



## PEF – Provincial Emergency Fund

Final Report to USAID - April 15, 2005

*Grant 306-G-00-04-00560-00, Immediate Drought Relief in Afghanistan*

### A. BACKGROUND

#### Government Priority and donors response

The Provincial Emergency Fund (PEF) was launched as an emergency response to the drought which affected wide areas of Afghanistan until the summer 2004. Following an inter ministerial assessment in April/May 2004, 16 of the most severely struck provinces were selected for an emergency intervention to be carried out over a period of 2 to 4 months. In a second step in September 04, an additional 10 provinces were added for a total of **26 provinces** (including a special allocation for Andkhoy) which were to benefit from an emergency allocation of between US\$ 30'000 and 60'000, totalling approx. USD 1 million. CIDA, USAID, UNDP, UNICEF and UNOPS are the co-donors in this project.

Donor	Amount contributed
UNOPS	US\$ 250'000
UNICEF	US\$ 200'000
UNDP	US\$ 175'000
Canadian Government	US\$ 175'000
USAID	US\$ 150'000
<b>Total</b>	<b>US\$ 950'000</b>

#### UNOPS Involvement

Initially, and in addition to a USD 250,000 contribution, the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) was acting as a “disbursement bank.” UNOPS began the collecting of the funds from various donors in Kabul and sending them out to the provincial drought committee via the UNOPS representatives (UNOPS Elections network.) There, the funds were to be handed over to the local MRRD representative who would spend them according to a plan established and agreed upon by a locally designated **drought committee** comprising representatives of ministries concerned and the governor’s office.

In a second stage however, UNOPS was asked to assist with the procurement of goods and services.

## B. FINAL OUTPUTS

### Provincial Expenditures

	Province	initial allocation	final expenditure	implemented activities
1	Badghis	\$45,000	\$42,000	3 tankers purchased
2	Baghlan	\$30,000	\$30,001	2 tankers purchased
3	Balkh	\$45,000	\$43,500	2 new deep wells
4	Bamyan	\$30,000	\$10,000	31 new semi-deep wells
5	Daikundi	\$30,000	\$31,945	29 new semi-deep wells, 11 karezes cleaned
6	Farah	\$30,000	\$30,000	22 new semi-deep wells
7	Faryab	\$60,000	\$60,000	2 tankers purchased, 9 new semi-deep wells
8	Faryab - Ankhoy	\$50,000	\$47,730	3 tankers purchased
9	Ghazni	\$50,000	\$49,286	19 new semi-deep wells
10	Ghor	\$45,000	\$55,000	30 new semi-deep wells. Note: \$15,000 were stolen, and \$40,000 finally spent on project work
11	Helmand	\$30,000	\$29,696	13 new semi-deep wells
12	Herat	\$30,000	\$25,544	2 tankers purchased
13	Jawzjan	\$30,000	\$30,000	1 new deep well (failed), 1 tanker purchased
14	Kabul	\$30,000	\$29,910	10 new semi-deep wells, initial water tankering (rented)
15	Kandahar	\$45,000	\$38,300	4 tankers purchased
16	Khost	\$30,000	\$30,000	5 new deep wells, 2 existing wells deepened
17	Laghman	\$30,000	\$6,972	2 new wells, not completed
18	Logar	\$30,000	\$27,740	21 new semi-deep wells
19	Nangarhar	\$45,000	\$28,479	6 new deep wells, 2 existing wells deepened
20	Nimroz	\$30,000	\$34,120	2 tankers purchased
21	Paktika	\$30,000	\$29,350	26 new semi-deep wells
22	Paktiya	\$30,000	\$25,000	1 tanker purchased, 1 new deep well
23	Parwan	\$30,000	\$31,326	16 new semi-deep wells
24	Samangan	\$30,000	\$30,000	2 tankers purchased
25	Saripul	\$30,000	\$21,856	2 tankers purchased
26	Uruzgan	\$30,000	\$19,682	2 tankers purchased
27	Wardak	\$30,000	\$29,995	19 new semi-deep wells
28	Zabul	\$30,000	\$30,000	13 new semi-deep wells
		<b>\$985,000</b>	<b>\$897,432</b>	

