Enhancing Water Management and Agricultural Efficiency in Sistan and Baluchistan

May 2024

Project Information

**Full title of project:** Strengthening the resilience of vulnerable local communities against water shortage thorough provision of a desalination system and effective use of water in agriculture in Chabahar area

**Funding:** USD 2,661,290.73

**Duration:** September 2022 to September 2025

**Implementing Agencies / Partners:** Ministry of Interior

**Objective:**
- To provide sustainable access to potable water for 50,000 local of five villages in Chabahar area, Sistan and Baluchistan province.
- To improve water efficiency in agriculture, enhancing the livelihoods and resilience of local communities.

**Challenges:**
- Prolonged droughts causing environmental degradation like soil erosion and drying up of water bodies.
- Social challenges include migration to urban areas due to water scarcity in rural areas.

**Background:**

Iran faces significant challenges due to climate change, including droughts and water scarcity, especially in the arid regions like Sistan and Baluchistan. This second-largest province of Iran, with a population of 2.5 million, has experienced severe water stress due to decades of drought, impacting its environment, economy, and social structure.
Strategic Approach:

- Strengthening desalination systems to provide fresh water.
- Implementing water-efficient agricultural systems and capacity building for sustainable practices.
- Building on consultations with governmental bodies and leveraging UNDP's prior experience in similar projects.

Key Components:

1. Desalination System Enhancement:
   a. Objective: To supply clean drinking water to local populations including those in remote villages around Chabahar.
   b. Activities: Engineering and operation of the desalination system, including training for local technicians and eventual handover to local authorities.

2. Agricultural Water Efficiency:
   a. Objective: To reduce water consumption and increase crop yield through modern irrigation techniques and sustainable practices.
   b. Activities: Conducting technical assessments, designing water-efficient systems, and promoting climate-smart agriculture.

Partnerships:

Our project collaborates with several governmental bodies to enhance its reach and efficacy. These include:

- Ministry of Energy: Engages in deploying best practices that can be scaled across the region, benefiting national energy policies and practices.
- Ministry of Interior: Supports in aligning the project with internal security and community wellbeing.
- Ministry of Agriculture Jihad: Partners to provide training, facilitation, and capacity building for farmers, promoting efficient agricultural practices.

The project places a significant emphasis on community involvement, particularly:

- Women-headed households: Special initiatives are in place to empower these households, providing them with direct benefits and support.
- Farmers: Located to the north of Chabahar city, farmers receive specialized training and resources to enhance agricultural productivity.
- Local communities: Residents of villages east of Chabahar city are primary beneficiaries, receiving clean water and support in sustainable practices.

Project Site and Beneficiaries:

- Location: Sistan and Baluchistan Province, with a focus on the Chabahar area.
- Direct Beneficiaries: Residents of villages in the eastern regions of Chabahar city, local farmers, and agricultural workers.

Expected Outcomes:

- Increased availability of clean water.
- Improved livelihood through applying water-efficient agricultural methods.