Afghanistan PEACE Project
Reducing Risk for the Kuchi People

Afghanistan
Pastoral Engagement, Adaptation and Capacity
Enhancement (PEACE) Project

Quarterly Report

July 1, 2010 through September 30, 2010

Submitted By:
University of California at Davis

In Collaboration With:
Texas A&M University System

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September 30, 2010
Introduction

The Afghanistan PEACE Project was able to acquire additional funding from the Office of Democracy and Governance that will extend one activity of the project until April 2011. The additional funds will be used to implement a portion of our previous conflict resolution program, called the Peace Ambassador Program. The PEACE Project has continued to work with the Independent Department of Kuchi, the President’s Commission on Tribal Affairs, and Sanayee Development Organization to deliver conflict resolution skills to both Kuchi and Village leaders across Afghanistan. One of the most important components of our previous program was the support we have been giving to provincial Kuchi Shuras. Provincial leaders have participated in a long series of trainings over the years and pass these lessons along during their monthly shuras. These Shuras have brought peace-building messages to hundreds of District and Clan leaders in Afghanistan, as a result. Although our modest budget was only capable of supporting 13 of the 31 Provinces represented by Kuchi Provincial Directors, we hope to find additional funding for this important effort. The PEACE Project's support of Kuchi Shuras ended this month.

We are also very pleased to announce that the Kabul University Herbarium Restoration Project had its opening ceremony in July to honor the Afghans that made the restoration possible. The U.S. Ambassador’s wife, Mrs. Eikenberry attended the ceremony.

Summary - Activities conducted this quarter

- The final rangeland surveys in July were cancelled due to security concerns
- Land Cover Map delivered to the Ministry of Agriculture’s Natural Resource Department
- Diet quality data was collected in 6 rangelands and will hopefully be analyzed soon
- Kuchi shuras received their final support from the PEACE Project
- 52 Peace Ambassadors participated in 2 more trainings this quarter and we report their July results
- Livestock Market Information System has been transferred to the MAIL and our support will only include data collection assistance until December
- Kabul University Herbarium Restoration Ceremony was a success

Major Implementation Activities conducted this Quarter

A. Infusion of the Forage Monitoring System

Field Surveys scheduled for July were cancelled due to a deteriorating security situation. Concerns that technicians and drivers would be exposed to unreasonable risk while travelling from one Province to the next forced us to make the decision. In September we finished modeling the vegetation information that we collected during the 2010 growing season.

The land cover map for Afghanistan was delivered to the Ministry of Agriculture’s Natural Resource Management Department this quarter. The map will serve as a useful tool for the Department.

In addition to creating a new land cover map for Afghanistan we have also created a map that displays the most important areas of rangeland conversion and will help the MAIL to prioritize their rangeland restoration efforts.
Map depicts varying degrees of rangeland conversion to rain-fed agriculture across Afghanistan. Red pixels (10km x 10km) represent the most highly converted areas and dark green the least converted. The two solid yellow areas are areas where rainfall is too low to grow crops without irrigation.
B. Infusion of the NIRS Nutritional Management System

Nutritional quality of sheep and goat diets is being assessed for several important rangelands in Afghanistan this year. We have been collecting fecal samples from sheep and goats across the northern and central Provinces and we will use the correlation equations we developed for Afghanistan to make these estimates. This year, 239 fecal samples (48 Faryab, 62 Kunduz and Balkh, 24 Samangan, 90 Bamyan, 15 Herat) have been collected and processed.

They were due to be scanned by MAIL staff this summer using near infrared spectroscopy to determine their crude protein and organic matter content. Unfortunately, with the re-organization of the MAIL, the nutritional profiling lab has been shifted to the Animal Husbandry Department. This means that the people we have institutionalized this lab with (i.e., the Animal Health Department), over the last 4 years, no longer have an employment position to staff this lab. There is no one in the Animal Husbandry Department that can run the lab. I have met with the Technical Deputy Minister in MAIL to resolve this issue and he assured me that it would be resolved quickly. Once the issue is resolved the scanning of this year’s samples will take place.

