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Report  
on  
Review of Afghan Agriculture  
and  
Redesign of  
Agriculture Sector Assessment Project

F: PRO 4

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June, 1988

## PREFACE

This report is submitted in compliance with terms of a contract (purchase order No. 306-0200-0-00-8821-00) dated May 1, 1988. The contract specifies the following assignment:

1. Review the results of the Agricultural Production Survey, and make recommendations for possible continued A.I.D. support for Phase II of the Survey.
2. Review an expected proposal from the International Rescue Committee relative to data needs, gathering and analysis. This proposal will focus on agriculture, but also look beyond need in this sector to others which may include health, education, transportation, shelter, etc. Make recommendations with respect to a possible role for Agricultural Production Survey in the context of broadened information needs and efforts.
3. Review current agricultural activities under the Afghan Program and make recommendations as to how these might be strengthened and enhanced, and provide prioritized assessment of future agriculture activities for A.I.D.'s consideration in light of rapidly changing political environment.
4. Prepare a comprehensive scope of work for the currently planned fall assessment/redesign of the Agricultural Sector Support Project (306-0204).

The reports on items 1, 3, and 4 of the above scope are included in the following sections I, II, and III, respectively. Regarding item 2, The International Rescue Committee <sup>(IRC)</sup> has not submitted the expected proposal. In discussions with the Director of IRC it was learned that such a request will not be submitted since the Swedish Committee, which sponsored the Agricultural Survey of Afghanistan and had earlier indicated that it might not be able to continue that activity, has since decided that it will support a continuation of that work. Therefore, the IRC does not intend to become involved in the survey.

The assignment was carried out during the period of May 23rd to June 2, 1988. The findings, conclusions and recommendations are based on review of project documents, including the ~~5th~~ <sup>5th</sup> draft of the project design paper attached to the Activity Authorization Memorandum, The August 30th Amendment to the VITA design paper, monthly and bi-monthly reports, the January 12, 1988 Status report on Rural Work Activities, The April 18, 1988 report, Agriculture and Rural Reconstruction in Afghanistan, by Dr. Lynn Carter and Dr. Whitney Azoy and miscellaneous reports. I was helped greatly by discussions with staff members of VITA and O/AID/Rep. as well as with members from some of the other PVDs working in agriculture.

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I. REVIEW OF FIRST REPORT <sup>2</sup> AGRICULTURAL SURVEY OF AFGHANISTAN

## REVIEW OF FIRST REPORT, AGRICULTURAL SURVEY OF AFGHANISTAN

The survey produced a massive database that will be an important source of information in planning for resettlement of refugees and reconstruction and development of rural Afghanistan. The survey is based on interviews with over 1300 communities and the heads of 20,000 farm families throughout the 29 provinces of Afghanistan and in the refugee camps in Pakistan. The First Report is a brief summary highlighting major findings of the survey with respect to the effects of the war on resources used in agricultural production. The survey showed that there has been a decline of 30 % in land area cultivated since 1978 and total agricultural production fell to only 53 % of the 1978 level. There was a dramatic decline in availability of family and hired labor. The number of draught animals declined by 40 % and there was widespread damage to irrigation systems.

The report states that the survey "seeks to reveal a representative profile of the average farm, and the average farm family". Averaging attributes of sample farmers on a country-wide basis obscures important differences that must exist among the geographical regions and provinces as well as within each local area. Such averages do not describe farmers and their situations typical of any area and give us no clue as to how land and other resources are distributed within communities - information that will be important in planning repatriation and reconstruction. Nevertheless, the averages presented in this report provide a credible overview of the nature and extent of injury to the agricultural economy.

The report provides some useful information on the functioning of the input distribution system in terms of availability of fertilizers and agricultural chemicals. It provides little information on the availability of credit and credit terms - information that will be important in planning a reconstruction program. Although the questionnaire solicited information on farm size, this report presents only averages, country-wide and by zones. Good information on numbers of farmers falling in different farm size categories and their production assets will be very useful in designing assistance programs. Such information should be obtainable from the database, though the report cautions that one of the likely bias in the data might be that enumerators would have a tendency to select the larger, more progressive, farmers for a variety of reasons, despite the training provided. The report suggests that absence of information on important issues of credit and tenure was properly excluded from the survey because of its sensitivity. But tenure, credit and farm size will be considerations in planning a reconstruction program.

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The report points out that there were serious security problems that made it impossible to insure representativeness in the sample design. Appropriate steps were taken to make the sample as representative as possible. The inability to communicate with the enumerators in the field was a serious problem that raises questions about the validity of responses to the questionnaire and accuracy as to the location of sample respondents. The report acknowledges the problem and the possibilities for bias but believes that rigorous screening in which dubious questionnaires were thrown out dealt with that problem. In section 6 of the report the possibility of employing satellite imagery in conjunction with sample ground data to make a judgement about the validity is proposed.

Section 6 of the report suggests a number of activities in continuation of the survey. These are commented on below.

(1) Further Analysis of Existing Data.

Consolidation of the data on a provincial basis would be useful and a relatively simple operation worth the effort.

The database contains a large amount of information that will be useful in designing programs for specific areas. The information will, in the first place, be helpful in selecting areas for priority assistance, based on whatever criteria are chosen. Further analysis of information in the database for the selected areas may provide adequate basis for detailed planning of reconstruction programs in some areas but will probably ~~usually~~ need to be supplemented by more detailed, focused studies.

