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

MONTHLY REPORT: APRIL 2012



APRIL 2012

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ACRONYMS

AAP	Annual Activity Plan	IVR	Interactive Voice Response
ADP	Alternative Development Program	JDA	Joint Development Associates
AGE	Anti-Government Elements	KTD	Key Terrain District
ACCI	Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Industries	LOP	Life of Project
AISA	Afghanistan Investment Support Agency	MAIL	Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock
ANDS	Afghanistan National Development Strategy	m	Meter
ASAP	Accelerating Sustainable Agriculture Program	M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
ASMED	Afghanistan Small and Medium Enterprise Development	MCN	Ministry of Counter Narcotics
AOI	Area of Interest	MHP	Micro-Hydro Power
CCI	Community Constructed Infrastructure	MRRD	Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development
CDC	Community Development Council	MPW	Ministry of Public Works
CoMo	Community Mobilization	MoWA	Ministry of Women's Affairs
CDF	Commercial Demonstration Farm	MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
CfW	Cash-for-Work	NRM	Natural Resource Management
CNTF	Counter Narcotics Trust Fund	NSP	National Solidarity Program
COIN	Counter Insurgency	NTA	Nangarhar Talc Association
DAI	Development Alternatives, Inc.	NVDA	Nangarhar Valley Development Authority
DCA	Dutch Committee for Afghanistan	PDC	Provincial Development Council
DDA	District Development Authority	PO	Purchase Order
DoPW	Department of Public Works	PRT	Provincial Reconstruction Team
DOWA	Department of Women's Affairs	RCC	Reinforced Cement Concrete
EMS	Environmental Management System	RFA	Request for Application
FTE	Full-time Equivalent	RMHC	Rabia Mariam Handicraft Co.
GDA	Global Development Alliance	SDF	Small Demonstration Farm
GIRoA	Government of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan	SPF	Small Production Farm
GME	Gender & Micro Enterprise	TIMER	Technology Innovations for Market-Led Economic Rehabilitation
ha	Hectare/s	USAID	United States Agency for International Development
IP	Implementing Partner	USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
IPM	Integrated Pest Management	USG	United States' Government
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force	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.

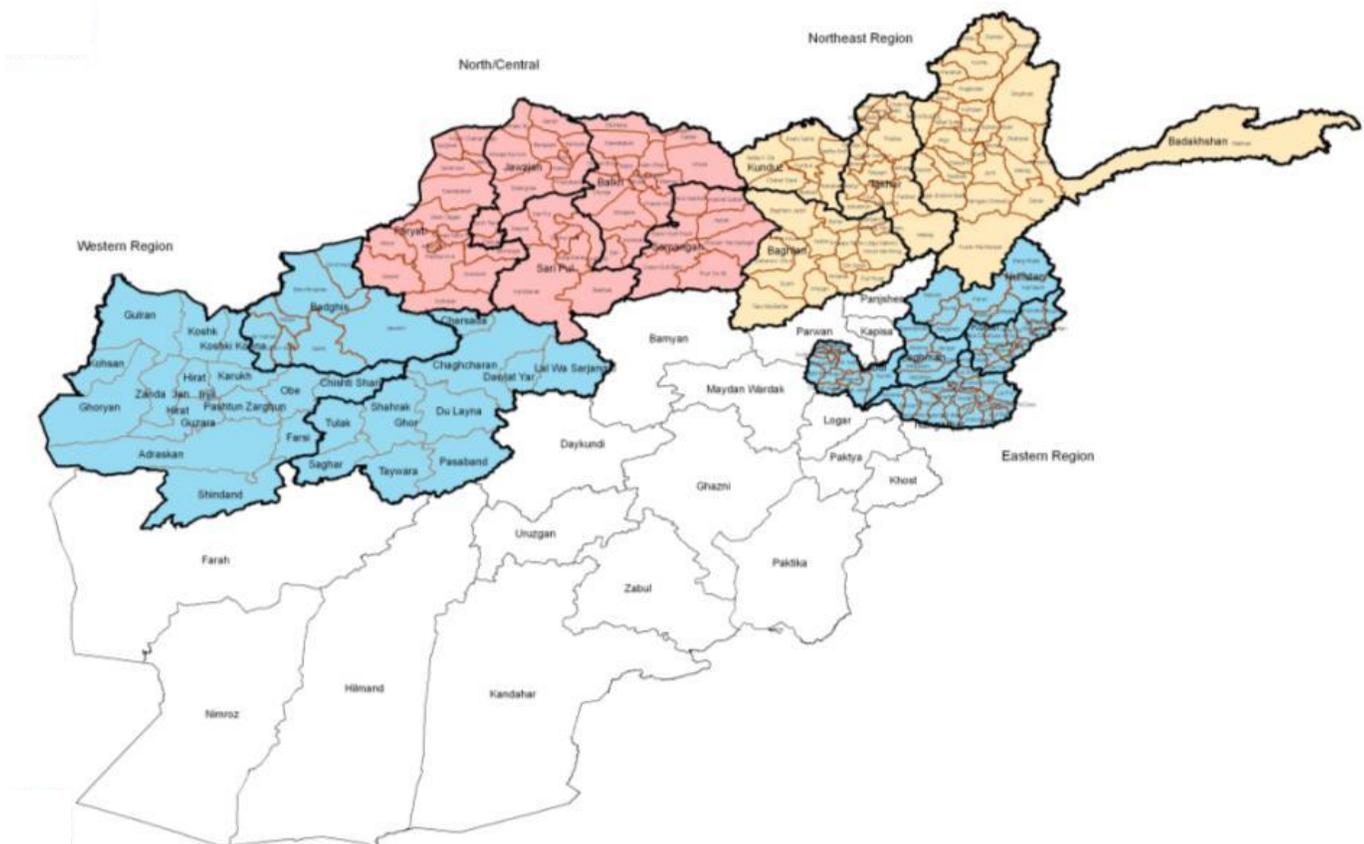
As part of this strategy, the Incentives Driving Economic Alternatives for the North, East, and West (IDEA-NEW) program has focused on activities that promote income generation and job creation through increased commercial agricultural opportunity for Afghan farmers in poppy production-prone areas. The 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 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

APRIL 2012

EASTERN REGION

LAGHMAN, NANGARHAR, NURISTAN AND KUNAR PROVINCES

Orchard Development Program: Provided technical assistance to 402 newly established orchards in irrigation systems, pruning of dried and damaged trees, and the use of mulch for moisture conservation

Commercial and Small Production Farms Program: Conducted 76 field days during which 1,454 farmers were trained on modern techniques in 23 districts of four provinces

Completed: IDEA-NEW awarded certificates to 300 young women who successfully completed the TARAQI SABA business skill training course

Completed: Mula Alam irrigation system construction, located in Shegal district of Kunar, irrigates 89 hectares of land serving the farms of 1,211 families and Niazi Canal Improvement project irrigates 237 hectares of land in Alingar district of Laghman

NORTHERN REGION

BALKH, FARYAB, JAWZJAN, SAMANGAN AND SARI PUL PROVINCES

Started: Planting field days on 24 potato demonstration plots began.

In Progress: A total of 20 new vineyards were converted into the new trellising system in Sari Pul, Faryab and Samangan provinces.

In Progress: Conducted 24 weed control field days and trained 2,167 farmers

Completed: Distributed improved seed potato to 24 farmers in Faryab

Completed: Distributed 1,000 boxes of silkworm eggs to women beneficiaries

NORTHEASTERN REGION

BADAKHSHAN, KUNDUZ, TAKHAR AND BAGHLAN PROVINCES

In Progress: Spring crop activities are ongoing this reporting period with 50 farmers receiving inputs (seeds) and 120 farmers were trained in agriculture practices such as irrigation, fertilizers and pest control. Summer crop beneficiary selection and voucher distribution will begin in May 2012.

