

## **Field Evaluation of Selected Projects in Tajikistan**

**Report by Joint FAO–Sida Mission**

28 May, 2001

### **Abbreviations & Acronyms**

CBO	Community Based Organisation
EAC	Emergency Agriculture Coordinator
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GOT	Government of Tajikistan
LIFDC	Low Income Food Deficit Country
MOA	Ministry of Agriculture
NGO	Non-government Organisation
OCHA	Office for Co-ordination of Humanitarian Assistance
PSF	Potato Seed Fund (under the Ministry of Agriculture)
RRP	Rayon of Republican Subordination
SEK	Swedish Kronor
Sida	Swedish International Development Co-operation Agency
TCOR	Special Relief Operation Service
UN-CAP	United Nations–Consolidated Appeal
WFP	World Food Programme
VFU	Veterinary Field Unit

### **Currency Equivalents**

US\$ 1.00 = TJK (Somoni) 2.50

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# **I. Executive Summary**

## **The Evaluation Assignment**

101. Support by Sida to projects implemented through FAO Special Relief Operations Service (TCOR) has increased significantly in recent years and the agency has decided that some of these projects be reviewed with a view to future quality improvement. The two organisations have jointly selected a limited number of projects to be subject to field evaluation, two of which have been implemented in Tajikistan.

## **Purpose and Structure of the Projects**

102. The first project under review, OSRO/TAJ/702/SWE: “Emergency Supply of Agricultural Inputs for the 1998 Cropping Season” (budget \$130,000; scheduled implementation period December 1996–May 1997), provided inputs and advisory services for local multiplication of quality seed potato to increase the availability of staple food. The second evaluated project, OSRO/TAJ/901/SWE: “Emergency Assistance to Animal Health and Potato Seed Production” (budget \$325,000; implementation period April 1999–March 2001), has provided additional support so as to make the multiplication of seed potato institutionally self-sustaining as well as assistance to restore rural veterinary service operations within a pilot scheme based on market priced vaccines and drugs. It has also financed part of the emergency agricultural co-ordination function exercised by FAO. The project activities have been implemented by the FAO office in Tajikistan through national and local staff seconded from the Ministry of Agriculture.

## **Main Findings**

103. The Project Documents were weak in several respects but the subsequent operational plans prepared by short term FAO consultants partly compensated for these deficiencies. The implementation performance of both projects has been good. The first project faced many adverse conditions, including a precarious security situation, which were overcome through commendable efforts by the project staff. The projects have also fulfilled most of their stated objectives. The design of the projects has facilitated cost-efficient contributions by under-utilised Government technical staff to the advantage of a significant number of beneficiaries while the seconded staff have acquired valuable experience by participating in the planning and implementation processes of the projects.

104. However, neither project has had a direct and significant effect on the livelihoods of those rural families who have been most adversely affected by economic bereavement and civil conflict but their impact has been largely indirect. The mission attributes the limited impact in this respect to four factors:

- there exist few guidelines or review procedures to ensure that vulnerable categories of rural families be identified as prime recipients of emergency assistance;

- the planning processes did not generate alternative intervention options that could be assessed and compared for their impact on rural livelihoods but rather served to justify proposals for support projects put forward by government officials at national or local level;
- too little time was devoted to the design and planning of interventions. This precluded not only identification of the most deserving targets groups for project support but also the formulation of simple, practical indicators for assessing the attainment of project objectives, outputs and impact; and
- the employed planning methodology did not take advantage of the rigour offered by consolidated techniques such as the logical framework approach.

## Suggested Actions

105. The mission's suggestions for future actions in Tajikistan include:

- fielding of a Programming Mission to define priority areas for FAO interventions in the medium and long-term, taking into account the most urgent needs during this transition period while also assessing the strategies of other major actors in Tajikistan and the comparative advantages of FAO;
- expansion of the coverage of private veterinary services through support from complementary funding facilities;
- extension of the Emergency Agricultural Co-ordination function by two to three years with revised terms of reference reflecting more realistic objectives; and
- appointment of an International Junior Consultant to work on food security monitoring and assessment, targeting issues and gender sensitisation.

