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MONTHLY REPORT— APRIL 2015

**INCENTIVES DRIVING ECONOMIC ALTERNATIVES FOR THE NORTH,
EAST AND WEST (IDEA-NEW)**

APRIL 1 - 30, 2015

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EAST AND WEST (IDEA-NEW)**

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ACRONYMS

A2F	Access to Finance
ABADE	Assistance in Building Afghanistan by Developing Enterprises
ACCI	Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Industries
ADF	Agricultural Development Fund
AIB	Afghanistan International Bank
AISA	Afghanistan Investment Support Agency
AP	Afghanistan Payment
ARFC	Afghanistan Rural Finance Company
AWBF	Afghan Women's Business Federation
CCP	Critical Control Points
CU	Control Union
DAI	Development Alternatives, Inc.
DAIL	Department of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock
FAIDA	Financial Assistance for Investment in the Development of Afghanistan
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FTE	Full-Time Equivalent
GIRoA	Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
HACCP	Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points
IDEA-NEW	Incentives Driving Economic Alternatives for the North, East and West
IPM	Integrated Pest Management
KFSC	Kapisa Farm Services Center
MAIL	Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock
PDC	Provincial Development Council
PERSUAP	Pesticide Evaluation Report and Safer Use Action Plan
PGC	Prosperity Group of Companies
PPA	Public-Private Alliance
PPQD	Plant Protection and Quarantine Department
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
RFA	Request for Applications
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

MONTHLY REPORT—APRIL 2015

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The U.S. Agency for International Development’s (USAID) Afghanistan country strategy includes the promotion of long-term agricultural development and alternative livelihoods for farmers that results in “a sustainable, thriving agricultural economy” and contributes to the U.S. Government’s stabilization and counter narcotics policy goals. USAID’s Office of Agriculture launched the Incentives Driving Economic Alternatives for the North, East and West (IDEA-NEW) program in March 2009. Its mission is to expand the licit agricultural economy in northern, eastern and western Afghanistan. Its activities support agribusinesses at different points of each value chain in order to improve their market access, increase processing capacity and catalyze investments into Afghanistan’s agricultural sector.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

IDEA-NEW continued project activities during the month of April, signing one matching grant and four live radio show grants with businesses in the eastern region and one matching grant, three SMS marketing grants and three live radio show grants with businesses in the central region. A fixed obligation grant was awarded to Control Union on April 16 to conduct a one-day Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) workshop and a 10-day HACCP training for food processors in the central and eastern regions. Two Access to Finance (A2F) workshops were held in Kabul during the month for the Afghanistan International Bank (AIB) and the Agricultural Development Fund (ADF) to meet with interested agribusinesses and explain their loan processes and procedures. The Financial Assistance for Investment in the Development of Afghanistan (FAIDA) project also attended both events and offered to assist businesses in completing their loan applications. On April 29, IDEA-NEW hosted an ‘Effective SMS Writing’ workshop for 17 representatives from six ag-input suppliers and one Nangarhar DAIL representative in Jalalabad. Current SMS grantees sent a total of 23 messages during the reporting period to the nearly 8,000 farmers and 800 retailers and fruit nursery growers/associations in their databases in Kabul, Parwan, Kapisa, Nangarhar, Laghman and Kunar provinces. In addition, input suppliers utilized SMS messages to reach their retailers outside of the IDEA-NEW coverage area. SMS grantees also conducted seven field days in Laghman and Nangarhar provinces in which a total of 234 farmers, four DAIL representatives and six retailers participated. There were also four demonstrations held by a matching grantee in which 48 individuals learned about the latest technologies in on-farm water conservation.

PROGRAM ACTIVITY UPDATES

ACTIVITY 1: SMS MARKETING FOR AGRICULTURAL INPUT SUPPLIERS

IDEA-NEW’s SMS initiative is an innovative way to ensure that commercially sustainable agricultural information is delivered to farmers in a timely, cost-effective and efficient manner. The program helps farmers gain access to reliable sources of information and inputs, and strengthens the linkages between farmers and input wholesalers. The system benefits the input wholesalers by providing easy and effective

marketing and advertising to increase sales and profitability. IDEA-NEW provides SMS grants to local ag-input wholesalers. As part of the sustainable cost-share arrangements in SMS grant agreements, ag-input wholesalers will cover the entire cost of SMS messaging when IDEA-NEW assistance ends.

IDEA-NEW signed SMS grant agreements with six input wholesalers (two based in Kabul and four based in Jalalabad) for the initial six-month pilot program in 2014. In response to its success and in an effort to better examine and measure its impact, IDEA-NEW extended the period of assistance for five of the original grantees (one in Kabul and four in Jalalabad) for an additional four-month period. IDEA-NEW is also in the process of awarding new SMS grants for the remainder of the project period.

Grant Type	Status
SMS	09 ongoing, 01 complete, 0 closed

During the month of April, SMS grants were signed with three companies based in the central region. Each of the grants includes salaries for new full-time equivalent (FTE) positions, transportation costs for site visits, monthly internet costs, SMS costs, four farmer field days for 120 farmers and Pesticide Evaluation Report and Safer Use Action Plan (PERSUAP) training for 10 retailers. Details on each business are provided below:

Parwan Bastan Improved Seeds Company was established in 2007 and is located in Bagram district of Parwan province. The company mainly deals in soybean seeds and flour, wheat seeds, fertilizers, chemicals and fruit and ornamental saplings. The company has approximately 1,000 contract farmers and serves over 5,000 farmers in Parwan, Wardak, Kapisa, Panjshir and neighboring provinces.

On April 20, IDEA-NEW signed an SMS marketing grant with Parwan Bastan [REDACTED]

Aslamzada Agriculture Services Company deals in certified saplings including fruit trees (grape, apple, pear, cherry, peach, apricot, plum, almond, quince, walnuts and pomegranate). The company also produces ornamental and decorative trees.

