



Internal Mid-Term Evaluation of

**FAO'S POST-CONFLICT PROGRAMME IN AFGHANISTAN AND FAO'S COORDINATION
ARRANGEMENT FOR LEADING TRANSITION**

2001-2003

Final Report

The views expressed in the report are those of the evaluation team except where otherwise stated.

FAO Evaluation Service, February 2004

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AACA	Afghan Assistance Coordination Authority
AAS	Afghanistan Agricultural Strategy
ACBAR	Agency Coordinating Body for Afghanistan
ACTED	Agence d'Aide à la Coopération Technique et au Développement
ADB	Asian Development Bank
ADG	Assistant Director-General
AFFC	Central Accounting Service (FAO)
AFI	Information Systems and Technology Division (FAO)
AFM	Administrative and Finance Manager
AFSP	Procurement Service (FAO)
AFSU	Afghanistan Food Security Unit
AGLW	Water Resources, Development and Management Service (FAO)
AGPP	Plant Protection Service (FAO)
APMIS	Afghan Programme Management Information System
ARIA	Agricultural Research Institute of Afghanistan
AUD	Office of the Inspector-General
CFSAM	Crop and Food Supply Assessment Mission
CG	Consultative Group
CGIAR	Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
CIMMYT	International Maize and Wheat Improvement Centre
CIP	Centro Internacional de la Papa
CTA	Chief Technical Advisor
DACAAR	Danish Committee for Aid to Afghan Refugees
DFID	Department for International Development
DG	Director-General
EC	European Community
ECHO	European Commission Humanitarian Office
ECU	Emergency Coordination Unit
EMOP	Emergency Operation
ESAF	Food Security and Agricultural Projects Analysis Service (FAO)
ESCG	Global Information and Early Warning Service (FAO)
FAAHM	Food and Agriculture, and Animal Husbandry Information Management and Policy Unit

FAIT	Food and Agricultural Information Team
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FAOR	FAO Representative
FAORAP	FAO Representative for Asia and the Pacific
FAS	Field Accounting System
FC	Finance Committee
FDAs	Field Disbursement Authorizations
FEWS-NET	Famine Early Warning Systems Network
FIVIMS	Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping System
FMD	Foot-and-Mouth Disease
FP	Focal Point
FPMIS	FAO's Field Programme Management Information System
FSS	Food Security Strategy
GAO	The United States General Accounting Office
GPS	Global Positioning System
HQ	Headquarters
ICARDA	International Centre for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
IFIs	International Financing Institutions
IG	Inter-governmental Group
IGR	Insect Growth Regulator
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IP	Implementing Partner
IPM	Integrated Pest Management
IRRI	International Rice Research Institute
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
ISE	Improved Seed Enterprise
ITAP	Immediate and Transitional Assistance Programme for the Afghan People 2002
MAAH	Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry
MIE	Monitoring, Information and Evaluation Unit
MIWRE	Ministry of Irrigation, Water Resources and Environment
MRRD	Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development
MTDF	Medium-Term Development Framework
MTE	Mid-Term Evaluation

MTR	Mid-Term Review
NDB	National Development Budget
NDF	National Development Framework
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organization
NPPP	National Professional Project Personnel
NRM	Natural Resources Management
NRVA	National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment
 OCD	Office for Coordination of Normative, Operational and Decentralized Activities (FAO)
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN)
OSRO	Office for Special Relief Operations (FAO)
PBEE	Evaluation Service (FAO)
PD	Programme Developer
PEACE	Poverty Eradication and Community Empowerment
PID	Provincial Irrigation Department
PM	Programme Manager
PPQD	Plant Protection and Quarantine Department
QDS	Quality Declared Seed
RAMP	Rebuilding Afghanistan's Agricultural Markets Programme
RAP	Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (FAO)
RAPG	Agriculture Department Group for Asia and the Pacific
RAPP	Policy Assistance Branch for Asia and the Pacific
RAPR	Field Operations Branch for Asia and the Pacific
SAG	Senior Advisory Group
SCA	Swedish Committee for Afghanistan
SDRN	Environment and Natural Resources Service (FAO)
SPFS	Special Programme on Food Security
SPM	Seed and Planting Material
SRG	Seed Review Group
STA	Senior Technical Advisor
TAPA	Transitional Assistance Programme for Afghanistan
TC	Technical Cooperation Department (FAO)
TCA	Policy Assistance Division (FAO)
TCE	Emergency Operations and Rehabilitation Division (FAO)
TCEO	Emergency Operations Service (FAO)

TCER	Rehabilitation and Humanitarian Policies Unit (FAO)
TCI	Investment Centre Division (FAO)
TCO	Field Operations Division (FAO)
TCOM	Field Programme Monitoring and Coordination Service (FAO)
TCP	Technical Cooperation Programme (FAO)
ULV	Ultra Low Volume
UN	United Nations
UNAMA	UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VAM	Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping Unit
VFU	Veterinary Field Unit
VSA	Veterinary Services Association
WB	World Bank
WFP	World Food Programme
WG	Working Group
WHO	World Health Organization

Executive Summary

- i. The Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE) of the FAO's post-conflict programme of assistance in Afghanistan was conducted by the Evaluation Service (PBEE) as a result of a request from the Emergency Operations and Rehabilitation Division (TCE). The main purpose was to provide validation of activities undertaken and suggestions for corrective measures and future programming and delivery. The Evaluation was also meant to identify issues for Senior Management consideration, with a view to adjusting FAO's programme and approach in Afghanistan. In this respect, the Evaluation was intended to be a 'formative' exercise. The evaluation also aimed at drawing lessons from the experience in Afghanistan that would be relevant for future post-conflict and transition situations elsewhere.
- ii. The MTE was conducted by a five-person team comprising PBEE staff and consultants and took place from October-November 2003. A draft report was circulated internally in December, and the final report was prepared in early 2004.

Background

- iii. Afghanistan has constituted a major theatre for FAO's development and emergency programmes. Over twenty years of political and military conflict, combined with major climatic and natural constraints, have caused a series of humanitarian crises, weak law and order, and growth in illicit drug production and trafficking. Following the US-led invasion against the Taliban, and the installation of an interim administration, the joint UN Country team in the Immediate and Transitional Assistance Programme appeal assessed the situation in Afghanistan in January 2002 as one of the most desperate in the world, with over one million IDPs and high levels of malnutrition.
- iv. Prior to the events of 2001, FAO had been working in the country for over 40 years. During the 1990s, FAO started to implement the Poverty Eradication and Community Empowerment (PEACE) Initiative which built a strong seed multiplication programme, and a range of livestock activities. FAO's emergency response began in early 2001 following a 2 year drought, but this was then expanded rapidly following the events of September 11th 2001. Against a backdrop of continuing drought and chaotic political and economic conditions, FAO joined in a series of donor alerts to raise funds for emergency activities. The success of these appeals gave the Organization a major opportunity to launch an assistance programme.
- v. Activities such as the distribution of agricultural inputs and provision of emergency coordination formed the bulk of approved projects, and together with other initiatives, made FAO's operations in Afghanistan their second largest in global terms after Iraq. In November 2003, some \$33 million has been spent from a total commitment made to FAO by donors of \$54 million for short and medium term projects.

Findings

- vi. The substance of the Evaluation is divided into two parts: (i) an assessment of the interventions by component (crop production, livestock, etc.) and (ii) an assessment of FAO's strategy, management, coordination and implementation performance.
- vii. In terms of the **results of the programme**, the MTE is of the view that although FAO has implemented a sizeable portfolio of projects and responded rapidly to meet the strong call for emergency assistance in Afghanistan, it nevertheless missed opportunities to play a key role during the transition period in Afghanistan, in particular, during the immediate post 11th September period. Because of its past involvement in the country, FAO had a tremendous asset in terms of expertise, presence and infrastructure that placed the Organization in a good position to contribute effectively to the rehabilitation and recovery of the country.

viii. There were several **external factors** that limited FAO's capacity to perform well. First, these included the very difficult conditions under which humanitarian assistance had to be provided, including the high level of insecurity, weak infrastructure and unstable political situation. Second, the highly political profile of aid to Afghanistan made it very much donor-driven, and the competition from a multitude of organizations, including the international financing institutions, challenged FAO's comparative advantages in terms of strategic guidance and leadership in the food and agriculture sector.

ix. Donors reported to the mission that they found FAO's response to have been competitive with NGOs for funds, seeking all possible opportunities to submit proposals and win projects in the rather chaotic and complex aid environment. Although this has led to FAO being perceived too much as an implementing agency (rather than as an agency providing technical advice), FAO is now present in a broad range of sub-sectors of agriculture, which also provides it the opportunity to now play a more dynamic coordinating and strategy role.

x. Because of the large volume of emergency funds available, some of the emergency funded projects contained components that were essentially of a more complex technical nature. This has been positive in the sense that FAO has been able to utilise this emergency resource to initiate rehabilitation and longer-term actions during early stages of the post-conflict period. This led to TCE handling a portfolio of projects requiring the complex management which is provided for FAO's development field projects. Also such complex projects need to be charged at the full FAO project support cost rates to enable the Organization to provide adequate support.

xi. Many FAO projects can be said to have had high **relevance** to estimated needs, although there are also limitations to the quality of the needs assessments done at the beginning. Seed multiplication has been of high relevance responding to the need for increasing the availability of improved seeds. The relevance of emergency seed distribution vis-à-vis the needs of food-insecure people appears less clear due to the doubts surrounding the extent to which there was a widespread lack of seed, and whether some of those targeted could make use of the improved seed (for example because of limited access to land). Plant protection has been very relevant, meeting serious pest infestations, while the irrigation projects were also well designed as they piloted rehabilitation works on small schemes but with greater emphasis on building provincial capacity and community involvement. Establishment of a food security assessment capacity was extremely relevant in view of the paucity of knowledge on the food security situation and the need for that information for formulating humanitarian assistance and aid in general.

xii. In general, **efficiency** (in terms of how well resources were translated into project deliverables) may be regarded as rather low because of the high cost of doing rural development work in Afghanistan, such work being affected by insecurity, poor communications, procurement difficulties and high backstopping needs. The volume of funds available was considerable yet the recorded expenditures have amounted to only 50% of the committed funds to date¹. Nevertheless, the **effectiveness** of many projects (in terms of translating activities into tangible, relevant benefits) has been good or has improved from the 2001 to the 2002 seasons. This is particularly true of the emergency seed distribution, animal health operations and pest control.

xiii. The collective **impact** of the FAO interventions is hard to judge because of the short time elapsed at this mid-term stage and the limited amount of impact assessment work. The focus of FAO's assistance was on providing short-term agricultural relief, enabling war and drought affected populations to resume food production. Emergency input distribution operations, especially in 2003, are estimated to have made a small but significant contribution to increased food production, particularly in the long term through the distribution of good quality seed. The extent to which it contributed to household food security is more difficult to ascertain in view of difficult targeting and a focus on production rather than on household food needs. However, it can be said that, at household level, FAO's emergency operations likely contributed to

¹ Data as of September 2003.

improved food security of those who benefited, but the number of beneficiaries was small compared with the large number of food insecure households. The locust control campaigns contributed to the saving of almost 300,000 ha in 2002 and 120,000 ha in 2003. As a whole, both emergency input distribution and locust control campaign are believed to be cost effective immediate food security related interventions compared with food aid.

xiv. FAO can be said to have contributed towards achieving a basis for longer-term food security in Afghanistan – with its improved food security monitoring, irrigation improvements, improved seed distributions, animal health and production activities. Furthermore, if funded, the proposal for alternative livelihoods to poppy cultivation is expected to generate structural changes in livelihoods of population groups concerned and to contribute, to the eradication of poppy cultivation.

xv. The MTE also reviewed FAO's **strategy, management and programme coordination**. It found that even though conditions were chaotic, internal deficiencies nevertheless affected FAO's ability to perform well during the first year of the period under review (late 2001 - late 2002). These included (i) the lack of a common and strategic vision that resulted in a piecemeal programme and weak synergy between the various operations; (ii) conflicts around management and coordination that failed to resolve the division between emergency and non-emergency operations; (iii) an inability to establish rapidly a management capacity with strong leadership, and thereby bring programme unity at country level; and (iv) the failure to establish adequate logistical, administrative and financial infrastructure to support the implementation of a complex portfolio of operations.

xvi. There has been a marked improvement in operations since the appointment of a long-term management team in late 2002, and efforts made to address administrative, financial and logistics issues. This has been reflected in the more positive visibility of FAO amongst government and international partners.

xvii. Marked progress has been made in the transfer of operational responsibilities to the FAO Representation (FAOR) in Kabul. Although the operational portfolio is expected to decline in the future, the portfolio will still include a number of major projects with both emergency and development funding sources, and this will require further improvements in operational efficiency.

Programme-level Recommendations

xviii. Given the sensitive and volatile political, social and economic conditions as well as the risky natural environment in Afghanistan, the MTE recommendations must be regarded as subject to adjustment, and where they are implemented it should be in a flexible manner and based on a close monitoring of events. A critical underlying assumption is that progress towards peace will continue and as part of it, the rebuilding of governance and the Government's institutions. Nevertheless, the transition out of emergency to development is dynamic and may slide backwards in parts of the country; therefore planning must take account of the likelihood of continued shocks that require short-term responses.

xix. Based on a balance of continuing strong project implementation with stronger technical advisory, capacity building and policy assistance elements, FAO should now move to a **strategic level of assistance** to government. It must aim to **link effectively its emergency and longer-term activities**. In this way, FAO can also demonstrate to UN partners and government its particular role in providing coordination and technical support in managing the dynamic transition from short-term to longer-term assistance.

xx. The challenge first and foremost is to assist the lead ministries in the sector. As part of this assistance, FAO must show a higher commitment to **institution building**. FAO's re-emergence as lead coordinator of the agricultural policy group indicates that government is looking to FAO to play a more active role.

xxi. FAO needs to **integrate more closely** with the Afghanistan government at national and provincial level, in both a visible and practical manner. All FAO projects should demonstrate how and when they will integrate with government, or with NGOs or communities as appropriate. Closer integration also means

that FAO's projects should be set within the Ministry of Finance's annual planning and budgeting exercise, which will replace the TAPA from March 2004. In this way, FAO's contribution to the Government National Development Framework and the 1383 Budget will be transparent and its commitment to the Consultative Group process demonstrated.

xxii. In light of these points, the MTE team believes that a first step is to hold an **internal strategy workshop** as early as possible for senior staff to discuss the strategic direction of the FAO programme for next 2-3 years. The workshop would aim to review the past experience of FAO's programme in Afghanistan, draft an outline country strategy for FAO for the next 3 years, draw up an indicative Work Plan and Budget for the 2004/5 FY, and prepare a staffing plan.

xxiii. Given the need to develop a more coherent programme, where should FAO concentrate its efforts in the future? The MTE would propose two main programme objectives: (i) improving resilience of the most vulnerable through the restoration, diversification and strengthening of livelihoods; and (ii) laying the basis for an enabling environment for agriculture-based growth.

xxiv. To meet these objectives the following areas may be given greatest attention: (i) strategy and policy work for the agriculture sector, including the institutional reform of the counterpart ministries; (ii) food security information and assessment, with activities that better serve identified information needs; (iii) agricultural relief with a food-based approach; (iv) sub-sectors reflecting existing achievements and Government priorities especially: seed (policy, multiplication and relief distribution), plant protection, small-scale irrigation, livestock, horticulture and forestry; (v) capacity building in all FAO interventions at central and local levels; (vi) livelihood-based approaches including seeking alternatives to poppy cultivation.

Coordination and Management Recommendations²

xxv. In view of the transfer of operational responsibility to the FAOR and the anticipated reduction in emergency operations, the MTE recommends that the **focal point at HQs be discontinued** and overall coordination for Afghanistan now be carried out by the FAOR.

xxvi. Management capacity should be strengthened and integrated, with the **Emergency Coordination Unit** integrated into the relevant development sub-programmes, and the **Programme Manager** made operationally responsible for the overall programme and given increased financial and management authority. **Area Managers** should be maintained where FAO retains sufficient operations, and their management and financial authority enhanced, and communication and physical links with Kabul improved.

xxvii. Additional measures in support of the transfer of operational responsibilities include: settlement of the **national staff** situation (including setting up of core staff for the Representation, separation, redeployment, contractual arrangements); further training of selected staff on FAO's administrative, procurement and financial procedures; a support mission from the **senior operational officer from RAP**; and the temporary fielding of an **emergency operations officer**, familiar with TCE and FAO operational procedures.

xxviii. There is much to be done to strengthen the **M&E system** in FAO Afghanistan. Steps include: improving project design through the use of simplified logical framework analysis; agreeing funding for monitoring and evaluation with donors; and making the MIE Unit more responsive to management needs.

General Recommendations and Lessons

² These recommendations were drawn up on the best available information at that time and subject to the successful transfer of operational holding responsibilities to the FAO Representative in early 2004. Subsequent information indicates that such success may not have been achieved. In view of this, it would likely have been premature to implement some of these recommendations.

xxix. Based on the experience in Afghanistan evaluated in this report, a number of issues have been identified for complex emergencies, which the MTE Team believes may have broader implications and that therefore should be explored further and compared with experience elsewhere. The Team would emphasize the tentative nature of these findings, which will require further in-depth study to be sure of their wider applicability.

xxx. In transition situations, where there is a dynamic and complex pattern of vulnerability, a multiplicity of actors and a combination of humanitarian, rehabilitation and development support, **FAO must define its role** based on a sound assessment of the nature of the emergency (rapid or slow onset, complex). In preparing the strategy, FAO should also build on any previous experience in the country, differentiate between its own role and the broad needs of the sector; and coordinate closely with local partners (government, NGOs and donors).

xxxii. In terms of FAO's role in "post-conflict" transition situations, **coordination mechanisms** at different levels are crucial. These may include the *nomination of a Focal Point* likely until an FAOR is fielded, whose appointment should be *based on individual strengths as a manager and coordinator*. The Focal Point's *Terms of Reference should be time-bound and clear as to the extent of supervision and responsibilities*. The Focal Point should be *supported by a Senior Advisory Group (SAG)* including individuals at HQs, the Regional Office and the country. The SAG would resolve issues of strategic planning, management responsibilities and fund mobilization which are beyond the authority of the Focal Point. A *Coordination Group* should also be established for information exchange and to enhance synergies between divisions.

xxxiii. It is crucial to appoint and **field an FAOR** as early as possible. In the interim, before arrival of the FAOR, strong, continuous leadership as well as coordination of emergency and rehabilitation/development programmes is needed. A *pool of selected senior staff* ready to take on six-month assignments should be assembled until the FAOR is fielded.

xxxiv. Emergency operations require significantly **enhanced implementation capacity** in country, especially where an FAOR is not present. Measures should include: fielding an administrative and financial rapid response team; setting-up efficient communication facilities; and fielding staff well-attuned with FAO procedures.

xxxv. A key aspect of FAO assistance is the need for **timeliness** in relation to input supply and seasonality. In responding to donor pressure for emergencies, FAO must carefully assess what it is realistically possible to achieve given seasonal timeframes as well as its implementation capacity and its ability to enhance that implementation capacity quickly. The experience of Afghanistan underscores the need for timely delivery of inputs. An *in-depth study*, based on case studies and including a detailed review of procedures, should be undertaken to understand and avoid bottlenecks in the delivery chain. In addition, consideration should be given to FAOR staff having more training, increased authority levels, and permitted to use rapid procurement procedures in an emergency context.

xxxvi. To avoid the split between emergency and non-emergency operations, which can lead to inefficiency and ineffectiveness of implementation, a key first step is the formulation of a **country strategy** supported by a work plan with integrated funding arrangements. Other measures are to *place overall management under a single operational unit* (whether TCE, the Regional Office or when in place the FAOR), and to second an emergency operations officer to either the Regional Office or the FAOR. This must be decided on a case by case basis and will depend very much on the capacity of the FAO Representation if such a representation is in place.

xxxvii. FAO should acknowledge the difficulties of working in a hardship environment, through careful selection of personnel with the skills and capacity to cope with stressful situations, and in supporting staff on all fronts, in particular, psychologically. Staff and consultants should be better prepared through training and on-line support by a staff counsellor (who would provide on-line services and regular missions).

I. Introduction

1. The Mid-Term Evaluation of the post-conflict programme of assistance by FAO in Afghanistan was conducted by the Evaluation Service of FAO (PBEE) as a result of a request from the Emergency Operations and Rehabilitation Division (TCE). For TCE, Afghanistan represented one of the newly formed Division's major operations under a complex emergency scenario. The purpose of the Evaluation was to provide validation of activities undertaken and suggestions for corrective measures and future programming and delivery. The Evaluation was also meant to identify issues for Senior Management consideration at an early stage with a view to re-orientating or adjusting the FAO programme and approach if deemed necessary and informing preparation of new proposals for donor financing. In this respect, and given the Mid Term timing, the evaluation is intended to be a formative exercise rather than a summative one. The evaluation also aimed at drawing lessons from the experience in Afghanistan that would be relevant for future post-conflict and transition situations elsewhere.
2. The MTE team visited Afghanistan from 7-23rd October. The team held consultations with relevant Headquarters units in September, and in the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (RAP), Bangkok on 6-7th October. Subsequent de-briefings with RAP took place on 27-28th October, and with HQ from 10-14th November. The team members were a combination of FAO PBEE staff members and consultants³.
3. As described in the Approach Paper (Annex 1), the methodology for the evaluation combined a range of evaluation tools:
 - interviews with all stakeholders, including FAO managers, staff, Government officials and staff, Donors and FAO's partners;
 - extensive document review⁴;
 - field visits, beneficiary interviews (see the Mission's itinerary); and
 - questionnaires: an auto-evaluation form was developed by the Team (see Annex 5) to capture additional views and experiences from concerned individuals that have been connected with the FAO programme from 2001 to the present⁵.
4. In-depth debriefing workshops with high attendance from FAO staff took place in Afghanistan, in RAP Bangkok as well as in HQ. The workshops were instrumental in the finalisation of the Evaluation Team evaluative judgements (see Annex 2 for the full Mission Itinerary).
5. The Report is structured as follows. A brief description of the traumatic recent history and humanitarian conditions in Afghanistan is given in the Background in Chapter II. This is followed, in Chapter III, by an overview of FAO's programme prior to the period under review, and then a description of FAO's response to the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan in the period 2001-2003. The substantive evaluative aspects of the Report then divide into two parts. In Chapter IV, an assessment of FAO's programme by component is made, covering nine different areas, and examining issues of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and to the extent it was possible, potential impact. In Chapter V, the Report then examines the quality of FAO's management and coordination during the review period, including strategic, operational and implementation capacity issues. Chapter VI provides a summary of the detailed findings from Chapters IV and V. Finally, the Report provides two sets of recommendations. In Chapter VII,

³ Nick Chapman, Team Leader (Consultant), Rachel Sauvinet-Bedouin, Evaluation Manager (PBEE), Carlos Tarazona (PBEE), Anthony Fitzherbert (Consultant), Roger Lough (Consultant).

⁴ In view of the very extensive documentation, a Desk Study was prepared by Carlos Tarazona. It served as an essential background document for the Team.

⁵ Out of about 60 auto-evaluation questionnaires circulated, 24 were returned.

recommendations specific to the programme in Afghanistan are set out. In Chapter VIII, more general recommendations and lessons for FAO's role in other countries emerging from complex emergency situations are proposed.

II. Background

6. In the past 23 years, Afghanistan has undergone a traumatic series of events that have destroyed much of the infrastructure, incapacitated the government and caused immense suffering for the population. From the Soviet invasion in 1979, the country has undergone virtually continuous war or internal conflict, only arrested by a period of stability under authoritarian rule of the Taliban in the late nineties. The Taliban, drawn from the Pashtun majority, were opposed by an alliance of factions drawn mainly from Afghanistan's minority communities. In control of about 90% of Afghanistan until late 2001, the Taliban were recognised as the legitimate government by only three countries.

7. The Taliban were at loggerheads with the international community over the presence of Al Qa'eda, accused by the US of masterminding the bombing of their embassies in Africa in 1998 and the attacks on the US on 11 September 2001. After the Taliban's refusal to hand over bin Laden, the US initiated aerial attacks in October, paving the way for opposition groups to drive them from power. Infighting between local commanders over power and territory has become a striking feature of the post-Taliban period. The authorities in Kabul have so far been unable to contain the fighting in the southern and eastern regions. The country is ruled by an interim administration under President Karzai, which under the Bonn Peace Accord agreement, is to govern until 2004, during which time it has the tasks of drafting a new constitution, overseeing the formation of a national army and preparing for elections at the end of its term. Nevertheless, much of the country is controlled by provincial commanders and ex-warlords who operate in an independent way from the central government.

8. Compounding the political story, Afghanistan has climatic and natural constraints. Landlocked and mountainous, the majority of the country's agriculture (crop and livestock) is rainfed and susceptibility to drought is acute. With four years of drought since 1999, the rural economy has been under severe pressure which, with the effects of the post-September 11th conflict, brought food shortages and malnutrition that led to a major humanitarian crisis categorising the country as a complex emergency⁶ and leading to a major humanitarian response in 2001-2002.

9. In addition, the failure of law and order and the effects of drought on farmer incomes have combined to produce a surge in illicit drug production. In 2002, Afghanistan accounted for 76% of global illicit opium production. The rapid increase in the crop's value, the many trafficking routes and transparent borders, and the high indebtedness of small producers, make poppy production extremely lucrative and difficult to eradicate, without a holistic approach combining law enforcement and realistic farm and non-farm alternatives.

10. The joint UN Country team in the Immediate and Transitional Assistance Programme appeal assessed the situation in Afghanistan in January 2002 as one of the most desperate in the world. Approximately nine of the estimated 24 million Afghans, including over one million internally displaced persons (IDPs), were in need of assistance in Afghanistan over the coming 12 months. Half of all Afghan children suffered from chronic malnutrition and there were some 4 million Afghan refugees, of whom the vast majority were women and children. Only 23 % of the population had access to safe water and only

⁶ According to the UN's Inter-Agency Standing Committee, "A complex emergency is a multi-faceted humanitarian crisis in a country, region or society where there is total or considerable breakdown of authority resulting from internal or external conflict and which requires a multi-sectoral, international response that goes beyond the mandate or capacity of any single agency and/or the ongoing United Nations country programme."

12% to adequate sanitation. 6% of Afghans had access to electricity (in 1993), among the lowest consumption rates in the world, while 1,700 km of 3,000 km of roads needed re-building.

11. It was estimated that Afghanistan's grain production had fallen by more than 50% since 2000, its livestock herds were severely depleted and its irrigation systems extensively damaged. Three years of drought and the onset of winter had further eroded already stretched coping mechanisms. Widespread environmental degradation disproportionately affected the rural poor and women. Over 800 sq km of land was unable to be put to productive use due to landmines and unexploded ordnance (UXO).

12. Overall, the events of the past two decades in Afghanistan have induced deep structural vulnerability and a weakened resilience of populations to events/disasters, which combined with post-war consequences (large-scale population movements of refugees, both IDPs and returnees), has led to population pressure in urban areas and the exacerbation of land issues in some regions in particular on agricultural land. With a resilient yet largely rural population, the country in reality operates from a very narrow resource base with a serious shortage of skilled manpower, extremely weak government capacity, poorly developed infrastructure and a serious lack of security and lawlessness in many parts of the country.

13. At the end of the war in November 2001, a transition situation begun, during which peace-building became the UN overarching aim⁷. The emergency situation required emergency/quick impact actions for the most vulnerable, war and drought affected populations, IDPs and expected returnees from Pakistan and Iran. A fundamentally undermined economy also required long-term assistance for the rehabilitation of the country. The response of the International Community was dramatic, with pledges of support at the Tokyo Conference in January 2002 of nearly US\$5 billion to help rebuild Afghanistan (although only about US\$2 billion has been delivered and Afghans have long complained that aid has been slow). The strong donor response and the worldwide media attention on Afghanistan especially during the winter of late 2001-early 2002 placed immense pressure on UN agencies and their implementing partners to respond quickly and effectively (see Timeline in Annex 3).

III. Overview of FAO's Response

3.1 FAO IN AFGHANISTAN, THE LEGACY

14. Prior to the events of 2001, FAO had been working in the country for over 40 years. During the 1990s, FAO started to implement the Poverty Eradication and Community Empowerment (PEACE) initiative, which had two different components: crops and livestock.

15. Under the FAO crops component, FAO was implementing a seed multiplication programme to develop high yielding seed varieties in an effort to rehabilitate the seed industry in Afghanistan. The programme selected superior varieties from the material received from a number of international centres (International Maize and Wheat Improvement Centre - CIMMYT, International Centre for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas - ICARDA) and domestic programmes with overlapping agro-ecologies (including India, Pakistan, Iran, Syria and Turkey). Under this programme, FAO has released 26 new varieties (15 wheat, 7 food legumes, 2 rice, and 2 barley) exclusively for Afghanistan.

16. From the very earliest days following the departure of the USSR forces in 1989, the FAO seed programme has worked with different implementing partners (IP). These have included the Provincial Departments of Agriculture and the Improved Seed Enterprise (ISE), and where this was not possible, with NGOs; and through these IPs, directly with private Afghan farmers – especially as contract seed producers.

⁷ The United Nations (UN) Development Group and the UN's Executive Committee on Humanitarian Assistance refer to transition as: "the period in a crisis when external assistance is most crucial in supporting or underpinning still fragile cease-fires or peace processes by helping to create the conditions for political stability, security, justice and social equity."

17. The Programme also included a strong technical review system. The Seed Review Groups and the Technical Committee on Evaluation and Release of Varieties were two important groups developed out of the Agricultural Co-ordination Sub-committee under the Agency Coordinating Body for Afghanistan (ACBAR), that met on a regular basis in Peshawar, between 1989 and 1995. This sub-committee co-ordinated all agricultural and seed matters among the UN and NGO agencies in which FAO took a leading role.

18. The livestock component included a broad range of activities: fodder production, artificial insemination for cattle, integrated dairy development, improvement of cattle management and feeding, poultry development and nomadic livestock production. Through the establishment of over 250 Veterinary Field Units, nationwide and support was provided to livestock owners including nomadic pastoralists or “kuchis” (who own a large amount of the total livestock in the country).

19. FAO’s programme on crops and livestock development operated successfully from 1995-2001. It was able to function in the absence of a recognized government, work at grassroots levels with local communities and non governmental organizations, and use approaches that were consistent with the main strategies of the PEACE Initiative⁸.

20. After November 2001, when the post-war brought up an interim administration, FAO had to work with a recognized government for the first time in the time life of the programme. From that period, the PEACE initiative moved towards capacity-building of the government, for which FAO was allocated a budget of over US\$ 4 million.

21. In early 2001, FAO implemented an emergency programme as a response to the then two-year long drought, which was coordinated from the FAO Emergency Coordination Unit in Islamabad but operated by the FAO team of Afghan consultants in the field working for the PEACE programme⁹. Over US\$ 1.5 million was allocated to FAO to distribute agricultural inputs (seed, fertilizer and equipments) to drought-affected farmers.

