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REGIONAL AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM-SOUTH (RADP-S)

Quarterly Report: 7 October 2013 – 31 December 2013



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Contract Number: 306-C-00-13-00018

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CONTENTS

- Acronyms 3
- Section I: Executive Summary 5
- Section II: Progress toward Indicators and Intermediate Results 6
 - A. Components I-III: Wheat, High Value Crops, and Livestock Value Chains 6
 - B. Component IV: Enabling Environment 9
 - C. Cross-cutting Themes 9
- Section III: Management and Administrative Activities 10
 - A. Home Office Project Management Unit Support 10
 - B. Staffing 10
 - C. Project Facilities 12
 - D. Procurement and Dispositions 12
 - E. Security and Travel 13
 - F. Contractual Deliverables 13
- Section IV: Implementation Challenges..... 14
- Section V: Activities Planned for Next Quarter 14
- Annexes
 - Annex A: Map of Targeted Provinces, Chart of Year One District Selection 18
 - Annex B: First Quarter Snapshot..... 19
 - Annex C: Field Office Organizational Chart..... 20
 - Annex D: December 2013 Monthly Report 21

Cover Photo: RADP-S Gender Integration Manager, Belqis Barrai, meeting with women in their house garden for FAIDA’s Agribusiness South component. Photo credit USAID/FAIDA.

ACRONYMS

ABADE	Assistance in Building Afghanistan by Developing Enterprises
ACE	Agricultural Credit Enhancement Program
ADA	Afghan Development Association
AGRED	Agriculture Research and Extension Development Program
AMMC	Afghan Management and Marketing Consultants
APPF	Afghan Police Protection Force
ALA	Afghanistan Land Authority
ATAR	Afghan Trade and Revenue Program
CCN	Cooperating Country National
CHA	Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance
CHAMP	Commercial Horticulture and Agriculture Marketing Program
CLIN	Contract Line Item Number
CMOC-S	Civil-Military Operations Center-South
COP	Chief of Party
COR	Contracting Officer Representative
CST	Country Security Team
DAIL	Directorate of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock
DCA	Dutch Committee for Afghanistan
DCOP	Deputy Chief of Party
DOWA	Directorate of Women’s Affairs
EMMP	Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan
GAD	Gender and Development
GAP	Good Agricultural Practices
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIRoA	Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
GLP	Good Livestock Practices
GMP	Good Management Practices
GUC	Grants Under Contract

Ha	Hectares
HR	Human Resources
HVC	High Value Crops
ICARDA	International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas
KFZ	Kandahar Food Zone
KIP	Key Implementing Partner
LOP	Life of Project
MAIL	Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MT	Metric Ton
NADF	National Agricultural Development Framework
NPP	National Priority Program
PMP	Performance Management Plan
PMU	Project Management Unit
PSP	Private Sector Provider
RADP-S	Regional Agricultural Development Program-South
SOTF	Special Operations Task Force
SOW	Scope of Work
TOT	Training-of-Trainers
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
VFU	Veterinary Field Unit
VSU	Vetting Support Unit

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

Agriculture plays a critical role in the lives of Afghan people. It is the country's primary driver in the southern region, employing more than 80 per cent of the population and contributing to one third of the gross domestic product. Its importance in the southern provinces cannot be overstated. Yet, agricultural productivity levels lag significantly behind neighboring countries and even those historically achieved in Afghanistan.

Program Description

The purpose of the Regional Agriculture Development Program-South (RADP-S) is to improve food and economic security for rural Afghans in the provinces of Kandahar, Helmand, Zabul and Uruzgan provinces. To accomplish this goal, RADP-S focuses on improving the productivity and profitability of the wheat, high value crops, and livestock value chains, while addressing policy, legal and regulatory constraints affecting value chain development. This agricultural development program supports the consolidation of licit economies to fuel long term economic growth, including providing alternatives to poppy cultivation.

The implementation approach of RADP-S dovetails with Afghan and U.S. government strategies in its focus on advancing food security, regenerating agribusiness, and increasing agriculture sector jobs and incomes. RADP-S aims to strengthen the capacity of producers, associations, traders, and agribusinesses to respond to market demands; facilitate lasting market linkages between value chain actors; and support an enabling environment that allows the private sector to thrive. The program places Afghan organizations at the forefront of implementation and addresses key crosscutting issues of women's empowerment, agribusiness value chain facilitation, and alternative development in all facets of the program. Embodying USAID's vision for sustainable Afghan-led development, RADP-S lays the foundation for greater and more socially inclusive growth in the agricultural economy.

The 4 Components of RADP-S

- I. Wheat Value Chain
- II. High Value Crops Value Chain
- III. Livestock Value Chain
- IV. Enabling Environment

Program Highlights from Quarter I

The Regional Agricultural Development Program – South (RADP-S) was awarded to Chemonics International on 7 October 2013. RADP-S immediately deployed a start-up team to establish the administrative and operational infrastructure needed to recruit and manage expatriate and local staff, identify project office space in Kabul and Kandahar, and produce high-quality deliverables according to the contract schedule. Four of the original key personnel staff (three expatriate, one local) and ten short-term specialists were fielded during the reporting period to lay the groundwork for programmatic activities. One additional third-country national was hired and onboarded for the key personnel position of Director of Finance on November 11 and attended the post-award conference with USAID and other key personnel. Most cooperating country national (CCN) administrative positions in the Kabul and Kandahar offices were hired by the end of 2013.

Over the course of the reporting period, RADP-S successfully positioned its key implementing partners (KIPs) – the Afghan Development Association (ADA), Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (CHA), and the Dutch Committee for Afghanistan (DCA) – to begin technical implementation as soon as possible. Early in the first quarter, RADP-S’ Project Management Unit (PMU) requested consent from USAID and the Vetting Support Unit (VSU) to subcontract with ADA, CHA, and DCA. Between November 26 and Dec 22, USAID and the VSU both granted their approval for all three KIPs. In the meantime, RADP-S’ COP and DCOP collaboratively worked with the KIPs to refine their scopes of work (SOW) from those drafted during proposal phase, and to finalize their mobilization plan for start-up.

RADP-S also focused on actively developing strategic partnerships with stakeholders to evaluate the most pressing issues facing the agricultural sector in southern Afghanistan. This included meetings with the Minister of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL), the Provincial Governor of Zabul, and the Director of the Zabul Directorate of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (DAIL). RADP-S leadership additionally initiated introductory and collaborative meetings with USAID implementers mutually engaged in agricultural and agribusiness activities in southern Afghanistan, such as the Commercial Horticulture & Agriculture Marketing Program (CHAMP) and the Kandahar Food Zone (KFZ). These meetings continued throughout the reporting period and collaborative relations are off to a strong start.

Technical implementation is in very early stages while the program finalizes subcontracts with the KIPs. Therefore, project indicators have not been included in this quarterly report. However, during the reporting period, Senior Technical Advisor Tom Fattori led the development of a baseline data collection methodology and Performance Management Plan (PMP) in order to measure and present RADP-S’ progress against indicators in future reports.

The monthly report for December 2013 has been incorporated into this report as *Annex D*.

II. PROGRESS TOWARD INDICATORS & INTERMEDIATE RESULTS

A. Components I, II, III: Wheat, High Value Crops, and Livestock Value Chains

Mobilizing RADP-S Partners for Project Implementation

On December 8, RADP-S’ COP and DCOP met with key implementing partners (KIPs) the Afghan Development Association (ADA) and Dutch Committee for Afghanistan (DCA). Later in the month the COP met with KIP Coordination for Humanitarian Assistance (CHA). The purpose of these meetings was to discuss their respective scopes of work, clarify roles and responsibilities, and review human and material resource requirements. As a result of these meetings, the KIPs’ scopes of work were updated from their original drafts during proposal phase. On December 18, 19 and 22, DCA, CHA, and ADA respectively received notice of eligibility from the USAID Vetting Support Unit (VSU). RADP-S had already received Contracting Officer consent to subcontract with all three KIPs on November 26.