## Priorities for Future Improvements

106. It is proposed that the identified shortcomings in project planning and implementation be remedied by:

- preparation of operational guidelines for planning and supervision of emergency projects, including target group selection criteria and identification procedures, criteria for FAO participation, planning methodologies, participatory approaches for working with the target groups, and approaches for transfer of ownership of project activities from the emergency project to national and local organisations working in conjunction with the target beneficiaries;
- institution of programming missions as a means to identify options for emergency support intended also for rehabilitation and development, in conjunction with involvement by more stakeholders in the planning process, including representatives from the target groups; and
- intensified headquarters supervision and backstopping of the planning process and the early stages of the implementation period.

## Issues for Further Consideration

107. In addition to the actions suggested above, the following issues appear to merit further attention in the future:

- Effective reconciliation of short and long term project goals in relation to emergency operation requirements as well as to support to rehabilitation and development efforts through careful analysis of past project experiences; and
- Practical but effective modes for participation by the project beneficiaries in the planning and implementation processes to ensure sustainability of the support initiatives and to mitigate against future dependency on external assistance.

## II. Introduction

201. Support by Sida (Swedish Agency for Development Co-operation) to projects implemented through FAO Special Relief Operations Service (TCOR) has increased significantly in recent years and the agency has decided that some of these projects be reviewed with a view to future quality improvement. The two organisations have jointly selected a limited number of projects to be subject to field evaluation, of which two<sup>1</sup> have been implemented in Tajikistan.

202. The TOR for the evaluation require that the projects be reviewed with respect to their relevance, design, implementation performance and impact on intended beneficiaries (the complete Terms of Reference are attached as ANNEX 1).

203. The evaluation team<sup>2</sup> undertook its work in Tajikistan 7–15 May through visits to the Karategin Valley in the Garm area in the north-west (seed potato multiplication under 702/SWE and 901/SWE) and Khatlon Province in the southern part of the country (animal health services under 902/SWE). It held recurrent meetings with contributing staff and officials in the capital Dushanbe during which the third project component under 902/SWE, the emergency agricultural co-ordination function, was also discussed. Its preliminary findings were presented at a round-up meeting with FAO staff and staff of the Ministry of Agriculture on 15 May. (The detailed work schedule for the mission is included as ANNEX 2 together with a list of people met).

204. In addition, the evaluation team reviewed policy and guideline documents, work plans and budgets, management manuals, progress reports, minutes from committee meetings and technical reports (ANNEX 3).

## III. Background and Context

### A. The “Emergency” Situation in Tajikistan

301. Tajikistan declared independence from the former Soviet Union in September 1991. Since then it has experienced three changes in government and a civil war. A peace agreement among rival factions was signed in 1997 but implementation has progressed slowly. The political situation in post-civil war Tajikistan remains unstable.

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<sup>1</sup> OSRO/TAJ/702/SWE: “Emergency Supply of Agricultural Inputs for the 1998 Cropping Season” (\$130,000; December 1996–May 1997) and OSRO/TAJ/901/SWE: “Emergency Assistance to Animal Health and Potato Seed Production” (\$325,000; April 1999–March 2001). Two other projects in North Korea will be evaluated in June.

<sup>2</sup> Ms. Rachel Sauvinet-Bedouin (FAO/Mission Leader) and Mr. J. Erikson (Sida consultant).

302. While Tajikistan entered a new phase, aimed at achieving reconciliation and peace building, this process faces numerous economic and social problems. Among them is the extreme poverty of the vast majority of the population and its substantial dependency on humanitarian assistance, disruption of social networks, collapsed infrastructure, deteriorating health conditions, declining education and reduced food production.

303. Tajikistan has the lowest per capita GDP among the 15 former Soviet republics and is classified as a Low Income Food Deficit Countries (LIFDC). The per capita GDP was estimated at US\$ 330 in 1998 and more than eighty percent of the population is thought to live below the poverty line<sup>3</sup>. The Tajikistan economy has been gravely weakened by six years of civil conflict and by the loss of subsidies from the former Soviet regime as well as by the loss of important markets for its products.

304. Furthermore, the country is prone to an array of various disasters such as earthquakes, floods, landslides and mudslides. In October 2000, The Farkhor District was hit by an earthquake, affecting 7,500 people in three villages. During the summer, the country was hit by a severe drought—the worst to happen in 74 years—causing substantial reduction in food production, and compounding the already existing water supply and health problems in many parts of the country.

## B. Food Security Situation

305. The food security situation is precarious for a large part of the population. A joint FAO/WFP Crop and Food Supply Assessment mission visited the country in July 2000<sup>4</sup> and alerted the International Community to the serious food crisis faced by the country due to the severe drought but also due to continuing economic problems as a consequence of past civil strife and the prevailing insecurity and particularly deteriorating conditions relating to agricultural production.

