

Annual Project Progress Report

[Ningxia Anti-desertification and Livelihood Improvement]
[2012/5/15]



Basic Project Information

Project Title:	
UNDP Award ID	00060620
UNDP Project ID	00076400
Project Duration	2010–2014
Reporting Period	2010/12–2011/12
Total Approved Project Budget	10,050,000
Participating UN agencies	NA
Implementing Partners/ National collaborating agencies	CICETE/Ningxia Provincial Government
International collaborating agencies	NA
Cost-sharing third parties	NA

1. Background

Development Context

Area of desertified land devours 55.8% of Ningxia's total terrain and additional 1,21 million hectares grassland and 132,000 hectares farmland are under the threat of desertification. The livelihood of inhabitant in 13 cities, 40 townships and 600 villages have been severely affected and the region's vulnerable natural environment is also at stake. Combating desertification and mitigating the effects of drought is imperative to ensure sustainable development.

Project Objectives and Strategy

The project is aimed to assist the efforts of the Ningxia Hui Autonomous Regional Government to better manage the sand control initiatives and improve the livelihood of the selected dryland and desert affected regions of Ningxia in the process of combating land degradation and desertification. Specific emphases will be given to initiatives which strike the harmony of human activities and environment sustainability. This will be done through the combination of eco-system regeneration, human capacity building and a green entrepreneurship. This project is also aiming to enhance China's participation in global issues through sharing China's development experience with other countries.

The project will demonstrate in Zhongwei City and Yanchi County: a) rehabilitation of the ecosystem and livelihood improvement; b) enhanced capacity of inter-agency cooperation in ecological management and poverty reduction; and c) a knowledge network is to be set up to enhance capacity development in anti-desertification and combat land degradation in Ningxia and promote experience sharing with other dryland areas in China and other countries.

2. Key Results

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Key targets/outputs for [2011]

Outcome 1: Capacity Development to Improve Inter-departmental Cooperation in Ecological Management and Poverty Reduction

Output 1: An efficient and effective consultation and participatory decision-making network of cross government departments, research institutions and industries is established for strategic planning and management of the project.

Output 2: Increased human resource capacities through training in Sand control, sustainable development and effective extension.

Output 3: Enhanced agriculture extension and technology transfer capabilities through the establishment of two Farmers Service Centre to serve the Zhongwei solar vegetable greenhouse production area and gravel mulched water melon production, respectively.

Outcome 2: Local Pilots for Sustainable Sand Industry Development

Output 1: Producers association establishment to coordinate production, marketing and logistics for effective quality control and increased market compatibility.

Results achieved in [2011]

1. Building an inter-cooperation networks between different divisions and stakeholders in Ecological Management and Poverty-relief.

Project Steering Committee (PSC) & Project Management Offices were established in 2011. The project was initiated smoothly with efficient coordination of the project management office.

2. Capacity building

Trainings and capacity building activities have been carried out. Through these capacity building activities awareness of balancing environmental management and poverty reduction is improved. Some specific technical trainings for farmers in plantation of high value vegetables and fruit planting, sand control, water saving, resilient to soil degradation, integrated sustainable development etc. have been conducted with satisfactory results. There are 2950 farmer participated in the trainings in the project areas, among which more than 25% are female.

As an integral part of the capacity building, the project introduced 70 new varieties of vegetables and 31 fruit seedlings, and built 200 acres of demonstration site of new seedling serving training base for the farmer's cooperatives.

The beneficiaries of the project also get some good experiences in ecosystem management, modern agriculture development of other countries

3. A new type of farmer professional cooperatives in desertification region is growing

In Zhongwei, there are 2200 farmers in Xiangshan professional cooperative association. This association established contact with 12 companies all over the country and set up more than 500 sales points.

Tianrui fruit and vegetable production and marketing association of Zhongwei City has 103 shareholder members, providing seeds, agricultural supply and other services for its members. The cooperative also provides services such as agricultural products processing, fertilizers, storage, transportation and sales business to ensure the farmers obtaining better economic benefits.

