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MONTHLY REPORT— MARCH 2015

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

MARCH 1 - 31, 2015

APRIL 2015

This publication was produced for review by the United States Agency for International Development. It was prepared by Development Alternatives, Inc.

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

MARCH 1 - 31, 2015

Program Title:	Incentives Driving Economic Alternatives for the North, East and West
Sponsoring USAID Office:	Office of Agriculture
Cooperative Agreement #:	306-A-00-09-00508
Contractor:	Development Alternatives, Inc.
Date of Publication:	April 2015

The authors' views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

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ACRONYMS

A2F	Access to Finance
ACCI	Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Industries
AIB	Afghanistan International Bank
AMA	Afghanistan Microfinance Association
AP	Afghanistan Payment
ARFC	Afghanistan Rural Finance Company
ASTWG	Afghanistan Strengthening Technical Working Group
CB	Certifying Body
CCP	Critical Control Points
CU	Control Union
DAI	Development Alternatives, Inc.
DAIL	Department of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock
DoPH	Department of Public Health
EOI	Expression of Interest
FAIDA	Financial Assistance for Investment in the Development of Afghanistan
FOG	Fixed Obligation Grant
GIRoA	Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
HACCP	Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points
HASC	Help Agriculture Services Company
IDEA-NEW	Incentives Driving Economic Alternatives for the North, East and West
NCE	No-Cost Extension
PDC	Provincial Development Council
PERSUAP	Pesticide Evaluation Report and Safer Use Action Plan
PGC	Prosperity Group of Companies
RFA	Request for Applications
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

MONTHLY REPORT—MARCH 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 March, signing two SMS marketing grants with two input wholesalers in the eastern region. One of the project's main activities during the month was the support and facilitation of provincial-level Agriculture Fairs/Farmer Day Celebrations around Nauroz in Kabul, Nangarhar, Laghman, Kunar and Kapisa. IDEA-NEW supported 21 agribusinesses from the eastern and central regions during the celebration in Kabul at Badam Bagh (March 21-23) and supported 50 booths for businesses at the celebration in Jalalabad (March 24-26). IDEA-NEW also provided assistance for smaller, one-day celebrations held in Laghman (March 24), Kunar (March 30) and Kapisa (March 31). On March 30, IDEA-NEW hosted a workshop for the Afghanistan Rural Finance Company (ARFC) to meet with 17 agribusinesses that had expressed interest in applying for loans during the Access to Finance Conference in Jalalabad on February 23. IDEA-NEW also hosted a 'Live Radio Show' workshop on March 09 for 18 input suppliers in the central region. Current SMS grantees sent 40 targeted messages to 24,637 farmers and 2,005 retailers/fruit nursery growers and associations during the month and one SMS grantee held two farmer field days for a total of 121 farmers and one government line staff. There were also three farmer field days/demonstrations held by a matching grantee in which 246 farmers and 19 government line staff 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. Activities continued under their respective agreements during the month of March.

Grant Type	Status
SMS	7 ongoing, 0 complete, 0 closed

SMS grantees sent 40 targeted messages to 24,637 farmers and 2,005 retailers/fruit nursery growers and associations during the reporting period.

In addition to the continuing SMS grants from the pilot program period, IDEA-NEW plans to sign SMS grants with an additional six input wholesalers during the second no-cost extension (NCE) period (March 1 - September 30). During the month of March, SMS grants were signed with two companies based in Jalalabad: Help Agriculture Services Company and Al-Roheed Agriculture Services Company. Details are provided below.

Help Agriculture Services Company (HASC) was established in 2015 and is located in Jalalabad city. The company deals in ag-inputs, including fertilizers, seeds, agro-chemicals and pesticides, which they purchase from wholesale markets in Pakistan for sale in the Jalalabad market. HASC recently signed a sole-distributorship agreement with ARROW, an international agro-services company based in Pakistan. The company's current market includes Laghman, Kunar and Nangarhar provinces and the company plans to expand to Kunduz, Balkh, Takhar and Baghlan provinces in the future. The company has four permanent employees and one part-time employee.

