



Sustainable Initiatives for Relief & Transformation

Impact Assessment & Evaluation (Final Year)



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Executive Summary

Country & Project Background

Pakistan is a disaster prone country frequently affected by drought, earthquakes and floods; it was hit both by a devastating shallow earthquake in 2005, and also by the worst flooding in 80 years in July 2010. Islamic Relief Pakistan (IRP) responded speedily to the earthquake victims, internally displaced people in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK), and to the 2010 floods which wreaked havoc on an unprecedented scale.

IRP implemented the Sustainable Initiatives for Relief & Transformation (SIRAT) project in two areas of Pakistan; namely Baluchistan and Sindh. Both are amongst the most deprived and calamity hit provinces of the country. The SIRAT project aimed to build the resilience of the targeted communities to disaster through social mobilisation; and through the provision of diversified portfolio of disaster resilient livelihoods, access to clean water, and in community development and advocacy.

Project Objectives

The project was heavily focused on initiatives designed to not only make a positive impact in the lives of the targeted beneficiaries, but to ensure that the communities would be able to independently sustain these post-exit, and also to make them secure from any future disasters. The project aimed to achieve this by providing assistance in three main sectors i.e. sustainable livelihoods, provision of safe drinking water, and also advocacy initiatives on DRR, climate change adaptation, and community development.

The project interventions were planned to directly benefit a total of 183,827 individuals (26,261 HH) out of the total population of 221,574 individuals (30,161 HH) in Sindh and Baluchistan. In Sindh, approximately 110,292 individuals (15,756 households) out of the total population of 137,590 (18,679 HH) of the four union councils i.e. Jati, Kothi, Keenjher and Gul Muhammad Baran of district Thatta were to benefit. In Baluchistan, the most severely affected segments of society are the women and children who succumb to various diseases and from dehydration. Furthermore, the physical exertion and time consumption for women to fetch water from distant locations was to be minimised through the interventions of this project. The project was to directly benefit a total of 10,505 households i.e. 73,535 individuals out of the total population of 83,984 (11,482 HH) in six union councils of Baluchistan.

Methodology

The purpose of this evaluation was to assess the impact of the intervention of this project, as per the agreed logframe and the theoretical assumptions behind the design of the project. Despite lengthy efforts however, permissions to enter Baluchistan were unfortunately not forthcoming and so it was not possible to visit this region; although the Baluchistan team were invited to Karachi for a one day meeting where the achievements of the projects were discussed, and documents that they were able to bring with them, checked.

The field portion of this evaluation was however, through necessity, limited to Sindh. Based on a planned 14 day mission, with 11 of these intended to be in the field and with an assumption that six people each could be interviewed on average each day by the two-man team, 132 one to one interviews were intended to be conducted across 11 villages.

Desk Review

An initial desk-based process involved the review of all relevant project documentation and carrying out the sampling for the field visits. The beneficiary list was consulted for random selection of beneficiaries.

With four union councils having been included in the project area, it was only possible to visit two during the project period. As such, a number was assigned to each and random numbers were then generated to select the two union councils to visit: these were Keenjher and Gul Mohammed Baran. The villages and beneficiaries to visit within each of these Union Councils were initially also randomly selected using the stratified simple random sampling method. However with 29 activities having been implemented in this project, the random selection did not cover all of the activities; as such, some purposive adjustments were then made to ensure that all activities would be covered.

Questionnaires were then designed for each activity based on the log frame and the project proposal, and implemented in the field through one to one interviews, focus group discussions, project site visits, and transect walks.

Field Data Collection

A 14 day mission was planned in total, with 11 of these intended to be in the field. Based upon an assumption that six one to one interviews each could be interviewed on average each day by the two-man team, 132 one to one interviews were planned to be conducted across 11 villages. One to One interviews were held in the field alongside Focus Group Discussions, transect walks, and project site visits for the purpose of triangulating and verifying the findings.

Three evaluation days in the field were however lost due to local political disturbances and which resulted in the evaluation team being confined to the hotel; two of these due to the assassination of a local politician two days before the due end of the evaluation. As such, the full document checks planned for the last day in the Sindh office also could not be conducted.

Unfortunately three evaluation days in the field were lost due to local political disturbances and which resulted in the evaluation team being confined to the hotel for security reasons.

Synthesis

On return from the field, the evaluation data was consolidated, inputted, and analysed with a draft report produced for the attention of the programmes team, for their review. The report was subsequently finalised and shared with the donor.

Project Achievements

- Of 17 sampled beneficiaries of commercial cereal, vegetable, rice, and sunflower activities, 15 (88%) saw increases in income as a direct result of this project. The largest of these was of a beneficiary who before the project had no income but who as a result of the project reported now having an income of 182,500 PKR, which converts to £1,216 per annum, or £3.33 a day.
- Of these same 17 sampled agricultural livelihoods beneficiaries who reported their incomes both before and after the project, the average increase in income as a result of the agricultural livelihood

activities in this project was 47,811 PKR per annum, which is the equivalent of £318 per annum. Excluding the two agricultural beneficiaries who reported no increase in income and the five who had no agricultural income before, the average percentage increase in income for the remaining agricultural beneficiaries was 276%.

- Every sampled beneficiary who when interviewed revealed having been indebted prior to the project, were as at the final evaluation, debt-free, and able to survive much easier on the income they were now earning from this project. One beneficiary, to avoid going into debt again, used his income gained as a result of this project to invest in a cow which he raised. This was then sold prior to the following harvest season so that he could buy the appropriate amount of seeds to sow for the next growing season.
- A bright 20 year old boy, who was selected by virtue of this to receive training in computer science, was able to report an income (182,500 PKR, or £1,216 p.a/15,208 PKR per month) as a result of this project, and which was an increase from nothing before. As a result of this project he set up a shop in the local town, which Islamic Relief helped him to set up with a computer, a printer, and software. People come to him to use his printer, and for which he earns about 500PKR a day. His rent is 300PKR a month, but this still leaves him with an income of 178,900 PKR or £1,192 p.a/14,908 PKR per month).
- Of 17 sampled agricultural beneficiaries, 9 reported that they were now farming all of their land as opposed to before, when they could only farm a smaller portion of it. This was due to their poverty and thus inability to afford inputs to farm the rest of the land; they also did not have the modern farming skills and so much lay fallow. Even the 8 beneficiaries who used to farm all of their land before this project, reported that their skills had improved and the productivity of their land had improved as a result of the intervention.
- Of 17 sampled agricultural beneficiaries, 9 reported that they were now farming all of their land as opposed to before, when they could only farm a smaller portion of it. This was due to their poverty and thus inability to afford inputs to farm the rest of the land; they also did not have the modern farming skills and so much lay fallow. Even the 8 beneficiaries who used to farm all of their land before this project, reported that their skills had improved and the productivity of their land had improved as a result of the intervention.
- Women have historically not been confident enough or able to communicate openly with strangers. But during the focus group discussions for this evaluation, the women in many villages were passionately and openly discussing the support they had received from this project. This was universally explained to have been because of this project, and which encouraged and gave them the confidence to do so.
- The easier access to water and the time saved had a direct and positive impact on the cleanliness of these villages. Training provided by Islamic Relief about the vital importance of cleanliness, as part of this WASH activity, contributed towards greater cleanliness with everyone quoting the Islamic teaching about cleanliness being half of faith whereas previously, and with so much time being taken for the fetching of water, the women were not able to clean their villages as often. Villages had initiated cleanliness campaigns with a Cleaning Day being organised by community organisations for this purpose. Children's knowledge and awareness of such issues have also increased, with their reportedly asking their parents, when the soap runs out, for them to buy some more, due to their desire to maintain cleanliness. The greater cleanliness achieved due to this project also contributed,

alongside access to clean water, to improved health and thus reductions in medical costs otherwise incurred due to villagers falling ill due to water-borne diseases.

- Times taken for women to fetch water have reduced by upto two-and-a-half hours a day in the most extreme case. The easier access to water also improved the safety of not only the women who used to fetch the water but also of their children. Women had to walk long distances, in one case across a main road with a pitcher in one hand, a child in the other, and also whilst having to shepherd other children to keep them safe whilst crossing the road. Now, with the water being available in the villages, this was no longer an issue for them. Where they had to leave children at home, they had to go hungry whilst their mother was fetching the water; this is no longer an issue.
- The community organisations set up with the support of Islamic Relief have been launching their own community development activities. A teacher didn't attend school and hadn't done so for a long time despite being paid by the authorities, so the concerned village advocated to the authorities; a second village also suffered the same problem, took the same course of action, and it was remedied by the authorities. The teacher was subsequently ordered to attend by the Educational Department and has been attending regularly since, ensuring that the children of the concerned village do receive an education. Thirty children (boys and girls) were also enrolled into schools in 4km away, and mobilised parents to this end. In one particular Union Council, 32 schools were reopened and teachers provided as a direct result of advocacy carried out by beneficiaries of this project; their ability to do this was reported during interviews to have been acquired as a result of the support provided in this project.
- In one village there was a very strong awareness of climate change and their responsibility to do something about it. One villager in particular was so passionate about this that he contacted the Forestry Department and sourced cheap tree seedlings for 15 PKR each, to plant in his own village; he has also been advocating the cause with other villages, and has helped them to source and plant trees in their villages too. These act as a flood defence and help to mitigate against climate change.
- This same beneficiary reported that whereas they used to chop trees for livelihoods, they have stopped now. He understood and explained the carbon cycle to the evaluation team, including how chopping trees negatively affects the environment. They now understand the significance of trees. Other villages also come, see, and ask about reasons for planting trees and as a result of which they too are planting trees in their villages. Women were both culturally and due to lack of confidence, but as a result of the dedicated support in this project, they are much more confident and can talk to male strangers now.

