



Project Title	School Feeding
Donor Agency	WFP (World Food Program)
Implementing Partner	SSTD (Society for Skills, Training & Development)
Area of the Project	Lower Dir
Targeted Union Councils	(UC Balambat, UC Lal Qila, UC Munda, UC Samarbagh, UC Dishgram, UC Drarangal, UC Gal, UC Haya Sari, UC Kambat, UC Kotkay, UC Khazana, UC Koto, UC Laj Book, UC Maskini, UC Mayar, UC Mian Kalay, UC Munda, UC Munjai, UC Sadbar, UC Zamidara)
Target Community	Primary schools' students (Girls & Boys)
Duration of the project	9 months

Area background

Lower Dir

Lower Dir is one of the 24 districts of Khyber PakhtunKhwa province. This district was formed in 1996 when the then Dir district was divided into Upper Dir and Lower Dir.

History

Dir was a small princely state located in the backwoods of Khyber PakhtunKhwa in Pakistan. The state ceased to exist in 1969 when it was incorporated into Pakistan. The area once comprised of the state of Dir (5,282 km²) now forms two districts of Khyber PakhtunKhwa - Upper Dir and Lower Dir. These two districts were part of Malakand Division.

Geography

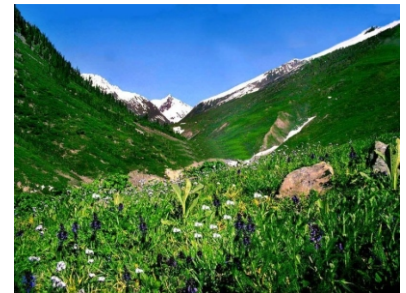
Most of the area lay in the valley of the Panjkora River which rises in the Hindu Kush Mountains and joins the Swat River near Chakdara. Apart from small areas in the south-west, Dir is a rugged mountainous area with peaks rising to 5,000 meters (16,000 ft) in the north-east and to 3,000 meters (10,000 ft) along the watersheds with Swat to the east and Afghanistan and Chitral to the west and north.



Demographics

People living in this area are Muslims, Pashtuns. The main language of the area is Pashto while Urdu is easily understood.

The population of Lower Dir district in 37 Union Councils is 797852 according to the 1998 census report; the projected population of the Dir Lower is 1037091 in 2005 with the same growth between 1981 and 1998 census i.e. 3.42% per annum.



Administration

The district is administratively subdivided into two Tehsils which are comprised of a total of 37 Union Councils:

- o Samar Bagh
- o Timargara

Project background

Repercussions of:	Details
Nawab Period	<p>Dir was a princely state before incorporating in to Pakistan. The last prince (Duke) was cruel towards his people. He didn't allow them to get education in order to avoid any potential rival. He discouraged everyone from education and tried to create hurdles for those who showed little interest in it. It was just one instance of his obscurant policy towards his people. In another case he even stopped people to color their homes white in his state except the duke's house.</p> <p>Keeping people of Lower Dir away from civilization has left the people with the irreparable damage even after 40 years of rule. People lack everything from education to the modernization of the society. The duke has deprived his people from the very basic things such as equal rights. The duke has plunged the people in to a drab which still have visible difference in terms of backwardness.</p>
Militants and military action	<p>Level of education among the people is low. Due to lack of education there is little awareness regarding the importance of education. The religious minded people of the target area were an easy prey for militants to use. Initially they mingled with the people very peacefully but when the militants grew in number they started imposing their will on the people and challenged the writ of government. In 2009 Pak Army launched an operation against the militants and decided to clear the area from the miscreants. The result was widespread destruction of buildings which included schools, offices etc. As a result there was a mass movement of people fleeing the affected area.</p>
Devastating flood	<p>After the completion of military operation as life was returning to normalcy a disaster of unmeasured proportion struck the land hard, when the floods of 2010 inflicted heavy damages that are still in the process of rehabilitation. These destructions have made the efforts of government and non-government organization NGO extremely difficult.</p>

Project Methodology

SSTD has obtained a list of 421 schools from Education Department Office for the distribution of food baskets among the young students. A packet of HEB is given on the daily basis to every student and distributed vegetable Oil tins among those students and teachers whose attendance is 22 days per month.

A total of 421 schools in different UCs (Union Councils) of lower Dir are provided with HEBs and Oil tins. Among them 272 schools are for boys, while 149 are for girls.

Thus all together 86888 boys' students, and 39125 girls, along with 1557 teachers of different schools are being served with food baskets.

Purpose of the project

Children are the most vulnerable segment of the society. They can be easily distracted from education especially in rural areas of Pakistan where education is not the priority. They prefer their children to start earning and help their poor family to fulfill their needs instead getting education. 2010 floods have severely affected the area and many schools. Heavy financial burden is thrown on their weak shoulders. Many children who were acquiring education are now facing immense problem to pay school expenses. To evade their expenses many parents have stopped their children to go to schools. Enrollment of students is very low and number of dropouts and truants is very high.

By providing food baskets to children at schools upon their attendance will encourage many children to join or rejoin their schools. Nutritious food would not only encourage them towards education but it will also help them to lessen their financial saddle and improve their health condition.

Aims & Objectives

- To increase the enrollment of students in schools
- To improve the attendance
- To reduce the number of dropouts
- To reduce the number of truants

Problems faced

- Uncertain security situation in village Miskini has affected the mobility of our staff
- Presence of a large numbers of security check posts impedes the distribution
- As schools are located far away from each other, it makes the distribution work more time consuming.



Outcomes of the Project

The project has brought immense change in the number of enrollment. Enrollments have been increased considerably. It has reduced the number of truants among the students. It has encouraged the teachers to give more attention towards their duties, bring more students to join schools. Providing assistance to the vulnerable community has brought positive changes in the lives of people and the area.

