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INCENTIVES DRIVING ECONOMIC ALTERNATIVES—NORTH, EAST AND WEST (IDEA-NEW)

FY'12 SECOND QUARTERLY REPORT

JANUARY 1- MARCH 31, 2012



Photo: Post-pruning integrated pest management (IPM) in an orchard supported by IDEA-NEW in Kunduz Province.

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

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ACRONYMS

AAP	Annual Activity Plan
ADP	Alternative Development Program
AGE	Anti-Government Elements
ACCI	Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Industries
AISA	Afghanistan Investment Support Agency
ANDS	Afghanistan National Development Strategy
ASAP	Accelerating Sustainable Agriculture Program
ASMED	Afghanistan Small and Medium Enterprise Development
AOI	Area of Interest
BVW	Basic Veterinary Worker
CCI	Community Constructed Infrastructure
CDC	Community Development Council
CoMo	Community Mobilization
CDF	Commercial Demonstration Farm
CfW	Cash-for-Work
CNTF	Counter Narcotics Trust Fund
COIN	Counter Insurgency
DAI	Development Alternatives, Inc.
DCA	Dutch Committee for Afghanistan
DDA	District Development Authority
DoPW	Department of Public Works
DOWA	Department of Women's Affairs
EMS	Environmental Management System
FTE	Full-time Equivalent
GDA	Global Development Alliance
GIRoA	Government of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
GME	Gender & Micro Enterprise
ha	Hectare/s
HACCP	Hazard analysis and critical control point
IP	Implementing Partner
IPM	Integrated Pest Management
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
IVR	Interactive Voice Response
JDA	Joint Development Associates

KTD	Key Terrain District
LOP	Life of Project
MAIL	Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock
m	Meter
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MCN	Ministry of Counter Narcotics
MHP	Micro-Hydro Power
MRRD	Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development
MPW	Ministry of Public Works
MoWA	Ministry of Women's Affairs
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NRM	Natural Resource Management
NSP	National Solidarity Program
NTA	Nangarhar Talc Association
NVDA	Nangarhar Valley Development Authority
PDC	Provincial Development Council
PO	Purchase Order
PRT	Provincial Reconstruction Team
PSP	Private Sector Partner
RCC	Reinforced Cement Concrete
REVAMP	Regional Vegetable Marketing Program
RFA	Request for Application
RMHC	Rabia Mariam Handicraft Co.
SDF	Small Demonstration Farm
SPF	Small Production Farm
TIMER	Technology Innovations for Market-Led Economic Rehabilitation
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USG	United States' Government
VFU	Veterinary Field Unit
2WT	Two-wheeled tractors

BACKGROUND

DAI, in alliance with Mercy Corps and ACDI/VOCA, has been working to achieve the broad objective of the U.S. Agency for International Development's (USAID) agricultural development and alternative livelihood strategy since 2009. USAID's country strategy objective for agricultural programming is "a sustainable, thriving agricultural economy," and under this objective USAID's agricultural programs contribute to both stabilization and counternarcotics policy goals through promotion of a thriving and licit agricultural sector in Afghanistan.

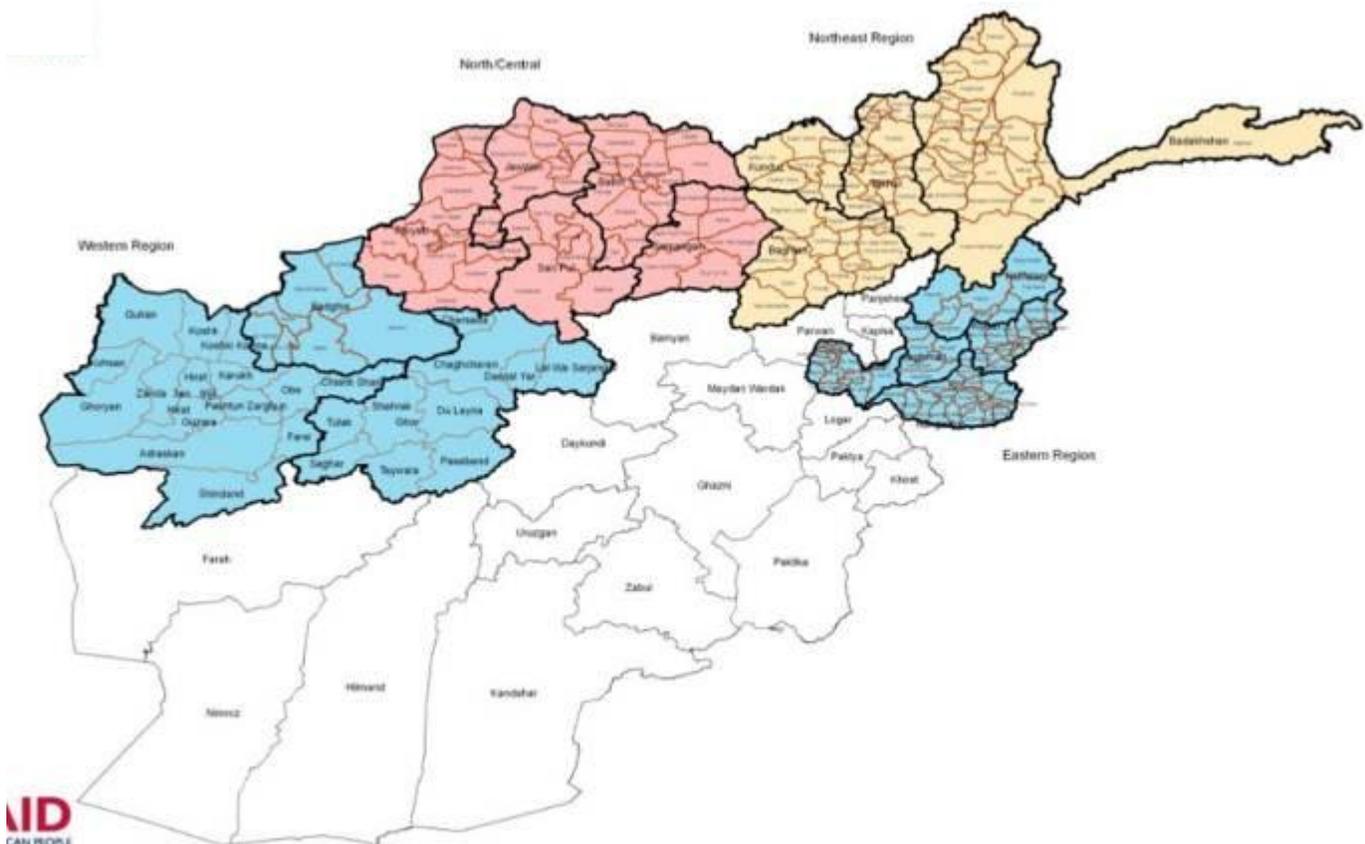
As part of this strategy, the Incentives Driving Economic Alternatives for the North, East, and West (IDEA-NEW) program has focused on activities that promote income generation and job creation through increased commercial agricultural opportunity for Afghan farmers in poppy production-prone areas. The program further contributes to supporting growth in the Afghan agricultural economy by strengthening farm to market linkages in economic development corridors in the northern, eastern, and western regions of the country. Working to grow viable agribusinesses, IDEA-NEW facilitates connections between producers, traders, and buyers through technical assistance, market information activities and sales promotion.

Three partners implement IDEA-NEW: DAI, ACDI/VOCA, and Mercy Corps:

- DAI works in the East and West (Nangarhar, Kunar, Laghman, Nuristan and Badghis, Herat);
- ACDI/VOCA in the North (Faryab, Sari Pul, Jawzjan, Balkh, Samangan) and
- Mercy Corps in the Northeast (Badakhshan, Takhar, Kunduz, Baghlan).

The program works closely with provincial- and district-level governments and within local communities, capitalizing on the successes of previous USAID projects in the area, which built strong relations among local stakeholders, and have given IDEA-NEW the ability to scale-up rapidly.

GEOGRAPHIC REACH OF IDEA-NEW



MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

JANUARY 1-MARCH 31, 2012

QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR PROGRESS

In the quarter, IDEA-NEW made the overall following progress:

- A total of **54,745 households** benefited directly from IDEA-NEW interventions
- Wages totaling **\$203,366** were paid directly to laborers working on community-constructed infrastructure projects
- A total of **126 full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs** were created through cash-for-work infrastructure activities
- A total of **285 Jeribs (57 hectares)** of land were brought under irrigation
- Another **946 hectares of land** were cultivated with licit crops supported by IDEA-NEW in the quarter
- More than **28,000 people** received IDEA-NEW-supported agricultural productivity training
- A total of **749,824 livestock** were brought under improved management practices
- More than **18,000 farmers** participated in voucher programs throughout IDEA-NEW areas of operation, and **3,026 farmers** planted high-value perennial crops
- Over **1,000 people** received business skills training
- A total of **3,855 full-time equivalent (FTE)** farm and agriculture-business- related jobs were created through IDEA-NEW technical assistance and financial support
- **Seventy (70)** government line staff received training supported by IDEA-NEW

NORTHEASTERN REGION

BADAKHSHAN, KUNDUZ, TAKHAR AND BAGHLAN PROVINCES

In Progress: Staff worked with Shuras, CDCs and private sector agricultural input suppliers to identify beneficiaries for 2012 agriculture and livestock projects in all provinces. This quarter 2,672 beneficiaries were selected for a wide variety of activities, including spring vegetables, beekeeping, orchard management and the women's poultry project.

In Progress: Distribution is underway and staff are working to distribute vouchers for selected beneficiaries. This quarter a total of 2,472 vouchers were distributed to farmers for spring vegetables seeds, fruit tree pruning and orchard establishment.

In Progress: A total of 864 orchards were pruned across all four provinces and more than 340 farmers received technical pruning training. In addition, 1,212 farmers sprayed their orchards through a voucher scheme with dormant oil and an improved fungicide. Dormant oil helps protect trees against pests.

In Progress: IDEA-NEW staff selected 245 new beneficiaries for the women's poultry project and trained 197 ongoing beneficiaries this period.

Women's Savings Groups: During the quarter, 600 women participated in Community-based Savings Groups (CBSGs). The amount women contribute varies from a minimum of 50 AFN to up to 800 AFN per session. The average amount saved is about \$10 per person for the quarter.

EASTERN REGION

LAGHMAN, NANGARHAR, NURISTAN AND KUNAR PROVINCES

Completed: A three-month textile weaving training successfully completed for 31 people in Kama and Bihsud districts of Nangarhar province. IDEA-NEW provided the cost of training including salaries of trainees and cost of raw materials for training purposes. Trainees will set up their own textile businesses.

Ongoing: A total of 402 farmers were identified to participate in an orchard planting program for the Spring. These farmers received 27,263 saplings of citrus, stone fruits, pomegranate and persimmon, and farmers contributed 55% of the cost of their saplings. These saplings will cover approximate 402 jeribs (80.4 hectares) of land throughout Nangarhar, Kunar and Laghman provinces.

Completed: Kolala Irrigation channel improvement project in Hisarak district of Nangarhar province is designed to irrigate an estimated 400 jeribs of land serving the farms of about 350 families.¹ The project rehabilitated about 325 m long underground irrigation channel for supplying water to agricultural land.

Completed: Shenkorak Kariz Improvement project is located in Shegal district of Kunar province, was designed to irrigate 205 jeribs (41 hectares) of land serving the farms of 230 families. The project rehabilitated a 1,300 m long underground irrigation channel to supply water to agricultural lands.