On March 25, IDEA-NEW signed an SMS grant with HASC [REDACTED]. The SMS grant includes the salaries of the Agriculture and Marketing Officer and the Database Officer, transportation costs for site visits, bulk SMS costs, an internet device, monthly internet costs, four farmer field days and Pesticide Evaluation Report and Safer Use Action Plan (PERSUAP) and pesticide safe handling training for input retailers.

Al-Roheed Agriculture Services Company was established in 2005 and is based in Jalalabad city. Al-Roheed is a key market player in the ag-input industry in the eastern region and deals in ag-inputs (hybrid seeds, ag-equipment, fungicides, insecticides and fertilizers) as well as agriculture services. The company's current market includes Nangarhar, Kunar, Laghman and Kabul provinces and the company plans to expand to Balkh, Baghlan, Kunduz and Takhar. The company has four permanent employees and one part-time employee.

IDEA-NEW signed an SMS grant agreement with Al-Roheed on March 25. [REDACTED]. The SMS grant includes the salaries of the Agriculture and Marketing Officer and the Database Officer, transportation costs for site visits, bulk SMS costs, an internet device, monthly internet costs, four farmer field days and PERSUAP/pesticide safe handling training for input retailers.

The following wholesalers continued their activities under SMS grants during the month of March:

Hamesha Bahar Agriculture Services Company sent 12 messages to 1,443 nursery growers in Nangarhar, Kunar, Laghman, Kabul, Parwan and Kunduz provinces during the month. In response to these messages, 54 nursery growers called Hamesha Bahar seeking more information about the advertised products including prices, availability (locations) and usage.

Wajid Zaman Agriculture Company sent 12 messages to 12,240 farmers and 12 retailers in Sherzad, Surkhrod, Kama, Behsud and Batikot districts of Nangarhar province and Qarghayi, Alingar and Metherlam districts of Laghman province during the month. In response to these messages, 60 farmers called Wajid Zaman seeking further information on the price, availability and application of inputs.

Bakhtar Afghan Azizi Agriculture Services Company signed a contract with Afghanistan Payment (AP) on March 3 for a period of six months. Under the contract, AP will send approximately 8,500 text messages to target groups each month. During the month of March, Bakhtar Afghan sent two messages to 3,843 farmers in Nangarhar, Kunar, Laghman and Kabul provinces. The messages advertised Bakhtar Afghan's products and informed farmers and retailers of the Agriculture Fair in Jalalabad.

Now Bahar Salrzai LTD sent nine messages to 7,300 farmers and 550 retailers in Nangarhar, Kunar and Laghman provinces during the month.

Prosperity Group of Companies (PGC) sent five messages to 1,254 farmers during the month of March.



*PGC conducts SMS field day in Paghman district of Kabul;
March 06*

PGC also conducted two SMS field days during the reporting period. One field day was held in Paghman district of Kabul on March 06 in which 103 farmers participated. Another field day was conducted in Jalalabad at the Department of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (DAIL) on March 20 in which 18 farmers and one government line staff participated. The purpose of both field days was to introduce PGC and the SMS system and hear from farmers regarding SMS marketing. Topics discussed during the field day included the importance of moving from traditional to modern agricultural practices, the use and benefits of SMS marketing and utilization of solar energy and drip irrigation for agriculture.

ACTIVITY 2: HACCP PRE-AUDITS AND TRAINING

Stage I: HACCP Workshop for Selected Food Processors

Stage I is complete as of January 2015. Following the workshops in Kabul and Jalalabad on January 28, a total of 20 food processors from the central region and 12 from the eastern region submitted Expressions of Interest (EOIs).

Stage II: Site Inspections and Pre-Audits

Out of the 32 EOIs submitted, 13 food processors from the central region and seven from the eastern region were recommended for site inspections/pre-audits and laboratory testing of each company's products conducted by Control Union (CU).

CU's representative conducted site visits to 17 food processing companies in Nangarhar, Kabul and Kapisa provinces from March 03-23 for the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) pre-audit. Each company's operations, production, inventory and waste management, food safety and hygiene, and office management were observed. The full report will be shared with IDEA-NEW in early April.