(2) Satellite Imagery

Satellite imagery can have a useful application. It could afford a basis for judging how accurate the survey was. It would probably not be necessary or useful to apply it country-wide; but it may be useful to apply it to limited geographic areas where comparisons with survey information will allow a generalization of the results of the survey for Afghanistan as a whole. The imagery may also be useful in assessing damage and planning reconstruction of major irrigation projects as in Helmand Valley. VITA has already taken steps to obtain LANDSAT imagery for a few such selected areas.

(3) Subject or Area Specific Focus Surveys

Development projects will likely focus on specific areas (valleys) and on specific crops or subjects. The database will be useful in providing general information and perhaps in selecting target areas. The specific information needed for detailed planning of projects will probably require special, focused studies of the area. That may be a suitable function of the ASA or some other organization. In any case, the design of the study should be worked out by whatever organization is planning the reconstruction/development project, in cooperation with ASA.

#### (4) Seed Testing and Multiplication

The survey concluded that there was evidence that the genetic potential of wheat seed has deteriorated over the past nine years. Given the importance of wheat as the staple food, maintaining or improving seed quality should have high priority in the development program. There is a need for establishment of institutional capacity to do adaptive research, to establish the suitability of technologies, including seed varieties, for various local conditions. Ultimately, there should be the organization, staff and facilities to test, select and multiply improved varieties on a continuing basis. It is not clear from the study how much of the decline in yields was due to a deterioration in genetic potential; yields were affected by drought, by reduced applications of fertilizer, labor shortages and other factors. If in fact there has been a serious decline in seed quality, it may be prudent, meanwhile, to import seed varieties which have demonstrated adaptability in similar environments while awaiting results of the time consuming seed introduction process, <sup>which</sup> the report proposes.

#### 5) Agricultural Extension Training and Low-cost Inputs Pilot Project

The report identifies crop pests and diseases as among the major problems perceived by farmers and suggests extension activities to demonstrate agro-chemical treatments. Extension demonstrations of appropriate chemicals for specific disease or pest problems and their appropriate handling and application will be very important. They can only be effective if there is a distribution system through which farmers have access to a reliable supply of the chemicals.

#### (6) General External Services

The First Report identified some problems that farmers perceived to be especially important. Examples are the shortage of animal power, shortage of tractors and spare parts, and problems of pests. These problems should probably be studied in more detail and ASA may be one of the organizations to do this. Such studies should probably be done focusing on specific areas targeted for development projects.

#### (7) The 1988 Agricultural Survey

The need for repeating the survey in 1988 should probably be reviewed. What additional insights can be expected from it? Perhaps an update of a few of the more important features will be sufficient.

The Afghan staff built up to conduct the survey and analyze the results is now relatively well trained and experienced. The capability developed represents an important step toward establishment of a Central Statistical Office, which will be needed for the reconstruction of the country. The Swedish

Committee indicates that it will continue its support for further analysis of information in the database and to maintain an on-going organization competent to undertake studies needed by various organizations for agricultural development planning. USAID might consider support to the survey unit by engaging it to produce end products needed by USAID or VITA.

II. REVIEW OF AFGHAN AGRICULTURE PROGRAM

## REVIEW OF AFGHAN AGRICULTURE PROGRAM

### I. Introduction.

This review of current agricultural activities under the Afghan Agricultural Program is being undertaken as a preliminary step to preparation of a scope of work for a comprehensive evaluation and redesign of The Agricultural Sector Support Project (306-0204). This report is based on project documents establishing and amending the project, bi-monthly and quarterly reports, and discussions with members of the VITA staff implementing the project. Other documents, such as the First Report of the Agricultural Survey of Afghanistan by Dr. Azum Gul and the Assessment of Food Prospects in Afghanistan by Ray Hooker, were also useful in understanding the problems of the Afghanistan agricultural economy. Discussions with some of the many private voluntary agencies (PVO's) were also helpful.

### II. Background.

In November, 1986 USAID gave a grant to Volunteers In Technical Assistance (VITA) to design a project for assisting the agriculture sector of Afghanistan. The initial grant also authorized VITA to undertake preliminary project implementation. So, by the time the project was approved in April, 1987, considerable progress had already been made in organizing a staff and planning and implementing a program.

The approved project had two major purposes:

- (1) To provide resources to support increased agricultural productivity in selected areas of Afghanistan, and
- (2) To support the growth of institutional mechanisms to utilize the resources the program will make available.

The program, as originally conceived, would follow a two-track strategy. Track I would operate under the direct policy guidance of the Agricultural Council, a body already in existence, consisting of representatives from each of the seven political parties in the Islamic Alliance of The Afghan Mujahadeen. The Council was expected to provide direction for the Afghan Agricultural Project (AAP), which would have responsibility for implementation of development activities within Afghanistan. The VITA staff would provide technical assistance to the AAP.

A parallel track II, working under the policy guidance of a Steering Committee composed of representatives of USAID, Government of Pakistan, and VITA, was intended to channel resources to private sector groups and organizations for assistance to the agriculture sector. It was designed to be parallel but independent of the AAP.

