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Afghan Agricultural Research and Extension Development Program (AGRED)



Monthly Report

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Afghan Agricultural Research & Extension Development Program (AGRED)

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Contracting Officer's Representative	Mark Kelly, PhD
Contracting Officer's Representative	Mohammed Junaid
Contract Officer	Paul Martin
Chief of Party	Kingsley Bash, PhD, kingsley.bash@rootsofpeace.org
ROP CEO	Heidi Kuhn, heidi@rootsofpeace.org
ROP Executive Director	Gary Kuhn, gary@rootsofpeace.org



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Throughout the month of January, AGRED continues to focus on building relations with MAIL in order to establish the roles and responsibilities of the AGRED program through the development of the AGRED PMP and MOU.

The revised PMP and a concept note to assess six of the 13 AGRED baseline values were submitted to USAID in January. Once the concept note is approved, a baseline study will be initiated and AGRED will begin measuring program outputs and outcomes.

The MOU continues to be a challenge as the GIROA has a lengthy approval process that requires vetting through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as well as through MAIL. AGRED will continue to collaborate with MAIL to keep Minister Rahimi informed of progress.

AGRED is also working to build relationships with DAIL Directors, Research and Extension Managers and the Education and Economic Directors to identify farmer needs and to incorporate these needs into research and extension priorities for 2013. The research and extension priorities identified in the stakeholder workshops held in December resulted in over 30 mini-proposals that will be presented to MAIL's Technical Working Group. Pending MAIL approval, implementation of the mini-proposals is scheduled to begin in February.

Additionally, in order to further inform planning between ROP and MAIL, the AGRED M&E and extension teams conducted assessments of physical assets and human resources at the research centers and extension centers in target provinces. The inventories will be used to inform the AGRED work plan for MAIL and to develop a plan for using on-budget funding from USAID.

Another priority for the month was the scheduled training on "Extension Principles" led by AGRED subcontractors WSU. Preparations were made however Minister Rahimi declined to authorize the invitation of DAIL staff due to lack of prior notice about the training. Further trainings have been postponed until an MOU has been signed to avoid training cancellations in the future.

Though the AGRED training was cancelled, seven AGRED Extension staff participated in an Extension Knowledge Workshop conducted at the University of Agriculture Faisalabad (UAF) and sponsored by USDA AAEP. AAEP was pleased to have AGRED staff participate as the AGRED staff will be able to reinforce training principles and distribute new information to DAIL extension staff.

ACHEIVEMENTS IN JANUARY

RESEARCH AND EXTENSION

PRIORITIES

Research and extension priorities in January were to coordinate with the many stakeholders in the seven target regions to ensure that the planning processes incorporate the existing resources for both extension and research.

Also a priority is ensuring that DAILs are prepared to provide input on AGRED implementation. Towards this end, AGRED research and extension staff conducted inventories of research and extension facilities and resources.

- Coordination with DAIL Administrative, Research and Extension departments and TWGs.
- Coordination meetings with Agriculture Development Teams (ADT) and other international programs, International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA) and Perennial Horticulture Development Program (PHDP).
- Conduct coordination meetings with provincial and local authorities.
- Conduct Research and Extension Inventory in target provinces.
- Participate in Extension Knowledge Workshop in Pakistan.

ACTIVITIES

- **Participate in administrative weekly meeting of DAIL in Kandahar Province-** Kandahar DAIL conducted the weekly administrative meeting in DAIL directorate on January 5, 2013. The DAIL Extension and Research Managers, CBCMP, PHDP and AGRED participated in the meeting providing updates on their monthly activities. Kandahar Regional Research Coordinator (RRC) and Regional Extension Coordinator (REC) provided information about mini-proposals as a result of Stakeholder Workshop on November.
- **Conduct meeting with DAILs Research and Extension Departments in target provinces-** The Research and Extension Managers, Agriculture Service Managers and AGRED participated in the meetings and talked about the available equipment, tools and human resources. The DAIL Research and Extension Managers emphasized that the research and extension farms in target provinces are in the very bad condition, and more than 70 percent of their equipment had been damaged during the wartime. The objective of these meetings were to collect the data of available

inventory such as equipment, tools and human resource in seven regional research farms and 26 extension centers on the district level in 26 provinces. The DAILs Research and Extension Departments promised to cooperate with AGRED in collecting the reliable data during the field visits.

