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**REGIONAL AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT  
PROGRAM IN NORTHERN AFGHANISTAN  
(RADP-N) CONTRACT NO. AID-306-C-14-  
00002**

**START-UP WORKPLAN  
MAY 22, 2014 – OCTOBER 31, 2014**

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# Regional Agricultural Development Program in Northern Afghanistan (RADP-N)

## Start-Up Workplan

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Chief of Party:	Danilo Benavides
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# CONTENTS

<b>Introduction and Overview of the RADP-N Program</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Technical Start Up</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Additional Technical Start-up Activities</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>Development of Value Chain Analyses</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>Baseline Survey</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>Linking Farmers and Markets</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>Value Chain Support for Local Businesses</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Design of Differentiated Market Strategies</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Planned Activities by CLIN</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>Start-up Period Deliverables</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>Operational Start-Up</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>Mobilization and Start-Up</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>Cooperating Country National (CCN) Staffing Plan</b> .....	<b>11</b>
<b>Subcontractor Mobilization</b> .....	<b>12</b>
<b>Operations Plan</b> .....	<b>13</b>
<b>Finance</b> .....	<b>13</b>
<b>Procurement</b> .....	<b>14</b>
 <b>Table 1: CLINs 1-3 Start-Up Workplan</b> .....	 <b>6</b>

# ACRONYMS

ACDI/VOCA	Agricultural Cooperative Development International and Volunteers in Overseas Cooperative Assistance
AgDepots	Agricultural Depots
AIB	Afghanistan International Bank
AISA	Afghanistan Investment Support Agency
APPF	Afghanistan Public Protection Force
ASMED	Afghanistan Small and Medium Enterprise Development
CCN	Cooperating Country National
CLIN	Contract Line Item Number
COP	Chief of Party
COR	Contracting Officer's Representative
DAI	Development Alternatives, Inc.
DAIL	Directorate of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock
DCA	Dutch Committee for Afghanistan
DCOP	Deputy Chief of Party
dTS	Development and Training Services, Inc.
EMS	Environmental Management System
FAS	Field Accounting System
FER	Field Expense Report
FOM	Field Operations Manual
FY	Fiscal Year
GIRoA	Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
HVC	High-Value Crop
ISP	Internet Service Provider
JDA	Joint Development Associates
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MAIL	Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OAA	Office of Acquisition and Assistance
PCC	Production and Commerce Cluster
PMP	Performance Management Plan

RADP-N	Regional Agricultural Development Program in Northern Afghanistan
RAR	Regional Agriculture Representative
ROI	Return on Investment
RSI	Rahman Safi Impact Consultancy
SIKA-N	Stability in Key Areas - North
SOW	Scope of Work
TAMIS	Technical and Administrative Management Information System
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VC	Value Chain

## INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW OF THE RADP-N PROGRAM

The Afghan agricultural sector is vibrant, diverse, and expansive, producing valuable crops in high demand by local, regional, national, and foreign markets. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Regional Agricultural Development Program in Northern Afghanistan (RADP-N), funded by the Office of Agriculture, is applying a transformative value chain approach to improving food and economic security for rural Afghans. RADP-N benefits from current and previous investments over many years by the U.S. and other national governments as it implements its activities. The RADP-N team will incorporate lessons learned from each of these investments to enhance the delivery of program results over the next five years.

RADP-N will work in a minimum of 26 districts across six provinces - Jowzjan, Balkh, Kunduz, Samangan, Baghlan, and Badakhshan –to train and provide technical assistance to farmers and agribusinesses, in conjunction with government, non-governmental, and international partners. Using an innovative implementation approach – Production and Commerce Clusters (PCCs) – RADP-N will solidify and maximize effective, efficient synergies among and within economic corridors, value chains, provinces, and districts to improve the productivity and profitability of farmers and agribusinesses in the wheat, high-value crop (HVC), and livestock sectors. The program will also focus on increasing the number of women beneficiaries, introducing alternative development techniques, and reviewing the legal and regulatory framework and domestic and foreign trade policies to identify areas of improvement to support a receptive and responsive enabling environment for the conduct of business in Northern Afghanistan.

