

Road #6 Rapid Assessment Survey: Azra to Sherzad Road (Azra, Hisarak & Sherzad Districts)

The SPR-SEA Road # 6 Community Outreach Team conducted a Rapid Assessment survey from April 13–26, 2008 in the villages located throughout the road alignment. Below is a synthesis of findings and the Community Outreach Department's recommendations for locally tailored outreach activities based on these findings.

Road #6 junction: Sherzad district to the left and IRD Road leading to Hisarak district on the right (February 26, 2008)



Background

Road #6 begins in Akbarkhel bazaar of Azra district, passes through Hisarak district and ends in Kolalan village of Sherzad district. The road covers 28 km in Azra district, 21 km in Hisarak and 14 km in Sherzad. Road #6 connects the provinces of Logar and Nangarhar and serves an estimated population of 83,365.¹ The start point of the road is also close to Zazai district of Paktya province.

Road #6 serves a total of 28 villages. The villages along the alignment in Azra district include Akbarkhel, Nazarkhel, Noor Khan Khel, Nasratkhel, Janikhel, Shahidano, Chotra and Spando Kas. In Hisarak they include Nawar, Khwaja Bar Baba, Spina Qala, Wach Siyaw, Khanjar, Jokan, Baghaki and Lajgar. The villages covered in Sherzad are Petlow, Bar Ashpan, Malim Gul Mohammad Korrona, Srow Khawro Kalay, Sray Kalay, Gul Agha Korrona, Kandi Koroona, Khata Kalay, Dag Korrona, Gandomak, and Kolalan.

The alignment is used frequently by Kuchi nomads who migrate from Logar to Nangarhar and the north during the winter to take advantage of the warmer weather. The tribal composition of the area is represented through 11 major tribes in Azra (Akbar Khel, Babar, Saifudin Khel, Maroof Khel, Zaman Khel, Qasim Khel, Sultan Khel, Imran Khel, Kochyan, Abdul Rahman Khel and Albi Khel), 8 major tribes in Hisarak (Jabarkhel, Maroofkhel, Nasar, Gari, Maikhel, Sakan, Shinwari and Momand), and 8 major tribes in Sherzad (Toto, Marki Khel, Kodi Khel, Mama Khel, Kolalan, Petlaw, Gandomak and Ashpan).

Unemployment is a significant problem along Road #6, although the area is rich in natural resources and agricultural production. Local complain that the poor quality road serves as the major impediment to the export of local crops, wool/sheep goods and other locally produced commodities. There are 6 bazaars located along the road, but residents of the area still travel 31 km to Jalalabad to take advantage of more affordable items, and also improved health care facilities.



Poor condition of Gandomak bazaar, Sherzad district (April 27, 2008)

During the rapid assessment, the Community Outreach field team met with key local community leaders, Shura members, and local and regional government officials along the road

¹ The Community Outreach field team collected this population data from 2.5 km on each side of the road alignment through consultation with the local shuras and government officials.

alignment and in Nangarhar and Logar provinces to secure their active support for the road project. The team also established positive relations with the Chief of Police and District Governor for Azra and have similar meetings scheduled for Hisarak and Sherzad. In preparation for construction, the locally-recruited Community Outreach field team is prepared to work with construction managers, engineers and local subcontractors to identify and recruit local construction workers directly from communities along the road alignment. Labor identification will be undertaken through close consultation with respected community groups in the area.

There are few development assistance activities in the area and the local residents warmly welcome support from the SPR-SEA project.

Key findings:

Road Condition/Area Topography:

- The alignment to date passes through varied topography ranging from flat desert plains to inaccessible mountain areas.
- There are few private landowners along Road #6, but many farmers share the land located directly along the alignment (an estimated 25 in Azra, 45 in Hisarak and 10 in Sherzad).
- All three districts benefit from their location near the White Mountains ("sefid spinghar"), which provide irrigation to agricultural fields in the spring when the snow melts. There are also various watersheds along the alignment, but assistance is needed to direct water into desert areas.
- Transport is challenging as many residents cannot afford cars and instead take donkeys to travel between villages. In Azra, only four wheel drive vehicles can be used to due steep mountainous terrain.
- There is limited side drainage along Road #6. Road survey team will review the need for road-related structures such as culverts, retention walls and causeways in consultation with the communities.