ADA and CHA will provide full management and technical support for wheat, high value crop, livestock, and enabling environment activities in the provinces to which they are assigned, with robust oversight from RADP-S. ADA will lead regional offices in Kandahar, Zabul, and Uruzgan, and CHA will lead the offices in Helmand. DCA is responsible for implementation of livestock program activities, such as analysis of animal health provision services, training of para-veterinarians, and development of Veterinary Field Units

(VFUs). DCA will establish a Regional Livestock Program Office in Kandahar City that will include offices for all DCA regional staff and trainers. DCA's provincial and district offices will be located within the offices of ADA and CHA.

RADP-S also held meetings with program partners Equal Access, International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA), and Afghan Management and Marketing Consultants (AMMC) to refine their scopes of work and outline the roles and responsibilities of each partner. Equal Access will lead activities in all four provinces to establish and sustain effective channels for the dissemination of information to RADP-S beneficiaries and counterparts using innovative communications, media, and training techniques. ICARDA will provide training to KIP personnel in wheat production and water management at the AMTEX training location. RADP-S is awaiting USAID consent to subcontract with AMMC, an experienced Afghan monitoring and evaluation firm who will complete the baseline studies for Components I, II and III.

Building Collaborative Relationships with Implementing Counterparts

Over the course of the reporting period, RADP-S' COP, DCOP, and Senior Technical Advisor initiated introductory and collaborative meetings with technically relevant USAID implementers also operating in southern Afghanistan. These counterparts included: the Afghanistan Agriculture Research and Extension Development (AGRED) project, Kandahar Food Zone (KFZ) program, Commercial Horticulture & Agriculture Marketing Program (CHAMP), Assistance in Building Afghanistan by Developing Enterprises (ABADE), Agricultural Credit Enhancement Program (ACE), Agricultural Development Fund (ADF), and the Afghanistan Trade and Revenue (ATAR) project. Recognizing a myriad of opportunities to mutually strengthen program activities and enhance USAID's positive development impact in the region, RADP-S will continue to coordinate with these programs throughout the life of project.

For example, AGRED, implemented by Roots of Peace, has staff based in all four RADP-S provinces including a Kandahar regional office, a Provincial Coordinator based at each DAIL, and extension and gender coordinators. AGRED and RADP-S leadership are therefore discussing to determine if and how the two programs can collaborate to support demonstration activities being conducted at DAIL research stations.

Additionally, KFZ, implemented by International Relief and Development, contains a livelihood component which will work with clusters of communities in seven districts of Kandahar Province. RADP-S and KFZ have identified the opportunity for RADP-S to build upon KFZ grant activities by providing complementary technical assistance and training. For example, KFZ may provide an infrastructure grant to a community to develop a farm market. RADP-S could then provide training to operate the market, including best practices for packing fruit and managing cold storage. KFZ and RADP-S have agreed to initiate such collaboration in Panjwai and Zhari Districts.

RADP-S' DCOP also held an introductory meeting on December 5 with the director and members of the Civil-Military Operations Center-South (CMOC-S). USAID Senior Development Officer Chuck Swagman and Senior USDA Advisor Mark Mitchell were in attendance as well. The meeting was held to determine the level and type of cooperation that could be established between the two entities. It was agreed that RADP-S would consider working with farmers recommended by Special Operations Task Force (SOTF) personnel who are stationed in RADP-S districts. RADP-S is interested in establishing lead farmers to receive substantial technical assistance for demonstrating technical agricultural practices to their farmer

neighbors. It was also agreed to explore how RADP-S expatriate staff could access SOTF bases in RADP-S districts to be able to meet with RADP-S stakeholders.

Generating Support from Multiple Levels of Afghan Leadership

During the reporting period, RADP-S actively initiated strategic partnerships with stakeholders to earn their support and to assess the priority issues facing the agricultural sector in the targeted provinces. On December 7, RADP-S leadership met with MAIL Minister H.E. Mohammad Asif Rahimi and representatives of USAID. At the meeting, RADP-S delivered a presentation to the Minister introducing RADP's goals, program components, and technical approach. The important role of the MAIL and provincial DAILs in RADP-S' vision for creating sustainable, long term impact was emphasized. The presenters also communicated RADP-S' desire to harmonize and coordinate with Afghanistan's National Agricultural Development Framework (NADF), the Government of Afghanistan's Agriculture and Rural Development National Priority Program (NPP), and MAIL's development strategy including the Food for Life program. In support of RADP-S wheat, high value crop, and livestock components, RADP-S leadership described their aim to enlist the DAILs to conduct demonstration activities. These activities will engage a range of farm households (from commercial to subsistence level) to contribute to promoting best practices and technologies which improve productivity. In support of the enabling environment component, they requested the DAILs' collaboration in collecting information on and evaluating the enabling environment and in actively communicating regulatory issues with the MAIL.

Attendees from USAID included: Freeman Daniels, Contracting Officer Representative (COR); Steve Orr, Acting Director, Office of Agriculture; and Sayed Khalid Hashimi, Project Management Specialist. RADP-S personnel consisted of Rick Pierce, COP; Gordon Bremer, DCOP; and Thomas Fattori, Senior Technical Advisor. MAIL participants included: H.E. Mohammad Asif Rahimi, Minister; Haidari, Deputy Minister, Technical Affairs; Javed Qayim, DG Policy and Planning; Zia, Director, Provincial Relations; Hakimi, Director, Private Sector; and Secretary to the Minister, Payam Aziz.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the two parties agreed to move forward with the establishment of a committee to facilitate effective coordination between RADP-S and the MAIL. A Memorandum of Understanding between RADP-S and the MAIL has been drafted and is pending signature in order to pave the way for collaborative activities between the program and DAILs at the provincial and district levels. Additionally, it was determined that RADP-S should coordinate with the MAIL Director of Planning regarding the project launch.



File photo of Provincial Governor of Zabul, Alhaj Ashraf Nasiri.

On December 23, RADP-S Capacity Building Director Altaf Rahimi and Communications and Outreach Manager Mateen Ashrafi met with the Provincial Governor of Zabul and five of his technical advisors. For the first portion of the two-hour meeting, Mr. Rahimi and Mr. Ashrafi delivered a presentation in Pashto, introducing the goals, activities, and technical approach of RADP-S. Following the presentation, the governor and his advisors introduced their economic development strategy for Zabul which shared numerous key objectives with RADP-South, such as: capacity building of entrepreneurs to boost economic growth; exploration and introduction of new high-value crops to increase agricultural profits; improved veterinary services; and promotion of the private business sector (e.g. processing, packing and transport). The governor welcomed RADP-South to

Zabul province, promising his support and cooperation with RADP-S and its key implementing partner in Zabul – the Afghanistan Development Agency (ADA).

The following day, Mr. Rahimi and Mr. Ashrafi met with the Director of the DAIL in Zabul in his office, where they delivered the same presentation. The DAIL Director, Besmillah Harifall, enthusiastically pledged his office's collaboration, including the sharing of DAIL regional data as well as assistance in establishing demonstration plots throughout Zabul. He recommended that RADP-S consider adding Arghandab to its targeted districts because of the high production of orchard crops which could support the program's Component III high value crops activities. In tandem with the provincial governor and his advisors, Mr. Harifall offered additional suggestions for achieving RADP-S goals in the region such as providing solar energy facilities for pumping water from deep wells to increase crop yields, and prioritizing market development and quality crop storage for farmers.