In Progress: 226 vouchers were distributed for beekeeping inputs, with 60 beneficiaries receiving inputs and 54 farmers trained in effective beekeeping techniques.

In Progress: IDEA-NEW staff selected 80 new beneficiaries in Takhar province for the women's poultry project and trained 120 beneficiaries in topics such as coop design, proper feed, and vaccination.

In Progress: There are 7 active infrastructure projects in 3 provinces (Badakhshan, Takhar and Kunduz). These projects are scheduled to be completed in the fall 2012.

Women's Savings Groups: 600 women currently participate 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.

WESTERN REGION

HIRAT AND BADGHIS PROVINCES

Completed: Khome Abasee canal protection project, located in Muqor district of Badghis, irrigates 122 hectares land serving 300 families.

VALUE CHAIN INTERVENTIONS

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.

DAI Eastern Region

No updates this reporting period.

ACDI/VOCA Northern Region

Vineyard Trellising Program

Two vineyard demonstration plots were pruned in Sari Pul and Sangcharak districts of Sari Pul. A total of 24 neighbouring vineyard owners attended and learned how to prune and train vines onto the T-system trellises. IDEA-NEW will follow up with the vineyard owners to make sure they prune their trellised vines properly. Following completion of the pruning at 12 demonstration plots, the first application of wettable sulfur was made on 15 demonstration vineyards to prevent powdery mildew. The treated vineyards were: one in Balkh, five in Faryab, two in Jawzjan, six in Samangan, and one in Sari Pul. A total of 60 vineyard owners attended the sprayer application training. The spray application methods and the quantity of pesticide to be sprayed were shown to the participants.

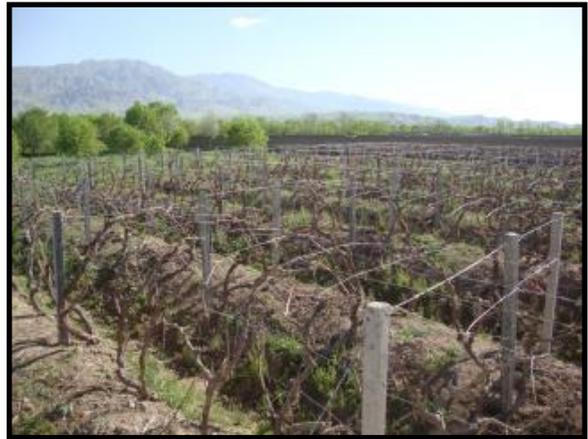


Photo: Supervision of trellised vineyards –Sari Pul, Sari Pul

Six vineyards measuring 0.83 ha in total have been trellised in Maymana, Shirin Tagab and Qaysar districts of Faryab and a total of 520 concrete posts were installed. One new vineyard was surveyed in Maymana district for trellising and 75 trellis posts have been transported to it for installation.

In Feroz Nakhchir and Hazrati Sultan districts of Samangan, seven new vineyards measuring 1 ha in total were converted to the new trellising system using 965 trellis posts. All surveyed vineyards have now been trellised in Samangan. There is a balance of 221 trellis posts in the stock which will be used soon.

In Sari Pul, four new vineyards measuring 0.52 ha have been trellised in Sangcharak and Sari Pul districts, using 403 posts. Four vineyards measuring 0.63 ha have been surveyed and a total of 487 trellis posts have been transported to them.

So far, 18.51 ha of land have been trellised in Faryab, Samangan and Sari Pul provinces.

The manufacturing of concrete posts for trellising has been suspended in all four concrete post manufacturing plants in the region because of the season for trellising being over. The manufacturing of posts will resume later in the year, in time for the next trellising season. Installation of trellises is not possible when the vines are growing.

ORCHARD CROP VALUE CHAIN

IDEA-NEW interventions in the orchard crop 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.

DAI Eastern Region

Orchard Development Program

During the reporting period 1,110 orchards were surveyed to identify what kinds of technical assistance would be most beneficial to improve production. To date 2,160 orchards have been surveyed. In addition, sixteen orchards were selected for Flexi Flume irrigation in Momandara, Ghani khail, Surkhrud, Kot, Rodat, Khogiani, Chaparhar, Sarkani, and Alingar districts. To date 31 orchards have been selected for Flexi Flume irrigation, which will save time and money in districts lacking water.



During the reporting period, 34 orchard owners were trained during 23 field days on planting pattern design, IPM, irrigation system design, pruning, mulch use, and fertilizer application.

Photo: A view of the field day, Kama district, Nangarhar.

Nursery Development Program

Citrus samples were collected in Nangarhar and Kunar for laboratory testing to identify the Citrus Tristeza Virus (CTV) disease in the eastern region.

Nursery Development Program coordinators visited a fruit nursery in Qala-e-Now district of Badghis where 26,000 vines of two varieties, Kishmishi and Shindokhani, have been planted. The nursery owner was instructed to set up the small sign board and record book for variety identification. He was also instructed on chemical application for pest and disease control.

Of 226 nursery growers in the program, 110 growers received technical training on pollination, seed treatment for germination and modal certified nursery establishment in Kunar, Laghman and Nangarhar. Fruit and forestry commercial nurseries in Nangarhar, Laghman and Kunar received 65 sign boards for variety and clone identification and six hoes for weed control.

ACDI/VOCA Northern 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 each for farmers, including almond, apricot, cherry and apple.

Following the establishment of 200 fruit orchards, the agriculture team moved around each orchard and distributed alfalfa seed to 200 orchard owners for inter-cropping in Pashtun Kot, Bilchiragh, Shirin Tagab, Khwaja Sabz Posh and Qaysar districts of Faryab. The alfalfa seed distribution is a part of IDEA-NEW's support to the orchard owners. Alfalfa will help the growth of newly-planted trees. The team monitored the growth of the newly planted trees which was satisfactory and instructed the orchard owners to establish proper irrigation systems for the orchards.



Photo: Alfalfa seed distribution to orchard owners – Pashtun Kot, Faryab

Mercy Corps Northeastern Region

Orchard Management

In the orchard management project, farmers use the voucher system to purchase pruning services and fertilizer. Farmers with existing orchards also receive training in pruning, irrigation, integrated pest management, basin digging, composting and marketing. Through the voucher system, farmers are linked with master pruners with whom they can maintain a relationship for future pruning.

In Kunduz, April monitoring has indicated that 227 out of 250 orchards have been pruned, with more than 70 fruit trees in each orchard. In total, 15,890 fruit trees have been pruned in Kunduz province.

In Takhar the orchard management project ended this month, with a total of 200 beneficiaries throughout 13 villages in Taloqan district: 7 villages in Bangi district, 8 villages in Kalafghan district, 6 villages in Farkhar district, 3 villages in Chall district, and 3 villages in Baharak district. For sustainability of the project, IDEA-NEW trained pruners will provide services to farmers, with the fees for services decided between the pruner and the farmer.

In Badakhshan IDEA-NEW distributed 8 pruning scissors to pruners with a 50% beneficiary contribution.

The orchard management project is completed in Baghlan province this month. The IDEA-NEW agriculture team monitored 140 orchard farmers' plots in Puli Khumri, Baghlan Jaded, Bano and Dehsallah districts. IDEA-NEW staff shared additional technical information regarding irrigation systems, fertilizer application, and weeding.

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 and chemical fertilizers including DAP and Urea. Barbed wire keeps the young trees safe from grazing animals.



Photo: New orchards established in Takhar

In the reporting period 134 farmers received 70 saplings each in Kunduz province, for a total of 9,380 new saplings. IDEA-NEW supports nursery growers with technical support, and in turn the nursery growers provide this information to farmers, including proper staking and making irrigation channels.

