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Assistance for Afghanistan

WEEKLY UPDATE

AMBASSADEN ISLAMABAD		
		BILAG
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Issue No.359

18 April 2000

Missions

A mission from UNDP's Emergency Response Division (ERD) is visiting Afghanistan and Pakistan from 16 to 28 April. The mission will travel to Kabul and Kandahar in Afghanistan. Mission members will review programmes funded through ERD and related capacity and co-ordination issues.

Displaced Persons

Since the UN team came back on 4 March from the Panjshir Valley, after reassessment of the displaced population in the valley, discussions were held with authorities in order to prepare for another cross line operation to assist persons displaced into Panjshir during last summer's fighting in the Shamali Valley north of Kabul. No real progress has been made. The front line was active early March and sporadic fighting occurs. Various options exist to bring assistance to the valley if a cross line operation cannot be resumed.

In Kabul, the IDP group, which includes UN agencies, NGOs and ICRC, meets every two weeks to discuss responses to the needs of displaced families living in the ex-Soviet embassy compound and elsewhere in the city, as well as in Panjshir. WFP's provision of corn-soy blend (CSB) continues in the ex-Soviet compound, while the authorities provide bread. Water and sanitation assistance is continuing through

CARE. Income generating programmes are being implemented with support from CARE for female heads of households in the ex-Soviet compound, mainly through tailoring and broom making programmes. SC (US) is providing support to education, while SCA is involved in health provision. FOCUS Humanitarian Assistance Europe Foundation has recently contributed non-food commodities in response to the needs of IDPs in the region. These items have been delivered to the joint IDP stock in Kabul.

Food Security

The FAO/WFP annual crop assessment mission for Afghanistan will be held from late April to mid-May this year. It is expected that both irrigated and rain fed crops may be affected by the dry spell, particularly in western and southern Afghanistan.

Afghanistan's national food deficit is made up through imports. The main source for cereal imports continues to be Pakistan. WFP sub-offices in Afghanistan report that the amounts of cereal crossing into Afghanistan from Pakistan have increased since last October but have not attained pre-October levels.

Poor production inside Afghanistan last year, combined with restrictions on cross border trade from Pakistan, have resulted in significant increases in the price of wheat flour. In March, the price of wheat

flour in various areas of the country ranged from 25% to 50% higher than September 1999.

Recent WFP VAM surveys in Afghanistan suggest that in many urban areas, the main threat to household food security is under-employment. Female-headed households are particularly susceptible to food insecurity since the main source of income is child labour and female begging. Moreover, the population of urban areas has increased considerably, further limiting labour opportunities. A recent survey carried out by the United Nations and the Central Statistics Office in Kabul determined that the population of the capital is 1.78 million, compared with the previous estimate of 1.2 million.

Health

World Health Day

WHO offices in collaboration with MoPH and other UN agencies and NGOs celebrated World Health Day in all regions of Afghanistan. The theme of World Health Day this year was blood safety.

In Kabul, Mullah Mohammad Abbass Akhund, Minister of Public Health of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, officially inaugurated the World Health Day ceremony at Library Hall of the Ministry. The Minister stressed the donation and transfusion of safe blood and screening of donated blood and advised all blood banks to utilise WHO directions in this regard. Reports about the day were broadcast by Radio Shariat, and news and articles were printed by all local dailies.

In Jalalabad, Mowlavi Sheer Ali, Regional Public Health Director, officially inaugurated the day, attended by sixty rep-

resentatives of UN agencies, NGOs, government authorities, and the MoPH. In Faizabad City, Dr. Asadullah, Deputy Regional Health Director, officially inaugurated a ceremony held at the conference room of Faizabad Hospital.

Measles Update

According to IAM in Hazarajat, 114 measles cases with twenty-three deaths have been reported from Lal Sarjantal district in Ghor province. IAM has given measles vaccine to 4,800 children under four years of age in eighty villages.

The MoPH medical team that was sent one month ago with WHO medical supplies to Khwahan district of Badakhshan to cope with the measles outbreak there returned on April 8, 2000. The team reported that fifty-eight children had died of the disease in that district. On 6 April, a medical team of MSF carrying WHO medical supplies left for Gandumqul area of Kishem district, Badakhshan, where another measles outbreak is in progress.

Immunisation

In Faizabad, WHO, UNICEF and PEMT have prepared a National Immunisation Days action plan for 2000 for northeastern Afghanistan. In Mazar, WHO chaired a meeting on Rapid Need Assessment of Polio Eradication that assessed the effectiveness of the current strategy and adopted measures for development of a comprehensive immunisation and polio eradication plan of action for the next three years.

Training

Thirty-four staff of UNICEF, including the representative and sixteen staff from the regional sub-offices and outposts, participated from 10-14 April in a programme workshop in Islamabad. The objectives and strategies for the three-year period 2000 to 2002 were agreed upon. Programme issues ranging from education for all to polio eradication and routine immunisation were discussed.

UNICEF Kabul organised a three-day training session on 4 to 6 April on trauma and grief for twenty-five persons, including the staff of Malalai Hospital, as well as social mobilisers from communities. The trainers were from the Mental Health Institute.

In Mazar, WHO conducted a three-day training workshop to prepare a health sector action plan for 2000. Regional Public Health Directors from northern region and representatives of UN agencies and national and international NGOs attended.

WHO facilitated two training courses for twenty-two traditional birth attendants (TBAs) in Daulatabad district, Balkh province and in Khulam district of Samangan province. The first TBA training course in Sayed Karam district, Paktia province has ended. A WHO team visiting Paktia province conducted another TBA training course in Road Area of the Sayed Karam district for fifteen TBAs.

Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA) in co-operation with the Regional Training Institute and Khyber Medical Hospital, organised and conducted a training workshop on reproductive health and nutrition from 20th of March to 6th of April in SCA Peshawar. The practical work was done at Khyber Medical Hospital, Union

Aid, and the Regional Training Institute for Family Planning.

Disability

Promotion of Professional Capacity

In pursuance of training courses in the year 2000 by CDAP/UNOPS/UNDP, a fourteen-day community based rehabilitation (CBR) refresher training course on rehabilitation and integration of disabled people was organised by CDAP in Sayed Abad District of Wardak Province. The participants included two trainers, two special education resource persons, and twelve mid-level rehabilitation workers.

Subsequently, a one-day CBR and special education refresher training course for fourteen individuals was organised by CDAP/UNOPS/UNDP in Ghazni City. The training aimed at upgrading and refreshing the CDAP field workers in CBR and special education.

Agriculture

FAO Crops trained local community farmers in different aspects of horticulture in several villages of Herat. As part of the establishment of a community-based extension system, a number of comprehensive theoretical and practical training courses have been conducted for such local trainers in different regions in Afghanistan. Fruit tree nursery, pome and stone fruit orchard, vineyard management, vegetable seed and crop production, potato research and production development, and apricot drying for export were covered during training. Several extension leaflets and booklets have been prepared in the local languages to support these training courses.

FAO Livestock provided straw and liquid nitrogen to four artificial insemination centres in Jalalabad.

Lack of breeding bulls is a major problem in most part of the country. FAO is investigating different approaches for improving this situation--provision of bulls and development of artificial insemination (AI).

AI has been practised in several regions and farmers are familiar with the concept. The infrastructure for AI has, however, been largely destroyed. FAO has initiated the importation of frozen bull semen from Italy. However, this system requires regular supplies of liquid nitrogen for storage purposes, and this is available only near Islamabad. Nangahar Province is the only area sufficiently near to Islamabad to benefit from the frozen semen.

A programme to train specialised inseminator and semen preservation technicians is underway. FAO is also developing a three-month training programme for inseminators and is investigating ownership arrangements for breeding bulls, which will be kept for both semen collection and natural service.

All farmers are charged for these services.

Rehabilitation

In Kabul, UNCHS (Habitat) continued support to education, income generating programmes, community-based sanitation, and health care education through community development centres in several districts. Habitat resumed a project recycling building materials in Kabul. Communities are assisted in recycling materials from houses damaged by fighting in the past, in an at-

tempt to encourage reintegration of people into their homes.

Refugees/Returnees

Repatriation of Afghan refugees from Iran began on 9 April with a convoy of seventy persons from Tehran. The governor of Herat, Mullah Khairullah, accompanied by officials from the local authority visited the Herat transit camp on 11 April to welcome over 700 Afghan returnees from Iran. The governor also met UN officials. The governor welcomed the returnees and invited them to join their families and relatives in rebuilding the country. He said that he would request all other provincial governors to facilitate the safe and peaceful reintegration of the returnees. He appreciated the assistance of the aid community, especially UNHCR.

A representative of the returnees, Jalil Mohamed Ibrahim from Mazar, expressed his gratitude to UNHCR and the IEA for making their return a reality. The United Nations Regional co-ordinator, as well as UNHCR, commended the co-operation shown by the local authorities.

In the joint programme for repatriation from Iran, groups of Afghan refugees are returning from Iran thrice weekly from both Tehran and Mashad voluntary repatriation centres. Transit centres have been set up both at the Islam Qala border and in Herat, which can accommodate up to 1,000 returnees. The transit camps are equipped with sanitation facilities, potable water, and twenty-four hour medical service through MDM, IRC, and IOM, with medicines provided through WHO and UNICEF. Returnees receive a small cash grant, wheat from WFP, jerry cans with drinking water, and plastic sheeting. Returnees also receive

free transport from the border to the transit centre in Herat. They are then registered and provided a letter of safe passage by the Ministry of Repatriation. Those returnees who are from areas outside Herat are provided subsidised transport to provincial capitals of their areas of origin through IOM and UNHCR. Returnees are so far repatriating to various areas of the country in addition to western Afghanistan, including Kabul, Ghazni, Mazar, and other provinces.

The repatriation process is expected to build up to 3000 (or over) persons per week during the coming weeks and months. The current arrangement is expected to last for the next six months. This process is expected to minimise the forced deportation of Afghans from Iran.

In addition to the returnees from Iran, as of the end of March, UNHCR assisted 6,269 individuals repatriating from Peshawar and Quetta in Pakistan, which is almost double the number last year at the same time.

Mine Action

As of the end of February, the Mine Action Programme for Afghanistan, the largest mine action programme in the world, has cleared over five million square metres of mined and battlefield areas of Afghanistan. Since its inception, the programme has destroyed 1.23 million explosive devices.

In southern Afghanistan MCPA survey teams last week completed the survey of two residential tasks in Kandahar city and one irrigation canal in Nahrissaraj district of Helmand province. After clearance, 1022 individuals will benefit from use of these safe areas. DAFA teams have completed the clearance of two irrigation canals in Dand and Daman districts of

Kandahar province. The clearance of these tasks were requested by local people and will benefit 1,000 people through the irrigation of 370 hectares of agricultural land. Mine dog teams have completed the clearance of two residential tasks and one road task in Panjwae and Dand districts of Kandahar province. Local people and authorities requested the clearance of these tasks. Ten thousand inhabitants of the area will benefit from the road clearance, while twelve large families will benefit from the clearance of the residential areas.

New on the Website

The website of the Afghanistan assistance community, maintained by ProMIS, has a new section set up by the human rights section of the Office of the UN Co-ordinator for Afghanistan. To access this information go to www.pcpafg.org. Click on "Players," "UN and International Organisations," "UNOC," and finally "Human Rights."

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Issue No.360

25 April 2000

Funding

The Government of Turkey has donated 110 metric tons of wheat, valued at USD 25,000, for distribution by the NGO ACTED in northern Afghanistan.

Hazarajat

A Bamyán Co-ordination Group meeting was held in Peshawar on 19 April. The group noted that in the absence of snowfall during the past winter, low water levels are imminent in the area. An MSF team has gone to the area to conduct a health assessment.

Health

UNICEF is steadily augmenting its staff presence in Afghanistan for the 2000-2002 country programme. In addition to the UNICEF offices in Herat, Jalalabad, Kabul, and Mazar, staff are posted in Badakhshan, Bamyán, Gardez, and Farah, and the number of staff in Kandahar is being increased. In keeping with the overall programme objectives, these staff members will support children's and women's survival, development and protection and promotion activities.

Disease outbreak

WHO office in Faizabad reported on April 18, 2000 the outbreak of a possible louse-born disease in Wakhan district of Badakhshan province. The main symptoms are fever and rash leading to death in some cases. WHO Faizabad is co-ordinating with ORA and SCA. One of the preventive measures is to control the lice population; WHO is in the process of organising insecticide for the affected area.

National Immunisation Days

The first round of National Immunisation Days (NIDs) is scheduled for 1 to 3 May. UNICEF and WHO are currently engaged in planning, training of vaccinators and co-ordinators, and social mobilisation to ensure the success of the first round.

Measles Update

In Faizabad, WHO and the MoPH are sending medical teams with medical supplies to Yaftali Payan, Ragh, and Kurano-munjan districts, where recent outbreaks of measles have occurred.

Medical supplies

WHO Kunduz provided medical and laboratory supplies to Baghlan-E-Jaded district

hospital, Baghlan provincial hospital and anti-malaria drugs to Kunduz Malaria Unit.

Water/Sanitation

The Danish Committee for Aid to Afghan Refugees (DACAAR) has completed a water supply project in Kogiani district of Nangahar Province, with funding from DIA.

The forty-five wells dug will benefit 1137 families, while 137 baths and 107 latrine will benefit 137 families. The community participated in site selection, and provided unskilled labour and some materials. The pumps provided in the project will be maintained by mechanics initially trained by DACAAR but now paid by the community.

Education

The UNICEF National Committee provided one of their senior staff members for three months to undertake the task of collecting all education materials currently being used in Afghanistan and compile a notebook describing their content, intended use and where to obtain them. Upon completion of her work a two-and-a-half day symposium and exposition of the materials was organised in Peshawar, 19-21 April. This is a step towards a sustainable country wide education system in Afghanistan. The symposium was chaired by the Commissioner for Afghan Refugees and attended by a number of national and international NGOs working in the field of education.

The NGO Afghan German Basic Education (AG BAS-ED) inaugurated Marastoon girls' primary school in Jalalabad on 16 April 2000. With funding from the Netherlands, AG BAS-ED has also com-

pleted one primary school for girls in Kaja-Khogiani district of Nangahar and one primary school for girls in Nooristan.

In addition, the NGO has begun the construction of five schools in Hisarak, Nangahar, and Arub-Jaji in Paktia.

Agriculture

The poultry backyard programme has distributed 500 kilos of poultry feed to selected families in Kandahar.

FAO Livestock is developing two approaches in the poultry industry; semi-commercial poultry production using kerosene incubator in the peri-urban areas of Jalalabad, Kabul, Kandahar, Helmand and Herat City, and improved backyard poultry production in adjacent villages. An intensive training programme with more than 300 farmers facilitated identification of the main constraints to semi-commercial poultry production. These include lack of technical knowledge in feeding and disease prevention, poor supplies of chicks, feed and other materials, and inadequate marketing of the products. To address these constraints FAO is providing technical advice though formal training for farmers and intensive work with about 100 selected families in target areas. In addition, Poultry Farmers Associations (PFA) have been established in Kabul, Jalalabad, Herat, and Kandahar to assist farmers with supplies and marketing and enable farmers to share their experience.

FAO crops completed the second round of sulphur dusting in fifteen grape demonstration orchards consisting of 1,500 grape trees. Grapes are an important crop throughout Afghanistan particularly in Kabul, Kandahar, Herat, Saripul, and Samangan. The major in-country disease problem

of grapes is powdery mildew, which can deprive a farmer of the entire crop. However, this can easily be prevented by the use of sulphur dusting. Demonstrations of the control of powdery mildew using sulphur have been repeated throughout different grape growing areas by FAO since 1995. These demonstrations build demand for the raw material (sulphur dust) to encourage its import from neighbouring countries.

Rehabilitation

In its water and sanitation programme in Kandahar, UNCHS (Habitat) has upgraded twenty wells and installed eight hand-pumps. In the ongoing project to rehabilitate the city water supply system, and prevent leakage, 1,500 meters of pipe were repaired and extended.

Refugees/Returnees

In Kandahar, UNHCR has completed five projects for returning refugees. The activities under these completed projects involve the renovation of two primary schools in Lashkar Gah (one for girls and one for boys), basic stationary supply to 5,110 students including 700 girls in Lashkar Gah and Zaranj and training of 120 women in midwifery in Kandahar city.

Since 9 April, the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) has assisted about 4,500 Afghan refugees returning from Iran through Herat by providing them transport.

In Kabul City, IOM is now beginning a new project to help refugees reintegrate. With Japanese funding for the \$200,000 project, IOM will work through UNCHS (Habitat) community fora in building community capacity to absorb re-

turning refugees. Specifically, the project will assist in matching community needs with the skills of various returnees.