Challenges

- The evaluator was not granted a visa for travel to Pakistan and so was thus unable to receive a No Objection Certificate (NOC) for onward travel to Baluchistan to be able to evaluate that portion of the project. As such, this evaluation was limited to Sindh where the evaluator, by virtue of his Overseas Pakistani Identity Card, was able to travel without a visa.
- Security problems even in Sindh however meant that permission to enter the project area came with the condition that he stay in Karachi rather than in a local bed and breakfast – a five hour round journey. This limited the time available to work in the field.

- Capacity for this evaluation was limited and so a statistically representative sample of the population could not be visited, although the sample to visited was selected randomly using Stratified Simple Random Sampling.
- Some beneficiaries, although sampled, were not available on the day and so had to be replaced with other suitable beneficiaries who were present on the day of the evaluation in the given villages.
- Three days of the planned two-week evaluation were lost with the evaluator confined to his hotel due to local security problems; the first day was due to local political demonstrations due to a domestic political issue, whilst the other two were due to the assassination of a local politician and which resulted in demonstrations and road closures. All of this meant that three sampled villages and their beneficiaries could not be visited. The project document checks planned in the field office on the final day of the evaluation therefore could not therefore take place, but scans of some documents were requested and checked.

MAIN REPORT

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Country Profile

Islamic Relief Worldwide (IRW) is an international relief and development agency that enjoys a consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council and is a signatory to the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Code of Conduct. IRW is dedicated to alleviating the suffering of the world's poorest people through promoting social and economic development in over 30 countries throughout sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, the Middle East and Eastern Europe as well as responding to natural and man-made disasters.

Pakistan is a disaster prone country frequently affected by drought, earthquakes and floods. It was hit by a devastating shallow earthquake in 2005 and the worst flooding in 80 years in July 2010. Apart from the destruction to property, livelihoods and infrastructure, malnutrition also took root. IRP responded speedily to the earthquake victims, internally displaced people in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) and the 2010 floods which wreaked havoc on an unprecedented scale. The amount of £14,545,809 was raised by Islamic Relief Worldwide during the floods.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The current project was proposed in light of the needs identified by the communities along with field assessment and impact analysis. The project is a continuation of the ongoing efforts of Islamic Relief Pakistan to improve the lives of disaster affected people, and will provide the leverage to scale- up existing programmes in both regions. Due to minimal income generation and unavailability of employment, the population is still suffering from the effects of drought and floods and is dependent on outside support to cover their basic needs.

Pakistan is a disaster prone country frequently affected by drought, earthquakes and floods. It was hit by a devastating shallow earthquake in 2005 and the worst flooding in 80 years in July 2010. Apart from the destruction to property, livelihoods and infrastructure, malnutrition also took root. IRP responded speedily to the earthquake victims, internally displaced people in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) and the 2010 floods which wreaked havoc on an unprecedented scale.

It is against this backdrop, Islamic Relief Pakistan (IRP) focuses on multi-sectoral interventions. In sustainable development, it interjects in health, nutrition and eye care; rehabilitation of educational facilities and skill enhancement through vocational training, access to drinking water and adequate sanitation, natural resource management, livestock, introduction of new methodologies and practices in agriculture and vegetation and micro enterprise development. The humanitarian programme deals with relief, recovery, rehabilitation and seasonal programmes. Reducing the risk factor to a minimum is the key objective in all humanitarian interventions. The child welfare programme supports an orphan's family to manage their living and raise awareness among the sponsored families about their rights.

The project is heavily focused on sustainable development initiatives to rehabilitate the lives of affected population and make them secure from any future disasters. The project aims to achieve this by providing assistance in three main sectors i.e. sustainable livelihoods, provision of safe drinking water and advocacy initiatives on DRR and climate change adaptation. The project interventions will directly benefit a total of 183,827 individuals (26,261 HH) out of the total population of 221,574 individuals (30,161 HH) in Sindh and Baluchistan.

AIMS & OBJECTIVES

The project was heavily focused on sustainable development initiatives to rehabilitate the lives of affected population and make them secure from any future disasters. The project aimed to achieve this by providing assistance in three main sectors i.e. sustainable livelihoods, provision of safe drinking water and advocacy initiatives on DRR and climate change adaptation.

The project interventions were planned to directly benefit a total of 183,827 individuals (26,261 HH) out of the total population of 221,574 individuals (30,161 HH) in Sindh and Baluchistan. In Sindh, approximately 110,292 individuals (15,756 households) out of the total population of 137,590 (18,679 HH) of the four union councils i.e. Jati, Kothi, Keenjher and Gul Muhammad Baran of district Thatta were to benefit. In Baluchistan, the most severely affected segments of society are the women and children who succumb to various diseases and from dehydration. Furthermore, the physical exertion and time consumption for women to fetch water from distant locations was to be minimised through the interventions of this project. The project was to directly benefit a total of 10,505 households i.e. 73,535 individuals out of the total population of 83,984 (11,482 HH) in six union councils of Baluchistan.

The specific objectives of the project were to:

WASH

- Provide access to a sustainable source of water to drinking and irrigation water to mitigate the risk of poor health due to contamination of water with different pollutants.
- Sensitise communities through effective advocacy campaigns against open defecation
- Familiarise them with models of good latrines that can improved their health and hygiene.
- Change the behaviours and attitudes of people towards hand washing and overall health and hygiene. Project participants, including children, were to be accessed through schools as well as through the work being done in their villages.

Livelihoods

- Diversify the economy of the local area by training people, especially women, in different vocations.
- Boost entrepreneurial activities in the local economy
- Familiarise and train farmers with the best farming techniques practiced in arid and semi-arid zones.
- Rehabilitate cultivable land through provision of agricultural inputs and irrigation support.

Climatic/Ecological Change and DRR

- Establish improved early warning systems for flash floods at local level, with appropriate communication systems.
- Prepare communities in community-based disaster risk management, and take mitigation measures in the construction of houses, sanitation facilities, and installation of safe drinking water supply schemes.

Methods and Materials

Despite lengthy efforts, permissions to enter Baluchistan were unfortunately not forthcoming and so it was not possible to visit this region; the Baluchistan team were however invited to Karachi for a one day meeting where the achievements of the projects were discussed, and documents that they were able to bring with them, checked. This impact study/evaluation was thus confined to Sindh although local security problems meant that the evaluation team had to book a hotel in Karachi, requiring a daily 4-5 hour round trip, rather than staying in the project area itself.

Desk Review

An initial desk review process involved the review of all relevant project documentation and carrying out the sampling for the field visits. The beneficiary list was consulted for random selection of beneficiaries. With four union councils having been included in the project area, it was only possible to visit two during the project period. As such, a number was assigned to each and random numbers were then generated to select the two union councils to visit: these were Keenjher and Gul Mohammed Baran. The villages and beneficiaries to visit within each of these Union Councils were initially also randomly selected using the stratified simple random sampling method. However with 29 activities having been implemented in this project, the random selection did not cover all of the activities; as such, some purposive adjustments were then made to ensure that all activities would be covered.

Questionnaires were then designed for each activity based on the log frame and the project proposal, and implemented in the field through one to one interviews, focus group discussions, project site visits, and transect walks.

Field Data Collection

A 14 day mission was planned in total, with 11 of these intended to be in the field. Based upon an assumption that six one to one interviews each could be interviewed on average each day by the two-man team, 132 one to one interviews were planned to be conducted across 11 villages. One to One interviews were held in the field alongside Focus Group Discussions, transect walks, and project site visits for the purpose of triangulating and verifying the findings.

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Synthesis

On return from the field, the evaluation data was consolidated, inputted, and analysed with a draft report produced for the attention of the programmes team, for their review. The report was subsequently finalised and shared with the donor.

The specific objectives of this evaluation were to:

1. Assess the extent to which the project as a whole has delivered the anticipated objectives indicated in the log frame with specific attention to outputs, outcomes and impact.
2. Assess the effectiveness of aid in contribution to improve food security and enhance resilience in the face of climate variability
3. Determine the magnitude and distribution of changes (intended and unintended) in outcome and impact indicators among different segments of the target population and to differentiate the changes that are attributable to the project interventions from other external factors contributing to change
4. Assess the key innovations used in the project that improved or worsened delivery of project impacts and how the learning was used in improving project performance.
5. Analyse and comment on the sustainability of the project outcomes/impacts and suggest measures to maintain long term sustainability.
6. Document lessons learned, develop clear and actionable recommendations for IRP and IRW for adoption and integration into any similar future development related projects in the region.