Completed: Mazina Girls' School Boundary wall project is a CDC (Community Development Council) project which is located in Rodat district of Nangarhar constructed 360 meters long boundary wall and installed one main and one sub entrance gates, it benefits a total of 1,205 girl students from 450 families.

NORTHERN REGION

BALKH, FARYAB, JAWZJAN, SAMANGAN AND SARI PUL PROVINCES

In Progress: Weed control field days at 30 annual crops training plots.

In Progress: Sale of subsidized 2WTs to 15 farmers.

In Progress: Fourteen new vineyards converted into the new trellising system in Sari Pul, Faryab and Samangan provinces.

In Progress: Training of pesticide retailers in Sprayers and Spray Application.

¹ GPS grids have not been taken for this project due to insecurity so this number is only an estimate provided by the site engineer. It has not been reported in IDEA-NEW performance data.

Completed: Planting field days at 30 annual crop training plots

Completed: Planting of 200 jeribs (40ha) apple, cherry, apricot and almond orchards in Faryab with distribution of 16,000 saplings and 3,200kg of DAP.

Completed: Training in vineyard management and pruning by an International Consultant for 95 participants including vineyard owners, DAIL Extension Departments, agricultural retailers, and students from the Agricultural Department of Balkh University.

Completed: Silkworm rearing training for a total of 1,000 women in all five provinces.

Completed: Review of Karakul production by an International Consultant

WESTERN REGION

HERAT AND BADGHIS PROVINCES

Completed: Alanjan Canal Structures Improvement project which is located in Injeel district of Herat province benefiting approximately 500 families in 15 villages irrigating an estimated 2,500 jeribs (500 ha) of land.²

Completed: Tezan Canal Structures Improvement project is located in Guzara district of Herat province which benefits 1,250 families and irrigates an estimated 5,000 jeribs (1,000 hectares) of land.

Completed: Odwan Canal Structures Improvement project is designed to irrigate an estimated 4,500 jeribs (900 hectares) of land benefiting 1,500 families; the main crops grown in this system are wheat, corn, rice, cotton, seasonal vegetables and fruit orchards.

²The GPS hectare data has not yet been collected for all three canals for the IDEA-NEW performance data. The data is expected to be collected, confirmed and reported in the next quarter.

VALUE CHAIN INTERVENTIONS

IDEA-NEW OVERALL SUSTAINABILITY APPROACH

As the project enters its fourth year, IDEA-NEW is focusing on plans to ensure that farmers' three main needs -- high quality inputs, sound technical advice and access to markets – continue to be met long after the project is over. With these three key elements in mind, IDEA-NEW is implementing a sustainability plan based on increasing both the supply and demand for high quality agricultural inputs and improving farmers' ability to market their goods.

IDEA-NEW is developing relationships with quality private sector partners (PSPs) across regions to improve their capacity to provide access to the quality inputs and technical training previously provided directly by IDEA-NEW. This includes, for example, working closely with two newly established farm service centers (FCS) in Kunduz and Takhar provinces, created through USAID funding under the Afghan Farm Service Alliance project. Other provinces are being served by local agriculture input suppliers and/or other FSCs with a commitment to provide quality inputs to farmers at competitive prices. Furthermore, these provincial-based PSPs serve as the suppliers to district level retailers in their province with whom they do business, providing technical training to increase the knowledge base of lower level retailers who often have little technical information about the products they sell. In addition to providing quality agricultural inputs these suppliers also supply technical knowledge to beneficiaries through their own demonstration farms.

Through this sustainability approach, IDEA-NEW hopes to build the capacity of market actors to improve their businesses and agricultural incomes. This approach also helps farmers to avoid being caught in a cycle of dependence on donor project implementers, and supports the development of Afghan agricultural markets.

ORCHARD VALUE CHAIN (HIGH VALUE CROPS)

IDEA-NEW interventions in the orchard value chain (citrus and stone fruit in the eastern region, stone fruit, almonds, and pomegranate in the central region, and apples and stone fruit in the northeastern region) are important because Afghan fruit and nut productivity is low, farm gate prices for fruits and nuts are high, feasible technical solutions exist to increase productivity and large numbers of rural Afghan households depend on fruits and nuts as a cash crop.

Mercy Corps—Northeastern Region

The orchard management project is ongoing, and during the latter end of the quarter much of the pruning training was conducted or co-facilitated by the private sector partners (PSPs) under the supervision of IDEA-NEW technical staff.

Currently 32 PSP pruners have been trained during the reporting period. Overall, 912 beneficiaries were selected and 898 vouchers were distributed for orchard management services. In addition, 1,212 farmers



Photo: A pruned orchard in Badakhshan province

were trained in the application of dormant oil and fungicide for fruit and nut trees. Dormant oil helps protect the trees against pests.

During the January-March 2012 quarter, 864 orchards were pruned across the four provinces and more than 340 farmers received technical training:

- In Badakhshan, PSPs pruned orchards in Kishem, Baharak, Argo, Jurm, Wardoi, Shuhada, Faizabad and Tishkan districts.
- In Baghlan, orchards were pruned by four PSP pruners in Puli Khumri, Baghlan Jaded, Bano and Dehsallah districts. In addition, more than 140 farmers were trained by PSP master pruners in these same locations.
- In Takhar, PSPs pruned orchards in Bangi, Kalafghan, Farkhar, Taloqan, Chal and Baharak districts, and 200 interested farmers participated in a practical training session in these areas.
- In Kunduz, orchards were pruned and there are plans to train beneficiaries in orchard post-blooming activities, such as lime application, channel preparation, post-blooming fungicide application and application of fertilizers.

Sustainability: In addition to training IDEA-NEW beneficiaries to prune their own trees, the project also linked orchard growers to master pruners already working in their areas. Growers received a voucher for discounted pruning services.

For the future, farmers will still be trained in pruning and linked to master pruners, but IDEA-NEW will provide little or no subsidy on the pruning services. This will encourage master pruners to work to generate demand for the services by reaching out to area farmers directly.

This year, IDEA-NEW will provide accreditation and ongoing skills training to master pruners and provide them with certificates and vests to show that they are certified pruners and increase their visibility among orchard owners.

Orchard Establishment

Farmers dedicate one jerib of irrigated land to a new orchard and are interested in a new business activity with fruit plantations. The farmers are committed to attending trainings and undertaking the aftercare of the new orchards, and contribute to the cost of inputs through the voucher system. Farmers in the orchard establishment project purchase high quality Perennial Horticulture Development Program (PHDP) certified saplings, secateurs, barbed wire fencing and chemical fertilizers including DAP and Urea. Barbed wire keeps the young trees safe from grazing animals.



Photo: Layout and design of new orchards in Baghlan

In the quarter, 546 beneficiaries were identified and selected for the new orchard establishment project in conjunction with input from Shuras and CDCs. Vouchers were distributed to all selected farmers, and currently 277 new orchards have been established. In addition, 300 individuals, including farmers, DAIL staff and private sector partners (PSPs) received ongoing training in orchard establishment best practices.

Ongoing monitoring of saplings and selected farmers' land has continued throughout the reporting period, with more than 150 farmers visited. IDEA-NEW agriculture staff report generally good results, with new orchards properly set up and previous years' orchards still in good condition. IDEA-NEW staff selected and signed contracts with five PSPs (Private Sector Partners) as fruit sapling growers and distributors and greater linkages were established between PSPs and farmers.

- In Badakhshan, IDEA-NEW technical staff established fruit orchards in Baharak and Faizabad districts. PSP members were present during the orchard design process. IDEA-NEW technical teams linked farmers with five local PSPs, facilitating farmers to purchase 3,360 saplings.
- In Baghlan, the IDEA-NEW agriculture team worked with PSPs in Puli Khumri, Baghlan Jaded, Bano and Dehsallah districts to demonstrate proper layout and design.
- In Takhar, 160 farmers participated in orchard establishment training. They learned proper layout and the proper way to plant saplings.
- In Kunduz, 135 new orchards were established. IDEA-NEW staff helped farmers deal with challenges and learn new skills, such as properly preparing irrigation channels and using correct pruning techniques. The agriculture team visited new orchards, which are complete and in good condition.

Sustainability: For the future, IDEA-NEW is working to link potential orchard establishment beneficiaries directly to fruit tree nurseries and nursery associations for ongoing provision of inputs and services. Currently, most nursery growers sell primarily to the NGO market, and then sell anything left over wholesale. This year, IDEA-NEW will support these fruit tree nursery entrepreneurs to extend outreach directly to farmers. The goal is to assist the nurseries in providing not only inputs (high quality saplings), but to combine inputs with layout and planting services in an embedded package for the farmers. IDEA-NEW may continue to marginally subsidize the cost of inputs to encourage the consumption of the package deal.

This kind of service delivery during the pre-planting and planting time is critical to establishing a strong orchard. Previously, pre-planting training was provided by IDEA-NEW, but this process needs to be handed over to capable private sector actors. The NISPA program is also providing nursery associations with technical and marketing support in order to ensure good quality inputs are available and nurseries are in a position to advise on their use.

DAI Eastern Region

Orchard Development Program

A total of 402 farmers were identified to participate in an orchard planting program for the spring. These farmers received 27,263 saplings of citrus, stone fruits, pomegranate and persimmon, and farmers contributed 55% of the cost of their saplings. These saplings will cover approximate 402 jeribs (80.4 hectares) of land. Another 583 orchard owners who joined the program in 2010 and 2011 were trained on orchard planting design, spacing, field layout, irrigation management, liming, top dressing and integrated pest management. As part of this program, a total of 724.5 jeribs (144.9 hectares) of stone fruit orchards were sprayed by winter oil via Ag Farm Store members for a fee of 200 Afs per jerib.



Photo: An IDEA-NEW field technician helps a farmer whitewash trees in Rodat District, Nangarhar; whitewashing is a standard IPM technique implemented by the program.

Nursery Development Program

The nursery development program works with three small nursery businesses to standardize saplings, improve their stock and provide high-quality, high-yielding tree varieties to farmers throughout Eastern region. The cuttings are received from PHDP and the Laghman Nursery Grower's Association Mother stock nurseries. In the quarter, a total of 18,860 saplings of stone fruit, vine, pomegranate and forestry cuttings as well as 63kg stone fruit (apricot, almond, peach) were planted in three commercial nurseries.



Photo: Winter oil spraying in Behsud District, Nangarhar.

ACDI/VOCA North Central Region

Perennial Crops

Other donors and agencies are active in development of the perennial crops value chain in the North Central Region, with the exception of Faryab province. To introduce a wider range of fruit crops in Faryab, IDEA-NEW is establishing 50 ha of new commercial orchards of 0.2ha(1 jerib) each for farmers, including almond, apricot, cherry and apple.

In 2011, 10 ha of almond orchards were planted as part of the overall 50ha of new orchards. During January and February, the owners of these almond orchards were trained on how to spray and the benefits of dormant oil.



Photo: Training the farmers how to plant saplings– Pashtun Kot, Faryab

Layout and digging of sapling planting holes were completed in the remaining 40 ha, giving a total of 200 orchards – 26 in Shirin Tagab, 63 in Khwaja Sabz Posh, 45 in Pashtun Kot, 17 in Bilchiragh, and 49 in Qaysar.

Certified varieties of apple, cherry, apricot and almond were supplied and distributed to the orchard owners, with each receiving 80 saplings plus the required amount of DAP fertilizer.

A total of 16,000 saplings and 3,200 kg of DAP fertilizer were distributed, with practical training on the planting of saplings and application of DAP fertilizer being provided during the distribution. Continued extension support will be provided to each farmer, including orchard management and irrigation, while Lucerne seed will be distributed for intercropping. GPS polygon data was collected for all 200 orchards.

