

Rebuilding Agricultural Markets Program (RAMP) Activities in Balkh Province January 2006

Road Rehabilitation

Market flow of agricultural products in Balkh has been hindered by the lack of quality transportation networks throughout the province. In response to this problem identified by rural communities, USAID has rehabilitated 100 km of congruent farm-to-market roads through the Rebuilding Agricultural Markets Program (RAMP). Since the completion of these projects in July 2005, travel times on particular road segments have significantly decreased - reducing transportation costs by up to 60 percent. Farmers and local traders are appreciating these savings even though fuel prices have substantially increased nationally over the same time period.

Upon the satisfaction of provincial government officials, and to further contribute to USAID's objectives of increasing marketable value of agricultural products, RAMP has begun rehabilitating an additional 48 km of road. This particular road segment connects Sholgar district with an industrial area on the outskirts of Balkh's capital Mazar-e Sharif. Rehabilitation work began in early January 2006.



Portion of 25 km road segment rehabilitated by a RAMP partner in Balkh district of Balkh province.



Balkh Governor Atta Mohammad Noor and provincial representatives attending January 2, 2006 commencement ceremony of road rehabilitation work in Sholgar district.



Ongoing road work near Dewali Maidan village in Balkh district is significantly reducing travel time to local and regional markets. Left: Before rehabilitation. Right: Ongoing rehabilitation.

Improved Irrigation

Through RAMP, USAID is surveying an assortment of irrigation projects feeding from the Balkhab River. RAMP partners are designing and will begin constructing in February 2006 one of three weir projects that will control diversions from the river to seven canal commands – Iman Sahib, Chimtal, Abdullah, Dawlatabad, Charbolak, Faizabad and Aqxha. Collectively, these canals will improve irrigation to more than 300,000 hectares of farmland. Additionally, RAMP's partners are planning to rehabilitate the full length of four of these canals, repairing 15 irrigation structures that were damaged during recent floods.



One of the three project sites on Balkhab River in Balkh district where RAMP will begin constructing the Samar Qandeyan weir. This structure will divert water to four canals collectively improving irrigation to 129,170 hectares of farmland.

Access to Improved Agricultural Inputs, Veterinary Services, and Micro-Finance Lending

In addition to USAID distributing 1,300 metric tons of seed and fertilizer in Balkh during the Fall 2005 planting season, RAMP's partners have established a network of certified agri-input dealers throughout the province. Farmers can now access 64 registered dealers who regularly stock competitively priced improved varieties of seed and fertilizer, and Ministry of Agriculture approved agricultural extension material.

RAMP's partners have established 15 Veterinary Field Units (VFUs) in 10 of Balkh's districts. Para-veterinarians who manage the VFUs provide valuable diagnostic services, administer vaccinations, and perform minor surgeries to increase the productive capacity of livestock and poultry.

RAMP is also providing financial support to 3 microfinance institutions reaching 13 districts throughout Balkh. Many program beneficiaries use the loans to invest in small-scale farms or agri-businesses in the region.



RAMP partners conducting topographic surveys and collecting soil samples at the Imam Shahib Weir project site in Robot Bala Village of Chimtal district.