- **Meeting with ADT in Ghazni, Kandahar, Logar and Paktya Provinces-** As per request of ADT representative for meeting with AGRED, meetings were held on 3 January in Ghazni, 13 January in Kandahar, 28 January in Logar and 20 January in Paktya provinces. During the meetings, AGRED and ADT shared their projects' activities in the last two months. Agricultural Development Team (ADT) worked closely with DAIL in agriculture, green house establishment, horticulture, poultry, livestock and research stations rehabilitation. AGRED provided information about research and extension mini-proposals which will be approved by MAIL and USAID. ADT and AGRED shared agriculture experiences in the meeting to design and implement the projects which is important for the farmers.
- **Meeting with Paktya Economic Director-** AGRED met with Paktya Economic Director Mr. Mahfoz Ahmad updating him about the project activities in the province on January 22, 2013. Economic Directorate is responsible to collect all the information regarding government and non-government organizations working in the province. He requested the coordination and cooperation between Economic Department and AGRED in Paktya. The Economic Director promised to support the project activities in the province
- **Conduct coordination meetings with Ghazni provincial and local authorities-**The Ghazni Provincial Extension Coordinators (PEC) arranged meeting with Mr. Ghazi the Deputy Governor on 8 January. AGRED PEC explained AGRED extension and research activities in the province. Mr. Ghazi appreciated the activities and extended his promise supporting AGRED activities in Ghazni.

To improve cooperation among Ghazni Economic Directorate, Women Directorate and AGRED, Ghazni PEC met with the Economic Director Mr. Hashimi and the Women Director on 13 January. Mr. Hashimi requested that AGRED be registered in the Economic Directorate.

The Women Director was very interested to cooperate with the project and requested that AGRED build the Demonstration Plots in the Women Directorate.

- **TOT training on inventory and human mapping-**AGRED conducted a TOT training for field coordinators on data collection of actual inventory and human resource mapping from research farms and extension centers on 14 January 2013. The Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist explained the data collection methodology and preparation of inventory survey's reports. Presently, these coordinators are able to collect the data on the concerned subject and how to form these data in the shape of a report.

- **Conduct Research and Extension inventory needs assessment survey in target provinces-** AGRED conducted the inventory and human resource mapping survey from January 17-20 in 7 Research Farms (Balkh, Kunduz, Kabul, Paktya, Nangarhar, Herat and Kandahar Provinces) and 26 Extension Centers on provincial levels.

It should be mentioned that Karna Extension Farm Inventory Data collected from Agricultures Services Manager by phone due to insecurity in Uruzgan Province.

As result, inventory and human resources mapping survey will help MAIL for reconstruction and rehabilitation of 7 Research Farms and 26 Extension Centers in target provinces.

- **Participate in Extension Knowledge Workshop in Pakistan-** To learn new extension techniques and skills and exchange experiences and knowledge, 7 AGRED Regional Extension Coordinators participated in an Extension Knowledge Workshop, facilitated by USDA, in Pakistan on 20-27 Jan 2013. The workshop was conducted in the University of Agriculture Faisalabad (UAF) and the



Research Center in Salar Bagh District of Kunar Province



Pakistani Trainees explained the Participatory Extension System, Conflict effects on farm production, different styles of conflict and field visit subjects. The Regional Extension Coordinators will transfer the new techniques to AGRED, MAIL and DAILs staff. (Extension Knowledge Workshop Materials are included as attachments)

- **Women Farmer Program activities-** Women's Director worked with the M&E team and participated in PMP meetings to ensure that gender is integrated into extension and research activities. Also, AGRED travelled to regional provinces to recruit Women Extension Coordinators for Nangarhar, Kunduz, Balkh and Herat Provinces. As the result of this travel, the team interviewed the candidates and selected women extension coordinators for all the mentioned provinces. The recruitment process will be completed by mid Feb 13. In January, The Director of Women's Program was invited to panel discussion of AGRED Woman Farmer Program activities, challenges and future plans.
- **AGRED Offices** - AGRED received office spaces in 14 provinces and necessary equipment are purchased and transferred to these offices.

CHALLENGES

- Working with MAIL Research and Extension and Home Economics in country level is challenging, AGRED is trying to work closely and creatively to put MAIL Research and Extension in lead and support the idea of working directly with Women Extension and Research in order to address women's farmers' problems.
- There is a fewer number of woman Extension and Research in provincial and district levels. AGRED is working to find woman volunteers focal points for extension and research in AGRED 26 targeted provinces and 50 districts.

TRAININGS AND WORKSHOPS

PRIORITIES

The priority for training in January was to begin with the first of the three planned WSU-led trainings. The training was to be a collaboration between AAEP and AGRED to begin working with extension staff from both MAIL and DAILs.

- Preparation for Extension Leadership training that will be conducted by WSU.
- Coordination with AAEP for AGRED extension staff attendance at Af-Pak Extension Training.

ACTIVITIES

- The main focus of the Training department was preparation for the first training on “Extension Principles” which was being coordinated with AAEP and led by the WSU Consortium. AAEP was funding trainers’ travel as the training fell under the scope of AAEP. AGRED was responsible for selecting and inviting trainees as well as materials preparations and training logistics. The training was scheduled for January 14th at MAIL and was to be delivered to 14 staff from DAILs in the seven target provinces and three staff from MAIL. Three WSU Consortium trainers were scheduled to travel to Kabul to lead the training.

