

AJK Rural Support Programme

1. Background

During the past fifteen years, Government of AJK has implemented various community development projects aiming at alleviation of poverty and improving living standard of rural poor of the State. Most of these projects followed the participatory approach in mobilizing communities for undertaking their own development. Through this process, around 3,500 Community Organizations (COs) were formed in the remotest areas of AJK and socio-economic development became visible. However, most of the COs either became inactive or died altogether after the expiry of a project due to the non-existence of any mechanism to support the COs after the community based project were concluded. Similar efforts were also undertaken in AJK by IFAD and UNDP sponsored "Neelum & Jehlum Valleys Community Development Project (NJVCDP, 1992-2004). During the project period, stakeholders felt the need of a mechanism that should patronize the community development initiatives and cater for COs needs on sustainable basis.

The idea was discussed with all the stakeholders at various levels that resulted into a consensus for having COs Apex body with the objective to support grassroots institutions in continuity and sustainability of the development initiatives. A policy dialogue was also organized in 2002 inviting representatives of COs from across the State and was also attended by the IFAD Project Formulation Mission for "Azad Jammu & Kashmir Community Development Program (AJKCDP)". As a result, both the Formulation Mission and the Appraisal Mission for AJKCDP widely shared the idea with different stakeholders and on the basis of deliberations the Appraisal Mission incorporated the concept of apex body in the report, envisaging the organization to be evolved and established with the name of Azad Jammu & Kashmir Community Support Program (AJKCSPP) during the execution of AJKCDP and provide home to all the COs in the State after the expiry of AJKCDP.

AJKCDP is a community based multi-disciplinary development project and is operational in the entire State. ECNEC, while approving the project, also approved Rs. 250 million as endowment fund for AJKCSPP to enable it to run its operations on sustainable basis. Thus, the Apex body having its genesis with AJKCDP has been notified on 16 June 2007 with the name of "Azad Jammu & Kashmir Rural Support Program (AJKRSP) as a corporate entity and indigenous body that shall support, patronize, foster and sustain the community development process and give continuity to community developmental initiatives even after the completion of AJKCDP or any other community development project.

2. AJKRSP Establishment

AJKRSP has been set up and registered under section 42 of the Companies Ordinance 1984 as a corporate body on 29 October 2007. Being a prime grassroots development auxiliary of the Government, the AJKRSP is to undertake community development projects by establishing and

empowering grassroots institutions throughout the State. The organization is also to support, accelerate, foster and sustain the public-private sectors efforts towards peoples' participation in reducing poverty, improving living standard and bringing about the well being among rural communities of the State. AJKRSP focuses on under-developed areas and vulnerable groups by forging effective linkages and functional networking between relevant stakeholders. Organization has been launched in view of the concerns of continuation, sustainability and lessening GoAJ&K burden of the recurring costs on development.

Vision

Entire population of AJK is organized in the form of their own organizations. The community institutions and their activists are recognized by the government and private developmental agencies as vehicles for sustainable development and poverty reduction.

Mission

To foster institutions of people for the people in all villages and settlements in AJK through a committed cadre of community activists and community extension workers/specialists. These institutions and cadre of activists/workers/specialists are be enabled to harness people's potential for reducing poverty and improving their quality of life.

Objectives

The main objective of AJKRSP is to promote the process of sustainable development through sectoral and programmatic interventions in partnership with communities at the grassroots level, with focus on the under-developed areas and marginalized and vulnerable groups, by forging effective linkages and functional networks with the relevant stakeholders for the socio-economic uplift of the area, leading to prosperity and well-being of the communities at all levels. The specific objectives of AJKRSP are,

- i. Support Go-AJK to alleviate poverty and improve the living standard of the rural poor of AJK through social mobilization and active participation of COs/Village Organizations (VOs) by continuously supporting them and strengthening their linkages with government line departments, other rural support organizations and donor agencies for ensuring their sustainable development.
- ii. Support developmental initiatives undertaken by grassroots level institutions and Non-Governmental organizations (NGOs) in sustaining their developmental activities.
- iii. Monitor the ongoing micro credit program and further support/strengthen it through establishment of linkages with micro financing institutions and donors at national and international level
- iv. Generate resources with the assistance of Go-AJK, NGOs and donors, undertake development initiatives, directly or through other organizations, NGOs and grassroots level institutions
- v. Build the capacity of grassroots level institutions through need driven training programs being organized by the existing institutions and facilities in the country.
- vi. Assist and provide training to grassroots level institution in the establishment of micro-enterprise, funded through the micro-credit programs in different trades and establish marketing linkages for their products by providing Business Development Services (BDS)

Strategy

- Fostering Institutions of People

- Consolidating the social mobilization already done by AJKRSP, NRSP, AJKCDP
- Scaling up through Community Activists and LSOs already formed
- Strengthening linkages with government departments and other agencies
- Encouraging networking between NRSP, AJKCDP, WWOP, PPAF
- Creating access to financial capital by forging linkages with commercial banks especially the AJK Bank
- Setting up Community Investment Fund for demand driven development rather than through a pre-conceived package

AJKRSP has been restructured in July 2009 and Mr. Shoaib Sultan Khan was elected as chairman of BoD, AJKRSP in its 5th BoDs meeting on 5th August 2009. After restructuring, AJKRSP started its activities with core team.