IOM is seeking \$250,000 for a similar programme to assist returnees in rural Herat Province.

Narcotics

From April 3 to 5, Mr. Bernard Frahi, Representative of UNDCP Country Offices for Afghanistan and Pakistan, witnessed the eradication of opium poppy fields by the provincial authorities in Nangahar.

The authorities eradicated around one hundred hectares of opium poppy crop, equivalent to 5 metric tonnes of raw opium in two days (4 and 5 April) in Mohmandara and Behsud districts on both sides of Torkham-Jalalabad-Darunta road. The authorities planned to eliminate all the opium poppy fields on both sides of the road. Although farmers were concerned about the loss of income particularly a few weeks before the harvest no resistance was noted.

The eradication was initiated by the Governor of Nangahar in compliance with the decree of Mullah Omar (issued on 29 September 1999) imposing a one-third reduction in the opium poppy cultivation in comparison to the 1998-99 planting season and the Governor's order for enforcing a total ban on poppy cultivation on both sides of Darunta-Jalalabad-Torkham road.

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Assistance for Afghanistan

WEEKLY UPDATE

Afghanistan (1)

Issue No.361

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Special Issue on the Drought in Afghanistan

Crisis Areas

In the worst drought to strike Afghanistan since 1971, the hardest hit area so far is southern Afghanistan, with a belt of severe drought in Kandahar, Helmand, Zabul, Uruzgon, and Nimroz. Reports from the Registan desert indicate that water sources have dried up and people have migrated. Moderate drought is affecting much of the rest of the country, leading to fears of a generalised problem of reduced production of food grains and animal fodder.

The Central Region may also be seriously affected by the drought in the upcoming months. It is expected that there may be a possible influx of people from worse affected rural areas to Kabul City; in this event, the deterioration of the water quality and worsening of sanitation conditions will be a serious cause of concern.

The most seriously affected populations continue to be, in order, livestock owners, especially kochis, farmers dependent on rainfall and farmers dependent on irrigation. The mortality rate amongst livestock in the most affected parts of southern Afghanistan is estimated to be in the range of 50% to 60%. Migration of people from drought affected areas to urban areas is exacerbating the employment problems there.

The estimated population of southern Afghanistan is about three million.

The water table in Kandahar City is already dropping. A water crisis in this city is predicted as the drought continues. According to UNCHS (Habitat), shallow wells are now drying up in Kandahar City - 90% of the city is reliant on shallow mosque wells. A WHO survey conducted as early as February found that the water in the city was unfit for human consumption even at that time. This decrease in quantity and quality of the water supply may pose additional risk to human health, particularly as the summer approaches.

The winter of 1999-2000 witnessed much less snowfall than 1998-1999, which was itself a drought year. With both rain and snowfall down, less water is available in the Helmand River, the main catchment area of southern Afghanistan, which in turn is predicted to lead to a scarcity of irrigation water.

It is notable that this cruel blow to the livelihood of agriculturists, and to Afghanistan's food security, is occurring when the overall economic situation is deteriorating (from other outside pressures such as tightened border controls), the exchange rate is fluctuating unusually rapidly (even for Afghanistan), and the cost of food is increasing.

The impact of the drought on cereal production will be evident by the end of May, when first results of the crop assessment mission become available. Unlike Pakistan, Afghanistan does not receive summer rains. It is thus probable that there will be no rain until late 2000 (if the rains do not fail again). Thus, the next chance for a normal crop from rainfed areas will not be until 2001 as the vast majority of the cultivated land produces only one crop per year.

Strategy

Insofar as possible, the strategy is to stabilise communities in situ and support existing coping mechanisms. The focus of the assistance community is and will be on food security, protection of livelihoods, preventive health, potable water, and co-ordination, monitoring, and information collecting in the short term. Immediate needs are being addressed as they are identified and as resources are made available.

In the longer term, the above activities may need continuation, especially information and food security, but emphasis will also be placed on rehabilitation and support for livelihoods. For now, the focus is on southern Afghanistan, but it should be expected that as needs are identified in other regions the scope of required assistance will broaden. The situation is an emerging one, and will require a co-ordinated response for at least a twelve to eighteen month period.

Proposed Interventions

The priority short-term interventions require USD 1.8 million for activities in providing drinking water, livelihood support, and information and monitoring. This requirement is based on current knowledge of the situation, and will be revised at the end of May, when a detailed one-year strategy will be developed. Depending on the situation, considerable additional resources *will* be required at the end of May.

(Information provided by the Drought Task Force of the Assistance Community of Afghanistan).



The Water Situation in the City of Kandahar

Kandahar City is experiencing its most serious drought in over 40 years. The extent of the problem exceeds the ability of affected populations – both rural and urban – to cope using only their own resources. As the summer approaches and the full impact of the drought takes hold, an already difficult pattern of normal life is being disrupted.

Conservative estimates place the population of Kandahar at 350,000 but this figure does not include all of the population residing in district 5 – the expansive, unplanned and populous area to the north of the city. The greatest threat to urban residents is lack of access to safe drinking water while a smaller percentage – those households that have small ruminants or urban orchards within their compounds – risk the loss of valuable household assets due to the drought. With limited access to water and feed as grazing lands dry up, households are selling their animals at less than ½ their value. Furthermore, the demand for potable water is expected to increase with the migration of rural populations to urban centres as the full impact of the drought takes hold over the coming summer months. No rain is expected until late 2000.

Most of the residents of Kandahar City rely on open shallow wells as a source of drinking water. Almost every private compound is equipped with a shallow well – some with a hand pump but most without.

Those without wells in their compounds or those who lack the financial means or willingness, (IDPs who see their situation as temporary), to dig or drill wells deeper, are forced to rely on communal water sources. These include shallow wells – often without a hand pump – which are located in neighbourhood mosques throughout the districts, or stand posts that are located along secondary roads. Only a small percentage of the urban population is serviced by the existing network due to lack of pressure caused by leakage within the network.

Those segments of the population who are most vulnerable to the drought are those with limited access to safe water – that is no water source less than 500 metres from their home based on basic minimum standard planning figures. The most vulnerable households are those relying on shallow wells which are usually without hand pumps so there is an increased risk of contamination. This includes 89% of the urban population.

It is expected that water shortage due to drought will adversely affect much of the urban populace. Human life and well being is threatened and economic losses at the household level have already taken place and are expected to continue. It should be assumed that given the lack of essential services during normal times, local coping mechanisms are on a regular basis already stretched beyond the limits, thus any further strain will exceed the ability of most of the residents to cope.

According to WHO, the minimum requirement of water for domestic consumption is 115 litres per person per day. Based on the absolute minimum requirement of 30 litres per person per day, 10,500,000 litres (10,500 cubic metres) of water must be available to meet the needs of the population every day.

Kandahar City has an existing piped water network which could serve up to 40% of the population residing in certain districts but in fact produces only 1,000 cubic metres, or about 10% of the total minimum needs. In addition to the piped network, many city residents also rely on shallow wells without hand pumps. Due to the lack of rainfall this year and a reduction in rainfall over the last two years, the water table continues to fall - rendering these wells useless. The water table continues to fall on average one metre per month.

Poorer families are unable to dig their wells deeper and thus are forced to fetch water from communal wells. Many of these wells, often located in the mosques, have either already dried up or are at risk of drying up, forcing people (often children) to walk long distances to meet their daily water needs. Access to water sources varies between the districts. Those districts that are already facing a significant water shortage are districts 1, 5, and 6. The residents of districts 2, 3, and 4 appear to be the most 'well-served' in terms of access to water. This is misleading, however, as these households are almost 100% reliant on shallow wells, and they are the most socio-economically disadvantaged. They are thus the least able to cope if the water table drops even one or two metres. If these shallow wells dry up, a large percentage of the population will be immediately affected. Furthermore, these shallow wells are often not equipped with a hand pump

and therefore do not represent a clean water source.

In the past, an estimated 8,000 households (56,000 people) relied on communal wells or on average 20 households per well. This has increased to approximately 56 households per well.

In the highly populated area north of Loya Wala in district 5, wells of more than 15- 30 metres are the minimum requirement. A few households in district 5 have drilled wells to 50 metres in search of water. While these wells solve water problems for a few, they simultaneously draw water from surrounding wells rendering them useless.

(Information provided by UNCHS-Habitat, Afghanistan)

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WEEKLY UPDATE

Afghanistan (1)

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Funding

10 May 2000

A UN-led appeal last week for USD 1.8 million to address initial short term assistance for drought victims in southern Afghanistan has not brought in anywhere near enough money from donor countries. So far, only the Swiss Government has come forward, with a pledge of USD 100,000.

Other pledges are awaited.

The Drought

A recent UNICEF report was compiled on the supply of drinking water in west and southwest Afghanistan. The report found that on average 11% of hand-dug wells with hand pumps were dry in western Afghanistan, while in Pashtun Zarghun district, 40% of the wells are dry. In southern Afghanistan, an average of 10% of dug or bore wells are dry. As in the west, however, this average conceals enormous variation. For example, over 60% of the wells in Khashrod district of Nimroz Province have run dry, as have almost half the wells in Maiwand district of Kandahar. The findings are based on situation analysis done by the Rural Rehabilitation and Development Department and the NGO DACAAR.

UNICEF is now heading a technical working group which has put together a plan of action for safe drinking water to the

most drought affected districts of Kandahar and Zabul provinces. The plan was prepared based on the pledges made by UNDP/ERD, UNICEF, and DACAAR for the provision of US\$83,000. The project, which will deepen/drill 250 wells, will benefit some 75,000 people in eight districts.

Meanwhile, Habitat in Kandahar has expedited the installation of hand pumps. Seven boring machines are operational and are digging the wells for more hand pumps.

Health

Iodine Deficiency

The first meeting of the Regional Committee for Control of Iodine Deficiency Disorder (CIDD) and universal salt iodisation (USI), initiated by UNICEF, was held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Kabul. In addition to discussing USI related issues the participants also agreed upon the site for the first salt iodisation plant in Afghanistan. Based on this initiative the installation of the other SIPs will be decided. The work is being done with UNICEF's technical and financial support.

For the first time in Afghanistan, UNICEF initiated a micro-nutrient programme in the western region through iodisation of salt. UNICEF has just completed a six-week study of iodine deficiency disorder.

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der, salt sources, availability of iodised salt in the region, and assembling salt iodisation plants. Arrangements have been made to install one iodisation plant in Herat.

Training

The second training course for fifteen traditional birth attendants (TBAs) in Sayed Karam district, Paktia province has been successfully completed. WHO distributed TBA kits to the graduates. WHO has now started training for ten TBAs in Machal Ghu area of Sayed Karam district.

Medical supplies

To strengthen the service delivery capacity in eastern region, WHO distributed medical supplies to one hospital and four health centres and food to seventy-five TB patients. WHO provided medical supplies to Norul Madaris clinic in Ghazni, Ghazni Malaria Referral Centre, TB guidelines and anti-TB drugs to Maqur TB centre, blood bags to Jaghuri clinic, medical supplies to Baghlan Provincial Hospital and Imam Sahib Health Centre, Baghlan province. WHO Faizabad office sent medical supplies to health facilities in Panjshir and anti-TB drugs to Faizabad Hospital. In addition, a WHO radiologist visited Ghazni, Paktia, Paktika and Khost provinces to repair x-ray machines.

Water/Sanitation

Following two months of joint effort of GRRD, UNICEF and Canada Fund the Shina pipe water supply project in Bagrami district of Kabul province has been rehabilitated to benefit some 6,000 people with safe drinking water. The project comprises a deep well, reservoir, piping system, and

standposts. UNICEF also provided a power generator for the project.

UNICEF organised a three-day day refresher training for 25 technical staff of GRRD Kabul on drilling and hand pump installation and maintenance. The GRRD trained staff conducted the training with the technical and financial support of UNICEF Kabul.

UNDCP has completed rehabilitating the Band-e-Temur canal. The canal has a command area of about 46 kilometres and provides water for about 2,000 hectares of agricultural land in Maiwand district. The beneficiaries are estimated to be around 5,000 families. The completion of this sub-project will enable the growers to have a constant flow of water to the agricultural lands through the winter season.

Education

In a two-week intensive workshop in Peshawar, education and health staff from Swedish Committee for Afghanistan prepared special training for school committee members in Afghanistan. As many of the participants' school committee members are illiterate, much effort has been put into finding proper pedagogical tools in order to get messages across. Hence, there are quite a number of pictures in the materials, cartoon stories, and audio drama recordings to be used. The training aims to involve local people in the running of their schools.

Human Rights

A Human Rights Orientation workshop, the first in a series that is part of a larger capacity-building programme, was conducted by the Office of the UN Coordinator for Afghanistan from 1 to 5 May. A total of ten

UN staff members participated. Designed to provide an introduction to human rights concepts and standards, the Workshop covered a range of issues including existing human rights mechanisms and procedures and the relevance of human rights to the work of assistance agencies. It also reviewed rights-based programming including the need to address structural inequalities that contribute to poverty, social exclusion and marginalisation.

The UNICEF/Save the Children-Sweden training of master trainers on the Convention for the Rights of the Child took place from 19 until 29 April 2000. The trainees will return for one final week in June, following the acquisition of practical experience in the field. The 10 women and 8 men work with various partners, including line ministries, NGOs and community groups. The development of this core team of master trainers will provide all four UNICEF sub-offices with the local resources to organise CRC training.

Disability

UNOPS/CDAP is conducting three group vocational training courses. Sixty vulnerable women (disabled and widows) will get skill training in embroidery and hat and net weaving. This is a part of UNOPS/CDAP's comprehensive rehabilitation services. The courses are being conducted based on the growing demand of vulnerable women and the local communities' request. The period of training is four months. After completion of training, UNOPS/CDAP will provide the skilled women with revolving loans in order to make them economically self-sufficient.

Agriculture

An FAO mission travelled to Spinboldak to assess a reported locust attack. No attack was unearthed.

Veterinary Field Units (VFUs) and poultry specialists distributed 400 doses of various vaccines and drugs for all species of livestock in Kandahar City.

Vaccination campaigns are carried out seasonally prior to the expected occurrence of specific disease outbreaks in the region. All veterinarians keep clinical records and spend at least 10 days per month in the villages. In addition they receive training. This training helps both farmers by increasing production and VFUs by delivering more services. Each VFU is supplied with essential medical and surgical supplies to undertake simple operations and procedures. Basic Veterinary Workers (BVWs) who remain active in the programme are also supplied with bicycles.

Rehabilitation

In Malajat area of Dand district, UNDP/UNOPS/ARRP has completed forty canal crossings. The NGO MCI has constructed two basic health units in Helmand province and has established a fruit and non-fruit nursery in Bagat village. The construction of a veterinary field unit and housing for returnees in Bagat is underway.

Refugees/Returnees

UNHCR assisted voluntary repatriation from NWFP to areas in the Eastern and Central region of Afghanistan continued at considerable numbers. While there was no group repatriation during the week, 644 families (3,728 persons) received the stan-

dard repatriation-grant at UNHCR's encashment centres in Jalalabad (385 families/2,330 persons) and Khost (259 families/1,398 persons). From Iran, between 9 April and 2 May, 8,324 persons have returned to Afghanistan, of which a large proportion have been provided with onward transportation to provincial capitals of the destinations in Afghanistan.

Mine Action

In southern Afghanistan, MCPA survey teams completed the survey of one residential minefield in Khosh Rod of Nimroz and one agricultural minefield in Daman district of Kandahar province, a total of 137,025 square metres, which will benefit 1,450 individuals.

DAFA teams have finished clearing one residential minefield in Daman district and one irrigation minefield in Kandahar City, at the request of local people. Clearance will benefit 3,420 persons and will allow irrigation of seven hectares of agricultural land.

DAFA teams have also completed the clearance of two agricultural minefields and a residential minefield in Daman and Maiwand districts of Kandahar province at the request of local people. 287 people will be able to cultivate their previously unsafe land and to rehabilitate ruined residential areas.

The Mine Dog Group has completed the clearance of one agricultural minefield and one irrigation canal minefield in Yakhchal, Nahr-i-Saraj, Helmand province. In Khash Rud district of Nimroz and Nahr-i-Saraj of Helmand, the Mine Dog Centre has completed the clearance of one residential minefield and one irrigation ca-

nal minefield at the request of local people and UNHCR.

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Assistance for Afghanistan

WEEKLY UPDATE

Issue No.363

16 May 2000

Special Issue on the Situation in Central Region

Back in March, *Weekly Update* 253 highlighted the new population survey of Kabul City. The survey found a significant increase in the total population of the city, previously estimated at some 1.2 million and now put at 1.78 million. The survey also found a high degree of mobility among the resident population, with one in five families reporting a move within the past six months. The report also confirmed that almost one-third of the families resident in the city had in-migrated to the city in recent years.