Challenges

- The evaluator was not granted a visa for travel to Pakistan and so was thus unable to receive a No Objection Certificate (NOC) for onward travel to Baluchistan to be able to evaluate that portion of the project. As such, this evaluation was limited to Sindh where the evaluator, by virtue of his Overseas Pakistani Identity Card, was able to travel without a visa.
- Security problems however persisted and permission for the evaluator to work in Sindh came with the condition that he stay in Karachi rather than in a local bed and breakfast – a five hour round journey. This limited the time available to work in the field.
- Capacity for this evaluation was limited and so a statistically representative sample of the population could not be visited, although the sample to visited was selected randomly using Stratified Simple Random Sampling.
- Some beneficiaries, although sampled, were not available on the day and so had to be replaced with other suitable beneficiaries who were present on the day of the evaluation in the given villages.
- Three days of the planned two-week evaluation were lost with the evaluator confined to his hotel due to local security problems; the first day was due to local political demonstrations due to a domestic political issue, whilst the other two were due to the assassination of a local politician and which resulted in demonstrations and road closures. All of this meant that three sampled beneficiaries and their beneficiaries could not be visited, and neither could the project document checks in the Sindh field office, planned for the final day of the evaluation, be conducted.

CHAPTER TWO: DETAILED FINDINGS

Document checks

Due to the aforementioned security issues whilst conducting this evaluation in the field, the project documents could not be fully checked and verified. The Baluchistan team travelled to Karachi where a one day meeting was held with them; the team brought as many documents from their office as they could and across the breadth of the project, which the evaluator checked. The targeted beneficiary numbers for some activities were fully confirmed because the documents were present, whilst for others, they were only partly confirmed because the rest of the documents could not be brought by the team.

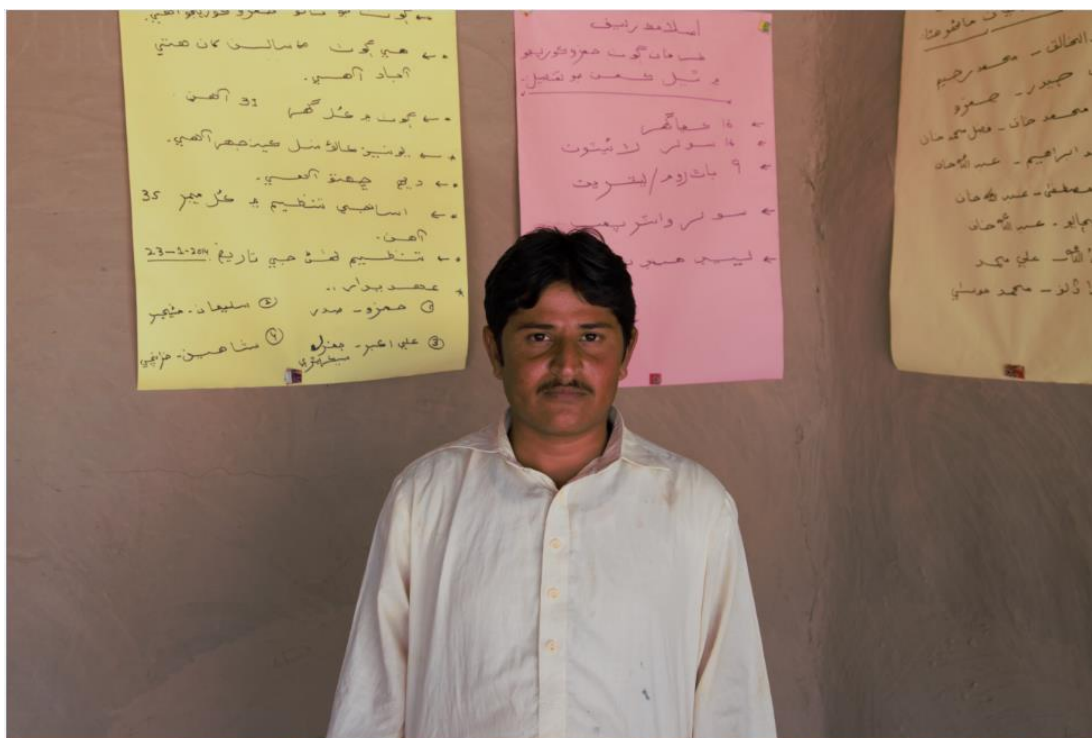
For the Sindh office, due to not being able to travel in the last two days, the evaluator instead checked a limited number of documents that were scanned and emailed upon request. These documents were all in order.

Impact Indicator 1: People living above the poverty line

Target: 53,000 people surface above the poverty line

Cereal & Commercial Vegetable Grants

- The indicator: “53,000 people surface above the poverty line” was not appropriate as there was no capacity to be able to properly measure and test this. Indicators must be designed with consideration for all risks, including the available capacity.
- Of 17 sampled beneficiaries of commercial cereal, vegetable, rice, and sunflower activities, 15 (88%) saw increases in income as a direct result of this project. The largest of these was of a beneficiary who before the project had no income but who as a result of the project reported now having an income of 182,500 PKR, which converts to £1,216 per annum, or £3.33 a day.
- Of these same 17 sampled agricultural livelihoods beneficiaries who reported their incomes both before and after the project, the average increase in income as a result of the agricultural livelihood activities in this project was 47,811 PKR per annum, which is the equivalent of £318 per annum. Excluding the two agricultural beneficiaries who reported no increase in income and the five who had no agricultural income before, the average percentage increase in income for the remaining agricultural beneficiaries was 276%.
- A male agricultural beneficiary in this project reported such: “We used to purchase seeds and fertiliser on credit, but since this project, we are out of debt. We have not yet replanted sunflower since the last harvest, but will buy more seeds and have saved 4-5,000PKR for this purpose. The rest of the money was used for household costs, to pay off debt (15,000PKR), and for groceries. I will now lease more land from a small landowner and rear livestock and farm it for further income. Previously very few in the village farmed sunflowers because it wasn't in vogue, and we also couldn't afford it; but now we can. I also got Paravet training and was chosen because I asked for it during the initial consultations. I have completed the training but have not received a certificate received; I will use the certificate to work as a Paravet, or be self employed if necessary.” He also said: “You [IR] have helped us a great deal, but now it's our hard work to do [to make the most of this opportunity!]”

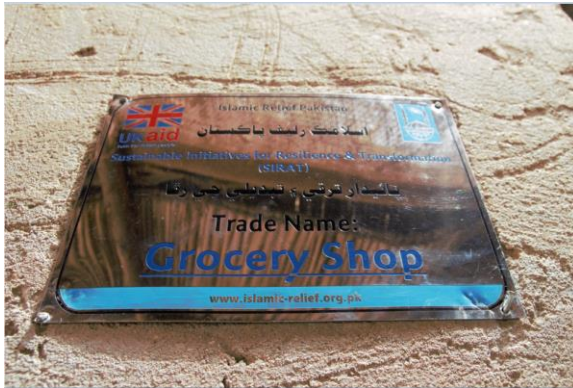


An agricultural beneficiary

- A 35 year old beneficiary of the exposure visits reported such: “We used to sow seeds that did not produce good harvests for us; at most we used to get about 400kg per harvest. But now, as a result of the support provided, I get 1200kg per harvest. We also used to take loans but not anymore because the harvest is enough for our needs. We bought livestock from our savings and raised them; these livestock are then sold to buy seeds for planting in the next season - so no loans were needed. We are much happier now, especially as no-one else has ever provided us with such support in this area.”
- A male beneficiary from the Sunflower portion of this project reported: “With my profits from this project, I bought an extra goat. I now have 4 goats and can give my children extra milk to drink. I cannot however find the same seed in the market that IR gave to him - the Canola variety - and so am not sure which seed is best to buy in the future. Bad traders dye cheap seed to look the same as the expensive variety, and I can't tell the difference.” The exposure visits training did provide knowledge in how to select the best seeds, but this beneficiary, although he greatly benefited from aspects of the project, did not have this information because no one passed the training onto him.

Micro-enterprise Development Grants

- A female owner of a village shop who purchased stock for sale in her shop with the grant reported as follows: “Before this project we only purchased small things; but now, we can afford to purchase and do good things for the children. Only IR has helped in this shop, no-one else; as such, all is due to IR's support. There has also been an impact on rest of the village too, and even for other nearby villages, as they used to have to incur transport costs to go to Sajawal to do shopping - 20PKR a day. Now they can all buy from me, and they save money too.”



Grocery shop supported through a micro-enterprise grant



The owner of the grocery store

- A 25 year old male beneficiary of a micro-enterprise grant reported such: “I was nearly destitute before the project. I used to work in Karachi as a general builder and was okay as a single man, but after having to return and marry, I couldn't earn enough even for a basic living. On most days from 2010-2013, we only had bread and relied on handouts from neighbours for a curry. Through my savings from the catering business that I have set up, I have built us a home; previously we lived in a hut with a plastic bag roof. I have seen prosperity as a result of this project and I am psychologically at peace in my home. I am earning and can show my face to the world. I now also want to help my mum and wife to learn a skill so that they too can earn.”

Vocational/Skills Training

- A female beneficiary of embroidery and sewing training reported thus about her training: “Life is much easier and I am much happier as I can earn much more money now. More advanced training would have been good however. I would like a proper embroidery machine which costs 7,000 PKR and am saving to buy one.”
- Another female embroidery beneficiary said during her interview: “With the money I earned from my new livelihood, I bought clothes for the children. My husband also earned 30,000 PKR from sunflower and rice harvest last year. We never used to buy meat but now can afford it twice a week; and can always afford bread. I now also have extra money which I spend on household items.”

