

AG 3794. Afghanistan: Research in Alternative Livelihoods Fund (RALF)

ANNUAL REPORT 19 January 2004 – 18 January 2005

Narrative Summary

Project Title: Research in Alternative Livelihoods Fund (RALF)
DFID Number: AG 3794
Project Manager: RALF Programme Manager (Acting): Elizabeth Bailey
Organisation: ICARDA (International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas)
Dates: 19 January 2004 – 18 January 2007
Total Budget: £ 3,000,210

Project Goal

Supergoal: Sustainable reduction and elimination of illicit poppy cultivation in Afghanistan.

Goal: Sustainable livelihoods in place for rural Afghans in poppy growing areas.

Background

Afghanistan has been the world's major supplier of illicit opium for a decade. The production and processing of narcotic drugs grossly distorts the economy and jeopardises the security and stability of the region as well as the development of Afghanistan. The Transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan adopted a National Drug Control Strategy (NDCS) with objectives of reducing poppy cultivation by 70% in five years and complete elimination in ten years.

However the livelihoods of a significant number of rural Afghans currently depend on growing opium poppy. If both the development and counter-narcotics objectives of the Government are to be achieved, sustainable alternative livelihoods must be identified for those who are currently engaged in illicit drug production.

The United Kingdom coordinates international counter-narcotics in Afghanistan. A 'UK Plan to Support Implementation of the Afghan National Drug Control Strategy', with objectives and implementation plans that parallel the NDCS, has been formally adopted. DFID's Transitional Country Assistance Plan (TCAP) contributes to this overall objective by focusing, *inter alia*, on supporting the development of sustainable livelihoods for poor Afghans. Without such support, there would be a substantial increase in poverty resulting from the elimination of the opium economy. A sustainable reduction in poverty depends on building the enabling environment and institutional base from which licit livelihoods can develop.

More than 20 years of conflict and neglect has left Afghanistan's system for research and extension devastated. The capacity and facilities currently available in Afghanistan are inadequate to respond to the challenge of finding viable alternatives to an entrenched economy based on an illicit crop. RALF circumvents this lack of capacity by involving research institutions outside Afghanistan, NGOs, as well as the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Food (MAAHF). The programme aims to contribute to MAAHF capacity building by involvement in project selection, in programme review, and in activities at the field level.

Project Objectives

The purpose of RALF is to develop and promote innovative alternative livelihood options for rural Afghans currently economically dependent on opium poppy.

Expected outputs of the project are:

- A competitive mechanism for funding innovative applied research projects tailored to the programme purpose.
- Recommended technologies and support services, tested and available for implementation.
- Improved capacity for applied research and extension in government and NGO partners.

The outcome of RALF will be licit alternatives to opium production that are practicable in the socio-economic environment of Afghanistan, and that are accessible to rural people. The beneficiaries will be the, predominantly poor, farming population and casual workers who currently depend on the illicit activity of growing poppy for their livelihood.

RALF operates through the mechanism of a competitive research fund (CRF) managed by ICARDA to mobilise innovative ideas for the development and promotion of alternative livelihoods opportunities in Afghanistan. Projects are proposed and implemented by 'mini-consortia' comprising a partnership that includes an international or non-Afghan research institution and an Afghan-based partner with experience in the area that fieldwork is to be carried out. This combination is intended to maximise synergy between international research practice and knowledge of the local Afghan context.

Projects are also intended to include an element of capacity building for Afghan Government and NGO collaborators. Apart from generating practical results of research that can be applied by rural people, RALF will also test the CRF mechanism, which may provide lessons for Afghanistan's emerging broader agricultural research strategy.

Achievements in Current Year

Achievements against the logical framework, by activity, are attached. The following provides a more detailed narrative of achievements by output in the first year.

Output 1: A competitive mechanism for funding innovative applied research projects tailored to the programme purpose.

RALF is managed by ICARDA, which is responsible for managing the selection, supervision, and monitoring and evaluation of projects funded under the CRF. The CRF is implemented through Requests for Proposals (RFPs). Project selection is made through an autonomous Project Review Panel.

1. **Administrative and governance mechanisms:** The administrative and governance mechanisms for RALF are fully described in Annex 6 of the Project Memorandum.
 - **RALF website:** The RALF website was launched on 19 January 2004 at <http://www.icarda.cgiar.org/RALFweb/RALF.htm> and included the announcement of the first Request for Proposals (RFP), full guidelines and other provisions as described in Annex 6.
 - **Appointment of Programme Manager:** ICARDA advertised the position of the RALF Programme Manager early in 2004. The position was filled in May 2004, but the appointee separated from ICARDA in August 2004. Therefore, throughout most of 2004, ICARDA's Projects Officer acted part-time as Programme Manager and fulfilled all administrative requirements of the project.