3.2 FAO’S RESPONSE AFTER NOVEMBER 2001

22. Any assessment of the FAO’s operations in Afghanistan must be set against the background described in Chapter 2. The Coalition campaign against the Taliban and Al Qa’eda (October/December 2001) and ultimate military victory brought about initial chaos at a critical season of the year from an agricultural based livelihoods point of view.

23. In addition, the FAO response also coincided with a climatic period over which Afghanistan moved rapidly from the worst drought and harvests for many generations (from 1999 to 2001), to a 2002 season of improving rainfall and harvest and then to the excellent and timely precipitation and the best wheat harvest in recorded Afghan history of 2003.

24. Because FAO also had no representation in the country, it faced additional internal problems that added to its general disorientation over the first six months after September 2001. It was during this period that the programme base moved from Islamabad to Kabul, new offices were established, old programmes (i.e. PEACE) were starting to ‘phase out’, new relationships with the Afghan Government - in particular the Afghanistan Administration Coordination Authority (ACA)¹⁰ and later on the Ministry of Agriculture and

⁸ Report of the Project Evaluation Mission AFG/96/007, part of the Mid-term thematic evaluation of the UNDP/PEACE Initiative Programme, 1998

⁹ TCOR operations by country, June 2001 and Donor Alert Update, November 2001.

¹⁰ ACA, headed by Ashraf Ghani (now Minister of Finance), had been established in January 2002 and became the policy making body of the Interim Administration and the main interlocutor for UNAMA and the international community

Animal Husbandry (MAAH) - were developed and new management structures within FAO were put in place. This was accompanied by an extraordinary level of donor interest and funding support in response to the humanitarian crisis facing Afghanistan.

25. The pace in those early months was particularly hectic for FAO: i) re-establishing FAO's physical presence and logistic capacity, refurbishing offices, repairing vehicles, procuring new vehicles, office equipment, cell/satellite phones, establishing email communications, finding and establishing a guest house, etc.; ii) participating in frequent coordination meetings with the UN agencies, NGOs, the AACA and other government agencies and responding to constant requests for information; iii) responding to frequent visits by donors and the media; iv) preparing project profiles and documents to tight deadlines; v) rapid up-scaling and supervision of operations; vi) transferring the FAO staff in Pakistan to Kabul; and vii) rapid recruitment and deployment of incremental Technical Assistance.

26. Following two donor alerts, the ITAP (Immediate and Transitional Assistance Programme for the Afghan People 2002) and TAPA (Transitional Assistance Programme for Afghanistan) appeals both prepared with government input and approved by the AACA, FAO's committed funds after November 2001 reach over US\$ 49 million¹¹. Before that period, around US\$ 5.0 million were allocated, which included funding for the one-year follow-up UNDP/PEACE programme (till the end of 2002) and the emergency response to the 2-year drought. From 2001 onwards, the total number of projects has been 47, with a combined value amounting to US\$ 54 million. Details of each project are given in Annex 4.

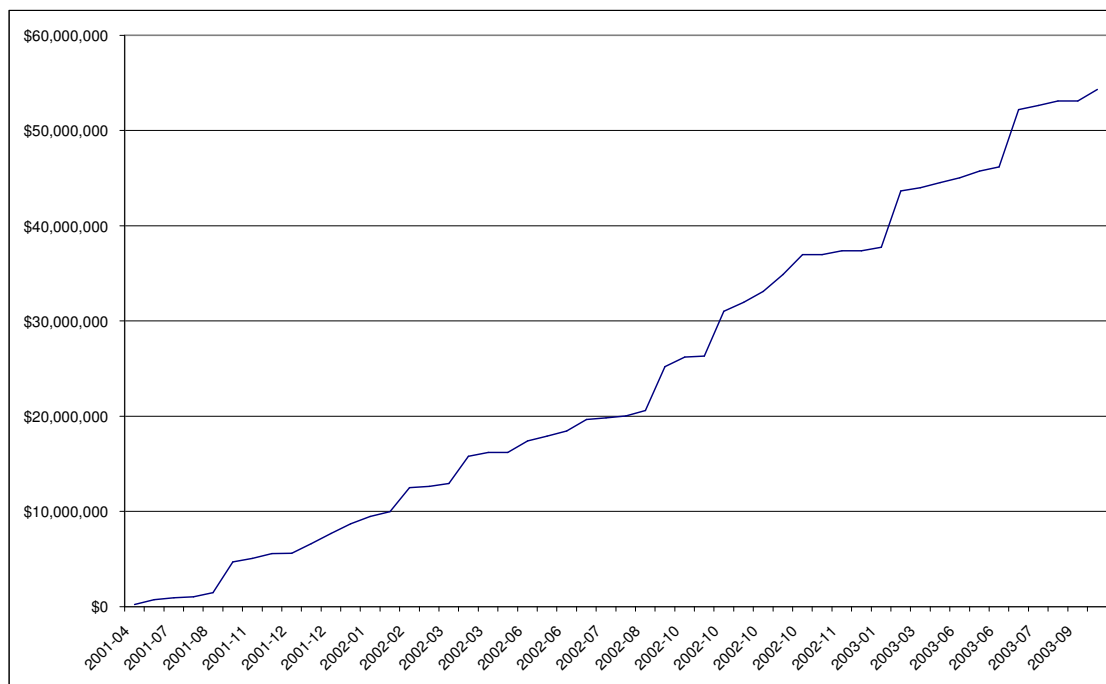


Figure 1. Cumulative Level of Funds committed to FAO from April 2001 till November 2003.

27. Funding is now scaling down (the forthcoming WB-funded project on Irrigation is not included). From a volume of projects reaching over US\$ 30 million in 2003, at the end of 2004 it is expected to be around US\$ 21 million, with less than US\$ 5 million allocated to short-term projects and over US\$ 16 million to development-type initiatives (Figure 2).

¹¹ All figures in this section are derived from FAO's Field Programme Management Information System as per November 2003.

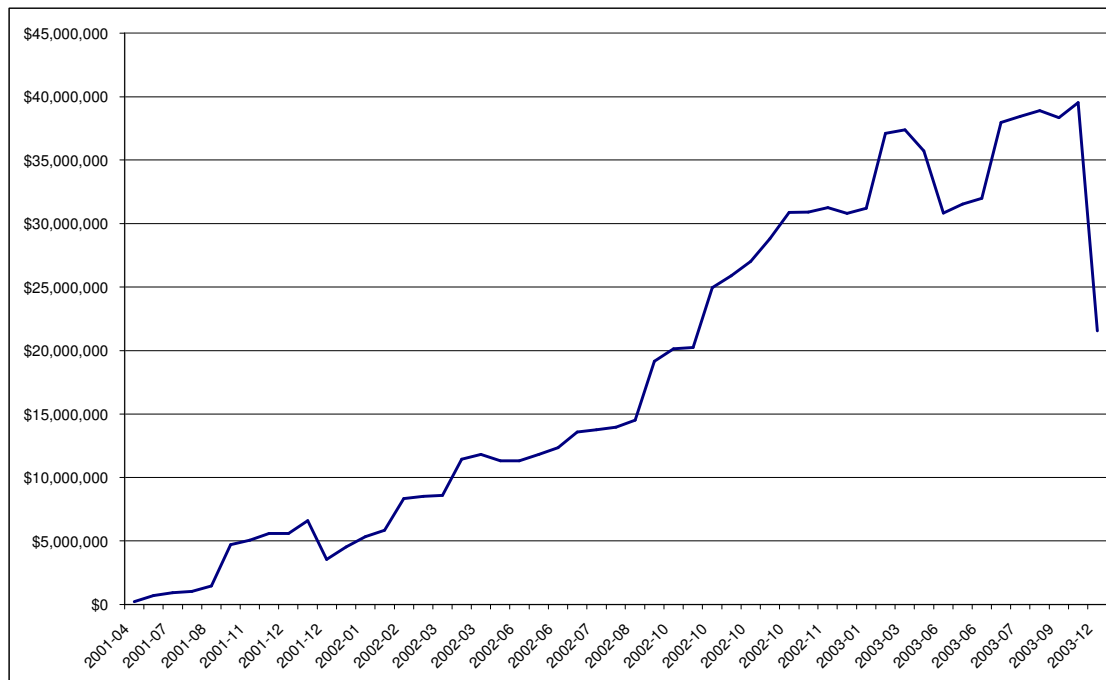


Figure 2. Provisional Estimate of Funds Received by FAO from April 2001 till November 2003

28. Donors who contributed to the FAO programme in Afghanistan include the European Commission, Belgium, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Kuwait, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, the United States and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). FAO has also contributed with its own resources through the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP). Funds received by the FAO programme have come through different funding mechanisms, but in particular through the UN/government common appeals (ITAP¹² and TAPA¹³).

29. Over US\$ 20 million out of the US\$ 54 million granted to FAO (including Italy and the Netherlands' Trust Funds) funded multidisciplinary projects, which were utilized to carry out activities in a wide range of sectors. In some cases, like horticulture, activities were fully funded through one of these Trust Funds (OSRO/AFG/212/ITA). In other cases, such as water resources and irrigation, plant protection, agricultural inputs distribution and emergency coordination funding came partially from these trust funds.

30. Activities such as the distribution of agricultural inputs and provision of emergency coordination made up a large part of the new projects running after November 2001¹⁴. Expansion of long-standing projects on crop production and seed multiplication as well as livestock (including animal health and input distribution), together with new largely emergency financed initiatives on food security, information, nutrition and planning, plant protection, water resources and irrigation, horticulture, alternative livelihoods, and - more recently - forestry, capacity building and the Special Programme for Food Security (SPFS), made FAO's operations in the country a sizeable programme and its second largest after Iraq.

¹² FAO received around US\$ 27.7 million as a response to ITAP.

¹³ As of November 2003, donors' response to FAO's TAPA appeal reaches US\$ 9.4 million.

¹⁴ Over the period evaluated and in value, around 48 percent of TCEO operations consisted of agricultural inputs.

Funding committed vs. disbursed at FAO from 2001 onwards

31. A comparison between funding committed to FAO during 2001, 2002 and 2003 vis-à-vis funding disbursed is presented below (Figure 3). As a cautionary note, the figures were taken from the FAO's Field Programme Management Information System (FPMIS) on November 2003. Therefore, there will be disbursements still to be recorded, as well as ongoing project activities in 2003 which are not reflected in the system. However, in summary, some \$33 million has been spent from a total commitment made to FAO by donors of \$54 million.

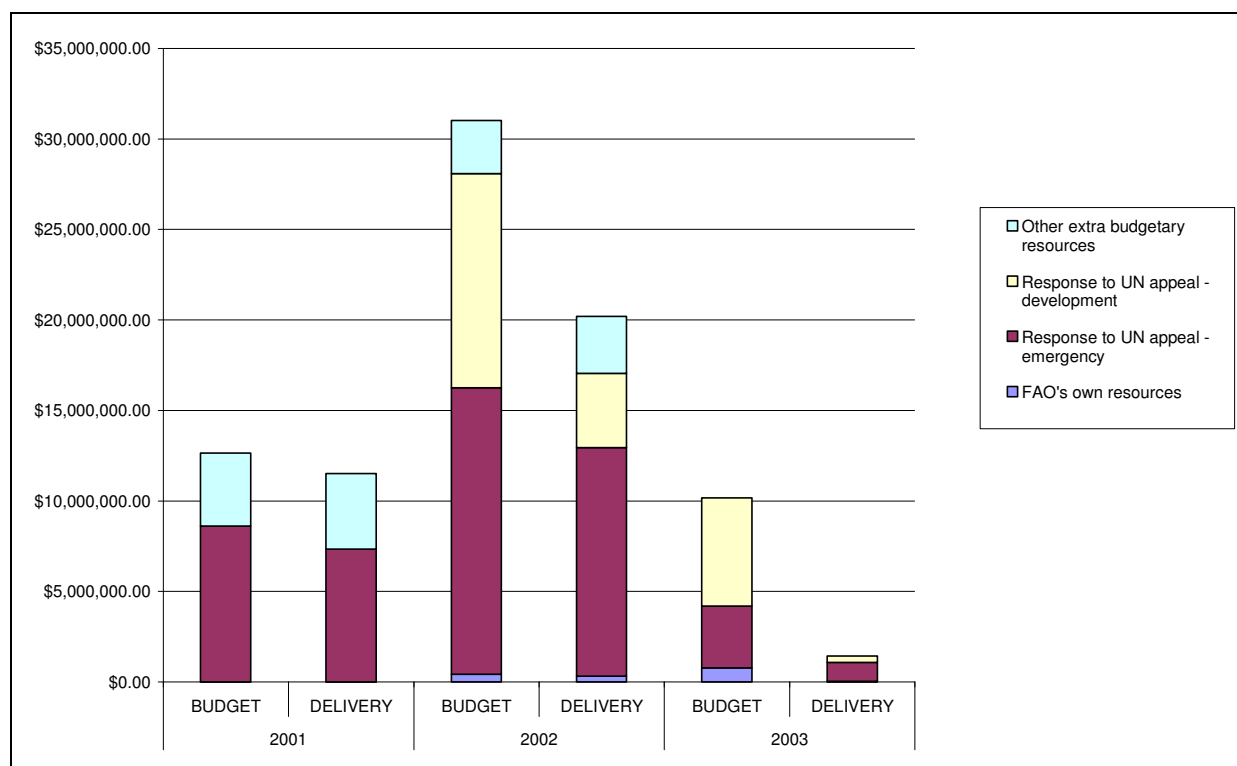


Figure 3. Comparison between FAO Budgeted and Delivered Funds 2001-2003.

32. As noted, FAO's projects portfolio consists of 'development projects' and 'emergency projects'. However, the distinction between the two categories is not always clear, since many of the emergency operations contained activities that could not be described as being of an emergency nature (e.g. the livestock census and the horticulture survey). All emergency projects were handled by the FAO's Emergency Operations and Rehabilitation Division (TCE) in headquarters (HQ), while all non-emergency projects were managed through FAO's Regional Office in Bangkok (RAP). Generally emergency projects are of a short-term duration (less than one year), although this is not always true, as some of the emergency seed projects illustrate¹⁵.

¹⁵ Most projects involving agricultural input distribution have a time frame longer than 1 year, reaching in some cases 2 years (e.g. OSRO/AFG/109/USA, OSRO/AFG/112/GER).

IV. Assessment of FAO's Interventions 2001-2003

33. This chapter provides an assessment of FAO's various interventions by component. For each component, the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and impact are analysed in so far as sufficient evidence is available. The following components are discussed:

- 4.1 Crop Production and Seed Multiplication
- 4.2 Agricultural Input Distribution
- 4.3 Plant Protection
- 4.4 Water Resources and Irrigation
- 4.5 Horticulture
- 4.6 Livestock - Animal Health and Animal Production
- 4.7 Food Security Information, Nutrition and Planning
- 4.8 Assistance to Policy Strategy Development
- 4.9 New Areas of Assistance: Alternative Livelihoods to Opium Cultivation

4.1 CROP PRODUCTION AND SEED MULTIPLICATION

Relevance

34. The Crop Production and Seed Multiplication Programme was supported by two donors: UNDP up to December 2002 and then the European Commission (EC) from 2003 to 2006¹⁶. These projects responded to a central agricultural need of the country: that of supporting a local seed industry within a relatively inaccessible, climatically-diverse and drought-prone country. Had these two projects not been in place it would have been more difficult to provide wheat seed of well selected varieties to fit the various Afghan environments for the autumn of 2002, spring of 2003 and again for the autumn sowing of 2003, under either the development programme or under the emergency programme. In addition, the FAO programme with its IPs has provided the basis from which other donors and implementing agencies could draw wheat seed of appropriate varieties for their programmes, even if of lower than Quality Declared Seed (QDS) standard¹⁷.

35. However, the great increase in donor/NGO/aid agency demand for wheat seed in the autumn of 2002 and continuing to a lesser extent this 2003 season stretched the production capacity of the programme to its limits, resulting in the case of some, but not all, of FAO IPs seed quality being sacrificed to quantity, in their attempts to meet aid agency demand. This certainly lessened the relevance of seed multiplication interventions.

36. Demand also drove the price of seed up to international levels to over US\$ 300 per MT in some cases, or at least double that which Afghan farmers were prepared to pay, which added to pressure. These prices were only affordable by the donors and some of the aid agencies. The FAO management team was bringing this situation into order this season and several hundred MT of seed produced by one of the leading FAO IPs was recently rejected and was re-processed and re-classified at a cheaper price. The total seed aid programme of about 23,000 MT in autumn 2002 has already been reduced to a little over 10,000 MT this season.

¹⁶ AFG/00/015 "Food Security Through Sustainable Crop Production," which ended December 2002; and

GCP/AFG/018/EC "Strengthening the National Seed Production Capacity in Afghanistan" from Jan 2003- 2006. More recently, an additional project dealing with non cereal crops funded by the German Government has started: GCP/AFG/025/GER "Developing a Sustainable Seed Programme in Southern Afghanistan" from Oct. 2002 to Sept. 2004.

¹⁷ for example, the ICARDA programme.

37. For non cereal crops, a new seed programme has started recently¹⁸ Whilst the FAO seed programme has for a long time concentrated attention on wheat, the major staple food crop, and included rice, maize and pulses, it is correct that the crop programme will now give more attention to non cereal crops, such as potatoes, and to cash and industrial crops.

Efficiency

38. The crop development and seed multiplication programme has been managed for many years with a minimum number of long-term international experts (one Senior Technical Advisor (STA)), the rest of the team made up of experienced, national staff and short term consultants to address specific issues. The FAO team manages the programme in co-operation with government and parastatal counterparts, six international and national NGOs, and a network of 5,000 private contract seed producers. With the latest non-cereal crop project, there is an additional International STA. There is also additional project strengthening in respect of consultant experts in Seed Law (the development of a legal framework for seed in Afghanistan), Privatisation and Marketing.

39. Since 1995, it has been the policy of the FAO seed programme in Afghanistan that quality seed has a real value and should not be free. This policy was adhered to by all the older NGOs involved with seed since the early 1990s¹⁹. However, QDS seed was offered to Afghan farmers at a subsidized price, usually between 10% and 20% above the local grain price at the time of sale before planting. The idea has always been to move in gradual stages as the Afghan situation permitted, towards the eventual commercial independence of the local seed industry. With this in mind the funds earned by the IPs were placed in special bank accounts (mainly in Pakistan and in Herat). These accounts are controlled jointly by the individual IPs together with FAO (also UNDP and the World Food Programme (WFP) whilst they were still involved). These funds were held in trust to be used as working or development capital for the individual IPs seed enterprise development. In Herat funds earned by ISE have been used to construct a seed processing centre and develop the ISE seed farms, with deep wells and buildings. At present a total of US\$ 4.4 million is held in this individual special account and discussions are currently in progress as to how best to use the funds.

40. The present subsidized price structure for Afghan farmers will not cover the independent cost of production without outside funding. A higher level of pricing may not be accepted by Afghan farmers in the short term, as there is no tradition of paying commercial prices for quality wheat seed. In 2002 increased demand for seed by donors and aid agencies, (including the FAO Emergency Programme) made it possible for the IPs to charge international level prices for QDS seed. This will not be sustained in the long term.

41. Since September 11th the size of the 'emergency' programme increased enormously as did the number of agencies, including FAO, who aimed to provide seed to needy farmers either free of charge or on a 'grain return' credit arrangement that as often as not is in default. This 'free' distribution has been having a negative effect on the commercial sale of wheat seed and the IPs have found it increasingly difficult in these circumstances to sell their QDS to Afghan farmers.

42. Since September 11th, the FAO's seed programme in Afghanistan has suffered from a management structure that has divided the longer term development programme incorporating crop production and seed multiplication from the emergency agricultural inputs programme. This was further compounded by conflicting personalities in 2001 and early 2002. There is no doubt that the two parts of the programme

¹⁸ GCP/AFG/025/GER "Developing a Sustainable Seed Programme in Southern Afghanistan" budgeted for US\$ 1,799,685, from Oct. 2002 to Sept. 2004.

¹⁹ The exception being ICRC who always maintained a free seed distribution policy, a matter of keen dispute. For ICRC, seed aid is an extension of food aid grounded in humanitarian principles and the right to food.

should have a symbiotic relationship. The older PEACE programme provided an administrative and logistics base for the emergency programme, particularly in the first year, whilst the emergency programme has been able to source funds to assist the development programme with much needed equipment, furnishings and furniture as well as a market for IP seed and as a means of spreading the good varieties more widely across the country. In fact, such complementarities functioned well at times, though depending very much on the good will of individuals. However, the divided command structure has created and continues to create tensions, inefficiencies and lack of internal co-ordination. With the emergency seed programme likely to now considerably decrease in volume, this seems an appropriate time to bring the whole seed programme under a single management command at the field level.

Effectiveness

43. The Crop Production and Seed Multiplication projects have demonstrated their effectiveness in providing the basis for the production of between 15,000 and 20,000 MT of quality declared wheat seed and of some other crop seed to meet the demands of the aid and donor community. But this to a large extent is a 'false' market that cannot be sustained once donor interest in funding seed procurement drops away. On the whole, monitored yield reports have shown good results, at least from the FAO managed programme. Less is known of programmes managed by other agencies such as ICARDA and the ICRC.

44. The increased demand for quality seed production has placed severe strains on quality. Driven by aid agency 'demand' and the high prices paid by donors and the aid community, certain of FAO's NGO IPs have been 'cutting corners' in order to meet this demand, while much of the seed cleaning machinery used by IPs is either out-dated or inadequate. With the bulk of the seed emergency now over, FAO can concentrate attention once again on seed quality, which should also include in some instances re-equipping IPs with cleaning and processing equipment.

45. Since 1995 agency co-ordination and uniformity of standards and approaches have been maintained by FAO through the biannual Seed Review Group²⁰. Sixteen such meetings have so far been held since 1995 – the last on October 31st 2003. These are attended by all those seriously involved in seed production in Afghanistan and since 2002 are chaired by the MAAH. Over time, these meetings have constituted an effective mechanism for information exchange, co-ordination and for ensuring that standards are both established and maintained.

46. The serious disorder that occurred during late 2001 and early 2002 was addressed during the Seed Code of Conduct workshop (jointly led by the MAAH, ICARDA and FAO) in May 2002 that set the scene for the much more orderly autumn 2002 programme. The establishment of a National Seed Council chaired by the MAAH, in which both the 'development' and the 'emergency' programme staff take an active part, has also improved collaboration and effectiveness.

Impact

47. At least 50% of all irrigated wheat currently grown in the country is thought to originate from the FAO and other seed programmes dating back over the last twenty years²¹. The FAO/WFP Crop and Food Supply Assessment Report (2003) found that most of the wheat being cultivated under irrigated conditions

²⁰ The annual meeting of the Technical Committee on Evaluation and Variety Release – decides on the official release of proven selected varieties for further multiplication.

²¹ "A winter agricultural survey carried out jointly by the MAAH/MRRD/FAO/WFP from December 2002 to January 2003 in 104 districts in 30 provinces of Afghanistan indicated that improved seeds are widely used. Amongst the sampled households, about 54% of the wheat planted area in 2003 was sown with improved seed released in the last 10 years (28 percent from FAO seeds programme and 26 percent from other sources). The rest (46 percent) was sown with local seeds or improved seeds introduced more than 10 years ago, such as the widely used 'Zardana' in northern Afghanistan." FAO/WFP Crop and Food Supply Assessment Mission Report 13 August 2003

in the main river basins is of improved genetic origin. This is much less true for rainfed wheat, where original land-races may still be found and sometimes in dominance. However, the geographical spread of the later varieties released during the last ten years, although excellent in some areas has nonetheless been patchy, due to a combination of insecurity and a somewhat passive marketing approach, i.e. waiting for farmers to come to the various IP seed centres to purchase. With notable exceptions, many remoter districts had until recently only limited access to the newer varieties since the more proactive distribution programmes of the early 1990s. Indeed, the FAO/WFP survey in May 2003, while confirming the dominance of improved varieties in certain river basins, also identified other districts and areas that had not had any introductions of improved varieties for many years.

48. The autumn 2002 emergency distribution programme has contributed greatly to the replacement of seed and the spread of the best varieties generated under the regular seed programme, so achieving a greater national impact while at the same time making the varieties more widely known and increasing the demand for them.

49. Assessment and evaluation reports²² give a generally good account of yield results obtained as a result of the widespread autumn distribution. Mollet states “The overall coverage of the total yield for the FAO irrigated varieties is almost 3,300 kg / ha compared to the average yield of the local varieties of 2,500 kg / ha, an increase of 33%. For rainfed varieties the yield for the FAO distributed seeds was on average 1,050 kg / ha compared to 835 kg / ha for the local varieties.” Cossee states “All the irrigated varieties distributed seem to be performing well and to be well suited to the regions of distribution”.

50. In short, the overall impact of the long term seed multiplication programme was almost certainly enhanced by the autumn 2002 ‘emergency’ distribution, although in the short term the ‘soft credit’ approach may have undermined the principle that quality seed has a value and should be paid for. Targeting of the food insecure with vouchers could address this issue.

Sustainability

51. Whilst variety selection and research will remain a Government responsibility under the Agricultural Research Institute of Afghanistan, supported by FAO²³, the present EC project envisages the gradual privatization of the seed production sector. The future of NGO-run activities is not yet clearly defined. The project document does not envisage the privatization of ISE in the near future, rather the capacity of ISE to produce ‘foundation seed’ should be assisted. ISE will also operate the new seed laboratories for seed testing and quality control²⁴.

²²O. Cossee, A. Q. Samin, FAO PBEE- Mid-Term Review of the Emergency Agriculture Input Distribution Programme in Afghanistan First Mission report (March 2003) and Second Mission report (November 2003) and M. Mollet. Emergency Agricultural Inputs Programme Evaluation reports - Post distribution (Jan to March 2003), After winter crop performance (May to June 2003) and During Harvest Report (August to October 2003)

²³ Also as appropriate by CGIAR Institutions - ICARDA, CIMMYT, IRRI, CIP, etc.

²⁴ The buildings for this were constructed and paid for by funds earned from seed sales by ISE Herat and refurbished by FAO in Mazar-I-Sharif from project funds. The equipment for the laboratories has or will be provided by ICARDA.

52. So far, seed sales have depended mainly on the sale of QDS wheat seed plus a little maize, rice and green and black gram (mung). There is no tradition of a wheat seed market in Afghanistan as the traditional system is highly dependant on farmer-to-farmer exchange. There are also religious taboos and customs surrounding wheat as the staple of life that do not apply to seeds of other crops. The common tradition is exchange of grain for seed quality wheat on a one-to-one basis. In the case of QDS, FAO has managed to convince farmers who appreciate obtaining quality seed to pay a small premium of 10%-20% over local grain price, as a charge against the cost of labour, seed dressing and bagging but more than that cannot at present be expected.

53. The recent high payments from donors and aid agencies for QDS are likely to prove ephemeral and are unlikely to sustain the industry into the future based on wheat seed alone. FAO should encourage a much more proactive and innovative approach to the promotion of seed sales and seed markets, as well as to the production and marketing of other higher value crop seeds. With this in mind, the FAO project is now employing experienced consultants to help develop this part of the programme.

Recommendations: Crop Production and Seed Multiplication

Recommendations:

1. As soon as possible bring the two parts of the Afghanistan seed programme – ‘longer term development’ and ‘shorter term emergency’ under a single management command in the field in order to better ensure a unified programme.
2. Continue to promote a strong private commercial seed production industry based on locally selected and appropriate varieties and a wider variety of crops, reinforced by sensible and enforceable legislation capable of meeting both normal seed requirements and emergencies.
3. Concentrate on improving seed quality and adhering to the rules governing the production of QDS for normal requirements and good commercial seed to meet ‘emergencies’.
4. The present projects’ privatisation objective should be discussed against a realistic time-frame – together with the Afghan Government and the donors and adjustments made as necessary.
5. FAO should assist ISE and other IPs to take a more pro-active role in the development of a seed market.
6. Strengthen FAO’s capacity to assist in the longer term development of a wider diversity of crops and the production of higher value seeds.
7. Discontinue at an appropriate pace the policy of providing quality seed on a subsidised or free basis. The ultimate sustainability of local seed production will be seriously impeded by continuing ‘free’ or effectively ‘free’ seed and agricultural input distribution.
8. Encourage the official endorsement by Government of the Seed ‘Code of Conduct in order to bring effective regulation to the seed industry.
9. Decide on how to best utilise the Seed Funds accumulated by FAO Seed IPs, with an emphasis on encouraging the development of commercial seed enterprises.

4.2 AGRICULTURAL INPUT DISTRIBUTION

54. The problems of post conflict damage, drought and returning refugees and IDPs in Afghanistan were not new. FAO had already managed a successful post-conflict agricultural rehabilitation programme between 1989 and 1995²⁵ and a 'drought response' agricultural inputs programme, with success since 1999²⁶. By October 2001, the major autumn wheat planting season was over and there was no certainty that the drought was going to break and so allow farmers to cultivate a crop of spring wheat on the northern rainfed lands²⁷.

Summary of FAO programme - Seed distribution with fertiliser + kits:

- 1st spring 2002 – February – 1,500 MT Inqilab 91 procured in Pakistan distributed in Badghis and Faryab
- 2nd spring 2002 – March/April – 2,322 MT three varieties procured in Pakistan. 438 MT sown; 504 MT missing; 1,400 MT partly damaged. Approx 1,000 MT re-cleaned, bagged and re-distributed
- autumn 2002/spring 2003. 1,972.5 MT purchased²⁸.
- 3rd autumn 2002/Spring 2003 – 3,773 MT (890 rainfed, 2,883 MT irrigated) – 14 varieties + 2,873 MT Urea, 3,318 MT distributed in 30 Provinces²⁹.
- 4th autumn 2003 - 3,010 MT (ongoing - not completed yet) planned to be distributed in 32 Provinces
- January to May 2003 - 67,500 Vegetable seed and tool kits to returnees

Relevance

55. In order to assess the relevance of the programme, the following questions should be asked: To what extent was there a need for a large scale distribution of seeds to improve food security? How pertinent was the selection criteria and how efficient was the targeting to ensure that the neediest beneficiaries, particularly those with little capacity to access seed, fertilizer and other agricultural inputs, were covered by the programme?

56. There is no proper answer to the first question. In December 2001, the situation in Afghanistan did not allow for the conduct of a proper seeds need assessment although the situation was assessed as being serious and there were strong political imperatives to act. FAO's long experience in Afghanistan had shown that seed must be treated with great care, but FAO itself quoted unrealistic seed requirement figures without due explanation.³⁰

57. The FAO autumn 2003 emergency seed distribution programme, after a season in which most of Afghanistan had a record wheat harvest, can no longer be termed an emergency programme. Nonetheless there are still many Afghan farmers in need of better quality seed and some IDPs and Refugees are still returning to their villages. For those people, agricultural input distribution can play a role in preventing further degradation of their livelihoods by protecting and enhancing their productive means. The emergency

²⁵ N.S.Tunwar FAO STA (Seed) - Case Study "Emergency Seed Supply in Afghanistan" prepared for the 2nd Project Planning Meeting 2-3 November 1998. Rome.

²⁶ Managed by the 'PEACE' programme.