Hotel in Azra district along Road #6 (April 20, 2008)



Market/Local Economy:

- There are 6 bazaars located along the road alignment in Akhbarkhel, Wachkhwar, Hisarak, Toto, Gandomak and Kolalan. The bazaars sell agricultural products such as timber, wheat, corn, cotton, nuts, apricots, grapes, pomegranates, potatoes and tomatoes grown mostly in Azra and Sherzad.
- Most of the agricultural items are consumed locally due to the bad condition of the road.
- The Kuchi nomads graze their sheep in the area and sell wool and various animal products to the local markets.
- Although there are bazaars established along the road, residents still travel 31 km to Jalalabad for a better selection of items.
- There are 4 gas stations along the road alignments: 2 in Azra district, one in Hisarak bazaar and one in Sherzad district.
- Carpentry is a popular local trade and there was a vocational training program in Akhbarkhel funded in 2007 by GTZ.

- There is great potential for development of a tourism industry and there is one hotel along Road #6 that has been there 18 years. Prior to decades of conflict, Afghans frequented Azra and Sherzad to spend summer vacations.
- Electricity is a barrier to industrial development along Road #6, but potential exists for hydropower. NSP established a micro-hydro electricity plan at the start point of the road in Azra that supplies power to 30 residential houses in Akbarkhel, as well as government offices in Azra.
- There is small-scale mining of talc and marble in Sherzad for export mostly to Pakistan.
- There is no bus system along Road #6, but there are two organized local taxi stands: one in Hisarak bazaar and the other in Toto village of Sherzad.
- The Nangarhar transport department charges a 70 afghani road tax that is enforced in Sherzad and Hisarak. There are collection points for this directly on the SPR-SEA alignment. There is currently no fee charged in Azra district along Road #6.

Women:

- Woman in Azra, Sherzad and Hisarak districts are unable to move freely outside their homes and are deprived from education, health facilities and employment opportunities.
- There is a Women's Department 31 km away in Jalalabad city and one located 22 km away in Logar (for which there is no connecting road), but no women's government office located on Road #6.
- There are 4 NSP-formed women's CDCs in Hisarak district in the villages of Jokan, Lajgar, Nawar and Khanjar. The CDCs were recently established and are not yet active in the area.
- Vocational and midwife training is identified as a priority for women living along Road #6.
- Community Outreach Gender Specialist will work closely with the Road #6 field team to determine an appropriate methodology for outreach activities inclusive of women residing in the road alignment area.

Health Care:

- There is no hospital located on Road #6. The nearest hospital is located 31 km away in Jalalabad city. The Ministry of Health is currently planning to build a 20 bed hospital in Hisarak.
- 3 clinics are located on the alignment in Azra: 1 in Kharoti, 1 in Akbarkhel and 1 in Mangal village. One of the clinics specializes in tuberculosis and another in maternity health.
- 2 clinics are located on the alignment in Hisarak
- 3 clinics are located on the alignment in Sherzad: 1 in Markikhel, 1 in Mamakhel and 1 in Toto. In Gandamak there is a private delivery clinic run by a female doctor.
- Health Net International is active along Road #6 and has set up 20 first aid mobile centers in Hisarak and another 10 in Azra. The mobile centers provide emergency treatment to both men and women.
- Overall, the condition of the clinics is acceptable, but patients facing serious health problems must travel to Jalalabad for advanced treatment.
- Patients complain of difficult road conditions to reach the above health facilities and a high infant mortality rate.

Education:

Nawar Primary School, Hisarak district (May 7, 2008)



- The school season in Azra, Sherzad & Hisarak districts starts at the beginning of April and ends in the beginning of January. Students have a 3 month winter break due to inclement weather conditions.
- In Azra there are 12 primary schools, 2 high schools and 1 madrasa located near the road alignment. The total number of students attending these schools are 17,380 of which 5,780 are girls and 11,600 are boys.
- There are 17 primary schools, 2 high schools and 1 madrasa in Hisarak district along the Road 6 alignment. 24,500 students attend these schools, of which 9,600 are girls and 14,900 are boys.
- In Sherzad there are 14 primary schools, 2 high schools and 3 madrasas located near the road alignment. 5,010 girls and 13,990 boys attend these schools, making a total of 19,000 students.
- Most of the schools along Road #6 have buildings, but lack boundary walls for privacy. Teachers and students complain of the severe lack of books and other study materials.

Security:

- Security along Road #6 is considered good with no major cases of robbery, crime or insurgent activity.
- There is currently a ban on poppy production in the area, so the communities are eager to welcome any assistance that may provide them alternate income generation.
- The local Shuras, maliks, religious leaders and other influential inhabitants of the area pledge their support for the safe and timely delivery of the SPR-SEA project.
- Sherzad district is covered under a security agreement in Khogyani between the elders and local government. At present, Hisarak and Azra do not have such an agreement in place.
- The Community Outreach field team met with the Chief of Police and Deputy District Governor for Azra district and have coordination meetings planned with the Chiefs of Police for Hisarak and Sherzad districts.
- Residents of the area are ready to recommend local security to be hired by the contractor.

