

# **Group Formation, Social Mobilization and Economic Mobilization of Horticulture Producer Groups in Mir Bacha Kot and Mahmood Raqi**

## **Phase two: Mobilization for Integrated Service Delivery to Horticulture Producer Groups**

### **Introduction**

HLP has been working with smallholder horticulture and livestock producers to increase production and productivity in focus clusters. The project has also facilitated formation of producer groups. More recently under the Farmer Organization Development (FOD) component, HLP has worked on an intensive process of group formation, mobilization and training enabling formation and strengthening of 175 male and 107 female producer groups in seven districts. This process has shown results in terms of building social capital, increasing social cohesion, increased capacity for self help and self management. This process has also resulted in increased awareness among members about HLP activities and operations. In some cases this has resulted in increased participation of these members in HLP extension efforts. Female producer groups have been supported in establishing 170 new orchards. Some women groups have been facilitated to take up semi intensive poultry production. The groups have developed some skills of planning and management. However these groups require more mobilization support and facilitation to participate actively in implementation and management of the extension and technology adoption for horticulture and livestock programs through the network of farmer field schools. There is also the need to develop intensive models for community management for last mile service delivery including extension services, input supply and management, savings and credit services and marketing services.

Building on the existing efforts at mobilization around self help and self management, HLP is in the process of developing a participatory extension and technology dissemination approach using farmer field schools. This would involve farmer trainers from every producer group participate in a farmer field school and get trained in key technologies and practices related to the key tree and field crops in case of horticulture and similarly in livestock sector. These farmer trainers are expected to become farmer extensionists and support experimentation and extension of the recommended practices for the farmers who are members of the producer group in their own fields. Producer group is expected to take an important role in deepening, management and monitoring of the extension efforts at the group level and ensure that farmer extensionist delivers extension services at the village level. The producer group is also expected to provide feedback to extension functionaries and the extension workers on the issues faced by the farmers in adoption of practices. The mobilization effort would lead to increased participation of the members of the producer group in extension and experimentation of the recommended practices and should lead to adoption and adaptation of the improved

practices. This process of mobilization would be undertaken with most groups formed in 11 districts.

The second type of mobilization would be taken up only in selected districts and farmer groups. This would revolve around service delivery for horticulture and livestock sectors. This would include facilitating extension services, input supply and management, savings, credit and financial services and marketing services. This mobilization would involve enabling farmer organizations to develop an integrated one stop service delivery to members leading to lower transaction costs and increased effectiveness. This would involve building linkages with input suppliers like ag-depots, VFUs in case of livestock, district extension services, microfinance agencies, functional cooperatives and other rural finance organizations, traders and other commercial organizations. This mobilization effort would lead to increased access to good quality inputs and services at a reasonable cost to the members and also ensure that members get better prices for their produce. This mobilization would include federating the producer groups to achieve economies of scale in delivering services and aggregating demand for services, inputs, credit and commodities. This would enable public and private agencies to provide services to farmers in a cost effective way and enable the producer groups to emerge as franchisees for various public and private service providers.

The process of mobilization would be taken up in training and implementation modules with the initial module focusing on self help, self management, savings and financial management. The second module will focus on participatory technology dissemination and extension through farmer field school and farmer extensionists and group management of extension and dissemination. The third module will be taken up in limited locations and will focus on management of service delivery including input supply, credit and marketing services. Depending on the progress made, these farmer organizations could be federated to achieve economies of scale for service delivery and could develop linkages with district extension system and CDCs/DDAs. This could also lead to setting up of Farmer Service centers at the federated level.

### **Objectives of group formation, social mobilization and economic mobilization**

1. To consolidate the work done to enable male and female producer groups to consolidate as strong self help and self managed institutions based on quality indicators developed and shared with the members.
2. To mobilize the male and female producer groups to participate actively in all extension, technology dissemination, activities including the farmer field schools and enable farmer extensionists to deliver services to members leading to high rates of adoption of improved practices according to agreed indicators.
3. To develop strong self managed community institutions for service delivery enabling better access to input supply and management, savings, credit and marketing services.

