



Investing in rural people

Improving livelihoods and enhancing resilience of the rural poor in the Hindu Kush Himalayas to environmental and socio-economic changes (AdaptHimal)

GRANT RESULTS SHEET



Training on enterprise development for beekeeping in Khagrachari, CHT, Bangladesh

The programme enhanced the livelihoods of communities in mountainous areas through innovative strategies for livelihood diversification, natural-resource management and capacity-building

Introduction

About 200 million people live in the Hindu-Kush Himalaya (HKH), 31 per cent of them below the poverty line. Mountainous areas tend to face greater and specific challenges owing to higher levels of poverty, less access to basic facilities and services, greater isolation, and limited urban-rural linkages due to poor infrastructure development. The grant is one of three projects implemented under a broader regional programme (Adaptation to Change) financed by IFAD, the Government of Norway, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), and United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID). It builds on a previous IFAD-supported grant (Livelihoods and Ecosystem Services in the Himalayas: Enhancing Adaptation Capacity and Resilience of the Poor to Climate and Socio-Economic Changes programme), which was implemented by the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) in Nepal from 2009 to 2013. It aims to address poverty and enhance the livelihoods of rural communities in mountainous contexts.

Goals and objectives

The overall goal of AdaptHimal was to reduce rural poverty in the HKH and enhance the resilience of the poor, especially women, to social, economic and environmental changes. Specific objectives included: (i) assess the impact of socio-economic and environmental change on the poor in mountain areas, and identify adaptation mechanisms; (ii) pilot-test and validate innovative livelihood options; and (iii) enhance the capacity of partner institutions to respond to socio-economic and environmental challenges through knowledge management and sharing.





Facts at a glance

Grant-implementing agency

International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD)

Theme

Climate change and natural resources management

Benefiting countries

Bangladesh, India, Myanmar and Nepal

Total programme cost

IFAD: US\$ 1.2 million

ICIMOD: US\$ 800,000 (in-kind)

Effectiveness and duration

2014-2017

Linkages to IFAD investment project

Seven projects – three in India and four in Nepal

Beneficiaries

Programme beneficiaries included: small and marginal farmers, particularly women; poor and vulnerable communities; emerging rural entrepreneurs in mountain environments; and tribal and ethnic groups. These groups included: Chakma and Marma in Bangladesh; Khasis, Jaintias and Garos in Meghalaya and Karbis in Assam (India); Dalit in Nepal; and the Chin ethnic group (Myanmar). The grant reached out to a total of 2,600 people directly (4,282 indirectly), most of whom were from indigenous people (IPs) and tribal/ethnic groups, and half were women. Capacity was enhanced for a total of 489 staff of various local implementing partners, plus total 1,296 indirect partners.

Main activities

The programme had three main components:

Targeting the poor and vulnerable in the mountain context. The Poverty and Vulnerability Assessment (PVA) tool, developed by ICIMOD through the previous grant, was refined to better delineate poverty pockets and hone targeting strategies. It has been customized to suit the requirements of the IFAD-funded Livelihoods and Access to Markets Project (LAMP), implemented in Meghalaya (India), and to conduct the baseline survey of the IFAD-supported Adaptation for Smallholders in Hilly Areas (ASHA) project in Nepal. An assessment was also conducted to understand and manage environmental and socio-economic transformations in shifting cultivation in Bangladesh and Myanmar.

Promotion of innovative livelihood strategies. Value-chain analysis was conducted to help identify the market potential of various commodities and facilitate farmers' market linkages. For example, such an analysis was carried out for perilla in India, a traditional aromatic crop of mint family grown in India; and for cereal seeds and the goat and dairy subsectors in Nepal. The programme also strengthened the *tulsi* value chain and assessed its contribution to increasing farmers' incomes. Market linkages were established for some value chains, including pineapple and sticky rice in Meghalaya. In Nepal, a pilot was also initiated to harness financial remittances for promoting rural enterprise development, envisaging financial literacy, establishing formal remittance-transfer channels, linking remittance-receiving households to formal financial institutions, and developing business plans for commercial goat production. In Bangladesh, the grant pilot-tested and promoted bee-keeping and value-chain development for honey, which have excellent market potential and are suitable for landless or near-landless people. In Myanmar, integrated water management techniques were promoted to address acute water shortages while improving soil conservation practices, as part of the package of solutions to manage transformations in shifting cultivation. The programme also developed and tested a conceptual framework to assess the sustainability of value-chain interventions across economic, social and environmental parameters.

The programme enhanced communities' access to income-generating opportunities, markets, value chains, and finance, with local institutions mainstreaming innovations.