A full-time Programme Manager, Dr. Najib Malik, has been appointed commencing 19 February 2005.
 - **Project Review Panel:** An independent Project Review Panel (PRP) was appointed during February-March 2004 comprising:
 - The ICARDA designated Programme Manager.
 - A representative of the Afghanistan MAAHF.
 - A representative of DFID: Senior Rural Livelihoods Adviser, Mr. David Radcliffe.
 - Three independent external reviewers, including:
 - an authority on rural development and alternative livelihoods in Afghanistan (Dr. Adam Pain)
 - an agricultural scientist (Dr. Adel Aboul Naga), and
 - a social development specialist (Dr. Adrienne Martin)

2. Calls for proposals and selection of projects

- **First Request for Proposals (RALF01)**

The 1st Request for Proposals (RFP) was announced on 19 January 2004 with the launch of the RALF website. Full guidelines and proposal proforma were provided. The deadline for submission was 15 March 2004.

A total of 21 proposals were received in response to the first RFP. (*Full listing was provided with last progress report*). The proposals were circulated to the PRP for review, with each proposal reviewed by at least four Panel members. Panel members were asked to assess the proposals by providing a score for each of the desirable criteria listed in the RFP guidelines.

The entire PRP met on 8th-9th April 2004, at ICARDA, Aleppo, to review collectively the proposals, based on the initial scores provided by each Panel member. Decisions were based on consensus.

Based on this review, two proposals were recommended for acceptance subject to some specific recommendations. A further seven proposals were considered to be potentially fundable, but required further modification. The proponents were provided with full comments and asked to provide modifications to their proposal, together with a letter responding to the Panel's comments, within four weeks of being notified. These revised proposals were then circulated to the Panel for review.

Based on this second round of review, a further five proposals were selected for funding.

In short: a total of **seven projects** were selected for funding from the first RFP

The draft Project Agreements between ICARDA and each Project Leader were sent to all seven selected projects in early June 2004. It took longer than expected to conclude these contractual arrangements with some projects. Delays in concluding some agreements delayed disbursement of first tranche funding to some projects.

- **Second RFP (RALF02)**

There was general agreement by the PRP that the time provided for preparation of proposals in the first RFP was too short. The Panel concluded that higher quality proposals would be obtained, and the review process made more efficient, through a two stage process: submission of brief Concept Notes to be short-listed by the Review Panel; short-listed Concept Notes would then be invited to submit full proposals, with selection to be made in the second meeting of the Panel.

The 2nd RFP was issued on 20 June 2004. The deadline for submission of Concept Notes was 9 August 2004. The requests for full proposals for short-listed projects were issued 9 September 2004, with a deadline for submission of 18 October 2004.

Twenty Concept Notes were received in response to the second RFP. Based on the review and scores of the Panel, ten proponents were requested to submit full proposals. Subsequently, one proponent decided not to develop the full proposal. The nine proposals were circulated to Panel members for review and scoring according to the criteria listed in the RALF guidelines.

The PRP met on 6th-7th December 2004, at ICARDA, Aleppo, to review collectively the proposals. One proposal was recommended for funding with some specific recommendations. A further three proposals were considered to be potentially fundable, but required further modification. The Panel discussed these three proposals at length. There was concern that although they represented research on potentially feasible alternative livelihoods, the proposals were inadequate and not well formulated. It was proposed that some Panel members would work with the proponents to improve the project design.

At the time of reporting, Panel members were working with the proponents of the three proposals.

Presuming that these are accepted for funding, **a total of eleven projects** will be funded by

RALF. These are summarized in Table 1. The selected projects represent a balanced geographical spread over poppy producing regions, and a diverse thematic spread,

- ***Monitoring and evaluation of projects***

In the absence of a full-time Programme Manager, ICARDA has not yet commenced active field monitoring and evaluation of the projects, but progress has been monitored against the project logframes and milestones. All selected projects include separate project logframes and workplans which are intended to facilitate monitoring of progress towards the project and RALF objectives. The first progress reports from the Projects were received in December 2004, reporting on progress against logframe indicators and milestones. These are attached as Annex 1.

However, in light of concerns over the quality of proposals (see below under Output 2), and especially the quality of logframes, Panel members suggested that more rigorous and standardised methods of monitoring and impact assessment would be needed. Two of the independent Panel members, Adam Pain and Adrienne Martin, offered their assistance in this respect. They subsequently submitted a proposal for contributing to the M&E process by (a) undertaking a comprehensive review of the indicators and monitoring processes within the RALF projects, (b) based on these, considerations of the wider opium poppy economy and the geographical spread of the projects developing a draft discussion paper laying out a proposal for cross-project monitoring, indicators and process; (c) presenting the discussion paper for discussion and debate at the first projects workshop with a view to moving towards an agreed monitoring framework.