This increasing population is directly relevant to the focus of this report: the situation of displaced persons in Central Region, and the drought.

Readers will recall that, in the wake of fighting in late summer/fall 1999, central and north Afghanistan witnessed a wave of displacement totalling about 200,000 people. The greatest numbers were those displaced from Shamali north of Kabul, who for the most part fled either to the Panjshir Valley (Northern Alliance territory) or to Kabul City. In each location, there were an estimated 60,000 or more displaced persons.

Since mid-December, the principal humanitarian issues that have faced agencies in the central region have been both the

impact of the displacement of tens of thousands of people from their homes in the Shamali plain, and the continuing drought in the region.

UN and assistance agencies have continued to monitor conditions and provide support for displaced families in the region. In Kabul, regular food inputs from WFP for some 3,000 vulnerable families housed in the ex-Soviet Embassy have been matched by joint UN/NGO non-food distributions. In addition, UNICEF, together with NGOs, have supported the provision of basic services (safe water, health care, and education) and winterised the compound.

On the assumption that families would be able to return to their homes in Shamali in the spring, a joint strategy for scaling down external assistance over a three to four month period has been developed in Kabul. Originally, assistance for the displaced was intended to be for six months, and thus to be phased out by March.

Therefore, food provision to displaced persons in the ex-Soviet compound is decreasing, while Action Contre la Faim simultaneously is conducting nutritional assessments there to ensure that the nutritional status of children and the vulnerable does not deteriorate.

The bulk of the displaced population still in Kabul continues to reside in the homes of relatives, who are themselves often poor and vulnerable. For this group, the NGOs GAA and MEDAIR (with funding from OFDA through UNOCHA) are employing 3,000 men in public works and 800 women in home based production activities.

In addition to practical support for the displaced, UN staff in Kabul have lobbied with the authorities to enable displaced communities to return to their villages of origin as soon as possible, to avoid greater dependence on external assistance. However, in the face of reported military build-ups by both parties, and the onset of fine weather, there has been little movement homewards on the part of the displaced.

In the Panjshir Valley, there is no major change in the displacement situation. The displaced are still staying in temporary shelters or tents, although some of them seem to have moved down the valley closer to their homes, presumably in the hopes that they can commute to till their land. The assistance community has been unable to obtain further cross line access from Kabul since January, and sending food from the north is still not feasible due to the weather.

While confronting the continuing humanitarian burden of displacement, Central Region is also beginning to feel the effects of the drought. While southern Afghanistan remains the most affected area of the country, other regions, including Kabul Region, are facing drought consequences.

The recently formed drought task force in Kabul City is assessing the situation in both rural areas and in Kabul City. Forecasting of anticipated possible problems in Kabul City and rural areas is currently ongoing. Possible drought related

fall out in Kabul City *may* be increased food prices (due to lower production), and a corresponding increase in food insecurity. Another concern is possible shortage of drinking water, declining water quality, and public health problems. Therefore, the assistance community is looking into a response, if it becomes necessary, to address food security, drinking water, and health/sanitation.

In rural areas, preliminary concerns are that there may be a decline in harvest and livestock losses, migration of people in search of wages/employment, and a diminution in the quality of drinking water. The anticipated response is similar to that for Kabul City.

An assessment of the situation in the rural areas has started one week ago. First results should be available around 20 May. The assessment had been organised and planned by the Task Force in Kabul with the cooperation of UN agencies (WFP, UNCH (Habitat), FAO, ProMIS) with IFRC and ICRC and with NGOs like CARE, Solidarites, etc. The health sector is involved in preparing contingency plans for facing the situation. In Kabul City, ICRC and UNCHS (Habitat) will assess the water quality and quantity.

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WEEKLY UPDATE

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22 May 2000

The Drought

While most media attention has been focused on the drought in southern Afghanistan, as earlier noted, other parts of Afghanistan are beginning to feel the effects of the drought as well. In western Afghanistan, the drought situation is being closely monitored. In Badghis province, several districts have been visited by various agencies. The districts of Jawan, Qades and village of Sangi Atesh were noted as most affected.

A WHO mission reported that in the village of Sangi Atesh, 20 litres of water cost Afs 120,000 and a kilo of meat costs Afs 10,000. Many residents, mainly those with livestock, have migrated from the area to Qala-i-Naw and to the Turkmen border. A UNICEF mission to Badghis gathered information that corroborates these findings.

Very few credible reports are available from Ghor province due to intermittent security problems, which have limited access by the aid community.

UNHCR in Kunduz reports the arrivals of an increasing number of families in Kunduz leaving drought-affected areas in the northern region, mainly from Maimana. Currently, seventy persons daily are approaching the UNHCR office to request assistance. UNHCR has to date provided tents and tarpaulins to the most needy IDP families. The NGO MARUF has started

health education and mine awareness programs for these displaced persons.

Health

UNFPA opens Kabul office

As of 1 May, UNFPA opened a small office within the UNDP premises in Kabul. An Afghan doctor has been hired as the national focal point to co-ordinate all UNFPA supported activities in Afghanistan.

UNFPA assistance aims to improve the reproductive health status of Afghan women. Current activities focus on improving maternal health by strengthening the provision of MCH services through the existing network of Afghan Red Crescent Society clinics in close collaboration with the IFRC. By the end of 2000, UNFPA will have upgraded eight of the ARCS clinics. UNFPA is also working with the Swedish Committee to strengthen their clinics. Recently UNFPA has approved funds to add an essential obstetric care (EOC) component in four SCA clinics. UNFPA will support training for medical and paramedical staff to manage EOC, priority setting, time management, and record keeping and will provide EOC equipment and vehicles for obstetric emergencies. UNFPA has also agreed with Ibn Sina to strengthen their mother-child health centre and their clinics.

In the south, the assistance community task force for the control of diarrhoea

and cholera, in collaboration with the MoPH, has drafted an action plan. While diarrhoea and cholera arise on a yearly basis, this year the problem is expected to be more serious due to the drought. The action plan includes training of health staff, surveillance, environmental sanitation, health education, provision of safe water, case management and prevention, provision of medical supplies, and co-ordination of activities.

Training

WHO started the third batch of refresher training course for female vaccinators of southeastern region at the Ghazni Public Health Department and for traditional birth attendants in Sayed Karam District. WHO provided malaria reporting formats and malaria registration books to 10 malaria referral centres and units in the region.

Medical supplies

WHO provided medical supplies to 350 IDPs displaced from Registan to Pashmool area of Panjwai district, Shorabak clinics in districts 3 and 4 of Kandahar city, medical supplies to TB and BHC centres in southern region, 300 blood bags and food for 300 malnourished children, lactating and pregnant women as part of WHO Safe Motherhood Programme in southeastern region.

Water/Sanitation

The Governor of Faizabad officially inaugurated the second phase of the Faizabad City Water Supply Project on May 10, 2000. The project will be completed with the contribution of WHO, UNOCHA, and WFP to the benefit of 40,000 people. The

project provides employment opportunities for 160 workers each day. Before the inauguration of the second phase, Professor Burhanuddin Rabbani advised the local commanders to help WHO in this regard. The governor, mayor, community leaders, and military council of Faizabad, Badakhshan have all agreed to support the construction of the second phase of the Faizabad City Water Supply Project.

The Danish Committee for Aid to Afghan Refugees (DACAAR) has completed a water supply project in Bati Kot, Helmand Province, with funding from UNHCR.

The eleven wells dug will benefit 150 families, while 76 baths and 60 latrines will benefit seventy-five families. The community participated in site selection, and provided unskilled labour and some materials. The pumps provided in the project will be maintained by mechanics initially trained by DACAAR but now paid by the community.

Education

In April 2000, WFP in collaboration with the Norwegian Afghanistan Committee and the Department of Education launched a Food for Education pilot project in Badakhshan Province in five districts. At present the NAC surveillance team is monitoring the attendance of teachers and students in the schools. The students, teachers and supporting staff will get a monthly ration after keeping the minimum required level of attendance, or 22 days in a month. The first food distribution took place on 14 May. A total of 50 schools, about 19,000 pupils, and 1,000 educational staff are benefiting.

NAC is implementing a UNICEF funded project in Badakhshan. The activities include the survey of Jurm district schools and the remaining 66 schools of the province which were not surveyed in previous years, distribution of text books from grades 1-6 and stationery kits among the students (grades 1-12), teachers training and formulation of parent-teacher committees.

A multi-agency materials development workshop, funded by DFID, took place in Islamabad from April 24th to May 10th. Twenty-seven Afghan educators from twelve key education agencies collaboratively developed a set of supplementary materials to support mathematics teaching and learning in grades 1-6. The materials are based on the basic Competencies, which set quality standards for learning. The materials will be edited and published by Save the Children USA, who organized the workshop with UNICEF; a second workshop will take place later this year to develop language learning materials.

This workshop was part of the ongoing inter-agency initiative, 'Education for Afghans'. This has included the development of the Basic Competencies and the recent exhibition and symposium held in Peshawar to launch the Afghan education materials reference guide.

In Taloqan in the northern province of Takhar, the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan is, in a multi-sectoral approach, running a twenty-day health education course for teachers. The object is to let the teachers train the students and then the students to train their parents in health and disease prevention. The target is to have one health-educated teacher at each school.

Disability

To transfer physiotherapy skills and techniques to the Comprehensive Disabled Afghans Programme (CDAP) field workers and other community volunteers working for disabled people, CDAP physiotherapy personnel have undergone a month long physiotherapy teacher training course at IAM, Kabul. This training will enable CDAP regional programs to develop capacities within local communities.

Provision of revolving loans for 11 disabled people was approved by a commission consisting of CDAP field workers, members of local communities and disabled people in Wardak region. This attempt is intended to improve the life of people with disabilities to become economically self-reliant by providing them with revolving loans to start their own business.

In Kandahar, two more education sub-committees were formed: one in Nazer Kariz, Shega district of Kandahar and the other one in Salo Kariz, Dand District of Kandahar. One large parents' gathering was arranged in Dehsabzi village where a CDAP supported community based school is now functioning. The parents' meeting aimed to support the education of their own children through exchange of ideas and discussion of problems they are currently faced with. To know about the opinion of mothers of the children, CDAP's female education supervisor also attended three parent meetings with the mothers of the students. A secondary objective of these meetings was to give a sense of ownership of the program to the parents and familiarise them with the school management.

Narcotics

In southern Afghanistan, UNDCP Kandahar organized a field day for the farmers and district shura members of Khakriz district to visit UNDCP funded projects in the district. Around 60 farmers and district shura members participated in the event. Following a briefing the participants visited various sub-projects' sites including integrated pest management (IPM), demonstration plots, orchard, wheat plots and fruit tree nurseries.

The UNDCP infrastructure section has now completed the improvement of Qala-e-Shamir canal. The project will bring 600 hectares of land under cultivation, and 1400 people will benefit.

The female community mobiliser trained 45 women in drug awareness, basic health, and sanitation in the target districts. In addition, 86 tribe elders, religious leaders and influential people have also attended drug awareness special events. The participants were briefed on the dangers of narcotic drugs. Posters and New Year calendars bearing anti-drug messages and pictures were distributed among the community.

UNDCP's annual opium poppy survey is about 70% complete in eastern and southwestern zones.

Rehabilitation

In Kabul, building materials from 118 houses in districts 3, 5, 6, 7, and 8 have been recycled in the past week through a UNCHS (Habitat) project. In addition, a memorandum of agreement was signed with the ministry of public health to start emergency rehabilitation of Malalai Maternity Hospital. The project began last week

In Mazar, UNCHS projects in road gravelling and pasta making, sponsored by ECHO, are underway by the community fora in Mazar City, which will give both men and women the opportunity to participate. The project will provide employment to a large number of people, reduce vulnerability, and offer an opportunity to people to help themselves.

Refugees/Returnees

Voluntary repatriation from Pakistan

While repatriation from Balochistan remained suspended, UNHCR facilitated the voluntary repatriation of 1,217 families (7,079 persons) from NWFP and Punjab to Afghanistan. The returnees received their standard repatriation-grant, comprising cash, wheat, and plastic sheeting at UNHCR's encashment-centres in Jalalabad and Khost.

On 9 May 2000, a co-ordination meeting on voluntary repatriation between UNHCR Afghanistan (Kandahar) and Pakistan (Quetta) took place in Quetta. Pakistani authorities attended in order to discuss effects of the drought in Baluchistan and southern Afghanistan on voluntary repatriation and UNHCR's further course of action.

While UNHCR advises against return to areas affected by drought, voluntary repatriation through the border at Chaman/Spin Boldak for refugees who insist on returning from Karachi and Baluchistan will resume to areas less affected by the drought in Afghanistan.

Voluntary repatriation from Iran

During the week no forcible returns from Iran have been reported and the voluntary repatriation movement under the joint programme from Iran continued through the border at Islam-Qala (Herat province). The 18th convoy with 1,596 returnees crossed the border on 18 May 2000. Since the launch of the programme six weeks ago, UNHCR has assisted the return of more than 18,000 Afghans.

About 50% of the returnees returned to Herat province, followed by Kabul, Ghazni, Balkh and Faryab.

UNHCR in Kandahar continued with preparations for establishing transit centres in Zaranj and Dilaram for the possible voluntary repatriation from Iran through the southern border at Milak/Zaranj. However, in agreement with the authorities in Kandahar, return through and to the southern region from Iran remained suspended as the absorption-capacity of returnees in the drought affected areas is very limited and therefore repatriation is not advisable.

Meanwhile, in Iran, UNHCR reports that the Mashad screening centre continued to attract an increasing number of undocumented Afghans who want to regularise their stay in Iran. The centre has been receiving an average of 400 new applications every working day. So far, a total of 5,514 cases (more than 20,000 individuals) have applied for protection. The second screening centre opened in Zahedan in Sistan-Baluchistan province on 1 May. It has been receiving an average of 35 applicants a day and the joint screening teams have interviewed 120 cases. The third screening centre opened on 7 May, at Pol-e-Chuby in Tehran. Thirty applicants were registered on

the first instance, 200 on the second and 700 on the third day. However, on the fourth day, a crowd estimated at 3,000 turned up to register, paralysing all activities at the centre. All efforts by UNHCR and government officials to control the crowd and conduct an orderly registration failed, forcing the suspension of the processing exercise for the day.

Several areas of Afghanistan affected by conflict or drought are designated as no-go-zones. No repatriation is facilitated to these areas. During the week, UNHCR in Iran declined to assist 39 Afghans who had requested to be repatriated to no-go-zones.

The repatriation of Afghans is a collaborative effort involving several UN agencies and NGOs. IOM provides transport, WFP food, WHO and UNICEF medical supplies, Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF), Medecins du Monde (MDM) and International Rescue Committee (IRC) medical services and the UN Mine Action Programme (MAPA) provides mine awareness training to the returnees.



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Assistance for Afghanistan

WEEKLY UPDATE SUPPLEMENT

A Preview of the Hazarajat Baseline Study

The Hazarajat baseline report is divided into three major sections - a social and political profile; livelihoods and food security; and access to services, primarily health and education.

This study was done as the first of the studies to be undertaken as part of the Strategic Monitoring Unit (SMU) initiative. The suggestion of a SMU was one of a number of ideas that arose from the recognition that aid agencies were failing to work together to address some of the root problems of Afghanistan.

Hazarajat comprises Bamiyan province and parts of adjacent provinces. The districts include all of the poorest Hazara districts. Hazarajat is generally accepted as one of the poorest parts of Afghanistan with some of the coldest, most mountainous and agriculturally least productive land. Much of the land is barren mountains. Although until recently the area was not directly much affected by the last 20 years of war, it has always suffered enormously from the indirect effects. The poorest and most vulnerable people are the landless, estimated at 22% of the population, followed closely by those with only a little land.

The current political situation

The Taliban arrival in Hazarajat was much feared, but in fact violence against civilians was limited. Unlike in many other areas, such as Kabul, the Taliban have not imposed strict codes of behaviour in Hazarajat - girls still go to school, women still wear their traditional dress rather than burqas, Shia Muslims pray according to their traditions.

Social relations

Hazarajat is the most mono-ethnic area in Afghanistan. It is overwhelmingly Shia Imami Muslims. Bamiyan is the most mixed area with 67% Hazara, 15% Tajik, 14% Sayyed, and just under 2% Pashtun and 2% Quizilabash. There are small numbers of other groups in some of the other districts, mostly traders. In general there seems to have been an increase in tensions between ethnic groups over last 20 years which cannot be separated from politics.