On January 9th AGRED learned that the Minister of MAIL declined to provide approval to distribute invitation to the DAILs. The Minister cited lack of prior information about the training and about the AGRED program. Though AGRED staff had been meeting extensively with MAIL departments in preparation for the training, AGRED learned that information was not being flowed up to the Minister. As a result the training was cancelled.

The WSU Consortium trainers cancelled their trips except for Mr. David Grana stein who continued to Kabul to work with AGRED, AAEP and CBCMP to develop a “master” training schedule for these projects. Mr. Grana stein worked with AGRED to ensure that the March Training on Research Methodologies and the Leadership workshop will go forward as planned.

- As described above, seven AGRED Extension Coordinators attended an Af-Pak Extension Training that was hosted by AAEP. The training was held at the University of Faisalabad.

COMMUNICATION

PRIORITIES

For the month of January the AGRED Communications team is focused on improving reporting to ensure that all stakeholders are kept informed of program activities.

- Finalize and submit the AGRED monthly reports to USAID.
- Develop the TOR for Communication Officer Position

ACTIVITIES

- In this period, Communication Department continued to establish the better flow of information from the field to the main office in order to collect the reliable data for the AGRED reports. November and December Monthly Reports finalized and submitted to USAID and second Quarterly Report will be drafted.
- In January, Communication Manager in coordination with ROP home office developed a TOR for the Communication Officer Position that will be announced soon.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

PRIORITIES

AGRED M&E has been prioritizing the PMP. This key document will serve as the foundation for program baselines and coordination with MAIL on specifics of roles and responsibilities.

- Submitting revised version of AGRED's PMP to USAID
- Initiating baseline study
- Collecting data for inventories of target Research Centers and Extension Centers
- Hiring M&E Manager, and Database Specialist

ACTIVITIES

- **Submission of AGRED PMP to USAID-** USAID shared feedback on AGRED PMP submitted last month i.e. December 17, 2012. The PMP was revised based on the USAID feedback, and revised version of the PMP is shared with USAID on Jan 26 to be finalized.
- **Baseline Study-** A concept note was produced and submitted to USAID for the AGRED baseline study. Purpose of the baseline study is to assess baseline values for six out of 13 PMP indicators. The baseline study concept note clearly outlines: purpose of the study, indicators to be assessed, methodology, data analysis, reporting outlines, and timeline for the baseline study. Once the concept is approved, a baseline study will be initiated.



Extension Farm in Zabol Province during inventory

- **Inventories and human resources mapping assessment-** Purpose of the assessment are to assess status of physical assets and human resources of research centers and extension center in target provinces. Findings will be used by AGRED and MAIL to get on-budget funding for refurbishment of the centers.
Data was collected from 9 Research Centers and 26 Extension by the AGRED field staff. Data analysis is underway and reports will be produced in February. USAID was also submitted a sample inventory report for Shesham Bagh Research Center – Nangarhar province. The report outlined in detail physical assets and human resources availability of the center.
- **Recruitment of M&E staff-** Interviews were held for M&E Manager Position and Database Specialists. Candidates are selected and offers are sent.

ACTIVITIES FOR FEBRUARY

RESEARCH AND EXTENSION

PRIORITIES

- Participate in SWG (Sectorial Working Group) meeting in provincial level.
- Participate in Agricultural Technical Working Group (ATWG) and Provincial Development Council (PDC) meetings in target provinces.
- Meeting with PRT, USAID and U.S embassy.
- Meetings with MAIL Home Economics about their activities and discussing the priorities projects topics in the seven target provinces with AGRED seven Women Regional Extension Coordinators.
- TOT workshop for seven Women Regional Coordinators about AGRED program in Kabul office.

PLANS

- Recruit RECs for Kabul, Mazar, Herat and PECs for Zabul, Helmand, Uruzgan, Badghis, Bamyan and Faryab Provinces.
- Conduct workshop on Strengthening Extension Skills for 210 MAIL and AGRED Extension staff in seven target provinces.
- Clearance of stakeholder workshop advance requests.
- Meeting with CBCMP and other stakeholders to avoid duplications.
- Participate in Agricultural Technical Working Group (ATWG) meeting updating participants on AGRED activities.
- Meet and work with Research and Extension Departments sharing Mini Proposals.
- Start meetings with MAIL Extension Director and Home Economics Director about participation of women in AGRED ongoing extension and research projects and trainings to be included in MAIL work plan.
- Coordination meeting with MAIL Women Extension and Research, Livestock and Home Economics about upcoming extension trainings by US universities in Kabul next month.

