

# ‘Monitoring & Evaluation’ (OSRO/TAJ/603/WB) ‘Community Agriculture and Watershed Management’

## UN Food and Agriculture Organisation

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## 1. Executive Summary

CAMP Kuhiston was provided with a brief to undertake monitoring and evaluation of the FAO project Community Agriculture and Watershed Management (OSRO/TAJ/603/WB) in Dangara District. The FAO project basically consisted of the allocation of small grants to village communities to improve their livelihoods. All the communities were required to provide a minimum of a 20% contribution.

Of the 450 projects funded, the team decided to monitor and evaluate 10% (45) of the projects. These were selected on the basis of different activities; this resulted in visiting projects in 6 Jamoats in Dangara.

The projects were split into 11 different categories these included activities such as bee keeping, flour processing and infrastructure projects. The majority of projects were successfully implemented, with a varied degree of assistance to the beneficiaries. The level of benefit to the beneficiaries could not be fully determined in all cases as some of the projects are still in their infancy. However, nearly all the projects showed signs that they could have a real impact on the livelihoods of the beneficiaries.

The infrastructure projects such as the bridge construction and road repairs benefited the most people. Villagers can now safely access schools, medical facilities and markets, where this was not possible during the heavy rains or the winter months.

The water supply project again served many beneficiaries and in some cases brought fresh water to villages that previously did not have access to drinking water.

The service projects had more limited beneficiaries however the bee keeping and gardening projects showed signs that they would be expanded by the communities after the project has finished and the sewing project was providing an alternative income for women in the communities.

The impact of the cattle and pasture project was harder to evaluate at this early stage.

The monitoring team recommended that monitoring is undertaken at a later stage to evaluate the long term sustainability of the projects.

Overall the FAO project provided positive results and it was noted that as well as the direct impact of the projects, the indirect impact of empowering the community and enabling them to decide on their own needs and their high level of participation will assist them to help themselves in the future.

## 2. Scope

FAO commissioned CAMP Kuhiston to undertake monitoring and evaluation of their *Small Grant* implementation project Community Agriculture and Watershed Management (OSRO/TAJ/603/WB) in the Dangara district. The project was designed to provide small grants of up to \$15,000 to help improve the livelihoods of the local inhabitants of the area. The project was implemented from 2007-2009 at an approximate cost of \$1.5 million. There were three components to the project:

- A1: Productivity Improvement
- A2: Land and Natural Resource Management
- A3: Rehabilitation of Infrastructure

In addition to this there was also a 'Credibility Investment Project'

In total there were 450 projects funded over this implementation period.

CAMP Kuhiston was required to manage the monitoring and evaluating of the projects whilst using FAO's own monitoring staff. CAMP Kuhiston was required to develop a methodology and decide upon the projects to be visited. The logistics of the monitoring were organised by FAO.

## 3. Methodology

After several meetings between the representatives of UN FAO and Camp Kuhiston a methodology was decided upon for evaluation.

The key components of the methodology were:

1. The development and use of a monitoring and evaluation questionnaire. This was developed in English and translated into Tajik. It was decided that a questionnaire would provide a level of standardisation to the assessment and allow for comparisons between different projects. A copy of the questionnaire is attached in Annex 1.
2. For conducting the monitoring and evaluation exercise three UN FAO coordinators, and one CAMP coordinator, were selected to conduct the field work. The four coordinators worked independently during the monitoring and evaluation of the project.
3. In a joint decision between the organisations it was decided that 10% of the projects would be monitored and evaluated. The specific projects were chosen to cover a range of different activities

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and 6 Jamoats and 18 villages were chosen. The projects were divided into 11 different activities for analysis.

4. The monitoring involved visiting the project sites, interviewing stakeholders and beneficiaries, and reviewing documents. This also included interviews with Jamoat representatives.

5. The evaluation work was completed between 29<sup>th</sup> April – 7<sup>th</sup> May 2010.

## 4. Results

No.	Title of the Project	No. Projects
1	Blacksmith	3
2	Beekeeping	4
3	Water Supply	7
4	Garden	10
5	Sheep breeding / vet	5
6	Sewing workshop	4
7	Chickens	1
8	Pasture	2
9	Flour Processing	4
10	Infrastructure	4
11	Wool processing	1
<b>Total</b>		<b>45</b>

Table 1: Type of projects monitored and evaluated.