²⁷ It did not start to rain until February 2002, by which time it was already too late to safely deliver seed into Afghanistan for spring sowing in view of weather and road conditions.

²⁸ P. Dickie. Agronomist Consultant. End of Mission Report (September 2002).

²⁹ M. Mollet – Post Distribution Evaluation of the Emergency Agricultural Inputs Programme - Autumn 2002 – Report 30th January to 3rd March 2003.

³⁰ After October 2001, a number of estimates for the total national seed requirement were reported. These ranged from 40,000 MT to 70,000 MT (FAO/WFP food and crop assessment estimates). These figures were not based on firm field evidence, but on notional percentage seed replacement rates for the average wheat crop of about 1.3 million hectares. They ignored the fact that there is no real need for all Afghan wheat farmers to renew their wheat seed every four years. The result was a seed frenzy involving FAO together with many NGOs, aid agencies and respected research institutions, such as ICARDA and donors.

team are well aware that the present situation requires more accurate needs identification and more precise targeting. Although the size of the total combined agency seed programme this autumn is less than half of the autumn 2002 programme³¹ the FAO 'emergency' programme for autumn 2003 - at 3,010 MT, is much the same as last year.

58. By definition, agricultural inputs such as seed and fertiliser must be provided to people who have access to land and water (if farming irrigated land), or – land with the benefit of rainfall if farming rainfed land. Such people are not usually the neediest nor the most vulnerable, although their situation is often food insecure³². The selection criteria while emphasising the neediest also stipulated the necessity of having access to a minimum amount of arable land plus irrigation water in the case of irrigated farmers³³.

Efficiency

Spring 2002

59. The first February 2002 deliveries and distributions were efficiently managed. The later March-April programme was seriously affected by poor management and the absence of leadership of the emergency programme at a critical time. The whole of this early period was marred by institutional and personality conflicts within the organization, compounded by difficulties involving procurement, logistics, divided operational bases in Islamabad and Kabul, poor phone, email and transport communications between the two capitals, and the short term nature of key emergency consultants' contracts, which tended to end at critical points in time.

Autumn 2002 and Spring 2003

60. For the autumn 2003 programme the FAO emergency team continue to play a co-ordinating role in the distribution of wheat seed among those agencies still in large scale distributions³⁴. However, co-ordination between the 'emergency' and the 'regular' seed programme teams remained weak as did communications between the 'emergency' team and the area based staff of the regular programme.

61. The FAO Autumn 2002 emergency seed distribution programme is considered to have been a logistical and technical success. FAO's IPs greatly appreciated 'to the doorstep' delivery and FAO's reputation was much improved³⁵. Seed was generally of a high quality. According to Mollet, 90% of the seed distributed under the FAO programme reached the beneficiaries in a timely fashion and the varieties

³¹ Total seed aid programme for autumn 2003 is 10,546 MT as opposed to about 23,000 MT in 2002 -. Source - Antonio Dileonardo – FAO Emergency Coordinator Kabul.

³² M. Mollet. Post Distribution Evaluation of the Emergency Agricultural Inputs Programme - Autumn 2002 Report (30th January to 3rd March 2003) "The main part of the beneficiaries were residents, followed by returnees and better off households. Even when marginal groups like widows, disabled and social caseswere specifically mentioned as beneficiaries in the criteria's selection, it seems they could not fulfil the other requested criteria (i.e. access to arable land). We could presume that they had no possibility to obtain access to, or have no land and, to a smaller extent lack of cash or credit for renting animals for land preparation." P. 11. "this parameter was one of the selection criteria; the beneficiary should have access to at least 2.5 Jerib or 5 Jerib for the irrigated or rain-fed package, respectively." P. 14.

³³ M. Mollet – First report P. 15 "Out of the total of interviewed households, 81.5% have access to irrigation water. This number is quite highdue to the fact that 75% of the total distributed seeds of FAO were for irrigated land." (Due to an overall shortage of seed of rain-fed varieties).

³⁴ Euronaid, the French Government, the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA) and the Danish Committee for Aid to Afghan Refugees (DACAAR).

³⁵ See reports of P. Dickie and A. Fitzherbert 2002.

generally out-yielded wheat from local seed both on irrigated and rainfed land³⁶. Nonetheless, Cossee³⁷ found that there were still some failings in timely delivery in 2002, particularly for fertiliser.

62. Various monitoring and evaluation missions report that yields were relatively good, although this was not always the case on the rainfed land especially at higher altitudes. Some farmers complained of seed infested with wild rye and oats.³⁸

63. Cossee's evaluation is sceptical about the practice of selecting beneficiaries through the village council or *shura* system, unless very well monitored and controlled by a strong NGO. He also casts doubts on relying on the WFP Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM) Unit's assessment as the basis for targeting seed needs, which are different from other forms of vulnerability. He points out the conflict between development objectives with their focus on increased production and emergency objectives which focus on targeting those perceived to be the most vulnerable, who are not necessarily those who make best use of inputs such as high quality seed. However, the issue of targeting should be reviewed with caution. Relying on existing social structure (Shura) may be the best solution given the limitations in time and resources.

64. The vegetable seed and agricultural tool kits programme was implemented efficiently once they became operational in late 2002 and early 2003. The quality of the vegetable seed is reported to have been good and useful but only where the beneficiaries knew what to do with them. The tools were appropriate for local use in Afghanistan. The main beneficiaries were returnees, who seem to have been successfully targeted with the assistance of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

65. Due to initial problems with the supplier in Pakistan these projects were postponed until autumn 2002 when 30,000 returnees were targeted and the spring of 2003 when 67,500 returnees were targeted. The delay was probably not a bad thing. The failure of the original Pakistani suppliers of agricultural tools meant that orders for tools were placed with Afghan blacksmiths and artisans, thereby supporting rehabilitation of local industry. In the end this produced tools more acceptable to Afghan farmers. It also gave more time to develop better co-ordination and targeting mechanisms with UNHCR and IOM.³⁹ Problems of procuring vegetable seed in Pakistan meant that vegetable seed were sourced from more reliable suppliers in Europe.

Procurement of equipment, including seed cleaners

66. The Emergency Programme has made an important contribution to the entire FAO programme as well as to the MAAH and the FAO IPs – ISE and NGOs through funding the procurement of equipment and furniture. However, in the case of certain items more care should have been taken about what was procured. This included 24 Crippen seed cleaners, which have proved to be inadequate for the task they are required to do. It would have been wiser to procure seed cleaners of familiar manufacture already well tried in Afghanistan as recommended in the project documents.

Effectiveness and Impact

The Spring 2002 Emergency Programme

³⁶ Post-Distribution Evaluation of the Emergency Agricultural Inputs programme, Autumn 2002 Season Matthias Mollet, FAO 2003- "The programme reached a majority of residents (63 percent of beneficiaries), a significant number of returnees and ex-IDPs (23 percent), widows (3 percent), disabled (2 percent), social cases 2 percent) but also 7 percent of better off households

³⁷ O. Cossee, A. Q. Samin. Mid-Term Review of the Emergency Agriculture Input Distribution Programme in Afghanistan Final Report (2003)

³⁸ A serious problem also noted by Peter Dickie in his report of September 2002

³⁹ The monitoring reports of FAO emergency consultant – Christof Charbon should be referred to.

67. The early delivery of 1,500 MT of wheat seed to the north east provinces in February 2002 was successfully delivered and distributed efficiently and is reported to have produced good harvest result⁴⁰. The IPs are reported to have deliberately provided the seed to farmers with irrigated land as the drought had not yet broken.⁴¹

68. With the later spring 2002 emergency programme, almost everything went wrong from late procurement, incorrectly labelled bags, chaotic logistical arrangements, incorrect deliveries, poor quality seed and problems in storage.⁴² The result was negative and damaged FAO's reputation. Some of the key problems, elaborated later on in this report, included: (1) difficulties in FAO procurement rules and procedures to accommodate for swift decision-making and changes; (2) poor cooperation between emergency and long-term international staff, with the latter not providing sufficient guidance on technical and logistic issues, despite their expertise and knowledge of the field gained from the implementation of the long-term programme; and (3) insufficient staff in the emergency programme to properly monitor the operations.

The Autumn 2002 and Spring 2003 Emergency Programme

69. The autumn seed distribution greatly helped to redeem FAO's reputation as it was well co-ordinated and managed. The role of FAO in co-ordinating not only its own NGO IP programmes but with the other main players, such as ICARDA, ICRC and Euronaid to avoid duplication of effort, was effective. The FAO emergency co-ordinator played an active role in the newly established National Seed Council, chaired by the MAAH, and with the 'FAO seed' 'development' programme. The emergency team also participated in the biannual Seed Review Group meetings.

70. The extent to which FAO through its 2002 autumn emergency seed programme was effective in targeting those without or with no access to seed is questionable. Many farmer families were in need of good quality wheat seed and complementary inputs and the programme will have helped them obtain a better harvest than otherwise. Farmer-to-farmer exchange is likely to spread the benefits from there after the last harvest. Less easy to quantify is whether or not the programme directly benefited and successfully targeted those who had the greatest difficulty accessing seed, fertilizer and tools. Access to land and water appears to have been the defining criteria for beneficiary selection and the IPs certainly seem to have followed this part of the criteria exactly. Mathias Mollet's survey indicates that the majority of beneficiaries surveyed –63%– only sowed seed received from FAO, which can be taken as an indication that they needed this seed and did not have ready access to any additional seed.

71. 39 % appeared to have sown additional seed in excess of the FAO seed. This certainly indicates that the beneficiaries were in need of good seed and made good use of the FAO seed, but it does not answer the question as to whether or not they might have acquired seed of some kind from somewhere else, had FAO not been available to provide it.

⁴⁰ There was no detailed follow up evaluation and apparently the two main IPs – Save the Children (US) and ACTED never produced detailed post harvest reports. (Peter Dickie report September 2002). However, FAO Afghan NPPs working in Badghis and Faryab reported verbally that the harvest results of the inputs of Inqilab 91 seed, procured in Pakistan, under FAO and sown in February 2002 had been good and farmers satisfied. All were farming irrigated rather than rain-fed land.

⁴¹ As reported by the NGOs to P.Chernohorski – Emergency Co-ordinator and A. Fitzherbert – when on mission in Badghis and Faryab in March 2002 – shortly after distribution. (see Fitzherbert – field mission report of March/April 2002 – Northern, North Western and Central Afghanistan)

⁴² According to Peter Dickie – Report September 2002 - Out of 2,332 MT of wheat seed procured in late March / early April 2002 only 418 MT was sown in the spring of 2002 and much of that performed badly. 504 MT was 'lost' and remains unaccounted for. The balance was either damaged in transport or in store by insects. It is later reported that much of the seed re-cleaned and re-bagged later performed badly when distributed in the autumn of 2002 or the spring of 2003 as reported to A.Fitzherbert by Afghan NPPs in Mazar-I-Sharif.

72. Out of a total of 3,773 MT of wheat seed in the autumn 2002 emergency programme, 890 MT was rainfed seed⁴³. Access to seed per se has never been seen as a problem for irrigated farmers. Generally speaking farmers with access to irrigated land tend to have less difficulty in accessing seed and as Mollet's survey indicates, 81% of the beneficiaries in the Autumn of 2002 had access to irrigation water.

73. It is acknowledged that FAO's emergency IPs were of very mixed calibre. The most competent and experienced of FAO's IPs undoubtedly undertook their targeting and beneficiary selection seriously but some of the IPs did not have this ability or motivation.⁴⁴

74. Overall, only a minority of Afghan farmers benefited directly from the total combined 'emergency' distribution of seed for the irrigated land and an even smaller number under the FAO programme. The remainder either relied on their own seed stocks or had access to seed of some kind, even if not the best quality, or went without. On the rainfed land, the percentage of farmers having access to 'emergency programme wheat seed' was even smaller when compared with the 1,235,000 hectares of land successfully sown with wheat in the autumn of 2002 and the spring of 2003 right across Afghanistan. The combined emergency seed aid programme contributed no more than 4.5 % of rainfed seed needs, of which the FAO emergency with 890 MT of rainfed variety seed contributed no more than 0.7 %. It will be necessary to look at the multiplication effect that these comparatively small inputs of quality seed of improved varieties will have in the locations where they were distributed.

75. The report of the final survey carried out in June/July 2003⁴⁵ provides unique information and data to assess the impact, in particular on household food security, of the Autumn 2002 distribution. The conclusions presented here are those presented in the report of the "MTR of the Emergency Agriculture Input Distribution Programme in Afghanistan"⁴⁶.

- Except in a few areas such as Sari Pul, the programme has produced good or very good crops and one can safely assume a strong impact on household food security. This was one of the main objectives of the intervention.
- The additional grain production induced by the programme can be estimated at 200 to 500 kg per household depending on the yield, presence of irrigation or not, and rye concentration. While the variability in the data is very wide, this typically amounts to 10 to 30 percent of the total household wheat production. The majority of farmers interviewed in the post-distribution surveys said they would use most of the harvest obtained from the FAO distributed seeds to cover their household grain food needs. Some farmers kept the majority of the production as seeds, as they were satisfied with the performance of the variety received and took the advantage to renew their seed stock.
- The final survey report computes that 68 percent of wheat seed and fertilizer beneficiaries were able to reach food self-sufficiency with all the wheat they planted this year, with a higher rate for those which received the irrigated kit compared to those with the rain-fed kit. However, the number of beneficiaries who were able to reach self-sufficiency in 2002 is not known.

⁴³ This was largely a consequence of seed type availability. Most of the seed available was suitable for irrigated conditions.

⁴⁴The MTE mission visited a village in Herat – in Kushk-Robat-Sangi district where DACAAR had distributed FAO seed with almost excessive adherence to criteria in so far as that the only returning refugee to the village and only person without seed was, the sole beneficiary of FAO seed and then only of 25 kg – just sufficient for his small piece of land.

⁴⁵ M. Mollet. Post-Distribution Evaluation of the Emergency Agricultural Inputs Programme, Autumn 2002 Season (January 2003).

⁴⁶ O. Cossee, A. Q. Samin. Mid-Term Review of the Emergency Agriculture Input Distribution Programme in Afghanistan Final Report (2003)

- The impact of the programme on wheat production, the rise in wages and a low wheat price also mean that net wheat buyers, be they small farming households or city dwellers, find it easier to purchase the wheat they need to feed themselves.

76. The overall positive assessment of the impact of the 2002 Autumn on household food security is reinforced by the cost-effectiveness analysis carried out in the same above-mentioned report. The report shows that emergency input distribution was a cost-effective food security related intervention compared to food aid.

Recommendations: Emergency Input Distribution

1. FAO in Afghanistan should now suspend large scale 'emergency' type distributions of seed and fertiliser and focus attention on sustainable quality seed production. Well identified and carefully targeted distributions should be considered when and where necessary.
2. The FAO seed programme in Afghanistan should be brought under a single management structure without delay.
3. FAO should continue its co-ordination role in partnership with the MAAH.
4. FAO must assist the Afghan Government through helping to develop FAAHM in a way that will assist assessing seed needs and establish targets on a national basis.

4.3 PLANT PROTECTION

77. FAO's activities have concentrated on emergency control of Moroccan locusts and Sunn pest, but the former have received much more attention.

78. In February 2002, FAO fielded a mission to assess the Moroccan locust situation in northern Afghanistan. This was in response to earlier and urgent warnings coming from the FAO team in Mazar-i-Sharif of a potential plague of Moroccan Locust resulting from several years' absence of any control measures. The mission concluded that three out of the nine provinces (Baghlan, Samangan and Kunduz) were particularly hard hit and over 70 percent of crop production across the north was deemed at risk. An emergency locust control project proposal was formulated and promptly funded through UK, US and FAO's own resources. The campaign was carried out between March and July 2002 in partnership with UN agencies (UNAMA, UNOCHA, UNHCR, etc), the government (MAAH), NGOs (GOAL, FOCUS, etc) and local communities.

79. In preparation for planning the 2003 campaign, a survey of oviposition sites was undertaken. It was estimated that over 400,000 hectares of rain fed wheat and over 190,000 hectares of irrigated wheat would be at risk from locust attack (235,000 ha out of them were estimated in the north of Afghanistan) meaning that the size of the overall population remained at least as large as it was the previous year. The locust control campaign was supported by Italy, US and FAO's own resources and implemented with the participation of local authorities, logistical support from the NGO GOAL and staff from the MAAH's Plant Protection and Quarantine Department (PPQD). 123,284 ha of locust infestations were treated mainly with conventional pesticides and some small areas were treated with an insect growth regulator.

80. A survey of oviposition carried out at the end of the 2003 campaign revealed that the scale of the 2004 campaign might be considerably less than that of 2003⁴⁷. This was also the view of most farmers, according to the Impact Study carried out by GOAL in October 2003, where it is stated that “the proportion of communities perceiving a locust problem in their area declined compared to last year.”

81. At the time of the MTE mission, FAO was discussing with donors on possible sources of funding for the 2004 locust control campaign, while developing a sustainable long-term strategy on integrated pest management to prevent future outbreaks.

82. In regard to Sunn pest, in April 2002 one thousand nets for mechanical control were made and distributed to Jawzjan, Sar-i-Pol and Faryab provinces. Trained operators carried out surveys and instructed villagers in the use of the nets. Badghis, Helmand and Herat were also surveyed for Sunn pest. Besides, following the sunnpest report in Helmand in 2003, FAO fielded a consultant to assess the situation in the region.

Relevance of the campaigns

83. The locust control campaigns were conducted following technical assessments in the field which confirmed the severity of the outbreaks. These campaigns were carried out in the absence of a well-established plant health service, and therefore technical guidance and inputs provided by FAO to control locust were in high need.

Efficiency, timeliness and coordination of the campaigns

84. Under the limited logistical support, timely procurement of inputs for the locust control campaigns was difficult, however the projects managed to cope with the situation developing a model of success, working in coordination with different partners (UN, NGOs, MAAH and local authorities) in the field. FAO provided the technical leadership and agricultural inputs. Local communities were quite supportive, albeit less participation was noted in areas where WFP previously implemented food-for-work schemes with farmers to do mechanical locust control.

85. In September 2003, GOAL conducted an impact assessment survey to ascertain whether the 2003 locust mitigation campaign was successful in controlling locusts in low, medium and high risk areas of northern Afghanistan and to compare this year’s campaign with that of last year. The data has revealed that there was an improvement in the implementation of the campaign. The number of communities experiencing locust invasion declined, and locusts were better controlled in areas where locusts did attack, resulting in less damage to crops. The targeting of the intervention was balanced, and the areas with the highest risk of locust damage suffered proportionately similar to that of the low risk areas. Farmers expressed approval of the way in which the operation was carried out, and said that it was better than last year. Furthermore, the operators who sprayed the locusts expressed willingness to continue participating despite many not having been paid by the communities.

Effectiveness, impact and sustainability of the campaigns

86. Although the two campaigns were reported to be broadly successful, there is limited information on the concrete results achieved or the results on crop acreages saved.

87. With regard to the 2002 campaign, around 80,500 ha of land were treated chemically and 213,000 ha controlled mechanically⁴⁸. The campaign was implemented in a context of high food insecurity. In many of the affected districts, the percentage of the population expected to require food aid was 80%. Even in

⁴⁷ A. W. Harvey “Emergency Locust Control in northern Afghanistan” (December 2003).

⁴⁸ A.W. Harvey “Emergency Locust Control in Northern Afghanistan” (2002)

those districts with an anticipated food surplus, such as the irrigated areas of Kunduz province, this was urgently needed in neighbouring districts. All the food destroyed by locusts would therefore have had to be replaced mainly by food aid. The lack of essential data and the methodological difficulties⁴⁹ linked to impact assessment of locust control campaign prevent from carrying out reliable estimation of crop areas saved⁵⁰ but the MTE agrees with the consultant who concludes that there is no doubt that if food production deficit due to locust had to be compensated by food aid, it would have been far more costly than one time locust control campaign.

88. The above-mentioned survey concluded that “Wheat production increased dramatically compared to 2002, and was above the baseline year of 1995. While this increase in production is mostly due to the highly favourable meteorological conditions and high levels of available soil nutrients due to a 3 year fallow as a result of the drought, the locust mitigation campaign has played a substantive role in safeguarding the livelihoods of farmers in irrigated and rain-fed areas of the north.”.

89. The use of more environment friendly pesticides and products with higher quality could have enhanced the overall effectiveness of the locust control campaigns.

90. The locust projects implemented in northern Afghanistan managed to save hundreds of hectares of crops, and contributed to food security by reducing crop damage. Representatives from the government, donors, and non-profit organizations as well as farmers acknowledged the importance of the plant protection activities undertaken, whose positive results helped FAO to gain visibility especially among donors and ministries. However, FAO’s activities tend to concentrate mainly on crop production while underestimating pre- and post-harvest losses related to pests and diseases. Overall and under the circumstances, FAO implemented realistic measures involving local communities and implementing partners to carry out mechanical and chemical control.

91. The need for controlling locust from 2004 and onwards have not been fully backed by donors and the locust campaigns for 2004 will have to rely on external sources of funding and use of pesticides. Other pests such as Sunn pest also require a longer-term integrated pest management approach, which should involve the MAAH and local communities.

Recommendations

1. Start locust control campaigns as early as possible, and when recurrent, a mechanism should be established to monitor future needs.
2. Place more attention on issues related to plant protection. Since other pests are increasing in importance and threatening crop production, possibilities to implement Integrated Pest Management (IPM) activities within other FAO operations should be sought.

⁴⁹ “Economic analysis of locust control is notoriously difficult because locusts are mobile and move unpredictably between crops and pastures of greatly different economic value. It is not therefore possible, as it is with static crop pests, to relate a given control input (as area treated for example) to the value of the crop saved. A further complication is the value of preventive control, in which locusts which are expected themselves to do damage, are controlled because, if they breed successfully, their more numerous offspring will”. Text extracted from the “Locust Campaign Cost/Benefit” note prepared by A. W. Harvey (2004).

⁵⁰ In the same “Locust Campaign Cost/Benefit” note, the consultant, in attempting to provide what he called “a very crude estimate” of areas saved, used as a basis for cultivated areas a land cover survey dated of the early 1970s and not on the area known to be planted in the current season. In view of so much unreliability, the MTE took the position not to attempt any quantification.

3. Integrate long-term locust management into a general community-based plant protection/extension service, supported by specialised survey and control capacity within the government. This can be done through reviving the government long term IPM strategy, which should include a capacity building component.
4. Increase the use of environmentally-friendly pesticides instead of organo-phosphate pesticide, especially if those will be used in hand-held sprayers by local communities.

4.4 WATER RESOURCES AND IRRIGATION

92. An initial reconnaissance survey in 2002 was financed out of an emergency project.⁵¹ Subsequently, the three regional projects (two emergency and one non-emergency)⁵² based respectively in Jalalabad, Kandahar and Herat have had similar objectives and can be seen as pilot projects in which FAO in partnership with the provincial Departments of Irrigation and the local communities of water users have for the first time started to work together to rehabilitate and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of traditional irrigation systems. The Italian emergency project also funded a national survey of traditional irrigation systems based on river basins, focusing on those systems most seriously damaged or in most urgent need of rehabilitation and repair. The German-funded project also included work in the centre in Kabul with the Ministry of Irrigation, Water Resources and Environment (MIWRE) in helping to establish a technical co-ordination unit.

Relevance

93. Although there were some shortcomings in terms of the absence of GPS for site location, the national irrigation survey carried out by FAO in 2002 and 2003 and now being finalised, marks an important and relevant step in laying the foundation of a database for planning in respect of traditional irrigation systems based on complete river basins. Almost nothing existed previously on a national basis.

94. The significance of the three FAO projects is that for the first time, increasing the capacity of the PIDs has been one of the main objectives. In past irrigation reconstruction efforts, there was little involvement of the Provincial Irrigation Departments (PIDs). This newly revived capacity is being assisted in such a way as to understand the importance of working with rural communities in a participatory fashion. Given the weakened state of the MIWRE and especially its Provincial offices, this can be seen as a significant step.

Efficiency

95. The national irrigation survey got off to a timely start, but possibly the quality of work may have suffered by initiating the work before everything was in place, such as GPS units etc. There have been criticisms of the engineers contracted to undertake this work. Such criticisms however will have to wait until the final results of the survey are officially presented.

96. The irrigation rehabilitation projects started late largely due to the late recruitment of consultants. Nonetheless, the projects caught up well. Taking everything into account, including the short duration of the two emergency projects, the very serious security problems that exist in some districts and the lack of

⁵¹ OSRO/AFG/111/USA

⁵² OSRO/AFG/212/ITA, 09-2002 to 12-2003, Irrigation Component US\$ 1,496,646; OSRO/AFG210/NET 10-2002 to 12-2003, Irrigation Component US\$ 1,506,655; GCP/AFG/024GER, 10-2002 to 09-2004, US\$ 2,060,508.

capacity on the part of the government institutions, the projects have performed well, and are much appreciated by local beneficiaries and PIDs alike. Training modules were developed for Irrigation Department staff as well as for community water masters (“mirab”) and there was a strong intention to assist formal formation of community Water Users Associations although this is yet to take off. Each project has also included funds for the rehabilitation or new construction of facilities and offices for the PIDs. This work has always been intended as a contribution towards about 50% of the structures, the balance to be provided by the Government.

97. Design work was carried out in each FAO Provincial project office. Also as part of the infrastructure construction and reconstruction activities, a tendering process was developed for contracting Afghan engineers to carry out the work. This tendering process was initially somewhat simplistic but has been strengthened and developed in the course of the projects, especially in Herat.

Effectiveness

98. The effectiveness of the irrigation survey cannot yet really be judged until it is officially presented and in use. At its current state, it requires modification and improvement.

99. The three irrigation projects have undertaken some useful rehabilitation and construction work which will benefit the communities dependant on the irrigation systems assisted, although the funds that budgeted this work were less than 20% of total project cost. In respect of the projects’ effectiveness in capacity building, community water users’ organisation and the training of specialist persons such as “mirabs,” the projects can only be seen as the first step in a long process that will have to be followed up.

100. The approach of taking the personnel who remain in the PIDs step by step from initial community dialogue, identification of problems, prioritisation of issues, through to survey, design, costing, contracting, supervision of work and payment, has probably been the most valuable aspect of the FAO PID engagement under these three projects.

Impact and Sustainability

101. The structural and irrigation system improvement work seen by the MTE mission appeared to be of good quality and the community beneficiaries declared themselves to be satisfied. Nevertheless, it is difficult and too early to judge the impact of these projects; however, it is unlikely that they will have significant benefits given their limited scale if not followed up.

102. The great risk with all three projects is that by themselves they have all been of too short duration and too limited scope to have a lasting effect. This is true even of the longer-term German-funded project in Herat. However, the World Bank Emergency Irrigation Project (see below) comes on stream as planned; this will provide the opportunity to build on the initial progress made.

The World Bank “Emergency Irrigation Rehabilitation Project”

103. The Afghan Government has selected FAO as their Implementing Partner for the US\$ 75 million World Bank “Emergency Irrigation Rehabilitation Project”. The project is in the process of being prepared under the Bank’s fast track procedures for emergency projects. FAO has been invited to submit a proposal for providing services as the project implementing agent under a process of non-competitive bidding.

104. The objective of the project is to improve food security and incomes through (i) rehabilitating irrigation infrastructure; (ii) restoring the hydro-meteorological network; (iii) supporting infra-structure and institutional capacity for managing sustainable use of water resources; and (iv) enhancing the role of community organizations and farmers for operating and maintaining irrigation systems⁵³. Under the project,

⁵³ Summarised from the pre-appraisal aide-mémoire, World Bank mission, September 2003.

it is envisaged that 1,280 schemes of various sizes would be rehabilitated covering between 280,000 and 350,000 hectares.

105. The prospect of being selected to have an important implementation role in such a significant irrigation project provides FAO with both a big opportunity as well as a major challenge⁵⁴. However, the MTE is concerned that FAO may not have the capacity to manage such a large project, including technical backstopping on a “24 hours response basis” (as is proposed) from FAO HQ.

106. Although the irrigation project will give FAO a very strong field presence, which it requires to give it credibility as a partner to MIWRE, the MTE has some misgivings about the subsequent imbalance created by a further (and major) increase in its implementation role when compared with the need for FAO to adopt and be seen to adopt a more strategic/advisory role to government.

Recommendations on Irrigation

1. A detailed study of the three irrigation projects should now be done to learn lessons for future interventions in the traditional irrigation sector. These will feed into FAO’s approach to the forthcoming World Bank project.
2. FAO needs to sharpen up procurement procedures for both staff recruitment and equipment, especially given the demands that will soon be made as a result of FAO’s management of the large WB project.
3. The national irrigation survey needs to be published as soon as possible so that it can be used for planning and future interventions.

4.5 HORTICULTURE

107. With the financial support of Italy⁵⁵, FAO implemented five activities in the sector. The overall objective of the FAO’s assistance on horticulture was to rehabilitate crop production as a key policy element of the newly established Government to rehabilitate a sustainable rural economy while also contributing to the alleviation of poverty and malnutrition and consolidation of food security.

108. From November 2002 to April 2003, a national survey was conducted to monitor and assess the condition of all the national research stations, existing nucleus fruit nurseries and private fruit nurseries previously assisted by the FAO programme during the 90s. The survey came up with critical findings, confirming the collapse of the fruit sector due largely to drought, and highlighted the impact of pre and post harvest losses. A marketing study for fruits, nuts and vegetables on both local and export markets was finished by July 2003.

109. The rehabilitation of the fruit tree nurseries was intended to reactivate the production of certified fruit tree seedlings. Selection of between 70 and 100 commercial private fruit and forest tree nurseries was

⁵⁴ At a meeting between the MTE team and the Minister of MWIRE, the question was posed by the team as to how he viewed FAO, as an agency providing advice or as an implementing partner. The minister’s reply was clear and unequivocal – he views FAO “as an implementing agency and expects FAO to deliver a high quality of work in a timely fashion.”

⁵⁵ Project OSRO/AFG/212/ITA component “Emergency Support to Horticulture Sector Rehabilitation and Agro-Forestry” budgeted for US\$ 821,000.

expected to be based on the survey results. Finally, because of poor water availability and irrigation conditions found in the nurseries, the project did mainly rehabilitation work on wells and irrigation systems.

110. Plastic tunnels were set up in 8 public research stations for the production of vegetable seedlings. These were later distributed to poor farmers for home gardening and to commercial vegetable farmers in the peri-urban areas. Around 750,000 seedlings were produced during the total cycle of production, as well as 1.2 tons of vegetables. Direct beneficiaries of the distribution of the vegetable seedlings amounted to 4,970 families, including 831 farmers, 2 orphanages and 1 school for the blind.

111. At the time of the MTE, a follow-up project (one year duration) and a mid-term plan (three-five year term) to support the development of horticulture (and floriculture) in Afghanistan were under preparation.

Relevance

112. Overall, the activities carried out were in line with local needs and priorities. However, the sequence and timeframe of activities such as the rehabilitation of the fruit tree nurseries could have been adjusted to wait for the preliminary results of the survey, though the donor's time limit for spending the resources did not allow this. The planned operational arrangements overestimated the weak technical and institutional capacity of the MAAH to act as a counterpart agency, so that initiatives towards capacity building might have been more appropriated.

