. Women in the informal economy usually earn a living as home-based piece-rate workers. Having no control over production processes, informal women workers are vulnerable and dependent on those engaging them in work- often middlemen.

The LRP Project responds to the crisis created by the 2010 and the 2011 floods and aims to improve the human security of 11,800 rural families (men, women, boys and girls) from 120 target villages located in the command areas of the Daulat Pur Minor-Jamrao and Gorki Minor-Mithrao Canal of Mirpurkhas District and “tail-end” of the command area of the Dadu “Rice Canal” of Dadu District, both in Sindh Province. Dadu district is on the right bank of the Indus River and Mirpurkhas is on the left bank. While Dadu has a typical “tribal” social system profile, Mirpurkhas has a typical “feudal” social system. However, the two districts are linked by migratory patterns of *hari* labour and displacement during the 2010 and 2011 floods. This translates into an estimated 64,000 *haris* and 22,000 *non-haris* (men, women, boys and girls) benefiting from the Project’s overall social empowerment and capacity building interventions, notably through its third objective, “to empower peasant organizations, farmers organizations, WUAs, farmers and women groups, etc to enhance their natural resource base while strengthening their resilience to future shocks”. It is further anticipated that *non-hari* people of the same villages and the residents of neighboring villages in Dadu and Mirpurkhas Districts will also benefit from the Project

through reduced food insecurity and debt and increased resilience to future shocks because of increased crop production and employment opportunities brought about by the Project's agricultural extension, off-farm employment, skills development and DRR interventions.

The overall goal of the Project is "to restore and protect the livelihoods and empower the poor and vulnerable peasants (men, women, boys and girls) who depend on feudal and tribal landholding and farming systems and were affected by droughts, floods and insecurity". This goal is at the core of human security provision and development beyond emergency and humanitarian assistance as it aims to improve the quality of life, disaster resilience and dignity of male and female peasants of Dadu and Mirpurkhas Districts in Sindh Province.

The goal of the Project was set to be achieved through the achievement of the following objectives:

- i. To improve the livelihoods and economic security of rural communities through in-kind support to restore and/or protect the farm production capacities and off-farm income generating activities of vulnerable peasant families and well-targeted progressive landlords – which, in turn, would have a positive impact on their disaster reliance.
- ii. To enhance the skills and knowledge base of men and women peasant farmers, landless people and unemployed youth through technical support in good agricultural practices (GAPs), post-harvest management and vocational skills.
- iii. To empower peasant organizations, farmers organizations, WUAs, farmers and women groups, etc and their constituent *hari* members to enhance their natural resource base (land, water, vegetation, etc) while strengthening their resilience to future shocks.

**Present Situation of the Project:** The Project is supporting the rural communities of two targeted Districts of Sindh Province in strengthening and diversifying their sources of income and enhance resilience and adopt disaster risks reduction measures to minimize effects of future floods and other climatic conditions. Project has identified 120 rural communities around various irrigation channels and minors in Districts Mirpur Khas and Dadu to work in a combined manner.

The Joint Project is being implemented by three UN Agencies FAO, ILO and UN-Women and is funded by UN

Trust Fund for Human Security (UNTFHS) for a period of 3 years and started in February 2013. All three partner UN agencies are working under ONE Programme, coordinated by FAO and supported by the corresponding line departments within the government of Sindh. The departments are Sindh Agriculture Department, Sindh Department of Labour, Sindh Social Welfare and Women's Development Department, other Government line departments i.e. Planning and Development and also the civil society and local communities.

**Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation:** The Mid-term Review focused on project impacts/results to date, particularly those relating to: (i) institutional, administrative, organizational and technical aspects of project interventions; and (ii) social empowerment, capacity building and environmental aspects of human security. The results of the Mid-term Review would help determine whether the objectives and performance indicators outlined in the project document are achievable within the allotted timeframe. The Mid-term Review would also serve as an opportunity for reflection, allowing the Project's executing partners to make course corrections and refine objectives, outputs, indicators and implementation timeframes, as needed.

**Methodology of evaluation:** The MTR mission assessed the project according to the following standard criteria: (i) relevance, (ii) efficiency, (iii) project effectiveness, (iv) effectiveness of implementation and management arrangement, (v) stakeholder involvement and ownership, and (vi) sustainability. Particular attention was paid to the challenges facing project management due to the complex nature of the implementing arrangement of the project. Once the mission started, a set of key review questions to facilitate the review process was agreed among the mission team. These review questions were supplemented by a set of questions provided by the FAO country office after the end of the mission's field work. The MTR team undertook desk review of key project documents and conducted a five-day field visit between 10-15 November 2014 to both the districts and held meetings and dialogues with key stakeholders. During the field work, the project management arranged for the MTR team focused group dialogues and meetings with various groups, and interviews with key project

stakeholders were undertaken. A structured questionnaire prepared by the MTR team was also administered to key project implementers and partners.

## Main Findings & Conclusions

The main findings of the mid-term review (MTR) mission include:

- The project has strong relevance to the human security challenges faced by the beneficiaries. While the project's overall intervention logic remains valid, the complex project design has posed major challenges in implementing the project activities.
- The project was clearly disadvantaged due to the very late start. Many of the FAO activities were lagging behind while a significant number of activities under the ILO and UN Women components appeared to be relatively on track. Project disbursements were at low levels.
- Notwithstanding the delay in project implementation, so far, the beneficiaries were generally satisfied with the outputs and most of the project stakeholders consider the project intervention in line with their needs.
- The delays and the inability of the project to be fully staffed have contributed to the challenges in coordinating project implementation. There have not been enough joint field visits and monitoring organized.
- The project has not yet properly communicated the project concept and human security approach to the stakeholders and information dissemination of project activities was inadequate
- Each of the three UN agencies has its own monitoring and evaluation system. There is no unified project-wide monitoring and evaluation system.
- The establishment of the District Coordinating Committee (DCC) and its operation has been a major accomplishment of the project. Stakeholders' involvement has been enhanced and the Committee provides a unique opportunity to forge strong partnership with government agencies and other stakeholders.
- The sustainability of project actions is variable across the project components according to the distinct methodological approaches, institutional arrangements and strategies employed by the three UN agencies.