Restocking of Poultry

- One of the sampled beneficiary's was assessed during the beneficiary selection process to be wealthy enough not to receive a grant of chickens from the project but still received training in their management. This beneficiary then purchased two chickens of her own (although she could not tell which breed), and as at the evaluation, she had 27 being reared. This beneficiary also reported that

she had previously lost all of her chickens to disease but after the training she received in rearing poultry including in their vaccination, although she still loses 50% of her stock, the remainder survives.

- A second female beneficiary received 10 chickens as well as 12kg of poultry feed which was enough to last 15 days. She also reported receiving training in the preparation of chicken feed, and also in watering, handling and vaccinating the chickens, as well as cleaning the chicken coop. She however lost 6 of her chickens, which she attributed to the harsh local climate and that they apparently could not survive hunger and thirst as well as the local breed.
- A third beneficiary female beneficiary also received 10 chickens of the Misri breed, but she was not aware of any consultations having been done about the breed of chicken to be given; she was not part of any consultations and received what she was given. This beneficiary reported having received 35kg which turned out to have been a guess as subsequent checks revealed that she actually received 25kg of feed, and which was enough for 15 days. After this she fed them 'red rice' which is a cheap feed and available at the market. Although there was no evidence that the red rice was having any adverse impact of the survival of the chickens, it might be possible that this breed that produces so many eggs might not be getting enough protein (aside from rice) to sustain them? This issue should be explored further as if the red rice is causing a nutritional deficit in the chickens, then the learning could be applied in the future.
- A female beneficiary previously owned 3 chickens and got 45 eggs per month, and all of which she used for household consumption. In the winter an egg is worth 20PKR and in summer, 10PKR. She now sells 5 eggs a day and so earns between 50-100 PKR depending on the season, which she uses to buy food. She can now sometimes afford lentils instead of just eating vegetables and rice. Her chickens also breed and produce chicks which she also raises and sells, although she too admitted that she would in the future buy the local breed instead of Misri, because they are apparently easier to look after and breed. The cost of looking after the Misri breed also was too high as far as she was concerned for just eggs; the return on sale of eggs was not enough. Her husband was evicted from his farm a few years previously and to make a living, turned to carting wood to sell at the market. They had been in extreme poverty during this time and had little to eat except for bread and occasional vegetables; they missed many meals. Her husband now works in a tyre repair shop and earns 150-200PKR a day. With their combined incomes, things are now much easier for them as they have two sources of income. They can afford to eat lentils as well as vegetables and bread, with meat maybe once a month.
- The fourth sampled female beneficiary who also received a grant of ten chickens of the Misri breed without having been aware of any consultations, like the above example, also received 35 kg of chicken feed which lasted 15 days, and also received training in looking after her chickens. She too fed her chickens with red rice and reported mixed results with the breed that she received; like the other beneficiaries, she said that they were good egg layers but struggled with the heat. She got 7 eggs a day from the chickens she had, and of which she fed three to her children and sold the other four.

Outcome Indicator 1: Households with Improved Food Security

Target: 26% of households have improved their food security with at least 12,000 PKR for a food basket per month

- It is not clear whether the target indicator of 26% of households earning at least 12,000 PKR for a food basket per month was met. Of 22 livelihoods beneficiaries across all activities who were able to provide appropriate income data, only four (18%) of the sampled beneficiaries reported their income now being more than 12,000 PKR per month. Beneficiaries were largely however unable to provide figures for how much money others in their households earned and so although it is possible that the indicator was met, this could not be reliably established during the evaluation.
- Of the four beneficiaries reporting personal income of over 12,000 PKR, only one of these benefited from agricultural activities; the remainder having been from microenterprise grants. The most change was witnessed in a beneficiary who received a cart to transport vegetables, and from which he was now earning over 15,000 PKR per month where previously he was relying on the charity of fellow villagers. Two of the other beneficiaries earning more than 12,000 PKR per month were female tailors/embroiderers, whilst the other ran a business selling samosa's and other street food. Only four of the surveyed agricultural beneficiaries were able to provide information for both their monthly income and the value of the produce that they consumed so as to then calculate the value of their produce that they consumed, and as such, it was not possible to capture this data for a reasonable number of the sampled households. But an average of 57% of produce was consumed by those farmers who reported figures for such; with the average monthly income reported by the agricultural households being 6,138 PKR per month. When adjusting this average reported income to account for the average value of consumed production, this increases to 14,274 PKR per month and which is over the targeted monthly income.
- Of the 17 beneficiaries interviewed whose income relied on agricultural farming, five of these, including the earlier example, previously had no income from this sector but now enjoyed incomes from it: 40,000 PKR (£266 p.a), 29,200 PKR (£194 p.a), 26,600 PKR (£197) and 96,000 PKR (£640 p.a). To continue from the first point above, this example shows that the stated incomes are much less than 12,000 PKR per month but they are still considered a success given that they now have enough food to support themselves, which they would otherwise have had to purchase, and they also have incomes on top. They were not able to report incomes of other household members however, and so it is not clear exactly what their total household income was.
- All livelihood beneficiaries were asked about improvements in their food security as a direct result of this project, if any, to assess any changes. Every livelihoods beneficiary across all activities, except one, reported that they now ate three meals a day, with the other household reporting that they are two. This issue did however go deeper than this given that although even before the project the vast majority of beneficiaries were eating three meals a day, the quality of these meals was often poor with many reporting having eaten green chilli's with chapattis. Three meals a day is therefore not necessarily a water-tight indicator of success of such projects given that it does not consider the quality of those meals; two meals a day, if culturally appropriate, and if containing good amounts of nutrition, can be more than enough.
- It was a mix, but the vast majority reported that before the project they used to 'eat well' only once a week. To eat well, in the local beneficiary context, mostly involves the facility to eat vegetables, fish and meat; and in one case, this even involved the ability to eat lentils as at other times they just ate chilli's with chapatti's. In another case, they used to eat lentils and vegetables but which they

referred to as not eating well. There was no correlation that could be found between the definition of 'eating well', and the households' socio economic status, as the family that referred to the consumption of vegetables and lentils as not eating well was amongst the poorest of beneficiaries. It is possible that they had higher expectations of what it meant to eat well, but it was not clear. Every beneficiary did however report that they could now eat well much more often than before the project; where before the majority could only do so once a week, this had increased to at least twice a week with some households reporting being able to eat well three times a week.

- Every sampled beneficiary who when interviewed revealed having been indebted prior to the project, were as at the final evaluation, debt-free, and able to survive much easier on the income they were now earning from this project. One beneficiary, to avoid going into debt again, used his income gained as a result of this project to invest in a cow which he raised. This was then sold prior to the following harvest season so that he could buy the appropriate amount of seeds to sow for the next growing season.

Output Indicator 1.1: Number of beneficiaries with new and improved skills

Target: 7% of beneficiaries trained in agriculture/livestock/business/FFS/vocational skills

- The target for this activity was met with 65% (42 out of 64) of the total sampled beneficiaries having received new and improved skills, either directly or indirectly, in agriculture, livestock, business, FFS, or in vocational skills.
- This project provided selected beneficiaries with exposure visits to learn advanced agricultural techniques which they would not only apply to their own farms, but also teach to others; this evaluation sampled four people to interview in regard to this. This goal had been achieved with each beneficiary reporting that not only had they passed on their training to others, but also that there had been a benefit of this training worth between 150% - 300% in increased agricultural production. A strong sense of community had also been fostered as a result of this activity and project as a whole, with one beneficiary working as a volunteer on other people's land to help them to make the most of this training that he had received.



- Various change stories were recounted by the beneficiaries of how they had little knowledge before the project and even used to plant seeds out of season, but their new knowledge now allowed them to be able to plant the correct seeds at the right time. This extended to the purchase of seeds from the market: vendors previously were able to take advantage of the buyers' lack of knowledge and sell inappropriate seeds, but their new knowledge allowed them to ensure that they bought the correct seeds. This knowledge even extended to their now being able to sift through individual seeds to select the best ones.
- There was however uncertainty about the possible impact of hybrid seeds upon land. Some farmers reported upon questioning that although their yields had increased with the hybrid seeds provided in this project, they would not be able to plant them for a further two years to allow the land to recover; but other farmers said that they would be able to plant these seeds on an ongoing basis without any negative impact. This requires further investigation to feed into learning and thus to ensure that all such beneficiaries are provided the correct information and guidance. If the land cannot be sown with hybrid seeds for two years after use, then the increases in income must be investigated to show whether this increase is enough to cover the two years where they will not be able to plant the same seeds again.

