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REGIONAL AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM-SOUTH (RADP-S)

April 2014 Monthly Report



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REGIONAL AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM-SOUTH (RADP-S)

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Cover photo: RADP-S test drives two wheel tractors assembled by project staff in late March. Photo credit USAID/RADP-S.

ACRONYMS

ABADE	Assistance in Building Afghanistan by Developing Enterprises
ABISC	Ahmad Baryaliai Improved Seeds Company
ACE	Agricultural Credit Enhancement Program
ADA	Afghan Development Association
ADF	Agriculture Development Fund
AFE	Action for Enterprise
AGRED	Agriculture Research and Extension Development Program
AMMC	Afghan Management and Marketing Consultants
ANNGO	Afghanistan National Nursery Growers Organization
APPF	Afghan Police Protection Force
ALA	Afghanistan Land Authority
AREDP	Afghanistan Rural Enterprise Development Program
ATAR	Afghan Trade and Revenue Program
AVA	Afghan Veterinary Association
AVIPA	Afghanistan Vouchers for Increased Production in Agriculture
AWO	Afghan Women's Organization
BVW	Basic Veterinary Worker
CCN	Cooperating Country National
CHA	Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance
CHAMP	Commercial Horticulture and Agriculture Marketing Program
CLIN	Contract Line Item Number
CMOC-S	Civil-Military Operations Center-South
COP	Chief of Party
COR	Contracting Officer Representative
CST	Country Security Team
DAIL	Directorate of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock
DCA	Dutch Committee for Afghanistan
DCOP	Deputy Chief of Party
DoWA	Directorate of Women's Affairs
EA	Equal Access
EMMP	Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan
FAIDA	Financial Access for Investing in the Development of Afghanistan
FAIDA Ag	Financial Access for Investing in the Development of Afghanistan's Agribusiness South component
GAD	Gender and Development

GAP	Good Agricultural Practices
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIRoA	Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
GLP	Good Livestock Practices
GMP	Good Management Practices
GUC	Grants Under Contract
HACCP	Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point
HALC	Hewad Afghanistan Agriculture and Livestock Company
HR	Human Resources
HVC	High Value Crops
ICARDA	International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas
IPM	Integrated Pest Management
KFFA	Kandahar Fresh Food Association
KFZ	Kandahar Food Zone
KIP	Key Implementing Partner
LOP	Life of Project
MAIL	Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MT	Metric Ton
NADF	National Agricultural Development Framework
NPP	National Priority Program
PMP	Performance Management Plan
PMU	Project Management Unit
RADP-S	Regional Agricultural Development Program-South
S-RAD	Southern Regional Agricultural Development Program
SME	Small and Medium Enterprises
SOW	Scope of Work
SPFU	Small Project Facility Uruzgan
SSISCO	Sadaqat-Sahil Improved Seed Company
TOT	Training-of-Trainers
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
VFU	Veterinary Field Unit
VSU	Vetting Support Unit
VCF	Value Chain Facilitation

Section I: Executive Summary

Program Description

The purpose of the Regional Agriculture Development Program-South (RADP-S) is to improve food and economic security for rural Afghans in the provinces of Kandahar, Helmand, Zabul and Uruzgan provinces. To accomplish this goal, RADP-S focuses on improving the productivity and profitability of the wheat, high value crops, and livestock value chains, while addressing policy, legal and regulatory constraints affecting value chain development. This agricultural development program supports the consolidation of licit economies to fuel sustainable long term economic growth, including providing alternatives to poppy cultivation.

The implementation approach of RADP-S dovetails with Afghan and U.S. government strategies in its focus on advancing food security, regenerating agribusiness, and increasing agriculture sector jobs and incomes. RADP-S aims to strengthen the capacity of producers, associations, traders, and agribusinesses to respond to market demands; facilitate lasting market linkages between value chain actors; and support an enabling environment that allows the private sector to thrive. The program places the Afghan private sector at the forefront of implementation and addresses key crosscutting issues of women's empowerment, agribusiness value chain facilitation, and alternative development in all facets of the program. Embodying USAID's vision for sustainable Afghan-led development, RADP-S lays the foundation for greater and more socially inclusive growth in the agricultural economy.

