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PAKISTAN

CASE STUDY

Market Network Helps Village Relocate

Assistance enabled communities to increase resilience both before and after the earthquake

Challenge

Nestled between the mountainous crevices of Balakot District, villagers living in the small enclave of Chaproachoshal led a simple life dependent on agriculture and livestock. The village was famous for its rich produce, including potatoes and other cash crops that were valued highly since their winter harvest made them available long after summer harvests were gone. The October 2005 earthquake forced 550 of the villagers to relocate to the Mansehra district hundreds of miles away. They numbered 90 families, 300 children, and 20 widows.



Photo: USAID/Suzanne Ross

Chaproachoshal village members who relocated after the earthquake received water filters, water sanitation tablets, relief supplies, and medical assistance.

“We are very grateful for humanitarian help. Please convey our love to your people,” said Ghulan Jelani Chaproachoshal, a village head.

Initiative

A decade ago, USAID supported community-based organizations working in remote areas, including Chaproachoshal, to strengthen their capacities to address local challenges. The earthquake demonstrated how this investment paid off. Farmers in this isolated location used to sell their produce at below-market prices

to middlemen who resold at much higher prices in urban markets. With help from one community-based organization, farmers received training in market principles, such as market assessments and economies of scale. The farmers consolidated points of sale to stabilize prices. In addition, the farm cluster began to sell directly to the marketplace, generating profits that convinced villagers of the benefits of the new approach.

Results

Through the program, the village created outside networks that offered help in the earthquake’s aftermath. First, a business contact gave the displaced villagers land to build a temporary 65-tent camp in Batrair, Mansehra. USAID provided them with water filters and purification tablets so villages would have safe water to drink and bathe. USAID also provided primary health care and relief supplies, helping villagers withstand the crisis as they prepared to rebuild their lives back home. Both before and after the earthquake, USAID assistance helped the villagers become more resilient in the face of economic and environmental shocks.

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