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| 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”, “Social and Poverty Alleviation”, “Support to local handicraft”, “Credit and Capacity Building” and “Culture”. The latest program aims at developing structures for community based ecotourism.**

### Key events in August

- Addressing the energy issue: Energy saving demonstration worksite in school # 9 and workshop to disseminate the use of solar ovens;
- World Meeting of Felt Art in Lakitelek, Hungary – a Yak House woman shares her knowledge;
- Athens? 2 days sports event in Murghab organized in cooperation with the PHIP culture department

### Reports by departments

#### *The Yak House*

A new office with a bigger sales outlet has been organized together with the Ecotourism office. One room and Yurt will be organized into an Eco-museum to display artefacts of the daily life.

Yak House sales amounted to 7455 TJS (2468 US\$ equivalent) in August. 36% of that were made in Murghab, which makes Murghab the biggest selling place for Yak House products before Dushanbe and Khorog – partly thanks to the increase of tourism, partly thanks to the better display in the new office and shop.

Two ladies from the Yak House participated in the celebrations for the GBAO anniversary in Dushanbe. Products were sent to France following all exportations procedures in order to test the feasibility of exporting on a regular basis. These products will be sold during a sales exhibition to take place in UNESCO headquarters in September.

#### **Culture**

Not quite as glamorous and fancy as Athens: the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> of August saw a small Spartakiade mobilizing about 150 sportswomen and –men for competitions in Volleyball, Bicycle race and Running. The PHIP supported Dostuk (friendship) Fund in coordination with the Hukumat Culture Department organized the event in honour of the national day of culture.

According to requests from communities and their contributions, the culture department provided musical instruments to Alichur, Beshgumbez, Kara Kul and Tokhtamish.

The culture officer participated at a PTA meeting for Murghab rayon to discuss the new schoolbook rental scheme over three years. The schools are now requested to provide a list of schoolbooks they require (Kyrgyz language books are hardly available), the distribution will be done accordingly.

The resource centre saw 10 visitors and a workshop on the construction and use of solar ovens.



**Micro Finance**

August was dedicated to overall monitoring: The new credit products (Tontine and Tontone) are working well. The Tontine had its last rotation, the money rotating has increased from 450 US\$ to 525 US\$ equivalent thanks to group savings.

The micro finance project has been faced with late reimbursements, partly due to the quarantine imposed on exportation of livestock because of the foot and mouth disease, partly due to the overall engraving economic situation due to the ending of humanitarian aid. The employment of a second loan officer to closer monitor has improved reimbursements, yet the problem still remains.

**Agriculture***Kitchen Garden*

The vegetation is going on well, but this summer is colder and wetter than is usually the case. The harvest of greenhouses is being consumed. ACTED is supporting the Madian VO to rehabilitate the hot spring greenhouse with a galls roof – a project funded by the German Embassy who supported the construction of the object in 2001. Exchange visits between farmers were organized for 34 beneficiaries from Murghab centre and Ges Ak Suu to visit the plots of Madian, where agricultural results have been best in the last years.

*Veterinary service*

The distribution of vaccine through VOs, Jemoats and individuals has allowed to vaccinate 660 big ruminants and 1680 small ruminants. Reimbursement of the credits has partly happened through purchasing goats for the goat breeding program.

**Ecotourism**

Items of everyday live for display in the Eco museum have been collected. They range from sheep stomach used as butter recipients over bear traps to intricate headdresses for weddings. The quest for a yurt as showroom is ongoing.

Some 50 clients used the services of META, allowing for a turnover of nearly 2000 US\$. One newly selected homestay was inaugurated and received its first satisfied clients. There are now 4 homestays in Murghab – the next season will see a further increase, thus increasing the benefit for the population.

One venture into Fedjenko glacier happened with the support of META in cooperation with the Great Game: two porters accompanied a German expedition up Tanymas valley. This trek might become an attraction for extreme trekking in the future.

Reimbursement of credits given to homestay providers for renovation of their houses has begun: 200 US\$ out of 800 US\$ were reimbursed.

**Support to Most Vulnerable Families**

The goat groups were organized in Beshgumbez and Madian. Six most vulnerable families received 5 goats each for a one year duration – in the coming year they will receive another 5 goats, provided the first year is successful. After two years, half the amount will have to be reimbursed in kind, half in cash. In Kuna Kurghan a group was organized, but the potential beneficiaries are not sure they can reimburse and are therefore hesitant to engage in the activity. List of most vulnerable were also received for Cheshtebe. All distributed goats were vaccinated against foot and mouth disease. Vaccination against 'Siberian Jasva' is being prepared.

