



# MID-TERM EVALUATION OF THE AFGHANISTAN FARM SERVICE ALLIANCE (AFSA)



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## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AFSA	Afghanistan Farm Service Alliance
ANSOR	Afghanistan National Seed Organization
CANAFA	Central Agricultural Network of Afghanistan Farm Stores/Agro Input
CDC	Community Development Council
CFW	Cash for Work
CNFA	Citizens Network Foreign Assistance
CPP	Crop Production Pest
DAIL	Directorate of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock
DASA	Durukhshan Agricultural Services Association
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FPO	Field Program Officer
FSC	Farm Service Center
FSCAA	Farm Service Center Association of Afghanistan
FTE	Full-Time Equivalent
GDA	Global Development Alliance
GIRoA	Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
IPM	Integrated Pest Management
IRD	International Relief and Development
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MAIL	Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock
NGO	Non-Government Organization
NSDP	National Seed Distribution Program
OAG	Office of Agriculture
PMP	Performance Monitoring Plan
PRT	Provincial Reconstruction Teams
PVO	Private Voluntary Organization
SDLR	Social Development and Legal Rights
ToF	Training of Farmers
ToT	Training of Trainers

USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USG	United States Government
WFSC	Women Farm Service Center

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

An agreement was signed by USAID with Citizens Network for Foreign Affairs (CNFA) to work with Afghan partners to establish private firms to sell agricultural inputs such as fertilizers, pesticides, seed, and other services to Afghan farmers so as to improve their profitability in March 2008. In completion of that task, CNFA established seven Farm Service Centers in the provinces of Ghazni, Helmand, Kabul, Kandahar, Kunar, Laghman, and Zabul. A Farm Service Center (FSC) is larger than most agricultural input stores. Instead of offering only one or two inputs, a FSC offers an array of certified agricultural inputs that are selected to meet the needs of the local farming community. Besides the sales of fertilizers, seeds, and pesticides, FSC also provides a variety of services such as extension training for farmers, capacity building for FSC employees, partnerships with local agricultural organizations, and the rental of scarce farm equipment to farmers.

The overall objective of this mid-term evaluation was to review the progress of the program in achieving its goals and to determine the impact of Afghanistan Farm Service Alliance (AFSA) project on the agriculture sector with special focus on Farm Service Centers' (FSC) ability to encourage the growth in rural household income by providing agriculture inputs and services to farmers. In addition, the mid-term evaluation reviewed the strengths, weakness and capacity of the Farm Service Association of Afghanistan (FSCAA) in terms of extension services, input supply, and other services to the FSC. To accomplish this task, the following groups were interviewed:

1. CNFA leadership team at Afghanistan Farm Service Alliance (AFSA)
2. Seven Farm Service Centers (FSC)
3. Farm Service Center Association of Afghanistan (FSCAA)
4. Local Input Suppliers and Afghanistan National Seed Organization (ANSOR)
5. Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock (MAIL)
6. Directorate Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock (DAIL) in seven relevant provinces
7. Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT) in seven relevant provinces

Our evaluation shows that the individual Farm Service Center stores are being successful and are likely to continue as viable businesses. However, the broader view of the Farm Service Center program that includes these stores providing unique services such as extension training for farmers, capacity building in local employees, partnership with like-minded local organizations, and rental of scarce farm equipment is not likely to be sustainable unless there is a major improvement in the performance of the Farm Service Center Association for Afghanistan (FSCAA). The following are the major conclusions of the evaluation that support this assertion and provide other improvements to the FSC program:

1. The individual Farm Service Centers (FSC) stores are successful.
2. These are areas that Farm Service Centers can show improvement.
3. The Farm Service Center Association of Afghanistan (FSCAA) is unlikely to be sustainable without major changes.
4. There is a lack of transparency in relation of the FSC with their input suppliers leading to bad feelings among some of the stores.

5. AFSA has not interacted to any significant degree with potential partners such as the MAIL, DAIL, ANSOR, and PRT.
6. There needs to be an improvement in the evaluation process by AFSA.

The following are 26 specific recommendations regarding these six conclusion:

*Recommendations regarding the current successes of FSC.*

1. AFSA should continue with the creation of ten new Farm Service Centers and a renewed commitment to support all seventeen.
2. No less than two new Women Farm Service Centers should be created as part of the additional ten.

*Recommendations for improvements to the FSC.*

3. The number of qualified staff with business and agricultural training should be increased at the Farm Service Centers.
4. Extension services to farmers and staff should be increased at FSC level.
5. FSC should coordinate their activities with MAIL, DAIL, and other international and national agencies in their region and take advantage of those resources.
6. FSC should establish and maintain the required infrastructure such as show room, warehouse, training room, and office so as to protect inputs and human health.
7. Each FSC should develop a business plan for their future activities and sustainability.
8. FSC owner should explore new input suppliers that include international companies.

*Recommendations for improvements to FSCAA (and AFSA).*

9. FSCAA must aggressively increase its support to the FSC. A good place to start is helping the FSC implement the suggestions that are listed in these recommendations.
10. A business plan, based on adding value to the operation of the Farm Service Centers, must be developed.
11. FSCAA/AFSA should immediately hire an agricultural specialist to develop more advanced agricultural training curriculum for the farmers and staff at the FSC.
12. Agricultural extension training needs to be significantly increased for farmers and FSC staff.
13. Business training should be significantly increased for store owners and senior staff.
14. The number of publications and posters that teach farmers how to use seeds, fertilizers, and pesticides productively and safely should be developed and provided to the FSC.

*Recommendations to improve transparency and competition among input suppliers.*

15. Transparency must be increased regarding the relation of AFSA with the distributors and their supply of inputs to the FSC.
16. AFSA should encourage the presence of several different input suppliers at a given FSC.
17. AFSA should encourage the FSC to seek out international input suppliers who will provide quality products with accompanying information.

*Recommendations to foster important partnerships.*

18. FSC must establish partnerships with DAIL, PRT, ANSOR, and other international and local aid agencies in their province.
19. AFSA should coordinate its activities with MAIL in Kabul to ensure that the Farm Service Center program is consistent with MAIL's national strategy.

*Recommendations to improve the evaluation process.*

20. AFSA must move from measuring total sales, rural households served, and new full time jobs to a marginal analysis (improvement from baseline).
21. After the initial provision of matching contributions by an agricultural business owner, it should be discontinued as an indicator and net worth substituted for it (improvement from baseline).
22. Only those sales, jobs created, and households served that occur in the FSC's home province should be included in the performance indicators.
23. A new indicator should be developed that measures the percentage relationship of direct farmer sales to total sales at the FSC.
24. When training programs are offered, they should be reported in the Quarterly Reports noting topic, date, location, and numbers of attendees.
25. To ascertain that the data provided to AFSA is accurate, random audits of individual FSC should be conducted.
26. An outcome indicator that should be added would measure whether farmers are implementing new cultural practices and inputs on their farm as a result of extension training received at a FSC.

## INTRODUCTION

On March 3, 2008, an agreement was signed by USAID with Citizens Network for Foreign Affairs (CNFA) to work with Afghan partners to establish private firms to sell agricultural inputs such as fertilizers, pesticides, seed, and other services to Afghan farmers to improve their profitability. By the end of Phase I of this agreement that ended on June 15, 2010, CNFA had established seven Farm Service Centers in the provinces of Ghazni, Helmand, Kabul, Kandahar, Kunar, Laghman, and Zabul. In Phase II of this project, June 16, 2010 through June 14, 2012, CNFA will add ten more Farm Service Centers in Balkh, Takhar, Kunduz, Parwan, Kapisa, Nangarhar, Logar, Wardak, Urozgan, and Nimroz (Figure 1).

In the creation of a Farm Service Center, the primary transformation occurs from changing an existing small store that only provides one or two inputs into a one-stop shop which offers an array of certified agricultural inputs that are selected to meet the needs of the local farming community (personal communication, Khabir Kakar, July 28, 2011). Besides the sales of fertilizers, seeds, and pesticides, FSC also provide a variety of services at a competitive prices such as machinery rental. FSCs are also different from the typical farm store in that they are engaged in extension and training efforts to assist local farmers in solving agricultural production issues and how to apply inputs. The agricultural input stores had to apply for the right to be a FSC. If selected, they received grants to improve the services offered by their stores (Table 1). The following are the responsibilities that are incurred for the owner of the new Farm Service Center:

- The store is responsible for providing technical assistance and training to farmer customers. If an existing store does not have technically trained employees on staff, then they will be required to hire an Extension Officer employee. FSC staff will receive technical training from AFSA as well as other partner organizations to strengthen their skill sets and better enable them to provide extension services to customers.
- FSC owners are responsible for establishing and maintaining the required infrastructure such as showroom, warehouse, and training venue.
- FSCs offer advanced services compared to other stores such as machinery services and demonstration plots and greenhouses.
- FSC store owners are required to keep customer and sales records in log books.
- FSC owners will be required to observe the FSC Store and Quality Standards.
- FSC owners participate as member or board members in the Farm Service Center Association of Afghanistan (FSCAA).
- FSC owners had to show a matching contribution to receive the grants in Table 1.

Table 1. Grants provided to purchase machinery and other inputs at the FSC at the onset of the program.

No.	FSC/Province	Approved Grant Budget	Disbursed	Balance
		Phase-I	Phase-I	Phase-I
1	Kandahar	\$ 95,000.00	\$ 95,000.00	\$ -
2	Helmand	\$ 48,000.00	\$ 48,000.00	\$ -
4	Ghazni	\$ 95,000.00	\$ 95,000.00	\$ -
3	Laghman	\$ 47,305.00	\$ 47,305.00	\$ -
8	Kunar	\$ 46,000.00	\$ 46,000.00	\$ -
5	Zabul	\$ 14,695.00	\$ 14,695.00	\$ -
6	Kabul Women FSC (terminated)	\$ 7,534.00	\$ 7,534.00	\$ -
7	Kabul Women FSC	\$ 26,466.00	\$ 26,466.00	\$ -

The overall goal of this mid-term evaluation is to evaluate the progress achieved so far with the seven Farm Service Services. This information will be used to guide the creation of the next ten FSC.

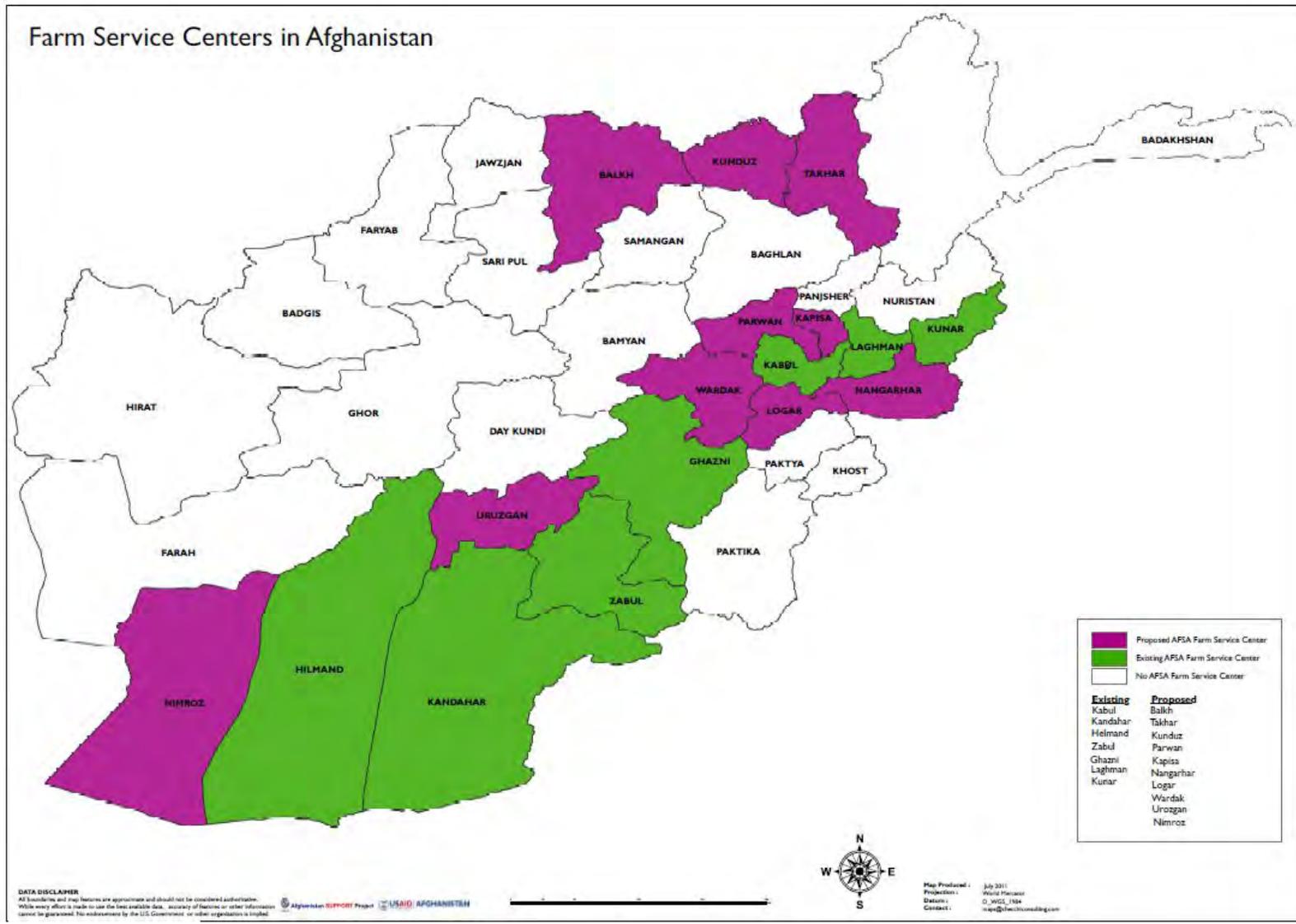


Figure 1. Farm Service Centers in Afghanistan.

# METHODOLOGY

## *Introduction*

The overall objective of this mid-term evaluation was to review the progress of the program in achieving its goals and to determine the impact of Afghanistan Farm Service Alliance (AFSA) project on the agriculture sector with special focus on Farm Service Centers' (FSC) ability to encourage the growth in rural household income by providing agriculture inputs and services to farmers. In addition, the mid-term evaluation reviewed the strengths, weakness and capacity of the Farm Service Association of Afghanistan (FSCAA) in terms of extension services, input supply, and other services to the FSC. Credit line services were not available in this first phase of the project.

To accomplish the objectives, the team focuses the efforts into four critical areas:

1. Sustainability of the Farm Service Center Association of Afghanistan - FSCAA
2. Benefits to the Farm Service Centers - FSC
3. Benefits to the Stakeholders - Farmers
4. Relations with Potential Partners – MAIL/DAIL/PRTs/Input Suppliers/Seed Association

To successfully complete the mid-term evaluation of the seven Farm Service Centers, the following key members and stakeholders of the Afghanistan Farm Service Alliance were identified to be interviewed. While the heaviest emphasis was directed to the Farm Service Centers, a major effort was made to develop a comprehensive list of other people and groups to be contacted. A diversified set of survey instruments were used to learn from these groups of people concerning the Farm Service Center program. The following groups were interviewed:

1. CNFA leadership team at Afghanistan Farm Service Alliance (AFSA)
2. Seven Farm Service Centers (FSC)
3. Farm Service Center Association of Afghanistan (FSCAA)
4. Local Input Suppliers and Afghanistan National Seed Organization (ANSOR)
5. Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock (MAIL)
6. Directorate Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock (DAIL) in seven relevant provinces
7. Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT) in seven relevant provinces

The completed forms for each interview and each survey are found in the ANNEX. The summary and analysis of these data are found in the Results section organized by the seven groups of stakeholders above. The major results are presented in the Conclusions section. The Conclusions section is organized by the themes suggested by those stakeholders interviewed regarding improvements for the Farm Service Centers. Finally, recommendations that follow from these conclusions are presented in the Recommendations section.

## *CNFA Leadership at Afghanistan Farm Service Alliance (AFSA)*

- Jim Hanson, Herman Sanchez, and Samadi met with Ab. Khabir Kakar, Chief of Party on Wednesday, July 13. It was an informal interview with Kakar providing helpful information about the operation of Farm Service Centers, AFSA, and the Farm Service Center Association of Afghanistan (FSCAA) in response to a wide range of questions by the interviewers.
- On Monday, July 18, Jim Hanson and Herman Sanchez had a more formal interview with Kakar, Marghuba Safi (M & E Specialist), and Sameer Ahmad (Grants Assistant). An interview tool was developed regarding indicators that have been collected (Annex, Survey 1).

### ***Farm Service Centers (FSC)***

Two focus groups and one interview were conducted with each of the seven Farm Service Centers.

- The first focus group was the Stakeholder Focus Group (Annex, Survey 2). This group was approximately ten people in size and included one DAIL representative, one local supplier, and eight farmers divided among field crops, vegetables, fruit trees, and livestock farmers.
- The second focus group was the Farm Service Center Staff Focus Group (Annex, Survey 3). This group was limited to no more than ten people and included such people as the owner, manager, sales staff, training staff, marketing staff, agronomic staff, local AFSA representatives, and other staff as invited by the owner.
- The personal interview was with the Store Owner (Annex, Survey 4). An individual store owner was allowed to select up to two more people for assistance in the interview.

Because of concerns about the security of the Farm Service Center personnel and their facilities, a local Afghan company was contracted to conduct these surveys. Six teams, each team consisting of two people, conducted the surveys at a given Farm Service Center (except Kabul). One person, from each team, came to Kabul to be trained by Ghulum Rasul Samadi on Monday, July 18 at 2 pm in the afternoon at the headquarters of the local Afghan company. On Tuesday, all six team members observed Samadi as he conducted the Kabul Women's Farm Service Center surveys. They were instructed to take notes and at the end of the day, all six team members compared their results with Samadi to ensure each had a consistent understanding of the questions and answers. The schedule for the focus groups and interviews was as follows:

- Kabul Women's Farm Service Center. Samadi conducted these surveys on Tuesday, July 19th. Local Afghan interviewers from the other six provinces were there to observe and learn. Jim Hanson and Herman Sanchez also observed.
- Ghazni, Zabul, Helmand, Kandahar Farm Service Centers. Local Afghan interviewers conducted these surveys on Thursday, July 21st. Samadi observed the interviews in Kandahar.
- Laghman and Kunar Farm Service Centers. Local Afghan interviewers conducted these surveys on Thursday, July 21st. Jim Hanson and Herman Sanchez observed the interviewers in Laghman.

### ***Farm Service Center Association of Afghanistan (FSCAA)***

On Sunday, July 24, Jim Hanson, Herman Sanchez, and Samadi interviewed key members of the Board of Directors and its staff.

### ***Local Input Suppliers and Afghanistan National Seed Organization (ANSOR)***

On July 20, Jim Hanson and Herman Sanchez met with Associate Professor Saidajan Atiq Abdiani, President of the Board of Directors of the Afghanistan National Seed Organization (ANSOR) and Dr. A. Fatah Noor, Director of Central Agricultural Network of Afghanistan Farm Stores/Agro Input (CANAFSA) and President of the Noor Group. On July 23, Jim Hanson and Herman Sanchez met with Hazrat Wali, Managing Director and Mohammad Bilal, Marketing Manager of Helal Group of Companies. A copy of the interview tool was found in Annex, Survey 5.

### ***Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock (MAIL)***

On Tuesday, July 19, Jim Hanson, Herman Sanchez, and Samadi visited MAIL. Informal interviews were conducted with Haidari, Director of Plant Protection, Nazira Rahman, Director of Extension Services for Women, Hukum Khan Habibi, Director General, Agriculture Extension, and Assad Zamir, Director, General of Programs. On Monday, July 25, Ghani Ghuriani, Deputy Minister for Technical Affairs was interviewed. These informal interviews were guided by a survey document (Annex, Survey 6).

### ***Directorate Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock (DAIL)***

Between Monday, July 18 through Thursday, 21, Ahmad Tamim Jebran conducted a phone survey with directors at the seven DAILS. The survey document is found in Annex, Survey 7.

### ***Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT)***

Said Pacha Lattoon (USAID) and Mr. Kakar (CNFA) provided a list of USAID contacts for the PRTs. From Sunday, July 17 through Thursday, July 21, email messages were sent to these people. These people were asked to complete survey or to recommend other people familiar with FSC to complete an email survey (Annex, Survey 8).

## **RESULTS**

### **Afghanistan Farm Service Alliance (AFSA) Interview**

This interview was conducted over two meetings with Khabir Kakar, Chief of Party on Wednesday on July 13 and on Monday, July 18, with Kakar, Marghuba Safi (M & E Specialist), and Sameer Ahmad (Grants Assistant). Kakar and Marghuba also responded to numerous email requests and worked on the interview questions independently submitting their answers to the Evaluation Team. The following are our main results:

- AFSA has been very successful in establishing seven public – private partnerships (Farm Service Centers) in the provinces of Kandahar, Helmand, Ghazni, Laghman, Kunar, Zabul, and Kabul. Total sales through June 30, 2011, since the beginning of the project, are \$31,913,867 (Table 4). The Ghazni FSC accounts for over half of these sales with \$16,002,540. More specifically, the major results are:
  - The largest product line sold was fertilizers accounting for \$17,692,776 (55.4% total sales). Ghazni FSC accounted for \$13,713,743 (78% of all fertilizers sales). The product line with the least sales was machinery services (rental) with \$253,028 (0.8% of total sales).
  - Two hundred fifty full time equivalent (FTE) jobs have been created at the FSC.
  - Rural households benefiting from the FSC were 45,765. AFSA record-keeping sheets at the local FSC allow people completing these forms to avoid double-counting (e.g., it is not 22,883 households each making purchases on two different days).
  - The average customers of FSC are mid-size farmers and agro dealers. It is estimated that each FSC averages 1,000 customers per month.
  - By February 28, 2009, “the well-established and experienced farm store owners that were selected to establish AFSA farm stores have already contributed \$12.3 million in land, construction/renovation, and inventory costs, which is far above the total matching contributions target of \$4.4 million.” (Annual Progress Report 1, 4 Mar 2008 – 3 Mar 2009, page 8). By June 15, 2010, current matching contributions had grown to \$23,452,009 and \$34,071,412 by June 30, 2011.
  - AFSA followed a transparent process with clearly stated numerical criteria to select the future participants in the FSC.
- In terms of outcomes for FSC, most of the jobs created, rural households served and number of people trained occurred in the middle period of March 2009 through March 2010 (Table 2). While there may be an upper limit to the number of FTE jobs created and number of rural households who purchase goods from the FSC, there should not be an upper limit to the number of people trained. Even if the FSC is reaching the relevant population, there are new topics that could be offered to people who have already participated in previous educational efforts. Total agricultural sales continue to grow over the three time periods. In addition, the \$ of sales per rural household have also grown (a computed ratio found by dividing total sales by total households served). Given the poverty of most rural households, however, it is likely that this ratio more accurately reflects the very large sales of agricultural inputs to institutions by FSC rather than income growth by the average farm family.

Table 2. Yearly increases in identified outcomes for FSC from March 2008 through March 2011.

Outcomes of FSC	March 2008 to March 2009	March 2009 to March 2010	March 2010 to March 2011
Number of FTE jobs created	34	110	106
Number of new rural households that have benefited	2,563	23,138	20,064

\$ of agricultural inputs and machinery services sold	349,147	8,842,002	16,546,978
\$ of sales per rural household	136	382	825
Number of people who have received training	273	10,379	5,821

- A few of the questions asked in the Statement of Work by USAID for the Evaluation Process, appear simple to answer, but in reality require a sophisticated, lengthy, and expensive study to provide reliable answers. These questions include:
  - How many people/farmers have adopted and are using new practices and technologies introduced as a result of extension services of AFSA?
  - What percentage of those farmers that have been trained to apply inputs correctly, are actually applying inputs correctly?
  - How much did farmer income increase? For how many farmers? For what period vs. what period?

The advantage of these types of questions is that they measure outcomes, not outputs. For example, if a farmer attends an extension class at a FSC, then the indicator that measures his or her attendance is an indicator that measures output. But, if we were able to measure whether that farmer used that new knowledge to adopt new practices, apply inputs correctly, or increase income on their farm, then that would be an indicator that measures outcomes. It is more important for USAID to understand the outcomes of its programs rather than the outputs. That said, it is an expensive process to estimate these outcomes. Calculating outcomes needs to be funded up front or conducted by a follow-up evaluation team that has been specifically assigned to the task.

- In Kabul, AFSA has a reliable system of collecting and tabulating data from the FSC. A copy of one of their data collection forms is included at the end of this section (Table 5). It appears that the data received on these data collection forms from the FSC is accurately tabulated at the Kabul. An unresolved question, however, is whether the data sent to AFSA from the FSC is accurate. Evaluating the integrity of those numbers is beyond the statement of work for this evaluation. We asked, for example, to see the contracts of the 250 people with full-time jobs. Employment contracts do not exist or at least they were not provided to Kabul AFSA. There are not any sales receipts offered to farmers by the FSC regarding their \$31 million in sales. So double-checking those numbers is not possible. In summary, the indicators provided in Quarterly Reports are accurately tabulated. However, it is not possible to determine whether the data that is being tabulated is itself accurate. An audit of randomly selected FSC would resolve many of these issues.
- Measuring impact accurately for the AFSA project is difficult. A major issue to be resolved is estimating the impact of the AFSA project versus the natural growth of agricultural input companies if they had not been selected. The following are measurement indicators that need to be resolved for future evaluations. These issues are:
  - *What data should be included in evaluating FSC?* For example, Ghazni FSC has \$13.7 million of fertilizer sales (Table 4). Only \$1.5 million of these sales took place in Ghazni. The rest of the fertilizer sales took place (approximately \$12.2 million) in Kabul. There is nothing improper about this. In 2008, Haji Ghulam Mohammad was selected as the FSC owner for Ghazni.

Because of security situation in Ghazni, Jerry Turnbull, Chief of Party at that time, allowed him to keep his large fertilizer stock in Kabul (personal communication, Kakar, July 26, 2011). However, much of the Kabul fertilizer is sold to MAIL, FAO, and other NGO in 18 other provinces (personal communication, Marghuba, July 26, 2011). The issue is, should the large Kabul institutional sales be included in the total output of the Ghazni FSC, or should only sales of fertilizer to local farmers in Ghazni be counted? If only local farmers sales in Ghazni were counted, then total sales by all seven FSC would be reduced by one-third from \$31 million to \$20 million. A related issue involves measuring the relative proportion of farmer sales to total sales over time. While wholesales are very important, this indicator would provide some insight into value provided to local farmers by FSC.

- *Marginal impacts of FSC.* It would appear from the Inventory Cost on February 28, 2009 that Kandahar and Ghazni might have had sizeable businesses before joining FSC (Table 3). It seems that the most relevant impact of the FSC program could be seen by measuring the change in total sales and total job creation from what these four agricultural companies had before FSC to after FSC. Currently, we measure total sales and total job creation. In other words, it seems that the marginal impact of the FSC could be best understood by the increase in sales and job creation since joining FSC, not total sales and job creation.
- *Measuring Matching Contributions.* The original matching contribution by FSC is the only measure that is important. The businesses applying for membership in FSC had to indicate a certain level of matching contributions to be selected for the program and receive a machinery grant. These matching contributions of \$12,341,439 far exceeded what was required (Table 3).
- *Substitute Net Worth for Matching Contributions.* To continue to measure matching contributions does not appear to make financial sense. A better measure would be increase in net worth. Matching contributions, as shown in Table 3, are assets. There is no mention of liabilities. Net worth or owners' equity is defined as assets (everything owned) minus liabilities (everything owed). A marginal increase in net worth by a company since joining the FSC would be a better indicator regarding the success of the FSC program. It may be that FSC owns will not share their financial liabilities with AFSA, so it will not be possible to compute net worth. Even if that were true, the continued measurement of Matching Contributions should still be eliminated.

