

GIZ-FLR Project Wakhan “Most Significant Change”



Project title	Forest Land Restoration-FLR Project
Type of activities	Re-afforestation, fruit tree plantation, irrigation canal, alfalfa propagation, formation of forestry association, forest management plan,
Geographical area	Qala-e Panja Village Wakhan districts in Badakhshan Province Afghanistan
Timeframe	Jan 2020 – December 2022
Implementing Partner	Rupani Foundation Afghanistan
Donor	GIZ

Qala-e Panja village Wakhan

October 2022

FLR Project activities at Qala-e Panja village Wakhan

- Villagers at Qala-e Panja planted 517,335 mixed plants in 2021 and 2022 under the FLR project
- 62 hectares of barren land came directly under afforestation cover as a result of FLR reforestation activities
- Survival rates of the plantation is over 90%
- 104 hectares of natural forest came under improved management through management of FMAs. these areas were quarantined for three years by FMA, regulating grazing and fuel wood uses.
- 7 Households received tree saplings for establishing private fruit orchards
- 2 irrigation canals was built to improve water supply to reforestation site
- 4 forest gardeners ensured consistent care and water supply at FLR reforestation sites
- 105 households received alfalfa seeds to introduce alfalfa is animal feed

Significant change in reforestation & forest management, Qala-e Panja village Wakhan

Qala-e Panja is one of the largest settlement in the Wakhan Corridor. The village has a population of 1,216 people living in 105 households. This village has very little forest. Access to fuel wood for cooking and heating is consistent challenge, and finding it is a very time and energy-consuming activity for household members, especially during the four winter months. villagers collect fuel wood from natural forest located at the Panj River between Tajikistan and Wakhan. This patch of forest is called *Mushtarak* as it is shared between villages in Tajikistan and Afghanistan (depending on the river course). *Mushtarika* natural forest was used to the point of significant degradation. Recently, villagers have started collecting fuel wood from another forest up the valley called Gozkhun forest. This is causing tension between the two villages.

Part of the FLR project a Forest Management Associations-FMA was formed in 2021. The FLR team helped the community through participatory workshops in mapping out the village's land, water, agricultural and forestry resources. A management plan was developed in participation with the villagers to promote, conserve and sustainably use these resources. As part of the plan, villagers quarantined 104 hectares of heavily degraded natural forest to give it time to rest and recover. The villagers also identified 100 hectares of common land where reforestation was planned. This barren land needed two irrigation canals (1000m each) to irrigate the future forest.

In 2021 Qala-e Panja villagers started a plantation drive under the village FMA. FLR project supported the drive. 104-105 people were consecutively engaged in 2021 and 2022 in the construction of Irrigation canals, land preparation, tree cutting harvest and tree plantation. Villagers planted 517,335 mixed plants, including willow, poplar and sea-buckthorn on 65 hectares of barren land during the two years. The plants have grown particularly well with over 90 % survival rate. 4 forest gardeners were hired, trained and equipped by the FLR project, and they looked after the project year round. The gardeners ensure that the forest is maintained under careful regulation by the village FMA. All households are engaged on an annual basis in cleaning and maintaining irrigation canals that supply water to the reforestation site. The community-members find the plantations highly beneficial and wish to continue it in the future.

Economic return of the reforestation effort will take years to materialize, but significant contribution of the project has been to bring reforestation into focus for community resilience. This was done by organizing the community by providing them a platform to discuss and find solutions for the issues, providing missing skills and crucial financial resources for implementing the much needed physical projects

* FMA (Forest management Associations) are established and registered with the Ministry of Agriculture

Wakhan: Key steps in implementation of FLR project

Step 1: Villagers are helped through participatory methods in forming a Forest Management Association-FMA. The FMA is registered with the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock-MAIL as a legal entity

Step 2: The FMA is helped in mapping out village land, water and forestry resources and in developing a forest management plan. In this village plan the community members identify key project interventions to increase forest assets and also key management interventions for protection and sustainable use of its village forestry resources.

Step 3: GIZ- FLR project helps the local FMA by funding construction of some of the key projects identified in the village management plans. These projects include construction of irrigation canals, sedimentation flushing houses, flood protection walls, river embankments, land preparation for afforestation, planting of fruit and non-fruit trees and growing vegetables etc.

Step 4: The Local FMA is helped in developing forestry and water resource use rules and regulations and assisted in their implementation.

Step 5: FMA members, district agriculture extension staff and key community members are trained in various skills including participatory planning, documentation and management of association, forest, fruit tree and vegetable growing techniques etc.

Step 6: FLR staff and district agriculture extension officer monitors the activities of FMAs and the project implemented. This includes functions of the FMAs and implementation of the rules and regulations developed for management of the forest assets

Step 7: FMAs take ownership of the assets created on behalf of the community and are responsible for its aftercare and sustainable use

517,336 trees were planted on 65 hectares wasteland at Qala-e Panja village Wakhan



FLR staff checking quality grass" chukerdop" grown in the reforestation site



Intercropping of alfalfa at an orchard. 105 households at Panja received alfalfa seeds



Tamarisk plantation grow at forest site by natural seeding



Forest Management Associations-FMA were provided with farming tools



Willow shoots during the first month of plantation at Qala-e Panja



Villagers lined up the river bank with sand bags to protect plants from flooding



Changing Forest Landscape

2019



2022



FLR reforestation and forest closure area at Qala-e Panja village, Wakhan District

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