In Takhar 153 beneficiaries have received saplings from the private sector partners (PSPs). This project is ongoing in 10 villages in Taloqan district, 6 villages in Bangi district, 4 villages in Kalafghan district, 5 Villages in Farkhar District, and 6 villages in Baharak district. Ongoing monitoring continues in all provinces by IDEA-NEW staff and there is reasonable growth in all districts. The process of designing irrigation systems has started in five targeted districts (Kalafghan, Bangi, Farkhar, Baharak and Taloqan).

In Badakhshan province, IDEA-NEW's agriculture team designed and established 19 fruit orchards in Baharak district and trained farmers in proper layout for 16 newly established orchards in Faizabad district. Ninety beneficiaries received saplings.

In this period, IDEA-NEW's agriculture team worked jointly with nursery growers to establish the layout and design of 8 new orchards in Dehsallah district, as well as the layout and design for 51 established orchards in Bano and Dehsallah districts. In total, 111 farmers were trained in layout and design of orchards (23 farmers in Puli Khumri, 13 farmers in Baghlan Jaded, 12 farmers in Bano and 63 farmers in Dehsallah). The agriculture team monitored all 111 farmers and shared additional technical information regarding irrigation systems (basin irrigation), fertilizer application, and weeding.

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.

VEGETABLE VALUE CHAIN

Since the beginning of the program, IDEA-NEW has trained more than 90,000 farmers in improved vegetable techniques, which has resulted in dramatic increases to productivity and household income. This broad promotion of improved practices 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 as a cash crop.

DAI Eastern Region

Commercial and Small Production Farms Program

First and second staggering plantings of spring and summer crops (tomato, eggplant, pepper, squash, watermelon, green bean and cucumber) were completed and third staggering planting continued.

Field layout, fertilization, soil preparation, direct seeding and transplanting continued for spring and summer crops. A CPF was selected in Qala-i-Naw district of Badghis for which tillage operation, soil preparation, field lay-out, raise bed nursery, basal fertilization and direct seeding was completed.



Photo: *Farmers receive training in a Small Production Farm, Qarghayee district, Laghman.*

During the month of April, 1,454 farmers participated in 76 field days in 23 districts of four provinces. Under the REVAMP or intercrop program, 621 farmers were trained in 36 field days on field lay-out, soil preparation, population density, seedling transplanting, irrigation, and base fertilization. To date 1,798 out of 4,500 farmers have been trained in Eastern region.

Mercy Corps Northeastern Region

Spring Vegetables Cultivation Project

In Badakhshan 50 beneficiaries received spring crops inputs (seeds). In Baghlan province, 120 farmers were trained in new methods of onion cultivation: 80 in Puli Khumri and 40 in Baghlan Jaded. The same team monitored 120 onion cultivation plats in PLK and Baghlan Jaded districts which are in good and healthy condition. All 120 onion cultivation plots were monitored by IDEA-NEW agriculture staff.

Vegetables Demo plots

This project is implemented with close coordination with PSPs and IDEA-NEW technical staff. IDEA-NEW provides fencing and wooden poles to protect the plots, two days labor for each plot, and technical advice via agriculture officers. PSPs are responsible for providing the land, different varieties of seeds, fertilizer, land preparation, irrigation weed control, and other technical work.



Photo: Onion cultivation plots in Puli Khumri district, Baghlan province

In Kunduz, barbed wire was installed in 4 demo plots in four districts: Imam Sahib, Khan Abad, Qala-e-Zal and Kunduz center. Each one jerib plot was weeded, creating jobs for 8 people. In Takhar this project is ongoing in four districts: Bangi, Farkhar Baharak, and Taloqan. The vegetables being grown include: cucumber, squash, okra, tomato, cabbage, and pepper.

In Badakhshan, the IDEA-NEW technical team designed five demo plots of onion, Tomato, okra, and cucumber in Argo, Baharak and Jurm districts. Ten farmers received tomato seeds in Baharak and Argo districts and 20 farmers received onion seeds in Baharak district. Pillars and barbed wire were installed for 2 demo plots in Faizabad.

Strawberry Demo plots

This project is ongoing in Takhar and Badakhshan, with farmers contributing 50% of input costs. In Takhar, 10 farmers in Bangi, Farkhar, Kalafghan, and Taloqan districts planted strawberries. In Badakhshan the IDEA-NEW technical team facilitated the design and layout of four demo plots.

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.

This project is ongoing in three villages of Taloqan district and one village in Bangi district. In this period 28 female farmers received training regarding transplanting seedlings and weed control. Currently in all four greenhouses in Takhar the vegetable seedlings are ready for transplanting in the fields.

In Kunduz province, all five greenhouses have been weeded and the female beneficiaries have been linked with input suppliers to promote the sustainability of this business. IDEA-NEW trained five women in tomato sucker removal in tomato plants.

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 would cover a range of topics including technical skills, field visit interviews with farmers and shopkeepers, marketing, and other value chain issues. The shows would include a mix of pre-recorded and live features so that they could be played over again or in other areas, 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.

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 Afghans who want to start or expand their weaving business, and feasible technical solutions exist to increase production volume and quality.

DAI Eastern Region

The textile washing and pressing facility pressed and dyed 4,200 scarves, 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 local textile weavers.



Photo: Textile weavers operate their factories and produce scarves and women shawls for the summer season, Rodat district, Nangarhar.

IDEA-NEW continues to support five textile factories through in-kind grants and six through direct implementation. These factories produce scarves and shawls for the summer season and are generating profits.

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.

DAI Eastern Region

The required vaccines for ILT Live+, SHS, and Cholera were applied in the Hedayat Barakat breeder farm, which now has a mortality rate of 4%. These chicks will produce the fertile eggs for the production of broiler chicks and will be distributed on local poultry farms in the eastern region.

A total of 83,689 fertile eggs were produced in the Nangarhar breeder farm and 75,240 eggs were transferred to Serobi hatchery for the production of broiler day old chicks for local poultry farmers. The breeder farm sold 6,845 day old chicks in the local market for 21 AFN per chick.



Photo: University students of Nangarhar receive practical training on poultry, Nangarhar.

Six students from Nangarhar University of veterinary faculty were trained on breeder farm management and vaccinations.

Five broiler farmers added 12,200 broiler day old chicks to their farms, which are located in Ghanikhel and Chaperhar districts of Nangarhar and Asadabad district of Kunar. These farms were directly facilitated with IDEA-NEW assistance and are sustainable.

Eight broiler farmers in Chaprahar, Dara-i-Noor, Ghanikhel and Kuz Kunar districts of Nangarhar and Qarghayee district of Laghman and Asadabad district of Kunar sold 18,000 broiler chicks in the local market and each farmer received an average of 36,999.50 AFN net profit.

IDEA-NEW poultry specialist visited two poultry breeder farms which are located in Nangarhar province and helped the farmers technically regarding feed system, lighting system and vaccination method.

Mercy Corps Northeastern Region

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 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.



Photo: *New coop under construction in Takhar*

In Takhar, the IDEA-NEW staff monitored coop construction for 80 poultry beneficiaries and observed that construction is nearly 70% completed. Beneficiaries are using local materials to construct the coops. Several days of rain damaged some of the coops, and they will take longer to complete.

In Baghlan 40 women were trained in coop construction, coop cleaning, proper feeding, and vaccination.

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

Traditionally there has been support for existing beekeeping associations through the 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.



Photo: Checking beehive quality; Qala-e-Zal district, Kunduz province.

In Kunduz 60 beneficiaries received beehives and boxes. Along with beekeeping PSPs, IDEA-NEW staff jointly monitored beekeepers for quality assurance.

In Baghlan Jaded, and Puli Khumri districts of Baghlan province, 54 beekeeping beneficiaries were trained for two days on basic practical skills. In addition, 66 input vouchers were distributed to beneficiaries in the same locations.

