

What is TUP?

TUP stands for: Targeting the ultra-poor. TUP is part of a larger, comprehensive, long-term initiative called the Rural Microfinance and Livestock Program (RMLSP) being implemented by Afghanistan's Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL) with funding from the International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD).

The Goal

The overall goal of RMLSP is to reduce the vulnerability and improve the livelihood, income, food security, and nutritional status of poor and vulnerable rural households on a sustainable basis in selected areas. TUP was piloted in three districts of Bamyan province in 2010, targeting 400 rural women. In June 2012, TUP was replicated in two districts of Badakhshan province, doubling the number of beneficiaries to 800.



For Reza Gul, it was hunger combined with physical abuse by her husband. The project gives her way out.

Hunger and humiliation turn into hope

The Story of Reza Gul

Before she was selected to participate in The Ultra Poor (TUP) program of MISFA, Reza Gul's life was filled with hardship and violence. Reza Gul was identified among the poorest of the poor in Badakhshan, a province in the northeastern highlands of Afghanistan. She received a package of support including livestock, monthly stipend, health allowance, skills and financial literacy trainings, and regular coaching. The intervention was just what she desperately needed to break the cycle of poverty and abuse that she did not know she could ever escape.

Reza Gul, her husband and five children live in Batash, a village in Faizabad city, the capital of Badakhshan. Prior to participating in TUP, she and her family were never sure of where they would get their food each day. They had survived on charity and leftovers of neighbors and community members. Hunger was the only certainty in her family, but for Reza Gul, it was hunger combined with physical abuse by her husband. The project gave her a way out.

TUP was first piloted in Bamyan and Badakhshan provinces in 2010- 2016, targeting a total of 1,760 households with funding from IFAD and in partnership with Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL). Upon the successful completion of the pilots, MISFA scaled up the TUP project in five more provinces covering a total of 6,725 households. The scale-up is funded by the Access to Finance Project supported by the World Bank, and ISAME, a project funded by the Italian Development Cooperation Office.

Reza Gul received a milking cow and a calf as part of TUP's support package. The livestock did not only serve as a main source of food for Reza Gul's family, but it also helped her earn a monthly income of AFN 1,200 from selling milk and other dairy products. Reza Gul now manages to cook meals and her children are able to eat fresh dairy products, such as eggs, milk and yoghurt, every day.

The 35-year old mother of five was inspired by what she had achieved with her dairy production livelihood that she tried to diversify her source of income by starting a poultry business. For some time she was earning an extra AFN 250 monthly by selling eggs, however, she hit a setback when two-thirds of her hens perished due to unknown causes and only four survived.

Reza Gul's next investment was the treatment of her husband's drug addiction in the hope that he could be an active member of the family. When Reza Gul's cow delivered

She sold the first one and purchased a cart for her husband that he could use to sell fruits and vegetables in the market. Once her husband started working again and earning a monthly income of more than AFN 1,500, he gained self-esteem and the violence towards his wife stopped.

"We will continue," said Reza Gul with confidence, referring to her determination to keep working on improving her household's quality of life. "What the project did for us was more than what parents do for their children."

With her and her husband both earning regularly, and two of their school-aged children enrolled in the public schools, Reza Gul reflects back on how the feeling of hunger had been banished and replaced by happiness and hope for a better, brighter future for her family.

**" What the Project did for us
was more than what parents
do for their children"**

- Reza gul

**TUP participant
(Badakhshan)**