

Afghanistan-Pakistan Activities
Quarterly Report XXIV
(July-August-September)
Sustainable Development of Drylands Project
IALC-UIUC

SUMMARY OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND FORWARD PLANS

Our major emphasis this quarter was on forward planning. This emphasis was necessary because on October 1, 2008 we entered our final year of the IALC/USAID-ANE Cooperative Agreement titled "Sustainable Development of Drylands in Asia and the Middle East". When combining the one-year preliminary agreement (FY03), with the four-year agreement that followed and the two-year no-cost extension, this activity will cover a seven-year time span. During this entire period, the same three-person team (Santas//Khan/Myers) has been responsible for the UIUC component known as "Human Capacity Development for the Agriculture Sector in Afghanistan". This staffing continuity has been a principal reason for the impressive record of accomplishments we have compiled during the life of this cooperative agreement.

A result of our forward planning during this quarter was the FY09 Scope of Work that was submitted to the IALC Project Director on September 4, 2008 along with our budget for that time period. These items will become the basis for the next modification in the cost reimbursable subcontract between the University of Arizona and the University of Illinois. This subcontract has been in existence since the September 2002 initiation of the USAID Cooperative Agreement.

The narrative portion of our FY09 Scope of Work is attached to this quarterly report. Those receiving this report are asked to read the Scope of Work and be advised that our attention during the upcoming quarter will be directed towards items 2 and 3 that are set forth in this planning document. Funds allocated for the short term training programs and for the workshops with Nangarhar University are in our possession. We must take immediate and decisive steps to implement these activities as the meter begins running on our final year.

Most readers already know that the final year of the IALC Cooperative Agreement will run parallel with a new three-year project that was initiated in March 2008. The "Afghanistan Water, Agriculture, and Technology Transfer (AWATT)" project is being led by New Mexico State University, with UIUC, SIUC and Colorado State University in support roles. As we transition to this new project, the delivery of customized short term training programs is one area where we expect to find considerable synergy between these two projects. While core funds in the IALC Cooperative Agreement will cover most course-related costs, the AWATT project will be able to help with training facilities and logistical support in Afghanistan. As another example of complementarity, individuals from the AWATT universities can team-up with NWFP AU Professors (at AWATT expense) to deliver instruction during these technical short courses.

Afghanistan-Pakistan Component
Scope of Work for Year Six
October 1, 2008 through September 30, 2009
of the IALC Cooperative Agreement with USAID's
Bureau for Asia and the Near East

Introduction

This document will identify and describe principal activities that our component plans to complete during year six of the above-mentioned Cooperative Agreement. Year six is the second and last year of the two-year no-cost extension that was approved by USAID, allowing us to completely and appropriately use accumulated funds that have been carried over from previous years. This is our wrap-up year. It will be used for capstone activities that integrate and summarize the efforts in "Human Capacity Development for the Agriculture Sector in Afghanistan" that have filled the past 6 plus years. This work was initiated by a Cooperative Agreement that was executed in September 2002.

The following three activities are at the top of our agenda:

1. M.Sc. program completion of ten MAIL Extension Department Staff enrolled at the NWFP AU. This group will require assistance and logistical/administrative support until their degree programs are completed in June 2009. All direct costs related to their programs are covered by the MAIL/UIUC Grant Agreement. Examples of these direct costs are: living allowances, tuition and fees, textbooks, travel, research support and supplemental training such as English language, computer skills, study tours and tutoring. Program monitoring and other forms of support will be provided by the Illinois Field Office as part of our agreement with the Ministry. This group of ten will receive our assistance until they are back on the job in Afghanistan. The Afghan Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL) made it clear that these students should not be enrolled in "bare-bones" degree programs, but wanted them to receive the full complement of enrichment experiences. To accomplish this, their programs will cover a full 30 month period and will produce well-qualified, job-ready graduates.
2. Customized short term training programs delivered in Afghanistan. This activity was introduced in our report for the second quarter of CY2008. Although a total of 23 technical short courses have been delivered on 17 different topics, cooperators and client organizations have requested customized versions of these courses. This means we will depart from the previous format of a month-long course presented to a group of 20 participants, usually conducted at the NWFP AU in Peshawar. We will of course, continue to use time-tested senior-level NWFP AU Professors as the lead instructors. Topics that have already been suggested/requested for these tailor-made courses are: Research Methodology, Extension/Outreach Communications, Integrated Pest Management, Animal Nutrition and Preservation of Fruits and Vegetables. A study tour to visit research institutions in Pakistan was also suggested. The budget we have constructed should allow us to deliver at least two and up to four of the above-mentioned

training programs during FY09. Decisions are being made on the exact topics for these courses and on sites within Afghanistan for this training.

3. Strengthen the international dimension of the NWFPAU. A long range goal, since USAID's investment in the TIPAN project, has been to position this university as a regional resource base and center of excellence in agricultural education, research and outreach. A continuing series of "Linkage Activities", many of which were detailed in our FY07 Scope of Work, have given the Illinois Universities (UIUC & SIUC) an opportunity to "introduce" the NWFPAU as a collaborating partner, to donors and development assistance organizations that are active in Afghanistan and Central Asia. We will continue our efforts to develop staff and infrastructure within the NWFPAU that will allow this university to engage directly with organizations that wish to use their resources and services in support of development assistance activities in the region.

One activity that will be jointly carried out during FY09 is a series of two workshops with Nangarhar University in Jalalabad, Afghanistan. FAS/USDA has provided a modest level of support for workshops that will assemble a selected group of faculty from Nangarhar and from the NWFPAU, asking them to "brainstorm" on approaches to development assistance, integration of marginalized populations, and improving quality of life in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) that border Afghanistan and Pakistan. These workshops will be held in both Jalalabad and Peshawar. The end result will be a proposal that can be presented to funding agencies, describing joint FATA-specific development programs that can be implemented by these universities.

With these three items at the top of our agenda, we realize that other needs may arise and require our attention as we move through the close-out phase of this component. Submission of final reports will likely be among these close-out activities. We are prepared to make adjustments in our agenda as needs arise.