

Spreading the spell of ‘*practice change*’ through farm advisors

The Lodhran Pilot Project (LPP) is being implemented in district Lodhran in Southern Punjab. The area is rich in livestock population with extreme climate conditions. For the last five years, field staff from LPP are providing advisory services to improve the on-farm efficiency and profitability of smallholder farmers.

This area has low, and unequal resource distribution which leads to significant challenges for livestock and the farming communities that rely on them. Farm advisors have been struggling to achieve their goals for LPP and dealing with unresponsive farmers, low milk yield and lack of knowledge about farm management practices.

Aik-Saath Dairy-Beef Project is an initiative of Australian Government working in Punjab and Sindh. The project collaborates with various organisations, including LPP, to strengthen farm advisor performance in their field activities to improve farm productivity and profitability.

The Dairy-Beef Project is providing training to farm advisors on improved livestock farming practices and building their capacity in communication and mobilization to engage farmers and drive practice change using a whole-family extension approach.

Nadeem Abbas, Senior Program Manager, LPP

“The farm advisors within their organisation were less confident in order to achieving their goals and implementing improved farm practices

at smallholder farming system. Trainings of farm advisors (provided by the Dairy-Beef Project) remained instrumental to improve their relationships with farmers, working efficiency and build their confidence in field activities. The training has been very helpful to achieve our organisational goals”



Nadeem Abbas from LPP (right) with farmers (left) discussing fodder quality in 46M village Lodhran

Sajida is participating regularly in the Dairy-Beef project farm advisor training workshops. She is implementing what she has learned in the field and providing advice to smallholder farmers.

“Before the training, I was facing difficulty to convince farmers for untying their animals to provide free access to feeding and watering. Only 2-3 farmers change this practice. During the training workshops, organised by the Dairy-beef project, I learned to assess the needs of farmers from social mobilisation sessions and technical knowledge. Now there are about 20 farmers in one village who have changed this practice. Farmers have significantly improved their on-farm

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efficiency and production after this practice change”.

The Dairy-Beef Project team has observed visible changes in Sajida, particularly in her communication skills and confidence in farmer meetings. She is implementing the whole family extension approach herself, by engaging with both male and female farmers in the field. She also developed a network of other farm advisors during these training workshops organised by Dairy-beef project.



Sajida (right) getting practical training on animal nutrition, UVAS Lahore

Kaneez Mai, female farmer, 46M village

“Initially I had only 3 animals which produced only 3-4L milk animal/day. I tied-up these animals and had to spent more time with these animals due to traditional practices . I got trainings from Sajida and untied my animals to provide them free access to feed and water. This practice change helped me

to save my time and labor. This change in practice enabled me to increase my herd size to 13 animals and improved milk production to 10-12 L/animal/day. I am enjoying the increased profit from the farm production”



Kaneez Mai (Left) and Sajida (right) at her farm in 46M, Lodhran

This story of Kaneez is just one farmer from village 46M in Lodhran who has been working with Sajida. However, Sajida is working in two villages. Through her work, Sajida has been successful in supporting four farmers in village 43M and another twenty farmers in 46M in adopting free access to water by untying of animals. She is sharing these skills with her team and bosses, who are working in a total of 8 villages in Lodhran and they are planning to extend advisory services in 30 villages. The passion and success of Sajida in the LPP has great potential to have even wider impact within the organisation.