Population movements

Conflict and inability of the population to feed itself mean that population movements, both temporary and permanent, have long been a feature of Hazarajat. Currently, there are three main types of population movement in Hazarajat: migration out, mainly in search of work; returnees from Iran, usually at least to some extent forced; and IDPs, caused mainly by the conflict. The line between voluntary migration and forced displacement is not always clear in practice, especially when considering population movements caused by food shortages.

Migration has long been a way of coping with the poverty of the area. In the '60s and '70s substantial numbers of people went to Kabul and other cities where they formed a large part of the labouring classes.

Returnees, who are mainly from Iran, form some of the poorest and most vulnerable members of the population. Lack of economic opportunities in Hazarajat and of health and education services, combined with poor security, means that they rarely return completely voluntarily.

Finally there are the IDPs. The 1992-4 fighting in Kabul in some ways benefited Hazarajat, as educated people fled the city for safer places. While some went to Quetta, Iran, and even further afield, a small educated group came back to Hazarajat, where they provide the core of professional staff for many agencies.

Livelihoods

The Hazarajat economy is fundamentally a subsistence one and the physical terrain will always act as a limit to cultivation. Landholdings are mostly very small and poverty

the norm. Tea and bread constitute most people's diet for most of the time, with meat only ever eaten at religious events, or if an animal is killed because it is close to death. The level of poverty is perhaps most starkly illustrated by the fact that hardly anyone can afford sugar - surely not a great luxury - and a significant proportion cannot afford even tea.

There are also demographic pressures. Most households can only grow part of their food requirements and have to adopt a variety of strategies to meet the gap between this and their needs. Local labouring is a necessary strategy for the poorest, though most of it is seasonal in nature and poorly paid.

A survey conducted by ACF showed that the 1997 blockade resulted in an increased reliance on wild foods for all except the wealthiest, a decreased access to remittances and an increase in loans. The 1997/98 crisis also brought about a new group of vulnerable people, as many who were previously middle ranking were forced to sell livestock and fell into debt.

Overall, the problem of the blockade was less one of reduced food intake and more one of weakening the household food economy through high levels of de-capitalisation, incurred debt, and mortgaging of land. The problem now for the poorest is that they have no way of re-establishing themselves because of the lack of cash labour in the area.

Agricultural practice

In most parts of Hazarajat the climate is too cold to allow for more than one cereal crop per year. Wheat is the dominant crop, except in the very high villages. The extent to which other crops are grown varies, but

they include barley, potatoes alfalfa, clover, fruits, rice and (in the warmer districts) maize.

Across Hazarajat livestock is essential to making up the food deficit and to enabling families to purchase essentials such as clothes. In many areas most families will own at least one sheep, goat or head of cattle.

Food security

For any community or household the food security situation derives from the sum of all the different strategies people have for meeting their food needs. In Hazarajat these strategies are primarily agriculture, livestock, cash labour and probably remittances. Even before the war, when Afghanistan as a whole could easily feed itself, the area had to import food and by autumn 1997 food security had become critical for the poorest groups.

Environment

Environmental degradation is one of the key problems in Hazarajat, leading to land loss and consequent reduction in food supply. Shortage of cultivable land has led to a vicious cycle of destruction whereby farmers grow wheat on the steep hillsides, resulting in erosion of topsoil and spring flooding, which in turn results in further destruction of the fertile valley land and further desperate farming of the fragile hillsides.

De-forestation is a relatively recent phenomenon. Elderly people speak of the hillsides being covered with a variety of species of trees, most of which have now disappeared. There has also been an increase in flooding in the last two years.

Health

The assistance community now provides all the facilities that exist in Hazarajat, but in general the area still has little health care service and access is especially difficult for mothers of young children.

With the exception of polio, vaccination rates in Hazarajat are low even in Bamiyan City and vaccination coverage in many rural areas is almost non-existent. Mass Immunisation Days for eradication of polio have been organised in 13 districts.

Education

Education facilities in Afghanistan have always been limited, especially in the rural areas. Literacy rates were and still are exceptionally low, especially for women. Hazarajat is no exception to this: literacy rates for the four districts of Yakawlang, Panjao, Lal and Waras are 8% for men and only 0.5% for women. Only 2.7% of the adult population in this area attended primary school and only 1% secondary school. The numbers of formal schools remain low throughout Hazarajat and in some districts, for example Dai Kundi, are almost non-existent. Lack of teachers' salaries, lack of materials and lack of any form of refresher training for teachers remain key problems. Given the lack of formal education services, the main form of education is winter schools (including mosque schools), run both by the communities themselves and by agencies.

The Taliban restrictions on girls attending school have not affected Hazarajat as much as most other areas. Agencies have been able to get agreements to continue girls' schooling and even women's literacy

courses, and in some cases local authorities are still running girls' schools.

Because of the low level of education provision, the majority of the educated and technically skilled are those who returned from Kabul and Iran.

The text above has been excerpted from the Hazarajat Baseline Report prepared by Chris Johnson for the Office of the United Nations Co-ordinator. The full report, which contains a wealth of statistical data, can be obtained from the Office of the United Nations Co-ordinator for Afghanistan, or electronically from the website of the Afghanistan assistance community at:

www.pcpafg.org

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Assistance for Afghanistan
WEEKLY UPDATE

AMBASSADEN ISLAMABAD		
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Issue No.365

30 May 2000

Funding

The Department for International Development (DFID) of the Government of the United Kingdom has given a grant of two million pounds for regional drought relief in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iran.

Health

Planning for the second phase of National Immunisation Days is underway in all regions of Afghanistan. UNICEF organised a workshop on communication for polio eradication, immunisation, and surveillance in Afghanistan, from 15-19 May in Peshawar. Twenty-six participants from WHO, UNICEF Pakistan, UNCDAP, Ibn Sina, Swedish Committee for Afghanistan, officials of the REMTs in five regions of Afghanistan and UNICEF's five sub-offices in Afghanistan attended and developed a communication plan.

In eastern Afghanistan, UNICEF, REMT, and WHO have established a regional social mobilisation committee for further strengthening the programme for NIDs. The committee's target group is childcare providers at the village and family level.

Disease Outbreaks

According to UNICEF, the provincial health department of Laghman Province has reported a measles outbreak in Garooch

and Badpash villages of Dawlatshah district of the province. A group of health professionals was assigned to visit the location to confirm the reports and recommend actions.

Swedish Committee for Afghanistan has reported that the measles epidemic in the north is still not quite under control. Two weeks ago, there was a new outbreak in the village of Hazar Somoch in Takhar Province, killing ten children. SCA sent a team and 500 children were vaccinated.

In Uruzgon, UNICEF has reported an outbreak of typhoid fever in Dai Kundi District. According to local authorities, 200 people have been affected.

Water/Sanitation

UNICEF Kandahar held meetings with the water and sanitation group to select districts for the deepening of a total 251 dried wells. The drilling of two wells in Roshan Meena and Bande-Taj was completed. RRD social mobilisers are disseminating messages on hygiene education and use of clean water.

In Kandahar City, UNCHS (Habitat) continued its well upgrading and hand pump installation project. So far, 45 hand pumps have been installed in districts 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 of Kandahar City, and three wells have been drilled. Ten drilling machines are drilling wells in different districts of Kandahar City. In addition, Habitat is continuing rehabilitating the city wa-

ter network and this week repaired damaged pipes and a submersible pump. The Water Sanitation Department has contributed pipes for the project. Another fifty families have just been connected to the city water network.

In Kabul, 600 people were provided with access to safe drinking water through drilling of two semi-deep wells and installation of handpumps. GRRD social mobilisers held hygiene education sessions with some 250 people in Kabul and Logar provinces, mainly women and children, including a session on the role of women in maintenance of WES facilities.

In western Afghanistan, UNICEF provided 15 handpumps and well materials to RRD Badghis for boring new wells in drought-affected areas. RRD was advised to organise intensive hygiene promotion through home visits by female volunteers where these handpumps will be constructed for drinking water supply.

The Danish Committee for Aid to Afghan Refugees (DACAAR) has completed a water supply project in Rodat, Nangahar Province with funding from Dutch Interchurch Aid and the Government of the Netherlands. The thirty-two wells dug will benefit 754 families, while 135 baths and 136 latrines will benefit 136 families. The community participated in site selection, and provided skilled and unskilled labour and some materials. The pumps provided in the project will be maintained by mechanics initially trained by DACAAR but now paid by the community.

The Swedish Committee for Afghanistan has conducted a fourteen-day course in Ghazni. The course included training in boring of dried wells by a new hand drill operator. Three wells were deep-

ened during the course and are now functioning. The 22 trainees came from southern and eastern Afghanistan. They will now continue working on deepening wells that are dry because of the drought.

Education

In Herat, UNICEF held a meeting with a group of female teachers to discuss how to gather education-related data to prepare a good information base. The teachers were briefed about UNICEF's policy and criteria for supporting home schools. A group of teachers was assigned the task of registering the home schools in Herat city in order to organise a meeting with teachers to get their view on quality teaching and learning issues. This will also help in clustering the home schools, which will facilitate better planning.

In Kabul, UNICEF provided education supplies including supplementary reading materials to the NGOs HIFA, GWA, Ashiana, and MSHA for distribution to 3,023 children (boys and girls) in their non-formal education centres in Kabul. In addition, UNICEF also provided 5,000 notebooks to SC-US for distribution to 5,000 children (girls and boys) for their Landmine Awareness training programme.

The Afghan Publishing House of the BBC Afghan Education Projects, with UNESCO's financial support, has recently published another illustrated storybook for Afghan children entitled "The Boy and the Gun." The story highlights the importance of education. The story is simple and has a clear message that real wealth cannot be obtained from weapons, conflict, or aggression, but is obtained through education, compassion, and unity. The book, published in Dari and Pashto, can be obtained

from the BBC Afghan Education Project in Peshawar.

Almost all community-based schools in the Kandahar region, supported by UNOPS/CDAP and funded under the UNDP Afghanistan P.E.A.C.E. Initiative, completed the first academic year. After successfully passing the final examination, 1,357 students (of which 431 are girls) have been promoted.

Mine Action

In southern Afghanistan, the Mine Action Programme for Afghanistan this week completed the survey of one residential and one agricultural minefield in Kandahar province, which will benefit 655 persons after the clearance. In addition, one grazing minefield in Panjwai district of Kandahar (benefiting thirty families), two residential minefields, and one agricultural minefield were cleared at the request of local people, benefiting 118 persons.

Human Rights

A human rights orientation workshop was conducted by the Office of the UN Co-ordinator for Afghanistan from 22-26 May in Peshawar. NOVIB funded the workshop and assisted in organising it. Ten aid workers from Afghan NGOs participated. The workshop covered a range of issues including the relevance of human rights to the work of aid agencies. It reviewed the concept and applicability of rights-based programming, including the need to address structural inequalities that contribute to poverty, social exclusion, and marginalisation.

In western Afghanistan, with the support of UNICEF Herat, the Convention

on the Rights of the Child (CRC) master trainers organised a two-day training workshop in Guzara District for 56 participants (29 females and 27 males). The participants requested copies of the CRC and Child Rights in Islam.

In Kabul, UNICEF organised a three-day CRC training workshop in Malalai Maternity Hospital for 27 women and a similar workshop for 25 men in the Rural Water supply Department of Kabul. The participants of both workshops were from rural and urban parts of Kabul city.



UNITED

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Special Report on Takhar and Badakhshan

As elsewhere in northern Afghanistan, poor spring rains combined with unseasonably high temperatures are expected to result in a significant reduction in crop production, specifically of spring rainfed wheat, throughout Takhar and Badakhshan. Variations are considerable but an average reduction of 80% is expected with a total crop loss and zero or sub-zero returns (i.e. harvesting the same or less than was sown) being expected in many areas. The situation of irrigated wheat is better, on average, but significant losses are nevertheless expected in specific areas due to irrigation structure problems, as well as in many marginal irrigated areas.

Pasture growth has also been severely affected in lowland and some moderate altitude areas. Upland pasture is reportedly not yet badly affected, though competition over pasture access is increasing. Movements of kochis have occurred earlier than normal in response to the drying up of lowland pasture. Production of winter fodder (wheat straw) will obviously be affected due to the poor wheat crop.

Rainfall was generally good during the winter, below average in March and low in April, the critical month. The present situation essentially did not start to develop until the end of March. Poor spring rains have been exacerbated by high temperatures. Temperatures have been unseasonably high, with 38 degrees being recorded in Faizabad in late April. These fell

but have remained higher than normal until the present. Snow melt has consequently occurred earlier than normal - river flow peaked last week, with such levels being usually seen one month later.

For rainfed wheat, severe crop losses of up to 100% are expected in many areas. Considerable variation in the impact of the drought and potential yield is visible but most crops appear to have been affected to a high degree. Spring wheat has been the most severely affected though high losses are expected from winter wheat - of which much less has been planted - in certain areas. Crops in many areas are displaying retarded growth and are drying out, or have already dried out. Reports have been received of livestock being grazed, deliberately, on failing rainfed wheat.

The low and moderate altitude uplands (northern Takhar and northwestern Badakhshan) appear to be the most severely affected. Higher altitude areas have fared better. While in some areas sowing is still ongoing (as is normal), in some areas (e.g. Shar-i-Buzurg) farmers have elected not to plant wheat and other spring crops because of soil moisture shortages.

It is estimated that an average 80% reduction in crop production will be experienced in the region. Much of the region is predominantly, and at times exclusively, rainfed, which obviously renders it most vulnerable.

For irrigated wheat, as with rainfed wheat, the situation is quite varied, from normal (in e.g. Taloqan, Dasht-i-Qala, Faizabad, where crops will be ripe in two weeks) to 50-60% crop loss expected (e.g. Khwajaghar, due to canal problems). Areas close to water sources will obviously fare better than others. Early snowmelt and the reduction in irrigation water availability will naturally affect the ability to further irrigate or irrigate subsequent crops.

For pastureland, lowland pasture has clearly suffered severely (winter/spring pastures have reportedly dried up much earlier than normal in Taloqan, Rustaq, Kunduz, etc.) and has occasioned an early kochi movement (a movement from Kunduz and Takhar to Shiwa and Sheghnan traditionally occurs). Growth on moderate altitude hills is clearly much less than normal and has started to dry out in many areas. The main upland pasture areas - Shiwa, Sheghnan, etc. - are not expected to have been badly affected but it is expected that competition for pasture access will inevitably increase.

In some areas (e.g. Shar-i-Buzurg) local authorities have permitted migrating kochis to pass, but have prevented them from using local pasture to conserve it for local usage. Short-range movements have traditionally occurred between districts neighbouring (e.g. Rustaq to Shar-i-Buzurg) but it is conceivable that that these will be prevented as above

Seasonal movements of kochis from Kunduz and Takhar to summer pastures in Badakhshan started two weeks earlier than normal and have now largely passed the Faizabad area.

Wheat prices in the region started to increase in April, while greater than usual drops in livestock prices have been reported

from Taloqan where local people have been offloading livestock to fund the purchase of wheat.

It is therefore expected that major reductions will be experienced in wheat production and that lesser reductions will occur in fruit and cash crops (e.g. melons, etc., which are presently being planted). Whilst some areas are expected to have normal irrigated outputs these will conceivably be insufficient to cover regional needs, whilst the ability of communities to purchase staple foodstuffs - where it would have existed in the past - will have been weakened due to reduced production of cash crops. Although 1999 was an average year in many areas, few communities have any stocks and little capacity to buffer further shocks. Additionally some areas e.g. Khwajaghar are only just recovering from the effects of recent conflicts which renders them especially vulnerable.

Kochis will return in the autumn to winter quarters to find a fodder scarce environment and predictably a depressed, wheat deficit economy in which to sell animals. It is readily conceivable that their economy will be affected similarly to that of sedentary communities.

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Assistance for Afghanistan

WEEKLY UPDATE

AMBASSADEN ISLAMABAD		
BILAG		
15 JUNI 2000		

Issue No.366

13 June 2000

Funding

DFID (UK) has agreed to grant 100,000 pounds to FAO's livestock programme in Afghanistan.

However, the assistance community continues to seek funds for the US\$67 million appeal for the drought in Afghanistan.

Afghanistan Crop Assessment

The report of the WFP/FAO crop assessment mission for Afghanistan (2000-2001) is available on the website maintained by ProMIS at www.pcpafg.org. This is an excellent and highly informative report.

The Drought

Among children of Baloch kochi (nomad) internally displaced people settled in Pashmol area of Panjwai (Kandahar), a measles outbreak has been reported. In total, 150 under five children (80 boys and 71 girls) have been vaccinated by Ibn-e-Sina, a national NGO, in the area. No deaths have been reported so far.

The local authorities have stated that they recently have provided various food and non-food items to some 400 newly arrived kochi families from the Registan desert, temporarily settled in Dand/Panjwai district, Kandahar province.