No.	Criteria	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	Unsatisfactory
1	Level of Implementation?	6	26	13	0	0
2	Organisation of Project?	5	22	3	0	0
3	Quality of Implementation?	4	26	15	0	0
4	Value for Money?	0	20	24	1	0
5	Completed in Timeframe?	3	24	16	1	0
6	Level of Community Participation?	5	20	18	1	0
7	Did it help the target beneficiaries?	7	14	21	0	0
8	Did it improve livelihoods?	1	14	25	2	0
9	Is the Project Sustainable?	0	25	18	1	0
10	Project integrated with other activities?	2	12	27	2	0
11	Impact on the Environment?	4	21	10	0	0
<b>Total</b>		<b>37</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0</b>

Table 2: Results from the project.

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(NB The completed questionnaire forms are available as a separate attachment. These were completed in Tajik and translated into English.)

The results of the interview with the Head of Project Coordination Unit in Dangara, Mr. Kurbonov Saifullo provided the following results:

- Component A1 - 100% (sheep breeding, orchards – 250 ha, tree care, bee keeping etc)
- Component A2 – 2-3 years prolongation (pasture management, grass planting (izen), 8-10 sub projects
- Component A3 – about 2,000 people were employed. Roads, water pumps repaired.
- About 3,000 people employed in project activities. About 70% of the district population were engaged in activities.

From the beginning of the project a series of two day seminars were conducted on how to assess social and economic problems in the villages.

1. 4 people from Centre were engaged in implementation of the Project.
2. Villagers were trained, and gained experience and knowledge of different kind of work (bee keeping, fruit tree care, sheep breeding etc.)

## 5. Evaluation

### 5.1. *Blacksmiths*

Overview:

Of the three projects, one project was rated as ‘excellent’ and the other two were rated as ‘well implemented’. There was a high of participation from the villagers.

<b>Strengths</b>	Training of village people in blacksmith skills and the establishment of workshops. It provided an income for the villagers and in one village they built a carpentry workshop with the income they generated. They also built a relationship with the Dekan farmers. The project were generally well organised, and the workshop provided a facility for repairing old and broken equipment.
<b>Weaknesses</b>	In one project they did not buy all the equipment.
<b>Opportunities</b>	To fix and repair agricultural equipment in the future. To reduce costs and transport time for fixing and repairing agricultural equipment in the village. Also can be used by other villages in the district. There is the potential to train other people in the use of the equipment

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<b>Threats</b>	May not be enough people currently trained at the moment.
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## **5.2. Beekeeping**

Overview:

In the four projects there was a high level of participation and all the projects there appears to be an expansion in activities.

<b>Strengths</b>	It provided an income for some of the participants. The number of bee family's increased and subsequent amount of honey and income increased in most projects. There appears to be a significant improvement in the level of knowledge with regards to bee-keeping in the participants
<b>Weaknesses</b>	These were some of the more expensive projects.
<b>Opportunities</b>	The participants are planning to increase the size of the activities in the future.
<b>Threats</b>	The weather has prevented the moving of beekeeping hives to new areas.

## **5.3. Water Supply**

Overview:

Most of the seven projects have been successfully implemented and the work was well organized. Villagers actively participated in implementation of the projects.

<b>Strengths</b>	Good organization of the work in the construction of the water supply system. The villagers are provided with drinking water and have established Water User Association. Beneficiaries are paying one somoni per person per month for water.
<b>Weaknesses</b>	In one village Village Development Committee was not interested to be involved.
<b>Opportunities</b>	Villagers will spend less time for collecting of water.
<b>Threats</b>	The management of the pipe water supply in the future in particular with regards to maintenance. Also the farmers would like access to the piped water for agricultural purposes which would directly affect the supply to the villages.

## 5.4. *Garden*

### Overview:

In the 10 projects visited there was evidence of a high level of active participation. The people were very interested in development of the new types of the trees as apricot, cherry, walnut, some kind of apples in new orchards.