On April 20, IDEA-NEW signed an SMS grant with Aslamzada [REDACTED]



Aslamzada signs the SMS grant agreement at the IDEA-NEW office in Kabul, April 20

Sefatullah Lalzai Ltd was established in 2002 and deals in the import of improved seeds, fertilizers and sprayer pumps from Holland, Turkey, and Japan.

IDEA-NEW signed an SMS grant agreement with Sefatullah Lalzai on April 15. [REDACTED]

Activities also continued under ongoing grant agreements during the month of April:

SMS grantees sent 23 messages to farmers, retailers and fruit nursery growers/associations in Kabul, Parwan, Kapisa, Nangarhar, Laghman and Kunar provinces during the reporting period. These messages were sent to groups within each grantee's database. SMS grantees also conducted seven field days in Laghman and Nangarhar provinces in which a total of 234 farmers, four DAIL representatives and six retailers participated.

Prosperity Group of Companies (PGC) sent six messages to farmers in their database of 1,500 registered names in Nangarhar, Kabul, Parwan, Kapisa and Laghman. During the reporting period, PGC was able to complete all activities under this grant.

Bakhtar Afghan Azizi Agriculture Services Company conducted three farmer field days during the reporting period. Its first field day was conducted on April 2 for 61 farmers and one retailer in Kama district of Nangarhar province. The second field day was held on April 8 for 30 farmers and one retailer in Qarghayee district of Laghman province. The third field day took place on April 13 for 24 farmers and one retailer in Kama district of Nangarhar province. Overall, a total of 115 farmers and three retailers participated in these three field days in Laghman and Nangarhar provinces. These field days focused on the introduction of SMS marketing, addressing common pests and diseases and the utilization of integrated pest management (IPM) techniques.



Bakhtar Afghan conducts an SMS field day in Kama district; April 02

Bakhtar Afghan also sent four messages to farmers in Nangarhar, Kunar, Laghman and Kabul provinces during the month of April. The messages contained information on common pests and diseases, IPM and Bakhtar Afghan's products.

Now Bahar Salrzai LTD sent six messages to farmers and retailers in Nangarhar, Kunar and Laghman provinces during the reporting period. These messages contained information regarding various registered pesticides recently imported by the company.

Wajid Zaman Agriculture Company sent seven messages to farmers and retailers in Nangarhar and Laghman provinces. In response to the messages, 44 farmers replied seeking further information on the advertised products, including retailer locations, proper application and safe handling.

In addition, as part of its extended SMS marketing grant agreement, Wajid Zaman conducted all four of its required farmer field days in Nangarhar province during the reporting period. The first field day was held in Kama district on April 8 for 29 farmers and one retailer. The second field day took place on April 15 for 28 farmers, one retailer and one DAIL representative in Kuz Kunar. On April 22, Wajid Zaman conducted its third field day for 35 farmers and one DAIL representative in Behsud district. The final field day was held on April 27 for 27 farmers, one retailer and one Nangarhar DAIL representative in Surkhrod district. A total of 119 farmers, three retailers and four DAIL representatives participated in

these field days. The field days focused on introduction of the SMS marketing system, including its benefits to farmers. They also addressed crop-related pests and diseases and the use of IPM techniques.

Al-Roheed Agriculture Services Company entered into a contractual agreement during the reporting period with Afghanistan Payment (AP), a telecommunication services provider, to send targeted messages to registered farmers and retailers in target provinces. Under this grant, Al-Roheed also hired two employees (one Agriculture Marketing Officer and one Database Officer) and developed a farmer database and a field day plan.



Wajid Zaman conducts a field day in Kuz Kunar; April 15

Help Agriculture Services Company signed a six-month agreement with AP on April 27 as the platform provider for sending SMS messages to its target audience (farmers and retailers). Per the grant cost-share requirements, Help also hired two new employees (one Agriculture Marketing Officer and one Database Officer). The Agriculture Marketing Officer will primarily focus on conducting site visits and identifying farm problems (pests and diseases) while the Database Officer will work in developing the database, including collecting farmers' information and contact details, introducing the SMS marketing system during the field days and regularly communicating with the contracted SMS platform provider (AP).

Effective SMS Writing Training: On April 29, IDEA-NEW hosted 'Effective SMS Writing' training for 17 representatives of six ag-input suppliers (SMS grantees) in Jalalabad. One Nangarhar DAIL representative also participated in this training session. Ag-input suppliers learned how to shorten text messages to reduce messaging costs and send succinct, timely messages when farmers are making crop management decisions. During the training, IDEA-NEW conducted writing exercises and encouraged debate and discussion between the input suppliers.

ACTIVITY 2: HACCP PRE-AUDITS AND TRAINING

Stage I: HACCP Workshop for Selected Food Processors

Stage I is complete as of January 2015.

Stage II: Site Inspections and Pre-Audits

Nijabat Haidary was the last of 20 companies to be assessed by Control Union (CU). This final assessment on April 14 completed the round of thirteen companies from the central region and seven from the eastern region that participated in the site inspection/pre-audit visits. Reports for each business were issued by CU during the reporting period and consist of findings and recommendations following HACCP criteria.

Lab results of samples collected from 20 agribusinesses were also received during the reporting period. These samples were sent by CU to an internationally recognized laboratory in Holland with the purpose

of analyzing the presence of contaminants in each product, and comparing these levels with other comparable products following international standards. CU will provide recommendations on how to lower contaminant levels during the Stage III HACCP Training.

Stage III: HACCP Training

A fixed obligation grant was awarded to Control Union on April 16 to conduct a one-day HACCP workshop and a 10-day HACCP training. CU will conduct the one-day workshop on May 10 in Kabul for all 20 Stage II food processors to review and explain findings from the site visits. From the 20 food processors in Stage II, IDEA-NEW selected seven businesses (five from the central region and two from the eastern region) that possess the necessary pre-conditions for possible HACCP certification. CU will provide a 10-day classroom and on-site training May 11-21 in Kabul for the seven food processors to prepare Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) based on HACCP principles. The training will incorporate the results of the previous site inspections/pre-audits into the training approach.