C. Outreach and supporting Herder Alliances

Facilitating Kuchi Shuras

Supporting Provincial Shuras through the Independent Department of Kuchi has been a way for the PEACE Project to deliver conflict resolution skills to provincial leaders. It has also provided an important way for information to be gathered regarding the current plight of the Kuchi people in Afghanistan. To demonstrate this fact we brought the Kuchi leaders to Kabul and asked them what their number one priorities were in terms of solving land access and tenure issues and how they might be solved. We broke them into several groups to accomplish this task. Please note that translations were as direct as possible to ensure authenticity.

**Group A: (Zabul, Nangarhar, Kabul, Khost, Konar, and Paktia)**

- Security is not good.
- Powerful people are taking the Kuchi rangelands by force.
- Kuchi have been prevented from going to summer rangelands. An example is the Hazarajat.
- Some provinces the Kuchi are prevented from accessing water.
- Some provinces not giving the rights for Kuchi as they give to the other people.

**Group B: (Badakhshan, Nimroz, Samangan, Takhar, and Kunduz)**

- Land-grabbing of grazing lands, closing the migration routes for Kuchi, and stopping Kuchi animals from accessing water tankers, springs, and other water sources even though the Kuchi have documents for those areas. Powerful people are creating these types of problems.
- In Nimroz specifically, sometimes the sheep and goats pass into Iran. They face problems and even their livestock may be killed. When livestock go to those rangelands, they are asked to pay money. They ask for the “payment” in the name of a gift (i.e., zakat, bakhshesh).

**Group C: (Balkh, Parwan, Sar-e Pul, Jawzjan, Faryab, and Logar)**

- Balkh, Jawzjan, and Sar-e Pul’s biggest problem is the grabbing of rangelands by powerful people. This causes many conflicts and people are sometimes killed.
• In Logar province most of the rangelands are converted to agriculture lands by powerful people. If the Independent Department of Kuchi and government don’t care about this, the leader predicts that the Kuchi will not have a place for even one tent after some years. The other thing is that if the government wants to build city for Kuchi, they should select the land. They don’t want to have conflicts with villagers about land in the future.

**Group D:** (Helmand, Urozgan, Ghor, Hirat, Badghis, and Farah)

• The powerful people are stealing the rangelands.
• In Badghis province 70% of the rangelands have been converted.
• When the Kuchi pass from one area to another they must pay money.

**Group E:** (Baghlan, Laghman, Kapisa, Farah, and Balkh)

• There are serious problems between Kuchi and villagers over rangelands which have been converted to agriculture or when house have been built on them.
• When Kuchi move through villages in the spring, powerful people are asking them to pay access fees.
• The government wants to build cities on the grazing areas that we have used every year. They don’t care about Kuchi.
• Villagers and powerful people are closing off the water access and migration routes for Kuchi and their animals by the.

**Solutions:**
1- In the provinces and in the provincial center with implement the rangelands law with enforcement. A joint commission should be formed and Kuchi should receive legal documents for using their rangelands.
2- The provincial center and village governments should stop the stealing of rangelands.
3- The Kuchi rangelands should not be changed to the cities, but if they are they are changed, they should give the Kuchi another place to use.
4- Since there is legal documentation showing some of the stolen rangelands do belong to the Kuchi, the government should return those areas.

The Provincial Kuchi Directors working for the Independent Department of Kuchi can provide much insight into the current problems facing extensive livestock production in Afghanistan. Unfortunately, their words tend to be lost among the majority leaders of the country. This is unfortunate in that Afghanistan is setting itself up for losing its economically-important livestock industry and all the jobs this industry supports.