Youth Scholarship

- Seven beneficiaries of youth scholarships were sampled to be interviewed in this project; of these, one reported her income to be 41 years of age and so could not be considered to be youth. Of the remaining six, only one of the youth was able to report an income as a direct result of this activity and project, and so it was not possible to gauge changes in the incomes of the youth beneficiaries as a result of this activity.
- The one sampled youth beneficiary who was able to report an income, a bright 20 year old, and who was selected by virtue of this to receive training in computer science, was able to report an income (182,500 PKR, or £1,216 p.a/15,208 PKR per month) as a result of this project, and which was an increase from nothing before. As a result of this project he set up a shop in the local town, which Islamic Relief helped him to set up with a computer, a printer, and software. People come to him to use his printer, and for which he earns about 500PKR a day. His rent is 300PKR a month, but this still leaves him with an income of 178,900 PKR or £1,192 p.a/14,908 PKR per month).
- Although the activity was referred to as a 'youth scholarship', it was not clear that the activity itself suited the term given to it. In large part, and based upon the sampled beneficiaries, this was just about short training given in tailoring, computers, motorcycle repair, and such. Equipment, e.g. a PC and tools for the beneficiaries who to then start a livelihood were given, but there was little evidence of any formal educational assistance and to which the term 'scholarship' might have appropriately applied. The only sampled beneficiary of this activity to whom the term could realistically have applied was the above mentioned beneficiary of computer science, who reported having received 55 days' worth of training in setting up hardware, computer networking, and in software packages like MS Office.

Restocking of poultry

- There were five beneficiaries of this activity sampled to be interviewed as part of this evaluation but two of these in one village were out harvesting during the visit, and it was not possible to replace them. As such, only three poultry beneficiaries were interviewed.
- In consultation with the beneficiaries, the Misri breed of chicken was selected for this project as it gives 50 eggs per month, and which is more than the local Sindhi breed. The benefit for income and thus livelihoods was the primary motivator. Training in poultry management was provided but what does not seem to have been considered was that the Misri breed can struggle to survive in the harsh temperatures experienced in the project area and so some were unfortunately dying. Foot and mouth disease was also a factor and which beneficiaries reported during the interviews as a problem; but even though beneficiaries paid to have the chickens vaccinated, some still died. One to one interviews with beneficiaries revealed that without exception, all of the females would now choose the local variety despite its laying fewer eggs.

Value Addition Training

- Two sampled beneficiaries of this activity reported receiving value addition in the production of kulfi ice cream and related dairy products. Both of the recipients of this activity specifically requested this during the initial consultations, and their requests were met by Islamic Relief.
- Both of these female recipients of this activity recounted with great enthusiasm and satisfaction the training they received, and how they have been making the dairy products ever since. Although they had produced dairy products for sale before, this activity provided them with much more detail, including sweet and salty varieties and also marketing and pricing techniques. One of the beneficiaries also recalled how before this project she used to make what she thought was kulfi ice cream, but she didn't know the correct ratios of milk and other ingredients required; but she does now and her product was much improved. They were also provided with training in producing different types of curries, e.g. karahi's, that they had not encountered before.
- A learning taken in this activity however was that although marketing training was provided, a lack of mobile refrigeration units meant that the products, especially ice creams, were being consumed by children within their own villages as they could not be transported for sale to other villages, nor to the markets.

Output Indicator 1.2: Market revitalised through development grants

Target: 100 existing businesses rehabilitated through dispersion of grants

- Eight beneficiaries of microenterprise development grants were sampled in this project, and ranged from the purchase of a cart for transportation of goods, embroidery/sewing, the improvement of existing grocery stores, and others. Five of these eight beneficiaries were female.
- Of these eight beneficiaries, five were able to report income figures for both before and after the project. The two highest reported income changes from amongst these five beneficiaries were 182,500 PKR (£1,216 p.a) and 180,000 PKR (£1200 p.a), both of whom saw these increases from a zero income before the project. The first of these two examples related to training and equipment

provided to help a female beneficiary set up as a tailor/embroiderer, whilst the second example was for tyre repair.

- The average income increase for relevant sampled beneficiaries was 118,350 PKR (£789 p.a), although if the two outlying examples are removed, the average increase based on the three other examples was 76,417 PKR (£509 p.a). Only two sampled beneficiaries reported income figures for both before and after the project; the average percentage increase in income for these two beneficiaries was 140%.
- Although the other beneficiaries were not able to show income figures for both before and after the project, all said that their incomes would increase but that it was too soon to give proper figures given that the support they received had only recently concluded.

Output Indicator 1.3: Land available for adaptive cropping methods

Target: 6960 acres of land cultivated through FFS, both on and off season, and crop/vegetable farming, and with improved irrigation

- Due to the loss of the final day in the field as a result of the political disturbances and which is when the document checks were due to be conducted in the office, it was not possible to verify this indicator.
- Of 17 sampled agricultural beneficiaries, 9 reported that they were now farming all of their land as opposed to before, when they could only farm a smaller portion of it. This was due to their poverty and thus inability to afford inputs to farm the rest of the land; they also did not have the modern farming skills and so much lay fallow. Even the 8 beneficiaries who used to farm all of their land before this project, reported that their skills had improved and the productivity of their land had improved as a result of the intervention.
- One female agricultural beneficiary reported as follows: “We are now motivated to work on our land as we know what we are doing. Previously, we didn’t prepare the land and left it relatively fallow, but now we are motivated.” They would however prefer standard seeds in place of the hybrid ones provided in this project because of not being able to sow them again for two years after the harvest.

Impact Indicator 2: Climate Change Adaptation Mechanisms at Union Council Level

Target: Resilient communities established in 10 Union Councils of Baluchistan and Sindh

It was not possible to visit all 10 Union Councils in Baluchistan and Sindh due to capacity, and also due to the challenges in this evaluation as mentioned above; but two union councils in Sindh were visited over this two week evaluation mission.

Water, Sanitation, Health & Hygiene (WASH)

- Women have historically not been confident enough or able to communicate openly with strangers. But during the focus group discussions for this evaluation, the women in many villages were not only passionately discussing the support they had received from this project but the one issue that really motivated them was the water and the relative ease that this has brought them.



The women in this meeting, outnumbering the men during the focus group, were very vocal about the benefits that they have seen in this project, especially the lady second from the right.

- The easier access to water and the time saved had a direct and positive impact on the cleanliness of these villages. Training provided by Islamic Relief about the vital importance of cleanliness, as part of this WASH activity, contributed towards greater cleanliness with everyone quoting the Islamic teaching about cleanliness being half of faith whereas previously, and with so much time being taken for the fetching of water, the women were not able to clean their villages as often. Villages had initiated cleanliness campaigns with a Cleaning Day being organised by community organisations for this purpose. Children's knowledge and awareness of such issues have also increased, with their reportedly asking their parents, when the soap runs out, for them to buy some more, due to their desire to maintain cleanliness. The greater cleanliness achieved due to this project also contributed, alongside access to clean water, to improved health and thus reductions in medical costs otherwise incurred due to villagers falling ill due to water-borne diseases.
- One village, after the support provided by IR, paid for a second water tank from their own savings and on their own initiative, and had it attached to the borehole to increase their supply of water. Their first water tank however was not operational at the time of the evaluation and which the village attributed to vermin biting through the underground pipes. When asked, the villagers said that they would have that repaired. This should be taken as learning; that where action can be taken to further protect the piping during installation, these should be considered and incorporated into future such programming.
- Following the WASH support provided by IRP, a health and hygiene campaign is now being held by one village on the 9th of each month and which involves the village coming together to ensure that everything is clean. All other villages also reported that although they have no dedicated campaign, they also work to keep their environments clean. This has also had a positive impact on their health as all villages reported that they were now much healthier and did not get ill as often as they used to. It is not clear just how much of this improvement can be attributed only to the cleanliness campaigns, although the totality of the intervention, which included the improved access to clean water, did improve health according to feedback from all villages.
- In one village consisting of two tribes their water source was dug in the part of the village inhabited to one of the tribes. The choice of this location was technically correct as it was the best place for the borehole to be dug; however, there was evidence of the neighbouring tribe feeling embarrassed at having to come to the part of the village to get their water, despite their having travelled outside of

the village on a daily basis prior to the project. This could be a cultural issue about feeling beholden to their immediate neighbours, which if so, would have been informed by decades and centuries of practice. Such issues of 'honour' should be anticipated prior to such interventions and remedies put in place as part of social mobilisation and educational efforts.

- Open defecation is a historical norm in the parts of Sindh where this project was being implemented; and although there were no latrines in this project for this practice to change, there was awareness of the issue, with villagers asking the evaluator to provide latrines and training in their use, for them to then further improve the cleanliness of their villages.