During the reporting period IDEA-NEW developed HACCP booklets for all 20 companies that were audited in Stage II based on the reports developed by CU. The booklets will be distributed and discussed during the one-day HACCP workshop.

Stage IV: Implementation of HACCP Food Safety and Management Control Systems

IDEA-NEW will sign matching grant agreements with approximately five selected agribusinesses that are committed to improving their management and production systems and processes and are considered likely to qualify for HACCP certification. During the Stage III trainings, IDEA-NEW will issue a Request for Applications (RFA) to all training participants. Applications will be reviewed by IDEA-NEW and competitive awards will be made for up to five applications who meet the criteria for grant award. The purpose of the grants will be to assist the companies in creating hygienic work areas, monitoring and documenting critical control points (CCPs), implementing management control and documentation systems, providing operator instructions and CCP signage, and separating processing areas from sources of contamination from raw materials, product testing and finished goods storage areas.

Stage V: HACCP Audit

HACCP Audit and certification will be the responsibility of the agribusinesses. Matching grants and consultations during Stage IV will equip each agribusiness with the necessary control measures and plans needed to apply for certification. It is expected that up to three agribusinesses will begin the HACCP certification process prior to August 31.

ACTIVITY 3: MATCHING AND PROMOTIONAL GRANTS TO AGRIBUSINESSES

2015 activities will continue to monitor and support previous grantees as well as award an additional 10 grants to agricultural input suppliers and agro-processors. Matching and promotional activity grants will require a minimum of 25% cost share with applicants evaluated based upon innovation, market access, shared risk and sustainability.

Sub-Activity 3.1: Matching Grants

Two matching grants were signed during the month of April with the Kapisa Farm Services Center on April 01 and the Khalil Rehan Food Processing Company on April 22.

Kapisa Farm Services Center (KFSC) was established in 2011 and is based in Mahmud Raqi district, Kapisa province. The center sells agro-chemicals, veterinary supplies, agricultural tools, fertilizers, improved and certified seeds and certified saplings. KFSC also produces wheat and soybean seed, as well as certified stone fruit mother stock and saplings.

On April 01, IDEA-NEW signed a matching grant with KFSC. Under the grant, IDEA-NEW will provide a potato planter, a potato harvester, a ridge plow and a mounted sprayer pump to KFSC. KFSC will demonstrate this equipment to farmers by conducting three field days as part of its contribution to the grant. [REDACTED]

Khalil Rehan Food Processing Company is located in Jalalabad city and processes guava, apple and mango juices, jams and tomato pastes. It sells its products to wholesalers and retailers in Nangarhar, Laghman and Kabul provinces. Khalil Rehan plans to expand its product line to include cherry juices, citrus concentrates and jams made from locally produced fruits. Khalil Rehan will use locally produced fruit grown under contracts with farmers who will also benefit. Currently, the cherry and citrus concentrates and jams are imported from Iran and Pakistan. With the new equipment to be provided under this grant agreement, Khalil Rehan will be able to directly compete with imported juices made by international and multinational juice producers. The company also plans to expand juice distribution to Kunar, Kunduz, Takhar, Paktia and Kandahar provinces.

On April 22, IDEA-NEW signed a matching grant agreement with the Khalil Rehan Food Processing Company. Under the grant agreement, IDEA-NEW will procure a cherry pitter machine which will be used to make cherry juices and jam. Khalil Rehan will purchase an automatic date printer, a homogenizer and cooking dishes. The company will also conduct post-harvest training for cherry farmers in sorting, harvesting and grading. [REDACTED]

The following matching grantee continued activities during the month of April:

Prosperity Group of Companies (PGC) conducted four drip kit demonstrations in Kabul during the reporting period. A total of 48 people participated in these demonstrations and 12 drip kits were distributed. The first demonstration was conducted on April 13 in Badam Bagh, Kabul where eight government officials participated and one drip kit was distributed. The second demonstration was conducted on April 23 at the PGC office in Kabul where nine farmers from different locations participated; two drip kits were distributed to lead farmers during this demonstration. The third demonstration was conducted on April 23 in Tabish University, Kabul, where 21 students from different provinces participated; five drip kits were distributed during this demonstration. The fourth demonstration was conducted on April 26 at the PGC



PGC conducts a drip kit demonstration at the Badam Bagh Research Station; April 13

office where 10 farmers participated; four drip kits were distributed. As of the end of April, PGC has completed all requirements under the grant agreement.

Sub-Activity 3.2: Promotional Activity Grants

No updates to report this period.

ACTIVITY 4: SUPPORT TO DOMESTIC AGRIBUSINESSES IN EXPANDING MARKETS

Many of the activities listed under this activity are cross-cutting and are integral parts of IDEA-NEW's support to grantees under SMS, HACCP, and matching and promotional grant activities. The activities described below will provide IDEA-NEW the opportunity to track and monitor any "added benefits" of IDEA-NEW assistance such as a grantee's ability to secure a loan, to negotiate a partnership with an international distributor/wholesaler, to expand market access via partnerships with other Afghan producers, wholesalers and/or processors or any other innovative approach that strengthens an Afghan agribusiness.

Sub-Activity 4.1: Identify key product needs of domestic food processors and input suppliers and match them with regional/international retailers

No updates to report this period.

Sub-Activity 4.2: Promote partnerships between domestic input suppliers, processors, distributors, retailers and financing bodies

During the reporting period, IDEA-NEW continued to promote partnerships by hosting workshops and following up on previous meetings and conferences.

Access to Finance (A2F) Workshops: IDEA-NEW hosted two A2F workshops as follow-on to the larger A2F conference held during the month of February.