At the second PRP meeting, this was discussed at length and the Panel recommended that ICARDA decide whether it wishes to commission the position paper as a resource for the Programme Manager to work with and for discussion at the first RALF Project Workshop.

Output 2: Recommended technologies and support services, tested and available for implementation.

- ***International- Afghan 'partnerships'***

Proposals were requested from 'mini-consortia' including an international research institution and an Afghan partner. 21 proposals were received in response to the 1st RFP and 20 Concept Notes were received in response to 2nd RFP. Proponents included a range of international partners (CGIAR centres, international NGOs, UK and US universities) and Afghan partners (Afghan branches of international NGOs, local NGOs, MAAHF and other Ministries, Afghan universities, etc). The final selected projects include a diverse range of partnerships (see Table 1).

- ***Quality of proposals***

There was a wide diversity in the quality of proposals received in the first RFP. Many proposals demonstrated a poor understanding of the complexity of the opium economy. Panel members had expected more targeted and knowledgeable problem analyses. Even when proposals presented a good problem analysis, they did not present convincing arguments as to how the proposed interventions would address these problems and leverage a change in poppy production and livelihoods.

In general, logframes were poorly formulated. Many projects did not adequately address the criteria related to stakeholder groups and the particular needs of poor stakeholders/vulnerable groups. Proposals tended to be weak on capacity building and institutional support.

As noted above, quality may have reflected the short time available for preparation of proposals in the 1st RFP, and consequently the process for the 2nd RFP was adjusted to a two stage process, to provide feedback from the PRP in development of quality proposals. It was also recommended to give additional guidelines for proposals to (a) strengthen the linkage between problem analysis and proposed interventions and request clear hypotheses of how the interventions are expected to leverage change, and how such change would

impact on poppy production and livelihoods; (b) strengthen the section on monitoring and evaluation, to include monitoring of the processes (causalities) of change in relation to poppy production and how this will be measured (indicators); and (c) emphasise the importance of a well formulated logframe.

The PRP was still concerned with the quality of proposals received in the 2nd RFP and, consequently, it was proposed that some Panel members would work with the proponents to improve the project design.

The PRP concluded that a proactive way to engender better proposals is needed (e.g. through targeted calls for proposals). This is something that may come out from an analysis of gaps in the programme during the first Project Workshop, scheduled for April 2005.

- ***Progress in achieving output***

The first progress reports from the Projects were received in December 2004 and are attached as Annex 1. A summary of project's achievement is given below.

Research is progressing, but it is too early to assess whether the projects funded by RALF are yielding results that will translate into practicable recommendations that can be used to improve incomes or food security, or provide employment. The first round of projects (RALF01) have been underway for just over 6 months, and many were delayed by security concerns, and the second round (RALF02) will get underway in February/March 2005.

It should be noted that the majority of projects have been delayed by staff changes and/or security concerns in the location of projects. Due to delays in start-up, some projects have adjusted their work plans. Most projects are concerned about the short duration of the RALF programme (effectively 2½ years for RALF01 projects), and some have enquired about the possibility of no-cost extensions beyond December 2006.

The progress of projects towards achieving this output and in identifying the support services needed to support improved technologies will be assessed in the first RALF Project Workshop scheduled for April 2005, and through the M&E framework to be discussed there.

- ***Summary of project progress through December 2004***

RALF01-03: Village Decision Driven Research Project

The planned training for both DACAAR and the MAAHF and development of a survey have been postponed due to security concerns. These are now scheduled for January 2005. A revised work plan has been submitted. The training will include survey techniques, including interviewing, enumerating, entering data and analysis of data. The workshop will further develop the survey that will be used in the spring.

RALF01-04: Introduction, Evaluation and Promotion of Appropriate Crop Legumes and Vegetables for Eastern Afghanistan

Two training programs have been conducted at Nangarhar University. The first was for 16 University professionals on monitoring, supervision and data collection of operational research plots in the Province, and on drip irrigation systems, layout, operation and maintenance management. The second was for 23 lead farmers selected from the ten target districts on the fundamentals of irrigation, drawing on farmers' extensive experience with canal and karez systems. A pressure treadle pump was demonstrated along with different configurations of drip irrigation applicable to smallholder vegetable growing.

An experimental trial has been set up at Nangarhar University Research Farm.

A preliminary assessment of existing irrigation systems and practices has been undertaken and options identified. Demonstration sites will be established both to demonstrate drip irrigation technology and also to investigate the requirements for incorporating field level distribution by drip irrigation in conjunction with a continuous flow water supply from the karez.