Table 3. Matching contributions by FSC on February 28, 2009.

## Annex 4



## Matching Contributions Update

Updated: 28 February 2009 - End of Year 1

Store Name/Province	Contribution Ratio Requirement	Owner Contribution			Other Contributions				Total		All Contributions		Comments	
		Land Cost	Construction/ Renovation Cost	Inventory Cost	Total of Owner Contribution		Input Suppliers	Producers & Processor s	Others	Target	Actual	Target		Actual
					Target	Actual								
Kandahar	6:1	\$222,750	\$64,685	\$4,503,564	\$2,000,000	\$4,790,999			\$2,400,000		\$4,400,000	\$4,790,999		
Ghazni	6:1	\$7,200	\$5,700	\$5,451,682		\$5,464,582						\$5,464,582		
Helmand	4:1	\$85,900	\$10,138	\$753,187		\$849,225						\$849,225		
Laghman	4:1	\$7,200	\$4,500	\$84,452		\$96,152						\$96,152		
Kunar	4:1	\$18,840	\$49,579	\$948,641		\$1,017,060						\$1,017,060		
Zabul	4:1	\$64,000	\$1,860	\$57,560		\$123,420						\$123,420		
Kabul -Women	4:1	\$5,040	\$1,085	\$0		\$0						\$0		
<b>Total Contribution</b>		<b>\$341,890<sup>(1)</sup></b>	<b>\$137,547</b>	<b>\$11,799,086</b>	<b>\$2,000,000</b>	<b>\$12,341,439</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0<sup>(2)</sup></b>	<b>\$4,400,000</b>	<b>\$12,341,439</b>		

<sup>(1)</sup> Excludes demonstration land & warehousing facilities, which values are not yet established.

<sup>(2)</sup> Other contributions will increase as the Alliance is expanded beyond the PSCs beginning in the next quarter.

**Table 4. Farm Service Centers: Total Sales Breakdown Summary Sheet - June 30, 2011**

FSC's	Pesticides Sold	%	Fertilizer Sold	%	Vet.Sups Sold	%	Seed Sold	%	
Kandahar FSC	\$733,312	11.4	\$2,715,470	42.2	\$683,214	10.6	\$1,394,508	21.7	
Helmand FSC	\$480,254	35.7	\$168,180	12.5	\$478,238	35.6	\$68,395	5.1	
Ghazni FSC	\$18,299	0.1	\$13,713,743	85.7	\$22,427	0.1	\$96,421	0.6	
Laghman FSC	\$155,987	4.5	\$113,470	3.3	\$35,278	1.0	\$2,610,405	75.3	
Kunar FSC	\$6,547	0.2	\$654,307	21.7	\$4,157	0.1	\$15,428	0.5	
Zabul FSC	\$80,101	12.9	\$299,638	48.3	\$85,774	13.8	\$59,842	9.6	
Kabul FSC old	\$0	0.0	\$2,000	32.4	\$0	0.0	\$1,500	24.3	
Kabul FSC New	\$0	0.0	\$25,967	2.5	\$0	0.0	\$782,324	76.6	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,474,500</b>	<b>4.6%</b>	<b>\$17,692,776</b>	<b>55.4%</b>	<b>\$1,309,088</b>	<b>4.1%</b>	<b>\$5,028,823</b>	<b>15.8%</b>	
FSC's	Machinery Services	%	Animal Feed	%	Others	%	Tools Sold	%	Total
Kandahar FSC	\$62,513	1.0	\$21,265	0.3	\$642,648	10.0	\$180,753	2.8	\$6,433,683
Helmand FSC	\$19,696	1.5	\$1,630	0.1	\$112,115	8.3	\$16,060	1.2	\$1,344,568
Ghazni FSC	\$43,659	0.3	\$0	0.0	\$2,106,132	13.2	\$1,859	0.0	\$16,002,540
Laghman FSC	\$29,040	0.8	\$84,816	2.4	\$356,968	10.3	\$81,074	2.3	\$3,467,038
Kunar FSC	\$75,864	2.5	\$3,381	0.1	\$2,255,281	74.7	\$3,163	0.1	\$3,018,129
Zabul FSC	\$12,457	2.0	\$0	0.0	\$25,739	4.1	\$57,147	9.2	\$620,698
Kabul FSC old	\$0	0.0	\$0	0.0	\$1,170	19.0	\$1,500	24.3	\$6,170
Kabul FSC New	\$9,799	1.0	\$80,660	7.9	\$74,056	7.3	\$48,236	4.7	\$1,021,041
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$253,028</b>	<b>0.8%</b>	<b>\$191,752</b>	<b>0.6%</b>	<b>\$5,574,109</b>	<b>17.5%</b>	<b>\$389,792</b>	<b>1.2%</b>	<b>\$31,913,867</b>

Table 5. Record Sheet provided to Farm Service Centers.

Farm Service Center										کتاب راجستر مرکز خدمات زراعتی												
Month..... Year.....										ماه..... سال.....												
شماره	اسم مشتری	جنسیت		حالتان		دایر		ادرس		مجموعه فروخته مواد زراعتی							فروخته		تعداد حاضرین که آموزش		مجموعه فروخته	
		ذکور	اناث	سابقه	جدید	سابقه	جدید	ولسوالی	قریه	کود	تخم های بذر	ادویه	ادویه	سامان آلات	خدمات	مواد	متنوع	نقد	قرضه	ذکور		اناث
No	Customer Name	Male	Female	Old	New	Old	New	District	Village	Amount of	Amount of seed sold	Amount of	Amount of CPP sold	Amount of Tools	Amount of Machine	Amount of	Others	Cash	Credit	Male	Female	Total Amount of
1																						
2																						
3																						
4																						
5																						
6																						
7																						
8																						
9																						
10																						
Total																						

## **Farm Service Centers (FSC)**

Stakeholder focus groups, FSC staff focus groups, and Owner interviews were conducted in all seven FSC. The results are presented as follows. First selected numerical responses are provided for each of the three interviews (Tables 6, 7, and 8). The answers show the percentage of the group across all seven locations that answer 'yes' to the question. It does not automatically mean that the remaining answered 'no', sometimes the Focus Group did not provide an answer to a specific question. Then strengths and weaknesses of the FSC are provided. These, while incorporating the numerical results, were primarily taken from the comments that were received.

The farmers, DAIL, and local suppliers who attended the Stakeholder Focus Group all thought that the agricultural inputs were reasonably priced and competitive with other vendors (Table 6). Approximately, three-quarters of the stakeholders thought that poorer farmers could afford these inputs. The most valuable extension services that a FSC could provide were knowledgeable sales people who could answer the questions farmers had when they visited the store to purchase inputs. Demonstration plots are typically effective means of communicating with farmers. The use of demonstration plots did not seem as popular with the FSC stakeholders. AFSA should explore how to improve the use of the demonstration plots. Most farmers had received some help in their livestock production, but less than one-half had received marketing instruction. A majority of the stakeholders thought that the new improved seeds and fertilizer worked better than the old and, because of these inputs and other services offered by the FSC, crop productivity had increased in their region.

The vast majority of the FSC Staff have received training in the safe use of pesticides (Table 7). This is an important topic because it affects the health of farm families. However, the provision of training in the other topics more related to agricultural production was much reduced. Most of the training related to the operation of the FSC occurred when it was being established. Most staff had received training in management and setting up the facilities. Less than one-half received training in completing the Monitoring and Evaluation form; grading, packing and marketing (local and international standards); delivering extension programs to farmers; and good agricultural practices in the use of pesticides, seeds, and fertilizers. Most of the training provided to farmers was in the classroom. Farmers received help in transportation and lunch so that they could attend these meetings.

The owners and their top staff think that their business are growing (Table 8). Their top problems are credit, cyclical nature of agricultural sales, and need for better management training in running their business. All had experienced cash flow problems in the past year; 29% had experienced it multiple times. The most common type of agricultural employee was an agronomist. All FSC had a demonstration plot, the average size was 4 jeribs. Most provide labels and training manuals when they sell their inputs. Most of the FSC have their seeds, pesticides, office and training classroom in the same room.

Table 6. Selected numerical results for Stakeholder (Farmers, DAIL, and Local Suppliers) Focus Group regarding service from seven Farm Service Centers (FSC).

1. Does your community have access to quality agricultural inputs & services on time at reasonable prices at your FSC? Yes 100%; No \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. Are the inputs FSC prices competitive (low) in relation to Ag Depot and the local market? Yes 100%; No \_\_\_\_\_;
  - b. Are inputs and services affordable to poorer farmers? Yes 71%; No \_\_\_\_\_;
3. Which of the following extension services provided by the FSC is most valuable for farmers?
  - a. What type(s) of extension services
    1. Answers at the store 100%
    2. Visits to your field 57%
    3. Workshop/formal training 57%
    4. Use of demonstration plots 29%
    5. Agricultural fair 29%
5. Have you received assistance from the FSC in your livestock production? Yes 71% No \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. If the first answer was no, would you like to receive this service: Yes 100% No \_\_\_\_\_
6. Have you received assistance from the FSC to market your agricultural production? Yes 43% No \_\_\_\_\_
7. Did the improved seed and fertilizer perform better than the old? Yes 86% No \_\_\_\_\_
8. Has the FSC increased crop productivity in your region? Yes 71% No \_\_\_\_\_

Table 7. Selected numerical results for seven FSC Staff Focus Groups regarding services from CNFA.

1. Besides training and advice (question 2), what type of assistance have you team received from CNFA over the last two years?
  - a. Land preparation 57%
  - b. Crop Production 57%
  - c. Green house construction 14%
  - d. Safe use of pesticides 86%
  - e. IPM 43%
  - f. Fertilization 43%
  - g. Mechanization 57%
  
2. Did you and your team receive training and advice from CNFA in the following topics.
  - a. Completing the M & E form? Yes 43%; No \_\_\_\_
  - b. Establishing the management procedures of the FSC?  
Yes 71%; No \_\_\_\_
  - c. Setting up the facilities. Yes 71%; No \_\_\_\_
  - d. Grading, packaging, and marketing inputs for sale to local farmers.  
Yes 57%; No \_\_\_\_
  - e. Grading, packaging, and marketing farmer output, according to international standards, for sale to national and international buyers.  
Yes 43%; No \_\_\_\_
  - f. Develop educational and extension programs for farmers.  
Yes 57%; No \_\_\_\_
  - g. Learning about Good Agricultural Practices in the use of pesticides, seeds, and fertilizer  
Yes 43%; No \_\_\_\_
  
3. How are the extension services of the FSC is being provided?
  - a. Formal classroom training? Yes 71%; No \_\_\_\_
  - b. Who provides the services? 1) FSC Personnel? Yes 29%; No \_\_\_\_\_; 2) external consultants? Yes 29%; No \_\_\_\_; 3) Association? Yes 43%; No \_\_\_\_;
  - c. How are they paid for the training? Free
  - d. Do you pay farmers to attend the training? Yes 43%; No \_\_\_\_\_? Transportation? Yes 71%; No \_\_\_\_; Lunch Yes 71%; No \_\_\_\_:

Table 8. Selected numerical results for interviews with seven store owner(s) and top assistant

1. Is your business growing in terms of number of customers and returning customers?  
Yes 100%; No \_\_\_\_\_
2. What are the main challenges in managing your FSC?
  - A. Lack of essential agricultural inputs 57%
  - B. No timely and quality technical services 71%
  - C. No access to cash markets and credit 86%
  - D. Stability of market sales 86%
  - E. Need for management training 86%
  - F. Low business skills 43%
3. How often in the past year have you had cash flow issues?  
Once? 57%; Twice? 14%; Three times? \_\_\_\_\_; Several times? 29%;
4. Are your customers satisfied with the quality and availability of inputs and the technical support provided by your FSC? Yes 100%; No \_\_\_\_\_;
6. How many extension staff, by sector (agronomists, livestock, and machinery) are employed by your FSC? One each for answers below
  - a. Agronomist/Pest management: 29%
  - b. Agronomist/Crop production: 57%
  - c. Agronomist: Fertility/Fertilizers: 43%
  - d. Ag Machinery management: 43%
  - e. Livestock: 14%
15. Do you have land dedicated to demonstrating the value of your seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, and livestock products? Yes 100%; No \_\_\_\_\_; How many jeribs? 4.0 average
16. When you sell pesticides, do you provide 'labels' that provide rates of application, approved crop usage, and time of year for application? Yes 71%; No \_\_\_\_\_;
17. When you sell seeds and fertilizers, do you provide pamphlets and training manuals to the farmers that describe rates of application and time of year for application? Yes 71%; No \_\_\_\_\_;
18. Are your seeds, pesticides, office, and training classroom located in different rooms? Yes 14%; No \_\_\_\_\_;

### *Strengths of the Farm Service Centers:*

Based on the overall objective of the AFSA program, seven Farm Service Centers were established in different provinces of Afghanistan.

- Seven Farm Service Centers, which were supported by AFSA, are active and functioning.
- All FSCs received some machinery grants through the AFSA program that had good effect on the growth of the businesses and services provided to farmers in their regions.
- FSCs delivered quality agricultural inputs, agricultural machineries at the right time to the farmers. Most farmers and communities had access to these agricultural inputs and services at reasonable prices.
- Farmers indicated that the improved seeds performed better than the old ones. The main factors which had significant effect on crop productivity were improved seeds, fertilizers and safe application of pesticides.
- Farmers valued the agricultural machineries, such as tractors and sprayers, that were provided to them on a rental basis at reasonable prices.
- FSCs mostly procured agricultural inputs from local suppliers and some of them directly from international suppliers.
- Based on survey results, five of the seven FSC (71%) thought that poorer farmers had economic ability to purchase agricultural input, but two FSC (29%) did not think that poorer farmers could purchase agricultural inputs even with subsidized prices.
- Generally FSCs provided free extension services such as advices at the store, training, demonstration plots, field visits and Ag Fair to farmers. The farmers were happy with these extension services.
- Most of the farmers preferred the training on safe use of pesticides, crop production, machinery and good agricultural practices (GAP). All FSC staff received some training on topics, such as safe use of pesticides, GAP and store management, that they considered useful.
- Except for Kabul Women FSC and Zabul, the other five FSCs have the membership the Farm Service Center Association of Afghanistan (FSCAA).
- FSCs, through the help of FSCAA and AFSA, link farmers to local markets for selling their products

### *Weaknesses of the Farm Service Centers*

- Survey showed that persons hired by CNFA/AFSA for better management of FSCs, only two of the staff are agriculturist with B.Sc. degree (Laghman and Kunar FSCs). The other five staff have some experiences in business have a 12<sup>th</sup> class grade degree. There is a lack of agriculturally qualified professional staff at FSCs to smoothly run the FSC business and interact with their farmer customers.
- CNFA/AFSA delivered some extension services, which were useful, but not good enough or sufficient enough to improve the capacity of the FSC staff. As a result, while the FSCs provided some extension services to farmers, much of the training was very basic. More specifically, farmers are not trained in the more advanced topics regarding the usage and application of agricultural inputs, planting rates and dates of improved seeds, grading of agricultural products, and processing and storage of different crops.
- There is a lack of livestock input, refrigerators, and extension services.
- There is a lack of extension leaflets, posters, and manuals in local languages for farmers related to the effective use and safety of agricultural inputs.

- There is a limited interaction and coordination by the FSCs with MAIL/ DAIL and other local/international aid agencies in the region.
- In terms of the safety of the stores, its inputs, employees, and customers,
  - there is a lack of Material Safety Data Sheet for chemicals to be distributed to farmers,
  - lack of instructions regarding the use of pesticides including topics such as the timing of application, rate of application, and approved crops,
  - lack of warehouse space to separate seeds from pesticides (herbicides, in particular), and food products/machinery from pesticides,
  - and lack of office space to separate employees from pesticides.
- Some of the FSCs had very small land for demonstration and research purposes that is not sufficient for farmers to evaluate the agricultural inputs and new machineries. It would be better for FSCs work together with MAIL research centers, not just at the farm store.
- Survey showed that the main challenges for FSCs are lack of essential agricultural inputs, no access to cash market and credit, low management business skills, and volatility in the agricultural markets that affect their sales. All FSC face cash flow issues, some more than once per year.

### *Conclusions for the Farm Service Centers*

There have been many successes by the Farm Service Centers. The seven Farm Service Centers, which were supported by AFSA, are active and functioning. Their businesses are growing. The FSC deliver quality agricultural inputs at the right time to the farmers and the farmers were satisfied with the assistance provided. The inputs have a good impact on their crop productivity and farmer incomes. The agricultural equipment, which was provided to farmers on rental basis at reasonable prices, was useful. The extension services and demonstration plots provided for farmers, while limited, were also useful.

However, there are serious problems with the Farm Service Centers. Farmers are not adequately trained regarding the usage and application of agricultural inputs, use of machinery, improved seed, pesticides application, grading, processing and storage of different crops. There are a lack of agriculturally qualified and business trained professional staff at FSCs to smoothly run the FSC business. There is a limited interaction and coordination with MAIL/DAIL, PRT, and local and international aid agencies in the region. Seeds, farmers and staff members are at risk with the lack of safe storage places for the agricultural chemicals. Everything is kept in one room. There is also a lack of extension leaflets, posters, and manuals in local languages for farmers showing them how to apply inputs, in particular, how to safely and productively apply pesticides. Some of the demonstration plots at the FSCs were too small to provide adequate instruction for farmers. In some cases, it would be better for FSC to establish demonstration plots and research trials at the MAIL research centers, not just at the farm store. FSC need to expand the inputs required by farmers raising livestock. Finally, FSC can expand quality and diversity of their product lines by better connecting to international markets.

### **Farm Service Center Association of Afghanistan (FSCAA)**

The interview of the Board of Directors of the Farm Service Association for Afghanistan (FSCAA) began with a formal introduction of those members present. They included three Board Members from Helmand, Kunar, and Kandahar. Three employees of FSCAA were also present and they included the Managing Director, the FSCAA Development Specialist, and the FSCAA operation officer. The meeting was also attended by Mr. Khabir Kakar, the COP of the Project. The Evaluation Team members present were Jim Hanson, Herman Sanchez, and Samadi. The Association was formed in December 2009 with seven members and FSC owners; today they have only six members because one sold his business. The current Chairman of the board was appointed four month ago. The development of the Association is being supported by the FSC project. In the first phase of the project, seven Farm Service Centers, including one Women FSC, were established. In the second phase, ten more FSC are being established including two Women FSCs. The following are the main results of the interview.

- The main purposes of FSCAA are to defend the FSC owners from legal issues, to work with the FSC to meet their common needs, and to secure competitive prices for the inputs they sell. Keeping the Farm Service Centers sustainable is a major goal of the association.
- The current Board recognized that the Association has not been as productive as it could have been in the past.
- Future plans include the following.
  - Support the distribution of quality agricultural inputs.
  - Provide timely and better technical support to farmers.
  - Help farmers with all phases of the agricultural production.
  - Build and manage cold rooms and packing houses to preserve quality in agricultural products.
  - Incorporate more women in the FSC.
  - Introduce credit lines for farmers.
  - Start a cattle farm.
  - Gain accreditation to produce certified seed from foundation seed.
- Currently, the Membership is voluntary in FSCAA. Anyone can join the association. Membership for FSC owners costs \$100 for an initiation fee and \$10 per month. There is a second category for individual Afghan farmers - 500 AFN as an initiation fee and 100 AFN per month. Currently the association has 15 members registered in the ministry of justice.
- The Association is open to partner and work with other association and business with similar/common goals. The association income comes not only from monthly fees but also from fees charged to contracts. They have a long list of potential contracts with NGOs and international development funded projects that may provide additional income in the future.
- Currently, the cost of operating the FSCAA exceeds the income raised. Between December 2009 and June 2010, AFSA provided 65% of the FSCAA cost of operation. Between January 2011 and now, AFSA has provided 39% of the FSCAA cost of operation (personal communication, Kakar, July 27, 2011). While income generated, relative to cost of operation, is moving in the right direction. FSCAA is still currently 39% short of being self-supporting and the AFSA project ends in March 2012. This will be a major challenge to the sustainability of the FSC, in general, and the FSCAA in specific in they

cannot increase their annual income. Along with generating more funds, FSCAA needs to move from a subordinate relationship with AFSA to a leadership role, especially now in the last year. AFSA can still support FSCAA but there needs to be a change in their relative roles.

- In terms of extension and training, the main accomplishment of AFSA is the pesticide safety training provided to the FSC in all seven locations and to farmers/customers. FSCAA agrees that there has been a lack of diversified, more advanced agricultural training for farmers and FSC staff and will improve that in the future.
- FSCAA recognizes that they need a strategic plan to accomplish their new goals so as to achieve sustainability.

## **Major Agricultural Input Suppliers and ANSOR**

The Farm Service Centers buy and distribute their inputs from Helal, the Noor Group, and the Sahrai Group; in most cases this business relation between the FSC and the input supplier is very close. The FSC relationship with Afghanistan National Seed Organization (ANSOR) is limited. This is a missed opportunity because as the national seed organization, ANSOR possesses knowledge about quality seeds, connections to many top seed producers, and is a good source of information for farmers about the proper agronomic practices for crop production. Among the major input distributors, a common characteristic is their mutual expression of unhappiness and often unfunded criticisms with each other. In general, they think that the other company is getting a better deal from AFSA than they are. These types of opinions cannot be considered as unbiased assessments. All the input distributors like the idea of promoting the private initiatives and everybody wants to see the Farm Service Centers open for business. Some of the FSC sell a majority of inputs that is only provided by one supplier. In general, these are the main perceptions among the input distributors and ANSOR about the FSC:

1. Some of the FSC are working well, most are not.
2. FSC need better trained technical people such as agronomists and livestock specialists.
3. FSC need to develop direct relationships with international seed companies, better prices and better publications.
4. The FSC should interact more with professional organizations such as ANSOR and fertilizer associations.
5. FSC should set up demonstrations and research trials (sponsored by FSC and input companies) on farmers' fields and at MAIL research centers, not just at the store.
6. The FSC could/should reduce dominance of Helal, Noor, and Sahrai groups in the market place by increasing the presence of new companies and by selling inputs supported with better technical assistance.
7. MAIL need to be encouraged to develop functions, similar to US Dept. of Agriculture (USDA), in their ability to monitor the quality and the use of agricultural inputs.
8. Some FSCs are totally dependent on their supplier for their inventory. The inventory is owned by the supplier and the FSC pays it back when the product is sold. This problem of cash flow with an

individual FSC can severely limit their profit potential. An FSC should not be so dependent on only one major distributor of inputs.

9. The elder brother of Hazrat Wali is the owner of Helal Seeds, while Hazrat Wali the Managing Director of Helal Seeds, is also the owner of the Women FSC. Mahbooda is the CEO of the Women FSC. Helal Seed owns all the inventory in the Women FSC. The Center is managed primarily by women employees; the operation is a friendly environment for women to buy inputs and to get advice and training by women.
10. Sahrai Seed also owns Kandahar FSC and sells its products through that FSC.

### *Helal Group*

- For the Helal Group, the FSCs are similar to what Ag Depots are for the Noor Group. Helal has not had success participating in the Ag Depot market due to small profit margins.
- The current FSCs need to receive/develop a working capital to buy by their own inputs without the current dependency from one supplier. Some FSC owners have no more than \$3,000-\$4,000 of operational capital.
- The Helal Group provides the WFSC with seed, fertilizers, and pesticides. The WFSC pays the Helal Group as sales takes place. The same arrangement exist with the Laghman FSC to sell pesticides, and fertilizers.
- Helal imports the seed from eleven suppliers from France, Holland, Italy and has business in India, Iran, and Pakistan.
- Helal is not training the FSC extension personnel.
- The Helal Group participates with AVIPA Plus in Helmand Province with seed and fertilizer.

### *Noor Group*

- Some of the FSC are working well, most are not. No other explanation given. Noor Group is willing to be part of the FSC network.
- The government should not create regulations and projects that compete with the private initiative.
- The Noor Group's perception is that the best FSC success is with the Women FSC.
- FSC need more and better trained technical people such as agronomists and livestock specialists on staff.
- FSC should develop direct relationships with international seed companies. With this relationship, they will get better products, better prices, and better publications.
- FSC should interact more with professional organizations such as ANSOR, fertilizer association, etc.
- Set up demonstrations and research trials (sponsored by FSC and input companies) on the farmers' fields and at MAIL research centers, not just at the store.
- The most important goal of the FSC is to increase acceptability and markets for more reliable quality inputs. The next need of the FSC is to expand the number and type of services offered in order to increase the interest of more customers. The current number of products sold by FSC is limited and farmers often do not find what they need.
- The FSC should reduce dominance of Helal Group in the market place by increasing the presence of new seed companies. The FSC need to provide inputs and services for small farmers and women.

Everybody in Afghanistan should put more emphasis on quality rather than price. Often the competition sells re-labeled, expired, and pesticides with a lower content of the active ingredient.

- The success of the Ag Depots under DASA is mainly due to the support given to the small owners of the stores. The average annual gross sale of a typical Ag Depot is \$25,000. The network among Ag Depots allows them to collaborate in unique business opportunities.
- Everybody should encourage MAIL to develop functions, similar to US Department of Agriculture, where they monitor quality and use of agricultural inputs.

### *Sahrai Group*

- The evaluation team did not have the opportunity to learn about this group. The available references indicate that this group is strong in the south of Afghanistan. They have their headquarters in Kandahar.

### *Afghanistan National Seed Organization (ANSOR)*

- Their level of knowledge about FSC is limited. They have seen some stores doing very well and others not so well. They all need to have more professional personnel supporting their sales. The use of demo plots will help to increase the confidence of the farmers as customers. The idea of making an alliance of FSC with Seed Enterprises is very attractive and is an effective way to distribute quality certified wheat seed. FSC also need to develop access to small short-term lines of credit to allow more farmers to purchase their products.
- FSC is a positive initiative. It will be even better if it makes new and stronger alliances with groups like ANSOR and the Fertilizer Association.
- Suppliers of inputs are needed in Afghanistan. However, they must supply better and more reliable inputs. Their dependency of inputs made in Pakistan is not positive for the FSC and its farmers. Pakistan and Iranian products often come adulterated in the active ingredient and in the expiration date. False re-labeling is often used to hide poor quality.
- FSC need to move out of their dependence on regional suppliers and move into a relationship with worldwide seed producers as the best way to reduce the current high cost paid by farmers. ANSOR believe that the FSC has the finances to make bulk purchases of seed, fertilizers, and pesticides from international distributors.

## **Directors of MAIL**

In order to answer the USAID Mission concern whether the FSC is supporting the general MAIL strategy and the Master Plan, decision makers in MAIL were interviewed by the principal advisors of the evaluation team. Figure 2 summarizes the primary responses of the people interviewed.

Figure 2. Primary responses by leaders within MAIL regarding their familiarity with Farm Service Centers.