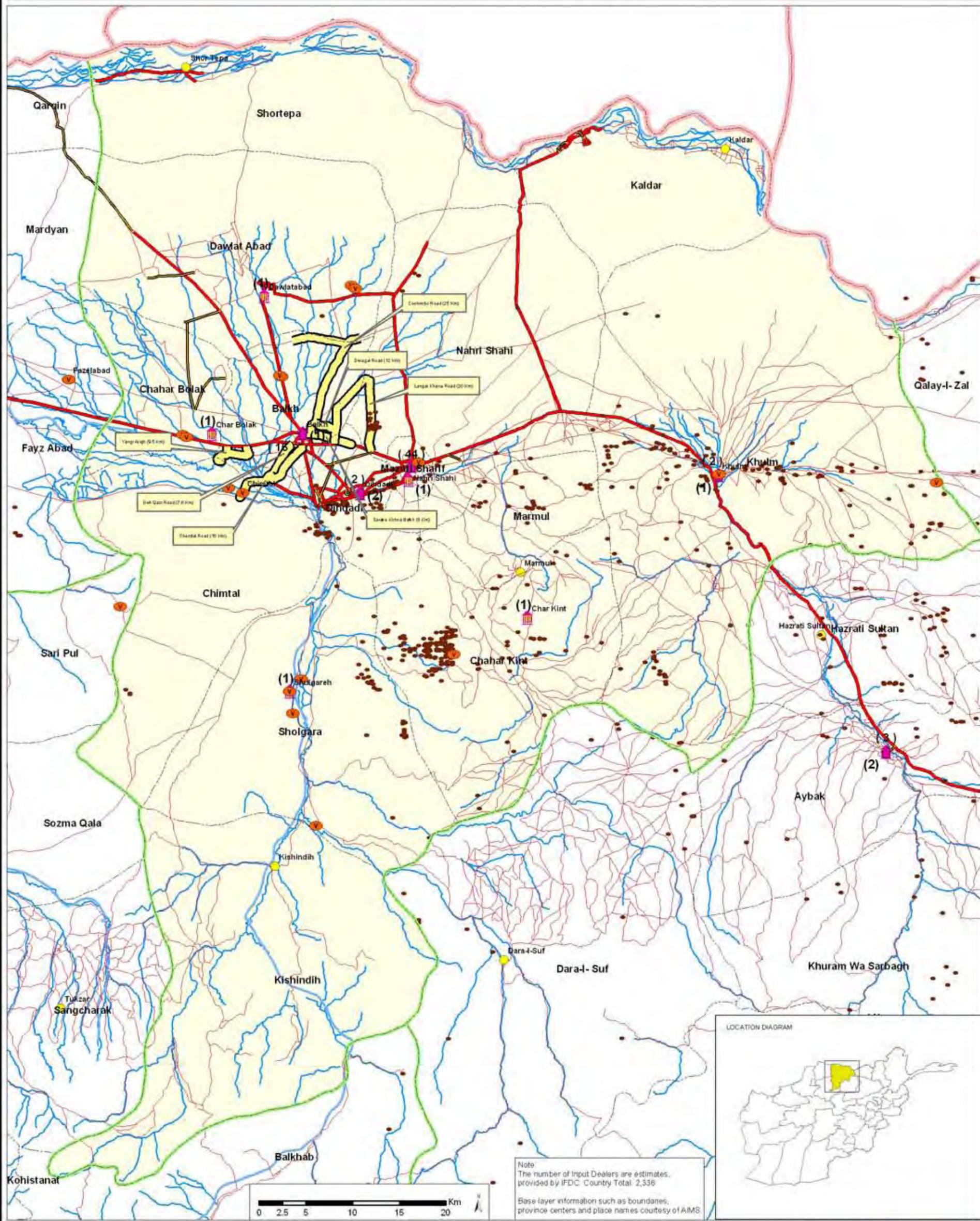
Locust and Sunn Pest Control

Moroccan Locust, Sunn pest, and melon flies pose an ongoing threat to agriculture in northern Afghanistan. The Moroccan Locust is generally regarded as the most serious agricultural pest in Afghanistan, causing significant damage - particularly to wheat crops. During 2004 and 2005, RAMP implemented substantial mechanical and chemical pest control activities throughout Balkh, protecting over 100,000 hectares of farmland. During 2006, RAMP is continuing emergency pest control efforts in Balkh to further contribute to the enhancement of food security in the region.



RAMP's ongoing pest control activities continue to contribute to the reduction of the locust population in Balkh.

AFGHANISTAN RAMP ACTIVITIES IN BALKH PROVINCE



Note
The number of input Dealers are estimates, provided by IFDC. Country Total: 2,336
Base layer information such as boundaries, province centers and place names courtesy of AIMS

 <p>USAID FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">LEGEND</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>CENTERS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Province ● District <p>BOUNDARIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> International Provincial District </td> <td style="width: 33%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>ROADS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary Secondary Tracks <p>HYDROLOGY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Main Streams Takes </td> <td style="width: 33%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>RAMP ACTIVITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Locust Control ■ Microfinance Institutions ● Veterinary Field Unit Road Rehabilitation ■ Agriculture Input Dealers ■ Approximate Number of Dealers in Province ■ Location Unknown ■ Number of Dealers per District ■ Precise Location Unknown </td> </tr> </table>	<p>CENTERS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Province ● District <p>BOUNDARIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> International Provincial District 	<p>ROADS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary Secondary Tracks <p>HYDROLOGY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Main Streams Takes 	<p>RAMP ACTIVITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Locust Control ■ Microfinance Institutions ● Veterinary Field Unit Road Rehabilitation ■ Agriculture Input Dealers ■ Approximate Number of Dealers in Province ■ Location Unknown ■ Number of Dealers per District ■ Precise Location Unknown 	 <p>RAMP Rebuilding Agricultural Markets Program Afghanistan</p> <p style="font-size: small;">RAMP GIS UNIT, JANUARY 2008</p>
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