On April 09, the first A2F workshop was held at the IDEA-NEW office in Kabul. Owners of eight businesses from the central region, who had previously expressed interest in applying for loans, participated in the workshop. During the workshop, AIB provided information regarding their products and loan processing procedures. FAIDA also offered their services in assisting businesses with the loan application process.



AIB explains the loan acquisition process during the A2F workshop; April 09

On April 15, the second A2F workshop was held at the IDEA-NEW office in Kabul. A total of 16 businesses from the central region interested in applying for loans attended the workshop. During the event, representatives from the Agricultural Development Fund (ADF) provided information on their products and loan processing procedures, while FAIDA again offered support in helping businesses through the loan application process.

IDEA-NEW shared the participant list and other business information with AIB, ADF and FAIDA for follow-up.

PGC Deal with FAO: During the month of April, PGC signed a contract [REDACTED] with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations for provision of conservational irrigation equipment for the Badam Bagh Research Station. This deal came to fruition as a result of PGC's SMS messages and FAO's subsequent attendance at PGC drip kit demonstrations. As part of the deal, PGC will also train FAO staff in soil and water analysis, as well as install a drip irrigation system on one jerib of research land for FAO.

ADF Workshop: On September 15, IDEA-NEW hosted a 'Program Awareness Workshop' for ADF in Jalalabad. Approximately 20 agribusinesses attended the workshop, including ag-input suppliers and food processors. While ADF's collateral requirements and the loan threshold prevented several small and medium businesses from submitting loan applications, two of the workshop participants and IDEA-NEW grantees (Wajid Zaman Agriculture Company and Bakhtar Afghan Azizi Agriculture Services Company) met the requirements and submitted loan applications. IDEA-NEW linked both businesses with FAIDA for technical support in filling out these applications.

Sub-Activity 4.3: Assist regional/international agriculture suppliers to realize the potential of the Afghan market

No updates to report this period.

Sub-Activity 4.4: Live Radio Programs

During the reporting period, IDEA-NEW awarded Live Radio Show grants to a total of seven agricultural input suppliers (three in the central region, four in the eastern region). The purpose of these grants is to promote ag-input products to farmers in central and eastern provinces through the dissemination of useful information using entertaining presentation methods. This activity aims to strengthen the linkage between private radio stations and agribusinesses without reliance on donors to directly work with radio stations to design and fund such activities.

Each of these cost-share grants includes the broadcasting of 10 shows over the course of the grant period. In addition, each grantee will conduct four farmer field days and create one FTE by hiring an agriculture expert. The grantees will also develop posters to advertise the radio shows, with details on the times and dates of airing, as well as the radio station's channel information.

Aslamzada Agriculture Services has three main nursery sites in Kabul and Parwan provinces and over twenty years of experience in nursery and flower production. The company deals in certified saplings including fruit trees (grape, apple, pear, cherry, peach,



Aslamzada signs the Live Radio Show grant agreement at the IDEA-NEW office in Kabul; April 23

apricot, plum, almond, quince, walnuts and pomegranate). The company also produces ornamental and decorative trees.

On April 23, IDEA-NEW signed a Live Radio Show grant agreement with Aslamzada. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Tamadon Agricultural Seeds Services Company is a leading agricultural company in Afghanistan dealing in agro-chemicals, agricultural machinery, improved seeds and fertilizers. The company has a group of agriculture experts that conduct research on the best products and services to support their farmers. Tamadon imports, exports, produces and processes quality seeds. The company also provides training and capacity building services for farmers, and engages in a small loan scheme for its farmers.

On April 26, IDEA-NEW signed a Live Radio Show grant agreement with Tamadon. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Bagram Nursery Growers Association is located in Chobakhsh Robot Village, Bagram district of Parwan province and has 44 members. The goal of the association is to produce high quality saplings and to support farmers' access to quality saplings in Parwan province. The association's saplings are certified by the Afghanistan National Nursery Growers Association and the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL). The company also produces ornamental and decorative trees.

On April 26, IDEA-NEW signed a Live Radio Show grant agreement with the Bagram Nursery Growers Association. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Now Bahar Salrzai LTD is a sole proprietorship located in Jalalabad city dealing in agricultural products (pesticides, fungicides, miticides and seeds). Now Bahar Salrzai has been operating since 1999 and supplies products to farmers through retailers and provincial wholesalers in Nangarhar, Laghman, Kunar, Kabul, Kunduz, Balkh, Takhar and Baghlan provinces. It has five full-time employees engaged in administration, marketing, import and supply operations.

IDEA-NEW signed a Live Radio Show grant agreement with Now Bahar Salrzai LTD on April 20. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Now Bahar Salrzai signed an agreement with Safa Radio Station during the reporting period to air the shows, which will enable farmers to learn about solutions for farm-related issues and provide an opportunity for Now Bahar to advertise its products over the most popular communications medium in Afghanistan.

Falak Niaz Barakzai Agriculture Services Company was established in 2010 and is located in Jalalabad city. It mainly deals in agricultural inputs (insecticides, herbicides, miticides, and fungicides), equipment and veterinary medicine imported from Pakistan and China. It also advises retailers and customers on the safe use of the products that it sells.

On April 20, IDEA-NEW signed a Live Radio Show grant agreement with Falak Niaz. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

During the reporting period, the company signed an agreement with the Hamesha Bahar Radio Station to air these live shows. The content of the shows will focus on the dissemination of farm-related information to target farmers, as well as marketing and advertisement of its products.

Wajid Zaman Agriculture Company was established in 2011 and is located in Jalalabad city. It sells agricultural goods and services (fungicides, insecticides, fertilizers, veterinary medicines and agricultural machinery) and plans to expand its product lines to include seeds due to large demand. Wajid Zaman has been working in the agriculture sector for over 15 years in Nangarhar and has three full-time employees and one part-time employee.

