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END OF TOUR REPORT

John E.Dixon, Coordinator

Narcotics Awareness Unit

Narcotics Awareness and Control Project

Contract No. 306-0210-C-00-0820-05

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END OF TOUR REPORT

John E. Dixon, Coordinator

Narcotics Awareness Unit

Introduction

I arrived in Peshawar, Pakistan to take up my duties as Coordinator of the Narcotics Awareness Unit of the USAID-funded Narcotics Awareness and Control Project for Afghanistan on September 11, 1990. On January 15, 1991 by USG order, I was evacuated for the duration of the Gulf War from Pakistan to Washington where I supervised the unit for three months by fax and telephone. I returned to Pakistan on April 23, 1991. On August 1, USAID ordered all project activities to cease inside of Afghanistan but allowed us to program in refugee camps in Pakistan. On August 25, 1991 USAID cut off new funds for the project which caused program activities to be cut back severely. On September 21, 1991, I was ordered by USAID for security reasons to move from Peshawar to Islamabad. This cut me off from direct supervision of the unit except for two days a week when I was allowed to visit Peshawar. For the last month of the project's existence, because of a USAID directive to save project funds, travel to Peshawar was prohibited. Thus I had no direct contact with the Peshawar staff except by telephone and mail during this period. On December 4, 1991 the project's chief of party was informed that USAID was disbanding the project.

The Environment

Formidable physical, psychological and media barriers to undertaking a successful anti-narcotics awareness campaign existed inside of Afghanistan in late 1990. Many areas of the country were still at war, some were held by the Kabul regime, all were impoverished. Electric power was non-existent; roads were at best in poor repair.

By and large mass media did not exist. There was no television in areas available to the project. International broadcasters such as BBC and VOA did have large audiences in the area but project materials could not be aired directly on these stations. At best, the project could contribute ideas and backgrounders to their producers and script writers. Resistance radio, although it did exist, had negligible audiences. No newspapers and few journals were distributed in the target areas; nor could they have made much impact on a highly illiterate population even if they did exist.

Nor was it expected at the outset that the people of the target area, widely dependent on opium and charas cultivation, would be

hospitable to an anti-narcotics message. In fact, some fearful candidates for positions in the unit refused job offers; those who accepted were clearly apprehensive about working outside the office on unit activities.

While the physical and media barriers proved to be as formidable as expected, apprehensions about public acceptance of an awareness campaign proved groundless. Before the end of the year, successful public awareness programs were conducted without incident before large audiences both in refugee camps in Pakistan as well as in poppy growing areas inside of Afghanistan. In one respect, however, we found local conditions worse than we expected. Schools were almost non-existent and those which we found were usually madrassas teaching the Koran to very young boys.

The Koran turned out to be our greatest asset and by no means a barrier or problem in our activities. Afghan's entire population is Muslim, most of whom are very devout. The Koran's admonitions against using intoxicants and drugs thus became the centerpiece of our entire anti-narcotics campaign. We discovered that even poppy growers realized that their activities are not approved by Islam even though a considerable number would argue that the practice can be condoned by Islam under the miserable conditions now facing the country.

The major responsibility of the project at the outset, therefore, was to create a credible medium for anti-narcotics messages in this physically inhospitable landscape. We chose a two stage effort; first, training of surrogates among leaders in Afghan communities who with our assistance would in the second stage lead anti-narcotics meetings and courses for all members of the community, most importantly poppy cultivators and young males who were at most risk of drug abuse. We defined community leaders as military commanders of the Resistance, maliks (traditional community leaders), mullahs, maulavis, teachers, health workers, and social welfare specialists. To support these leaders in this campaign, we would provide graphic and electronic media products with anti-narcotics messages which had been designed for the target population.

While this type of approach was necessary under those conditions which faced us, we did not regard it, by any means, as a fatally flawed or a second-best solution. Recent studies in areas of the United States where a significant decrease in drug abuse has been achieved, indicate that school-based anti-narcotics programs or mass media campaigns against drug abuse, <u>just by themselves,</u> are probably not very effective. In order to be effective, prevention programs need involvement by the entire community. (See research findings from mid-western, community-wide prevention programs issued by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Resources in

1990.) We also believed that using community leaders to spearhead the campaign, rather than members of our staff or other hired specialists, we would considerably increase the credibility of our message and the attention which the local community gave to it.

