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EVALUATION REPORT

AGRICULTURE SUB-COMMITTEE

and

VETERINARY COORDINATION

(July - December 1991)

Prepared by : Khalil Rahman

## AGRICULTURE SUB-COMMITTEE

### INTRODUCTION :

The Agriculture Sub-committee is one of the four sectoral working groups in ACBAR. Mr. Abdul Baqi Afzali of DACAAR and Mr. Noor Agha of ARC are the chairman and the vice-chairman respectively.

The sub-committee holds meetings once a month. Around 25 ACBAR member NGOs are members of this sub-committee out of which 12 to 15 NGOs regularly participate in the sub-committee meetings and others did not. A small number of non-ACBAR member NGOs also took part in the sub-committee meetings from time to time. UN agencies (FAO, UNDP) are the major suppliers of the agricultural inputs and technical assistance to the sub-committee members. Therefore, the sub-committee and the concerned UN agencies, FAO in particular, are in close contact with each other. The normal attendance of the sub-committee meetings ranged between 15 - 20 people but sometimes the attendance was very poor.

### OBJECTIVES :

The main objectives of the Agriculture Sub-committee are:

1. To bring the member NGOs together to share their agricultural and related information with each other.
2. To encourage member NGOs to be cooperative in providing technical assistance to each other.
3. To structure unified policies and standards for the smooth and better implementation of agricultural rehabilitation programs inside Afghanistan.
4. To avoid technical mistakes in the implementation of projects.
5. To avoid overlapping of projects in the target area.

## ACHIEVEMENTS :

The Sub-committee discussed some important issues through the following meetings in the last 6 months of 1991:

### 12 August :

- The maize variety Shaheen, distributed to some NGOs, was planted in spring 1991. Most of the NGOs reported that the maize variety had very poor germination. Different reasons were given for the poor germination of this variety.

FAO asked the NGOs to bring seed samples of the same variety from Afghanistan to be tested for germination. However, the seed had been tested for germination before distribution. It was decided that effective measures have to be taken in the future.

- DACAAR reported on the poor result of the wheat varieties Pak-81, Pirsabak-85 and Bezostaya in Ghazni province. According to DACAAR, some farmers did not even have anything to harvest. The sub-committee recommended that since the first two varieties were not true winter type, they should not be recommended for cold areas like Ghazni or above 1,800 meters.

The Swedish Committee received good results from the wheat variety Ataya-85, a Turkish variety. Ataya is a winter type for cold regions and has been recommended for areas like Ghazni. SCA only had 13 MTs of this variety; it was distributed to some NGOs for multiplication.

- DAI suspended sending seed and fertilizer to Afghanistan because of the USAID ban on cross border activities. The main reason for the ban was the kidnapping of two Americans working for Global Partners. It was said that the cut of these two main inputs, especially fertilizer, might be a great risk to agricultural programs inside Afghanistan. Therefore, USAID was contacted to send its inputs through some other programs.
- Dr. Azam Gul, the former chairman of the Agriculture Sub-committee, resigned from the chairmanship having served as the chairman of the sub-committee for almost two and half years. Consequently, Mr. Abdul Baqi Afzali of DACAAR and Mr. Noor Agha of ARC were elected as chairman and vice chairman respectively.

9 September :

- ARC reported on its trip to Logar. Besides the report on its activities, ARC reported that the unexpected and unfortunate climatic conditions of last winter (very cold) and the heavy and continuous rains of spring 1991 destroyed almost all crops of the farmers in this province. Rust (a disease) was also a major problem. ARC warned that, to save people of the area from hunger, NGOs should take active measures regarding the provision of wheat for food and wheat seed for fall planting. ARC distributed 2,700 MTs wheat for food. SCA also mentioned that WFP has wheat to give for food for work programs.

9 October :

- The wheat seed program for 1991/92 was discussed. FAO, the main supplier of seed for NGOs, stated that it has 1,200 MTs improved wheat seed for this term of which 700 MTs will be sent to south-western provinces and 500 MTs will go to the rest of Afghanistan. According to FAO, areas like Khost will be given priority. FAO mentioned that the agency is going to send 100 MTs improved seed through Iran to Harat.
- SCF-US had a trip to Nangarhar. The agriculture manager of the agency reported that he saw commanders and Mujahedin cutting the trees of Ghaziabad farm where the agency has been working. No way was found to stop this action.

6 November :

- The request of the farmers of Bagram district, Parwan province, regarding the wide spread of Powdery Mildew (Vine disease) was discussed. The farmers of this district and some other surrounding districts requested the NGOs to provide assistance for the control of this disease. It was said that the best chemical for the disease is sulphur and the amount needed might be thousands of tons which is beyond the capacity of the NGOs. The sub-committee decided that this enormous amount of sulphur should be provided through traders at a subsidized price to the farmers. According to UNDP, the sulphur imported from Soviet Union was found to be cheaper and of good quality.

