

Integrated Community Development in Four Communities of Tashir sub-region of Lori marz



INCOME GENERATION

Background

Neighboring communities of Sarchapet, Norashen, Mikhaylovka and Metsavan are situated in the Tashir sub-region of the Lori region, about 1,600 meters above sea level, with a population of 11,238. Over 90% of the population are Armenian of Catholic faith. The number of households is around 3,159. A 6th-century Catholic church operates in the Metsavan community and a new Catholic church has been operating in the community of Sarchapet for the last two years.

Plough-lands, hayfields and pasturelands constitute a large part of agricultural land. However, the availability of land does not necessarily mean that the households that own it use it adequately. Given the absence of an irrigation system and of quality planting stock and seeds, it does not make economic sense to grow crops. Only 35-40% of the available 4,278.9 hectares are cultivated. The population is engaged in growing grain, forage and truck crops as well as melons, gourds, potatoes and fruits. The focus in plant cultivation is on potatoes and winter wheat. However, the yield rate is 1.3 times lower than the countrywide average. Within the past 10-15 years new kinds of potato and wheat seeds have not been used in these villages. The existing difficulties notwithstanding, the potato crop satisfies the households' food needs and the surplus is exported to the neighboring country (Georgia) as the State border is very close.

Orchards in the said communities are only on household plots. There are primarily apple, pear and plum trees in the orchards. The orchards in the community are very old already and, therefore, low yielders.

The population also engages in breeding dairy, meat cattle and to a lesser extent in pig-breeding, poultry-keeping and beekeeping. Since the tradition of cheese-making still exists in Tashir, the companies that collect and process milk constantly operate in neighboring villages. The milk produced in the communities are purchased and transported to Tashir twice a day; at the same time, small cheese-making enterprises operate also in the communities. Even though 2,550 cows in the communities belong to gray Caucasian species and have a low milk yield, nevertheless, the cheese-making stimulates cattle-breeding. Alpien pasture-lands, as well as natural and climate conditions, contribute to the development of cattle-breeding.

Objective

The Project implementation will target the following objectives:

- Replacement of old trees in orchards in household plots,
- Provision of good-quality potato seeds,
- Provision of good-quality wheat seeds,
- Artificial insemination of cows and an increase in their milk yield.

Beneficiaries

All de facto existing 3,159 rural households in the communities

Budget

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| 1. 47,385 seedlings of apple, pear and plum trees (for 3,159 households, 15 seedlings to each household, i.e. 5 seedlings of each kind); | 70,000 USD |
| 2. Provision of potato seeds to plant potatoes on 5 – 45 hectares of plough-lands; | 18,000 USD - 180,000 USD |
| 3. Provision of seed, fertilizers and diesel fuel to sow wheat on 45 – 450 hectares of plough-lands | 22,500 USD – 225,000 USD |
| 4. Artificial insemination of cows | 40,000 USD |