



PRESS RELEASE

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More Than A Thousand Families Benefit from Kushkak Canal Rehabilitation

JALALABAD, TUESDAY, JUNE 26, 2012— At today's ribbon-cutting ceremony, Nangarhar Deputy Provincial Governor Mohammad Hanif Gardiwal, Surkhrod Deputy District Governor, Haji Mohd. Ikram, provincial council members, representatives of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), and elders from Surkhrod District celebrated the completion of the newly rehabilitated Kushkak Canal.

Kushkak Canal flows up to 10 kilometers through six villages and provides irrigation water for 388 hectares of land, benefiting 1178 farming families in Surkhrod District of Nangarhar Province.

USAID implemented this project in close coordination with the Department of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock, the Department of Rural Rehabilitation and Development, and the local community. The rehabilitation work included the construction of 70 meters long main wall, 882 meters of canal side walls, three regulating gates for spillways and 17 dikes in different locations.

Kushkak Canal also helps the operation of two micro hydropower plants and two flour mills that were previously inactive due to insufficient water supply. The micro hydropower plants now provide electricity to 590 families and to 4 poultry farms in the area.

"Before rehabilitation of Kushkak canal, there was not enough water for irrigation. Also, during monsoon season, floods would always damage the canal and causes crops to be parched. This presented a big problem for the residents of the area. Now, we can all breathe a sigh of relief," said Engineer Jan Mohammad, Head of the Planning Department at the Nangarhar Provincial Directorate of Irrigation and Energy.

During the project implementation period some 60 local residents had the opportunity to work on the project. Through daily wage employments and sourcing of locally available construction material like sand, gravel and stones, more than USD 185,000 was injected into the local economy.

USAID's Incentives Driving Economic Alternatives for the North, East, West (IDEA-NEW) Project strives to improve irrigation systems and market linkages across eastern, northern and western Afghanistan that enables farmers to produce high-quality fruits and vegetables and obtain higher market prices.

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