B. Component IV: Enabling Environment

Enabling Environment Advisor Matt Weber's first assignment began November 17 and was successfully concluded on December 16. On December 10, Mr. Weber finished drafting the enabling environment implementation section of the work plan, which presented a background of present enabling environment issues, an overview describing the manner in which the Enabling Environment Unit will be conducting its activities, and a detailed presentation of the specific indicators associated with each indicator enumerated in the PMP. He furthermore outlined the proposed activities, tasks, and responsibilities for RADP-S' Component IV, including its role as it relates to the upcoming RADP-Central program. Collaborating with the project technical team and other stakeholders, Mr. Weber finalized the initial framework for collecting enabling environment baseline data which will allow for the accelerated commencement of analysis activities. He will be implementing this framework during his second assignment starting February 2014.

C. Crosscutting Themes

Agribusiness Value Chain Facilitation

In early December, USAID COR for RADP-S, Freeman Daniels, and USAID Senior Advisor for Markets and Trade, Todd Flower, met with the RADP-S' COP, DCOP and Senior Technical Advisor to initiate discussions regarding incorporation of a value chain facilitation approach into the RADP-S implementation strategy. Based on these discussions, the PMU immediately issued recruits for value chain facilitation consultants and proceeded to shortlist candidates in close collaboration with USAID. The PMU is currently finalizing the recruit for the key personnel position of Value Chain Facilitation Advisor. Further discussions with USAID regarding how to incorporate a value chain facilitation approach were gathering steam at the close of the quarter.

Gender

On December 29, Gender Integration Manager Belqis Barraï officially joined RADP-S. She is the first member of the three-person Gender Unit Team to be onboarded. As Gender Integration Manager, Ms. Barraï will

oversee the Gender Unit Team and identify appropriate opportunities for Afghan women to increase participation in agribusiness, input supply, post-harvest, and marketing activities. Ms. Barrai was selected for her familiarity with both the world of international development and the realm of rural women in southern Afghanistan, her experience working with rural women's issues, and her deep knowledge of the institutional settings through which RADP-S works.

The Gender Integration Manager is based in the RADP-S Kandahar office in order to be fully integrated into all RADP-S value chain and technical capacity building plans. From Kandahar, she will monitor and assist the work of her ADA and CHA gender team counterparts in the provincial and district offices who are helping women in the village clusters with an array of value chain activities. As outlined in the gender section of the draft work plan, this approach allows the Gender Unit Team to maximize the number of beneficiaries by reaching through the provincial offices to the villages where the need to create agriculture and agribusiness opportunities for women is greatest.

III. MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIVITIES

A. Home Office Project Management Unit (PMU)

In accordance with Chemonics' unique home and field office structure, the DC-based PMU provided the field office team with the correct resources and support to set the field team up for success in the first quarter. Supporting nearly all aspects of start-up activities, the PMU assisted field leadership in ensuring that project implementation aligned with the terms of the contract, USAID regulations, USAID Afghanistan mission expectations, and Chemonics management standards. Specifically, the PMU supported drafting of all approval requests for personnel and subcontractors, assembling of vetting packages, procurement of IT equipment, and budget forecasting, among other responsibilities instrumental to laying the groundwork for attaining results and impact in the field. To ensure first quarter contract deliverables were provided in a timely fashion and met USAID expectations, the PMU mobilized home office specialists in the area of human resources, procurement, finance, contract compliance, security, subcontracts and grants, monitoring and evaluation, and work planning. Additionally, the PMU played a critical role in fostering a high performing field team by providing essential backstopping support to field staff and conducting efficient recruits for key vacant expatriate positions. Within a week of the unfortunate news that the Director of Finance would not be able to finish out his contract, the PMU identified a highly qualified replacement, exemplifying the PMU's ability to adapt to the project's changing needs efficiently and effectively.

B. Staffing

Cooperating Country National (CCN) Staff

During the reporting period, RADP-S start-up team initiated competitive recruits for a total of 73 local national positions (57 in Kandahar, 16 in Kabul). In the interest of ensuring that all hiring be carried out efficiently but in strict accordance with USAID regulations, Chemonics corporate policies, and Afghan labor laws, two local recruiters (one expatriate, one home office) were consecutively deployed to the field to lead recruitment efforts. By the first week of December, the Human Resource (HR) Specialist for the Kandahar office had been identified and onboarded. A short-term local recruiter from Chemonics' home office continues to work collaboratively with him to implement rigorous HR systems and to staff

Kandahar's large office in accordance with the RADP-S budget, staffing plan and technical objectives. Simultaneously Kandahar's HR Specialist is being trained in enforcing USAID and Chemonics' high standards of due diligence, from scrupulous fact-checking of biodata information to utilization of Chemonics' quality management system.

Throughout the reporting period, the two field offices submitted a total of 34 hiring packages for review by the home office PMU, who then submitted requests for approval to USAID. As of the end of December, the local recruit stood as follows:

RADP-S CCN STAFF as of December 31, 2013			
Field Office	No. of staff hired	No. of hiring packages under review by PMU	Target no. of hires
Kabul	9	3	16
Kandahar	10	12	57
Total	19	15	73

CCN Salary Scale

On October 17, RADP-S submitted the Cooperating Country National (CCN) salary scale for USAID approval. Because approval was not received during the reporting period, Chemonics onboarded CCN personnel through the established hiring approval system.

Expatriate and Third-Country National Staff

Four of the five original proposed key personnel, including the COP, DCOP, Value Chain Advisor, and Compliance Officer were immediately onboarded for program start-up. Ten short term specialists were additionally fielded within the first quarter to lay the groundwork for programmatic activities:

1. Procurement Specialist
2. Start-Up Manager - North
3. Start-Up Operations Director -South
4. Human Resources Specialist - North
5. Human Resources Specialist - South
6. Enabling Environment Advisor
7. Seniors Contracts Advisor
8. Senior Technical Advisor
9. Finance and Compliance Specialist
10. Local Recruitment Specialist

Upon award of the RADP-S contract, home office PMU immediately launched expatriate/TCN recruits for the key personnel positions of Director of Finance and Value Chain Advisor upon notice that the previous two employees' contracts would unfortunately be discontinued in December. Kevin Stupay was quickly identified for the position of Director of Finance and his approval was pending at the end of the reporting period. In the meantime, the project has reexamined the scope of work of the Value Chain Advisor and proceeded to replace the position with two positions which will accommodate the integration of a value

chain facilitation component: Value Chain Facilitation Advisor (key personnel) and Training Manager or Technical Program Advisor (title to be determined). Both recruits were ongoing throughout December and will be finalized in the second quarter. The PMU additionally conducted a recruit for a long term M&E and/or Communications Specialist which should be finalized in February. In a competitive recruit, the PMU selected Home Office Director Chris Perine for the position of short-term Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (EMMP) Specialist to write the EMMP. He will be fielded to Kandahar mid-January. Finally, the PMU mobilized one of its own members on December 14 to lead CCN recruitment efforts in Kandahar.

C. Project Facilities

Kandahar

In October the RADP-S start-up team worked closely with Chemonics' Country Security Team (CST) and security subcontractor to identify a secure and operationally optimal office in Kandahar which would serve as the technical base for RADP-S. Recognizing the volatile security conditions and inadequate infrastructure, among other challenges to working in southern Afghanistan, the project conducted a thorough security analysis of three different facilities which could potentially suit RADP-S' needs for a technical platform in Kandahar.

AMTEX Village was selected for its secure environment for project operations, proximity to USAID's operating platform in the south, and its accessibility to local national staff, implementing partners, and other program stakeholders. At the end of October, RADP-S negotiated a short-term lease with AMTEX which now hosts the project's core group of technical experts. In November, the Deputy Chief of Party (DCOP), Value Chain Advisor, Operations Director, short-term Enabling Environment Specialist and Start-up Recruiter mobilized to Kandahar to initiate office set up and local recruitment. RADP-S is awaiting AMTEX vetting approval which will allow the transition to a long-term lease agreement.

