



# REGIONAL AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM-SOUTH (RADP-S)

306-C-00-13-00018

MONTHLY REPORT: November 2014



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**Cover photo:** Trainees study the construction of a drip irrigation system storage tank. This system will be used in greenhouses on the district demonstration farms. Photo credit USAID/RADP-S.

## ACRONYMS

ANSOR	Afghanistan National Seed Organization
APS	Annual Program Statement
DAIL	Directorate of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock
DCA	Dutch Committee for Afghanistan
DCOP	Deputy Chief of Party
DDA	District Development Assembly
DOWA	Directorate of Women's Affairs
EEU	Enabling Environment Unit
FEG	Farmer Extension Groups
GIROA	Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
HVC	High Value Crops
IPM	Integrated Pest Management
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
KIP	Key Implementing Partner
KFZ	Kandahar Food Zone
KFFA	Kandahar Fresh Fruit Association
MAIL	Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MOWA	Ministry of the Women's Affairs
PMP	Performance Management Plan
PPU	Productivity and Production Unit
PVD	Provincial Veterinarian Department
RADP-S	Regional Agricultural Development Program-South
TOT	Training of Trainers
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VCFU	Value Chain Facilitation Unit
VFU	Veterinary Field Unit

## **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. To accomplish this goal, RADP-S focuses on improving the productivity and profitability of the wheat, high value crops (HVC), 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.

### **November 2014 Program Highlights**

During the month of November, RADP-S continued to conduct training sessions throughout the 15 districts in the four targeted provinces. The trainings focused on a variety of wheat and high value crop topics including wheat sowing time, crop rotation, seed rate, orchard management, and greenhouse establishment. Providing both classroom instruction and hands-on participatory training at district demonstration farms, ensured farmers were able to apply the increasingly sophisticated skills they had learned in the classroom in a practical real-life setting. By end of November, 4,971 farmers had attended a training in wheat or HVC conducted by RADP-S.

Working off the success of last month's training of trainers' workshop, the RADP-S gender integration team conducted basic nutrition trainings in Helmand, Uruzgan, and Kandahar provinces. The 17 female master trainers, in conjunction with province-based DOWA officials, hosted these basic nutrition trainings for women beneficiaries in the provincial capital city center and surrounding areas. There were 107 female trainees in attendance.

RADP-S value chain facilitation team held four pre-application workshops for the Annual Program Statement (APS). These workshops provide assistance to 58 local businesses interested in applying to the APS program. The workshop explained the different grant mechanisms, terms and conditions, and how to properly write a statement of interest.

Kandahar Fresh Fruit Association (KFFA), with technical assistance on fruit washing, sorting, packaging requirements, and storage from RADP-S post-harvest specialist, packed and shipped a trial shipment of Kandahari pomegranates to London, UK. This trial shipment marks the first unsubsidized international shipment of Kandahari pomegranates for KFFA to a Western European market.

RADP-S hosted master trainers from all four provinces at the AMTEX Technical Training Facility and Demonstration Farm from November 16 through November 29. These two weeks of intensive training provided the master trainers with the necessary classroom and field based instruction to continue delivering quality instruction to beneficiaries throughout RADP-S' 15 target districts.

## SECTION II: PRODUCTIVITY AND PRODUCTION

### Components I & 2: Wheat & High Value Crops (HVCs)

#### *Province-Wide Training*

During the month of November RADP-S staff based in provincial centers and throughout the 15 districts conducted trainings on wheat and HVC. Trainings held in Daman, Dand, Arghandab, Zheri, and Panjwai districts of Kandahar focused on orchard establishment, orchard maintenance, wheat



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**A master trainer facilitates orchard water management training in one of the demo farms of Arghandab district in Kandahar**

sowing time, crop rotation, seed rate, and land preparation for the planting of wheat. Trainings were conducted on the demonstration farms to provide farmers with hands-on experience which facilitated a more participatory discussion between trainers and farmers. It was noted that many of the farmers still used old or “traditional” systems of growing and many of the techniques being taught were new to the farmers.

Training topics for HVC focused on orchard plant nutrition, vineyards nutrition, vineyard establishment, and

establishing greenhouses specifically their structural design and benefits. Master trainers provided similar trainings at district-based demonstration farms on the topics of wheat and HVC in Helmand province’s Lashkar Gah, Nad Ali, Nawa and in Uruzgan province in the districts of Tirin Kot, Chora, and Dehrawod. Using plans developed by RADP-S program staff, each demonstration farm was leveled with the demarcation of farm boundaries determined for wheat, orchard, and other HVC planting. Like the others, Zabul province continued with its training schedule also focusing on similar topics dealing with land preparation and crop establishment. Trainers noted, farmers are growing eager to participate in the trainings and learn more about agriculture as well as upgrade their technical skills. All demonstration farms in the Zabul districts of Qalat, Shajoy, and Jaldak have ploughed and leveled their plots during training exercises in preparation for wheat planting.