Control Union and IDEA-NEW staff visit Khalid Faizan for HACCP pre-audit, March 16

Stage III: HACCP Training

Upon finalization of the site inspection/pre-audit reports from CU, CU will conduct a one-day workshop 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 (7) who possess the necessary pre-conditions for possible HACCP certification. CU will provide a 10-day classroom training for the seven (7) food processors to prepare Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) based on HACCP principles. The training will incorporate the results of the site inspections/pre-audits into the training approach, and will take place in late-April/early May.

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

The Training Provider will ensure that applications for HACCP audits are submitted to an internationally recognized and accredited Certifying Body (CB) by July 30 and will facilitate the work of certification auditors during August-September.

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

Review and clarification of potential matching grants continued during the month of March, with two grants expected for award in early April to the Kapisa Farm Services Center and Khalil Reihan Food Production Company. More details will be included in the April monthly report.

Overall, IDEA-NEW plans to award matching grants during the second NCE period divided between the eastern and central regions, with a focus on inclusion of woman-owned/operated businesses.

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

Prosperity Group of Companies (PGC), in coordination with district DAIL extension officers, trained 246 farmers and 19 government line staff on on-farm water conservation and the use of drip irrigation systems. At the end of each demonstration, 61 model farmers and institutions were selected to receive drip irrigation kits. These lead farmers will go on to use their drip irrigation kits to train and demonstrate to other farmers in their communities the benefits of drip irrigation for water conservation. In sponsoring these training events, PGC has strengthened its ties with district DAIL extension officers and fostered good business relations with area farmers which will lead to additional sales for the company in the years to come.

Out of the 11 demonstrations, seven were conducted in Kapisa province on March 05. These demonstrations were conducted at DAIL Kapisa, Alberuni University, the Agriculture Institute, the Extension Department and Karezai village of Mahmood Raqi district. A total of 70 farmers and 16 government line staff participated.

One demonstration was conducted in Paghman district of Kabul on March 06, in which a total of 70 farmers attended. Another demonstration was conducted on the same day in district 11 of Kabul province, where a total of 22 farmers participated.

Another demonstration was conducted at DAIL Jalalabad on March 20, where a total of 65 farmers and two government employees attended. The last demonstration for the month of March was conducted at DAIL Laghman on March 20, where a total of 19 farmers and one DAIL staff member participated.

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 following up on previous meetings and conferences.



Group discussion during the workshop; March 30

Access to Finance (A2F) Workshop - ARFC: As follow-on to the A2F Conference held in Jalalabad in February, IDEA-NEW hosted a workshop on March 30 for ARFC. The purpose of the workshop was to provide a forum for ARFC and interested agribusinesses to meet and further discuss the terms and conditions of loans, mark-up rates and collateral requirements. One representative from the Financial Access for Investment in the Development of Afghanistan (FAIDA) project, two representatives from the Afghanistan Microfinance Association (AMA), one ARFC representative and 18 representatives from 17 agribusinesses participated in the workshop.

During the workshop, ARFC responded to inquiries regarding collateral requirements and misconceptions about Sharia-compliant loan products. All 17 agribusinesses expressed interest in obtaining loans from ARFC. The businesses plan to prepare the necessary documents and collateral, and FAIDA offered to assist in the preparation of loan applications.

Out of the 17 businesses, three businesses that currently fulfill all of the ARFC requirements scheduled appointments with FAIDA to help prepare and review the application packages before submission. The loan application, once completed and submitted, will take approximately one month to process and release.

Meeting with FAIDA: On March 19, a meeting was held with representatives of the FAIDA project at the IDEA-NEW office in Kabul to discuss their support in preparing business documentation for agribusinesses seeking financial assistance. IDEA-NEW shared the list of agribusinesses that expressed interest in applying for loans during the A2F conference held in February.