On April 20, IDEA-NEW signed a Live Radio Show grant agreement with Wajid Zaman to design and contract with a radio station to air live radio show programs. Wajid Zaman signed an agreement with the Abasin Radio Station during the reporting period to air the shows, which will provide farm-related information to farmers, market the company's products and services and promulgate production methods that increase farm productivity. [REDACTED]

Hamesha Bahar Agriculture Services Company has been selling agricultural inputs in the eastern provinces for the past 10 years. In addition to inputs (citrus and stone fruits sapling, ornamental seeds, flowers and plants and ag-inputs) it provides product information and training to farmers and nursery growers in the eastern provinces. Hamesha Bahar also trains nursery growers and retailers in pesticide safety, identification of crop diseases, crop cultivation, and will provide them timely crop management information, when to cultivate, harvest, use pesticide and control for disease.

On April 26, IDEA-NEW signed a Live Radio Show grant agreement with Hamesha Bahar to design and contract with a radio station to air live radio show programs. Hamesha Bahar signed an agreement with the Abasin Radio Station to air the shows, which will provide farm-related information to farmers, market its products and services, and recommend production methods, seeds and fertilizers aimed at increasing farm productivity. [REDACTED]

Sub-Activity 4.5: Farmer Days

A detailed report on the Agriculture Fair/Farmer Days held in Kabul, Nangarhar, Laghman, Kunar, Kapisa and Parwan was submitted to USAID on April 09. Below is the final schedule of Agriculture Fairs/Farmer Days supported by IDEA-NEW:

- Kabul: March 21-23
- Nangarhar: March 24-26
- Laghman: March 24
- Kunar: March 30
- Parwan: March 31
- Kapisa: April 01



The Kapisa Deputy Governor visits one of the IDEA-NEW supported businesses at the Ag Fair in Kapisa; April 01

CROSSCUTTING THEMES

Continued IDEA-NEW and GIRoA Collaboration

IDEA-NEW regularly meets with local, district, provincial and national-level GIRoA officials in each of its target provinces to ensure that all stakeholders are abreast of IDEA-NEW's plans and can contribute to activity development, implementation and, if necessary, problem-solving.

During the month of April, IDEA-NEW attended four meetings in Nangarhar and Kabul provinces.

On April 06, IDEA-NEW participated in the Provincial Development Committee (PDC) meeting for Nangarhar in which various government, non-government and international organizations representatives participated. Organizations provided updates on their activities and the Deputy Governor asked the participants to implement projects in close coordination with the local communities.

On April 27, IDEA-NEW held a meeting with the Plant Protection and Quarantine Department (PPQD) in Badam Bagh, Kabul to provide an overview of IDEA-NEW's activities, in particular IDEA-NEW's work with ag-input suppliers through SMS marketing grants. IDEA-NEW also shared information on the field days conducted by input suppliers, and suggested that these field days could be a useful opportunity for the Plantwise project to meet hundreds of farmers and provide information on registering crop diseases and identifying solutions to various on-farm issues. Plantwise is a team of consultants working with the Agro-Chemical and Pesticide Department at MAIL who have established mobile clinics in 10 provinces (Kabul, Parwan, Nangarhar, Laghman, Samangan, Bamyan, Herat, Balkh, Faryab and Baghlan). They conduct frequent visits to 47 districts in these provinces with high farmer populations to provide information on how to diagnose and cure diseases, obtain samples of affected plants and discuss solutions for elimination of specific diseases. The team also sends samples of undiagnosed problems to the UK for further analysis. PPQD and Plantwise work together to conduct visits to input suppliers and check their available products, storage arrangements, labeling and informational leaflets. They requested IDEA-NEW to provide them with the lists of previous attendees at PERSUAP training for inclusion in their assessment visits. IDEA-NEW also invited Plantwise to attend the upcoming PERSUAP trainings in Kabul and Jalalabad in order to explain their procedures to the participating input suppliers.

On April 29, IDEA-NEW visited MAIL's Horticulture Directorate to deliver six framed photos of IDEA-NEW activities. These photos were requested by Mrs. Adela Bakhtyari, MAIL horticulture director.

On April 29, IDEA-NEW met with the Nangarhar DAIL. It was agreed during the meeting that one representative of the PPQD would present information regarding the Plantwise program during an upcoming PERSUAP training for input suppliers.

In addition to the above coordination meetings with GIRoA, IDEA-NEW strives to improve communications with other donor projects in order to share information and minimize duplication of efforts.

On April 14, IDEA-NEW hosted a monthly coordination meeting with the ABADE and FAIDA projects.

During the meeting, ABADE provided an update on monthly activities, highlighting that the project received USAID approval for four concepts and has thus far signed a total of 32 Public-Private Alliance (PPA) agreements with private enterprises. An additional 17 PPA concepts have been initially approved by USAID and ABADE's technical evaluation committee; ABADE expects these agreements to be signed during the next month. IDEA-NEW provided a brief summary of ongoing activities, followed by

FAIDA's summary. FAIDA shared that 20 loan applications were supported for different banks and financial institutions. Out of these, eight loan applications were approved and released in Laghman and Kunar provinces, with a total value of AFA 1,421,200 (USD 24,950).

As a result of these coordination meetings, FAIDA worked with two enterprises referred by IDEA-NEW to fill out loan applications, which were submitted to the Afghanistan Rural Finance Company (ARFC). These applications are currently awaiting technical review in Kabul. In addition, ABADE approved the PPA application of Masroor Food Processing Company, an IDEA-NEW grantee. Masroor has requested a Tetra-pack juice plant. The application was approved by the technical committee of ABADE and USAID, and the agreement is expected to be signed soon. The Sail Food Production Company, another former IDEA-NEW beneficiary, signed an agreement in 2014 with ABADE. During the month of March, ABADE delivered the requested equipment (a "Kurkure" snack manufacturing plant) to Sail Foods.