The table below, Table I, lists the number of farmers that have attended the second training module in the wheat and HVC training cycle in the month of November.

Table I. Number of Attendees, November 2014				
Province	District	HVC	Wheat	Total
Helmand	Lashkar Gah	181	343	524
Helmand	Nad Ali	90	531	621
Helmand	Nahri Saraj	420	243	663
Helmand	Nawa	122	201	323
<b>Helmand Sub Total</b>		<b>813</b>	<b>1318</b>	<b>2131</b>
Kandahar	Arghandab	111	40	151
Kandahar	Daman	16	80	96
Kandahar	Dand	76	118	194
Kandahar	Panjwai	195	157	352
Kandahar	Zheri	51	54	105
<b>Kandahar Sub Total</b>		<b>449</b>	<b>449</b>	<b>898</b>
Uruzgan	Chora	80	73	153
Uruzgan	Dehrawood	87	81	168
Uruzgan	Trinkot	239	379	618
<b>Uruzgan Sub Total</b>		<b>406</b>	<b>533</b>	<b>939</b>
Zabul	Jaldak	149	122	271
Zabul	Qalat	188	76	264
Zabul	Shajoy	335	133	468
<b>Zabul Sub Total</b>		<b>672</b>	<b>331</b>	<b>1003</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>2340</b>	<b>2631</b>	<b>4971</b>

### Training of Trainers



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**RADP-S experts conduct 2<sup>nd</sup> round of ToT training for master trainers at the AMTEX demonstration farm**

From November 16 to the 29 RADP-S conducted the second round of the training of trainers' for the 50 master trainers working throughout the 15 districts in the four targeted provinces. These sessions were broken up into two sessions per day. The morning sessions, which were classroom based, focused on the core theory of the training topics. The afternoon sessions, which took place at the AMTEX demonstration farm and greenhouse facility, provided hands on practical experience using the techniques and tools learned during the classroom sessions. Pre and post tests were taken for every session to measure retention and reinforce training specifics. The

training of trainers agenda covered such topics as orchard maintenance, orchard establishment, orchard plant nutrition, orchard water management, orchard IPM and weed control, orchard harvest and post-harvest, vineyard water management, vineyard maintenance, vineyard nutrition, vineyard establishment, vineyard IPM and weed control, greenhouse vegetable water management, greenhouse plant nutrition, greenhouse vegetable IPM and weed control, greenhouse establishment, greenhouse maintenance, wheat crop establishment, wheat IPM and weed control, wheat harvest and post-harvest, wheat water management, wheat plant nutrition, vegetable harvest and post-harvest, grapes harvest and post-harvest, and crop rotation. The master trainers will use the information they learned during these sessions as they continue to carry out training activities across the 15 districts in accordance with the master training schedule.

#### **Master Trainers Recognize Importance of ToT**

“This training was even more beneficial than learning in a school because at school you would only listen to lecture, but here it was different. We had books, presentation, and most importantly the practical work at the demo farm. The teachers here are also so qualified and helpful.” - *Master trainer, Asil Khan, Dand, Kandahar*

#### **Kandahari Pomegranates to London**

The Kandahar Fresh Fruit Association (KFFA) completed the delivery of a one-metric ton trial consignment of Kandahari pomegranates to the United Kingdom. These pomegranates are currently being sold at Harrods' Department Store in London, and the client has expressed satisfaction in the quality of the product received. This trial consignment is the association's first shipment to the United Kingdom and has provided key lessons learned about shipping internationally and the viability of continued shipments to western markets. RADP-S' post production advisor was asked to provide technical direction to KFFA and allow for the usage of the packaging facilities at the AMTEX demonstration farm. The post production advisor provided guidance on fruit washing, sorting, packaging requirements, and storage. After the initial guidance was supplied, KFFA management took the lead on the day-to-day details of moving the product from the fields to the packing facility, and onto the plane.

While the delivery of the pomegranates to the UK was a critical step forward, the continuation of this venture is unsustainable (profitability wise) until KFFA addresses several of the deficiencies in their packaging and shipping processes. A major cost incurred by KFFA was moving the consignment via air freight from Kandahar to London (via Dubai); the use of a substitute transportation method, like ocean freight, could lead to lower transportation costs. While transportation costs cut into profit margins, other losses in product and profit were incurred due to poor packaging and sanitizing. The cardboard boxes used by KFFA were not the appropriate type for shipping this type of fruit. The height of the boxes were fit for pomegranates sized 600 grams or smaller, where the majority of pomegranates shipped were 800 grams or larger. The larger sized fruit was not properly protected by the boxes and significant losses were experienced due to crushing. Additionally, many of the boxes picked up moisture en route, which required them to be repackaged once they reached the UK.

