

January 1, 2002

Rob Andrew
Disaster Operations Specialist – Afghanistan
USAID/OFDA
1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20523

RE: Award No. AOT-G-00-00-00231-00

Dear Mr. Andrew:

Enclosed please find Mercy Corps' final report for its Drought Relief and Rehabilitation project in Afghanistan, grant # AOT-G-00-00-00231-00. This report covers activities for the duration of the project between September 1, 2000 and August 31, 2001.

Mercy Corps is pleased to report this project accomplished the program goals. On behalf of the men, women and children benefiting from this program, Mercy Corps thanks the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance for its vital support. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or would like additional information.

Best regards,

Kim Johnston
Director, Program Operations

Enclosure



OFDA Final Report**December, 2001**

Organization: Mercy Corps

Mailing Address: 3015 SW First Ave
Portland, OR 97201
(503) 796-6800

Date: December 2001

Contact Person: Lynn Renken
Senior Program Officer, Central and South Asia

Jim White
Regional Director for Pakistan and Afghanistan

Telephone: USA: (503) 796-6840
Pakistan: +92-300-856-9641

Fax: USA: (503) 796-6843
Pakistan: +92-51-287-8083

E-mail Address: USA: lrenken@mercy Corps.org
Pakistan: jmw@isb.pol.com.pk

Program Title: Drought Relief and Rehabilitation in Afghanistan

Country: Afghanistan

Disaster/Hazard: Drought

Period of Report: (Final) 1 Sep. 2000 – 31 Aug. 2001

Program Goals and Objectives

The goal of this program was to prevent drought-related population displacement through the provision of livelihood security. The objectives of the program are as follows:

- 1) To provide potable water to people living in approximately 15 communities in three districts of two provinces of Afghanistan;
- 2) To increase recipients' purchasing power via Cash For Work (CFW) projects¹, thereby facilitating their ability to buy basic food commodities in approximately 15 communities in three districts of two provinces of Afghanistan;
- 3) To increase recipients' ability to retain critical household assets (livestock) in order to facilitate post-drought recovery in 10 villages in 3 districts within two provinces of Afghanistan.

Target Population

The region consisting of southern Iran, Afghanistan, southern Pakistan, and southwestern India is suffering from drought. Late winter of 1999 marked the onset of the drought in Afghanistan, which has caused the most severe water shortage since in living memory. The situation was compounded by low precipitation levels in 1998-1999. This lack of precipitation has caused underground water supply systems (karez) to dry, and water levels in the dams and rivers to drop or disappear at an alarming rate during the second half of 2001. There is insufficient potable and irrigation water, a shortage of crops, fodder, and grazing land for livestock. All have contributed significantly to the displacement of people from their villages. The drought situation in Afghanistan grew worse during the summer of 2000, and with no rain again during the summer of 2001 most crops failed, and approximately 50% of the fruit trees died or were dying. The same plight has befallen livestock. This has serious implications as livestock represent sources of food and milk, and are used by Afghan families as primary forms of capital and savings.

Southern and Central Afghanistan were considered to be the hardest hit areas due to the lack of functioning karez and water systems since the onset of the drought and because a large portion of agriculture and grazing land in these regions is rain-fed. In May of 2000 the UN Coordinator for Afghanistan said the most impacted area to date is southern Afghanistan; specifically the provinces of Kandahar, Helmand, Zabul, Uruzgan and Nimroz. This situation has only grown worse, receiving no rain through September of 2001. When there is low rainfall, the first to suffer from the reduced food availability and the weakened livestock populations are villages that depend on rain-fed cropping and grazing land. As per the Mercy Corps assessments of May of 2000, our interventions have been in the most severely effected communities within Kandahar and Uruzgan provinces.

Throughout this reporting period all program objectives were going well. For instance, tube well installations have been successful, though hampered somewhat by the availability of drilling rigs and geology. Mercy Corps was able to install approximately 150 such tube wells in the three districts in less than one year, which yield potable water to several thousand Afghan people.

¹Cash For Work Projects are of 3 types:

1. Karez (subterranean water supply systems) Rehabilitation/Extension
2. Spring Repair (spring repair numbers are subsequently included in karez numbers)
3. Road Repair

Program Performance

Objective 1: To provide potable water to people living in approximately 15 communities in 3 districts of two provinces in Afghanistan.

Activity 1: Drilling tube wells in approximately 15 communities in 3 districts of two provinces in Afghanistan.

The provision of potable water meant the drilling of tube wells. The drilling was done using a 400 lb. impacting rod suspended from a tripod rigging. Despite a very challenging operating environment in southern Afghanistan (geologically, geographically, politically, logistically), Mercy Corps was able to install 148 such tube wells in less than one year. These tube wells provide potable water to approximately 30,000 Afghan people.