This five-month Start-Up Workplan offers an overview of technical and operational priorities from May 22 to October 31, 2014. During this start-up period, the RADP-N team will focus our efforts in four areas:

1. **Operational start-up**, including mobilization, recruitment of all staff, administrative set up, and finalization of all sub-contracting agreements.
2. **Participatory engagement with stakeholders** -- our Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GOIRA) partners, and associations, traders, processors, and farmers – to confirm and solidify RADP-N program design.
3. **Design of high-impact short-term** activities with agribusinesses and farmers organizations.
4. **Identification and vetting** of potential agribusiness and farmers organization partners.

## TECHNICAL START-UP

In 2012, USAID funded a study through the Afghanistan Small and Medium Enterprise (ASMED) program that explored how value chain linkages in the Northern Corridor of Afghanistan could be exploited for maximum productivity. Results showed that previous investments improved infrastructure, commercial market systems, and human resource capacity. However, these investments were often focused on individual market actors and did not take a holistic market systems approach. The study concluded that investments to strengthen entire value chains were necessary for ensuring the viability and sustainability of results and that strategic interaction among sector stakeholders was essential for increasing value chain growth and productivity. The

RADP-N PCC approach addresses these needs by working with and connecting all actors within the value chain, including farmers, suppliers, businesses, and associations, to promote greater productivity and profitability. Specifically, the PCC brings together a geographically proximate set of actors and activities working at various nodes in a specific value chain -- from input supply and on-farm production to processing and retail -- in order to create and exploit the synergies that competitive value chains demonstrate.

RADP-N is designed to focus on three value chains with the market potential to achieve the program's objectives. These include wheat; high-value crops (HVC) including fruits/nuts, grapes/raisins, and melons; and livestock (small ruminants). The RADP-N team will work in geographical areas with the greatest potential for development impact and feasibility. Development impact criteria include number of farmers, number of food-insecure households, number of prospective female beneficiaries, presence of previous donor investments to leverage, and potential to reduce or prevent poppy production. Feasibility criteria include PCC elements such as key transport networks along economic development corridors, proximity to existing and latent irrigation sources, and the presence of value chain nodes such as AgDepots, farmer organizations, or aggregation centers on which RADP-North can build.

In June and July, the RADP-N leadership team undertook several significant activities that have helped us to refine our approach to program implementation. On June 23, 2014, DAI held the Post-Award Conference with USAID in Kabul (the agenda and participants list appear in the Quarterly Report submitted to USAID on July 30, 2014). At the conference, USAID's Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) Mark Henderson shared his vision for implementation with RADP-N Chief of Party (COP) Danilo Benavides. RADP-N will implement this vision by engaging all PCC actors – rural farming communities, input suppliers, processors, extension providers, and agribusinesses – to facilitate information exchange and the collective creation of products that are in high demand in domestic, regional, and foreign markets. Exploiting opportunities in this fashion will strengthen farmer access to markets, thus increasing their productivity and profitability and achieving overall stimulation of the agricultural sector in Northern Afghanistan.

Equally informative for the finalization of the program approach, RADP-N staff has been holding key meetings with Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock (MAIL) officials. This includes meetings with the MAIL Deputy Minister for Technical Affairs and Technical Advisors to begin development of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the project and MAIL, as required by the RADP-N contract. RADP-N expects to receive the signed MOU by the end of August 2014. In late July, the COR and USAID's Regional Agriculture Representative (RAR) Albert Wanous held meetings in Mazar-e-Sharif to formally introduce the RADP-N project to public officials (governors, DAIL, and MEW representatives), farmers associations, and agribusinesses where these individuals identified priority activities with which RADP-N can assist them.

The RADP-N team also spent July and August compiling information on farmers, traders, association members and businesses to create an initial list of prospective program partners and participants for upcoming RADP-N and USAID conferences, training, and workshops. RADP-N is identifying key actors along each value chain, in addition to planning for both an Implementing Partners Meeting and a Stakeholders Kickoff Workshop in September 2014. These sessions will be followed by the USAID/North Implementing Partner and Stakeholder Conference, a two-day event in October that will officially launch the participatory strategy development process.