Kabul

RADP-S leveraged the presence of three other Chemonics' projects at the Baron Compound in Kabul to quickly establish a project office. Operating out of the Baron is the COP, Compliance Officer, and Director of Finance, as well as local administrative staff including the operations, finance, and subcontracts/grants team. Starting in the second quarter, the Baron will additionally host a Capacity Building Specialist, project reporting team, and Monitoring and Evaluation Director.

D. Procurements and Disposition

To quickly facilitate the implementation of RADP-South activities, Chemonics' Procurement Senior Advisor Terry Collier was mobilized to Afghanistan at the start of November. Mr. Collier initiated the company's robust procurement systems and controls and led the procurement of equipment, furniture, and supplies that are critical to working effectively in Afghanistan. Concurrently, the start-up team Operations Manager and Director worked closely with USAID to acquire project equipment and supplies through the disposition of other USAID project properties.

With the start of Kandahar office's Procurement and Logistics Manager and Procurement Specialist, significant advancements in procurement were made in December. Small-scale two-wheel tractors and

implements, seeders and harvesters to be used for value chain facilitation activities were dispositioned to RADP-S and shipped from Mazar to Kandahar. Additionally, two vehicles were dispositioned in Kandahar, as well as laptops, office furniture, radios, satellite telephones, printers, scanners, and television sets. On December 8, an RFP for soft skin vehicles was released and a vendor was soon identified and submitted to USAID's Vetting Support Unit (VSU). These vehicles will be used to safely transport local national staff from Kandahar City to the office, facilitate day-to-day procurements, and transport program staff traveling to the four targeted provinces.

E. Security and Travel Administration

RADP-S mobilized Chemonics' Country Security Team (CST) to ensure that proper security measures were in place to enable the safe and rapid mobilization of RADP-S staff and start-up team. RADP-South additionally joined the Chemonics Afghanistan security platform by subcontracting with security providers DynCorp International and the Afghan Police Protection Force (APPF).

F. Contractual Deliverables

Work Plan

RADP-S' draft work plan was submitted to USAID for approval on December 14, 2013. Input from key and specialized technical implementing partners, including the Afghan Development Association (ADA), Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (CHA), the Dutch Committee for Afghanistan (DCA), Equal Access, and Afghanistan Management and Marketing Consultants (AMMC) has been incorporated into the draft Work Plan. As the project moves into the Quarter II, RADP-S intends to revise the work plan to incorporate a value chain facilitation component by identifying project outcomes that can be directly linked to, and enhanced by, market-based solutions to value chain constraints.

Performance Management Plan (PMP) and Baseline Data Collection Plan

The framework for the collection of baseline and control data, including the development of survey instruments, was developed in collaboration with Afghan Management and Marketing Consultants (AMMC). Upon receiving Contracting Officer approval, AMMC, a local organization, will begin baseline data collection to update the performance management plan and establish the project's baseline. The draft PMP was submitted to USAID on December 14, 2013.

Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (EMMP)

RADP-S field staff is working to identify potential environmental impacts from planned activities noted in the work plan. Chris Perine, a home office director experienced in EMMP-writing, was identified in December to fill the role of short term Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (EMMP) Specialist. Mr. Perine will deploy to Kandahar mid-January and submit the completed EMMP upon completion of his assignment in February.

Grants Under Contract (GUC) Manual

DC-based Grants and Subcontracts Specialist Marielos Sabillon began drafting the Grants and Subcontracts manual for submission to USAID in early January. Chemonics' home office is preparing to mobilize Ms. Sabillon or another grants expert to Kabul in February to finalize the Grants Under Contract (GUC) manual per the adjusted contractual deliverable due date. The GUC manual will be developed in conjunction with the RADP-South work plan to ensure that it responds to planned project activities under the grants fund. Ms. Sabillon is also preparing a subcontracts manual and she (or whoever is fielded for the short term grant and subcontracts assignment) will train RADP-S subcontracts staff in February 2014.

Branding and Marking Plan

RADP-S' Branding and Marking Plan was included in the final contract. As the project is implemented and marking needs and constraints are better defined, Chemonics will revise the Marking Plan and request exceptions as deemed necessary.

IV. IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES

As of the end of the reporting period, RADP-S had not been able to arrange meetings with relevant MAIL authorities to follow-up on commitments made with the Minister of Agriculture at the December 7 meeting to execute a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between RADP-S and the MAIL, form a permanent coordination committee, and discuss preparations for a MAIL sponsored RADP-S launch. With the assistance of USAID, RADP-S will continue to pursue these important matters with the appropriate MAIL officials.

A vetting request made on October 30, with clarifications submitted December 14, had not been approved for the Kandahar Office location, AMTEX Village, as of the end of the reporting period. This delay impacted the project's ability to fully set-up the Kandahar office space and technical training area, as well as to initiate training demonstrations in support of wheat activities since planting season for wheat ended in December.

V. ACTIVITIES PLANNED FOR NEXT QUARTER

Components I-III

AMTEX Technical Training Facility

RADP-S will establish a 3000 square meter demonstration farm on AMTEX grounds for the primary purpose of training ADA and CHA program staff in technical skills such as drip irrigation, utilization of greenhouses, field cooling and cold storage, and post-harvest handling (i.e. grading, sorting, and packing). Wheat and target high value crops such as grapes, vegetables and orchard crops will also be cultivated and maintained on the site.

Baseline Assessment

Afghan Management and Marketing Consultants (AMMC) will start the baseline assessment to gather current data and statistics responding to each indicator included in the RADP-South PMP for all four components. Ability to commence the assessment is contingent upon CO approval to subcontract with AMMC. The first phase of AMMC's baseline study will utilize secondary sources such as national sources in Kabul, such as data from the Central Statistics Office, and provincial sources from the four target provincial centers, such as data collected by the DAILs. AMMC will additionally source information from international donor-funded projects such as USAID and United Nations agencies when possible. All data collected and included in the baseline assessment will be disaggregated by district, province, program component, and value chain. AMMC will complete the baseline assessment under the direction of the Chemonics Monitoring and Evaluation Advisor, Thomas Fattori who arrives in Kabul on January 30, 2014.

Provincial and District-Level Start-Up:

ADA and CHA will spend the duration of the second quarter in rapid start-up, with the goal of getting their provincial and district offices established, furnished, staffed, and fully functional by the end of March. ADA will establish provincial offices in Kandahar, Zabul, and Uruzgan, plus a total of 14 district offices across the three provinces. CHA will establish a presence in five districts in Helmand.

In Mid-February, RADP-S will host an administrative orientation for the KIPs in Kabul to begin training them in USAID administrative, financial and operational policies and procedures. A technical orientation is planned for late February in Kandahar at AMTEX to develop and institutionalize a uniform set of technical objectives and practices to be articulated and implemented down to the district level by RADP-S program staff. This is likely to be a three-day workshop.

Following the technical orientation, a series of trainings for KIP program staff will be conducted at AMTEX, to further develop and focus the technical skills of KIP personnel and to institutionalize uniform sets of implementation activities which address the primary technical topics of the program. Each training (of one-three days in duration) will target a particular set of technical activities including value chain facilitation and other important program functions such as monitoring and reporting, communications, gender integration, improvement of the enabling environment, and environmental compliance. In later months, refresher conferences and sessions will be held periodically to address emerging issues, promote repetition of successes, update technologies and hone KIP skills.

Stakeholder Outreach

On January 27, RADP-S communications staff, Khan Mohammad Etebari and Abdul Mateen Ashrafi, will initiate collaboration with Equal Access to commence discussion of the RADP-S communications and outreach strategy and activities.

Additionally, an integrated team comprised of RADP-S Communications, Outreach, and Gender Team representatives will travel to Helmand and Uruzgan for the purpose of introducing the goals and technical activities of RADP-S to the Provincial Governors and DAIL directors in their respective provinces. These meetings will also be an opportunity to exchange and evaluate with provincial leadership the most pressing issues affecting agriculture and agribusiness in southern Afghanistan.