Below are the district tube well totals for this reporting period. (Please note that the average family size is 7).

District Name	No. of Tube Wells Completed	No. of Families Served	No. of People Served
Shah Wali Kot	45	1496	10,472
Nish	52	1189	8,323
Tirin Kot	51	1656	11,592
Totals	148	4341	30,387

Activity 2: Rehabilitate and/or extend Karez.

In many of the villages existing karez (karez being both singular and plural) are old and require extensive maintenance. Since these systems tend to be very old, much maintenance needed to be done to rehabilitate and/or extend them. Since karez projects are potentially both CFW and potable water projects, they had multiple benefits: First, they fulfilled the overall program goal of preempting drought-induced migration. Second, these projects enabled Mercy Corps to inject money into the local economy by employing several hundred laborers to repair and/or extend karez systems. With this income, laborers were able to support their families. Approximately several thousand people were being supported by karez projects. Another benefit of karez projects is that they helped to develop and/or improve a source of clean water that is in many cases potable. Still another benefit from these projects was that they increased the flow rates in virtually all karez rehabilitations.

On the following page, the district karez totals are listed:

District Name	No. Of Karez Rehabilitations	No. Of Workers Employed	No. Of Families Served By Karez
Shah Wali Kot	32	595	790
Nish	14	405	1342
Tirin Kot	10	278	354
Totals	56	1,278	2486

Activity 3: Establish/monitor village water management committees in each of the villages receiving Mercy Corps tube wells.

Village water management committees have been established in all 3 districts. This generally means that for every tube well there is at least one village elder appointed as its general custodian. These elders are involved in the installation of their respective pumps and are trained in their basic maintenance. Also, there is one mechanic appointed per district to sort out bigger problems should they arise. Local villagers all chip in and pay each mechanic a total of 27 kg. of wheat for their work at harvest time. Throughout various villages in Nish and Shah Wali Kot Districts, soak-away pits have been constructed to guard against malaria and other waterborne disease.

Indicators for measuring success of meeting objective #1:

- More than 47,000 people have access to adequate potable water²
- The successful establishment of a water management committee in each of the targeted villages

Objective 2: To increase peoples' purchasing power, thereby facilitating their ability to buy basic food commodities in approximately 15 communities in three districts of two provinces in Afghanistan.

Activity 1: Implement the selected and designed CFW projects. (Chart reprinted from activity 2 of objective 1).

Below are the district karez totals:

District Name	No. Of Karez Rehabilitations	No. Of Workers Employed	No. Of Families Served By Karez
Shah Wali Kot	32	595	790
Nish	14	405	1342
Tirin Kot	10	278	354
Totals	56	1,278	2486

² 47,000 = 30,387 tube well beneficiaries + (2,486 x 7) karez beneficiaries

Below are the district CFW road totals: (please note that in Shah Wali Kot the villagers opted unanimously for karez projects over road repair projects).

District Name	No. Of Road Projects	No. Of Kilometers Repaired	No. Of Workers Employed Per Day
Shah Wali Kot	-	-	-
Nish	2	23	360
Tirin Kot	2	28	194
Totals	4	51	554

Activity 2: Continually monitor works in progress.

Work sites were routinely inspected on field trips to ensure the quality and progress of the work being done, as well as to troubleshoot.

Indicators for measuring success of meeting objective 2:

- More than 450 families possessed increased purchasing power due to involvement with CFW programs
- 80 percent of families remained in their respective communities.

Objective 3: To increase peoples' ability to retain critical household assets (livestock) in order to facilitate post-drought recovery in 15 communities of the three districts of two provinces of Afghanistan.

The chart below shows the ten villages in each district that were assisted with livestock security intervention. In each village there were twenty-five families receiving assistance. Each family received assistance for four sheep or female goats and five of the families received assistance for one ram or male goat in addition to their four ewes or goats. The total number of animals per village was 105.

Shah Wali Kot (Kandahar Prov.)	Nish District (Kandahar Prov.)	Tirin Kot District (Uruzgan Prov.)
Gul Khan	Korbozak Kalay	Kosh
Nahri Khair	Ghanigay	Mullah Ismail
Chiena 1	Daylanor	Kochkin
Chaqui	Shah Wez	Dianarkhel
Sidiq Mary	Suray	Babakarzo
Choghak	Sherak	Sayeedan
Jalalnden	Haji Alam Kalay	Sabzabad
Lal Mohammad	Qasem Kalay	Kattha Khinjak
Podina	N/A	Malak Zareen
Tasildar	N/A	Khush Kharab

Activity 1: Distribution of “shukrana” (livestock feed)

Ten villages in each of the 3 districts (30 villages in total) were selected for the livestock-feeding component of the program. Monthly shukrana distributions were on going throughout the program with each MC-supported sheep receiving 300 grams of feed per day, or 9 kilograms per month. It is worth noting here that these daily 300 grams represent necessary nutrients only. The livestock must also graze on wild desert flora in addition, for dietary bulk.