GRAPE VALUE CHAIN

Grape trellising, along with appropriate crop management, can double or triple production in a traditional Afghan vineyard in three years. Most traditional grape growing areas in Afghanistan now have established and productive trellised vineyards and a private agribusiness sector just beginning to develop as a provider of key inputs and services crucial to continued expansion of trellised vineyards. There are opportunities for IDEA-NEW interventions in the value chain because Afghan grape productivity remains relatively low, prices for grapes are high, feasible technical solutions exist to further increase productivity, and large numbers of rural Afghan households depend on grapes as a cash crop.

ACDI/VOCA North Central Region

Vineyard Demonstration Plots: Nineteen trellised vineyard demonstration plots have been established in the five northern provinces to show the benefits of the new trellising methods to the vineyard owners in the region. The remaining part of trellis installation was completed at two vineyard demonstration plots, one located in Shibirghan district, Jawzjan and another located in Qaysar district, Faryab.

March is the pruning season for vines, and an international viticulture consultant provided theoretical and practical training on vine pruning and canopy management for both the T and I systems of trellising. A total 95 persons including farmers, agricultural retailers, DAIL extension workers and students of Balkh Agriculture Faculty received this training in Faryab, Jawzjan, Sari Pul and Balkh provinces.



Photo: Supervision of trellis post installation – Sangcharak, Sari Pul

Based on the the technical consultant's recommendations, a workplan to implement the pruning and canopy management techniques in the field was prepared and pruning at ten vineyard demonstration plots was completed, eight plots in Faryab and two in Jawzjan provinces. A total of 24 neighboring vineyard owners participated in the pruning of the plots and practically learned how to prune and train trellised vines. These farmers are expected to adopt the techniques in their own trellised vineyards.

Commercial Trellising Program: In Maymana, Khwaja Sabz Posh, Shirin Tagab and Qaysar districts of Faryab province, twelve new vineyards measuring 2.58 ha were trellised and wired, using 1,548 concrete posts. In order to expand the trellis installation in Qaysar district, a new agricultural retailer was trained in trellis layout and installation and an MoU signed, clarifying responsibilities and the fees payable by IDEA-NEW for layout and installation.

In Samangan, three new vineyards measuring 0.56 ha were converted to the new trellising system in Hazrati Sultan and Feroz Nakhchir districts. A total of 504 trellis posts have been installed in the vineyards.



Photo: Produced concrete posts – Sangcharak, Sari Pul

In Sari Pul, nine new vineyards measuring 1.48 ha were converted to the new trellising system in Sangcharak district. To expand the trellising program further, two agricultural retailers, from Sozma Qala and Sari Pul districts in Sari Pul were trained in post lay-out, post installation, and wiring. An MoU was signed with the retailer in Sozma, and an MoU is due to be signed with the retailer in Sari Pul district. So far, 16.96 hectares have been trellised in Faryab, Samangan and Sari Pul provinces.

In support of the Vineyard Trellising project, in Samangan, Sari Pul and Faryab provinces, four private businesses have been established to manufacture the required concrete posts. Manufacture continued at the three plants in Sari Pul and Faryab, with a total of 3,320 posts produced. Post production has now ceased with the end of the trellising season in March.

Project support was discontinued for the plant in Samangan province, and the plant will continue on a fully commercialized basis. During this three months, stocks of posts from previous purchase orders were utilized in the IDEA-NEW trellising program.

The following table gives details of the posts produced during this reporting period:

Plant Name	Province	Posts produced in Jan-March 2012 quarter	Status	Total posts produced
Maymana	Faryab	1290	No purchase order.	5,030
Qaysar	Faryab	760	Production was resumed by the end of February.	2,110
Feroz Nakhchir	Samangan	N/A	Direct project support has been withdrawn, since IDEA-NEW has achieved its targeted hectares of trellising.	9,260
Sangcharak	Sari Pul	1290	All production under 3 rd PO was completed and the 4 th PO was signed.	2,540
Total		3,320		18,940

VEGETABLE VALUE CHAIN

Since 2009, IDEA-NEW has trained more than 90,000 farmers in improved vegetable techniques, which has resulted in dramatic increases to productivity and household incomes. This broad promotion of improved practice has also stimulated agricultural input suppliers to stock and sell a much wider selection of seed and chemicals than they did five years ago. Yet, traditional, low-input, low-yield vegetable production still prevails throughout the country. There are opportunities for IDEA-NEW to intervene in the vegetable value chain as feasible technical solutions exist to increase productivity and large numbers of rural Afghan households depend on fresh vegetable production for both food security, and as a cash crop.

Mercy Corps Northeastern Region

Sustainability: IDEA-NEW is working with one primary supplier in each province through which the project beneficiaries will purchase vegetable seeds, pesticide and fertilizer. These private sector partners (PSPs) received training in business development as well as agricultural technical training. In two of the provinces, these PSPs are also being supported by the NGO CNFA, another USAID grantee. In addition to the provincial-level partners, we are also working with district-level partners. The provincial-level partners work with the district partners to not only supply inputs, but also provide training to raise the technical and business capacity of the retailers in the districts.

In the quarter, 1,118 vouchers were distributed to farmers in all four provinces for spring vegetable seeds such as tomato, onion, cucumber and okra. Farmers will purchase certified seeds from local PSPs while taking part in trainings facilitated by IDEA-NEW and the PSPs.

Spring Vegetable Cultivation Project

In Badakhshan, the IDEA-NEW team distributed 250 vouchers for onion, okra and cucumber seeds in Faizabad, Jurm, Argo and Baharak districts. In Kunduz, 359 vouchers for cucumber and onion seeds were distributed in Aliabad, Emam, Qal'ezal, Khanabad and Kunduz city center. In Takhar, 389 vouchers for cucumber, tomato and onion seeds were distributed in Bangi, Kalafghan, Farkhar and Baharak districts. In Baghlan, 120 vouchers for onion seeds were distributed in Puli Khumri and Baghlan Jaded districts. Ongoing monitoring of plots continues, with the agriculture team visiting 80 onion cultivation plots in Puli Khumri and Baghlan Jaded districts.

Vegetable Demo Plots

In this quarter, 12 farmers were selected for vegetable demonstration plots in Takhar and Badakhshan provinces. Four farmers in Taloqan, Baharak, Bangi and Farkhar districts in Takhar province and 8 farmers in Baharak, Jurm, Faizabad and Argo districts in Badakhshan province were selected to receive training and support for the design and planting of demonstration plots of cucumber, squash, tomato, pepper and okra.

Strawberry Demo Plots

This new project will take place in Takhar province, and four farmers in four districts (Taloqan, Baharak, Bangi and Farkhar) were selected to participate.

Agriculture Radio Programming

Discussions are currently underway to enhance and expand Internews' agriculture radio programming. IDEA-NEW is working together with USAID-funded CNFA as well as Aga Khan and Concern to develop a series of radio programs for farmers. The programs will cover a range of topics including technical skills, field visit interviews with farmers and shopkeepers, marketing and other value chain issues. The shows will include a mix pre-recorded and live features, so that they could be played over again or in other areas with similar crops/weather patterns, as well call-in components to give farmers a chance to ask questions. This program supports the sustainability of the project going forward by allowing IDEA-NEW to indirectly reach out to a large group of farmers whom the project may never reach in person, and provide advice that can be re-played over time.

DAI Eastern Region

Small and Commercial Production Farms Program

IDEA-NEW provides support to small production farms (1 jerib), which also demonstrate their successes to other farms in the area and host field training days, where they grow high-yielding vegetable varieties. Commercial production farms (3 jeribs) receive more intensive training on growing cash crops for commercial production, and eight of these are linked with high-end traders and a pack house owned by a company called Tak Dana that is HACCP certified. Commercial production farms take hygiene measures very seriously, and are outfitted with latrines and security measures to ensure the integrity of their crops. All production farms are linked with five regional Farm Service Centers (FSCs) in order to provide market linkages to buy high-quality seeds and other inputs.

IDEA-NEW field technicians assisted commercial production farms in their staggered planting techniques. In the quarter, they completed at least three plantings at the farms, for both winter season and spring season crops. During the quarter, training activities also continued, and 3,815 farmers were trained on modern techniques.

A total of 240 new small production farms were selected for coming spring – summer season for demonstration practices and field training days. Farmers contributed 60% of the cost to grow various vegetables on their farms, including eggplant, tomato, okra, pepper, cucumber, squash, and watermelon.



***Photo:** Farmers get training on land preparation and field lay out on a small production farm in Chowkai district, Kunar.*

TEXTILE VALUE CHAIN

IDEA-NEW has initiated support to rural entrepreneurs who want to restore their ancestral businesses of weaving shawls, scarves, and bulk wool cloth for hat and traditional apparel production. The current demand for these products is five times greater than can be supplied by established workshops, all of which are working at full capacity. Therefore, IDEA-NEW's intervention in the textile value chain is important because there is a strong and unmet regional demand for the shawls and cloth that can be produced, a large pool of interested and experienced Afghans (some in refugee status in Pakistan) who want to start or expand their weaving businesses and feasible technical solutions to increase production volume and quality.

DAI Eastern Region

- A three-month textile weaving training successfully completed for 31 local Afghans in Kama and Bihsud districts of Nangarhar province. IDEA-NEW provided the cost of training including salaries of trainees and cost of raw materials for training purposes. The trainees will set up their own textile businesses.
- The textile washing and pressing facility pressed and dyed the following products, which were woven by individual textile companies and weavers in Kama, Dari-Noor, Rodat and Bihsud districts of Nangarhar. This facility is now completely sustainable and serving for local textile weavers.

<i>Product</i>	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Processing Description</i>
Scarves	13,439	Pressed and dyed
Male shawls	399	Pressed
Cotton cloth (m)	317	Pressed
Scarves	390	Pressed

POULTRY VALUE CHAIN

IDEA-NEW intervention in the poultry value chain is important because Afghan poultry production is small in comparison to Pakistani imports but it is competitive in price and quality; many farmers are interested in raising broilers. Hence, there exists rapidly growing demand for birds and production assistance as imports are replaced with domestic production.

IDEA-NEW has established 79 broiler farms in the eastern region and other broiler farmers have learned from the farmers who have received training from IDEA-NEW and now are adopting the production efficiencies promoted by the program. However, challenges still exist in providing cost-effective inputs to broiler producers. Broiler farmers are vulnerable to the cross-border transport problems that affect the supply of day-old chicks and also to production problems stemming from inconsistent quality and pricing of Pakistan-sourced broiler feed. While these challenges cannot be removed entirely, they can be mitigated by supporting alternatives to these problematic components of the value chain.

Mercy Corps Northeastern Region

During the quarter 245 women were selected as poultry beneficiaries in Badakhshan, Takhar, and Kunduz provinces, mostly located near the provincial centers for easier access to local markets and lower transportation costs when transporting eggs for sale. In addition, 197 women received training in poultry rearing and coop design. A one-day technical refresher course was held for all IDEA-NEW staff to increase their capacity to work with poultry rearers.

Takhar's poultry team conducted training in Ganj, Ali Bek and Eshan Oeshlag villages for 32 select beneficiaries. The training took place over ten days in which participants learned about the importance of improved poultry breeds, the role of balanced feed for egg production, vaccinations, feeding and drinking systems, and hatching eggs by traditional methods.

In addition, poultry team members helped beneficiaries to select the locations and layouts for coops, which will be built from local materials. Coops are generally 2.5 meters long and 2 meters wide with one window and one door.

