Restorative Agriculture and Rural Economy (RARE) Research Project

Penny Anderson on behalf of Geof Dolman

Hajji Barak, RARE Project Manager

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
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
COMPONENT 1
Farmer-led Experimentation and Extension Services

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Poly-tunnel in Sakari Bagh nursery, Kandahar
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
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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   RALF 02-11, ICARDA?
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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.
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