- Deputy Technical Minister of MAIL – *No Knowledge of FSC*
- Director General of Program and Private Initiatives – *No Knowledge of FSC*
- Director of Extension – *No Knowledge of FSC*
- Director of Women Extension – *Positive Interaction with FSC*
- Director of Plant Protection – *No Knowledge of FSC*

A relevant line of ideas were developed to guide the interviews. Most of the interviews were conducted by Jim Hanson and Herman Sanchez. As shown in Figure 2, with the one exception of the Director of Women Extension, none of the interviewed Directors and the Deputy Minister had previous experience with Farm Service Centers. It is evident that FSC is not working with MAIL in the development of the agricultural sector. The following are specific comments from the interviews.

*MAIL Deputy Technical Minister*

- The Deputy Minister had never heard about the FSC presence.
- MAIL is disappointed to see a grant-based agriculture project not collaborating with MAIL.
- This is an extreme case of poor communication.
- The interview ended abruptly once the Deputy Minister realized that MAIL has no news about this project.
- No recommendations given.

*Director General of Program and Private Initiatives*

- The Director General, who supports/coordinates/facilitates grant-base projects in MAIL, had never heard about this project. A short description of the project was given.
- This project could be easily supported by MAIL if they are willing to get closer to MAIL and DAILS; MAIL has extension and teaching materials to share.
- The Director General would like to be visited by this Project, FSC, and the WFSC in Kabul.
- MAIL would like to better understand this private initiative. Right now they are looking for a partner to distribute refrigerated veterinarian products (including vaccines); FSC could be a good opportunity.
- MAIL also needs to look closer into this experience to learn how this project has managed seven successful sustainable businesses and how this project is expanding into ten new businesses.

*Director of Extension*

- New in this position. Still in the process to learn about his office and functions. No knowledge about the FSC.
- It would be easy for Extension to coordinate and facilitate extension activities with FSC.
- No recommendations for now other than an invitation to have AFSA make a short presentation in his office.

*Director of Women Extension*

- Participated with H.E. the Minister of MAIL in the inauguration of the WFSC in Kabul.
- The FSC is an excellent concept; much better than most donor sponsor projects that seldom have a real gender need sensitivity. Each province should have one Women FSC. It is very difficult for women to

access directly quality inputs; this is especially true for the divorcees, widows, and abandoned women in Afghanistan who are often heads of household supporting children and elders.

- Women farmers will support a business capable of providing quality inputs and services to women.
- Have used the WFSC to acquire seed and other inputs for MAIL Youth and Home Gardens projects.
- Recognize the quality and variety in the inputs and tools sold by the WFSC.
- It is a need felt in all 34 provinces and in all 398 Districts. The MAIL Women Extension would like to expand the relation to a full partnership with WFSC to expand the technical support to women farmers through the seventeen FSCs and to any other new Women FSC created in Afghanistan.
- Any one helping women to reach profits is gaining a long term loyal customer.
- A possible limitation facing FSC is the giving away of free inputs by NGOs and donors.
- The FSC started without MAIL participation

*Director of Plant Protection (previous Director of Extension)*

- Has never heard about this project.
- Afghanistan is in the process of developing a pesticide law. No real applicable law in place. MAIL Plant Protection is interested to support the FSC effort to improve the safe use of pesticides. Willing to review their training modules on the safe use of pesticide
- It is good that the USAID is looking for suggestions on how to improve this initiative with full participation and interactions of other private sectors.
- The government gives the approval to import and use new pesticides. New pesticides are analyzed for efficiency and safety in Afghanistan and the lab analysis are made in France including crop residue.
- The new MAIL Plant Protection lab building is almost completed. We need to equip the labs.

## **Provincial Directorates of MAIL – DAILS**

The success of the Farm Service Centers depends on the ability of the stores to be part of an extended support network capable to provide technical services otherwise hard to manage and support directly by a store owner. These services could provide an essential support to the FSC to increase sells because the products sold actually can make a significant contribution to the farmers' profits. More profits means more sales and loyal customers returning to buy more from the same FSC. To answer the question “whether the FSC are having a close relation with seven DAILS”, the evaluation team implemented a survey among the DAILS. A major result of this survey is that most DAIL offices have not been involved with the FSC, but they would like to be.

Figure 3 provides an overview of the responses by the DAIL offices. Five of the DAIL offices had not visited the FSC or met with its leaders at an off-site location. As a result, the DAIL was not involved with the operation of the FSC and it had no opinions regarding the affordability of inputs, quality of inputs, or quality of the extension training offered. Two of the DAIL offices had interacted with the FSC. They thought that the inputs and services offered were good and also mostly affordable.

When the FSC interacted with the DAIL, the feedback was positive. Unfortunately, most of the FSC had not interacted with the DAIL. Specific comments from the DAIL survey are provided by province.

**Figure 3. Interaction of DAIL with Farm Service Centers (FSC)**

**Five DAIL**

- No meetings at the FSC or off-site
- DAIL not involved with the FSC
- No opinions regarding quality of inputs, affordability of inputs, and quality of extension training provided to farmers

**Two DAIL**

- Multiple meetings at the FSC or off-site
- DAIL involved with the FSC
- Quality of inputs, affordability of inputs and quality of training provided to farmers are mostly good

*DAIL - Ghazni Province*

Knows about the existence of the FSC in the Province and has had no direct relations with the Farm Service Center in Ghazni; however, the DAIL had the following comments:

- DAIL should be considered as one of key implementing partner by any organization that they want to work in agriculture sector
- FSC service could be one of several profitable sources for Ghazni people as well as a service center for Ghazni farmers. If this enterprise is financially supported through different funding agencies for a while, it can be sustainable agricultural service point for farmers
- FSC in Ghazni province have a weak relation with DAIL.
- FSC authorities in Ghazni province should share the information, sources, and achievements with Ghazni's DAIL to have a better future of agriculture in Ghazni province

*DAIL - Helmand Province*

Knows about the existence of the FSC in the Province, but has had no direct relation with the Farm Service Center in Helmand; however, the DAIL had the following comments:

- One of the key successes of the project is relation and coordination with other relevant organizations.
- DAIL should be considered as vital implementing partner to increase capacity building in Afghanistan agriculture.

*DAIL - Kabul Province*

- Between June 1, 2010 and July 21, 2011, the DAIL and his colleagues have visited three times the WFSC in Kabul.
- DAIL has also interacted with the WFSC/Kabul in two other locations than the store.

- FSC service is very good for local farmers because they need agricultural inputs in low price near to their farms.
- USAID should support this FSC for long term so it will be profitable.
- DAIL/Kabul consider that the inputs sold at the FSC are not accessible to be purchased by many farmers
- DAIL believes that the price of the inputs is too high for the poor farmer.
- The quality of the inputs is considered good.
- The training and advice provided by the FSC is given in a regular basis and it is considered by DAIL as valuable to local farmers. DAIL's personnel have participated in training provided by the FSC.
- The presence, inputs, and activities of the FSC have not contributed to increase the profitability of the Kabul Farmers.
- DAIL/Kabul would like to be able to support their operations and services at the province level

#### *DAIL - Kandahar Province*

In Kandahar Province the DAIL did not have a relationship with the FSC but he did have some comments to share.

- AFSA project should have the close coordination with Kandahar Agricultural offices, especially, with DAIL.
- Close relationships will contribute to the solving of many problems within Kandahar province.

#### *DAIL - Laghman Province*

Even though the Laghman DAIL has not interacted with the FSC, the Provincial Director has some comments to share.

- The AFSA project authorities should inform other agencies about the FSC activities inside Laghman province.
- On the day of this interview, was the first time this Director had received information regarding AFSA project activities.
- Does AFSA have a problem working with the MAIL and DAILs?

#### *DAIL - Kunar Province*

- The DAIL and personnel have visited this three times the FSC and have interacted twice with their personnel away from the store in a minor advisory role.
- DAIL consider that farmers in Kunar have access to the FSC inputs and consider prices to be affordable for the small/poor farmer.
- The inputs sold at the FSC have good quality and farmers are being advised regularly on how to use the product sold.
- DAIL considered that the equipment lease is a valuable service to the province.
- The FSC have increased the profitability of agriculture in Kunar.
- The DAIL believe, these services should be supported for long term to be able to operate without any foreign funding program.
- The management of these FSCs should be strengthened to become fully operate providing technical services to all farmers of Kunar Province.

#### *DAIL - Zabul Province*

There was no relation of the DAIL with the FSC in Zabul, but the Director had some comments.

- The participation of DAIL in the development of the FSC should be promoted through regular coordination meetings and personal relations.

## Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT)

Email surveys were sent to key personnel at all seven PRTs. Said Pacha Lattoon and Khabir Kakar provided us email addresses of their contacts at these PRTs. We received one completed response from Laghman and two completed surveys from Zabul. We had two responses from Kandahar indicating that they were not familiar with the FSC and one response from a neighboring PRT to Kabul City saying that they did not have any experience with the Kabul WFSC. We did not have responses from Helmand, Kunar, and Ghazni. Numerous attempts were made to contact these PRTs.

**Figure 4. Interaction of PRTs with Farm Service Centers (FSC)**

**Six PRTs**

- One or less meetings at the FSC or off-site
- PRT not involved with the FSC
- No opinions regarding quality of inputs, affordability of inputs, and quality of extension training provided to farmers

**One PRT**

- Multiple meetings at the FSC or off-site
- PRT involved with the FSC
- Quality of inputs, affordability of inputs and quality of machinery services are good
- Extension training was not good

Figure 4 provides an overview of the results of the survey with the PRT. Similar to the DAIL survey, six PRT were not involved with the FSC and only one PRT was involved. Somewhat similar to the DAIL survey, the one PRT that was connected to the DAIL had mostly positive opinions about its operation. The quality and affordability of the inputs was good and the machinery services provided to the farmers were positive. However, the extension training was not effective.

The following are specific results of our survey:

- Only one of the seven PRT (Laghman) had any meaningful interaction with the Farm Service Center. As shown in Figure 4, they thought that the FSC provided an important service to the farmers in the province by selling agricultural inputs that increased profitability and that these inputs were affordable by poorer people. They also thought that the services provided through the rental of machinery was good. In contrast, the number of trainings provided to farmers and the quality of these trainings were thought to be inferior.
- PRT responses from Zabul, Kandahar, and Kabul indicated that there was not any interaction with the FSC. In particular, both Zabul responses indicated a great frustration, *“I have to answer ‘no opinion’ because the PRT and that is the 2 USAID FPO’s here have never been informed or contacted by anyone that there was a farm store here since 2009!! We thought it was closed. The DAIL also does not know anything about this farm store!????”*
- In terms of Helmand, Kunar, and Ghazni, it is difficult to say whether the lack of response by the PRT indicated that they did not have any experience with FSC or that the people we were trying to reach were traveling at a different location. However, given the general lack of outreach to MAIL, DAIL, and other PRT by FSC, we would project that it was the former.
- One possible explanation for the lack of connection between FSC and PRT is that the FSC may be concerned about their personal security and that of their investment. They may feel that the overt involvement of a PRT may jeopardize that security.

## CONCLUSIONS

One of our major concerns has been to determine whether the Farm Service Center program is sustainable. The answer to that question lies in how the Farm Service Center program is defined.

- If the Farm Service Center program is defined as a collection of stores selling quality agricultural inputs, providing employment to a relatively large number of people, and servicing very large numbers of rural households, then the program is sustainable. In five years, assuming normal economic times, these stores will still be operating.
- If the Farm Service Center program is defined as a new and different type of farm input store providing a wide array of services including extension training for farmers, knowledgeable staff that can advise farmers in proper agricultural practices, collaborations with important local agricultural partners, and the rental of scarce farm equipment to farmers, then it may not be sustainable. We would hope over the long run that the owners would realize it was in their own best interest to educate their employees, provide extension training to farmers, partner with organizations concerned for agricultural development, and re-invest in machinery that farmers vitally need to rent to be successful. However, in the short run, this attitude and changed behavior is totally dependent on the success of the Farm Service Center Association for Afghanistan (FSCAA) to educate and support its member Farm Service Centers. And, as we note below, major improvements and changes are needed for FSCAA to accomplish these goals.

In summary, Farm Service Center stores are sustainable as businesses. Given the current problems of FSCAA, however, the Farm Service Center program as a concept is likely not sustainable. As an Evaluation Team, we

agree with the second, broader definition of the Farm Service Center program, that is why it is critical that AFSA re-invest its energies into building a strong FSCAA that will continue to provide important services to the individual Farm Service Center stores after the project ends. According to the findings from our focus groups, interviews, and surveys, the following are a list of our major conclusions.

1. The individual Farm Service Centers (FSC) are successful. AFSA has done a good job in creating the Farm Service Centers.
  - a. Since the creation of the seven FSC in late 2008, they have sold over \$31 agricultural million in goods and services. The product line with the highest sales is fertilizers with sales over \$17 million. The product line with the smallest sales is equipment rental with sales over ¼ million dollars.
  - b. Two hundred and fifty full time jobs have been created at the seven Farm Service Centers.
  - c. Over 45,000 households have benefited from the Farm Service Centers by purchasing their agricultural inputs and services at these stores.
  - d. Matching contributions of the FSC to the machinery grants provided Afghanistan Farm Service Center Alliance (AFSA) has grown from approximately 5 to 1 to over 50 to 1.
  - e. The Women Farm Service Center in Kabul is accomplishing many of the desired positive social goals through its work with women.
  - f. The FSC deliver quality agricultural inputs at the right time to the farmers. These impacts has a good impact on crop productivity and farmer incomes.
  - g. The provision of agricultural equipment and extension services, while limited, have proved useful to farmers.
2. These are areas that Farm Service Centers can show improvement.
  - a. The extension services provided to farmers are not sufficient to train farmers regarding the productive usage and application of agricultural inputs, machinery, improved seed, pesticide application, grading, processing and storage of different crops.
  - b. There is a lack of agriculturally and business trained professional staff at FSCs to effectively run the FSC business.
  - c. There has been limited interaction and coordination with MAIL/DAIL, PRT, and local and international aid agencies in the region. These are resources that would benefit the Farm Service Centers.
  - d. There is inappropriate storage of pesticides with other agricultural products, such as seeds and herbicides, in the farm store. The health of farmers and staff may also suffer.
  - e. The land dedicated to agricultural demonstrations and research trials is too small at some stores. There may be opportunities to collaborate with MAIL personnel at their research centers.
  - f. There is a lack of extension leaflets, posters and manuals in local languages for farmers to help them understand how to safely and productively apply such agricultural inputs.
  - g. More inputs and services need to be offered to farmers who raise livestock.

3. The Farm Service Center Association of Afghanistan (FSCAA) is unlikely to be sustainable without major changes. This is a critical problem for the Farm Service Center program because it is FSCAA that provides the support necessary for the unique services offered by FSC stores. FSCAA and AFSA have a close relationship, it is often difficult to see the difference between the two groups. As a result, many of the observations listed below are equally valid for both groups. AFSA has conducted many of the trainings in the early days that FSCAA is supposed to now take over. AFSA also provides financial support for FSCAA. AFSA can still work with FSCAA so that in the remaining days of this project these two groups can add value to the operations of the Farm Service Centers.
  - a. Currently, AFSA is providing 39% of the FSCAA operating budget. Unless there is a significant growth in enthusiasm by the owners of FSC and its stakeholders for FSCAA, it is unlikely that FSCAA will increase its revenue to be self-sustaining by the end of the project in June 2012. In addition, even at this late stage in the project, it appears that AFSA's influence is significant with FSCAA. As stated, FSCAA needs to be more successful, but it needs to be more successful because of its own actions, not AFSA's. AFSA can support but FSCAA needs to lead.
  - b. FSCAA realize that they have had a slow start. As a result, they have come up with good ideas to provide benefits to the FSC. However, a strategic business plan is needed to make sure they accomplish these goals in the limited time left.
  - c. FSCAA (AFSA) have provided agricultural training to the FSC. However, while this training has been valuable, it does not seem to have been sufficient. For example, the safe use of pesticides has been a priority. This is an important topic, however, farmers also need training in agronomic practices and livestock management. Training must be perceived by the FSC as a primary strategy to increase sales and profits, e.g., more knowledgeable customers bring more profits to the store.
  - d. There is a lack of qualified personnel at the FSC. As with training, there were some qualified people, but frustration with the knowledge and skills of FSC personnel was widely repeated to interview teams. Certainly, a large part of this problem can be alleviated by the better training mentioned above, but it appears that the wrong skill sets were chosen for some of the personnel. For example, of the seven regional managers, only two have a formal education in agriculture and, even with that, the level of education is not high.
4. There is a lack of transparency in relation of the FSC with their input suppliers. Sometimes it is not clear whether the store is owned independently or by the input supplier. For example, the Women Farm Service Center in Kabul is owned completely by the Managing Director of Helal Seeds. There may have been a good reason for this arrangement; perhaps, a women with sufficient financial resources could not be found to own the store. In any case, it has attracted some negative attention. More generally, when AFSA provides support to a FSC, such as Kabul, it can appear to competing input suppliers that special consideration is being provided to their competitor. AFSA should work to ensure that multiple suppliers sell at each store to increase competition and reduce any allegations of favoritism. Also, there may be international input suppliers willing to participate with FSC, who can provide quality inputs and services, that are not currently provided by local distributors.

5. AFSA has not interacted to any significant degree with potential partners such as the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock (MAIL), MAIL Directorate offices known as Directorate Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock (DAIL), ANSOR, and Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT). AFSA and these groups would find mutual benefits from working with each other. It is understood that in some provinces the involvement of the PRT could reduce security, but MAIL and DAIL can be included everywhere. Local advisory boards, that include people and groups in the province, should be considered for each Farm Service Center.
6. There needs to be an improvement in the evaluation process by AFSA moving into Phase 2. As mentioned in Conclusion 1, the individual FSC are successful. However, there could be an improvement in the use and evaluation of this data.
  - a. AFSA, at the Kabul level, has a reliable monitoring system that accurately records data submitted from the FSC. What is unknown, however, is whether the data submitted to AFSA is accurate. An audit of randomly selected FSC could be implemented and used by AFSA to verify the accuracy of the data. These random audits would also encourage all FSC to submit accurate records.
  - b. Where possible, AFSA should go from measuring outputs (farmers attending an extension class) to measuring outcomes (farmers utilizing new knowledge learned at the extension class to adopt new practices, apply inputs correctly, and earn more income). Measuring outcomes is an expensive process that requires scientific analysis.
  - c. We suggest a change from measuring total sales and total jobs created by the FSC to measuring the marginal increase in sales and jobs created by the FSC. Some of these FSC were sizeable businesses before they became a FSC. What is important is to measure the increase in sales and jobs from before they became an FSC (at baseline) to now.
  - d. Nearly one-third of all FSC sales come from the sale of fertilizers by the Ghazni FSC in Kabul. These sales are largely institutional and go to large purchases by MAIL, large NGOs, and PRTs. Was this really the purpose of the FSC program when it was initiated? Shouldn't we only be measuring the sales of the Ghazni FSC to local farmers in Ghazni? In addition, it is possible to measure the relative proportion of wholesale versus farmer sales on the current record keeping sheet. Looking at that indicator over time would provide important information about the direct contact by FSC with farmers.
  - e. Matching contributions by a farm service business was required to join the FSC program. This was a good use of the matching contributions indicator. However, matching contributions continue to be measured. This practice does not make any financial sense. Matching contributions, in terms of a balance sheet, are assets. If assets are being measured, then we also need to know liabilities. Assets minus liabilities equal net worth or owners' equity. This is a more complete indicator that should be considered. And similar to the comments made above, we should measure the increase in net worth from before an agricultural business becomes a FSC (baseline) to now.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Recommendations regarding the current successes of FSC.

1. AFSA should continue with the creation of ten new Farm Service Centers and a renewed commitment to support all seventeen.
2. No less than two new Women Farm Service Centers should be created as part of the additional ten.

Recommendations for improvements to the FSC.

3. The number of qualified staff with business and agricultural training should be increased at the Farm Service Centers.
4. Extension services to farmers and staff, such as advice at store, training, on-farm training, demonstration plots and research trials, Ag-fair, leaflets, posters, and manuals should be increased at FSC level.
5. FSC should coordinate their activities with MAIL, DAIL, and other international and national agencies in their region and take advantage of those resources.
6. FSC should establish and maintain the required infrastructure such as show room, warehouse, training room, and office. Also, FSC should manage their pesticides, in particular herbicides and its effect on the viability of seeds, so that inputs and human health are protected.
7. Each FSC should develop a business plan for their future activity and sustainability.
8. FSC owner should explore new input suppliers that includes linking with international companies.

Recommendations for improvements to FSCAA (and AFSA).

9. FSCAA must aggressively increase its support to the FSC. A good place to start is helping the FSC implement the suggestions listed in the recommendations above.
10. A business plan, based on adding value to the operation of the Farm Service Centers must be developed. FSCAA currently has some good ideas, but the Board of Directors should work aggressively to implement them. FSCAA must recognize its primary role as mentor to the FSC owners and managers so as to help them increase profits.
11. FSCAA/AFSA should immediately hire an agricultural specialist to develop more advanced agricultural training curriculum for the farmers and staff at the FSC. Some educational material has already been developed by international organizations working in Afghanistan and can be immediately utilized. It appears that FSCAA/AFSA has sufficient business expertise, but an equally aggressive training program in business management should be developed for FSC staff.
12. Agricultural extension training needs to be significantly increased for farmers and FSC staff.
13. Business training should be significantly increased for store owners and senior staff.
14. The number of publications and posters that teach farmers how to use seeds, fertilizers, and pesticides productively and safely should be developed and provided to the FSC.

Recommendations to improve transparency and competition among input suppliers.

15. Transparency must be increased regarding the relation of AFSA with the distributors and their supply of inputs to the FSC.
16. AFSA should encourage the presence of several different input suppliers at a given FSC so as to increase competition at individual stores.
17. AFSA should encourage the FSC to seek out international input suppliers who will provide quality products with accompanying information, in local language, that will assist farmers in more profitable production.

Recommendations to foster important partnerships.

18. FSC must establish partnerships with DAIL, PRTs, ANSOR, and other international and local aid agencies in their province. One way to accomplish that goal is for each FSC to establish an Advisory Board with important members of their community.
19. AFSA should coordinate its activities with MAIL in Kabul to ensure that the Farm Service Center program is consistent with MAIL's national strategy.

Recommendations to improve the evaluation process.

20. AFSA must move from measuring total sales, rural households served, and new full time jobs to a marginal analysis that shows the improvement since the original agricultural business became an FSC. This baseline information may not be available for the initial seven FSC, but it does exist for the next ten FSC in Phase 2.
21. After the initial provision of matching contributions by an agricultural business owner, used to qualify for FSC membership, it should be discontinued as an indicator. Net worth, which measures assets and liabilities, should be substituted in its place. A marginal analysis, similar to total sales, that measures the improvement of net worth since baseline should be substituted its place. The evaluators recognize that some owners may not be willing to provide a measurement of their liabilities.
22. Only those sales, jobs created, and households served that occur in the FSC's home province should be included in the performance indicators.
23. A new indicator should be developed that measures the percentage relationship of farmer sales to total sales at the FSC. A higher percentage implies that more farmers are being served directly by FSC and, consequently, are more likely to have received extension training and other services at the FSC. This does not mean that the FSC should be discouraged from selling to other wholesalers for their own profit, but it should be recognized that these other agricultural input suppliers are likely not providing the services and benefits to farmers offered by the AFSA program.
24. When training programs are offered, they should be reported on in the Quarterly Reports noting topic, date, location, and numbers of attendees.
25. To ascertain that the data provided to AFSA is accurate, random audits of individual FSC should be conducted.
26. Outcome indicators are more valuable than output indicators, but they are more expensive and difficult to measure. Of the outcome indicators mentioned in the Statement of Work, the one most easy to implement would be whether farmers are implementing new cultural practices and inputs on their farm as a result of extension training received at a FSC. This change in behavior at the farm level is easier to measure compared to whether this change in behavior at the farm level then increased yields or income. USAID and AFSA should discuss adding this outcome indicator. It could be measured once per year at a few randomly selected FSC.

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**ANNEX**

**MID-TERM EVALUATION OF THE**

**AFGHANISTAN FARM SERVICE ALLIANCE**

**(AFSA)**

**August 4, 2011**



# USAID | AFGHANISTAN

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

## STATEMENT OF WORK (SOW)

### Mid-Term Evaluation of the Afghanistan Farm Service Alliance (AFSA) Cooperative Agreement (CA) No. 306-A-00-08-00517.00

#### I. INTRODUCTION

The overall objective of this mid-term evaluation is to review the progress of the program in achieving its goal and to determine the impact of Afghanistan Farm Service Alliance (AFSA) project on the agriculture sector with special focus on Farm Service Centers (FSCs) network that catalyze the growth in rural households income by providing agriculture inputs and services to farmers. The mid-term evaluation will also look into the strengths, weakness and capacity of the Farm Service Center Association for Afghanistan (FSCAA) in terms of extension services, input supply and trade credits made available to farmers.

#### II. BACKGROUND

On March 03, 2008, USAID signed a cooperative agreement with Citizen Network for Foreign Affairs (CNFA), using the Global Development Alliance (GDA) mechanism, to implement the AFSA Project. The overall objective of the AFSA program is to work with Afghan partners to develop Farm Service Centers (FSCs), profit-oriented, privately-owned enterprises, intended to provide the agricultural inputs, services and market linkages, Afghan farmers need to transition to improved agricultural practices. AFSA is helping create a model for a more efficient supply chain that can deliver large quantity of farm inputs and services. FSCs also serve as a node for producers' access to market, farm inputs, technical information, output sales, credits, which are done of the many challenges faced by Afghanistan's rural farmers.

CNFA, as prime contractor has been implementing AFSA to establish 7 FSCs in 7 provinces of Kandahar, Helmand, Ghazni, Kunar, Zabul, and Kabul Women FSC. The AFSA project has been extended for an additional two years until June 14, 2012 to establish ten new FSCs in targeted provinces: Nangarhar, Logar, Wardaq, Parwan, Kapisa, Takhar, Kunduz, Balkh, Urozgan, and Nimroz to benefit an additional 35,000 Afghan farmers. (See Annex I – FSCs development/Activity time line)

AFSA's initial two year cooperative agreement that ended in June 15, 2010, established a network of seven FSCs in seven targeted provinces: Kabul, Ghazni, Helmand, Kandahar, Laghman, Kunar, and Zabul benefiting over 42,000 Afghan farmers through increased access to agricultural inputs, training and output markets and has exceeded the targets such as:

- FSC owners contributed over \$21 million of their own resources to support the AFSA program, compared to total AFSA grants of only \$400,000.
- In addition, these FSCs created 2250 full time equivalent jobs, exceeding the target of 120.

- Benefited over 45,000 rural farming households, exceeding the target of 20,000,
- Trained 16,473 individuals in agricultural productivity, exceeding the target of 8,000.
- Provided pesticide safe use training to over 150 individuals, including farmers, FSC owners and AFSA project staff.
- To date, sales of products through the FSCs have surpassed \$25.7 million, exceeding the target of \$8.6 million.

Although program has exceeded its targets, mid-term evaluation is deemed necessary to evaluate if the targets and indicators are appropriate, sustainability of FSCs, impact of FSCs to farmers in the area and recommendation for way forward.

### III EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The AFSA evaluation will focus on reviewing the program structure, progress of the program in accomplishing its objectives. Specifically, the evaluation will answer the following key questions: AFSA Work Plan is provided in Annex II.

