



## FAO Representation - Afghanistan

### Success Story –2008

#### **Impact of Irrigation Rehabilitation on Crop Production in Afghanistan**

Since 1990 FAO has actively been involved in the rehabilitation and development activities in the field of irrigation in Afghanistan. So far through the Emergency Irrigation Rehabilitation Project (EIRP) FAO has rehabilitated nearly 500,000 hectares of land of which about 80,000 hectares is brought back under irrigation. The Ministry of Energy and Water MEW is implementing the project with the financial assistance from the World Bank and the technical support of FAO.

One of the schemes which is recently rehabilitated under EIRP is Maloma canal in Karokh district of Herat province with a capacity of 2 m<sup>3</sup>/sec. Dawandar Wash is feeding this canal. According to the beneficiaries the scheme has more than 280 years old history and was built by the community with very simple hand tools available at that time. This canal is the only sources of water for irrigation as well as drinking for four main villages with 1330 households. The main crops grown are wheat, barley, mung bean and alfalfa.

During the conflict period this irrigation scheme suffered from direct and indirect impact of the war such as bombing, lack of proper maintenance due to farmers' displacement or migration, erosion, river regime change and etc.

Before rehabilitation, the community had to repair the intake and some other parts of the canal with available local material and means every year. This yearly routine repair took around 40-50 days and each day occupying at least 80-100 farmers instead of working in the farm. The yearly damage of the canal prior to rehabilitation not only prevented water flow in the canal for irrigation but also limited it for drinking purposes. The children and women had to fetch water for drinking 5 to 10 Km away from the village. Following rehabilitation of the scheme, only 10 farmers will work for 10 days each for routine operation and maintenance of the canal.



The rehabilitation of the scheme is composed of 12 structures. The assessment made after such rehabilitation shows that the scheme brought 60% more land (from 1500 ha to 2500 ha) under irrigation. Moreover, an average increase of 33% of yield (wheat yield has increased from 2.6 ton/ha to 3.4 ton/ha) was realised. This has the potential to increase more through interventions such as provision of improved varieties of seed, fertilizer, extension services etc.



Since 1990, FAO has rehabilitated more than 1200 similar schemes and more than 700 schemes with approximate cost of 60 Million US\$ are ready for implementation if funds become available.