April 2014 Program Highlights

During the month of April, RADP-S continued to aggressively position itself to roll out implementation of capacity-building activities immediately upon execution of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock (MAIL) and USAID. Employing the expertise of RADP-S' Productivity and Production Unit (PPU) and the technical specialists of RADP-S' key implementing partners (KIPs), the project consolidated training modules and brought the total number of completed capacity-building curricula for the wheat and high value crop value chains to 29. These curricula will guide the productivity and production interventions carried out by KIP master trainers and lead farmers at the district level.

RADP-S' KIPs – the Afghan Development Association (ADA) and Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (CHA) – continued to roll out the Enabling Environment Constraint Survey, developed and designed by the RADP-S Enabling Environment Unit. In April, the survey targeted stakeholders in the project's selected value chains for the purpose of identifying major enabling environment constraints, with particular emphasis on agro-chemical use, high value vegetable production, and women's role within agricultural value chains. By the close of the reporting period, the KIPs had conducted 543 survey interviews across Kandahar, Zabul, Helmand, and Uruzgan provinces. To support and expand on the survey data, RADP-S' Enabling Environment Unit conducted ten focus groups which generated more in-depth information about the constraints affecting RADP-S' target value chains in each of the four provinces. A comprehensive analysis of the information gleaned from these surveys and focus groups will be



RADP-S cultivated high value vegetables seedlings, including tomato (featured here) at the AMTEX Demonstration Farm in April.

completed in May.

Throughout April the RADP-S Gender Team coordinated with the Department of Women's Affairs (DoWA) of each target province to identify opportunities to integrate agricultural value chain activities into the DoWA's capacity-building activities. RADP-S is currently exploring the possibility of establishing a demonstration orchard on up to 25 jeribs of land at the new Kandahar DoWA Women's Training Center in Aino Mina, as well as instituting training classes in nutrition and agribusiness skills. The goal is to establish a DoWA training and business facility focusing on agriculture production and productivity as well as value-added commercial level products that will serve the entire Kandahar province. As this concept is still in its initial brainstorming phase, RADP-S will continue to work with DoWA to identify beneficiaries at the provincial and district level, and to consider follow-on support to technical activities carried out at the Center. If this model is successful, RADP-S would like to replicate the model in each of the remaining three provinces.

RADP-S also made progress toward important administrative deliverables during the reporting period. April 7-10, RADP-S' component leaders and USAID representatives convened to draft a revised Year One Work Plan, which RADP-S submitted to USAID on April 28. The Monitoring and Evaluation Unit completed staffing its team of 21 people (including four female field monitors) and initiated roll out of the household and small and medium enterprise (SME) survey across all four provinces. Data collection for the survey will be completed by May 20.

Section II: Productivity and Production

CLIN I: Wheat

On April 16 – 17, the RADP-S Productivity and Production Unit (PPU) led a workshop with the wheat specialists from ADA and CHA at the AMTEX Technical Training Classroom. The purpose of the workshop was to finalize the capacity-building curriculum for wheat productivity and production. Participants worked diligently and completed such curriculum as harvest and post-harvest handling and water management. These curricula will be employed by RADP-S to train ADA and CHA's district master trainers and the selected lead farmers. The PPU also drafted a wheat production annual calendar for winter and spring varieties which is currently being converted by the Communications Unit into an illustrated instructional brochure targeting farmers in the districts.

CLIN 2: High Value Crops (HVC)

In April, RADP-S High Value Crops (HVC) members of the PPU coordinated a working group with ADA and CHA HVC specialists to design the curriculum and capacity-building materials for the production of stone fruits (apricot, plum and peach) and almonds. The following six curricula were finalized for almonds and each individual stone fruit, making a total of 24 completed curricula on such topics as orchard establishment and post-harvest handling. These curricula will be delivered by ADA and CHA's district level master trainers to the selected lead farmers both on-farm and at selected venues.

The PPU also drew up capacity-building plans for year one. These plans were categorized into four generic crop calendars – orchard, vineyard, winter vegetables and wheat – then combined into one



RADP-S established an orchard including peaches (featured here), plums, apricots and almonds on the AMTEX Demonstration Farm.

calendar for all four provinces, creating an all-inclusive capacity-building plan for all RADP-S target crops. RADP-S has submitted the individual crop calendars to Equal Access for illustration in instructional brochures.