Yanchi Hao Jitai village, 22 kilometers away in the Yanchi town, has 7 villages, 290 households, 1270 people and 8889 Mu farmland. In March 15, 2011, the Hao Jitai Village Association was established with 230 members. The association provides members techniques of Salix cultivation and processing,

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and promotes marketing of Salix products. Annual income of the members of the association has increased by 2000 yuan per capita.

Hao Jitai Village Development Cooperation Fund in Bianpai was also set up in the project implementation period with original capital is 200,000 yuan from the government poverty reduction funds. Villagers participate in the credit cooperative with equity contribution of minimum contribution of 1000 Yuan for 1 share. The maximum share limit for each member is 3 shares. There are 110 households joined in the mutual credit cooperative. Until now 330,000 yuan have lent to members. Similar credit cooperatives have been established in 8 administrative villages affiliated to Qingshan Township.

4. Pilots development for demonstration and extension

The project has carried out trials and demonstrations, including the Chengxitan cotton test planting, cultivation of shrubs and herbs, such as planting licorice root, Haloxylon ammodendron and inoculation of Cistanche deserticola, Celluloses of Salix psammophila and Caragana korshinskii Kom in the Liuyaotou desert.

The "Tengger Desert Comprehensive Utilization Demonstration" is located in Shapotou district of Zhongwei city. 1200 greenhouses have been built in the site, with coverage of 1 acre each. The greenhouses produce organic vegetables and fruits with high value-added. Shelter belt is also built in the area of greenhouses.

Pilot of ensuring sustainable land use of sand mulched water melon land is conducted by exploring alternative cultivation and land use patterns.

Training materials and audio-visual materials were made in 2011 covering the areas of shelterbelt and economic forest construction, vegetable and fruit cultivation technology, water-saving irrigation and soil and water conservation technology.

The information of the project sees <http://video.nxvtv.cn/player.php?id=31673>

Analysis of project performance

The project enhanced awareness of sustainable poverty reduction with balance of livelihood improvement and ecosystem benefit.

The project has explored some initiatives to improve livelihood of farmers in the process of combating land degradation and desertification. The project emphasizes some practical approaches which strike the harmony of human activities and environment sustainability. Income of some beneficiaries in the project has been increased.

Knowledge and experiences in soil and water conservation, farming practice and ecosystem management have been delivered to the beneficiaries of the project. The activities of the project also contribute to improvement of agriculture infrastructure of the project areas.

Outputs of the project will be useful policy reference in making anti-desertification policies.

The project contributes to capacity development at sub-national level. Government officials at different levels in the province, rural technical extension staff and farmers from pilot areas have participated in the capacity building activities organized in the project, including training workshops, field visit to other provinces and international study tours. Some of the experiences and knowledge learned in the capacity building activities have been applied in the project.

Research and studies have been launched in watershed management, sustainable land use of sand mulched water melon field, and sand economy development. The studies and research enhance capacity of government officials and project implementing partners.

The women has play an important role in the livelihood improvement activities such as greenhouse production in Zhongwei Shapotou and has been benefited from greenhouse production know-how

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and business management trainings, as well as in the ecological-environment protection and livelihood improvement in Yanchi county in plantation of Garagana and Licorice and wickerwork. The women took part in technical extension initiatives of the project as worker, learner, house-livelihood decision-maker in project area.

3. Project Management and recommendations

The project runs smoothly. PMO was setup and functioning. Cooperation among the different governmental agencies and department is effective. The main outputs of the project are well planned for the whole project cycle.

It is recommended the PMO should track the priorities in the 12th-five-year plan of Ningxia in the fields of anti-desertification and livelihood improvement in the arid semi-arid areas in Ningxia and work closely with relevant departments to design some workable activities in the project sites.

The project could contribute to strengthen the existing farmers' organizations and make suggestions to emerging farmers' organizations. Detailed recommendations see the attached investigation report prepared by Prof. Wan Jingxin, the rural development expert in the project.

At present, the government is providing the infrastructure including water and electricity supply, etc. And the government builds greenhouses and rent them to farmers. With technical supports from the government and TTFs, the farmers work in the green houses and get the income from the activities and pay rental of greenhouses. It is needed to anticipate scenarios of government withdrawal or partial withdrawal, while ensure sustainability of the production cycle.

It is suggested that some good practices of anti-desertification in Ningxia should be well summarized for wider dissemination.