Achievements after Restructuring

Offices Establishment

District Offices	Teshil	Field Unit	Date of Establishment
Neelum	Athmaqam	Neelum	March 2010
	Sharda		
Hattian	Chikar	Hattian	March 2010
	Hattian		
	Leepa		
Muzaffarabad	Muzaffarabad	Muzaffarabad	October 2007
	Patika		
Kotli	Kotli	Kotli	March 2010
	Charoi	Khiratta	March 2010
	Khuratta		
	Sehnsa	Nakial	March 2010
Nakial			
Bhimber	Barnala	Bhimber	March 2010
	Bhimber		
	Samahni	Samahni	March 2010
Mirpur	Dudyal	Dudyal	March 2010
	Mirpur	Mirpur	March 2010

Summary and Description of On-going projects

Project Name	Donor	Total Project Cost	Duration	Location
Fostering of Local Support Organizations Networks	RSPN/DFID	2.24 Million	March to August 2010	District Muzaffarabad
Women and Child Rights Awareness through the active participation of activists, LSOs & NGOs	RSPN/DFID	1.77 million	March to August 2010	District Muzaffarabad
ERRA- CLRP Project	ERRA, FAO	-	July 2009 to Jul-10	District Bagh, Rawalakot
School Safety Program for linking the schools to the family and community in disaster risk reduction	WFP	1.5 Million	March to June 2010	Muzaffarabad
Formation and Strengthening of Grass root Level Institutions - Payara Kashmir Project	Government of Pakistan	300.6 Million	June 2009 to June 2012	432 villages of all districts of AJK (around 5 km of LoC)
Distribution of Spray Machines	Agriculture Department, Go-AJK	-	September 2009 to December 2009	AJK
Total		317.11 Million		

1. Collaboration between AJKCDP and AJKRSP

Donor: IFAD
Total Cost: 11.7 million
Duration of project: 16 Months (March 2010 to June 2011)
Project Location: AJ&K

Objective:

- Strengthening of existing COs to actively participate in various productive activities focusing on NRM, Infrastructure development, repair and maintenance of irrigation infrastructure, credit, human resource development and other community development initiatives in the program area.

- Preparation and reconciliation of financial matters related to the COs savings and micro finance program in the given districts. These COs will also include the COs established and initiated micro credit activities by the previous projects; Neelum & Jehlum Valleys Community Development Project (NJVCDP) and Area Development Program South AJK.
- Preparation of Village Development Plans (VDPs) in given districts.
- Formation of clusters/VOs/LSOs/Sub-Apex Bodies in the districts.

Activities	Achievements as of Feb 2010	During March, 2010	Total
CO Strengthened	1,190	133	1,323
VOs formed	0	6	6
LSOs formed	12	3	15
No of COs provided CMST	590	0	590
No of COs members trained for VDP preparation	303	0	303
No of VDP prepared	79	0	79
No of COs provided credit utilization training	658	0	658
No of COs provided Matching Fund	347	40	387

2. Fostering of Local Support Organizations Networks

Donor: RSPN/DFID
Total Cost: 2.24 Million
Duration of project: April to September 2010
Project Location: District Muzaffarabad , AJK

Objective:

- To operationalize the TSNs and DSNs in the area
- To create an enabling environment for the local area development
- To form LSOs in remaining UCs of Muzaffarabad
- To create linkages between COs/VOs/LSO and other institutions like government and private institutions
- To disseminate information on agriculture, health, education, disaster management, and employment opportunities etc
- To monitor the activities of all three tiers i.e. COs, VOs, LSOs etc
- Resource mobilization and fund raising
- To ensure internal audit once in 6 months and external audit once in a year

Activities	Targets	Achievements
Formation of TSNs	5	2
Registration of TSNs	5	In Process
Establishment of TSN offices	5	-
Formation of DSNs	2	-
Registration of DSNs	2	-
Establishment of DSN offices	2	-