An assessment of equipment and hardware needs and availability in Nangarhar has been completed. Plant breeding material has been collected for trials and seed multiplication purposes.

With the delay in project start-up, the planned introduction of some new crops has been replaced with other crops. A revised work plan has been submitted to the RALF Programme Manager.

RALF01-07: Restorative Agriculture and Rural Economy (RARE) Research Project

A detailed implementation plan has been drafted. The topics for the cropping trials have been chosen: a) out-of-season vegetable production, b) mushroom production, and c) essential oil crop production. The topics for the processing trials have been chosen: a) edible oil processing, b) apricot processing using sulphur, c) tomato paste making, d) essential oil processing, and e) pomegranate juice making.

Terms of reference for the Organic Production Feasibility Study were drawn up and HDRA (UK) has been identified as the institution to carry out the study.

Activities were delayed due to a change in staffing at Mercy Corps. However they are confident that the full programme of research will take place. A modified Work Plan will be submitted.

RALF01-08: Innovative financial mechanisms for improving the livelihoods of rural Afghans currently economically dependent on opium poppy

Implementation of the project has been delayed by the ill-health of the principal investigator. Two attacks on AKDN offices in Badakhshan resulted in temporary withdrawal of AKDN from Badakhshan.

NRI has submitted a revised logframe and work plan to RALF Programme Manager. NRI livelihoods and micro-finance specialists travelled to Badakhshan in December. No results were available at time of reporting. One financial product is fully developed i.e. terms and condition, target clientele, procedures, links with non-financial services, required information systems and institutional capability. Fieldwork is now underway in Badakhshan and other project activities are expected to take place more or less as originally planned.

RALF01-09: Marketing of livestock and livestock products: Market demand, potential returns to producers and constraints to market access

The start of the project was initially delayed until after the elections in Afghanistan. Following a preliminary review of secondary data and discussions with the organisations in Afghanistan it was found that some work has already been carried out on the marketing of poultry and poultry products and in the dairy sub-sector. Therefore, the project is focusing on the beef and small ruminant sub-sectors.

Preliminary informal interviews have been held with traders in one of the livestock markets in Kabul to inform the design of a trader survey. Draft survey instruments have been prepared for interviews with traders and farmers. These will be field tested in early December, prior to the focus group discussions, surveys and semi-structured interviews in January/February 2005.

Therefore the project will focus on the following areas: Kabul, Kunduz, Takhar, Kandahar, Helmund and Mazar.

The Ministry of Agriculture is fully involved: it was agreed with the Ministry that a small Steering Group be established.

RALF01-11: Improved rural incomes from better forage production and sales of milk products

Start-up of the project was delayed to November 2004 because of ill health of the Principal Investigator and a Project Coordinator to be based in Afghanistan was not hired due to security concerns. The project workplan was revised to account for the delay in the start-up.

Five districts in Baghland Province were selected for the implementation of the project. For each district, five communities, and 15 households per community, have been selected based upon the criteria listed in the project document and existing characterization data from AKF.

Preliminary farmer-participatory workshops have been conducted to identify farmers' perceptions of their major constraints to forage and milk production. Draft survey instruments have been prepared for interviews with the selected households in February 2005.

Seeds of native and introduced winter and summer forage crops have been acquired for on-farm demonstration and testing.

It has been agreed with the Ministry of Agriculture to use Baghlan Center, where the Ministry has a veterinary clinic and a milk processing unit, as one of the project sites.

RALF01-16: Western Afghanistan Agroenterprise Action Research Project

Security threats in Herat and Ghor Provinces delayed the initiation of project field activities to November 2004. Given the deterioration of security in western Afghanistan, CRS added the District of Pashtun Zargon to its project areas to mitigate delays to project implementation. Pashtun Zargon is a poppy growing area. It is more accessible than Ghor, particularly in winter months, making it easier for field staff and researchers to conduct work.

Project activities have included two field trips to Pashtun Zargon District. The first field trip in early November involved meetings with village leaders conducted by three local field agronomists. In 12 villages, leaders organized meetings in late November with farmers who were interested in participating in cumin and pea trials this winter. Cumin and pea demonstration plots have been established on 36 farms in Pashtun Zargon. Field Activities in Ghor will start in January/February 2005.

Sub-sector analyses of supply/value chains are nearly completed for cumin and saffron trade in western Afghanistan. A technical working group for saffron producers and traders in and around Herat City has been formed. It was decided not to form a technical working group for cumin producers because the trade in the Western Region is dominated by a few large, aggressive traders. CRS is pricing cumin cleaning equipment to evaluate profitability and appropriate scale (tons/day).