Local authorities in Ghor have provided a list of 46 villages, in the eight districts of Ghor province, in dire need of

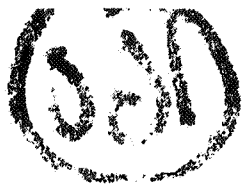
drought mitigation assistance. According to the local authorities, these 46 villages are all severely affected by the drought situation.

In Kandahar province, the water table has done down further in Maiwand district. The UNDCP team there says that the water table for potable water along the Kandahar - Herat highway is now at 30 meters, down from app. 27.5 meters some three months ago. Closer to the Arghandab River, the water table level is closer to the surface. Many drilling rigs for production wells line the highway, as comparably wealthy farmers compete to access increasingly scarce water.

In Kandahar City, UNCHS continues upgrading and restoring the existing city water supply system. In this regard, work is ongoing on the repair of water pipe leakage and replacement of damaged pipes. During the past week, 95 meters of damaged pipes and leakage were repaired in district 6, which connected 200 more families with city water network.

Meanwhile, the UNOPS Office, located in district 6 of Kandahar City has been without potable water for the last three weeks. However, after drilling down to 50 meters, reliable water has now been found. The UNCO Kandahar, near the UNOPS Office, has also been without water for the last couple of weeks. Drilling will begin soon.

Health



Disease outbreak

In Herat, WHO has received reports from Shor Village of Gulran District that claimed that 16 persons have so far died due to an undiagnosed disease. WHO and MoPH are investigating.

Polio Immunisation

WHO/UNICEF in close collaboration with MoPH, UN agencies and NGOs successfully completed the second round of the National Immunisation Days. Over 30,000 doctors, vaccinators, volunteers, supervisors and social mobilisers took part in the campaign. The campaign to eradicate polio, implemented country-wide in Afghanistan, reached about 4.5 million Afghan children under the age of five. In this round, Vitamin A was also administered to all children aged 12-59 months. Based on experience in the May round, it was decided to include more female volunteers in the June round. Female volunteers made encouraging efforts and worked efficiently.

UN agencies and NGOs helping in the first and second rounds of NIDs include UNOPS, WFP, UNHCR, FAO-L, UNCHS, UNDCP, UNOCHA (de-mining), DAFA, MCPA, GUARDIANS, ICRC, HI-HNI, AHDS, Ibnesina, ACTED, OXFAM, AF-GHANAID, NAC, MSF, SCA, DACAAR, and CARE.

Clinic in Rustaq

An international medical team of eight has returned from Rustaq after conducting a ten day medical clinic there. Three SNI staff members joined the team from Tajikistan as well as several members of SNI local and international staff based in Afghanistan.

The team was able to go in with about 500 kilos of medicines.

The team saw nearly 4,000 patients during the clinic. Most of the 4,000 patients were women. The team was struck by the medical plight of Afghan women and the advanced stages of many of the diseases. Several doctors indicated that as many as 70 percent of the people they saw needed immediate medical attention and would be hospitalised in the developed world.

Training

Under the current SIDA-funded project "Return of Qualified Afghan Nationals in the Health and Education Sectors", IOM conducted a workshop in Peshawar on 29 May with the aim to strengthen strategies to promote recruitment of qualified female professionals residing in Pakistan for employment inside Afghanistan. Three returned female doctors participated and gave presentations on their experiences of returning back to Afghanistan, in particular highlighting their own coping strategies for performing their professional duties under often difficult circumstances.

A summary report containing recommendations with concrete action points on how recruiting agencies can prepare and plan for special gender needs will now be prepared.

WHO in close collaboration with the MoPH, conducted a three-month public health course in the Tuberculosis National Institute in Kabul. The course was attended by 30 persons from 16 provinces. The course aims to improve basic management and health planning and to provide comprehensive understanding of the concept of public health and sound knowledge of pub-

lic health strategies and communicable diseases.

In the Greater Azro Initiative Project, WHO conducted five training courses for traditional birth attendants in Khaki Jabbar District of Kabul province. Each course had 10 participants and was held in different villages of the district. WHO distributed TBA kits to the trained TBAs.

Social mobilisation and hygiene education continues through RRD female mobilisers in Badghis province and Guzara district of Herat province. RRD Herat female mobilisers helped master trainers on the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) to identify women for CRC training in Guzara district.

CRC training workshops for women and men were also held in Jalalabad and Mazar.

Male and female social mobilisers and health educators of GRRD held meetings and discussions with about 400 women and children in Kabul and Logar provinces. They spread messages on health and hygiene issues, the importance of safe drinking water and adequate sanitation, and the role of women in maintenance of WES facilities.

Social mobilisers in Deh Subz, Kamari, and Pul-i-Charkhi rural districts of Kabul held sessions with women and children. They provided information on mine awareness, CRC, Trauma/Grief and hygiene and sanitation for 175 women and 405 children.

Water/Sanitation

The Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA) has started implementing an emergency project, including deepening of 1500 drought affected wells in Afghanistan. Within four months, SCA will deepen more than 1500 dried wells.

Each well serves on average sixteen families. Deepening of 1500 wells, by hand drilling operations, will provide stable drinking water for about 180,000 persons.

Since 1984, SCA has constructed about 7000 wells in southern, eastern and northern Afghanistan. In Mid-May this year 60 percent of the wells were dried due to the drought. SCA has applied for Rs. 7.5 million from donors for the project.

In central region, chlorination of water supplies was discussed with WHO and NGOs. UNICEF provided detailed information on the proper use of chlorine powder and the need for intensive monitoring of the chlorination programme.

UNICEF will support disinfection of water supplies using chlorine as disinfectant in disease out-break areas. Super chlorination of sources and equipment (pumps, etc) after construction and repair is also under way by GRRD with UNICEF support.

Education

UNDP/UNOPS/CDAP has established three community schools for both boys and girls in Kandahar. One community school for girls and another for 35 boys in Rigwa village of Panjwai district have newly started due to community demand. Another community school for both 35 boys and 24 girls in separate portions has been established in Mirwais Mina in Kandahar City.

Shuras and elders of the concerned villages and city have welcomed this initiative. At this stage, CDAP provides technical support. Day to day management of the schools and teachers salary will be the responsibility of the communities.

Teachers' Day was celebrated in most home schools in Herat city with the participation of students and teachers. In all

these gatherings the students sang songs, read poems and offered flowers and greeting cards to their teachers. Girl students of 16-18 years age also sang songs and there was equal opportunity of participation for both sexes in all places. The walls were decorated with slogans, flowers, and posters. UNICEF shared UNICEF views on education.

Sixteen female teachers in Herat conducted a rapid assessment on community based home schools. 175 such schools were registered. 209 female and two male teachers are teaching 1,377 boys and 3,870 girls (grades 1-7). The curriculum is the same as in formal schools for boys, but they are facing a shortage of textbooks and classroom facilities.

An education workshop was recently held in Kabul to develop support mechanisms to non-formal primary schools in Kabul. The participants proposed education packages for students, teachers, classrooms and schools. The workshop also prepared proposals for material distribution and monitoring of non-formal schools in Kabul city.

UNICEF Kabul provided various education supplies to CiC and ACD for distribution to 16,316 students (boys and girls) in grades two to six their non-formal education centres in Kabul city.

Rehabilitation

In Ghazni, UNDP/UNOPS/CDAP have established three community rehabilitation development centres--two in Ander district and Cherkh district of Logar and one in Chak district of Wardak. Villagers, shura members, and local volunteers have taken responsibility to equally participate in management and further development of these centres.

Disability

UNDP/UNOPS/CDAP held a five-day Employment Support Training Workshop in Peshawar last week. Thirteen regional employment support officers were trained in group lending guidelines. An action plan was established to determine the number of courses, number of trainees, and number of group guarantee loans.

In Kandahar, a one-day refresher training on muscle testing was conducted for female field workers of the physiotherapy section of UNDP/UNOPS/CDAP.

Agriculture

FAO Crops has published the results of a horticultural field survey in 79 districts of Afghanistan.

The report notes that the horticultural sector has experienced rapid changes during recent years, first with a decline of activities which coincided with beginning of the war and emigration in 1979, and second with gradual rehabilitation beginning in the 1990's.

Afghan farmers are interested in cash crop production from which they find a comparative economic advantage compared to traditional subsistence crops. In addition, horticultural crops represent a wide range of species that can be grown during an extended period of the year if crops are cultivated under protected cultivation. Horticultural crop cultivation is a high-income generation activity requiring a limited capital investment that is an advantage for poorer farmers and sharecroppers. In addition, it is relatively "water-efficient," which is an advantage in Afghanistan where water is a limited resource.

Narcotics

The UNDCP Regional Office for Pakistan and Afghanistan has begun a new bi-annual publication called *Chronicle*. Among much else of interest, the first issue contains articles on drug addiction among women and the success of Pakistan in eradicating poppy. The journal is available from the UNDCP Regional Office, 11th Floor, Saudi Pak Tower, 61-A, Jinnah Avenue, PO Box 1051, Islamabad, Pakistan, tel. 92 51 279087, 279088.

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Assistance for Afghanistan
WEEKLY UPDATE

AMBASSADEN ISLAMABAD		
BILAG		
23 JUNI 2000		

6/7-00

Issue No.367

20 June 2000

Funding

To date, a total of US\$85.8 million has been pledged/contributed to Afghanistan in 2000, out of which US\$78.6 million is in response to the Appeal, representing 36% of the total (US\$220.8 million) funds requested in the 2000 Appeal.

Health

Measles outbreak in Bamiyan

The NGO Solidarites reported to UNICEF in Kabul that there was an outbreak of measles in the villages Aqrubat and Gulistan of Bamiyan Province. A team from UNICEF and the Ministry of Public Health went to the area to assess the situation between 11 to 14 June. Three children died of measles and 150 between 6 months and 15 years were affected by the disease.

UNICEF sent essential drugs including ORS and vitamin A. Anti-measles vaccines were sent from Kabul to the affected area where they arrived on June 15.

An antimeasles campaign is being conducted in the surrounding villages (which have around 2,500 people), for all children between 9 to 59 months old by the MoPH and UNICEF. By June 18, 14 children under 5 years old had died. The children in the surrounding villages will also receive the measles vaccination.

HealthNet with support from WHO and MSF-Holland upgraded the infectious

diseases ward in Mirwais Hospital in Kandahar as a reference center for the treatment and management of complicated malaria cases. MoPH staff members were given appropriate training.

During the past few weeks, Health-Net International trained 17 technicians and 37 health educators. A female technician was trained to diagnose and treat malaria among pregnant women and children.

The number of fixed outlets and mobile teams for the subsidised sale of bednets in the southern region was increased from 16 in 1999 to 46 in 2000 to make sure that the nets are reaching remote areas in the south west.

Reconstruction

A drought survey in districts 3,5,6,7,8,9,12 and 16 of Kabul through the community fora and the Community Fora Development Organisation (CFDO) has continued during the last week.

In Kabul, UNCHS continues to support the community development and sanitation projects. It expedited the process of handpumps installation and restoration of city water network for mitigating the current severe drought situation.

Nearly 90 handpumps have been installed and 91 new wells have been drilled in various districts of Kandahar.

Disability

CDAP Mazar conducted a ten-day training course for 9 female community rehabilitation and development workers, and one field supervisor by a special education resource person. In addition, a four-day small business course for disabled females was held in the city.

Vocational training courses for the disabled were also held for 25 trainees in Wardak, Logar and Ghazni.

CDAP Kandahar celebrated the end of a pilot phase of the community education academic year by distributing of transcripts for 97 (girl/boy) students in the presence of Shura heads, the UNRCO, PEACE partners, parents of the students and participants from the community on 8 and 10 May. The schools were initiated by CDAP in August 1999. CDAP has now included grade 4 for the next phase. Encouraged by the CDAP community schooling, the Shuras and families would like to skip summer vacation. They want their children to continue school in the summer.

Repatriation

Voluntary repatriation from Pakistan

A total of 245 families/1,062 individuals have voluntarily repatriated from Pakistan via Chaman/Spin Boldak border last week. UNHCR provided the standard repatriation assistance package (cash, WFP wheat, plastic sheeting) and tea.



UNITED

NATIONS

Assistance for Afghanistan

WEEKLY UPDATE SUPPLEMENT

The Drought Situation in Western Afghanistan
May - June 2000

Western region includes four large provinces: Herat, Badghis, Ghor and Farah.

From May through August, strong winds prevail in Herat. Winter months are December to February when temperatures can drop to freezing points.

In March/April the rains come and often cause flash floods and freak storms. Last year, however, there was no rain, floods, storms or snow. Many water reservoirs were not replenished and there has been a general decrease in water supply. The main rivers Hari rud, Murghab, Qala-e-nau and Delaram, normally filled with water from melting snow from the central highlands, have little water. Due to the lack of rain, most rainfed crops failed. The severity of the situation varies in different provinces.

Badghis Province

A mission to Badghis in May 2000 reported increasing stress among the local people and predicted decreased food security in the coming months. Seriously affected areas are Qala-I-nau, Sangi Atesh, Murghab, Qades and Jawand districts.

Details of problems include a growing number of destitute people in the district and town centers, rapid loss of livelihoods, livestock losses, falling prices.

Rain fed cultivation is completely lost. The dried stalks when possible have been used as fodder for livestock. In certain areas, irrigated cultivation is less than 20% compared to previous years.

Herat Province

The UN office has received a report from the people of Ghorya and Korogh districts in Herat province that their karezes and springs have dried up. They are asking for assistance to save their livelihoods.

In Zindajan district, Herat province, the situation has also deteriorated. The villagers are in the process of setting up food-for-work projects to improve their wells. WFP and DACAAR may be potential supporters.

Herat City

According to the Herat Municipality Water Supply Department, the water level in the major deep wells supplying the city has dropped by three meters from March to May 2000.

Ghor Province

Few reports are available from Ghor province due to intermittent poor security and limited safe access.

However in the second half of May, Christian Aid, the Ecumenical Office and Afghan Aid have been able to visit the province and are in the process of undertaking substantial activities.

Inter-Agency Response

Several agencies have investigated areas affected by the drought. These agencies are also providing assistance. The following agencies are involved in different activities in the region:

UNICEF to date provided three drilling rigs, PVC casing pipes and filter through the department of RRD for improvement of existing wells in Badghis province. It was agreed that RRD with community participation and contribution will construct 15 bore wells. UNICEF will provide 15 hand-pumps on the condition that RRD provides exact locations of the wells and the final report.

In Herat City, UNICEF agreed to study the water situation with the water supply authority as the need may arise.

DACAAR mission to Qades reports that local villagers are improving their existing shallow wells using the new resources that will be provided by the agency.

DACAAR is still awaiting the arrival of the rigs. The resources will be located at most district headquarters where DACAAR has a water programme and will be available for use after the community makes subsidised payments for operational costs.

FAO distributed 2 metric tonnes of corn seeds in Badghis. Instructions and demonstrations of locust and sunnpest control are being conducted in affected areas. FAO CA/EO and Afghan Aid will supply improved seeds from FAO improved seed enterprise to farmers in Ghor province. There will be co-operation in other agricultural interventions.

CA/EO and Afghan Aid are establishing an operation base in Ghor province to extend humanitarian aid activities there.

DCA visited livestock concentration areas around Qala-e-naw (Badghis) and is planning to visit the Turkmen border. So far, no cases of disease outbreak among livestock have been reported.

MoPH and WHO are monitoring the health situation. WHO met with the governor of Badghis province and visited Sang-e-Atesh village. In this village, 20 litres of water costs Afs.120,000, and a kilo of meat costs Afs.10,000. Many residences, mainly those with livestock, have migrated from the area to Qala-e-naw and Turkmenistan border. Meanwhile the last NID's campaign could be successfully implemented in many locations including some Kochi settlements.

WFP's mission to Jawand district produced the successful rehabilitation of water collection ponds in the area. Given the severity of the situation in some of the areas visited, WFP is strongly advising/offering free food distribution to the worst affected communities.

In Herat, the villagers in Guzara, Zindajan and Ghorya districts are discouraging cultivation of rice in favor of wheat and other crops, which do not require much water. Villagers in Zindajan are also organizing well improvements. WFP will provide food for work.

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Assistance for Afghanistan
WEEKLY UPDATE

AMBASSADE ISLAMABAD		
BILAG		
29 JUNE 2000		

Issue No.368

27 June 2000

Funding for Drought Response

The United States of America has pledged \$4 million in response to the appeal by the assistance community. The US also announced delivery of 40,000 metric tons of wheat to the region on 15 June, for shipment to Afghanistan.