Activity 2: Livestock Monitoring

Two livestock monitors per district traveled by motorcycle verifying the general health of Mercy Corps livestock. In addition, expatriate staff did random, unannounced livestock general health checks.

Activity 3: Treatment and Vaccination Campaigns

Below is a table reproduced from Mercy Corps’ Livestock Coordinator. It details the *treatment* activities of 3 Veterinary Health Units from the period of 1 September 2000 to 31 August 2001.

Treatment	Cattle	Sheep	Goats	Equine	Camels	Poultry	Total
Respiratory Disease	96	2,588	269	23	7	194	3177
Diarrhea	50	119	200	-	2	335	706
Other Infectious Disease	11	1704	119	-	4	36	1,874
Ecto-Parasite	98	4,318	7,056	1	186	25	11,684
Endo-Parasite	770	35,394	5,409	89	62	484	42,208
Castration	7	286	13	-	-	-	306
Other Surgeries	14	46	10	28	1	-	99
Reproductive Disorders	38	17	18	-	-	-	73
Pregnancy Tests	24	-	-	-	-	-	24
Other	315	379	132	15	27	-	868
Totals	1,423	44,851	13,226	156	289	1074	61,019

Program wide Mercy Corps vaccinated livestock against 4 diseases: Anthrax, Enterotoxaemia, Pasteurelloses and Sheep Pox. Below is a table reproduced from Mercy Corps' Livestock Coordinator that details the *vaccination* activities of 3 Veterinary Health Units from the period of 1 September 2000 to 31 August 2001.

Vaccination	Cattle	Sheep	Goats	Equine	Camels	Poultry	Total
Anthrax	-	9721	4,260	-	-	-	13,981
Enterotoxaemia	-	14,269	5,975	-	-	-	20,244
Black Quarter	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Heamorg. Sept.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
CCPP	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pastreulosis	-	10,978	4,972	-	-	-	15,950
Sheep Pox	-	3,975	-	-	-	-	3,975
Newcastle Dis.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other:	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Vaccines	-	38,943	15,207	-	-	-	54,150

Indicators for measuring success of meeting Objective #3:

- 90% of targeted families still possessed healthy livestock assets at the end of the project period
- 100% of the targeted population were treated by Mercy Corps' veterinary field units

Conclusion

Mercy Corps has operated in Afghanistan in different capacities and locations since 1986. Throughout this period we have always achieved our proposed objectives. Mercy Corps was able to successfully accomplish its overall program goal: To prevent population displacement through the provision of livelihood security. To do this, Mercy Corps continued to overcome one of the most challenging operating environments in the world. Now, as we regroup and plan (in light of the events of September 11), we will continue to provide relief aid to the people of Afghanistan using all available resources.

Geologically, the first program objective of tube well installations was challenging from the beginning. It seemed there was no end to the hard rock that broke drill bits, slowed drilling times or prevented drilling all together. This meant changing a location slightly, which always meant a loss of precious program funds and time. There were also numerous contractor and supply problems as rigs and replacement parts were hard to find.

Geographically, the program area was vast. This fact was dramatically compounded by the extraordinarily rugged terrain of Afghanistan. Field offices and field sites were several hours apart. This meant that a great deal of time was spent travelling between field offices or field sites. Moreover, since we were short staffed due to the lack of qualified expatriate staff willing to work in Afghanistan, travelling time cut into expatriate project management time. Despite this problem however, we were successful.

In the last couple of months, several program improvements were made. We purchased new vehicles and hired new drivers. And in order to free up senior English speaking national staff, we had hired interpreters for field and office work. Accounting systems, reporting, and security protocol were becoming solid. Inter-agency meetings were going well, good information was being exchanged and professional collaborations being developed.

This was due in large part to our growing numbers of staff. During the last two months we acquired another full time expatriate project manager, giving us a total of two. We had also recently added an expatriate Administration, Logistics & Finance Manager.

Upon hearing and seeing the events of September 11, we felt sorrow for the United States and for all those nations whose countrymen were at work there. We hope for world peace. Also, we regret and are deeply saddened that we had to leave Afghanistan before our work was done, and will surely return as soon as conditions permit.

Speaking as one voice, we, the staff of Kandahar, are all very proud, and very honored, to have been a part of the drought relief effort in Afghanistan.