- Meet with MAIL Home Economics about their activities and discussing the MAIL priority projects in the seven target provinces.
- Assessment and inventory of number of women working in 26 provincial DAIL offices by Women Regional Coordinators in target provinces in February.
- Translation and approval of Gender Policy for Women Farmers Program to achieve a balanced environment for women and men within the organization, various partners and the communities with whom we are working and strengthen the gender sensitivity among all.
- TOT workshop for newly hired women's program Regional Coordinators about AGRED program in Kabul office.

ANTICIPATED CHALLENGES

- Delays in providing on-budget funding will delay coordination among AGRED and stakeholders. AGRED work closely with MAIL to get Implementation Letter to start on-budget activities.

TRAININGS AND WORKSHOPS

PRIORITIES

- Coordination with MAIL to ensure awareness and early approvals of trainings
- Development of annual Training Plan

PLANS

Due to the cancellation of the January training AGRED will be holding a number of meetings with MAIL directors as well as the Minister and Deputy Minister to ensure that each department is kept informed of AGRED trainings and activities.

AGRED will work with the WSU Consortium and other USG programs to present a clear and organized plan for trainings in 2013.

COMMUNICATIONS

PRIORITIES

- Draft AGRED's second quarterly report.

- Finalize and submit the January Monthly Report.
- Hire the Communication Officer
- Develop the AGRED website.

PLANS

- Compile and submit the second AGRED quarterly report for October-December 2012.
- Work with ROP Home Office to develop the layout and content for AGRED.af website.
- Announcement of the Communication Officer's position and start the hiring process.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

PRIORITIES

- Inventory and human resources reports
- Baseline study
- M&E framework for USAID's environmental assessment (IEE)
- M&E staff on board

PLANS

- Various reports for the inventories of target research and extension centers will be produced. These reports include: Summary report (5 pages), detailed report – combined report for all inventories, and reports for each center.
- Baseline study for AGRED program will be initiated by designing data collection tools, selection of target farmers, training of enumerator and actual data collection. The study will be completed in two months time.
- M&E framework for USAID's environmental assessment (IEE) will be produced. The framework will include: indicators, data collection tools, methods, frequency, and reporting templates. The framework will be submitted to USAID followed by training of staff on the tools.
- M&E Manager and Database Specialist staff members will be onboard from the last week of February.

ANTICIPATED CHALLENGES

- The schedule for the baseline survey is subject to USAID's approval of AGRED's PMP. The survey will begin when the PMP is approved.

CALENDER OF EVENTS: JANUARY 2013

Proposed Date	PSSP Framework Activity	Results Activity	Events/ Activities	Purpose	Person Responsible	Venue	Partner/s and Expected Level of GOP Representation	Applicable for Branding & Marking
12- 18 Jan.	Training and capacity building of research and extension's staff to deliver quality services		Extension Training in Kabul	Training of Trainers	AGRED Training Manager	Kabul	MAIL and DAIL Extension and Research Officers and Managers	USAID/ MAIL
19 Jan.	N/A		PMP Meeting in USAID	USAID feedback on draft PMP	AGRED Manager; M&E Maheed Khan	Kabul	N/A	N/A
21-26 Jan.	Training and capacity building of research and extension's staff to deliver quality services		Af/Pack Extension Training	Training of Trainers	AGRED Extension Coordinator	Faisalabad, Pakistan	DAIL extension counterparts could not get visas	
22 Jan.	USAID on-budget funding to MAIL		Meeting with MAIL, USAID and AGRED	Facilitate USAID-MAIL MOU	COR Mark Kelly	MAIL	N/A	
29 Jan.	N/A		USAID Meeting Partner	Coordination with USAID agricultural IPs	AGRED Kingsley Bash COP	Kabul	N/A	

Acronyms

AAEP	USDA Afghan Agricultural Extension Program
ACBAR	Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief
ADT	US Military Agriculture Development Team
AGRED	USAID Afghan Agriculture Research & Extension Development
ATWG	Agriculture Technical Working Group
CBCMP	USDA Capacity Building and Change Management Program
CHAMP	USAID Commercial Horticulture & Agricultural Marketing Program
COP	Chief of Party
CDC	Community Development Council
DAIL	Directorate of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock
DoWA	Directorate of Women Affairs
EC	European Community
GIRoA	Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
IPM	Integrated Pest Management
IEE	USAID's Environmental Assessment
ICARDA	International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas
LOE	Level of Effort
MAIL	Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MoWA	Ministry of Women Affairs
MRRD	Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development
PMP	Performance Management Plan
PHDP	Perennial Horticulture Development Program
PEC	Provincial Extension Coordinator
RADP	USAID Regional Agriculture Development Program
ROP	Roots of Peace
RRC	Regional Research Coordinator
REC	Regional Extension Coordinator
TAMU	Texas A&M University
UCD	University of California, Davis
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USG	United States Government
WSU	Washington State University
RRD	Rural Rehabilitation and Development
PDC	Provincial Development Council