Sustainability: Previously, IDEA-NEW directly handled the procurement of layer birds and high quality feed because the right inputs were not readily available in the provinces. To date it has been difficult to find strong private sector partners to serve as local suppliers for quality pullets. Currently, IDEA-NEW works with two private sector partners (PSPs) who supply improved breed pullets to beneficiaries across all four provinces. In this way, IDEA-NEW serves as the intermediary that links potential poultry rearers to inputs and services available in their area, and ensures that they are of good quality.

DAI Eastern Region

- A total of 94,553 fertile eggs were produced in Nangarhar breeder farm and 89,280 were transferred to Surobi hatchery for the production of day old chicks for the local poultry farmers. The additional 7,920 fertile eggs were sold to the Mazar-i-Sharif hatchery, generating a total of generated 102,960 Afs to the breeder farm. The breeder farm also sold 54,074 day old chicks in local market per chick on 20 Afs that generated a total of 1,081,480 Afs to Nangarhar Breeder Farm.

- A total of 6,000 breeder chicks arrived on December 30th, 2011 to Hedayat Barakat breeder farm. The required vaccine of ND+EDS kill and IBD3 live were applied in Hedayat Barakat breeder farm. These chicks will produce the fertile eggs for the production of broiler day old chicks and will distribute on local poultry farms in the eastern region.



Photo: A view of broiler breeder chicks in Rodat district, Nangarhar.

- Broiler farmers located in Achin, Ghanikhel, and Khewa Bihsud and Chaperhar districts of Nangarhar province put 47,600 broiler day old chicks in their farms.
- IDEA-NEW poultry specialist visited two poultry breeder farms per month and helped the farmers regarding feed, lighting system and vaccination method. These are routine visits of IDEA-NEW poultry specialists that they help the local poultry farmers technically in eastern region.
- Six broiler farmers that receive technical support from IDEA-NEW in Ghanikhail, Dara-i-Noor and Kuz Kunar districts of Nangarhar and Qarghai district of Laghman provinces sold their 15,600 broiler chicks in local market and each farmer received an average 54,000 Afs net profit.

HONEY VALUE CHAIN

IDEA-NEW intervention in the honey value chain is important because Afghan honey productivity is low, domestic demand is high, and farm gate prices for honey are high. Feasible technical solutions exist to increase productivity, and honey production can provide supplemental income to thousands of households situated in the many tree-fruit growing areas of the country where bees can play a key role in the pollination of fruit trees—sometimes doubling yields. Although the Northeast has a suitable climate and terrain for beekeeping, few beekeepers exist in the region and those fail to meet the local demand, mainly due to a lack of improved honey production techniques and processing knowledge.

Mercy Corps Northeastern Region

Beneficiary Selection

This project resumed this quarter after the winter weather subsided, with 145 new beekeeping beneficiaries selected in Takhar and Badakhshan provinces. In Takhar, 80 new beekeeping beneficiaries were selected in Kalafgan and Farkhar districts. Plans to implement this project with an additional 50 beneficiaries in Khodesh district were thwarted due to an armed clash and increasing insecurity in the area. The district Governor chose Khaf dara village in the same district as the new implementation location, but beneficiaries have not yet been selected. In Badakhshan 65 new beekeeping beneficiaries were selected in Baharak district.

Input Suppliers

In the quarter, IDEA-NEW staff met with local beekeeping cooperatives and signed contracts to provide inputs for beneficiaries. In addition, five expert beekeepers were identified, and IDEA-NEW will work closely with them. In Kunduz, a technical workshop about bee rearing systems, bee disease diagnosis,

treatment of disease and medication was conducted for three beekeeping PSPs, three VFUs and four IDEA-NEW staff to increase their technical capacity, with the aim to spread this information to farmers.

Sustainability: Traditionally there has been support for existing beekeeping associations through government and NGOs working in the beekeeping subsector. Most of these were efforts to pool producers to market honey produced by the members. IDEA-NEW works with several beekeeper businessmen or associations in each province who are already established and selling the necessary inputs including hives, bee boxes and tools. The project will provide technical training as well as business training to help them market their products more successfully and expand the pool of qualified beekeepers.

WHEAT VALUE CHAIN

Most wheat is grown for household consumption, and for that reason, it will always be a major crop. Oilseeds (flax, sesame, safflower, and canola) produce oilcake and vegetable oil, which are also in high demand. As access to markets improves, there will be an opportunity to encourage diversification into these more drought-resistant crops. IDEA-NEW intervention in the staple crop wheat and oilseed value chain is important because Afghan crop productivity is low, there are substantial imports of wheat and oil to make up for low productivity in Afghanistan, feasible technical solutions exist to increase productivity, and nearly all rural Afghan households depend on their own wheat production—and to a lesser extent oilseed—for a part of their household diet.

DAI Eastern Region

A total of 28 demonstration farms (one Jerib each) of certified wheat seed were established in winter season 2012, to demonstrate Improve Certified Seed through technology, use of two-wheeled tractors, proper weed control, row sowing, fertilizer use and IPM techniques. The yields of these farms will be compared with the yields of traditional plantation and shown to area farmers for adoption in their own farms.

ACDI/VOCA North Central Region

Training of Farmers on Improved Agronomy of Annual Crops (2011-2012)

Planting field days were completed in all 30 annual crops training plots, resulting in training of 2,964 individual farmers from five provinces. Participants learned about the use of 2WT in bed preparation and plowing, treating seed against diseases, use of improved seed and seed rate, and planting in rows. Planting was delayed this year due to the prolonged winter and cold weather.

With the completion of planting, weed control field days commenced. Three field days were conducted, in Kaldar and Khulm districts of Balkh province, and in Aybak district of Samangan province. A total of 207 farmers attended and were trained in the types of weeds, impact of weeds, methods of weed management, using sprayers, and practical demonstration of spraying by farmers.

The later-planted drought resistant crops (chickpea, lentil and flax) were sown at the plots located in Khulm, Kaldar, Balkh and Dihdadi districts of Balkh province, Khwaja Do Koh, Shibirghan, Fayzabad



Photo: Farmers attend weed control field day– Khulm, Balkh

and Aqcha districts of Jawzjan province, Feroz Nakhchir district of Samangan province, and Khwaja Sabz Posh district of Faryab province.

Advanced Weed Control Training: In order to make the weed control field days more efficient, an advanced training program was held for the farmers who own the annual crops training plots and for relevant extension workers. Under this initiative, a total of 21 landowners and 20 extension workers from Balkh, Jawzjan, Samangan and Sari Pul province were trained in integrated weed control.

Sprayer Training: 28 farmer groups with a total of 229 individual member farmers were trained on the use of a knapsack sprayer for the control of weeds within the annual crop fields. Each farmer group received a knapsack sprayer at the end of the training. The sprayer will be used for weed control in the member farmers' lands as well as other farmers' lands.

Conservation Tillage Training

A zero-tillage seed drill was imported to introduce this technology to farmers, and seven training plots established. Each plot consists of 1 ha, of which 0.6 ha is allocated for wheat, 0.2 ha for safflower and 0.2 ha for chickpea. By January 2012, the last of the seven planting field days using the zero-tillage seed drill was conducted in Maymana district, Faryab, where farmers were shown the use of zero-tillage seed drill attached to a four wheel tractor. The farmers planted 20 ha using the zero-tillage seed drill in Khulm district of Balkh province. The following table shows details of this program:



Photo: Demonstration of zero-tillage – Maymana, Faryab

Demo Plot Location	District	Province	Type of Land	ha in Zero-tillage Seed Drill (Plowed and unplowed)	Ha in Bed Planter (Plowed)
Damulla Lashkari	Khulm	Balkh	Semi-irrigated	0.4	0.2
Oljatoo	Khulm	Balkh	Rainfed	0.6	0
Shirabad	Dihdadi	Balkh	Rainfed	0.6	0
Khwaja Paitakht	Maymana	Faryab	Rainfed		
Arab Qorloq	Khwaja Do Koh	Jawzjan	Semi-irrigated	0.6	0
Sansiz	Fayzabad	Jawzjan	Semi-irrigated	0.4	0.2
Larghan	Aybak	Samangan	Rainfed	0.6	0

Small-scale Mechanization (Provision of Subsidized 2WTs)

During this quarter, a total of 15 farmers, six from Balkh, four from Jawzjan, one from Sari Pul and four from Faryab provinces bought subsidized two wheel tractors from IDEA-NEW. The 2WTs were handed over to them after they had received the required five days of operation and maintenance training. In addition, two reapers were also sold at a subsidized price to two farmers in Jawzjan province.

Since the start of the 2WT program, 157 farmers have bought 2WTs at a subsidized price and been trained in operation and maintenance.

Establishment of 25 Maintenance and Repair Workshops for 2WTs

IDEA-NEW has contracted Osiyo Hamkorlik Company (OHC) to establish 25 privately owned repair and maintenance workshops in the region to support farmers who invest in 2WTs.

During this reporting period, the sixth and seventh series of supervision visits to the 25 workshops in five provinces were completed. All the workshops were busy repairing 2WTs and selling spare parts to operators. In the sixth series, the collected sales sheets show that the 25 workshops earned 103,330 Afs from the service fees and sale of spare parts over a two month period, a 30% increase over the previous two months.

The sales report of the seventh series of the supervision shows that the 25 workshops earned 83,641 Afs during the previous two month period. Two new mechanics were trained to replace two old mechanics in Shibirghan and Qarqin districts of Jawzjan province who had ceased work. The spare parts and repair tools were taken back and handed over to the new mechanics under the supervision of IDEA-NEW.

SILK VALUE CHAIN

Household silk production is a traditional activity in the northern region, where the silk is processed and used to manufacture carpets and textiles. Silk production is an ideal activity for increasing the incomes of poor households because production costs are low and a family may, for six weeks' work, earn enough to ensure their food security for the whole year. It is also a great multiplier of employment, creating work for spinners, dyers, weavers, carpet makers, and garment makers. All of these jobs are suitable for women and others who, for any reason such as disability, are unable to do heavy manual work. IDEA-NEW intervention in the silk value chain is important because Afghan silk productivity is low, there is a strong demand in the regional carpet and textile industry, feasible technical solutions exist to increase productivity, and silk production provides rural Afghan women with employment that is both profitable and culturally appropriate.

ACDI/VOCA North Central Region

Silkworm Rearing Training for Women

Silkworm rearing training for 1,000 women was started in five provinces in February and completed by mid-March 2012. A total of 25 training venues were identified where the selected beneficiaries received five days of training on how to rear silkworm eggs to the cocoon stage, including disinfection of the rearing room, incubation of eggs, mulberry leaf collection and cleaning, and the four stages of silkworm development (egg, larva, pupae and adult). At the start of the silkworm production season in early April each trainee will be provided with one box of silk worm eggs and will receive continued extension support during the production period.



Photo: Silkworm rearing training, Jawzjan Province.

AGRICULTURE AND RURAL INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVED

IDEA-NEW implements community-constructed infrastructure (CCI) projects that serve a two-fold purpose: to restore and build productive infrastructure, and to inject cash into local economies in unstable and insecure areas helping to reduce communities' reliance on illegal activities including narcotics and insurgency.

IDEA-NEW is actively working on 15 community-constructed infrastructure (CCI) projects throughout its areas of operation. It paid \$197,795 in wages and created 123 labor-intensive rural jobs in the quarter.

Mercy Corps Northeastern Region CCI Summary Chart – January 1-March 31, 2012

Province	Active Projects	Approved Projects	Completed Projects	Stopped Projects	Total Person-days	Total FTEs	Total Wages
Badakhshan	2	23	20	1	3,894	15	29,124
Baghlan	0	40	40	1	190	.7	1,344
Takhar	3	18	13	0	3,560	13.7	23,160
Kunduz	2	11	7	0	1,112	4.3	7,645
Totals	7	92	80	2	8,756	33.7	61,273

Flood Protection Infrastructure

In order to protect farmlands from annual flooding, IDEA-NEW is working closely with local communities and MAIL / DAIL to identify and implement high priority projects. These projects range from repair work to new construction.