Disaster Risk Reduction/Preparedness

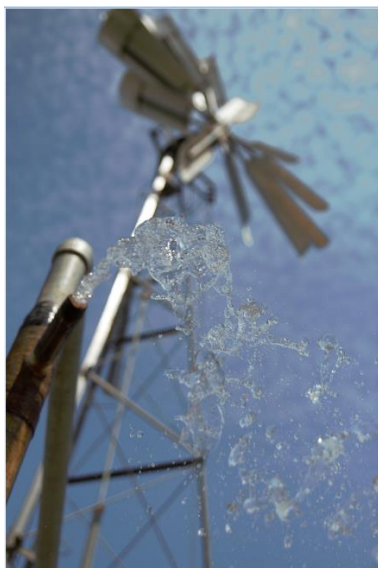
- The training and organisation received through this project was also used when there was a significant fire in a neighbouring village. One of this project's beneficiary villages used IR's disaster kit, including the megaphone, to mobilise neighbouring villages to go to that village and help and put out the fire. Funds saved, and raised, by the community organisation at this village were also loaned to this fire-affected village to help them rebuild. This was therefore an example of how this project has increased the resilience to disaster not only of the beneficiary villages but with a strong community spirit, also of their neighbours.
- Most of the villages, when asked, reported that they had never received help in DRR of the sort that IRP provided in this project, from any other agency. One village reported that they did receive such support from another local government NGO and had been taught the same thing, but that the refresher provided by IR was useful. IRP's work was however reported by beneficiaries in all villages to be very visible and impactful as opposed to others, as they were linked into political officials. No-one else had previously provided them with this. As a result, the villagers can now visit politicians and talk to them when previously, in the words of one villager, they would never have been let in through the door. IRP also involved everyone in the decision-making: every man and woman was required to be present during key decisions, helping to challenge and break down the gender barriers that had previously existed.
- When asked about the support that the villages had received in this project, without exception, the beneficiaries were positive about the support received and the positive changes seen in their communities. The communities requested more advanced training in all areas, including in First Aid/Search & Rescue. There was a two-month course of which they were all aware but which they cannot afford. One beneficiary specifically asked for training in how to apply stitches, to be provided as part of a more advanced first aid training, which he said would allow him to treat the more serious cuts that can occur during emergencies.

Outcome Indicator 2: Communities Access to Potable Water Sources

Target: 40% of target households have access to safe and sufficient water

- All five (100%) of the sampled villages visited which had received support in accessing clean water reported that they now had regular access to sufficient clean and sweet drinking water to meet not only their needs, but also of neighbouring villages who now use these water sources. Two of these villages reported that they only had enough water for part of the year before the project but since this project, they now have clean and sweet water all year round; whilst the other three, although they had year round access to water, it was not clean and so there were regular instances of water-

borne diseases in these villages. There was also evidence of access to clean water in and of itself having contributed towards the reduction of water-borne diseases, with beneficiaries reporting that since their new water sources were provided recently, they did not suffer from diarrhoea or gastro-enteritis as much as they did before.



Windmill built in one village



Slow sand filter water pond

- Times taken for women to fetch water have reduced by upto two-and-a-half hours a day in the most extreme case. The easier access to water also improved the safety of not only the women who used to fetch the water but also of their children. Women had to walk long distances, in one case across a main road with a pitcher in one hand, a child in the other, and also whilst having to shepherd other children to keep them safe whilst crossing the road. Now, with the water being available in the villages, this was no longer an issue for them. Where they had to leave children at home, they had to go hungry whilst their mother was fetching the water; this is no longer an issue.
- The women in many of the villages were very outspoken about exactly how the new water sources had helped them. They attended the focus group discussions in large numbers which in itself was significant given the previous cultural aversions of gender mixing, but they were also not shy about actively participating in the focus group discussions. This was a significant change which both beneficiaries and social mobilisers attributed to this project, and of which they were proud.
- The women in one village reported that had no idea about the importance of washing hands with soap. Mothers are now very particular about it and diseases have reduced as a result; and children too are now asking for soap to wash their hands - they too understand the importance of handwashing.

Output Indicator 2.1: New and improved disaster resilient irrigation and water systems

Target: 17 irrigation channels rehabilitated and 80 drinking water schemes installed

- The borehole provided in one village had however become damaged through regular use with the handle having broken three times since installation and after repair. This was attributed by the villagers to regular use although this should be anticipated in the design of such products; as such, the quality of the product could be called into question. The villagers had fashioned a temporary repair through use of a wooden block attached to what remained of the broken handle, but this was not a

permanent solution and had already broken twice. At the time of evaluation, the village had reported that they would employ someone to implement a more permanent fix.

- Of the five sampled villages who received water sources, although everyone had someone trained to repair basic issues, only two said that they had any form of savings specifically earmarked for the repair of their water system should more technical work be required. The other three villages did have savings but it was a central system managed by their community organisations. These COs were instituted as a direct result of this project, but their one fund was used for all issues including repair of buildings, transport for the ill, the building of a mosque and paying for an imam to minister to them, etc. There was thus a risk that should the water sources require repair, that such villages may not have sufficient funds to repair them.
- It could not be stated with certainty whether the water systems would survive a major disaster, but beneficiaries in all villages who received water sources reported that they felt the sources would survive the smaller and more regular floods they experienced.

Output Indicator 2.2: Production of crop yield per acre

Target: 600kg increase per acre for sunflower production, and 1600kg increase for rice production

- Out of 6 sampled beneficiaries of rice production support who provided appropriate data, two saw an increase of more than 1600kg as a result of this project (4800kg and 3000kg). The average increase in production for the sampled rice farmers was 1880kg.
- For the three beneficiaries of sunflower production amongst the sample, all saw an increase of at least 600kg per acre: the maximum increase was of 2,280 kg for a beneficiary who had never grown sunflowers before. The other two increases in sunflower production were 1800kg and 720kg respectively.

Output Indicator 2.3: Community trained on alternative water supplies

Target: 400 community groups trained

- This project provided alternative water sources such as solar systems, windmills, and slow sand filter water ponds, and trained the communities in their use. The windmills especially were a very appropriate solution to the area due to the wind hitting this coastal area of the country; a demonstration showed how when turned on, the water tank filled very quickly and allowed quick access to water. Although it was not possible to meet and speak to the international NGO, it was reported that another agency saw this solution implemented by this project and had instructed their partners to explore the same solution in their projects.
- The mechanism to turn on the windmill was however potentially dangerous and a villager had to climb all the way to the top, with no harness, in the wind and with the rope blowing away, to start the windmill. Such issues of safety should be considered in the design of such future projects especially when sourcing equipment, to ensure that the people to whom such support is given remain safe when using the items provided in our projects.
- The slow sand filter water ponds were also working well and provided clean water to the one village who received them, and who did not have access to clean water before. The filters were also

relatively cheap and available in the market, and the village was confident that they could maintain it in perpetuity; this village had savings of 10,000 PKR (£66) which had been saved and managed by their community organisation since the project started: they had no mechanism to save prior to this project.

Outcome Indicator 3: Structural & non-structural mitigation measures in hazard-prone areas

Target: 100 villages disaster resilient

- The outputs for this indicator, discussed below, achieved a great deal for the villages visited in this evaluation and there had been a great deal of progress made from their limited capacities at the start of the project. Their ability to advocate for their needs had increased significantly, and which resulted in paths being reconstructed, as well as repair work being done on an embankment in one village after they personally advocated their need to the local Minister of Irrigation. There had been a significant increase in knowledge and ownership of the processes, since the start of the project, to ensure that they were disaster resilient.
- Due to the initial delays in the project however, although everything was eventually completed, the rush did not allow for an exit strategy to be communicated in good time, including a period of reflection and adjustments after the final activity had been completed: indeed, the final activity was completed on the first day of the evaluation and three days before the whole project was due to finish. There were reports of some nervousness and panic amongst beneficiaries who had seen so much positive change, but who were now worried about IR leaving; and IR staff were visiting villages even after the official end of the project to reassure them. There is thus a risk of the gains in this project not being appropriately sustained in the medium to long term.

Output Indicator 3.1: Early warning systems established and capacity of local communities built on DRR

Target: 44 early warning systems established and six DRR workshops conducted

- Every village visited, after this project, knew exactly how and to where to evacuate should it be required, in the event of a flood. The institution of the community organisations and of emergency response teams within these COs, and allocation of specific responsibilities to individual villagers, worked very well as everyone was clear on what it was that they were required to do in an emergency situation. Monitoring of the media for information, checking the embankments to ensure that they are holding, transport for the vulnerable out of the project area, and many others were all specifically mentioned by the villagers.
- There was however quite a variance when asked about how soon before any flood arrived the villagers would receive their first news; the range was from 24-48 hours to 240 hours. It was not clear exactly why this would be the case as the qualitative data suggested that every village was very organised, linked into the media and local authorities, and so should technically be aware of any risk at the same time. It is possible that these villagers simply were not able to accurately articulate the correct answer, although their understanding of their early warning system and especially how many hours they have must always be tested and verified to ensure that there is no risk of misunderstanding.



A case study on the wall of a community centre, informing the villagers of what to do in a disaster.

Output Indicator 3.2: Participatory and inclusive village development plans and activities

Target: CBDRM mechanisms and structures established at local level and replicated

- The sharing of information within and between villages was evidenced, ensured that the impact of this activity in the project was replicated in other villages. During the 2015 rains and where there was a significant risk of flooding, villages demonstrated awareness of everything that Islamic Relief had taught them. Every person with responsibility performed their responsibility fully, and the villages were co-ordinating their work with each other and with the authorities to ensure that everyone knew exactly what was happening. Where mobile phones did not work, a responsible villager was sent on a motorcycle to each local village to ensure that they were all aware of the impending threat. One community head reported as follows: “In 2010 we were very disorganised and so suffered, but in 2015, due to Islamic Relief’s help, they knew and understood the impending threat and were able to plan and save ourselves.”