Component IV

Enabling Environment Advisor Matt Weber will return in Quarter II to complete the following: 1) implement the framework for the collection of enabling environment data and identification of value chain constraints which was drafted during his previous assignment; 2) draft the process for analyzing value chain constraints; 3) implement the constraints analysis process; and 4) develop training materials for enabling environment unit staff and RADP-S KIPs.

Crosscutting Themes

Gender

The Gender Unit Team will be fully staffed by the end of Quarter II. Moving forward, RADP-S envoys to the provinces will include a Gender representative that will participate in the DAIL and Provincial Governor discussions. They will additionally meet with each province's Directorate of Women's Affairs (DOWA) to evaluate opportunities to increase Afghan women's participation in the agricultural and agribusiness sectors. RADP-S will also begin to provide assistance to existing women-owned food-processing activities, and to assist women in the districts to more fully participate in agriculture and agribusiness activities.

Management and Administrative

Ag Implementing Partners Regional Coordination Meeting and RADP-S Launch

The Ag Implementing Partners Regional Coordination Meeting is tentatively scheduled to take place in Kabul on February 13. The RADP-S official launch event is scheduled to take place on or about National Farmer's Day, also known as *Nowruz*, on March 21. The event will take place in Kabul, with attendees from USAID, Chemonics, and potentially MAIL and provincial leadership.

Contractual Deliverables

Work Plan, Project Management Plan (PMP), and Data Collection Plan

RADP-S' COP, DCOP, Senior Technical Advisor, and incoming Value Chain Facilitation Advisor and Training Manager/Technical Program Advisor will collaboratively revise the Year One Work Plan. A large focus of the revision will be an adjusted balance in technical approach between capacity building and value chain facilitation. With the aid and guidance of the Value Chain Facilitation Advisor, RADP-S' core technical team will thoroughly assess and identify project outcomes (new and existing) that can be directly linked to, and enhanced by, market-based solutions to value chain constraints. The Work Plan will moreover likely feature the addition of a value chain facilitation team under the direction of the Value Chain Facilitation Advisor. The M&E framework of the PMP and Data Collection Plan will be adjusted to accommodate any new targets or indicators as necessary from revision of the Work Plan.

Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan

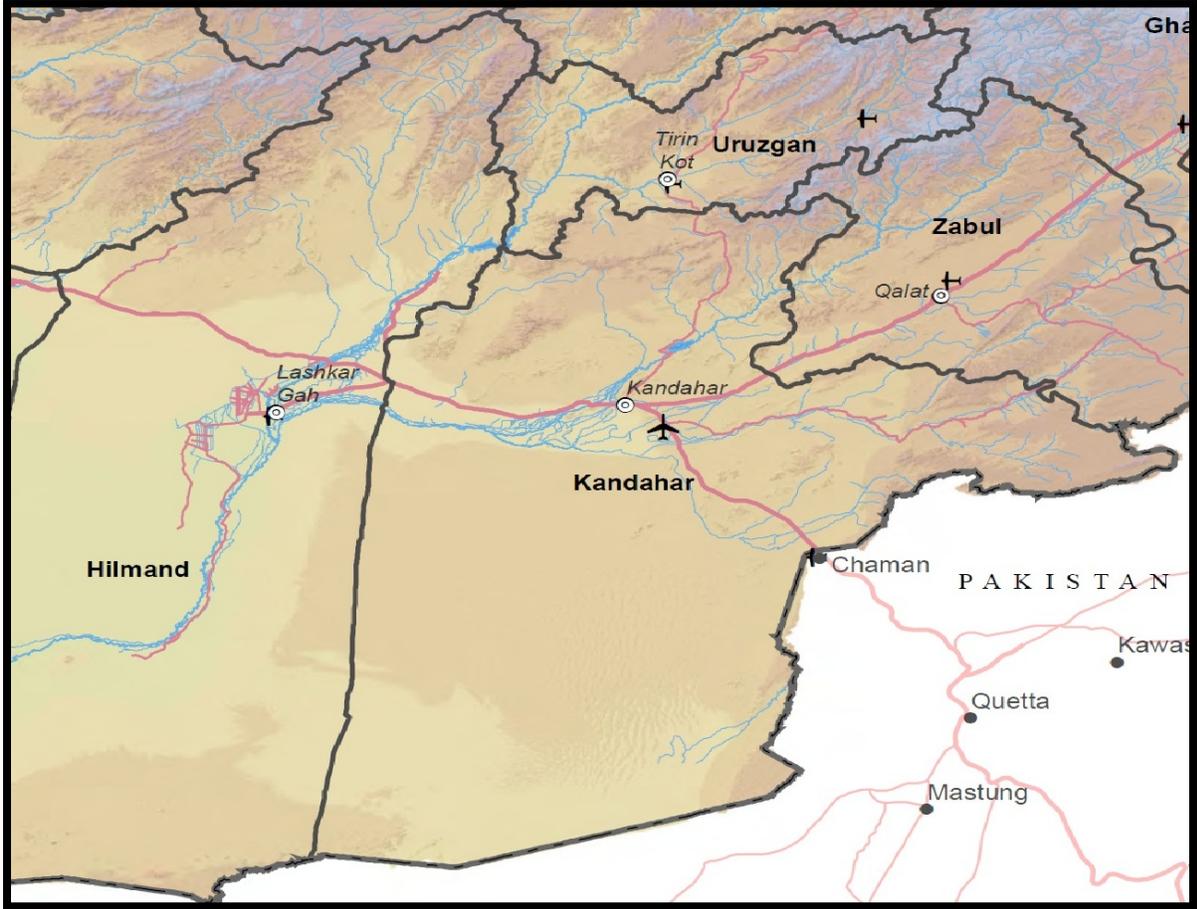
Beginning January 22, Chemonics home office Director Chris Perine will carry out a 30-day assignment as Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (EMMP) Specialist, during which time he will prepare and introduce the EMMP on behalf of RADP-S. Mr. Perine will additionally, conduct an environmental review

of value chain development plans as contained in the draft Work Plan, draft environmental compliance documentation for program activities, and coordinate with the M&E team to integrate required environmental monitoring into the M&E system. The EMMP will be submitted to USAID at the conclusion of his assignment.

Grants Under Contract (GUC) and Subcontracts Manuals

A Grants and Subcontracts expert will be fielded to Kabul from Chemonics home office to finalize the draft GUC and Subcontracts manuals. The same technical expert will also be responsible for building the capacity of RADP-S Subcontracts and Grants team.