One of USAID's most important reasons for funding the project was to test prevention campaign ideas and train a professional narcotics staff which could later be employed throughout Afghanistan in a national fight against narcotics production and demand. For that reason, we chose a test target area where the Reseach Unit of the Project could do before and after studies to measure the effectiveness of our awareness activities. Our test target area was a representative sample of 30 districts in 10 border provinces of the country which were relatively easy to reach from our offices in Peshawar and Quetta. Many of these target districts grew poppy and charas; three were signifiant producers of opium, Helmand, Kandahar and Nangarhar. Initially, we also planned to conduct programs in refugee camps but USAID requested us to confine our activities to Afghanistan. Later when it became impossible to enter the country, with USAID approval we programmed extensively in refugee camps.

Five months prior to my arrival, USAID issued a contract to the Afghan Media Resource Center (AMRC) in Peshawar to produce an anti-narcotics video as well as posters, pamphlets and radio programs. Produced under the direction of Ms. Phyllis Oakley of USAID, Dr. Hans Spielmann, an international narcotics consultant, and professional members of the AMRC staff under the supervision of its director Haji Daud, these materials were available to the Narcotics Awareness Unit at the outset of the project. In addition to this windfall, several of AMRC's media professionals who worked on the drug abuse account joined the Narcotics Awareness Unit as the nucleus of its Creative Services Department.

Basic Programs

Two basic programs were undertaken to carry out our work. The first was called Public Services in which we enlisted Afghan leaders at all levels to take a highly visible, public stance against narcotics cultivation, trafficking and abuse. The second program, linked to the first, was Training in which these leaders were given lectures and materials in short term seminars so that they could make effective anti-narcotics presentations for the general public. Training was also undertaken more intensively for those leaders on the front line in the fight against drug abuse, i.e., teachers, maulavis, health wokers and social welfare specialists.

Public Services

Our first activities were conducted in the public services area at the community level. We organized a series of community awareness programs in refugee camps and then moved them into target areas of Afghanistan. The basic format for these programs was a one or two day public meeting in which local leaders would speak against narcotics to large general Afghan audiences.

We quickly found leaders in all of the communities we enlisted who were willing to stand up against poppy and drug abuse and participate in our programs. Leading mullahs invariably spoke. Inside of Afghanistan, the leader of the local commanders' shura took part; in refugee camps, a major elder or malik graced the occasion. Often a top teacher and maulvi appeared on the platform. Sometimes school boys participated, too.

NACP decorated the site extensively with its anti-narcotics posters and banners. When the speakers finished, NACP often provided other program events. Sometimes anti-narcotic dramas and videos were shown. Sports events, as a display of healthy activities for youth, were organized. Anti-narcotics drawing, essay and speech competitions for young people were conducted. At one event, a mushaira, or poetry reading, was organized to call attention to the twin menaces of drugs and poppy. All events were photograghed and video taped to show the community's willingness to fight against drug abuse.

NACP supported these programs by giving small grants, usually to the local shura to prepare the site, put up a speaker's stand, obtain loud speakers, transport people from outlying areas, and prepare some hospitality for the guests and elders, especially those coming from some distance.

It was anticipated that 50 to 60 of these events could be held each year at the awareness project's level of funding. We believe this level of activity could have been achieved easily had conditions permitted. We had mastered the art of conducting these events in Eastern Afghanistan as well as begun similar work in the South. We lacked only one or two additional staff members to help us reach a faster pace.

One major activity in the Public Services area started too late to reach fruition. A series of widely publicized national leadership councils were planned so that every Afghan would know that his or her country's top leaders in many fields were unambiguously opposed to drug cultivation, trafficking and abuse. President Mojaddedi and Prime Minister Sayyaf of the Afghan Interim Government were already

on record against drug abuse and we used their statements on banners which were prominently draped at all community events. The leadership councils were to be organized to put other national leaders on record against drugs. The first council, being organized at the project's demise, was to include top religious leaders of the country. The ones to follow would be for top commanders, political leaders, educators, and health and medical specialists. It was hoped we could organize one in the area of parents and, if possible, mothers.

As for programs for mothers and other women, shortly before the project concluded, we had engaged a female trainer to start work in this difficult field. Since most Afghan women are not literate and do not appear publicly, a separate awareness program for them was called for. In one of our community programs held at a refugee camp, the public address system was wired to reach the entire camp, enabling women to hear progam events. This practice would have been continued in other camp events but it probably would not have worked in communities inside of Afghanistan where programs were conducted at some distance from most homes. Our plans for mothers, therefore, included more program emphasis on videos, graphics and audio cassettes, all of which could be taken into restricted home compounds.

