

Restorative Agriculture and Rural Economy (RARE) Research Project

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Funded by Research in Alternative Livelihoods Fund



Mercy Corps RALF 01-07



Project Goal

- A rural economy that supports agricultural livelihoods that are legitimate, economically viable, culturally appropriate, and environmentally sound.

Four research components:

- Farmer-led Experimentation & Extension Services
- Small-scale Value-added Processing
- Organic Export Feasibility Study
- Community Participation and Agricultural Governance

RARE Implementation Areas Helmand and Kandahar provinces



COMPONENT 1

Farmer-led Experimentation and Extension Services

Output 1: Economic analysis of a variety of staple, cash and specialty crops.

- A. Out of season vegetable production
- B. Essential Oil Crop Production
- C. Mushroom Production
- D. Control Study—Wheat Production
- E. Control Study—Maize Production

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Poly-tunnel in Sakari Bagh nursery, Kandahar



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A farmer in Kandahar constructing a poly-tunnel



Tomato plants in a poly-tunnel in Lashkagah in February



A collaborating farmer showing us his poly-tunnel in late March



Farmers interested in a poly-tunnel in Lashkagah



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Lessons Learned, Polytunnels

- Interest of farmers: some more interested than others.
 - Those less interested delayed implementation, which led to less success
 - Those more interested intend to continue polytunnels with own funding next year
- Quality of tunnels (cost vs. quality)
- Timing is everything, especially with agricultural programs

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**B. Essential Oil Crop Production:
RALF 02-11, ICARDA?**

A. Mushroom Production

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Mushroom training

- Three men, four women will attend training at University of Peshawar in May.
- Attendees are farmers and MAAHF officials.
- Mushroom houses being excavated and constructed in Kandahar and Helmand.



Lessons learned, mushrooms

- Still determining fair cost for good quality mushroom houses.
- Logistics difficulties for international trainings, especially including women.
- Nevertheless, it is important to target women, as mushroom production is likely to be a household task assigned to women.

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COMPONENT 1

Farmer-led Experimentation and Extension Services

Output 2: Economic analysis of different types of improved small-scale irrigation systems.

Site for trial (vegetables, drip vs. ditch) has been identified.

Output 3: Review of past and current extension services, including recommendations for future market-driven supplies of agricultural support services, including technical agri-enterprise development and group/cooperative development.

Data being collected.

COMPONENT 2

Small-scale Value-added Processing

- **Output 4:** Evaluations of at least 10 different existing small-scale agri-processing industries.
- **Output 5:** Case studies of agri-enterprises that prove to have value-added through experimental processing.

Data being collected. A partner involved with tomato paste processing has been identified.

COMPONENT 3

Organic Export Feasibility Study

- Study will be conducted by Henry Doubleday Research Associates, Coventry, UK.
- Assessment of viability of organic conversion to be performed by July 2005.
- If conversion is found to be potentially viable, two farmers groups will participate in the production and marketing of organic products.



the organic
organisation

COMPONENT 3

Organic Export Feasibility Study

- **Output 6:** In-depth feasibility study for the development of markets for organic Afghan agricultural products.
- **Output 7:** A review of the different types of organic certification and an evaluation of how this might be applied and developed in an Afghan context
- **Output 8:** Publication of producer manuals explaining regulations of organics and guidance and instruction on organic agricultural practices

COMPONENT 4

Community Participation and Agricultural Governance

- Study on community and government mechanisms for encouraging alternative livelihoods to be conducted by the Centre for Arid Zone Studies (CAZS), Bangor, Wales.



COMPONENT 4

Community Participation and Agricultural Governance

- **Output 9:** Study testing the effectiveness of local decision-making in encouraging alternative livelihoods.
- **Output 10:** Review and analysis of past and current agricultural governance and recommendation for future role of Provincial Ministry of Agriculture in supporting the creation of alternative livelihoods.

Mercy Corps/CAZS will collaborate with Kandahar and Helmand MAAHF.

PARTNER INSTITUTIONS

- Helmand and Kandahar Departments of MAAHF
- Agriculture Innovation Centre, Helmand
- Sakari Bagh Nucleus Nursery, Kandahar, owned by Kandahar Municipality.
- CAZS – Bangor University, consultancy services.
- Henry Doubleday Research Association, UK

Producer of fruit juice and pickle in Kandahar



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