International and non-government organizations will use the drought relief funds in Afghanistan, on a country-wide basis, for water and sanitation, health and nutrition, protection of livelihoods, logistics and coordination. The United States is the largest single donor of humanitarian assistance to the people of Afghanistan - about \$70 million in 1999.

The Japanese Government has pledged US\$1,200,000 for UNOCHA to support food distribution activities in collaboration with WFP. An addition, US\$3,000,000 has been pledged to World Food Programme for the purchase of food.

Health

Disease outbreak in Gulran District

An outbreak of acute haemorrhagic fever syndrome has been reported from an isolated village in Gulran District of Herat province. Disease symptoms are compatible with Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever (CCHF). An international team, coordinated by WHO, arrived in the affected area on 16 June to control and investigate

this outbreak. The team comprised of experts from the WHO Collaborating Centre at the National Institute of Virology (NIV-South Africa), Epicentre (France) and WHO.

Preliminary findings indicate that cases began at the beginning of May and are continuing to occur. Twenty-five suspect cases including 15 deaths were identified by the team. Samples were collected and transported to NIV where diagnostic laboratory tests will be performed to establish the aetiology of the outbreak.

The team has provided basic protective materials (gloves, masks), disinfectants (chlorine bleach) and instructions for their use in caring for patients with bleeding symptoms. An isolation area has been identified in the hospital in Herat to deal with haemorrhagic patients and will be equipped by WHO. Training in barrier nursing will be provided to medical and nursing staff. The report is available on the website maintained by ProMIS at www.pcpafg.org.

WHO sub-offices, in collaboration with MoPH, other UN agencies and NGOs, celebrated World No-Tobacco Day on 31 May. Representatives of all UN agencies, MoPH, Municipalities, ministry of education and Higher Education, Information Directors, and Amri Belmaroof attended a ceremony which took place in Tuberculosis National Institute.

WHO, UNICEF and REMT Kandahar compiled the results of the second

round of National Immunization Days (NIDs).

FOCUS has been playing an important role in support to the WHO and UNICEF National Immunization Days (NIDs). Particularly, they have assisted in immunizing Afghan children in the remote reaches of northern Badakhshan as well as Baghlan.

FOCUS transports the vaccines from Faizabad across the Amu Darya (Oxus River) over to Khorog in Tajikistan, and then back into Afghanistan to Darwaz, Sheghnan and Wakhan. The process involves not only road transportation over very difficult terrain but rafting across the fast-flowing, dangerous waters of the Amu Darya.

WHO Ghazni office was informed by the Public Health Director of Khost that there is an increase of rabies in Khost. WHO, together with health authorities, the municipality and WFP will jointly prepare a plan to eradicate stray dogs.

The Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA) and RSQUO health unit conducted three workshops on microplanning at district level, in three regions during May and June 2000. These workshops were conducted in Takhar, Kabul and Ghazni provinces. There were 20 participants at each workshop including representative from SCA clinics, provincial supervisors, health master trainers and regional health units staff.

Training

WHO conducted one-week training course for 10 TBA Trainers representing eight districts of Kandahar City.

In Faizabad, WHO conducted two day's training for 17 focal points of AFP

surveillance system in Badakhshan province.

WHO, in collaboration with MoPH and health NGOs decided to conduct training courses in the Southern Region for 10 microscopists and 20 health personnel on control of diarrhoeal diseases.

Medical supplies

In Kandahar, WHO provided anti-TB drugs to a TB center. The office provided medical supplies to Bust Hospital in Helmand province and two UNGHS support clinics in Kandahar City.

In Faizabad, WHO provided anti-malaria/leishmania drugs to Faizabad hospital and anti-TB drugs to Jurn TB center.

In addition, WHO provided surgical equipment and medical supplies to the Khost and Ghazni Hospitals.

Education

The Research and Advisory Council of Afghanistan (RACA) completed with the financial support of Canada Fund/CARE a three month training project about Conflict Transformation and Peace building in Peshawar. The participants were composed of Afghan refugees, high school teachers, NGO staff and university students. RACA trained 234 participants; 120 women, 36 NGO staff, 16 young students and 62 school teachers.

The main goals of RACA from these training workshops were; recognition and development of peace building capacities among Afghans, encouragement and empowerment of Afghan women to take part in peace process, promoting non-violence approaches in Afghan society, bringing positive behavioural changes, de-

veloping resolution skills and creating responsibility and sense of interdependency.

Under CIDA, projects Agency for Construction and Training (ACT), through its Teacher Training Program, has trained 120 female teachers of primary (grade 1-3). In the second phase of the project under Canada Fund Afghanistan funded projects, ACT trained 120 female and 120 male teachers of upper primary (grade 4-6) at Afghan Refugee schools in different areas of Peshawar. The program is for untrained teachers and refresher training old teachers to learn new teaching techniques and methods.

Agriculture

FAO Crops

FAO crops trained 65 contract seed growers on roguing and seed production technology in Enjil and Gozara districts.

FAO Livestock

FAO livestock distributed 21,200 doses of Newcastle Disease vaccines. 14,000 doses of Gumboro vaccines were distributed and vaccinated 19,437 chicks were vaccinated in Kandahar City.

Mine Action

Mine dog groups (MDGs) of MDC have completed the clearance of a minefield in Noor Zai village, NahriSaraj District of Helmand province returning 19,367 sqm of land back for agricultural production. They also cleared an area of 122,486 sqm in Qalat center, Zabul province which can now be used safely for grazing. Both areas were cleared after requests from local people.

In order to reduce accident, injuries and deaths caused by mines and other explosive devices, a total of 2,474 persons received mine awareness training in Kandahar, Urozgan and Zabul provinces. The training was conducted by OMAR and DAFA teams.

Refugees/Returnees

Voluntary repatriation from Pakistan

Eighty five families (401 persons) were voluntarily repatriated from Pakistan to Kandahar during the reporting period. Fifty families returned to Kandahar and 35 returned to Helmand provinces. The returnees received their standard repatriation-grant, consisting of cash, wheat and plastic sheets.

Ninety-three families returned to Spin Boldak and 88 families returned to Lashkar Gah. They completed the construction of their houses using iron roofing beams provided by UNHCR.

International Day against drugs.

In Kandahar, the UN agencies jointly celebrated the UN International Day against Drugs on 26 June. The celebrations took place at Kandahar Sports Stadium. The event included various games and matches and other cultural events. UN agencies in Kandahar participated in the event arranged by the Kandahar drug control and coordination unit, supported by UNDCP.



UNITED

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Assistance for Afghanistan

WEEKLY UPDATE SUPPLEMENT

Further to the preliminary assessment as reported in Weekly Update No. 365, a more extensive and systematic multi-agency survey has been conducted in most areas of Badakhshan and Takhar.

This survey confirmed that rainfed cereal crops will be almost totally lost throughout the region. In many areas harvests are now producing zero yields (i.e. harvesting the same as was sown) or sub-zero yields (i.e. harvesting less than was sown). In parts of northern Takhar farmers will not attempt to harvest as much as a third of the cultivated area. In order to provide some grazing pasture for animals. Spring wheat is a total failure. In most areas the autumn crop is only marginally better though yields are in general negligible. In many places harvesting, or rather plucking, is being carried out by hand rather than by scythe as the wheat is so thinly dispersed. Even in the few areas where both water retention and shade have been, a much reduced yield will be obtained. In general, wheat quality is exceptionally poor, disease levels are high and virtually none is of seed quality. Additionally, the barley crop has been totally lost. Critically, a wheat seed crisis is expected during the forthcoming planting season.

Contrary to earlier assessments, higher altitude rainfed wheat areas (at

2500-3000m) and all spring planted, have been badly affected with zero or very low yields expected.

Whilst respectable yields may be obtained from some irrigated areas, many areas will experience serious reductions in yields of up to two-thirds. Both lowland areas irrigated by main canals, specifically those at the end of water courses, and small upland irrigated areas have been similarly affected.

Patterns of cultivation vary throughout the region:

- in parts of Takhar and a few areas of western Badakhshan cultivation is a mixture of rainfed with smaller amounts of irrigated, though communities in these areas generally depend on rainfed cultivation;
- Traditionally, Takhar, from both rainfed and irrigated areas, previously provided wheat for the whole region: This year, its own rainfed areas will be food deficit and its irrigated areas will not be food surplus;
- in the upland areas of eastern Badakhshan there is no rainfed land and only very small areas of irrigated, and communities are generally food deficit

Communities depends on rainfed cultivation will, from this year's harvest, be able to only produce adequate wheat to cover

their needs for 2-3 months. Clearly, with coping mechanisms having already stretched by the effects of earthquake and some recently conflict vulnerability is becoming acute. A WFP VAM survey, currently underway, will provide more data in this respect.

The livestock situation is also cause for concern. Pasture at low and moderate elevations has been totally burnt. Contrary to earlier expectations, high altitude pasture has also been affected with only 50-60% of last year's growth. The seasonal nomads or Kochis, which traditionally move from the four north-eastern provinces to the Shiwa "ailoqs" or pastures in NE Badakhshan, moved around one month earlier. They moved with 70-80% more animals than usual. These have been entrusted to them by non-Kochis who do not normally send animals to summer pastures, but have done so in response to the loss of lowland pasture. With reduced growth and increased numbers of animals the carrying capacity of the pastures has clearly been exceeded. Kochis expect that they will return to lowland areas, themselves pasture deficient, earlier in the autumn than is normal as pasture there will be exhausted quickly. Livestock health is presently poor and contagious diseases are widespread in both upland areas and amongst livestock remaining in lowland areas.

Fodder production required for winter feeding, has been seriously affected. Poor wheat (which has produced limited straw) and grass crops, and the loss of the barley crop has meant that few farmers expect to obtain more than three months supply. A severe fodder shortage is expected around October-November.

Of major concern is the serious reduction in the casual labour market, at district, provincial and regional level,

throughout the region. This has occurred at what should be the busiest time of year. Casual labour, both agricultural and non-agricultural, has traditionally compensated for production shortfalls amongst agricultural communities, and has traditionally sustained many chronically food deficit areas (e.g. Darwaz). Its absence deprives the region of its principal economic safety net. Additionally, the lack of a dynamic urban economy under-developed external trade links, and the physical isolation (at the people) further compounds the problems of the region.

Potable water supply, as well as general river water levels, has been reduced throughout the region. A clear pattern exists of springs drying up or of discharging at a much reduced level and wells drying up because of falling water levels.

A coordinated, multi-agency response strategy is presently under development and will be finalised and circulated shortly. This is expected to focus on general FFW/FOODAC activities, irrigation structure rehabilitation, the provision of seed and fertilizer, veterinary interventions. The approach will be avoid free distributions whenever possible. This strategy will attempt to ensure that all affected areas are covered and will endeavour to focus attention on presently under-served areas. It is fortunate that NGO capacity in the north-east is presently relatively strong - many are in the process of strengthening this in preparation for scaling-up activities-, and that agencies have well-defined areas of operation which will facilitate ensuring that coverage is maximised.

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Assistance for Afghanistan
WEEKLY UPDATE

AMBASSADEN ISLAMABAD		
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- 6 JULI 2000		

Issue No.369

4 July 2000

Funding

DFID (UK) has agreed to donate £450,000 to Afghanaid for promotion of community development in Badakhshan and Kunar provinces. In addition, a grant of £37,646 to Afghan Development Association (ADA) for Agriculture Rehabilitation and Refugee Resettlement in south and Southwest Afghanistan has also been agreed.

The Government of Germany has pledged US\$248,944 to UNHCR for drought related programmes in Afghanistan.

Health

In order to control acute diarrhoeal diseases including cholera in Southeastern region of Afghanistan, WHO met with representatives of NAC, MSF, SCA and Ibnisina to coordinate health activities. It was agreed that a three day training course would be conducted on 1 July in the Public Health Hospital Ghazni, for doctors and nurses.

Provision of safe drinking water to the Dehyak village is a joint WHO/WFP project. The villagers would rehabilitate and clean their underground water canals while WFP provides food for work.

Training

WHO completed a training course for 21 EPI health workers of Paktia and Khost provinces in Gardez Hospital, and con-

ducted another training workshop for 30 new and previous sentinel sites focal points, representing four provinces of the Northern region of Afghanistan.

A three-week training course was conducted for 10 Traditional Birth Attendants (TBAs) in Karokh district of Herat province.

In the Agency for Construction and Training (ACT) vocational training programme, women are trained as tailors, as many women and their families consider practical training more important than formal education.

Under this programme, ACT in partnership with the Canada Fund and CARE International has trained 50 women in tailoring in Sharan of Paktika province. The trainees received a sewing machine and small tools of tailoring with some raw materials. ACT follow up survey shows that 75% of the passouts have either been employed or are self-supported.

Medical supplies

WHO distributed anti-leishmania drugs to the malaria unit of Faizabad hospital. In addition, a number of laboratory and medical equipment, anti-malaria drugs, ORS, and WHO manual were provided to various health facilities, clinics and provincial hospitals in Kunduz, Ghazni and Paktika.

Mine Action

A total of 157,180 sqm of high priority agricultural, residential, grazing and irrigation canals area was cleared by both manual teams and Mine Dog Groups in Kandahar, Helmand and Zabul provinces last week.

25 families will benefit from the clearance of various residential areas, irrigation canals and agricultural and grazing land in Kandahar, Helmand and Zabul provinces.

Nearly 2,500 people including women and children received direct mine awareness training in Kandahar, Zabul and of Oruzgan province.

Refugees/Returnees

Voluntary repatriation from Pakistan

UNHCR continued to facilitate and assist the voluntary repatriation of refugees to their districts of origin. A total of 133 families received the standard repatriation grant of cash, wheat and plastic sheeting in Kandahar and Helmand.

On 27 June, the 34th convoy of returnees under the Joint Programme, which had started on 9 April 2000 crossed the Islam-Qala border between Iran and Afghanistan. It comprised of 1,325 returnees, bringing the total number of UNHCR assisted ones from Iran since the beginning of this operation to 41,397 Afghans. The returnees were provided with transportation up to Herat, and standard repatriation grants.

Monitoring and reintegration assistance

Under the Joint Programme, UNHCR offices in Kabul, Mazar-i-Sharif and Herat have continued to undertake missions for

the purpose of returnee monitoring to areas of high refugee return during the past week.

Based on earlier findings, shelter rehabilitation projects have been initiated in Ghozara and Enjil districts of Herat as well as in Khak-e-Jabar and Musai districts of Kabul and Pule Alam (Logar). Surveys for the provision of potable water in areas of refugee return are ongoing in the Western region.

Tripartite Repatriation Commission

At the invitation of the Pakistan Ministry of KANA and SAFRON, a third meeting of the Tripartite Repatriation Commission, took place in Islamabad on 29 June 2000. The meeting was attended by Afghan Minister for Martyrs and Repatriation, as well as representatives of UNHCR Pakistan and Afghanistan. Issues discussed included the drought and its effects on voluntary repatriation, the harmonization of repatriation assistance for returnees from Iran and Pakistan, the need for information-sharing with refugees and return in Afghanistan as well as priority areas for reintegration assistance.



UNITED

NATIONS

Assistance for Afghanistan

WEEKLY UPDATE SUPPLEMENT

The Drought Situation in Southern Afghanistan
July 2000

Kandahar

A UN team visited the Arghandab dam on 20 June and reported that the lake had run out of water. WFP and UN RCO, who led the team, inspected Band-i-Dahla Lake, the main water supply to the Arghandab River in Shah Wali Kot district, Kandahar.

This is the first time for the lake to dry up since this major irrigation project was built in 1952. This serious situation could endanger all the farms in Arghandab valley, which normally produces most of the region's grapes, pomegranates and other fruits.

The valley farmers have heavily invested in drilling deep boreholes to help irrigate their parched lands. So far, more than 650 production wells have been drilled in Arghandab district alone. Indiscriminate well drilling, however, has increasingly affected an already endangered water supply.

As there is little or no water in the Arghandab river, the livelihoods of around one million people in Kandahar province are now under threat.

Meanwhile, the two generators of Kandahar Feelkoh Electric Station, constructed in 1961, have gone out of service.

Nimroz

Due mainly to the lack of water in both the Helmand and the Khashrod rivers, most farmers in Chakhansour and Kang districts have failed to irrigate their wheat fields. In addition, birds and unexpected dust storms have caused the reduction of crops to almost 40% of the expected yields.

In the heart of Nimroz, the Sistan Lake, which is usually surrounded by pastures and was once considered a main fishing and hunting area, is completely dry. Almost 80% of the cattle (60-80,000) have died in two districts near the lake. Wild animals searching for water attacked herds and villagers in various districts.

In the rural areas of Chakhansour the water table continues to decline. People, who want to sell drinking water, have started digging surface wells in the dry Helmand riverbed. Four gallons of potable water now sell for Afs.20,000. Inhabitants, who cannot afford the high price, dig communal wells and consume brackish water. Crowds of women and children can always be seen around wells, even after dark.