1. Based upon program activities and results, assess the progress in achieving the program's overall objective. How relevant are the agriculture inputs, veterinary and extension services quality and quantity in meeting the farmers' needs of the agriculture sector? Validate the data's reported in Quarterly and Annual reports.
2. To what extent has the program incorporates the MAIL's strategy of programs in its planning and implementation of its activities? How well collaborated are FSC activities within OAG programs or any other donors program?
3. Which of these farms steps forward to sustainability, which one is sustainable, if not what are the limiting factors,
4. Review project management people, equipments, relationship and location.
5. If CNFA/AFSA/AFSAA is to be more effective, what changes should be done in the programmatic and management structure? Strategy?
6. Review structure of Afghanistan Farm Service Association for Afghanistan (AFSAA), its leadership role and responsibilities and organization capacity to take it forward.
7. Review M&E and reporting process of AFSA and provide recommendation. The Evaluators shall also look in the PMP indicators.

The Evaluators shall collect and analyze data on the following indicators on a life-of-project basis through the most recent fiscal year quarter (September 30, 2010) for the CNFA Afghanistan Farm Service Alliance (AFSA) project:  
USAID/OAG Standard Indicators -

- I. Number of public-private partnerships formed as a result of USG assistance<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 7 FSCs already established during the PHASE I (March 3, 2008 – June 15, 2010) in the provinces of Kandahar, Ghazni, Helmand, Laghman, Kunar, Zabul and Kabul. There is 10 additional FSCs to be

2. Number of Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Jobs Created by USG Sponsored Alternative Development or Alternative Livelihood Activities
3. Number of Rural Households Benefiting Directly from U.S Interventions in Agriculture
4. Increased Sales of Licit Farm and Non-Farm Products in USG Assisted Areas Over Previous Year
5. Number of Individuals Who Have Received USG Supported Short-Term Agricultural Sector Productivity Training (male/females)
6. Number of Farmers Benefiting from Financial Agreements

The Evaluation team shall review and validate performance data relative to the following project components:

- Farm Service Center Development
- Alliance Development

The Evaluation team shall travel and conduct site visits to activity locations in the following cities/provinces, as necessary:

- Kandahar
- Helmand
- Ghazni
- Laghman
- Zabul
- Kunar
- Kabul

The following questions (not limiting to) are expected to be addressed by the Evaluation team;

8. How many people/farmers have adopted and are using new practices and technologies introduced as a result of extension services of AFSA?
9. CNFA has supported the sale of improved inputs such as seeds, fertilizer, and chemicals; how many (or what percentage) of farmers have been trained to use the new inputs?
10. What percentage of those trained are applying inputs correctly?
11. Did the improved seed and fertilizer perform better than the old?
12. How much of an increase in crop production has been achieved? For which crops? For what period vs. what prior period?
13. If increases in production were reported, what factors contributed to the increase?
14. How much did farmer income increase? For how many farmers? For what period vs. what period?
15. What products are being sold at the FSCs? Which products are generating the most revenue?
16. What services such as extension and equipment rental services, etc. are being provided by the FSCs?
17. How are the extension services of the FSCs being provided? Who provides the services?

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establish in the PHASE II (June 16, 2010 – June 15, 2012) in the provinces of Parwan, Kapisa, Nangarhar, Wardak, Logar, Balkh, Kunuz, Takhar, Nimruz and Urzgan.

18. How are the services paid for? Fee-for-service?
19. Who patronizes the FSCs stores? Who uses the extension services? What is the profile of the average/typical customer of the FSCs in terms of occupation, income level, etc.? Are the services appropriate and affordable to farmers?
20. How many clients per month do the FSCs service?
21. What is the average monthly and annual turnover of the FSCs?
22. What is the average monthly and annual profit of the FSCs?
23. How much CNFA funds have been given to the FSCs on average?
24. How much of their own funds have the owners/partners contributed?
25. Review FSCs Selection criteria and process.
26. How are the equipment rental equipment and services provided? How are they paid for?
27. How much of the FSCs revenue is generated by the provision of extension and equipment rental services vs. retail products?
28. How many total people do the FSCs employ? How many permanent, full-time staff do the stores have? How much are they paid per month?
29. Monthly sales and revenue of FSCs.
30. Where do FSCs source their products? Are they procured locally or imported?
31. What is the cost of each major product line? Are products and services affordable to poorer farmers?
32. How many repeat customers do the stores have?
33. Credit provided by FSCs, value of \$, number of farmers, and times.
34. How many extension staff such as agronomists does each store employ?
35. Provide a breakdown and verification of the matching contributions of each FSC owner. Are the contributions cash or in-kind?

#### **IV. METHODOLOGY**

The evaluation team should consider utilizing different, yet complementary and inter-related forms of gathering information. These are:

1. Document review throughout the evaluation process – including project reports, project work plans, PMP, donor reports, relevant studies and evaluations;
2. Individual and group interviews - CNFA and AFSAA staff and FSCs staff; project beneficiaries and stakeholders, DAILS and other IPs;
3. Focus group discussions, if they are deemed useful and time permits; especially with FSCAA and FSCs and Farmer Association;
4. Site Visits

A stakeholders' meeting is proposed at the onset of the evaluation to help table issues and concerns regarding project goals, components and objectives, as well as to understand the changing context and recent developments that could potentially impact project goals and objectives. Second stakeholder meeting is suggested when preliminary evaluation findings and recommendations are presented. USAID staff based at Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) should be consulted in those provinces and districts where they have worked with or observed the AFSA project.

The evaluation questions presented above are to guide the Evaluators in assessing the service quality of FSCs provided to farmers, Capacity of the Farm Service Center Association of Afghanistan (FSCAA); trade credit to farmers from FSCs and sales value and volume of FSCs and recommendation in way forward.

**Other concerns of USAID/OAG:** The evaluation team shall evaluate the performance of each partner to the AFSA GDA alliance and determine whether each partner is fulfilling their expected roles. The team shall determine whether each partner is contributing their required leveraging contribution (financial and/or in-kind). The evaluation team shall also address any other concerns of USAID as identified during the course of the evaluation.

**V DELIVERABLES**

1. Inception report and briefing – within the first weeks, the team will prepare a brief inception report for USAID/Kabul that will include a preliminary work plan (to be revised in consultation with USAID, as needed) and expected result. The work plan should indicate the team’s schedule for data collection, analysis, report writing and interim meetings for USAID.
2. **Interim Briefing and Exit Briefing** – the team will provide USAID periodic interim briefings on the team’s findings, as needed. Exit briefing should be done when all field work analysis are completed prior to submission of the draft report and should contain annotated outline of the final report.
3. **Key stakeholders meeting** – The evaluation team shall organize and conduct or present and discuss the findings and recommendations evaluation study with the AOTR and OAG.
4. Draft Report – A draft report will be submitted to USAID within two weeks after the exit briefing.
5. Final Report – The final report should be produced within a week of receiving USAID comments on draft reports (USAID may take one week for comments).
6. **Level of Efforts (LOE):** the proposed LOE for this mid-term evaluation are 25 days. See the following table.

Activities	Days
Arrival of Consultants to the country	2
Pre-field work	2
Field work, including visits to all 7 FSC site	14
Post field work, including reports, briefing and presentation	5
Departure of consultants from the country	2
<b>Total LOE</b>	<b>25</b>

**Executive Summary**

The Executive Summary will state the development objectives is provided below of the program/project evaluated; purpose of the evaluation; study method; findings; conclusions, lessons learned and future design implications.

**Table of Contents:**

**Introduction:** The context of what is evaluated including the relevant history demography socioeconomic and basic political arrangements.

**Body of the Paper**

- The purpose and study questions of the evaluation. Brief description of the program.
- Evidence, findings and analysis of the study questions.
- Conclusions drawn from the analysis of findings stated succinctly.
- Recommendations: recommendations for actions CNFA's AFSA project and USAID program managers should take based on the conclusions.

**Appendices** shall include:

- Evaluation scope of work
- List of relevant USAID targets and results (Operational Plan Program Elements)
- List of documents consulted
- List of individuals and agencies contacted
- Technical topics including study methodology if necessary
- Schedule of activities in an Excel format.
- Evaluation Team composition collection period. The report will focus on the topics and questions under Section Tasks. For each topic, the report will present the major findings, the conclusions of the team concerning what the findings mean or indicate about the topic being addressed and the

**VI TEAM COMPOSITION**

The review team will be composed of two international staff/consultants and one/two local consultants: agriculture specialist, management/institutional specialist and a local consultant. However, this does not preclude considering a proposal for a different mix of specialists.

1. **Agriculture specialist** – shall have at least 10 years in implementing development projects and agriculture teaching experience, preferably with experience in semi-arid regions. Preferred experience in conflict zones.
2. **Management/Institutional Specialist or Socio Economist** – shall have at least 10 years of management and administrative experience in project/program implementation of development projects. Preferred experience in conflict zones.
3. **Local Consultant** – shall have at least 3 years experience implementing development projects. This member of the team should be an Afghan with good communication skills in English, Pashtu and Dari. He / She should have good reading comprehension and writing ability in English, Pashtu and Dari.

**VIII DATA SOURCES**

The mid-term evaluation will rely on primary and secondary data sources, various project documents and interviews with key officials from government counterparts, project staff and other organizations/persons directly or indirectly linked with AFSA activities, including international organizations and interest groups.

### List of contacts made by the Mid-Term Evaluation of the AFSA-2008-2010

No	Date	Province	Name	Position	Organization	Phone#	E-mail
1	07/13/2011	Kabul	S. Pacha Lattoo	Project Management Assistant	USAID/OAG	0093(0) 787 777 302	<a href="mailto:Plattoo@usaid.gov">Plattoo@usaid.gov</a>
2	07/13/2011	Kabul	Mark J. Carrato		USAID/OAG		<a href="mailto:mcarrato@usaid.gov">mcarrato@usaid.gov</a>
3	07/13/2011	Kabul	Ab. Khabir Kakar	Chief of Party	CNFA/AFSA	0093(0) 700 933 977	<a href="mailto:kakar@cnfaafghanistan.org">kakar@cnfaafghanistan.org</a>
4	07/14/2011	Kabul	Mahboba Dawar	Office Manager	Women Farm Service Center	0093(0) 793 204 083	<a href="mailto:mahboba@kabulwomenfarmstore.com">mahboba@kabulwomenfarmstore.com</a>
5	07/14/2011	Kabul	M. Ab. Rahim Yahya	Chief of Party	Pearl Horizon Consulting Co, Ltd.	0093(0) 788 535 648	<a href="mailto:ryahya@pearl-horizon.com">ryahya@pearl-horizon.com</a>
6	07/14/2011	Kabul	Hayatullah Hayat	Executive Director	SDLR	0093(0) 700 669 026	<a href="mailto:hayat@sdlr.af">hayat@sdlr.af</a>
7	07/17/2011	Kabul	Milad Omary	Secretary of Deputy Technical Affair of minister	MAIL		<a href="mailto:milad.omary@mail.gov.af">milad.omary@mail.gov.af</a>
8	07/17/2011	Kabul	Hamayoun Nawabi	Management Support Coordinator	MAIL	0093(0) 799 152 464	<a href="mailto:hamayoun.nawabi@mail.gov.af">hamayoun.nawabi@mail.gov.af</a>
9	07/18/2011	Kabul	M. Amanuddin Haidari	Director	Plant protection and quarentine / MAIL	0093(0) 7	
10	07/18/2011	Kabul	Nazira Rahman	Director	Women Extension Service-MAIL	0093(0) 786 233 658	<a href="mailto:nazira.rahman@mail.gov.af">nazira.rahman@mail.gov.af</a>
11	07/18/2011	Kabul	Hukum Khan Habibi	Director General	Extension Directorate-MAIL	0093(0) 787 263 995	<a href="mailto:hukumkhanhabibi@mail.gov.af">hukumkhanhabibi@mail.gov.af</a>
12	07/18/2011	kabul	Gh. Hazrat Halimi	President	Horticulture Cooperative Development Program-MAIL	0093(0) 795 002 885	<a href="mailto:ghulam.halimi@mail.gov.af">ghulam.halimi@mail.gov.af</a>
13	07/18/2011	Kabul	Assad Zamir	Director General of Program	MAIL	0093(0) 707 112 847	<a href="mailto:assad.zamir@mail.gov.af">assad.zamir@mail.gov.af</a>
14	07/18/2011	Kabul	Sultan Hussain Abasyar	Director	Ghazni-DAIL	0093(0) 799 227 550	
15	07/18/2011	Kabul	Rohullah Yaqini	Liaison Manager	CNFA/AFSA	0093(0) 798 980 837	<a href="mailto:yaqini@cnfaafghanistan.org">yaqini@cnfaafghanistan.org</a>
16	07/19/2011	Kabul	Haji Mahsel	Director	Kunar-DAIL	0093(0) 707 030 071	
17	07/19/2011	Kabul	Abdullah Ahmadzai	Director	Helmand-DAIL	0093(0) 777 534 941	
18	07/19/2011	Kabul	Hesmatullah Enayat	Director	Kabul-DAIL	0093(0) 700429898	
19	07/19/2011	Kabul	Sameer Ahmad	Grants Assistant	CNFA/AFSA	0093(0) 789 209 140	<a href="mailto:sameer@cnfaafghanitan.org">sameer@cnfaafghanitan.org</a>
20	07/19/2011	Kabul	Marghoba Saifi	M&E Specialist	CNFA/AFSA	0093(0) 706 799 820	<a href="mailto:marghuba@cnfaafghanistan.org">marghuba@cnfaafghanistan.org</a>
21	07/20/2011	Kandahar	Ahmad Shah	Director	Kandahar-DAIL	0093(0) 702 008 521	
22	07/20/2011	Kandahar	Amin Zhwakmal	Agriculture Advisor	Kandahar-DAIL	0093(0) 799 376 922	
23	07/20/2011	Kabul	Saidajan Atiq Abdeyani	Chaiman	ANSOR	0093(0) 700 601 824	<a href="mailto:saidajan_abdiani@yahoo.com">saidajan_abdiani@yahoo.com</a>
24	07/20/2011	Kabul	Dr. Ab. Fatah Noor	President	Noor Agro Group	0093(0) 799 364 354	<a href="mailto:afatahnoor@hotmail.com">afatahnoor@hotmail.com</a>
25	07/21/2011	Laghman	Abdul Raqib	Owner	Laghman FSC		
26	07/21/2011	Laghman	Wali Mohammad	Samsoor Ban	Marketing Manager	0093(0) 778 558 881	
27	07/21/2011	Laghman	Abdul Basir	Farmer	Laghman	0093(0) 774 167 707	
28	07/21/2011	Laghman	Mohammad Ali	Farmer	Laghman	0093(0) 700 834 484	
29	07/23/2011	Kabul	Hazrat Wali	Managing Director	Helal Group	0093(0) 786 601 734	<a href="mailto:hazratwali@helalgroup.org.af">hazratwali@helalgroup.org.af</a>
30	07/23/2011	Kabul	M. Bilal	Marketing Manager	Helal Group	0093(0) 799 576 452	<a href="mailto:marketing@helalgroup.org.af">marketing@helalgroup.org.af</a>
31	07/25/2011	Kabul	Ab. Ghani Ghoryani	Deputy Technical Affair of Minister	MAIL		
32	07/26/2011	Kabul	Munir Ahmad Sahrahi	Vice president	Sahrai Co. Ltd.	0093(0) 700 300 165	<a href="mailto:sahraitdco_1@yahoo.com">sahraitdco_1@yahoo.com</a>
33	07/26/2011	Kabul	Eng. M. Ibrahim	Association Chairman	Farm Service Center-Helmand	0093(0) 707 725 818	<a href="mailto:almaiwand@yahoo.com">almaiwand@yahoo.com</a>
34	07/26/2011	Kabul	Mohibullah Mohmand	Managing Director	FSCAA	0093(0) 788 345 878	<a href="mailto:mohmand@cnfaafghanistan.org">mohmand@cnfaafghanistan.org</a>
35	07/26/2011	Kabul	Zahidullah	Operation Officer	FSCAA		
36	07/26/2011	Kabul	Mohammad Haroon	Development Specialist	FSCAA		

**ANNEX**  
**Completed Surveys**

## **AFSA Completed Interview**

### **1. Overview of Farm Service Center Creation**

The main transformation in the creation of a Farm Service Center is changing an existing kiosk shop/store which provide only one or two types of inputs into becoming a one-stop shop which offers an array of certified agricultural inputs that are selected to meet the needs of the local farming community. Besides the sales of inputs, FSC also provide and offer a variety of services at a competitive prices such as machinery rental services with drivers, threshing machines, and processing equipment. FSCs are also different then shops/stores as they are engaged in extension and training efforts to assist local farmers in solving agricultural production issues and how to apply inputs.

### **2. Responsibilities of being a Farm Service Center**

When an existing kiosk store becomes an FSC the responsibilities of the store owner and employees changes in several key ways:

- The store is responsible for providing technical assistance and training to farmer customers. If an existing store does not have technically trained employees on staff, then they will be required to hire an Extension Officer employee. FSC staff receive technical training from AFSA as well as other partner organizations to strengthen their skill sets and better enable them to provide extension to customers.
- FSC owners are responsible for establishing and maintaining required infrastructure such as showroom, warehouse, and training venue.
- FSCs offer advanced services compared to other stores such as machinery services and demonstration plots/greenhouses. These services require expertise.
- FSC store owners are required to keep customer and sales records in log books.
- FSC owners accessing credit via the FSCAA are responsible for loan management, reporting and repayment.
- FSC owners will be required to observe the FSC Store and Quality Standards which are currently being developed.
- FSC owners participate as member or board member in the FSCAA.

### **3. Benefits of being a Farm Service Center**

- Increased customers through affiliation with the FSCAA, which facilitates business deals by assisting with bidding/contracting and linking FSCs to donor programs, PRTs, etc.
- Technical assistance and training from FSCAA, AFSA and other partners (such as ASAP and IDEA-NEW)
- Learn about more and larger business opportunities
- Learn Good Agricultural Practices
- Increased customers due to reputation as source of quality inputs
- Access to credit from ACE/ADF via the FSCAA

- Access to pilot projects via the FSCAA (for instance new M-banking initiative with Roshan)
- Collective bargaining opportunities through the FSCAA
- Grant funding from AFSA

**Major Indicators (provide estimates, explain how calculated, offer improvements)**

1. Number of public-private partnerships formed as a result of USG assistance:

The 2008 Cooperative Agreement between USAID and CNFA provided resources for the AFSA project to establish and develop FSCs in six provinces in the southern and eastern regions of Afghanistan. Modification #2 to the Cooperative Agreement approved November 18, 2008, added a seventh FSC in the Kabul province, the Kabul Women’s Farm Service Center. On June 15, 2010, Modification #7 to the Cooperative Agreement added \$6 million to the budget, so that CNFA is able to create ten additional FSCs in two years.

2. Number of full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs created by USG sponsored alternative

During the Phase I, AFSA has created 250 FTE jobs at the Farm Service Centers and the full-time jobs are defined as 40 hours per week, and at least 260 work days per year. These jobs are new positions related to the FSC development.

March 2008 – March 2009	Mar 2009 – Mar 2010	Mar 2010 – Mar 2011
34	110	106

3. Development or alternative livelihood activities:

Not an AFSA indicator and data is not maintained on it. However, but since the establishment of the FSCs and increasing the agriculture inputs supply centers has developed the livelihood for different people i.e. carpenters, machinery operators, farmers, orchard owners, herders, doctors, labor etc.

4. Number of rural households benefiting directly from U.S interventions in agriculture:

AFSA has benefited 45,765 households and they are the farmers, agro dealers, workers etc in each province.

March 2008 – March 2009	Mar 2009 – Mar 2010	Mar 2010 – Mar 2011
2,563	23,138 (VD Program)	20,064

5. Increased sales of licit farm and non-farm products in USG assisted areas over previous year

AFSA has provided over 25.7 million in sales of agriculture inputs and machinery services to the farming community in the 7 provinces of the country.

March 2008 – March 2009	Mar 2009 – Mar 2010	Mar 2010 – Mar 2011
349,147	8,842,002	16,546,978

6. Number of individuals who have received USG supported short-term agricultural sector productivity training (male/females):

AFSA has training 16,473 individuals on agriculture inputs, machinery, new technology, good agriculture practices etc trainings and a number of these trainees were the lead farmers and extension staff who were trained as ‘Trainers of trainers’.

March 2008 – March 2009	Mar 2009 – Mar 2010	Mar 2010 – Mar 2011
273	10,379	5,821

7. Number of farmers benefiting from financial agreements

This was not one of AFSA indicators during phase I but it is currently our indicators and up to now 1,858 individuals have received agro inputs on credit from these farm service centers.

Minor Indicators (provide estimates)

8. How many people/farmers have adopted and are using new practices and technologies introduced as a result of extension services of AFSA?

Not available

9. CNFA has supported the sale of improved inputs such as seeds, fertilizer, and chemicals; how many (or what percentage) of farmers have been trained to use the new inputs?

Not available

10. What percentage of those trained are applying inputs correctly?

Not available

11. How much did farmer income increase? For how many farmers? For what period vs. what period?

Not maintained and would be a good project for the future. From local sources it is heard that there was increase in income from different vegetable and fruit crops during the last 2 years.

12. What products are being sold at the FSCs? Which products are generating the most revenue?

The top two products are fertilizers with total sales \$17,692,776 (55.4%) and seeds with total sales of \$5,028,823 (15.8%).

13. Who works at the FSCs stores? The FSC owner and his staff.

- a. Who uses the extension services? Extension services are used by the farmers, herders, orchard owners, livestock owners, agro dealers etc.
- b. What is the profile of the average/typical customer of the FSCs in terms of occupation, income level, etc.? Mid-size farmers and agro dealers.
- c. Are the services appropriate and affordable to farmers? Yes

14. How many clients per month do the FSCs service?

Average number could be over 1,000 individuals a month.

15. What is the average monthly and annual turnover of the FSCs?

Totals sales: 25.7 million gives us an average annual turn out per FSC: 1.8 million USD.

16. What is the average monthly and annual profit of the FSCs?

Not available

17. How much CNFA funds have been given to the FSCs on average?

See AFSA grant disbursement summary table below:

No.	FSC/Province	Approved Grant Budget	Disbursed	Balance
		Phase-I	Phase-I	Phase-I
1	Kandahar	\$ 95,000.00	\$ 95,000.00	\$ -
2	Helmand	\$ 48,000.00	\$ 48,000.00	\$ -
4	Ghazni	\$ 95,000.00	\$ 95,000.00	\$ -
3	Laghman	\$ 47,305.00	\$ 47,305.00	\$ -
8	Kunar	\$ 46,000.00	\$ 46,000.00	\$ -
5	Zabul	\$ 14,695.00	\$ 14,695.00	\$ -
6	Kabul Women FSC (terminated)	\$ 7,534.00	\$ 7,534.00	\$ -
7	Kabul Women FSC	\$ 26,466.00	\$ 26,466.00	\$ -

18. How much of their own funds have the owners/partners contributed?

FSC owner required contribution was 4:1 against each \$50 thousand and 6:1 against \$100 thousand grants and the actual were way over the required. Please see the attached spreadsheet for details please see matching contribution spreadsheet below:

FSC Table 2. Matching Contributions, June 15, 2010 and Matching Contributions, June 30, 2011

Matching Contribution Update As of 15 Jun 2010				
FSC Name	Land Cost	Renovation Cost	Inventory Cost	Total Owner Contribution Cost
Kandahar	\$ 222,750	\$ 64,685	\$ 7,984,729	\$ 8,272,164
Helmand	\$ 85,900	\$ 10,138	\$ 1,222,633	\$ 1,318,671
Ghazni	\$ 7,200	\$ 5,700	\$ 11,140,784	\$ 11,153,684
Laghman	\$ 7,200	\$ 4,500	\$ 533,512	\$ 545,212
Kunar	\$ 18,840	\$ 49,579	\$ 1,088,364	\$ 1,156,783
Zabul	\$ 64,000	\$ 1,860	\$ 293,340	\$ 359,200
Kabul(terminated)	\$ 5,040	\$ 1,085	\$ 166,159	\$ 172,284
Kabul (New)	\$ 6,000	\$ 11,358	\$ 452,143	\$ 469,501
FSCAA			4600	4600
Grand Total Contribution Cost	\$ 416,930	\$ 148,905	\$ 22,886,263	\$ 23,452,099

Matching Contribution Update As Of 30 - June 2011								
FSC Name	Land Cost		Renovation Cost		Inventory Cost		Total Owner Contribution Cost (Phase I)	Co
	Phase I	Phase II	Phase I	Phase II	Phase I	Phase II		
Kandahar	\$ 222,750	\$ -	\$ 64,685	\$ -	\$ 7,984,729	\$ 1,136,573	\$ 8,272,164	\$
Helmand	\$ 85,900		\$ 10,130		\$ 1,222,633	\$ 422,481	\$ 1,318,671	\$
Ghazni	\$ 7,200	\$ -	\$ 5,700	\$ -	\$ 11,140,784	\$ 5,299,740	\$ 11,153,684	\$
Laghman	\$ 7,200	\$ 32,609	\$ 4,500	\$ 8,457	\$ 533,512	\$ 60,328	\$ 545,212	\$
Kunar	\$ 18,840	\$ -	\$ 49,579	\$ -	\$ 1,088,364	\$ 2,173,902	\$ 1,156,783	\$
Zabul	\$ 64,000	\$ -	\$ 1,860	\$ -	\$ 293,340	\$ 134,740	\$ 359,200	\$
Kabul(terminated)	\$ 5,040	\$ -	\$ 1,085	\$ -	\$ 166,159	\$ -	\$ 172,284	\$
Kabul (New)	\$ 6,000	\$ -	\$ 11,358	\$ -	\$ 452,143	\$ 85,050	\$ 469,501	\$
FSCAA	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 4,600	\$ 8,500	\$ 4,600	\$
Wardak	\$ -	\$ 60,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 28,816	\$ -	\$
Nangarhar	\$ -	\$ 560,000	\$ -	\$ 3,389.00	\$ -	\$ 357,535	\$ -	\$
Logar		\$ 205,298		\$ 1,176		\$ 13,335		\$
Kapisa		\$ 12,000		\$14,386.00		\$ -	\$ -	\$
<b>Grand Total Contribution Cost</b>	<b>\$ 416,930.00</b>	<b>\$869,907</b>	<b>\$ 148,905</b>	<b>\$ 28,408</b>	<b>\$ 22,886,263</b>	<b>\$ 9,720,999</b>	<b>\$23,452,099</b>	<b>\$</b>

Note: QTR 3 matching contribution contains (March, 2008 -15<sup>th</sup> Jun 2010) documentation of phase I and from (16<sup>th</sup> Jun, 2010 - 30<sup>th</sup> Jun, 2011) data report from phase II.  
(1) Kabul Women FSC grant was terminated on 29 Sep 09 on 1<sup>st</sup> Feb 2010, the new Kabul FSC was Established.

