

STAFF PAPER FOR DAC DISCUSSION, APRIL 8, 1974

**HAVA ASSESSMENT, Louis L. Mitchell, Rural Development Advisor**

David Garner, Dick Scott and I have been involved in assessing the situation in the Helmand Arghandab Valley Region for the past six weeks. The purpose and goals of the assessment as set forth previously are attached. We have been assisted by many of the U.S. technicians in the Valley and have received cooperation from Dr. Keshwarz and other HAVA officials.

**I CONCLUSIONS (April 8, 1974)**

**A. The GOA does not know whether or not it wants continued U.S. assistance in the Region.**

There are at least two persuasions within the Government: those who do not desire continued U.S. assistance and those who probably do. Those in the latter category don't know how much of what for which need they can or should seek, nor do they know the process of seeking.

**B. The U.S. Mission to Afghanistan knows that it wishes to continue assistance consistent with the new legislation.**

**C. Until there is resolution of the conflicting persuasions within the GOA, no substantial and probably no effective project development and implementation should be anticipated.**

**D. The HAVA is extraordinarily ill-equipped in terms of qualified personnel and developmental perspective to effectively exploit the human and agricultural resources of the Region.**

**E. If U.S. Assistance is to continue, it must be repackaged radically in terms of form and substance.**

**II RECOMMENDATIONS**

**A. A USAID Representative should be appointed for the Helmand Region as soon as possible. His primary role would be to work with the General President and other HAVA officials in identifying and developing new project activities for U.S. assistance during FY 75 and beyond.**

B B. There are five potential project areas presently identified through the assessment which require continued exploration. However, the HAVA is not prepared for serious negotiation on any of them.

1. Drainage. The Director General of Project Development and Planning, in the Technical Department of HAVA, is in the process of preparing recommendations for construction of new main drains and cleaning and enlarging existing drains and wasteways in the Marja and South Shamalan areas. The need for this work is clear and the Director General believes that there is a good chance that his recommendations will be accepted by higher authority. However, no monies have been budgeted by HAVA for the constructions during 1963, and it is uncertain that appropriate equipment will be available. Some of this work could be done by hand labor which the Director General estimates being available at the level of one man per ten acres.

The fixed cost reimbursement was discussed with the Director General and he responded positively.

On the issue of farm drains, the Director General was not optimistic. He felt that most farmers were not informed about the benefits to accrue from such constructions and he stated that no departments or persons within HAVA - including the Extension Service - understood the need for farm drains, except his department. At the same time, there may be ways to stimulate farmers to dig drains on their own land. One such way would be to support capital improvement credit issued through the Ag Bank, especially to small farmers. For such a program, present collateral requirements would be dropped as they exist for other credit, and through a U.S. guaranteed fund, the Bank would issue credit to farmers. The U.S. fund would guarantee, say, 50% of the loan. Drains to be dug would be according to certain specifications and designed as part of the existing and future drainage network.

2. Marketing/agro-business. There is an efficient marketing and agro-business system responsive to the Region's requirements. Grain dealers (104) are in Lash; there are 10 tractor repair shops, 10 blacksmiths in the business of small tool production and 4 chemical/insecticide shops (including AFC). There are large numbers of flour mills throughout the Region. Grapes and other fruits are sold to dealers from Kabul and Kandahar who make their deals directly with the farmer on his land prior to harvest in late spring and summer. In addition, there is a cotton products plant which manufactures lint, cake, oil, soap and fuel (culls), with a capacity for 25,000 MTs of seed cotton annually.

What appears to be needed at the present time is a study of the above internal systems to explore existing policies, production and other constraints which preclude market and agro-business expansion. At this time it is not

recommended that USAID support an external markets survey such as outlined for the CP.

3. Intensive Farmer Education. Every sign post unearthed during the past several years points to the critical need for farmer education. The extension service is weak in numbers (50) and quality, and farmers generally distrust the agents and HAVA in their efforts.