Recommendations for SPR-SEA Programming

Issue	Proposed Activity	Action upon CTO activity approval	Benefit	Estimated Cost
Infrastructure				
Akbarkhel, Wachkhwar, Hisarak, Toto, Gandomak & Kolalan bazaars	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Build area w/ shoulders, small sidewalks, ditch, crossways, entrance ways for 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify key communities along the road ▪ Involve communities in the final location 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Creation and expansion of roadside businesses and service shops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Approx. \$100,000 per bazaar based on estimation by Chief

Issue	Proposed Activity	Action upon CTO activity approval	Benefit	Estimated Cost
lack appropriate infrastructure to respond to local consumers and road traffic	<p>pedestrians to businesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop service roads for bazaar Storm drainage system that drains excess water away from the road/bazaar area 	<p>and design of the local bazaar</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify local subcontractors to help build the bazaar Launch RFP for bazaar contract among local contracting firms 	<p>catering to local community and road traffic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Easier access to store fronts for women, the elderly and disabled Diversification of local commodities due to improved market access Long term economic benefits to local farmers 	<p>Engineer</p> <p>ESTIMATED TOTAL COST: \$600,000</p>
Improve access to drinking water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local contractor is hired to construct bore-wells and appropriate irrigation structures where required along the road alignment Develop and improve system of potable and non-potable irrigation to support potential agriculture and animal husbandry activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct local training on water management Meet with relevant local government officials and community leaders to discuss the benefits of an improved irrigation system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support construction activities Improve quality of drinking water Support local capacity to build/maintain local irrigation system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> STTA: 6 days @ \$200/day = \$1,200 1 deep well every 2 km @ \$2000 each for 14-18 wells = \$28-36K 5 training workshops @ \$500 each = \$2,500 3 meetings with local government officials @ \$150 each = \$450 <p>ESTIMATED TOTAL COST: TBD based on needs assessment</p>
Economic/Income Generating Activities				
Limited vehicle repair / maintenance shops along the proposed road	Support vocational training on vehicle maintenance to local community members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct local capacity survey on technical skills in the catchment area Conduct trainings/ workshops on vehicle maintenance and shop management Launch RFP to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support / develop local capacity and long term employment opportunities Source for potential road maintenance contribution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> STTA: 10 days @ \$200/day = \$2,000 2 trainings @ \$500/training = \$1,000 Grant fund for mechanic-related items for non-cash

Issue	Proposed Activity	Action upon CTO activity approval	Benefit	Estimated Cost
		Nangarhar/Logar-based mechanic associations, labor unions and community-based technical groups for expansion/ creation of vehicle repair shops		grants @ \$30,000 ESTIMATED TOTAL COST: \$33,000
Local livestock and agriculture source depleted	Establish livestock, poultry and/or dairy production farms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Launch RFP to local communities within catchment area to receive non-cash grant for livestock farm ▪ Launch RFP for performance based grant for local community groups to prepare meals for construction workers ▪ Conduct capacity building trainings and exercises on animal husbandry and livestock farming ▪ Through Gender Specialist, consult Women's Department and women's CDC to encourage and determine feasibility of women's involvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Replenishes supply of area livestock ▪ Income generating activity for community to provide meals for construction workers ▪ Improves nutrition and health of local population ▪ Build capacity of women to manage and operate poultry farms ▪ Build capacity of local communities in animal husbandry and agricultural production best practices ▪ Support development of the agricultural sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ STTA: 18 days @ \$200/day = \$3,600 ▪ 5 training workshops @ \$500 each = \$2,500 ▪ Grant fund for agricultural and/or livestock-related items for non-cash grants @ \$20,000 ▪ Cash grants for labor meals @ \$5,000 ▪ 5 meetings with local government, womens shuras @ \$150/meeting = \$750 <p>ESTIMATED TOTAL COST: \$32,000</p>
Existing carpentry/wood-working industry underdeveloped	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Vocational training in carpentry/wood-working ▪ Economic cooperative development ▪ Revolving grant among cooperative members for business/economic development activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conduct economic/market assessment of carpentry industry along road ▪ Identify local wood-working groups to develop cooperative ▪ Conduct trainings relevant to the needs and capacity of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support private sector development ▪ Increase local prospects for off-farm employment ▪ Increase opportunities for developing small scale supporting industries and supply industries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ STTA: 12 days @ \$200/day = \$2,400 ▪ 10 of trainings @ \$500 = \$5,000 ▪ Revolving grant at \$30,000