More women, children and old people are falling sick. The current high tem-

perature has caused many cases of diarrhea and infections in the rural areas.

Displacement and migration continue. All families have now deserted Ghorghori (Talibanabad), the new capital of Nimroz.

Zabul

According to a UNHCR mission, the greatest threat to the rural residents in Zabul is the shortage of food, drinking water and feed for animals. Most affected are the districts of Shinkai, Atghar, Shamalzai, and parts of Qalat.

Bread is scarce and unaffordable. So far, 155 out of 216 wells in the area have dried up. Almond, apricot, and pomegranate trees are drying up. Around 20,000 sheep and goats have reportedly died in the area since the beginning of the drought.

Inter-Agency Response

UNDCP has recently completed the extension of Band-e-Temur canal bank in Maiwand district, Kandahar. Over 500 families benefit from the project.

UNOPS Kandahar has assisted the (Balooch) Kutchis in finding water at the depth of 104m in one of five hand-dug deep wells the Registan desert, Kandahar.

UNCHS (Habitat) continues to support water supply projects in six districts in Kandahar. More than 100 wells have been equipped with hand pumps. Restoration of the existing city water supply system is ongoing. Work continues on repair of water pipe leakage and replacement of damaged pipes.

UNICEF and WFP are implementing a drinking water project to rehabilitate and construct 250 drinking water wells in the severely drought affected districts of

Shenkai, Shamalzai, Atghar, Arghistan, Maruf, Spin Boldak and Maiwand in Zabul and Kandahar provinces.

UNICEF has provided 20,000 sachets of ORS, 250 kg of chlorine and 100 chlorination guidelines to a number of health facilities in Kandahar province.

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UNITED



NATIONS

Assistance for Afghanistan
WEEKLY UPDATE

20/7-00

Issue No. 370

12 July 2000

Funding

The Government of Denmark has pledged US\$ 313,367 to the UNOCHA Mine Action Programme for Afghanistan.

Aid Workers Arrested in Kabul

Ms. Mary MacMakin, head of Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation Support for Afghanistan (PARSA), and her 15 female and male staff were arrested in Kabul last Sunday.

PARSA is helping widows by teaching them basic skills such as weaving and embroidery, and is supporting education for children and vocational training.

Ms MacMakin, who has been living in Afghanistan for more than 30 years, told the authorities that she would remain in detention house until all her colleagues were free.

Last week, Radio Shariat and local newspapers in Kabul reported on a new edict issued by the Vice-Minister of Planning according to which Afghan women were no longer allowed to work with NGOs or UN agencies.

The UN Co-ordinator travelled to Kandahar on Wednesday, 12th July seeking clarification on the issue from the authorities, and in order to avoid the negative impact such an edict would have on the provision of humanitarian aid.

Health

Immunisation

WHO, UNICEF and the Regional Immunization Management Team (REMT) reviewed the prepared plan and time-frame for the second round of NIDs, routine EPI activities and AFP surveillance system in the Northern region.

A special arrangement was made to vaccinate Kochis and drought affected IDP children in Chesht-I Sharef district of Herat province. The UNICEF-supported vaccination programme was carried out by REMT in collaboration with IAM.

Training

WHO completed two training courses for 30 Traditional Birth Attendants (TBAs) and Village Health Volunteers (VHVs) in Karokh district in Herat. A training programme for doctors from five provinces of the Northern region on diarrhoeal and cholera diseases was held in Balkh.

The Arian Construction and Rehabilitation Unit (ACRU) conducted a six-month "Institutional Support Development and Office Management" training programme in Kabul. The project, which aims to build the capacity of Afghan NGOs, has been funded by CIDA. Close to 500 persons received training in computer skills, accounting and management.

The Destitute Training Center (DTC) completed a broom-making training

project, supported by Canada, for 80 needy people of Districts 7 and 8 of Kabul city. In addition, DTC carries out carpet weaving and literacy projects for 30 females and males in District 8 of Kabul, also funded by Canada.

Medical supplies

In Kandahar, UNICEF delivered 53 accessory kits and one refrigerator to the Kandahar EPI regional department.

WHO provided medical supplies to the Herat Regional Hospital and furniture for its library, to be used by male and female medical students.

WHO also distributed medical supplies to 12 health facilities in Balkh and Samangan provinces.

Water/Sanitation

UNICEF organised a two-day workshop on proper drilling procedures and maintenance of drilling equipment at the RRD Nangarhar compound last week. The workshop was attended by 30 participants from RRDs in six provinces of the eastern region. DACAAR, German Agro Action (GAA), RRD Nangarhar and a freelance drilling expert facilitated the workshop.

UNICEF is currently consulting WFP, RRD, DACAAR and local communities to establish Emergency Centers for the drought affected people in ten districts of the western region. These centres will provide health, sanitation and hygiene services to the affected children and women.

The following WES activities will be undertaken as essential drought mitigation measures: conversion of 200 dug well handpumps, construction of 55 borewells to be equipped with handpumps in areas where the water table is below 40m, im-

provement of 100 dug wells to be fitted with handpumps, and training of RRD and community technicians in handpump installation.

Some 100,000 drought affected people will have access to safe drinking water on completion of the said activities, which will hopefully prevent possible migration.

UNICEF Kandahar provided 14 hand pumps, PVC riser pipes and other accessories to BRO, a local NGO, implementing drought mitigation projects in Arghistan and Maruf districts of Kandahar province.

UNCHS has so far installed 120 handpumps in Kandahar city and 2,895 metres of pipes of the city water supply network have been repaired and replaced.

Work continues on the water supply assessment for returnees by a joint UNHCR, UNOPS, FAO and DACAAR mission in Khak-e-Jabar district of Kabul province.

Agriculture

Over 400 kg improved bean seed of different varieties were distributed among 211 farmers in 94 villages of provinces in the southern region.

FAO sent 6,000 doses of Newcastle Disease vaccine to Faizabad. Badakhshan province.

Approximately 1,000 liters of raw milk were collected by the BALCO milk collection scheme and provided after processing to consumers in Kandahar City.

Around 900 kg of mineral and concentrated cattle feed, Sorghum, millet improved fodder seed and DAP were distributed to selected farmers in Dand district of Kandahar province.

Mine action

A total of 202,560 square meters of high priority residential, grazing and irrigation canal area was surveyed and marked for clearance in Kandahar and Helmand provinces last week.

In addition, 243,002 square meters of high priority grazing, residential and irrigation canal area were cleared by manual and mechanical teams, and mine dog groups in Kandahar, Helmand and Zabul provinces last week.

After the area was cleared, seven families started rebuilding their houses in Kandahar city. Some 3,600 persons benefited from the mine clearance in Zabul province, in Maruf district of Kandahar, and of the Nahri Saraj irrigation canal of Helmand province.

A total of 20,255 individuals including women and children received mine awareness training in Kandahar and Zabul, as well as Kochies of Uruzgan province.

The Karo-Khail village, Khak-e-Jabar District, Kabul, was cleared of mines and UXOs last week. More than 600 people will benefit from the cleared area covering 75,918 square meters of grazing land.

Mine clearance operation also continued in Charaka village of Kota-i-Ashro District, Wardak, where Afghan Technical Consultants (ATC) cleared 71,081 square meters of grazing area. Over 210 persons will benefit from the project.

ATC field teams completed search of two battle areas in Kabul City and in Bagrami district of Kabul province. Direct and indirect beneficiaries are 1,034 persons residing in the cleared districts.



UNITED

NATIONS

Assistance for Afghanistan

WEEKLY UPDATE SUPPLEMENT

Situation in the Panjshir Valley

July 2000

Summary of Assistance Provided Since Fall 1999

Since end July/early August 1999, thousands of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) are concentrated in the Panjshir valley. The latest WFP assessment carried out at the end February 2000 identified 7,568 families in the valley. This assessment did not take into account those displaced families, who according to the authorities, are sheltered in Gulbahar city, Jabal-Seraj and Charikar.

Assistance provided to IDPs since last fall includes food and non-food items such as blankets, tarpaulins, cooking utensils, children jackets, sweaters, shoes, stoves, coal and such like.

Temporary camps with tents were set up to shelter families who had moved into the valley in August 1999. ACTED started to build stone houses, with one room per family, on various sites placed along the Panjshir valley. Most IDPs were employed in the construction of the shelters receiving food for work provided by WFP. For security reasons and as advised by the authorities, a few camps were established at high altitude which proved inconvenient for families in the winter. Due to the climatic conditions, 234 temporary shelters were not filled by the end of April. As a result, only

1,142 new shelters were built and 1,258 rooms repaired, whilst ACTED entered into a contract with house owners, who would provide a room for one displaced family.

New temporary shelters, repaired houses, winterized schools and buildings in the Panjshir valley and Gulbahar also received stoves and coal from ACTED. Water supply services in Gulbahar and Abdara camp up to the end of March were undertaken by Oxfam, and later by AMI.

In Gulbahar, close to the old textile factory, Oxfam winterized a large number of buildings accommodating 600 families.

ECHO, UNICEF, OFDA, and the Netherlands Government were the main donors.

After the influx of IDPs, a number of health institutions and NGOs provided assistance to clinics and health facilities, including establishing a hospital for war casualties. Health education and distribution of soap and buckets were part of the assistance.

Ongoing and Planned Assistance

Besides regular nutritional programmes, Action Contre la Faim (ACF) will implement a nutritional survey throughout the area in August 2000, and intends to design a strategy for the the second half of the

year, depending on the military and civilian movements within the area.

Following recent fighting in Senjed Dara, Charikar and Khoja Sairan north of the Shamali Plain and close to Bagram airport, people have started to leave their homes again towards Panjshir Valley.

Observations

The assistance provided to IDPs in the valley seems to be at a minimum level but is considered adequate. Reportedly, IDPs who were sheltered under tents have moved down during Spring and early Summer to work on their land, if it was not mined or too close to the frontline. Apparently, harvesting has been done earlier than usual, considering the most probable offensive.

Concerns have been expressed that if another serious offensive occurs, again thousands of not only new IDPs but also those who were displaced last year will flee north up the valley.

The UN and the assistance agencies are engaged in planning assistance strategies for a variety of different scenarios.

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Assistance for Afghanistan

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WEEKLY UPDATE

Issue No.371

18 July 2000

UN Co-ordinators Mission to Kabul

Following discussions with the Foreign Minister of the Taliban in Kandahar on 6th July, the UN Co-ordinator, Erick de Mul, traveled to Kabul to on 16th July to follow up with the authorities on the issue of women's employment that surfaced in Kabul on 6th July 2000. Discussions have been described as "positive". He will return to Islamabad on 20 July.

Earthquake

In the early hours of the morning, on 18 July, an earthquake measuring 6.2 on the Richter scale shook areas in the north-east of Afghanistan. The epicenter was reported on being of 36.21N--71.00E. No major damage or casualties have been reported from the quake.

WFP Relief Operation

The UN World Food Programme in Rome confirmed its emergency operation for Afghanistan which will bring the 120,000 MT of food to help more than 1.6 million famine-threatened people survive the worst drought in Afghanistan.

According to WFP, the estimated cereal deficit for Afghanistan in 2000/01 is expected to be as high as 2.3 m MT, more than double that of the previous year.

This emergency operation forms the core of response to the drought by the assistance community.

Food Distribution

In Kandahar, WFP launched the second phase of emergency food distribution to drought-affected families in 19 districts of the Southern Region. Food distribution has started in Qalat District of Zabul Province, where a total of 100 MT of wheat is under distribution to 1000 vulnerable families.

The revalidation exercise has been launched by 30 women through a house by house survey in Kandahar City. They will distribute coupons to 16,000 families. The same exercise has started in Khas Urozgan, Chora and Gizab Districts of Urozgan and Arghistan district of Kandahar.

WFP has delivered 68 MT of food to Arghandab District of Kandahar for further distribution to 168 unskilled labour families. In addition, 16 MT of wheat has been distributed to 30 families through food for work activities carried out by UNCHS in Kandahar city. Over 10 MT of mixed food for in-patients and clinics has been released to the Mirwais hospital, Kandahar.

Health

The monthly meeting of the Health Co-ordination Committee was held in Laghman with the participation of provin-

cial health authorities, UN agencies and NGOs.

The Medical Education and Peace Corps (MEPC) NGO, presented key technical procedures for medical measures in a resource constrained situation in Laghman province. MEPC will continue its technical support to the health professionals in Laghman province.

WHO, MSF and SCA discussed EPI activities, results and constraints of the two rounds of NIDs and other health issues in Kunduz province.

In Faizabad, WHO agreed to provide vaccines and vaccinators, while MSF will implement DPT and measles campaign in that district.

Cholera Task Force

WHO organised a meeting of cholera task force in Puli-Khomri, Kunduz province, and held meetings with the community health committee in the Baghlan Jadid hospital. Community leaders were briefed on how to control diarrhoeal diseases and malaria.

Training

WHO in collaboration with MoPH and health NGOs started the second round of training courses for EPI staff in Paktia, Paktika and Khost provinces.

Both UNICEF and HealthNet International (HNI) fielded a follow up visit to Torkham border and observed the situation of working children. Girls and boys of 4 to 15 years are involved in the smuggling of goods across the border. According to the Torkham-based HNI clinic many of these children suffer from injuries and skin diseases which are more likely to be a result of their work.

Medical supplies

WHO provide drugs and various medical and non-medical supplies to a number of health facilities, clinics and hospitals in the northern, central and south-western regions of the country.

Education

Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA) conducted workshops from 19th June to 14th July with the participation of 30 school consultants from three SCA regional offices in Kabul, Ghazni and Taluqan.

In addition, 18 SCA school consultants participated in Basic Competencies of Learning (BCL) workshop in Taloqan on 6th and 8th July.

Representatives from 10 local shoras and 3 school consultants from SCA regional offices participated in the ten days facilitators workshop on 3rd July.

Materials used in the workshop cover encouragement toward community participation in education, peace, health, gender and school up-grading programmes among Afghan communities.

Disability

Comprehensive Disabled Afghan Programme (CDAP) is determined to improve self-reliance by providing revolving loan to people with disabilities in Wardak and Kandahar.

In cooperation with the local Education Department, CDAP initiated separate education classes for 45 disabled children in Kandahar city. Accommodation and regular payments for the said classes are provided by local communities.

Kandahar Sectoral Working Group for education led by CDAP has conducted a

survey to find out the need for model schools. The project is envisaged to encourage the return of assistance community employees' families to the southern region.

National Workshop on Victim Assistance in Afghanistan

As part of the preparatory work for a Round Table on Public Health (RTPH) to be held in Geneva from 4 to 8 September 2000, a workshop on Victim Assistance (VA) in Afghanistan was organized by CDAP, ICRC and the Geneva Foundation in Peshawar on 9 and 10 July, 2000. In addition, polio eradication and essential drug programmes in Afghanistan will also be covered by the Round Table.

Agriculture

Poultry specialists monitored 12 poultry farms in Kabul City and provided technical advice to a number of farmers in the area.

The Kabul Poultry Farmer Association (PFA) produced over 1,400 kg balanced feed for poultry and distributed 6,000 kg to members of the association in Kabul. It also produced almost 20,000 day-old chicks from which 114,05 were sold to small poultry farmers.

Harvesting and threshing of improved wheat by Contract Seed Growers (CSGs) under the supervision of IRC and FAO professional staff are ongoing in Paktia and Logar provinces.

Drought resistance cultivates of cereal and legume trials were selected by a crop specialist, in Kunduz and Baghlan provinces. The urea top dressing was applied on 10 rice variety trials, and weeded and irrigated potato research trials in Baghlan and Kunduz provinces.

Mine action

A total of 138,792 sqm of high priority grazing and agricultural area was surveyed and marked for clearance in Kandahar and Zabul provinces last week.

A total of 203,666 sqm of high priority grazing and agricultural area was cleared by manual teams supported by mechanical clearance teams and mine dog groups in Kandahar and Zabul provinces last week. Over 5,000 people benefited from the project.

A total of 3,013 people (female, male and children) received direct mine awareness training in Kandahar, Zabul and Kouchies of Uruzgan province.

Afghan Technical Consultants cleaned mined areas in Qarya-i-Salam Khail, Said Karam district, Paktia province, benefiting 120 persons and a grazing land in Tangi Sayedan Village, Char Asiab district. More than 100 persons will benefit from the cleaned areas.

In Karta-i-Now, Kabul, ATC team cleaned a former battle area. Nearly 250 helped to rid unexploded ordnance scattered in this area. The same team completed another battlefield in Qarya-i-Hassan Khan of Bagrami District. Almost 2,000 people will use the cleaned area.