The final months of support have been provided to the Provincial Kuchi shuras. Support for these shuras ended in September 2010. They have been active during the last quarter solving conflicts and addressing the many issues facing the Kuchi population. Continued support for these shuras is highly recommended as development of these leaders can lead to peace and stability across the nation.
D. Building Capacity Kuchi leaders and Villagers to Resolve Conflicts

Peace Ambassador Program

The Peace Ambassador program is off to a good start. We added 40 new ambassadors this year and over the last quarter they have come to Kabul for additional training in July and again in September. In July they finally produced some results and provided us with reports and presentations on their progress. The original 12 Peace Ambassadors have also been continuing their work within their respective provinces. They have been providing some important mentoring to the newly recruited ambassadors as well.

Each workshop in July had a summary report in addition to the individual reports given by the Peace Ambassadors. Here is an example of the report from the first group, written-up by the head of our Afghan team.

First day agenda:

- Opening of workshop
- Introduce the participants of the workshop
- What is peace?
- What is the goal of peace?
- Value of peace from Islam perspective
- Type of peace in Islam
- Review of the day

A brief introduction of the workshop:

This workshop had three parts
One: Training of peace form perspective of Islam
Two: Presenting of last two months reports
Three: Making plan for upcoming two months.

This workshop was designed for three days starting at 8:45 AM up to 3:15 PM. There were 14 out of 17 participants attending the workshop. The participants were from Badakhshan, Takhar, Kunduz, Baghlan, Kapisa and Parwan. They started the workshop by reading verses of Quran and received a warm welcome form SDO trainers. Mustafa and Haroon attended this workshop too.

Participants list

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Province</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Abdull Malak</td>
<td>Badakhshan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Haji Hawoldar</td>
<td>Takhar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Mola Yaqob</td>
<td>Takhar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Moh. Dawood Asad</td>
<td>Kunduz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Wali Jan</td>
<td>Kunduz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Hdaahuatullah</td>
<td>Kunduz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Moh. Amin Sadiqi</td>
<td>Baghlam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Moh. Zahir</td>
<td>Baghlam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Mir Anza</td>
<td>Baghlam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Moh. Ajmal</td>
<td>Kapisa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Haji Rahmudin</td>
<td>Kapisa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Moh. Haroon</td>
<td>Parwan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Moh. Yahya</td>
<td>Parwan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Mola Zahir</td>
<td>Baghlam</td>
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Reason for why some of them were not present
One of them was on the way to Kabul, he had an accident that is why he did not show up. His name is Austad Jilany.
There was a bombing attack in Badakhshan, the two peace ambassadors were in Kabul for workshop. Unfortunately they were informed on the day of workshop that one of their family members was killed and one was injured and for that reason they went back to Badakhshan.

Abobaker and I decided we would bring them in for the next workshop later in the month.

Group Work in first day
Question: What are the reasons for bringing peace in your society?
Answers:
- Safety, Justice, and freedom
- Trust in community
- Cease fire
- Having skills to solve the problems
- Building a good relationship between government and NGOs
- Being honest and truthful
- For bringing peace we need the support of elders and well known people
- In solving problems we should be the mediator and remain neutral
- For bringing peace we need to have a good plan

Second Day
Date: 13/07/2010
- Review of the first day
- The benefit of peace in Islam
- Explaining the group work
- Presented group work
- Promise to work for peace and the benefit of Islam
- Forgiveness in Islam and its value
- The negative results of revenge
- The system and main point of peace
- A review of the days

This day everything went well and everybody was happy and was doing fine. The Peace Commission asked the peace ambassadors to promise that they would do their work well and following the important rules listed below:

Rules:
- Never fight with anyone
- Behave well with everybody, all the time
- Solve the problems between Kuchi and villagers
- Be polite
- Be a good speaker and listener
- Have respect for everybody in the area
- Support both sides of conflicts
- Never use your power in bad ways
- Try to follow the Islam during our work
- Never show disrespect to any one
- Use your ability in positive ways not negative ways

At the end everybody was happy and promised that they were going to follow these rules in future.

