

Quarterly Project Report

Rebuilding the Information Infrastructure in Afghanistan: A Plan to Begin Redevelopment of the Kabul University Library

**Submitted to the International Arid Lands Consortium
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**Arid Lands Information Center
Office of Arid Lands Studies
University of Arizona**

Overall Project Goals:

The goal is to take a first step toward developing a modern agricultural information system in Afghanistan. This will be accomplished by creating a fully equipped and operational Agriculture Electronic Library housed in Kabul University's College of Agriculture.

Accomplishments since June 30, 2004:

During the past quarter, efforts continued to try to gain support for a more comprehensive library development project that would incorporate regional universities as well as Kabul University. A concept paper for such a project was forwarded to contacts at the USAID mission in Afghanistan, the US Embassy in Afghanistan, and USAID Washington. In addition, discussions were held with members of the U.S. National Agricultural Library regarding potential USDA funding. Unfortunately, there has been little concrete response as yet, although there does seem to be interest in the project. Once positive feedback has been received, plans are to compile a full proposal for initiating an expanded effort. This effort will involve multiple institutions including the University of Illinois and Texas A & M as well as the University of Arizona.

Atifa Rawan has maintained close contact with Mr. Abdul Khalid Madadi, Field Coordinator of the Agriculture Electronic Library (AEL) at Kabul University, and with Dr. Fayez, Minister of Higher Education, and Dr. Wassimi, Executive Manager for ICARDA in Kabul to ensure effective operation of AEL.

Nicole Joos, TEEAL Coordinator, is sending further training materials including a DVD of a training session to Mr. Mahadi

Carla Casler prepared a press release about Atifa's accomplishments in Kabul, which the University Library adapted and sent to UANews.org, the University of Arizona news site, that is consulted by news organizations in the U.S. and abroad.

Carla Casler prepared an announcement about the AEL for CALSLine, an email "current awareness" newsletter produced by the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, which has 300 subscribers throughout Arizona. This includes a link to Atifa's trip report on the OALS web site: <http://ag.arizona.edu/OALS/oals/Tripreports/atifajune04.html>

Anne Thwaits designed a prototype web page for Atifa's consideration to develop a web presence for disseminating information to all interested parties about library building activities in Afghanistan. <http://cals.arizona.edu/oals/afghanistan/>

Carla Casler submitted an article to *Arizona Land and People*, which will be the main feature of the December issue.

Atifa Rawan gave presentations on the library redevelopment project at the University of Arizona's Arid Lands Information Center (August 19, 2004), Center for Middle Eastern Studies, (September 2, 2004), and Library Faculty Assembly (October 5, 2004), and at Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Tucson (October 10, 2004).

Following Quarter's Activities, October – December:

- Field Coordinator continues to maintain the TEEAL collection and other CD-ROM resources, making them accessible to faculty and students.
- Atifa Rawan and other project personnel will continue to communicate with contacts at USAID, the U.S. State Department and others on the possibility of expanding the initial library development operation both at Kabul University and at other regional universities
- Once comments are received on the concept paper, a full proposal will be prepared for submission to USAID