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END OF CONTRACT REPORT

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NARCOTICS AWARENESS AND CONTROL PROJECT

CONTRACT NO. 306-0210-C-00-0820-05

END OF CONTRACT REPORT

Steven E. Weerts, Acting Chief of Party

Narcotics Awareness and Control Project

INTRODUCTION

The Narcotics Awareness and Control Project (NACP) opened under the direction of Chief of Party, Gerald Owens on 7 July 1990 in Peshawar, Pakistan. NACP was divided into three units: the Information and Research Unit (IRU), the Poppy Reduction and Elimination Unit (PREU), and the Narcotics Awareness Unit, often called the Narcotics Awareness Center (NAC). The mandate for these units was to collect information on the current status of poppy production, dissemination, and use in Afghanistan, and then to reduce those levels if possible, through education and crop substitution.

An Initial Implementation Plan was submitted in August of 1990, but problems expressed by Washington regarding the Foreign Assistance Act delayed full implementation. The Quetta PREU office opened in July, NAC and IRU activities began in Peshawar in August, and the Peshawar PREU office started operations in October. Work in all units proceeded on a limited basis pending approval of the Implementation Plan. The time was well spent collecting data for future site selection, staff education, setting up survey forms and generally preparing for the time when plans could be implemented.

In January 1991 USAID evacuated all Americans for the duration of the war with Iraq. Local staff continued operations in Peshawar with supervision per fax and telephone from Maryland, while exiled staff tried to work with AID Washington to move the Congressional Notification process along. American personnel returned to Pakistan on April 23, 1991 and work resumed, although the Congressional Notification still had not been approved. June 9, 1991 brought the resignation of Chief of Party Owens and the appointment of Steven Weerts as Acting Chief of Party.

August 1, 1991, USAID ordered all cross-border activities to cease in response to the kidnapping of Americans in Afghanistan. USAID altered its approach at this point, allowing NACP to work in the refugee camps. Successful community programs were launched with good response from the people. Then on August 25, 1991, USAID notified NACP that no more money could be obligated to the project until the Congressional Notification was successfully completed, which caused program activities to be cut back severely.

NACP underwent a radical reconfiguration- the PREU Unit was disbanded in response to Congress's discomfort with the Foreign Assistance Act, and the plans were to expand the IRU and NAC units. NACP was required to go through a second Congressional Notification.

After the shooting of an Afghan-American USAID employee in Peshawar, NACP's administrative employees were required to move from Peshawar to Islamabad on September 21, 1991. A core group of Afghans were left in Peshawar, and direct supervision of that staff was undertaken by phone and USAID-approved visits to Peshawar, until a USAID order to conserve project funds prohibited travel to Peshawar for the last month of the project's existence. On December 4, 1991, after problems with the second Congressional Notification, USAID notified NACP that the project was being

disbanded.

Under the circumstances outlined above, NACP was not able to carry out many of the activities which it hoped to pursue. In spite of all of the setbacks, NACP gained valuable experience in the activities it was allowed to undertake and collected information which should enable US policymakers to formulate future drug policy.

INFORMATION AND RESEARCH UNIT (IRU)

The initial activities of IRU concentrated on the compilation of area profiles for potential target areas to enable the work of PREU. Working in cooperation with PREU, IRU gathered political, economic, demographic and logistic information on poppy producing areas in Afghanistan- information which would assist both NAC and PREU in selecting target areas for project activities and planning. To compile area profiles, monitors conducted surveys in camps in Nasarbagh, Kachagari, Shamshatu, Munda, Yakaghund, Badaber, Azakhel, Peshawar City and Kohat Districts. Surveys inside Afghanistan took place in Mohmandara, Shinwar, Nazian, Lalpur, Ghosta, Rodat, Chaprihar, Dehbala, and Achin District. Later surveys were conducted in Khost, Paktia; Lalapur, Nangahar; Dara-e-Noor, Nangarhar; and in Chitral camps to gather information on Badakshan. IRU personnel concentrated on eastern Afghanistan and PREU Quetta concentrated on the southwest.