At the close of the meeting, ABADE agreed to share an updated list of beneficiaries with the group, and FAIDA will share a list of woman-owned businesses in the eastern region. IDEA-NEW will distribute the list of agribusinesses interested in obtaining loans from a bank or financial institution with FAIDA.

Gender

All activities implemented by IDEA-NEW strive for the maximum inclusion of women through support to woman-owned agribusinesses and female entrepreneurs. Specifically, IDEA-NEW assists these businesses with accessing finance and establishing linkages with retailers/supermarket chains to sell their products. Per the Activity Plan, IDEA-NEW will strive for a minimum of 10% of program participants to be woman-owned and/or operated businesses.

Coordination meeting with AWBF: On April 21, IDEA-NEW held a meeting with the Afghan Women's Business Federation (AWBF) in Kabul. AWBF is an independent, non-profit organization registered with the Ministry of Justice. Their main office is located in Kabul, with branches in Bamyan, Mazar-e-Sharif, Jalalabad and Urozgan. AWBF serves as an umbrella organization for woman-owned and operated enterprises, offering capacity building training in management, marketing and promotional skills to enable these businesses to compete in local, regional and international markets. The purpose of this meeting was to obtain a list of woman-owned businesses active in the agriculture sector for potential support by IDEA-NEW.

Sola Safi Food Processing Company: This woman-owned food processing company located in Jalalabad city was identified by IDEA-NEW and considered for an unsolicited grant. This company's activities support IDEA-NEW goals and objectives for 2015, and there is an immediate and measurable impact in supporting this activity. This intervention will create four seasonal and two full-time equivalent jobs for women. Sola Safi's seasonal production period (pickles) will increase from four to six months and an additional product, chutney, will be added to its product line, which will be produced year-long to satisfy high demand. More details on this grant will be included in the May monthly report.

Sustainability

IDEA-NEW's approach to longer-term sustainability depends heavily on its programmatic approach of developing follow-on projects that build off previous successes. This method has resulted in six years of calculated interventions that have helped farmers evolve from being program beneficiaries receiving subsidized, improved seeds, saplings and fertilizer to full price paying customers of those same products.

Attention must now be given to the agribusinesses on either end of the farmer so that sustainability will be improved across multiple value chain stages and the wider agricultural sector. This is exactly what IDEA-NEW's 2015 program to local input suppliers and food processors aims to accomplish.

By continuing to build the capacity of GIRoA and other private sector bodies, the Afghanistan Investment Support Agency (AISA) and the Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Industries (ACCI), IDEA-NEW will also work to improve local institutions' capacity to determine gaps and strategically improve the changing environment for agriculture over time. Hosting B2B conferences and participating in relevant GIRoA events will also reinforce agricultural markets by facilitating deeper connections between producers, processors, traders and buyers—both domestic and international. It is IDEA-NEW's goal that these stakeholders will continue to work together after programming has ended, to advance agriculture in Afghanistan.

PROGRAM CHALLENGES AND CONCERNS

No updates to report this period.

OTHER

Business Exposure Visit: On April 07, IDEA-NEW conducted a business exposure visit to the Tabasom Raisin Processing Plant in Kabul. Equipped with new technology and skilled and trained personnel, the company is a good example of an Afghan business that has obtained and maintained international certification. It processes raisins for the international market, with sales across Europe, Russia and Southeast Asia.

Fifteen representatives from nine food processing companies based in Kabul and Jalalabad participated in this visit; these companies are engaged in IDEA-NEW's HACCP training activity.

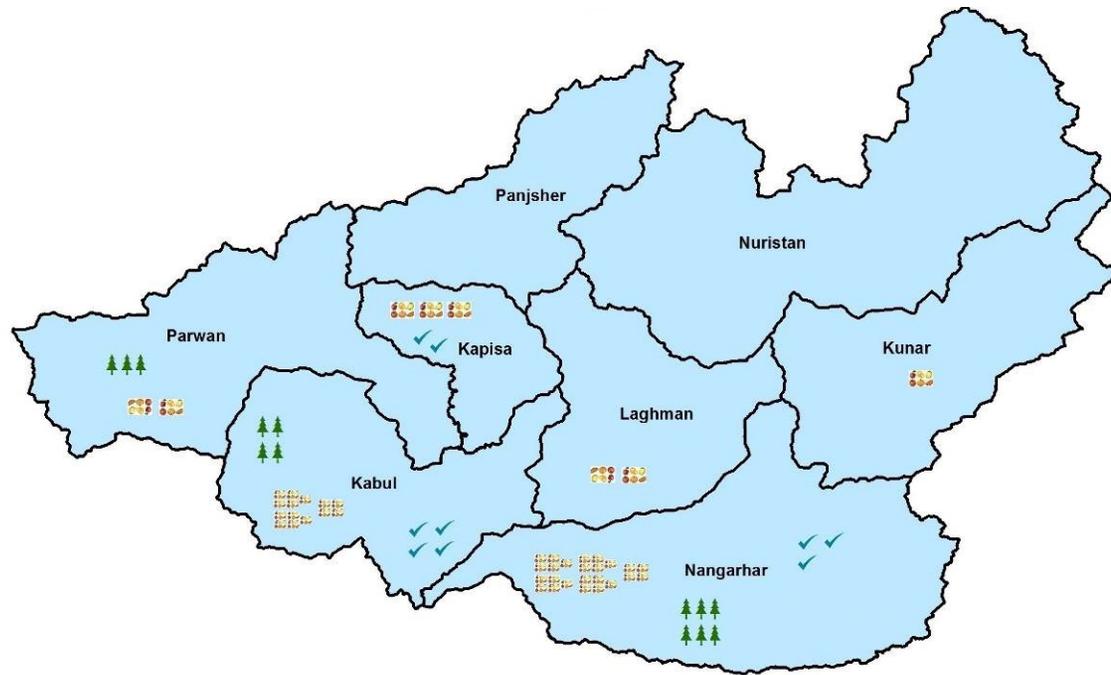


Participants put on protective clothing and sanitize hands before entering the processing plant, April 07

The purpose of this tour was to provide the participants an opportunity to witness the operation and SOPs of an internationally certified food processing company. During the tour, the CEO and Quality Control Manager of Tabasom led participants through the processing plant and explained all aspects of the processing plant's processes, procedures and facilities. Topics discussed included the grading and separation of raw material, employee arrival and dress changing stations, protective clothing and sanitation procedures, laboratory testing, recording of data and storage and identification.