## Additional Technical Start-up Activities

Below we first briefly present key technical start-up activities. We then provide additional information on all start-up period activities by Contract Line Item Number (CLIN).

**Development of Value Chain Analyses.** During the first five months of implementation, Value Chain Advisor Bill Mays and RADP-N value chain technical staff will conduct an analysis of the wheat, high-value horticulture crops, and the livestock value chains — using the approach detailed in DAI’s proposal. These analyses constitute a critical first contact across the entire range of stakeholders who must be integrated into value chains. The RADP-N value chain program staff will immediately begin building relationships with farmers, aggregators, agribusinesses, private sector enterprises, associations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), community organizations, and other stakeholders to understand what is happening on the ground, how stakeholders make money, which goods are traded in the marketplace, and the critical entry points for linking farmers with other value chain actors. The analyses will address the following broad categories: market demand; enabling environment; vertical linkages from inputs to suppliers; horizontal linkage, both formal and informal farmer organizations; and financial and other business services.

**Baseline Survey.** Rahman Safi Impact Consultancy (RSI) will conduct the RADP-N baseline survey starting in August, as soon as consent to subcontract is received for RSI. The baseline survey will document the current condition of RADP-N value chains and planned beneficiaries, as well as a control group, against which project results will be measured. The Data Collection Plan, submitted on August 1, details the survey methodology.

**Stakeholder Engagement.** Strong relationships with our partners will be critical to the success of RADP-N so we are investing significant resources during the start-up period to identifying and building these relationships. As mentioned, RADP-N public sector stakeholder engagement includes collaborations with the MAIL on development of the strategic interventions and with the Directorates of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock (DAILs) on implementation of specific field activities. RADP-N will also work closely with the Afghan Ministry of Women’s Affairs (MOWA), which directs women’s advancement nationwide, to provide inputs and guidance for increased participation by women in all program activities. RADP-N will work with MOWA and the Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Industries (ACCI) on agribusiness issues. The project also recently learned that the Ministry of Energy and Water (MEW) has been involved in the establishment of irrigation water canals in coordination with other donors. RADP-N sees an opportunity to collaborate with MEW to promote high-value agriculture in the areas where irrigation water is now available. To further cement our relationships with key stakeholders, RADP-N will hold a Stakeholders Kickoff Workshop, tentatively scheduled for mid-September, with participants from USAID, GIRoA, local associations, farmers, and business groups.

**Production and Commerce Clusters.** A key organizing principle of our program design is the Production and Commerce Cluster (PCC) concept. The PCC approach builds on the value chain nodes—rural farming communities, input suppliers, processors, extension providers, and urban agribusinesses—that currently exist in the North.

During the period of this work plan, the team will work in selection of Production and Commerce Clusters for each value chain and geographical area based on the review of the districts included in the DAI's proposal for RADP-North program and further review of up to date statistical information. Based on the current levels of production and geographical locations, the team will identify the important PCC actors – focusing on farmers and agribusiness – that will establish the basis for RADP-North activities. The team will also identify the actors and activities that compromise each of these clusters. For example, in a selected PCC, the team will identify a seed company that will supply certified seed to an input dealer in the cluster area. Additionally a processor will be identified who can purchase grain from farmers in that cluster area.

**Linking Farmers and Markets.** Implementation of a sustainable agricultural development program is a key RADP-N objective. Technical activities aim to promote investments that result in sustained, long-term increases in farmer incomes and private sector growth. One important aspect that will achieve these goals is strengthening links between domestic and international markets and farmers. RADP-N is taking steps to begin this process.

RADP-N will link farmers to markets with the highest value for their crops or to the most dynamic markets. RADP-N will invest funds in specific types of farmers and farming communities to expand access to markets that match their capability, production, investment capacity, and risk profile. This is a key distinction that the RADP-N value chain facilitation teams will make in contrast to past programs that worked with farmers. RADP-N will use this information to identify potential partners and determine how to best support the dominant small-holder farmers in this region. This screening will inform selection of the specific geographic areas in which to begin involving farmers in RADP-N's strategy development activities. Interventions will depend on the farmer's initial status within RADP-N target areas. Target farmers' goals, options, and aspirations will also influence decisions about products in which to invest and markets to target. Other factors include: political stability; physical security; local food security conditions; environmental conditions; wealth, capacity, and skill of the target community; market conditions; and maturity of the local private sector.

