Overview of the RALF Program

Najib Malik
RALF Programme Manager
ICARDA

National Saffron Workshop: Production, Processing, Quality Control, Marketing
Nov 14-16, 2006, Herat

www.icarda.cgiar.org/RALFweb/RALF.html
RALF is a “Competitive Research Fund”

- Operates through a competitive research fund to attract a range of innovative proposals for applied research into natural resource-based livelihoods,

- Projects are proposed and implemented by ‘mini-consortia’ comprising partnership of:
  
  - international or non-Afghan research institution, and
  - an Afghan-based partner with experience in the proposed area
  
- This combination is intended to maximise synergy between international research practice and knowledge of local Afghan context.

- Project Review Panel: Projects were selected by an independent panel
The Transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan has adopted a National Drug Control Strategy (NDCS) with objectives of reducing poppy cultivation by 70% in five years and complete elimination in ten years. The United Kingdom coordinates international counter-narcotics in Afghanistan, and has adopted a plan to support implementation of the NDCS.

The Research in Alternative Livelihoods Fund (RALF) is a component of the UK's development assistance programme to Afghanistan which is administered by the Department for International Development (DFID) (http://www.dfid.gov.uk). The purpose of RALF is to develop and promote innovative alternative livelihood options for rural Afghans currently economically dependent on opium poppy, which will contribute to the overall goal of sustainable elimination of opium poppies in Afghanistan.

The overall scope of RALF is applied research and promotion of natural resource-based livelihoods, including post-harvest processing and services, specifically directed at farmers and other rural stakeholders in areas currently affected by poppy production.

RALF is managed by the International Centre for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA) which has its headquarters in Aleppo, Syria, and an office in Kabul (http://www.icarda.cgiar.org). ICARDA is the lead center of the Future Harvest Consortium for the Rehabilitation of Agriculture in Afghanistan (FHCRAA) (http://www.icarda.cgiar.org/afghanistan/index.html).

RALF is using a competitive research grant mechanism to mobilise innovative ideas for the development and promotion of alternative livelihoods opportunities in Afghanistan. The following pages on this site provide:

- further background and rationales for RALF,
- outcome of the first request for proposals (now closed),
- details of the second request for proposals (now open),
- guidelines for submitting proposals,
- details of the review and selection process;
- initial information on project implementation, monitoring and evaluation,
- a facility for registering interest and/or seeking partners, and
- responses to frequently asked questions (FAQs)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Partners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01-03</td>
<td>Village Decision Driven Research Project</td>
<td>Laghman</td>
<td>Washington State University DACCAR MAI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01-04</td>
<td>Introduction, Evaluation and Promotion of Appropriate Crop Legumes and Vegetables</td>
<td>Nangarhar</td>
<td>World Vegetable Centre (AVRDC) Relief International Nangarhar University MAI, IDE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01-07</td>
<td>Restorative Agriculture &amp; Rural Economy Research Project</td>
<td>Helmand Kandahar</td>
<td>Mercy Corps Afghanistan MAI Centre for Arid Zone Studies, UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01-08</td>
<td>Innovative financial mechanisms</td>
<td>Badakhshan</td>
<td>Natural Resources Institute, UK Agha Khan Foundation MAI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01-09</td>
<td>Marketing of livestock and livestock products</td>
<td>Kabul Kandahar Kunduz</td>
<td>Macaulay Research Consultancy, UK Mercy Corps, MAI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01-11</td>
<td>Improved rural incomes from better forage production and sales of milk products</td>
<td>Baghlan</td>
<td>ICARDA Agha Khan Foundation; MAI; Macaulay Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01-16</td>
<td>Western Afghanistan Agroenterprise Action Research Program</td>
<td>Herat Ghor</td>
<td>Catholic Relief Services (CRS) ICRISAT CIAT MAI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Project Description</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Partner Organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02-02</td>
<td>Research in sustainable production and successful marketing of saffron</td>
<td>Herat</td>
<td>DACCAR                                  Washington State University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>MAI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02-05</td>
<td>Increased productivity and profitability of wheat-based cropping system</td>
<td>Balkh Baghlan Badakhshan</td>
<td>Joint Development Associates (JDA) CinMMYT, AKDN Cornell University Balkh University Balkh Credit Union (BCU)/World Council of Credit Unions. (WCCU) MAI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02-07</td>
<td>Multi stakeholder program on natural ingredients for food, pharmaceuticals and cosmetics</td>
<td>Paktia Takhar Faryab Bamyan Balkh Badakhshan</td>
<td>Novib-Oxfam, Netherlands Faculty of Pharmacy, Kabul Univ AKF, CHA, TLO, MAI Anadolu University-Turkey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02-11</td>
<td>Cultivation of mint as a viable alternative livelihood in East and North East of Afghanistan</td>
<td>Nangarhar Kunduz Helmand</td>
<td>ICARDA MAI Kabul University Iranian Research/Industrial Institutions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Projects on Medicinal Plants

- **Cultivation and Value Addition of Mint as an Alternative Livelihood**
  - Target Provinces: Helmand, Nangarhar, Kunduz

- **Sustainable Production & Marketing of Saffron**
  - Target Province: Herat

- **Western Afghanistan Agro-enterprise Research**
  - Includes saffron and carabia
  - Target Provinces: Herat, Ghor

