



Farmers with no access to the market: Village Nagoha is situated in the north-west near river bank of Swat District, KPK, Pakistan. The population of the village is about 500 households. Around 80% of the population are purely dependent on agricultural/farming and 90% of them are tenants who have leased the agriculture land from the owners. Farming is the sole source of livelihoods of the local population but the cultivable land was flooded in the 2010 floods of Pakistan. “The standing crops of rice, maize and vegetables particularly tomato received heavy losses. The irrigation channels and farm to market road were severely affected. The rehabilitation of irrigation channel and reclamation of the agriculture land was carried out through various support provided during the early recovery phase; however the problem of access to market remained unresolved”.

...a road to better access to market, a road to increased farmers’ income.

... a success story shared by Mr. Zahir Shah, president of the community based organization in Nagoha Village, Swat, KPK, Pakistan.

The farmers of the village normally grow different vegetables and cereal crops but the transportation of the agriculture inputs to the fields and produce to the market was the big challenge in terms of finances. They were bearing more labor cost for the transportation. Also the local market people brokers were taking less interest to purchase agriculture produce from these agriculture fields. Due to no vehicular access they have to bear heavy labor and donkey carriage cost to transport the agriculture produce. The farming community was facing around 40-45% losses in terms of money due to cost incurred on the farming; also 11-15% losses in terms of production loss as post-harvest handling of the agriculture produces. “This accessibility problems contributed to our losses in many ways, we were taking our agriculture produce to the nearest road by labor, donkeys pulling cart and sometime hiring tractor which was minimizing our income from the agriculture”. “Also due to this poor transportation most of the vegetable which is our cash crop received damages and thus our agriculture produces were unable to compete in the market”.

A local NGO supporting farmers help themselves: LASOONA a “Society for Human and Natural Resource Development” in partnership with Welthungerhilfe (a German INGO) intervened in the village under the project “Sustainable Agriculture Rehabilitation to Ensure Food Security and Disaster Prevention in north-west Pakistan”. The project is financially supported by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development. Purpose of the project is increasing income and food production of the 2010 flood affected poor farmers. Construction of the farm to market road was identified by farmers as the top priority of the local population. The road was constructed as planned; although there were some constraints in the land acquisition for the road. Both the tenants and the owners were frequently consulted and coordinated in this regard and finally construction of 2000 rft road which includes 180 rft pipe culverts and one small bridge was completed and formally handed over to the village.

Farmers’ income increased: The beneficiaries of the road express their happiness during the operation and maintenance training and formal handing over of the road. They shared that now they have easy short and smooth access to their agriculture fields. Agriculture inputs such as seeds, fertilizers, farm yard manure and other agriculture implements are easily transported in short time and low cost. Tractor and pulling cart can easily reach to the end point of the road. Vegetables reach to market on time in same fresh condition and no losses due to transportation. The brokers and buyers are now coming to the fields, where they buy the products directly from the farmers which was previously not possible due to poor accessibility.

Transportation cost decreased up to 70 % which led to increase in income. Both farming and non-farming communities are equally benefited from this road; the villagers collect sand, gravel and other construction material from the nearby river and they use this road for that purpose. Around 12 community members have purchased Suzuki (small pickup vehicle) and pulling cart to be hired by the farmers for transportation of their agriculture inputs and produce which provided economic opportunity to the villagers. Prices of the agriculture land increased as compare to last year when the road was yet to be completed the price of per square feet land was PKR 140 while just after the construction of road the per square feet price went up to PKR 350.