**Value Chain Support for Local Businesses.** RADP-N will identify businesses that provide farm services, materials to processors, and traders along the target value chains. The regional wheat planting season occurs from September to January. Therefore, RADP-N will design six certified wheat seed distribution strategies with a minimum of six seed enterprises from different provinces. The goal will be to develop distribution systems for wheat grain producers that improve access to high-quality seed as a key factor to increase productivity and grain quality. These activities will be implemented in target program areas where established seed enterprises exist. RADP-N will also identify potential partner, women-owned and operated businesses currently providing services to the wheat and livestock sectors.

**Design of Differentiated Market Strategies.** RADP-N will use the baseline survey and results to design CLIN market studies, tie them to analyses of supply chain actors, and identify specific products and customer segments. The project team will spend the remainder of this workplan period gathering this information and incorporating it into actionable steps to guide the technical team for the life of the project. One of the critical issues raised from prior program analyses of

small-holder farmers is the potential for commercialization based on land size. If these analyses hold, they may present opportunities for RADP-N to use certain filters to segment farmers and design customized intervention programs for different types of farmers. RADP-N will aim to rapidly implement these activities and increase farmer incomes in a sustainable manner.

## Planned Activities by CLIN

Current and projected activities for CLINs 1 through 3 appear in the table below. Targets for each activity are noted in the month when they are expected to be achieved, with totals for the work plan period in the last column. A CLIN 4 summary statement follows. RADP-N will provide more detailed information on CLIN activity implementation in the FY2015 Annual Workplan that will be submitted to USAID on October 31, 2014.

**TABLE 1: CLINs 1-3 Start-Up Workplan**

ACTIVITIES	Jul-14				Aug-14					Sep-14				Oct-14				Total
	5-11	12-18	19-25	26-1	2-8	9-15	16-22	23-29	30-5	6-12	13-19	20-26	27-3	4-10	11-17	18-24	25-31	
<b>CLIN 1: Wheat Value Chain</b>																		
Identify regional businesses involved in wheat processing. Meet to discuss supply of plants and certified seed, consider contract farming, and improvements to flour quality and nutritional value.					X	X	X	X	2	X	X	X	4					<b>6</b>
Identify districts growing wheat and considered to be at the hub of the program across the province. Review information from past programs and GIRoA statistics offices to identify highly productive wheat clusters by district.				X	X	X	X	X	18									<b>18</b>
Identify regional businesses providing farm services to the wheat sector and interview input dealers and equipment & tool suppliers for VC facilitation								X	2	X	X	X	4					<b>6</b>
Design certified seed distribution strategies with a minimum of six seed enterprises in different provinces with a focus on specific market segments.					X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	4	X	X	X	2	<b>6</b>
Identify women-owned and operated businesses providing services to the wheat sector to increase productivity, production, and employment for women.								X	2	X	X	X	2	X	X	X	X	<b>4</b>
Assist wheat related business in their participation in the Kabul Ag Fair to promote their products.					X	X	X	X	4	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	<b>4</b>
Develop Year 1 CLIN 1 Workplan									X	X	X	X	X	X	X			

ACTIVITIES (continued)	Jul-14					Aug-14					Sept-14				Oct-14				Total
	28-4	5-11	12-18	19-25	26-1	2-8	9-15	16-22	23-29	30-5	6-12	13-19	20-26	27-3	4-10	11-17	18-24	25-31	
<b>CLIN 2: High-Value Crops Value Chain</b>																			
Identify regional businesses involved in fruit processing interested to purchase fresh fruit directly from growers, add value to target national and international markets, and generate employment for women.							X	X	X	2	X	X	X	4					6
Identify regional businesses providing services to the fruit/nut production sector to promote links to farmers and financial service providers and introduce technical innovations in production							X	X	X	2	X	X	X	2					4
Identify regional businesses involved in fruit/nut marketing to promote trader-farmer, and trader-national/international market links											X	X	X	2	X	X	X	2	4
Identify districts growing value crops and considered to be at the hub of the program across the province. Review information from past programs and GIROA statistics offices to identify melon, grape/raisin, and fruit/nut production clusters by district to establish definition of target districts and villages						X	X	X	X	18	X	X	X	X					18
Work with a minimum of two businesses to identify current constraints to effective, profitable export and develop recommendations											X	2	X	X	X	X	X	X	2
Identify women-owned and operated businesses involved in the fruit/nut sector to increase productivity, production and employment for women											X	X	X	2	X	X	X	2	4