IRU also conducted a baseline survey which measured awareness and perceptions of narcotics use and addiction among the Afghan male population. IRU also assumed the responsibility for a

Narcotics Awareness Study to gauge the impact of NAC activities in Afghanistan. When the Afghan border was closed to all USAID contractors, IRU conducted the baseline study in the refugee camps in NWFP and Baluchistan. Roughly 2000 respondents in NWFP and 800 in Baluchistan were interviewed. All of the data from this phase of the survey was coded and entered into an SPSS computer program. The Survey Unit had virtually no security problems in the camps and obtained a great deal of assistance by UNHCR and Afghan representatives who were highly supportive of NACP's work.

After the reorganization of NACP, an IRU Crop Research Unit was staffed by the former Peshawar PREU members. This unit collated farm data on five key crops and poppy in Helmand, Kandahar, Urozgan, Farah, Nimruz and Zabul provinces. Data covered return per jerib, hired labor and costs, input cost, labor requirements, cropping practices and land tenure.

IRU also established an archives and library, trained monitors and established evaluation procedures. A Data Processing Unit was established which set up data bases for storage, analysis, and retrieval of information. As of the date of withdrawal of the project, data entry was completed on the survey data, and the final report was being written.

NARCOTICS AWARENESS CENTER (NAC)

Prior to the opening of the NAC in September of 1990, USAID commissioned the Afghan Media Resource Center in Peshawar to produce drug abuse materials. After opening, NAC planned programs to test those materials in a refugee camp setting. Materials were

modified and enhanced as information was received on the people's response to them.

NAC then designed and implemented Community Awareness Programs which were tested first in Afghanistan, and later, after cross-border work was discontinued, in refugee camps in Pakistan. The purpose of the Programs was to reach several target groups- those farmers already growing poppy, those contemplating growing poppy, and the young men tempted to use it. Two units were set up to accomplish this goal. First, the Public Services Unit enlisted Afghan leaders at all levels to take a public stand against narcotics cultivation, trafficking, and abuse. Then the Training Unit gave lectures and materials to the people identified by the Public Services Unit, to enable them to make more effective anti-narcotics presentations. Teachers, maulavis, health workers and social welfare specialists were also trained, since they would be instrumental in the prevention of drug abuse.

During evacuation, the staff of NAC did an exceptional amount of work. They produced two thousand copies of three posters; one thousand copies of of pamphlets written in both Dari and Pashto for parents, social leaders and farmers; 2000 copies of a calendar; and 1000 copies of an anti-opium postcard. These materials were distributed to hospitals, NGOs, the AIG, Afghan political parties, schools and refugee camps.

A two day seminar was held in Quetta with more than 40 commanders and moulavis of seven Afghan Islamic parties attending. These people represented eight southeastern provinces of Afghanistan. Fourteen commanders made a commitment to support NACP. Many community meetings were held. Video tapes of community meeting and interviews with addicts were made for future educational use. NAC also contacted other USAID/REP training

programs to encourage the inclusion of anti-narcotic awareness materials into their curriculums and presentations.

After the Gulf War and the reorganization of NACP, NAC expanded its activities. A new Program Planning and Assessment section was established which would examine the multitude of ideas which were coming in for future projects, to prepare budget plans, program plans and reports. This section also served as a think tank to review research assessment studies and help NAC sharpen, expand, and where necessary, curtail themes and activities.

During this time the Training Section held a seven day training program for all NACP staff members. They also developed a newsletter Parhiz which was distributed to its primary contacts. Two issues of this bi-monthly newsletter were distributed before NACP was closed. Community Awareness Programs continued and became very flexible, adapting easily to any opportunity opened to NAC.

A new Creative Services Section developed new channels for anti-drug messages. First, they created two, hour-long anti-narcotics dramas, one in Pashto and one in Dari, which were well received in the refugee camps in NWFP and Baluchistan. NAC also commissioned two anti-drug songs in Pashto which were recorded by top Afghan popular singers. Under a contract with NACP, Radio Peshawar played the songs twenty times during the month in a time segment popular with its Afghan audience. Finally, the Creative Services Section created a prototype video van designed to take its anti-narcotics videos into areas without adequate roads and power facilities. Work was being done to develop audio and video materials which could be given to the women who were kept in seclusion, and could not attend the public seminars.

During the time in which NAC functioned, the Koran grew to be

their greatest asset. The Koran's admonitions against using intoxicants and drugs became the centerpiece of their anti-narcotics campaign. Even poppy growers seemed to realize their activities were not approved by Islam, although a considerable number argued that the practice could be condoned by Islam under the miserable conditions which faced the country. Future work would have focused on this breach of Islamic beliefs.