Motorcycle and responsible villager, for early warning to all villages

- Every village was saving money as part of their community organisations, but as with the water sources, it was not necessarily being used for DRR mitigation initiatives. Some activities like the

rebuilding of culverts and the repairing of a path in and out of the village were undertaken to aid evacuation efforts should they be needed, but the money was also being used to pay for the marriages of young women, to pay for medical treatment, and also for religious instruction. This is not necessarily a bad thing, especially the latter, as the spiritual development of these very pious communities is a vital tool in ensuring their resilience to disasters. Healthcare of course is also important and if anyone is ill, they need to get the money from somewhere; and marriage is of course an important institution which has to be paid for. But with their money often being used for activities other than improving physical infrastructure, where vital infrastructure is not fixed, then there continues to be a risk to the communities.

- Hazard Vulnerability and Capacity Assessments were done in every village and which were explained by the villagers. They had all identified lack of appropriate drainage as being a significant risk to their villages during floods. This was beyond the scope of this project and perhaps too expensive for any INGO to undertake; the villagers were advocating to the political authorities to provide support with this but there had not as yet been any progress.
- Of all the sampled villages visited who received Community Organisation formation training, all reported that the COs they visited were brand new, set up as a result of this project, and that they did not have any such mechanism to be organised before the project. What was not so clear however was whether the villages who did not receive CO Formation training already had COs in their villages, or whether they did not receive support in this sector.
- The community organisations set up with the support of Islamic Relief have been launching their own community development activities. A teacher didn't attend school and hadn't done so for a long time despite being paid by the authorities, so the concerned village advocated to the authorities; a second village also suffered the same problem, took the same course of action, and it was remedied by the authorities. The teacher was subsequently ordered to attend by the Educational Department and has been attending regularly since, ensuring that the children of the concerned village do receive an education. Thirty children (boys and girls) were also enrolled into schools in 4km away, and mobilised parents to this end.
- One village which was especially organised listed the 7 committees that they have as part of their overall community organisation; operational, knowledge, health and cleanliness, communication, project committee, search and safety, and record keeping. These names were given to them by Islamic Relief, with the village, with IR's help, then setting everything up. The head of this village, as well as selected others, also sits on Union Council level organisation which works at a higher level

Output Indicator 3.3: Structural measures taken to build resilience of communities

Target: Three gabion walls and three small reservoirs constructed, and four irrigation and two demand-base channels rehabilitated

- In one village there was a very strong awareness of climate change and their responsibility to do something about it. One villager in particular was so passionate about this that he contacted the Forestry Department and sourced cheap tree seedlings for 15 PKR each, to plant in his own village; he has also been advocating the cause with other villages, and has helped them to source and plant trees in their villages too. These act as a flood defence and help to mitigate against climate change.



A villager who planted trees in his village to protect it from the effects of climate change. He also did the same for many of his neighbouring villages too.

- This same beneficiary reported that whereas they used to chop trees for livelihoods, they have stopped now. He understood and explained the carbon cycle to the evaluation team, including how chopping trees negatively affects the environment. They now understand the significance of trees. Other villages also come, see, and ask about reasons for planting trees and as a result of which they too are planting trees in their villages. Women were both culturally and due to lack of confidence, but as a result of the dedicated support in this project, they are much more confident and can talk to male strangers now.
- This villager reported as follows: "We have learned about climate change and DRR, and have taken the initiative to plant 150 trees in our village, and have organised 1000 in other villages nearby. We had the courage to change things but not the skill; IR came to harness this [courage] and push us in the right direction."
- Emergency response kits were provided by IR in this project and were kept at cluster level, so one village received a kit which was to be used by all villages in that cluster. Every sampled village where a kit was kept reported that the products were of good quality and would survive heavy use. However due to the cluster sometimes covering a radius of upto 4-5km, it was not clear exactly how the kit would or indeed could benefit villages beyond those inside where the kits were stored. One village reported that the kits would be brought to them by the village at which it was kept for storage, but during an emergency, it just was not clear how this could be accomplished and especially when all villages are planning their evacuations at the same time.
- Although not in every village, there was evidence in one village of new buildings being built on 2.5 feet plinths, to protect against floods. The villagers also reported that they didn't know in 2010 how to care for the pregnant during an emergency, but in 2015, they decided to send the pregnant and elderly to Karachi as a precaution, and rented a building to house them whilst the threat was assessed. Women specifically had no ability to protect themselves against disaster before, but can now protect the disabled, elderly and pregnant, and can do first aid. All villages also had awareness

of the vital necessity to keep safe their vital documents, including deeds to their land, so as to make it easier to rebuild afterwards.

- Another village also had a link road built to their village, and also better lighting for their village school, after they advocated to the authorities for their needs. This was also attributed to the work that Islamic Relief had done with them because prior to the project, they and other villages did not have the confidence to be able to make demands of politicians. Local politicians were also reported to have jokingly asked Islamic Relief just what they were teaching the locals: that the villagers had become much more demanding over the past few years.
- As mentioned above, before this project, the community was not active, organised, or knowledgeable about disasters and how to protect themselves. But they are now so active that they have even organised a Disaster Day (13 October each year), and they present dramas and educational talks to promote learning, including the sharing of traditional knowledge about forecasting disaster. This event also gets held in different places: 2014.

CHAPTER THREE: VALIDITY OF THE INTERVENTION

Conclusion Validity: Was there a relationship between the intervention and the outcome of the project?

Although the sample able to be included in this study was not statistically representative of the total project due to lack of available capacity to visit so many people, there was evidence amongst all aspects of the project that there was a relationship between the intervention and the observed outcomes.

Internal Validity: Assuming there is a relationship, was it causal?

- ***Temporal Precedence***

The temporal precedence of the implementation of this project, in relation to the changes observed, was established: there was no evidence of any activities having been implemented prior to the intervention by IR, or by any other agency, including by the government, and which would have had either a direct or indirect impact upon this project.

- ***Cause and effect***

This project was working in areas where very few NGOs have ever worked; there was evidence of a local NGO, the NRSP, having worked in some of the sampled villages in regards to the construction of temporary shelters after the 2010 floods, and with the provision of DRR training. But this was not true of all of the villages where they had never received any support from an NGO. The observed changes in the project, when attribution was discussed, were all said by beneficiaries to have been as a result of this intervention rather than anything else, for the simple reason that no one else had ever provided them in most of the sectors covered in this project. They had never advocated to the local politicians for their own needs before, for example, because their lack of confidence in their own abilities and lack of knowledge about their own rights held them back. Even though DRR training had been provided in some villages eight years previously, this training did not manifest in any change of behaviour as the impact of the 2010 floods showed. But this evaluation noted how behaviours had

indeed changed as a result of this project, mainly as a result of the social mobilisation efforts which organised and empowered beneficiaries to make the most of the support being offered to them.

- ***No Plausible Alternative Explanations***

As mentioned above, there was limited evidence of any other NGO, local, national, or international, or the government, having worked in the sampled villages, and having done the type of work that this project has conducted. Those agencies that did do some work, whether it was temporary after the floods in 2010 or the DRR work done by the NRSP, did so at cluster level rather than directly with the villages, and also did not conduct social mobilisation activities, which have been such a benefit from this highly impactful element of this project. Knowledge about constructing houses on plinths, to protect against floods was provided by another agency and which people in Fateh Mohammed Soomro village were aware of, but such knowledge was not evident in other sampled villages prior to IRP's intervention.

The DRR training previously provided by NRSP was reported to have been the same as what Islamic Relief taught in this project, but without the social mobilisation, there was little realisable impact, if any. The beneficiaries themselves, lacking confidence in their ability to affect change due to their social status, had never actively advocated for anything until after this project and which they without exception, attributed to this project.

There was no evidence that the beneficiaries themselves had the requisite knowledge or initiative to have learned about such things independently, indeed, there was little evidence that beyond the houses on plinths in one village, that any real thought had been given to DRR prior to IRP's intervention. The 32 new schools that were reopened in one Union Council, for example, were done so after this project was initiated and after advocacy from the beneficiaries. A village reported that whereas prior to this project they had no girls' school, they advocated to the authorities and now have a girls school and two teachers; the importance of educating their girls had been taught to them, and understood. A second village enrolled 30 of their children, boys and girls, into a school after their parents were mobilised after this project. Another village had a school but a teacher who never attended; but as a result of the empowerment provided by this project, they advocated to the authorities and were able to have another teacher assigned to teach their children. All of this happened after this SIRAT project was initiated, and there is no evidence that any other agency had any role in these achievements.

Construct Validity: Assuming there is a causal relationship, did the programme results reflect our design of the project?

- The social mobilisation element of this project was not designed to be as extensive as it turned out to be, and was an unintended positive impact of the initial delays in the project. It is therefore unlikely that, at least in the amount seen during the evaluation, it would have been so impactful had the delays not allowed more time for the social mobilisation to proceed further.
- Some elements of the project also did not work as planned: the poultry restocking activity, for example. The project, after consultation with the communities, provided a breed of chicken that ultimately turned out to have not been as suitable as originally thought due to its difficulty in surviving the heat in the sampled project areas.

- The beneficiaries were aware that an exit might happen although they all asked the evaluator to remain for another two years so as to provide them with more advanced knowledge and training; they were not confident in their ability to sustain the impacts that they had achieved so far. There was also evidence that the beneficiaries, upon hearing about the project ending, had started to panic, and IRP staff had as such instituted a programme of visits to the beneficiary villages to reassure them. As such, it was unclear whether the beneficiaries were yet ready and confident enough for an exit, despite the progress made. A further intervention with the same beneficiaries of about two years, depending on a needs assessment, and with the final months reserved for a phased exit, would help to build upon the achievements of this project, to further develop the confidence of the villagers, and to thus enable a more sustainable exit.