Ongoing: Shna Tapa retaining wall project

The Shna Tapa retaining wall project in Guldin village of Aliabad district, Kunduz province is ongoing, and will serve to protect the Aliabad canal from flooding. The project began on January 27, 2012 after it was identified by the local government as a priority. This soil erosion project will protect 660 hectares of agricultural land from flooding, benefiting 374 families. Construction of the 100 meter stone masonry wall is ongoing, as work was temporarily suspended during the winter months.



Photo: Shna Tapa Retaining Wall Project, Ali Abad District, Kunduz Province

Ongoing: Youchug road construction project

The ongoing Youchug road construction project is underway in Worsoj district, Takhar province. The project began on June 27, 2011 and will be completed in May 2012. The construction of the new two kilometer road will link 60 hectares of agriculture land and orchards in Youchug village to nearby markets, benefiting 150 families. The village is fairly remote from the Worsoj district center, and residents need a passable road outfitted

with culverts to protect it from flooding. At the moment it is difficult to transport agriculture products for sale as trucks and light motor vehicles are not able to drive on the road. Construction work includes two kilometers of road-cutting, filling, levelling and gravelling, in addition to the construction of five culverts and 20 meters of retaining wall. The project was requested by CDCs in the community and certified by the district governor.

Irrigation and Water Management Infrastructure

IDEA-NEW is supporting agriculture through improving and extending irrigation systems and expanding water management systems.

Completed: Zardew Canal

The Zardew canal in Shuhada District, Badakhshan was completed this period. This project rehabilitated the 13.5km Zardew canal, which irrigates an estimated 2,200 hectares of land for 1,740 farming families from 17 villages. Local workers excavated and reinforced the structure of the canal, which had been damaged by repeated flooding. The intake of the canal was also replaced to allow the community to control the amount of water in the canal. The project started in August 2010 and was completed on January 15, 2012. The rehabilitation of the canal and intake included the construction of three aqueducts, 320 meters of covered canal, a 180 meter retaining wall, three culverts and one spillway. This canal project will ensure regular irrigation for orchard growers in the area, helping them earn higher and more reliable incomes.



Photo: Zardew canal handover ceremony in Shuhada District, Badakhshan

Completed: Abdullah Canal

IDEA-NEW completed the Abdullah Canal project in Omerkhil village in Kunduz. This project started on July 12, 2011 and was completed on January 24, 2012, and consists of 14 off-takes, 2 culverts and 121 meters of retaining wall, which provides sufficient water for 752 hectares of agricultural land. This project will directly benefit 852 rural farmers' families. This project provided work for 238 local laborers through the cash for work scheme, generating 1,723 person days.

Completed: Jaji irrigation project

The ongoing Jaji irrigation project is located in Guldin village of Aliabad district, Kunduz province and began on January 23, 2012. This project will rehabilitate the canal's irrigation structure to ensure regular flow and sufficient water for 320 hectares of agricultural land and orchards for 374 families. Construction is ongoing for a 63 meter stone masonry wall.

Ongoing: Cha Ab-Gazan road project

Cha Ab district is a remote, mountainous area of Takhar province. Its inhabitants export fruit as the primary source of income for the area; however, bad roads have made it difficult for people to transport fruit quickly and undamaged to the district center. This ongoing project began on July 17, 2010 and is expected to be completed in May 2012. The projects entails the construction and graveling of over 9.2 km of road, the construction of five culverts of different sizes, as well as the construction of two bridges (each spanning 10 meters), 180 meters of retaining wall, and 720 meters of gabion work. This project has so far created work opportunities for at least 1,245 laborers and more than \$100,000 paid out in wages.



Photo: Bridge Culvert, Cha Ab-Gazan road project. Chah Ab District, Takhar

Ongoing: Muhajer Qushlaq super passage project

The ongoing Muhajer Qushlaq super passage project in Bangi district, Takhar province, will help to ensure regular flow and sufficient irrigation water for 291 hectares of agriculture land and orchards, benefiting 2,038 families in 8 villages. Bangi district, about 40 km south of the Taloqan district center, is renowned for its agriculture lands, with almost 90% of its residents working in agriculture-related activities and managing livestock. The super passage project will rehabilitate the existing irrigation structure with a new 82 meter super passage structure to ensure proper water flow of the Muhajer Qushlaq canal.

Ongoing: Sakha Irrigation and power canal

The Sakha irrigation canal in Badakhshan province is IDEA-NEW's largest infrastructure project in the Northeastern region, and once completed will provide water and hydro-power for 647 hectares of land in Baharak district. The project began on April 20, 2011 and is 60% complete. So far construction of the intake structure has been completed, as well as 75 meters of retaining wall in the intake area. In addition, culvert structures have been built and 1700 meters of the canal has been widened and reinforced with stone masonry to prevent wash-outs.



Photo: Sakha Irrigation and Power Canal project, Baharak District, Badakhshan

Ongoing: Guzar e Afghani Canal

The Guzar e Afghani canal project is ongoing in Faizabad, Badakhshan province. It began on November 14, 2011 and is approximately 70% complete. Once completed the new canal structure will provide irrigation water for 110 hectares of farmland in the area. Major activities this quarter included the construction of three wash culverts and 550 meters of canal protection walls on both sides of the canal. Laborers also excavated the canal lining and built 214 meters of stone masonry walls.

**DAI Eastern and Western Regions
CCI Summary Chart – January 1-March 31, 2012**

<i>Province</i>	<i>Active Projects</i>	<i>Approved Projects</i>	<i>Completed Projects</i>	<i>Temporarily Stopped Projects</i>	<i>Cancelled Projects</i>	<i>Total Person-days*</i>	<i>Total FTEs*</i>	<i>Total Wages*</i>
Kunar	3	12	9	-	-	5,998	23.1	38,699
Laghman	1	8	7	-	-	2,118	8.2	12,429
Nangarhar	5	44	33	-	6	11,374	43.8	62,824
Nuristan	-	1	1	-	-	0	0	0
Badghis	-	35	23	8	4	0	0	0
Hirat	-	4	4	-	-	3,475	13.4	22,570
Totals	9	104	76	13	6	22,965	89	136,522

* Wage, FTEs and person days are reported for two months as one month was reported in the previous quarter.

The following six projects were completed and two others started in this quarterly period, projects in Badghis province were stopped temporarily due to winter weather.

Completed: Mazina Girls’ School Boundary wall:

This CDC (Community Development Council) project, which is located in Rodat district of Nangarhar, constructed 360 meters long boundary wall and installed one main and one sub entrance gate: it benefits a total of 1,400 girls from 450 families in the area.

Completed: Kolala Irrigation channel improvement project:

Kolala Irrigation channel improvement project in Hisarak district of Nangarhar province is designed to irrigate an estimated 400 jeribs of land serving the farms of about 350 families.³ The project rehabilitated about 325 m long underground irrigation channel for supplying water to agricultural land inside the villages.



Photos: Before and after photos of Kolala Irrigation channel improvement project

³ GPS grids have not been taken for this project due to insecurity so this number is only an estimate provided by the site engineer. It has not been reported in IDEEA-NEW performance data.

Completed: Alanjan Canal Structures Improvement project

Alanjan Canal Structures Improvement project which is located in Injeel district of Herat province benefiting around 500 families in 15 villages irrigating an estimated 2,500 jeribs (500 ha) of land.⁴



Photos: Before and after photos of Alanjan Canal Structures improvement project

Completed: Tezan Canal Structures Improvement project

Tezan Canal Structures Improvement project is located in Guzara district of Herat province which benefits 1,250 families and irrigates an estimated 5,000 jeribs (1,000 hectares) of land.

The project built following structures: A total of 1,479 meters length of intake and canal protection walls; five small weir structures; one spillway and a control gate.



Photos: Before and after photos of the Tezan Canal control gate

Completed: Odwan Canal Structures Improvement project

The project is designed to irrigate 800 jeribs (160 ha) of land benefiting 500 families; the main crops grown in this system are wheat, corn, rice, cotton, seasonal vegetables and various kinds of orchards.

⁴ The GPS hectare data has not yet been collected for all three completed projects in Herat, so hectares have not been reported in the IDEA-NEW performance data. The data is expected to be collected and reported in the next quarter.

Completed: Shenkorak Kariz Improvement project

It is located in Shegal district of Kunar province which was designed to irrigate over 1000jeribs of land serving the farms of about 1,070 families and flowing through six different villages in the district of Shegal. The project rehabilitated about 1300 m long underground irrigation channel channel for supplying the water to agricultural lands inside the villages.



Photos: Before and after photos of the Shenkorak Kariz Improvement Project in Shegal District, Kunar.

Started: Salar Intake Repairing project:

Salar Intake Repairing project which is fed from the Pech River. IDEA-NEW re-built the Salar Canal to irrigate more than 5,000 jeribs (1,000 hectares) of land in 2010; it is repairing portions damaged by flood in Asadabad District.

Started: Sada Branch Canal:

The Sada branch canal irrigation system is located in Kama district of Nangarhar. The system is designed to irrigate about 300 jeribs of land (60 ha) serving the farms of about 150 families in three villages. The project will improve a 2,535 m length of branch canals and 21 number turnouts.

CROSS CUTTING THEMES

GENDER

Mercy Corps Northeastern Region

Women's Home-based Greenhouse Project

IDEA-NEW is making efforts to increase women's participation in agricultural production and business, thus improving household income. Through IDEA-NEW, women have received materials and assistance in constructing backyard greenhouses for crops such as tomatoes, cabbage and cucumbers to take advantage of high off-season prices.



Photo: Training for women poultry beneficiaries in Taloqan district, Takhar

A pilot was carried out in two provinces to determine if inexpensive winter greenhouses could be successful and cost effective in local climate conditions without using a costly heating source. Several designs were piloted at a cost of under \$200 each using locally available materials and composting as a heating source. Five greenhouses were constructed in Kunduz province and an additional four greenhouses were built in Takhar province. These greenhouses also serve as demonstration greenhouses to teach others in the communities about the benefits of this type of agriculture production. Ongoing monitoring took place during February March, with all of the greenhouses beginning to sprout vegetables.

Women's Poultry Project

Each poultry project beneficiary receives 30 pullets, comprehensive training in chicken care and egg production and support with coop design. The women are also linked with VFUs for ongoing veterinary support.

The women's poultry project implementation structure changed during the 2012 season, with women now receiving 30 pullets and technical support from IDEA-NEW staff. In the past, women also received feed and inputs for building coops. The new structure aims for greater beneficiary investment, and greater sustainability for the project. This quarter 245 new beneficiaries have been selected and IDEA-NEW staff continued to provide support to previous years' beneficiaries. Women report small-scale gains in income, which assist families in supporting needs such as children's education, food and shelter.

Community-Based Savings Groups Training

Women in the poultry project earn money from daily egg sales, but they generally do not save any of this money for the future. This project gives IDEA-NEW poultry project beneficiaries a chance to work together to pool their extra income and to make loans to other women in the group. The groups generally include 10-20 people, and the chairman, secretary and treasurer are elected by group members. The women agree to contribute a minimum of 50 AFN (1 USD) per month, and the group unanimously decides what to do with the money. Women can request loans in the event of a personal emergency, such as a serious illness, to start a business, or to help the group start a business.