During the reporting period, RADP-S acquired the number of wheat and orchard farmers in each target province with assistance from the DAILs' respective extension departments. RADP-S also collaborated with the DAILs to develop a list of the most appropriate HVCs in each target province.



Equal Access Communications Manager studies the orchard in the AMTEX demonstration nursery.

CLIN 3: Livestock

In April, RADP-S' key implementing partner for livestock activities, the Dutch Committee for Afghanistan (DCA), employed three provincial coordinators, four extension officers, and three district extension workers. Following a week-long field orientation where they will be exposed to DCA extension and veterinary field unit (VFU) work, they will move to their assigned provinces in the South for RADP-S.

During the reporting period, DCA continued to make progress in the preparation of capacity-building curricula and materials. For example, DCA finalized the Pashto version of the large and small ruminant herd health packages and began development of the Pashto materials for the artificial insemination capacity-building program. DCA also finalized the format of the VFU assessment and situational analysis survey, which will be rolled out once the newly-hired provincial staff are in place.

AMTEX Technical Training Facility

RADP-S continued development of the 4,275 square meter demonstration farm located on the AMTEX compound outside Kandahar City. During the reporting period, staff planted a local variety of eggplant and tomato seedlings and two hybrid varieties of cucumbers in the high value vegetable beds. They also prepared a raised bed in the nursery for the cultivation of hybrids seeds. The farm is irrigated using raised bed furrow and basin methods.



RADP-S demonstrates a tractor assembled by the project in March for the KIP attendees at the Technical Management Work Group Conference, April 14.

The primary purpose of the technical training facility will be to build the capacity of RADP-S key implementing partners (KIPs) – the Afghan Development Association (ADA) and Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (CHA) – in technical skills such as post harvest handling, utilization of greenhouses, field cooling and cold storage and drip, furrow and basin irrigation. Wheat, high value orchard and vineyard crops as well as high value vegetables will also be cultivated and maintained for capacity building and demonstration purposes.

Technical Management Working Group Conference

April 14-17, the provincial directors and managers of ADA, CHA and DCA met with RADP-S at the AMTEX Classroom for the Technical Management Working Group Conference. On April 14,

attendees established and finalized selection criteria for lead farmers, developed criteria for demonstrations with the DAILs, brainstormed potential outreach and communications interventions to enhance program activities, coordinated with the M&E and Enabling Environment units, and received training in administrative processes such as procurement and grants. April 15-17, the KIPs divided into technical working groups to continue developing their value chain-specific capacity-building interventions.

Section III: Enabling Environment

Enabling Environment Constraint Survey

During the reporting period, KIPs ADA and CHA continued conducting the Enabling Environment Constraint Survey, developed and designed by the RADP-S Enabling Environment Unit. The survey targeted stakeholders in RADP-S' selected value chains and sub-value chains – wheat, high value crop, dairy and poultry – for the purpose of identifying major enabling environment constraints. During the month of April, ADA staff conducted 94 survey interviews with farmers, traders, associations, cooperatives, enterprise owners, nursery growers and GIROA officials in six total districts across Kandahar, Zabul and Uruzgan provinces. Three different surveys were conducted: an agro-chemical survey targeting producers and input suppliers which addressed the types and quantity of agro-chemicals used and their impact on productivity and pest and disease control in agricultural produce; a vegetable production survey which requested information from producers and entrepreneurs regarding size of business, value chain constraints and involvement of women in vegetable production; and finally a gender survey where women producers and entrepreneurs were interviewed to garner information about their involvement in the agricultural and livestock value chains, and about the constraints affecting women in production and agribusiness. CHA likewise conducted a total of 44 enabling environment constraint surveys in the target districts of Helmand province addressing agro-chemicals, vegetable production, and gender.

Enabling Environment Focus Groups

To support and expand on the survey data from the target provinces, the RADP-S Enabling Environment Unit continued to conduct a series of focus groups that generated more in-depth information about the constraints affecting RADP-S' target value chains in each of the four provinces. ADA conducted seven total focus groups – three each in Zabul and Uruzgan (focusing individually on wheat, HVCs and livestock) and one in Kandahar addressing HVCs which was attended by representatives of the Afghanistan Nursery Growers Association. CHA conducted an additional three in Helmand: one per wheat, HVCs, and livestock. Five focus groups were held in Kandahar and Helmand in March.