113. Albeit released later than expected, the horticulture survey was instrumental to get updated information about the status of the sector after a 4-year drought and the recent war, and the usefulness of the results were acknowledged by donors, NGOs and government. However, the aim to introduce more development-type activities (such as the introduction of new technologies and distribution of unknown varieties to farmers) without ensuring the presence of a follow up exercise could be judged to be a weak design element, though a follow up project is being prepared.

Efficiency

114. Activities such as vegetable seedlings distribution and identification of beneficiaries were expected to be done through the establishment of working relationships with other partners, but building bridges with them have been generally weak and poor collaboration with development agencies was reported.

115. For instance, although government facilities such as research centres have been used as field sites (e.g. rehabilitation of irrigations systems and plastic tunnels development), there was no mechanism set up to liaise with the ministry at the central level. Besides, unwillingness of local counterparts to work "for free" also hampered further integration of the activities with other organizations running similar schemes.

Effectiveness

116. Distribution of vegetable seedlings done through NGOs was late and thus reduced the relevance of the intervention. Selection of beneficiaries was poor, for example, few women beneficiaries had access to irrigated land. It was also reported that new varieties of vegetables released to farmers were not previously tested.

117. Lack of preparedness in the relevant technical divisions to quickly respond to the field delayed the clearance of the horticulture survey.

Potential impact and sustainability/connectedness

118. The survey is considered very useful as a basis for policy formulation and planning in the sub-sector. However, given the large budget, the limited outputs and the small number of direct and indirect beneficiaries indicate that the overall impact of the project component has been rather small.

119. The sustainability of the activities carried out in the field is questionable under the circumstances. Indeed, the innovations implemented (e.g. building of plastic greenhouses and introduction of new varieties of vegetables such as winter-resistant tomatoes) would require a close and continuous follow-up, including proper training, before widespread and sustained farmer adoption may be expected.

Recommendations on Horticulture

1. Focus on selected geographical areas in common agreement with the government.
2. Seek further cooperation with other actors in the field, improving the integration of horticultural activities with other activities carried out by FAO in Afghanistan, in particular nutrition education/communication, community-based capacity building and 'emergency' relief.
3. Prioritize sectors with potential domestic and/or export market demand such as fruits (raisins), pistachios and fresh vegetables (the latter mostly for urban markets).

4.6 LIVESTOCK

Relevance

120. The FAO response to the emergency/rehabilitation period 2001 to 2003 combined both continued support for ongoing projects and additional short-term emergency support for animal health and animal feed (Table 1). Key to the rehabilitation phase is the national herds and flocks ability to optimise production as the pressure on the resource base is eased and surplus feed produced. This will be expressed in (i) the short term through increased milk production and (ii) the longer term through increased herd and flock off-take.

121. The animal health intervention contributed to the longer term recovery through both faster re-generation of the national herd and flock combined with greater off-take. Combined, these two factors will stimulate increased disposable household incomes and improved household food security and nutrition.

122. The development component of the FAO's livestock interventions targeted the most significant activities of the sedentary herd and flock, namely cattle and poultry production and addressed the most important constraints: health, marketing and feed. In providing support for both animal health and artificial insemination (AI), the programme gave producers the confidence to expand production. Support for the small ruminant flock was less structured and indeed reflected the nomadic and semi-nomadic nature of the flock. Direct support was provided through animal health initiatives and indirectly through the fodder programme, complemented by the improved cereal seed programme.

123. The relevance of the FAO livestock operations must be assessed against the basic principles of extensive/semi-extensive livestock production. Even though RAP fielded a consultant to specifically address rangeland management, further actions were lacking to directly support Afghanistan's single largest resource – rangeland production and the ability of the rangeland to respond to rainfall. Nor did they address issues relating to the mobility of the national herd and flock. The development programme did however address issues relating to marketing, through the dairy milk collection and AI activities, but only as it related to the sedentary herd.

124. Both the development and the emergency programmes addressed components related to support services. The sedentary and nomadic herd and flock benefited from the continued support for animal health services. The sedentary cattle herd benefited directly from the fodder programme, nevertheless both the

sedentary and nomadic small ruminant flock will benefit indirectly from the programme as relevant feeding strategies are developed.

125. The development programme has focused on government services that will in the future enter the private sector while assisting core government services that will remain in the area of “public good”. The development programme has not directly assisted core government services relating to planning and policy.

126. Although constrained through regional security issues, a lack of continuity in personnel and inconsistencies in funding, the approach is considered both appropriate and relevant.

Efficiency and Effectiveness

127. Emergency livestock projects targeted between 25 and 50 percent of the National Herd and Flock (Table 8) in:

- Badghhis, Farah, Ghazni, Heart, Kabul, Kapista, Khost, Kunar, Laghman, Logar, Nargarhar, Pakika, Pakyta, Parwan and Wardak Provinces under the 2002 Emergency Programme, and
- Badakhshan, Baghlan, Balk, Faryab, Jawzjan, Kunduz, Samangan and Takhar Provinces under the 2003 Emergency Programme.

128. In so doing, 5 to 10% of the targeted cattle herds, 45 to 70% of the sheep flocks and 15 to 30 % of the goat flock were covered. Under the 2002 intervention, the animal health input was complemented by 100 kg compound feed being given to some 14,000 households.

129. The ability to implement **animal health operations** in an *efficient* manner was possible because the Veterinary Field Units (VFUs), used as implementing agents, had been established under the PEACE Programme (1997 to 2002). The Netherlands funded project (2002) provided appropriate assistance but implementation was delayed and field reporting less than desirable. The timing of the Italian funded project in 2003 was more applicable and the field reporting adequate. Unfortunately the recovery in 2003 was impeded by a Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD) outbreak. Deaths of 20 to 30 percent were reported in young stock. A US-funded campaign around major sale yards and in 25 key districts will be undertaken in the autumn of 2003.

130. **Fodder activities** have made a significant contribution to site-specific understanding of the technical requirements of green fodder production and demonstrated the production capacity of relevant crops. The projects have made less progress in developing: (i) broader strategy for the integration of fodder crops into specific crop rotations and (ii) precise, quantifiable, feeding strategies related to the demands of both small and large ruminants. These issues should be addressed under a second phase of the fodder development programme.

131. While the fodder projects have underpinned the introduction of a smallholder dairy programme, its ability to respond to the need for short term milk production increases during the rehabilitation period was constrained through a lack of seed and, since the results from the programme are still being developed, an inability to provide precise, targeted assistance.

132. Support for **poultry production** at the village level, irrespective of gender, is an important component of the rehabilitation phase as it encourages increased food security and stimulates economic activity. Support during the rehabilitation should build on established and understood production principles. Where that support is based on new and or improved technology that requires a significant level of extension support, then the intervention becomes a development project to be implemented as the community emerges from the rehabilitation phase. The FAO poultry intervention has been based on significant extension and marketing support. Most of the beneficiaries were women and a cadre of women poultry trainers was established. While appreciated by the beneficiaries, the analysis of this intervention would suggest that without a broadening of the production base and reduction of per unit overhead costs these activities are not sustainable in the longer term.

Table 1

**POST 2001 EMERGENCY PROGRAMME
MID TERM EVALUATION
Schedule of Livestock Interventions**

Project	Period	Funding Agent	Amount (US\$m)	Project Description	
Development Projects					
Livestock Strategy	1996	FAO		Preparation of a livestock sector development strategy	
PEACE Programme	Animal Health	1997 to 2002	FAO	8.29	Support for 255 Veterinary Field Units (VFU)
	Animal Production	1997 to 1999	FAO + DFID		Fodder, AI, Extension and Milk Marketing as individual projects
		2000 to 2002			Fodder, AI and Extension consolidated under a Milk Marketing Project
Transboundary Disease Surveillance	2000	TCP	0.38	Surveillance of major transboundary diseases Rhinderpest and PPR	
OSRO/AFG/102/EC OSRO/AFG/103/US	2001/02	EC	0.03	The establishment of an AI facility at Mazar	
	2001/03	US	0.09	The on going support for the milk marketing and collection project	
Supplementary Budget	2002	UNDP	0.80	10 Field Clinics and 6 Labs rehabilitated, 1 vehicel plus vet, office and training equipment purchased Disease (24) and Lab (10) training undertaken Support for the rehabilitation of the Kabul Dairy Processing Plant General support for the rehabilitation of MOA offices and provision of equipment	
Development of Livestock Production in Selected Districts	2002 to 2004	Germany	1.20	Establishment of 2850 village level poultry producers, NDV support for 11,000 village level producers, support for the Poultry Growers Association, 600 fodder crop demonstration plots, support for AI and animal health to dairy producers, completion of the Kabul Dairy Plant	
Emergency Projects					
OSRO/AFG/107/NET	2001 to 2003	Netherlands	1.00	1400 tonnes of coumpound feed, 5.6 m doses of vaccine 0.6 million treatmenst for internal parasites, Rabies campaign (see Table Schedule 1)	
OSRO/AFG/212/ITA	2001/02	Italy	0.60	5.22 m doses of vaccine, 0.47 m treatments for internal parasites (see Table Schedule 1)	
			0.80	A livestock census was undertaken, while support was given for a policy advisor in the MOA	
Protection of the Kuchi Nucleus Breeding Flocks 2003		FAO	0.39	250 tonne feed for the Kuchi flock	

133. Given a culture which does not systematically encourage the sale of milk surplus to the extended family requirements, the **small holder dairy development programme** under the PEACE Programme and extended under the German Programme was never meant as a response to the rehabilitation phase. The programme therefore should not be evaluated in this context.

134. As an ongoing programme, milk production has created incremental disposable household income amongst sedentary herds during the rehabilitation period and as such enhanced the recovery in those areas.

Recommendations

1. A financially viable dairy and poultry sector could act as a catalyst for the development of the livestock sector. Technical assistance that would advise on policies associated with the restructuring of the Dairy Processing Units and Poultry Growers Associations into self sustainable commercial entities is therefore recommended. The re-structuring would include:
 - The preparation of Articles of Association
 - Raising of equity capital to allow suppliers equitable participation
 - A Management Plan that sets achievable objectives and defines the operational responsibilities of both management and suppliers
 - Implementation of financial and product control systems that ensure efficient management of the entity.
 - Identification and sustainable costing of the support services to be provided by the entity to its suppliersFAO should therefore re-activate the Concept Paper already prepared and submit a detailed Project Proposal.
2. FAO should rejuvenate the stalled process of privatisation of animal health services and provide appropriate support during the transitional phase as the private sector takes greater responsibility. Over this period, FAO should play a key role in advising the MAAH on policy implications and direction as it relates to the livestock sector. The transitional programme would be implemented over three years, and comprise 3 elements:
 - (i) Strengthening the Veterinary Services Association and Veterinary Field Units (VSA/VFU) by improving management and fiscal control, increasing the capital base of the VSA and providing appropriate VFU training, equipment and remuneration that would support disease reporting.
 - (ii) Strengthening the Government's regulatory and monitoring role by supporting veterinary epidemiology, laboratories and trans-boundary disease monitoring, the establishment of a Disciplinary Board to oversee the veterinary profession, and most importantly implementing quality standards for animal health inputs. Disease surveillance would rely on the cooperation of the VFU and involve the establishment of linkages between the VFU and the diagnostic laboratory (s)
 - (iii) Strengthening livestock policy assistance by supporting an adviser position to help MAAH with programming, policy and restructuring support. The work would involve the final drafting of veterinary legislation to determine the functions of state as regulatory and as policy maker (i.e. public good activities) and to allow private sector to take responsibility as producer and as service deliverer (private good activities).
3. The ongoing development of the fodder programme should remain in the area of "public good" and therefore subject to continued FAO assistance. The programme should build on the knowledge gained, and develop a range of effective feeding strategies for uptake by different levels of producer, and encompassing rainfed cereal producing and rangeland areas.

4.7 FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION INFORMATION AND COMMUNITY-BASED CAPACITY-BUILDING

135. The main activities relating to food security and nutrition include:
- The Crop and Food Supply Assessment Missions (CFSAM) jointly carried out with WFP. Over the period covered by the evaluation, two CFSAM took place in June/July of 2002 and 2003.
 - The establishment of a food security and nutrition information capacity through two projects, funded by two different sources.
 - Capacity building on community-based food security and nutrition planning.
136. Both projects (111/USA and 026/GER) have similar overall objectives. However, they differ in their approaches and target users, as a result of different priorities at the time they were formulated.

Relevance

137. The first project (OSRO/AFG/111/USA) was formulated at a very early stage of the post September 11 emergency and was part of the Donors' alert issued in November 2001, a time when major humanitarian assistance operations were foreseen. Food and agriculture information was available through FAO-ProMis, a geo-referenced database, containing agriculture-related information. The database was recognised as incomplete and inaccurate, considering the tremendous changes over the past decade. WFP had continued vulnerability assessments and joint FAO/WFP CFSAMs had taken place since 1997. However, insecurity and lack of technical support made it difficult to provide accurate information. Thus, the needs for timely and accurate information especially for defining and targeting humanitarian assistance were pressing. Although formulated hastily, the project was very relevant under the circumstances. It was also realistic in its objectives, aiming first at enhancing WFP and FAO's capacity to provide timely, accurate and reliable information on the rapidly changing conditions of crisis-affected populations.

138. The second project (GCP/AFG/026/GER) was formulated under the ITAP and had two immediate objectives: "(i) mechanisms established for collecting, analysing and interpreting information for better decision-making on food security, nutrition and livelihoods; and (ii) capacity of government officials, partner agencies and NGOs, civil society and the identified communities in priority areas strengthened, to design and implement participatory community interventions for improving food security, nutrition and livelihoods of vulnerable groups". The project was formulated after the establishment of the Interim Government and was more ambitious in terms of capacity building. The first component (information capacity) complemented 111/USA project. With regard to the second component, introducing household food security and nutrition planning at local level was relevant in a country with local diversities, and where the Central Government had so little control over local management. However, the component was too ambitious in its outputs, mixing awareness building, skills training with community nutrition interventions. In addition, these two different components, involving different target-groups and counterparts, created confusion among project staff and staff backstopping from HQ on what the project was meant to do throughout the project life.

Efficiency

139. Implementation (including outputs delivery) suffered delays. This is reflected, among other things, in the low rate of disbursement three months before completion (less than 30% for one of the projects⁵⁶). During the first year of operations (2002), little was achieved in terms of outputs. A two-month consultancy had been fielded to support a FAO/WFP production and food supply survey in advance of the 2002 FAO/WFP CFSAM. While this eventually gave credibility to the results of the CFSAM, there was no system put into place and the project did not meet in the first year its primary

⁵⁶ Budget and expenditures data provided to the Team by TCE 25/09/03.

purpose, i.e. the provision of information for assistance for food in the agriculture sector and in particular the information of FAO's emergency operations.

140. Part of the delay is linked to difficulties in recruitment which in turn led to staff turnover. The team leader was not fielded before June 2002. Community-based planning started only in June 2003, when the consultant arrived.

141. Implementation was hampered by several factors, including conflict of personalities among project staff, and unclear lines of responsibility for solving them. The separation of budget holding and operational responsibilities for each funding source (with 026/GER operated by RAP and 111/USA by TCE in HQ) did not facilitate team building among staff. Furthermore, the project staff did not consider serving information needs of FAO's operations as a priority and the project was operated completely independently from the rest of the FAO's programme and in particular from the emergency operations and in fact the methodology used did not allow to feed timely information on vulnerability and targeting to the emergency coordination unit. The situation improved through the participation of the Senior Agronomist of the ECU in the National Crop Output Assessment exercise coordinate by FAIT, and subsequently in the collaboration of the horticulture unit with the Nutritionist of FAIT in home gardening initiatives. The results of the NCOA were subsequently used by the CFSAM and the ECU for the planning of 2003 Autumn input distribution campaign.

142. Other external factors affected implementation. After the events of late 2001, FAO needed to find its place in an environment dominated by confusion and duplication of work among too many actors involved in the collection and analysis of food security, nutrition and vulnerability information. The re-establishment of the Government institutions progressed slowly and with confusion of roles among ministries, especially between MRRD and MAAH. Furthermore, FAO's support to food security information is attached to MAAH, one of the weakest ministries.

143. On the positive side, a number of factors created a better environment for FAO to operate later on. The Minister of MRRD, in promoting a broad and multi-disciplinary vision of food security, called for greater clarity of role and strengthened inter-institutional coordination. In addition, the May 2002 workshop, in which FAO participated, was a breakthrough in enhancing coordination, as well as better integration of nutritional and food security surveillance information.

Effectiveness and Impact

144. Limited achievements were realised until Mid-2003 for reasons mentioned above. Until the latest CFSAM, the Afghanistan Food Security Unit was not able to provide information and analysis for use by the humanitarian community as well as by FAO itself for the planning and programming of FAO's agriculture relief interventions. Furthermore, today, the early warning and food security database is still not functional, and the first food security bulletin was only issued at the time of the MTE mission (October 2003).

145. However, some important achievements have been realised on several fronts.

The establishment of food security information capacity

146. A crop monitoring system is progressively being established. Crop survey methodologies were developed and several surveys were carried out, including the crop and food supply assessment survey in July 2002 and the winter crop survey (2002/2003). The implementation of the programme to install agro-meteorological equipment (though partial) and collaboration with the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS-NET) permitted the use of ground and satellite agro-met data for the crop production ex-ante estimate of May 2003.

147. Crop surveys and related reports supported the joint FAO/WFP CFSAMs. There is a general consensus from donors and agencies met by the MTE on the usefulness and quality of FAO's work on crop assessment and monitoring that supported in particular the latest CFSAM. Much improvement was noted in this year's Special Report, very much accounted for by the quality of the preparatory

work carried out by what was called the Afghanistan Food Security Unit (AFSU) and FAAHM on crop assessment.

148. The presentation of the CFSAM results constituted for the first time a real forum for discussion between the Government and the international community on food security and food aid issues in Afghanistan.

149. In addition to the crop survey reports, a few ad-hoc reports have been published, including for instance the Food and Agriculture Alert series with a first issue on Sunn pest in May 2003. Presentations were made on specific subjects such as “encroachment on grasslands” and “implications of increased food production for food assistance policy for WFP”. The Food and Agriculture Focus first issue was launched in May 2003, and the first food security bulletin (main expected output) at the time of the MTE mission. However, efforts towards the systematic and regular production of publications are still insufficient and a clear dissemination strategy needs to be defined.

Vulnerability Assessment

150. Less successful attempts have been made to develop vulnerability livelihoods profiles, using an approach developed by the FAO Food Security and Agricultural Projects Analysis Service (ESAF). Profiles have not yet been finalised and thus, FAO is not considered as a reference on vulnerability assessment in Afghanistan. FAO’s work has been perceived by other agencies, also involved in this domain, as isolated and redundant to other work carried out at the same time.

151. Much more positive is FAO’s contribution to the current National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (NRVA). The team contributed to the design of the crop and nutrition (food composition and dietary diversity at the household level) components of the questionnaire and it will also be making a financial contribution for the survey and data processing.

Capacity Building and Institutional Strengthening

152. Capacity building is taking place through the reactivation of some of the staff and services of the MAAH by regular on-the-job training. The extension officers of the MAAH and some of the MRRD have been trained in survey methods. The agro-meteorologist is training national consultants and counterpart officials whilst the nutritionist is training the staff of the Home Economics unit of the Extension Department as well as in the provinces and some NGO and CBO staff.

153. The physical realisation of the FAAHM unit took place on July 2003 through its formal establishment in the MAAH as the focal entity for dealing with food security issues in liaison with the MRRD. Strengthening the MAAH remains a major challenge. Nevertheless, establishing a platform through the FAAHM within MAAH as well as a process for developing a joint long term information strategy are significant achievements.

154. In parallel, the Team Leader is playing an active role in assisting the MAAH in its current policy formulation process (see Chapter 4.8). This role is well appreciated both by the Government and Donors who recognised FAO’s comparative advantage in this field.

Capacity building on community-based food security and nutrition

155. This component is still in its infancy. The staff responsible for this component has been extremely dedicated and active and received adequate and timely support from HQ. As a result, in the past three months, a number of activities have already taken place.

156. Community-based workers (Government, NGOs, WFP, Unicef, WHO, etc.) have been trained through two-day workshops on nutrition and food security in three provinces. Sensitizing local institutions, including humanitarian organizations, on household food security and nutrition was useful in bringing a common understanding on issues to be addressed among the multitude of local partners. However, their impact is expected to be limited without close follow-up and improvements in the security situation.

157. A number of interventions (from home gardening, poultry activities, to quality control and safety for a flour factory in Kabul) took place. They reflect a fragmented approach competing with better equipped implementing agencies (NGOs) and with the risk of having a limited impact. The MTE believes that rather than being involved in implementation of small-scale and dispersed interventions, FAO assistance in this domain should promote mechanisms for responding to ad-hoc requests (e.g., including delivering technical advice, helping with project formulation, channelling proposals to donors), while maintaining a coordination and advisory role.

Recommendations on Food Security information

1. Given the delays in this component, the priority now must be to concentrate on the delivery of information outputs e.g. food security bulletin, as well as on filling-in gaps in setting livestock and market monitoring capacity.
2. The FAAHM should further strengthen its crop monitoring and forecasting component. Information outputs should continue to serve as priority information needs for seeds assessment. Crop monitoring and forecasting efforts have to be implemented in close consultation with the agro-meteorological component of the FAAHM. Partnership opportunity with FEWSNET in this regard should be further explored and concretized as well as strengthening FAO's role in the vulnerability surveillance network chaired by MRRD.
3. The vulnerable groups' profiles should be finalised as soon as possible as they could complement some of the preliminary results of the NRVA which are expected by the end of the year.
4. Community-based planning activities should be taken out of the FAAHM and be relocated within the MAAH in a department closer to their counterparts. The focus should be on the promotion of improved approaches (multi-disciplinary, multi-institutional and participatory) at local level, rather than on direct interventions and an advisory and facilitating role in identifying partners who have the capacity to follow-up on the initiatives.
5. Long-term support to food security and nutrition assessment is needed in order to ensure that achievements so far are sustained.

4.8 ASSISTANCE TO POLICY AND STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

158. Following the end of the 2001 conflict, there was considerable pressure for FAO to declare its intentions for providing support to Afghanistan. The Director-General had made a public call at the Tokyo donor conference, in December 2001, to provide US\$202 million of assistance to rehabilitate the agricultural sector. Resulting from this, the focal point for Afghanistan instructed RAP on 3/11/01 to prepare: 'a medium term rehabilitation programme for the agricultural sector and a comprehensive longer-term development plan for Afghanistan'. In response, RAP engaged a consultant to prepare a 'Strategy for the Early Rehabilitation of Agriculture in Afghanistan' which was released by end-January 2002. It drew on previous FAO strategy work, particularly the Afghanistan Agricultural Strategy (AAS) of 1996, and the subsequent Food Security Strategy (FSS) in 1997; and aimed to present an 'overview of FAO's strategic approach to the rehabilitation of the agricultural sector' following the complex emergency of end-2001, with farming populations affected by conflict and long-term drought. It was not presented at the donor conference, as it was still under review; however the document was endorsed by the FAO Director General and presented to the Afghan government in February 2002.

159. The Strategy document was finalised and submitted to the interim government in Kabul at the same time as two other strategy initiatives. The Interim Administration prepared a National

Development Framework (NDF), through the Afghan Assistance Coordination Authority (AACCA) in April 2002, and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) as mandated by the Tokyo conference led a multi-donor group that prepared a Medium-Term Development Framework (MTDF), based on a comprehensive needs assessment, in May 2002, an exercise in which coincidentally FAO was involved.

160. Under the post-war circumstances, and immense donor pressure to support humanitarian efforts, it was difficult to focus on policy/strategy work and build awareness and ownership with the Government, especially given that ministers in the concerned ministries had little policy or strategy experience.

161. Nevertheless, the weaknesses in the document were well highlighted in the comments from the Afghanistan's Government Representation to FAO in February 2002⁵⁷. The strategy did not separate an overall government strategy from that of the strategy of one partner (FAO), and did not sufficiently state FAO's comparative role in the sector. Furthermore, it did not sufficiently address vulnerability, which was the most pressing issue at the end of the war. Finally, it did not sufficiently discuss the collaboration mechanisms for FAO with other partners and government or the follow-up implementation steps. The document appears to be aimed at providing a justification of how to allocate a figure of \$202 million over 3 years, rather than setting out an overall needs assessment and funding requirement for the sector, into which FAO's resources might fit. The document has therefore had, at the end, limited effectiveness or impact, either as a tool to guide FAO's own interventions or as a form of policy or strategy support to Government.

162. Although the strategy document had been officially endorsed by FAO, its weaknesses made it difficult for programme staff in the field to press for its adoption. At the same time, the Minister of Finance (also head of AACCA) indicated a preference for development banks over UN agencies and gave higher priority to the role of ADB, whose MTDF also better reflected the central role of the NDF. The ADB needs assessment (in which FAO staff participated) set out rather different priorities that were based on a multi-donor viewpoint as well as the Interim Administration's declared vision.

163. FAO's subsequent response was the preparation of a **Strategy Action Plan** for the Early Rehabilitation of Agriculture, in September 2002. This aimed to better fit the NDF framework, while providing a detailed elaboration of the broad areas of assistance outlined in the NDF / MTDF. The volume of assistance was still earmarked at just over \$200 million but spread over 5 years, and included greater scope for capacity building, policy assistance. The Action Plan takes on board ongoing projects and is structured according to the NDF. As a result, the document is seen as slightly more relevant by government, but it nevertheless has not been fully utilised as a planning tool, and was only final endorsed 'in principle' in March 2003, six months after submission.

164. With the arrival of a more permanent FAO representation and management team in November 2002, the opportunity to engage more effectively in providing assistance in the areas of policy formulation and detailed strategic planning could have been considered greater. Yet by this time, FAO's role in country with regard to policy and strategy work had been somewhat marginalized, as by late 2002 it had been replaced by ADB as the donor responsible for coordinating the sector (through coordination of the Consultative Group on Natural Resources Management (NRM)). FAO, with its predominantly emergency rehabilitation operations implemented by NGOs, was seen by the Ministry of Finance as continuing to work outside of government structures, and with a less pivotal role than the International Financing Institutions (IFIs) in terms of leveraging large scale investment and supporting government institution building. The response of the new FAO team was tactical in that it chose to focus on mobilising project funding in both emergency and development operations, and through this, to rebuild FAO's position as a key development partner for the sector.

⁵⁷ Comments on FAO's 'Strategy for the Early Rehabilitation of Agriculture in Afghanistan', A. Ayazi, Alternate Permanent Representative of Afghanistan to FAO, WFP and IFAD, 25 Feb 2002.

165. In recent months, FAO has begun to provide more effective policy assistance. This has been due to a number of factors: (i) the ADB support through technical assistance to MIWRE and MAAH in policy assistance, which has stimulated the preparation of draft policy statements; (ii) the successful integration of FAO's FAAHM unit into MAAH, and the active role played by the Manager of the Unit, (iii) the receptiveness especially in MAAH to FAO playing a leading role in the policy area, and (iv) the success of the FAO initiated regional and national 'Strategy Development Workshops'⁵⁸. The forthcoming TCP for capacity building has also built confidence in FAO's commitment to supporting ministry staff to fulfil their designated planning and policy functions. At the moment, however, there is no specific project for FAO to provide policy assistance, and this means that current activities are supported on the back of other projects. In fact, in this respect, it should be noted that FAO started the ground work for policy work in some specific sub-sectors through the conduct of comprehensive surveys (horticulture, irrigation, livestock) funded through projects. There is an urgent need to propose a long-term (1-2 years) project to provide substantive assistance, especially as other assistance is being mobilised (by ADB, the Department for International Development (DFID), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), ICARDA, etc).

166. A Policy Advisory Board in MAAH has now been set up with wide representation, and under this Board a smaller working group has been tasked to develop a policy framework for government. FAO has been requested to take the coordination role for this WG. This is a very positive step, and is an indication of the growing status that FAO holds. In MIWRE, existing FAO project staff is working with the ADB and ministry team to draft a water resources policy document. In both cases, it should be remembered that the assistance is being provided by FAO staff that will finish their contracts by end of the year. Possible sources of future funding for policy assistance work are: the German funding to FAAHM, the USAID Rebuilding Afghanistan's Agricultural Markets Programme (RAMP) funds managed by Chemonics. At the time of the MTE mission, internal FAO discussions were going on to field a short-term policy expert, an action strongly supported by the mission, providing a government request for such support is arranged. The scope of the assistance should include developing a follow up to the strategy development workshops and taking over coordination of the Policy Working Group (WG).

Recommendations on policy assistance

1. The recent positive engagement by FAO as a coordinator in the MAAH's policy formulation work should be continued. This means increasing the engagement with the new policy Working Group. The MTE supports initiatives currently underway to field a short-term policy advisor. In due course, there is a need to place a long-term policy adviser at high level, preferably Afghan, in both the MAAH and in the MIWRE.
2. Equally it should be a priority to continue to use the results from the FAO-organised regional and national planning workshops in the policy and strategy formulation process, and seek ways to follow-up this work to help formulate more detailed strategies in a locally-owned and well-coordinated manner.

⁵⁸ 6 workshops were held in July/Sept, for all stakeholders in the agricultural sector (including the three main ministries, Governor representatives, NGOs, donors). These 5 day events involved some 500 persons, and were the first time that Afghan officials worked together on their own strategy. The MTE team heard positive comments from various Afghan participants.

4.9 NEW AREAS OF ASSISTANCE: ALTERNATIVE LIVELIHOODS TO POPPY CULTIVATION

167. Funding under the FAO's emergency programme has made it possible to develop a number of important longer term strategic development and reconstruction type projects, two of which - the DFID-funded Development of Sustainable Agricultural Livelihoods in Eastern Hazarajat project and the World Bank-funded Emergency Irrigation Rehabilitation Project are entering their preliminary phases. A donor for the third of these strategic projects – the Alternative Agricultural Livelihoods (AAL) project – has still to be found.

168. The AAL project was conceived as the result of the alarming, rapid and large scale return to opium poppy cultivation that took place in the early winter of 2001 in the wake of the Coalition victory over the Taliban and followed the previously almost entirely successful ban on the crop by the Taliban in the previous 2000/2001 season⁵⁹. The latest estimates by UNODC shows a further increase in 2003 to almost 90,000 hectares, not far short of the previous record 1998/1999 season of 90,983 hectares and more than the next highest 1999/2000 season of 82,172 hectares.

169. The AAL project proposal has a budget of US\$ 25 million to be managed over a five year period. Its overall objective is "to develop viable 'alternative livelihood' options and diverse on-and off-farm income opportunities in four of the key traditional poppy growing provinces (Badakhshan, Nangarhar, Kandahar and Helmand), as a means of providing alternative income-generating opportunities to counter the economic dependency of rural communities on opium poppy. The project will be a critical component of an integrated strategy approach to the overall development of the country, consistent with the National Drugs Control Strategy and on-going interventions being undertaken by FAO and many other Government and non-Government agencies.