Training

The Training Department started somewhat later than the Public Services Department but proved to be more active and in many ways more inovative, even though it did not receive the short term TA it expected and deserved.

Although there was basic training material introduced in all seminars and sessions conducted by the Training Department, it customized its presentations according to the time the participants had available and according to their occupational interest in the subject. (In the following section of this report, topics for NACP drug lectures are outlined.) For instance, some people had only a day to devote to the subject, such as some para-medics from the International Medical Corps who were soon returning to Afghanistan. The training session for them as well as for similar groups, of course, covered topics quickly. In accord with their professional interest, more emphasis was placed on addiction, its treatment and related health subjects. If teachers were involved in our training sessions as they often were, they would be shown how they could introduce drug topics into their classrooms. Our longest course lasted two weeks. In this case the entire training menu could, of course, be dealt with more extensively. It should also be mentioned that courses were not all held on the road, the Training Department outfitted a seminar room in its office for training purposes. A large video and podium were available and many anti-narcotics materials decorated the walls.

Training was tied into community awareness programs in the summer of 1991. The training people would arrive in a community or refugee camp a day or two prior to the date set for the community meeting. They would organize a training session for up to 25 community leaders, hopefully including the speakers at the events to follow, as well as such key citizens as maulavis, headmasters and classroom teachers. The introduction of this training, as might be expected, considerably deepened the anti-narcotics content of speechs and presentations at the community events to follow.

Follow-Up

Once the Public Services and Training Departments had come into contact with a community, they were expected to stay in touch with key individuals there. Public Services had a whole range of media products available that were to reach the community quickly and regularly. Training was expected to expand its local school services. Both were expected to use the project's newsletter to keep in touch with and maintain the professionalism of their key contacts. Some of this follow up work had been undertaken but much remained to be done when the project died. In two communities where events had been held, small photo exhibits of the events were set up for residents. In addition, two issues of the newsletter had reached key contacts in most of the communities in the program.

Program Direction

We started our program with a comprehensive group of anti-narcotics media themes which we expected would be sharpened and expanded over time. For various reasons, this never happened and we were still using the following list when the project closed.

1. Poppy is the source of heroin, a dangerous and highly addictive drug.
2. Heroin trafficking involves enormous amounts of money which come into the hands of international criminal elements.
3. Heroin is highly addictive; people who are hooked find it almost impossible to overcome the habit.
4. Heroin addiction leads to disruption of family relations.
5. Heroin addiction leads to criminal behavior and disruption of society.
6. Islam is opposed to drugs.

While we had no results from surveys to tell us to what degree public opinion supported each of these themes, our constant talks and contact with Afghan leaders, farmers, and young people made us believe at the project's conclusion that there are several

ancillary themes which should have been attacked in the future. That is, these are the areas where public anti-narcotics awareness was most deficient.

1. There is no dispensation given by Islam, even under adverse conditions, for farmers to grow drug products.
2. The grower bears some responsibility for the havoc his drug products cause.
3. 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.
4. Most medical authorities find that heroin addiction is almost impossible to cure, that an addict cannot cure himself even if he wants to and even if he has professional medical assistance.

Target groups for our activities were mentioned earlier in this paper. They remained roughly the same for the entire life of the program and were not apt to have greatly changed had we continued. The ultimate targets of this type of program, of course, are the farmers who are now growing or contemplating growing poppy as well as the young men who may be tempted to experiment with drugs. To reach all of them, however, was beyond the ability of the project or its resources. For that reason as well as for others reasons cited here, community leaders, and especially teachers, who are in constant touch with farmers and youth, became the primary targets of the program's activities.

There are, of course, many desirable anti-narcotics activities and, if we had attempted to follow them all, our program would have been widely dispersed and poorly targeted. Every day, for instance, we had a suggestion from some quarter or other about producing a new anti-narcotics novelty. For this reason, we established a small Program Direction and Assessment Department. The unit had the obvious responsibilities of preparing budget plans, program plans and reports for the office. It performed these duties well. It also had another objective, to act as a think tank for the unit, an objective which was not fully achieved at the project's closing.