In the summer of 1987 VITA engaged Engineer Mohammad Sidiq, President of the Rural Development Department in Afghanistan before the war, as a consultant to advise on reconstruction of the rural infrastructure. This led to a VITA proposal for an amendment to the project to create a third track. Track III would deal specifically with rural works and other development requirements in selected areas of Afghanistan. The amendment was approved and became operational in September, 1987, with initial funding provided by reallocation of program funds in the program budget of the contract. Mr. Sidiq returned to become the director of the track III activities. Track III operates independently of the Agriculture Council, but maintains close liaison with the political parties of the Alliance and the commanders of the areas where the activities are located.

The project design takes account of the instabilities in the political, security and economic environment in Afghanistan by adopting a "rolling design strategy" to allow accretion or deletion of activities as the situation requires.

The project was designed with two phases. During phase I, emphasis would be on identifying priority target areas, surveying the needs of the selected areas and supplying appropriate equipment, supplies and technical assistance to those areas. Phase II is to be based on experience in the first phase and the evolving political situation, as reflected in an evaluation and redesign exercise scheduled for the fall of 1988.

### III. Accomplishments.

Accomplishments in tracks II and III have been as good as, or better than, expected. Experience with track I has been disappointing thus far. The Agricultural Council was ineffective in developing policies and unable to direct implementation of a program. Track I was intended to be the institution-building element of the project, developing the organization and competence of Afghan staff for planning and implementing programs in the field. The project design, fortunately, anticipated some of the difficulties in developing this institutional capacity and provided for creation of track II, which has been successful in moving substantial amounts of agricultural inputs to target areas in Afghanistan through a variety of arrangements with private firms in Pakistan and Afghanistan and to a lesser extent through private voluntary organizations.

Track III was designed to operate independently of the Agricultural Council to avoid the obstacles inherent in the track I arrangement. Track III has had substantial success in mounting a well organized program quickly. While operating outside the direct control of the Alliance, the Rural Works program has developed close working relations with existing leadership in the

selected areas, has recruited from the Alliance personnel qualified field staff for implementing the projects and has assembled a support staff in Peshawar to plan and backstop the program.

Over the last few months, VITA has consolidated field activities around the field staff of the Rural Works Division (track III). The Rural Works Division now has field staff in place in 13 provinces. Shuras (councils) are forming in many local areas where development schemes are being located. These shuras provide important opportunities for the VITA program to use and, at the same time, strengthen the developing grass-roots local civil administration. Both track III and the emerging shuras support the second goal of the project: the growth of institutional mechanisms.

Consolidation of activities, with agricultural staff working alongside existing Rural Works staff in the 10 area development scheme areas, is creating a framework wherein the agricultural staff can also be utilized effectively. They work under the supervision of the Senior Provincial Engineer and are supported by the administrative staff of the Rural Works Division and the VITA Planning Unit in Peshawar. The Director of the Afghan Agricultural Project (AAP) is now working with senior staff from the Rural Works Division. VITA has trained 45 technicians in various machinery repair and operation activities to work in agriculture in conjunction with the field staff of the Rural Development Department.

At the end of May, 21 small threshers were being sent into seven of the area development schemes, along with seven tractors and seven reapers. Track I has experimented with the movement of draft animals into Afghanistan. Two groups were sent in last year. The first group consisted of seven horses and three bullocks. The second shipment consisted of 35 bullocks, which were delivered to a commander at the border, with instructions to distribute them to deserving people who had lost their cattle in the war. Monitoring verified that beneficiaries were, in fact, deserving. (Another shipment of 50 bullocks was sent in 1988, but this was done through the track III program.) Additional shipments of draft animals are scheduled through the summer as VITA continues to experiment with the thorny issues of allocation and distribution. There are no major problems in distribution of public works. Roads are clearly public property. Irrigation facilities, too, are often owned by a large part of the community. On the other hand, tractors, bullocks and machinery are generally individually owned. In the absence of host country mechanisms such as departments, agencies or ministries how do you decide who gets them, and on what terms?

Track II activities provide equipment and supplies to development areas through private firms in Pakistan and Afghanistan, as well

as through private voluntary agencies. Through the end of April, 1988, various pieces of equipment costing 12 million rupees had been sent and sold in Afghanistan under these arrangements. In view of the severe shortage of power and labor in the war affected areas, the Technical Support staff has explored ways to provide labor saving and energy efficient equipment. The aim is to identify small scale units for power and threshing, for import or local manufacture, that are easily transported and appropriate for the development areas. They have also developed nurseries at some locations in Pakistan and Afghanistan for propagation of various fruit trees to provide cuttings which can be sent to the development areas to rebuild damaged orchards.

Activities under track III began in May, 1987. The initial, pilot phase was completed early in 1988. By the end of March, 1988, the Rural Works Division had a staff of 55 people, many of them experienced engineers and technicians recruited from the old Rural Development Department. By late spring, more than 12,000 requests for various types of rural works projects had been received from 19 provinces. It is far beyond the capacity of the present staff to accommodate all these requests. Until now RWD has concentrated on two general types of sub-projects: roads and karezes. By the end of May work was underway on three roads. Work had been approved and scheduled for cleaning and repair of 523 kerezes in 9 provinces. The RWD has fully committed its 1988 budget and has informed commanders that it cannot accept additional requests for this year, and will have to defer new project starts to 1989. In order to carry out its present commitments, RWD is expanding its field technical staff. It plans to double its present staff, to about 100 field positions, by the end of 1988. It is also strengthening its office staff in Peshawar in order to support its present RWD commitments as well as its responsibilities for supporting field agricultural activities, and it is absorbing agricultural staff who are working under its jurisdiction in the area development schemes.

