



PEACE

A PROJECT OF THE GLOBAL LIVESTOCK CRSP



"Reducing Risk for the Kuchi People"

Pastoral Engagement, Adaptation and Capacity Enhancement (PEACE) Project AFGHANISTAN

Annual Report

July 1, 2006 through June 30, 2007

Submitted By:

University of California at Davis

In Collaboration With:

Texas A&M University System

A USAID-funded Project
Cooperative Agreement No. 306-A-00-06-00521-00

June 27, 2007



USAID | AFGHANISTAN



Summary

Six major activities have been initiated this first year.

- We have successfully established in-country administrative and logistical support for our project through an agreement with Mercy Corps. This agreement has significantly increased our ability to be successful in Afghanistan.
- The Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Land (MAIL) have been fully engaged with our project from the beginning. We have produced *Memorandums of Understanding* (MOU) with 2 Departments within the MAIL (i.e., Animal Health and Natural Resource Management). They were both signed by the Technical Deputy Minister of Agriculture. The Department of Natural Resource Management is involved in institutionalizing the Livestock Early Warning System while the Department of Animal Health is helping us implement the Near Infrared Nutritional Profiling System. These two systems will provide valuable information regarding forage quantity and quality for Afghanistan. This year we trained 18 MAIL staff in support of the LEWS and 2 Afghans in support of the Nutritional profiling system.
- Our primary focus this year, with respect to outreach, has been to identify the different NGO, Government Organizations and Kuchi groups for who we can provide our forage information. The forage information will not become available until next growing season.
- Linking our information to herders is a major challenge and we feel that we are on the right track with the Department of Kuchi Affairs. This independent department has been very helpful and is interested in being a major conduit for the information we can deliver.
- Finally, capacity building within the MAIL has been delivered this year in the form of intensive field training. We have invested over 3 months of face to face time with MAIL employees. We anticipate that three of the Kabul employees assigned to our project will be able to help us train many more government staff and university students in the coming year.

Major Implementation Activities Initiated this year

A. Established in-country administrative support

Mercy Corps was chosen as the in-country collaborator for the PEACE project for two major reasons. First, Mercy Corps had previously worked with the UC Davis / Texas A&M team in Mongolia to set up a Livestock Early warning system. Due to the success of the Mongolia collaboration, Mercy Corps was on the top of the list for potential collaborators in Afghanistan. Second, Mercy Corps has had a long-standing program in Afghanistan. We felt that this would assist the PEACE Project in a more rapid and effective start to our project.

We have completed an agreement with Mercy Corps that provides us with logistical support and are finalizing an extension of this contract for year 2. One of the first collaborations with Mercy Corps was a jointly funded conflict resolution workshop held in May (*see the "other achievements" section below for more information on this workshop*).

B. Infusion of the Forage Monitoring System

During our last quarter, focus had been on conducting vegetation surveys to acquire the data needed develop the Livestock Early Warning System. Field work required to implement the LEWS project began in April. We were able to conduct vegetation surveys in 7 Provinces. These included Kabul, Parwan, Baglan, Kunduz, Takhar, Bamyán and Panjshir. Staff from the Department of Land Resources within the Ministry of Agriculture accompanied us during all the field work. We were able to train a total of 18 MAIL employees during our sampling period.

A MOU between our project and the Department of Natural Resource Management was signed on April 8th, 2007. It clearly outlines what the PEACE Project and the MAIL will contribute to establish the Livestock Early Warning System.

C. Infusion of the NIRS Nutritional Management System.

During the first year we have located a site for the Near Infra Red Spectrometry (NIRS) laboratory. The Director, Dr. Aziz Osmani has provided us with 2 buildings that will house the office/lab and an animal feeding facility. This has been a difficult year for the Department as they have been short-handed during out-breaks of bird-flu. The NIRS lab is not scheduled to come on-line until the second year of the project, however, we have paved the way for an easy installation and implementation of this component.

We invited people from this department to attend a NIRS training in Mongolia but we encountered a problem with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. They sat on the invitation paperwork making nearly impossible for us to obtain the visas in time for the journey. Instead, we went with plan "B" and invited a Mercy Corps Veterinarian and our technical assistant to Mongolia so that we would be able to transfer the information learned in Mongolia to the Animal Health Dept. The Mercy Corps Vet used to work with in Dr. Osmani's department and maintains a good working relationship with him and the other department staff. Subsequently, the information transfer should be smooth as they are trusted colleagues.

A MOU between our project and the Department of Animal Health was signed on June 24th, 2007. It clearly outlines what the PEACE Project and the MAIL will contribute to establish the Near Infrared Nutritional Profiling System.