306. Due to loss of employment and decline in production, many households face seasonal food shortages even in a normal year. The World Bank poverty assessment of 1999 shows significant dietary changes taking place. Many households were unable to meet their food needs and have already adopted a variety of coping mechanisms to that end. As of 1999, up to 85 percent of households had changed their food consumption pattern and was switching to cheaper foods. About 44 percent of households had reduced the number of meals and 30 percent were consuming smaller portions. Not surprisingly, the incidence of malnutrition is high: 41 percent of the children have been recorded as stunted while 14 percent had acute malnutrition in 1999, certainly due to a combination of food insecurity problems and poor health environment. The FAO/WFP mission estimated that nearly one-half of the total population faced severe food access problems and warned that the situation was likely to worsen as the 2000/2001 marketing year progressed.

<sup>3</sup> International Support to Post-Conflict Peace-Building in Tajikistan , March 2001

<sup>4</sup> Special Alert – No 310- FAO/WFP Crop and Food Supply Assessment Mission to Tajikistan – July 2000.



## C. The Role of the Agriculture Sector

307. Seventy percent of the country's 6.4 million population<sup>5</sup> reside in rural areas. The major livelihood strategy for rural households is crop production with little opportunities for diversifying income outside agriculture. The population is large relative to the arable land. Tajikistan's 143,000 square kilometres are mostly mountainous, only 7 percent of its land is arable. However, the country is well endowed with water resources, enabling irrigation of round 75 % of the arable land and contributing to Tajikistan's specialisation in cotton production.

308. According to the World Bank, the agriculture sector in Tajikistan accounts for 25 percent of the GDP and over 50 percent of employment. Farming is mostly dependent on irrigation although many of the irrigation canals and pumps are not functional any more. Cotton is the single most important crop, accounting for about 40 percent of agricultural output and a third of export earnings. Other crops are grains, fodder crops, potatoes, vegetable melons, vineyards and fruits. As Tajikistan is predominantly mountainous, livestock (mostly small ruminants) are also an important resource.

309. Because of its importance, agriculture is perceived as a strategic sector for the rehabilitation of the Tajikistan economy. Major donors, in particular the Multilateral Financial Institutions (World Bank, Asian Development Bank) are supporting major investment programmes associated to policy reforms in the sector. In particular, support to land privatisation and farm restructuring and to rural infrastructure, including rehabilitation of irrigation systems, are major domains of assistance.

310. Furthermore, supporting agriculture rehabilitation is viewed as a key priority in the peace-building effort. The UN report on International Support to Post Conflict Peace-Building in Tajikistan stressed the need for agriculture programmes targeted at ex-combatants and their families as well as at returnees not only for temporary employment but also for providing these population groups with opportunities to become more self-reliant after the completion of post-conflict peace-building programmes. The report mentions specifically that "the biggest effect could be achieved in the agriculture sector".

## D. Overview of FAO Operations in Tajikistan

311. Since 1997, the year of the fielding of the emergency coordinator, the FAO programme has steadily built up. In Table 1 (below), the support projects have been classified into three categories:

(i) **Emergency agriculture:** those projects that aim at providing an immediate response to food security problems of farming families by meeting emergency input needs of targeted farmers, allowing the farmers to "catch the next crop" and reducing food aid dependency. This type of projects consists of the free distribution of inputs (seeds, fertilizers and/or pesticides). They are generally accompanied by the provision of technical advice to farmers on farming practices.

In Tajikistan, these projects have served two purposes: assisting returnees (civil conflict-related ex-refugees) in re-settling in rural areas and resuming agriculture activities and assisting farmers affected by the 2000 drought.

<sup>5</sup> July 2000 estimate – CIA The World Factbook 2000-

The project TAJ/701 “Emergency Supply of Agricultural Inputs for the 1998 Spring Planting Seasons” has been classified in this category as it was designed as such. During implementation, the potato seeds multiplication scheme was initiated. As it concerned less than one-fourth of the quantity of seeds, this has been put on the account of its sister project TAJ/702.

(ii) **Rehabilitation/ development:** projects that do not necessarily respond to the immediate next cropping season needs of farmers but that aim at longer-term objectives of rehabilitating the agriculture sector. Projects of this category include a large component of capacity building (e.g. training of trainers). They may also include support to the beginning of privatization (e.g. support to local private animal health services and support to cost-recovery seed multiplication scheme through private farmers).

