

Rural Education & Economic Development Society (REEDS) Pakistan

Introduction: The locust plague believed to prove worse than COVID-19, adversely inflicted farmers across the country and is feared to create food shortages. The United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) estimated \$2.5 billion worth of losses to winter crops and \$2.8 billion to summer crops. The threat coincides with the corona-virus crisis that already crippled the economy and growth prospects. Economic growth is expected to contract 0.4 percent this fiscal year from 1.9 percent in the last fiscal year. Summer breeding is underway along both sides of the Indo-Pakistan border. In India, numerous adult groups and swarms are laying eggs over a wide area of Rajasthan between Jodhpur and Churu while hatching and band formation from earlier laying have occurred further south from Phalodi to Gujarat. In Pakistan, hopper groups and bands are present in the Nagarparkar area in Tharparkar of southeast Sindh. Adult groups are scattered throughout Cholistan and other parts of Tharparkar that will lay eggs shortly. In Iran, locust numbers have declined, and the situation has improved.

References: <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/675577-govt-earmarks-rs26bln-to-fight-locust-outbreak> & FAO Desert Locust situation update 29 July 2020

FARMER AWARENESS RAISING

Rickshaw/Mosque Announcements: Awareness campaign using rickshaw with speakers installed on it and through mosque announcement about locust control activities and timely reporting to Agriculture Extension Department and Locust information Cells in case of locust attack. The rickshaw moves from one village to other covering about 10 to 15 villages in one whole day. During this campaign the team distributes the awareness material too on which contact details of locust information cell is mentioned. On an average 3000 to 4000 audiences are benefited during one rickshaw campaign.



Rickshaw in filed announcing locusts control measures for farmers

Radio Awareness Program: Awareness raising through FM Radio program is regular and routine practice of REEDS. This month more awareness raising Radio programs were conducted for capacity building of audiences. Experts from REEDS and Agriculture Extension Department participated the Radio Awareness Program for locust control. Different questions were asked from the audiences which were answered by experts and audiences were satisfied for their queries.



FM awareness session being aired

Awareness Walks: REEDS has conducted an awareness walk with 30 participants at DC office Ghotki with collaboration of Agriculture Extension Department as a part of awareness of common people against locust attack. Dr. Muhammad Yousaf Ali (Project Manager REEDS-Pakistan), Shah Nawaz Shiekh (Deputy Director AED, Ghotki), Anis Ahmad (Focal Person Deputy Commissioner Ghotki) and Ghulam Murtaza (District Coordinator, REEDS-Pakistan) lead the awareness walk for locust control. Participants were holding play banner for control of locust.



Dr. Muhammad Yousaf Ali (project manager REEDS) during the awareness walk for locust control in Ghotki

TRAINING & CAPACITY BUILDING

Capacity building of Farmers (Male & Female): Farmer awareness sessions by conducting corner meetings to build the capacity of farmer for fighting against the attack of Locust in target districts were conducted. These farmers were made aware for timely informing the agriculture department and locust information cell in case of locust attack by organizing group meetings (observing SOPs to control the spread of COVID-19), face to face personal meetings and conveying the messages about locust control & preventive measures through social media. The farmers are given training for use Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) kits during pesticide application during locust attack.



Awareness session of farmer for locust control being conducted by Dr. Muzaffar Saeed

PLANNING / PROGRESS SHARING MEETINGS

District Administration: Dr. Muhammad Yousaf Ali, Project Manager and Dr. Muzaffar Saeed, Program Manager on behalf of REEDS-Pakistan regularly participate in progress and update sharing meetings chaired by DC's of respective districts. District Administration, Agriculture Extension Department, Department of Plant Protection, NDMA & REEDS-Pakistan are active members of these meetings. The purpose of these meeting is share the situation report of district for locusts attack and planning for efficient use of available resources to combat the attack.



Dr. Muhammad Yousaf Ali (Project Coordinator, REEDS) participating in progress sharing meeting at DC office RYK

Agriculture Department: A joint meeting was held today between the Agriculture Extension Department, Rural Education and Economic Development Society (REEDS) Pakistan, National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), District Government and Pakistan Army regarding the locust prevention and control in district Vehari. Mr. Rana Muhammad Arif Deputy Director AED, Muhammad Altaf, Assistant Director, AED Vehari, Dr. Muzaffar Saeed Manager Programs Networking & Coordination REEDS Pakistan, LT Sagheer Pak Army and other Notables from District Government are the part of above said meeting.