FAIDA assists agribusinesses in preparing loan request documents for banks and non-banking financial institutions. These documents include concept notes, business plans and financial statements. FAIDA plans to attend future IDEA-NEW A2F workshops and B2B meetings to assist agribusinesses referred by IDEA-NEW. The first A2F workshop is scheduled to take place on April 09 at the IDEA-NEW office in Kabul. The Afghanistan International Bank (AIB) has been invited to present their loan packages as well as brief agribusinesses on their loan application process.

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

On March 09, IDEA-NEW hosted a ‘Live Radio Show’ workshop for 19 representatives from 18 ag-input suppliers in the central region. Fourteen input suppliers from Kabul province, three from Parwan and one from Kapisa province attended the workshop

The objective of this workshop was to educate ag-input suppliers on how live radio shows work and their use as a marketing tool. The goal of the program is to go beyond mere NGO/donor-funded commercial advertisements and marketing for agribusinesses. The program will assist ag-input suppliers in negotiating contracts with local radio stations and designing/sponsoring radio programs that inform listeners of the latest issues, products or technologies in agriculture. The workshop described the grant process including the application and the importance of demonstrating sustainability, shared risk and value chain impact. IDEA-NEW plans to award fixed obligation grants (FOGs) to approximately four competitively selected agricultural input suppliers. FOGs will require a minimum of 30% cost-share from grantees. RFAs were distributed to participants interested in applying for grants. A similar workshop was held in Jalalabad in late February.



‘Live Radio Show’ workshop held at the IDEA-NEW office in Kabul; March 09

During the month of March, IDEA-NEW received a total of 16 applications (nine in Jalalabad and seven in Kabul) which were reviewed by the technical evaluation committees. Eleven applications were recommended for the proposal clarification stage and eight (four from each region) were recommended for grant award. IDEA-NEW expects to award these ‘Live Radio Show’ grants during the month of April.

Sub-Activity 4.5: Farmer Days

A detailed report on the Agriculture Fair/Farmer Days held in Kabul, Nangarhar, Laghman, Kunar, Kapisa and Parwan will be submitted to USAID in early April. 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

Kapisa: March 31

Parwan: April 01



Farah Farhat Faizi Agriculture Products Processing Company displays products at their booth during the Ag-Fair in Kabul

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 March, frequent meetings were held with DAIL representatives in the provinces of Kabul, Nangarhar, Laghman, Kunar, Kapisa and Parwan for the coordination of Agriculture Fair/Farmer Day Celebrations. In total, IDEA-NEW attended over ten individual meetings with DAIL and provincial representatives throughout the month. The schedule, venue, layout, marketing materials and radio ads for each event were among the topics discussed during these meetings. In addition, IDEA-NEW continued to attend regular monthly meetings at the provincial level.

On March 02, IDEA-NEW attended a coordination meeting with the Nangarhar Deputy Provincial Governor. During the meeting, the Deputy Governor explained that the government intends to privatize public areas and parks and asked IDEA-NEW grantees (Hamesha Bahar and Nangarhar Agriculture Training Center) to submit a proposal for consideration.

On March 03, IDEA-NEW participated in a coordination meeting chaired by the Director of the Economy Directorate for Laghman province. This was a monthly coordination meeting of aid agencies and donor projects active in Laghman province.

On March 04, IDEA-NEW attended the Nangarhar Provincial Development Council (PDC) meeting, where Bakhtar Afghan Azizi Agriculture Company (an IDEA-NEW grantee) delivered a presentation on its activities.

On March 05, IDEA-NEW participated in the Laghman Agriculture Strengthening Technical Working Group (ASTWG) meeting in which IDEA-NEW activities during the previous month were explained to the meeting participants.

On March 16, IDEA-NEW participated in the Kunar ASTWG meeting, where DAIL shared that 15,000 saplings were distributed to central and district level government departments for planting and further distribution to proactive farmers.

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 with SIKA-East: On March 02, IDEA-NEW met with the Gender Advisor from the USAID-funded Stability in Key Areas (SIKA)-East project, where coordination on gender activities was discussed. As part of SIKA-East's vocational training program for women, IDEA-NEW introduced some woman-owned businesses for visits by SIKA-East trainees. On March 09, two business exposure visits were facilitated by IDEA-NEW for 10 female trainees from SIKA-East. During the visits, the trainees visited the Farah Farhat Faizi (3F) Agriculture Products Processing Company in Kabul and Faisal Kohistani Food Processing Company in Kapisa. The trainees learned how each of these woman-owned companies produces different types of jam and pickle and reviewed the entire production process—from procurement of raw materials all the way through sorting, cleaning, cooking, processing, pouring, labeling, packing and marketing.