CRS is initiating project activities (with private funding) in Sharak District (Ghor) to improve availability and accessibility of water in drought affected areas through promotion of water harvesting technologies in micro-watersheds. These activities will complement the RALF Agroenterprise activities.

Output 3: Recommended technologies and support services, tested and available for implementation.

- ***Capacity building in MAAHF***

The MAAHF member (Deputy Minister) actively participated in the 1st PRP meeting to review proposals, supported by an expatriate adviser. However, he did not participate in the review of the 2nd RFP proposals and did not participate in the 2nd PRP meeting, but was represented by an expatriate adviser.

As a result, MAAHF can not be said to be fully conversant with operating a CRF mechanism. The CRF was managed by ICARDA and was essentially electronically based (web site announcements and submissions by email). Limited email facilities of MAAHF are a contributory factor, plus English language limitations. Throughout the CRF, MAAHF was advised by expatriate advisers, who provided valuable input to the review process and to modification of some proposals.

However, means for improving the capacity within MAAHF need to be considered in the remainder of the RALF Programme. The Programme manager will include provincial research and extension staff in field visits to project sites. MAAHF (Deputy Minister and research and extension professionals) will be invited to participate fully in the 1st RALF Project Workshop scheduled for April 2005.

- ***Capacity building within RALF Projects***

On-the-job training is factored into project logframes and workplans, but, as noted above, proposals tended to be weak on capacity building and institutional support. The extent of capacity building needs to be reviewed in the 1st RALF Projects Workshop. This could be factored into the review of the indicators and monitoring processes within the RALF projects (see Activity 1.5).

- **“Lesson sharing workshops”**

The first “lesson sharing workshop” (RALF Projects Workshop) was initially scheduled for November 2004. It has now been rescheduled for April 2005. In the interim, a one day meeting with all RALF Projects has been scheduled for February 2005, immediately prior to the FHCRAA¹ Steering Committee Meeting, in which all RALF projects will participate.

With respect to the Annual Projects Workshop, this was discussed during the second PRP meeting and the Panel recommended:

- One day should be open to donors and other key stakeholders, and therefore will require formal presentations. In addition to formal presentations by each project, it was proposed to include presentations by:
 - David Radcliffe on where RALF sits within the overall counter-narcotics program;
 - Adam Pain on the overall research approach on alternative livelihoods within the opium economy of Afghanistan;
 - the Programme Manager on an overview of RALF.
- A second day should be reserved for informal working sessions to discuss common issues between projects. The Project Leaders should be canvassed on the issues they wish to discuss. Potential common issues include:
 - baselines/indicators for monitoring impact;
 - definition of outcomes;
 - market surveys/assessments/analysis: methodologies and potential to combine and/or for collaboration in market assessments;
 - analysis of the process of change and the differentiation between different stakeholders and beneficiaries.

David Radcliffe noted that it is proposed to link the DFID annual review of RALF with the RALF workshop. DFID would then be in a better position to judge whether to extend the programme, seek additional funding, etc.

Planned Activities for Next Year

Output 1: A competitive mechanism for funding innovative applied research projects tailored to the programme purpose.

- **Competitive Research Facility:**

The competitive mechanism is in place. A further request for proposals will not be made unless further funding comes available.

Three RALF02 proposals are currently being modified in consultation with PRP members. Once approved, Project Agreements with these projects will be concluded and the first tranche funding disbursed.

- **Project Review Panel:** The PRP is expected to play a continuing advisory role in the programme, beyond the review of proposals. All PRP members will be invited to attend the first RALF Project Workshop scheduled for April 2005.
- **RALF website:** The RALF website is intended to serve both as a centre for information and publicity for the RALF programme and as a means for projects to exchange and share information. The website will be updated and expanded to include project reports, proceedings of annual meetings, etc., and provide a forum for exchange of information, reports, etc., between RALF projects (restricted to project participants).

¹ Future Harvest Consortium for Rebuilding Agriculture in Afghanistan: a consortium of CGIAR Centers, international research institutes, US Universities and NGOs established in 2002. FHCRAA is governed by a Steering Committee representing major stakeholders, which is chaired by ICARDA and the Ministry of Agriculture.

- **Monitoring and Evaluation of projects:**

ICARDA will confirm acceptance of the Panel members' proposal and contract the two Panel members to prepare the discussion paper for discussion at first RALF Project workshop to be held in April 2005.

Based on an agreed monitoring framework, the Programme Manager will undertake active M&E of RALF projects, which will include periodic field visits and interaction with local staff of the implementing agencies, as well as monitoring progress against logframe indicators and workplan milestones. .

Output 2: Recommended technologies and support services, tested and available for implementation.