DR. Muzaffar Saeed participating locust control planning meeting with AED, Vehari and Pakistan Army

COORDINATION AND STRENGTHENING STAKEHOLDERS

Mock Exercise: REEDS has conducted mock exercises Ghotki and Vehari with collaboration of Agriculture Extension Department as a part of training of AED & REEDS field staff. Dr. Muzaffar Saeed Manager Programs Networking & Coordination REEDS and Dr. Muhammad Yousaf Ali (Project Manager REEDS) organized the awareness exercises for locust control in which Agriculture Extension Department District Administration and other stakeholders participated. These exercises will help to practice the use of machinery and train teams to combat attacks of locusts.



News in National Newspaper of Mock Exercise at Vehari

Handing Over of Locust Control Material: REEDS-Pakistan handed over 200 liters of Lambda cyhalothrine to DC Office, Ghotki for locust control activities. Deputy Commissioner, Ghotki highly appreciated the REEDS support which has helped in control locust. REEDS have already supported District Administration and Agriculture Extension Department by providing them locust control material.

RESEARCH TRIALS & KNOWLEDGE SHARING

Mr. Shah Nawaz Sheikh (Deputy Director Agriculture Extension Department, Ghotki), visited REEDS Head Office Rahim Yar Khan for visual demonstration of sound producing machine designed by REEDS to repel locust which help in avoiding the stealing of locust in target acre. He highly appreciated the working of sound producing machine. The working efficiency was already tested in field with participation of Department of Pest Warning, Rahim Yar Khan. There was least settlement of pest in the acre where sound producing machine was installed. After practical demonstration of sound producing machine farmers are adopting the technology to save their crop.



Dr. Muhammad Yousaf Ali giving demonstration of sound producing machine to Mr. Shah Nawaz Sheikh (Deputy Director Agriculture, AED, Ghotki)

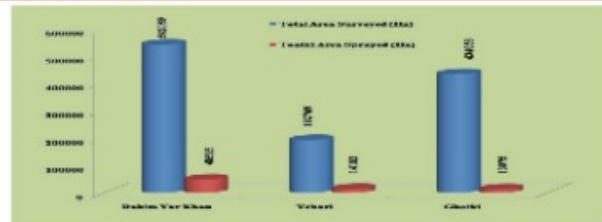
NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES

National: The government has announced Rs 26 billion worth funds to fight locust outbreak which is a threat to food security in Pakistan. Federal government will spend Rs14 billion and provincial governments will contribute Rs12 billion to counter the locust," Imam said, addressing the 5th meeting of the National Locust Control Centre. About 8,000 army troops have been deployed for the anti-locust operation. According to national action plan for anti-locusts target has been set for treating crop area in first stage. Punjab will treat 5 million hectare, Sindh will treat 1.5 million hectare, Baluchistan will treat 0.5 million hectare. Similarly, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa will treat 0.5 million hectares. There will be a surveillance/control team that will be headed by entomologists. The team will also include locust assistant, representative of local community and manpower from Pakistan Army.

International: China extended financial help of \$4.9 million to Pakistan by giving it 53,000 liters of spray, sprayers and drones, the minister said. Twenty aircrafts will be used for anti-locusts operation. FAO will hand over 20 micron air sprayers in next week, the minister said. Asian Development Bank and World Bank will finance anti locusts operation in form of \$200 and \$150 respectively.

SITUATION UPDATE

This It has been reported by Agriculture Extension Department & District Administration that in district Rahim Yar Khan 48515 ha out of 542089 ha surveyed was sprayed while 13075 ha out of 434058 ha surveyed was sprayed in Ghotki. On the other hand in District Vehari 14182 ha out of 192769 ha surveyed was sprayed as reported by National Locust Control Center as shown in graph.



comparison of area surveyed and sprayed with pesticide for locusts control

STORIES FROM THE FIELD

District Administration of District Rajanpur of Punjab has approached REEDS to replicate the same project of locust control in their district. For which REEDS came forward to sign an MOU with District Administration, Rajanpur who have nominated Mr. Rahat Rashid (Assistant Director, Department of Pest Warning) as focal person. REEDS handed over 200 liters of Lambda cyhalothrine and 10 spray machines to district administration. The honorable Deputy Commissioner of Rajanpur appreciated the activities of REEDS and back donor KIA for supporting them for this national cause. The departments involved are strengthened by provision of these commodities to combat locust "deputy commissioner said".



Handing over of pesticide to Deputy Commissioner rajanpur by Dr. Muhammad Yousaf Ali (PC, REEDS)

For more Information

Dr. Muhammad Yousaf Ali, Project Manager

Project in Support of Preventive Desert Locust Control & Management in Sindh & Punjab

Head Office: House No 1, Street No 1 Canal Park Rahim Yar Khan Pakistan

<https://www.facebook.com/reedsryk>

E-Mail: redpm@reedpk.org Contact: +92-300-0963530