#### IV. Issues and Recommendations.

Major issues in revising the project for phase II will concern how to allocate assistance responsibilities among the various international, country and private voluntary agencies interested in the rehabilitation of the Afghan rural economy. The Afghan Agricultural Survey conducted under the direction of Dr. Azam Gul, with majority funding from USAID, indicates that damage to agricultural resources and productivity was severe and widespread. Work of VITA has thus far been concentrated in selected development areas in 16 provinces. The criteria for selection of these initial impact areas, in addition to reflecting the the priorities of the Alliance, were:

-that they be currently accessible from Pakistan (thus limited to areas east and south of the Hindu Kush mountains),

-that the security situation in the areas be conducive to effective development activities,

-that they have some reasonable potential for agricultural development, and

-that cooperation of local commanders is assured.

It is apparent that the political and security situations are changing rapidly. The map of "Free Zones" is being enlarged weekly. Thus, the number of areas that meet the project's current criteria for concentration is expanding, while the backlog of unmet needs in the original impact areas remains beyond the capacity of the project's present staff and funding. The gap between what needs to be done and what is possible with current funding grows wider. What are the implications for design of the second phase of the VITA project?

(a) Expand VITA's budget and staff? The potential for significant expansion in movement of supplies and equipment into Afghanistan through the project's track II are good and should improve with the expansion of free zones. VITA is building a strong base for support to the private sector channel by identifying appropriate seed varieties, machinery and equipment and their sources, and by providing technical advice from the Peshawar office. Modest increases in VITA Planning Unit and Technical Advisory staff could support a significant expansion in supplies to the development areas. VITA has been experimenting with alternative ways of distributing supplies through the private sector. The VITA planning staff feels that the private sector will be an important channel but that an expanded dealership network for farm implements and inputs needs to be developed as a partial alternative to establishment of public distribution agencies.

The needs for reconstruction of rural infrastructure will be far beyond what the present track III staff can carry out. Even a doubling of present budget and staff will be insufficient to carry out the surveys, designs and construction for the backlog of requests already submitted. Repair of irrigation structures and farm-to-market roads is vital to the rehabilitation of the agricultural economy. It is not feasible for the RWD to attempt to meet the monumental needs for reconstruction of agricultural infrastructure by itself. It will be a gigantic task, and one that needs to involve a consortium of other aid-giving organizations. However, the RWD could be a catalyst for involving other interested organizations. It could provide training for technicians and engineers and technical advice for design and planning. A modest increase in budget and staff would permit RWD to extend such services to other organizations.

(b) Engage one or more additional contractors (?). What VITA is

doing now it is doing well. Present activities are using the staff and budget to capacity. An alternative to expanding its staff and budget is, of course, to engage one or more additional contractors to supplement/complement VITA. This would make good sense if there are agricultural problem areas for which VITA does not have experience, expertise or interest. One such area may be agricultural credit. Others include fertilizer distribution, commodity marketing, livestock development, and rehabilitation of major irrigation works. Some of these are discussed in later sections.

(c) Coordination with other aid-giving organizations. What should VITA's relationship be with the multitude of other agencies, including PVOs, engaged in assisting the agriculture sector? As indicated above, VITA now is operating at capacity in terms of present staffing. Three possible roles could be considered:

-VITA will provide in-house technical assistance to PVOs involved in agriculture and rural works projects but without funneling funds to them via sub-grants.

-VITA will provide TA and sub-grant funding to other PVOs, who will implement activities in VITA's work plan on its behalf.

-VITA will have a coordination (only) role with other PVOs working in Agriculture.

With the approval of the Rural Assistance Project (306-0208) USAID will channel funds to other PVOs through The International Rescue Committee (IRC). Perhaps IRC should be the principal channel for such funding.

Should VITA be a source of technical advice for other PVOs, or should each organization provide its own expert staff? There is a limited number of Afghans available who have training and experience in agriculture and rural development. VITA has recruited and organized a large share of them into effective planning and technical advisory units which can provide expert advice on rural works design and construction, farm mechanization, irrigation farming, and fruit cultivation. It would be difficult for other PVOs to duplicate VITA's expertise in most of these areas. Moreover, it would be wasteful of the scarce trained Afghan technical manpower. There are areas in which other organizations have unique expertise. Arrangements for sharing the technical and planning skills among the PVOs might be mutually advantageous.

Does VITA have a coordinating role? There are now a great number of organizations involved in assisting Afghan agriculture. The numbers are likely to increase. The task is large enough that a surfeit of assistance is unlikely, but coordination will be important. Is VITA the organization best staffed and situated to

perform that function? It could have an effective role because of its broad expertise in Afghan agriculture. Two current alternatives are (1) IRC, which will be the channel for AID funding of several PVOs under the Rural Assistance Project, and (2) The Cooperative Committee, an informal, unfunded organization of PVOs that are involved in cash for food and other rural assistance activities. Other alternatives could emerge. Possibly the UNHCR, having appointed a coordinator for reconstruction and repatriation, may be prepared to take on that role. It may become increasingly important to have a United Nations or multilateral planning and coordinating mechanism, so that coordination is not seen to be done too much under U.S. or Western auspices. While VITA needs to be involved in coordination and planning, it can probably do this most effectively behind the scenes.