(iii) **“Both” emergency agriculture and rehabilitation:** such projects primarily provide inputs but use the funds and structure of the project to promote more rehabilitation/development initiatives. For instance, the project TAJ/904 “Assistance to Returnees and Land-Lease Private Farmers with Fertiliser and Animal Services” primarily aims at improving the food security situation of 9,000 rural poor households through meeting urgent fertiliser needs in the 2000 agricultural season, but also develops veterinary services by training and backstopping of veterinary staff operating a mobile Veterinary Field Unit that will serve the targeted households. The project TCP/TAJ/8921 “Emergency Provision of Agricultural Inputs and Assistance for a Seed Sector Review”, while providing needed agriculture inputs for farmers in the Khatlon area, has also permitted to develop a comprehensive seed sector review.

312. The table clearly shows the diversity and hence the complexity of the FAO programme and reflects the “emergency nature” of the situation in Tajikistan.

313. Emergency agriculture projects are still needed as a result of both the past civil conflict (to help re-settle ex-refugees) and the impact of the drought (to assist affected farmers). Furthermore, the level of poverty for a large part of the population is such that meeting immediate needs of the farmers and going away from food aid dependency will still be priorities in the years to come.

314. At the same time, addressing the deep causes of the emergency situation in Tajikistan (linked to the economic crises) necessitates a longer-term perspective and initiation of rehabilitation and development actions that will help changing processes towards sustainable development. However, it should be kept in mind that any rehabilitation and development action is implemented in an emergency situation where insecurity still prevails in certain areas putting at stake project results and sustainability.

## E. Swedish Support since 1997

315. SIDA supported the FAO programme in Tajikistan at the very beginning in 1998 with the project TAJ/702 “Emergency Supply of Agricultural Inputs for the 1998 Spring Planting Seasons”. Over the four years of FAO projects implementation, SIDA has been the major donor of the FAO programme covering nearly 50 percent of total budget. SIDA support reflects also the “balanced” structure of the programme including support to targeted emergency agriculture operations as well as support to more long-term development interventions.

Table 1: FAO Programme in Tajikistan

Year	Emergency Agriculture (Free distribution of inputs)	Both emergency agriculture and rehabilita- tion/development	Rehabilitation/Development in the agriculture sector
1997	• TCP/TAJ/6612(E) Emergency Coordination		
1998	♦ OSRO/TAJ/701/NET <b>US\$ 526,898</b> <i>Emergency Supply of Agricultural inputs for the 1998 spring Planting Seasons</i>	♦ OSRO/TAJ/702/SWE <b>US\$ 139,000</b> <b>Emergency Supply of Agricultural inputs for the 1998 spring Planting Seasons</b>	
1999	♦ OSRO/TAJ/902/HCR <b>US\$ 60,000</b> <i>Emer- gency Supply of Seed Potato to Returnees and Irrigation Rehabilitation in Khatlon</i>	♦ TCP/TAJ/8921 <b>US\$ 356,000</b> <i>Emergency Provision of Agricultural Inputs and Assistance for a Seed Sector Review</i> ♦ OSRO/TAJ/904/NOR <b>US\$ 127,500</b> <i>Assis- tance to Returnees and Land-Lease Private Farmers with Fertiliser and Animal Services</i>	♦ OSRO/TAJ/903/SWI <b>US\$ 87,200</b> <i>Radio Broadcasting for Private Farmers</i> ♦ OSRO/TAJ/901/SWE <b>US\$ 324,950</b> <i>Emer- gency Assistance to Animal Health and Potato Seed Production</i>
2000	♦ OSRO/TAJ/002/HCR <b>US\$ 247,885</b> <i>Agricul- tural Assistance to Returnees</i> ♦ OSRO/TAJ/001/SWE <b>US\$ 290,325</b> <i>Agri- cultural Assistance to Returnees and Land- Lease Private Farmers</i>		
2001	♦ OSRO/TAJ/004/HCR <b>US\$ 49,974</b> <i>Post- Drought Provision of Agricultural Inputs to Returnees</i> ♦ OSRO/TAJ/003/NOR <b>US\$ 86,413</b> <i>Post- Drought Provision of Agricultural Inputs to Rural Poor Households</i>		♦ OSRO/TAJ/101/SWE <b>US\$ 620,000</b> <i>Post-Drought Irrigation Rehabilitation and Support to Animal Health Services in Tajikistan</i>
	<b>6 projects</b> <b>US\$ 1,261,495</b>	<b>3 projects</b> <b>US\$ 622,500</b>	<b>3 projects</b> <b>US\$ 1,032,150</b>