Overall, profit/loss from this venture has yet to be determined, but high shipping prices and product losses from transport care critical considerations for KFFA moving forward. The lessons learned of this trial have provided valuable information for KFFA as they continue to look at the profitability of exporting products to foreign markets.

## **Component 3: Livestock**

### ***Farmer Extension Groups***

During the reporting period, RADP-S staff distributed extension materials to the farmer extension groups (FEGs) through the respective provincial offices. The Kandahar districts of Dand, Daman, Arghandab, and Panjwai focused trainings on herd health, goat and sheep rearing, breeding, and income products for livestock. A total of 16 farmer extension groups were engaged during these trainings in Kandahar. Each FEG ranged from 6-16 members per extension group and 12 of the total 16 farmer extension groups were made up of all female beneficiaries. In Helmand province, in the districts of Lashkar Gah, Nawa, and Nad Ali, the 16 farmer extension groups participated in similar trainings on sheep and goat rearing, winter feed storage, and deworming awareness. In Zabul, the 16 farmer extension groups, four of which are female, were also instructed on the same topics, while eight farmer extension groups in Uruzgan received similar instruction.

### ***Provincial Veterinary Department***

RADP-S Project Manager, Dr. Ander Gul, conducted meetings with members of the Provincial Veterinary Department (PVD) in Kandahar, Helmand, and Zabul to provide status updates. Dr. Gul and the PVD discussed current veterinary field unit (VFU) activities, the identification of new VFU locations, and selecting new paravet trainees. In Uruzgan province, the Director of the Economy Department was also invited to attend the meeting between Dr. Gul's and the PVD as the topic of livestock rearing and its economic benefits were of interest to him.

## **SECTION III: ENABLING ENVIRONMENT**

RADP-S' enabling environment unit, is identifying and analyzing obstacles to doing business in southern Afghanistan that might be addressed through adjustments to policies or regulations enacted at a national level. A preliminary constraints analysis was conducted on certified wheat seeds. The constraint analysis identified that to improve the quality and quantity of certified seeds on the market, the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL) needs to amend its policies in order to make it easier for companies to lease land from the government to encourage companies to grow registered seeds that produce quality certified seeds. Additionally, by working with Afghanistan National Seed Organization (ANSOR), bi-laws can be created that strictly prohibit the production of counterfeit and/or low quality certified seed. The development of a regulatory monitor will be needed to ensure adherence to the laws within the private sector.

The enabling environment unit drafted an application to be disseminated to national agricultural organizations who have responded to a request for "Expression of Interest" to receive training in policy formation and advocacy. This application was developed following MAIL's suggestion that such national agricultural organizations could attend the Agribusiness Working Group meetings defined in the coordination mechanism between the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and MAIL.

## **SECTION IV: VALUE CHAIN FACILITATION**

### ***Annual Program Statement***

The value chain facilitation unit (VCFU) moved forward with the promotion of its Annual Program Statement (APS). Advertisements were released in the local newspaper inviting interested businesses working in the fruit, vegetable, livestock, broiler, or wheat value chain to apply to attend one of four pre-application workshops. These workshops were designed to provide technical direction on the application process when applying to the APS. Participants were instructed on selection criteria, provided a review of possible grant agreements (simplified, in-kind, standard, or fixed obligation



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**RADP-S value chain specialist conducts APS pre-application workshop to get the companies familiar with the process of applying and developing concept papers**

grants), and timelines for the submission of applications. In total 58 value chain actors attended one of the four workshops. In addition, the VCFU followed-up with companies that were unable to attend one of the workshops, but had expressed interest in learning more about the process and potentially applying to the program. Applications for the APS are accepted on a rolling basis, but as of November 30, 31 applications had been submitted covering all five value chains the VCFU is interested in working with. The next steps for the VCFU

will be to review each application using the selection criteria as a basis for determining which companies to select. After the companies are selected, they will be invited to individual meetings to further assess their needs, outline grant opportunities, and discuss budget details.

## SECTION V: GENDER

### *Nutritional Training*

The RADP-S gender integration team continued basic nutrition trainings for the women in Kandahar, Helmand, and Uruzgan. These three sessions provided the female beneficiaries with information on why nutrition matters, classifications of nutrients, obesity, causes of malnutrition, types of vitamins, and keys to maintaining a healthy diet.

Due to security concerns, the trainings were conducted in only three of the targeted four provinces. An additional training, slated for December, will be conducted in Zabul. All the training sessions were conducted in collaboration with the Department of Women Affairs (DoWA) within each respective province. A total of 107 women were trained over the course of the three training sessions. From the positive response received from these three training sessions, the RADP-S gender integration team is working to identify additional training opportunities where the basic nutrition curriculum can be presented to a wider range of female beneficiaries.