<b>Strengths</b>	There were well organised fruit orchards. The participants had planted new types of the fruit trees in villages and between the rows of the trees vegetables were planted which was as an income for the villages.
<b>Weaknesses</b>	More people could have been involved in the project.
<b>Opportunities</b>	Fruit processing and selling at the markets which could subsequently provide a good income for households. New types of the fruit trees will be distributed to other villages. Strengthening of soil through planting of the trees to prevent soil degradation.  The participants were discussing and planning to increase the size of gardens in the future.
<b>Threats</b>	Weather conditions and lack of an established agreement of distribution among group members

## 5.5. *Cattle Breeding / Veterinary*

### Overview:

There were five implemented projects. A new Hissar breed was introduced into the sheep herd. Veterinary services were well implemented and some projects are continuing.

<b>Strengths</b>	The projects increased the number of the Hissar breed sheep with six sheep born within the first year of one project. There was a high level of participation of the group members. It has improved the health, and increased the number of cattle in some of project area and a vaccination post was established.
<b>Weaknesses</b>	One project was not fully implemented.
<b>Opportunities</b>	To increase Hissar breed of sheep in the villages.  There should be consideration with regards to conduct educational trainings for the people to raise awareness in pasture management.



<b>Threats</b>	<p>Veterinary Service Centre in Oksu is not finished</p> <p>If the number of animals increase, the use of pasture will be used more which will lead to over grazing and this will lead to land degradation.</p>
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## 5.6. *Sewing Workshop*

Overview:

Four projects have been well implemented. The women actively participated in these projects.

<b>Strengths</b>	<p>Young ladies were trained in sewing skills and some gained qualifications. From several of the projects the women have received income by selling the products. Some women have bought their own equipment and are now able to sew goods at home and sell them at the markets.</p>
<b>Weaknesses</b>	<p>No monitoring from Jamoat Development Committee, management of the people are very weak</p> <p>One of the sewing workshops was established in private house.</p>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<p>If there is an increased demand from customers, there would be potentially greater income for the households.</p> <p>It could lead to an increase of qualifications and expansion of this profession to other new young ladies.</p> <p>More young ladies and women can be employed.</p>
<b>Threats</b>	<p>At certain times of the year women have to work in the fields and are unable to spend their time sewing.</p>

## 5.7. *Chickens*

Overview

This project provided vaccination against bird disease. This project just started it's difficult to assess the success of the project.

<b>Strengths</b>	Vaccination was provided against bird disease.
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<b>Weaknesses</b>	
<b>Opportunities</b>	It is a goof opportunity to increase chicken yields and improve the health of chickens.
<b>Threats</b>	

### **5.8. Pasture**

Overview:

Two projects just have started it was difficult to assess the success of these projects.

<b>Strengths</b>	Planting of Izen in 1 ha of the land.
<b>Weaknesses</b>	Lack of information of implementing projects
<b>Opportunities</b>	The seeds will be distributed to even more areas by the wind to further increase the coverage.  Many villagers are interested to get seeds and plant Izen themselves.
<b>Threats</b>	

### **5.9. Flour Processing**

Overview:

Four projects were successfully implemented. Many people were involved in establishment of the flour mills.

<b>Strengths</b>	Villagers can make flour by themselves in their villages, which decreases transport costs and time. Other villagers can buy flour for less money. There are also customers from other villages. Vulnerable villagers such as orphans were provided with flour. At the moment the project has a very small profit for the interested group.
<b>Weaknesses</b>	The monitoring of the Jamoat Development Committee.
<b>Opportunities</b>	This project will continue for the next 10 years.  Villagers have opportunity to processing their grain with low price and also other villagers can purchase flour at the low price.
<b>Threats</b>	Energy is expensive

## 5.10. *Infrastructure*

Overview:

Four projects were implemented as bridge construction, riverbank strengthening and road repair.

<b>Strengths</b>	The population has less difficulty during rainy and winter seasons.  Children are going to school without any problems.  Cattle access to go to the pastureland is better.  Villagers are no longer uses a dangerous road to travel.
<b>Weaknesses</b>	The riverbank protection project is not fully complete and more funds are required.
<b>Opportunities</b>	Two villages can establish new garden on the other side of bridge. Some of villagers are planning to increase the number of livestock.
<b>Threats</b>	Funds for completion of riverbank protection are not secured.

## 5.11. *Wool Processing*

Overview:

One short term project was successfully implemented in Lolazor Jamoat.