POPPY REDUCTION UNIT (PREU)

The Quetta office began work in July 1990, drawing a preliminary profile of agricultural economic needs of Kajaki and Musa Qala in the Helmand Valley. They assisted IRU in the design of a survey instrument which would enable the identification of poppy growing areas and potential target sites for NACP work. Poppy growing areas were identified in western Kandahar province (Kharkrey, Shahali Kot and Ghorah.)

In October the Peshawar PREU office opened. Extensive plans were drawn for a project in Goshta-Kama area of Nangarhar. Forms were drafted to facilitate the poppy elimination plan applications which were anticipated. Due to the lack of approval of the implementation plan, the Goshta project was not carried out, but identification of field operations personnel was completed for future use. Plans for procurement were drawn for proposed poppy elimination sites.

During the second quarter of operation PREU tracked opium prices, processing methods, and use. They made contacts with related agencies and people. After examination of the Helmand, Kandahar, Zabul, Urozgan and Farah areas, regarding the extent and

intensity of poppy cultivation, 18 districts were identified to be in poppy cultivation. This information was invaluable to the construction of area profiles to rank and classify potential project sites. In order to facilitate processing of information, a Lotus 1-2-3 spreadsheet tool was developed.

PREU later developed surveys for wheat, rice, corn, sugar cane cotton, cumin and poppy. Survey results were compiled and a cropping calendar was developed. Due to the uncertainty surrounding the PREU after the Gulf war, PREU activities were severely constrained.

Quetta continued to collect information on the social, political, and economic structure in poppy growing districts in southwestern Afghanistan. They worked on a map delineating production levels and intensity of poppy. They looked at patterns of drug trafficking, processing, and marketing in project areas.

In Peshawar, Field Director Steve Weerts became acting Chief of Party upon the resignation of Gerald Owens. His staff conducted two surveys to gather agricultural and pricing data in Chitral and Quetta. They identified several new areas of poppy cultivation: Gulistan, Farah Province; Dehraoud and Tirincot of Urozgan Province.

When PREU was eliminated, some staff members were transferred to the IRU Crop Research Unit, where they continued work on crop surveys.

LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS
FOR FUTURE ANTI-NARCOTIC PROJECTS

The closing of NACP was very difficult for all parties concerned. After a year of planning and investigation, constant difficulties with Congressional interpretation of the Foreign Assistance Act, and two evacuations, the demise of NACP was a bitter ending. Much information gained on this project could be useful to future narcotic projects in Afghanistan. It would help ease the pain of the dissolution of the project if some of that information could be used in the future.

First and foremost, future drug projects must have clear regulations for the implementation of Sections 2291 (b) and (f) the Foreign Assistance Act. It is an irresponsible waste of public funds to open a project and then not allow the work to be done because of a law which was clearly in effect before the project was conceived. The interpretation of Sections 2291(b) and (f) of 22 U.S.C. was vital to this project, as it will be to all future projects. Surely it was not Congress' intent to ban all anti-narcotics programs. See Steve Weerts' End of Tour Report for further suggestions regarding future interpretation of USC 22.

Second, we learned that the Afghan people are generally supportive of anti-drug messages, and that they enjoyed the drama and music messages particularly. We found support among religious and civic leaders, and found the Koran to be the most important tool available in this Muslim society.

Third, fears we had of danger to our staff appear to be unfounded. Our work on awareness activities took place without incident.

Fourth, we found that many Afghans believe that, under adverse conditions, it is all right to grow drug products in spite of the clear message against it in the Koran. Future drug projects should

work on this area. The grower must accept responsibility for his actions. Many farmers do not grow poppy even though they would take some economic advantage from doing so. Islam is too important for them to engage in this practice.

Fifth, Many Afghans seem to feel that heroin addiction is not common among Afghans. They say that the drugs are used only by infidels, so they have no vested interest in stopping production from that standpoint. They also feel that an addict can cure himself if he wants to. Future work must emphasize physical addiction of Afghans and its concomitant social and personal implications for their society.

Sixth, greater efforts must be made to resolve the diverse and conflicting anti-narcotic strategies among NGOs, the U.S. Government and the United Nations drug programs.