In Takhar province 100 beekeeping vouchers were distributed.

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

Training activities continued in wheat CPFs in which 101 farmers were trained. To date a total 541 out of 750 farmers have been trained on modern techniques.

ACDI/VOCA Northern Region

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

IDEA-NEW is in the third year of farmer training for improved agronomy of annual crops. The main purpose of the program is to introduce new methods based on the use of Two-wheel Tractors for tillage, planting and reaping. There is also emphasis on the use of improved seed, weed control, and more efficient use of irrigation water. Each location consists on one hectare with a plot of wheat, a plot of an oilseed (sesame, flax, safflower or canola), and a pulse.

The program also includes trials and demonstrations of conservation tillage with a view to enabling agricultural contractors to offer this service to farmers.

The weed control field days are one of the important stages of the annual crop development program. Twenty four weed control field days were conducted in different districts of the five project provinces which include five in Balkh, six in Jawzjan, four in Sari Pul, seven in Faryab, and two in Samangan provinces. A total of 2,167 farmers attended the field days and learned about types of weeds, impact of weeds,



Photo: Farmers attended in weed control field day—Fayez Abad, Jawzjan

methods of weed management, how to use sprayers, and a practical demonstration of spraying by farmers. So far 27 weed control field days have been conducted.

The sowing of later-planted crops continued in the training plots. Flax was sown at the plots located in Andkhoy, Qurghan, and Khan Char Bagh districts of Faryab province.

Conservation Tillage Training

A total of seven one-hectare training plots have been established; three in Balkh, one in Faryab, two in Jawzjan, and one in Samangan, all under a sub-award with JDA for the annual crops development program. The zero-tillage seed drill with the mulch management will be assessed at JDA's hub locations.

After conducting and completing planting field days in zero-tillage demonstration plots, the weed control field days were conducted in five project provinces. A total of 260 farmers attended the field days which covered types of weeds, impact of weeds, methods of weed management, using sprayers, and practical demonstration of spraying by farmers. The extension agents of the DAILs were also present in the field days and they explained some key topics about the weed control benefits.

The following table shows details of this program:

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	0.6	0
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)

Ten farmers, six from Sholgara and Kaldar districts of Balkh, three from Sangcharak district of Sari Pul, and one from Pashtun Kot district of Faryab bought subsidized 2WTs from IDEA-NEW. The 2WTs were handed over to them after they had received the required five days of operation and maintenance training.

Since the start of the 2WT program, 168 farmers have bought 2WTs at a subsidized price and been trained in operation and maintenance.

Establishment of Maintenance and Repair Workshops for 2WTs

IDEA-NEW has contracted Osiyo Hamkorlik Company (OHC) to establish 25 privately owned and managed repair and maintenance workshops in the region to support farmers who invest in 2WTs. OHC has started the eighth series of supervision visits to the 25 repair workshops in five provinces. OHC staff visited four repair workshops in Jawzjan and four repair workshops in Sari Pul provinces. The workshops have been open and delivering repair services to the 2WT owners. The supervision visits started on April 22, 2012 and will be completed by May 9, 2012.

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 Northern Region

Silkworm Rearing Training for Women

The project aims to train 1,000 women within four months (February through May) in the five northern provinces to rear silkworms and to produce raw silk cocoons.

The following table shows the breakdown of the eggs distribution to 1,000 beneficiaries during the month of April 2012:

Province	District	Village	Number of eggs distributed/Box	Number of Beneficiary received eggs
Balkh	Dihdadi	Chardang	49	49
Balkh	Dihdadi	Wardakabad	58	58
Balkh	Dihdadi	Hazar Jerib	63	63
Balkh	Dawlat Abad	Sadir Abad	49	49
Samangan	Aybak cent	Joyzendan	56	56
Samangan	Aybak cent	IshanQeshlaq	48	48
Samangan	Aybak cent	Khoja Esmail	17	17
Samangan	Aybak cent	Dari Zendan	10	10

Jawzjan	Shibirghan	Morghab	25	25
Jawzjan	Shibirghan	Kilik&Ghora	25	25
Jawzjan	Shibirghan	Nawabad	27	27
Jawzjan	Shibirghan	Arabkhana	23	23
Jawzjan	Aqcha	Qomarigh	25	25
Jawzjan	Fayzabad	Sanses	48	48
Jawzjan	Mangajek	Charchangho	50	50
Jawzjan	Shibirghan	Aqcha	26	26
SariPul	Sari Pul	Yakabdasht	25	25
SariPul	Sari Pul	Asia Abad	25	25
SariPul	Sari Pul	Afardi	50	50
SariPul	Sari Pul	Silbordkocha	25	25
SariPul	Sari Pul	Ochikhord	75	75
Faryab	Khwaja Sabz Posh	Namazjai	42	42
Faryab	Khwaja Sabz Posh	Dehnaw	42	42
Faryab	Khwaja Sabz Posh	Badghisi	100	100
Faryab	Shirin Tagab	Gorziwan	17	17
Total		25	1,000	1,000

Following the completion of the training course for 1,000 women, the distribution of silkworm eggs started. Each woman trainee received one box of silkworm eggs which can produce up to 30 kgs of silk cocoons and 300 AFN as a reimbursement of transport cost. Due to this these women have started household silk producing businesses and the IDEA-NEW technical team have been assisting them in their houses to make sure they process the silkworm eggs properly and adopt the rearing methods that they were taught. The project is going on and the silkworms have passed the first instar successfully and now they are living in their second instar, which will take seven to ten days.

Mercy Corps Northeastern Region **Beneficiary Selection and Ongoing Support**

In the Fabrika area of Baghlan Jaded district, 50 farmers were selected to participate in the silkworm rearing project, which will run from April 20th to July 20th. 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.

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 twenty-three community-constructed infrastructure (CCI) projects throughout its areas of operation. It paid \$68,596 in wages and created more than 43 labor-intensive rural jobs. To date, the project has paid \$7.1 million in wages, creating 4,527 FTE jobs for local laborers on infrastructure projects.

CCI Summary Chart – April 2012

Province	Active Projects	Approved Projects	Completed Projects	Stopped Projects	Cancelled Projects	Total Person-days	Total FTEs	Total Wages
Kunar	2	12	10	-	-	2,143	8.3	13,985
Laghman	1	8	7	-	-	1,119	4.3	6,503
Nangarhar	5	44	33	-	6	4,216	16.3	22,180
Nuristan	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-
Badghis	8	35	23	-	4	-	-	-
Herat	-	4	4	-	-	-	-	-
Badakhshan	2	23	20	1	-	2,683	10.3	18,898
Baghlan	-	40	40	1	-	-	-	-
Takhar	3	18	13	0	-	52	0.2	305
Kunduz	2	11	7	0	-	1,092	4.2	6,725
Totals	23	196	158	2	10	11,305	43.6	\$68,596

The following four projects were completed in this reporting period:

Mula Alam Canal Improvement Project

The irrigation system, located in Shegal district of Kunar, was designed to irrigate 89 hectares of land serving the farms of 1,211 families.

The following activities were completed during implementation:

- Canal retaining walls with a total length of 806 meters
- One spillway
- Three culverts with different size
- Five regulator gates were fixed in different location
- A weir with a total length of 56 meters

Niazi Canal Improvement Project

The project located in Alingar district of Laghman is designed to irrigate 237 hectares of land. This project includes 600 meters of retaining wall, three super passages, and eight distributors in needed locations.



Photo: Mula Alam Canal after construction, Shegal district, Kunar.

Salar Intake Repair Works Project

The irrigation system located in Asadabad district of Kunar was previously completed but required some additional work in this reporting period, including the construction of an intake and a 35 meter long retaining wall.