4 December :

- Due to the problems the NGOs had with the security of transportation of inputs and other commodities into Afghanistan and the permit issuance for these commodities, the sub-committee decided to invite UNILOG to the meeting of 4 December. The representatives of UNILOG took part in the meeting and stated that, under present conditions, UNILOG can not use its trucks to dispatch the commodities of the NGOs inside Afghanistan. Instead, some private transport companies carry out this task and their arrangements are made with UNILOG. The agency added that there are security problems with these companies too. There are some companies offering their logistical services with some guarantees but they ask for higher rent. Regarding the permit, UNILOG said that the Government of Pakistan does not have any restrictions for sending commodities cross border with legal documents. The only restriction is on the items which are in short supply in Pakistan and which the Government provides at subsidized prices to the nation. Wheat and diesel were mentioned as examples.
  
- The issue of karez cleaning was raised by SCA. SCA stated that statistics show that in many places more karezes have been cleaned than the actual existing number in the area. It shows that the same karez has been cleaned twice. It was said that karez cleaning has been a local skill activity for centuries. So the activity could be carried out by the local community and instead the resources should be spent on other areas of work. In cases where technology is required, outside assistance should be requested.  
  
The sub-committee suggested that community participation should be encouraged through the field staff of the NGOs. Therefore, a course should be held for the field staff of the member NGOs before the next growing season.
  
- It was agreed that inputs should be given to the farmers for nominal or subsidized prices. FAO claimed that some NGOs sold the commodities for very high prices this year. UNDP has already stopped funding projects of the agencies which violated the policy.

CONCLUSION :

The Agriculture sub-committee covered some good points in its meetings in the last 6 months of 1991. Some of the discussions concluded with decision made but there was still a need for follow up of the decisions. For example, it was

understood that the number of karezes reportedly cleaned/repared or the amount of money spent in this sub-sector did not match the actual number or amount. The Swedish Committee initiated a good suggestion : that karez cleaning or repair is a local skill activity and should be carried out by the community itself. Only technical assistance could be allocated from outside. This issue was discussed in one of the sub-committee meetings but no final result was obtained as to whether the agencies would follow the decision or not.

Attendance at the sub-committee meetings is as important as the implementation of the decisions. Sometimes the attendance was very poor. Even some ACBAR members such as Afghanaid, MADERA, ADA, AFRANE, Solidarariat Afghanistan and AAA participated poorly or not at all.

### SUGGESTIONS :

1. Since the rehabilitation of agriculture in Afghanistan is a priority, most of the newly developed/developing NGOs open their offices with agricultural projects even if the NGO is a construction or health related one. It will be very awful if an engineer or a farmer is going to perform a surgical operation.  
  
There are tens of NGOs starting or who have started their agricultural projects with a single professional or semi professional person. It would be preferable if these single professionals came together and made a group of 10 professionals under a single NGO. Therefore, it is advisable for the donors to approve the projects of the NGOs which are technically and professionally capable of carrying out the task.
2. There is a tremendous request of assistance from the northern, western and south western provinces of Afghanistan; therefore, NGOs should spread or shift their activities to the areas where a smaller amount of work or nothing is being done.
3. All funding agencies should stop their funding of organizations violating policies agreed by the sub-committee in the Guidelines.
4. NGOs should adhere to guidelines/decisions made by the sub-committee as well as participating in the sub-committee meetings.
5. Guidelines/standards should be addressed to the Steering Committee for endorsement/support.

## VETERINARY COORDINATION

### INTRODUCTION :

Veterinary Coordination is one of the four sectoral working groups of ACBAR. Dr. Neil Chesterton of COMDEV is the chairman and Dr. Muhebullah Halimi of DCA is the vice-chairman.

Vet. Coordination held meetings every other Tuesday (twice a month). Eight ACBAR members and three to four non-ACBAR members participated in these regular meetings. UNDP as a major donor fully attended the meetings.

### OBJECTIVES :

The objectives of the Veterinary Coordination Committee are:

1. Sharing information and experience among the member agencies.
2. Identifying new project sites on the basis of one NGO per district.
3. Developing a common policy for the implementation of veterinary projects and services.
4. Sharing assistance for the diagnosis of diseases, supply of vaccines and medicines and training of personnel.

### ACHIEVEMENTS :

Some important issues were discussed and results gained through the following meetings:

#### **2 July:**

- SCA announced that they will not be able to continue veterinary services within their programs after the end of August 1991. Other NGOs were asked if they could use SCA's veterinary staff and services in their projects.
- UNDP suggested that using a uniform report form by

member NGOs will enable UNDP to analyze the diseases and drugs used for them.

- It was asked if the money received from sales of medicine should come to the head office or should be spent in the project site. Most agencies agreed that the money should stay at the project site. The salaries of the field staff, office rent and similar expenses could be paid from this money.

#### 16 July :

- A discussion was held on the type and availability of anthelmintics used for animals. On prior assignment from the previous meeting, DCA had prepared a list showing the names, formula, packing, cost of different anthelmintics and their dose/body weight, costs/30 Kg sheep and cost/150 kg cattle.
- The BVWs teaching manual which was prepared by GAF had already been discussed by GAF and DCA. DCA said that the contents of the manual might be difficult for BVWs and therefore a team of 5 experienced veterinarians was assigned to re-structure the manual. It was emphasized that the team should work full-time to finish the manual within the shortest possible time.

