

DEVELOPMENT SUSTAINED BY NATURE

Band-e-Amir National Park

FEB 2016

UNDP Afghanistan

Livelihoods and Resilience Unit



Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.

UNDP

We believe that a national park works best when local communities truly appreciate its importance.

Together with the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and its Small Grants Programme (SGP), UNDP is supporting the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) and local NGOs to unite local communities and empower them to take the lead in managing and conserving the park.



BAND-E-AMIR

In war-torn Afghanistan's relatively peaceful province of Bamyan, the first national park in the country, Band-e-Amir, is slowly changing.

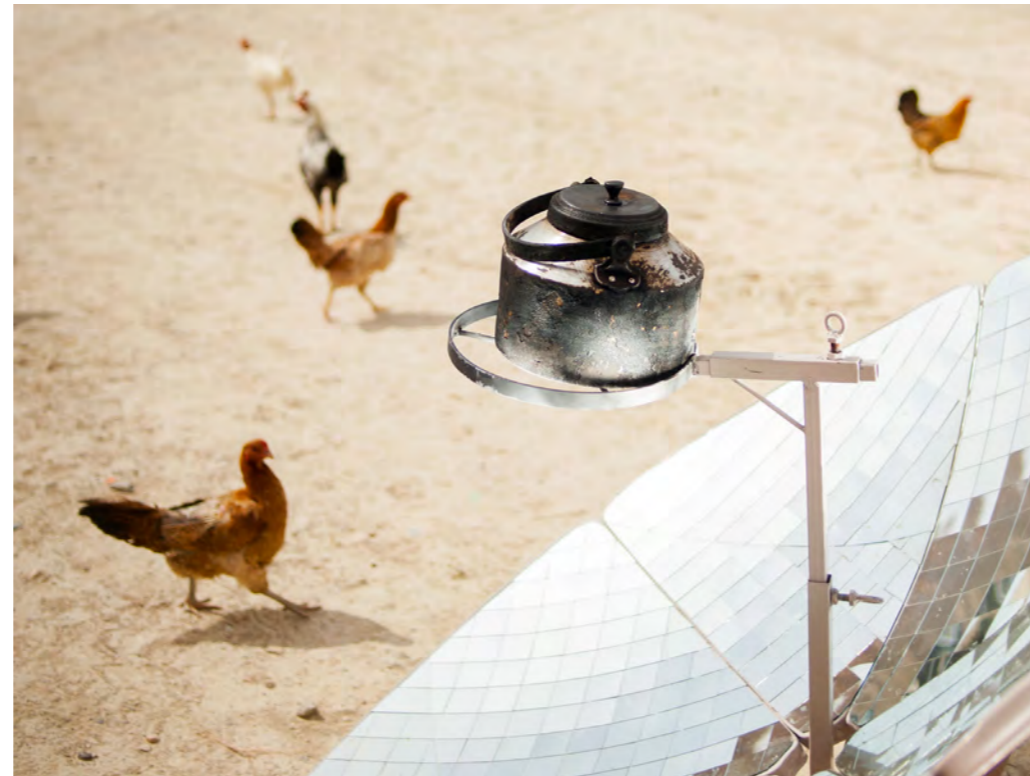
With education programmes, alternative natural resource management and livelihood schemes, locals begin to care about and conserve the environment, and see the national park as an opportunity for bringing work and stability.



CLEAN ENERGY

In the past, local residents had to collect, cut and burn the wood for cooking, which stung their eyes and choked their lungs. It also damaged the ecosystem.

With the support of UNDP and GEF, WCS has distributed 500 fuel-efficient stoves and a local SGP grantee has provided 160 people with solar cookers.



THE STORY OF RUQIA

“Before we had the solar cookers, it was terrible. We had to burn wood in our houses and the rooms would fill with smoke, which made us sick. But with the solar cooker, I do all my day’s cooking, boil my milk and cook my potatoes.”

— Ruqia Naser, mother of 4 children and resident of Band-e-Amir National Park



RANGERS

On a typical day, they collect data on endangered animals, protect the park from poachers and overgrazing, and regulate tourism.

It's no easy job, as they sometimes face gangs of poachers and crowds of belligerent tourists who don't want to follow the rules.

Their work is vital to the effective functioning of the park. They are safeguarding the amazing wildlife and natural assets of their country.



With the support of UNDP, GEF and WCS, Afghanistan's first-ever female rangers are protecting the wildlife in the park and assisting visitors.



FEMALE ROLE MODELS

"We admit that our work is hard, but there is no job that's easy, and we think we make a great contribution."

"We're optimistic that the park will flourish. And if my daughter becomes a ranger one day, I'll be proud of her."

— Naikbakht, one of Afghanistan's first female rangers, now working in Band-e-Amir with UNDP's support



COMMUNITY-BASED

All these achievements are only possible with sound governance, making sure all 14 villages around the park have a say in its development and share the benefits of its increasing popularity.

To extend this success, UNDP is also working on the establishment of Afghanistan's Parks and Wildlife Authority and creating a common framework for managing all protected areas in Afghanistan.

We believe environmental sustainability can only be achieved when policies and community empowerment go hand in hand.



sound governance + the right technology + community empowerment =
environmental sustainability

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