In this work, it was supposed to review research and assessment studies, both the small product assessment studies that were conducted by us in the Awareness Unit and the larger studies of national awareness levels and drug prevalence that were to be conducted by NACP's Information and Research Unit. Using these reviews, the Program Direction and Assessment Department was then supposed to help the Awareness Unit sharpen, expand, and where necessary curtail its themes and activities. The small assessment studies were planned and some were undertaken by our office; results from larger studies undertaken by IRU were never available.

In organizational terms, the Program Direction and Asssessemnt Department was supposed to discuss its research findings and ideas with the Public Services and Training Departments to determine what their product and program needs were. It was then supposed to talk to the Creative Services Department to plan the type of product support it could offer. We had expected help in sparking this kind of staff activity and thinking by a TA experienced in building informattin campaign stragegies. The TA, virtually on the airplane, was cancelled when the project developed funding problems. We therefore undertook staff development in this area, as in so many others, by ourselves. We achieved some success in developing the specialized type of critical thinking needed in this area but much remained to be done at the end.

Electronic Media Products

Video Activities

One eighteen minute video Drugs and Society produced by USAID for general audiences in Pashto and Dari was available to the unit at the outset. The production covered both production and demand areas and was used extensively by us, especially in training courses. An assessment of the video by young male viewers brought high praise for its message and production qualities. Most program themes were found to be well served. One possible weakness; viewers were not convinced that addicts could not shake their habit if they really wanted to.

A production of the Pakistan Narcotics Control Board in Pashto Heroin Hits Pakistan was also frequently used by the unit in training seminars. In addition, the Pakistan Drug Prevention Resource Center in Islamabad allowed us to copy many of its video and TV advertising materials. Some of these were used in training sessions; all would have been valuable for archival material had we gone on to produce more of our own videos.

Three video productions were planned in 1991. Bids were received in August but a contract was not signed because of funding problems. The productions were:

The Good Farmer A 20 minute production which could be shown to farmers as well as other audiences emphasizing that all Afghan farmers do not grow poppy, even if they could. Some hold to Islamic practices and their families lead happy lives free from concern that their farm products are causing distress to other people, including Afghan youth.

The Addict A 20 minute production which could be shown to

young people as well as other audiences, especially farmers, showing how easily heroin addiction occurs and how hard, almost impossible, it is to free oneself from its grip. The video would also show how families and communities are adversely effected by an addict's anti-social behavior.

Communities Mobilize Against Narcotics A 30 minute production which would show scenes from NACP community meetings in which Afghan leaders speak against drugs and poppy. The video would be shown in order to emphasize that Afghan communties were beginning to take a stand against the drug menace.

Unit plans for 1992 called for the production of several videos in which prominent Afgans would speak out against drugs and poppy cultivation.

Since its inception, the unit had planned to produce a short video in English which would summarize the entire project's objectives and activities. Production was to have begun when Congress had approved the project and the result shown to VIP's as well as USG officials in Islamabad and Washington. Since the project was never officially approved, the video was not produced.

Two short-term TA's were planned to sharpen staff skills in video planning and use; one for general productions and one for training type productions. In this connection, an order was prepared but never entered to purchase video editing equipment for the unit that would be suitable for small, quick projects; productions like those otulined above would still be produced in professional studios under contract.

The project purchased eight VCR's; 4 26" TV sets, 2 42" sets, and 2 100" projection sets with separate amplifiers and speakers. One of the 42" sets was mounted in a custom-made video van for use after dark inside of Afghanistan and in refugee camps in Pakistan, areas which are largely without TV and electrical power. The prototype van was tested and found to be an effective way to show video to audiences of about 100 people. But, even though the TV and VCR equipment was suspended and well padded, its durability and sturdiness were not adequately tested on the rough terrain inside of Afghanistan. Other video van designs were planned and at the end of the project we were investigating commercially produced British vans, which reportedly have been used in remote areas of Africa and South Asia, possibly with better day-time viewing features.

The archives include extensive video and still photo coverage of all community meetings and most training sessions held by the unit. In addition, special field trips were made to videotape poppy

planting and opium harvesting in Nangarhar. These are available as are long video-taped interviews with heroin addicts made in the NACP office. Most of this material is on Super VHS tapes.