## F. History of Projects Evaluated

316. The evaluation mission has been asked to evaluate two Swedish funded projects, one completed, OSRO/TAJ/702/SWE “Emergency Supply of Agricultural inputs for the 1998 Spring Planting Seasons” (TAJ/702) and one under completion, OSRO/TAJ/901/SWE “Emergency Assistance to Animal Health and Potato Seed Production” (TAJ/901). The rationale for selecting these two projects was to be able to draw lessons from projects for which some outputs had already been achieved and also from projects which had a common theme.

### OSRO/TAJ/702/SWE

317. In response to the UN Inter-Agency Consolidated Appeal (UN-CAP) for urgent humanitarian assistance covering the period December 1997-May 1997, the Government of Sweden contributed US\$139,000 to the emergency provision of agricultural inputs for the 1997 spring planting season. This donation came in addition to a donation of US\$ 527,000 from the Kingdom of Netherlands to FAO for the same purpose. The two sister projects were scheduled to be implemented in the spring of 1997 and included funding for six months for an international consultant (potato cultivation expert) and six months for three national consultants in addition to the provision of seed potatoes, fertilizer and pesticides. For reasons linked to the insecurity situation prevailing in the area where the projects were to be implemented, the implementation had to be postponed by one year. As the situation became more stable, it was decided to allocate part of the funding to the support of seed multiplication by private farmers and to initiate a potato seed fund for financing future seed supply.

### OSRO/TAJ/901/SWE

318. Following the UN-CAP proposal for the year 1999, SIDA indicated in February 1999 its willingness to support FAO assistance in several domains, among which were emergency coordination, potato seed multiplication as a follow-up to TAJ/702, and control of serious epidemic livestock diseases. The project TAJ/901 was then formulated accordingly. Funding to the amount of US\$ 325,000 became available in May 1999.

## G. Methodology of the Evaluation

319. The mission had access to various country documents and project files at Headquarters and at the FAO unit in Tajikistan. The mission had extensive discussion with the FAO team (the emergency co-ordinator, the agronomists, the Potato Seed Fund Manager and the veterinarians), the UN partners as well as structured individual and group interviews with local authorities and beneficiaries during the field visits (persons met and the mission itinerary are attached in ANNEX 2).

320. To a large extent the report is structured around the three themes that are covered by the two projects:

Potato Seed Multiplication

Support to Animal Health Services

Emergency Co-ordination for the Agriculture Sector.

321. However, under the potato seed multiplication theme, whenever it was possible and relevant, the mission distinguishes TAJ/702 from TAJ/901.

## IV. Assessment of Project Objectives & Design

### A. OSRO/TAJ/702/SWE

401. As explained in the former section, TAJ/702 is a sister project of TAJ/701 and therefore both projects are analysed simultaneously as one project.

402. At the national level, the project objectives were to reduce dependency on direct food aid and to assist the country to become increasingly self-sufficient in seed production in terms of quality and quantity. At the farmers' level, the objective was to encourage the emergence of localised supply networks.

403. The specific production targets provided in the Project Document for TAJ/701 were to increase seed potato production in 1997 by 320 tonnes and food potato production by 1,100 tonnes (i.e. potato that would not have the required quality for additional multiplications). It was projected that in 1998 the 320 tonnes of seed potato would generate 2,500 incremental tonnes of potato for consumption. The production targets were subsequently qualified in the first report by the seed potato consultant that served as an implementation plan for the two projects as a total of 4,400 tonnes of seed and food potato, of which 1,200 tonnes of seed potato would be contributed to a Government operated Potato Seed Fund (PSF).

406. The scarce project features of the Project Document were subsequently supplemented by more details in the three reports prepared by the consultant. In particular, the projects have been carefully sequenced with detailed plans of action that have proved useful tools for implementation. The recommended husbandry practices are also well defined in pamphlets distributed to the growers. However, some important elements that have not been included in the project design are elaborated upon in the following paragraphs.

407. **Target Group Identification and Analysis.** The identification of the target groups for the support to be provided by the project was not based on an analysis of their social or economic situation to justify the emergency assistance.

