

**Training Report of Agriculture Officers  
and Subject Matter Specialists  
By JOBS Trust at NARC  
Islamabad**



## Training Report

Prepared for JICA by JOBS Trust

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#### Abbreviations used:

PARC: Pakistan Agricultural  
Research Council

KP:Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

JICA: Japan International  
Cooperation Agency

AO: Agriculture Officers

SMS: Subject Matter Specialist

## Executive Summary

JOBS Trust was approached by JICA and NARC representatives to conduct a 2 hour training session, as a specialist on solar drying of fruits and vegetables to a group of agriculture officers and subject matter specialists.

24 agriculture officers were trained on September 15<sup>th</sup> from 14:30 to 16:30 pm by the JOBS' team, as part of a training, aimed at strengthening agricultural extension services in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province in order to perform their role effectively in improving farm productivity, employment generation, mitigating environmental degradation and uplifting socio-economic conditions of rural masses of the province.



Submitted by  
JOBS Trust

## Introduction

The session started with a round of introduction of the participants, followed by introduction of the master trainer, Shahnaz Akhter and facilitator Aqeela Sadaf. A brief overview of the 2 hour program was given.

The training participants included Agriculture Officers (AOs) and subject matter specialists (SMSs) from the following areas from KP. With a few exceptions, majority were employed in their own districts.

- Upper & Lower Dir,
- Swat,
- Buner,
- Mardan,
- Swabi,
- Haripur,
- Nowshehra,
- Karak, and
- Peshawar.

The workshop participants had gone through the other methods of food processing and preservations such as jam making, chutneys and pickles, which was part of the earlier sessions. Some participants were familiar with the concept of drying fruits and vegetables since they had seen senior members of their family doing growing up as a child. However, these were traditional methods and not the hygienic method using solar dryers.



### *Interactive Activity 1: Tasting of Dried Fruits*

The first interactive activity immediately following the introductions was designed to ignite the participants' curiosity and interest.

The 24 participants were seated in 3 rows. Each row was given a small box filled with dried fruits, which were dried using the Sunny Miracles' solar dryers. Each participant was asked to take a piece and pass it on to the next participant. Then they were asked to taste each fruit (mango, apple and peach) and identify what they were eating.

The session triggered informal discussions. It also enabled the participants to start visualizing the possibilities of various fruits and vegetables which could be dried, aside from the typical options.

Second half of the activity, included tasting of dried persimmons and halwa, a local sweet dish using dried carrot. The participants enjoyed the halwa and one participant said "Thank you this is good!" There was an interactive dialogue where the master trainer asked the participants, "Why do you think we chose these two items. A participant asked, " it is not carrot season, why did you choose halwa?" The master trainer explained that aim was for the participants to see see the benefits of solar drying and how one can enjoy any fruits or vegetable throughtout the year if dried properly..

A participant shared that their older generation used to dry additional vegetables for winters but people no longer make the effort since there are many options available in the market round the year, Another participant said "This attitude of not preserving food has added financial burden on men's shoulders. It is becoming increasingly difficult to manage household expenses. If we preserve our food, we are also helping to stabilize the prices in the market and saving money spent on purchasing expensive vegetables."

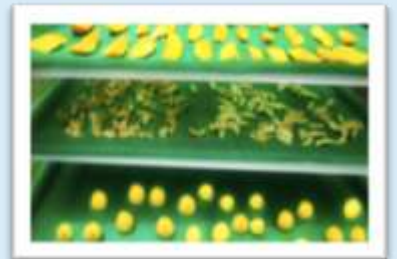
### *Comments from the participants*

*"It tastes better then the fresh fruit. They are sweeter then the fresh ones. "*

*"We only dry some fruits (typically apricots, figs, mulberries etc.) in Pakistan. This is the first time eating other fruits"*



Sunny Miracles Solar Dryer  
(Hygienic and efficient)



### *Overview of Solar Dryer and Sunny Miracles Model*

#### **Interactive Demonstration and Discussion:**

The master trainer showed the participant a small demo unit of the solar dryer and explained how the solar dryers are used to efficiently and hygienically dry fruits and vegetables. Participants took great interest in learning about the solar dryer. Their questions included:

- Where are these dryers manufactured?
- What is the material used in manufacturing the dryer?
- What is the exact size of the solar dryer?
- What about rainy and cloudy weathers? How much does weather impact the drying time?
- What is the cost of a solar dryer?
- How much can be dried in a week per unit?