Radio Activities

The unit worked with top Afghan singers, Farzana (female) and Shah Ali (male) to record two anti-narcotics songs which could be played on Radio Pakistan at times when a large Afghan audience listens to the station. Radio Pakistan charged a fee for playing the songs but gave a substantial public service discount to us. The songs were also played for a group of young Afghan men invited to the NACP office. Their verdict was uniformly favorable, very much so. The songs were probably the most popular media production in NACP's short existence and were being prepared for a wide distribution on cassette at the time the project closed.

The unit continued to work with Radio Pakistan until the end of the project preparing short anti-narcotic spots (commercials) which could be aired, like the songs, at times when the station had a large Afghan audience. (It should be noted that the radio station has a creative department which develops spots. Independent ad agencies are much less active in this area than in America.)

One of the project's major objectives was to provide anti-narcotics information, backgrounders, and interviews to BBC's Pashto Service and VOA's Pashto and Dari Sevices, all of which had large Afghan audiences. Both stations already had widely broadcast anti-narcotics material so attracting their interest and cooperation was not difficult. However, more work on our part was needed.

Drama Activities

In the first community meeting which NACP held in a refugee camp near Peshawar, it hired a small Afghan drama group to put on an anti-narcotics play of about one hour's duration. This proved to be one of the high points of the event with audiences young and old watching intently and obviously being moved by the sad denoument. Since this drama group was unwilling to perform inside of Afghanistan, the unit engaged another group to write and perform two dramas, one in Pashto and one in Dari, which could become an integral part of our anti-narcotics community meetings. Working on a portable stage which the project commissioned, the drama activity was barely under way when we were forced to curtail its activities. A formal assessment of this activity was under way when the project ended. Our observation of audiences while the dramas were being played, however, revealed that drama is a very effective medium for putting across anti-narcotics themes. Both dramas were videotaped.

Print Media Products

The unit had available to it at the outset six pamphlets and one booklet, each in Dari and Pashto versions, produced earlier under USAID contract. One pamphlet was written for each of the following five audiences: the public at large, parents, cultivators, social leaders, and teachers. The sixth pamphlet was for the public at large but concentrated on discussing the drug problem from the Islamic and medical points of view.

The booklet for general audiences covered drugs in greater depth than the brochures. This was tested with young male audiences and found to be favorably accepted. Its anti-narcotics themes were also generally well recalled but as in the case of the video the audience was not convinced that addicts could not do more to cure themselves.

Staff analysis of this written material indicated weaknesses in some of the pamphlet titles. They were all written when acceptance of the project was unknown and thus were to some degree timid or defensive. The cultivators' brochure was the only one deemed weak enough to remove from distribution. In this title, poppy cultivation was blamed to a large degree on Kabul and the communists, rather than on producers themselves. It was being redesigned at the time of the project's closure, this time with considerably more graphic and less written material.

The unit's principal publication Perhaz a bi-monthly newsletter designed for its major contacts was published twice in 1991; the first time as a dry run, the second time seriously. The heavily illustrated publication carried articles about project activities in Afghanistan as well as in refugee camps, anti-narcotic short stories and poems, and editorials about drug abuse and poppy cultivation. Research on the publication's impact was in progress when the project closed as were staff discussions on whether the publication should be issued more frequently and whether it should resemble a newspaper or journal in content.

Six large colored posters, each carrying an anti-poppy as well as an anti-drug message, were produced by the same USAID contract and available from the unit's outset. These proved to be very popular with Afghan viewers and were received very favorably by participants in an all-Asia anti-narotics conference in Bangkok where they were shown in 1990. In tests they were found to be effective for literate as well as illiterate audiences. Although each carried a brief written message, one version in Pashto and one in Dari, all were found to be completely understood even when the written message was hidden. The series of posters was reprinted in 1991.

Related to this design were covers of notebooks for use in our training seminars and for distribution to school and madrassa students. The design of the front cover showed the unattractive image of young people under the effects of drugs; the back cover gave information on the dangers of the charas and poppy plants, both of which were shown in close-up photos.

In early 1991 the project's Creative Services Department designed four highly stylized calligraphic posters to carry the four leading Koranic admonitions (in Arabic with Dari translations) against drug abuse and intoxication. Because of funding problems, only two were ultimately printed and distributed. Research findings about the posters' acceptance were incomplete when the project closed but the assessment officer as well as other project staffers had received high praise for the work and the demand for both posters was high.

Also popular and in great demand was an Islamic calendar for 1991 issued on Afghan New Year's Day, March 21. The calendar showed a map of Afghanistan with attractive pictures of legal crops which could be grown productively in Afghanistan.