Khame Abase Canal Protection Project

This canal, located in Muqor district of Badghis, irrigates 122 hectares land serving 300 families.

CROSS CUTTING THEMES

GENDER

DAI Eastern Region

Land preparation, lay-out, and fertilization of Kitchen Garden plots started, during the reporting period and 28 plots were cultivated. To date 80 out of 107 kitchen garden farms have been laid-out and transplanted in Assadabad, Chawki, Mihterlam, Surkhrod and Bihsud districts of Kunar, Laghman and Nangarhar.

IDEA-NEW facilitated 30 women layer farms in Ghanikhail, Kuz Kunar, Bihsud, Momandara, Rodat districts of Nangarhar and Noorgal district of Kunar. A total of 43,862 table eggs were produced in these farms and all were sold in local market generating 219,310 AFN to women farmers.



Photo: Women kitchen garden operators get training on soil preparation and lay-out, Sowkai district, Kunar.

IDEA-NEW awarded certificates to 300 young women who successfully completed TARAQI SABA business skill training course. Participants of the course included girls from 15 high schools in Nangarhar, Kunar and Laghman provinces. The course lasted for three months and provided these students with the skills and knowledge necessary to generate ideas, develop business plans, and ultimately manage their own successful and sustainable businesses.

During this reporting period IDEA-NEW facilitated the sale of 283.5 kg fresh cheese generating a total of 21,263

AFN net profit to seven local cheese centers that are located in Nangrahar, Kunar and Laghman.

Ten women retail shopkeepers sold their goods in the local market generating an average 3,340 AFN net profit to each retailer.

Six newly established women-owned garment and finishing centers supported by in-kind grants from IDEA-NEW and five existing centers sold their products in the local market and generated 6,782 AFN net profit to each center.

Mercy Corps Northeastern Region

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.

Kunduz staff monitored the quality of chickens at the poultry farms and found that the chickens are healthy. The vendors will distribute 2550 pullets in the near future. Beneficiaries' coops are 90% complete. Poultry training continues for 85 beneficiaries in Ali Abad district of Kunduz province.

The Badakhshan IDEA-NEW team designed 80 coops for 80 poultry beneficiaries in Hisary village of Faizabad district.

In the reporting period in Baghlan, all 80 women beneficiaries are busy constructing coops, which are designed for 30 pullets, with a size of 2.5m in length and 2m wide with one window and one door. There is also ongoing training, with 40 families in two CDCs in Puli Khumri trained.

Community-Based Savings Groups Training



Photo: Documentation and savings for CBSG in Takhar

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. In Takhar the total amount of savings is up to 99,600 AFN.

In Baghlan IDEA-NEW staff visited the 10 community-based saving groups. In total 133 women are participating in 10 savings groups, and contributions range from the minimum of 50 AFN to over 2,550 AFN, with 90,650 AFN saved to date.

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/or Indian eggs) and possibly lead to the formation of a poultry association.

ACDI/VOCA Northern Region

Establishment of 10 Village Milk Collection and Processing Centers

Most dairy production in Afghanistan is by households owning one or two cows. Most of the product is consumed by the household, but surplus may be offered for sale locally. BLDU has, over the last seven years, developed a network of household dairy producers who sell surplus milk for processing by the Balkh Dairy in Dihdadi. A program of extension training in animal breeding, feeding and health care, together with improved access to veterinary services, has increased the marketable surplus and provided a boost to household incomes. In order to extend these benefits to other districts in the region, BLDU, under a sub-Agreement with IDEA-NEW, is setting up 10 village milk processing centers where fresh milk can be processed by hand-operated equipment into cheese, butter and yoghurt. The project includes breed improvement through artificial insemination (AI).

The monitoring and supervision of the milk processing centers continued with visits to all ten milk collection centers in the five project provinces. The centers have been active and the amount of raw milk collected is getting increased. A total of 25,777 liters of milk was collected from 433 members for 456,357AFN (average 17, 7 AFN per liter of milk). BLDU conducted meetings in three milk processing centers in Sari Pul, Faryab and Samangan. The main purpose of the meeting was establishing village milk processing associations (VMPA). The villagers welcomed the establishment of VMPAs.

The following table shows the amounts of milk and dairy collected and processed at each center:

Processing Center	District	Province	Milk Collected (liter)	Dairy Products Processed and Sold							
				Bulk Yogurt kg	Yogurt cup-400 gr	Yogurt Cup -200 gr	Chaka kg	Butter kg	Cheese kg	Butter milk (bottle)	Bulk Milk (liter)
Juee Zandan	Aybak	Samangan	2670	-	5575	-	-	-	32	-	180
Baba Evaz	Sholgara	Balkh	2400	-	2683	-	180	15	90	-	-
Koushkak	Balkh	Balkh	4560	-	2978	-	-	-	420	-	-
Ghazniqak	Hazrati Sultan	Samangan	920	916	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Yank Ariq	Aqcha	Jawzjan	2040	-	2543	-	-	-	-	-	1017
Scinsus	Fayzabad	Jawzjan	1830	-	2283	-	270	-	-	-	-
DehNow	Khwaja Sabz Posh	Faryab	1210	-	3013	-	-	-	-	-	-
Jamshidi	Pashtun Kot	Faryab	4447	-	11100	-	-	-	-	-	-

Emam Sahib	Sari Pul	Sari Pul	1350	-	3365	-	-	-	-	-	-
Yaka Bagh	Shibirghan	Jawzjan	4350	-	10858	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	10		25,777	916	44,398	0	450	15	542	0	1197

Cattle Management Training for 500 Women Member Dairy Farmers

The house-to-house follow-up of women dairy farmers continued, together with upgrading of cowsheds, of which a total of 50 were completed during this month. So far 419 cowsheds out of 500 have been upgraded, which include installation of a lighting window, ventilator, and mud plastering of the walls to prevent ecto-parasites.

Cattle husbandry training for 50 female dairy farmers continued in the Yaka Bagh milk processing center in Jawzjan. The training was supervised by an IDEA-NEW agriculture officer. The training was started on Dec. 20, 2011 and will end on Jun. 20, 2012.

Native Cattle Breed Improvement through AI

A total of 70 cows were inseminated during this reporting period. AI will improve the local cows' breed so they produce more milk.

FMD Vaccination

The third cycle of the vaccination campaign against foot and mouth disease continued in seven milk processing centers and a total 1,010 animals were vaccinated against FMD. A total of 105 households benefited from this process.

The following table includes details of achievements in each village milk processing center:

Center Name	Liters of Milk Collected	Price of Per Liter (AFN)	Total AFN Paid to the member	Members brought milk	Cattle Sheds Improved	Total Income (AFN)	Total Expenses (AFN)	Inseminated Cows
Juee Zandan	2670	16	42,720	50	6	75860	64845	9
Baba Evaz	2400	14	33,600	42	2	51747	46100	11
Koushkak	4560	19	86,640	60	8	125220	105840	7
Ghaznigak	920	15	13,800	13	0	16488	14600	0
Yank Ariq	2040	14	28,560	47	0	40685	37589	0
Scinsus	1830	15	27,450	38	2	39030	34830	8
Deh Now	1210	25	20,250	14	5	45195	41289	6

Jamshidi	4447	21	93,387	72	21	155400	136285	26
Emam Sahib	1350	17	22,950	32	3	43745	36005	3
Yaka Bagh	4350	20	87,000	65	3	130296	124000	0
Totals	25,777	N/A	456,357	433	50	723,666	641,383	70

USG AND GIROA COORDINATION

DAI Eastern Region

A technical working group meeting was held in Laghman in which IDEA-NEW shared its monthly activities with the participants.