ACTIVITIES (continued)	Jul-14					Aug-14					Sept-14				Oct-14				Total
	28-4	5-11	12-18	19-25	26-1	2-8	9-15	16-22	23-29	30-5	6-12	13-19	20-26	27-3	4-10	11-17	18-24	25-31	
Assist high value crops related businesses (processors and traders) in their participation in the Kabul Ag Fair to promote their products. The Kabul Ag Fair is planned to take place in September.							X	X	X	X	X	X	X	6	X				6
Develop Year 1 CLIN 2 Workplan											X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
<b>CLIN 3: Livestock</b>																			
Identify at least 16 districts growing value crops and considered to be at the hub of the program across the province. Review information from past programs and GIROA statistics offices to identify livestock production clusters by district to establish definition of target districts and villages											X	X	X	X	16	X	X	X	16
Identify in six districts at least 12 commercial orchards with potential for fodder production under intercropping systems.											6	X	X	X	6	X	X	X	12
Identify four feed mills interested in the use of by products from the flour mills to reduce costs and to improve the feed quality											X	X	X	4	X	X	X	X	4
Assist small ruminant related businesses (processors) to assist them for their participation in the Kabul Ag Fair to promote their products. The Kabul Ag Fair is planned to take place in September.											X	X	X	3	X	X	X	X	3
Develop Year 1 CLIN 3 Workplan												X	X	X	X	X	X	X	

**CLIN 4 activities** will only launch towards the end of the start-up period. In September, RADP-N will work to incorporate polling of farmers, associations, and businesses regarding the specific legal and regulatory challenges they encounter. The project will also seek to identify sectoral advocates who possess in-depth knowledge about these policies and legal provisions to collectively craft potential steps that may be taken during the project lifecycle to advance legal and regulatory reforms.

**Coordination and Collaboration.** The core RADP-North leadership will work on activities aimed to introduce the program to the public and private sector in the region and nationwide, as well as establish linkages with other donor funded programs. Such activities include:

- Attending the agricultural sectorial coordination meetings in Balkh province
- Attending meetings of the Provincial Development Council
- Establish coordination framework with other agriculture related USAID funded programs CHAMP, ACE/ADF, FAIDA, ABADE and, RADP-South
- Periodical meetings with USAID’s General Development Officer/Ag Advisor Regional Command – North, based at Camp Marmal, Mazar-e-Sharif, in order to brief about developments of RADP-North

## Start-up Period Deliverables

Listed below are updates for contract deliverables due during the start-up period.

**Data Collection Plan.** The RADP-N team finalized and submitted the Data Collection Plan to USAID on August 1. The Baseline Survey will be one of the first activities to set up systems that will track RADP-N’s achievements towards its CLINs, the attainment of its performance indicator targets, and also track wider outcomes, impact, and return on investment (ROI).

**Performance Management Plan.** The Performance Management Plan (PMP) is the principal reference in monitoring and evaluating RADP-N’s performance and assessing the achievement of objectives, results, and deliverables. The full Results Framework, a key foundation of the project PMP, appears in the Data Collection Plan submitted to USAID on August 1. The draft PMP, which illustrates the means by which RADP-N will manage, monitor, and evaluate program achievements, will be submitted to USAID on August 19 (90 days after award) A final PMP, adjusted with data from the Baseline Survey, will be submitted in November, 180 days after award.

**Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan.** RADP-N will use a comprehensive Environmental Management System (EMS) to ensure full compliance with USAID regulations and sound environmental management of project activities. This will be outlined in the Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan to be submitted on August 19.

**Grants Manual.** RADP-N submitted the grants manual at the beginning of the second quarter and is awaiting USAID approval.