FSC Table 3. Matching Contributions, February 28, 2009

Annex 4



Matching Contributions Update

Updated: 28 February 2009 - End of Year

Store Name/Province	Contribution Ratio Requirement	Owner Contribution					Other Contributions				Total Target	
		Land Cost	Construction/ Renovation Cost	Inventory Cost	Total of Owner Contribution		Input Suppliers	Producers & Processor s	Others	Total		
					Target	Actual				Target		Actual
Kandahar	6:1	\$222,750	\$64,685	\$4,503,564	\$2,000,000	\$4,790,999				\$2,400,000	\$4,400,000	
Ghazni	6:1	\$7,200	\$5,700	\$5,451,682		\$5,464,582						
Helmand	4:1	\$85,900	\$10,138	\$753,187		\$849,225						
Laghman	4:1	\$7,200	\$4,500	\$84,452		\$96,152						
Kunar	4:1	\$18,840	\$49,579	\$948,641		\$1,017,060						
Zabul	4:1	\$64,000	\$1,860	\$57,560		\$123,420						
Kabul -Women	4:1	\$5,040	\$1,085	\$0		\$0						
<b>Total Contribution</b>		<b>\$341,890<sup>(1)</sup></b>	<b>\$137,547</b>	<b>\$11,799,086</b>	<b>\$2,000,000</b>	<b>\$12,341,439</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0<sup>(2)</sup></b>	<b>\$4,400,000</b>

<sup>(1)</sup> Excludes demonstration land & warehousing facilities, which values are not yet established.

<sup>(2)</sup> Other contributions will increase as the Alliance is expanded beyond the FSCs beginning in the next quarter.

## 19. Review FSCs Selection criteria and process.

Below are the steps taken toward the selection of the FSC owner and selection criteria:

- a. Survey of agro-dealers, cooperatives and association and all necessary agriculture information collected.
- b. Potential candidates short listed from each province
- c. Short listed potential candidates invited to the Alliance meeting, CoP introduces CNFA briefly and then introduces the AFSA project Phase I and Phase II in details, FSCs, FSCAA owners get introduced. Program team introduces in detail what and FSC is and what is the criteria for ownership of an FSC, and what the required matching contribution from the FSC owner is. M&E required report are discussed in a presentation to the new FSCs candidates. Farm Service Center's association development specialist brief them about what is an association, what is the roll of association in further development of the FSCs, describe the 4 FSCAA task groups. i.e. new business development, marketing and advertising, output marketing, extension and training.
- d. A questionnaire about agro-dealers business, experience and expertise in agriculture section and interest in taking the ownership of an FSC and capabilities will be filled by each participants, which will later on be reviewed by a selection committee of professional AFSA employees to select strongest candidates for the ownership of the new FSCs.
- e. The strongest candidates are invited to a second meeting for further queries and discussion about the establishment, investment and sustainability of the FSC and the selection committee uses the following guidelines do the scoring and select owners who could be single or cooperative.
- f. Once the investors have been identified the AFSA team will work directly with the investors to develop business plans. In addition, the AFSA team will work closely with the investors to develop a strategy which will serve the needs of the women of Afghanistan. As a part of the program kick-off, CNFA will survey all seven target provinces and make at least two outreach presentations in each region to broadly publicize the Farm Service Center concept and matching grant process, explain eligibility requirements and promote additional interest in applying to the program. After this outreach effort, CNFA will establish a deadline for proposal submission and all potential investors will be required to submit a formal application. Grant recipients will then be selected through a transparent scoring process including review by an external Grant Review Committee (Washington DC staff) and no-objection approval by USAID.
- g. Responsibility of the FSC
  - i. Ownership: The ownership structure of the FSCs will depend on the outcome of the investor meetings. Where appropriate, CNFA will encourage the development of "new generation cooperatives."
  - ii. In all cases, FSCs will provide goods and services to all local farmers, but members/shareholders will receive a small discount through the center and will be eligible to share in the dividends at the end of each year. FSCs will be managed by professional, hired staff under the supervision of a democratically

elected board of directors, representing the membership or shareholders which have adopted organization bylaws. Comprehensive training will be provided to the membership and board, in order to ensure that all parties sufficiently understand their rights, responsibilities and limitations regarding FSC administration and operations. In general, FSC boards of directors will be responsible for long-term planning and for approving certain extraordinary decisions of the management, but the hired staff will be responsible for normal day-to-day operations, including inventory, marketing and financial management. Rank-and-file members/shareholders involvement in FSC management will be limited to their election of board members to serve as their representation.

- iii. **Establish Training Program:** In order to build Farm Service Center staff skills and ensure the long-term sustainability of the centers, a program of training and technical assistance will be implemented to improve the business skills of Farm Service Center staff and the cooperative/corporate management skills of membership/shareholders and boards of directors. This program will train Farm Service Center staff on the business and management skills necessary to successfully manage a profitable agribusiness enterprise. Trainings will be a combination of one-on-one trainings, training of the trainers by consultants and when possible, workshops will be arranged by AFSA, to be conducted by such organizations as Development Alternatives Inc. (DAI), Kaywan, Noor Educational Center (NEC), Fajr Educational Center (FEC), Afghanistan Small & Medium Enterprise Development (ASMED), and others.
- iv. To augment this training program, CNFA will also provide targeted technical assistance on a one-on-one basis, as needed, to Farm Service Centers in the areas of business management, marketing, agronomy, animal husbandry, and other topics, as required.
- v. **Matching Grant Methodology:** CNFA will use a matching grant methodology to introduce new business models and technologies, stimulate investment, mitigate risk, foster replication, and effect transformative changes in the agricultural sector.
- vi. CNFA has developed a transparent, rigorous, competitive matching grant process that is broadly advertised and open to all eligible applicants. CNFA will award matching grants averaging \$25,000 for 7 existing centers and up to \$50,000 for the new FSCs. Grants are intended to facilitate local partner investment and to mitigate the risk of start-up businesses and are complemented by training and technical assistance to increase the chances for profitability and sustainability. Again, considerations will be made for women involvement.
- vii. **Application Process:** CNFA will approach selection of farm store owner/operators in a two phase approach. First, the dealers will be screened as outlined in the “Beneficiary Criteria” section below. These criteria are prerequisites to being considered for the “Selection Criteria – Scoring” phase, shown after the beneficiary criteria below:
- viii. **Beneficiary Criteria:** A key grant criteria is that the applicants demonstrate commitment and financial viability by jointly investing in the Farm Service

Center. For every dollar of grant funding received, recipients will be required to provide a minimum of three (3) dollars of matching investment, in cash or in-kind contribution (3:1 match). The two larger scale hubs will likely contribute a much higher amount with an average for all six locations estimated at 6:1. This match requirement is not intended to exclude applicants, but is a requirement to ensure partner responsibility for the project and for the long-term operation of the business.

ix. Other criteria include:

1. Demonstrated entrepreneurial spirit and leadership qualities of group principals;
2. Evidence of group commitment to work together in project implementation and beyond;
3. Successful experience with input supply, output marketing or related farm service business;
4. Existence of a sufficient number of farmers in the cooperative/group and in the intended market area to warrant establishment of an FSC;
5. Presence of a sufficient number of rural producers (both participating in FSC cooperative ownership and independent) to provide commercial sustainability for the FSC;
6. Ability to extend trade credit or serve as an access point for other rural credit providers;
7. Ownership or long-term lease of an appropriate, commercially accessible location for the center;
8. Gender consideration, either a separate store or a possible linkage.
9. Selection Criteria: A standard scoring sheet will be created, to be used by the Grant Review Committee in order to ensure objective, quantifiable, and consistent scoring across applications.
10. Grant Package: A Grant Agreement will set conditions for funding of shelving, painting, cash register and basic accounting system, agricultural equipment (field machinery and/or processing equipment), licensing and registration expenses and office equipment. Local Farm Service Center partners will provide the Farm Service Center building, land and facilities, input supply inventory and credit for customers, along with project-related salaries. In addition, the grant will include money for marketing, communications, and PR. CNFA staff will provide marketing consulting and mentoring for each Farm Service Center client as part of their on-going technical support. Each FSC is expected to require 9-12 months from date of application to formal opening.

20. How much of the FSCs revenue is generated by the provision of extension and equipment rental services vs. retail products?

Machinery services equaled \$253,028 in June 30, 2011 or .8% of total sales.

21. How many total people do the FSCs employ? 250 people permanent and over a hundred seasonal and labor employees in warehousing, during harvest, packing season are employed by the 7 FSCs How many permanent, full-time staff do the stores have? 250 people are the permanent employees of the FSCs How much are they paid per month? N/A but the labor is paid based on the daily labor rate which differ one province from another and the full time employee are also paid in different rates.

22. Revenue of FSCs.

By order of volume of sales through June 30, 2011,

- Ghazni FSC has sold \$16,002,540
- Kandahar has sold \$6,433,683
- Laghman has sold \$3,467,038
- Kunar has sold \$3,018,129
- Helmand has sold \$1,344,568
- Kabul (old - \$6,170 and new - \$1,021,041) has sold \$1,027,211
- Zabul has sold \$620,698

23. What is the cost of each major product line? Not available

- a. Are products and services affordable to poorer farmers? Yes,

24. How many repeat customers do the stores have?

- a. Not available, but a good estimate would be around 50% of the total customers are repeat customers.

25. Credit provided by FSCs, value of \$, number of farmers, and times.

Credit was not one of AFSA approved indicators during Phase I but as of June 2011, FSCs have provided credit to 1,858 individuals and the example of value could be the pilot programs currently run by Kunar and Helmand FSCs which has a line of credit for \$350,000

Month..... Year.....

مل

شماره	اسم مشتری	جنسیت		دسته‌بندی		دیلر		آدرس		مجموعه فروضات مواد زراعتی							فروضات		موزش			
		ذکور	اناث	سابقه	جدید	سابقه	جدید	ولسوالی	قریه	کود	تخم های بذر	ادویه	ادویه	سامان آلات	خدمات	مواد	متنوع	نقد	قرضه	کود		
				Farmer	Dealer	کیمیایی	ری			حیوانی	زراعتی	ماشین آلات	غذای حیوانی									
No	Customer Name	Male	Female	Old	New	Old	New	District	Village	Amount of	Amount seed sold	Amount of	Amount CPP sold	Amount of Tools	Amount Machine	Amount of	Others	Cash	Credit	Mal		
1																						
2																						
3																						
4																						
5																						
6																						
7																						
8																						
9																						
10																						
<b>Total</b>																						

## **Farm Service Centers Completed Surveys**

### **Report on Farmers Services Center, Ghazni Province**

Date: July 21, 2011

#### **Stakeholder Focus Group**

At present the center is only selling agricultural chemicals and animal related medicines and seeds. No extension activities, farm management, grading, marketing packaging course have been conducted for farmers. There was no store observed during the visit as the center was not assisted for its establishment by the CNFA. So far only spraying machines and few tractors have been donated to the center which were rented out to the farmers and were not seen in the center. Inventory or list of the available and sold items was not available. All FSC personnel was unprofessional even a single technical staff was not among them. In the stakeholders' focus group, representatives from MAIL/DAIL or local government were not present. Only one person from CNFA was there.

1. The farmers can easily access quality agricultural inputs and service through the current FSC. Agricultural inputs such as seed, fertilizers, and pesticides were sold to farmers in a reasonable price while sprayers were rented out on demand basis from the farmers.
2. Ghazni FSC is providing improved seeds, fertilizer, pesticides and other agricultural rental equipments to farmers who are satisfied of its service.
3. The valuable extension service for farmers at center is Answer at store. In addition land preparation, crops production, safe use of pesticides, fertilization and mechanization courses were provided to the farmers. The training at the center is useful, the skill & knowledge of the technical advisor is satisfied.
4. FSC provides four wheels tractors and wheat thresher reasonable rent to farmers.
5. Farmers have not yet received any assistance from FSC for their livestock and will be happy to receive it.
6. Farmers are not having any assistance for the marketing of their agricultural products from FSC.
7. Comparing the old seeds with the improved seeds and fertilizer, farmers are happy of its good result which has contributed to better quality, easier to use, better germination and almost 85% increase in the agricultural products.
8. Receiving improved seeds, fertilizers, pesticides and use of machinery from FSC has resulted good and valuable increase in the agricultural productivity of farmers.
9. Strengths of FSC
  - Provides improved seeds which resulted increase in agricultural products.

10. Weakness of the FSC:

- Limited agricultural equipments

11. Recommendations: Farmers are recommending FSC to:

- Increase its Agricultural equipments
- Provide loans to farmers

**Professional staff of FSC Focus Group**

1. CNFA has provided land preparation, crops production, green house construction, safe use of pesticides and fertilization effective trainings.
2. CNFA provided useful trainings of completion of M & E forms, setting up the facilities, establishing the management procedures, grading, packaging and marketing inputs for sale, develop educational and extension programs for farmers and learning about good agricultural practices in the use of pesticides, seeds & fertilizers.
3. In a formal FSC classroom farmers receive extension services training from the association. Farmers can freely participate in the training but other than a tea break, they are not receiving any stipend, transportation or lunch during the training.
4. FSC provides rental equipment and services on a credit basis to the farmers.
5. Ghazni FSC is having good coordination with the local Directorate of Agriculture, Irrigation & Livestock and local suppliers.
6. Having good relation and cooperation with farmers, association and increase in the agricultural productivity of farmers has exceeded our targeted goals.
7. Increase in providing advanced & new agricultural tools and increase in the amount of loans to farmers can have good and positive results in the market and farmers products.

**Interview with Owner of FSC:**

1. Besides keeping our old customers happy we have good number of new customers coming to the center.
2. Ghazni FSC is facing the main challenges of : Lack of essential agricultural inputs and management trainings.
3. Luckily our center didn't face any major cash flow issue in the past year.
4. Qualitative inputs and on time availability of technical support kept our customer highly satisfied. Importance quality, availability and on time delivery are all highly important for Ghazni FSC.
5. Many of our old customers are visiting the center. Averagely there are 17 farmers visiting the SC 6 times on monthly basis.
6. Ghazni FSC is having 5 non professional staff.
7. No permanent inventory record is available at the center.

8. Fertilizer, crops and improved seeds has major benefits.
9. The products hard to sell at this FSC are the sprayers.
10. Sometime it's very difficult to sell our products.
11. The FSC source its products through local suppliers and local distributors/brokers and direct general distributors.
12. The products are produced locally.
13. Benefits being associated with AFSA:
  - Building our FSC center
14. Benefits from being associated with AFSA:
  - Through AFSA we are connected to other provincial FSCs
  - They helped us improve our extension services.
15. We have 10 jireebs of land but is located in an unsecure area where we can't have access.
16. The FSC claim that they provide labels.
17. FSC claims that the pamphlets are provided to the customers for sold materials.
18. We keep all things in one room.

## Report on Farmers Services Center, Helmand Province

Date: July 21, 2011

### **Stakeholder Focus Group**

The FSC in Helmand was observed on the of the most functional and well organized FSCs seven provinces. Stores were established in a proper way and farmers seemed happy about the assistance provided by the FSC.

1. The community in FSC have access to quality agricultural inputs and services on time at a reasonable price but the farmers are very poor and all of them cannot afford even these items on a reasonable price.
2. At present the FSC is providing improved seeds, fertilizer, pesticides, small tools other agricultural rental equipment to farmers who are satisfied from its services.
3. All extension services provided by the FSC are valuable answer at store, land preparation, crops production, visits to the field, use of demonstration plots and agricultural fair. In addition to the above, land preparation, crop production , safe use of pesticides, IPM, fertilization and mechanization are equally important for farmers too. Trainings and guidance provided by the experts of the FSC are very useful and effective and has good affect on our farming.
4. Provide as four wheel tractor, mowers and thresher.
5. We have received valuable assistance about our livestock production from the FSC.
6. Effective assistance was received from FSC for better marketing of our agricultural products.
7. The improved seeds performed better than the old seeds in better quality inputs, better germination, better yields and easier to use.
8. The productive has been increased particularly wheat, water melon, bean and vegetables due to the major factors of growth including seed, fertilizer, pesticides, machinery/equipment and extension/technical advice.
9. Strengths of FSC
  - Provides quality products
  - Long term loans for farmers
  - Provision of extension activities.
10. Weakness of the FSC:
  - Far distance of FSC from agricultural land or activities
  - Unavailability of cold stores for products
  - Security problems for farmers in Lashkargah city and remote areas.

11. Recommendations: Farmers are recommending FSC to:

- Build free cold storage for farmers
- Increase agricultural tools and machinery such as tractors etc.
- Provide long terms loan to farmers
- Observation (Lack of proper donor support, lack of sufficient machinery and long term courses.)

### **Professional staff of FSC Focus Group**

1. CNFA has provided land preparation, crops production, green house construction, safe use of pesticides and fertilization, IPM, Fertilization, mechanization, protection of environment, use of sulfur and campaign against insecticides and fungicides. All these training and information sessions were very useful.
2. We were provided useful training by CNFA including completion of M & E forms, setting up the facilities, establishing the management procedures, grading, packaging and marketing outputs according to international standards for sale to national and international buyers, develop educational and extension programs for farmers and learning about good agricultural practices in the use of pesticides, seeds & fertilizers.
3. The extension services are provided by FSC in a formal classroom by FSC personnel in coordination with association and sometime external consultant. Farmers can freely participate in the training. Transportation, food and other cost of the training for farmers are covered by the FSC. The venue and actual conducting of these type of course are kept confidential due to security reasons.
4. FSC provides rental equipments and services against a specific amount of agricultural product for which the equipment is rented.
5. The FSC maintains good relation with MAIL/DAII, PRT, NGOs and other sponsored projects.
6. The exceeded results of FSC are due to sharing experience and providing facility for experts in the FSC to serve for people.
7. Provide better opportunities to the registered farmers such as poultry farming and milk cows keeping and provision of professional experts in these fields

### **Interview with Owner of FSC:**

1. My business is growing both in terms of customers and returning customers.
2. The main challenges in Helmand FSC are no access to cash markets and credit and market fragmentation.
3. We had several times cash flow issue last year.
4. FSC Helmand's customers are satisfied with qualitative and availability of inputs and the technical support provided by this FSC, Input quality, availability and timely delivery are equally important.

5. Averagely there are 80% returning customers.
6. At present the FSC has an agronomist (fertility/fertilizer), Ag machinery management and livestock.
7. A proper inventory is available in the center.
8. Herbicides, fungicides and insecticides provide us best profits.
9. Once we had corn which were gained against our machinery work, was difficult to sell them.
10. We incorporate new products and services requested by farmers.
11. The FSC source its products through direct regional distributors, direct international suppliers and direct seed producer (international)
12. Products are imported through associations.
13. Benefits being associated with AFSA:
  - Our connection with donors and international companies and with farmers
  - Establishment of a central FSC
  - Donation of medicines at rate of 1/6 of sales after reporting
14. Benefits from being associated with FSAA:
  - Unity of FSCs that resulted increase in agricultural production
  - Connection with donors
  - Marketing
15. We have 10 jireebs
16. The FSC provide labels. FSC Helmand is the only good center in Helmand
17. Pamphlets are provided to the customers for sold materials.
18. Seeds, pesticides, office and training classroom are located in different rooms.

## Report on Womens' Farmers Services Center, Kabul

Date: July 19, 2011

### **Stakeholder Focus Group**

The following people participated in this focus group (woman farmers, extension officer of MAIL - Women extension directorate represent, and one representative from Helal group.) The following are general comments that were recorded during the focus group.

- Agricultural inputs such as seed, fertilizers, pesticides, and sprayers were sold to farmers in a reasonable price.
- Farmers were satisfied from Kabul WFSC services.
- WFSC share their activities with Directorate of women extension of MAIL. Additionally, they don't have relation with either funded projects or NGOs.
- One representative from the AFSA work permanently basis with KWFSK and provided technical information to the FSC
- Women FSC facilitate packaging, process, and marketing for women.
- Women farmer are happy from what they receive from FSC. In the result, their life improved.
- Women FSC have a demonstration plot inside farm for the purpose to conduct some trials and tools for training.
- Strength of the FSC:
  - Provision and selling of quality agricultural inputs increases the level of yields.
  - It is useful to train farmers in new agricultural technology and in greenhouse production so that they can produce vegetables in off season.
- Weak points of Women FSC:
  - Lack of agricultural machinery
  - Insufficient extension services such as training
- Recommendations:
  - Fruit and vegetable process equipment should be provided at low price for farmers or a rental basis.
  - Timely conducting of new agricultural technology training courses.
  - All pesticides and seeds should have label in the local language.
  - FSC should facilitate to access the market and/or help in marketing channel.

### **Professional staff of Women FSC Focus Group**

1. Women FSC only has one professional staff that has hired by KWFSC to conduct short term courses in term of vegetable production, safe usage of pesticides, good agricultural practices, and farm management, which were all profitable.
2. Women FSC held many training courses for farmers without fees.
3. Success of this center is returned back to their provision good quality services to farmers that caused to have more customers.
4. Finding of markets for farmers products

### **Interview with Owner of KWFSC:**

1. FSC owner is satisfied with the developing of this FSC. Their customers increased day by day.
2. Important challenges that affect the activities of this center is low level of women extension services, no access to cash as well as credit, un sure market, and low level of business skills.
3. All customers are satisfied with the provision of good quality agricultural inputs.
4. Inventory list and registration book were present.
5. Products such as vegetable seeds, greenhouse package, and fertilizers have high demand.
6. Helal group is big supporter of Kabul women FSC.
7. All agricultural inputs provided by Helal group.
8. AFSA project only provided one tractor, mower and sprayer.
9. Tractor is being used in Laghman province for Helal group.
10. Farmers didn't utilize from this tractor, because it is in Laghman not in Kabul.
11. Three points of FSC as a result of AFSA involvement:
  - Conducting of training courses
  - Introducing of FSC for different donors to find projects
- Three points of FSAA
  - According to FSC owner, they aren't member of FSAA.
- This FSC doesn't have labels or extension leaflet to direct how to use seeds, machinery, and fertilizers.
  - Some of the pesticides have had label into local languages.
  - All stuff including pesticides, fertilizers, machineries, training hall were located in one place.
  - Fertilizers, seeds, and pesticides are stored disorganized in one container.

## Report on Farmers Services Center, Kandahar Province

Date: July 21, 2011

### **Stakeholder Focus Group**

The center is running very well but there are none professional staff to improve it further and give appropriate guidance to the customers.

The Kandahar FSC has big building, which has warehouse, selling store, offices, and big open area for machinery. Agricultural inputs were organized somewhat. Furthermore, all pesticides have label in local languages such as Dari and Pashto. But, seeds don't have label of local languages. Kandahar FSC has enough equipment to spray the pesticides. KFSC imported a lot of seeds from famous companies.

List of inventory and registration were present. Agricultural inputs such as seed, fertilizers, and pesticides were sold to farmers in a reasonable price cheaper than market. Most of the farmers have the ability to buy these products on a reasonable price.

1. At present we sell Seeds (wheat, vegetables), fertilizers, insecticides & fungicides, small tools and rent/lease equipment.
2. The valuable extension services for farmers at the center are: answers at store and visit to the fields. Farmers were satisfied with technical knowledge of trainers who conducted training at the FSC.
3. Four wheels tractors and mowers are rented/leased out to the farmers on reasonable price.
4. We have received valuable assistance regarding livestock production from FSC.
5. Assistance was received from FSC for marketing our agricultural production which markets better our products.
6. Improved seeds and fertilizer perform better than the old one in better quality inputs, better germination and better yields.
7. FSC efforts increased wheat, carrots, radish and cauliflowers productivity with the major factor of seed, fertilizer, pesticide and machinery.
8. Strengths of FSC
  - Provides improved seeds cheaper than local markets.
  - On time delivery of crops and medicines
  - Rent/lease of rental equipment
9. Weakness of the FSC:
  - No Marketing for FSC services
  - Lack of enough professional staff at FSC
  - Lack of laboratory at FSC

10. Recommendations:

- Build a well-equip laboratory
- Hire professional staff at FSC

**Professional staff of FSC Focus Group**

1. This center has not received any technical assistance due to internal problem between CNFA/ AFSA since August, 2010.
2. CNFA assisted this FSC in the delivery of machineries and setting up FSC and a year before.
3. The Kandahar FSC is providing formal classroom training by itself free of charge for farmers and only provide food during the training sessions to the participants.
4. The equipment and services are provided as loan to farmers.
5. We coordinate activities with local suppliers, other NGOs in the region and other sponsored project.
6. Because of our good marketing and providing quality products cheaply to farmers.
7. Hire professional staff, conduct agri. & livestock trainings. We have only received one training from CNFA a year before and other than that we don't have any good memory and have no relation with them nor we are reporting to them.

**Interview with Owner of FSC:**

The owner of Kandahar FSC is Nazir Ahmad Sarhai who claim to have more than 30 years experience in agricultural related issues.

1. Business is growing and on daily basis there is an increment in both returning and new customers.
2. The main challenges of FSC are: Lack of essential agricultural inputs, Lack of timely and quality technical services, no access to cash markets and credit, market fragmentation and lack of good management and low business skills..
3. Only once last year the FSC faced cash flow issues.
4. The farmers are satisfied with the quality and availability of inputs and technical support provided by FSC, still availability of inputs and timely delivery of technical support are important issues.
5. On daily basis 5-10 persons.
6. The center is lacking professional staff. There are totally 6 persons including owner and other staff who have learned by practices and experience knowledge about the agricultural and animal issues.
7. Inventories and registration book were available.
8. The major benefits come out of seeds and livestock medicines.
9. Some of the chemical and medicines are hard to sell.
10. We incorporate new products and services requested by farmers.

11. The FSC source its products through local suppliers, direct international distributors and direct seed producers (international).
12. Products are imported from abroad.
13. Benefits being associated with AFSA:
  - We are not connected with CNFA/AFSA since August, 2010.
14. Benefits from being associated with FSAA:
  - We have bought some items from Helal group through FSAA which were all expired. We are the member of FSAA.
15. The FSC in charge said that they have 4 jirebs land for demonstrating the value of their products.
16. We provide labels when we sell pesticides.
17. Pamphlets are not provided to the customers for sold materials.
18. Kandahar FSC has big building, which has warehouse, selling store, offices, and big open area for machinery. Agricultural inputs were organized somewhat. Furthermore, all pesticides have label in local languages such as Dari and Pashto. But, seeds don't have label of local languages.