A joint meeting was held with AAEP staff in the IDEA-NEW meeting hall. Different technical issues were discussed and AAEP staff were briefed on all IDEA-NEW activities in the region.

The IDEA-NEW Regional Manager along with some technical heads visited Koshtal MHP and met with the elders in the Achin district. The elders of the district thanked IDEA-NEW for quality structure and close coordination during the implementation of the project.



Photo: AAEP staff listen to IDEA-NEW representative while briefing them, Jalalabad, Nangarhar.

The IDEA-NEW agriculture section held a meeting with the CHAMP Regional Director to coordinate ongoing project activities and share information regarding the orchards program including Flexi flume installation. A meeting was also held with Ghani khail district extension officers and fruit grower group leaders regarding the importance of the installation of the Flexi flume irrigation system.

Mercy Corps Northeastern Region

The Kunduz Livestock and Business Development (LBD) unit conducted a meeting with the head of the Ali Abad Agriculture Department regarding project monitoring.

On April, 16th a Badakhshan IDEA-NEW representative participated in a meeting at DAIL to share the 2012 work plan.

On April 17th Badakhshan's IDEA-NEW program manager and the infrastructure unit manager met with the Water Management Director to discuss updates on the Sakha irrigation project.

On April 22nd Badakhshan's IDEA-NEW program manager participated in the sectoral meeting for DAIL and MRRD. The discussion centered on updates on projects, and DAIL appreciated IDEA-NEW's contribution on Farmers' Day.

On April 27th Badakhshan's IDEA-NEW program manager met with the Director of DRRD to discuss recent activities and achievements.

On April 23rd Badakhshan's IDEA-NEW program manager 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 the Natural Resources Department. Participants discussed the annual plan and INGOs were thanked for their contribution to Faizabad's green belt area.

On April 25th Badakhshan's IDEA-NEW program manager met with USAID project management specialist (Nabi Jan) and discussed general field activities.

Baghlan's Community Mobilization team met with Baghlan's agricultural cooperatives directors to select farmers for watermelon and cauliflower planting. DAIL supports this project's implementation in Baghlan.

Baghlan IDEA-NEW staff met with Mr. M. Anwar, the director of the Ajmer Bee keeping Cooperative to discuss an increase in beekeeping beneficiaries.

IDEA-NEW staff in Takhar met with the Kalafgan district governor to discuss beekeeping projects in the district. The governor voiced his support in the implementation of these projects.

Takhar staff met with the Cha Ab district governor to resolve the issue of the community's contribution to the Gazan road construction project.

Takhar's Community Mobilization unit manager met with the head of the Bangi District DDA about bringing gravel to the Mojerqshlaq infrastructure project.

On April 1st the Deputy Project Director met with the Export Promotion Group (EPPA office).

On April 9th the Deputy Project Director met with a representative from Samsorban in Baghlan.

On April 12th Takhar's infrastructure site engineer made a presentation at the monthly Infrastructure and Natural Resource Management Meeting at the Women Affairs Department.

On April 15th Takhar program managers visited Nahre Ab village of Farkhar district and met with the district governor regarding implementation of beekeeping projects in Nahre Ab village.

On April 29th Badakhshan's IDEA-NEW Program Manager met with a representative from the Norwegian Committee for Afghanistan; they requested information about IDEA-NEW's poplar cultivation projects in Badakhshan province.

ACDI/VOCA Northern Region

On April 22nd, the IDEA-NEW Regional Manager Dr. Andrew Harvey, Deputy Regional Manager David Quarles, and Program Manager Eng. Khalid attended in the second day of IDEA-NEW planning workshop which was held in USAID office in Kabul. A presentation was given by Dr. Harvey to all participants from DAI, MC, and USAID officials.

On April 24th, the IDEA-NEW Regional Manager Dr. Andrew and Program Manager Eng. Khalid had a meeting with Khalid Mirza, the director of Balkh Karakul Institute in Balkh province. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss about the current status of Karakul Institute and the possibility of their staff capacity building training under IDEA-NEW up-coming program.

On April 10th, based on the invitation letter of Samangan DAIL, the IDEA-NEW CDO attended in Agriculture Sector Meeting in Samangan province. The NGOs representatives reported about their last month activities to the participants and line sector. The IDEA-NEW CDO also updated participants about IDEA-NEW activities in Samangan and submitted the monthly report to responsible person.

On April 25th, the concrete manufacturing plant in Feroz Nakhchir district of Samangan province was officially handed over to the post maker. A meeting was conducted with the post maker in which, the representatives of IDEA-NEW, district government, CDC were present. The benefits and activity of the manufacturing plant was explained to the participants. At the end of event, the hand over documents

along with other necessary documents was signed by post maker, head of CDC, district governor representative and IDEA-NEW program representative.

On April 8th, the IDEA-NEW CDO attended in Agriculture Sectorial Meeting in Sari Pul province. The purpose of the meeting was to update about ongoing projects of the NGOs in the province. The IDEA-NEW CDO updated participants about IDEA-NEW program in this province. At the end of the meeting, all NGOs representative submitted their monthly report to responsible person.

On April 11th, Balkh Agriculture Sectorial Meeting (AGSEM) was held at FAO compound. The IDEA-NEW CDO attended the meeting and NGOs reported their activities. At the end of the meeting, the IDEA-NEW CDO submitted the monthly report to the responsible person of Balkh DAIL.

The second six months activity report of IDEA-NEW was submitted to Department of Economy of Samangan, Balkh, Jawzjan, Sari Pul and Faryab provinces.

SUSTAINABILITY/CAPACITY BUILDING

DAI Eastern Region

The accounting trainer for SMEs and poultry farms visited twenty factories and eight poultry farms in Kama, Rodat and Bihsud districts of Nangarhar to review their financial record keeping. The owners of these SMEs and poultry farms were trained on accounting and bookkeeping. The prime objective of this program is to improve the financial management system of the SMEs and poultry farms in Eastern Region.



IDEA-NEW provided first aid training to 100 members of the Nangarhar Talc Producer Association. This training was conducted by three doctors of the public health hospital. IDEA-NEW distributed mine extraction equipment and first aid kits to all participants.

Photo: Participants of Nangarhar Talc Producers and Traders Association receive First Aid training, Jalalabad, Nangarhar.

MADERA held a training for 60 members of the Laghman Nursery Grower Association on the importance of apple and sweet orange saplings in mother stock and stocking and monitoring of mother stock saplings. IDEA-NEW together with MADERA trained 80 members of LNGA in the field on dormant seeds of apricot, apple, almond, peach and pear which need to rest for specific duration of time.

Mercy Corps Northeastern Region

IDEA-NEW's livestock team in Takhar province conducted a ten-day training for poultry beneficiaries, teaching about general issues regarding poultry keeping, feeding, vaccination, and coop construction.

ACDI/VOCA Northern Region

Motmaen Association from Samangan province reported that it procured two types of pesticide and six types of animal medicine with the total cost of 117,000 AFN from a trading company in Kabul called

Khoshkyar Co. The association sold the inputs to its member retailers. This is a positive sign of the association becoming sustainable.

The pesticide retailer application course was conducted for 31 retailers from the Bawar association of Faryab province. With this, the pesticide application training for all the agricultural retailers has been completed and a total of 117 agricultural retailers were trained in five provinces. The IDEA-NEW trainers evaluated the understanding of the participants at the end of the training sessions and the result was satisfactory. Completion certificates were also distributed to the participants at the end of the training. IDEA-NEW will distribute pesticide safety posters and sprayer application manual to all agricultural retailers and follow them up to adopt the lessons they have learned.