A simple decal, with an adhesive back and no written message, showing a poppy plant with an international barrier symbol across it, was widely distributed in the last month of the project's existence. Although it was designed to be mounted on windows or walls, we do not have complete findings on where it ultimately was used. We do have some photos, however, of some stuck on Kalashnikovs being carried by mujahadin inside of Afghanistan.

Two other novelties designed and produced by the unit included a multi-colored kite with an anti-narcotics message which is currently being marketed in bazaar shops of Peshawar and a post card with an addict illustration, distributed widely with the calendar.

At the time of the project's closing, the Creative Services Department had four bumper stickers ready for production and were designing a maze or board game such as parchesi with drug, poppy and charas barriers that had to be surmounted in order to reach the winner's circle. The latter game was to be introduced with our anti-narcotics school curriculum.

Translations of foreign anti-narcotics materials into Afghan languages had begun. An entire manual, taken from Nepal, had been translated into Pashto but not yet finally typed when the project ended. Other pertinent materials awaited adaptation into Afghan formats.

While some short stories had been written for the unit newsletter,

another project to produce Mullah Nassiruddin stories with anti-narcotics themes proved less successful. Contributions in Dari and Pashto by a local literary group were judged of marginal value by the staff.

The project received a great many other ideas for anti-narcotics novelties, some good and some of less value.

While many of the unit's materials were distributed in connection with its community and training programs, several posters were distributed separately by two agents under contract to the unit. Before work was curtailed inside of Afghanistan, they had taken materials into Paktika and Nangarhar projects. Later they went into Kurram and North and South Waziristan to distribute materials to refugees along the Afghan border. When funds were scarce, our own staff made extensive distribution to refugee camps in the Peshawar area. We did not have a chance to monitor this intensive distribution carefully but believe that our efforts are visible in mosques, schools and clinics throughout the target areas.

Training Products

NACP's Training Department made extensive use of many of the print and electronic media materials described above. They, however, developed lecture materials which covered a wide range of narcotic information. These lectures could be concise or extended depending upon the training time available. As the department gained more experience, individual trainers assumed specialized roles in certain areas and handled the related lectures. The basic lecture topics follow:

1. What is a drug? The differences between medical and "recreational" drugs.

2. Where drugs come from. The poppy and charas plants.

3. Classification of drugs. Opium, heroin, hashish, alcohol, etc.

4. Why people take drugs.

5. How addiction occurs. The signs of an addict.

6. Drug treatment.

7. The Islamic point of view on drugs.

8. The dangers of addiction to family and society.

9. History of drug abuse.

10. Afghanistan's problems with drugs. Its historic efforts to control narcotic cultivation, trafficking and drug abuse. Its laws and adherence to international teaties.

11. International problems with drugs. Efforts to control production, trafficking and use. The United Nations and Narcotics.

12. The role of schools in anti-narcotics education.

13. The role of the media in anti-narcotics education.

14. The role of parents in controlling drug abuse.

When project funds became scarce, the Training Department turned its attention to developing a written anti-narcotics curriculum as well as text book materials which could be used in the schools of Afghanistan after the war. Thus, written essays on all of the subjects outlined above have been prepared. In addition, the Department began discussions of how best these topics could be inserted into a curriculum, debating such points as whether this material should be introduced in special anti-narcotics courses or whether it should be used in already existing courses such as religion, civics, health, science and so on. At the time this report is being written, the Director of the Training Department plans to meet with the leaders of the USAID-supported Educational Sector Support Project for Afghanistan (University of Nebraska in Omaha) to brief them about our unit's activities and share any materials the ESSP people find valuable.

Personnel

Almost all Awareness personnel needed for the unit had been assembled when the project came to a conclusion. The 22-member staff, with the exception of the Coordinator, was entirely Afghan and mostly very young. The Deputy Coordinator, for example, was only 29; the Assessment and Reports Officer, only 18. Three quarters of the staff did not know English and our staff meetings were conducted and most internal correspondence was written in Dari/Pashto. The Coordinator would rely on translations when needed. The staff was entirely engaged in awareness activities; administrative support, such as personnel, financial and transportation services, came from the central executive section of the project. The staffing pattern follows:

Program Direction

Coordinator - John Dixon

Deputy Coordinator - A. Mateen Mehraban, a professional pharmacologist who had public administration training in America.
Program Planning Director - Abdul Qayum, former Kabul government health planner.
Assessment and Reports Officer - A. Sonan Osmani, a very bright young Afghan with good English language skills. A graduate of many IRC courses including English, pub admin, and journalism.
Administrative Assistant - Abdul Aziz, a very bright young Afghan who graduated from many IRC courses, including English, pub admin, and journalism. Had worked in Afghan health agencies.
Logistics Assistant - Obeidullah

Public Services Department

Director - The first incumbent, an experienced Afghan journalist, left for America after six months; the position remained vacant thereafter.
Eastern Field Representative - Abdul Hai Warshan, formerly a journalist and writer
Deputy for Logistics - Sher Aqa, former military officer
Southern Field Representative - Shamsuddin Kakar, former teacher and school administrator.
Deputy for Logistics - Vacant
Women's Representative - The first incumbent, a woman with training experience, left the job shortly before the project ended.

Training Department

Director - Shah Alam, former Secondary School Principal
Deputy Director - Habibullah Arif, Narcotics Specialist trained in Germany. Many years of experience in field.
Training Specialist - Lutf Karim, former Secondary School Dean.
Training Specialist - Mohammad Wasi, former Maulavi.
Training Specialist - Inayatullah, former Secondary School Teacher.
Training Specialist - Mohammad Rabi, Geological Engineer and former Mining Project Officer
Training Specialist (Southern Area) - Alam Mansoor, former Secondary School Principal.

Creative Services Department

Director - Hafiz Ashna, Graphic Artist with degree from Kabul University Fine Arts Faculty

Calligraphy Specialist - Mohammad Aman, Attended Fine Arts Faculty of Kabul University
Video Specialist - Yousaf Nawab, Former Kabul TV cameraman and editor. Trained as an engineer.
Editor for Print Materials, Newsletter - Abdul Masood, trained at Kabul University, experience with several Afghan news agencies.
Editor for Radio, Drama, Music - Mohammad Ikram, trained at Kabul University, experience with several Afghan news agencies.
Radio Assistant - Hamidullah, bright young Afghan trained at the Afghan Media Resource Center.

To develop a team relationship, the staff met frequently and at length. Every two weeks, everyone attended a staff meeting which had an agenda but which was also open-ended. Staffers regardless of rank spoke and meetings ran sometimes to 90 minutes. Smaller staff meetings of different configurations were held frequently. Heads of department met jointly with the coordinator as often as once a day; indivdually as often as once a week. Since the unit was just beginning to work, we followed the practice of keeping everyone on the staff informed about as much as possible as often as possible. The coordinator also believed that as many program decisions as possible should be reached consensually by as many staff members as possible. Considerable progress in these areas was achieved.

Salaries in the Awareness unit, which had been awarded in accordance with an NACP-wide scale, were higher than found in most purely Afghan or Pakistani agencies; they were considerably lower than paid by the United Nations in its agencies. After initial disappointment at not being paid at UN levels, staffers were generally content. Most staffers received raises after 3-6 months of service. Project funds, however, were cut before raises could be awarded to most members of the Training Department. This was unfortunate in view of the very fine services and hard work performed by this group.

I would rate the morale of the staff very high even when the project's existence was hanging in suspense. Most of the staff had developed a high interest in and deep committment to our work and believed with great conviction that what they were doing was in the interest of their country and its future. Their deep Muslim faith, of course, greatly reinforced this attitude. The unit's work never stopped until I arrived in Peshawar on December 4 to give the staff the very disappointing news that the project had been disbanded by USAID.

NACP Support

The Narcotics Awareness and Control Project of which the Narcotics Awareness Unit was a part, provided all of our administrative support. Neither of the two NACP Chiefs of Party who served during the project's existence held regular staff meetings but we did meet at times of crisis and they were always accessible. The first chief, Dr. Gerald P. Owens, was an agricultural economist, with expert knowledge of poppy in Afghanistan. He was less interested in staff development and left that function to subordinates. Despite some professional and managerial disagreements with him, I must thank him for his support and many courtesies. My relations with his successor, Mr. Steven E. Weerts, a lawyer, were entirely warm and unclouded. Again I must thank him for his many kindnesses to me and members of my staff. I very much admired his performance during the difficult days prior to the project's closing.