Enhancing capacities and integrated knowledge management.

Various activities were implemented, and knowledge products developed, as explained in the section Knowledge generated/disseminated (below).

Main results

Promoted and adopted innovative tools and practices. The programme tested, refined, mainstreamed and scaled up a variety of innovations, including: (i) the PVA tool, which some IFAD projects adopted, to improve geographical and social targeting based on location-specific drivers of poverty and vulnerability; (ii) situation analysis and microplanning for management of effective transformation of shifting cultivation areas in Bangladesh and Myanmar; (iii) tulsii value-chain interventions for production/cultivation, drying, storage and marketing in India; (iv) a bottom-up planning approach to support transformations in shifting cultivation as well as integrated water management and soil conservation techniques in Bangladesh and Myanmar; (v) a methodology for harnessing remittances for rural enterprise development in Nepal, whereby remittance-sending migrants and remittance-receiving households or returnee migrants are integrated in the value chain; and (vi) a framework for using geospatial tools (GIS) to assess watersheds, identify adaptation options and suitable sites for interventions, and develop subwatershed plans to better inform the local adaptation plans for action formulated under the ASHA project in Nepal.

Enhanced access to profitable income-generating opportunities, value chains, markets and finance. The programme helped identify, assess and promote sustainable value chains and income-generating opportunities, while enhancing market linkages, access to financial services, and rural enterprises. In India, tulsii farmers reported a gain of INR 2,050 on 0.2 ha (whereas, on paddy farming, they lost INR 1,400 on 0.2 ha). The average gross profit from tulsii farming rose from INR 2,631 (about US\$ 30) in 2014 to INR 5,478 (about US\$ 81) in 2015 by streamlining production processes and reducing crop damage through the use of better drying and storage technologies. There was also a significant swing in profit from total crop farming, up from a loss of INR 1,622 (about US\$ 24) in 2014 to a gain of INR 942 (about US\$ 14) in 2015 as a result of training. As part of the pilot, market linkages were established for fresh pineapples (packed in specially woven bamboo baskets) from Ri Bhoi to Guwahati by road, and to Delhi by Rajdhani express train. The pilot established that, in Delhi, farmers received about 20-40 per cent more than the market price for pineapples in Shillong (both summer and winter crops). The total value generated from pineapples (with a farm-gate value of INR 67,000) was INR 161000; however, this is the gross amount. In Bangladesh, the bee-keeping pilot showed promise, especially for landless people. A pool of bee-keepers and lead farmers were trained on bee management and improved beehives, and provided with the equipment required. In Nepal, all beneficiaries of the remittances

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pilot are now linked to the Environment Development Multipurpose Cooperative, and 10 per cent have access to microfinance institutions. Moreover, about 10 per cent of all participants are now part of the goat value chain developed under the IFAD loan project High Value Agriculture Project in Hill and Mountain Areas (HVAP).

Enhanced capacity of local institutions and in-country partners to take up and mainstream innovations. Local institutions (e.g. line departments, government institutions, NGOs, community institutions and producers groups) were strengthened to adopt and mainstream innovations and successful approaches. It is expected that the Meghalaya Basin Development Authority and the IFAD project Mega-LAMP will use the outcomes from the PVA tool for planning. Similarly, the Khagrachari Hill District Council is likely to take up recommendations made for managing transformations in shifting cultivation. The Choklei Organisation for Rural and Agricultural Development (CORAD) in Myanmar is expected to scale up programme innovations through its Livelihood and Food Security Trust Fund, working with smallholder farmers and landless people. In Nepal, HVAP will continue to support the participants in the remittance pilot, and scale up this approach.

Lessons learned

Working in four countries with diverse geographic landscapes, multiple implementing partners with variable capacities, and IFAD in-country investment projects under different stages of implementation, proved challenging. Such an undertaking requires a strong coordination role combined with early planning and regular backstopping.

Capacity-building of implementing partners in community development, monitoring and evaluation, and knowledge management is vital to ensure participatory implementation, monitor progress, inform project planning and implementation, and document successful approaches and innovations.

Building local capacity at all levels enhances the likelihood of innovation uptake, mainstreaming and scaling up.

Knowledge generated/disseminated

The programme had an agenda prioritizing knowledge management and knowledge-sharing through multi-stakeholder networks for facilitating cross-learning. Knowledge was disseminated through: country-specific and/or regional events; training, exposure visits (in- and cross-country), and workshops; use of electronic media and journal publications; and the development of a variety of knowledge products, including value-chain analyses and other studies, handbooks for project-promoted tools, case studies, and best practices.