ANNEX A: Targeted Provinces and Districts

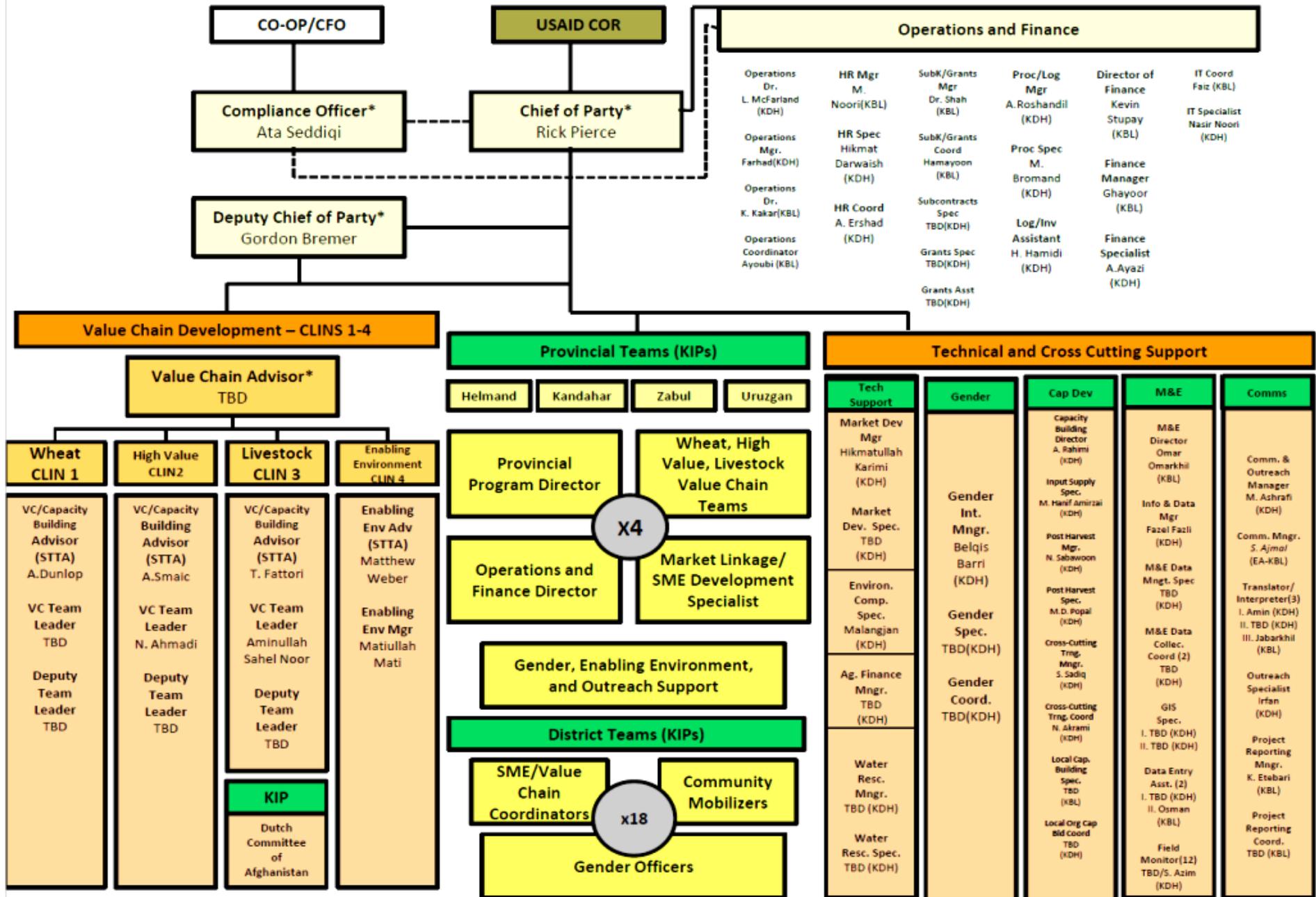


RADP-S Year One District Targets

Kandahar	Helmand	Zabul	Uruzgan
Kandahar	Lashkar Gah	Qalat	Tirin Kowt
Panjwayi	Marja	Shah Joi	Chora
Arghandab	Nad Ali	Mizan	Shahidi Hassas
Daman	Naway-i-Barakzayi	Jaldak	
Spin Boldak	Nari Seraj	Daychopan	
Zherai			

Updated: 26 Jan 2014

RADP-S ORGANIZATION CHART





USAID | AFGHANISTAN

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

SNAPSHOT USAID and Afghan Leadership Invest in Growing Zabol's Future

USAID looks to Afghanistan's agricultural sector for economic security



The Provincial Governor of Zabol believes that the solution to lifting Zabol's population out of poverty lies in revitalizing Zabol's agriculture sector.

USAID Afghanistan's agriculture programs are moving from stabilization efforts to longer term strategies for development. Today USAID is successfully earning the support and buy-in at all levels of government and from the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock to achieve mutual long term goals of food and economic security for rural Afghans.

Telling Our Story

U.S. Agency for International Development
Washington, DC 20523-1000
<http://stories.usaid.gov>

Like other southern provinces of Afghanistan, Zabol's economic engine – agriculture – is struggling. Three decades of war and intermittent drought have severely affected farming and livestock activities. Poor quality inputs, damaged irrigation systems, inadequate farming technology, and a lack of veterinary clinics have led to meager yields. Farmers struggle to capitalize off of their production and private investors show little interest in Zabol. 75% of Zabol's population today is living in poverty. A revival of its agricultural sector is its best bet for growth and security.

On December 23, 2013, members of USAID's new Regional Agricultural Development Program-South (RADP-S) met with Zabol's provincial governor, Alhaj Ashraf Nasiri, to introduce the program's plan for improving food and economic security in southern Afghanistan. After RADP-S presented their strategy for boosting the productivity and profitability of Zabol's wheat, high value crop, and livestock sectors, Mr. Nasiri enthusiastically shared the Zabol Directorate of Local Governance's economic development strategy: *Invest in Zabol, Growing for the Future*. Centered on activities which will increase licit crop yields, connect farmers to the international market, strengthen human capacity (including women) in agricultural production, and promote high value crops as an alternative to poppy cultivation, the strategy substantially mirrored the vision and objectives of RADP-S.

A subsequent meeting with Zabol's head of the Directorate of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock (DAIL), Besmillah Harifall, garnered similar enthusiasm. The DAIL is likewise undertaking a 10-year development plan to increase the economic status of Zabol's farmers. Mr. Besmillah embraced RADP-S' mutual endeavor.

The RADP-S envoy departed Zabol with the pledged collaboration of DAIL and the provincial government. In coming months, the DAIL will share its data to inform RADP-S' baseline study, as well as support the establishment of demonstration farms. USAID and provincial efforts combined, Zabol looks hopefully toward a new period of economic security.



REGIONAL AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM-SOUTH (RADP-S)

December 2013 Monthly Report



30 January 2014

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REGIONAL AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM-SOUTH (RADP-S)

Monthly Report: December 2013

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DISCLAIMER

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CONTENTS

Acronyms	24
Section I: Executive Summary	26
A. Program Description.....	26
B. December 2013 Program Highlights.....	26
Section II: Progress toward Indicators and Intermediate Results	27
A. Components I, II, III: Wheat, High Value Crops, and Livestock Value Chains	27
B. Component IV: Enabling Environment	28
Section III: Management and Administrative Activities	29
A. Recruitment	29
B. Contractual Deliverables.....	30
C. Procurements and Infrastructure-Building of RADP-S Offices	30
Section IV: Implementation Challenges.....	31

Cover photo: File photo of Provincial Governor of Zabul, Alhaj Ashraf Nasiri.

ACRONYMS

ABADE	Assistance in Building Afghanistan by Developing Enterprises
ACE	Agricultural Credit Enhancement Program
ADA	Afghan Development Association
AGRED	Agriculture Research and Extension Development Program
AMMC	Afghan Management and Marketing Consultants
APPF	Afghan Police Protection Force
ALA	Afghanistan Land Authority
ATAR	Afghan Trade and Revenue Program
CCN	Cooperating Country National
CHA	Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance
CHAMP	Commercial Horticulture and Agriculture Marketing Program
CLIN	Contract Line Item Number
CMOC-S	Civil-Military Operations Center-South
COP	Chief of Party
COR	Contracting Officer Representative
CST	Country Security Team
DAIL	Directorate of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock
DCA	Dutch Committee for Afghanistan
DCOP	Deputy Chief of Party
DOWA	Directorate of Women's Affairs
EMMP	Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan
GAD	Gender and Development
GAP	Good Agricultural Practices
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIRoA	Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
GLP	Good Livestock Practices
GMP	Good Management Practices
GUC	Grants Under Contract
Ha	Hectares
HR	Human Resources
HVC	High Value Crops
ICARDA	International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas
KFZ	Kandahar Food Zone

KIP	Key Implementing Partner
LOP	Life of Project
MAIL	Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MT	Metric Ton
NADF	National Agricultural Development Framework
NPP	National Priority Program
PMP	Performance Management Plan
PMU	Project Management Unit
PSP	Private Sector Provider
RADP-S	Regional Agricultural Development Program-South
SOTF	Special Operations Task Force
SOW	Scope of Work
TOT	Training-of-Trainers
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
VFU	Veterinary Field Unit
VSU	Vetting Support Unit

I. Executive Summary

A. Program Description

The purpose of the Regional Agriculture Development Program-South (RADP-S) is to improve food and economic security for rural Afghans in the provinces of Kandahar, Helmand, Zabul and Uruzgan provinces. To accomplish this goal, RADP-S focuses on improving the productivity and profitability of the wheat, high value crops, and livestock value chains, while addressing policy, legal and regulatory constraints affecting value chain development. This agricultural development program supports the consolidation of licit economies to fuel sustainable long term economic growth, including providing alternatives to poppy cultivation.