D. Forage Monitoring and Nutritional Information Delivery and Outreach.

The outreach and delivery of project information is being developed through several potential avenues. We are working with the MAIL to develop a radio program that will be broadcast over "am" radio straight from the government radio station at the Ministry of Agriculture. We have also developed relationships with other projects that are trying to help Kuchi herders. Tribal Liaison Office, Shelter Now, Medair and Assests are among the NGO's we have discussed collaborations. These organizations are providing various services to Kuchi herders and could provide important in-roads for us to reach Kuchi with forage condition and market information. In return, we can assist these organizations with conflict resolution issues for Kuchi in their areas of influence.

There were two aspects of the delivery and outreach activity that were not addressed this year. The Project web page has not been produced yet and is scheduled to be operational by September 07. We have not tested a radio network to date either. The reason for not finishing this aspect of the outreach activity is that we are still exploring the best option for the radio transmission. We feel that we have found what could be the most viable option. However, it will still be some months before we can hope to test out the government radio. We are currently in discussions with the MAIL to put together a weekly agricultural radio program.

E. Linking the Technology with Herder Alliances

We have discussed the dissemination of our forage condition information with the most relevant NGO's and the MAIL. They are all very aware of the potential advantages that the early warning system has for planning for mitigation activities. Relevant NGO's include those that work directly with Kuchi Herders.

The General Director of Kuchi, Agha Doud Shah Niazi, has introduced us to some of his provincial staff. He has proved us with unlimited access to Kuchi through his office. He is also very interested in conflict

resolution regarding access to grazing lands for Kuchi. After the conflict resolution workshop in May, we discussed priority areas to test some negotiation and resolution methods. We are planning to visit those areas in the early fall with our conflict resolution consultant. This will be a “learning by doing” exercise and allow us to refine and facilitate the development of a conflict resolution strategy for Kuchi herders.

F. Building Capacity within the MAIL, NGOs and the University

Our primary capacity building focus this year has been with the Ministry of Agriculture. We placed a major amount of time in developing the relationship between the departments within the MAIL and the PEACE Project. Our goal was to first develop trust with individuals and then to proceed by including the relevant MAIL staff in the initiation of our project. We started with an MOU that spelled out the Ministry’s role in providing people to be trained to how to implement the Livestock Early Warning System. In this way we hoped to develop the foundation on which the sustainability of the system could be built. Several MAIL staff from Kabul accompanied us during the entire field season. While sampling each province we would also bring at least 2 local MAIL staff members with us.

The Faculty of Agriculture and Faculty of Animal Science at the University of Kabul were also informed of the PEACE project’s objectives and desire to train University students. We determined, however, that we should begin building capacity within the MAIL first, and then after we had a core group of Ministry people trained the training of the University students would be easier and more effective. In this way we have trained future trainers.

Other Achievements

1. We were able to provide training to 49 people during two workshops that focused on negotiation strategies and conflict resolution techniques. The second workshop targeted government employees. We specifically invited government people that regularly deal with land-use conflicts. Five provincial representatives from the Department of Kuchi Affairs were among the attendees. It is our goal to engage these representatives into using known methods of conflict resolution to solve the many problems they are facing. We had very positive feedback from most attendees and we were asked to continue to provide this type of support.
2. During vegetation surveys this field season we collected over 200 species of plants. These were collect in triplicate when possible and most were identified to genus. One copy was sent to the University of Gottingen in Germany for identification to species. This University has several botanists that specialize in middle-Asian plants and a reference collection from Afghanistan. The specimens were shipped out of the country at the end of June and should be identified by the end of July. Plant identification is essential for running the plant growth model that operates the Livestock Early Warning System. We were assisted in sending these plants out of the country by the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Environment.

Modifications to the First Year Work Plan

There have been a couple of modifications to the work plan.

1. Feeding trials have been rescheduled for this fall. This modification to our original plan was due to the late decision by the Dept. of animal health as to where we could conduct the feeding trials. Approval to use the Darulaman building for trials did not come until January 2007. This did not provide us with enough lead time to organize necessary equipment and animal feed. In addition, January was particularly cold and the plumbing froze-up in the feeding facility. The delay in the trials, however, did not involve NIRS equipment purchases. Equipment acquisition is proceeding

2. Originally our plan was to hire two full-time professional nationals in the capacity of livestock specialist and ecologist. We were unable to fill these positions, however, due to the fact that capacity is quite low in Afghanistan. We advertised the positions for 6 weeks and received about 40 applications. None were of the capacity that we were hoping to find. This presented the need for a change of strategy for the project. During a project meeting held in late January, it was determined that to meet our project objectives we would have to increase the amount of time allocated to our consultancies. In addition, we would need to increase the position of the pastoral ecologist to full-time. These changes will require additional funding. We have submitted a budget modification to USAID that outlines the necessary funds required to get the job done. Although the request is only a modest increase, these funds will be essential to the success of the project.