Trainees from SIKA-East participate in a business exposure visit at 3F; March 09

Support during Ag-Fairs/Farmer Days: IDEA-NEW provided support to over 10 woman-owned agribusinesses to participate in Agriculture Fairs/Farmer Days in Kabul, Nangarhar and Kapisa provinces during the reporting period.

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, AISA and 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.

The section below provides a broader overview of the sustainability of the activities planned for 2015.

Activity 1: One of the over-arching goals of the SMS marketing program is to ensure grantee "ownership" of the activity. It is for this reason that IDEA-NEW requires potential grantees to research and enter into contractual agreements with the SMS platform provider that they feel meets their companies' needs. Beginning at month three, IDEA-NEW gradually decreases its level of funding to the grantee while their share of payment to the SMS service provider increases. By the end of the sixth month the grantee is paying 100% of the cost of the service. Additionally, IDEA-NEW provides workshops, ongoing trainings and technical support to grantees throughout the 6-month grant period to ensure that the grantees have all the information and tools needed to operate, manage and measure the impact of their SMS marketing program. At the end of each 6-month grant, IDEA-NEW and the grantee review lessons learned, measure any increases in sales and develop a plan for the continued operation of the SMS activity once IDEA-NEW assistance ends.

Activity 2: The broader goal of the HACCP program is to increase awareness of the need to implement quality management, manufacturing and hygiene standards and practices in Afghan food processors and fruit/vegetable exporters. The IDEA-NEW sponsored HACCP workshops and pre-audit/training activities will increase awareness and knowledge of what exactly the meaning and use is for the seemingly never-ending list of acronyms that are so in vogue amongst practitioners. It is unrealistic to assume that a majority or even a small percentage of Afghan agribusinesses are ready to receive internationally recognized accreditation. However, all Afghan agribusinesses will benefit by learning what these internationally recognized accreditations actually mean and if they are the right fit for a particular firm relative to their place in the market at a given time. IDEA-NEW assistance is geared to identify and assist firms to measure where their firms rate against international standards, and to assist those firms in improving their management and hygiene systems. Sustainability is built into the program by first requiring commitment from interested firms to participate in IDEA-NEW sponsored workshops and trainings. For firms applying for an IDEA-NEW matching grant, a 50% cost share is required. Additionally, actual HACCP certification can take anywhere from 3, 6 to 12 months. This is long after IDEA-NEW ends. IDEA-NEW assistance is geared toward identifying those firms who can benefit the most from an accreditation such as HACCP, giving them the background, tools and understanding of the accreditation process and ensuring that they have the knowledge to pursue accreditation when the time is right for their firm.

Activity 3: Prior to funding any activity, IDEA NEW requires a sustainability plan as part of the program documentation for each specific intervention. The sustainability plans include a clear exit strategy and detailed plan from the beneficiary(s) as to how the activity will maintained/sustained once IDEW-NEW assistance ends. All grants require a minimum of 25% cost share, include business and marketing training, ensure linkages with other GIROA and donor

programs, and include assistance in accessing financing. All grants require a clear exit strategy and sustainability plan to be included as part of the grant documentation. In addition, IDEA-NEW aims to award 10% of grants to woman-owned and/or operated businesses.