The success of the VITA program in developing the Rural Works Division into a potential effective Afghan institution is relevant to the issue. The Rural Works Division is carrying out its area development and rural works field programs with and through local shuras and civil administrations. It is probably seen by many of them and by the Alliance as the functioning Rural Development Department of the "Free" zones. It seems to be regarded that way by some of the other PVOs. The Swedish Committee has recently offered one million rupees to fund some of the backlog of requests for rural works received by RWD. An Austrian organization has made a similar offer. This raises questions as to what the relationship should be between the RWD field operations and VITA. Too "out front" an American role may make it difficult politically for the Rural Works Division to be accepted as a Department in whatever government emerges in Kabul, and perhaps even at the provincial or regional level.

An alternative to United Nations auspices might be a consortium of organizations from several countries, giving it status as a multilateral agency. The arrangement might be quite informal but should be organized to actually perform a coordinating function and to be seen as having that function. Project activities might be publicised as projects of the consortium rather than as projects of individual participating organization. A variation on this idea would be to spin off the Rural Works Division as The Agricultural and Rural Development Foundation so that it could be structured to receive assistance from several donor agencies.

(c) Priorities. In designing this project VITA went through an exercise of evaluating priorities in terms of need as well as feasibility, or ease, of implementation. Some of the most needed supplies, such as fertilizer, were very difficult to transport, given the impossibility of travel by trucks to most of the impact areas. The changing political and security situation may require a reassessment of needs as well as feasibility of transporting. If, as seems likely, there is an increase in repatriation of refugees and demobilization of mujahideen, the shortage of workers

in the rural areas may ease and the emphasis on labor-saving equipment may need to be reconsidered. The project design indicated that importation of draft animals was a high priority, from the standpoint of need as well as ease of implementation. However, the number of animals imported under the project has been very small. Dr. Gul's report indicates that the losses of draft animals is widespread and will be a serious obstacle to increasing production. Addressing the animal power problem should continue to be a high priority, and more effective mechanisms need to be found for implementation.

(d) Subsidies. A large part of the budget for track II activities is spent in subsidizing equipment, machinery and supplies delivered through the private sector through the open market. Are these subsidies crucial, or even important? Almost certainly, the cost/benefit ratios for the high priority items will be very favorable for individuals and communities without subsidy. Providing a good credit program would probably be more cost effective and more likely to result in a fair allocation among beneficiaries. Without credit only those who can pay from savings become candidate beneficiaries. VITA has recognized the problem and experimented with various mechanisms to insure equitable allocations. For major pieces of equipment which lend themselves to such use, Vita has encouraged arrangements whereby the purchasers of equipment such as tractors or threshers agree to perform custom services for their neighbors.

(e) Credit Institutions. Long and intermediate credit are important for investments in infrastructure such as roads and irrigation facilities, and for purchase of tractors, bullocks and implements. Short term production credit is crucial for purchase of inputs such as seeds, fertilizers and agricultural chemicals. Development of suitable rural credit institutions should be an important part of the institution-building agenda for the agriculture sector. Ideally, the AAP should have been the vehicle for this. Alternatively, this might be accomplished through a separate contract. Rural credit institutions were not well developed before the war and it is certain to be even more difficult to establish them now. But it will be virtually impossible for many of those who lost their production resources to restore their productivity without either credit or out-right grants. Establishing a viable agricultural credit system will not be easy. Afghanistan had little success with the Agricultural Development Bank before the war, and they now have far fewer trained people to implement a credit program. A credit program on a national scale is clearly not feasible at this time. At this time it may only be possible to start at the local level, finding ways to adapt and modify traditional devices. But in the rapidly changing political situation it may that a national government with broad acceptability will emerge before long. If and when it does, an effort should be made to develop a viable national agricultural credit program. It need not be done by USAID. The

gouvernement of West Germany was involved in assistance to the Agricultural Development Bank in the 1970s and should be encouraged to try again.

(f) Monitoring and Evaluation. VITA has established a monitoring and evaluation system that seems to be an effective apparatus for monitoring the delivery of supplies to the impact areas and for assessing the agricultural situation in the provinces.

VITA has two full time monitoring teams, working independently of each other. One works under the supervision of Dr. Wakil, the other under Eng. Sediq. Eng. Sediq has no monitors residing in Afghanistan. He has three living in Pakistan. One of these has made one trip inside Afghanistan, but usually they send sub-monitors. Information is also collected on the political situations in the area through a variety of systems, using RWD's close liaison relations with the Alliance as well as independent contacts. In addition to the data collection by the full-time monitors, Eng. Sediq's senior technicians also make monitoring trips to project sites.

Dr. Wakil has seven full time monitors. Two of them live in Pakistan and the others within Afghanistan. Of the five who live in Afghanistan, one is in the north and four are in the east. This is rather thin coverage. Dr. Wakil feels a total of 15 would be necessary to cover the whole of Afghanistan. He says it is difficult to find good monitors who would not be suspect. In addition to the full time monitors Dr. Wakil makes use of casual informers. These are considered less reliable but a useful additional source. Monitoring of shipments of subsidized commodities involve several independent checks, often 4 or 5 times, to make sure the shipments are sold at right prices.