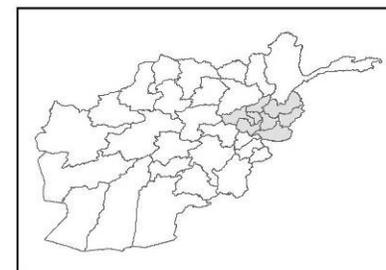
The visit was followed by a Q&A session during which participants inquired about different aspects of obtaining international certification, including major challenges and the benefits of being internationally certified.

ANNEX I: MAP OF IDEA-NEW VALUE CHAINS AS OF APRIL 30, 2015



Value Chain Legends

- Orchard / Vegetables
- Vegetables
- Orchard



ANNEX II: PERFORMANCE INDICATOR TABLE

Please see the attached Excel document.

ANNEX III: KEY ACTIVITIES ACCOMPLISHED

Please see the attached Excel document.

ANNEX IV: MONTHLY GRANTS REPORT

Please see the attached Excel document.

Annex III - Key Activities Accomplished, April 2015

Activity Type	Activity Name	Activity/Sub-Activity	Activity Description	Province	Start Date	End Date	Activity Status	Status Comments
SMS Grant	Help Agro Services Company	Activity #1 (NCE-2)	Introduce pilot SMS marketing strategy for input wholesalers	Nangarhar	25-Mar-15	25-Sep-15	Active	NCE-2
SMS Grant	Al-Roheed Agriculture Service Company	Activity #1 (NCE-2)	Introduce pilot SMS marketing strategy for input wholesalers	Nangarhar	25-Mar-15	25-Sep-15	Active	NCE-2
SMS Grant	AslamZada Agricultural Services Company	Activity #1 (NCE-2)	SMS Marketing for Agricultural Input Supplier	Kabul	20-Apr-15	31-Aug-15	Active	NCE-2
Live Radio Show	AslamZada Agricultural Services Company	Sub-Activity 4.4 (NCE-2)	Live Radio Programs	Kabul	22-Apr-15	31-Aug-15	Active	NCE-2
Live Radio Show	Bagram Nursery Growers Association	Sub-Activity 4.4 (NCE-2)	Live Radio Programs	Parwan	22-Apr-15	31-Aug-15	Active	NCE-2
SMS Grant	Bakhtar Afghan Azizi Agro service Co.ltd	Activity #1 (NCE-2)/Sub-Activity #1.4 (NCE-1)	Introduce pilot SMS marketing strategy for input wholesalers	Nangarhar	03-Jul-14	30-Jun-15	Active	NCE-2
FOG	Control Union	Activity #2 (NCE-2)	HACCP Training	Kabul	16-Apr-15	28-May-15	Active	NCE-2
FOG	Falak Niaz Barakzai Ltd	Sub-Activity 4.4 (NCE-2)	Live Radio Program	Nangarhar	19-Apr-15	31-Aug-15	Active	NCE-2
SMS Grant	Hamisha Bahar Agro Services Company	Activity #1 (NCE-2)/Sub-Activity #1.4 (NCE-1)	Introduce pilot SMS marketing strategy for input wholesalers	Nangarhar	17-Aug-14	17-Jun-15	Active	NCE-2
FOG	Hamisha Bahar Agro Services Company	Sub-Activity 4.4 (NCE-2)	Live Radio Program	Nangarhar	19-Apr-15	31-Aug-15	Active	NCE-2
Matching Grant	KFSC (Kapisa Farm Services Center & Dehqan-e-Asr Seeds Production Company)	Sub-Activity # 1.3	Matching and promotional activity grants to assist agriculture input dealers	Kapisa	25-Mar-15	16-Aug-15	Active	NCE-2
Matching Grant	Khalil Rehan Food processing Company	Sub-activity 2.3	Matching and Promotional	Nangarhar	22-Apr-15	11-Jun-15	Active	NCE-2
SMS Grant	Now Bahar Salarzai-LTD	Activity #1 (NCE-2)/Sub-Activity #1.4 (NCE-1)	Introduce pilot SMS marketing strategy for input wholesalers	Nangarhar	07-Sep-14	07-Jul-15	Active	NCE-2
FOG	Now Bahar Salarzai-LTD	Sub-Activity 4.4 (NCE-2)	Live Radio Programs	Nangarhar	19-Apr-15	31-Aug-15	Active	NCE-2
SMS Grant	ParwanBastan Improved Seed Company	Activity #1 (NCE-2)	SMS Marketing for Agricultural Input Supplier	Parwan	20-Apr-15	31-Aug-15	Active	NCE-2
Matching Grant	Prosperity Group of Companies (PGCs)	Activity #3 (NCE-2)/Sub-Activity #2.3 (NCE-1)	Matching and promotional activity grants to assist agriculture input dealers	Kabul	29-Jun-14	30-Apr-15	Active	NCE-2