The progress of projects towards achieving this output and in identifying the support services needed to support improved technologies will be assessed in the first RALF Project Workshop scheduled for April 2005, and through the M&E framework to be discussed there.

Output 3: Recommended technologies and support services, tested and available for implementation.

An initial meeting of the RALF Programme Manager with all Project Leaders has been scheduled for February 2005, immediately prior to the FHCRAA Steering Committee Meeting. All RALF Projects will also participate in the FHCRAA Steering Committee Meeting and will share experiences with other projects operating under the FHCRAA umbrella.

The first "lesson sharing workshop" (RALF Projects Workshop) is scheduled for April 2005. The DFID annual review of RALF will take place at the same time.

The Workshop will be an important milestone in the progress of RALF, and will:

- Assess progress within each project towards the ultimate objectives of RALF;
- Discuss a monitoring and evaluation framework, based on a review of logframe indicators in each project;
- Share lessons learned and discuss common issues between projects;
- Assess the extent of capacity building conducted by projects.

The Programme Manager will circulate a draft agenda and solicit comments and input from participants on issues that they wish to discuss.

Table 1. RALF Projects

Proj No.	Implementing Agencies (lead in bold)	Short Title	Location	Focus	Duration
1st round projects (2004-2006)					
01-03:	Washington State University Danish Committee for Aid to Afghan Refugees (DACCAR) Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry (MAAHF)	Village Decision Driven Research Project	Laghman	Village organizations, livelihood analysis and identify alternatives, marketing	1-Jun-04 to 31-Dec-06
01-04:	Relief International World Vegetable Centre Nangahar University International Development Enterprises	Introduction, Evaluation and Promotion of Appropriate Crop Legumes and Vegetables for Eastern Afghanistan (CLVEA)	Nangarhar	Legumes (soybean, mung bean) and vegetables; market analysis and market promotion	1-Jun-04 to 31-Dec-06
01-07:	Mercy Corps Afghanistan Centre for Arid Zone Studies MAAHF (Helmand and Kandahar Provinces)	Restorative Agriculture and Rural Economy Research Project	Helmand and Kandahar	Specialty crops; testing methods of intensified production; agro-processing enterprises; feasibility study of organic export market	1-Jun-04 to 31-Dec-06
01-08:	Natural Resources Institute, UK Aga Khan Foundation	Innovative financial mechanisms for improving the livelihoods of rural Afghans currently economically dependent on opium poppy	Badakhshan	Micro/small enterprise development; financial mechanisms; micro-finance/credit;	1-Jun-04 to 31-Dec-06
01-09:	Macaulay Research Consultancy Services Ltd., UK: Mercy Corps MAAHF ICARDA	Marketing of livestock and livestock products: Market demand, potential returns to producers and constraints to market access.	Kunduz, Takhar, Daikundi, Kandahar & Helmand Provinces	Investigation of marketing chains for livestock and livestock products; quantifying trade in livestock products; identifying market opportunities	1-Jun-04 to 31-Jan-05
01-11:	ICARDA Aga Khan Foundation MAAHF Macaulay Research	Improved rural incomes from better forage production and sales of milk products	Baghlan	Increasing livestock productivity; forage and milk production; milk processing and marketing,	1-Jun-04 to 31-Dec-06
01-16:	Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Afghanistan ICRISAT:	Western Afghanistan Agroenterprise Action Research Program	Ghor	Development of market linkages and agroenterprises: high-value crop production and small-scale value-adding activities.	1-Jun-04 to 31-Dec-06

Proj No.	Implementing Agencies (lead in bold)	Short Title	Location	Focus	Duration
2nd round projects (2005-2006) Provisional					
02-02	DACCAR Washington State University, USA MAAHF	Research in sustainable production and successful marketing of saffron as an alternative to opium poppy cultivation	Pashtun Zarghun District, Herat.	Production, processing and marketing of saffron; growers associations.	15-Jan-05 to 31-Dec-06
02-05	Joint Development Associates International (JDA), Afghanistan CIMMYT Cornell University Aga Khan Foundation/Balkh Credit Union (BCU)/World Council of Credit Unions, Inc. (WCCU)	Increased productivity and profitability of wheat-based cropping system to reduce reliance on poppy in Northern Afghanistan	Balkh, Baghlan, Badakhshan	Improving wheat-based system through introduction of high value crops (e.g. oilseeds) and conservation tillage; development of market pathways and business plans for new crops and value added products.	15-Jan-05 to 31-Dec-06
02-07	Novib-Oxfam, Netherlands NGOs (AKF, CHA, Swisspeace)-Afghanistan University of Kabul / MAAHF-Dept. of Forestry / Anadolu University- Turkey	Multi stakeholder program on natural ingredients for food, pharmaceuticals and cosmetics in Afghanistan	Khost, Patika, Badakhshan, Baghlan, Bamyan, Herat, Ghor, Mazar, Farah and Faryab	Promoting employment and income opportunities through "value chain analysis" of six natural ingredients; processing technologies; analysis of international quality standards	15-Jan-05 to 31-Dec-06
02-11	ICARDA Central Institute of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (CIMAP), India MAAHF	Cultivation of mint as a viable alternative livelihood in East and North East of Afghanistan	Baghlan, Helmand, Kunduz, Nangarhar and Takhar provinces	Increased production of spearmint for culinary and medicinal uses; introduction of improved varieties of peppermint for value-added products (oil and menthol); domestic and international market analysis.	15-Jan-05 to 31-Dec-06