<b>Strengths</b>	Group selling their own products including carpets, thin rope, jumper, bags and etc.  They have their own customers at the market. Customer base is already existing.
<b>Weaknesses</b>	
<b>Opportunities</b>	To increase production.
<b>Threats</b>	Traditional techniques may take a lot of time and may not be cost effective in the future.

## **6. Results Summary**

In total 45 projects were evaluated by UN FAO and CAMP Coordinators in the period of one week in April & May 2010.

Projects as Garden establishment, Beekeeping, Water Supply, Cattle Breeding, Sewing Workshop, Flour Processing were successfully implemented and funds used effectively. The opinion of the monitors was that the infrastructure project and water supply had the most beneficiaries. Before there were major issues with drinking water and access to services such as schools, markets..etc. Although the infrastructure projects have a large number of beneficiaries there may be issues over their future maintenance.

The service projects such as blacksmiths, flour processing and sewing had a more select number of beneficiaries but again it was reported that there were significant benefits for stakeholders who were directly involved and for other stakeholders such as those living in different villages and possibly districts.

Group members actively participated in implementation of sub-projects, most of group members have their share in their project e.g. orchards, cattle breeding, bee keeping, flour processing.

One of the main themes that came through with all the projects was the bringing together of the community in structured and planned way. There are still some issues to be resolved with regards to distribution of funds, profits or products. The variety of projects meant that a large diverse cross section of beneficiaries was helped.

For the long term of sustainability of project activities important of Jamoat Development Committee communication with the villages, for their mutual collaboration, decision making.

## **7. Recommendations**

Monitoring was conducted only at the end of the project activities, it may be more beneficial to monitor the project through-out the implementation stage. This would allow for evaluation and review of the projects progress and the development of recommendations for improvements to the outcome.

The framework for monitoring preferably should have more time to get more information on the activities during project period. It would be interesting to undertake further monitoring and evaluation after another year to assess the sustainability of the projects.

Several projects should be supported with consultation and trainings with the aim for their sustainability. The monitoring team considered that the implementation of some of the projects could have been further supported by additional trainings in subjects such as pasture management, animal husbandry, fruit cultivation, fruit processing, business planning and marketing.

## **8. Conclusion**

This report took a 'light touch' approach to monitoring and evaluating of a large three year project. The results of the project proved to be very promising. In the 45 projects that were monitored and evaluated very few had not been fully implemented and none of the projects had run into such difficulty that they could not be completed in the near future.

Due to the time constraints there was only a brief review of paper work; therefore issues such as ownership, income and responsibility of the project were based mainly on interviews with the beneficiaries. Again in most cases the project had brought the community together and these issues had been resolved.

There were notable successes in beekeeping, the planting of gardens and in flour processing. Some monitoring could not be fully evaluated such as pasture management and project to aid in benefiting cattle as the full extent of the intervention will not be apparent for several years.

The infrastructure structures in this assessment proved to help the most beneficiaries and provide a significant to several communities.

One of the notable indirect benefits was the empowerment of the villagers and letting them decided what best suited their needs and what they were willing to participate and collaborate with.

## 9. Annex

ANNEX 1: Copy of the Questionnaire

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# FAO Project Evaluation Form

## Section 1: General

Project Component: \_\_\_\_\_ Jamoat: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Received: \_\_\_\_\_ Additional contribution: \_\_\_\_\_

Number & Title of Project: \_\_\_\_\_

Beneficiaries: \_\_\_\_\_

Timeframe for Project: \_\_\_\_\_ Village : \_\_\_\_\_

## Section 2: Project Evaluation

Main Objective:					
Main Activities:					
Level of Success	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	Un satisfactory
Level of Implementation?					
Organisation of Project?					
Quality of Implementation?					
Value for Money?					
Completed in Timeframe?					
Level of Community Participation?					
Did it help the target beneficiaries?					
Did it improve livelihoods?					
Is the Project Sustainable?					
Project integrated with other activities?					
Impact on the Environment					

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General Comments on Project Activities:

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### Section 3: Review

1. Stakeholders Interviewed / Title:

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2. Documents Reviewed:

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3. Overall Review and Recommendations:

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4. Interesting Stories:

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_