170. The project proposal recognises the enormity of the task and the necessity of being part of a much larger multi-sectoral programme. It is intended to be a major contribution towards an international and multi-donor/multi-sectoral programme to reduce poppy production and dependence through support to good governance and law enforcement as well as investment in rural infrastructure, education, health care and the development of job alternatives and improved market opportunities in rural areas.

V. Management and Coordination

5.1 FAO STRATEGIC VISION AND PROGRAMMING APPROACH

171. The mission finds that there has been no effective strategic vision underpinning FAO's activities in Afghanistan in the past two years, despite attempts to provide one (through the FAO Early Rehabilitation Strategy and Action Plan). Such a strategy should have aimed to provide a basis for FAO's overall role as one of various agencies working in the sector, and how in particular its new emergency and its existing development activities would work together in a complementary way to address the differing immediate and longer-term needs of the sector. The reasons for the lack of effective strategy are:

- the strong donor pressure to initiate emergency assistance in the latter part of 2001 which drove the emergency staff to move rapidly without a clear intervention strategy;

⁵⁹ According to the Annual Opium Survey Surveys released by UNODC, Afghanistan reached record proportions of up to and above 90,000 hectares in the late 1990s. Under the Taliban ban, the total estimated area under opium poppy was reduced to only 7,606 hectares in 2001 and this mainly in the Northern Alliance controlled province of Badakhshan. In the wake of the Coalition victory the area under poppy increased once again to a conservative estimate of 74,000 hectares in 2002.

- the long practice under the development programme of working outside government and on the basis of secure UNDP funding;
- the weak internal cohesion between different FAO actors, so that although RAP was instructed by the focal point for Afghanistan to prepare a strategy, the resulting document although officially endorsed was not widely accepted or implemented within FAO in particular by staff working in the country at that time;
- the strategy work mandated by the Tokyo conference and government being undertaken by ADB/WB (and with FAO involvement) that eventually placed ADB in a leading role for coordination of the sector;
- the weak and transient leadership in the FAOR during 2002, which was reactive rather than proactive, and unable to cement the competing emergency and development operations; and
- the weak capacity of government, in particular the correspondent ministries (MAAH and MIWRE), to take leadership and join in a dialogue on policy issues.

172. The absence of an effective strategic vision for FAO, and thus of a coherent programme, resulted in a piecemeal approach to resource mobilization and not fully taking into account other major players in the sector. Overall, FAO's programme has and still is strongly project driven, tactical not strategic. Some donors and IFIs express surprise or concern at FAO's implementation mode of operation.

5.2 MANAGEMENT AND COORDINATION⁶⁰

173. The particular attention given in this report to management and coordination of FAO's programme is linked to the special circumstances within which FAO had to operate, which were those of a post-war situation characterised by an interim Government and a dominant International Community in terms of setting up of the institutional and political framework in the immediate period after the war, as well as a massive donors' response concentrating on short-term humanitarian assistance (see Chapter 2 above). Internally, FAO inherited an unusual management set-up linked to (i) the non-recognised status of the Afghan Government during the Taliban period and (ii) the dependence of FAO's programme since 1992 on UNDP. There was no officially appointed FAO Representative in Afghanistan until November 2002. The Officer in Charge nominated in April 2002 was the first in a decade. FAO nevertheless had a strong presence throughout the country, including some 200 national and international staff. In practice, the FAO Programme was managed by the FAO Programme Manager and the STAs funded through the PEACE Programme. Operational responsibilities for this programme lay with RAP and technical responsibilities were shared between FAO HQs and RAP.

174. The situation changed drastically after the war, when FAO was given the opportunity to play an important role in response to the humanitarian crisis and the post-war rehabilitation of Afghanistan with an unprecedented availability of funding for the Organization⁶¹. Quickly, FAO had to face a unique and major challenge: the management and efficient implementation of a complex portfolio of operations that mixed emergency/early rehabilitation interventions with more development-oriented projects. This involved, among other things, the fielding and mobilisation of numerous staff and involved many parts of the Organization. Unifying FAO's various operations under a common programme required strong and clear coordination arrangements and management.

Overall Coordination and Management of FAO's Programme in Afghanistan

Nomination of a Focal Point for Afghanistan

⁶⁰ This section should be read together with the timeline of FAO staff in Afghanistan presented in annex...

⁶¹ With the exception of Iraq.

175. At the onset of what would become FAO's second largest-scale emergency operations (after Iraq), the Director of TCE was appointed by the ADG-TC as the Focal Point for all operational matters related to Afghanistan⁶². In her e-mail to Management⁶³, she presented her role as:

“Ensuring that the Organization's response to the crisis in Afghanistan is conducted in a unified and comprehensive manner and that the emergency response, early rehabilitation initiatives and development programme are implemented in a coherent and seamless way.”

176. In view of the many departments and offices involved, the mission believes that there was a need for a high-level coordination mechanism and that appointing a focal point was a sound decision. The choice of the Director of the (newly-up-graded) Emergency Operations and Rehabilitation Division was correctly guided by the mainly humanitarian assistance nature of the donors' response following the war and the need to ensure close relationships with the humanitarian branch of Donors. Furthermore, TCE's new mandate relating to rehabilitation⁶⁴ gave another justification for the choice of the Director of TCE in the immediate post-war period.

177. The placing of the Focal Point in TCE was not fully accepted by all those involved. In particular, the role of the Director of TCE in leading those aspects of FAO's operations that were not institutionally handled by TCE (such as overall programme development, and coverage of an existing programme that had been handled by RAP and technical divisions) was questioned by some staff of the technical divisions and RAP. This led to tensions and confusion between the various parties involved and difficult collaboration (HQs-TCE and RAP, HQs-TCE and other divisions). There are several factors that contributed to this, including:

- The terms of reference of the Focal Point were not clear enough in relation to the type of decisions that Focal Point was to take, the supervisory/management responsibilities required over the non-emergency part of the FAO's operations in Afghanistan, and the consultative process that the Focal Point needed to be followed.
- The limited capacity of TCE, following its upgrading in 2001, including its reliance on consultants who were not sufficiently familiar with FAO, weakened the effectiveness of TCE.
- The lack of systematic coordination and consultation at senior management level was noted by several MTE interviewees.

178. Various attempts were made to reduce tensions and misunderstandings. These included joint missions to Afghanistan by the Focal Point and the Chief of the Policy Branch in RAP (with the ADG of TC also part of the second mission), as well as considerable informal email and telephone exchanges.

Coordination Mechanism at HQ

184. The Focal Point was supported by a competent and motivated team which progressively increased from two staff at the beginning to five full-time staff in 2003. However, since all the staffs was part of TCE and the fact that most of them were new to FAO, meant that it was difficult for them (and TCE) to tackle inter-departmental coordination.

185. Some attempts were made to set up an inter-departmental coordination mechanism at HQ. The Afghanistan List was formed, where information, including briefing and debriefing of missions was channelled. While it was an appropriate mechanism for exchanging information, its constitution was too broad and with insufficient seniority to provide a much needed consultative

⁶² 31st October 2001

⁶³ 3rd November 2001

⁶⁴ In particular, TCE Functional Statement includes as one activity of TCER: “Take the lead in identifying and formulating rehabilitation policy programmes and projects in cooperation with the relevant technical divisions” (FAO Manual Section 110.6).

or advisory group to solve critical issues and conflicts that fell beyond the mandate of the Focal Point.

Coordination and Management at Country Level

179. Two periods can be distinguished: a first period from October 2001 to November 2002 characterised by temporary and ad-hoc actions, and a second period, starting from December 2002 when a more permanent and sizeable management team was established (was later called the “superstructure”).

October 2001 – November 2002: “The Chaos”

180. Commendable attempts were made by the Focal Point to field staff and management positions at a very early stage (see staff timeline). Although insufficient to cover all management and coordination functions, the fielding of a senior staff from HQ ensured better liaison with donors and Government, as well as to HQ, as well as improving FAO’s programming in a rapidly evolving context.

181. The benefits of the stronger FAO presence created by the fielding of a senior TCE staff presence was unfortunately shortened due to health problems, and was followed by several temporary and ad-hoc solutions. For most of 2002, FAO suffered from transient leadership, with unclear lines of command and limited coordination⁶⁵. The high turn over of coordination and management positions, as well as of emergency coordination positions (see timeline), prevented continuity and the building up of relationships between FAO and the Interim Government and the International Community (Donors, and IFIs in particular). Furthermore, the division of operational responsibilities and separate lines of reporting between emergency operations and development projects (emergency staff to TCE, development staff to RAP mainly) contributed to further confusion. In general, FAO’s presence in Afghanistan lacked an explicit management, coordination and staffing strategy and the result, as perceived by almost all those involved, was “chaotic”.

182. Conflicts arose between staff of the two “wings” of the FAO programme, which further entrenched their differences and left scars that are still evident today. Some emergency consultants were fielded with little appreciation of the existing programme, and little patience to work with the older STA team. On the other hand, some of the development project staff did not offer full support to the emergency staff, and resented the responsibilities that they had to carry⁶⁶. They also found it difficult to share resources for work that they had themselves formerly carried out, though on a smaller scale. Furthermore, despite their potential synergies, projects were operated independently. One illustration of this is the FAAHM project, which was initially conceived to serve the information needs of the FAO emergency operations and which did not perform this function until recently as it was not perceived as a priority by its project staff. This separation was detrimental to the image of FAO (which appeared dysfunctional) and to overall efficiency implementation.

183. In addition to the above, the delays and logistics difficulties resulting from the move to Kabul in early 2002 did not facilitate management and coordination.

184. The consequence of this poor coordination, management and staffing was the loss of opportunities for FAO to play a leadership role in domains where FAO was perceived as having a key role (see 5.1 above). By and large, coordination and the sense of a FAO unified programme were largely left to the initiative of individual’s that had the right commitment and personal skills.

November 2002 – Present: The “super-structure”

⁶⁵ The FAO Representative appointed in April 2002 was a retiree who was fielded in an acting capacity.

⁶⁶ The two senior STAs under the regular programme shared responsibility, and therefore accountability, for signing all payments up to March 2003, including those for emergency operations, and yet they were not responsible for implementation of the latter.

185. The fielding of management positions - FAO Representative (FAOR), Programme Developer (PD), Programme Manager (PM), Administrative and Finance Manager (AFM), and the Area Managers - was a positive step towards establishing stronger leadership and improving coordination. All except the FAOR were financed by emergency projects.

186. However, the horizontal structure whereby the PM – PD – AFM are at the same level proved to be not very effective. This flat structure requires particularly strong leadership and team building from the FAOR, and the mission feels that these aspects have not been given enough attention. In addition the terms of reference of the posts were not sufficiently explicit on the extent of decision-making power and supervisory role. As a result, effective collaboration depended on the strength of personal relations between individuals, which is a risky approach, especially in a country like Afghanistan where poor working conditions and general insecurity lead to high stress. In addition, it also created confusion for FAO staff in the country as to whom they had to report.

187. In terms of responsibilities, the MTE mission notes that the FAOR and the management team are facing problems common to other decentralised country offices as analysed in a number of recent reviews of various aspects of decentralisation⁶⁷. In particular, these reports stress the problems caused by the devolution of programme development and delivery responsibilities without matching levels of delegated authority and infrastructural support.

188. In addition to the country office management structure, five Area Managers (international staff) were fielded and financed from emergency projects⁶⁸. Setting up regional structures in a diverse country, with poor communication and disconnection between central and regional government was justified. Area Managers have been useful in increasing the visibility of FAO and in facilitating field operations, in particular, emergency distributions. However, they do not have real management responsibilities. In particular, their role vis-à-vis the project staff in the region and at central level is unclear. Overall, they have been very much under-used and given a too limited role compared to their potential contribution on the management and implementation of the programme as well as in the programming aspects.

189. The establishment of a more permanent management team had some positive impacts. There was a marked improvement with regard to a sense of a unified programme despite a fragile and fault line still existing between development and emergency staff and operations after the departure of the Emergency Coordinator. The style of team management has not sufficiently integrated the different programmes or resolved frictions. While there have been efforts to introduce management coordination through weekly staff meetings, and periodic meetings with area managers, there is still today compartmentalisation among the various parts of the programme. The Kabul-based management has focused on improving systems but have had insufficient contact with the field, and as a result Area Managers feel isolated and ill-informed about FAO's overall country programme.

190. Nevertheless, externally, FAO has gained visibility during 2003 and is now perceived both by the Government and the Donors as an important player in the agriculture sector, though as mainly as an implementer of a wide range of useful and relevant projects, rather than as a strategic partner.

⁶⁷ Such as:

- Review of the Functions and Resources of the FAO Representations – OCD July 2003 (draft)

- Report on the Regional Workshops for Strengthening the operational Capacity in the FAO Representations – TCO.

Furthermore, it is expected that issues of decentralisation will be comprehensively addressed in the forthcoming in-depth evaluation of decentralisation.

⁶⁸ First in April 2002 in Mazar-i-Sharif, Kandahar and Herat. Subsequently, two additional area offices were opened in the east in Jalalabad and in the north-east in Fayzabad.

191. Finally, an important limitation of such an unusual FAO country team management structure is its high dependence on the volume of funding (mainly emergency and extra-budgetary funding for positions other than that of the FAO Representative). Furthermore, establishing such a management structure had implications on non-management staffing. The establishment of field posts carried costs over and above standard cost included in project budgets. The cost of these professionals meant that either other staff budget lines had to be decreased, or their mission duration shortened. At the same time, insufficient attention was paid to the need to set aside funds to recruit and field staff at a less senior level that would carry out the day-to-day tasks under the supervision of the senior staff. This has created a fragile structure that is likely to suffer major deflation in the near future as with the ending of many emergency projects, the majority of staff at all levels will have to be released, and in consequence the valuable body of experience and skills that has been created dissipated.

Operational and Technical Support to the Country Office

192. Support to the country office was given by (i) at HQs, the TCE operations team and various technical division officers and (ii) at RAP by a senior operations officer and technical officers.

Operational support

193. The support provided by the team of operations officers in TCE is well appreciated by the staff in country. In particular, the first Operations Desk Officer for Afghanistan was instrumental in ensuring an effective liaison between the various parties (HQs-FAO Pakistan-Afghanistan and RAP). There have been regular visits, some of them for a substantial period of time which have been found extremely helpful by the staff in the field. The operations officer in RAP has also been following up very closely all non-emergency projects, despite communications difficulties. The last visit of the RAP operations officer was before the fielding of the current country management team, and the MTE feel that country visits (some jointly with TCE operations officers) would have helped in solving some operational issues and contributed to team building. In particular, in view of the forthcoming transfer of the budget holding, a support mission to ensure the smooth transfer of responsibilities to the FAO Representation should have been made and is still urgently needed.

Technical Support

194. The broad range of sectors and themes covered by the programme in Afghanistan has required considerable backstopping expertise from FAO HQ and RAP. However, the mobilisation of staff of the technical divisions at HQs and RAP varied widely. At HQs, support to the field competes with their regular programme work - which tends to receive higher priority. Nevertheless, a number of professional staff have closely followed the Afghanistan programme and devote considerable time above what is permitted by their regular work programme⁶⁹.

195. In RAP, Afghanistan competes with many other countries covered by the Regional Office, and they have not had the capacity to respond promptly to the demand for support, and this left the FAOR feeling insufficiently supported by RAP⁷⁰. The MTE mission found RAP technical staff to be generally under-informed about developments in Afghanistan in a number of sectors as a result of this low involvement.

196. While much of the backstopping has been valuable, the manner of its delivery has been sometimes poor. The very large number of missions⁷¹ to Afghanistan in the past two years has not always been coordinated well and perhaps reflects more the opportunity arising from the availability

⁶⁹ In ESAF, as much as three food security officers have been involved in the backstopping (including missions) of FAO's assistance to the FAAHM.

⁷⁰ An example of the slow response's capacity mentioned to the MTE by the FAOR has been the request for the RAP irrigation specialist to visit Afghanistan since December 2002. The officer was not able to come to the country before September 2003 because of other commitments. However, an AGLW/RAPG was organised in May/June to compensate for the unavailability of staff from the relevant technical divisions.

⁷¹ According to the Programme Manager, there have been more than 80 FAO missions to Afghanistan since January 2003.

of funding than a clear response to needs arising in the field. It is not clear to the MTE that all were necessary or productive or coordinated. It should be noted that for the Afghanistan country team so many missions represented a cost, as well as a benefit, in terms of the time and logistics required for their facilitation before, during and after their arrival, under complex and restrictive security and transport conditions⁷².

5.3 IMPLEMENTATION CAPACITY AT COUNTRY LEVEL

197. Given the scope and skills of the MTE team, this section is not comprehensive but aims to point out some key areas that have had an impact on FAO's implementation efficiency in Afghanistan. These relate to four areas: staffing, logistics and communication, procurement, and financial management and control. Many issues pertaining to the implementation capacity of the Afghanistan office have been well reviewed by appropriate experts, especially as a consequence of the forthcoming transfer of operational responsibilities, including budget holding, to the FAOR. What follows is largely based on findings of these reviews. There are however several detailed aspects regarding the administrative procedure in the country office that could not be addressed here.

Staffing Issues

198. The presence of a large number of staff was potentially a tremendous asset for FAO at the onset of a large emergency operation. However, there have been numerous staffing issues, some relating to factors independent of FAO and others being the result of inadequate management⁷³.

Difficulties in fielding international staff

199. The nature of emergency operations financing did not permit long-term contracts for international or national staff. Furthermore, the contractual conditions offered by FAO have not always been sufficiently attractive to recruit suitable international experts. As a result, delays occurred in recruiting key staff, such as the Programme Manager, Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, Information Officer, the Area Managers, and other specialised experts. On the other hand, for positions such as Area Managers, for which a commitment of at least 6 months or more was sought, the working and living conditions in Afghanistan (non-family duty station, sharing of accommodation, insecurity, etc.) made it difficult to find candidates. Overall, the contractual conditions (short-term consultancy possibly renewed) and level of honorariums offered by FAO were not supportive⁷⁴.

Insufficient attention given to Profiles of Professional staff to be fielded

200. Many key international staff fielded in Afghanistan, including the Representative, the Programme Manager and Area Managers, had no previous experience with FAO and were not familiar with the Organization's rules and procedures for recruitment of local staff, Letters of Agreement with NGOs, procurement and financial management. This occasioned "unreasonable" requests and frustrations of field staff towards what appeared to be HQ's bureaucracy and insensitivity to the constraints in the field.

201. In the selection of staff, little attention was given to the hardship under which people were expected to work and thus, to the psychological strengths needed in addition to technical competences. Some of the staff selected appeared not suitable for highly stressful conditions, resulting in a high turnover rate. Freshly recruited staff were briefed in HQ but no other preparation or training was given, nor support once in the field.

⁷² The senior staff (and support staff) devote a considerable amount of their time to hosting missions, and the MTE (which was itself a serious burden on the local staff time) was informed of several instances of missions or consultants arriving unannounced, or whose TOR were not clear or that failed to leave any aide-mémoire or report.

⁷³ The fact that there was no personnel officer in a country where the total FAO staff exceeded 450 at times certainly indicated a flawed approach to staff management.

⁷⁴ However, no guidance was provided by UNDP to harmonize recruitment conditions between the various UN agencies in Afghanistan (only general principles and "best practices" were issued by UNDP).

National Staff: Salaries and Contractual Issues

202. Due to the impossibility, priority should be given now to ensure the retention of a core national staff with proper contracts attached to the Representation and this, through a transparent selection process. Under the long term development programme and the emergency funding of engaging local staff on regular long term contracts, casual labour contracts have been arranged for periods ranging from 3 to 6 months. As this staff was expected to be required in the future, with funding from different projects, no other alternative was available to the continuation of the casual labour contracts. While this practice was widely used in the country and permitted needed flexibility at the time, it is now recognised that it led to unacceptable situations whereby some national staff have been extensively contracted on this basis for 10 years or more in some cases, with no additional benefits (paid leave, pension, insurance, training etc.) beyond salary.

203. There are too many national staff now considering the current and expected volume of operations. This has been recognised and action is being taken to reduce personnel (separation of staff under PSA contracts is envisaged). Training has been carried out for administrative and finance staff but it is still insufficient vis-à-vis the needs (in particular in view of the planned transfer of budget holding for non-emergency projects to the FAOR). Furthermore

Logistics and Communication

204. Logistics (especially office space) and communication have been severely neglected in the planning and management of FAO's operations in Afghanistan despite resources made available at an early stage by the United Kingdom Government's humanitarian aid division (see below). Apart from a negative impact on staff morale, stress and motivation, this has resulted in inefficiencies with staff fielded without the appropriate means to perform their duties.

205. At the beginning of the emergency operations, the reliance on the UNDP PEACE programme logistics and infrastructure was instrumental in ensuring the implementation of operations. However, as the operations grew, competition on the use of the UNDP PEACE programme facilities increased and became the subject of conflicts between staff under the PEACE programme and emergency staff. By the nature of the projects (short-term life and bound to decrease substantially in volume), it was difficult to justify and donors reluctant to finance infrastructure and equipment investment in the emergency project budgets.

206. The United Kingdom Government provided vital resources for FAO⁷⁵ to support facilities and equipment with a view to enhancing overall management capacity to deliver large-scale assistance. FAO first established the Emergency Coordination Unit (ECU) for Afghanistan in Islamabad, Pakistan. Given the limited infrastructure and dysfunctional banking system in Kabul at project inception, the Islamabad office played an important role in supporting FAO's Afghanistan operations by means of facilitating procurement, travel arrangements, logistics, financial transfers and other tasks necessary for programme implementation. Funds under the project were used to keep this office functioning and maintain the national staff to perform the necessary functions throughout the period of transfer.

207. As the volume of FAO's activities in the country increased, an FAO Representation was established to head the programme from its offices in the UNDP compound and additional offices were rehabilitated⁷⁶, including the equipment for an acceptable and secure working environment. In addition to office repair work, the project also supported FAO with other working means and security equipment necessary for programme implementation. Funds were used to equip offices with basic

⁷⁵ Project OSRO/AFG/201/UK: "Strengthening FAO's capacity to deliver a coherent programme support for the medium-term rehabilitation of the agricultural sector in Afghanistan" (US\$2 842 000). It became operational in February 2002.

⁷⁶ Shirpur building (former FAO guest house) and offices inside the MAAH compound

supplies, communication and data processing equipment, and generators. A fourth Kabul office, in Darulaman, was upgraded through ISAF assistance.

208. The enabling IT environment has nevertheless remained inadequate for a long time. It is only since October 2003 (just before the MTE mission) that all staff has been equipped with a computer and all four offices have functional internet connections⁷⁷. This has had severe implications given that the country office depends for most of its operations on clearance and decisions of other units from HQs and RAP. Communication and internet connection are still a major problem for the area offices. They are connected to a private company⁷⁸ which is expensive and so far unreliable. This contributed to the sense of isolation of some area managers as mentioned above.

Procurement

209. FAO procurement procedures for emergency projects appeared to be stringent and difficult to comply with in a quick manner in the context of Afghanistan. This was the case for local procurement of large quantities of inputs (such as vaccines⁷⁹, seed, fertilizer, seed cleaning machinery⁸⁰) and issuance of local contracts (such as for vehicles), for which a tender had to be launched by the Procurement Service (AFSP), as per FAO rules. Many local suppliers/service providers had no fax or telephone and were difficult to reach even by road. Translation of the bids into Farsi was also necessary. While AFSP was willing to assist as much as possible and did approve waivers and delegations of signature authority for local procurement and contracts in key instances, AFSP did not issue waivers in other cases, and regular FAO procurement procedures sometimes delayed the procurement process and the ensuing deliveries and distributions in the field.

210. Another problem linked to procurement stemmed from a Pakistan-based company which having won a bid in 2001 and failed to deliver vegetable seed, was nonetheless invited to tender again for another procurement of the same inputs for the next planting season. This company again failed to deliver the vegetable seed on time for this second procurement. Funds under the project (OSRO/AFG/108/EC) requiring implementation within six months had to be returned to the donor, the European Commission Humanitarian Office (ECHO). AFSP rules did not authorise the exclusion of this company from the list of invitees to the tender, despite TCEO request.

Inputs procurement for the Locust Control Campaigns

In 2002, pesticides (e.g. deltamethrin) and miscellaneous equipment (e.g. ULVAMast, ULVA, overalls, goggles, rubber gloves, hats and boots) were procured. Due to the magnitude of the outbreak, chemical control had to start in March without having received the needed inputs yet. In their absence, less efficient means such as mechanical control and products stored from previous FAO projects such as an 8-year-old pesticide and 300 ULVA were applied.

In 2003, vehicles, spray equipment, protective clothing and pesticides were requested. A detailed procurement plan was prepared at the end of the 2002 campaign, listing recommended transport arrangements and suppliers as well as dates for having the equipment and pesticides in the field. Again, field operations had to begin earlier (mid-March) using 7,000 litres of pesticide that remained in store from the 2002 campaign. The fortuitous availability of airlifts provided by the Belgium Air Force made the delivery of pesticides possible with minor delays compared to the previous year.

Effectiveness of control campaigns, especially in case of locust outbreaks, greatly depends on quick delivery of inputs. Rapid delivery optimizes resources (i.e. including less use of pesticides), saves manpower and improves the overall planning of the campaigns. In Afghanistan, even though the

⁷⁷ Until recently, an internet cafe with two computers in the UNDP FAO office was serving at times more than 100 FAO users.

⁷⁸ Web-SAT

⁷⁹ See the Livestock Annex

⁸⁰ See Olivier Cossee –Report on Mid-Term Review of the Emergency Agriculture Input Distribution Programme in Afghanistan Final Report Draft version October 2003 – Box 3 “Example of Late Procurement”.

campaigns were broadly successful, procurement challenged field operations not only because of delays, but also because some pesticides had the wrong formulation.

Financial Reporting and Control

211. At the beginning of the large emergency operations and until February 2003, all funding was channelled through the FAO imprest accounts attached to the PEACE programme. Financial accounting for the whole of FAO's programme was the task of the sole FAO administrative assistant under the PEACE programme in Islamabad for some months until support from HQs⁸¹.

212. The audit report⁸² of May 2003 highlights the alarming state of the administrative and financial support system at the field level. The Auditor fielded in Kabul in April 2003 was not in a position to reconcile project financial accounts. There were no reliable financial statements produced by any system including Oracle. In particular for emergency operations, there were no official reliable financial records regarding the actual available budget for the projects⁸³. The auditor further noted specific issues linked to the administrative and financial arrangements. In particular, he stressed the lack of trained support staff for the newly-posted Administrative and Finance Manager⁸⁴.

213. Financial accounting problems seemed to have had their origin in the field. Project budgets have been managed by TCEO for emergency operations and RAPR for non-emergency projects, while the field manages the funds transferred through field disbursement authorizations (FDAs). Consolidated financial statements on the overall budgets were prepared by TCE at HQ based on HQ records in the case of HQ's expenditures and on financial reports received from the administrative/finance unit in the case of field expenditures. The wrong accounting of some expenditures, non-compliance with some FDAs and the delayed entering of field expenditures in the Field Accounting System have led to difficulties in reconciling expenditure with the initial budget.

214. All this resulted in budget overruns cross-charging and several instances where management in Kabul (FAOR) and TCEO were not in a position to review the budgetary position and manage specific project funds even at the time when "no cost" extensions had to be sought.

215. The situation has greatly improved thanks partly to actions taken by TCE in collaboration with AFFC and staff in Afghanistan. TCE has been covering, through the funds of emergency projects, part of the cost of a finance/administrative officer in Kabul since April 2002. Various missions from HQ have taken place and recently, a consultant has been attached to the ECU by TCEO and the FAO Central Accounting Service (AFFC) with the task of reviewing and reconciling all emergency projects accounts given errors in charging the appropriate budget lines/projects, etc.

216. With regard to the financial accounting system, AFI has now set-up a dedicated FAS station for Afghanistan at HQ with financial data to be input here. AFC fielded a mission in September to train national staff of the FAOR in the operation of the Field Accounting System (FAS) as well as in record keeping requirements, cash control procedures. On the job training was also carried out by assisting in day to day financial operations. AFFC has set up a cash imprest replenishment system for Afghanistan and issued imprest submission procedures to be followed.

5.4 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

217. Following discussions between TCEO and PBEE and based on the model initiated in Kosovo, a consultancy for the establishment of a Monitoring, Information and Evaluation unit (MIE Unit) was begun in July 2002. The objective was to provide programme management staff with access to

⁸¹ Novelli missions April-July 2002

⁸² Office of the Inspector General – AUD 3103 – FAO Emergency Programme – May 2003.

⁸³ Mission's report Fran Brunet TCOM May 2003.

⁸⁴ An experienced HQ Administrative and Finance Manager was only fielded in January 2003, and although knowledgeable of FAO procedures, the officer had limited field experience.

relevant and up-to-date information and reports in support of implementation of FAO activities and projects, among other functions.⁸⁵

218. Through an international technical assistance input from July 2002-May 2003, backstopped by PBEE, the MIE system was designed, including a preliminary set of “fiches” or forms to be completed monthly for each project by Project Managers and Area Managers to provide information on key indicators. However, the first pilot exercise started only in April 2003 and up to mid-October only a 50% response rate had been achieved.

219. With further backstopping support from HQ, but from TCOM not from PBEE, a web-based information system called Afghan Programme Management Information System (APMIS) based on – and integrated with – FAO’s Field Programme Management Information System (FPMIS) was developed with the purpose to not only serve the Afghanistan programme management, but also as a pilot field level module for the FPMIS to be used in future in other countries, with relevance to situations where both emergency and long-term activities are undertaken.

220. The MIE Unit has suffered from a difficult history. The original consultant hired for the task was chosen on the basis of a CV only after several others had refused because of conditions in Afghanistan. This consultant was highly problematic throughout his 10-month consultancy, but managed to stay on mainly due to changing managers and unstable conditions in the FAO office in Kabul. This led to frequent revisions of his TOR and a lack of clarity in his line of reporting and supervision.

221. In FAO HQs, a conflict emerged between two units, PBEE and TCOM, over responsibility for the MIE unit, resulting in a split of the functions into the web-based APMIS (under TCOM) and the field-based project monitoring and evaluation system (under PBEE), run by two different consultants and with too little collaboration. The National MIE Officer was recruited only two weeks before the departure of the International MIE Consultant, though this officer has apparently been able to bring some order to the MIE Unit since his recruitment in April, and has produced several reports for the Programme Management Unit.

222. However, overall, the Unit has not yet produced the outputs required by programme management staff in regards to monitoring and evaluation. A project-driven structure and unclear managerial responsibilities at programme level led to the MIE Unit lacking staff, resources and links with FAO activities. There has been a weak understanding and poor ownership of the MIE Unit’s outputs and services. This situation is not helped by the fact that FAO project proposals often lack measurable objectives, indicators or log frames, which could facilitate the role of the MIE Unit. After more than one year and several attempts to introduce a uniform monitoring and evaluation system for the programme, the Unit can be regarded as having a low profile within FAO Afghanistan. MIE work, including the analysis as well as the tools used, are still in need of technical backstopping despite the ten months of costly international consultancy input.