Activity 4: The sustainability of IDEA-NEW interventions under Activity 4 are based upon the premise that it is not the role of IDEA-NEW to design, fund and “own” such activities as live radio programs, agribusiness participation at GIROA-sponsored events (meetings, agricultural fairs or farmer field days) or for IDEA-NEW to fund investment or financing opportunities for Afghan businesses. IDEA-NEWs role is as a facilitator and enabler through training and technical assistance. The sustainability of IDEA-NEW interventions revolves around the fact that agribusinesses are active participants and partners in all IDEA-NEW-funded activities. Participants of IDEA-NEW-supported activities are left with the skills, knowledge and confidence to directly negotiate/interact with relevant market and GIROA actors without outside donor assistance. Agribusinesses identify and negotiate terms with radio stations for live radio shows, coordinate and advocate with MAIL/DAIL to present at GIROA sponsored events and utilize skills learned to seek foreign markets, investors and financing. The sustainability of the interventions is that there are no passive beneficiaries under IDEA-NEW program assistance. If the agribusiness is not willing to invest in itself and be proactive in expanding their market or seek new market opportunities then they do not qualify for assistance.

PROGRAM CHALLENGES AND CONCERNS

No updates to report this period.

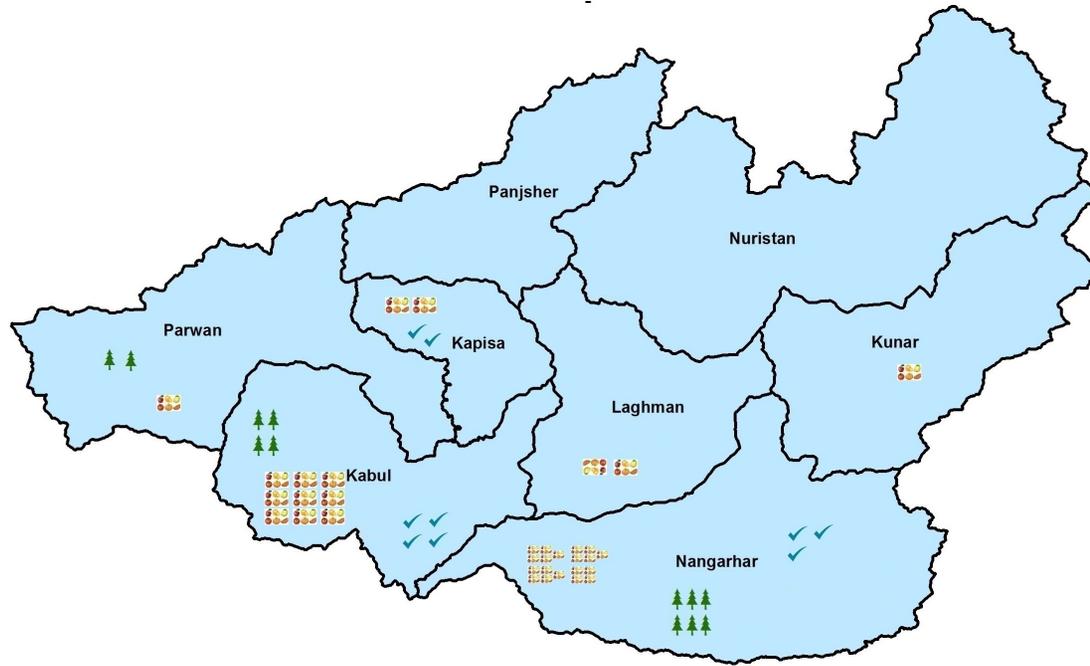
OTHER

Food Test Lab Training: During the month of March, the trainer arrived in Jalalabad to install the laboratory equipment and complete the practical food testing lab training for Department of Public Health (DoPH) and Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Industries (ACCI) lab technicians. The training lasted for three days, where each piece of equipment was explained and demonstrated. Several sample tests (4-5 per piece of equipment) were conducted with the chemicals. At the end of the training, a printed guide was displayed above each piece of equipment to assist the lab technicians as they carry out future tests.



