

Result 6.1 - Pilot-4

RBWRP TA STRENGTHENED APRICOT VALUE CHAIN DEMONSTRATING ART OF HANDLING, DRYING AND MARKETING

To boost the value and global marketability of Balochistan's apricot produce, the RBWRP-TA project engaged an international expert from Turkey to lead a specialized knowledge transfer initiative. The program aimed to equip female farmers, marketing collectives, and extension agents with modern techniques in apricot handling, drying, and marketing—shifting from traditional practices to methods that meet international quality standards. A central feature of the initiative was the hands-on piloting of these techniques to ensure effective learning and adoption. Under the guidance of Mr. Erken Yilmaz, participants received comprehensive training across the apricot value chain, with particular emphasis on post-harvest processing.



The consultant emphasized the critical success factors for producing high-quality dried apricots, identifying precision drying as the most decisive step in determining market value. His theoretical guidance covered scientific harvesting, proper pitting, and variety-specific handling protocols, which laid the foundation for practical application. From 10–13 July, this knowledge was immediately tested through a multi-day pilot demonstration, where participants engaged in hands-on training with the sulfur aeration technique—a vital pre-treatment that preserves color, extends shelf life, and prevents microbial growth. Under his guidance, participants gained direct experience in applying these methods, reinforcing the link between theory and practice.

- Preparing an airtight chamber for treatment.
- Using food-grade sulfur in controlled concentrations.
- Managing the 6-7 hour submersion process for optimal penetration.

Mr. Yilmaz provided daily on-site supervision throughout the process, offering real-time troubleshooting and ensuring participants gained the confidence to replicate the technique independently. The training successfully introduced a advanced, export-oriented drying technologies that had previously been unavailable to local Farmer Marketing Collectives (FMCs). Equipped with these new skills, participants are now positioned to extend their knowledge to wider communities, thereby strengthening the entire apricot value chain in Balochistan and paving the way for greater competitiveness in international markets.

Apricot Drying & Marketing Techniques		
Trained Persons	Male	Female
		
48	30 62%	18 38%

Key Recommendations from Participants:

Market Linkages: Urgent need to connect women entrepreneurs & FMCs with domestic and international buyers to commercialize their upgraded products. **Appropriate Technology:** Provision of low-cost, smallholder-scale drying equipment (e.g., solar dryers) tailored for rural women.

Advanced Training: Exposure visits to established regions like Turkey and training on organic alternatives to sulfur (e.g., citric acid).