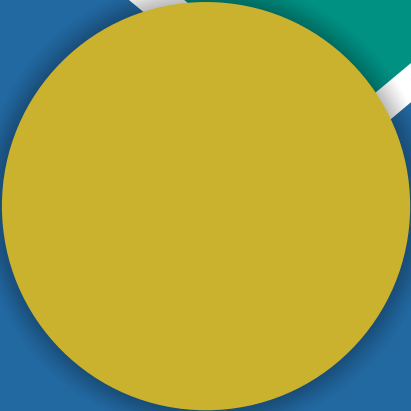


Community Mobilization through Outreach



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Social mobilization is essential for rural development and enhancing agricultural productivity through collective action in the rural areas. However in rural Punjab it is always a challenge to bring communities together for collective work due to heterogeneous socio-economic and cultural environment. Universities, being perceived as neutral entities, can act as catalyst in this regards by mobilizing farming community through research based solutions. In this context, the

Outreach Chair of US-Pakistan Centre for Advanced Studies in Agriculture and Food Security (USPCAS-AFS) has established the *Community Outreach Centers* in six villages to enhance the direct interaction of UAF faculty and the farming community. These centers are equipped with ICT tools and also link the rural community with agricultural experts of UAF through direct interaction and also through information and communication technology.

Participatory need assessment surveys were conducted in the selected villages and based on the survey results, need based training sessions and expert talks are being arranged on regular basis. An important component of this initiative is *gender mainstreaming* in which a team of rural sociologists is working with the female farmers for their capacity building. Keeping in view the fact that rural youth is taking less interest in the farming activities, a program for rural youth and school children is being initiated.

Main components of this initiative are:

- Pilot Cooperative Extension Model (UAF indigenous model)
- Gender and youth mainstreaming in agriculture
- Promotion of ICT culture in rural areas
- Enhance coordination between farming community, UAF faculty and public extension department



Inauguration of Community Outreach in Samundri.



Farmers' Day in Samundri



Community Meeting in Tandlianwala, District Faisalabad