

TRIP REPORT-KABUL
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LOCATION: KABUL

DURATION: June 15-22, 2003

PURPOSE: To meet and discuss the IALC/UIUC training of Afghan Nationals in Pakistan with the officials of USAID/Kabul and Government of Afghanistan.

PERSONS VISITED: **USAID/KABUL**

Mr. Robert J. Wilson
Ms. Terry Hart

ICARDA

Dr. Nasrat Wassimmi, Team Leader, ICARDA

GOVERNMENT OF AFGHANISTAN

Engineer M.Sharif, Deputy Minister for Agriculture and Livestock

Mr. Mohammad Akbar Barekzai, Deputy Minister, Irrigation, Water Resources and Environment.

Professor Dareez, Deputy Minister, Higher Education

Professor Mohammad Yasin Mohsini, Dean, Faculty of Agriculture, Kabul University

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION (FAO)

Dr. N.S. Tanwar, Senior Technical Advisor
Dr. Len Reynolds, Livestock Specialist
Dr. Said Gul Safi, National Program Supervisor
Mr. Ali M. Allahbadi, Senior Technical Advisor (Irrigation).

PURDUE UNIVERSITY TEAM

Professor Dr. Kevin T. McNamara, Department of
Agricultural Economics
Mr. Maani Entesari, Marketing Consultant

DISCUSSIONS:

USAID:

I presented copies of North West Frontier Province Agricultural University (NWFAU)'s Capability Statement, IALC/UIUC Project Brief and short and long-term Training Program to Robert J. Wilson, General Development Officer (GDO) and Terry Hart, Agriculture Officer, USAID Kabul. I explained to the USAID team that during the first year only short-term training program will be carried out. During the second year a need assessment for human resource development will be carried out. Both short and long-term training programs based on this need assessment will be started and instruction will go into the second year and beyond.

Bob and Terry reviewed our training programs and found them to be in line with the USAID/Kabul programs. The USAID team appreciated our program and assured full cooperation in the implementation. Bob said he would circulate these short-term training programs to partners in the Afghan Government requesting nominations be made by the deadlines requested. I expressed appreciation for USAID help. Terry asked about the required qualifications of the participants. I responded since these participants are intended to be the Master Trainers, it is essential that these participants must possess a bachelor's degree in social, agricultural and engineering sciences along with some practical experience in their respective disciplines. In the case of the Enterprise Development Skills program, practical experience is desirable though not required. Terry noted this requirement. It is expected that participants for the Enterprise Development Skills will come from USAID/Kabul funded business activity.

Bob and Terry were interested in having more participants per course. I informed them, currently we have planned 20 participants per course. However, we can handle 25. If the number of participants nominated is more than 25, then we can repeat the course at another time.

ICARDA

I met Dr. Nasrat Wassimi of the ICARDA project and delivered to him the copies of the Capability Statement, IALC/UIUC Project Brief and the short and long-term training programs. After review of the training programs Dr. Wassimi said that even if the need assessment is carried out, the results of this need assessment will exhibit the same ground realities reflected through design of these short-term courses by the UIUC. Dr. Wassimi said that there are four agricultural educational institutions in the country namely, (1) Faculty of Agriculture, Kabul University; (2) Faculty of Agricultural University at

Nangarhar; (3) Agricultural College, Herat and (4) Agricultural College, Mazhar-e-Sharif. Dr. Wassimi said that all of these educational institutions must have equal opportunity to avail themselves of the short and long-term training under the IALC/UIUC training program. Dr. Wassimi suggested that I should visit all of these educational institutions. I informed him that I have already visited the Faculty of Agriculture, Kabul University and I will visit the remaining institutions as I am able. Dr. Wassimi suggested that it would be appropriate and economical that participants from Afghanistan travel to Peshawar, Pakistan by road. I agreed to this proposal if there is no security or safety problem. I informed Dr. Wassimi that I plan to visit the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock; Ministry of Irrigation, Water Resources and Environment, Ministry of Higher Education and asked him if he could provide me with the names and telephone numbers of people to contact at these locations. Dr. Wassimi gave me the names of Ministers and suggested that I should also meet with the Vice Chancellor, Kabul University in addition to the Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture. I thanked Dr. Wassimi for his help and assistance.

GOVERNMENT OF AFGHANISTAN

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND LIVESTOCK

I met Engineer M. Sharif, Deputy Minister for Agriculture and Livestock. I provided him with copies of Capability Statement, IALC/UIUC Project Brief and short and long-term training programs. I explained to him our training program will be spread over a period of four years with emphasis on short-term training that will be carried out during year one. The short-term training course during year one would include Enterprise Development Skills, irrigation and water management practices, post-harvest management and marketing skills. A Need assessment for human resource development will be carried out in year two and thereafter short and long-term training program will be started in years two, three and four. I further informed him that these training programs would be carried out at the NWFP Agricultural University, Peshawar, Pakistan. Deputy Minister for Agriculture and Livestock appreciated the training program and liked the idea of having these training programs at the NWFP AU since it would have many advantages for Afghan professionals in terms of convenience, cultural and language aspects. The Minister assured his full cooperation and stated that departments under his Ministry will eagerly participate in both the short and long-term training programs. The Minister also offered any type of help that I needed. The Minister wrote a letter to Ministry of Interior for grant of a Multiple Visa for me which was granted the same day. Thus a good working relationship has been established with the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock for implementation of Training Programs for Afghans in Pakistan.