The implementation approach of RADP-S dovetails with Afghan and U.S. government strategies in its focus on advancing food security, regenerating agribusiness, and increasing agriculture sector jobs and incomes. RADP-S aims to strengthen the capacity of producers, associations, traders, and agribusinesses to respond to market demands; facilitate lasting market linkages between value chain actors; and support an enabling environment that allows the private sector to thrive. The program places Afghan organizations at the forefront of implementation and addresses key crosscutting issues of women's empowerment, agribusiness value chain facilitation, and alternative development in all facets of the program. Embodying USAID's vision for sustainable Afghan-led development, RADP-S lays the foundation for greater and more socially inclusive growth in the agricultural economy.

B. December 2013 Program Highlights

December was a period of considerable forward progress for RADP-S in staffing, work planning, and fostering collaboration with key partners and stakeholders. The first local staff began work in the Kandahar and Kabul offices December 7, facilitating accelerated recruitment, procurement, program outreach, and office establishment. Thirty-four local staff total were hired contingent upon USAID approval, with 19 receiving approval during the reporting period.

Productive meetings between RADP-S technical leadership and key implementing partners (KIPs) resulted in refined scopes of work and evaluation of each organization's human and material resource requirements. The objective was to position each KIP to efficiently mobilize for technical implementation as quickly as possible. Progress toward this objective was strengthened when all 3 major KIPs – the Afghan Development Association (ADA), the Coordination for Humanitarian Assistance (CHA), and the Dutch Committee for Afghanistan (DCA) – received a notice of eligibility from USAID's Vetting Support Unit.

RADP-S continued building strategic partnerships with all levels of the Afghan government in order to generate buy-in for program activities and build the foundation for sustainable impact. RADP-S' COP and DCOP met with the Minister of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL) to initiate collaborative planning of program activities. In the final week of the reporting period, RADP-S Capacity Building Director and the Communications and Outreach Manager traveled to Zabul to present the program's goals and technical approach to the Provincial Governor of Zabul and the Director of the Zabul Directorate of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (DAIL). All three meetings successfully laid the initial groundwork for future support and cooperation which will facilitate the program's ability to create lasting benefits.

In December, RADP-S' Senior Technical Advisor submitted the first draft of major contract deliverables including the Year One Work Plan, Project Management Plan, and Data Collection Plan. The Component IV enabling environment implementation section of the work plan was contributed by the Enabling Environment Advisor, who concluded his first short term assignment in December. As a result of his assignment, the framework for collecting enabling environment baseline data has been finalized.

II. Progress toward Indicators and Intermediate Results

A. Components I, II, III: Wheat, High Value Crops, and Livestock Value Chains

Key Implementing Partners

On December 8th, RADP-S COP and DCOP met with key implementing partners (KIPs) the Afghan Development Association (ADA) and the Dutch Committee for Afghanistan (DCA). Later in the month the COP met with the KIP that will be implementing project activities in Helmand, the Coordination for Humanitarian Assistance (CHA). The purpose of these meetings was to discuss their respective scopes of work, clarify roles and responsibilities, and review human and material resource requirements. As a result of these meetings, the KIPs' scopes of work, which were drafted during proposal phase, were updated. On December 18, 19 and 22, DCA, CHA, and ADA respectively received notice of eligibility from the USAID Vetting Support Unit. RADP-S had already received Contracting Officer consent to subcontract with all three KIPs on November 26th.

Fostering Strategic Collaboration with the MAIL

During the reporting period, RADP-S actively initiated strategic partnerships with stakeholders to earn their support and to assess the priority issues facing the agricultural sector in the targeted provinces. On December 7, RADP-S leadership met with MAIL Minister H.E. Mohammad Asif Rahimi and representatives of USAID. At the meeting, RADP-S delivered a presentation to the Minister introducing RADP's goals, program components, and technical approach. The important role of the MAIL and provincial DAILs in RADP-S' vision for creating sustainable, long term impact was emphasized. The presenters also communicated RADP-S' desire to harmonize and coordinate with Afghanistan's National Agricultural Development Framework (NADF), the Government of Afghanistan's Agriculture and Rural Development National Priority Program (NPP), and MAIL's development strategy including the Food for Life program. In support of Components I-III, they presented RADP-S' objective to enlist the DAILs to conduct demonstration activities which engage a range of farm households (from commercial to subsistence level) to contribute to promoting best practices and technologies to improve productivity. In support of Component IV, they requested the DAILs' collaboration in collecting information on and evaluating the enabling environment, and in actively communicating regulatory issues with the MAIL.

Attendees from USAID included: Freeman Daniels, Contracting Officer Representative (COR); Steve Orr, Acting Director, Office of Agriculture; and Sayed Khalid Hashimi, Project Management Specialist. RADP-S personnel consisted of Rick Pierce, COP; Gordon Bremer, DCOP; and Thomas Fattori, Senior Technical Advisor. MAIL participants included: H.E. Mohammad Asif Rahimi, Minister; Haidari, Deputy Minister, Technical Affairs; Javed Qayim, DG Policy and Planning; Zia, Director, Provincial Relations; Hakimi, Director, Private Sector; and Secretary to the Minister, Payam Aziz.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the two parties agreed to move forward with the establishment of a committee to facilitate effective coordination between RADP-S and the MAIL. A Memorandum of Understanding between RADP-S and the MAIL has been drafted and is pending signature in order to pave the way for collaborative activities between the program and DAILs at the provincial and district levels. Additionally, it was determined that RADP-S should coordinate with the MAIL Director of Planning regarding the project launch.

Earning the Support of Zabul's Provincial Governor and DAIL

On December 23, RADP-S Capacity Building Director Altaf Rahimi and Communications and Outreach Manager Mateen Ashrafi met with the Provincial Governor of Zabul and five of his technical advisors. For the first portion of the two-hour meeting, Mr. Rahimi and Mr. Ashrafi delivered a presentation in Pashto, introducing the goals, activities, and technical approach of RADP-S. Following the presentation,

the governor and his advisors introduced their economic development strategy for Zabul which shared some key objectives with RADP-South, such as: capacity building of entrepreneurs to boost economic growth; exploration and introduction of new high-value crops to increase agricultural profits; improved veterinary services; and promotion of the private business sector (e.g. processing, packing and transport). The governor welcomed RADP-South to Zabul province, promising his support and cooperation with RADP-S and its key implementing partner in Zabul – the Afghanistan Development Agency (ADA).

The following day, Mr. Rahimi and Mr. Ashrafi met with the Director of the DAIL in Zabul in his office, where they delivered the same presentation. The DAIL Director, Besmillah Harifall, enthusiastically pledged his office's collaboration, including the sharing of DAIL regional data as well as assistance in establishing demonstration plots throughout Zabul. He recommended that RADP-S consider adding Arghandab to its targeted districts because of the high production of orchard crops which could support the program's Component III high value crops activities. In tandem with the provincial governor and his advisors, Mr. Harifall offered additional suggestions for achieving RADP-S goals in the region such as providing solar energy facilities for pumping water from deep wells to increase crop yields, and prioritizing market development and quality crop storage for farmers.