A total of 600 women are participating in savings groups. There is a large range of contributions coming in at each savings session, from the minimum of 50 AFN to over 800 AFN. Women are beginning to save enough to make loans. One CBSG in Khasaba village, Yaftal Payeen district, Badakhshan province held a meeting and decided to give a 10,000 AFN loan from their group savings to support a fellow member who is suffering from kidney disease and needs additional money for treatment.

Sustainability: These savings groups serve as an interim activity for IDEA-NEW as the project moves towards facilitating the formation of marketing groups where women can work together to sell their eggs and buy inputs in bulk to take advantage of economies of scale. The goal is to help the women increase production to take advantage of strong demand for local eggs (which sell at a premium compared to Pakistani/Indian eggs) and possibly lead to the formation of a poultry association.

DAI Eastern Region

- A total of 30 women-owned greenhouses continued to receive support in seven districts of Nangarhar, Kunar and Laghman provinces. Soil preparation, animal manure application, seed preparation, layout, sowing and transplanting of cucumber, tomato, squash and okra was finished in all 30 greenhouses.
- Selection of kitchen garden beneficiaries completed for spring/summer season 2012 crops. A total of 100 women were selected to participate in various districts of Laghman, Kunar and Nangarhar provinces.
- During this quarter IDEA-NEW women-owned poultry farms produced a total of 109,224 eggs and all were sold in local market which generated 600,321 Afs to the women farmers.
- Business plan training under the Taraqi Saba program for high-school girls was completed for 300 girl students of high schools and business plans were evaluated by committee to select for the awards. IDEA-NEW will have a closing ceremony for this program in the next quarter.
- Six new garment and finishing centers and five existing centers, generated an average of 15,924 Afs net profit to the businesses (\$318). These businesses were established in 2011, with in-kind grant support from IDEA-NEW.



Photo: A view of a kitchen garden plot– Alishang district, Laghman.



Photo: Girl students during business skill training as part of the Taraqi Saba program- Narang district, Kunar.

ACDI/VOCA North Central Region

Establishment of 10 Village Milk Collection and Processing Centers

Ten village milk processing centers have been established, two in each province, to create a market for the surplus milk in the households. The centers have been provided with hand-operated milk processing equipment to produce yoghurt, cheese, butter, cream and pasteurized bulk milk. Regular supervision and technical support continued to be provided to the centers. During this quarter, a total of 49,514 liters of milk was collected and 832,215 Afs (average 16.80 AFN per liter of milk) and has been paid to the member dairy farmers.



Photo: Monitoring the Milk Processing Center – Balkh, Balkh

Volumes of milk collected at some centres has not been as high as expected, and a meeting was held in March with the processing managers from all ten centers to discuss issues related to improvement of marketing for the dairy products and increasing the amount milk being collected daily.

Cattle Management Training for 500 Women Member Dairy Farmers:

The house-to-house follow-up of women dairy farmers continued in village Milk Collection and Processing Centers. Advice was given to the women dairy farmers as part of their improvement and remodeling of cattle sheds in all project villages. During this quarter, 182 cow sheds were upgraded. This includes installation of a lighting window, ventilator and mud plastering of the walls to prevent ecto-parasites. So far 369 cowsheds out of 500 have been upgraded.



Photo: A woman receives cattle management training –Shibirghan, Jawzjan

The six month cattle husbandry training for fifty women dairy farmers continued in Yaka Bagh milk processing center in Jawzjan. All trainees have been present and learning improved husbandry practices. The training course will be completed at the end of May 2012.

Native Cattle Breed Improvement through Artificial Insemination (AI):

In order to increase the household surplus milk, the cows' breed needs to be improved. An AI service has been introduced at each milk processing center, with a total of 132 cows inseminated during this quarter.

Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) Vaccination:

To prevent FMD, which is endemic in the region, the members' cows are being vaccinated against this disease. During this quarter, the third cycle of the vaccination campaign against foot and mouth disease began in six of the ten centers, with a total of 878 cows vaccinated against FMD.

USG AND GIROA COORDINATION

Mercy Corps Northeastern Region

January meetings:

- The Takhar Program Manager participated in NGO Forum Meeting attended by all local NGOs and hosted by CAF.
- Engineer Abd Ahad the agriculture advisor of the Agha Khan Foundation met with IDEA-NEW livestock and agriculture unit managers to discuss coordination for the spring season.
- The Takhar Program Manager attended the private sector working group at the Ministry of Economy, along with other NGOs.
- The Takhar Program Manager met with the DAIL director to discuss programming and coordination for the agricultural projects in Takhar province for 2012.
- Baghlan management staff attended the DAIL department meeting along with other local NGOs.
- The Baghlan Program Manager met with the directors of the Baghlan Water Management Department to get their signatures for completed projects.
- Badakhshan staff met with the DAIL monitoring and evaluation staff to arrange site visits to agriculture and livestock projects.
- Badakhshan staff attended the provincial governor's monthly meeting and participated in a discussion on the Provincial Development Plan as well as presentations from other NGOs and UNAMA.
- IDEA-NEW hosted a joint field visit with the MAIL M&E manager and DAIL Forestry manager in Baharak and Faizabad. The MAIL team was happy with the projects.
- IDEA-NEW hosted a joint field visit with the USAID Activity Manager and head of the DDC to agriculture projects in Baharak and Argo districts.
- The IDEA-NEW M&E Officer attended a meeting at the Economy Department to discuss reporting requirements. The Department requested Mercy Corps registration form, staff list, equipment list and reports for their files.
- Kunduz staff met with DAIL to present plans for 2012 and discussed coordination.

February meetings:

- Takhar staff met with Farkhar, Bangi and Kalfgon district Governors to discuss cooperation with IDEA-NEW and the implementation of our projects.
- Takhar's DM&E Officer participated in the NGO forum organized by SCA (Swedish Committee for Afghanistan) to discuss NGO activities and security in the province.
- Consulted with leaders and members of CDCs in districts in which we have projects to discuss IDEA-NEW's policies and to ensure transparency for beneficiary selection.
- Baghlan's Project Manager participated in the Baghlan PDC meeting, along with the Governor of Baghlan, Provincial council members, directors of all government departments, heads of NGOs and representatives from UNAMA.
- Baghlan's Unit Managers participated in a DAIL meeting to discuss monitoring all 2011 projects via the MAIL M&E team.
- Meeting conducted with the Kunduz DDA, including 15 CDCs to review last year's projects and to share the 2012 revised approach.

- Kunduz staff conducted a meeting with the Aliabad DDA, including CDCs, to convince the community to contribute to the INFs project in Aliabad district.
- In Badakhshan the IDEA-NEW team met conducted a joint field visit with a USAID representative to observe the beneficiary selection process for 2012 agriculture projects.
- Badakhshan staff participated in an agriculture sectoral meeting at DAIL to discuss NGOs plans for programming in 2013.
- Badakhshan staff participated in a PDC meeting with UNAMA, the Provincial Governor, Mayor, PRT, Concern, GIZ, RCDF, MAIL, Water management Department, Economic Department, DRRD, AKD, Women affairs, Health department, BMZ, UNOPS, IRDF, USAID and Natural Resources Department to discuss future work plans.

March meetings:

- Baghlan IDEA-NEW staff participated in the Festival of Farmers and received an official letter of appreciation from DAIL and the Baghlan Governor's Office for IDEA-NEW's activities in the province.
- IDEA-NEW's staff engineer in Takhar province attended a meeting with the provincial water management department on March 27, 2012. The meeting's purpose was to prepare for seasonal floods and how to protect irrigation infrastructure from destruction and agricultural land from erosion.
- Takhar's program manager attended a USAID meeting at the Takhar government meeting hall.
- The Community Mobilization unit manager met with CDC members in Yrogtash and Badalashlog villages in Kalafgon district, Takhar province, regarding the distribution of agriculture vouchers.
- Takhar's Community Mobilization unit manager met with the Farkhar district governor to discuss the problem with the women's beekeeping project (2011) in Naharab village, where vouchers were collected from the women and exchanged for cash.
- A meeting was conducted with the Irrigation department in Kunduz province, including the head of the Irrigation department from Aliabad district, regarding program updates and better coordination for project implementation in Aliabad district.
- A meeting was held with the Khan Abad DDA in Kunduz province to share information about the progress of agriculture business development projects in the Khan Abad district.
- A meeting was held with the Iman Sahib DDA and CDC to share the new value chain approach for 2012.
- Badakhshan staff met with USAID staff on March 5th and March 14th to discuss the status of activities and the Zardew canal handover.
- IDEA-NEW Badakhshan met with the Narcotics Department to discuss implementation of Alternative Livelihoods projects in the province. All NGOs should coordinate these types of projects with the Narcotic Control Department and DAIL.
- Regional Director met with Faizabad FPO Kendra Bruce and USDA representative John Ellerman on March 4th to discuss the activities for the final year of implementation.
- On March 14th, IDEA-NEW staff in Badakhshan met with the Baharak district governor and provincial council members to discuss the Sakha canal challenges and work progress.

- On March 29th and 31st Badakhshan staff met with DAIL to discuss the handover of saplings to the department.
- On March 21st, IDEA-NEW's Regional Director coordinated a meeting between CNFA, Concern Universal and Aga Khan Foundation with Internews to determine how we can all work together to improve the quality, sustainability and outreach of Internews' recently started bi-weekly agricultural radio program. This was a follow on to an initial meeting held in February with Internews and multiple meetings over the past six months between CNFA and Concern Universal.

Other USAID Programs

Badakhshan staff met with Medair's Nutrition Manager to discuss and exchange technical knowledge regarding agriculture programs.

DAI Eastern Region

- Representatives from USAID accompanied IDEA-NEW to monitor the Kushkak Canal Intake project in Surkhrod District, Nangarhar. The high quality of the work was noted by the USAID inspectors.
- IDEA-NEW team went to Kunar PRT base and presented information on ongoing projects and provided other technical information to the participants who were PRT, ADT, and USAID and then answered respective questions.
- DAIL development workshop on alteration and improvement of five years plan at all Nangarhar was held. All related national and international NGOs, CDC, extension officers, associations, deputy governor, PRT, ADT, provincial council, UNAMA, IDEA-NEW and USAID representatives participated.
- Agriculture Project Integration Senior Officer made a presentation on IDEA-NEW activities to the MAIL and partners program in the Ministry in Kabul, and answered the questions to the floor.
- IDEA-NEW Agriculture Project Integration Senior Officer participated in Laghman farmer's day celebration and presented IDEA-NEW activities. Mr. Dawlatzai, Provincial Director of agriculture, thanked IDEA-NEW for its always good coordination and support.
- IDEA-NEW and six businesses from eastern region participated in the MAIL-sponsored Kabul Agfair in February.
- IDEA-NEW pack house facility was officially handed over to TAK DANA, a private local company. During the ceremony, various local governmental officials participated



Photo: IDEA-NEW representative shares ideas in DAIL workshop in Jalalabad.

ACDI/VOCA North Central Region

January Meetings

- January 1 - The agriculture officer had a meeting with Director of Cooperatives of Balkh DAIL to select a good agricultural cooperative to lend the Land Laser Leveling machine. Bradaran-e-Ittefaq Cooperative in Nahri Shahi district was selected.