### Activities in the provinces

- The intervention took place in 77 districts and 26 provinces
- An estimated 15,000 + families have benefited from the project (number of beneficiaries have not been systematically recorded)
- A total of 26 tankers have been purchased and handed over to provincial authorities. Running and maintenance costs have been partly covered by the Drought Fund, and will be covered by the provincial budget in the future.
- A total of 223 shallow/semi deep wells have been built in 11 provinces, mostly through local NGOs/construction companies, the maintenance will be ensured by communities
- A total of 19 deep wells have been built in 5 Provinces, in exceptional circumstances when shallow wells could not be envisaged

*Details on USAID contribution to specific areas and items are in the Financial Report*

## C. CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED - RECOMMENDATIONS

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### Emergency response to an on going problem

Out of the 26 provinces selected for this programme, about 60% had been severely affected by drought for the past 4 years, and all of them had received below than usual precipitations in the same period. In the summer 2004, this quasi structural problem became acute and reportedly, people started to move out of their villages. In regions where the effects of the drought were dramatic, the emergency response was relatively easy and straightforward. Tankers were rented or purchased, to supply drinking water in the most vulnerable areas. Elsewhere, the decision process was slower and less targeted. Some choices (such as building wells) were difficult to fit in an emergency framework and timing. In these situations, the implementation took a lot longer than expected. Future rapid interventions related to drought should be extremely focused and rationalised, but mostly, a drought preparedness programme should be mainstreamed in the overall rural development policy, with an emphasis on optimising the use of water resources.

## **Empowerment of the local authorities in a context of a national “emergency” intervention**

This programme, although limited in volume and short in time, was a small milestone in handing over the responsibility of rapid intervention to the provincial authorities and the line departments. The provincial governor, in consultation with the drought committee, was expected to make decisions in terms of a. type of intervention, b. use and allocation of the money (with UNOPS procurement support). The decisions were intended to be taken in a consensual manner by different departments. Many of the provinces do not have a history of smooth cooperation. The results were mixed but overall encouraging. In about 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the provinces, the drought committee was able to act swiftly and cooperatively, often due to the leadership of a pro-active governor (Khost). They were able to give clear directions to UNOPS staff, and processed cash issues swiftly. *(In provinces such as Daikundi, the governor and the MRRD representative were both active and capable, allowing for a speedy plan creation and thus immediate starting of works.)*

In other provinces however, the process was much slower. At the height of the “emergency”, several governors wanted to address the request of a specific constituency but did not follow up with any rational intervention. *(In two of the worst affected provinces, Ghor and Uruzghan, the Governors made a strong push towards aiding drought affected populations. But in terms of actual planning and implementation, their capacity was limited.)* In regions where the committee was loose (*Bamyan and Laghman*), it took weeks to decide what to do. Or the committee lacked leadership, and without leadership, members could not agree. The MRRD representatives took decisions which were later contested, etc... And finally, in about 6 or 7 provinces (*Helmand, Nangahar*), it seemed that the committee was simply in a state of expectation and looking at UNOPS as programme manager and decision maker (which was not the deal). UNOPS staff had to constantly push the drought members or the MRRD PMA to move ahead.

A handful of provinces where activities started just at the onset of the winter did not run a very successful project. Indeed, very quickly early January the weather deteriorated and the local authorities were busy with many other things, and to some extent lost interest in a now seemingly irrelevant drought issue. In some of these provinces, the activities were not always fully completed. End of March, UNOPS decided to close the overall project and withdrew funds which had not been used nor committed (hence a slightly lower expenditure level than allocated)

## **Procurement and Logistics**

The procurement of goods and services was generally facilitated by UNOPS Regional Managers. Because of a delegation of authority to UNOPS regional managers, contracts of wells and tankers could be approved directly at the regional level. Water tankers proved to be difficult to procure quickly. Brand new tankers were significantly more expensive than what the budget could allow and second hand tankers were in very poor states once checked. A wide range of tankers were purchased across the country and there was not time to establish standards. Some tankers had to be imported from Pakistan and Tajikistan. In other instances (*Kandahar, Zabul*), water reservoirs were built in on a local truck or tractor. Second or third hand tankers in poor condition needed re-vamping of engines and water reservoirs. In several regions, UNOPS encouraged the rental of existing tankers as an

interim solution, but again, these were in limited numbers. A positive result however, is that a number of regions now have one to 3 tankers available for future interventions.