The present monitoring plan was drafted in August, 1987. Forms have been prepared and are being used to record information about the status of project activities, quality of equipment and commodities delivered, and beneficiaries. Information is also collected on the political situation and on prices of a few commodities. The system will not become fully operational until computerized, which VITA is working on, using the program developed for monitoring and evaluation of the Education project. Meanwhile, organized files on requests for rural works and the status of implementation are maintained in Eng. Sediq's office. Dr. Wakil evaluates and analyses information he receives and submits written reports. The project has recently added Dr. Riffat Sardar, an American trained Pakistani political scientist, to be formally responsible for consolidating, annotating and analysing monitoring data.

As the areas meeting criteria of accessibility and need increase, more detailed information on agriculture for specific areas will be needed. The Agricultural Survey of Afghanistan sponsored by

the Swedish Committee collected a gigantic agricultural database. The First Report, published in May, 1988, provides a summary of information that is useful in showing what has happened to the agricultural economy over the past nine years. It shows that the damage was extensive to the agricultural infrastructure, including roads and irrigation facilities, and especially severe with respect to the supply of labor and animal and tractor power. The database has yet to be analyzed for very important information on farm size, production resources and other characteristics and relationships. As VITA contemplates new activities, or activities in new areas, the Survey database could be a valuable source of information.

The Swedish Committee has indicated that it intends to continue to support the survey organization, which will be available and competent to work with other organizations in design and conduct of micro-studies needed for planning development projects. USAID might want to consider this service. The organization built up to conduct and analyze the results of the survey is now relatively well trained and tested. USAID should consider supporting its continued development as a national institution that can be very important to an evolving new government. This agricultural survey capability represents a partial step toward the establishment of a Central Statistical Office, which is an imperative for the reconstruction of the country. USAID might support the survival of this organization by contracting with it to carry out specific studies of importance to USAID or VITA activities.

(g) Fertilizer Distribution. Most of Afghan agriculture is irrigated agriculture. The most limiting factor is usually soil nutrients. Under well managed irrigation the return to a ton of fertilizer may be 4 to 5 tons of wheat. A good, reliable system for delivery of fertilizers where and when required is a valuable asset. Afghanistan established such a system in the early 1970s. The Afghanistan Fertilizer Corporation (AFC) is a para statal organization developed with financial and technical assistance from USAID. It enjoyed a reputation for good management and service. It continued to function relatively satisfactorily for several years after 1978. In fact sales continued to increase each year through 1985. Most recent reports are that the central office structure is still there. Much of the earlier staff has been replaced. The provincial offices are reported to have "disintegrated". The AFC constructed storage extensive fertilizer storage facilities throughout the country. These reports suggest that with the return to more security and stability the old AFC could be reconstituted to perform the role it fulfilled prior to the war.

(h) Major Irrigation Works. The Helmand-Afghandab Valley Authority (HAVA) system, in which USAID has invested heavily, is reported to have suffered considerable damage during the war.

Rapid and effective repair and rehabilitation will be important in bringing that large area back into full production quickly. For this USAID should consider contracting with one or more engineering groups to carry out turn-key rehabilitation of the system.

(i) Adaptive Research. A program of adaptive research for field testing new technologies and varietal testing of seeds and plants for adaptability should have high priority. This can be organized on a regional or provincial basis independent of the government in Kabul. Modest facilities would be required and existing field stations of the Ministry of Agriculture might be used. Much of the work can and should be done off the research station, on farmer's fields. The program should include staff and facilities for seed multiplication. This activity might be part of the VITA program in the next phase. The VITA staff is already doing a considerable amount of adaptive research with farm machinery and horticulture crops. Either this should be an expanded activity under the project or the agronomy component should be the objective of a new project.

III. SCOPE OF WORK  
for  
EVALUATION AND REDESIGN  
of  
AGRICULTURE SECTOR SUPPORT PROJECT (306-0204)

## SCOPE OF WORK

### A. PROJECT.

This is a Scope of Work for evaluation and redesign of Agriculture Sector Support Project (306-0204), a Project for Increasing Food Production in Afghanistan. The objects of the project are: (1) to provide resources to support increased agricultural productivity in selected areas of Afghanistan, and (2) to support the growth of institutional mechanisms to utilize the resources the program will make available.

The project was authorized for a three year Life of Project extending to March 31, 1990. The estimated total LOP cost of the project was \$6,000,000. The initial contract obligated \$1,500,000. A March 1, 1988, amendment obligated an additional \$2,000,000, and on June 30, 1988, an additional \$1,000,000 was obligated for an increased level of effort in track III, making the total amount available under the current contract with VITA \$5,000,000.

### B. EVALUATION AND REDESIGN PURPOSE.

The purpose of the evaluation/redesign is to:

a. assess the needs for rehabilitation and development of the Afghan agricultural sector;

b. review progress and assess effectiveness of implementation of the on-going project in meeting project objectives as indicated in the original Activity Approval Memorandum (AAM), subsequent amendments to the AAM, and semi-annual budget/work plans;

c. revise the project to better reflect changes in the political and economic environment and current and evolving requirements of the agricultural sector; and

d. recommend new project(s) (in addition to or split off from current project) that may be needed for satisfactory development of the Afghan agricultural sector.

