

PROGRAM SCHEDULE SHAMALON UNIT (31,399 ACRES)

A Report of Contract Services Performed
for the
U. S. Agency for International Development
(Contract: AID/nesa - 141 - Afghanistan)
and the
Helmand-Arghandab Valley Authority
Royal Government of Afghanistan

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SUMMARY

The accompanying schedule and this descriptive report cover work of the Program Scheduling Specialist of The J. G. White-Engineering Corporation for the two-year period starting November 10, 1965, completing scheduling services for the U. S. Agency for International Development (USAID) under Contract AID/nesa - 141 (Afghanistan), as amended, and the Helmand Arghandab Valley Authority (HAVA), Royal Government of Afghanistan (RGA).

The schedule shows the major elements of projected operations thought by most to be necessary in the Shamalon Unit for achieving full irrigation development and early economic returns. The projected operations and programs are tabulated in the left column of the schedule with bar lines superimposed on the seven-year quarterly-divided calendar to the right showing when each particular action is to take place.

The Shamalon Unit is located on the west bank of the Helmand River in the Helmand Arghandab Region, in the vicinity of Lashkar Gah in Southern Afghanistan. It consists of 31,399 acres of irrigable land on the first and second terrace levels bordering the river in a gross area approximately 40 miles long by 2-1/2 miles wide.

The schedule has two phases dealing with development of the Shamalon Unit. Phase I is concerned with the physical betterment of lands, including construction, resettlement of the developed lands following construction, and the operation of the irrigation system. Phase II deals primarily with programs for implementation after construction and resettlement are complete, so that prompt and effective utilization of the developed land may be made.

Unresolved Issues. Certain issues remain to be resolved. The issues consist of a broad complex of political, social and economic matters all of which are important to the success of agricultural and rural development in the Shamalon area. While the issues are described in more detail elsewhere in this report, in general they involve population displacement during construction, charges for land improvement, delivery of water to farmers and assessments against users, settlement policies, public health, education, and rural women's activities. The most pressing need is for a sound plan for moving and relocating the rural population before construction begins in early 1968, but preparing such a plan may be difficult to do without solving other related issues.

It is obvious that expanded activity lies immediately ahead for HAVA and RGA in which significant increases in personnel, facilities, and budget will be required.

Recommendations. Because the many unresolved issues are tied up with Afghanistan laws, customs, and regulations it is felt that solutions can best be made by HAVA and RGA. For this reason, it is recommended that the Program Scheduling Committee (described later in the report) be given the continuing responsibility to study the unresolved issues in a thorough, systematic manner and develop early specific recommendations for concurrence by RIA and others.

BACKGROUND

The scope of services of the Program Scheduling Specialist are described in the original contract as follows:

Within twelve months he shall have completed preparation of a development schedule for the cultivated and uncultivated land of the valley which takes specific account of the current development of processing industries, community services, roads, need for and availability of manpower and budget resources, and the desirability for rapid increase in land productivity.

Under normal circumstances, such an assignment might have been possible. In the Helmand-Arghandab Region, however, detailed programs and clearly defined objectives did not exist. The development of substantive programs, per se was clearly not within the scope of services of the Program Scheduling Specialist.

A long standing major obstacle to the development of the Valley has been the lack of a well-conceived specific plan with clearly defined goals and supporting programs required to achieve the goals. Preparation of plans is slowly materializing but much work of this nature remains to be done. The HAVA Planning and Statistics Division was created in 1966 and is undertaking some planning work, but it has not yet become fully effective. No over-all HAVA-HAVR* planning agency exists for the preparation of jointly agreed upon plans.

The PIO/T relating to the extension of the contract of The J. G. White Engineering Corporation as well as the amendment modified the services to be performed by the Program Scheduling Specialist to the preparation of:

A complete program schedule of the work required for land development of the 13,310 acre West Shamalon tract. (The West Shamalon schedule will constitute compliance with the scheduling requirement of the previous contract.)

To support the scheduling work, H. E. General President Safi formally appointed a committee on April 12, 1967, replacing an ad hoc committee which had existed earlier. The new committee consists of HAVA officials and the Program Scheduling Specialist and is chaired by Mr. Tawab Assifi, head of the HAVA Technical and Engineering Division. The assignment of the committee as stated in the appointment letter is as follows:

*Helmand-Arghandab Valley Region (HAVR) is an agency of USAID.

The committee will consider and weigh all available facts, conditions and reports in order to identify the full range of programs and actions necessary to bring the West Shamalon from the present stage through its development to the point where final and effective utilization of the land is realized. This will include for each program or action a starting date, the rate of which the activity is expected to proceed and its anticipated completion date, all properly phased and integrated into a realistic schedule.

The committee has been actively engaged with programs, problems, and solutions. Committee members have been enthusiastic. Several have devoted considerable extra time making special studies bearing on the work of the committee. The committee has done much to bring problems and issues into the open for free discussion. The result has been to stimulate thinking by Afghans toward seeking satisfactory solutions, especially for the broad complex of unresolved social, political, and economic issues affecting all people of the Shamalon area.

Since 1964, a U.S. Bureau of Reclamation water resources team has been on the site carrying out detailed field investigations and technical studies to determine feasibility of development of the Shamalon Unit. The Draft Feasibility Report of the Shamalon Unit, consisting of 31,399 acres of irrigable land in the Helmand-Arghandab Region of Afghanistan, was published in September 1967, and the final edition is expected by January 1, 1968.

The Shamalon Unit is the first area to be ready for physical land betterment under the USAID assistance program to HAVA. Since the intention now is to develop the Shamalon 31,399 acre tract as a unit, and the full energies of both USAID and HAVA are being applied in this direction, it was suggested that the preparation of a realistic schedule of programs for this area would be more meaningful than for the West Shamalon 13,310 acre tract. HAVA has requested such a schedule. USAID has concurred that preparation of a schedule of programs for the whole Shamalon Unit consisting of 31,399 acres would be acceptable as fulfillment of the contractual terms of the Program Scheduling Specialist, since it includes the lesser West Shamalon 13,310 acre tract.