Activity Type	Activity Name	Activity/Sub-Activity	Activity Description	Province	Start Date	End Date	Activity Status	Status Comments
SMS Grant	Prosperity Group of Companies (PGCs)	Activity #1 (NCE-2)/Sub-Activity #1.4 (NCE-1)	Introduce pilot SMS marketing strategy for input wholesalers	Kabul	14-Oct-14	30-Apr-15	Active	NCE-2
SMS Grant	Sefatullah Lalzai Ltd	Activity #1 (NCE-2)	SMS Marketing for Agricultural Input Supplier	Kabul	15-Apr-15	31-Aug-15	Active	NCE-2
FOG	Sheen Zar Agricultural Trading Company Ltd	Sub-Activity 4.4 (NCE-2)	Live Radio Programs	Kabul			Clarification	
FOG	Tamadon Group of Companies	Sub-Activity 4.4 (NCE-2)	Live Radio Programs	Kabul	22-Apr-15	31-Aug-15	Active	NCE-2
FOG	Wajid Zaman Agriculture Company	Sub-Activity 4.4 (NCE-2)	Live Radio Program	Nangarhar	19-Apr-15	31-Aug-15	Active	NCE-2
SMS Grant	Wajid Zaman Agriculture services Co	Activity #1 (NCE-2)/Sub-Activity #1.4 (NCE-1)	Introduce pilot SMS marketing strategy for input wholesalers	Nangarhar	03-Jul-14	30-Jun-15	Active	NCE-2
FOG	Control Union	Activity #2 (NCE-2)	HACCP Pre-Audit	Kabul	17-Feb-15	30-Apr-15	Closed	NCE-2

Annex IV - Grants Report, April 2015

as of April 30, 2015

(CENTRAL REGION)

No.	Grant No.	Company Name	Activity /Sub Activity	Product /Services	Grant Activity Type	Start Date	End Date	Current Status*
1	G-JAA-219	Control Union	Activity 2	Input Supplier	FOG	17-Feb-15	30-Apr-15	Completed
2	G-KBL-054	Bagram Nursery Growers Association	Activity 4, Sub-Activity 4.4	Input Supplier	Radio Show	22-Apr-15	31-Aug-15	Active
3	G-KBL-055	Aslamzada Agriculture Services	Activity 4, Sub-Activity 4.4	Input Supplier	Radio Show	22-Apr-15	31-Aug-15	Active
4	G-KBL-057	Tamadon Agricultural Seed Services Company	Activity 4, Sub-Activity 4.4	Input Supplier	Radio Show	22-Apr-15	31-Aug-15	Active
5	G-KBL-047	Parwan Bastan Improved Seed Company	Activity 1, Sub-Activity 1.4	Input Supplier	SMS Grant	20-Apr-15	31-Aug-15	Active
6	G-KBL-048	Aslam Zada Agricultural Services Company	Activity 1, Sub-Activity 1.4	Input Supplier	SMS Grant	20-Apr-15	31-Aug-15	Active
8	G-KBL-052	Control Union	Activity 2	Input Supplier	FOG	16-Apr-15	28-May-15	Active
9	G-KBL-050	Sefat Ullah Lalzai Ltd.	Activity 1, Sub-Activity 1.4	Input Supplier	SMS Grant	15-Apr-15	31-Aug-15	Active
10	G-KBL-046	Kapisa Farm Service Center	Activity 2, Sub-Activity 1.2	Input Supplier	Matching Grant	25-Mar-15	16-Aug-15	Active

11	G-KBL-020	Prosperity Group of Companies	Activity 1, Sub-Activity 1.4	Input Supplier	SMS Grant	14-Oct-14	30-Apr-15	Completed
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*'Completed' indicates that activities under the grant are complete, and close-out paperwork is under process. The grant is still active until close-out paperwork is complete.

as of April 30, 2015

(EASTERN REGION)

No.	Grant No.	Company Name	Activity /Sub Activity	Product /Services	Grant Activity Type	Start Date	End Date	Current Status*
1	G-JAA-226	Khalil Rehan Food Production Company	Activity 3, Sub-Activity 3.1	Food Processor	Matching Grant	22-Apr-15	11-Jun-15	Active
2	G-JAA-222	Hamisha Bahar Agricultural Services Company	Activity 4, Sub-Activity 4.4	Input Supplier	Radio Show	19-Apr-15	31-Aug-15	Pending ERF Approval
3	G-JAA-223	Wajid Zaman Agriculture Company	Activity 4, Sub-Activity 4.4	Input Supplier	Radio Show	19-Apr-15	31-Aug-15	Active
4	G-JAA-224	Now Bahar Salrzai LTD	Activity 4, Sub-Activity 4.4	Input Supplier	Radio Show	19-Apr-15	31-Aug-15	Active
5	G-JAA-225	Falak Niaz Barakzai Ltd	Activity 4, Sub-Activity 4.4	Input Supplier	Radio Show	19-Apr-15	31-Aug-15	Active
6	G-JAA-220	Al-Roheed Agricultural Services Company	Activity 1	Input Supplier	SMS Grant	25-Mar-15	25-Sep-15	Active
7	G-JAA-221	Help Agro Services Company	Activity 1	Input Supplier	SMS Grant	25-Mar-15	25-Sep-15	Active
8	G-JAA-208	Naw Bahar Salarzai LTD	Activity 1	Input Supplier	SMS Grant	7-Sep-14	7-Jul-15	Active
9	G-JAA-192	Hamisha Bahar Agro Services Company	Activity 1	Input Supplier	SMS Grant	17-Aug-14	17-Jun-15	Active

10	G-JAA-190	Bakhtar Afghan Agro Services Company	Activity 1	Input Supplier	SMS Grant	3-Jul-14	30-Jun-15	Active
11	G-JAA-191	Wajid Zaman Agriculture Co	Activity 1	Input Supplier	SMS Grant	3-Jul-14	30-Jun-15	Active
12		Sola Safi Food Processing Company	Activity 3, Sub-Activity 3.1	Food Processor	Matching Grant			Clarification

*'Completed' indicates that activities under the grant are complete, and close-out paperwork is under process. The grant is still active until close-out paperwork is complete.