The 10 minutes demonstration and discussion on the solar dryer was followed by a structured presentation. The presentation covered a wide range of topics including the need and the benefits of solar drying and global trends, which participants had very low level of awareness.



## Overview of Solar Dryer and Sunny Miracles Model

The presentation started with the big picture, how preservation of food could contribute towards addressing many of the challenges Pakistan face, including high unemployment rate, high post harvest losses, high costs of fruits and vegetables Health concerns, how people are suffering from malnutrition due to lack of access to healthy foods were also discussed. Other discussion points included the necessity to grow and preserve more food every year since the population is growing so rapidly. Another important topic, which was discussed in detail, was the indirect impact of the project in improving the general health of the communities by raising awareness on safe hygiene behaviors.

Sunny Miracles' approach and overview of the implementation model was shared. Experiences from implementing the project in Swat was also introduced as a case study to help participants visualize the implementation process. Marketing strategy, branding, marketing, current Sunny Miracle partners and future plans to spread the reach at the national level to make an impact was also presented to give a holistic picture on the development of a value chain.

One of the participants asked how we were succeeded in teach these concepts to the female beneficiaries at the village level since many are illiterate. The master trainer explained how flip charts (sample below) which effectively use graphics are used to explain the teaching methodology to the illiterates/semi literates. Participants continued with enthusiasm to ask questions. However, given the time constraints, the participants were asked to watch a short Sunny Miracles video, which addresses many of the questions asked.



**Reduction of Post-Harvest Loss**



**Increased Food Security**



**Generation of Employment**

### *Sunny Miracles Documentary*

An eight-minute documentary was shown. Participants took great interest in the documentary. They commented they could visualize many implementation steps and how it can be applied in their areas/\. Another commented that seeing how the solar dryers are used at an operational training/production center was very helpful.

