



welt  
hunger  
hilfe

For a world without hunger

COUNTRY REPORT

# Millennium Village Veshab – Tajikistan





MDG 7: Resource management can reduce erosion and contribute to environmental sustainability



MDG 1: Beekeeping for an improved income generation and food security



MDG 3: Sewing courses and income generation to empower women

## Millennium Village Veshab – Tajikistan

### Sense of hope in the Zerafshan valley

The houses and huts in Veshab are nestled up against the steep slopes of the Zerafshan valley in northwestern Tajikistan. A few trees, very little green countryside and above all, cliffs, rocks and boulders.




Veshab is a typical Tajik village. Until 2006, the approximately 2,000 residents had a great deal of land but barely any farmland and the crops it yielded did not suffice for them to live from. Many children suffered from malnutrition and the limited access to jobs and sources of income meant that the men had to look for work in other regions. The story was the same as the one echoed across the country: eight out of ten people here live on less than a dollar per day. However, much has happened since Veshab became a Millennium Village together with the neighbouring villages of Darg and Shamtuch in 2006.

The village has seen the introduction of new cultivation techniques, irrigation schemes, additional agricultural products and their marketing, new drinking water facilities and education for girls – the list of developments is long. “Before the project began, we drew our water right out of the streams but now, with the help of a pipeline, we can enjoy clean drinking water” says Rukia Nazarowa, mother of four. Severe cases of diarrhoea have become rare thanks to the routine awareness-raising of hygiene and sanitation practices and, should a child or adult fall ill, they are treated in the new health centre.

The villagers have initiated many individual steps with the support of Welthungerhilfe – all of which are part of a systematic plan. Mutual discussions have led to mutual decisions being made and to the establishment of the Public Organization Zarafshan (POZ) and a Women’s Committee. This local organization will persevere even when Welthungerhilfe completes its project; Rukia Nazarowa, head of the Women’s Committee, is convinced of that.

### Educate and earn a higher income

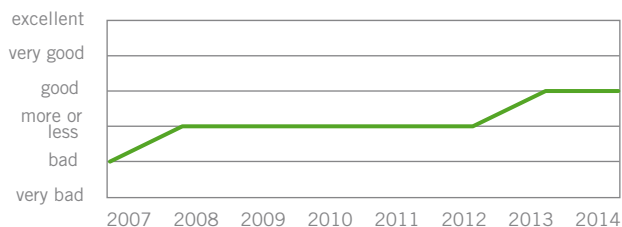
The education of girls in particular shows how much the perspective in Veshab has changed. In the beginning, most villagers were hesitant “convincing the parents of the idea took a great deal of time because girls are traditionally married off at a young age and therefore, have to leave school at the age of eleven at the latest”, 43-year-old Rukia Nazarowa reports. Today, she offers sewing classes for the girls which means that the people can now buy clothing in the village and no longer need to travel to the town of Aini, which is 90 minutes away. They save on the cost of transportation and the women earn money which stays in the village. Rukia Nazarowa has noticed how the relationship between men and women is changing. “Nowadays, even married women are going to university or are completing their vocational training. This would have been unimaginable in the past”, says the head of the Women’s Committee.

 <p>Today, there are 34 beekeeper with 230 beehives in Veshab</p>	<p><b>34 ha</b></p> <p>of apricot orchards with a yield of 40 to 70 tons per year</p>	 <p>The women group of Veshab offers sewing courses and a wedding dress for rent</p>	 <p>Honey and propolis ointment is sold regionally</p>	 <p>Everybody has access to and uses clean drinking water</p>	<p><b>18</b></p> <p>fruit driers have been produced locally and are in use and distributed locally</p>
--	---	---	--	--	--

“Nowadays, even married women are going to university or are completing their Vocational training. This would have been unimaginable in the past”, says Rukia Nazarowa.



### Villagers' assessment regarding community health (MDG 1)



Source: Welthungerhilfe 2015

### Villagers' assessment about gender equality (MDG 3)



Source: Welthungerhilfe 2015

### Agricultural yields are increasing

How can agricultural yields be increased when working on the limited farmland available? As a first step, the men and women repaired their dire irrigation system and with the help of experts, implemented an economical drip irrigation system. In order to avoid erosion, they built fields into terraces. They learned to use water sparingly in routine training sessions and established support groups in which they experimented with new cultivation methods, tested new fruits or grew seeds in greenhouses. A great example of their keenness for innovation is beekeeping – until recently unknown – and the drying of fruit using solar dryers. Meanwhile there are 34 beekeepers in Veshab, each of whom makes 34 Somoni (5 Euros) for each kilo of honey they produce. The honey's good quality has won the beekeepers some customers in the capital Dushanbe's hotel sector, including the Hyatt and others. Furthermore, women extract propolis or bee glue, which has an antibiotic and antiviral quality and which can be sold for a good price. The dried fruit can also be marketed well or helps to sustain the families through the winter period.

Despite great successes in Veshab over the past ten years, not all of the measures implemented have proved as successful as planned meaning that the people here are still faced with great challenges. Deforestation remains a problem due to the fact that people still cook using firewood and many young men and women are turning their backs on Veshab to seek greener pastures elsewhere.

According to Husein Sulonov, agricultural engineer and elected head of the POZ, the residents of Veshab have set a positive process into motion, which helps them to yield larger harvests and procure additional income. “Thanks to the mixture of small investments in infrastructure and further education on the one hand and superior products on the other, we have succeeded in achieving sustainable development” says Sulonov. It is particularly pleasing that word of Veshab's success is spreading. As the realisation that Veshab's development can be replicated elsewhere dawns, delegations from other villages are descending on Veshab to learn about how they can bring about similar changes in their communities.

	Tajikistan 2009	Tajikistan 2015	Germany 2015
Population	7.35 m	8.05 m	80.6 m
Population Density	51 p/km <sup>2</sup>	56 p/km <sup>2</sup>	231 p/km <sup>2</sup>
Gross Domestic Product per person & per year	486 €	753 €	33,606 €
Life Expectancy at Birth Men	62.3 years	64 years	78.6 years
Life Expectancy at Birth Women	68.5 years	70.3 years	83.3 years
Total Fertility Rate	2.99 per women	2.76 per women	1.38 per women
Infant Mortality Rate	4.1%	3.5%	0.3%
Literacy	99.5%	99.7%	99%
Labour Force in Agriculture	67%	46%	1.6%
Global Hunger Index	18.5 – serious	16.4 – serious	-
Human Development Index	0.688 (rank 127/182)	0.607 (rank 133/195)	0.911 (rank 6/195)
World Risk Report	7.47% (rank 73/173)	7.17% (rank 70/171)	3.01% (rank 147/171)
Gender Gap Score	0.6661 (rank 87/134)	0.6654 (rank 102/142)	0.7780 (rank 12/142)

Source: Bündnis Entwicklung Hilft/UNU-EHS, CIA, IFPRI/Concern/Welthungerhilfe, UNDP, Worldbank, World Economic Forum