Attendees of the focus groups were mobilized by RADP-S and the KIPs in the process of conducting the constraints survey. Participants included farmers and representatives from agricultural associations, cooperatives, and enterprises. These individuals shared their experiences with existing value chain constraints affecting production, productivity and commercial activities, as well as their ideas for removing or overcoming these constraints.

A comprehensive analysis of the information gleaned from these surveys and focus groups will be completed by the RADP-S Enabling Environment Unit in May.

Section IV: Value Chain Facilitation

In April, RADP-S continued to implement the recommendations of value chain facilitation (VCF) subcontractor Action for Enterprise (AFE) by carrying out abbreviated value chain analyses of

grapes, wheat and their supporting markets. These abbreviated analyses created a map that presented the relevant market actors and their relationships with one another; described value chain governance structures and methods of inter-firm cooperation; identified constraints in the areas of market access, input supply, technology/product development, management and organization, policy, finance, and infrastructure; and assessed the potential, and requirements, of the end markets and key buyers of the selected value chains. The VCF Unit will continue to carry out these analyses for more target value chains in the next reporting period.

RADP-S also continued recruitment to staff the ten-person VCF Unit. The VCF Team Leader, Carianne deBoer from AFE, will begin a one-year assignment in May.

Section V: Gender

On April 9, the RADP-S Gender Team held a meeting with Ms. Ruqia Achakzai, the Director of the Kandahar Provincial Department of Women's Affairs (DoWA) at her office. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the capacity-building interventions in solar drying benefiting those women involved in the drying and processing of stone fruits. Ms. Ruqia expressed her support for the intervention and offered to introduce women from the RADP-S target districts. She also proposed that RADP-S collaborate with DoWA to establish a demonstration orchard in 25 jeribs of land at the new Aino Mino Women's Training Center.



Kandahar DoWA Director, Ruqia Achakzai, gives RADP-S' Gender Integration Manager a tour of the Women's Training Center in Aino Mina, April 23.



RADP-S' Gender Integration Manager identifies a bore well outside the Women's Training Center which could be used to irrigate a demonstration orchard, April 23.

Following up to the meeting at DoWA, on April 13 the RADP-S Gender Team was introduced by the Afghan Rural Enterprise Development Project (AREDP) to women involved in small-scale agribusiness activities in the districts of Dand and Arghandab. The attending women emphasized to RADP-S their need for capacity-building and toolkits to carry out improved fruit drying and processing activities, particularly with the support of solar power. They extended an invitation to RADP-S to visit their villages and observe their activities first-hand.

RADP-S accepted the invitation and on April 22 the Gender Team and one monitoring and evaluation (M&E) field monitor visited Rohabad village in Dand district. Most women they met with in Rohabad possessed either a kitchen garden or managed small orchards in their

backyard. Most had at least some experience in drying fresh fruits, mainly turning grapes to raisins and selling their surplus produce in Kandahar markets. Some of the women had come together to create a central fund in which members would contribute money and then award the total fund to one member on a weekly and rotating basis. The member then uses the fund to put toward income-generating activities in agribusiness or livestock.

The following day, RADP-S met again with Ms. Achakzai at the building where the Aino Mino Women’s Training Center is being established. At the meeting, RADP-S and Ms. Achakzai discussed the logistics behind supporting the development of a demonstration orchard on the 25 jeribs of adjacent to the training facility, pending USAID approval. They also discussed the possibility of introducing agribusiness-oriented modules to the center with the technical support of RADP-S. The same activities are being considered by RADP-S for the DoWA women’s training centers in Helmand, Zabul, and Uruzgan.

Section VI: Monitoring and Evaluation

During the reporting period, the M&E Unit continued to oversee the development of the baseline survey. RADP-S partner Afghan Management and Marketing Consultants (AMMC) submitted the second draft of the baseline report to the RADP-S M&E Unit for review in April and RADP-S is in the process of providing detailed feedback. In the meantime, AMMC trained its enumerators on the tested and translated baseline survey tools to gather household and small and medium enterprise (SME) data. It then initiated rollout of the household and SME surveys in all four provinces and is projected to complete survey collection by May 20.