MINISTRY OF IRRIGATION, WATER RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT

Irrigation and water resources are very important activities of Afghan Government where many donors like USAID and FAO are already working. I met Mr. Mohammad Akbar Barezai Deputy Minister for Irrigation, Water Resources and Environment and delivered to him all of the training documents. I explained to the Minister about our training

program in irrigation and water management practices. The Minister appreciated the training program and stated that the staff of his Ministry would participate in these short-courses during year one and after that the nominations for long-term training program would be made. The Minister assured full cooperation in this effort of human resource development.

MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION

I met Professor Dareez, Deputy Minister for Higher Education. I provided him copies of training related documents and discussed the short-term training program during year one and short and long-term training programs during years two to four and that these training would be conducted at the NWFP Agricultural University. The Minister appreciated the training programs and asked if the IALC/UIUC would enter an agreement with the Ministry of Education for such type of training. I explained to the Minister that a contract for such types of training has already been signed between the IALC of University of Arizona and the USAID also a sub-contract between the IALC and the UIUC has already been signed for implementation of the Afghan training programs in Pakistan. I explained to him that I don't see any need for an additional contract. That all that is needed is for the Ministry of Higher Education along with other Ministries of the Afghan Government to nominate participants and IALC/UIUC would train them at the NWFP Agricultural University in the short and long-term degree programs. The Minister assured full cooperation and said that his Ministry would actively participate in this program.

FACULTY OF AGRICULTURE, KABUL UNIVERSITY

Faculty of Agriculture, Kabul University is headed by Professor Mohammad Yasin Mohsini. During the course of our meeting Professor Mohsini informed that the Faculty of Agriculture was established in 1956. The Faculty of Agriculture was initially assisted by the University of Wyoming for a period of 15 years. After completion of University of Wyoming's assistance, the Faculty of Agriculture was assisted by the University of Nebraska. The University of Nebraska improved curriculum and provided modern lab. Equipment. During that time there were a total of 70 faculty members – 35 Ph.D's and 35 Master's Degree faculty. They had twelve well-equipped laboratories. Two years before the war, the University of Nebraska left. Now the Faculty was at the lowest ebb with lack of laboratories, equipment and outdated curriculum. Recently the Faculty of Agriculture received \$100,000 World Bank assistance for purchase of chairs and equipment for students and faculty members. Before the war the Faculty was offering Masters Programs in Horticulture. Now its teaching program is limited to a four-year Bachelor Degree program in agricultural sciences. The Faculty's teaching program centers around theoretical aspects with no emphasis on practical or research orientation. This has affected the quality of education at the Bachelors' level. Currently there are 800 students at the Faculty of Agriculture supported by 40 faculty members. Of the total faculty, 8 are Ph.D, 17 are M.S. and 15 are B.S. The 15 B.S. faculty members are the potential candidate for long-term Master Programs at the NWFAPU. Currently, the Faculty of Agriculture is being supported by Purdue University for curriculum improvement. There are three other agricultural educational institutions in the country which I have not visited

during this trip. However, I will certainly visit them during my next trip, as these institutions are the potential candidates for short and long-term training programs. These three other institutions are: (1) Faculty of Agriculture, University of Nangarhar, (2) College of Agriculture, Herat and (3) College of Agriculture, Mazar-e-Sharif.

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION (FAO)

FAO's activities are centered around livestock and irrigation. FAO is currently conducting a census of livestock in Afghanistan and the results of this census will be available in July, 2003. According to Dr. Len Reynolds, a British Livestock Consultant for FAO, the livestock population of Afghanistan has declined by 50% a drought that has existed for the past three years. These results will be important for our need assessment for human resource development. Similarly, the FAO's irrigation program is based on paper and is nicely placed on a shelf. Mr. Ali, a Jordanian, who is an Irrigation Advisor for FAO Irrigation Project, has developed nineteen courses in Irrigation System Technologies but has not conducted even a single training course. The reason he gave is that he could not find participants for these training programs.

PURDUE UNIVERSITY

Purdue University in U.S. has been assisting the Faculty of Agriculture, Kabul University in curriculum development. Their faculty is also expected to teach at the Faculty of Agriculture, Kabul University. Purdue University observed that improvement in English language capability of the Faculty is urgently needed. Currently, the Purdue University is conducting a marketing survey of agricultural products of Afghanistan. They are interested in sharing a piece of pie with Chemonics' upcoming USAID/Kabul funded project. During a joint meeting between ICARDA, Purdue University and IALC/UIUC it was agreed that we will all collaborate and cooperate in this development effort as our mission is the same – the reconstruction of Afghan agriculture.

OBSERVATION

All Ministries and people of Afghanistan are willing to cooperate and work hard to reconstruct their agricultural economy.