The revised project should address problems identified in the assessment and reflect the broad policies and directions A.I.D. should take with respect to the Afghan agricultural sector in the evolving political and economic situation. The amendment should build in implementation flexibility to permit adequate response to rapidly changing conditions. The team will need to take account of what is expected to be done for the agriculture sector

under other A.I.D. programs and by other donors in projecting what can and should be done under this project, for how long, and at what cost.

### C. BACKGROUND.

In November, 1986, USAID gave a grant to Volunteers In Technical Assistance (VITA) to design a project for assisting the agriculture sector of Afghanistan. The initial grant authorized VITA to undertake preliminary project implementation. By the time the AAM was signed (April 1, 1987), considerable progress had already been made in recruiting staff and in planning and implementing a program.

The project design, in recognition of the uncertainties in the political and economic environment, adopted a flexible strategy to allow accretion and deletion of activities as the situation might require. The project was designed with two phases. During phase I, emphasis would be on identifying priority target areas, surveying the needs of the selected areas, and supplying appropriate equipment, supplies and technical assistance to those areas. The second phase was to be based on experience in the first phase and the evolving political situation.

As originally designed, implementation would follow a two track strategy. Track I would operate under the direct guidance of the Agricultural Council, a body already in existence, consisting of representatives from each of the seven political parties in the Islamic Unity of the Afghan Mujahideen Alliance. The Agricultural Council was to provide direction to the Afghan Agricultural Project (AAP), which would have responsibility for implementation of agricultural activities in Afghanistan. Track I was intended to be the institution-building element of the project, developing an organizational structure and trained staff of Afghan nationals, working with and through the political parties and local commanders to implement agricultural programs.

Track II was designed to work outside the direct guidance of the Alliance. Its policy guidance would be from a Steering Committee composed of representatives of USAID, The Government of Pakistan, and VITA. It would provide planning and technical advice and channel equipment and supplies for the Afghan agriculture sector through other channels, such as private firms and voluntary agencies.

The project was amended in September, 1987 to provide for a third track. The track III program focused on reconstruction and development of rural infrastructure such as roads, trails and irrigation facilities. It also included a component for area development schemes. The former president of the Rural Development Department in Afghanistan before the war was recruited to be the director of the track III, or Rural Works

Division (RWD). The RWD has recruited and deployed field staff in development areas in Afghanistan, with staff members residing in 10 provinces and working in 16. While RWD was designed to operate outside the direct control of the Alliance and Agricultural Council, in order to avoid obstacles inherent in track I arrangements, it has developed close working relations with the existing leadership in the selected development areas and maintained liaison with the political parties. RWD now has a staff of 55 persons, many of them engineers and technicians recruited from the old Rural Development Department and nominated by the tanzeem. It plans to double its staff by the end of 1988.

Over the past few months, VITA has consolidated activities around the field staff of the Rural Works Division. Shuras (councils) are forming in many areas where development schemes are being located. These shuras provide opportunities for the VITA program to use, and strengthen, the grass-roots local civil administration. Both track III and the emerging shuras support development of important institutional mechanisms for rural development.

Consolidation of activities, with agricultural staff working alongside existing Rural Works Division staff in 10 area development scheme areas, is creating a framework wherein the agricultural staff can be utilized effectively. They work under the supervision of the senior Provincial Engineer and are supported by the administrative staff of the Rural Works Division and the VITA Planning Unit in Peshawar. An Area Development Officer has been appointed to work directly under the Director of the Rural Works Division to direct the agricultural programs in the field. The Agricultural Council, which was never very active, has ceased to function. What was the track I program has been incorporated into the area development schemes of track III. The Agricultural Council is no longer relevant to the project at this time. The rural works and area development field activities, working with and through existing local organizations, are now providing the only channel for services to farmers that would normally be provided by government agencies. They are developing institutional arrangements that, in fact, may become the government service agency.

#### D. SCOPE OF ASSESSMENT AND REDESIGN

##### 1. ASSESSMENT

The team will be responsible for studying the relevant information on the current status of the agricultural sector in Afghanistan, assessing the appropriateness of A.I.D. assistance under this project and recommending specific, practical improvements which can be implemented in light of the evolving political and economic environment. The analysis will address (but not be limited to) the following questions:

a. What progress has been made in developing effective Afghan organizations for development of the agriculture sector? How effective has the Agriculture Council been in staffing and directing the Afghan Agricultural Project? What, if any, role does it have in the provisional or future Afghan government?

b. Is satisfactory progress being made in providing commodities, equipment and services to the impact areas through mechanisms which have been designed to date? What are the problems in equitable allocation and distribution of commodities and services? What lessons have been learned?

c. Are priorities established for commodities and services to be provided to the Afghan agricultural sector consistent with the current or evolving political and economic environment? What, if any, changes are recommended?

d. Are project outputs being achieved at acceptable costs compared to alternative approaches to obtain the same objectives? Are subsidies effective and/or necessary to effect distribution of priority inputs to farmers in the impact area?

e. What progress has been made in strengthening existing agricultural services in the project areas? Are the basic services, such as credit, extension, input supply and commodity marketing functioning in the impact areas? Which of these can and should this project try to develop or strengthen? Which should be split off as new projects?

f. What progress has been made in training agricultural technicians and para-engineers under the VITA auspices? Does the training program need to be broadened or expanded to meet the needs for trained agricultural manpower?..

g. Is the technical assistance team effective? Are there sufficient numbers with appropriate backgrounds to meet project objectives?

h. Is the monitoring and evaluation unit appropriately organized and staffed? Is it providing timely analysis and reports to the technical assistance team? Is the system providing reliable information on the quality and adequacy of the supplies and services provided to the impact areas, and on how they are distributed and used?

i. What is, and what should be, the relationship of VITA to other organizations providing assistance to the agriculture sector?