408. **Review of Other Actors in the Sector.** No analysis appears to have been undertaken of the activities of other actors in the seed potato sector although several NGOs are supporting seed potato production in the same localities as FAO/Ministry of Agriculture.

409. **Model for Supporting Poorer/More Vulnerable Farmers.** Although the project made efforts to contract not only the most proficient farmers as seed producers, it lacked a model for how less resourceful farmers, including women<sup>6</sup>, might be engaged. Such a model may be based on an analysis of the characteristics of such farmers in order to outline the required steps for identifying and contracting them and to define the additional support that they may require to become successful seed potato growers.

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<sup>6</sup> The majority of the seed potato producers supported by the projects undertake land preparation by tractor (ploughing, harrowing and ridging), control pest manually using knapsack sprayers handled by men and harvest the crop by tractor pulled potato diggers. Women in farming households frequently do the planting of the seed potato while occasionally also harvesting the crop manually. The marketing and control of income from seed potato production is largely within the domain of the male household members.

410. **Model for Encouraging and Supporting Growers Associations.** Although it is one of three explicit project objectives to promote formation of self-sustaining seed growers associations, the project documents contain no guidance on how such groups may be mobilised and assisted.

411. **Assessment of Implementation Risks.** The risks associated with the transportation of the seed potato inputs, the security situation in the country, the planting of seed potato in virus affected areas, and a possible oversupply of seed potato in the medium term are vaguely referred to in the project documents. However, no attempt appears to have been made to systematically assess them and to prepare for how they might be mitigated.

## B. OSRO/TAJ/901/SWE

412. The project document is succinct. The overall objective of the project is to rehabilitate agriculture and improve food security in post-conflict Tajikistan. The strategy to do so is to assist the Government of Tajikistan (GOT) in three areas:

- (i) Animal health
- (ii) Potato seed multiplication
- (iii) Co-ordination of assistance in the agriculture sector

### Rationale and Justification

413. **Priority Areas for Emergency Support.** The above areas correspond to priority areas expressed in the strategic approach and sector objectives defined in the UN- Consolidated Appeal (UNCAP) January-December 1999. Indeed, co-ordination of assistance in the agriculture sector through inter-agency meetings, further improvement in the availability of critical inputs (seeds in particular) and focus on selected sub-sectors which require urgent attention such as animal health, were key elements of the strategic approach for agriculture at that time.

414. **Support to Capacity Building and Privatisation.** The project goes beyond the provision of “pure” agriculture relief by supporting local capacity building activities and enhancing privatisation: support to private veterinary services in the animal health component and support to seed multiplication by private farmers. Support to privatisation in agriculture, both at the central Government level through lobbying and at the local level through focusing programmes primarily on private farmers, was also part of the strategic approach defined in the UNCAP for 1999.

### Project Features

415. **Animal Health.** Generally, livestock owners in Tajikistan are not considered poor or particularly disadvantaged but may instead belong to the more affluent portion of the rural population. This applies particularly to the owners of about 850,000 head of cattle now estimated to be in private hands (although it may be assumed that the private owners of 1,800,000 sheep and goats, together with the owners of small poultry flocks, belong to the poorer segment of the livestock owners). However, recent events in Tajikistan have deprived many livestock owners of important assets and, in some cases, forced them to temporarily leave their land for safety in neighbouring countries. Among the refugees who were identified in the Project Document as one potential target group

for emergency support, about 50,000 returned to Tajikistan from Afghanistan together with their animals, in 1997/98.

416. The information provided in the Project Document did not include an analysis of the situation of different categories of livestock owners in the aftermath of the civil war or what may be undertaken to reduce inflicted poverty and vulnerability. The justification for the planned intervention in the animal health sector was based on concerns about epizootic outbreaks, the limited effectiveness of the incapacitated veterinary services following the reduction in Government budgetary allocations, and a general concern for protein diet deficiencies among the population at large. The rationale for intervention changed after the first visit by the animal health consultant which generated an implementation plan for the first 12 months of project operation. The concern now became focused on the rehabilitation of the veterinary services within a pilot privatisation strategy, an approach that had earlier been successfully introduced in Afghanistan. The consultant mission appears to have made no further attempts to analyse the situation of different groups of livestock owners to define target groups for project intervention in line with the FAO policies for emergency support.