RADP-S completed staffing of the M&E Unit in April, including one female field monitor per province. Subsequently, RADP-S drafted a training needs analysis to identify strengths and weakness in its team. Based on the needs analysis, the team’s leadership will develop training modules to ensure that all staff are trained in data collection and analysis best practices.

The team also drafted a Data Quality Analysis (DQA) method to review completed baseline surveys and ensure rigorous quality control. During the survey process, RADP-S’s M&E team will work with AMMC and will use the DQA method to confirm validity for a 10% sample of completed surveys.



AMMC presents to KIP provincial leadership at the Technical Management Working Group Conference, April 14.

Section VII: Communications and Outreach



A live broadcast at Sabawoon Radio in Helmand Province.

In April, RADP-S communications and outreach partner, Equal Access (EA), began a communications assessment of radio and television stations in the Helmand and Kandahar provinces. EA assessed each station for its ability to produce live call-in radio episodes, its experience broadcasting agriculture-themed programs, its overall technical capacity, and its geographical coverage. The stations assessed in Helmand province were as follows: Bost Radio, Samoon Radio, Taleem ul Islam Radio, Sabawoon Radio and Television and Muska Radio. In Kandahar City, EA visited Hewad Radio and Television Group, Sanga Radio, and Merman

Radio. All stations met the requirements for coverage in all target districts and most possessed experience in running agricultural radio programs.

RADP-S is currently planning on running a monthly radio program in each province featuring mini dramas, expert panel discussions and live call-in segments. The project will also frequently use radio to broadcast timely, short and repetitive public service announcements related to improved agricultural and livestock practices.

RADP-S has also shared crop calendars produced by the PPU for wheat and HVCs with EA. EA will use these calendars to produce instructional printed material (consisting mostly of illustrations and very basic Pashto) for mass dissemination in support of PPU capacity-building interventions.

EA will complete the communications assessment, which also includes evaluation of mobile theater troops, in all the provinces by the end of June.

Section VIII: Collaboration with Partners and Stakeholders

RADP-S met with leadership of the USAID Kandahar Food Zone (KFZ) project to lay the foundation for monthly technical coordination meetings. These meetings serve as a venue to identify opportunities for complementary activities while also ensuring there is no duplication of effort in Kandahar province. The next meeting will be held May 20th in Kabul.

Section IX: Administration and Management

Personnel

During the reporting period, Dan Rhodes and John Haydu joined the project as Acting Chief of Party and Deputy Chief of Party, respectively. Dan Rhodes will serve in this role until the replacement COP Bruce Brower arrives mid-June.

Year One Work Plan

April 7-10, RADP-S' Acting COP Dan Rhodes, DCOP Gordon Bremer, PPU Team Leader Campbell Dunlop, M&E Advisor Brian Zuidema, Communications Specialist Rachel Rothgery, ST Enabling Environment Advisor Matt Weber, and USAID Agriculture Advisor Tom Love convened to revise the Year One Work Plan. RADP-S Contracting Officer Representative (COR) Freeman Daniels and Alternate COR Sayed Khalid Hashimi also attended on April 7. Participants identified first-year outcomes and supporting activities for each target value chain (wheat, HVCs, livestock) and component (productivity and production, value chain facilitation, and enabling environment). They also analyzed each actual activity for possible constraints, risks, and opportunities to apply crosscutting and supporting activities in gender and communications and outreach. On the final day, the provincial directors from ADA, CHA and DCA participated in the work-planning exercise. RADP-S submitted the first draft of the revised Work Plan to USAID on April



Former DCOP Gordon Bremer (left) introduces his replacement, John Haydu (right), to KIP leadership the final day of work planning, April 10.

28. The Work Plan is currently undergoing final revisions according to USAID feedback, including the addition of a nutrition theme throughout the technical components.

Section X: Implementation Challenges

The lack of an MOU with the MAIL is a significant limitation to program implementation. An endorsement of RADP-S by the MAIL to Provincial and District authorities is needed to enable the KIPs to receive cooperation from local authorities. KIPs have also expressed the necessity to be specifically named in the MOU in order to be permitted by the provincial and district authorities to implement on behalf of RADP-S in the districts.