



Civil Society Organization «Ganji Tabiat»

Project Title: "Preservation and restoration of unique local wild plant species, together with communities residing nearby protected areas (PAs) of Kulyab in Khatlon region." **The main goal of the Project:** The preservation and restoration of endemic, rare and endangered plants, involving local communities located around PAs of Kulyab.

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION BACKGROUND

According to official figures, nowadays, forests cover a little more than 3 % of the country. Mountain forests of southern Tajikistan for millennia had been the object of economic use. Such forests were a source of food and raw materials for medicinal plants. They have been used as a timber and fuel material. Later, forests were actively destroyed due to expansion of agricultural land and livestock breeding. In recent decades, due to the scarcity of energy resources, mostly in mountainous regions, forests are cut down for cooking and heating purposes.

Currently, situation has worsened due to growth of population and massive reclaiming of mountain territories in Kulyab area for farmland and pastures. There is growing deforestation trend in protected areas, including natural reserve in Dashtijum and reserve in Childuhtaron. Deforestation leads to soil degradation and drastic reduction of biodiversity: nowadays, wild apple, Regel pear, Vavilov almond, pistachio, as well as cumin, roszak, rhubarb and others are either rare or endangered species. Fragile mountain ecosystems are under threat.

KEY PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES

Within the framework of the project, micro-nurseries were of 0.8 hectares were built in several villages of Shurabad (Khasorak, Shoinak, Sarichashma, Guliston) and Muminabad (Gesh, Childuhtaron, Momandiyon) districts. Local people grow in such nurseries fruit crops such as apple, pear, almond, fig, pomegranate, walnut and wild rose. Another project milestone was the establishment of demonstration sites for growing rare species of herbaceous plants such as Anzur onion (*Allium stipitatum*, Persian shallot), Rosenbach onion, wild thyme, Galagania, and others. Additionally, number of local fruit crop varieties had been planted at demonstration plots.

Project target groups were provided 10 workshops/seminars on the technology of cultivation and use of endemic, rare and endangered plants. Staff of jamoats, forestry agency, farmers and local population had participated in series of aforementioned workshops. For a broad discussion of the issues and possible solution in both districts, series of roundtables have been hold, with involvement of biologists, agronomists, and environmental specialists.

PROJECT PHOTO



Blossoming of mountainous onion (*Allium stipitatum*, Persian shallot) at one of demonstration sites

PROJECT DATA

- Project Donors:**
The Small Grants Programme of the Global Environment Facility, UN Development Programme
- Other Project Donors:** District level forestry department, agency on environmental protection, local community
- Geographical coverage:**
Shurabad and Muminabad districts of Khatlon oblast, the Republic of Tajikistan
- Project beneficiaries and stakeholders:** Population of Muminabad and Shurabad districts
- Project Duration:**
June 2012 to October 2013



KEY PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES

In the course of project implementation, special attention was paid to gender mainstreaming. The main focus was given to women empowerment and their participation in the process of improving the welfare of local communities, as well as environment. Women had actively participated in workshops and discussions, organized with and for local communities. Mostly girls and women have undergone trainings on collection and drying of herbs. It should be noted that two solar dryers were procured under the project, for manufacturing of dried fruits and herbs.

The project was implemented in close cooperation and partnership with local forestry agency and environmental protection agency. Experts of both agencies provided vital counseling for Dekhan farms. Articles in local newspapers were published for the purpose of public awareness on goals and objectives of the project. Regional TV has broadcasted story about relevance of conservation and restoration of endemic wild plants species. Additionally, schoolchildren were covered with awareness activities: schoolchildren were provided with thematic courses and talks with involvement of local experts and specialists.

PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS

The Project of SCO "Ganji Tabiat " made a significant contribution to the conservation of rare and endangered species, which are used by the local population as a food spices or herbs. Previously residents used to harvest these plants (some of them are subject to Red Book), leading to damage of natural habitat and significantly reducing numbers of such plants: nowadays, local population is able grow such plant species at their households. Environmental component of the project is particularly important, given that the planned activities were carried out next to the nature reserve Dashtijum and Childukhtaron reserve, where unique mountain ecosystems are under protection.

The Project had a positive impact on the socio-economic status of local communities. Currently, some families grow rare plant species and local fruit crops in their home gardens. Available technology for fruit and herbs harvesting and drying, allows farmers to sell part of the crops at local markets.

At the same time, owners of mini-nurseries, established within the project framework, sell adult seedlings to those who wish to establish new gardens. Such new source of income generation is a great opportunity for withholding eradication of endangered and endemic plant species. Moreover, such approach contributes to the preservation and dissemination of local fruit crops' varieties in the mountainous regions of Southern Tajikistan.

PROJECT PHOTO



Visit to nursery of rare plant species: Momandiyon village



Establishment of a nursery in Guliston village of Shurabad district



Seeds of the rare and endangered plants of South Tajikistan

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE PROJECT, PLEASE CONTACT

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