ACHIEVEMENTS AGAINST LOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Project Outputs and Activities	OVIs (from logical framework)	Achievements During Reporting Period (19 January 2004-18 January 2005) and Comments	Planned Achievements During Next Reporting Period (19 January 2005-18 January 2006)
<p>Output 1 - A competitive mechanism for funding innovative applied research projects tailored to the programme purpose.</p>	<p>1.1. Administrative and governance mechanisms in place for CRF 3 months after project initiation.</p> <p>1.2. At least 4 high quality applied research and development projects selected and first tranche funding disbursed within 6 months of project start; and at least 10 projects (cumulative total) selected and first tranche funding disbursed within 18 months of project start.</p>	<p>1.1. Administrative and governance mechanisms were in place 3 months after project initiation. Position of Programme Manager was announced; RALF website was established; first call for proposals announced; and a Project Review Panel appointed.</p> <p>ICARDA's Projects Officer, Elizabeth Bailey, acted as Programme Manager, until full-time Manager appointed. Full-time Manager was appointed 19 January 2005.</p> <p>1.2. Seven projects selected in first call for proposals (RALF01). Project agreements concluded in July 2004. Delays in concluding some agreements delayed disbursement of first tranche funding.</p> <p>A further four projects (RALF02) were approved (in principle) in December 2004. Three of these needed further modification.</p> <p>Cumulative total of 11 projects selected.</p>	<p>With appointment of Programme Manager, additional administrative mechanisms (e.g. expansion of RALF website) will be completed.</p> <p>Three RALF02 proposals to be modified in consultation with PRP members.</p> <p>Project Agreements with RALF02 projects to be concluded. First tranche funding for RAL02 projects to be disbursed. All will be completed within 18 months of project start.</p>
<p>Activity 1.1 - Establish management arrangements for CRF.</p>	<p>Update guideline on CRF management (Annex 6) if required within 3 months of project start.</p>	<p>Guidelines for CRF management (Annex 6) did not require updating. They were used as reference point for development of the CRF. The RALF website http://www.icarda.cgiar.org/RALFweb/RALF.htm was launched on 19 January 2004, including announcement of first Request for Proposals (RFP), full guidelines and other provisions as described in Annex 6.</p>	<p>Activity completed</p>
<p>Activity 1.2 Select and Recruit PRP members.</p>	<p>PRP in place in time to review first batch of proposals (2 months after project start).</p>	<p>An independent Project Review Panel was appointed during February-March 2004. The 1st PRP meeting was held in April 2004.</p>	<p>Activity completed</p>
<p>Activity 1.3 Issue calls for proposals</p> <p>Activity 1.4 Review and select projects</p>	<p>First batch of projects approved 4 months after project start (second batch 18 months after project start).</p>	<p>First RFP was issued 19 January 2004. Deadline for submission of proposals was 15 March 2004. The entire PRP met on 8-9 April 2004 to review the proposals. Seven projects were selected.</p> <p>The 2nd RFP was issued 20 June 2004. The second batch of projects (RALF02) was selected during 2nd PRP meeting on 6-7 December 2004. Four projects were selected. Of these some required further modification.</p>	<p>Activity completed</p>