One attempt to change the situation is being made by HAVA. Underway is a one-month training course for 49 new recruits (12th class graduates) from non-jobs in the HAVA bureaucracy. However, a more intensive approach is necessary.

This could take two forms. First, U.S. technical assistance applied to the extension service; and, second, U.S. assistance for direct farmer education through radio (low-frequency HAVA broadcasts to the Region) and an adult education program which would go directly to local people, using Khans as teachers, plus audio-visual and other aids.

U.S. technicians assigned with groups of extension workers would overcome limitations of U.S. technicians working with farmers on their own and have a cumulative affect upon the quality of the work of the agents. A comprehensive adult education program delivered at the local level, using local leadership, could include training in drainage, better water management, inter-cropping, cash crop possibilities, nutrition, and general home economics.

Both forms could be included within a local training institute established as part of HAVA for government workers and local people.

4. Malaria control. Regional development schemes should always include activities designed to deal with the malaria threat intrinsic to a enlarged labor force, new settlers and new excavations which increase the number of breeding places. With WHO assistance, the National Malaria Control Program has an active program country-wide. In the HAVA there are over 100 local officers who are equipped for testing, spraying and curative measures. The organization appears to be fairly efficient and under competent leadership.

In 1970 and 1971, malaria went out of control in the Region, and though it appears to have been brought under control during 1972 and 1973, there are still many active carriers in the Region. Further, two varieties of mosquitos with resistance to DDT have been found in the Region. In addition, the deadly *Plasmodium vivax* parasite has also been recently identified.

In the 1975 control program it is felt to be mandatory that Malathion replace DDT in the Region. WHO has no money to finance this insecticide. Nor does it appear that other donor agencies are interested. It is recommended that USAID consider financing a fixed percentage of the costs for Malathion and the GOA purchase the rest. Total costs would be about \$170,000 for the Region. Without GOA participation, USAID should make no investment.

5. Livestock. The livestock program ranks at the top of poorly managed programs within HAVA. The sheep and dairy program are failures. Care of cattle is virtually non-existent, and a number are on their beds of death. However, the AI program has had considerable success in the past, and because the results directly benefit the small farmers, consideration of supporting the AI program are in order. In addition to no transportation being available for the program presently (Dr. Keshwarz claims he will solve this immediately), the bulls are worn out and the season for insemination (March - June) is considered too short. Through the introduction of frozen semen, both limitations could be overcome. As many as 1200 cows can be inseminated monthly with a 60% conception rate. The value of a dropped heifer is  $x + 6,000$  afs, and at 18 months the value jumps to  $x + 12,000$  afs. In addition, first generation milk production is estimated at 30 lbs per day as compared to 8 from local breeds. Small farmers have already demonstrated their acceptance of AI.

There are problems: Dr. Keshwarz is unimpressed, the livestock farm personnel may not be able to manage frozen semen, more and better quality feed would have to be available for the improved breeds, health standards would have to be increased, and a radical increase in milk production may not be absorbed locally.

However, USAID should explore such a program with the assignment of a livestock specialist and importing frozen semen. A pilot 2 year program would use no more than 10,000 shots @ \$2.

### C. Future U.S. Assistance.

1. Assuming future U.S. assistance to HAVA, it is recommended that changes be instituted in form.

a. Personnel. Future technical personnel must assume an operational role by assignment directly to HAVA department heads. They would participate in the daily operational and policy issues of the department. The advisor concept is among the basic roots of our present predicament in the Valley. And, U.S. technicians must share Afghan work days and hours.

b. Support systems. The commissary, Staff House, motor pool and telecommunications are built-in constraints to effecting the collaborative style. All should be abandoned. The Staff House could be turned into an Afghan - International Center. The motor pool/maintenance to the hasser for contract services.

3. It has been recommended that Messrs. Tyson, Gault and Ambyac be retained for at least the next year to assist in program development. This is further recommended here, so long as all three are willing and able to be assigned to HAVA departments consistent with their specialties.