4. To develop coordination and linkages with public and private service providers e.g. microfinance agencies, Ag-depots, VFUs, district and other extension services, NGOs.

### **Expected tasks of SDO**

In this phase of mobilization the respective NGOs should focus on the development of integrated service delivery model (tasks numbered 3-7) based on the social cohesion built under phase one mobilization.

#### **1. *Strengthening Group Cohesion, Building Social Capital***

- Strengthening of the existing groups (development of bye laws, leadership, grading, auditing, etc).
- Monitoring of activities carried through by groups without facilitators.
- Monitoring of implementation of group action plans (seasonal calendars).
- Training in group processes:
  - Principles of peaceful conflict resolution (“do not harm”) and consensual decision making
  - Information about Services and support needed and offered by HLP
  - Thematic Micro-planning with focus on horticulture and livestock

#### **2. *Improvement of Management and Planning Capacities of Groups / Farmer Organizations***

- Training of the key functionaries of the group in planning and group management.
- Provide continuous recording and reporting of the realized activities.
  - Keeping a “minutes of meeting book” for the documentation of activities of each group
  - Provide monthly reports on the activities realized
  - Contribute to the evaluation of the activities in form of
    - (i) a summary report and
    - (ii) sharing of experiences during an evaluation exercise.

### **3. *Management of the Farmer Field School, Community management of extension and technology experimentation and adoption process***

- Support the participation of the male and female producer groups in the activities of the farmer field school, both in horticulture and livestock issues, in close cooperation with the HLP technical components (extension service).
- Facilitate the linkage between producer groups and veterinary clinics and Veterinary Field Units (VFUs) as well for the provision of animal health services.
- Developing a calendar and plan for technology dissemination and extension for the group members.
- Management of the farmer trainer and extensionists in close coordination with the HLP extension service.
- Organisation of field days and localised farmer field schools within the group using participatory extension methodologies in close coordination with the HLP extension service.
- Arranging for farm trials within the group in close coordination with the HLP extension service.
- Monitoring of the adoption rates.
- Providing feedback to the extension services and the experts.

### **4. *Input supply management***

- Training in business abilities and commercialization (input supply, marketing).
- Training in administrative and management skills.
- Facilitating the linkages with private input providers (e.g. Ag Depots, VFUs).
- Facilitating the collective purchase of agricultural inputs at federated level.
- Promoting the cooperation between producer groups on village and district levels.
- Supporting the creation of registered farmer associations (or cooperatives).

### **5. *Development of Savings Mobilization , Micro credit and other financial services including “Savings Boxes”***

- Training in organization, member participation, leadership, financial management and book keeping.
- Training in management of savings boxes and internal lending and repayment (eligibility criteria, clear savings norms, minimum amounts,

withdrawal rules, appraisal, prioritization, repayment schedules, actions to be taken at every stage of delinquency, internal audits and frequency etc).

- Assistance in developing rules and regulations for management of revolving funds, micro-lending procedures, taking into consideration known experiences and best practices.
- Developing linkages of producer groups with external agencies including microfinance agencies and other financial service providers.

#### **6. *Provision of marketing services***

- Support development of marketing plans for various commodities being produced in the orchards through group level collection of data on produce and prices.
- Develop and train group functionaries who would specialise in market information access and dissemination to members.
- Develop links with traders and other agencies interested in building fair price and trade relationships with groups.
- Facilitate aggregation, grading, quality control and local level value addition to get better prices for the produce.
- Work on federating the groups to be able to aggregate produce and get market linkages.

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### **➤ Bazarak / Onaba / Rokha, Panjshir**

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group is expected to take an important role in deepening, management and monitoring of the extension efforts at the group level and ensure that farmer extensionist delivers extension services at the village level. The producer group is also expected to provide feedback to extension functionaries and the extension workers on the issues faced by the farmers in adoption of practices. The mobilization effort would lead to increased participation of the members of the producer group in extension and experimentation of the recommended practices and should lead to adoption and adaptation of the improved practices. This process of mobilization would be undertaken with most groups formed in eleven districts.

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