- January 4 - At the request of Sari Pul DAIL, the Community Development Officer (CDO) attended an agriculture sector meeting in Sari Pul province, at which the acting director of Sari Pul DAIL requested IDEA-NEW to establish a sub-office in Sari Pul province to help maintain good coordination in implementation of the projects. At end of the meeting the monthly progress report of IDEA-NEW was submitted.
- January 10 - The CDO had a meeting with Jawzjan DAIL and submitted the IDEA-NEW monthly progress report. The silk production section of Jawzjan DAIL was present and requested that they be informed should IDEA-NEW have a silk production program in Jawzjan province for the coming months.
- January 11 - The CDO attended the agriculture sector meeting in Samangan province at which he presented the activities of IDEA-NEW in a Power Point Presentation to the participants, and also presented the monthly progress report. The Samangan DAIL requested all NGOs to present their annual plan and last year activities in the next month sectorial meeting.
- January 15 - The CDO attended the agriculture sector meeting in the FAO compound in Balkh province. Dr. Zia Formuly from DCA presented the IDEA-NEW project “Strengthening Livestock in the North Central Provinces”. At end of the meeting the monthly progress report was submitted.
- January 18 – In response to a written invitation of Department of Economy of Jawzjan, the IDEA-NEW CDO attended the emergency meeting in Jawzjan province. The main purpose was to talk about the emergency support to the families who have been affected by the increase of water level in the villages adjacent to Amu River in Kham Ab and Qarqin districts of Jawzjan province. The deputy governor of Jawzjan asked the NGOs for support.
- January 23 –The (CDO) and Agriculture supervisors attended the District Agriculture Service Provision System workshop in Samangan province organized by Samangan DAIL and presented by HLP/MAIL program staffs. The main objective was to improve coordination among organizations. In the meeting, NGOs were requested to fill out the district agriculture seasonal action plan and submit to Samangan DAIL.
- February 26 – The Capacity Building Specialist Mr. Tony Treen and Business Development Manager had a meeting with the representative of ACCI (Afghan Chamber of Commerce and Industry) in Balkh province regarding the registration of the agricultural associations supported by IDEA-NEW. The problem of associations registering under Ministry of Justice was explained and the representative of the ACCI said that there are some non-profit women associations that are registered under ACCI operating in Balkh province. He thanked IDEA-NEW for sharing this with them and promised that he will discuss this issue in a meeting with the ACCI board of directors and will keep us informed of the outcome of the meeting.
- February 27 – The IDEA-NEW Program Manager and CDO had a meeting with Eng. Katib Shams, Director of Balkh DAIL, and Mr. Virendra Malik, Regional Adviser in Balkh DAIL to discuss possible IDEA-NEW support for the conversion of an existing building to create a Balkh Regional Training Center (BRTC). The Program Manager Eng. Khalid said that the IDEA-NEW commitment to supply the electrical fittings, costing US\$3,000-4,000. Mr. Katib Shams and Mr. Malik thanked IDEA-NEW.

- February 29 - The Faryab governor representative, Abdul Jalil Awar, Director of DAIL, Asadullah Bahar and Director of Economy department of Faryab, Eng. Abdul Hafiz, attended the distribution of saplings for 40 ha orchards in Deh Azizan village of Pashtun Kot district of Faryab province. IDEA-NEW was represented by Eng. Mobin, M&E Manager and Eng. Khalid, Program Manager. The governor and DAIL officials expressed their gratitude for IDEA-NEW's support to agricultural development through implementing such programs in the region.
- March 7 - Mr. David Strine, Mr. George Melton and Mr. Mohammad Zia attended the monthly coordination meeting of the Agricultural Retailer Associations, held in the IDEA-NEW office.
- March 24 –Regional Manager Dr. Andrew, Deputy Regional Manager, Mr. Tony and Program Manager Eng. Khalid participated in the celebration of Farmers’ Day which was held by the Agriculture Department of Balkh in DAIL compound. On behalf of IDEA-NEW, Eng. Khalid gave a speech which was prepared by Dr. Harvey regarding the project’s contribution in agriculture development sector in the region, especially Balkh province. At the end of the event, an appreciation letter was given to Dr. Harvey for his active contribution to agriculture development and maintaining a good coordination of IDEA-NEW program with DAIL.
- March 27 - The IDEA-NEW agriculture officer in Faryab province attended UNAMA Inter-Agency coordination meeting, during which the UNAMA security responsible updated NGOs about security issues, and then the NGOs representatives gave information about their projects and its whereabouts.
- March 12 - The CDO attended the agriculture sectorial meeting in Jawzjan province in DAIL department. The CDO updated the participants about IDEA-NEW last month activities. At the end of the meeting, all NGOs representatives submitted their monthly reports to responsible person.
- March 14 - Based on written invitation letter from Sari Pul DoE and Provincial Council, the CDO attended the coordination meeting held in Sari Pul provincial council office. All NGOs reported their activities during 2011 and gave information about the 2012 plan.

SUSTAINABILITY/CAPACITY BUILDING

Mercy Corps Northeastern Region

- IDEA-NEW’s livestock team in Badakhshan province conducted a two-day Training of Trainers (ToT) training for Concern’s poultry team, per Concern’s request. The training consisted of one day of instruction in the office on topics such as poultry business, advantages and importance of coops, coop construction and design, site selection, required tools, coop sanitation, proper feed and its effects on production, infectious diseases and parasites, vaccination, and linkages to FVUs, feed suppliers and markets to sell eggs. The second day consisted of a site visit to an IDEA-NEW poultry project for practical training.
- A one-day poplar production and cultivation training took place at the Puli Khumri office, Baglan province. Five IDEA-NEW staff were trained, including Agriculture and Business Development (ABD) officers, the ABD Unit Manager and Community Mobilization officers.



Photo: Training for Concern poultry team, Badakhshan

IDEA-NEW conducted a pruning training for private sector partners (PSPs) from Kishem, Argo, Faizabad, Yaftal and Baharak districts in Badakhshan. Overall, 13 people participated, including six people from the IDEA-NEW agriculture team.

- IDEA-NEW conducted orchard establishment design training for nursery grower PSPs.
- IDEA-NEW agriculture team and PSPs participated in spring crop training.

DAI Eastern Region

- A six-month English and computer training successfully completed for 12 staff members of sectorial and economics directorate of Laghman province.
- A one-year long English training was successfully completed for six staff members of NCCI (Nangarhar Chamber of Commerce and Industries) in Nangarhar province. The objectives of this trainings are to develop the capacities of the staff of NCCI to respond rapidly and appropriately to the needs of the business community.

ACDI/VOCA North Central Region

Ag Retailer Association Support:

Three monthly coordination meetings were conducted with the boards of directors of six agricultural retailer associations from five provinces. The business development team chaired these meetings and discussed issues related to sustainability of the associations, and also provided them with necessary recommendations and support.

Although their licenses with the Ministry of Justice in Kabul were renewed in January, some problems were experienced during the process, and it would appear that the associations should correctly be registered with the Ministry of Commerce. Discussions in this context were held with the Balkh Chamber of Commerce and Industry, as noted under GIRoA Coordination above.



Photo: Ag retailer's associations monthly coordination meeting– Mazari-e-Sharif, Balkh

A performance analysis of the six agricultural retailing associations in five provinces was completed, covering book-keeping, revolving capital funds, and cash and inventory management. The two associations in Balkh province and Motmaen Association in Samangan province stands at first, second and third ranks and demonstrated good performance during the last one year.

Trellis installation equipment consisting of ten augers, four wire grippers, ten lever arms, two measuring tapes, four steel cutters, and four pliers were granted to the agricultural associations in Sari Pul and Faryab provinces for distribution to the three agricultural retailers who were trained in Sozma Qala, Sari Pul, and Qaysar districts.

In-kind Grants: In-kind grant items from IDEA-NEW stock were distributed, consisting of 2,187 kgs of wettable sulphur, 75 foot pump sprayers, 2,000 meters of flexi flume along with its components, 1,445 pairs of safety goggles, 3,000 pairs of spray gloves, 71 pruning shears and 95 pruning saws, to Kawsar and Balkh-e-Bastan Associations in Balkh province and Motmaen Association in Samangan province. Distribution to only three associations was based on the business performance analysis.

In response to a request from IDEA-NEW East, 450 liters of dormant oil was transferred from Mazar-e-Sharif to Jalalabad. It was given to IDEA-NEW East in accordance with a signed MoU.

Motmaen Association in Samangan province procured pesticide and animal medicines worth of 550,000 Afs from a reputable company in Kabul using the capital gained through IDEA-NEW support. Motmaen is one of the three associations that has demonstrated good performance in turning over the working capital by procuring quality inputs and resale to its members.

Pesticide Application Training: Building on the Retailer Basic Training courses on pesticide storage, handling, sale, use and safety, a training programme on sprayers and spray application was initiated for the agricultural retailers. In early February, four IDEA-NEW training staff were given five days technical background and course training. Following this, seven two day courses were held for eight agriculture staff from JDA who are involved in the annual crops training activity, five staff from the Balkh Women's Farm Service Center, and 72 retailers.

Course topics consisted of sprayer components and their function, sprayer maintenance and repair, protective clothing, factors to consider when preparing to spray, pesticide mixing, spraying techniques for herbicides and for insecticides / fungicides, disposal of empty containers and excess spray mix, and sprayer calibration. The topics were covered in a mix of classroom theory followed by field activities to put the theory into practice. The final two courses, for retailers from Faryab, will be held in early April.



Photo: Poplar cutting and sorting in Bangi district, Takhar

2WT Usage: The six associations have been granted 66 of the 2WTs, while 26 cooperatives have been granted 26 of the 2WTs. From January to March, the associations plowed 155 ha and the cooperatives plowed 45.2 ha.

LEGACY PROJECTS

Mercy Corps Northeastern Region

Commercial Timber and Timber Nursery

Timber provides a relatively high income for farmers as compared to other crops, but farmers are not aware of how to produce it and linkages to markets. Further, the existing varieties of poplars are slow-growing and pest infested. The market demand for timber poles is high but the availability of improved varieties is the missing link for the growth of the sector as a viable livelihood option.

IDEA-NEW is introducing hybrid clones and scientific cultivation practices to encourage farmers to grow timber beyond their household needs to meet growing market demand for saplings and wood. The hybrid varieties grow straighter and faster than local varieties, reaching maturity in just three years. Farmers plant either a half-jerib of open-space (1 x 1 meter) or quarter-jerib of closed space (.5 x .5 meters) of poplar on good quality irrigated land.

The project is ongoing with monitoring and site visits to potential and past beneficiaries. In the reporting period, the Baghlan agriculture team surveyed farmers to identify community members who may be interested in purchasing saplings from existing timber beneficiaries. In Takhar, project staff linked 45 interested farmers with current poplar owners. These farmers purchased poplar cuttings from IDEA-NEW beneficiaries and planted the cuttings in 23.5 jeribs of land. In addition, 120 farmers received practical training in poplar production.

Silk

This quarter, 650 people were selected to participate in the silkworm rearing project. In Kunduz, 600 female farmers were selected and in the Fabrika area of Baghlan Jaded district, Baghlan province, 50 farmers were selected to participate in the silkworm rearing project, which will run from March 20th to July 20th. All beneficiaries participated in the project last year, and will receive ongoing technical assistance in 2012. The silkworm rearing project is a quick income generation project with the goal of increasing cocoon production for the rearers. Each beneficiary will provide their own rearing tools and IDEA-NEW will provide support through training. In Kunduz, IDEA-NEW plans to hire four technical experts on a service contract to support the 600 ongoing beneficiaries. Government officials in both provinces have voiced support of the project.

Grape Cultivation/Trellising

This project is ongoing in Takhar and Badakhshan provinces for 19 farmers. IDEA-NEW's agriculture unit manager and field officers visited and monitored project participants and provided instruction on fertilizer application and weed control. In addition, grape plants were pruned for farmers in Taloqan, Kalafgan and Bangi districts of Takhar province.