Sub projects involving wells were usually conducted swiftly. The work was generally sub contracted to a local construction company, with the selection of sites being monitored by either the MRRD PMA, or the drought committee itself. The quick onset of the winter in certain provinces however (such as Ghor, Bamyan), delayed the full completion of the activities until the spring of 2005. Unfortunately, little time (and probably no budget) was allocated to hygiene/sanitation awareness and well maintenance (a shortfall in such a short intervention time allotment).

Maintenance, running costs in the mid and long term, and overall long term management of the purchased assets have not been clarified in most places. In some provinces, the assets are managed by the provincial governor's office, in others by MRRD. We recommend that MRRD immediately follow up with clear guidelines to the former drought committee or with a commitment to maintain the tankers in a usable state.

### **UNOPS set up, and overall programme coordination**

Since UNOPS was initially tasked to act as a mere cash transfer support to the project and budget entailed no support/operation. However within 3 weeks, the government requested UNOPS to organise the procurement of goods and services. UNOPS had agreed to use its provincial network of election logistic officers to carry on the project at no extra cost. This proved to be a challenge, as the drought response was launched 6 weeks prior to the elections. De facto, our team was extremely busy on the ground 6 weeks before and 6 weeks after the elections and did not have much time to oversee the drought activities where the drought committee was not strong enough.

Lack of active cooperation between the UNOPS election officers and the MRRD PMAs was a major cause of delays, in 4 or 5 provinces. In several provinces where the drought committee did not pick up its role properly, there was an underlying assumption that UNOPS was the project manager and in charge of making everything happen. This created some tensions among some of the election staff already occupied with distributing salary to hundreds of election staff and police in the post election days. In a few areas, UNOPS requested some of the regional engineers working on NEEP projects to back up the election logistic officers, in order to move procurement forward. Collection of provincial reports and financial documents proved to take long and was sometimes difficult. Most of UNOPS election staff left between December and February. Clearly, for several players – incl. UNOPS – the capacity for intervention, monitoring and reporting have been stretched to its limits, considering that all the persons involved (at field level as well as here in Kabul) were already occupied full time on other projects.

This should definitely be taken in consideration for any similar response, ie specific staff should be tasked to take care of a sudden surcharge of work on large scale interventions for a few weeks or couple of months. The project totalled close to USD 1 million, and it would have been justified to have 2 fully allocated staff, at least in the initial 2 months.

## On Monitoring and Project Impact

Finally a point on monitoring the actual project outputs and impact: UNOPS was not tasked to select areas of intervention nor to monitor the implementation, the technical quality and the actual impact on targeted population. That was the responsibility of either the PMA or the drought committee. In a couple of areas, the local UNICEF rep was involved. Consequently, this report focuses on quantifiable outputs, rather than analytical feedback related to project impact on beneficiaries. MRRD sent teams of monitors in several parts of the country, and in addition to their PMA network, this monitoring exercise should provide this additional perspective on the project.

From a programme management perspective here in Kabul, the situation was not optimal. We had very little visibility on actual achievements and use of fund, once the procurement was finalised. All final payments were made only when completion reports were produced, but the UNOPS team did not go and tour all project sites.

## CONCLUSION

A key element in the success of the project at the provincial level has been the level of commitment, understanding and readiness of the drought committee. In a number of regions, the committee was formed quickly, had a clear understanding of the project objectives, and had precise ideas on what should be done where. This does not necessarily mean the needs were met in an impartial way but some needs were addressed quickly, and with a strong presence of the government. This exercise was a good test to identify the provinces where the level of responsiveness to an emergency was strong and those where it was not.

The concept of a provincial emergency response committee, formed of existing senior provincial officials, should be built upon and used for developing a real response network when large scale emergencies strike. MRRD naturally has a key role to play, although the political dynamics between the local MRRD office and the provincial governor's office create conflict and specific responsibilities established. As the PMAs have been shifted to a regional position, one of their tasks could be to organize an emergency response committee built along the same line as the drought committee.

For future national scale response though, considering the amount of funds involved, and the number of provinces targeted, it is necessary to establish a minimum programme management structure in Kabul, which comprises both programme and financial elements. The lines of communication and responsibilities should be very clearly defined, particularly if there is an implementing agency involved in some of the response cycle. Finally, emphasis should be made to ministry staff at provincial level as well as governor on the importance of accountability on funds received.