The mechanical excavation team cleared a minefield located in Dar-ul-Aman.

Repatriation

Voluntary repatriation from Pakistan

Last week 135 families voluntarily repatriated to Kandahar and Helmand from Pakistan. They received UNHCR standard repatriation assistance packages (cash, WFP wheat, plastic sheeting).

Narcotics

The UNDCP Community Development Office monitored several agriculture and infrastructure projects sites and interviewed farmers and beneficiaries on UNDCP activities impact in the south-western.

The UNDCP female community mobiliser trained 25 women on their in drug control, drug awareness, basic health and sanitation in the area.

A three-day drug awareness and drug abuse prevention training workshop was arranged by UNDCP in collaboration with the local Drug Control Unit (DCU) in Kandahar from 11 to 14 July. The workshop was participated by Kandahar and Helmand DCUs, UN Agencies, NGOs and Public health department representatives.

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NATIONS

Assistance for Afghanistan

WEEKLY UPDATE

16/8-00

Issue No.372

25 July 2000

UN Coordinator's Mission to Kabul

The United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator for Afghanistan, Erick de Mul, returned last week to Islamabad after traveling to Kabul, in an attempt to reverse the recent edict banning Afghan women from working with the capital-based UN agencies and NGOs.

Discussions will continue in Kabul.

Health

Immunization

UNICEF with the help of its northern regional offices supported an inter-regional EPI Review meeting of Regional EPI Management Team/Provincial EPI Management Team (REMT/PEMT), WHO, SCA and MSF. The agenda included, EPI current strategy, cold chain, stock monitoring, and immunization coverage.

In Ghazni, WHO in collaboration with MoPH and health NGOs, established a surveillance system for reporting of acute watery diarrhoea in different parts of the province, especially areas with a poor environmental sanitation and background of suspected cholera occurrence.

Training

UNICEF organised a four-day training on personal hygiene and household sanitation for 9 District Female Supervisors of Habitat Urban Sanitation Project and MoPH/ UNI-

CEF Sanitation Center in Herat. A two-day follow up training for 80 female volunteers will also be conducted in the area.

Other UNICEF-initiated training courses for female and male staff of CFDO, FARDA, NPO and Afghan Turkish school were organized in Mazar-I-Sharif. A total of 44 (22 female and 22 male) participants attended the courses.

A Convention on the Right of the Child (CRC) training/promotion committee (of UNICEF, SCF(UK) and relevance NGOs) is being established to review the training outline materials and coordinate activities.

In Herat, UNICEF organised a 5-day training on CRC for 20 participants from Anjuman-e-adabi and Herat University, followed by another training session for 20 home school female teachers.

UNICEF Herat will provide US\$25,550 in cash and kind to Ockenden International (NGO) for a 6-month training programme of 110 vulnerable women on carpet weaving and tailoring.

WHO conducted two medical training workshops for 11 female and 17 male doctors in Kunduz City.

Water and Sanitation

Under UNICEF-supported projects, work continued on improvement of fourteen dug wells to be fitted with hand-pumps in Sangar and Shekh Sahib villages of Alinger

district in Laghman province. Six wells were drilled in six villages of Mehterlam.

According to Rural Rehabilitation Department (RRD) 16,300 wells have been chlorinated in Jalalabad city during the third round of chlorination campaign. UNICEF delivered 5 handpumps to RRD Kunar and released 30 barrels of chlorine for Laghman and Kunar provinces.

Supplies

The renovation of a generator room in the Provincial EPI Management Team (PEMT) Farah has been completed with the technical and financial support of UNICEF. This will improve the cold chain facilities for routine EPI programme and NIDs. UNICEF provided a new 27 KVA generator for REMT Herat. This will ensure power supply to the REMT regional cold room in Herat.

WHO continues to provide a number of medical and non-medical supplies to health facilities, clinics and hospitals in various districts of Badakhshan, Mazar, Samangan, Faryab, Balkh, Jowzjan and Baghlan provinces.

Education

The Kandahar Nursing school was officially inaugurated on 19 July with an opening ceremony in the Kandahar Nursing School building. The Governor of Kandahar province, representatives from UN Agencies including the Senior Gender Advisor to the UN System, NGOs and local departments participated in this ceremony.

The nursing school is for 105 students (55 female and 50 male students) with around 30 teachers. This school is actively supported through inputs from WHO, WFP and UNICEF.

A meeting of the Education Technical Working Group (TWG) was held in Mazar, where the representative of the authorities announced a plan to establish 100 home-based schools in the city, with a ratio of 60-40% of girls-boys students respectively.

The Education Department of Balkh, UNICEF, SC (US), Habitat, and CDAP/SCA will draft a strategy for the home-based education in Balkh province.

According to UNICEF Mazar-I-Sharif, 10 home-based schools for both girls and boys have been established by the Education Department in Jowzjan.

Agriculture

FAO monitored Integrated Protection and Production (IPP) field activities in the central region. Farmer Field Demonstrations (FFDs) products were harvested and threshed in Logar, Wardak and Kabul provinces.

FAO and IRC seed specialists supervised harvesting/threshing of Contract Seed Growers(CSGs) in Sayed Karam and Gardez districts of Paktia Province.

A number of Newcastle and F. Pox vaccines were distributed among poultry farmers cattle, and mineral feed for cattle sold to farmers through Veterinary Field Units in various districts of Nangarhar province.

PIHAM (Animal Health and Production Improvement Module) trainers visited 200 farmers in villages of Khiwa District of Nangrahar province and discussed a range of livestock related issues for the improvement of animal production in the eastern region.

Mine action

Last week, 251,447 sqm of high priority agricultural land and grazing areas were surveyed and marked for clearance in Kandahar and Zabul provinces by the Mine Action Programme for Afghanistan.

A total of 224,932 sqm of high priority grazing, agricultural land, residential and irrigation area, cleared by manual teams and MDGs groups, benefited over 2,000 persons in Kandahar and Zabul provinces.

Some 2,500 female, male and children received mine-awareness training in Zabul, Kandahar, and Kochies of Uruzgan provinces last week.

Afghan Technical Consultants (ATC) and Mechanical Mine Clearance teams cleared minefield locations in Kartal-Now, Arzan Qeemat and Mangal Hossan (Paghman District) of Kabul. Almost 3,000 persons benefited from the cleared area.

Repatriation

Voluntary repatriation from Pakistan

Last week, 485 families, verified by UNHCR encashment centers in Khost, Jalalabad and Kandahar repatriated from Pakistan. They were assisted with the standard UNHCR repatriation grant.

Voluntary repatriation from Iran

Under a Joint Programme, 4,526 Afghan returnees crossed the Afghan-Iranian border at Islam Qala in three convoys last week. This brings the total number of returnees since the beginning of the Joint Programme in the beginning of April to 55,003. The

returnees were assisted with the standard repatriation grant at the Islam Qala transit centre.

Forcible return from Iran

UNHCR reported that 92 Afghans, mainly single male, were forcibly returned from Iran through the Islam Qala border crossing point last week.

Reintegration assistance for returnees

Given the tight financial situation to assist the returnees, UNHCR Kabul is giving emphasis to reconstruction of 1,101 shelters in high returnee areas in the districts of Paghman, Pole-e-Alam, Khak-e-Jabar, Musahi and Khawar in Kabul and Logar provinces.

Further shelter assistance is planned for 1,500 returnee families in Kandahar, Helmand, Zabul, Ghazni, Nimroz and Urozgan provinces.

Mid-Term Review (Appeal 2000)

The Office of the UN Coordinator for Afghanistan has recently published a Mid-Term Review of the Afghanistan Appeal 2000. The document can be found on <http://www.pcpafg.org>.

Copies are available in the UN Afghanistan Office, H-292, St.-55, F-10/4, Islamabad.

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UNITED



NATIONS

Assistance for Afghanistan
WEEKLY UPDATE

16/8-00

Issue No.373

1 August 2000

Talks on Women Employment

Following earlier UN missions in Afghanistan, discussions continue with the authorities on women employment in Kabul.

Human Rights Workshop

The Human Rights Section of the office of the UN Co-ordinator for Afghanistan conducted its fourth human rights training workshop in Peshawar last week (July 23-27). The five-day workshop focused on rights-based programming and related issues. The participants (16 female and male aid workers) took part in group activities and made daily presentations.

Health

WHO supervised the activities carried out by the Baghlan TB centre, which was opened, 10 July 2000. Over 100 positive and suspected TB cases were registered. In Ghazni, WHO visited a TB Centre in Ander District Hospital, where the rate of sputum smear positive patients proved to be around 30%.

A Diarrhoea outbreak is being reported from health facilities in the drought affected districts of Nigarhar province. UNICEF organised a meeting of ISRA, SCA, IIRO and HNI, who agreed to establish five new ORT corners in these districts, and upgrade the existing ones.

Immunization

UNICEF organised a 4-month computer training course for five Regional EPI Management Teams (REMTs), and donated a set of new computer and a laser-jet printer to (REMT), MoPH Herat.

With support from UNICEF 100 families displaced from neighbouring provinces because of the drought were vaccinated for all antigens including TT for Child Bearing Age (CBA) women by MDM- and REMT/MoPH in the Minaret camp of Herat city.

UNICEF, REMT/PEMT, and UNCHS agreed to apply Intensive Urban Immunisation Approach (IUA) to increase the TT coverage among CBA women in Herat city. As a result, UNICEF will train 90 female social mobilisers and supervisors under an EPI social mobilisation programme.

UNICEF with collaboration of the EPI Provincial Department, WHO and MCI completed the routine EPI micro-plan for Garmsir District of Helmand Province.

WHO visited Nawour District of Ghazni province and evaluated the health situation in the area. A joint WHO/UNICEF efforts for establishing EPI organizational structure, coordination of EPI and NIDs activities, strengthening of Acute Flaccid Paralysis (AFP) surveillance system and monitoring of EPI routine activities were also discussed with the UNICEF EPI consultant in Ghazni.

Training

In Kabul, WHO conducted EPI training courses for 46 female and male vaccinators representing Kabul, Wardak and Logar provinces. Workshops on the control of diarrhoeal disease for female and male health personnel from the central region, and a training course on the control of diarrhoeal disease for medical doctors and nurses was also conducted at the Herat Regional Hospital in Herat. The three-month Public Health Management course for health managers and doctors with support from WHO and contributions of health NGOs is ongoing.

UNICEF organized two separate training workshops on the Convention of the Right of the Child (CRC) for 50 female and male participants from MoPH, Rural Rehabilitation Department (RRD) and communities in Logar Province. Female social mobilizers in Kabul and Logar reached 30 women and 52 children with CRC and mine-awareness messages.

WHO conducted a training workshop for AFP focal points in Baghlan province. The participants were trained in how to report AFP, measles and neo-natal tetanus.

Water and Sanitation

UNICEF has identified sites for the construction of 200 Sanitary Family Latrines (SFL) in Shinkurak District of Kunar province.

Work continues on the Shinkurak Pipe Water Supply Project, which will be completed in August 2000. The project will provide safe drinking water to some 10,000 people in the area.

UNICEF also delivered health education materials to RRD Kunar for their social mobilisers.

The Rural Rehabilitation Department (RRD) completed drilling of two semi deep wells in the Morawara District in Kunar province, with the technical and financial assistance of UNICEF. RRD's mobilizers provided health and hygiene education to some 500 female and male members of the communities in the rural districts of Kabul, where WES activities are ongoing.

RRD drilled three wells in Ghazni using the UNICEF donated drilling rig

Supplies

WHO provided drugs to 30 TB patients at Guzarah Basic Health Centre in Herat; medical supplies to the Kunduz MoPH Polytechnic, Imam Sahib Health centre, Pulikhomri Civil Hospital, Mine Hospital and Baghlan Jadeed district health facilities and medical/surgical supplies to Rabia Balkhi, Kartai Saye, and Ali Abad hospitals.

As part of the Safe Motherhood Initiative, WHO provided anti-diarrhoea and anti-malaria drugs and surgical supplies to Ibnesina MCH clinic in Khwaja Omari District, Ghazni, Sharan Hospital in Paktika Province, and Basic Development Needs (BDN) Village, Deh Yak District, and Community Health Centres in Ghazni province.

WHO donated a Toyota to the MoPH planning and Statistic Department to improve undertaking the Health Information System (HIS), epidemic preparedness and surveillance.

UNICEF delivered 166,000 sachets of ORS and a number of health education materials to MoPH, health facilities and

NGOs in Kabul for a possible CDD/Cholera outbreak in the region.

Education

The Education Unit of Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA) has conducted a five-day workshop on Health and Literacy in Peshawar. Eight participants from SCA regional offices including doctors, school consultants and literacy course facilitators attended the workshop.

The SCA Gender Unit conducted another workshop on Gender Awareness in Peshawar last week. Over 40 female and male participants including SCA staff from Taloqan, Mazar, Ghazni, Kabul and Peshawar attended the workshop. Guest participants included a female lecturer from Mazar-I-Sharif University, 3 male staff from CHA and 2 female staff from Ibn Sina and IMC (NGOs).

Agriculture

FAO weeded rice and mungbean research trials in Behsud District of Nangarhar Province, irrigated 40 jeribs of mungbean seed multiplication field in the Dehdahi research farm, applied urea top dressing on rice seed multiplication plots and monitored local community farmers' rice field in Shulgara District of Mazar Province.

Around 575,000 MT of food wheat, 23 MT maize seed, 20 MT of DAP, urea and mineral fertilizer were distributed in Helmand, Nimroz and Kandahar provinces.

Work continues on procurement of improved wheat seed through community shura, cutting of almond and apricot fruit tree branches for fall budding and distribution of plastic bags among the Contract Seed Growers (CSGs) in Farah province.

Mine Action

One grazing, two agricultural and one irrigation land (nearly 124,000 sqm) land were cleared by DAFA in Maruf, and Daman districts of Kandahar and Qalat District of Zabul provinces. Over 200 people will benefit from the cleaned area.

The Mine Dog Center (MDC) cleared around 123,500 sqm of a residential area in ward - 6, Kandahar province.

In order to reduce mine casualties, almost 3,000 female, male and children received Mine Awareness training in the southern region last week.

Afghan Technical Consultants (ATC) cleared the Arzan Qeemat area, in Kabul city. Over 5,000 people will benefit from the cleaned area.

Disability

CDAP established a Community Based Rehabilitation and Development Center (CRDC) in Farah city. This is the first initiative to set up a center to provide a variety of rehabilitation and development services such as home-based training, physiotherapy, mobility training, special education, vocational training, revolving loan, basic education and community awareness.

CDAP Farah has also established a local community revolving loan committee comprised of CDAP Employment Support Officer, head of the local Disabled People Organization, a disabled person, beneficiary of CDAP revolving loan, and representative of the Farah Traders Society. The committee will have the overall responsibility to select the deserved and eligible loan recipients and devise a loan policy in accordance with the local community and market requirements.

A week-long teacher training for community-based schools in Balablok district of Farah province was conducted by the CDAP community education section. A similar course was conducted for teachers of the community based schools in Kandahar.

Repatriation

Last week a total of 23 families voluntary repatriated to Helmand from Pakistan and received the standard UNHCR repatriation assistance packages (cash, WFP wheat, and plastic sheeting).

IDPs

UNHCR distributed 6.5 MT of rice and 260 liters of cooking oil to 380 drought affected families displaced from Registan and living on the bank of the Arghandab river in Panjwai and Maiwand districts of Kandahar province.

UNHCR signed a project agreement for the provision of stationery to two primary schools in Garmser district of Helmand last week. Two quick impact projects for provision of shelter to 1,100 returnee families in Kandahar, Helmand and Ghazni provinces, and stationery to 15 primary schools in Ghazni, have also been approved during the reporting week.

Narcotics

On 28 July 2000 the local radio (Voice of Shariat) in Kandahar announced a complete ban on opium poppy cultivation in the coming season. UNDCP Kandahar officials held subsequent meetings with the Taliban's spokesman, who confirmed that it was a unilateral and independent decision of the authorities.

Publications

FAO has recently published a comprehensive Final Report reflecting a range of its field activities under animal health and livestock production programme and livestock development for food security in Afghanistan in the last six years.

Copies of the document are available in the FAO Office, H-8, St-30, F-7/1, Islamabad.

Email: sharif@isb.comsats.net.pk

The Mine Action Programme for Afghanistan (MAPA) has published its annual workplan for the year 2000. The document focuses on problem analysis, major objectives and outputs for the year 2000 as well as advocacy, landmine survivors, beneficiaries and funding requirements.

Copies of the document are available at the MAPA office, H-292, St-55, F-10/4, Islamabad.

Email: unocha.mineaction@undpafg.org.pk