223. It can thus be concluded that, with a few outputs produced and less being successfully used, the MIE unit has not played its role as information provider or programme monitoring unit. Poor administrative handling, lack of leadership within the FAO office and delays in proper staffing of the unit have resulted in having MIE work itself initiated only after nine months. Other activities have been performed instead and neither monitoring plans nor scheduled impact assessment exercises have been carried out. The unit lacks the capacity and resources to produce MIE-related information as and when needed. Response in the field to coordinated efforts to launch the “fiche” monitoring model and test the APMIS database developed have been weak and generally disappointing. The APMIS could have been considered a step forward to consolidate web-based tools for M&E purposes, but inappropriate design which did not consider limitations on internet connectivity, and insufficient interest from project managers, has meant that it has not been tested and used in the field.

⁸⁵ Funding came from different emergency projects (especially OSRO/AFG/111/USA), and now its costs will be shared across all projects including the newer emergency (OSRO) projects 301/BEL, 302/SWI, 303/NOR.

224. Although late, the unit is finally going to produce a consolidated project report for monitoring purposes in the near future. However, if no use is made of the web-based tool and the “fiche” system produced, cost/benefit ratio for the investment in setting up the unit would be highly negative.

225. Sustainability of the MIE unit is doubtful without external funding, which will need to come from a sizeable number of projects using their services. The strength (or weakness) of the overall Afghan programme management team will also have a critical impact on the continuation of the MIE activity.

5.5 COORDINATION EXTERNAL TO FAO

226. This section principally reviews the coordination in Afghanistan between FAO and the various partners working in the agricultural sector. It has not examined external relations at FAO HQ level.

227. Under the post-conflict circumstances in Afghanistan in late 2001, coordination was an immensely difficult task. The multiplicity of players, from UN agencies, IFIs, donors, NGOs, foreign governments and Military Forces, as well as the Interim and Transitional Administrations, many of whom held different and often competing strategies and roles was a chaotic environment in the early months. Commentators have noted the sometimes unrecognised difficulty of bringing cohesion and discipline⁸⁶, and the finding that strategic coordination suffered from ‘internal argumentation, inter-agency rivalry, weak cooperation and strategic disarray at least gives some comfort to FAO that it was not alone in its struggle to coordinate effectively with other agencies. A very useful and more focused report on the agricultural sector by the General Accounting Office (GAO) was equally critical of the ‘inadequate coordination mechanisms for international agricultural assistance’ in 2002⁸⁷. ‘Because of the lack of coordination, the Afghan government and international community by mid 2003 were felt not to have developed a joint strategy to integrate the numerous disparate assistance projects⁸⁸’.

228. The machinery put in place for aid coordination began effectively in April 2002 with the ITAP and the NDF, and the Implementation Group mechanism. FAO was given responsibility for the Inter-governmental Group (IG) on Natural Resource Management (NRM) as the Programme Secretariat in July 2002. Although the FAO Programme Developer worked hard to make the Secretariat function, the general view is that FAO was handicapped because of the government’s wish to reduce the role of UN agencies, and the difficulty of coordination when there were three key ministries involved and each had little capacity.

229. The transition into the TAPA process at the end of 2002 strengthened the role of government and was intended to build donor support more closely around the NDF/NDB (National Development Budget). A new mechanism, the Consultative Group (CG), was constituted to replace the IG, and ADB was given the secretariat function. The reasons for this change relate to the earlier mentioned preference being given to lending institutions by the MoF over the UN, but also FAO had been perceived as still operating a fragmented programme with some projects in and some outside the ITAP umbrella, and furthermore the more reformist led ministries were unhappy that FAO had not done enough to challenge the MAAH and MIWRE to change their approach. FAO was therefore placed in a secondary role as far as coordination was concerned, and this entrenched its profile as an implementer rather than a strategic agency in the sector.

230. The CG mechanism has also struggled to play an effective role, and has not surmounted the conditions that prevented the IG mechanism from coordinating assistance. The role of ADB in coordinating the sector through the NRM CG has not been seen as effective, and the meetings have been criticised as unproductive. Nevertheless, the CG structure has been ‘cemented’ as the mechanism

⁸⁶ Strategic Coordination in Afghanistan, N.Stockton, Issue Paper, Afghanistan Research & Evaluation Unit, Aug. 2002

⁸⁷ ‘Lack of Strategic Focus and Obstacles to Agricultural Recovery threaten Afghanistan’s Stability’, US General Accounting Office, Report to Congressional Requesters, GAO-03-607, June 2003.

⁸⁸ *ibid*, p.3.

for aid coordination within the NDF, and a Mid-Term Review (MTR) conducted in August 2003 by the MoF argued that the CG structure had helped to integrate the TAPA programme within the NDB, which is now seen as the principal aid coordination device⁸⁹.

231. Another coordination mechanism is the Joint Support Unit, started by UNAMA in March 2003, with the intention of providing a programming level of coordination between UN agencies. FAO attends but the general view expressed is that this is mainly an information sharing forum so far rather than an effective joint planning mechanism.

232. Agricultural coordination meetings have been organised by the Emergency Coordination Unit of FAO since June 2002 and these have been an effective means of sharing information on food security, and planning and reporting on input distributions between MAAH, MIWRE, MRRD, donors and the distribution agencies. CG members have recognised the importance of this forum, and supported a request made by the former FAO emergency coordinator, that it be brought officially under the CG umbrella, either as a WG of the NRM CG, or by placing the input distributions as a regular item on the CG agenda.

233. At regional and provincial level, FAO's five Area Managers, funded as part of the FAO's Emergency Coordination mechanism, have been active in the different coordinating bodies at region and province levels. Agricultural Technical Wags established by UNAMA, and FAO has been active in most regions, chaired by FAO. UN Prioritisation Retreats have started at regional level and it is reported that FAO has been an active participant in the first one, in Jalalabad.

VI. Overall Findings

6.1 FAO'S "PROGRAMME"

234. The MTE is of the view that although FAO has implemented a sizeable portfolio of projects and responded rapidly to meet the strong call for emergency assistance in Afghanistan, it nevertheless missed opportunities to play a key role during the transition period in Afghanistan, in particular, during the post 11th September period. Because of its past involvement in the country, FAO had a tremendous asset in terms of expertise, knowledge, presence and infrastructure that placed the Organization in a good position to contribute effectively to the rehabilitation and recovery of the country.

235. In addition to internal deficiencies (see below), there were several external factors that limited FAO's capacity to perform well. First, these included the very difficult conditions under which humanitarian assistance had to be provided, including the high level of insecurity, very weak infrastructure and an unstable political situation, the latter making the establishment of relationships with the Government difficult. Second, the highly political profile of aid to Afghanistan made it very much donor-driven, and the competition from a multitude of organisations, including the IFIs, challenged FAO's comparative advantages in terms of strategic guidance and leadership in the food and agriculture sector. This political pressure and competitive environment continues today, particularly with major US funding being provided to the country, including in the agricultural sector, which have to be visibly spent to assist political stability in the lead up to elections this year.

236. Donors reported to the mission that they found FAO's response to have been competitive with NGOs for funds, seeking all possible opportunities to submit proposals and win projects in the rather chaotic and complex aid environment. Within a short timeframe (from November 2001 to March 2002), FAO managed to raise a portfolio from US\$ 5 million, which mainly consisted of two components (crops and livestock), to US\$ 16.1 million including 12 projects. Although this has led to FAO being perceived too much as an implementing agency (rather than as an agency providing technical advice), FAO is now present in a broad range of sub-sectors of agriculture, which also provides it the opportunity to now play a more dynamic coordinating and strategy role.

⁸⁹ 1382 Mid Term Review, National Development Budget, Islamic State of Afghanistan, Sept. 2003.

237. Because of the large volume of emergency funds available, a number of the larger emergency funded projects contained components that were essentially of a more complex technical nature⁹⁰. This has been positive in the sense that FAO has been able to utilise this emergency resource to initiate rehabilitation and longer-term actions during early stages of the post-conflict period. This led to TCE handling a portfolio of projects requiring the complex management which is provided for FAO's development field projects. Also such complex projects need to be charged at the full FAO project support cost rates to enable the Organization to provide adequate support.

238. FAO was under pressure from donors (such as Italy and the Netherlands) to implement projects under a tight time-frame and/or for specific activities (e.g. horticulture, opium poppy, irrigation). TCEO realized from the outset that many of these activities did not fall under its typical input relief function, and that the emergency-funding timeframe might be too short to produce significant impact and enable follow-up activities. Nevertheless early rehabilitation was required and provided a platform for follow up activities. The decision to implement such projects increased the tensions already existing between TCEO and other FAO divisions such as TCA and RAP, who felt that projects of a more technical or developmental nature should not be implemented by TCEO. TCEO, on the other hand, was suitable for a quick formulation and approval of project documents, efficient in implementing projects including a good experience with rapid procurement of inputs, thus speeding up the initiation and implementation of project activities.

239. There is still a long way to go before FAO in Afghanistan achieves a unified programme underpinned by a strategic vision that is both relevant to the host government's needs and also fits FAO's own comparative advantages. Given Government's current aid planning and budgeting exercise, there is a pressing need for FAO to develop a more coherent programme approach in order for it to be seen as an appropriate partner and strategic thinker for the sector.

240. Addressing evaluation questions concerning the relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of FAO's operations as a whole has proved a difficult task for the MTE because of the complex and fragmented nature of the portfolio over the past two years, and lack of effective M&E (see 5.4). Individual components have addressed these aspects in a systematic manner, but it is hard to summarise.

241. Many FAO projects can be said to have had high **relevance** to estimated needs, although there are also limitations to the quality of the needs assessments done at the beginning. Seed multiplication has been of high relevance responding to the need for increasing the availability of improved seeds. The relevance of emergency seed distribution vis-à-vis the needs of food-insecure appears less clear due to the doubts surrounding the extent to which there was a widespread lack of seed, and whether some of those targeted could make use of the improved seed (for example because of limited access to land). Plant protection has been very relevant meeting serious pest infestations, while the irrigation projects were also well designed as they aimed to pilot rehabilitation works on small schemes but with greater emphasis on building provincial capacity, especially community involvement. Establishment of a food security assessment capacity was extremely relevant in view of the paucity of data and knowledge on the food security situation and the pressing need for that information for formulating humanitarian assistance and aid in general.

242. In general, **efficiency** in terms of how well resources were translated into project deliverables may be regarded as rather low because of the high cost of doing rural development work in Afghanistan, security constraints, poor communications and procurement delays, the high backstopping needs and so on. The volume of funds was considerable yet the recorded expenditures have amounted to only 50% of the committed funds as per September 2003. The picture is also unclear because of the weaknesses observed in the reporting systems.

⁹⁰ For example, the Italian project, OSRO/AFG/212/ITA, contained not only support for seed distribution but also to conduct a horticulture survey and irrigation rehabilitation

243. Nevertheless, the **effectiveness** of many projects (to the extent that results are known) have been good or have improved from the 2001 to the 2002 seasons. This is particularly true of the emergency seed distribution.

244. Several operations have demonstrated the valuable linkages and inter-dependencies between the pre-existing resources and experience of the ongoing PEACE programme, and the short-term emergency operations in 2002-03. This has been a key feature of the Afghanistan experience and was a two-way relationship.

245. This was manifested not only in the sharing of vehicles and equipment - though not always amicably - to the benefit of emergency operations, but also where emergency funded staff (area managers for example) supported implementation of seed multiplication and livestock operations. Also the field capacity established prior to 2001 was able to assist in the conduct of emergency operations: for example, VFUs supported the vaccination campaigns and contract seed growers supplied seed for emergency distribution.

246. The collective **impact** of the FAO interventions are very hard to judge because of the short time elapsed at this mid-term stage. But in addition, the impact is hard to judge because of:

- the weak M&E system;
- the lack of information from many short-term operations, which did not conduct beneficiary surveys with the exception of the seed distributions;
- the delayed publication and use of the various studies, food security assessments and the livestock census; and
- the lack of evaluation studies for the longer-term interventions.

Impact on food security

247. Because of many factors including the drought and adverse political conditions, it would be overstating the case to claim that agricultural assistance has been able to measurably improve Afghanistan's long-term food security. Though many activities such as locust control, support to veterinary services, and distribution of improved varieties helped it from getting worse.

248. The focus of FAO's assistance was on providing short-term agricultural relief, enabling war and drought affected populations to resume food production activities⁹¹. Emergency input distribution operations, especially in Autumn 2002, are estimated to have made a small but significant contribution to increased food production, in particular, in the long term through the distribution of good quality seed⁹². The extent to which it contributed to household food security is more difficult to ascertain in view of difficult targeting and a focus on production rather than on household food needs. However, it can be said that, at household level, FAO's emergency operations likely contributed to improved food security of those who benefited, but the number of beneficiaries was small compared with the large number of food insecure households. The locust control campaigns contributed to the saving of almost 300,000 ha (80,500 ha treated chemically and 213,000 ha controlled mechanically) in 2002 and 123,284 ha (all treated chemically) in 2003 of irrigated and rainfed areas⁹³. However, it would be speculative to try to estimate the quantities of food production saved without reliable quantitative information of the type of crops and total area grown. As a whole, both emergency input distribution interventions and locust control activities are believed to be cost-effective immediate food security related interventions compared with food aid.

⁹¹ 23,000 t of wheat seed in Autumn 2002 were distributed, which met 11% of the seed need, but only 5% of the rainfed need.

⁹² Cossee's report : *"The cost of the whole wheat seed and fertilizer distribution operation in autumn 2002 was about US\$5.5m including US\$1 million investment in equipment and transport for the seed multiplication programme.. The value of the incremental grain production generated in 2003 is conservatively estimated at between US\$8.1 and 13.3 ml...one should however consider that the additional grain production induced by improved varieties does not stop in the first year, but are likely to span over 5 to 10 years"*.

⁹³ Andrew Harvey's Final Reports of the Locust Control Campaigns (2002 and 2003).

249. One should recognise that some initiatives such as poultry and vegetable projects did address the needs of food insecure households. There are new projects such as the E.Hazarajat livelihood and the nutrition programme (up till now in the FAAHM) that have more potential for addressing household food security issues through a more community-based, people-centred approach, and a longer-term perspective.

250. However, FAO can be said to have begun at least to have contributed towards achieving a basis for longer-term food security in Afghanistan – with its improved food security monitoring, irrigation improvements, improved seed distributions, animal health and production activities, etc. However, the combined effect of these interventions is hard to gauge.

Beneficiary Targeting

251. Under emergency conditions, targeting though not perfect was pragmatic; while access was often constrained by security and absence of NGOs in some of the vulnerable areas. The most vulnerable groups (refugees, widows and orphans, rainfed farmers) may not be those most likely to benefit from seed and tool distributions since in order to make use of improved seed, recipients must have access to suitable land. In addition, the choice of inputs was sometimes not appropriate, especially when they required a previous testing (e.g. vegetable seeds).

Gender

252. Overall, there was insufficient attention paid to (and insufficient understanding of) gender issues in a country where it is a major concern within the rehabilitation process of Afghanistan. It is recognised that in the socio-cultural context of the country it is not an easy issue to address. There were some initiatives which did target women, including poultry, vegetable seeds and nutrition projects that increased their access to income-generating activities and food security. A gender specialist from RAP visited the country in November 2002 and made some proposals as to how to better integrate gender concerns in FAO's programme. Little follow-up was given to her mission. Project designs are not gender-related, data not disaggregated and as a whole, there is insufficient data and knowledge on gender issues in Afghanistan. With regard to FAO's staff (whether on projects or part of the FAOR), professional female staff are very few. According to the FAO representation, this is due to the limited number of qualified women available for positions. However, the MTE is of the view that FAO does not have proper guidelines for recruiting and supporting women in such an environment.

Capacity Building

253. FAO's operations have provided a wide range of capacity building support to government and other service providers, though largely through funding government and NGOs to deliver services rather than through formal or informal training. There are exceptions, notably under the work of FAAHM in 2003 through training for various surveys. Government capacity has also been raised through counterpart arrangements (particularly under the irrigation projects and the FAAHM project) and office reconstruction. Emergency work by its nature does not usually include training, and this has been true for FAO's own staff, none of whom have received any in-service training, as well as for FAO's counterparts. A TCP is now starting which will provide training courses for a limited number of MAAH staff (part of a larger ADB component).

254. To a certain extent, FAO has neglected its role as a key counterpart to the government's reform process. This neglect contributed to FAO losing its strategic leadership role within the CG mechanism, and has left MIWRE and MAAH behind in the ongoing reforms programme. Despite this gap, the two ministries rate FAO as a key player and there is a willingness to use FAO's experience and an eagerness to make use of its in-country expertise.

6.2 MANAGEMENT, COORDINATION AND IMPLEMENTATION CAPACITY

255. Internal deficiencies affected FAO's ability to perform well during the first year of the period covered by the MTE, including:

- The lack of a common and strategic vision which resulted in a piecemeal programme, dispersed initiatives and missed opportunities in terms of synergies among the various operations other than operational linkages;
- Conflicts around management, coordination and operational responsibilities that prevented the dichotomy between emergency and non-emergency operations from being overcome;
- The inability to establish in a speedy manner a management capacity with strong leadership, and of ensuring a sense of a unified programme at country level;
- The failure to establish adequate logistics, administrative and financial infrastructure capacity to support the implementation of a complex and important portfolio of operations.

256. There has been a marked improvement in the way the Organization operates in Afghanistan since the appointment of a more long-term management team, and even more since the recent efforts to address administrative, financial and logistics issues. This has been translated into a positive visibility of FAO both from the Government and the international community's viewpoints. The fact that FAO has been given the implementation responsibilities of major projects (DFID-funded East Harazajat Project, WB-funded irrigation programme) reflects the confidence now placed in FAO's implementation capacity by these donors. FAO also has a widely-acknowledged technical capacity both internationally and importantly in-country. However, there is a risk that much of the in-country expertise will be dissipated by end of 2003 as contracts terminate, and no strategy is in place to use these personnel resources in future, only an ad hoc shifting to new projects as opportunities arise.

257. Today, many of the constraints faced by the country office in Afghanistan reflect broader and structural issues of FAO's field programme, and any attempt to address them needs to take into account the current efforts being carried out at the level of the Organization to tackle them in a systematic way. However, because of the still important volume and complexity of operations in Afghanistan, the environment within which FAO has to operate, and the major implementation challenge in the near future, it is urgent to also take measures for improving capacity in Afghanistan.

258. Great progress has been made on several fronts as part of the transfer of operational responsibilities (including budget holding for non-emergency projects) to the FAOR, although the MTE supports the view that it was necessary to postpone the transfer to 1st of January 2004. FAO's implementation capacity will still be highly challenged considering the need for appropriate staffing, training and logistics in the remaining period. Although the operational portfolio is expected to decline in the next two to three years, it will still include a number of major projects with both emergency and development funding sources, and this will require improved and efficient operational management.

Monitoring and Evaluation

259. This component has achieved very limited success during the period under review. Despite an extensive period of technical assistance for M&E in 2002, there is no effective system in place. The development of the M&E system has also been crippled by inadequate attention to sound project design principles: few of the operations in the period under review could be said to have developed measurable indicators, used logframes or budgeted for M&E activities. FAO's programme has a weak reporting system and almost none of the projects under review have undertaken any evaluation activities to assess benefits or impacts. Apart from handicapping the work of the MTE, this has prevented the team in Afghanistan and the support staff in RAP and HQ from improving future project designs.

VII. Recommendations for Afghanistan

260. Given the sensitive and volatile political, social and economic conditions and the risky natural environment in Afghanistan, the recommendations made in this chapter must be regarded as subject to adjustment, and where they are implemented it should be in a flexible manner and based on a close monitoring of events. In particular, in drawing up the recommendations below, the Evaluation Team assumes that progress towards peace will continue and as part of it, the rebuilding of the Government and government institutions. Nevertheless, the transition out of emergency to development is dynamic

and may reverse in parts of the country, and therefore planning must take account of the likelihood of continued shocks that require short-term responses.

261. This chapter focuses on recommendations relevant to the future of the FAO in Afghanistan. More general recommendations and lessons pertinent to FAO as a whole are placed in Chapter 8.

7.1 SETTING A STRATEGIC DIRECTION FOR FAO IN AFGHANISTAN

Moving to a Strategic Level of Engagement

262. The MTE aims to provide suggestions for FAO's strategic direction in Afghanistan: based on a balance of continuing strong project implementation with stronger technical advisory, capacity building and policy assistance elements. To arrive at this balance requires a period of reflection and dialogue between the different FAO units concerned with Afghanistan. This is especially important given the past record of weak strategic direction and competition between different divisions. FAO is nevertheless now set to bring together its many achievements and to link effectively its emergency and longer-term activities. FAO can also demonstrate to UN partners and government its particular role in providing coordination and technical support in managing the dynamic transition from short-term to longer-term assistance.

263. FAO should move to a **strategic level of assistance to government**, building on its very positive track record and reputation in country. The challenge first and foremost is to assist MAAH and MIWRE to reform (following the lead shown by MRRD). FAO can assist through support based upon its knowledge and experience of similar reform programmes elsewhere.

264. As part of this assistance, FAO must show a higher commitment to **institution building**, given the very low capacity of the two ministries and the strong interest expressed at minister level (in MAAH at least) for FAO to be a key partner. FAO must work to identify needs and prepare long term assistance in this area. This task will be challenging because of the multiplicity of other donor initiatives that have recently started working in this area. However, there are signs that government is frustrated with the lack of progress by other actors, and looking to FAO to play a more active, even leading, role.

265. FAO needs to **integrate more closely with government** at national and provincial level, in both a visible and practical manner. This requires that all FAO projects should demonstrate how and when they will integrate with government, or with NGOs or communities as appropriate. This ranges from the closer physical linkage planned between the FAOR and the MAAH⁹⁴, to the merging of Area Management offices into the Regional/Provincial government, and different sub-sector units (FAAHM and irrigation have already started). It implies sharing the Darulaman office with government counterparts, and facilitating MAAH and MIWRE to conduct sector coordination more effectively.

266. Closer integration also means that FAO's various ongoing and planned projects should in the near future be submitted and set within the Ministry of Finance's annual planning and budgeting exercise, which will replace the TAPA from March 2004. In this way, FAO's contribution to the Government National Development Framework and the 1383 Budget will be transparent and its commitment to the CG process demonstrated.

267. In light of these points, the FAO team therefore should as a first step hold an **internal strategy workshop** as early as possible for senior staff to discuss the strategic direction of the FAO programme for the next 2-3 years. HQ and RAP management should be present (HQs and RAP senior officers). An experienced facilitator should be engaged who knows the history and the different views of stakeholders. The workshop would span a 3-4 day period in order to cover the following tasks:

⁹⁴ The FAOR is in the process of transferring his office to the MAAH compound, pending security clearance.

1. Review the past experience of FAO's programme in Afghanistan, based on the MTE report and other relevant documents.
2. Draft an outline country strategy for FAO for the next 3 years, drawing on the 2002 Action Plan, the MTE recommendations⁹⁵.
3. Draw up an indicative *Work Plan and Budget* for the 2004/5 FY (matching the Afghan 1383 Budget Year) that would be an input into the MAAH and MIWRE submissions for the forthcoming MOF budget.
4. Prepare a *staffing plan* for international and local staff in light of known future operations and desired programming needs. This is critical, given the volume of contract expirations in next two months, and in order to ensure continuity and maintain FAO's critical advantage in terms of experience of qualified personnel. The staffing exercise would be carried out by a separate senior management team. Furthermore and to the maximum extent possible, tentative budget plans in relation to staffing in particular should be established, to avoid the difficulties faced in the past with short-term contracts, unreliable sources of funding for personnel and tensions between TCE and TCA/RAP over the control and use of donors' funding for staff (and other operational/administrative) costs.

Priority Areas

268. Given the need to develop a more coherent programme that makes best use of FAO's comparative advantages in Afghanistan, where should FAO concentrate its efforts?

269. The MTE would suggest the following areas be given priority, based around two main objectives: (i) improving resilience of the most vulnerable through the restoration, diversification and strengthening of livelihoods; and (ii) laying the basis for an enabling environment for growth in which agriculture has a role to play.

1. Contribution to strategy and policy work for the agriculture sector, including assisting in institutional reform process for counterpart ministries. Apart from assistance to elaborate an overall sector policy, important work also needs to be initiated in a number of neglected sub-sectors, e.g. agricultural research and technology transfer, land reform, sustainable rangeland management and forestry.
2. Food security information and assessment. This is undoubtedly a domain where FAO is recognised to have a comparative advantage. However, activities should be more focused as indicated in section IV above and better serve well identified information needs of humanitarian actors, FAO and the Government.
3. Well-targeted agriculture relief with a food-based approach, taking into account that there is still a large number of IDPs in the country, refugees outside the country and a part of the country still at war. Targeting those vulnerable groups will imply to work more closely with UNHCR and WFP.
4. Key sub-sectors reflecting (i) existing recognised achievements; (ii) priority of Government; and (iii) FAO's comparative advantage:
 - coordination of seed (policy, multiplication and targeted relief distributions)
 - support to plant protection
 - small-scale irrigation
 - livestock
 - horticulture
 - forestry (based on FAO's mandate issued by the Government for addressing this sub-sector)

Specific recommendations for most of these sub-sectors are found in Chapter IV above.

⁹⁵ This is in line with other PBEE evaluation findings, for example, the Response to the Continuing Crisis in Southern Africa, Recommendation No.1.

5. Capacity building (in all FAO interventions). Capacity building should include not only central government but also government and non government institutions at local level.
6. Promote livelihood-based approaches. In this respect, the MTE fully support the approach adopted in the Eastern Hazarajat project⁹⁶ which is a well conceived community based rural development project with an emphasis on sustainable livelihoods.
7. Support to alternative livelihoods to poppy cultivation, with FAO being one partner among others as part of a comprehensive programme to eradicate poppy cultivation, including various supports to good governance, law enforcement, social infrastructure and income-generating activities.

7.2 MANAGEMENT, COORDINATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

Note from the Team (25 May 2004): These recommendations were drawn up on the best available information at that time and subject to the successful transfer of operational holding responsibilities to the FAO Representative in early 2004. Subsequent information indicates that such success may not have been achieved. In view of this, it would likely have been premature to implement some of these recommendations.

Overall Coordination

270. In view of the full transfer of operational responsibility for the non-emergency projects to the FAOR and the anticipated reduction in the volume of operations (emergency operations), there is no longer a strong rationale for maintaining a focal point at HQs. Overall coordination for Afghanistan should now be carried out by the FAOR, subject to the successful transfer of operational (budget holding for non-emergency projects) responsibilities in early 2004.

Management at Country level

271. FAO should strengthen its management capacity and improve integration of the different sub-programmes. Given that this is now a strategic period for FAO (including a major shift in funding patterns), there are several large projects expected that will require substantial implementation capacity, and the need for a unified, more coherent and integrated Programme.

272. Then FAO should:

- Streamline programme management, with the ECU integrated into the relevant development sub-programmes;
- Maintain the functions of Programme Manager in support to the FAOR. The Programme Manager would be the equivalent of a Deputy FAOR. She/he should have operational responsibilities on the overall programme in addition to programme coordination functions⁹⁷;
- Increase the financial and management authority of the Programme Manager;
- Prepare an annual work plan for 2004/5 (see 7.1);

⁹⁶ The Project GCP/AFG/029/UK "Development of Sustainable Agricultural Livelihoods in Eastern Hazarajat" is funded by DFID for a total of US\$ 5,992,654 and due to progress over four years until completion in 2007. The FAO will develop the project in close collaboration with the local government and provincial departments of the appropriate ministries, most significantly the MAAH but also MIWRE and MRRD. At the same time it will work through and with the local communities and help to co-ordinate the programmes of NGOs and other Aid / Development Agencies working in the region.

⁹⁷ At the time of the report writing, a Vacancy Announcement for a Senior Operations Officer in Afghanistan has been issued by TCE. The MTE does not recommend having both a Senior Operations Officer and a Programme Manager. Both functions should be merged.

- Give longer-term contracts for key management staff that are not part of the regular FAO Representation structure (one year).

273. The Deputy FAOR/Programme Manager should be supported in her/his operational management functions by (i) an administrative and finance officer (not necessarily a senior position) and a National Operations Officer. Both of them would deal with the day-to-day operations.

274. Regional (Area Managers) Level:

- Area Managers should be maintained only where FAO implements **sufficient**⁹⁸ projects and operations, in order to channel information to raise awareness at central level among FAO, donors and the Government; formulate proposals for submission to donors and to the Government; and build partnership and capacity locally;
- Enhance their management role through annual plans and budgets that transfer project implementation responsibility to Area Managers;
- Increase links with the Programme Manager (quarterly visits by the PM, regular management meetings, etc.);
- Increase involvement in programme development and project formulation;
- Improve communication facilities and physical links with Kabul;
- International positions for area managers are justified only if given increased responsibility, and providing candidates have capacity building and local language skills.

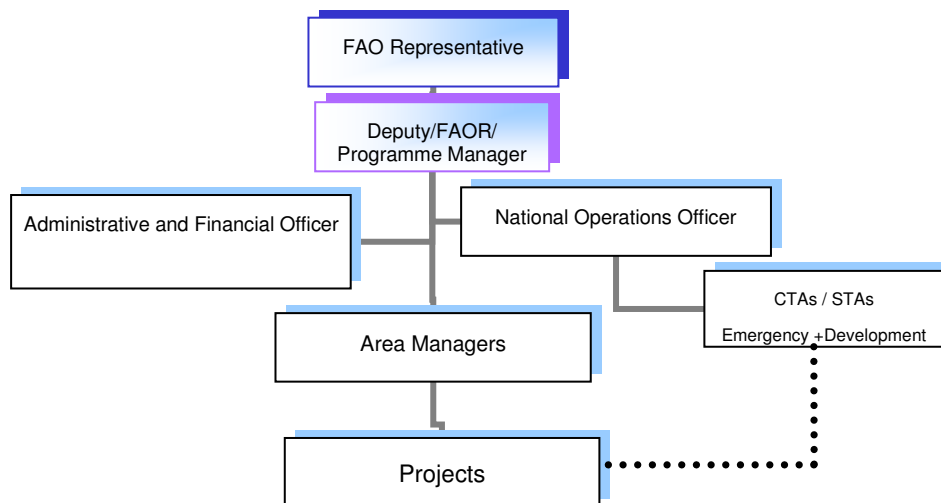


Figure 4 Proposed Organisational Structure for FAO Afghanistan

Operational Concerns

275. Operational responsibilities should be unified regardless of funding sources (e.g. resolve FAAHM's separate executing lines despite there being two funding sources).

276. In terms of the proposed choices for the transfer of budget holding being considered now by TC, the MTE believes that the transfer of **only development** operational responsibilities may not be

⁹⁸ A minimal operation funding level per year for a region should be set, for example, \$500,000.

justified considering progress made so far in settling budgetary issues relating to emergency operations and the expected reduced emergency portfolio. This option would also create further divisions between emergency and development parts of the programme. The mission therefore recommends that all operational responsibilities are transferred.