Project Outputs and Activities	OVIs (from logical framework)	Achievements During Reporting Period (19 January 2004-18 January 2005) and Comments	Planned Achievements During Next Reporting Period (19 January 2005-18 January 2006)
Activity 1.5 Monitor and evaluate projects	All projects monitored by ICARDA (using external consultants when appropriate) before project month 30.	PRP members suggested that more rigorous and standardised methods of monitoring and impact assessment are needed. Two Panel members submitted a proposal for contributing to the M&E process by (a) undertaking a comprehensive review of the indicators and monitoring processes within the RALF projects, (b) based on these, considerations of the wider opium poppy economy and the geographical spread of the projects develop a draft discussion paper laying out a proposal for cross-project monitoring, indicators and process; (c) present the discussion paper for discussion and debate at the first projects workshop with a view to moving towards an agreed monitoring framework.	ICARDA will confirm acceptance of proposal and contract the two PRP members to prepare the discussion paper for discussion at first RALF Project workshop to be held in April 2005. Based on agreed monitoring framework, Programme Manager will undertake M&E of RALF projects.
Output 2. Recommended technologies and support services, tested and available for implementation.	<p>2.1. 75% of projects funded by the CRF yield positive results, translating into practicable recommendations that can be used to improve incomes or food security, or provide employment.</p> <p>2.2. Support services needed to support improved technologies clearly identified.</p>	First progress reports submitted by RALF01 projects in December 2004. Copies attached.	Progress of projects towards achieving this output will be assessed in first RALF Project Workshop and DFID Review scheduled for April 2005.
Activity 2.1: Form international-Afghan 'partnerships' and prepare proposals.	Good quality proposals prepared, potentially fundable under CRF.	<p>Proposals were requested from 'mini-consortia' including a research institution and an Afghan partner. 21 proposals were received in response to the 1st RFP and 20 Concept Notes were received in response to 2nd RFP. Proponents included range of international partners (CGIAR centres, international NGOs, UK and US universities) and Afghan partners (Afghan branches of international NGOs, local NGOs, Ministry of Agriculture, etc).</p> <p>Quality of proposals was variable. It was considered that the time provided for preparation of proposals in the 1st RFP was too short, and the process for the 2nd RFP was adjusted to a two stage process, to provide feedback from the PRP in development of quality proposals.</p> <p>The PRP was still concerned with the quality of proposals received in the 2nd RFP and, consequently, it was proposed that some Panel members could work with the proponents to improve the project design.</p>	<p>Activity completed.</p> <p>The PRP concluded that a proactive way to engender better proposals is needed (e.g. through targeted calls for proposals). This is something that may come out from an analysis of gaps in the programme during the first Project Workshop, scheduled for April 2005.</p>

Project Outputs and Activities	OVI (from logical framework)	Achievements During Reporting Period (19 January 2004-18 January 2005) and Comments	Planned Achievements During Next Reporting Period (19 January 2005-18 January 2006)
Activity 2.2: Implement projects (separate project logframes to be prepared)	Indicators developed in project logframes and workplans)	All selected projects include separate project logframes and workplans. PRP members are currently working with three projects provisionally selected in the 2 nd RFP to improve logframes.	The results of the review of the indicators and monitoring processes within the RALF projects and discussion of a monitoring framework (see Activity 1.5) may have bearing on the indicators in the project logframes.
Output 3: Improved capacity for applied research and extension in government and NGO partners.	3.1 MAAHF PRP member fully conversant with operating a CRF mechanism for agricultural research, by e.o.p 3.2 Participating Afghan GO/NGO partners have improved research and development skills by e.o.p. 3.3 ATA adopts lessons from RALF in new research strategy.	MAAHF can not be said to be fully conversant with operating a CRF mechanism. The CRF was managed by ICARDA and was essentially electronically based (web site announcements and submissions by email). Limited email facilities of MAAHF a contributory factor, plus English language limitations. Throughout the CRF, MAAHF was advised by expatriate adviser.	Means for improving the capacity within MAAHF need to be considered in remainder of project.
Activity 3.1: Engage MAAHF PRP member and mentor as required.	MAAHF member actively participating in reviews, PRP meetings and workshops.	The MAAHF member (Deputy Minister) actively participated in the 1 st PRP meeting to review proposals, supported by an expatriate adviser. MAAHF member did not participate in the review of the 2 nd RFP proposals and did not participate in the 2 nd PRP meeting, but was represented by an expatriate adviser.	MAAHF will be invited to participate fully in the 1 st RALF Project Workshop scheduled for April 2005
Activity 3.2: On-the-job training to be factored into project logframes and workplans.	Identifiable capacity building elements in projects	On-the-job training is factored into project logframes and workplans.	The extent of capacity building needs to be reviewed in the 1 st RALF Projects Workshop and should be factored into the review of the indicators and monitoring processes within the RALF projects (see Activity 1.5).
Activity 3.3: Conduct two lesson sharing workshops and participate in lesson sharing events sponsored by other projects	Workshops conducted with active stakeholder participation.	The first "lesson sharing workshop" (RALF Projects Workshop) was initially scheduled for November 2004. It has now been rescheduled for April 2005. In the interim, a one day meeting with all RALF Projects has been scheduled for February 2005, immediately prior to the FHCRAA Steering Committee Meeting, in which all RALF projects will participate.	First lesson sharing workshop scheduled for April 2005.