## Recommendations & Lessons Learned

### Main recommendations and follow-up

The MTR team recommended the following:

1. Project implementation was delayed by at least 8 months, hence, there is a need to extend the duration of the project for 6–8 months, on a no-cost basis, to complete all project interventions. The additional time will enable the project to effectively implement, document, and come up with good lessons and models and provide sustainability features for the project initiatives.
2. The project should conduct a workshop to review the findings of the baseline study and subsequently modify and revise targets, outputs, and activities where necessary. Some portions of the project's logical framework need revision and possible changes in implementation modalities need to be looked into. Also, budget for new activities not included in the project document, such as FBS (Farmer Business School), should be provided.
3. The three UN agencies should establish a joint project-wide monitoring and evaluation system to facilitate accurate and timely tracking of accomplishments, consolidation of data, and delivery of prescribed progress reports. More results based indicators should be developed and revisions be made as a result of the baseline study, including possible changes in outputs and activities.
4. The three UN agencies need to jointly develop and adopt a concrete strategy and checklist to ensure a focus on the human security element of the project, and to be able to report on the results achieved.
5. The project should develop a master list of beneficiaries for selecting one beneficiary per family assistance.
6. The project should recruit all the staff and consultants required at the soonest time possible.
7. Technical officers from regional and headquarter offices of FAO should provide technical, monitoring, and backstopping expertise.
8. To improve coordination and synergy and avoid duplication; the three UN agencies should increase the frequency of joint planning and reporting exercises, and undertake joint field visits.
9. In the DCC, efforts should be made to hold regular and frequent meetings, ensure the active participation of members, and follow up the agreed decisions.
10. To address the language problem, the project should

- engage facilitators who know the language spoken in the villages and require the IPs to utilize staff who knows the required language.
11. The project should facilitate that the FSS/WOS is the village institution that would establish linkages to extension services. To facilitate the transformation of the FFS to FBS and then to PMG, the FAO and ILO should collaborate to use the relevant tools already developed, including the 'Know-About-Business' tool of the ILO.
  12. To assist in the elimination of bonded and child labour, the project should undertake the programme on Adult Functional Literacy and the Non-Formal Basic Education where educational facilities are inaccessible. Raising the awareness on the consequences of bonded labour and child labour and the deprivation of rights are also recommended.
  13. The human security aspect could develop an integrated model on skills development, which combines (a) functional literacy, (b) entrepreneurship, (c) environment conservation, (d) occupational safety and health, (e) rights as workers, and (f) gender mainstreaming. This model could be shared with the relevant training authorities for wider replication.
  14. The beneficiaries who have undergone skills training should be provided with continuous mentoring and backstopping. The project should assist in establishing sustainable enterprises and strong market linkages.
  15. The project should conduct a short 3–6 months literacy and numeracy programme to enable the illiterate beneficiaries to take maximum benefit from project interventions. This will also allow the project to further embed its human security component into its activities.
  16. The UN Women should establish facilitation and redress mechanisms to assist women HBWs who are registered with social security programme but are unable to access these services.
  17. Women HBWs who want to start a business enterprise, should be assisted in accessing credit and in enhancing their skills in colour combination, fabric selection, and product diversification to be able to (a) compete in high-end markets, (b) decrease the role of commission agents/middle men, and (c) improve their access to markets. This initiative could pave the way for economic empowerment of these women HBWs and could serve as a model for possible replication. ILO should provide possible support and there is a need to link these HBWs with other local initiatives (public, private, and social sectors).
  18. The practice of providing training to one member from each family (male or female) in the FFS or WOS and that this same group is used for trainings in gender should be reviewed and revised if found ineffective. For gender-mainstreaming sessions, an alternative approach would be to involve both the men and women from the families of the FFS and WOS members.
  19. To facilitate the formalization of the tenancy agreements, and considering that the agreement is made between the farmer-tenant and the landholder, it is recommended that a strategy be designed that will engage both parties and to have them sensitized and convinced to formalize their tenancy agreements. The project should develop a system to maintain a record of tenancy agreements.
  20. Since in many instances, the share of the haris and tenants is not enough to improve their living conditions, the project should further assist in looking for ways and means to diversify livelihood options. These haris who do not own the land they are working on mostly rely on their share of the produce.
  21. The design of the latrines should follow WHO guidelines for latrine construction and, stoves, and grain storages should be revised to withstand heavy rains and floods.
  22. The project should hasten the implementation of the DRR components. It should also assist in strengthening the district government's capacity to deal with disasters. A project-specific joint DRR strategy should be developed for integrating the activities of all agencies.
  23. The project should develop a communication plan. It should produce and disseminate project brochures, project publications, reports, case studies, and other communication materials. It should also establish a project website. The project should engage with the broadcast and print media to raise the visibility of project initiatives.
  24. The project should look into constituting a small team from the existing staff who would be responsible for ensuring the sustainability of project initiatives and benefits. The project could also hire a short-term consultant to undertake this task.
  25. Project management needs critical support. A short-term international consultant on project management who has an experience in managing a similar multidisciplinary project should be recruited. If this is not possible, appropriate technical backstopping should be provided by FAO.