3. Women and Child Rights Awareness through the active participation of activists, LSOs & NGOs

Donor: RSPN/DFID
Total Cost: 1.77 Million
Duration of project: April to September 2010
Project Location: District Muzaffarabad , AJK

Objective:

1. To raise awareness of governance, gender equality and women rights issues in COs/VOs/LSOs.
2. To enhance the capacities of male and female members of COs, NGOs and Union, Tehsil and District Councils to participate actively and effectively in the democratising, gender equality and women & children rights initiatives defined for this Project.
3. To strengthen existing linkages between the grass root level Organisations, relevant local and regional NGOs and the elected Councils and to create new linkages where they do not presently exist.
4. To enhance the relationship between these parties, so that each participant is aware of the rights of and responsibilities to the others.
5. To delineate the relationship between transparent and accountable governance practices, equitable development initiatives, gender-equity initiatives and women & children rights practices.

Activities	Targets	Achievements
Component 1: Seminars		
Human Rights	2	-
Child Rights	2	-
NGOs Capacity - local governance	2	-
Component 2: Workshops		
Human Rights:	2	-

Child Rights:	2	4
NGOs Capacity – local governance:	2	-
Component 3:		
Exchange Visits	3	-
Walks/Days	4	-
Promotional Material	1	-

4. School Safety Program for linking the schools to the family and community in disaster risk reduction

Donor: WFP
Total Cost: 1.713 Million
Duration of project: April to September 2010
Project Location: District Muzaffarabad , AJK

Objective:

- To prepare disaster preparedness and response information, education and communication (IEC) materials on school safety programme for primary school students and teachers' guide book.
- To provide a one-day training for 200 teachers from 100 WFP assisted mostly girls' primary schools on how to use both disaster preparedness and response IEC materials and teachers' guide book.
- To provide a two-day orientation (one day orientation and second day practical drill) with the help of trained teachers to approximately 5,000 students from 100 WFP assisted primary schools.

This project will be implemented in three phases. The details are,

- **Pilot phase District Muzaffarabad**
 - 100 WFP assisted govt. girls primary schools
- **Phase 1**
 - Replication in all govt. girls and boys primary schools of district MZD/Bagh/Neelum/Hattain/Rawalakot/Haveli
- **Phase 2**
 - All remaining districts of AJK

Activities	Targets	Achievements
Preparation and printing of Student Learning Booklets on DRR	2,100	In process
Preparation and printing of Teacher Guide on DRR	250	In process

Activities	Targets	Achievements
Preparation and printing of IEC material (No of Charts)	880	In process
Training in 100 girls primary schools in Muzaffarabad (Students and Teachers)	100	-

5. Piayara Kashmir Project, "Formation and Strengthening of Grass root Level Institutions"

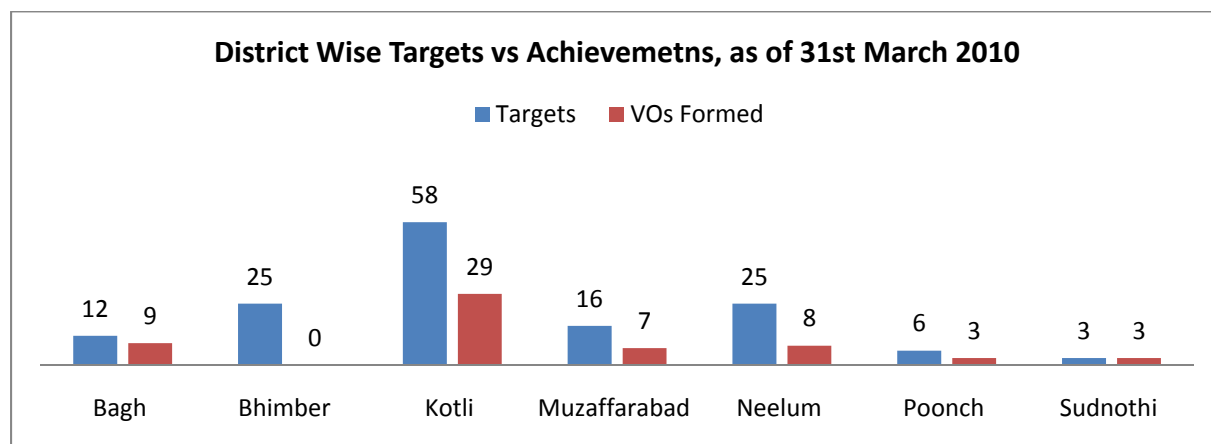
Donor:	Government of Pakistan
Total Cost:	300.6 Million
Duration of project:	June 2009 to June 2012
Project Location:	432 Villages of all districts of AJK (around 5 km of LoC)

Objective:

- 1) Formation and strengthening of grassroots institutions; which means the establishment/strengthening of Community Organizations (COs), Village Organizations (VOs) at village level & Local Support Organizations (LSOs) at Union Council level in the rural area of all 7 Districts of AJ&K along LOC by conducting a series of dialogues with the rural communities. The organizations formed by the effort of different programmes and projects will also strengthened and supported. Therefore in 7 Districts a total of 432 VOs are estimated to be formed within a 1 year period. These VOs will be registered with the relevant registration authorities as formal institutions at the grassroots level. In each revenue village one VO will be formed having the membership from all COs and VOs of the village.
- 2) Preparation of Village Development Plans (VDPs) of the rural area located in 7 Districts; which means Capacity building of VOs members enabling them to identify, prioritize, plan, implement and manage felt/ real needs of the rural poor population through "Asset Based Assessment". VDPs will be the basis for all efforts towards poverty alleviation.
- 3) Establishment of small productive units
- 4) Provision of revolving funds to Village organizations for sustainability of grass root institutions

District	Targets	VOs Formed as of 31 st March 2010
Bagh	12	9
Bhimber	25	0
Kotli	58	29
Muzaffarabad	16	7
Neelum	25	8
Poonch	6	3

District	Targets	VOs Formed as of 31 st March 2010
Sudnothi	3	3
Total	145	59



6. Formulation and Implementation of Community Livelihood Reconstruction Plans (CLRPs) under ERRA Livelihood Strategy

Donor: ERRA, FAO
Duration of project: January 2007 to December 2009
Project Location: Bagh, AJK
Objective:

The CLRPs are to be prepared, implement and evaluate under the livelihood rehabilitation strategy having four key objectives:

- To restore the livelihoods of the earthquake affected population to, at least, pre earthquake conditions.
- To effectively coordinate the livelihood rehabilitation activities in the earthquake affected areas, preventing duplication of activities and ensuring equitable coverage by implementing agencies.
- To strengthen community based organizations (CBOs) and committee in planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating community livelihood rehabilitation plans.
- To restore and enhance the capacities and capabilities of livelihood related line departments.

Activities	Achievements
No of UCs allotted	1
Total No of CLRPs to be prepared	10
Total No of CLRPs prepared	9
No of Project Digest Approved by DRAC	5
CLRPs with 1st Installment released	5

Activities	Achievements
CLRPs with 2nd Installment released	4
Amount released from DRU to VOs/COs (million)	2.66
Amount released from DRU to AJKRSP account (Million)	0.17
Total amount released by DRU (Million)	2.82
Total CPIs	9
Total CPIs initiated	5
Total CPIs completed	-
Establishment of Vocational Center for Women	0

7. Distribution of Spray Machines

Donor: Agriculture Department Go-AJK
Duration of project: 3 Months (September 2009 to December 2009)
Project Location: AJ&K

Objective:

- a) To provide Agriculture Inputs to farmers through VOs and LSOs.
- b) To provide free transport facility for distribution of Agriculture Inputs at District level and especially at far-flung area where poor transport facility exists.
- c) To facilitate mark-up for Agriculture input.
- d) To provide technical guidance/orientation training/demonstration to farmers about the use of inputs.
- e) To provide brochures/pamphlets about the use of Agriculture Inputs.

District	Achieved
Muzaffarabad, Hattian and Neelum	145
Bagh & Haveli	130
Poonch and Sadnhuti	80
Kotli	80
Mirpur & Bhimber	50
Total	485

S.#	Name of Project	Project Location	Donor	Budget Allocation	Remarks
1	Trout Fish/small hydel power generation/ irrigation channel, Neelum valley	District Neelum	AJK Council	137 million	
2	Green & Skilled Kashmir Project	AJ&K	GoP	240 million	Approved by the DWP, GoAJ&K
3	Water Harvesting in EQ Affected Areas	Muzaffarabad	ERRA	210 million	
4	Trainings of village activists under ASPL-II Project	AJ&K	MINFAL	80 Million	Approved by the DWP, GoAJ&K
5	Community Based Composting and Promotion of Organic Farming	AJ&K	AJ&K Council	17 Million	
6	Vegetable Seed Production in Kotli, Rawalakot, Neelum & Muzaffarabad	AJ&K	AJ&K Council	23 Million	
7	Bead Work	AJ&K	AJ&K Council	40.63 Million	
8	Sustainable Management/ Harvesting/ Marketing of Medicinal Plants	AJ&K	AJ&K Council	18.1 Million	
9	“Improving Local Governance by Strengthening Networks of Community Organizations across AJK”	AJ&K	Economic Division, Pakistan	50 Million	
Total				815.73	