277. **Additional measures** should be taken to prepare and support the transfer of operational responsibilities:

- Settlement of the national staff situation (including setting up of core staff for the Representation, separation, redeployment, contractual arrangements);
- Further training of selected staff of the FAO Representation on FAO's administrative and financial procedures;
- Further training of FAOR and Programme Manager and project staff on procurement procedures;
- An urgent support mission from the **Senior Operational Officer** from RAP⁹⁹;
- The temporary fielding of an **Emergency Operations Officer**, familiar with TCE and FAO operational procedures in general.

Procurement/delivery

278. Procurement issues need to be addressed in a more systematic way (see next section). However, there are a number of preparedness actions that could be done at the level of the country office that could enhance preparedness for future major procurement:

- Training of FAOR and staff on procurement procedures;
- Identification of an indicative list of inputs likely to be needed;
- Preparation of a short list of preferred suppliers and or contractors that have a proven and reliable record with the FAO programme in Afghanistan in supplying these inputs. The list to be subject to review every six months. In the case of an emergency, the FAOR would activate the list, seeking at least three quotations and possibly more for the supply of essential inputs and or transport costs.

Monitoring and Evaluation

279. There is much to be done to strengthen the M&E system in FAO Afghanistan. The following points should be considered:

- Monitoring, management information, and ongoing evaluation activities at programme level should continue, conditional on becoming and remaining useful to the various levels of management of the FAO country programme.
- MIE work should be more responsive to programme and project management needs, including proactively seeking out these needs and reviewing them regularly with the concerned stakeholders (programme manager, project managers, counterparts, field staff, etc.). As originally foreseen in the MIE Unit's TOR, greater use could be made of rapid appraisal methods and 'quick and dirty' impact assessments.
- Funds for project monitoring and evaluation need to be attached to each project budget,¹⁰⁰ and donors must agree to a portion of this budget going to a central programme management unit above and beyond the support covered by FAO's PSC percentage (up to 13% for non-emergency projects depending on budget structure).
- Greater integration between the MIE Unit's work and individual project M&E activities should be sought. Project-specific M&E tools produced or tested by field projects, if found useful, should be disseminated by the MIE Unit as appropriate to other projects. The MIE Unit should be the primary technical backstopping unit for any project M&E activities in the country.

⁹⁹ At the time of finalisation of this report, a mission of the SOO was already planned.

¹⁰⁰ The recommendation was also made under the PBEE evaluation for FAO's response to the Continuing Crisis to Southern Africa (Recommendation No.2)

- The project design criteria of FAO in general need to be clearer and include such elements as the use of simplified log frame analysis, measurable indicators, etc., to facilitate monitoring and evaluation for better management and accountability, including for emergency-type projects. Stronger support to the recently finalised FAO Project Cycle Review Training Course would help in the task of spreading good practice throughout the Organization.

Coordination with External Partners

280. The Agricultural Coordination Meetings that are held monthly between FAO, government and other sector partners needs to be formally woven into the CG framework. The preferred option would be to nominate this meeting as an official Working Group of the NRM CG so that its current form can be continued. Its agenda should be flexible to allow discussion of both emergency and non-emergency topics. This approach could also be mirrored at provincial level, where FAO is already active in agricultural coordination.

281. More generally, the recent emergence of FAO as the coordinator of the policy Working Group has given FAO an improved role with government, and other partners. There is still much to be done to build stronger links with external partners in country, including improving the visibility of FAO's operations (using different media), and making the existing UNAMA and CG coordination processes more effective.

VIII. General Recommendations and Lessons for Countries Emerging from a Complex Emergency Situation

282. Based on the experience in Afghanistan evaluated in this report and taking into account the results of other relevant evaluations¹⁰¹, a number of issues have been identified for complex emergencies, which the Evaluation Team believes may have broader implications. These issues will need to be explored through in-depth discussion and comparison with experience elsewhere.

8.1 DETERMINING FAO'S RESPONSE FOR COUNTRIES IN COMPLEX TRANSITION

Development of an FAO Strategy

283. In transition situations where there is a dynamic and complex pattern of sometimes contiguous vulnerable and less vulnerable groups, a multiplicity of actors and a combination of humanitarian, rehabilitation and development support, it is important to define a common vision as early as possible of what FAO's role should be. FAO needs to be able to both assess the nature of the emergency with which it is dealing (rapid or slow onset, complex) and the appropriate role which the Organization can provide. Without a more coherent preparedness, FAO is likely to repeat the use of ad-hoc approaches in the future when operating in countries undergoing a transition from complex emergencies to rehabilitation and development.

284. This role should be articulated around two main objectives: (i) improving resilience of the most vulnerable through protection, restoration and strengthening of livelihoods; (ii) laying the basis for an enabling environment for growth in which agriculture has a role to play. This vision or strategy will underpin the FAO programme in the country.

285. In developing a strategy for FAO's role in a post-conflict situation, the strategy should:

- be based on a *needs assessment* (and not exclusively driven by funding commitments);
- differentiate clearly between *FAO's role* and the *broad needs of the sector*;
- be prepared *in close coordination with local partners* (government, NGOs and donors); and
- build on *FAO's previous experience* in the country (where available).

Timeliness

286. The bulk of FAO's emergency interventions remain the distribution of inputs to affected farmers. This is first and foremost an agriculture-based response to food problems. Hence, the relevance and effectiveness of FAO's emergency interventions (for both crop and livestock) highly depend on *agricultural calendars* in the country.

287. This means that in responding to donors' pressure, and in addition to determining the needs for such interventions, FAO should carefully assess what it is realistically possible to achieve given the timeframe determined by the next cropping season as well as its implementation capacity and/or its ability to enhance its implementation capacity quickly.

Building on pre-existing experience/knowledge

288. Where FAO has existing knowledge and experience through a pre-existing operation, this should be effectively built on and not ignored. This means that a strong representation or programme coordination in country is needed which can use past capacity while embarking on a major emergency programme.

¹⁰¹ In particular, some of these lessons learned are also drawn from the Evaluation of the Strategic Objective A3: "Preparedness for, and Effective and Sustainable Response to Food and Agricultural Emergencies" (FAO – 2002).

8.2 COORDINATION

289. In post-conflict situations where humanitarian assistance is predominant and expected to increase substantially over a short period of time and where various parts of FAO have been involved and continue to have programmes, coordination mechanisms at different levels are crucial and a unified line of authority for all programmes (development and emergency) is essential. This could include:

- a) In consultation with key managers, the nomination of a **Focal Point**. The Director of TCE is generally the most logical option in view of the predominance of emergency operations over development operations and the need to mobilise funding quickly. This must be decided on *a case by case basis* and will depend very much on the capacity of the FAO Representation, (if such a Representation is in place). Furthermore, there is a limit to the number of complex emergency situations that a focal point (at Director level) can handle. Thus, eventually, where several Focal Points are required, the individual's strengths as a manager and coordinator should be the most important criteria in the selection. The Terms of Reference of the Focal Point should be time-bound (linked to the emergency funding time-frame) and should be clear as to the extent of supervision and responsibilities over the overall Programme.
- b) The Focal Point should be supported by a **Senior Advisory Group (SAG)** including individuals at HQs, the Regional Office and the country who are willing to devote time to such an assignment. The SAG could include senior managers of the most concerned divisions: the Policy Assistance Division (TCA), the Field Operations Division (TCO), the Information Systems and Technology Division (AFI), and the Policy and Programming branch of the regional/or sub-regional offices to which the country relates, as well as the individual in charge of the management of the programme in country (FAOR or FP?). The Office for Coordination of Normative, Operational and Decentralized Activities (OCD) should also be involved as early as possible. The composition of the SAG may be specific for each situation and decided within the Emergency Coordination Group. The SAG would deal with resolving issues that are beyond the authority of the Focal Point such as strategic planning, management responsibilities and fund mobilization.
- c) A **Coordination Group** composed of all those working on the country should be set-up (similar to the Afghanistan-List) primarily for information exchange, to ensure consistency among activities and enhance synergies between various divisions whenever possible. An e-mail list would be useful to involve in this group technical officers from the regional and/or sub-regional offices and technical officers in the country.

Coordination and Management Capacity at an early stage

290. It is crucial to appoint and field an FAOR as early as possible. This could be done through the quick redeployment of an FAOR from other countries. Building up of a pool of FAORs from emergency coordinators and FAOR retirees with the right calibre could also permit speedier fielding of an FAOR.

291. If fielding an FAOR still takes time, it is important to ensure as soon as possible strong, continuous leadership as well as coordination of both emergency and rehabilitation/development programmes at country level until the FAO Representative is appointed. Whether this leadership is ensured by the emergency coordinator or not depends more on his/her strategic planning skills and his/her knowledge of FAO's mandate and full range of services. The individual should be the counterpart of the focal point at country level and be given time-bound full responsibilities for overseeing FAO's programme and management.

292. A **pool of selected senior staff** ready to take on six-month assignments should be assembled (TCI, TCA, TCE). Funding could be based on a shared cost arrangement (OCD – TCE) until the FAO representative is fielded.

8.3 IMPLEMENTATION CAPACITY

293. Emergency operations require enhanced implementation capacity in country. Neglecting implementation capacity requirements at the onset of a major emergency programme can have dramatic negative impacts on FAO's programme (and thus on its image). In countries where there is an FAOR, they stretch to an unsustainable level the FAOR resources. Where the presence of FAO was not ensured by normal FAO representation, setting up proper implementation capacity is even more determining for FAO to operate.

294. Enhancing FAO's capacity should include:

- a) An **administrative and financial rapid response team** should be sent to the country as early as possible, covering personnel, procurement/logistics, IT and finance matters. The team would not necessarily stay in country for a long assignment and would primarily set the procedure and office structure into place for staff to operate. It would also select national support staff and train them.
- b) Setting-up efficient **communication facilities** (including internet access) should be given a high priority (this would, among other things, give direct access to FAS as early as possible), in particular in view of the fact that operational responsibilities will remain at HQs or at the Regional/Sub-regional Office until the FAOR is posted and fully operational.
- c) Taking into account the necessity of quick operationality, staff sent to the field should be well attuned to FAO's procedures and regulations. A pool of FAO staff should be identified and prepared for such missions ("roving team").

295. The funding of rapid enhancement of capacity in the country will have to be secured. Options should be reviewed now and possibly include:

- Part of AOS of emergency operations
- Emergency and rehabilitation revolving fund (proposed at the Finance Committee in May 2003)
- Percentage of emergency funding for the country representation (similar arrangements as WFP Emergency Operation – EMOP)
- TCP for infrastructure and equipment so that funds would partly come back to FAO through transfer of the assets to the FAOR.

Procurement/Delivery

296. Once again, the experience of Afghanistan calls for efforts to improve timely delivery, including procurement. It should be recognised that despite anecdotal stories, there is a lack of full understanding of where the principle bottlenecks in the delivery chain are and the reasons for these. An in-depth study, based on case studies and including a detailed review of procedures should be undertaken.

297. However, within the present knowledge and based on other recommendations from previous evaluations, the following recommendations could be considered:

- Systematic training on administrative procedures, including procurement procedures of staff and FAOR;
- Increase level of authority to regional offices and FAORs for procurement;
- Seek approval (or modify FAO rules) to procure rapidly under emergency context from a shortlist of pre-qualified suppliers. For example, base procurement on a pre-qualified short-list of known, preferred suppliers. Such a list could be kept up-dated for each sub-region.

Operationalising a Programme Approach

298. The division of emergency operations from non-emergency operations leads to inefficiency and ineffectiveness of implementation and is detrimental to FAO's image. The formulation of a country strategy is a first step towards a programme approach. Furthermore, the following options could be looked at to unify FAO's operations in operational terms.

- a) Where both emergency and non-emergency funding is being used to support the same sub-sector or component, a decision may be taken for a single operational unit to run the different projects in a unified way. This may mean initially through TCE or the Regional Office, but in due course transferring to the FAOR.
- b) For major operations, an emergency operations officer could be posted in the Regional Office, if operational responsibilities are primarily there, to ensure better coordination with all those most involved, or to the FAOR (and later on).
- c) Implementation of multi-funded projects could be structured around a single time bound work plan into which different funds are attached, and adjusting internal finance control mechanisms.

Staff Management

299. FAO should acknowledge the difficulties of working in a hardship environment, through (i) a careful selection of staff and consultants taking account of inter-personnel skills and capacity to cope with stressful situations; (ii) in supporting staff on all fronts, in particular, psychologically. Staff and consultants should be better prepared through training and on-line support by a staff counsellor (who would provide on-line services and regular missions).

300. In conclusion, the MTE mission re-emphasizes the tentative nature of its findings on the issues identified above which will require further in-depth study.

8.4 COMPONENT LESSONS

Food Security Information

301. In countries where there is paucity of data, CFSAM appear to be a very useful prime set of analyses for a better understanding of humanitarian needs, in particular of food aid as well as agriculture relief needs. It is perceived by all as a unique prerogative of FAO on the grounds of (i) FAO as a neutral agency as well as (ii) the solid methodological support it can provide. It should be acknowledged that the setting up of a food security information capacity takes more time than is generally allowed for such a system to provide rapidly a proper tool for decision-making on humanitarian assistance, including agricultural relief.

302. FAO should develop a two-stage strategic approach to its role on food security information.

303. In a **first phase**, FAO should concentrate on the preparatory work for a CFSAM through support given for crop assessment surveys, using existing networks of field workers (e.g., WFP food aid monitors) and train them. This may require ESCG to develop a set of guidelines for a quick package support that will aim at improving within accuracy and coverage of the agriculture areas within a short period of time (FAO Environment and Natural Resources Service (SDRN) – land cover - use mapping – how can it be done over a short period of time?)

304. In a **second phase when the institutional environment¹⁰² stabilizes**, FAO should aim at setting up in-country capacity for food security assessment. The role of FAO in this phase and the extent of its involvement on the full range of food security and nutrition aspects should very much be based on FIVIMS (Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping System) principles

¹⁰² By institutional environment, we mean not only Government institutions, but all agencies primarily concerned by food security.

and on a careful assessment of the various actors involved (including non government actors) as well as gaps for which FAO has comparative advantages to fill (Afghanistan “model”).

305. For each of these phases, it is important to bear in mind the prime uses. Obviously, in the first phase, it is clear that information should be geared towards humanitarian and relief needs. If properly planned, it can contribute to set the ground for the setting up of a crop monitoring system in country. Later on (uses and users,) emphasis will shift more on information for strategy and policy for rehabilitation as well as specific information for interventions. With regard to the latter, while it is important to ensure a close link (institutional) between information and uses, it is necessary **to distinguish the functions relating to the provision of information/assessment work from those attached to the uses and FAO-related support.** (Different skills, different focus on the support, different operational capacity, different counterparts).

306. Finally, we acknowledge that these “two phases” can take place simultaneously under certain circumstances (FAO as a new comer in a protracted emergency, which is unlikely); the point here is to acknowledge the need for a two-pronged approach.

307. Information assessment work and policy advisory functions are major and separate areas for FAO assistance and each needs full-time support, and should not be combined under one project.

Crop Protection

308. Under emergency situations, FAO has to react very quickly to conduct field assessments in order to instigate, if required, pest control campaign on a timely basis.

Crop Production and Seed Multiplication

309. It is important that the lessons of the past are recorded and codes of operation and standards for procurement passed on to newer and later generations of management.

Emergency Agricultural Inputs

310. Emergency agricultural inputs distribution should be based on a comprehensive assessment of needs, based on an analysis of livelihoods vulnerability and its causes. The challenge is to carry out such an assessment within a relatively short time frame, using quick and dirty methods while being comprehensive. Particular care should be given in the analysis to the relevance and role of agricultural inputs distribution as a means to maintain and/or restore livelihoods.

311. Great care must always be taken in managing seed as an instrument of aid. Good seed correctly provided is a wonderful aid to agricultural rehabilitation after a crisis, but if the incorrect seed is provided it may leave the beneficiaries worse off than before.

312. Every emergency programme must have an exit strategy lest it start to create dependencies and thus work counter to sustainable development. Free or virtually free aid in the form of seed and other agricultural inputs has its place as a temporary measure but should never be allowed to carry on beyond the period of strict necessity or it may discourage sustainable local production.

313. New technology or inputs that require extension back up and farmer training should not be placed in an emergency programme unless there is a capacity or means to deliver such technical assistance to the beneficiaries.

Monitoring and Evaluation

314. The project design criteria of FAO in general need to be clearer and include such elements as the use of simplified log frame analysis, measurable indicators, etc., to facilitate monitoring and evaluation for better management and accountability, including for emergency-type projects. Stronger support to the recently finalised FAO Project Cycle Review Training Course would help in the task of spreading good practice throughout the Organisation.

315. FAO still needs to do further work on the development of a viable model for a programme monitoring and information system which can be rapidly deployed in a post-crisis or other complex emergency theatre.

316. PBEE and TCOM need to discuss and agree on a clear division of roles and a protocol for collaboration on the development of field-based monitoring, information and evaluation functions for programme and project management.

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Annex 1

Terms of Reference for the Mid-Term Evaluation of FAO's Post-conflict Programme in Afghanistan and FAO's Coordination Arrangement for Leading Transition

1. Background

FAO has been providing agriculture assistance to Afghanistan for more than 30 years. In the recent past, FAO has been one of the lead Agencies for the United Nations "PEACE" programme, "Poverty Eradication and Community Empowerment Programme", in Afghanistan. From 1997, FAO implemented the agricultural component of this programme, called "Food Security and Sustainable Livelihoods", which focused on seed multiplication systems for in-country production and distribution, crop protection, horticulture, integrated livestock production and animal health, fodder development, milk marketing schemes and development of village poultry activities.

Following the end of the war at the end of 2001 and the establishment of the Afghanistan Transitional Authority (ATA) in January 2002, FAO deployed significant financial and human resources for Afghanistan with a view to ensuring an effective and comprehensive response to the post-war challenges. Afghanistan was thus, a special case for FAO, with the following characteristics:

- *Major efforts were made to coordinate management within Headquarters Divisions and Services, and between Headquarters, the regional office RAP and the FAO-Afghanistan offices in Islamabad and in the country.*

Managing FAO's assistance during the transition period is complex because of the numerous divisions involved in the programme. Furthermore, the programme, including both emergency operations operated from HQs and development projects supported essentially by the Regional Office, required well-coordinated management. The Director of the Emergency and Rehabilitation Division (TCE) was nominated FAO Focal Point for Afghanistan on 31st October 2001. The head of the newly established Unit for Rehabilitation and Humanitarian Policies (TCER) set up in TCE to ensure the transition from emergency relief interventions to rehabilitation and development assistance was deployed to Afghanistan in mid-February for several months to coordinate FAO's initial programming and field level management. Management coordination between Headquarters, the Regional Office for Asia (RAP) and FAO field office in Kabul has been carried out through extensive use of e-mail to exchange documents and information, as well as briefing at Headquarters of staff sent to Kabul, some of them transiting through RAP for briefing or debriefing. At Headquarters, focal points in each Technical Divisions of FAO were designated and included in an e-mail list to which relevant documents, information and meeting notifications were sent.

- *A strengthened Field Presence to manage the implementation of the field programme*

A series of staff positions were identified and gradually filled to ensure the development and implementation of the FAO programme, including an FAO Representative, Programme Manager, Programme Developer, Emergency Coordinator, Area Managers, Monitoring & Evaluation Specialist, Information & Communication Specialist, and Finance/Administration Officer. An internal Auditor is also being appointed.

- *FAO was entrusted by the Government with a leading coordination role for planning and programming in the agriculture sector*

In May 2002, FAO was designated by the Government as Programme Secretariat for Natural Resources Management involving the three lead ministries - Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry, the Ministry of Irrigation, Water Resources and Environment, and Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development. The main tasks including support to the coordination of activities carried out by the Natural Resources Management Group. As part of this role, FAO coordinated the

appraisal and submission to the Government of the Natural Resources Management Programme of the Transitional Assistance Programme for Afghanistan (TAPA¹⁰³) launched in mid-December 2002 in Oslo.

However, the Programme Secretariats' structure was reviewed and transformed into a Consultative Group structure. As of mid-January 2003, the 12 national development programmes, including the Natural Resources Management Programme formerly led by FAO, form a Consultative Group (CG). The Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD) are, among others, participating members. The ADB is the focal point of the CG and FAO is participating together with the United Nations Administration Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and the WB.

- *Agricultural Strategy Development*

In the autumn of 2001, FAO/TCI assisted the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the World Bank (WB) with a desk review of the preliminary needs for the agriculture sector, which was integrated into the overall needs assessment presented to the Tokyo pledging conference in January 2002. The ADB was designated lead agency for the field based needs assessment and follow up.

In addition to its contribution to the ADB strategy, FAO presented its own strategy for the Early Rehabilitation of the Agricultural Sector to the Minister of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry in Afghanistan in February 2002. The Strategy was subsequently endorsed by the Ministry and was later supplemented by an Action Plan, covering a five-year period from 2002 to 2006, translating broad strategy into concrete and progressive actions for each agricultural sub-sector. Key actions are grouped based on four strategic sectors. The Strategy and the Action Plan aimed to guide all partners in the agriculture sector, including FAO's assistance programming in the sector. Ongoing projects in the FAO programme cover partially some of these sectors.

- *A comprehensive FAO programme combining short-term interventions and medium-term projects and funded by several donors*

FAO had already a programme approach to its assistance to Afghanistan, through its contribution to major UNDP programmes framed within broad poverty-related objectives. At the time of preparing these terms of reference, FAO is implementing 19 emergency and 7 medium-term projects with total budget of US\$36 million. In addition, FAO has 12 medium-term projects in the pipeline for an additional US\$41 million. FAO's programme is funded by a large number of donors. FAO's own resources represent only a small percentage of the total resource it manages in Afghanistan. The current programme covers eight broad areas: (i) crop development and provision of agricultural inputs (seeds, fertilizer and hand tools); (ii) Livestock; (iii) Food security and nutrition analysis and information dissemination (iv) Locust control; (v) Capacity building in particular for Government staff; (vi) Irrigation; and (vii) Horticulture, and (viii) support to alternative livelihoods to opium poppy cultivation.

2. Purpose of the Mid-Term Evaluation

Humanitarian and non-humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan has been given a high political profile by the international community in the post-conflict, post-Taliban regime period. As mentioned above, FAO assistance in the country represents a sizeable programme funded by various donors to whom FAO needs to account for the relevance and effectiveness of the aid provided. FAO can be best prepared through carrying out a self-assessment exercise.

¹⁰³ The TAPA covers a period of 15 months and constitutes part of the Global Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP) for 2003.TAPA, ensuring that the most urgent as well as the long-term needs for the agriculture sector are covered by the TAPA.

The purpose of the Evaluation is to provide validation of activities undertaken today and suggestions for corrective measures and future programming and delivery. This will include the identification of issues for Senior Management consideration at an early stage with a view to re-orientating or adjusting the FAO programme and approach if deemed necessary and informing preparation of new proposals for donor financing. In this respect, such an evaluation intends to be a formative exercise. Ultimately, the Government and the population of Afghanistan will benefit from a more relevant and effective FAO assistance.

The evaluation will also draw lessons (positive and negative) from the experience in Afghanistan that will be relevant for future post-conflict and transition situations.

The Evaluation will use the basic criteria and examine the issues summarised below. These draw on the standard OECD/DAC evaluation criteria applied for evaluations of humanitarian assistance¹⁰⁴. The evaluation will thus contribute to the development of criteria more specific to FAO's work, which can be applied in other reviews and evaluations.

The Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE) is addressed primarily to FAO's Senior Management, including management at Regional and Country Field levels and will be an internal exercise with support from external expertise. The results of the MTE will be shared with the Government and Donors/ agencies concerned at a later stage.

3. Scope and issues to be addressed

As the transition period is not over and the FAO's ongoing programme combines both short-term emergency operations and medium-term projects, the Evaluation is considered as "mid-term" in reviewing FAO's response.

Basing its overall judgement on the potential for the FAO programme and its constituent projects to have a sustainable impact on the livelihoods of Afghanistan's rural people, the MTE will examine:

(i) The Coverage, relevance and realism of FAO's assistance to Afghanistan starting November 2001. This will include: FAO's Strategy, the programme and its components as well as FAO's role in the agriculture sector. The "programme" is defined as the group of emergency and non-emergency projects implemented or under implementation since November 2001. Past projects, such as the PEACE project will not be evaluated; however, they will be examined in respect to their linkages with the present programme. Furthermore, and categorised, as indicated above, in eight sub-sectors/themes: (i) crop development and agricultural input (seeds, fertilizer and hand tools); (ii) Livestock production and health; (iii) Food Security and Nutrition Information Analysis and Dissemination (iv) Locust Control; (v) Capacity Building; (vi) Irrigation; (vii) Horticulture; and (viii) Support to Alternative Livelihoods to Opium Poppy cultivation, although this sub-sector is embryonic. In particular, the MTE will assess:

- The relevance and realism of FAO strategy and programme vis-à-vis the needs of the Afghan populations and the government's and donors' priorities and time horizons, with particular attention to humanitarian assistance needs, immediate needs of the most vulnerable populations as well as the more long-term rehabilitation needs, including priority needs for restoring sustainable livelihoods. This will include the extent to which the methods used for assessing needs were appropriate, timely and effective. The mission will assess whether the programme, especially the development programme, was realistic with regard to such pre-requisites as service provision, road and market development and rural people's capacities.
- Linked to its relevance, the extent to which FAO's strategy and programme were able to cover the needs of different needy population groups. In particular, it will assess whether gender aspects been given the attention they deserve.
- The coherence of FAO's strategy and programme with the Immediate and Transitional Assistance Programme (ITAP), Pillar Two of UNAMA, the National Framework of the

¹⁰⁴ OECD/DAC (1999), Guidance for Evaluating Humanitarian Assistance in Complex Emergencies – Evaluation and Aid Effectiveness.

government, Donors and other key partners. In particular, the mission will assess FAO's role in defining and proposing a strategy vis-à-vis the ADB strategy and role.

- The connectedness¹⁰⁵ within the Programme elements, including:
 - the extent to which the emergency components of the programme have taken into account possible (positive and negative) effects and impacts in the long run.
 - whether FAO's programme reflects an appropriate balance and linkage between short-term relief and longer-term rehabilitation operations; and
 - the extent to which lessons from past projects and programmes in Afghanistan have been used in the design of the emergency operations.
- The realism of the FAO strategy development in Afghanistan with regard to FAO's own capacities and resources.

(ii) The efficiency of FAO's internal processes for managing, coordinating, delivering and monitoring a complex programme in a transition situation. FAO's assistance to Afghanistan involves many donors and other stakeholders and various geographical locations (Regional Office in Bangkok, Country Representation initially in Islamabad then Kabul, managerial, financial, and Technical Divisions and Services at Headquarters) that make management and coordination complex and all the more crucial. Furthermore, and as suggested in the evaluation of strategic objective A3, the MTE also aims at assessing the effectiveness of the new organisational arrangements whereby TCE takes a lead role in coordinating the transition and linkages between emergency relief operations and a post-conflict longer term rehabilitation programme. Afghanistan is considered a "pilot" experience in this regard.

The review of management and coordination will include an analysis of the following activities: setting of the overall direction and goals of FAO's assistance to Afghanistan, allocation of tasks and responsibilities within the programme, ensuring of correspondence between resources mobilised (human and financial) and established priorities, and efficiency and timeliness of decision-making, procurement and delivery (in particular in reviewing delivery of the emergency relief operations and in relation to the agricultural calendar), the functioning of the implementation arrangement in the country/field, as well as the provision of leadership and monitoring. Issues relating to *vertical coordination* (lines of responsibilities, timelines, communication, monitoring and reporting), *horizontal coordination* (linkages and coherence between the various units within FAO, as well as between the various FAO units and groups working in Afghanistan), the functioning of the *implementation arrangement* in the country/field, as well as *liaison with other agencies and donors* will also be examined.

(iii) The overall effectiveness of FAO's assistance. To what extent has FAO's Strategy constituted an accepted and appropriate framework for rehabilitation for the Government and donors and guided international aid to the sector? Aspects of programme/project achievements including benefits according to the intended beneficiaries will be analysed. Are the benefits being received (or expected to be received) by the planned beneficiaries? How are these benefits perceived by stakeholders? Have all the planned beneficiaries had access to programme outputs and used them?

a) The following particular issues will be addressed under effectiveness:

- FAO performance in taking the leadership in the agricultural sector in a post-emergency situation:

Sharing the leadership with the Asian Development Bank, FAO has a key role in the agriculture sector to assist the Government. The active involvement of FAO within the Consultative Group for Natural Resources is a challenging role for FAO in a transition situation, a role that FAO has not performed particularly well in the past, despite its perceived

¹⁰⁵ Defined by "the need to assure that activities of the short-term emergency nature are carried out in a context which takes longer-term and inter-connected problems into account"- Minear, L. (1994), The International Relief System: A critical Review. Paper presented to the Parallel National Intelligence Estimate on Global Humanitarian Emergencies, Meridian International Centre, Washington DC, September 22.

comparative advantage to do so (see finding of the evaluation of Strategic Objective A3). This is an opportunity for FAO to assess its capacity to take such a lead role and to highlight conditions and potential constraints to doing so.

- FAO's ability to build on past experience and link short-term/emergency with existing and new long-term interventions:

b) FAO has had a long-term presence in the country, with recognised achievements in some specific domains. The MTE will examine to what extent this long-term basis provided the opportunity for FAO to build a comprehensive response in an emergency context and laid the ground for FAO to take a lead role during that period.

- FAO's role in linking relief to rehabilitation:

There has been an attempt to develop some synergies between the FAO emergency programme and long-term development assistance (e.g., seeds multiplication programme providing inputs for emergency distribution). Linking emergency relief to rehabilitation has always been claimed by FAO to be its unique feature within the UN-system humanitarian assistance to the agricultural/rural sector. Testing such a hypothesis and drawing lessons from the Afghan experience will be useful for guiding FAO future field assistance strategy in similar contexts.

(iv) Potential impacts and their sustainability of the programme/projects. As a mid-term evaluation, it is unrealistic to expect a thorough evaluation of the wider effects of FAO's programme. However, the evaluation will analyse, to the extent possible, potential impacts (immediate and long range) in terms of assuring adequate livelihoods of beneficiary households targeted under the various components of the Programme. The MTE will also address the following question: Does FAO assistance contribute to the establishment of a proper enabling (social/ policy) environment for rehabilitation and sustainable development?

Among the various criteria for analysing expected sustainability, institution and capacity building will be given high consideration:

- To what extent capacity building has been given priority in the programme?
- How far is the programme embedded into local institutional structures?
- Are the conditions met for achieving capacity building?
- Are mechanisms being put in place for transferring the governance/ leading coordination role of FAO to the Government?

The Evaluation will examine not only how FAO relates to central government but also to local governments, especially in view of the very weak central government; it will examine the extent to which the programme reinforces or undermines the development of local business and NGO capacity.