First Quarterly Report (May - Jun. 2014). The first Quarterly Report was submitted to USAID on July 30.

## OPERATIONAL START-UP

The operational focus during start-up is centered on the establishment and implementation of critical policies and procedures; completion of a rapid security and facilities set up to create a solid structure to support and sustain effective implementation; and rapid hiring and orientation for expatriate and local staff.

### Mobilization and Start-Up

To ensure the necessary framework exists to complement and support technical implementation, DAI assembled a dynamic team of individuals who lead and support technical and operational efforts. The Start-Up Team mobilized from mid-June to end-July and was made up of the following individuals:

#### HOME OFFICE ORIENTATION

<b>DATES</b>	<b>NAME</b>	<b>TITLE</b>
Jun. 10-19	Danilo Benavides	Chief of Party
Jun. 21-25	Edmundo Ballivian	Director of Finance

#### FIELD MOBILIZATION

<b>Mobilization Dates</b>	<b>NAME</b>	<b>TITLE</b>
Jun. 14 – Aug. 2	Jim Benson	Start-Up Team Lead
Jun. 14 – Aug. 12	Amanda Scannell	Start-Up Operations Specialist
Jun. 17 –Jul. 10	Bob Richey	Project Director
Jun. 21	Danilo Benavides	Chief of Party
Jun. 27	Edmundo Ballivian	Director of Finance
Jul. 5	Bill Mays (ACDI/VOCA)	Value Chain Advisor
Jul. 14 – Aug. 31	Matt Brummond	Associate
Jul. 20	Ghulam Samim	Deputy Chief of Party
Jul. 20-26	Sarah Saunders	Staffing Specialist

The compliance officer candidate named in the proposal is no longer available and recruitment is ongoing for a replacement for this Key Personnel position. Interviews are being conducted in the first week of August, with an anticipated submission to USAID for the selected candidate in late August, with an immediate mobilization in early September. DAI will update USAID if any changes to this schedule occur. Julie Berlin, Monitoring and Evaluation (MandE) and Communications Manager, will receive home office orientation on August 8 and arrive in-country on August 11. ACDI/VOCA’s Finance Manager will mobilize upon finalization of the subcontract.

The team applied donor- and company-compliant policies and procedures listed in DAI’s standard Field Operations Manual (FOM) to establish the project’s operational systems and departments. National staff recruitment, onboarding, and training, procurement, inventory management, travel, and use of DAI’s Technical and Administrative Management Information System (TAMIS) for these and additional program implementation tasks are underway. In addition to the FOM, various manuals and systems provided by the DAI home office govern the manner in which the Finance Department established financial protocols.

The initial team immediately set to work with the security contractor identifying prospective office and guesthouse sites. The team moved into the Mazar-e-Sharif guesthouse on August 4. Select areas of the guesthouse are serving as temporary office space pending final approval and full execution of the lease for the proposed office site.

### Cooperating Country National (CCN) Staffing Plan

Below we detail the order in which we are recruiting local staff.

<b>ROUND</b>	<b>POSITIONS</b>
<b>One</b>	Senior Finance and Operations staff, including drivers who support: a) the Finance team and preservation of financial controls; b) guesthouse and office set up; and c) the CCN recruitment process.
<b>Two</b>	Facilities staff managing facilities preparation and operation.
<b>Three</b>	Technical staff working in the main program office in Mazar-e-Sharif.
<b>Four</b>	Provincial office staff.

Recruitment for Rounds One and Two was completed in July and early August. Recruitment for Rounds Three and Four will commence in mid-August.

Below is a table of the 32 CCN staff hired as of August 08, 2014.