Indicators and Achievement Benchmark with Financial Plan by Activity

PEACE - ACTIVITY MONITORING MATRIX			PROGRESS ON WORKPLAN			
USAID INDICATOR	4 - year TARGET VALUE	BENCHMARK	ACTIVITY PROGRESS- PERCENTAGE COMPLETED			
		Annual FY2006	1-Oct	1-Jan	1-Apr	1-Jul
Indicator 1: Percentage of in-country support established	Memorandum signed and office functional by the end of October, 06	Memorandum signed and office functional by the end of October, 06	0%	100%	100%	100%
Indicator 1. Percentage of Vegetation data collected for the 5 provinces in central Afghanistan	Livestock Early warning system is completely operational for at least 5 Provinces in central Afghanistan. 60 technicians trained in field techniques. There are 10 technicians trained in running the model and forecasting software.	Vegetation data collected for half of the sample points during the spring and early summer of 2007. Conduct the first model runs by the end of the fiscal year. During the first year we expect that institutionalization will begin with the introduction of the technology to the MOA, Kabul University Depts. and relevant NGO's.	0%	0%	25%	100%
Indicator 2: Percentage of information required to conduct the first model runs						
Indicator 3. Institutionalization of the LEWS / LINKS technology						
Indicator 1: Identify location to conduct feeding trails and to place the NIRS lab	NIRS lab and Nutritional Management system is operational and institutionalized. 75 technicians trained in feeding trial studies and NIRS lab procedures are prepared to carry on the work.	Location for feeding trails is established and first feeding trail is completed. NIRS lab location is identified. The institutionalizing of this activity during the first year will require that we have trained at least a quarter of the total technicians.	0%	50%	55%	100%
Indicator 2: Number of feeding trials conducted to provide information to the NIRS						
Indicator 3. Institutionalization of the NIRS /NUTBAL technology by both the MOA and Dept. of Agriculture and Kabul University						
Indicator 1: Percentage of relevant NGO's, and Ministries aware of the LEWS and NIRS information	Integration of the "early warning" advisories with the community outreach, NGO and Afghanistan ministries to facilitate the delivery and use of the information. Widespread uptake of LEWS/NIRS information by Government and NGO's.	Establishment of the web interface. Produce simulation-model output as well as the testing of the radio network. We expect to have introduced this technology to 75% of the relevant agencies and 25% of the Kuchi Herder Alliances. We do not expect organizations to use the LEWS or NIRS products by the end of the first year. This will take an additional 6 months.	0%	10%	25%	85%
Indicator 2: Percentage of Kuchi Alliances in the central provinces, aware of LEWS and NIRS						
Indicator 3. Number of relevant organizations using the forage forecasts and nutritional reports						

Indicator 1: Number of Alliances have been identified and strengthened within the central provinces.	We expect to establish at least 10 Herder alliances per province. Herder alliances in the central provinces receive information that allows for decision-making to occur regarding forage condition and livestock nutritional status, thus improving rangeland management and increasing livestock production.	Initiate contact with relevant NGO's to identify existing herder alliances. Consultant to identify ways of strengthening Alliances. Strength of an Alliance will be measured by the adoption rate or use of new information for their livestock production.	0%	0%	50%	100%
Indicator 2. Adoption rate of new technologies. Percent of the Alliances adopting technologies and percent of alliance members adopting technologies.						
Indicator 1: Number of workshops and informal training activities accomplished	Approximately 500-1000 will be trained during 10 workshops and numerous training activities will build capacity for LEWS, NIRS, LINKS, Conflict Resolution, and Risk Management. Attendees will have the knowledge to increase livestock production from a rangeland management perspective.	Workshop on conflict resolution will occur in March. Workshop attendees will gain important insight as to why there is a need to resolve access issues for the Kuchi. With this knowledge we expect a stronger effort will be made to increase the extensive livestock production through resolving the access issues.	0%	0%	25%	100%
Indicator 2: Number of meetings held with the relevant Ministry officials						
Indicator 3. Increased extensive livestock production in the nomadic sector						
Annual Total						

PEACE Implementing Mechanisms Indicators and Targets

Indicator Number	Common Indicators	FY06 Accomplishments	FY07 Targets	FY08 Targets
5	Agriculture			
122	Percent change in growth in agriculture value added	0	0	0
5.1	Agriculture Enabling Environment			
131	Number of institutions / organizations undertaking capacity / competency strengthening as a result of USG assistance	10	10	15
133	Number of individuals who have received short-term agriculture enabling environment training as a result of USG assistance (sex disaggregated)	44	60	80