Group work on the second day
Question: What are the peace ambassadors’ responsibilities to the people?
Answers:

Freedom group
1. Hard work to follow Islam in our live
2. Be prepared for solving people’s problems and conflicts because they need peace.
3. Try to stop the conflict before it happens
4. Preparing the situation for both sides of the conflict for solving conflict???
5. Giving the right to its owner
6. If it is possible try to find justice
7. Work hard to bring peace in your community

Justice group
1. We should do our job with honesty
2. Try to bring peace in our society
3. Try to destroyed the conflicts
4. Inform the people in our society about the benefit of peace
5. A peace ambassador should have good behavior with people in community

Immunity group
1. The peace ambassador should work with people
2. Try to solve their problems if it is possible; do everything you can do solve it
3. The peace ambassador always should be a mediator, not taking one side or the other

Third Day
Date: 14/July/2010
- Observation of yesterday’s work
- Reading of last month reports
- Making work plan for the next month
- What is the peace ambassador responsibilities
- Peaceful live in Islam
- Where we should start the peace
- Evaluation of workshop
- Review of the day

During this day everything went fine and everybody was happy for what they learned from the three days of the workshop.

At the end, Abohaker passed on Sabawoon’s message for everybody and thanked them for being active and patient during the workshop and informed them that they should pass the peace message in their villages and provinces as much as they can. He hoped that the peace ambassadors would use the new ways and techniques that they had learned from this workshop in their provinces.

On behalf of peace ambassadors, Wali Jan from Kunduz, thanked the peace commission for this really good idea of having peace ambassador program because now they know how important this is to have peace ambassadors. They are a small group of people but their work can be more effective than a large army. He was very thankful from SDO for their hard work and being patient during the workshop with everybody. He also said thanks to USAID and PEACE project for financial support of this kind of workshops. He was hoping that it should continue in future as well. He said some people might not think that this support helps the Kuchi, but they don’t know the value of this kind of training and workshops. Now we know how important this is for the Kuchi and Kuchi problems and we all very much appreciate the help of USAID, PEACE project and SDO for providing us these kinds of workshops and trainings. And we will try our best to pass the peace message and solve the problem of Kuchi as much as we could.

Since July, they have solved about 113 conflicts ranging from family feuds to ethnic conflicts (see figure below). This has occurred in four regions of Afghanistan. The 4 regions are; Northwest (Faryab, Sar-e-Pul, Jawzjan, Balkh), Northeast (Baghlan, Kunduz, Takhar and Badakhshan), Central (Parwan and Kapisa), South Central (Ghazni and Wardak) The new Ambassadors have been using their peace-building skills and returning to Kabul with many questions and thoughts about how to approach difficult issues.
In late September the Peace Ambassadors returned to Kabul to report on their August/September achievements. The data is not yet analyzed and will be reported in the next quarterly report.

E. Livestock Market Information System

Livestock Market Information System

Live animal prices for sheep and goats have been collected in Mazar, Jalalabad and Kabul for the last 6 months. We can now produce reports and analyze trends graphically with the LMIS software. You can visit http://afghanmarketprices.org/lmis to check out the latest trends in the sheep and goat markets.

The Market Server and associated equipment was moved to the MAIL in June. The equipment will be maintained by the Office of Market Information Systems (MIS) and the data will be collected by the Statistics Department. We are still working out the last remaining kinks in the system after placing it within the Ministry. The hope is that as the MAIL develops the office of MIS they will expand the number of markets where MAIL staff collect the information. We are currently working on a way to continue to give technical support to the MAIL from Texas A&M University into the future. Technical support for the software used to analyze and report the data could be maintained
though “email support” from Texas A&M programmers. This would be the most cost effective type of support we could provide.

During the last quarter there have been trainings held in Mazar, Jalalabad and Kabul to introduce more traders and sellers to the system. The reception to the system was one of interest and skepticism. Most of the traders and sellers thought that the system would be very good for the livestock economy of Afghanistan but were not convinced the MAIL would be able to do it successfully. Furthermore, there was some concern about whether or not the MAIL would provide accurate information. We have made a suggestion to resolve this issue. The livestock market owners can very easily check and sign-off on the data collected each week by the MAIL monitors. In this way there can be a level of transparency that will soon allow for trust to develop about the data.