NON-VALUE CHAIN PROJECTS

DAI Eastern Region

Aryan Marble Processing Factory

Aryan Marble Processing Factory in Surkhrod district of Nangarhar is a private and registered factory with the Afghanistan Investment Support Agency. Aryan Marble Factory started the production of marbles using new machinery purchased through an in-kind grant from IDEA-NEW. The factory will create jobs opportunity for local Afghans, increase the production of marble, substitute the import of marble from abroad, and provide market opportunities for unprocessed marble. Currently the owner of this factory has hired seven employees to operate the new machinery and plans to hire more in the future.

Potato Chip Factory

IDEA-NEW assisted Dari-Noor and Kawoon potatoes chips factories through an in-kind grant of \$17,250 to each factory. These factories created job opportunities for 14 local Afghans and will provide market opportunities for local potato farmers.

Nangarhar Talc Association

Nangarhar Talc Association exported 8700 tons of talc to Pakistan generating 72,500 AFN to NTA. The association also earned 114,400 AFN in registration and membership fee from 44 new members.

Radio Programing

Nine live Karkila Aw Maldari (agriculture and livestock) radio shows were aired via Sharq Radio in Nangarhar. During the shows 36 farmers/listeners called IDEA-NEW experts and asked questions about orchards, vegetables, and livestock.

Five live agriculture and livestock shows were aired via Kawoon Ghag in Laghman and 45 farmers from different parts of the province posed their questions to IDEA-NEW experts.



Photo: IDEA-NEW agriculture expert and Sharq Radio moderator listen to questions during radio show, Jalalabad, Nangarhar.

Mercy Corps Northeastern Region

Commercial Timber and Timber Nursery

The project is ongoing with monitoring and site visits to potential and past beneficiaries. In Badakhshan, the IDEA-NEW agriculture team participated in a poplar cultivation training conducted by Mercy Corps in Faizabad on April 14, 2012. IDEA-NEW selected 8 new beneficiaries and designed their poplar plots.

The Baghlan agriculture team linked 16 farmers to timber nursery growers. These farmers purchased poplar cuttings from IDEA-NEW beneficiaries and planted the cuttings in 16 timber plots in Puli Khumri, Baghlan Jaded, Bano and Dehsallah districts. All 16 plots were weeded, and IDEA-NEW shared technical knowledge regarding irrigation and fertilizer application.

Silk

Through IDEA-NEW, farmers received training and supplies for silk worm care. The training included instruction from agriculture experts on the stages of life of the silk worm, feeding methods, and humidity control. Farmers also received a box of silk worm eggs, wooden beds for the silk worm cocoons, woven mats to keep the worms contained on the bed, plastic sheeting to provide insulation and gas cylinders help reach and maintain the proper temperature and humidity for worm growth, as well as scissors and knives. Farmers purchased some of the inputs through the voucher system at a 30% beneficiary contribution and IDEA-NEW worked closely with MAIL to arrange for the procurement and transport of silkworm eggs, which must be kept cool.



Photo: Women traditionally oversee silkworm rearing, Ali Abad district, Kunduz

All beneficiaries that participated in the project last year 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 staff conducted training about silkworm rearing for other internal staff, and also hired four technical staff guide the production of a technical pamphlet

and training sessions for silkworm beneficiaries. In this period 550 cases of silkworms were purchased through the

Silk Department of Kunduz province and were distributed to 550 beneficiaries. Roughly 97% larvae hatched from eggs.

In Baghlan, IDEA-NEW plans to hire one technical expert on a service contract to support the 50 ongoing beneficiaries. Baghlan IDEA-NEW technical staff visited silkworm rearing beneficiaries in Baghlan Jaded district and shared technical information with them. In this period, 50 silkworm rearing beneficiaries were trained for two days on silkworm rearing process in Baghlan Jaded district.

Grape Cultivation/Trellising

Grape cultivation has not been introduced commercially in the region. The existing local varieties have low yields and farmers do not produce the seedless fruit demanded in the market. Through the project, farmers purchase high-quality rootstock and are trained in trellising methods. Participating farmers dedicate a half-jerib of land for grape cultivation on irrigated land. Farmers are committed to attending trainings and contributing 80% of the cost of the rooted saplings and fertilizer sold through the voucher system.

During the reporting period, IDEA-NEW staff provided vineyard management training to 14 farmers and 3 government staff in Kishem district of Badakhshan. IDEA-NEW staff from all four provinces also participated in the training session.

ACDI/VOCA Northern Region

Support to Veterinary Field Units (VFUs)

A total of 19 VFUs, one in Balkh, two in Jawzjan, two in Sari Pul, and 14 in Faryab were monitored with respect to the regular extension training sessions conducted by the paravets in the field and their vaccination and medication registration books while extension support was provided. These deliver

animal health services to livestock owners in the region, including insecure and very remote areas.



Photo: Female Paravet vaccinating a cow, Nahri Shahi Balkh

Two selected female paravets from Balkh and Chimtal districts of Balkh continued the extension training for the female farmers in the two districts. In two months, they conducted 81 sessions in 31 villages and a total of 1,250 female farmers attended in the training. The female farmers were trained to understand the importance of animal vaccination, de-worming, proper feeding, and watering.

DAIL Pure-Bred Karakul Flocks

The IDEA-NEW livestock officer monitored the Karakul sheep farms in Dihdadi district of Balkh province and Shibirghan district of Jawzjan province. The sheep were in good condition and technical supports were provided.

Meanwhile, the training for 15 new BVWs which include four women was started April 21st, 2012 and it will continue for one month. The selected BVWs are from Karakul concentration areas of Balkh, Jawzjan and Faryab provinces. After finishing the training, the trainees will provide support to Karakul sheep flocks with animal health services in remote areas to produce quality Karakul pelt.

Establishment of Feed Banks:

Four feed banks were monitored, one in Jawzjan and three in Faryab. The sales records of the feed banks were checked and the managers of the feed banks were instructed to record the sales and finance issues properly. Twenty-five livestock feed banks have been established in 23 districts of the region. Each feed bank has been provided with eight tons of cotton cake and flax cake.

Retailers and Input Suppliers

The 20th monthly Associations coordination meeting was held, attended by five agricultural retailing associations from four provinces. The feedback from pesticide application trainings, which was collected from associations, was satisfactory. The performance of three associations, which include Faryab, Jawzjan and Sari Pul, were still found poor, however, the team provided much support to their finance officers in terms of book-keeping and business management.

IDEA-NEW's agricultural officer visited a farmer in Hazrati Sultan district in Samangan who purchased flexi flume pipes from the association through the agricultural retailer in his area and used it on his vineyard. The lay flat pipe was used properly and the farmer was satisfied with using it.

Based on IDEA-NEW's plan to withdraw its support from three poorly performing associations, IDEA-NEW's agriculture retailing grants/finance assistant travelled to Jawzjan, Sari Pul, and Faryab provinces and checked the funds in bank accounts, stock inventory and their value, outstanding debts of each member, and membership due owed by each member. All of the financial data has been collected from the associations. Separate meetings will be arranged with the members of the associations to find out their decision on whether to keep working with IDEA-NEW, to become independent, or possibly dissolve.

Land Laser Leveling Program

2.8 ha was leveled using a laser land leveler by Sabze Baba Yadgar Agricultural Cooperative in Nahri Shahi district of Balk, and 2 ha have been leveled in Sari Pul by the Asia Abad Cooperative.

A MOU has been signed with Sanawi Almar Agricultural Cooperative in Almar district of Faryab for using the laser land leveling machine on commercial basis to introduce further the new technology. Meanwhile, in Faryab, the IDEA-NEW agriculture officer provided two-day on-field practical and theoretical training to Sanawi Almar Cooperative's operator on using the laser land leveler. The training was attended by 15 students from Faryab Agricultural Faculty as well. During last month, 1.6 ha was leveled in Almar district by Sanawi Almar Cooperative.



So far, 64.1 ha were leveled using the four laser land leveling machines in three provinces.

