

Project Brief

Carbon Sequestration Project (CSP), Phase II

PROJECT AT A GLANCE:

Starting Date: March 2012

Total Budget: \$4,635,283.00

UNDP Budget: \$1,445,870.00

Implementing Partner: Ministry of Jihad Agriculture (Forest, Range and Watershed Org); and Ministry of Interior's Provincial Governorates.

Provincial Locations:

Initial pilot site: South Khorassan, Sarbisheh District.

Replication locations: Alborz; Azarbaijan (West); Bushehr; Fars; Golestan; Ilam; Isfahan; Kerman; Khorasan (North); Khorasan Razavi; Markazi; Qom; Semnan; Sistan and Baluchistan; Tehran; and Yazd.

Why is it important ?

The CSP project aims at greening Iran's arid and semi-arid environment and sustaining development and livelihoods for local poor people. It intends to establish a national model for sustainable development and inclusive growth that can be cost-effectively undertaken by the people themselves: adopting an area based development approach with outcomes that sustain eco-system services (including carbon reduction) and socio-economic transformation (including better employment and income generation), through participatory approaches linked to public institutions.

What is our goal ?

The CSP shows that improved and integrated poverty reduction and environmental sustainability methods and linkages are possible. It does this through pilot initiatives all across Iran that undertake tree planting and rangeland management, and which demonstrate that desertified areas can be cost-effectively reclaimed by the local people and for their own benefit. CSP activities sequester atmospheric carbon for both local and overall global benefit, improve the productivity of semi-arid areas, combat desertification and enable employment generation through participatory process. Rangeland rehabilitation activities; mobilization of local communities through *Village Development Groups* (VDGs); umbrella cooperative networks; use of *social mobilisation and micro-credit* techniques; and local institutional strengthening – all activities which help in the greening of Iran.

The mainstreaming and participatory approach of CSP is the centre pivot of the work: allowing for collaboration not only between local populace for development purposes, but also between local Government and communities, and between international, national and local partners.

How will we reach it?

The project strategy is to enable public-community-private partnerships to take shape at the local level – on the basis of rangeland rehabilitation. CSP supports local communities to take active part in the decision making process for managing rangelands, while promoting local institutional change that encourages participation and enables socio-economic transformation through improved livelihoods.

The CSP three main project components:

- 1) improved rangeland management, through community based approaches;
- 2) ensuring community and demand driven mechanisms and management through “social mobilisation” techniques and establishment of “village development groups”;
- 3) establishment of “micro-credit” funding systems and networks to support the above; and,
- 4) development of networking and support systems for mainstreaming and integration purposes.

What we have achieved?

The CSP was initiated in Sarbisheh District of South Khorassan. The project model proved a success and is now being replicated in 16 other provinces across Iran (Alborz; Azarbaijan (West); Bushehr; Fars; Golestan; Ilam; Isfahan; Kerman; Khorasan (North); Khorasan Razavi; Markazi; Qom; Semnan; Sistan and Baluchistan; Tehran; and Yazd).

Significant success has been achieved in South Khorassan: helping improve the socioeconomic status of the local communities, helping eradicate abject poverty and enhancing the local Human Development Index. Up to 2500 persons have been directly affected by CSP. Dry-land rehabilitation has taken place in 15,000 hectares; a further 15,000 hectares under range management; establishment of 63 VDG's; empowered communities and women to become more functional; established models of micro-credit and micro-finance systems; improved knowledge sharing; enabled national replication; trained Government staff; prompted South South Cooperation (study tours, etc); identified methods to absorb atmospheric carbon; took steps towards global public goods improvement; and well demonstrated that desertified rangelands can be cost-effectively reclaimed by and for the benefit of the local people; and tested and showed the strengths of the

"social mobilization and micro-credit" technique for area based development and poverty reduction.