- **Natural Ingredients:** Licourice, Hing, Terkh, Caraway, Cumin/Carabia, Onab/Jubjube
  - Target Provinces: 9
RALF Project 02-02: Sustainable Production and Marketing of Saffron
Project 02-11
Cultivation of Mint as Viable Alternative Livelihood
Nangarhar, Kunduz, Helmand
Project 02-07: Natural Ingredients for Food, Cosmetics & Pharmaceuticals

Value Chain Development of Natural Ingredients for Sustainable Livelihoods in Afghanistan
Species Targeted

- Glycyrrhiza glabra (Licorice)
- Cuminum cyminum (Cumin)
- Ferula asa foetida (Devil’s dung, hing)
- Carum carvi (Carabia/Caraway)
- Artemisia sina berg (Terkh/wormseed)
- Ziziphus jujuba. (Onab, Ber, jujube).
### Geographical occurrence of medicinal plants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Products</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Artemisia</td>
<td>Caraway</td>
<td>Cumin</td>
<td>Hing</td>
<td>Liquorice</td>
<td>Jujube</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khost</td>
<td>xx</td>
<td>xx</td>
<td>xx</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paktia</td>
<td>Xx</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Badakshan</td>
<td>XXX</td>
<td>XXX</td>
<td>xx</td>
<td></td>
<td>xx</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baghlan</td>
<td>XXX</td>
<td>xx</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>XXX</td>
<td>Xxx</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bamyan</td>
<td>XXX</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herat</td>
<td>XXX</td>
<td>xx</td>
<td></td>
<td>XXX</td>
<td>Xxx</td>
<td>xx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghor</td>
<td>XXX</td>
<td>xx</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>XXX</td>
<td>Xxx</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farah</td>
<td>XXX</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Xx</td>
<td>Xxx</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faryab</td>
<td>XXX</td>
<td>Xx</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Xxx</td>
<td>Xxx</td>
<td>Xx</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Crop Diversification, Agro-enterprise

• Project 02-05: Introduction of New Oilseed Crops in a Wheat-based Cropping System
  – Focus: Balkh, Baghlan, Badakhshan, Kunduz

  – Agro-enterprise
    • Value addition
    • Preparing women for agro-enterprise
    • Focus: Herat, Ghor

• Restorative Agriculture
  – Focus: Helmand, Kandahar
Project 01-04:

Introduction Evaluation and Promotion of Appropriate Crop Legume and Vegetables for Eastern Afghanistan
Project 02-05: Increased Productivity and Profitability of Wheat Based Cropping Systems in Northern Afghanistan
-Agronomic Research on Oilseed Crops in Badakhshan
01-16: Western Afghanistan Agro-enterprise Research Project
Improved Farming Techniques

• Mud Greenhouses
  – Winter Production.
  – Higher Winter Prices.
  – Import Substitution.
  – Low cost.
  – Iron Pipe.
  – Mudwall.
Preparing Women for Agro-enterprise

- Bazaar visits
- Quality and consistency checks
- Exhibitions
- Planning with WDOA for marketing
- Initiating agreement with first shopkeeper
Socio-economis

• Project01-03: Village Decision Driven Research Project
  – Focus: Alingar District, Laghman
    – Innovative Financial Mechansims, Microfinance
      • Focus: Jurm and Ishkashem Districts, Badakhshan
Project 01-03: Village Decision Driven Research Project

Laghman Province
Alingar District

Mango - Kotali

Salab – Sahib Zadagan

Sangar – Masoom Kala
Project 01-08
Innovative Financial Mechanisms (Microfinance)

Target Area:
Jurm and Ishkashem Districts of Badakhshan Province
Forage/Livestock

• Project 01-11:Fodder Production and Dairy
  – Target: 15 Communities in Baghlan

  – Marketing of Livestock and Livestock Products
    • Target: Survey of Markets in Kabul, Kandahar, Kunduz
Project 01-11: Improved Rural Incomes from Better Forage Production & Sales of Milk Products, Baghlan Province
- Survey of 75 households in 15 communities completed
- Forage crops under investigation at Poze-Eshan Research Station
- Feeding trials for dairy cattle in progress
Survey of Livestock Markets in Kabul, Kunduz, Kandahar
## Project 01-09: Market Survey of Livestock & Livestock Products: Kabul, Kandahar, Kunduz

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opium resin price ($/kg)</th>
<th>Net income from poppies ($/0.3 ha)</th>
<th>Lambs needed to break even when each lamb earns $23</th>
<th>Lambs needed to break even when each lamb earns $70</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>350</td>
<td>4660</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>280</td>
<td>3660</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>1040</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Animal Products:
Currently no added value in Afghanistan
Added value of skins and hides gained by tanneries in Pakistan
Is **fattening sheep** an alternative to poppy cultivation?

- More efficient marketing chains could enhance producer incomes
- Fattening of sheep could serve as a partial alternative to growing poppies
- Constraints:
  - Inadequate supply of feed
  - Access to credit
Progress toward ultimate goal: Poppy cultivation gradually being replaced by cash crops (i.e., potatoes in this slide in Eastern Provinces)