

Pamir High Mountains Integrated Project

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ACTED
Agence d'aide à la coopération technique et au développement.

Monthly issue

PHIP is an integrated development project implemented by the INGO ACTED. It is funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and UNESCO. It started operating in 1999 and aims at improving the livelihood of the local population by opening up sustainable economic options. Support to civil society, capacity building, and support to vulnerable population are the focus of activities. The project is organized into departments responsible for “Agriculture, Environment and Livestock”, “Community Social Infrastructures”, “Support to most vulnerable families”, “Support to local handicraft”, “Credit and Capacity Building” and “Culture”. The latest program aims at developing structures for community based ecotourism.

Key events in September

- External review: An external review of the project was conducted in Murghab between the 8th to the 16th of September under the leadership of Prof. Frank Bliss. The review, ordered by the SDC, resulted in recommendations which shall allow the project to improve its approach for the next phase and to reach a higher impact particularly in view of the needs of most vulnerable families.
- Natural dyes seminar in Murghab in cooperation with MSDSP and CACSA. A Turkmen designer conducted a 9 days workshop for 15 Murghabi and 4 Khorog craftswomen and –men.
- UNESCO workshop in Massuleh/Iran: The 8 partner projects developing Ecotourism in Central and South Asia met for a 1 week seminar for promoting their activities.

Reports by departments

The Yak House

A new sales outlet: Pamirtourism in Khorog is now selling Yak House products: 52 items worth 1183 TJS were delivered. Also in Khorog: Serena Inn received 31 items of Yak House products worth 1248 TJS.

From 6th to 8th of September, CAMP organized a design workshop to celebrate the opening of their new sales outlet in Dushanbe. One Yak House member, Nuskar, participated in the event. Products for 595 TJS were sold in these 2 days. On the 14th, CAMP shop received 42 items worth 747 TJS.

In Murghab, products worth 929 US\$ were sold in September. The ACTED guesthouse purchased felt curtains to demonstrate local energy saving possibilities..

The 10 last days of September were mainly dedicated to the workshop on natural dyes (see special report)

Agriculture

Gardening:

Harvest has begun. Climatic conditions were unfavourable: overall, the potatoes are small, and the barley had partly to be harvested before being ripe. Not all gardens have brought in their harvest, since many gardeners are still in the pastures. Results:

	Planted (kg)	harvested (kg)	Kept for seeds fund for 2005
Kishto (Madian)	905	2989	600
Murghab centre	323	387	80
Ges Ak Suu	475	1290	350



Forestry:

Meetings with MSDSP and GTZ as well as with a CAMP specialist to discuss the respective interventions on agriculture and forestation. End of September, the agreement to support a tree nursery run by the forestry department was finally signed.

Vaccination:

Reimbursement of vaccination credits: 19 goats were paid by the VO of Kuna Kurgan and re-distributed through the 'support to most vulnerable' program.

The outstanding reimbursement by veterinary department is now being decided by the local judge.

Culture

The culture officer received the visit of Florent Leduc, director of the Bactria Cultural Centre. In their discussion a strategy change towards smaller, more flexible and vivid events such as poetry and legend competitions were decided. The cultural officer has subsequently prepared a 2 years workplan.

A list of Kyrgyz language schoolbooks for 1500 US\$ to be rented out by the 12 Kyrgyz language schools of Murghab rayon was received and purchases were done accordingly. A donation of 200 US\$ was received to purchase additional school equipment for vulnerable pupils. The distribution will take place in early October.

Two more requests for musical instruments were received by Kuna Kurgan and Rang Kul.

Ecotourism***Service providers***

Services for 35 clients were provided in September, generating a profit of 624 US\$. Until the end of September, 237 visitors have requested the services of META members, generating a profit of 5497 US\$.

A business note book was elaborated and the service providers trained in its use to better follow up the economic situation. Credits disbursed for upgrading of homestays were collected in time. Total reimbursement amounted to 696 TJS.

Capacity building

Three day training for new Homestay providers from Alichur, Madian, Murghab and Pshart.

Eco-museum

Selection and purchasing of cultural artifacts for the eco-museum in cooperation with the Yak House. The description of the artifacts explaining the use and significance of the objects has been accomplished. A Yurt as display and café area was selected and purchased. The design of pictures for eco-museum information boards on semi nomadic herders life and wildlife was initiated with a local artist.

Nature protection

Environmental education material for a seminar on nature conservancy to be held in October was prepared by the project team in cooperation with a local artist. A team of Zoologists from the Institute of Zoology in Dushanbe was contacted and the plan for the seminar was outlined.

Protection of archaeological sites

Two Almaty based scientists conducted a 3 week mission to design a conservation plan for four most endangered archaeological sites which had previously been identified in cooperation with the Institute of Archaeology from Dushanbe and the French Archaeological mission to Central Asia. They gave recommendations for the rock paintings of Shakhty, the mining city and petroglyphs of Ak Jilga/Basar Dara and the geoglyphs of Kara Art and Shorolu including visitor itineraries, access limitation, and small scale rehabilitation of sites.

Support to Most Vulnerable Families***Flour trade***

A new flour sale group was organized in Kuna Kurgan with 3 salespersons. 12 tons of flour ere distributed as follows:

	Murghab	Tokhtamыш	Шаймаг	Чештебе	Бешгумбез	Булун Кул
# benef.	23	3	3	2	3	2
Flour received	233	12	12	4	13	8

Applications to get involved in the flour trade activity were received from Alichur and Rang Kul.