Collaboration with Technically Relevant Counterparts

On December 5th, RADP-S' DCOP Gordon Bremer met with Major, Director Michael Carson and members of the Civil-Military Operations Center-South (CMOC-S) unit. Also attending were Chuck Swagman, USAID Senior Development Officer and Mark Mitchell, Senior USDA Advisor. The meeting was held to introduce RADP-S to CMOC-S and determine the level and type of cooperation that could be established. It was agreed that RADP-S would consider working with farmers, recommended by Special Operations Task Force (SOTF) personnel who are stationed in RADP-S districts, to establish them as lead farmers receiving substantial technical assistance for demonstrating technical agricultural practices to their farmer neighbors. It was also agreed to explore how RADP-S expatriate staff could access SOTF bases in RADP-S districts to be able to meet with RADP-S stakeholders.

Mr. Bremer also met with the USAID Kandahar Food Zone (KFZ) Project COP Ligia Carvajal on December 17th to continue coordinating collaboration between the two programs. Sharing one of RADP-S' program objectives – to strengthen and diversify licit agricultural livelihoods in Kandahar in order to promote alternatives to poppy cultivation – KFZ shows rich potential for partnership in a number of technical activities.

Integrating a Value Chain Facilitation Approach

In early December, USAID Contracting Officer Representative for RADP-S, Freeman Daniels, and Senior Advisor for Markets and Trade, Todd Flower, met with the RADP-S' COP, DCOP and Senior Technical Advisor to initiate discussions regarding incorporation of a value chain facilitation approach into the RADP-S implementation strategy.

B. Component IV: Enabling Environment

On December 16, Enabling Environment Advisor Matt Weber concluded his first short-term assignment during which he drafted the enabling environment technical implementation section of the Year 1 work plan, including proposed activities, tasks, roles, and responsibilities. Mr. Weber collaborated with the project technical team and other stakeholders to spearhead the development of Year One indicators and targets for all Component IV activities and designed the framework for collection of enabling environment baseline data.

III: Management and Administrative Activities

A. Recruitment

Expatriate and TCN

The home office Project Management Unit (PMU) immediately launched expatriate/TCN recruits for the key personnel positions of Director of Finance and Value Chain Advisor (VCA) upon determination that the previous two employees' contracts would unfortunately be discontinued in December. Kevin Stupay was identified for the position of Director of Finance and was pending approval at the end of this reporting period. In the meantime, the project reexamined the scope of work of the Value Chain Advisor and proceeded to replace the position with two positions which will accommodate the integration of a value chain facilitation component: Value Chain Facilitation Advisor (key personnel) and Training Manager or Technical Program Advisor (title to be determined). Both recruits were ongoing throughout December and will be finalized in the 2nd quarter. The PMU additionally conducted a recruit for a long term M&E and/or Communications Specialist which should be finalized in February. In a competitive recruit, the PMU selected Chemonics Home Office Director Chris Perine for the position of short-term Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (EMMP) Specialist to write the EMMP. He will be fielded to Kandahar mid-January. Finally, the PMU mobilized one of its own members, Rachel Rothgery, to lead CCN recruitment efforts in Kandahar.

Cooperating Country Nationals (CCN)

Progress in the local recruit accelerated significantly during the reporting period. The first week of December, the first six CCN staff received CO approval and started in the Kandahar office. By the final week of the month, five staff joined the Kabul office and two more joined in Kandahar, with six additional approved to start the next month. Fifteen more were offered positions contingent upon USAID approval. Though the presence of a home office local recruiter increased the rate of hires, it also created the opportunity to formalize HR systems and to train Kandahar's CCN HR Specialist in rigorous enforcement of USAID, Chemonics, and Government of Afghanistan's hiring and labor laws to ensure that quality and compliant recruiting would not be compromised.

As of December 31, the following positions were approved and hired. The six employees in italics at the bottom were approved but did not start until January:

RADP-S CCN December Hires			
#	Position	Name	Office
1	Operations Coordinator	Amin Ayoubi	Kabul
2	Project Reporting Manager	Khan Etebari	Kabul
3	Subcontracts and Grants Coordinator	Hamayoon Qudos	Kabul
4	Finance Manager	Abdul Jabar Ghayoor	Kabul
5	Administration Assistant	Mohammad Gouhar	Kabul

6	Human Resources Specialist	Hikmatullah Darwaish	Kandahar
7	Operations Manager	Farhad Farhad	Kandahar
8	Procurement and Logistics Manager	Abdul Ghaffar Roshandil	Kandahar
9	Finance Specialist	Mohammad Anas Ayazi	Kandahar
10	Communications and Outreach Manager	Abdul Mateen Ashrafi	Kandahar
11	Capacity Building Director	Altaf Rahimi	Kandahar
12	Procurement Specialist	Mirwais Bromand	Kandahar
13	Gender Integration Manager	Belqis Barraï	Kandahar
14	<i>Monitoring and Evaluation Director</i>	<i>Omar Omarkhil</i>	<i>Kabul</i>
15	<i>Human Resources Manager</i>	<i>Marjan Noori</i>	<i>Kabul</i>
16	<i>IT Coordinator</i>	<i>Maryam Faiz</i>	<i>Kabul</i>
17	<i>Operations Director-Kabul</i>	<i>Khabir Kakar</i>	<i>Kabul</i>
18	<i>Cross-Cutting Training Coordinator</i>	<i>Naqeebullah Akrami</i>	<i>Kandahar</i>
19	<i>Input Supply Specialist</i>	<i>Hanif Amirzai</i>	<i>Kandahar</i>

B. Contractual Deliverables

The following deliverables were drafted by Senior Technical Advisor Tom Fattori and submitted December 14: Work Plan, Project Management Plan (PMP), and Data Collection Plan. After productive discussions with RADP-S' USAID COR, the draft is now undergoing considerable revisions, including more substantial integration of the value chain facilitation approach and the addition of the new long term positions, Training Manager/Technical Program Advisor and Value Chain Facilitation Advisor.

DC-based Grants and Subcontracts Specialist Marielos Sabillon began drafting the Grants and Subcontracts manual for submission to USAID in early January. Ms. Sabillon or another grants expert will be joining the Kabul office on short term assignment in February to finalize the manual with RADP-S staff, provide training to the CCN grants and subcontracts team, and assist with the administrative orientation of the KIPs during their start-up.

C. Procurements and Infrastructure-Building of RADP-S Offices

With the start of Kandahar office's Procurement and Logistics Manager and Procurement Specialist, significant advancements in procurement were made in December. Small-scale two-wheel tractors and implements, seeders and harvesters to be used for value chain facilitation activities were dispositioned to RADP-S and shipped from Mazar to Kandahar. Additionally, two vehicles were dispositioned in Kandahar, as well as laptops, office furniture, radios, satellite telephones, printers, scanners, and television sets.

An RFP for soft skin vehicles was released on December 8 and a vendor was soon identified and submitted to USAID's Vetting Support Unit. These vehicles will be used to safely transport local national

staff from Kandahar City to the office, facilitate day-to-day procurements, and transport program staff traveling to the four targeted provinces.

Finally, internet service was installed at the Kandahar office the last week of December, providing a much needed service for the efficient operation of RADP-S' technical base.

Section IV: Implementation Challenges

As of the end of the reporting period, RADP-S had not been able to arrange meetings with relevant MAIL authorities to follow-up on commitments made with the Minister of Agriculture at the December 7 meeting to execute a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between RADP-S and the MAIL, form a permanent coordination committee, and discuss preparations for a MAIL sponsored RADP-S launch. With the assistance of USAID, RADP-S will continue to pursue these important matters with the appropriate MAIL officials.

A vetting request made on October 30, with clarifications submitted December 14, had not been approved for the Kandahar Office location, AMTEX Village, as of the end of the reporting period. This delay impacted the project's ability to fully set-up the Kandahar office space and technical training area, as well as to initiate training demonstrations in support of wheat activities since planting season for wheat ended in December.