In reviewing FAO's assistance against the above criteria, an analysis will be carried out which will identify in particular:

- Strengths and factors that have contributed to the potential for FAO to take the lead, including the role of its long-standing presence in Afghanistan;
- Weaknesses including: internal constraints to effective coordination and management within FAO, including issues relating to linkages between the Regional Office and Headquarters, as well as between operational divisions (TCE and TCA), TCI and technical divisions, dichotomous approaches within the Organization, resource allocation, lines of reporting and authority; exogenous constraints to effective coordination and management;
- Opportunities for the FAO programme that should be taken advantage of;
- Emerging issues (strategic, operational or technical) at individual project or programme level that deserve attention from Management.

4. Proposed Methodology

As a formative evaluation, it is essential that the methodology be highly consultative and participative. As defined above, the evaluation will serve first and foremost internal purposes and should inform decisions with regard to the programme orientation (policies, strategies and modalities of operations). It is expected that the Evaluation will be fed by the findings and recommendations from the mid-term review of FAO Seeds Programme in Afghanistan focusing on emergency agricultural inputs distribution, which is planned to take place in two phases, the first one in February/March and the second one scheduled for July 2003. It should also be able to use the outputs of the Afghan Programme Management Information System (APMIS) currently being put into place in Kabul. Other evaluations done in the past on FAO projects in Afghanistan as well as project final reports will also be part of the documentation.

A *Desk Review* will be carried out at Headquarters. It will highlight salient issues and aspects to which the field mission should pay particular attention, define a set of indicators against which to evaluate the various components of the FAO programme, sample the field work and prepare desk project reviews.

A field mission will be carried out, focusing on performance and achievements of FAO's assistance. Consultations with stakeholders, including Afghan authorities, programme beneficiaries, field partners, donors, and both the international and national field staff will be given high importance. Appropriate field visits will be carried out to discuss with beneficiaries, covering various components of the Programme¹⁰⁶. Workshops will be organised at the end of the field mission in the country as well as in RAP and Headquarters) with the objective of exchanging views on findings, recommendations and lessons learned with stakeholders before report finalisation. If still on duty, the Monitoring, Information and Evaluation (MIE) Expert will provide initial information to the mission on programme progress and outcomes, as well as providing logistical and other support to the mission as needed during its fieldwork.

5. Team Composition

The evaluation will be managed and supported by PBEE. The Team Leader will be consulted as to the final terms of reference and the evaluation arrangements. The team will consist of:

- A Team Leader (PBEE or external) – Senior Evaluation Expert. The MTR will address issues of direct interest to FAO Senior management. Thus, the Team Leader should be a *senior expert*, with extensive experience in evaluation, post-emergency situations, organisational learning and strong communication skills. Ideally, the Team Leader will be familiar with FAO's functioning and structure. The team leader will particularly look at the overall strategy development and issues of programme balance and FAO's role vis-à-vis other agencies.
- An Evaluation officer (PBEE) who will contribute to analysis of institutional and economic aspects as well as beneficiary and food security and vulnerability aspects.
- Two External Specialists who will have the necessary expertise to cover between them agronomic, livestock and water-related issues.

In addition, there will be two national resource persons, assisting the team during the field mission.

6. Timing

The Evaluation will be carried out over nine weeks, including four weeks in Afghanistan and RAP.

Week 1-3: Headquarters – (consultation with staff, collection of information, desk review) Week 4-7: RAP- Afghanistan – RAP

Week 8: Headquarters – final consultation

Week 9: Finalisation of the report (Team leader + PBEE staff)

¹⁰⁶ A survey of beneficiaries of the Seeds Programme is currently being carried out and will be part of essential documentation of the mission.

Annex 2

Mission Itinerary

ROME

1. Desk review and consultation with staff in Rome 8 September – 5 October 2003

Meetings with staff from TCEO, TCER, TCED, AGPP, AGPC, ESNP, ESCG, ESAF, AGLW, FONP, TCOM, TCOS, TCA and ODG were held.

2. Flight Rome-Bangkok 5 October 2003

BANGKOK

1. Briefing at FAORAP (Bangkok): 6-7 October 2003

Meetings with staff from RAPD, RAPP, RAPO, RAPG, RAPS and RAPR were held.

2. Flight Bangkok-Dubai-Kabul: 7-8 October 2003

KABUL

1. Field Visit Afghanistan: 8-25 October 2003

<i>Day 1 Kabul</i>	
Wednesday 08 Oct	Arrival from Dubai and Islamabad Communications equipment and ID cards Check in Intercontinental Hotel
	Meeting with FAOR
	Security Briefing
<i>Day 2 Kabul</i>	
Thursday 09 Oct	General Briefing Meeting within FAO PM: Departure for Jalalabad by road Meeting with FAO Jalalabad staff Security Briefing
<i>Day 3 Jalalabad – Team 1</i>	
Friday 10 Oct	Irrigation projects Livestock Programme
<i>Day 4 Jalalabad</i>	
Saturday 11 Oct	AM: Horticulture projects / Olive plantation Debriefing with FAO Jalalabad staff PM: Return to Kabul by road
<i>Day 5 Kabul</i>	
Sunday 12 Oct	8:30: Meeting with Emergency Programme 11:00 USAID – Karri Goeldner (not confirmed) 13:30: Meeting with FAAHM Team

	17:00: European Commission – Arnaud Cauchois
<i>Day 6 Kabul/Herat</i>	
Monday 13 Oct	AM: Flight Kabul - Herat PM - Meeting with FAO Herat staff Meeting with UNAMA and other UN agencies Security briefing
<i>Day 7 Herat</i>	
Tuesday 14 Oct	Visit to Urdo Khan Research farm (crop improvement activities, horticulture activities, agro-meteorology) Visit to Irrigation projects in Enjil and Gozara districts Visit to Veterinary clinics
<i>Day 8 Herat</i>	
Wednesday 15 Oct	Visit to Khusk-e-Rabat Sangi District (emergency seed distribution, livestock, agro-meteorology) and interaction with farmers and DACAAR Interaction with NGOs
<i>Day 8 Herat / Kabul</i>	
Wednesday 15 Oct	14:00 Return from Herat – Rachel Bedouin and Nick Chapman 16:00 DFID – David Radcliffe
<i>Day 9 Kabul</i>	
Thursday 16 Oct	10:30 : WFP –VAM – Scott Ronchini 12:15 : UNAMA – Margareta Whalstrhomm 14:30 : UNHCR – Pablo Mateu 17:00: UNODC – Adam Bouloukos
<i>Day 9 Herat</i>	
Thursday 16 Oct	AM: Meeting with MAAH and MIWRE PM: Debriefing with FAO Herat staff Departure for Kabul – Carlos Tarazona, Roger Lough and Anthony Fitzherbert
<i>Day 10 Kabul</i>	
Friday 17 Oct	Meeting with Seed Programme team Meeting with Livestock Health and Production team Meeting with Irrigation Unit
<i>Day 11 Kabul</i>	
Saturday 18 Oct	AM: Village Poultry Scheme Meeting with FAO Auditor
<i>Day 12 Mazar and Kabul</i>	

Sunday 19 Oct	AM: Departure Mazar (A.Fitzherbert and Roger Lough) PM – Dehdadi and Mazar city of Balkh province, Experimental trails, Village poultry production, Artificial insemination, Milk Collection, Contracted Seed Growers, Fodder Crops, Veterinary Field Units, Vet. Lab and Horticulture activities
Sunday 19 Oct	Kabul – Meetings (N. Chapman, R. Bedouin and C. Tarazona) AM: The World Bank, Cooperazione Italiana and the Representatives of the Ministry of Finance (+UNDP Advisor) PM: The Vice-Ministry of Agriculture and the Policy Advisor from the Asian Development Bank (ADB)
<i>Day 13 Mazar and Kabul</i>	
Monday 20 Oct	Mazar – Pulikhumri - Meet President of Agriculture - ISE Seed Stock - Seed Growers in Doshi (lunch) - Locust Project (Kilagai) - Meteorology station - Veterinary clinic Night Pulikhumri Kabul - Report Writing and Meeting with the Ministry of Irrigation, Water Resources and Environment (MIWRE)
<i>Day 14 Mazar</i>	
Tuesday 21 Oct	AM: Return to Kabul PM: Report Writing
<i>Day 15 Kabul</i>	
Wednesday 22 Oct	AM: Report Writing PM – Qargha – An example of horticulture and irrigation rehabilitation
<i>Day 16 Kabul</i>	
Thursday 23 Oct	Workshop with stakeholders
<i>Day 17 Kabul</i>	
Friday 24 Oct	10:00 Meeting with FAO/GTZ Mission
<i>Day 18 Kabul</i>	
Saturday 25 Oct	AM: Return to Dubai and Islamabad

2. Flight Dubai – Bangkok and report writing 26-27 October 2003

BANGKOK

1. Debriefing at FAORAP: 28 October 2003

Meetings with staff from RAPD, RAPP, RAPE, RAPG and RAPR were held.

2. Flight Bangkok-Rome: 29 October 2003

ROME

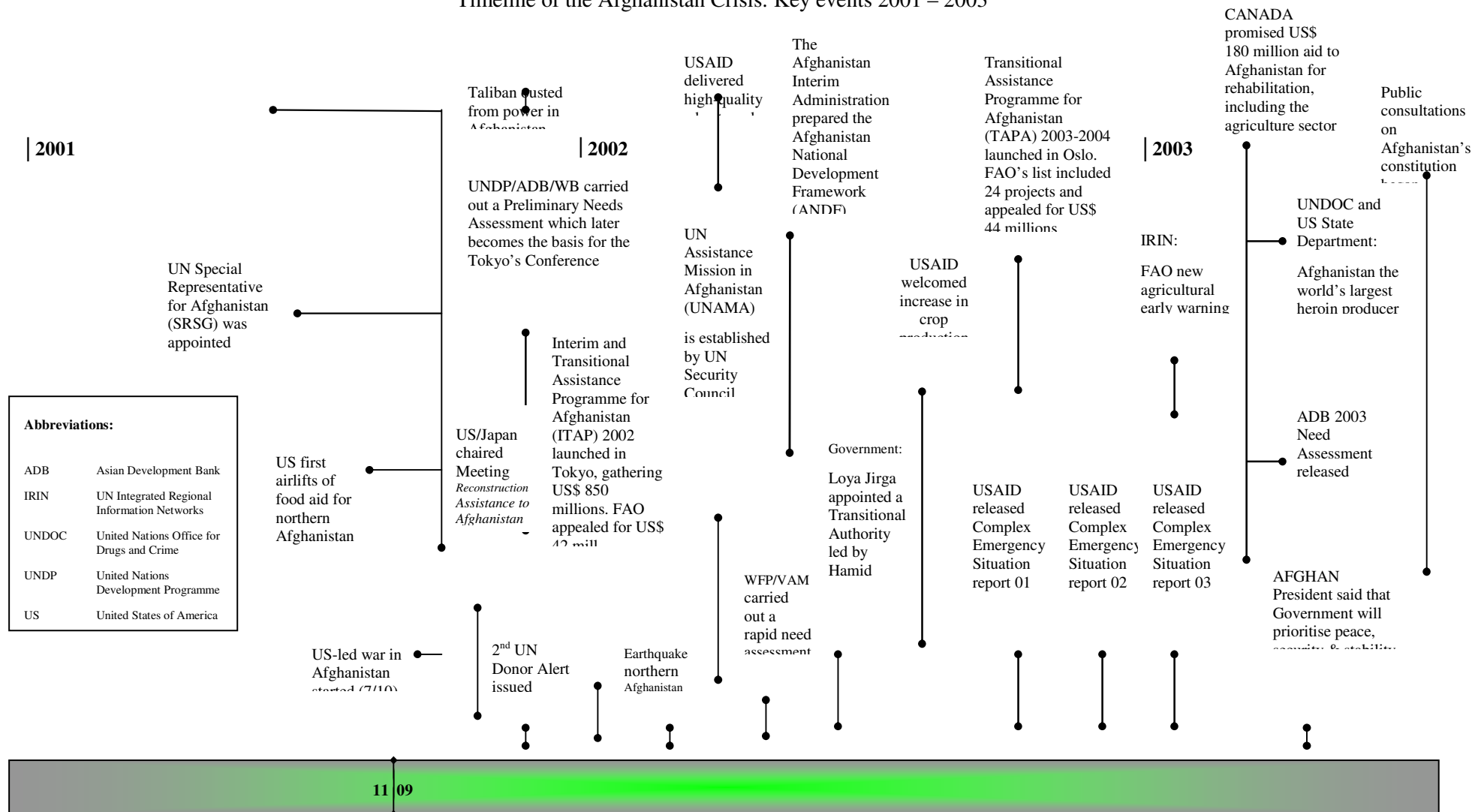
1. Debriefing sessions 14 November

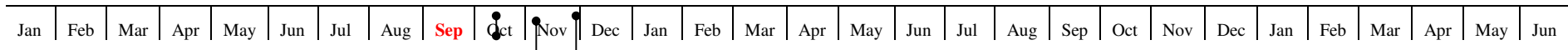
Meetings with staff from TCEO, TCER, TCED, TCIE, AGPP, ESAF, TCOM, TCOS, AFSP, AGLW, AGSF, ESNP, OCD, TCAR, TCAS and ODG were held.

2. Report Writing 17 – 28 November

Annex 3a

Timeline of the Afghanistan Crisis: Key events 2001 – 2003





1st UN Donor
Alert issued

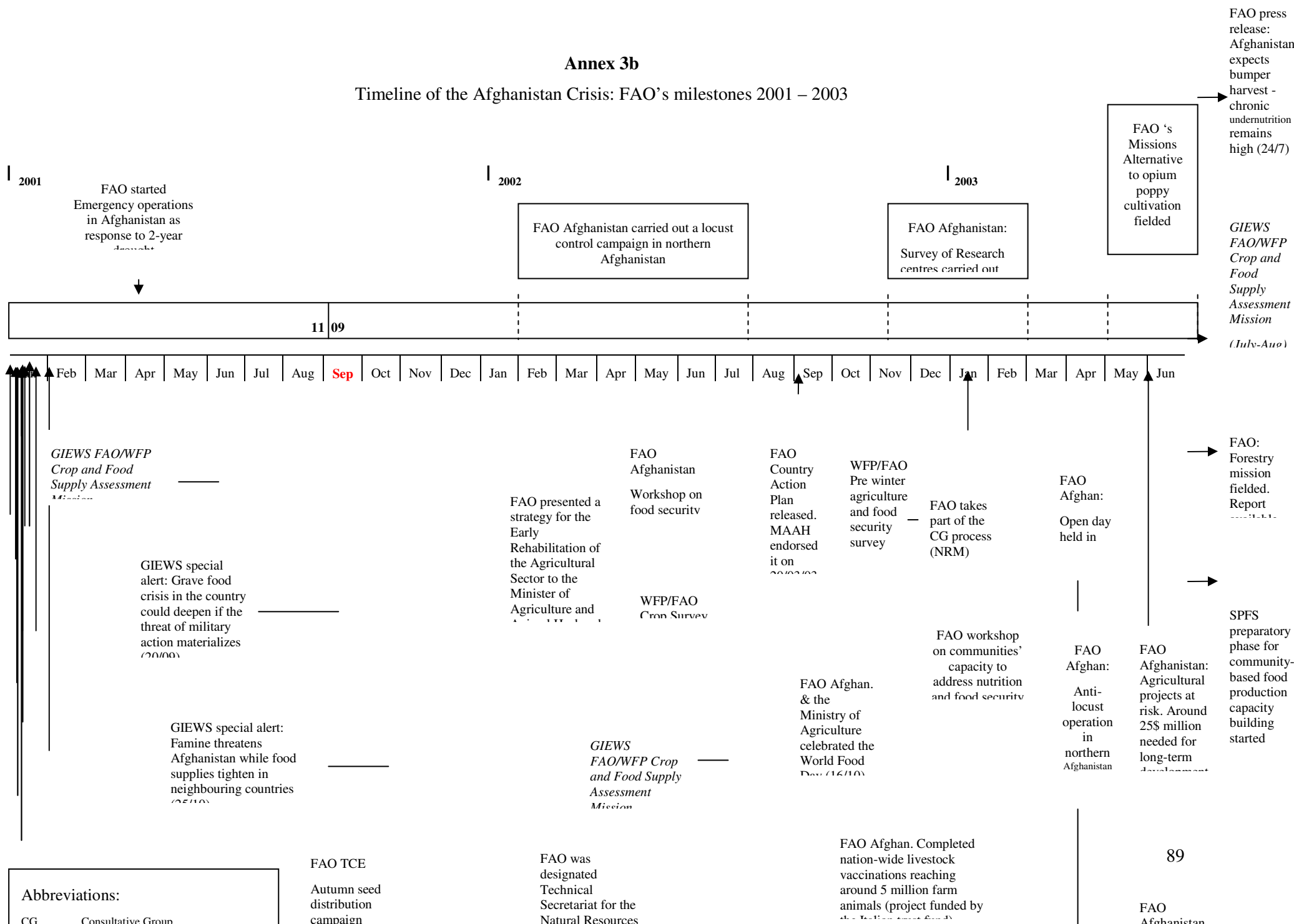
T A L I B A N R E G I M E

2nd UN
Donor alert
issued

ADB/WB/UNDP
Conference on Preparing
for Afghanistan
Reconstruction

Annex 3b

Timeline of the Afghanistan Crisis: FAO's milestones 2001 – 2003



→ FAO Crop
Output
Survey
released

Note: FAO's Livestock Census, Horticulture and Education Surveys are expected to be realized in November/December 2009

Annex 4

List of FAO's projects from 2001 onwards by sector

Start date	End date	Project Symbol	Project Title	Budget	Budget Holder
<i>Multidisciplinary projects (covering capacity building, horticulture, plant protection, emergency coordination, inputs distribution, etc)</i>					
2001-06	2003-06	OSRO/AFG/103/USA	Emergency Provision of Essential Input to Support Drought and War Affected Farmers in Afghanistan	\$500,000	TCEO
2001-11	2002-12	AFG/00/015/ /01/12	Stabilizing Rural Food Supply	\$3,251,229	RAPR
2001-12	2003-06	OSRO/AFG/107/NET	Coordination and Implementation of Emergency Agricultural Relief and Rehabilitation Programmes in Afghanistan (on Animal Health and Production)	\$1,000,000	TCEO
2002-01	2003-12	OSRO/AFG/110/NOR	Coordination and Implementation of Emergency Agricultural Relief Programme in Northern and Central Afghanistan (on Inputs distribution)	\$790,000	TCEO
2002-02	2003-12	OSRO/AFG/111/USA	Establishment of a Food Security Surveillance Unit and Integrated Support to Spring Seed Distribution and Water Resources Management to Drought and War Affected Rural Population	\$2,500,000	TCEO
2002-03	2003-06	OSRO/AFG/201/UK	Strengthening FAO's Capacity to Deliver a Coherent Programme Support for the Medium-term Rehabilitation of the Agricultural Sector in Afghanistan	\$2,842,000	TCEO
2002-09	2003-12	OSRO/AFG/212/ITA	Italian Voluntary Contribution to ITAP 2002/2003 in Afghanistan	\$4,627,260	TCEO
2002-10	2003-12	OSRO/AFG/210/NET	The Netherlands Contribution to ITAP 2002/2003	\$4,717,000	TCEO
2003-06	2007-05	GCP/AFG/029/UK	Development of Sustainable Agricultural Livelihoods in Eastern Hazarajat	\$5,992,655	RAPR
2003-11	2004-10	OSRO/AFG/304/GER	Coordination and provision of essential agricultural inputs to returnees and IDPs rural families in selected provinces of northern, southern and central regions of Afghanistan	\$1,193,059	TCEO
				<u>\$27,413,203</u>	
<i>Crop production (including agricultural inputs distribution and emergency coordination)</i>					
2001-04	2002-03	OSRO/AFG/101/GER	Distribution of Wheat and Chickpea Seed Fertilizer to Drought-Affected Farmers in Samangan Province	\$215,163	TCEO

2001-07	2002-06	OSRO/AFG/104/IRE	Distribution of Essential Inputs (Seed, Fertilizer and Equipment) for Seed Multiplication in Central Afghanistan	\$214,000	TCEO
2001-08	2002-12	OSRO/AFG/105/SWI	Emergency Seed Procurement for Drought and War Affected Farmers in Afghanistan	\$100,000	TCEO
2001-08	2002-12	UNTS/AFG/003/SID	Distribution of Seeds of Dry Land Varieties	\$428,038	RAPR
Start date	End date	Project Symbol	Project Title	Budget	Budget Holder

Crop production II (including agricultural inputs distribution and emergency coordination)

2001-11	2002-12	UNTS/AFG/004/SID	Stabilizing Rural Food Supply	\$361,348	RAPR
2001-12	2002-05	OSRO/AFG/102/EC	Provision of Essential Inputs to Support Drought and War Affected Farmers in Northern and North-Eastern Afghanistan	\$509,091	TCEO
2001-12	2003-12	OSRO/AFG/109/USA	Strengthening the Food Security Situation of Resilient War and Drought Affected Farm Families Through the Emergency Distribution of Wheat and Fertilizer in the Northern Province	\$1,095,000	TCEO
2002-01	2003-12	OSRO/AFG/112/GER	Facilitating the Reintegration Process of Returning Refugees and IDP Families Through the Provision of Agricultural Kits	\$500,000	TCEO
2002-01	2002-06	OSRO/AFG/108/EC	Facilitating the Reintegration Process of Returning Refugees and IDP Families Through the Provision of Agricultural Kits	\$1,000,000	TCEO
2002-02	2003-12	OSRO/AFG/113/IRE	Facilitating the Re-integration of Returning Refugees and IDP Families Through the Provision of Agricultural Kits	\$165,600	TCEO
2002-06	2003-12	OSRO/AFG/204/BEL	Facilitating the Re-integration of Returning Refugees and IDP Families through the Provision of Agricultural Kits	\$500,000	TCEO
2002-06	2003-12	OSRO/AFG/208/NOR	Procurement and Processing of Quality Declared Wheat Seed from Contracted Seed Producers in Afghanistan for Re-distribution to most Needy Farmers in Northern and Central Afghanistan for Autumn 2002 Season	\$536,350	TCEO
2002-06	2003-05	OSRO/AFG/205/ITA	Procurement and Processing of Quality Declared Wheat Seed from Contracted Seed Producers in Afghanistan for Re-distribution to Most Needy Farmers in Southeastern, Southwestern and Central Afghanistan for Autumn 2002 Season	\$1,218,400	TCEO
2002-06	2003-12	OSRO/AFG/206/GER	Procurement and Processing of Quality Declared Wheat Seed from Contracted Seed Producers in Afghanistan for Re-distribution to Most Needy Farmers in Northern and Central Afghanistan	\$1,230,570	TCEO

2002-07	2002-12	OSRO/AFG/209/GER	Coordination of Emergency Agricultural Relief Operations in Afghanistan	\$169,014	TCEO
2002-07	2003-06	OSRO/AFG/207/KUW	Provision of Farm Inputs to Facilitate the Resumption of Small-scale Agricultural Activities in Afghanistan	\$200,000	TCEO
2002-08	2003-09	OSRO/AFG/211/SWI	Procurement and Processing of Quality Declared Wheat Seed from Contracted Seed Producers in Afghanistan for Re-Distribution to Most Needy Farmers in Western and Northern Rainfed Areas of Afghanistan for Autumn Season 2002	\$563,000	TCEO
2002-10	2003-05	AFG/02/005/ /01/12	Fertilizer Distribution Project 2002	\$1,000,000	TCEO
2002-10	2004-09	GCP /AFG/025/GER	Development of a Sustainable Seed Programme in Southern Afghanistan	\$1,799,685	RAPR

Start date	End date	Project Symbol	Project Title	Budget	Budget Holder
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Crop production III (including agricultural inputs distribution and emergency coordination)

2003-01	2006-01	GCP /AFG/018/EC	Strengthening National Seed Production Capacity in Afghanistan	\$5,905,649	RAPR
2003-05	2004-01	OSRO/AFG/301/BEL	Emergency Assistance to Vulnerable Farmers in Central and Eastern Provinces of Afghanistan through the Provision of Basic Agricultural Inputs for Autumn Season 2003	\$537,057	TCEO
2003-06	2004-05	OSRO/AFG/303/NOR	Emergency assistance to returning IDPs and refugees through the provision of basic agricultural inputs.	\$511,000	TCEO
2003-06	2004-05	OSRO/AFG/302/SWI	Emergency Assistance to Vulnerable Farmers in Northern North-Eastern Provinces of Afghanistan through the Provision of Basic Agricultural Inputs	\$700,000	TCEO
2003-07	2004-02	OSRO/AFG/307/SWI	Emergency assistance to vulnerable farmers in northern and north-eastern provinces of Afghanistan through the provision of basic agricultural inputs	\$58,722	TCEO

See OSRO/AFG/103/USA, OSRO/AFG/210/NET

\$19,517,687

Water Resources and Irrigation

2002-10	2004-09	GCP/AFG/024/GER	Community-based Irrigation Infrastructure Rehabilitation and Institutional Strengthening of the Water Resources and Irrigation Sub-sector in the Western Region of Afghanistan	\$2,060,508	RAPR
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See OSRO/AFG/111/USA, OSRO/AFG/212/ITA, OSRO/AFG/210/NET

\$2,060,508

Livestock (Animal production and health)

2002-10	2004-06	GCP/AFG/021/GER	Development of Livestock Production Activities in Selected Districts of Afghanistan	\$1,137,986	RAPR
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2003-01	2003-06	TCP/AFG/2903	Emergency Protection of Kuchi Livelihoods through Providing Feed and Veterinary Care to Nucleus Breeding Flocks	\$398,000	TCEO
2003-08	2004-01	OSRO/AFG/305/USA	Vaccination campaign for livestock in Afghanistan	\$469,428	TCEO

See OSRO/AFG/103/USA, OSRO/AFG/107/NET, AFG/00/015/01/12, OSRO/AFG/212/ITA

\$2,005,414

Food Security and SPFS

2002-10	2003-06	GCP/AFG/020/GER	FAO/WFP Crop and Food Assessment Mission	\$90,000	RAPR
2002-10	2003-12	GCP/AFG/026/GER	Support to the Improvement of Food Security, Nutrition and Livelihoods in Afghanistan	\$928,797	RAPR
2002-11	2003-03	SPFM/AFG/2201	SPFS in Afghanistan: Exploratory Formulation Mission	\$33,044	RAPR
2003-06	2005-05	SPFP/AFG/2301	Special Programme for Food Security (SPFS) in Afghanistan - Preparatory Phase for Community-Based Food Production Capacity Building	\$447,060	RAPR
2003-03	2004-02	TCP/INT/2902	Support to ECO for the Preparation of a Regional Programme for Food Security	\$327,000	RAPR

See OSRO/AFG/111/USA

\$1,825,901

Start date	End date	Project Symbol	Project Title	Budget	Budget Holder
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Plant protection

2002-03	2002-12	OSRO/AFG/202/USA	Emergency Monitoring and Control of Locust and Sunnpest in Northern Afghanistan	\$305,000	TCEO
2002-03	2003-12	TCP/AFG/2801	Emergency Monitoring and Control of Locusts in Northern Afghanistan (ex-Advance Allocation)	\$391,000	TCEO

See OSRO/AFG/201/UK, OSRO/AFG/212/ITA

\$696,000

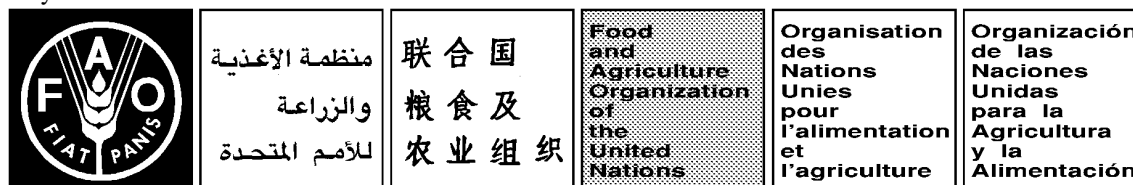
Capacity building

2001-12	2002-11	TCP/AFG/0166	TCP Facility for FAORs	\$13,000	FAPAK
2002-11	2003-06	TCP/AFG/2902	Promoting Institutional and Human Resource Capacity of Government Institutions in the Agricultural and Rural Sector	\$370,000	RAPR

See OSRO/AFG/201/UK, OSRO/AFG/212/ITA, OSRO/AFG/210/NET

\$383,000

Total Budget \$53,901,713



Annex 5

Questionnaire for the Mid-Term Evaluation of FAO's Post-Conflict Programme in Afghanistan

This form has been prepared to assist the team conducting the MTR of FAO's Afghanistan programme. It is intended to capture additional views and experiences from concerned individuals that have been connected with the FAO programme from 2001 to the present. All replies will be treated in confidence.

Please email your replies to Rachel.Bedouin@fao.org and Carlos.Tarazona@fao.org or, if not possible by e-mail, give it directly to one of the members of the Team.

Name:	
Position and responsibilities vis-à-vis the FAO Afghanistan programme:	
Sub-sector/ Theme(s) in the context of Afghanistan Programme:	
Location: (HQ, RAP, Kabul, Province (name))	
Start and end period when involved with the programme	Start Month/Year __ End Month/Year __
Contact email /telephone:	

A. Strategy

1. In your view, to what extent has FAO's programme in Afghanistan since Sept. 2001 been guided by a relevant, realistic strategy?
2. How well would you say FAO's programme or its individual projects were designed to achieve a link between emergency and developmental-type assistance? In practice, to what extent were such links established?

B. Efficiency

1. What has been your own role in the execution of FAO's Afghanistan programme? (Do you have clear TOR? To whom do your report?)
2. For those projects that you have been involved in, has the operational and financial management been adequate? Is it now? (This includes reporting lines, supervision, decision-making authority; the resources available).

-
3. Did you receive the appropriate technical support you expected and needed to carry out for your work in Afghanistan? (This includes clear guidelines and advice from FAO HQs, RAP or other FAO staff in Afghanistan)
 4. What have been the main strengths and weaknesses of the management of the programme? (Please indicate whether you refer to the whole programme or to specific components or aspects of the programme: such as emergency or long-term projects, sectoral or cross-sectoral sub-programmes).
 5. Overall, what do you think are, or have been, the main constraints to a smooth implementation of your activities?

C. Effectiveness and Impact

1. For those projects in which you have been involved, who have been the main beneficiaries (be as much specific as possible)?
2. What have been the main benefits received by the intended beneficiaries? How widely and equitably have these benefits been shared to both targeted and non-targeted beneficiaries?
3. How sustainable would you say the benefits are likely to be? (including constraints to sustainability)
4. How successful have the capacity building aspects been? How well has central / local Government been assisted and able to take over their responsibilities regarding the interventions in the sector?
5. Please indicate on what type of information you base your opinions

D. General

1. How do you assess FAO' strengths and weaknesses in implementing its Programme/Projects?
2. In your view, what have been FAO's comparative advantages in its operations in Afghanistan, compared to other UN agencies, NGOs, financial institutions, or bilateral donors?
3. What are the most important lessons you would draw from FAO's experience in Afghanistan for future post-conflict operations?

Given the TOR of this MTR, are there any other points that you would like to mention?