All bags were sold and a request for new flour was received on the end of September. The quality problems



encountered in August did not reproduce.

Goat breeding

Groups were organized in Kuna Kurgan and Cheschtebe. Six beneficiaries in Kuna Kurgan received 5 goats each for a two years duration. If they prove successful herders they'll receive an additional 5 after one year.

A leaflet instructing best practices for goat breeding was prepared and approved by the veterinary department.

Rehabilitation

The remaining worksites are speeding up activities as winter is approaching:

Cheschtebe medical point: the building is rehabilitated including roof, entrance shed and design changes. The bridge planned for community contribution has been installed and crossed.

Kuna Kurgan medical point: the building is completed apart from minor painting work that remains to be done. All insulation is done, the ceiling has been repaired, the yard with the new toilet and a well has been fenced off.

Alichur medical point: The roof is accomplished, only some interior work remains to be done: doubling of three windows, repairing of the ceiling and building of an entrance shed. The main challenge is the community contribution consisting in the building of a toilet. The toilet is only half built so far.

Shaimag boarding school: the roof was covered with an insulating layer and the concrete covering has been started. The floor has been laid out in half the building over an insulating layer of algae. A double entrance has been built to cut the wind, the plastering is accomplished.

School #9: the demonstration worksite is going on well: all cement and plaster work are done, windows and doors are placed. The wooden construction of the roof has been finalized and 2/3rd of it has been covered with metal sheets. Half of the work for the insulation of floor and ceiling has been done (algae, gazebeton). Two on site seminars have been held, attracting a number of interested people.

Chechekty boarding school is accomplished including insulation of roof, entrance shed and repairs after a minor earth quake.

Murghab museum is accomplished

Madian greenhouse (funded by the German embassy): wooden material has been purchased, the construction of the window frames has begun. Problem: the missing electric power in Murghab since the end of September is slowing down the work.

Micro Finance

Micro Finance continued its efforts to receive the late reimbursements from Small business and Livestock credits. At the end of the month, 736 US\$ of the principal reimbursement for small business support were still outstanding. For livestock, 2320 US\$ of the principal reimbursement were still outstanding from last years creditors. Adding the outstanding interest, 3153 US\$ have still to be reimbursed by livestock clients.

Tontine and Tontone groups have reported good results and good profits through the various activities they engaged in (trade, livestock).

The new Loan officer received a 10 days training in Kurgan Tiube, focussing on group building and reporting.

special report - special report

Natural colors for the Yak House products

The Yak House organized, in cooperation with the Khorog based handicraft project sponsored by MSDSP a 9 days training on the utilization of natural dyes for artists of Murghab rayon and Khorog area. To that end, Ludmila Kisileva, artist, designer and natural color specialist from Turkmenistan and highly recommended by CACSA, was invited.





Plants collected near Shaimag are heated and later sieved in order to produce some natural dye. Unfortunately, Badakhshan plants mainly produce yellowish dyes – red and blue will have to be imported.

The training was held in The Yak House yard. The majority of participants came from Murghab town, one women from Tokhtamish, Bash Gumbez and Rang Kul represented the villages of the rayon. MSDSP Khorog had sent 4 participants.

The local botanist from Shaimag, Raimberdi Mamatumarov, had collected 11 species of herbs (e.g. wild onion) to be used for dyeing. The Khorog participants contributed other plants and berries, such as nutshells, rosebush and others. Most of the plants gave light yellow till orange colors, others gave light brown, brown, light blue-green and khaki color. Experiments were also made with Indigo and Marena, which the designer had brought along: Indigo can give blue and green, Marena can give coral and red color One outcome of the training is therefore that some natural colors will have to be imported from Iran or India, as local plants don't result in strong red, blue, green color.

Indigo results in a bright blue, which can later be mixed into different shades of green. Unfortunately, the raw material has to be imported from India or Iran.



On the last day of the seminar, Ludmila taught our handicraftswomen how to weave carpets with pile technique. At the same time our handicraftswomen, the people from Khorog and Ludmila had a vivid exchange of experience. The Yak House purchased six copies of a handbook printed by CACSA about natural dying in order to follow up and develop the skills.



6th UNESCO regional workshop on “Development of Cultural and Ecotourism in the Mountainous regions of South and Central Asia” in Masouleh, Iran

Partner projects from Kyrgyzstan Kazakhstan, Nepal, Buthan, India, Tajikistan and Iran met between the 19th and 26th of September in a cycle of workshops to promote the various project activities in the different countries. Apart of the valuable regular exchange of experiences, the workshop followed various objectives:

- Understanding the market and market chains; designing a marketing strategy
- Building of partnerships.
- Ecotourism and Environment; based on case studies from UNESCO partner countries best practices and challenges were discussed.
- Sustainability - a follow up to the spring workshop, where milestones for sustainability had been identified. How well had 2004 milestones been met? What are the opportunities and threats to building sustainability during 2005?
- Lessons leaned in Cultural Heritage Conservation and Community-Based Ecotourism. This session allowed for an intensive exchange of experiences with stakeholders of Masouleh's cultural and ecotourism project activities.

The workshop allowed staying and getting to know the beautiful ancient village of Masouleh, where houses are glued against a slope and the roof of one house serves as a road for the upper houses. It also included a visit to the Caspian Sea and to an appearance at another UNESCO workshop dedicated to 'Man and Biosphere', where Marielle Leseur presented the PHIP project activities.