## Report on Farmers Services Center, Kunar Province

Date: July 21, 2011

### **Stakeholder Focus Group**

The following people participated in this focus group (farmers, extension officer of DAIL - extension and representatives from AFSA and CNFA). The following are general comments that were recorded during the focus group. The FSC in Kunar is active more than two years. It has four staff including an Agronomist and a veterinarian. This center has not started yet extension services/training and the staff needs training in these fields by experienced agricultural experts. At present on one hand the unavailability of extension services lead this center to no economic benefits on the other hand, the unprofessionalism of staff and lack of communication with similar organizations caused the serious need for undertaking extension activities. This center contains pesticides medicines, animal medicines, seeds, fertilizer, spray machines, censors and others which were mixed up. Expire and none expire items were mixed and most of the chemical bottles were observed unsealed. The animal medicines were not stored in refrigerator. Lists of chemicals and tools were not found during the assessment in the center. A greenhouse was visited which was located in Khas Kunar district 25 Km away from the center. All the farmers were chosen from this district and were realized as blood relatives (cousins). After the interview in the center same the farmers were met again in the greenhouse

1. Agricultural inputs such as seed, fertilizers, and pesticides were sold to farmers in a reasonable price while sprayers were rented out on demand basis from the farmers.
2. Farmers were generally satisfied from Kunar FSC services particularly on provision of improved seeds and chemicals.
3. The valuable extension services for farmers at the center are: answers at store, workshops and formal trainings, use of demonstration plots. In addition land preparation, safe use of pesticides, fertilization and mechanization courses were provided to the farmers. The farmers are requesting the center to conduct the GAP course.
4. Four wheels tractors are rented/leased out to the farmers on reasonable price.
5. The FSC provides only medicines for livestock from which the farmers look satisfied
6. The FSC have not assisted famers to market their productions.
7. Improved seeds and fertilizer contributed to better quality and germination and increase in the quantity of agricultural products.
8. The efforts of FSC increased crop productivity in our area particularly wheat due to improved seeds, fertilizers, pesticides and use of machinery.
9. Strengths of FSC
  - Provides improved seeds cheaper than local markets.
  - Provide Agri. Tools on lease to farmers

- Farmers Agri. Information programs

10. Weakness of the FSC:

- No cold storages for farmers products
- No marketing information for farmers products
- No long term loans for farmers

11. Recommendations:

- Increase in extension services
- Provide Agri. Combine machinery & Thresher tools to farmers
- Increase in Agri. Tools i.e tractors
- Observation (Include Dairy processing in the program)

**Professional staff of FSC Focus Group**

1. The assistance received from CNFA compromises land preparation, safe use of pesticides, IPM and how to pesticides for different plants' pests.
2. The FSC team received helpful training and advice regarding completing M & E forms, setting up facilities, and grading, packaging and marketing inputs for sale.
3. The FSC in Kunar doesn't have a class room for conducting training. At present the center only provide pesticides and its advice which take place in the FSC drug store. In organized trainings, farmers are paid for lunch and others while during normal visits from the center they are not paid and instruction is provided to them at no cost. Afghan GAP conducted a 5 days training regarding the diseases of crops from which all the FSC staff seemed satisfied.
4. The FSC give tractors on rent/lease to the farmers and after crop harvesting the lease money is paid by the farmers.
5. The FSC coordinates its activities with the directorate of agriculture in Kunar.
6. The reported results are not exceeds, they remain the same and it is due to our good connection with farmers.
7. Increase farmers learning programs by professional staff, advanced & new agricultural tools, increase free crops distribution to farmers, solar power to center to keep medicine and crops with good temperature and help us in finding of markets for farmers products.

**Interview with Owner of FSC:**

Abdul Fatah is the actual owner of the FSC in Kunar. He was not present on the day of interview so we have interviewed Qazi Abdul Rahman who is the in charge of the farm.

1. The business is growing and on daily basis there is an increasing in both returning and new customers.

2. The main challenges of FSC are: Lack of timely and quality technical services, no access to cash markets and credit, market fragmentation and lack of good management.
3. Last year, the center face twice with cash flow issues.
4. The farmers are satisfied with the quality and availability of inputs and technical support provided by FSC, still availability of inputs and timely delivery of technical support are important issues for them to be narrowly followed in future.
5. There is 50% increasing in our customers compare to last year. Averagely there are 20-30 farmers visiting the FSC on weekly basis.
6. At present the center has totally 4 employees including an agronomist and an veterinarian
7. Inventories were not found and stuff (seeds, chemicals, machinery) were mixed up.
8. The major benefits come out of animal drugs/medicines.
9. The products hard to sell at this FSC are the sprayers.
10. Yes, we incorporate new products and services requested by farmers; otherwise we won't have good business here.
11. The FSC source its products through local suppliers and local distributors/brokers.
12. The products are produced locally and sometime imported from abroad.
13. Benefits being associated with AFSA:
  - Entering in Farmers association
  - Getting Agricultural related machinery
  - Capacity building of FSC staff
14. Benefits from being associated with FSAA:
  - Connected with Afghan farmers
  - Sharing products
  - Marketing
15. The FSC in charge said that they have 3 jireeb land for demonstrating the value of their products but in reality the area measured by SDLR surveyors was around one Jireeb.
16. The FSC claim that they provide labels and also some sort of uniform to the farmers.
17. Pamphlets are provided to the customers for sold materials. SDLR didn't see any pamphlets in the center.
18. No, things are mixed up in one room. The greenhouse is 25 KM away where famers cannot get easily.

## Report on Farmers Services Center, Laghman Mehrtarlam

Date: July 21, 2011

### **Stakeholder Focus Group**

The current owner bought this center 3 months before. At present, the center is only selling animal and plants medicines and also have few sprayers which are given free of charge for marketing purposes to the farmers. The center has only one agronomist who is working on disease control. Generally staffs were observed unprofessional and needs capacity building. The store was found disorganized, agricultural medicines were kept next to food items. The center doesn't have a greenhouse; a small place was shown as nursery in which few okra were grown. The inventories and registrations were kept but not updated.

1. Most of the farmers are poor and even cannot afford agricultural inputs such as seed, fertilizers, and pesticides on a reasonable price while sprayers were rented out on demand basis from the farmers.
2. The insecticides and fungicides and knowledge sharing on how to keep livestock properly is the best selling things at the FSC.
3. The valuable extension services for farmers at the center are: answers at store and visits to field. When we face problem we visit the FSC for consultation, safe use of pesticides, and a short course regarding livestock.
4. Only sprayers and censors were given to us by FSC.
5. I was given information on livestock medicines and livestock feeding.
6. No assistance was received from FSC to market our agricultural production.
7. We have not received yet the improved seeds. We are using our own seeds for the production of potatoes, cucumber, okra, beans, radish, onions, pumpkin, egg plant which give us very good product here.
8. Strengths of FSC
  - Staff positive attitude & good manner
  - Cheap Agri. Medicine
  - Quality medicine
9. Weakness of the FSC:
  - Limited Agri. Tools
  - Unavailability of Agri. Seeds
  - No farmer learning programs
10. Recommendations:
  - Expand FSC office in each district

- Provide good and Improved seeds, fertilizer & tools
- Increase in farmer learning programs
- Observation (Increase in farmer learning programs)

### **Professional staff of FSC Focus Group**

1. This center has been bought by the current owner since 3 months. Only IPM training was conducted for one participants by CNFA. So far no other assistance has been received.
2. Since inception of the FSC which was 3 months ago, no other training has been conducted by CNFA for our staff.
3. No extension services have been provided by this FSC since its establishment.
4. At present the FSC has a seed cleaner and few sprayers which are given on no cost (free) to the farmers for their use.
5. We are only coordinating our activities with CNFA and we report to them to. We don't exactly whom they are reporting to.
6. Because we have good relations with farmers provide them positive guidance and we are the only one center here.
7. Increase extension services by professional staff, advanced & new agri. Tools, increase free crops distribution to farmers, solar power to center to keep medicine and crops with good temperature.

### **Interview with Owner of FSC:**

Abdul Raqib is the owner of this FSC who is veterinarian.

1. The business is growing; lack of essential agricultural inputs, no timely and quality technical services, our sales are getting higher day by day as the customer rate is increased on daily basis.
2. The main challenges of FSC are: Lack of timely and quality technical services, no access to cash markets and credit, market fragmentation and lack of good management.
3. The new owner owns this FSC since 3 months. So he doesn't have any cash flow issues yet.
4. As this FSC is owned by the new owner since 3 months so he provide the information only about sprayer and information about livestock. The owner expressed that input quality, availability of inputs and timely delivery of all these is equally important.
5. This FSC has 15 persons on daily basis who are visiting the center 2 -3 times a month.
6. At present an agronomist, a veterinarian and 3 other non skilled staff was present at the center.
7. Inventories were available at the center.
8. Agricultural chemicals and livestock medicines

9. This FSC is in the process of incorporation of greenhouse and improved seeds.
10. The FSC source its products through local suppliers.
11. The products are produced locally and sometime imported from abroad.
12. Benefits being associated with AFSA:
  - Capacity building
  - Access to agricultural machinery
  - Access to Technical Staff
13. Benefits from being associated with FSAA:
  - Participation in some workshops
  - Possibilities of getting loans
  - Marketing
14. Half Jireeb (0.5) land has been assigned to demonstrate the value of FSC's seeds, fertilizers, pesticides and livestock products.
15. Only verbal instructions are given to the farmers, no labels are available on the stocks.
16. Official pamphlets are not available. Only instructions are given to farmers for the correct used of sold materials.
17. They are not located in different rooms.

## Report on Farmers Services Center, Zabul Province

Date: July 21, 2011

### **Stakeholder Focus Group**

The management of this center was assessed weak as it was run by unprofessional staff. A tractor, one thresher one refrigerator was given to this center. There was no store at FSC. A greenhouse established but not yet functional for agricultural activities. All the farmers (look shopkeepers) were the relatives of the store owners and they were dictated to say positive about the center. All workers of the center were family members. No registration book was found and the center was run in an improper way. SDLR team was not treated well by the FSC staff. They were pushing SDLR staff to finish as quickly as possible because the FSC staff didn't want to be watch by other people being interviewed due to security concerns. The overall management of the FSC was assessed weak. CNFA representative was present while the government representative was not there during our visit.

1. The community here has access to quality agricultural inputs and services on time on reasonable prices compare to the local market which are affordable for famers.
2. The best agricultural inputs we sell at the FSC are seeds, insecticides & pesticides.
3. The valuable extension services for farmers at the center are: answers at store, workshops and formal trainings. In addition the preferred training topics by farmers are crop production, safe use of pesticides, fertilization and mechanization.
4. The FSC is providing four wheel tractors support by thresher which is given on 800Afs (16 USD) per hour and the thresher charges are 50 Kgs out of 700 Kgs wheat.
5. We have not received any assistance related to livestock from FSC. And we want this important assistance to happen.
6. So far we have not received any assistance from FSC to market our agricultural products.
7. Improved seeds and fertilizer performed better in better quality inputs, better germination, better yields and easier to use.
8. Crop productivity has been increased in the through FSC due to seeds, pesticides, machinery/equipment and technical advice.
9. Strengths of FSC
  - Increase in Agricultural Products
  - Cheap Agri. chemicals & crops
  - We learn how to use crops medicine
10. Weakness of the FSC:
  - Limited Agri. Tools
  - Lack of professional staff at FSC

- No help to have good irrigation system

11. Recommendations:

- Increase in Agri. Tools i.e tractors
- Hire professional FSC Staff
- Provide more improved seeds & fertilizer
- Observation (No professional staff at the FSC)

**Professional staff of FSC Focus Group**

1. The CNFA assistance received by FSC compromises land preparation, crop production, safe use of pesticides IPM were useful.
2. The FSC team received helpful training and advice regarding completing M & E forms, establishing the management procedures of the FSC, setting up facilities, and grading, packaging and marketing inputs for sale to local farmers and developing education and extension programs for farmers.
3. The extension services are provided by the FSC personnel free for farmers in classroom which was not shown to us due to security concerns by the FSC staff. The staff claimed with no evidence that the transportation, food and training facilities for farmers training if conducted will be provided by the FSC.
4. The FSC give thresher on remuneration 50 Kgs wheat on processing 700 wheat while the tractor is given on rent/lease to the farmers and after crop harvesting the lease money is paid by the farmers.
5. This FSC doesn't have coordination with any relevant department, organizations, NGOs or government.
6. Farmers' involvement in training and providing cheaper agricultural seeds & chemicals facilitated for exceeded target goals.
7. We are having many security issues therefore we don't want anything from CNFA as if we have more services or products it can cause security problems for us.

**Interview with Owner of FSC:**

Mr. Sayed Rahim is the owner of the FSC in Zabul. He is graduated from grade 12 and doesn't have any technical knowledge in agricultural and livestock issues.

1. Sure, the business in relation to the number of customers is growing.
2. Main Challenges that FSC is facing are: lack of essential agricultural inputs, Lack of timely and quality technical services, no access to cash markets and credit, market fragmentation and lack of good management.
3. Last year, the center faced several times with cash flow issues.
4. The farmers are satisfied with the quality and availability of inputs and technical support provided by FSC. Availability of inputs and timely delivery of technical support are medium important issues for them to be followed in future.

5. Normally there are 15 persons coming to the FSC twice a week. Both regular and returning numbers have increased compare to the previous year.
6. There are totally 6 employees in this FSC and none of them is having technical or professional skills. The highest education level among them is grade 12.
7. No inventories of log of the store or available equipment was maintained.
8. The best profits are provided to us by agricultural seeds and livestock.
9. The products hard to sell at this FSC small sprayers.
10. We have not been requested by farmers.
11. The FSC source its products through local suppliers and local distributors/brokers.
12. The products are produced locally.
13. Benefits being associated with AFSA:
  - Connected with FSCs
  - Get cheap agricultural related items
  - Build our trust with people and traders
14. Benefits from being associated with FSAA:
  - We are not connected with FSAA
15. Two Jirebs land is dedicated for demonstrating the value of FSC seeds, fertilizers, pesticides and livestock.
16. The FSC claim that they provide labels but SDLR teams have not seen them.
17. Yes pamphlets are provided to the farmers for sold materials, but not seen by SDLR team.
18. Seeds, pesticides, office was just at one shop. Place for training and classroom was not available.

## Numerical Results

### Stakeholder (Farmers, DAIL, and Local Suppliers) Focus Group regarding Service from Seven Farm Service Centers (FSC)

The following collates the numerical responses of the seven provinces to the Stakeholder Focus Group. The answers show the percentage of FST that answer 'yes' to the question. It does not automatically mean that the remaining answered 'no', sometimes the Focus Group did not provide an answer to a specific question.

1. Does your community have access to quality agricultural inputs & services on time at reasonable prices at your FSC? Yes 100%: No \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. Are the inputs FSC prices competitive (low) in relation to Ag Depot and the local market?  
Yes 100%: No \_\_\_\_\_;
  - b. Are inputs and services affordable to poorer farmers? Yes 71%; No \_\_\_\_\_;
  
2. List types of agricultural inputs that sell best at the FSC
  - a. Seeds 86%
  - b. Fertilizers 71%
  - c. Insecticides & fungicides 86%
  - d. Small tools 43%
  - e. Rent/lease equipment 100%
  - f. Others \_\_\_\_\_
  
3. Which of the following extension services provided by the FSC is most valuable for farmers?
  - a. What type(s) of extension services
    1. Answers at the store 100%
    2. Visits to your field 57%
    3. Workshop/formal training 57%
    4. Use of demonstration plots 29%
    5. Agricultural fair 29%
  - b. What are the preferred training topics by farmers?
    1. Land preparation 57%
    2. Crop production 57%
    3. Safe use of pesticides 86%
    4. IPM 29%
    5. Fertilization 71%
    6. Mechanization 71%

7. Others:

\_\_\_\_\_;  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_;

c. Was the training useful in learning about good agricultural practices and new machinery?

Yes 57% No \_\_\_\_\_

d. Are you satisfied with the skills and knowledge of the agriculturalists providing technical advice at your FSC? Yes 86% No \_\_\_\_\_

4. What equipment rental services are being provided by the FSC?

a. Two wheel tractors 0%

b. Four wheel tractor 71%

c. Mowers 29%

d. Other equipment: \_\_\_\_\_;

\_\_\_\_\_;

5. Have you received assistance from the FSC in your livestock production? Yes

71% No \_\_\_\_\_

a. Was it valuable the assistance with livestock production? Yes 100% No \_\_\_\_\_

b. If the first answer was no, would you like to receive this service: Yes 100%  
No \_\_\_\_\_

6. Have you received assistance from the FSC to market your agricultural production?

Yes 43% No \_\_\_\_\_

a. Was effective the assistance received to better market your product? Yes  
100% No \_\_\_\_\_

7. Did the improved seed and fertilizer perform better than the old? Yes 86% No

\_\_\_\_\_

a. How did the new seed and fertilizer perform better?

b. Better quality inputs? 86%

c. Better germination? 71%

d. Better yields? 86%

e. Easier to use? 57%

f. Other

\_\_\_\_\_

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8. Has the FSC increased crop productivity in your region? Yes 71% No \_\_\_\_\_

1) For which crops? \_\_\_\_\_; \_\_\_\_\_;  
\_\_\_\_\_;

2) If crop productivity increased; which major factors that influenced this growth?

a. Seed 86%

b. Fertilizer 86%

c. Pesticide 86%

d. Machinery/equipment 71%

e. Extension / technical advice 29%

f. Other reasons

\_\_\_\_\_;

9. What are the strengths of the FSC in its service to the communities in your region? Name three (3)

(i) \_\_\_\_\_; (ii) \_\_\_\_\_; (iii)  
\_\_\_\_\_;

10. What are the weaknesses of the FSC in its service to the communities in your region? Name three (3)

(i) \_\_\_\_\_; (ii) \_\_\_\_\_; (iii)  
\_\_\_\_\_;

11. What are your recommendations to improve FSC effectiveness in your region? Name three (3)

(i) \_\_\_\_\_; (ii) \_\_\_\_\_; (iii)  
\_\_\_\_\_;

Other observations: \_\_\_\_\_

## Numerical Results

### Seven FSC Staff Focus Groups regarding Services from CNFA

The following collates the numerical responses of the seven provinces to the FSC Staff Focus Group. The answers show the percentage of FST that answer 'yes' to the question. It does not automatically mean that the remaining answered 'no', sometimes the Focus Group did not provide an answer to a specific question.

1. Besides training and advice (question 2), what type of assistance have you team received from CNFA over the last two years?
  - a. Land preparation 57% ;was useful the training? Yes 100% No \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Crop Production 57% ;was useful the training? Yes 100% . No \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. Green house construction 14% ; was useful the training? Yes 100% . No \_\_\_\_\_.
  - d. Safe use of pesticides 86%; was useful the training? Yes 100% ; No \_\_\_\_\_;
  - e. IPM 43% ; was useful the training? Yes 100% ; No \_\_\_\_\_;
  - f. Fertilization 43% ; Was useful the training? Yes 100% ; No \_\_\_\_\_;
  - g. Mechanization 57% ; Was useful the training? Yes 100% ; No \_\_\_\_\_;
  - h. Other training: \_\_\_\_\_; Was useful the training? Yes \_\_\_\_\_; No \_\_\_\_\_;
  - i. Other training: \_\_\_\_\_; Was useful the training? Yes \_\_\_\_\_; No \_\_\_\_\_;
  - j. Other training: \_\_\_\_\_; Was useful the training? Yes \_\_\_\_\_; No \_\_\_\_\_;
  
2. Did you and your team receive training and advice from CNFA in the following topics. Explain whether the training was helpful or not.
  - a. Completing the M & E form? Yes 43% ; No \_\_\_\_\_; was useful the training? Yes 100%; No \_\_\_\_\_;
  - b. Establishing the management procedures of the FSC? Yes 71% ; No \_\_\_\_\_; was useful the training? Yes 40% ; No \_\_\_\_\_;
  - c. Setting up the facilities. Yes 71% ; No \_\_\_\_\_; was useful the training? Yes 100%; No \_\_\_\_\_;
  - d. Grading, packaging, and marketing inputs for sale to local farmers. Yes 57%; No \_\_\_\_\_; was useful the training? Yes 100%; No \_\_\_\_\_;

- e. Grading, packaging, and marketing farmer output, according to international standards, for sale to national and international buyers.  
Yes 43%; No \_\_\_; was useful the training? Yes 100%; No \_\_\_;
- f. Develop educational and extension programs for farmers.  
Yes 57%; No \_\_\_; was useful the training? Yes 100%; No \_\_\_;
- g. Learning about Good Agricultural Practices in the use of pesticides, seeds, and fertilizer  
Yes 43%; No \_\_\_; was useful the training? Yes 100%; No \_\_\_;

3. How are the extension services of the FSC is being provided?

- a. Formal classroom training? Yes 71%; No \_\_\_;
- b. Who provides the services? 1) FSC Personnel? Yes 29%; No \_\_\_\_\_;  
2) external consultants? Yes 29%; No \_\_\_; 3) Association? Yes 43%; No \_\_\_\_\_;
- c. How are they paid for the training? Free
- d. Do you pay farmers to attend the training? Yes 43%; No \_\_\_\_\_?  
Transportation? Yes 71%; No \_\_\_; Lunch Yes 71%; No \_\_\_: Explanation if necessary

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4. How are the rental equipment and services provided?

Pre-paid? Yes 14%; No \_\_\_; Credit? Yes 71%; No \_\_\_; Other:

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5. Do you coordinate the activities of your FSC with:

- A. MAIL/DAIL? Yes 57%; No \_\_\_;
- B. Local supplier? Yes 43%; No \_\_\_;
- C. PRT? Yes 14%; No \_\_\_
- D. Other NGOs in your region? Yes 43%; No \_\_\_
- E. Other sponsored projects? Yes 14%; No \_\_\_

6. Can you explain why your FSC has reported results (as measured in indicators) that exceed the original target goals?

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7. What are your recommendations to improve the service of CNFA in establishing new FSC?

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## Numerical Results

### Interview with Seven Store Owner(s) and Top Assistant

The following collates the numerical responses of the seven owners to their Interviews. The answers show the percentage of owners that answer 'yes' to the question. It does not automatically mean that the remaining answered 'no', sometimes the owner did not provide an answer to a specific question.

1. Is your business growing in terms of number of customers and returning customers?  
Yes 100%; No \_\_\_\_\_
  
2. What are the main challenges in managing your FSC?
  - A. Lack of essential agricultural inputs 57%
  - B. No timely and quality technical services 71%
  - C. No access to cash markets and credit 86%
  - D. Stability of market sales 86%
  - E. Need for management training 86%
  - F. Low business skills 43%
  
3. How often in the past year have you had cash flow issues?  
Once? 57%; Twice? 14%; Three times? \_\_\_\_\_; Several times? 29%;  
Estimate how many? \_\_\_\_\_
  
4. Are your customers satisfied with the quality and availability of inputs and the technical support provided by your FSC? Yes 100%; No \_\_\_\_\_; (1) \_\_\_\_\_ (2) 29% (3) 71% with 1 low, 2 medium and 3 the highest score
  - a. Is input quality more important? Yes 100%; No \_\_\_\_\_; (1) \_\_\_\_\_ (2) 29% (3) 71% with 1 low, 2 medium and 3 the highest
  - b. Is availability of the inputs you need more important? Yes 100%; No \_\_\_\_\_; (1) \_\_\_\_\_ (2) 14% (3) 86%
  - c. Is timely delivery of technical service more important? Yes 100%; No \_\_\_\_\_; (1) \_\_\_\_\_ (2) \_\_\_\_\_ (3) 100% with 1 low, 2 medium and 3 the highest score
  
5. How many regular/returning customers do you have (estimation): many;
  
6. How many extension staff, by sector (agronomists, livestock, and machinery) are employed by your FSC? One each for answers below
  - a. Agronomist/Pest management: 29%
  - b. Agronomist/Crop production: 57%



(i) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(ii) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(ii) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

15. Do you have land dedicated to demonstrating the value of your seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, and livestock products? Yes 100%; No     ; How many jeribs? 4.0 average

16. When you sell pesticides, do you provide 'labels' that provide rates of application, approved crop usage, and time of year for application? Yes 71%; No     ;

17. When you sell seeds and fertilizers, do you provide pamphlets and training manuals to the farmers that describe rates of application and time of year for application? Yes 71%; No     ;

18. Are your seeds, pesticides, office, and training classroom located in different rooms? Yes 14%; No     ;

# Input Suppliers and ANSOR Completed Surveys

## Helal Group Interview

**Participant:** Mr. Hazrat Wali, Managing Director and Mohammad Bilal, Marketing Manager

1. Did you know about the FSC?

Yes; No; No reply

**Observation:** Helal Group fully supports the FSC initiative with special emphasis to the women store in Kabul.

2. What is your **perception** of this private initiative? 1=Low; 5=Very high;

1 2 3 4 5 No reply Not know

**Observations:** For the Helal Group the FSCs are no more no less than what it is the AgDepots for the Noor Group. Helal have had not success participating in the Ag Depot market due to the profit is very small/marginal and profits are very dependent on the quick turnover of the inventories.

3. **Relevance** – Is the project Farm Service Centers and its component felt needed in Afghanistan?.

A. Effectiveness – Is the project meeting community/farms needs

1 2 3 4 5 No reply

Observations:

B. Efficiency – Are project results being achieved cost effectively.

1 2 3 4 5 No reply Not know

Observation: The current FSCs need to receive/develop a working capital to buy by them self inputs without the current dependency from one supplier. Some FCS owners have no more than \$3,000-\$4,000 of real operational capital

C. what work and what didn't: \_\_\_\_\_

1 2 3 4 5 No reply Not know

4. **What lessons are learned?**

1 2 3 4 5 No reply Not know

5. Is sustainability being address?

Yes No No-reply Not-know

Observations: The WFSC and the Laghman FSC will not survive without the Helal group support.

**General perceptions.**

My note-1: Their relations with FSC is too close for comfort. Need more information

My note-2: Need to know who are the investors in the FSCs? – Amount of investment made by each owner.

Helal Group provide the WFSC with the seed, fertilizers, pesticides, and Vet in consignment with interest penalties. The WSC pays the Helal Group as sales takes place. The same arrangement exist with the Laghman FSC to sell pesticides, Vet, fertilizers; right now the amount of seed sold in this location is limited due to market conditions and because is the only time of the year no one is planting vegetables. Only Laghman and women Kabul are the only supported by the Helal Group

According to the Helal the WFSC and the Laghman FSC will not survive without the Helal group support. The current FSCs need to receive/develop a working capital to buy by them self inputs without the current dependency from one supplier. Some FCS owners have no more than \$3,000-\$4,000 of real operational capital.

For the Helal Group the FSCs are no more no less than what it is the AgDepots for the Noor Group. Helal have had not success to participate in the Ag Depot market due to the profit is very small/marginal and profits are very dependent on the quick turnover of the inventories.

Helal import the seed from eleven suppliers from France, Holland, Italy and have business in India, Iran, and Pakistan.

Helal is not training The FSC extension personnel. Independent distributors selling Helal products do not allow supporting the FSC sales; private dealers will see as unfair competitions.

Helal group participate with AVIPA Plus in Helmand Province with seed and fertilizer.

## Noor Group Interview

**Participant:** Director of the Central Agricultural Network of Afghanistan farm stores/agro inputs - CANAFA.

1. Did you know about the FSC?

Yes; No; No-reply

**Observation:** Have seen no major activity in their competitors. Noor Group is willing to be part of the FSC network.

2. What is your **perception** of this private initiative? 1=Low; 5=Very high;

1 2 3 4 5 No reply Not know

**Observations:** The private initiative should be encourage developing the economy with government support. The government should not create regulations and projects that compete with the private initiative.

3. **Relevance** – Is the project Farm Service Centers and its component felt needed in Afghanistan?.

A. Effectiveness – Is the project meeting community/farms needs

1 2 3 4 5 No reply

- Reduce dominance of Helal Group in the market place by increasing the presence of new seed companies. FSC need to provide inputs and services more appropriated for their customers who are small farmers and women. Everybody in Afghanistan should put more emphasis in quality than price. Often the competition sell re-label expired and lower content of the active ingredient.

B. Efficiency – Are project results being achieved cost effectively.

1 2 3 4 5 No reply Not know

Observation: Made no additional remarks

C. what work and what didn't: \_\_\_\_\_

1 2 3 4 5 No reply Not know

4. **What lessons are learned?** The success of the Ag Depos under DASA is mainly due to the support given to the small owner of the stores. The average annual gross sale of a typical Ag Depst is \$25,000; the link (network) among Ag Depo allows the management of unique business opportunities as opportunistic partners when Ag Depo could have in his market a low price commodity in demand by other market where other Ag Depot is working.

5. Is sustainability being address?

Yes No **No-reply** Not-know

Noor Group general perceptions.