-Should VITA provide in-house technical assistance to PVOs involved in agriculture and rural works projects but

without funnelling funds to them through sub-grants? Or,

-Should VITA provide the in-house technical assistance as well as grant funding to other PVOs for implementation of activities in VITA's work plan? Or,

-Should VITA have a coordination (only) role with other PVOs working in Agriculture? Or,

-Should it have no role?

(The team should take account, in particular, of A.I.D. Project 306-0208, Rural Assistance, to be implemented by the International Rescue Committee).

j. Are the effects of the project such that they are likely to continue after the A.I.D. funding has stopped? Which are and which are not likely to be sustained?

k. At what point should consideration be given to moving operations to Afghanistan? Are field operations in rural works and area development candidates for transfer soon to provincial, regional or local Afghan administrative units? What might then be their relationship to the VITA planning and coordination operations in Peshawar? As field activities take on operating functions which are normally that of a government agency, how will that affect relationships to VITA and A.I.D.? Can the UN have a role in giving these emerging institutional arrangements a politically acceptable appearance of independence? Should the operational arm of the project be spun off as an independent foundation which could accept donor assistance from a variety of sources?

## 2. REDESIGN.

Before leaving Islamabad, the team will prepare a final draft of a revised Activity Action Memorandum (AAM). The revised AAM will incorporate the findings and recommendations of the assessment of the present project. It will need to provide flexibility to allow appropriate response to evolving political and economic conditions and changing relationships with the Government of Pakistan, the Alliance, other PVOs and Afghan institutions. The team will address the following in the redesigned AAM:

- Objectives, content, and mechanisms for delivery of activities under the revised AAM.

- A new life of Project funding estimate and project completion date.

- Review of existing waivers and incorporation of any new

ones necessary for execution of the project as amended.

#### E. METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The assignment will be carried out under the guidance of the AID/Rep and his staff in Islamabad and Peshawar. The assignment will be accomplished in four phases, as follows:

##### 1. Team Planning. (2 days)

Hold a Team Planning Meeting in Washington, D.C. prior to departure for Pakistan. The TFM will be organized along Washington project guidelines. The TFM will produce a report format (Table of Contents), a work plan, and a delegation of work assignments among the team members. Plans and assignments for assessment/redesign will be shared with AID/Rep, Islamabad for reaction prior to teams arrival in Islamabad.

##### 2. Evaluation and Assessment. (3 weeks)

The team will spend three weeks in the field carrying out an assessment of the agriculture sector and an evaluation of the Agriculture Sector Support Project (306-0204). The team will review project documents, including the initial AAM and Amendment, bi-monthly reports, work plans and other relevant data. The team will interview project staff, visit project sites where possible, interview staffs of other PVDs involved in aid to agriculture, and, if possible, interview beneficiaries. Upon completion of this phase, the team will submit a draft evaluation report and brief the AID/Rep staff..

##### 3. Project Redesign. (9 days)

The team will develop recommendations for redesign of the project, including possible new or split-off projects, based on findings and conclusions of the evaluation and assessment. Upon completion of this phase, the team will brief the AID/Rep staff on their recommendations.

##### 4. Report and Wrap Up. (9 days))

During the this period the team will prepare a draft Revised AAM (see section D 2 above) and outlines of new projects or projects to be split off from the current project.

Arrangements will be made for debriefings with the AID/Rep and staff, VITA, U.S. Embassy and other interested parties during the final week.

The team will be expected to work a six-day week.

The Office of the AID/Rep/Islamabad will be responsible for

providing all in-country logistical and administrative support, including transportation, office space, and clerical assistance for preparation of the reports.

#### F. TEAM MEMBERS.

1. Team Leader/Agricultural Economist. A senior officer with experience in design and implementation of agricultural projects in developing countries. Familiarity with A.I.D. programming requirements is required. Prior experience in Afghanistan or South Asia is strongly desirable.

2. Financial Analyst. A person with experience in project financial analysis who is familiar with A.I.D. Regulations. Experience with agricultural projects in developing countries preferred but not essential.

3. Agronomist/Agricultural Engineer. Broad training and experience in agricultural development required. Experience with farm power and machinery appropriate for small farms and with irrigation systems and cultivation practices for dry-land and irrigation farming required. Experience in Afghanistan or South Asia is desirable.

4. Civil Engineer. Training and experience required in design and construction of basic rural works in developing countries, including farm-to-market roads and mountain trails, bridges and minor irrigation works. Experience in Afghanistan and/or South Asia desirable.

#### G. REPORTS..

The output of this assignment will be: (1) a report on the assessment/evaluation (section D 1) and (2) a redesigned AAM (section D 2).

The evaluation report will conform to A.I.D.'s required format (see Handbook 3, Supplement C - Evaluation Handbook.)

The redesigned AAM will ....

The team leader will have three (3) workdays in the United States for integrating comments and corrections and preparing the final reports. He will submit ten copies of the final report within two weeks of departure from Pakistan to: ?

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