The Administration section was always helpful and I can think of only one area where I needed more support than I received, in the writing of contracts and purchase orders. The Finance section and its chief, Ms. Aida Devierte, were models of their kind as far as support for our project was concerned. Sometimes they did not have money but when they did, our bills were paid promptly. Even under short deadlines, program funds were usually available to us. The Procurement section, although willing, had problems in carrying out its commissions. In short, our Awareness staffers should have been much more involved in shopping trips and equipment specifications than they were. The Transportation section, with few exceptions, was highly reliable and courteous.

Our relations with the embryonic Poppy Reduction and Control Unit were always cordial. Had this unit gone into business, we had drafted specific awareness programs which we could carry out in support of its activities.

Our relations with the Information and Research Unit were also cordial. Initially the Awareness Unit planned to have a Resource Center for its documents and materials. At the suggestion of the first COP, this function was merged into the IRU Library and Archives Section, which was located close to the Awareness office. We in the Awareness Unit, however, retained control over the distribution of our media products and retained some frequently used reference materials on our premises. With the exception of our training staff, IRU's library, archives, and resource center never received frequent use by our staff. I feel, as we became more professional, however, this situation might have changed.

We also had cordial relations with the various Coordinators and

research staffers of IRU. Unfortunately, none of them had much survey research experience and so relied heavily on our short term TA and to a lesser degree me to take up this lack.

The TA in this instance was Dr. Hans Spielmann, an international narcotics specialist, who had vast experience in Pakistan as well as in all of Asia, setting up and operating Narcotics Awareness programs. He advised the project before I arrived and then returned to generously give me advice and ideas. Many awareness programs that we tried are results of his suggestions. I am deeply grateful for his assistance.

Dr. Spielmann was the only TA employed by the Awareness Unit although others who were scheduled to arrive had to be cancelled because of the funding crisis and other reasons. I especially had wanted specialists in the following areas to visit: training, video, and information strategies.

Recommendations

There were some decisions I made about the unit that I would change or correct were I in a position to do so. These, I believe, are all mentioned in the text of the report and for that reason I will not bring them up again here. There were also many outside events which adversely effected the success of the project. These have been mentioned in the introduction and for that reason, I will not repeat them here either.

I am left, therefore, with two recommendations which I feel are very important for those evaluating the project or, inshallah, succeed me.

1. Lack of NGO's - Early in the project's life, I was called to a USAID staff meeting in which it was impressed on me that under no conditions should I form Afghan NGO's in the anti-narcotics field. The decision, I was told, was made because USAID did not want funding obligations, moral or otherwise, to any independent organization to exist at the end of the three year contract. The entire objective of the contract, they said, was to train individuals in the anti-narcotics field, not to build institutions.

The inevitable outcome of this directive was to leave a group of trained anti-narcotics specialists with no where to go when the project ended. There were no Afghan organizations to whom staff members could apply or even volunteer for jobs. The plates for our print materials will go into storage as will our books and our files. Research findings will quickly date. In short, in a few weeks our organization will have disappeared and its influence will have begun to decay.

2. Work in Refugee Camps - Again, early in the project's life, USAID asked us to confine our activities to areas inside of Afghanistan. As I recall, this was done to keep us out of USAID Pakistan's jurisdiction as well as that of the United Nations Drug Control Program. USAID Pakistan, however, had no program of this kind and UNDCP's program was close to moribund. We were not overly upset by this decision. We had anticipated that most of our programs would be inside of Afghanistan. As events turned out, an American kidnapping forced USAID to cancel all of its contract work inside of Afghanistan and we ended up working entirely in the refugee community.

Nontheless, we feel USAID's initial decision was shortsighted. Afghan refugees are not totally divorced from their home areas. They have in fact organized themselves by these areas in refugee camps and maintain close contact with people back home. Their men folk, who look after what remains of farms and businesses travel back and forth between the communities and the camps. Boys and significant numbers of the young men stay in Pakistan where schools are located, not at home where schools are severely disrupted. Any sophisticated anti-narcotics programming, therefore, should be divided between the home and the refugee commmunities.

Biographical Note

I joined the project after 25 years of service with the U.S. Information Agency in a variety of administrative, information, cultural, research and educational duties. Three of those years were spent as director of the American Center (USIS) in Peshawar and another three years as USIA's Afghanistan Country Program Officer (Desk Officer) in Washington. Prior to my service in USIA, I spent ten years with The Gallup Organization in Princeton conducting a variety of public opinion, advertising and marketing studies.

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