

## Small Action Facility Adoptive Projects (SAF) - A contribution towards empowerment

• Zakia Ishtiaq Khan\*

inter  
cooperation  
Natural Resource Management  
Rural Economy  
Local Governance and Civil Society

CBRM has initiated various farmers' centred approaches like Participatory Technology Development (PTD) and Farmers Field Schools (FFS). The essence of these approaches is that the communities are involved in issues identification, prioritization, planning solutions based on indigenous and improved scientific knowledge, implementation, monitoring and validation. Beside other key functions, the Regional Coordination Forum (RCF)\*\* is also responsible for Small Action Facility (SAF) under which small projects identified and submitted by communities are reviewed, approved and later backstopped through participatory monitoring.

In a first step, CBRM trained the key staff of the project, NGO partners and Government line agencies as Master Trainers in PTD approach. Through various field exercises these master trainers helped the communities understand the basic concepts of PTD. The communities were also facilitated to identify their poten-

tial NRM issues and trained to formulate small project proposals on SAF formats. The communities submit these proposals to Field Support Unit staff or related PTDeers to seek their input. The PTDeers then forward these proposals to Regional Coordinator for necessary scrutiny as per laid out criteria of the CBRM (i.e. marginalized groups, demonstration effects, sustainability aspects, innovation and learning, etc). These proposals are then forwarded to the RCF for discussion in the subsequent meeting.

Each small project is presented by a community representative. After presentation the RCF members provide their comments. The Forum after a consensus ei-



\*Coordinator HID / PMR CBRM

\*\*A separate article is available in this report on Regional Coordination Forum (RCF)



ther approves the proposal or suggests necessary revision. In the same meeting, the Forum also decides about the composition of monitoring committee, which usually comprises members from government departments, the local government and the local community. After the approval of the project Terms of Agreement are formulated with the concerned community. The community

receives funds in their bank account in agreed instalments. The communities are guided in observing and documenting various stages of the project in order to promote and replicate learning. CBRM also helps communities in validating their

project through a learning event either during or at the end of its implementation. All the related stages and observations of the SAF projects are shared with the RCF members at various occasions.

SAF has proven as a useful tool in enhancing communities' skills in managing finance for small initiatives. The process involved in SAF contributes to improving their understanding on proposal development. They also learn to present logics in the proposed solution when they defend their projects in the RCF. It is important to mention that a number of SAF initiatives have also come from the women organizations. However, the experience shows that women would need a more consistent and longer term support before they are able to follow all the steps independently. In general, SAF is a financing mechanism at local level which leads to empowerment.