Issue	Proposed Activity	Action upon CTO activity approval	Benefit	Estimated Cost
		cooperative members	in the communities along the road	ESTIMATED TOTAL COST: ▪ \$38,000
No regular transport services along road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the development of a local transport service along Road 6 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct needs survey of local communities within the catchment area to determine whether a regular transport service is demanded Develop project plan, if necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate efficient movement of goods and people along Road 6 Improve integration between Azra, Hisarak & Sherzad districts Increase employment opportunities and capacity building 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> STTA : 6 days @ \$200/day = \$1,200 TBD <p>TOTAL: TBD</p>
Spoilage of agricultural goods prohibit sale of goods to other markets and decrease value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish cold storage facility along the road to be utilized by local producers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct assessment for cold storage Identify local producers to develop cold storage usage/strategy Conduct trainings to local producers on cold storage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support agricultural development Decrease spoilage of locally produced agricultural goods Increase agricultural sales to markets outside Azra, Hisarak & Sherzad districts, such as Jalalabad, Logar & Pakistan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> STTA: 7 days @ \$200/day= \$1,400 5 trainings @ \$500 = \$2,500 Construction of cold storage facility at \$20,000 + depending on size <p>ESTIMATED TOTAL COST: TBD</p>
High transport costs prohibit local business and consumers to transport goods along road alignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic cooperative development Support transport cost sharing activities among cooperative members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct transport / shipping assessment along Road 6 in close coordination with existing community groups Facilitate the development of a local cooperative among business, producers and consumers that use/need low cost shipping If there is no organized shipping company, identify local businesses/ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shipping/transport costs are reduced for local shop owners and consumers Local capacity is enhanced Consumer needs are met Supports community buy-in for long term road maintenance to keep shipping costs low and commodities moving along road alignment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> STTA: 10 days @ \$200/day = \$2,000 2 roundtables @ \$250/roundtable= \$500 5 trainings @ \$500/training = \$2,500 <p>ESTIMATED TOTAL COST: \$5,000</p>

Issue	Proposed Activity	Action upon CTO activity approval	Benefit	Estimated Cost
		community members to develop shipping business for consumers/businesses along road <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct business/market-related trainings 		
Education				
School supplies limited	In-kind donation of school supplies	Conduct needs survey in local schools to determine appropriate materials	Support local education sector	TBD
Teachers lack teaching materials and other basics	In-kind donation of Ministry of Education-supported books and teaching materials	Conduct needs survey in local schools to determine level of education and appropriate materials	Support local education sector	TBD
Opportunities for Women's Vocation Training limited or non-existent	Support vocational training classes to women in priority areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct local capacity survey on women's skills in the catchment area Conduct roundtables with 4 women's CDCs in Hisarak to identify local priorities for women Launch RFP to Nangarhar/Logar-based training providers for curriculum development and classroom training 	Increase women's access to income-earning opportunities Support capacity development to women's CDCs in Hisarak	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cost and frequency of trainings TBD 3 roundtables @ \$250/roundtable= \$750 TOTAL: TBD
Security/Safety				
Road safety among community members, particularly local children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement a locally-appropriate road safety campaign Target local schools, women's community groups, local businesses and shops, and community leaders Locally-designed murals that are drawn along SPR- 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess feasibility of setting up a Women, Family and Community safety workshop Launch training of trainer program for primary school administrators and educators on road safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decrease in road-related injuries or fatalities, traffic accidents and speeding Build community ownership of the road project Increase local knowledge of and capacity for road maintenance 	20 events @ \$200/event = \$4,000 \$100/mural, total number = TBD ESTIMATED TOTAL COST: \$5,000

Issue	Proposed Activity	Action upon CTO activity approval	Benefit	Estimated Cost
	build retaining walls, etc that support road safety/road benefit to local communities			

Recommendations for USAID Implementing Partner Programming

Issue	Proposed Activity	Recommended USAID Implementing Partner	Action upon CTO activity approval
Schools along Road 6 lack much-needed boundary walls	Construction of boundary walls	TBD by USAID	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate activities with implementing partner • Introduce partner to SPR Field Team Counterparts for community introductions, etc.
Access to electricity limited or non-existent	Conduct local assessment to determine feasibility of small-scale electrification projects (hydropower, etc) ²	TBD by USAID	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult local Ministry of Power to determine feasibility and payment options • Coordinate activities with implementing partner • Introduce partner to SPR Field Team Counterparts for community introductions, etc.

² During the Rapid Assessment, the Community Outreach field teams received numerous requests from the communities for hydropower projects in Kudikhel & Markhled valleys in Sherzad, as well as Nawar valley in Hisarak where there is abundant water from mountain sources.