

## Capturing the Opportunity: Rehabilitation of Rain Water Harvesting Pond in Tharparkar

Tharparkar district, housing a population of 914,000 persons, stands among the poorest districts of Pakistan. Majority of inhabitants depend on livestock and rain fed agriculture. Water scarcity is the common problem faced by communities in desert areas. According to available data during past 30 years the region faced 11 acute drought years. Continuous drought over past few years has further aggravated the situation, making communities desperately look for some serious efforts that can solve the problem. Government and other organizations have supported the communities in construction of rain water harvesting structures, dug wells and hand pumps. One similar pond was constructed through local government in revenue village Vijheto in Union Council Moharano. This pond was constructed back in 1975.

Mr. Qamar-ud-Din, the president of Village Disaster Management Committee (VDMC) Vijheto, says, "Our village is a medium sized village with a population of around 1200 persons, consisting of 175 households. In addition to this pond, there are three dug wells and one Tarai in the village. After receiving training in Community Based Disaster Risk Management our VDMC developed a disaster risk management plan for our village. This plan included details about risks, vulnerabilities, resources and possible mitigation measures. We identified rehabilitation of our water structures as a way of mitigating drought. We got one old dug well repaired as Critical Community Infrastructure during initial period of Tahafuz-II but these structures are not sufficient to cater the needs of the villagers."

The pond identified for rehabilitation has deteriorated over decades and did not retain water because of broken floor. The compound wall was also broken and needed repair. During USAID RSPN Tahafuz Project No-Cost Extension period, the community approached the project team and requested for support in repair and rehabilitation of this critical scheme.

After analyzing the situation and genuine need of the community, Tahafuz team approved their request and work has been initiated on repair and rehabilitation of this damaged pond. The community members are very happy and appreciate the support from USAID in resolving one of their major problems. Members of the community are working as paid labor and waiting for rain so that they can collect water in this pond.



The damaged rain water harvesting pond being repaired



A view of repaired retaining walls and floor of the pond



Work in progress on rehabilitation of Rain Water Harvesting Pond