#### 30 July :

- The 1990 and early 1991 policy was that treatment fees and medicines should be charged for but vaccination should be free of charge. The meeting decided that a vaccination fee should also be charged at nominal prices as follows:

a. poultry	Afs. 5
b. sheep and goats	Afs. 10 - 15
c. cattle	Afs. 20 - 30

It was also said that the summary of the charging policy for 1991 would be presented to the next coordination meeting.

#### 13 August :

- GAF team visited Nangarhar province on 9 August in order to monitor its projects there. The team observed a disease in Kama Daka and Shelman areas. The disease was common in young sheep of 2-6 months. According to the statements of the farmers, many sheep died from the disease. The team brought the lung of a diseased animal to Peshawar and it was sent to VRI Peshawar.

The result from VRI showed the existence of E. Coli in the lung but the coordination members said that the signs were not for E. Coli. Therefore, GAF was advised to go to the area and take some more samples for further examination in Peshawar.

- A special meeting regarding women's participation and involvement in community activities was held on 29 July in ACBAR. In the meeting it was said that Afghan women perform some of the animal husbandry activities (for example, poultry raising) and the meeting discussed a few ideas of how vet. staff could help them.

#### 27 August :

- The charging policy conjunction to the ACBAR Agriculture Guidelines, second edition, was discussed. Paragraph #9 of the section on livestock of the Guidelines stated that "Vaccination should be free of charge and that antiparasitic treatment should also be free of charge for a minimum time of one year." The coordination group said that the experience of different NGOs was that the continuation of free of charge concept is making the farming community totally dependent on funds from outside the country. If funding had to be stopped for a clinic, then all veterinary services would stop. So, in late 1990, the coordination committee decided that the only way to encourage veterinary field units to become self sufficient was to introduce a charging policy for all services and goods except vaccines at present. In the meeting of 30 July 1991, a proposed fee structure for vaccination was approved.
- For new veterinary field units (VFU), it was proposed that the charging policy should be applied right from the beginning.

It was also said that the charging policy will incorporate an incentive because some of the money from charging will go to the field staff. It means that the veterinarians, paravets and village workers will earn more money if they do more vaccination and treatment.

#### 10 September :

- Some important and necessary changes were made to the Livestock section in the Agriculture Guidelines.

15 October :

- Pamir Reconstruction Bureau (PRB) opened some new clinics in Badakhshan province. The agency director visited the northern provinces including Badakhshan and on return he reported on his trip. According to PRB, people were very happy with the charging policy.
- The need for the construction of clinic buildings in districts and provincial centers was felt strongly. The coordination group decided that one of the agencies involved in construction should be asked to come to the next vet. coordination meeting. Therefore, it was said that GTZ/DESP should be invited to the next meeting to discuss the conditions and the cost of a model clinic.

12 November :

- According to the decision of the previous meeting, GTZ/DESP took part in the meeting and presented details about the construction of clinics in different districts where the NGOs have veterinary programs.
- IRC/RPA reported on the opening of seven new veterinary clinics: six in Paktia and one in Logar. Only the clinic in Sayed Karam could not start work due to fighting around Gardez.
- Staffing was a problem with some of the NGOs. The shortage of DVMS was a big problem. UNDP in consultation with DCA suggested that one way to solve this was to upgrade the knowledge of the best paravets to the level of veterinary assistants. This should be done in 6-month training programs.

10 December :

- GAF was informed by Jihad Consulting Engineers (JCE) that signs of a disease were seen in Kochies' animals in Kama Daka of Nangarhar province. A sample from the infected animals was brought to Peshawar and was sent to the Veterinary Research Institute (VRI) Peshawar. One of the differential diagnoses was CCPP. The coordination meeting agreed that more blood samples should be taken from the infected animals to be further tested. The meeting also agreed that immediate vaccination after getting the blood samples would be advisable if CCPP was suspected.

## CONCLUSION :

Veterinary Coordination was one of the most active committees of ACBAR. Although not too many NGOs are involved in livestock and veterinary services, the limited number very actively participated in the meetings of the last half of 1991. Problems were identified and effective decisions were made. Moreover, all the decisions and policies outlined by the committee were implemented very successfully.

The coordination group kept good contact among themselves as well as with the donors (UNDP). UNDP also in turn took part in all of the Vet. Coordination meetings which was a good incentive for NGOs' participation in these meetings. Having a non-ACBAR member as the chairman of the coordination was a good indicator of cooperation among the NGOs.

## SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS :

1. Animal husbandry is one of the main sources of income and food supply for the rural Afghan families. During the war years, almost 60 - 70% of the animals were lost in relation to this the present capacity of the agencies involved in veterinary services seems to be inadequate. Therefore, more resources should be allocated to preserve the animals presently found in the country.
2. At present, veterinary services are the center of attention of the NGOs involved in this field. Equal or even more importance should be given to animal husbandry (increase of population of animals). Some new breeds of different types of animals should be introduced to the country to compensate for those lost.