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The RADP-S gender integration manager trains 40 afghan women beneficiaries on Basic Nutrition at the Department of Women Affairs (DoWA) in Lashkar Gah, Helmand

## **SECTION VI: COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH**

### ***PSA and Live Call-In Radio Broadcasts***

Four radio programs continued to air throughout the month of November, in all the four provinces. The topics of each show covered vineyard establishment, wheat crop rotation, orchard maintenance, and orchard water management.

Four Public Short Announcements (PSAs) were aired 28 times through selected radio stations in the four target provinces. The PSAs delivered messages on wheat crop rotation, wheat cultivation, irrigation benefits, and benefits of greenhouses.

### ***Listening Circles***

During November a total of 52 listening circles were conducted for 965 participants across the 15 districts, on animal vaccination, wheat IPM and weed control, orchard management, orchard IPM and weed control, orchard water management, vegetable crop establishment, orchard crop establishment, and winter vegetable water management.

### ***RADP-S Media Training Workshop***

RADP-S communications and outreach department concluded their digital photography trainings for key implementing partners provincial and district staffs in Zabol, Helmand, and Kandahar provinces. The training placed particular emphasis on improving the attendees' photography skills and introducing them to the latest tips in taking high quality photos for M&E and documenting progression during technical training sessions. In total 135 individual were trained during these sessions.

## **SECTION VII: MONITORING & EVALUATION**

The M&E unit completed the data entry process of training data for Beneficiaries Farmers Intake Forms and training attendance sheets for Kandahar, Helmand, Zabol and Uruzgan provinces and the team is currently compiling the data to put into an M&E database. In addition, the team started the data entry process of recording pre-test and post-tests results for farmers' training.

District and province-based staff started to receive their username and account details for the M&E Cloud Storage System. This system will allow remotely based staff to upload M&E information into the RADP-S M&E cloud where the data can be arranged and collated. This system will assist with speeding up the collection time of M&E data and reduce the travel and work hours currently needed to transport hard copy M&E files from districts to provincial center then onto the RADP-S M&E office.

## **SECTION VIII: PARTNER & STAKEHOLDER COLLABORATION**

### **Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan**

#### ***Kandahar***

A meeting was held at the Kandahar DAIL offices with the Kandahar DAIL Director on November 5. RADP-S staff presented an update on the current status of the RADP-S project as well as to share the November training schedule, in Pashto, with the Director.

During four meetings, held over the first two weeks of November, District Governors from Daman, Panjwai, Arghandab, and Dand were updated on the project progress and shown Pashto versions of the RADP-S training schedules for the month of November.

### **Zabul**

The Zabul Provincial Governor requested activity reports from all NGO representatives on activities conducted in Zabul between March and October 2014. RADP-S provincial staff prepared Pashto versions of their program activity reports and submitted them to the Provincial Governors Office and with additional copies submitted to DAIL and the Economic Department of Zabul.

On November 25, RADP-S representatives conducted a coordination meeting with Zabul DAIL Director Mr. Bismillah Haripoul and Dr. Ebrahim, a Veterinary Officer, regarding farmer extension group and VFU activities; specifically on the deworming campaign. Both officials appreciated the extension activities which delivers important messages for farmers and livestock owners.

### **Uruzgan**

On November 23, RADP-S representative in Uruzgan province, Engineer Rahim Ullah, attended a Provincial Development Council (PDC) meeting at the provincial meeting hall which was attended by directors of different NGOs and directorates along with the Deputy Governor of Uruzgan. In this meeting, Engineer Rahim Ullah, verbally presented on the program activities of RADP-S in Uruzgan province, recapping the previous month's accomplishments and describing upcoming training sessions.

### **Helmand**

On November 13, the RADP-S HVC value chain specialist attended the monthly coordination meeting with the Directorate of Economy in Helmand province. The meeting was coordinated to present the monthly project progress update including beneficiary selections. The RADP-S project progress for Helmand was presented verbally, in Pashto, by the RADP-S HVC value chain specialist. The brief was welcomed by all the participants, while government officials ensured their full support to RADP-S during their continuing training sessions.

On November 29, the RADP-S provincial representative in Helmand attended a short meeting with the Provincial DAIL Director to present project progress updates for the month of November.

## **SECTION IX: Implementation Challenges**

Security concerns throughout our southern districts continue to pose implementation challenges. In particular, female extension workers are experiencing increased security concerns which in turn has hindered their ability to meet with the farmer extension groups in all the districts.

The gender integration team continues to experience difficulty in identifying suitable training facilities for female beneficiaries. Smaller venues such as private homes that are typically used for these events, do not have the capacity for larger group events. The gender integration team is working with provincial DOWA officials to identify government facilities that can accommodate the women during their training sessions, specifically in the more remote districts.