DAI Eastern and Western Regions

- Regional Vegetable Marketing Program (REVAMP): REVAMP is a program to help orchard farmers make an interim cash crop (vegetables) until their trees start bearing fruit; this makes them less likely to rip up the trees and sell them in times of need before they are a source of income. Input distribution for REVAMP for 100 beneficiaries was completed, they received a REVAMP Package (25kg Urea+25Kg DAP + Seed) in different districts of eastern region, and farmers contributed 60% of the costs.
- A total of 97 Natural Resource Management Association (NRMA) members received capacity building training regarding forestry management, soil conservation, forest protection and benefits of forests in Noorgal and Pachiru Agam watersheds. The activity was completed.
- During this reporting period NTA (Nangarhar Talc Association) exported 45,570 tons of talc to Pakistan that generated 379,750 Afs to NTA. IDEA-NEW helped form the association, which is now running sustainably on its own.
- SPFA (Spinghar Poultry Farmers Association) inaugurated a new poultry market for their members in Jalalabad city. The market has 42 poultry shops; the members will pay 100 Afs/month from these shops to the Association.
- A total of 22 live Karkila Aw Maldari (agriculture and livestock) radio shows were aired via Sharq Radio in Nangarhar. During the shows 99 farmers/listeners called IDEA-NEW experts and asked questions they had about their orchards, vegetables, and livestock. IDEA-NEW will conduct an impact survey on the program in the next quarter, and decide whether or not to move forward with it. Another 12 live agriculture and livestock shows were aired via Kawoon Ghag in Laghman and 115 farmers from different parts of the province posed their questions to IDEA-NEW experts.

ACDI/VOCA North Central Region

Support to Veterinary Field Units (VFUs)

Support continued to the private network of 109 veterinary field units in the region with regular supervision and technical visits. The VFUs were actively involved in delivering animal health services to all the districts in the region, and a total of 703,373 animals including sheep, goats, and cows were treated for or vaccinated against common diseases.

Monthly Extension Training: Each paravet continued to hold monthly extension training sessions for groups consisting of about fifty herders. A total of 16,807 person days of training was created during this quarter as a result of this intervention. The livestock owners learned improved husbandry and herd health focusing on improving animal health and increasing livestock production. Two female paravets have each been regularly conducting monthly training on animal health topics for twenty women livestock owners in Chimtal and Nahri Shahi districts of Balkh province.

Joint extension courses were conducted for each of 45 VFUs (29 from Balkh, six from Jawzjan and ten from Samangan) and their groups of herders. The topic was mixing urea with straw to prepare concentrate feed and improve nutritional quality of the feed.

Refresher Courses for Paravets: In January 2012, three two-week long Livestock Nutrition courses were conducted and a total of 24 paravets attended, including five from Balkh, seven from Jawzjan, four from Sari Pul, six from Faryab and two from Samangan, provinces. The training course will help the paravets deliver better quality services.

- Five paravets, three from Balkh, one from each of Faryab and Samangan province attended a five day training course on Basic Laboratory Practices.
- Ten paravets, two from Balkh, three from Jawzjan, two from Faryab and three from Samangan provinces attended a five day training course on Business Skills in order to improve their book keeping and management capabilities.
- Thirteen paravets, eight from Balkh, one from each of Jawzjan and Faryab and three from Samangan provinces attended two weeks training course on Animal Pregnancy in two separate courses.
- A five day Poultry Husbandry course was conducted attended by six paravets, two from Balkh, one from Sari Pul. and three from Faryab provinces.

Basic Veterinary Workers (BVWs): The third round of one month basic training course for new BVWs started on January 1 and was completed on January 26, 2012. A total of seventeen BVWs including four from Balkh, seven from Faryab, three from Jawzjan, two from Samangan and one from Sari Pul provinces attended this program. So far 52 BVWs have been trained and assigned to help certain VFUs to reach more remote areas. The BVWs will be a chain link to the existing network of paravets.



Photo: A local paravet teaching herd health packages to the herders – Fayzabad, Jawzjan

DAIL Pure-Bred Karakul Flocks

An international consultant assessed the need for improvement of the Afghan Karakul based on the international market requirements. The consultant made several site visits to the two DAIL Karakul farms supported by IDEA-NEW. He also visited farmers who are breeding Karakul sheep and produce Karakul pelts in Andkhoy and Dihdadi districts of Faryab and Balkh provinces. Karakul traders were interviewed and the measures that need to be taken to improve the quality of Afghan Karakul and increase its value were discussed. The assessment was completed and a report together with recommendations was produced. The recommendations will be implemented through the paravets and BVWs. A drinking basin was constructed for the Karakul Farm in Balkh province.

Establishment of Feed Banks:

Twenty-five(25) livestock feed banks have been established throughout the region, each with 150 members. These were regularly visited and supervised. Each feed bank was provided with eight tons of animal feed, which include flax and cotton seed cakes. Most of the feed banks have sold the feed stuff to their members and started revolving the fund. Support will continue to ensure that they become sustainable businesses.

Land Laser Leveling Program

The Beradarane Itefaq Agricultural cooperative was identified by Balkh DAIL as suitable for the loan of a laser land leveling machine on a use and return basis. The cooperative covers 108 ha agricultural land and hills near Mazar-e-Sharif Airport. An MoU was signed between IDEA-NEW and the cooperative, and the machine was handed over together with its additional parts. Two-days of training was given to the machine operator. A second cooperative has been identified by Faryab DAIL in Almar district for the loan of a laser land leveling machine on use and return basis. The performance of this cooperative is being assessed prior to granting the loan.

The MoUs for the use of two laser land leveling machines by two agricultural cooperatives in Balkh and Sari Pul province were extended till Dec. 31, 2012.

During this quarter, a total of 8.3 ha were leveled by three cooperatives in Balkh province. So far, 57.7 ha have been leveled using the four laser land leveling machines in three provinces.

VOICES FROM THE FIELD

Mercy Corps Northeastern Region



Mohammed Zubair is cultivating a fruit tree nursery in Dasht e Farakh, Baharak, Badakshan.

Mohammed is solely responsible for feeding his large family of 12. He said,

“I have 20 jeribs of land but prior to the project I was cultivating wheat and other cereal crops which couldn’t provide for my family’s essential life requirements. Then I got news that IDEA-NEW planned to establish fruit tree nurseries in Baharak.”

IDEA-NEW helped Mohammed to establish a nursery and provided him with a sprayer, pruning scissors, a pruning knife, animal manure, labor for weeding, barbed wire, pillars, technical trainings and exposure visits in which he gained a great deal of knowledge about fruit orchards and nurseries. Mohammed told us,

“Now my hopes are coming true because I can see change in my life. Now I have 8,000 certified and standard fruits saplings - apples, apricots, almonds,

pears and peaches - to sell at the market. I can earn a large profit from my fruit trees nursery, and have gained new customers from NGOs and local farmers.”

DAI Eastern Region



Wali Jan, 48, owner of a Small Production Farm in Qarghae district of Laghman province:

“IDEA-NEW provided me input package with technical assistance like land layout, sowing, nursery establishment, transplantation, fertilizer application, weed control and irrigation management. I cultivated different types of vegetable such as Cabbage, cucumber, okra, potato and squash in my 5 jeribs farm and earn good income by selling my products in Kabul market. I have also gained a lot of experience in vegetable production by participating in field days. I am satisfied from IDEA-NEW assistance.”

QUARTERLY MONITORING & EVALUATION DATA

Performance Indicators

Outputs are tracked through 25 Performance Indicators. Regional implementing partners use the same forms to capture data, and it is reported into a central database. Depending on the indicator, results are reported on a biweekly, quarterly or annual frequency. There are 16 biweekly indicators, seven quarterly indicators and two annual indicators. The tables below give the results for the reporting period by partner as well as by the program as a whole, and are charted against “targets” by Fiscal Year.

Impact Evaluation

Output indicators by themselves are not a basis for rigorous performance measurement; IDEA-NEW also conducts impact evaluation for some of its largest projects. With the flexibility to conduct specific impact assessment at regular intervals, this plan serves to measure program effectiveness and give management the right information to make better-informed decisions about IDEA-NEW’s work, as well as give USAID Afghanistan a clear picture of IDEA-NEW’s outcomes and impacts over the life of its project.

The project also conducted a baseline household study in July 2009, and will follow up at intervals to assess household impacts in areas where IDEA-NEW is working. This will be done on a biennial basis, and will include those items measured in the household economic baseline. The baseline report, which gives a full economic picture of households in provinces where it was implemented, is available by request.

Field Missions

Field Missions are undertaken to provide contextual information, as well as QA/QC. On infrastructure projects, engineers assess construction quality and project progress, and laborers are asked if their wages are paid in a fair and transparent way. For non-infrastructure, overall quality, transparency, and effectiveness are assessed. All field missions are conducted to inform program managers about areas of improvement. All missions also review environmental compliance with USAID, and ensure that GPS grid points for projects are captured. Approximately six to eight missions are conducted weekly.

Some explanations on indicators

All definitions and data collection methods for all indicators below are available at request. Some answers to common questions:

Full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs: These are calculated in two ways. For CCI projects, 260 labor days = 1 FTE. For agriculture projects 0.25 ha under licit cultivation = 1 FTE. For enterprises, a new employee reported by an IDEA-NEW assisted business to be “full time” = 1 FTE. Existing employees at the start of IDEA-NEW intervention does not count. There is a one-month lag time for CCI wage reporting.

Increased sales of licit farm and non-farm products are tracked in different ways. Farm product sales are tracked through surveys of key agricultural interventions programs involving 10,000 people or more. Non-farm products are tracked through bi-annual sales reports from assisted enterprises; only increases over the baseline are reported.

All data reported to USAID has “back-up” documentation, including training sign-in sheets, contracts, export documentation and enterprise forms that detail sales and employee information.

ANNEX I: QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR TABLE BY REGION

(SEE ATTACHED)

ANNEX II: CCI PROJECT DATA BY REGION

(SEE ATTACHED)

ANNEX III: NON-CCI PROJECT LIST

(SEE ATTACHED)

ANNEX IV: GRANTS UPDATE

DAI Eastern and Western Regions

(SEE ATTACHED)

ACDI-VOCA Northern Region

A realigned LOP Budget was prepared and submitted to DAI, covering the 4 year period from March 2009 through January 2013.

At the IDEA-NEW Quarterly Meeting held in February 2012 in Kabul, DAI agreed to increase the current Obligated Funds by an additional \$2.4 million to cover expenses through September 2012 (FY2012).

For the 40ha Faryab Fruit Orchard activity, purchase orders (PO) were signed with four Baghlan nursery farmers for the supply of 5,360 M111 and M25 rootstock apple saplings, with two Takhar, Warsoj nursery farmers for the supply of 3,000 apple saplings, and with Umulbelad Nursery Grower Association, Mazar for the supply of 1,760 Almond saplings and 1,200 Apricot saplings. All the saplings were received in March 2012

A subagreement modification for a “no-cost-time-extension” was signed with the Dutch Committee for Afghanistan to extend the “Strengthening the Livestock Production Project” to June 2012 from the current ending of March 2012.

An Invitation to Quote was advertised in the Peace Dividend Trust (PDT) Afghanistan website and IDEA-NEW website for the supply of: (i) 1 No Multi-end Reeling unit (capacity 10 kg/day), (ii) 5 Nos Charkha reeling units, hand-operated (capacity 1.5 kg/day).

ANNEX V: COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT INFORMATION

ProjectIDEA-NEW
Start DateMarch 2, 2009
End DateMarch 1, 2014
Cooperative Agreement Number306-A-00-09-00508
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