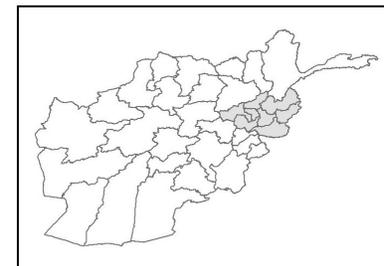
Trainer instructs food testing lab staff in the use of equipment; March 23

ANNEX I: MAP OF IDEA-NEW VALUE CHAINS AS OF MARCH 31, 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, March 2015

Activity Type	Activity Name	Activity Plan Sub-Activity	Activity Description	Province	Start Date	End Date	Activity Status
Matching Grant	Prosperity Group of Companies (PGCs)	Activity# 3	Matching and promotional activity grants to assist agriculture input dealers	Kabul	29-Jun-14	30-Apr-15	Active
SMS Grant	Prosperity Group of Companies (PGCs)	Activity# 1	Introduce pilot SMS marketing strategy for input wholesalers	Kabul	14-Oct-14	31-Mar-15	Active
FOG	Control Union	Activity # 2	HACCP Pre-Audit	Kabul	17-Feb-15	31-Mar-15	Active
SMS Grant	Bakhtar Afghan Azizi Agro service Co.ltd	Activity# 1	Introduce pilot SMS marketing strategy for input wholesalers	Nangarhar	07-Jul-14	30-Apr-15	Active
SMS Grant	Hamisha Bahar Agro Services Company	Activity# 1	Introduce pilot SMS marketing strategy for input wholesalers	Nangarhar	17-Aug-14	17-Jun-15	Active
SMS Grant	Now Bahar Salarzai-LTD	Activity# 1	Introduce pilot SMS marketing strategy for input wholesalers	Nangarhar	04-Sep-14	07-Jul-15	Active
SMS Grant	Wajid Zaman Agriculture services Co	Activity# 1	Introduce pilot SMS marketing strategy for input wholesalers	Nangarhar	07-Jul-14	30-Apr-15	Active
SMS Grant	Help Agro Services Company	Activity #1	Introduce pilot SMS marketing strategy for input wholesalers	Nangarhar	25-Mar-15	25-Sep-15	Active
SMS Grant	Al-Roheed Agriculture Service Company	Activity# 1	Introduce pilot SMS marketing strategy for input wholesalers	Nangarhar	26-Mar-15	26-Sep-15	Active
FOG	Now Bahar Salarzai-LTD	Sub-activity 4.4	Live Radio Programs	Nangarhar			Clarification
FOG	Hamisha Bahar Agro Services Company	Sub-activity 4.4	Live Radio Program	Nangarhar			Clarification
FOG	Falak Niaz Barakzai Ltd	Sub-activity 4.4	Live Radio Program	Nangarhar			Clarification
FOG	Wajid Zaman Agriculture Company	Sub-activity 4.4	Live Radio Program	Nangarhar			Clarification

Annex IV - Grants Report

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(EASTERN REGION)

No.	Grant No.	Company Name	Activity /Sub Activity	Product /Services	Grant Activity Type	Start Date	End Date	Current Status*
1	G-JAA-190	Bakhtar Afghan Agro Services Company	Activity 1	Input Supplier	SMS Grant	7/3/2014	4/30/2015	Active
2	G-JAA-191	Wajid Zaman Agriculture Co	Activity 1	Input Supplier	SMS Grant	7/3/2014	4/30/2015	Active
3	G-JAA-192	Hamisha Bahar Agro Services Company	Activity 1	Input Supplier	SMS Grant	8/17/2014	6/17/2015	Active
4	G-JAA-208	Naw Bahar Salarzai LTD	Activity 1	Input Supplier	SMS Grant	9/7/2014	7/7/2015	Active
5	G-JAA-220	Al-Roheed Agricultural Services Company	Activity 1	Input Supplier	SMS Grant	3/25/2015	9/25/2015	Active
6	G-JAA-221	Help Agro Services Company	Activity 1	Input Supplier	SMS Grant	3/25/2015	9/25/2015	Active

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(CENTRAL REGION)

No.	Grant No.	Company Name	Activity /Sub Activity	Product /Services	Grant Activity Type	Start Date	End Date	Current Status*
1	G-KBL-020	Prosperity Group of Companies	Activity 1	Input Supplier	SMS Grant	14-Oct-14	30-Apr-15	Active
2	G-JAA-219	Control Union	Activity 2	HACCP Training Provider	FOG	17-Feb-15	31-Mar-15	Active