Photo: Land Laser Leveling Training – Maymana, Faryab

Potato Improved Seed Demonstrations:

Potatoes are grown in the IDEA-NEW project region, but yields are low because of the usual reasons of poor husbandry, low-yielding varieties and pests and diseases. There are opportunities to increase yields significantly by demonstrating better methods of cultivation, and making high quality seed potatoes, the main objective this project are, the farmers adopt improved methods of growing potatoes and good quality seed potatoes are available commercially.

In 2011, IDEA-NEW trained 360 individual farmers in improved potato cultivation in Kohistan district of Faryab province and distributed ten tons of improved seed potatoes. For better multiplication of the seed potato, IDEA-NEW purchased ten tons of potato from farmers who had grown potatoes in 2011 and stored them for planting in 2012. IDEA-NEW has established twenty four new potato demonstration plots each measuring 0.2 ha in Bilchiragh and Pashtun Kot districts.

During this month, ten tons of seed potatoes were distributed to twenty four selected farmers who have contributed their lands as training plots. The farmers also received DAP and urea fertilizers and shovels. The selected plots are located in Nashar village of Bilchiragh and Kata Qala village of Pashtun Kot districts. Twelve planting field days were conducted on the demonstration plots and a total of 173 farmers attended in the field days. The participants learned about types of planting potato, seed rate and use of fertilizer. 150 AFN was paid for each participant and the potato cultivation leaflets were distributed to them.

VOICES FROM THE FIELD

DAI Eastern Region

Beneficiary: Haji Sharif

Project Name: Commercial Production Farms

From: Kama district, Nangarhar

“Before IDEA-NEW support and intervention, we were only making on average 10,000 AFN from cereals and vegetables. We were using plenty of seeds for seedling production but had poor quality seedlings. Besides, we were cultivating the land once only for which we were getting low price and income. Fortunately, with the technical assistant of IDEA-NEW the vegetable production increased tremendously and I earned 555,000 AFN from five Jirebs of land cultivated with different vegetables in this Fall - Winter seasons. I also learned modern techniques such as soil preparation, new and resistance seed varieties, field lay-out, raised bed nursery, fertilizer application and staggering planting during support.”



Mercy Corps Northeastern Region

Beneficiary: Mohammed Mir

Project Name: Shna Tapa Irrigation project

From: Shna Tapa village, Ali Abad district, Kunduz

Mohammed Mir is the father of eight children and the only person working in his family. He said, “I have no land or any specific business, I just perform masonry work to support my family members. This infrastructure project implemented by IDEA-NEW has provided job opportunities not only for me but also for other people in the village. Through this project I receive 500 AFN per day and I’ve been able to work here for the past two months. This project has really helped me and my family, and I’m very thankful for this program.”

BIWEEKLY 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: PERFORMANCE INDICATOR TABLE (SEE ATTACHED)

ANNEX II: CCI PROJECT DATA BY REGION (SEE ATTACHED)

ANNEX III: FARMER TRAINING SUMMARY

April 1-30, 2012

Province	Districts	CPF		TIMER	REVAMP	Orchard Dev Program	Total
		Wheat	Vegetables	Vegetables	Vegetables		
Nangarhar	Behsood	-	31	-	73	14	118
Nangarhar	Chaparhar	-	56	-	-	-	56
Nangarhar	Dari noor	-	78	-	15	-	93
Nangarhar	Dihbala	-	69	-	-	-	69
Nangarhar	Ghanikhil	-	43	-	23	20	86
Nangarhar	Goshta	-	38	-	45	-	83
Nangarhar	Kama	-	90	-	14	-	104
Nangarhar	Khogyani	-	-	-	17	-	17
Nangarhar	Kot	16	81	-	47	-	144
Nangarhar	Kuz Kunar	-	128	-	50	-	180
Nangarhar	Momandara	23	64	-	-	-	87
Nangarhar	Pachir Wa Agam	-	42	-	-	-	42
Nangarhar	Rodat	-	54	-	49	-	103
Nangarhar	Surkhrod	-	-	-	62	-	62

	Sub-total	39	774	0	397	34	1,244
Kunar	Asad Abad	-	50	-	59	-	124
Kunar	Chawky	-	66	-	-	-	70
Kunar	Khas Kunar	-	63	-	47	-	120
Kunar	Narang	-	143	-	77	-	225
Kunar	Noorgal	-	31	-	-	-	31
Kunar	Serkaney	-	-	-	-	-	1
Kunar	Shegal	-	48	-	41	-	92
Kunar	Watpur	-	-	-	-	-	2
	Sub-total	0	401	0	224	0	665
Laghman	Alingar	-	23	-	-	-	23
Laghman	Alishang	-	70	-	-	-	70
Laghman	Mehtarlam	62	66	-	-	-	198
Laghman	Qarghaee	-	75	-	-	-	75
	Sub-total	62	23	0	0	0	366
Badghis	Qal-i-Naw	-	45	-	-	-	45
Total		101	1,454	0	621	34	2,320

ANNEX IV: MONTHLY SALES DATA

April 1-30, 2012

Products	Local Market		High Value Market		Export Market		Total	Weight & Value
	Kg	\$	Kg	\$	Kg	\$	Kg	\$
Vegetable	104,000	28,180	20,305	28,843	350,000	126,923	474,305	183,946
Fruits	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Herbs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cheese	281	694	-	-	-	-	281	694

Masroor Foods	-	6,260	-	-	-	-	-	6,260
Textile	-	14,433	-	-	-	-	-	14,433
Snacks	-	2,142	-	-	-	-	-	2,142
Chicks Hatched	-	28,751	-	-	-	-	-	28,751
Cartoons Riaz	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Table Eggs	-	4,386	-	-	-	-	-	4,386
Vermicelli	15,000	8,666	-	-	-	-	15,000	8,666
Soap	20,000	15,555	-	-	-	-	20,000	15,555
Total	139,281	109,067	20,305	28,843	350,000	126,923	509,586	264,833

July 1, 2009- April 30, 2012

Products	Local Market		High Value Market		Export Market		Total Weight & Value	
	Kg	\$	Kg	\$	Kg	\$	Kg	\$
Vegetable	5,418,150	1,165,030	190,018	234,270	14,495,000	3,769,571	20,103,168	5,168,871
Fruits	187,386	55,108	6,530	16,461	22,500	22,583	216,416	94,152
Herbs	709	200	-	-	-	-	709	200
Cheese	15,523	52,169	-	-	-	-	15,523	52,169
Masroor Foods	-	155,786	-	56,352	-	-	-	212,138
Textile	-	184,415	-	-	-	-	-	184,415
Snacks	-	107,838	-	4,392	-	-	-	112,230
Chicks Hatched	-	260,125	-	-	-	-	-	260,125
Cartoons Riaz	-	95,240	-	-	-	-	-	95,240
Table	-	118,407	-	-	-	-	-	118,407

Eggs									
Vermicelli	229,500	135,217	-	-	-	-	229,500	135,217	
Soap	138,000	93,274	-	-	-	-	138,000	93,274	
Total	5,989,268	2,422,809	196,548	311,475	14,517,500	3,792,154	20,703,316	6,526,438	

ANNEX V: NON-CCI PROJECT LIST

(SEE ATTACHED)

ANNEX VI: GRANTS UPDATE

(SEE ATTACHED)

ANNEX VII: COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT INFORMATION

ProjectIDEA-NEW
Start DateMarch 2, 2009
End DateMarch 1, 2014
Cooperative Agreement Number306-A-00-09-00508
AOTR/USAID Program ManagerMohammad Aslam Amiri, +93 (0) 700.066.583
Agreement OfficerBruce McFarland
Geographic CoverageNorthern, Northeastern, Eastern and Western Afghanistan

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