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FACTSHEET

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Poverty-Environment Linkages

Improving Livelihoods of Fishermen Communities of Central Indus Wetlands Complex, Pakistan through Effective Natural Resource Management



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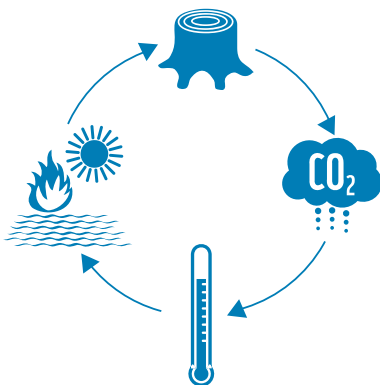
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WWF-Pakistan with the financial support of Department for International Development (DFID) under its Global Poverty Action Fund (GPAF) is implementing the project Improving Livelihoods of Fisher Communities in Central Indus Wetlands Complex, Pakistan. The project covers three sites along the entire 500km long stretch of the Indus River, between Taunsa and Sukkur barrages. Taunsa and Guddu-Sukkur are Protected Areas and also notified as Ramsar sites. The area is of immense ecological significance and communities living in buffer zones of these Protected Areas employ unsustainable natural resource extraction practices. The high ratio of rural population to low development perpetuates a variety of socio-economic problems, such as poverty, limited income earning opportunities, social exclusion, income disparity, lack of basic facilities and dependence on agriculture, fishing and other natural resource based income sources.

This project focuses on improving livelihoods of at least 2,100 fisher households covering an approximate population of 17,000 people by addressing the poverty-environment nexus. This project also supports the government of Pakistan's commitment to meet Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to alleviate poverty (MDG 1) and ensure environmental sustainability (MDG 7). The MDG for women empowerment (MDG 3) is also being addressed through gender specific components of the project.

Initiatives implemented aim to introduce varied options for livelihood generation, provide alternate energy and energy efficient units, and encourage sustainable practices among fisher communities residing in the Central Indus Wetlands Complex (CIWC). These interventions will help augment income, improve the quality of life for disadvantaged communities, and conserve natural resources for future use through improved collaborative management of Protected Areas.



Project Objectives

1. Establish and strengthen a network of Community Based Organizations (CBOs) along CIWC to effectively address poverty-environment related issues among fisher communities.
2. Introduce diversified livelihood options among fisher communities in the CIWC to augment their incomes.
3. Introduce energy efficient and alternative sources of energy in fisher communities in order to improve quality of life and reduce pressures on natural resources.
4. Promote improved management of CIWC Protected Areas in collaboration with stakeholders.

Project Achievements

The project has organized the fisher communities in CBOs with an aim to provide a platform to address their issues more effectively, and to promote community participation in decision making, advocacy for representation in local initiatives and development plans.

In order to enhance income and reduce dependence on natural resources, 10 Livelihood Development Plans (LDPs) have been developed for each CBO after a detailed training needs assessment and market surveys. The implementation of LDPs is being carried out in collaboration with CBOs and respective implementing partners. The income generation potential of the communities has been enhanced through skill development, demonstration projects and home-based enterprises. In addition, vocational centres, training on sustainable fishing practices and livestock units are other initiatives of the project. A Community Poverty Alleviation Fund of PKR 1,000,000 has been established under the project for each CBO to establish a micro-finance mechanism, and to further support their livelihood initiatives.

The project has introduced more than 1,900 fuel-efficient stoves and 130 biogas plants to reduce community dependence on natural resources for energy needs. Around 50 per cent reduction in average household consumption of fuelwood has been recorded. A total of 400 units of solar energy have been introduced to communities with little or no access to electricity.

In order to strengthen Protected Areas management plans of Taunsa Barrage Wildlife Sanctuary and Indus Dolphin Reserve have been developed in consultation with all the stakeholders and line departments. The plans encompass components like climate change, disaster risk reduction and floodplain management.



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Project Goal

Socio-economic conditions of the riverine communities in Pakistan are improved by addressing the poverty-environment nexus.



WWF-Pakistan's Poverty-Environment Linkages Goal

The establishment of poverty-environment linkages for the economic uplift of people.

Government Implementing Partners

Punjab Forests, Wildlife and Fisheries Department; Punjab Irrigation Department; Sindh Forests Department; Sindh Wildlife Department; Sindh Fisheries Department; and Sindh Irrigation Department

Local Implementing Partners

Saiban Welfare Foundation (SWF), Khawaja Farid Foundation (KFF), and Sindh Youth Welfare Organization (SYWO)



Why we are here:

To stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature.

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