Lessons Learned

- Social mobilisation must be an integral part of every programme, and of an appropriate length to ensure beneficiary understanding of, and buy-into the programme objectives. This does delay when the hard activities can begin, but the ongoing success of an intervention depends on the extent to which beneficiaries are motivated to take ownership of the support being offered, both during and after the intervention.
- This project was designed for three years and achieved a great deal in this period, although there is a risk of the gains reversing due to there not being an appropriate period of exit after the final activity was implemented. In the same way that an appropriate period of social mobilisation is needed at the start, a period of reflection is required as part of the exit strategy so as to monitor the impact on an ongoing basis, identify any issues, and then implement remedies to allow for the project to be truly sustainable. The final activity in this project, for example, was inaugurated only three days before the scheduled end of the project so there was no time to conduct a phased exit.
- There was a lack of appropriate project design expertise provided to IRP, during the initial designing of this project. For projects this large, IRW should invest in sending an expert during the initial phase to help with the design of the projects, and provide enough time to ensure that the needs are appropriately assessed and designed into a project, and with an appropriate amount of time for this to happen.
- The delays in this project, compounded by the lack of clear communication at the start between IRW, IRP, and IRUK led to trust being lost and which took time to re-establish. Communication must be established between all stakeholders at the start of an intervention, especially when there are multiple stakeholders involved at HQ and donor level, to ensure that everyone is on the same page before project activities commence. An initial three month delay in the project was caused by the late signing of the SLA and as a result of which project expenses could not be incurred, meant that project activities could not start on time.
- There were a huge amount of activities in this project which in one way was a positive as it allowed the intervention to diversify the support provided to the beneficiaries, and to ensure that the market would not become saturated by multiple people benefiting from the same activity. One of the tailoring and embroidery beneficiaries, for example, was the only beneficiary of this activity in her locality and so had a large potential market to which to sell her services. The downside of the huge number of activities however was that it was a lot to squeeze into a relatively small amount of time, and which thus did not allow for any post-implementation monitoring and remedies to be put in place. In conjunction with the learning about social mobilisation and the time required to implement

this, project activities should also have enough time commensurate with their complexity to ensure that there is enough time not only to implement them, but to also allow some time to pause and reflect so as to make any necessary changes.

- The people who designed this project either left the organisation or were seconded to other parts it, and which led to a lack of continuity in the initial management and implementation of this project. The Country Director position and Head of Programmes positions especially changed during this project, and which caused difficulties. Appropriate steps must be taken to retain staff, especially for strategic projects such as this, to avoid such challenges.
- The beneficiaries in all villages wanted greater opportunity to implement the projects rather than external vendors being recruited and the money going to them. Where specific technical expertise is required then this would not be possible, although it could be possible for less technical activities. But for this to work, the communities need to be organised into CBOs with active bank accounts but which has been a challenge given local anti-money laundering regulations.

Conclusions

- The project was impactful with evidence of positive change having been made as a direct result of this intervention. Incomes increased as did food security; sampled beneficiaries who had been in debt had all now paid this debt off; and some beneficiaries were also now investing in livestock assets. Much of this impact did however seem unintended however given the delays in the project and which in turn allowed the social mobilisation unit more time to work with and strengthen the communities. The project, originally designed for three years, has achieved much for the target population but given the enormity of issues faced by the communities in terms of climate change, poverty and intermittent disasters, a longer term engagement with the communities, civil society and local government to strengthen existing work and make it sustainable would have allowed for the provision of more advanced support; like saline resistant agriculture, the revival of coastal mangrove forests, drought resistant crops and irrigation, and the further strengthening and solidification of the gains already made in this project in terms of disaster risk reduction and advocacy.
- Microfinance loans had succeeded in improving the incomes and food security of its beneficiaries; this was due to the design of the project and due to the large number of activities. Although the large number of activities also caused problems with the management of the project, they also allowed for villages and individuals to receive help across a diversified number of livelihoods, and as a result of which individual beneficiaries had a chance to build a feasible livelihood rather than having to compete with other beneficiaries for the same business. Care was taken by IRP not to saturate the markets, and which was a success.
- The ability and confidence of the communities to advocate for their needs has increased as a result of this project. Communities have had schools reopened, teachers assigned to their villages, and embankments repaired as a result of their new ability to advocate to local political officials. Prior to the project, without exception, the beneficiaries had reported that they did not feel confident or empowered enough to do so, and did not even know who the local officials were for each sector.
- Although consultations were carried out, and agreement reached for the choice of a breed of chicken to distribute in this project, the breed was ultimately not appropriate because although selected for its ability to lay more eggs which the beneficiaries could then sell and earn money from, the chickens found it difficult to cope with the harsh local temperatures and so some were dying. A potential

problem, but which could not be confirmed for certain, was the use of 'red rice' by beneficiaries as chicken feed. It was not clear whether or not this was cooked before feeding to the chickens; if not, then this can expand and cause gut problems.

- Female beneficiaries were specifically targeted in this project and benefited, especially from the provision of clean water sources, and also livelihood activities such as sewing, embroidery, and value addition training. The latter however did not produce as much economic benefit for the sampled beneficiaries as could have been expected, because for the ice cream and dairy production activities for example, they did not have mobile refrigerators to transport the goods for sale. As such, these products were being consumed within the villages by children rather than being sold. This was however still a positive because of the morale boost to the community of seeing their enjoying a luxury that otherwise they could not afford to purchase for them.
- The provision of clean and safe water from traditional and alternative sources was a success because it reduced the time taken for the women of the villages to fetch water. This in turn allowed the women time to implement the training that IR provided in the importance of cleanliness and are now ensuring that the village remains clean. One village even organises a regular cleanliness day and on which they all work together to ensure that their village is clean. The women especially benefited from this a great deal; and during the focus group discussions, they were visibly happy and excited to be telling the evaluator about just what difference the water sources made for them. The water sources were repairable and although the village water committees established could only fix minor problems, they were able to call for engineers from the nearest towns if needed. Given the savings set up by the community organisations, the villages could now also afford such repairs if necessary.
- The communities were very strongly mobilised in regard to disaster risk reduction, and were prepared to deal with an emergency should it arise. Every sampled village, to varying extents though each was able to safely evacuate if necessary, was organised and knew exactly what they needed to do in the event of a disaster. Individual villagers had roles, e.g. monitoring the media for news, checking the embankment for danger of it breaching, etc; and each was performing these roles with passion and interest. Men, women, and the elderly were involved in such groups, although there was a gap given that there was no evidence of children being directly involved in the project activities, especially in DRR. Whereas in 2010 most of the villages had no awareness of the floods until the last minute, they now have the capacity not only to find out early but also to evacuate themselves and their valuables safely.
- There was uncertainty about the medium to long term effectiveness of hybrid seeds. They provide a very good harvest but then most farmers said that they would be unable to plant hybrid seeds for another two years, so as to give their land time to recover; another farmer who went on an exposure visit, however said that this was not the case and hybrid seeds could be planted again.
- Due to the early delays in this project and also due to lack of time, there was no time for a phased exit from this project: beneficiaries were reported to have been surprised and nervous at an impending exit and had been worried when they discovered. Beneficiaries themselves also reported that they needed advanced and more detailed training to further strengthen their capacity to respond to a disaster, e.g. advanced first aid/search and rescue.

Recommendations

- Future interventions of this size and complexity should be planned and funded for an appropriate period of time to ensure that the projects have enough time to conduct strong social mobilisation, the implementation, and also enough time after the end of the final activity to monitor and communicate an exit to all beneficiaries, including scope to conduct any remedial actions that may be identified by ongoing project monitoring.
- The social mobilisation conducted in this project should be further explored, and lessons taken from it, so that the whole organisation can learn from this and appropriately implement in their own project areas.
- This project, although showing strong progress and immediate impact in the sampled project areas as at the evaluation date, should be provided an opportunity to strengthen the implementation and thus to enable a sustainable exit. It should not require a lot of time and an appropriate needs assessment would be required, but with a relatively small amount of funds for more advanced activities, these communities could achieve a sustainable impact and thus enable an exit from those villages.
- It is commendable that beneficiaries were consulted at every stage with their views taken into account, but as witnessed with the issue with the chickens, IR must also maintain some ability to be able to offer a more plausible and appropriate alternative course of action.
- Where activities, such as value addition training, are implemented so as to offer alternative modes of earning an income, they should be planned so that all necessary inputs are provided to ensure that the goals of the intervention are met. The activity to produce kulfi for example, although catering for a gap in the market, did not consider the need for refrigeration to ensure that the products would not melt prior to sale.
- The fact that women and the elderly were actively involved in the entire project, especially in DRR, is notable; however in the future, children should also be included in a manner appropriate to their ages, so that they too can benefit.
- All indicators for future logframes should always be measurable, as per the SMART mnemonic, to ensure that monitoring and evaluation activities can appropriately measure the achievements made by projects.
- The effects of hybrid seeds on land, and the correct advice to be given to landowners, should be researched and taken as a lesson learned, so that farmers can be appropriately advised in future such projects.