<b>START DATE</b>	<b>TITLE</b>	<b>NAME</b>
Jul. 5	3 B6 Drivers	████████████████████
Jul. 14	Operations Director	██████████████
Jul. 15	Guesthouse Gardener	██████████
Jul. 24	Generator Mechanic / Electrician	██████████
Aug. 3	5 B6 Drivers	<i>Multiple</i>
Aug. 3	Human Resources Specialist	██████████████
Aug. 3	Risk Coordinator	████████████████████

Aug. 3	Procurement Specialist	██████████
Aug. 3	3 Guesthouse Cleaners	██████████████████
Aug. 3	8 Chawkidars	<i>Multiple</i>
Aug. 5	Finance Manager	██████████████████
Aug. 5	Finance Assistant	██████████
Aug. 5	Cashier	██████████████████
Aug. 5	Inventory Administration Specialist	██████████
Aug.6	Information Technology Specialist	██████
Aug. 10	Information Technology Specialist	██████████████
Aug. 10	Handyman / Maintenance Assistant	██████████████

### Subcontractor Mobilization

The RADP-N implementation team includes multiple local and international partners led by DAI. Below is an update on the status of all named major partners on RADP-N mobilization and related subcontract matters as of August 8, 2014:

<b>SUBCONTRACTOR</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
ACDI/VOCA	Consent to subcontract received on June 2 and Bill Mays, Value Chain Advisor, mobilized on July 5. ACDI/VOCA is currently recruiting two senior-level candidates - Deputy Regional Director and Senior Business Development Specialist - who will start work in mid-August.
Joint Development Associates (JDA)	Consent to subcontract submitted on July 16. Mobilization will commence as soon as consent is received.
Rahman Safi Impact Consultancy (RSI)	Based on comments from the Office of Acquisition and Assistance (OAA), subcontract type was changed. Request to consent submitted on August 7. As RSI is a local firm, they will be able to start work as soon as consent is received.
Development and Training Services, Inc. (dTS)	Consent to subcontract response submitted on August 6. Mobilization will begin as soon as consent is received.
Dutch Committee for Afghanistan (DCA)	Vetting and a source nationality waiver request have been submitted and DAI is awaiting response. DAI is in negotiation with DCA to respond to OAA comments. Request for consent

	will be submitted to USAID during the week of August 10. As DCA is based in Afghanistan, they are able to immediately begin work once USAID consent is received.
Pace Group (Pace)	Based on USAID feedback, DAI is finalizing its response with Pace.
Alcis	Based on USAID feedback, DAI is reviewing subcontract type.

## OPERATIONS PLAN

Finance. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Plans for the remainder of the start-up period follow:

MONTH	TASK
<b>August</b>	1) [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] 2) Hire finance manager and project accountant. 3) Continue training finance staff on field expense report (FER) processes.
<b>September</b>	1) Conduct Field Accounting System (FAS) training. 2) Finance department migration from FERs to FAS.
<b>October</b>	1) Finalize procedures with technical team to ensure specific formulas and related approaches required to capture value chain investments by region, crop, and gender are incorporated to facilitate technical and financial reporting and meet DAI and donor standards.

**Procurement.** RADP-N signed the lease for the guesthouse on July 15 and expatriate staff moved in on August 4, . The project is awaiting vetting approval for the office space, which was submitted to the vetting office on June 24. Plans for the remainder of the start-up period follow:

<b>MONTH</b>	<b>TASK</b>
<b>August</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Anticipated receipt of vetting approval for proposed office site.</li> <li>2) Anticipated approval of RADP-N Security Plan.</li> <li>3) Sign office lease with landlord.</li> <li>4) Procure the remaining three generators for the guesthouse and proposed office.</li> <li>5) Complete minor security upgrades on guesthouse.</li> <li>6) Finalize Afghanistan Public Protection Force (APPF) contract.</li> <li>7) Enter into contract with Internet service provider (ISP) for office.</li> <li>8) Begin office IT installation and wiring.</li> <li>9) Projected arrival of home office-procured IT equipment (e.g., laptops, servers, accessories).</li> </ol>
<b>September</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Move into office and complete security upgrades.</li> <li>2) Finalize B6 disposition from Stability in Key Areas – North (SIKA-N) project. Receipt of this vehicle will make a total of three B6s for RADP-N.</li> </ol>
<b>October</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Review softskin vehicle needs to date to ensure adequate transportation services have been secured.</li> </ol>

The RADP-N team is progressively advancing towards completion of these goals. Team leadership and expertise, donor support, and strategic partnerships are in place to effect lasting, positive changes in the Northern Afghanistan agricultural sector over the next five years.