F. Other Achievements

Herbarium Restoration Ceremony held at Kabul University

A once-endangered and nearly forgotten herbarium containing tens of thousands of plant specimens representing the botanical diversity of Afghanistan was officially opened and dedicated at Kabul University on the morning of July 7, 2010.

University leaders and U.S. and Afghan government officials, including Afghanistan's Deputy Minister of Higher Education, Dr. Baburi, were on hand for the event, which was held at the university's Faculty of Science building.

There was praise from university and other officials, and an address by Earl Gast, U.S. Agency for International Development mission director for Afghanistan. Activities included a tour of the herbarium and explanation of its importance to Afghanistan's education and research efforts, as well as to the country's future development.

Herbarium restoration was implemented through the Pastoral Engagement, Adaptation and Capacity Enhancement, or PEACE, project of USAID. The project, led by Texas A&M University and the University of California-Davis, represents a consortium of academic, governmental and other institutions and organizations dedicated to building Afghanistan's capacity for environmental research and assessment, according to project coordinators.

Other USAID-funded partners, the ECODIT-Biodiversity Support Program for Afghanistan's National Environmental Protection Agency, the Wildlife Conservation Society and Purdue University-Alliance for Afghanistan (A4) Project, joined with the PEACE project, which led restoration efforts.

Restoration work began in November 2009. Consortium participants and a team of technicians and student interns worked to restore the herbarium, photograph it and electronically record data on some 23,700 plant species.

At the herbarium opening, Dr. Baburi presented a plaque of appreciation from USAID to Dr. Ahmad Mirazai, a physiology professor and biology department head in the faculty of science, who has been hailed by that agency as a 'hero-scientist' for protecting the collection during the Taliban takeover.
"At a time when many were fleeing for their lives, Dr. Mirazai recognized that this resource must be protected," Baburi said in his remarks. "Dr. Mirazai was also essential to the success of the restoration process."

During the Taliban regime, Mirazai moved most of the university's extensive herbarium to his home to protect it. Most of the original herbarium collection was donated to the university in the 1960s and '70s by German scientists, and it was feared the collection might be destroyed by the Taliban, who wanted to rid Afghanistan of foreign, especially Western, influence.

When the Taliban fell, Mirazai returned the collection to the university, but safety issues and lack of resources left it languishing for years in a dusty storeroom until rediscovered by members of the PEACE project.

Baburi congratulated Mirazai for being a "hero to Afghanistan and to its students," and for his "dedication and never-ending support of education, Afghanistan's students and the environment."

When we PEACE project scientists examined the collection in March 2009, we were amazed at the sheer number and diversity of plant specimens in the herbarium collection. Equally amazing was that in spite of any specimen damage from time and inattention, most of the specimens remained in good condition and could be restored. Much of this was due to Dr. Mirazai's heroic and painstaking efforts.

The herbarium database is now available in the herbarium on a lab computer which can be used by students, faculty and researchers alike, along with photos of every specimen. This data also has been supplied to various government and non-government institutions to support their efforts in environmental management. We are now working to put it on the Internet so that it can be accessed by researchers and institutions worldwide. All the specimen information has been entered into a database, scientists, engineers, researchers and others involved in environmental impact assessments essential to Afghanistan's future development will have the best possible information on Afghan flora available anywhere.

The restored herbarium will be used to support the Afghan government's efforts to design, implement and manage development programs in cooperation with the university. The data has been shared with those responsible for livestock and irrigation within the Ministry of Agriculture, as well as with Afghanistan's National Environmental Protection Agency. Maybe the most gratifying part of the herbarium restoration was that, once again, Kabul University faculty and students will be able to use it for the purposes it was originally intended, those of teaching, training and research. (Note: this account of the Herbarium Opening was drawn from an article written by Paul Schattenberg, Texas A&M University)