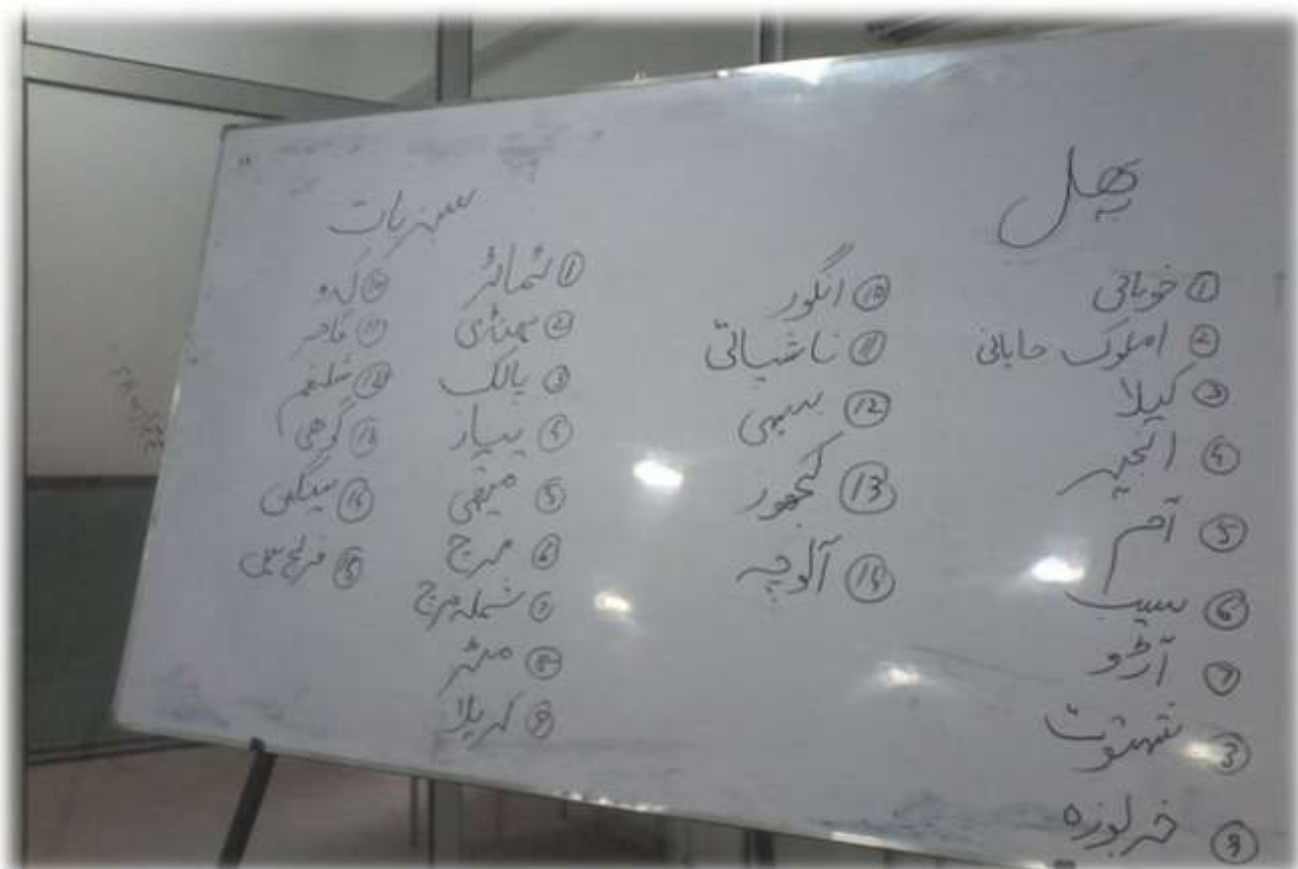


Scene from the documentary: Sunny Miracles items being used at Serena Hotel



Scene from the documentary: Hygienic practices





*Interactive Activity 2: Listing of Potential Produce to Dry*

This interactive activity was conducted with the entire participants. One participant was asked to write down first the names of the fruits and then vegetables, which were called out by the participants. During this activity, explanation of why certain fruits and vegetables are more suitable for solar drying and tips were given. For example, the importance of proper drying time was explained using guava as an example on how it can be easily over-dried. Similarly, the importance of selecting the right variety, ripeness for more sensitive items such as tomatoes and how it could impact the colorization after the being dried was explained.

## *Comments from the Training Participants*

Best time management example, others should learn from this, too.

The tasting was fun and they all tasted good.

Good facilitation skills.

Afternoon session of 2 hours. Yet, such high participation. We had early seen such high interest

JOBS should work closely with the agriculture department. They have resources and outlets.

This was the best session in the last 3 weeks!



## *Summary of Evaluation and Comments from the Training Participants*

- While rating the overall training, 92% said the training was excellent, while remaining 8% of the respondents said it was good.
- 100% of the respondents “strongly agreed” that they will be able to apply the knowledge they have learnt in their work.
- Majority, 16 strongly agreed and 8 agreed that the content of the training was organized and easy to follow.
- Commenting about the trainer, 20 strongly agreed, 3 agreed and 1 remained neutral that they understand that trainer was knowledgeable.
- In response to the question, if class participation and interaction was encouraged, 16 strongly agreed and 8 agreed that they were encouraged to participate and interact.
- When asked if adequate time was provided for questions and discussions, 22 strongly agreed and 2 agreed that they were provided the opportunity to ask questions and have discussions.
- In response to the question which topic was found most useful, 22 said the overall presentation of Sunny Miracles, 1 liked the tasting of dried products and 1 enjoyed the discussion on fruits and vegetables which can be dried.
- When asked if there is anything they would like to learn in more detail, the response was,
  - a) 19 would like to try the practical session conducted by JOBS if there is an opportunity.
  - b) 2 would like to know where to get the solar dryers.
  - c) 3 would like to know how they can sell the dried products.
- In order to improve this training further, what topics they think should be added?
  - a) 4 would like to include exposure visit to the successful unit at any district.
  - b) 2 would like to have more elaborated training of 2-3 days.
  - c) All others (18) would like to add practical session as one of the contents.
- Ideas suggestions for further improvement of the training?
  - a) 2 suggested conducting this training for agriculture department staff in order to have massive outreach.
  - b) 5 suggested conducting this training for district level staff.
  - c) The rest said the training was excellent or perfect.

## *Annex*

### PROGRAM

#### **Training for Agriculture Officers at NARC**

**Date: September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

**Time: 14:30 to 16:30**

**Venue: NARC**

<b>From</b>	<b>To</b>	<b>Activity</b>
14:30	14:35	Introduction and Overview
14:35	14:45	Introduction of Participants (Name, qualification, where they are from and where they work)
14:45	15:00	Interactive Activity 1: Tasting of dried fruits and vegetables (cooked and uncooked).
15:00	15:30	Powerpoint Presentation Why, how, what, where, implementation model and cost
15:30	15:45	Sunny Miracles Documentary
15:45	16:00	Interactive Discussions
16:00	16:25	Interactive Activity 2: Group work – Prepare a lists of fruits and vegetables which can be dried
16:25	16:30	Completion of Evaluation Form