



PROJECT PROPOSAL

AT-COST PROVISION OF FARMING SUPPLIES TO FARMERS IN BAVRA CLUSTER (ASHOTSK SUB-REGION OF SHIRAK MARZ)

The Bavra, Tavshoot, Saragyugh, and Sizavet communities (Bavra cluster) are located in Ashotsk sub-region, in the northern part of Shirak Marz, next to the Georgian border, at an altitude of 1,900-2,200 m. above sea level. The cluster has a population of about 1,545. Cattle-breeding is the main occupation here, given the area's mountainous terrain and rich grasslands. Wheat, barley, potato, and vegetables are also grown as cash crops. However, a deteriorated economic infrastructure, the lack of agricultural machinery and quality seeds, small plots, limited marketing possibilities, and the lack of capital are major constraints for expanding economic output beyond subsistence levels. Farmers lack basic supplies, purchase credits are not available, and much of the irrigation system has either collapsed or is not designed for small plots.

The Bavra cluster is considered the coldest and poorest area of Shirak Marz and Armenia as a whole. It is remote, isolated, and underdeveloped, characterized by high levels of general and particularly youth unemployment. The sub-region is a high priority area for both the Government and the donor community. Since 2006, with the help of the Norwegian government, the UNDP has implemented a number of projects in the Bavra cluster, focusing on income generation for the most vulnerable households. Building on these experiences and results, the UNDP proposes to further strengthen local economic capacities in order to reduce poverty.

Of the 2,533 hectares of arable land in the Bavra cluster, over two-thirds currently remain uncultivated. The 333 households of the cluster are unable to optimally use their plots because they do not have access to affordable, locally available farming supplies (seeds, fertilizers, insecticides, fuel, etc). Instead, farmers are forced to travel long distances to buy supplies, thus increasing their costs.

This project will make essential farming supplies available to farmers at cost. In the short run, the project will enable farmers to buy basic supplies at cost, thereby reducing their financial burden and helping expand agricultural productivity. In the long run, the project will boost agriculture in the Bavra cluster, help raise the living standards of farmers, and stem migration.

OBJECTIVES

- To provide core farming supplies at cost to farmers in the Bavra cluster.
- To extend purchase credit to farmers in the springtime, when they are financially strapped.
- To expand the use of plough lands.
- To help farmers raise their income levels.

BENEFICIARIES

Three hundred thirty three households of the Bavra cluster.

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT/ACTIVITIES

Based on applications for agricultural supplies filled out by farmers, the project will buy the total quantity of the required supplies and transport and deliver them to the farmers. The farmers will buy the supplies at cost. The project will collect the moneys following harvest, when farmers will submit applications for the next year.

EXPECTED RESULTS

- An annual 20-30% increase in the cultivation of plough lands.
- A 10-15% increase in farmer incomes.
- Farmer cost savings of 10% or more.

BUDGET

30,000 USD (for the purchase of agricultural supplies at the launch of the project).
If the farmers' supply requests exceed this budget, an advance payment equal to the excess amount could be collected from the applicant farmers.

OTHER FUNDING - Staff costs will be defrayed by local communities.



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