- Noor had the opportunity to have/create a FSC in Kabul but decline to participate.
- Some of the FSC are working well, most are not; No explanation given
- Noor Group perception is that a FSC success is their focus services to the women sector. FSC could provide more appropriated product services for women.
- FSC need more and better trained technical people such as agronomists on staff
- Develop direct relationships with international seed companies, better prices and better publications
- FSC should interact more with professional organizations such as ANSOR, fertilizer association, etc.
- Set up demonstrations (sponsored by FSC and input companies) on the farmers' fields and at MAIL research centers, not just at the store.
- The FSC most important goal to increase acceptability and markets is the distribution of more reliable quality inputs. FSC next need is to expand the number and type of services offered in order to increase the interest of more customers. The current number of products sold by FSC is limited and farmers often do not find what they need.

Other recommendations:

- FSC should reduce dominance of Helal and Noor Groups in the market place by increasing the presence of new companies.
- Everybody should encourage MAIL to develop functions similar to US Dept of Ag where they monitor quality and use of ag inputs.

## Afghanistan National Seed Organization (ANSOR) Interview

**Participant:** Associate Professor Saidajan Atiq Abdiani, President of the Board of Directors – Afghanistan National Seed Organization – ANSOR.

**Yes** No No-reply

Observation: The level of knowledge about this group is limited. He has seen some stores doing very well and other not so. They all need to have more professional personnel supporting their sales. The use of demo plots will help to increase the confidence of the farmers as customers. The idea of making an alliance with FSC with the Seed Enterprises is very attractive as an effective way to distribute quality certified wheat seed. FSCs also need to develop the access to small short-term lines of credit to allow more farmers to their products.

2. What is your **perception** of the private initiative? 1=Low; 5=Very high;

1 2 3 4 **5** No reply Not know

Observations: It is positive initiative that needs to make new and stronger alliances with groups like ANSOR and other associations like fertilizers, etc.

3. **Relevance** – Is the project Farm Service Centers and its component felt needed in Afghanistan?

A. Effectiveness – Is the project meeting community/farms needs

1 2 3 4 **5** No reply

Observations: Suppliers of inputs are needed in Afghanistan. However they need to supply better and more reliable inputs. Their dependency of inputs made in Pakistan is not safe for FSCs and for the farmers. Pakistan and Iranian products often comes adulterated in the active ingredient and in the expiration date. The re-labeling is often used for that purpose.

B. Efficiency – Are project results being achieved cost effectively.

1 **2** 3 4 5 No reply Not know

Observations: The FSCs need to jump out of the regional suppliers and move into the direct seed producers as the best way to reduce the current high cost paid by farmers; ANSOR believe that the FSCs has the finances to make bulk purchases of seed, fertilizers, and pesticide from international distributors willing to invest in technical support.

C. what work and what didn't: \_\_\_\_\_

Observations: The FSC concept is good but the efficiency must be increased by the direct access to international distributors of inputs; their dependency on regional distributors is hurting the agricultural sector and farmers seeking quality inputs to grow crops and nurse animals.

4. What lessons are learned?

\_\_\_\_\_

Observations: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Is sustainability being address?

Yes **No** No-reply Not-know

Observations: The FSCs dependency from of too few suppliers is not allowing the full sustainability.

6. General/other comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## MAIL Completed Surveys

MAIL Director General of Programs.

1. Did you **know** about the FSC?

Yes; **No**; No- reply

Observations: I short presentation of the FSC is made by the evaluation team followed with a short description of the mission.

2. What is your **perception** of this private initiative? 1=Low; 5=Very high;

1 2 3 4 **5** No reply Not know

Observations: MAIL is very interested in promote partnerships with the private initiative. The MAIL private initiative program is under my Directorate.

3. **Relevance** – Is the project Farm Service Centers and its component felt needed in Afghanistan?

A. Effectiveness – Is the project meeting community/farms needs

1 2 3 4 **5** No reply

Observations: I may not have direct knowledge of this program, but undoubtedly the concept is relevant for farmers and rural communities.

B. Efficiency – Are project results being achieved cost effectively.

1 2 3 4 5 No reply **Not know**

Observations: \_\_\_\_\_

C. what work and what didn't: \_\_\_\_\_

1 2 3 4 5 No reply **Not know**

Observations: \_\_\_\_\_

4. What lessons are learned?

1 2 3 4 5 No reply **Not know**

Observations: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Is sustainability being address?

Yes No No-reply 1 2 3 4 5 No reply  
**Not know**

Observations: \_\_\_\_\_

6. General/other comments: MAIL would like to see closer this private initiative. Right now they are looking for a partner to distribute veterinarian products (including vaccines) in a system with refrigerators to protect; AFC could be a good opportunity.

MAIL also need to look closer into this experience to learn how this project has managed seven successful sustainable businesses and how this project is expanding into another 10 new cases.

Director of Plant Protection

1. Did you know about the FSC?

Yes **No** No-reply

2. What is your **perception** of the private initiative? 1=Low; 5=Very high;

1 2 3 4 **5** No reply Not know

Observations: None

3. **Relevance** – Is the project Farm Service Centers and its component felt needed in Afghanistan?.

A. Effectiveness – Is the project meeting community/farms needs

1 2 3 **4** 5 No reply

Observation: MAIL Plant Protection is interested to support the FSC effort to improve the safe use of pesticides. Willing to review their training modules on the safe use of pesticide.

B. Efficiency – Are project results being achieved cost effectively.

1 2 3 4 5 No reply **Not know**

Observation: None

C. what work and what didn't: \_\_\_\_\_

4. What lessons are learned?  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. Is sustainability being address?

Yes No No-reply **Not-know**

The USAID is looking for your suggestions on how to improve this initiative with full participation and interactions of other private sectors.

The Directorate of Plant Protection and Extension have had relations with the FSC and has no experience with the services provided. The wrong use of pesticides is a common issue in Afghanistan. The last case of pesticide miss use that intoxicated a family took place not long ago in a pomegranate field.

The government gives the approval to import and use new pesticides. New pesticides are analyzed for efficiency and safety in Afghanistan and the lab analysis are made in France including crop residue.

The new MAIL Plant Protection lab building is almost completed. We need to equip the labs. Personal is being trained.

An effective pesticide Afghan law is being developed with USAID support.

The private sector distributor often dislikes government interventions. Do not want to be regulated and much less be monitoring to keep their business safe for users and consumers.

Farmers demand quality products as long they work. Pesticide prices are important but it is not the most important factor farmers use to define whether to buy inputs.

MAL his not participating in the FSC training on the use safe of pesticides

Labels are not translated to Dari or to Pashtun

FSC have not shared the training materials with MAIL extension.

Share experience and coordinate efforts.

The FSC should invite MAIL in the annual (biannual) planning meeting and the FSC should attend the Sunday meetings lead by the Minister to coordinate activities; FSC should visit the Plant Protection office

Director of Women Extension Services / Home Economics.

1. Did you know about the FSC?

**Yes** No No-reply

Observations: For over a year the Directorate has used the Kabul FSC to acquire seeds and inputs for the Home Gardens programs and for the Youth programs growing vegetables.

2. What is your **perception** of the private initiative? 1=Low; 5=Very high;

1 2 3 4 **5** No reply Not know

Observations: Excellent concept; much better than most donor sponsor projects that seldom has a real gender need sensitivity. Each province should have one Women FSC. It is very difficult for women to access directly quality inputs; this is especially true for the divorcees, widows, and abandons women in Afghanistan who more often are house hold head supporting children and elders.

3. **Relevance** – Is the project Farm Service Centers and its component felt needed in Afghanistan?

A. Effectiveness – Is the project meeting community/farms needs

1 2 3 4 **5** No reply

Observations: Yes. It is a need felt in all 34 provinces and in all 300+ Districts. Women do not have a direct access to agricultural inputs and has no access to technical services delivered by women. The MAIL Women Extension would like to expand the relation to a full partnership with FSC to expand the technical support to women farmers through the seventeen FSCs and though to any other new Women FCS created in Afghanistan.

B. Efficiency – Are project results being achieved cost effectively.

1 2 3 4 5 No reply **Not know**

Observations: Have not enough information to have a perception or to make a recommendation.

C. What work and what didn't: Women FSC in Kabul. Excellent initiative.

Observations: No additional perceptions given.

4. What **lessons** are learned? Women farming needs can support a business willing and capable to provide quality inputs and services to women.

Observations: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Is **sustainability** being address?

Yes No No-reply Not-know

Observations: Have not enough information to have a perception or to make a recommendation. However the Women Extension Directorate is interested in promote sustainability in the FSC's owned and managed by women.

6. General/other comments:

The Minister and the USA Ambassador's wife attended the inauguration of the Kabul Women FSC.

MAIL Women Extension Directorate purchase FSC seeds for the Home and Youth gardens

The WFSC should prioritize the women cooperatives as customers.

The FSC stores are very well organized

Recommendation: Should be at least one Women FSC established in each of the 34 provinces. The main complaint from women is the no direct access to most of the FSC because they are managed and attended by men and because often they do not have ways to pay cash; they need short term lines of credit. Any one helping women to reach profits is gaining a long term loyal customer; once they make the first profits women by natural tendency is to reduce her dependency from credit.

A possible limitation facing FSC is the giving away of inputs by NGOs and donors.

The FSC started without MAIL participation.

## DAIL Completed Surveys

Province: Ghazni

DAIL director Sultan Hussain Abasyar

Date: 07/18/2011

### DAIL Survey

My name is TAMIM A. and I am a member of a team that is providing a mid-term assessment of the Farm Service Centers on behalf of USAID. We have some short questions about your DAIL's relationship with the Farm Service Center. Our conversation should not take longer than 10 to 15 minutes.

**This person did not have a relationship with the Farm Service Center in Ghazni. As a result, he was not able to complete the survey, but he did have a few comments.**

1. My colleagues at DAIL or I have visited the Farm Service Center the following number of times in the past year, June 1, 2010 through July 21, 2011.  
0  1  2  3  4  5  More than 5 times
2. My colleagues at DAIL or I have interacted with the Farm Service Center leadership team, but at locations different from the Farm Service Center, the following number of times in the past year, June 1, 2010 through July 21, 2011.  
0  1  2  3  4  5  More than 5 times

Please provide short answers to the following questions.

3. Please describe your DAIL's advisory role in the operation of the Farm Service Center.  
Major advisory role  medium advisory role  small advisory role   
Comment: DAIL should be considered as one of key implementing partner by any organization that they want to work in agriculture sector.
4. Are the seeds, pesticides, and fertilizers offered by the Farm Service Center accessible to be purchased by many farmers in your province?  
Yes  No  Comment: FSCs service could be one of the profitable sources for Ghazni people as well as a service center for Ghazni farmers, if this enterprise financially supported through different funding agencies for a while, it can be sustainable agricultural service point for farmers.
5. Are the seeds, pesticides, and fertilizers offered by the Farm Service Center affordable to the poorer farmers in this province?

Yes  No  Comment

6. Are the seeds, pesticides, and fertilizers sold by the Farm Service Center good quality?

Yes  No  Comment

7. Is the farmer training and advice provided by the Farm Service Center valuable to local farmers?

Yes  No  Comment

8. Is the farmer training and advice provided by the Farm Service Center offered on a regular basis?

Yes  No  Comment

9. Do members of your DAIL participate in the farmer training provided by the Farm Service Center?

Yes  No  Comment

10. Is the farm equipment rental service offered by the Farm Service Center a valuable service to the province?

Yes  No  Comment

11. Has the Farm Service Center significantly increased the profitability of agriculture in this province?

Yes  No  Comment

12. All other comments are welcome.

FSCs in Ghazni province have weak relation with DAIL directorate. Even, we didn't invite to see from their activities and achievements. Therefore, I strongly suggest from FSCs authorities in Ghazni province to share their information, sources, and achievements with Ghazni's DAIL to have a real on hand success for better future of agriculture in Ghazni province.

Province: Helmand  
DAIL director: Abdullah Ahmadzai  
Date: 07/19/2011

### DAIL Survey

My name is TAMIM A. and I am a member of a team that is providing a mid-term assessment of the Farm Service Centers on behalf of USAID. We have some short questions about your DAIL's relationship with the Farm Service Center. Our conversation should not take longer than 10 to 15 minutes.

**The director in Helmand Province was not working with the FSC. He did have some comments.**

1. My colleagues at DAIL or I have visited the Farm Service Center the following number of times in the past year, June 1, 2010 through July 21, 2011.

0  1  2  3  4  5  More than 5 times

2. My colleagues at DAIL or I have interacted with the Farm Service Center leadership team, but at locations different from the Farm Service Center, the following number of times in the past year, June 1, 2010 through July 21, 2011.

0  1  2  3  4  5  More than 5 times

Please provide short answers to the following questions.

3. Please describe your DAIL's advisory role in the operation of the Farm Service Center. Major advisory role  medium advisory role  small advisory role

Comment: One of the key successes of the project is relation and coordination with other relevant organizations. DAIL should be considered as vital implementing partner to have a start point of capacity building in Afghanistan agriculture. If everyone come here and do something with their professional skills, meanwhile, we faced lack of these professional skills. Obviously, this is not capacity building.

4. Are the seeds, pesticides, and fertilizers offered by the Farm Service Center accessible to be purchased by many farmers in your province?

Yes  No  Comment: We appreciate from any national or international organizations that work in Helmand. But, we suggest from these organizations that at least they inform us about their activities, area of activities, kinds of activities, and purpose of activities.

5. Are the seeds, pesticides, and fertilizers offered by the Farm Service Center affordable to the poorer farmers in this province?  
Yes  No  Comment
  
6. Are the seeds, pesticides, and fertilizers sold by the Farm Service Center good quality?  
Yes  No  Comment
  
7. Is the farmer training and advice provided by the Farm Service Center valuable to local farmers?  
Yes  No  Comment
  
8. Is the farmer training and advice provided by the Farm Service Center offered on a regular basis?  
Yes  No  Comment
  
9. Do members of your DAIL participate in the farmer training provided by the Farm Service Center?  
Yes  No  Comment
  
10. Is the farm equipment rental service offered by the Farm Service Center a valuable service to the province?  
Yes  No  Comment
  
11. Has the Farm Service Center significantly increased the profitability of agriculture in this province?  
Yes  No  Comment
  
12. All other comments are welcome.

Helmand DAIL directorate has strong relation with all other funding agencies and projects which is taking place in this province. Close working relation is a side of our activities with other organization. Therefore, close working relation and involvement of different parties such as government office, Local administrations, and other relevant agencies with AFSA-FSC could improve positive performance of FSCs in Helmand province. “We want to have strong professional relation with CNFA-FSC services.” Abdullah Ahmadzai Said.

Province: Kabul  
DAIL director: Abadul Kabir Farzam  
Date: 07/19/2011

### DAIL Survey

My name is TAMIM A. and I am a member of a team that is providing a mid-term assessment of the Farm Service Centers on behalf of USAID. We have some short questions about your DAIL's relationship with the Farm Service Center. Our conversation should not take longer than 10 to 15 minutes.

1. My colleagues at DAIL or I have visited the Farm Service Center the following number of times in the past year, June 1, 2010 through July 21, 2011.

0  1  2  3  4  5  More than 5 times

2. My colleagues at DAIL or I have interacted with the Farm Service Center leadership team, but at locations different from the Farm Service Center, the following number of times in the past year, June 1, 2010 through July 21, 2011.

0  1  2  3  4  5  More than 5 times

Please provide short answers to the following questions.

3. Please describe your DAIL's advisory role in the operation of the Farm Service Center.  
Major advisory role  medium advisory role  small advisory role

Comment: Proper relation of other agricultural projects with Kabul DAIL directorate showed good improvement. We support FSC services and they should have considered us as their work partner to improve tasks.

4. Are the seeds, pesticides, and fertilizers offered by the Farm Service Center accessible to be purchased by many farmers in your province?

Yes  No  Comment: FSC service is very gainful for local farmers whom they need much agricultural inputs in low price and in near to their farms.

However, I strongly suggest from funding agency that they contribute these FSC for long term to be able to operate after ending of financial supporting from these organizations.

5. Are the seeds, pesticides, and fertilizers offered by the Farm Service Center affordable to the poorer farmers in this province?

Yes  No  Comment

6. Are the seeds, pesticides, and fertilizers sold by the Farm Service Center good quality?

Yes  No  Comment

7. Is the farmer training and advice provided by the Farm Service Center valuable to local farmers?

Yes  No  Comment

8. Is the farmer training and advice provided by the Farm Service Center offered on a regular basis?

Yes  No  Comment

9. Do members of your DAIL participate in the farmer training provided by the Farm Service Center?

Yes  No  Comment

10. Is the farm equipment rental service offered by the Farm Service Center a valuable service to the province?

Yes  No  Comment

11. Has the Farm Service Center significantly increased the profitability of agriculture in this province?

Yes  No  Comment

12. All other comments are welcome.

Fundamentally, FSCs are one of the important parts of farming sector. Through different coordination practices we could have perfect working relation, and in the result we might have good result from the FSC services.

Province: Kandahar  
DAIL staff: Amin Zwhakmal (Senior Advisor for DAIL director)  
Date: 07/20/2011

### DAIL Survey

My name is TAMIM A. and I am a member of a team that is providing a mid-term assessment of the Farm Service Centers on behalf of USAID. We have some short questions about your DAIL's relationship with the Farm Service Center. Our conversation should not take longer than 10 to 15 minutes.

1. My colleagues at DAIL or I have visited the Farm Service Center the following number of times in the past year, June 1, 2010 through July 21, 2011.

0  1  2  3  4  5  More than 5 times

2. My colleagues at DAIL or I have interacted with the Farm Service Center leadership team, but at locations different from the Farm Service Center, the following number of times in the past year, June 1, 2010 through July 21, 2011.

0  1  2  3  4  5  More than 5 times

Please provide short answers to the following questions.

3. Please describe your DAIL's advisory role in the operation of the Farm Service Center.  
Major advisory role  medium advisory role  small advisory role

Comment:

4. Are the seeds, pesticides, and fertilizers offered by the Farm Service Center accessible to be purchased by many farmers in your province?

Yes  No  Comment:

5. Are the seeds, pesticides, and fertilizers offered by the Farm Service Center affordable to the poorer farmers in this province?

Yes  No  Comment

6. Are the seeds, pesticides, and fertilizers sold by the Farm Service Center good quality?

Yes  No  Comment

7. Is the farmer training and advice provided by the Farm Service Center valuable to local farmers?  
Yes  No  Comment
8. Is the farmer training and advice provided by the Farm Service Center offered on a regular basis?  
Yes  No  Comment
9. Do members of your DAIL participate in the farmer training provided by the Farm Service Center?  
Yes  No  Comment
10. Is the farm equipment rental service offered by the Farm Service Center a valuable service to the province?  
Yes  No  Comment
11. Has the Farm Service Center significantly increased the profitability of agriculture in this province?  
Yes  No  Comment
12. All other comments are welcome.

AFSA project should have the close coordination with Kandahar Agricultural offices, especially, with DAIL. Close relation facilitates most of problems within Kandahar province. In the future, we suggest from this project to involve us in their programs and activities to have a clear and developed developing strategy.

Province: Kunar  
DAIL director: Haji Mahsel Khan  
Date: 07/19/2011

### DAIL Survey

My name is TAMIM A. and I am a member of a team that is providing a mid-term assessment of the Farm Service Centers on behalf of USAID. We have some short questions about your DAIL's relationship with the Farm Service Center. Our conversation should not take longer than 10 to 15 minutes.

1. My colleagues at DAIL or I have visited the Farm Service Center the following number of times in the past year, June 1, 2010 through July 21, 2011.  
0  1  2  3  4  5  More than 5 times
2. My colleagues at DAIL or I have interacted with the Farm Service Center leadership team, but at locations different from the Farm Service Center, the following number of times in the past year, June 1, 2010 through July 21, 2011.  
0  1  2  3  4  5  More than 5 times

Please provide short answers to the following questions.

3. Please describe your DAIL's advisory role in the operation of the Farm Service Center.  
Major advisory role  medium advisory role  small advisory role   
Comment
4. Are the seeds, pesticides, and fertilizers offered by the Farm Service Center accessible to be purchased by many farmers in your province?  
Yes  No  Comment
5. Are the seeds, pesticides, and fertilizers offered by the Farm Service Center affordable to the poorer farmers in this province?  
Yes  No  Comment
6. Are the seeds, pesticides, and fertilizers sold by the Farm Service Center good quality?  
Yes  No  Comment
7. Is the farmer training and advice provided by the Farm Service Center valuable to local farmers?

Yes  No  Comment

8. Is the farmer training and advice provided by the Farm Service Center offered on a regular basis?

Yes  No  Comment

9. Do members of your DAIL participate in the farmer training provided by the Farm Service Center?

Yes  No  Comment

10. Is the farm equipment rental service offered by the Farm Service Center a valuable service to the province?

Yes  No  Comment

11. Has the Farm Service Center significantly increased the profitability of agriculture in this province?

Yes  No  Comment

12. All other comments are welcome.

As I believe, these services should be supported for long term to be able to operate without any foreign funding program. Therefore, the management of these FSCs should be strengthened to fully operate and provide technical and non-technical services to all farmers of Kunar Province.

Province: Laghman  
DAIL staff: Daulatzai  
Date: 07/24/2011

### DAIL Survey

My name is TAMIM A. and I am a member of a team that is providing a mid-term assessment of the Farm Service Centers on behalf of USAID. We have some short questions about your DAIL's relationship with the Farm Service Center. Our conversation should not take longer than 10 to 15 minutes.

**He has not interacted with the FST but he had some comments.**

1. My colleagues at DAIL or I have visited the Farm Service Center the following number of times in the past year, June 1, 2010 through July 21, 2011.  
0  1  2  3  4  5  More than 5 times
2. My colleagues at DAIL or I have interacted with the Farm Service Center leadership team, but at locations different from the Farm Service Center, the following number of times in the past year, June 1, 2010 through July 21, 2011.  
0  1  2  3  4  5  More than 5 times

Please provide short answers to the following questions.

3. Please describe your DAIL's advisory role in the operation of the Farm Service Center.  
Major advisory role  medium advisory role  small advisory role   
Comment:
4. Are the seeds, pesticides, and fertilizers offered by the Farm Service Center accessible to be purchased by many farmers in your province?  
Yes  No  Comment:
5. Are the seeds, pesticides, and fertilizers offered by the Farm Service Center affordable to the poorer farmers in this province?  
Yes  No  Comment:
6. Are the seeds, pesticides, and fertilizers sold by the Farm Service Center good quality?  
Yes  No  Comment:
7. Is the farmer training and advice provided by the Farm Service Center valuable to local farmers?

Yes  No  Comment

8. Is the farmer training and advice provided by the Farm Service Center offered on a regular basis?

Yes  No  Comment

9. Do members of your DAIL participate in the farmer training provided by the Farm Service Center?

Yes  No  Comment

10. Is the farm equipment rental service offered by the Farm Service Center a valuable service to the province?

Yes  No  Comment

11. Has the Farm Service Center significantly increased the profitability of agriculture in this province?

Yes  No  Comment

12. All other comments are welcome.

The AFSA project authorities should inform from their activities inside Laghman province. 21<sup>st</sup> of July was the first day that I got information regarding AFSA project activities. However, we suggest from USAID that they should support government, and if they support the people of Afghanistan, why they don't support through MAIL or DAIL.

Province: Zabul  
DAIL director: Bismullah  
Date: 07/20/2011

### DAIL Survey

My name is TAMIM A. and I am a member of a team that is providing a mid-term assessment of the Farm Service Centers on behalf of USAID. We have some short questions about your DAIL's relationship with the Farm Service Center. Our conversation should not take longer than 10 to 15 minutes.

1. My colleagues at DAIL or I have visited the Farm Service Center the following number of times in the past year, June 1, 2010 through July 21, 2011.

0  1  2  3  4  5  More than 5 times

2. My colleagues at DAIL or I have interacted with the Farm Service Center leadership team, but at locations different from the Farm Service Center, the following number of times in the past year, June 1, 2010 through July 21, 2011.

0  1  2  3  4  5  More than 5 times

Please provide short answers to the following questions.

3. Please describe your DAIL's advisory role in the operation of the Farm Service Center.

Major advisory role  medium advisory role  small advisory role

Comment:

4. Are the seeds, pesticides, and fertilizers offered by the Farm Service Center accessible to be purchased by many farmers in your province?

Yes  No  Comment:

5. Are the seeds, pesticides, and fertilizers offered by the Farm Service Center affordable to the poorer farmers in this province?

Yes  No  Comment

6. Are the seeds, pesticides, and fertilizers sold by the Farm Service Center good quality?

Yes  No  Comment

7. Is the farmer training and advice provided by the Farm Service Center valuable to local farmers?

Yes  No  Comment

8. Is the farmer training and advice provided by the Farm Service Center offered on a regular basis?

Yes  No  Comment

9. Do members of your DAIL participate in the farmer training provided by the Farm Service Center?

Yes  No  Comment

10. Is the farm equipment rental service offered by the Farm Service Center a valuable service to the province?

Yes  No  Comment

11. Has the Farm Service Center significantly increased the profitability of agriculture in this province?

Yes  No  Comment

12. All other comments are welcome.

Provision of agricultural inputs such as pesticides, fertilizers, seeds, and machineries in low price can help farmers to improve their activities. Therefore, I am much interested to have working relation with FSC in Zabul to develop a sustainable program and strategy for FSCs.

## PRT Completed Surveys

### Laghman Province, Mehtarlam

1. I have visited the Farm Service Center the following number of times in the past year, June 1, 2010 through July 21, 2011.  
0      1      2      3      4      5      More than 5 times  
          2
  
2. I have interacted with the Farm Service Center leadership team, but at locations different from the Farm Service Center, the following number of times in the past year, June 1, 2010 through July 21, 2011.  
0      1      2      3      4      5      More than 5 times  
Plenty of times (more than 5 times)

For the following statements, please indicate your level of agreement with the following four responses

1 = disagree, 2 = agree, 3 = highly agree, NO = no opinion

3. My PRT plays a major advisory role in the operation of the Farm Service Center.  
1 = disagree, 2 = agree, 3 = highly agree, NO = no opinion           3
  
4. The seeds, pesticides, and fertilizers sold by the Farm Service Center are accessible to be purchased by many farmers in this province.  
1 = disagree, 2 = agree, 3 = highly agree, NO = no opinion           1
  
5. The seeds, pesticides, and fertilizers sold by the Farm Service Center are affordable to the poorer farmers in this province.  
1 = disagree, 2 = agree, 3 = highly agree, NO = no opinion           3
  
6. The seeds, pesticides, and fertilizers sold by the Farm Service Center are good quality.  
1 = disagree, 2 = agree, 3 = highly agree, NO = no opinion           3
  
7. The farmer training and advice provided by the Farm Service Center is valuable to local farmers.  
1 = disagree, 2 = agree, 3 = highly agree, NO = no opinion           1
  
8. The farmer training and advice provided by the Farm Service Center is offered on a regular basis.  
1 = disagree, 2 = agree, 3 = highly agree, NO = no opinion           1
  
9. The farm equipment rental services offered by the Farm Service Center are a valuable service to the province.  
1 = disagree, 2 = agree, 3 = highly agree, NO = no opinion           3

10. The Farm Service Center has significantly increased the profitability of agriculture in this province.

1 = disagree, 2 = agree, 3 = highly agree, NO = no opinion 3

11. All other comments are welcome.

In Laghman Province, the USAID implementing partner indicated that we have three FSC in the province, but for the past 18 months in country, I have visited one of them in Mehtar Lam about a year ago, they were not offering training to farmers or renting of tractors at the center or training room. I am very interested about the program, however, we need to survey the areas very well and motivate interested business men/women to open one. I am working with a business man in Jalalabad to come and set up better operation in Mehtar Lam municipality.