Flour sales to preferential prices (35 TJS instead of 50 TJS or more) was organized through groups of most vulnerable families: 23 people in Murghab are involved, 2 in Beshgumbez, 2 in Bulun Kul. Lists for Rang Kul, Shaimag, Tokhtamish, Cheshtebe were received. 12 tons had been purchased in Osh as a trial. The flour sold very quickly, but problems were encountered with the quality of nearly 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the bags. A second shipment of flour was therefore purchased directly from the flour combine in Kara Suu bazar (Osh), with a quality certificate and the obligation to take back spoiled flour. The groups have elected accountants and each group has elaborated its mechanisms to create small group funds with which they will use as rotating credit.

Visibility material was prepared to instruct beneficiaries of the goat program on goat breeding.



### Rehabilitation

All the sites have proceeded, even if slowed down by the desertion of workers due to the hay making season.

In Alichur hospital the roof insulation is ready and the final layer of cement / bitumen sheets is being applied.

In Cheshtebe, only the painting of the ceiling and floor are left.

Chechekty boarding school was shaken by a minor earthquake. This has made some additional work necessary. The roof is being sealed and stronger lintels over the windows and doors are being placed.

Shaimag boarding school, the mother of all worksites, attracted another CAMP engineer. He gave some good ideas to further improve energy saving techniques with locally available materials. The roof is now about to be covered with insulation materials – the goal is to close the object before the first deep frost expected for the midst of September and to finalize the interior work before the 15<sup>th</sup> of October.

Kona Kurghan only needs some finalization work.

### Mobilization

The community mobilization department assisted the different departments in conducting their activities: the community mobilizer followed up on the community contributions per worksite and organized the awareness seminar for the demonstration worksite. He contributed to organize the solar oven seminar and assisted the agronomist in finding an agreement for vaccinations.

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### Addressing the energy crisis: demonstration worksite school #9

Two architects from the University of Bishkek and trained by CAMP in Kyrgyzstan on energy saving construction techniques were invited to supervise the energy saving demonstration worksite in school #9 in Murghab town. A brigade is being trained on the job, and seminars to introduce and explain the different steps of the work and the rationale are being held.

The construction is designed to make the greatest use of passive solar energy: the classrooms are exposed full south with big windows to let in the days sun. The corridor faces north, light enters through few small windows thus reducing heat losses. The walls are built in a 'sandwich construction', the gap between the two rows of bricks partly being filled with Rang Kul algae, partly only using air as insulation. All double glass windows are constructed by local carpenters who have received a training and strict guidelines. The floor will partly be made of 'gazbeton' (inflated concrete), partly with a wooden floor over an aerated and algae filled underground. The roof will be made of metal sheets, the ceilings covered with a layer of algae and clay algae mix for insulation. A ring of armoured concrete for seismic security has been included.

The first workshop aimed at presenting the plan of the building and at demonstrating the wall building techniques. 15 people attended the event, amongst whom the head of the Murghab rehabilitation commission and engineers from other agencies. The site will be finished within the month of September.



*School #9: big south facing window with a 25cm strong lintel, the 60 cm wall filled with air and the seismic security concrete closing.*



### Saving energy – cooking with the sun

Following up on her last years mission, an engineer from Khatlon came to teach a group of interested people on the construction and the use of solar ovens. She was supported in her mission by the PHIP community mobilizer who made some progress in cooking and by a PHIP engineer who overlooked the carpenters working on the ovens.

Meals were prepared (in spite of the lousy summer), and the result has already convinced some people: in a promotional act, the first load of solar ovens will be sold for 15 TJS if the purchasers agree to publicly promote the use of the ovens and to exchange recipes and experiences.

4 carpenters are working on the ovens, material for a first 25 pieces was brought from KT and Osh. One oven will be distributed per Jemoat, the others will be sold to preferential prices for promotional purposes. The objective is to have a group of carpenters who can produce those ovens for a small benefit and thus create income.



*Tasting a solar dish. The carpenters are able to assemble 1 – 2 ovens a day, the technique has already convinced some experimental women tired of spending money on Teresken. Solar oven can at least be used to always have hot water – and it is even possible to bake bread.*

### World Meeting of Felt Art

Upargul, a young Yak House member from Murghab town, participated in the ‘World Meeting of Felt Art’, in Lakitelek, Hungary. The workshop lasted 8 days and attracted 140 participants from Central Asia, the Far East and Europe. The PHIP contributed the travel expenses, the rest was covered by the association of the Hungarian folk artists. The whole trip had been arranged in cooperation with Kyrgyzstan based Central Asia Crafts Association (CACSA).

The representatives of Central Asia worked on and taught the construction of Yurts, whilst participants from other parts of the world taught and presented different felt making techniques and designs: for everyday objects, trendy fashion and small decorative items

The last four days were spent in Budapest, where an art festival attracted street theatres, musicians and other artists from all around the globe.



*I liked best the people and the hospitality I encountered. And then there were those beautiful cities of old Hungary... And I did learn some new felt techniques, which will have to be tested and taught with the wool we have access to in Murghab rayon.*