**Qalat Zabul Province Afghanistan – Survey One**

1. I have visited the Farm Service Center the following number of times in the past year, June 1, 2010 through July 21, 2011.

0    1    2    3    4    5    More than 5 times  
\_\_\_\_\_0\_\_\_\_\_

2. I have interacted with the Farm Service Center leadership team, but at locations different from the Farm Service Center, the following number of times in the past year, June 1, 2010 through July 21, 2011.

0    1    2    3    4    5    More than 5 times  
\_1x in\_\_2009\_\_\_\_\_

For the following statements, please indicate your level of agreement with the following four responses

1 = disagree, 2 = agree, 3 = highly agree, NO = no opinion

3. My PRT plays a major advisory role in the operation of the Farm Service Center.

1 = disagree, 2 = agree, 3 = highly agree, NO = no opinion \_\_\_\_1\_\_\_\_\_

4. The seeds, pesticides, and fertilizers sold by the Farm Service Center are accessible to be purchased by many farmers in this province.

1 = disagree, 2 = agree, 3 = highly agree, NO = no opinion \_\_\_\_NO\_\_\_\_\_

5. The seeds, pesticides, and fertilizers sold by the Farm Service Center are affordable to the poorer farmers in this province.

1 = disagree, 2 = agree, 3 = highly agree, NO = no opinion \_\_\_\_NO\_\_\_\_\_

6. The seeds, pesticides, and fertilizers sold by the Farm Service Center are good quality.

1 = disagree, 2 = agree, 3 = highly agree, NO = no opinion \_\_\_\_NO\_\_\_\_\_

7. The farmer training and advice provided by the Farm Service Center is valuable to local farmers.

1 = disagree, 2 = agree, 3 = highly agree, NO = no opinion \_\_\_\_NO\_\_\_\_\_

8. The farmer training and advice provided by the Farm Service Center is offered on a regular basis.

1 = disagree, 2 = agree, 3 = highly agree, NO = no opinion \_\_\_\_NO\_\_\_\_\_

9. The farm equipment rental services offered by the Farm Service Center are a valuable service to the province.

1 = disagree, 2 = agree, 3 = highly agree, NO = no opinion \_\_\_NO\_\_\_\_\_

10. The Farm Service Center has significantly increased the profitability of agriculture in this province.

1 = disagree, 2 = agree, 3 = highly agree, NO = no opinion \_\_\_NO\_\_\_\_\_

11. All other comments are welcome.

I have to answer NO opinion because the PRT and that is the 2 USAID FPO's here have never been informed or contacted by anyone that there was a farm store here since 2009!! We thought it was closed. The DAIL also does not know anything about this farm store!!??? Why were we the PRT and DAIL just informed? I have been here for 3 and a half years as the USDA Agriculture Advisor for Zabul this is not good!!

**Zabul Province – Survey Two**

1. I have visited the Farm Service Center the following number of times in the past year, June 1, 2010 through July 21, 2011.

0      1      2      3      4      5      More than 5 times  
    0    

2. I have interacted with the Farm Service Center leadership team, but at locations different from the Farm Service Center, the following number of times in the past year, June 1, 2010 through July 21, 2011.

0      1      2      3      4      5      More than 5 times  
    1    

For the following statements, please indicate your level of agreement with the following four responses

1 = disagree, 2 = agree, 3 = highly agree, NO = no opinion

3. My PRT plays a major advisory role in the operation of the Farm Service Center.

1 = disagree, 2 = agree, 3 = highly agree, NO = no opinion     1    

4. The seeds, pesticides, and fertilizers sold by the Farm Service Center are accessible to be purchased by many farmers in this province.

1 = disagree, 2 = agree, 3 = highly agree, NO = no opinion     NO    

5. The seeds, pesticides, and fertilizers sold by the Farm Service Center are affordable to the poorer farmers in this province.

1 = disagree, 2 = agree, 3 = highly agree, NO = no opinion     NO    

6. The seeds, pesticides, and fertilizers sold by the Farm Service Center are good quality.

1 = disagree, 2 = agree, 3 = highly agree, NO = no opinion     NO    

7. The farmer training and advice provided by the Farm Service Center is valuable to local farmers.

1 = disagree, 2 = agree, 3 = highly agree, NO = no opinion     NO    

8. The farmer training and advice provided by the Farm Service Center is offered on a regular basis.

1 = disagree, 2 = agree, 3 = highly agree, NO = no opinion     NO

9. The farm equipment rental services offered by the Farm Service Center are a valuable service to the province.

1 = disagree, 2 = agree, 3 = highly agree, NO = no opinion NO

10. The Farm Service Center has significantly increased the profitability of agriculture in this province.

1 = disagree, 2 = agree, 3 = highly agree, NO = no opinion NO

11. All other comments are welcome.

The following comments are from the USAID Field Program Officer (FPO) assigned to Zabul Province from 30 OCT 2008 through 10 JULY 2011, which is to say that the respondent had first-hand knowledge of the program beneficiary. In general, due to the overall security situation in Zabul Province, overt interaction by U.S. Govt. personnel (USAID, USDA, PRT MIL, et al) with the program beneficiary sufficient to respond to (many) of the questions in the above survey (the way the questions are worded) has not been appropriate. The limited detail in this survey response should in no way be taken as a negative/sub-standard assessment of the effectiveness of the program in Zabul, in fact the program beneficiary may very well have been relatively more successful in inverse proportion to direct/overt contact with U.S. Govt. personnel. Of note, to date the program implementing partner made no noticeable effort to proactively engage with U.S. Govt. personnel in order to in any way systematically track/interact within the parameters of this survey, which is to say that if (we) had been aware of this sort of interest in data (we) could have more readily made an appropriate effort to track this sort of information.

**Kandahar Province**

- I have no working knowledge of the Farm Service Centers but will be glad to get it on my radar and attempt to visit it. I do agree that we need to find a way to focus on and support such enterprises.
- I actually haven't been to the center, and so am unable to offer an opinion.

**Kabul Province/City**

- "no experience"

**ANNEX**  
**SURVEYS, INTERVIEWS, AND FOCUS GROUP**  
**QUESTIONS**

**Survey 1**  
**Afghanistan Farm Service Alliance (AFSA) Interview**

**Major Indicators (provide estimates, explain how calculated, offer improvements)**

26. Number of public-private partnerships formed as a result of USG assistance
27. Number of full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs created by USG sponsored alternative
28. Development or alternative livelihood activities
29. Number of rural households benefiting directly from U.S interventions in agriculture
30. Increased sales of licit farm and non-farm products in USG assisted areas over previous year
31. Number of individuals who have received USG supported short-term agricultural sector productivity training (male/females)
32. Number of farmers benefiting from financial agreements

**Minor Indicators (provide estimates)**

33. How many people/farmers have adopted and are using new practices and technologies introduced as a result of extension services of AFSA?
34. CNFA has supported the sale of improved inputs such as seeds, fertilizer, and chemicals; how many (or what percentage) of farmers have been trained to use the new inputs?
35. What percentage of those trained are applying inputs correctly?
36. How much did farmer income increase? For how many farmers? For what period vs. what period?
37. What products are being sold at the FSCs? Which products are generating the most revenue?
38. Who patronizes the FSCs stores? Who uses the extension services? What is the profile of the average/typical customer of the FSCs in terms of occupation, income level, etc.? Are the services appropriate and affordable to farmers?
39. How many clients per month do the FSCs service?
40. What is the average monthly and annual turnover of the FSCs?
41. What is the average monthly and annual profit of the FSCs?

42. How much CNFA funds have been given to the FSCs on average?
43. How much of their own funds have the owners/partners contributed?
44. Review FSCs Selection criteria and process.
45. How much of the FSCs revenue is generated by the provision of extension and equipment rental services vs. retail products?
46. How many total people do the FSCs employ? How many permanent, full-time staff do the stores have? How much are they paid per month?
47. Monthly sales and revenue of FSCs.
48. What is the cost of each major product line? Are products and services affordable to poorer farmers?
49. How many repeat customers do the stores have?
50. Credit provided by FSCs, value of \$, number of farmers, and times.
51. Provide a breakdown and verification of the matching contributions of each FSC owner. Are the contributions cash or in-kind?

**Survey 2**  
**Stakeholder (Farmers, DAIL, and Local Suppliers) Focus Group regarding**  
**Service from Farm Service Center (FSC)**

**INTERVIEWER FILLS OUT AT START**

Province \_\_\_\_\_ District \_\_\_\_\_

Village \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Survey Person \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Survey \_\_\_\_\_ Phone  
Number \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Name of Farm Service  
Center \_\_\_\_\_

12. Does your community have access to quality agricultural inputs & services on time at reasonable prices at your FSC? Yes \_\_\_\_\_: No \_\_\_\_\_
- a. Are the inputs FSC prices competitive (low) in relation to Ag Depot and the local market?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_: No \_\_\_\_\_;
  - b. Are inputs and services affordable to poorer farmers? Yes \_\_\_\_\_; No \_\_\_\_\_;

13. List types of agricultural inputs you sell best at the FSC

- a. Seeds \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Fertilizers \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Insecticides & fungicides \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Small tools \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Rent/lease equipment \_\_\_\_\_
- f. Others \_\_\_\_\_

14. Which of the following extension services provided by the FSC is most valuable for farmers?

- a. What type(s) of extension services
  - 6. Answers at the store \_\_\_\_\_
  - 7. Visits to your field \_\_\_\_\_
  - 8. Workshop/formal training \_\_\_\_\_
  - 9. Use of demonstration plots \_\_\_\_\_
  - 10. Agricultural fair \_\_\_\_\_
- b. What are the preferred training topics by farmers?
  - 8. Land preparation \_\_\_\_\_
  - 9. Crop production \_\_\_\_\_
  - 10. Safe use of pesticides \_\_\_\_\_

11. IPM \_\_\_\_\_

12. Fertilization \_\_\_\_\_

13. Mechanization \_\_\_\_\_

14. Others:

\_\_\_\_\_;

\_\_\_\_\_;

c. Was the training useful in learning about good agricultural practices and new machinery?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

d. Are you satisfied with the skills and knowledge of the agriculturalists providing technical advice at your FSC? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

15. What equipment rental services are being provided by the FSC?

a. Two wheel tractors \_\_\_\_\_

b. Four wheel tractor \_\_\_\_\_

c. Mowers \_\_\_\_\_

d. Other equipment: \_\_\_\_\_;

\_\_\_\_\_;

16. Have you received assistance from the FSC in your livestock production?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

c. Was it valuable the assistance with livestock production? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

d. If the first answer was no, would you like to receive this service: Yes \_\_\_\_\_

No \_\_\_\_\_

17. Have you received assistance from the FSC to market your agricultural production?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

a. Was effective the assistance received to better market your product? Yes \_\_\_\_\_

No \_\_\_\_\_

18. Did the improved seed and fertilizer perform better than the old? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

a. How the new seed and fertilizer perform better?

b. Better quality inputs? \_\_\_\_\_

c. Better germination? \_\_\_\_\_

d. Better yields? \_\_\_\_\_

e. Easier to use? \_\_\_\_\_

f. Other

\_\_\_\_\_

19. Has the FSC increased crop productivity in your region? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

3) For which crops? \_\_\_\_\_; \_\_\_\_\_;  
\_\_\_\_\_;

4) If crop productivity increased; which major factors that influenced this growth?

g. Seed \_\_\_\_\_

h. Fertilizer \_\_\_\_\_

i. Pesticide \_\_\_\_\_

j. Machinery/equipment \_\_\_\_\_

k. Extension / technical advice \_\_\_\_\_

l. Other reasons

\_\_\_\_\_;

20. What are the strengths of the FSC in its service to the communities in your region? Name three (3)

(i) \_\_\_\_\_; (ii) \_\_\_\_\_; (iii)  
\_\_\_\_\_;

21. What are the weaknesses of the FSC in its service to the communities in your region? Name three (3)

(i) \_\_\_\_\_; (ii) \_\_\_\_\_; (iii)  
\_\_\_\_\_;

22. What are your recommendations to improve FSC effectiveness in your region? Name three (3)

(i) \_\_\_\_\_; (ii) \_\_\_\_\_; (iii)

**Survey 3**  
**FSC Staff Focus Group regarding Services from CNFA**

**INTERVIEWER FILLS OUT AT START**

Province \_\_\_\_\_ District \_\_\_\_\_

Village \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Interviewer \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Survey \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Farm Service Center \_\_\_\_\_

8. Besides training and advice (question 2), what type of assistance have you team received from CNFA over the last two years?

- a. Land preparation \_\_\_\_\_ ;was useful the training? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Crop Production \_\_\_\_\_ ;was useful the training? Yes\_\_\_\_\_. No\_\_\_\_\_
- c. Green house construction \_\_\_\_\_ ; was useful the training? Yes\_\_\_\_\_. No\_\_\_\_\_.
- d. Safe use of pesticides \_\_\_\_; was useful the training? Yes \_\_\_\_\_; No \_\_\_\_\_;
- e. IPM \_\_\_\_; was useful the training? Yes \_\_\_\_\_; No \_\_\_\_\_;
- f. Fertilization \_\_\_\_\_; Was useful the training? Yes \_\_\_\_\_; No \_\_\_\_\_;
- g. Mechanization \_\_\_\_\_; Was useful the training? Yes \_\_\_\_\_; No \_\_\_\_\_;
- h. Other training: \_\_\_\_\_; Was useful the training? Yes \_\_\_\_\_; No \_\_\_\_\_;
- i. Other training: \_\_\_\_\_; Was useful the training? Yes \_\_\_\_\_; No \_\_\_\_\_;
- j. Other training: \_\_\_\_\_; Was useful the training? Yes \_\_\_\_\_; No \_\_\_\_\_;

9. Did you and your team receive training and advice from CNFA in the following topics. Explain whether the training was helpful or not.

- a. Completing the M & E form? Yes \_\_\_\_; No \_\_\_\_; was useful the training? Yes \_\_\_\_\_; No \_\_\_\_\_;
- b. Establishing the management procedures of the FSC?  
Yes \_\_\_\_; No \_\_\_\_; was useful the training? Yes \_\_\_\_\_; No \_\_\_\_\_;
- c. Setting up the facilities. Yes \_\_\_\_; No \_\_\_\_; was useful the training? Yes \_\_\_\_\_; No \_\_\_\_\_;
- d. Grading, packaging, and marketing inputs for sale to local farmers.

- Yes \_\_\_; No \_\_\_; was useful the training? Yes \_\_\_; No \_\_\_;
- e. Grading, packaging, and marketing farmer output, according to international standards, for sale to national and international buyers.  
Yes \_\_\_; No \_\_\_; was useful the training? Yes \_\_\_; No \_\_\_;
- f. Develop educational and extension programs for farmers.  
Yes \_\_\_; No \_\_\_; was useful the training? Yes \_\_\_; No \_\_\_;
- g. Learning about Good Agricultural Practices in the use of pesticides, seeds, and fertilizer  
Yes \_\_\_; No \_\_\_; was useful the training? Yes \_\_\_; No \_\_\_;

10. How are the extension services of the FSC is being provided?

- a. Formal classroom training? Yes\_\_\_; No\_\_\_;
- b. Who provides the services? 1) FSC Personnel? Yes\_\_\_\_\_; No \_\_\_\_\_; 2) external consultants? Yes\_\_\_; No \_\_\_; 3) Association? Yes \_\_\_\_\_; No \_\_\_\_\_;
- c. How are they paid for the training?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- d. Do you pay farmers to attend the training? Yes \_\_\_\_\_; No \_\_\_\_\_? Transportation? Yes \_\_\_; No \_\_\_;Lunch Yes \_\_\_; No \_\_\_: Explanation if necessary \_\_\_\_\_

11. How are the rental equipment and services provided?

Pre-paid? Yes \_\_\_; No \_\_\_; Credit? Yes \_\_\_; No \_\_\_; Other:  
\_\_\_\_\_

12. Do you coordinate the activities of your FSC with:

- F. MAIL/DAIL? Yes \_\_\_; No \_\_\_;
- G. Local supplier? Yes \_\_\_; No \_\_\_;
- H. PRT? Yes \_\_\_; No \_\_\_
- I. Other NGOs in your region? Yes \_\_\_; No \_\_\_
- J. Other sponsored projects? Yes \_\_\_; No \_\_\_

13. Can you explain why your FSC has reported results (as measured in indicators) that exceed the original target goals?

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14. What are your recommendations to improve the service of CNFA in establishing new FSC?

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Other observations: \_\_\_\_\_

**Survey 4**  
**Interview with Store Owner(s) and Top Assistant**

**INTERVIEWER FILLS OUT AT START**

Province \_\_\_\_\_ District \_\_\_\_\_

Village \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Interviewer \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Survey \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_, Name of Farm Service

Center \_\_\_\_\_

19. Is your business growing in terms of number of customers and returning customers?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_; No \_\_\_\_\_

20. What are the main challenges in managing your FSC?

A. Lack of essential agricultural inputs \_\_\_\_\_

B. No timely and quality technical services \_\_\_\_\_

C. No access to cash markets and credit \_\_\_\_\_

D. Stability of market sales \_\_\_\_\_

E. Need for management training \_\_\_\_\_

F. Low business skills \_\_\_\_\_

21. How often in the past year have you had cash flow issues?

Once? \_\_\_\_; Twice? \_\_\_\_; Three times? \_\_\_\_; Several times? \_\_\_\_; Estimate how many? \_\_\_\_\_

22. Are your customers satisfied with the quality and availability of inputs and the technical support provided by your FSC? Yes \_\_\_\_; No \_\_\_\_; (1) \_\_\_\_ (2) \_\_\_\_ (3) \_\_\_\_ with 1 low, 2 medium and 3 the highest score

e. Is input quality more important? Yes \_\_\_\_; No \_\_\_\_; (1) – (2) – (3) with 1 low, 2 medium and 3 the highest

f. Is availability of the inputs you need more important? Yes \_\_\_\_; No \_\_\_\_; (1) – (2) – (3)

g. Is timely delivery of technical service more important? Yes \_\_\_\_; No \_\_\_\_; (2) \_\_\_\_ (2) \_\_\_\_ (3) with 1 low, 2 medium and 3 the highest score

23. How many regular/returning customers do you have (estimation): \_\_\_\_\_;

24. How many extension staff, by sector (agronomists, livestock, and machinery) are employed by your FSC?

- g. Agronomist/Pest management: \_\_\_\_\_
- h. Agronomist/Crop production: \_\_\_\_\_
- i. Agronomist: Fertility/Fertilizers: \_\_\_\_\_
- j. Ag Machinery management: \_\_\_\_\_
- k. Livestock: \_\_\_\_\_
- l. Other \_\_\_\_\_

25. Do you keep a permanent inventory? Yes \_\_\_\_\_, No \_\_\_\_\_

26. Do you know which products provide you the best profits?

Which? \_\_\_\_\_;  
 \_\_\_\_\_;

27. Do you give up products hard to sell? Yes \_\_\_\_\_, No \_\_\_\_\_

28. Do you incorporate new products and services requested by farmers? Yes \_\_\_; No \_\_\_;

29. Where does your FSC source their products?

b. Local suppliers \_\_\_; b. Local Distributors/brokers( middle man) \_\_\_; c. Direct Regional distributors \_\_\_\_\_;

h. Direct International suppliers \_\_\_\_\_; e. Direct seed producers (international) \_\_\_\_\_

30. Are they procured

b. Locally \_\_\_\_\_; b. Imported \_\_\_\_\_; c. Through the Association? \_\_\_\_\_;

d. Through AFSA? \_\_\_\_\_ e. Not know: \_\_\_\_\_; f. Others? \_\_\_\_\_

31. What are the three (3) best benefits from being associated with AFSA?

(ii) \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) \_\_\_\_\_

(iii) \_\_\_\_\_

32. What are three (3) best benefits from being associated with the Farm Service Association for Afghanistan (FSAA)?

(iii) \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) \_\_\_\_\_

(iv) \_\_\_\_\_

33. Do you have land dedicated to demonstrating the value of your seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, and livestock products? Yes \_\_\_; No \_\_\_; How many jeribs?  
\_\_\_\_\_

34. When you sell pesticides, do you provide 'labels' that provide rates of application, approved crop usage, and time of year for application? Yes \_\_\_; No \_\_\_;

35. When you sell seeds and fertilizers, do you provide pamphlets and training manuals to the farmers that describe rates of application and time of year for application? Yes \_\_\_; No \_\_\_;

36. Are your seeds, pesticides, office, and training classroom located in different rooms? Yes \_\_\_; No \_\_\_;

**Survey 5**  
**Input Suppliers and Afghanistan National Seed Organization**

1. Did you know about the FSC?

Yes; No; No reply

2. What is your perception of this private initiative? 1=Low; 5=Very high;

1 2 3 4 5 No reply Not know

Observations:

3. Relevance – Are the project Farm Service Centers and its component felt needed in Afghanistan?.

A. Effectiveness – Is the project meeting community/farms needs

1 2 3 4 5 No reply

Observations:

B. Efficiency – Are project results being achieved cost effectively.

1 2 3 4 5 No reply Not know

C. What work and what didn't:

1 2 3 4 5 No reply Not know

4. What lessons are learned?

1 2 3 4 5 No reply Not know

5. Is sustainability being address?

Yes No No-reply Not-know

General perceptions.

## **Survey 6**

### **MAIL Directors and the Deputy Minister**

1. Short presentation of the project and expected relation with MAIL.
  - a. The overall objective of this mid-term evaluation is to review the progress of the program in achieving its goal and to determine the impact of Afghanistan Farm Service Alliance (AFSA) project on the agriculture sector with special focus on Farm Service Centers (FSCs) network that catalyze the growth in rural households income by providing agriculture inputs and services to farmers. The mid-term evaluation will also look into the strengths, weakness and capacity of the Farm Service Center Association for Afghanistan (FSCAA) in terms of extension services, input supply and trade credits made available to farmers.
2. Your perception of the private initiative on the Afghanistan Farm Service Alliance (AFSA) project established in Kangarhar, Helmand, Ghazni, Laghman, Kunar, Zabul, and Kabul women Farm Service Centers
  - a. Relevance – Is the project Farm Service Centers and its component to the needs felt.
  - b. Effectiveness – Whether the project is meeting community/farms needs
  - c. Efficiency – Are project results being achieved cost effectively what work and what didn't).
  - d. What lessons are learned?
  - e. How sustainability is being addressed
  - f. Expected results achievement (attached indicators), what is the reason AFSA project has achieved more than expected results.
3. The USAID is looking for your suggestions on how to improve this initiative with full participation and interactions of other private sectors.

**Survey 7**  
**District Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock (DAIL)**

My name is Tamim A. and I am a member of a team that is providing a mid-term assessment of the Farm Service Centers on behalf of USAID. We have some short questions about your DAIL's relationship with the Farm Service Center. Our conversation should not take longer than 10 to 15 minutes.

13. My colleagues at DAIL or I have visited the Farm Service Center the following number of times in the past year, June 1, 2010 through July 21, 2011.

0    1    2    3    4    5    More than 5 times

14. My colleagues at DAIL or I have interacted with the Farm Service Center leadership team, but at locations different from the Farm Service Center, the following number of times in the past year, June 1, 2010 through July 21, 2011.

0    1    2    3    4    5    More than 5 times

Please provide short answers to the following questions.

15. Please describe your DAIL's advisory role in the operation of the Farm Service Center.

Major advisory role \_\_\_\_\_ medium advisory role \_\_\_\_\_ small advisory role \_\_\_\_\_  
Comment

16. Are the seeds, pesticides, and fertilizers offered by the Farm Service Center accessible to be purchased by many farmers in your province?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Comment

17. Are the seeds, pesticides, and fertilizers offered by the Farm Service Center affordable to the poorer farmers in this province?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Comment

18. Are the seeds, pesticides, and fertilizers sold by the Farm Service Center good quality?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Comment

19. Is the farmer training and advice provided by the Farm Service Center valuable to local farmers?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Comment

20. Is the farmer training and advice provided by the Farm Service Center offered on a regular basis?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Comment

21. Do members of your DAIL participate in the farmer training provided by the Farm Service Center?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Comment

22. Is the farm equipment rental service offered by the Farm Service Center a valuable service to the province?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Comment

23. Has the Farm Service Center significantly increased the profitability of agriculture in this province?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Comment

24. All other comments are welcome.

## Survey 8

### Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT)

My name is Jim Hanson and I am a member of a team that is providing a mid-term assessment of the Farm Service Centers on behalf of USAID. This survey has been sent to the PRT Head, Economics Dept. Head, USDA representative, and USAID representative in your PRT. If you do not have any experience with the Farm Service Center, please return the email to me and indicate 'no experience'. If you have some experience with the Farm Service Center, please complete the following survey. It is very short and should only take between 5 and 10 minutes. If possible, please return your survey by 5 pm. Thursday, July 21. Your responses will be confidential. Please, 'reply to all', I have two email addresses for myself to make sure your survey reaches me.

12. I have visited the Farm Service Center the following number of times in the past year, June 1, 2010 through July 21, 2011.

0      1      2      3      4      5      More than 5 times

\_\_\_\_\_

13. I have interacted with the Farm Service Center leadership team, but at locations different from the Farm Service Center, the following number of times in the past year, June 1, 2010 through July 21, 2011.

0      1      2      3      4      5      More than 5 times

\_\_\_\_\_

For the following statements, please indicate your level of agreement with the following four responses

1 = disagree, 2 = agree, 3 = highly agree, NO = no opinion

14. My PRT plays a major advisory role in the operation of the Farm Service Center.

1 = disagree, 2 = agree, 3 = highly agree, NO = no opinion \_\_\_\_\_

15. The seeds, pesticides, and fertilizers sold by the Farm Service Center are accessible to be purchased by many farmers in this province.

1 = disagree, 2 = agree, 3 = highly agree, NO = no opinion \_\_\_\_\_

16. The seeds, pesticides, and fertilizers sold by the Farm Service Center are affordable to the poorer farmers in this province.

1 = disagree, 2 = agree, 3 = highly agree, NO = no opinion \_\_\_\_\_

17. The seeds, pesticides, and fertilizers sold by the Farm Service Center are good quality.  
1 = disagree, 2 = agree, 3 = highly agree, NO = no opinion \_\_\_\_\_
18. The farmer training and advice provided by the Farm Service Center is valuable to local farmers.  
1 = disagree, 2 = agree, 3 = highly agree, NO = no opinion \_\_\_\_\_
19. The farmer training and advice provided by the Farm Service Center is offered on a regular basis.  
1 = disagree, 2 = agree, 3 = highly agree, NO = no opinion \_\_\_\_\_
20. The farm equipment rental services offered by the Farm Service Center are a valuable service to the province.  
1 = disagree, 2 = agree, 3 = highly agree, NO = no opinion \_\_\_\_\_
21. The Farm Service Center has significantly increased the profitability of agriculture in this province.  
1 = disagree, 2 = agree, 3 = highly agree, NO = no opinion \_\_\_\_\_
22. All other comments are welcome.

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Directory: C:\Windows\system32  
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otm  
Title:  
Subject:  
Author: James Hanson  
Keywords:  
Comments:  
Creation Date: 9/23/2011 2:59:00 AM  
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