417. The objectives stated in the Project Document are: (a) to provide assistance to the veterinary service to carry out prophylactic vaccination in critical areas against major epidemic diseases; (b) strengthen the ability of the veterinary service to respond to sudden local outbreaks of diseases; (c) support private delivery of veterinary services; and (d) sensitise farmers to correct animal husbandry practices and, where appropriate, to the advantage of herd or flock reduction. No indicators on the attainment of objectives or the achievement of project results were specified.

418. **Potato Seed Multiplication.** This component is the follow-up to the former projects OSRO/TAJ/701 and 702: “Emergency Supply of Agricultural Inputs for the 1998 Spring Planting Season”, under which a pilot seed multiplication scheme was successfully initiated. The present project was planned to expand such experience in the same region (Garm region). Through the assistance under this project, the Potato Seed Fund was in 2000 expected to become a sustainable and economically viable unit which, through the marketing of its produce, would generate enough resources to procure most inputs for the planting in that year, including Class E and A potato seeds for the multiplication scheme. The project provided fertilisers, herbicides, pesticides, fuel, machinery and equipment, national project staff, office supplies and funds for operating costs.

419. **Co-ordination of Assistance in the Agriculture Sector.** The FAO coordination function for the agriculture sector in Tajikistan was first financed under the Technical Cooperation Program project TCP/TAJ/6612, “Coordination of Emergency Agricultural Relief and Recovery Interventions” with a budget of US\$ 351,000 and covering a 16-months period. Activities under the project started in June 1997 with the fielding of an international consultant/emergency coordinator (EAC) of emergency agriculture interventions. The objective of the project was “to establish an agricultural programme for coordinating, developing and implementing strategies that addressed immediate emergency agricultural needs and that were supportive of concurrent and subsequent efforts to create conditions conducive to recovery and sustained development”. Subsequent to the TCP project, the coordination function has been funded through various projects, including OSRO/TAJ/901/SWE.

420. With the relative stabilisation of the political situation and as part of the overall effort to rebuild governance, the initial objective of the coordination function has pro-

gressively shifted towards supporting the Ministry of Agriculture and the Government in taking over coordination responsibilities per se in the agriculture sector.

421. The coordination function as described in the project document is very ambitious. It includes numerous activities that can be broadly categorised under six outputs:

- Well-functioning co-ordination mechanisms
- Enhanced and well-managed FAO's programme
- High quality backstopping provided to the government, other UN agencies and NGOs
- Effective promotion of key themes
- High quality assessment reports
- Monitoring and evaluation

422. Because of the complementary nature of the funding, the achievements under the coordination function will be assessed over the whole period it has been performing and not over the short-term frame of five months as per the Project Document.

423. Overall, the project is formed of three distinct components with no linkages among them except the co-ordination component which involves supervision of all FAO operations in the country. The timeframe, as indicated by the amount of technical assistance provided (international or national consultants), is different for each of the components.

424. In order to clarify the objectives, outputs and activities of the project as per design, the mission has attempted to summarise in the following table what can be perceived as a simplified logical framework of the project. This is based on discussions with staff involved in the project formulation.



**Table 2: Summary of Key Features of 901/SWE**

	<b>Animal Health</b>	<b>Seed Potato Multiplication</b>	<b>Co-ordination of TA in Agriculture</b>
<b>Development Objective</b>	<b>Rehabilitation of agriculture and improved food security in post-conflict Tajikistan</b>		
<b>Intermediate objective</b>	Improved Animal Health	Increased availability of potatoes Increased availability of potato seeds	Effectiveness and efficiency of assistance provided in the agricultural sector
<b>Immediate Objectives</b>	Strengthen community-based private veterinary services	Develop a well-functioning high quality potato seed multiplication scheme (Potato Seed Fund)	Improved co-ordination of assistance in the agriculture sector
<b>Products (Results)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Veterinary service responds effectively to sudden outbreaks of animal disease in specific areas</li> <li>A large number of animals are vaccinated against most serious diseases</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seeds planted in selected farms</li> <li>Increased production of seeds</li> <li>Increased potato production</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Well-functioning co-ordination mechanisms</li> <li>Enhanced and well managed FAO's programme in Tajikistan</li> <li>High quality backstopping provided</li> <li>Effective promotion of key themes</li> <li>A well-functioning information and monitoring and evaluation system</li> </ol>
<b>Activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support to private delivery of veterinary services</li> <li>Support to vaccination</li> <li>Provision of training/extension services to farmers</li> <li>Production and dissemination of leaflets and/or posters</li> <li>Provision of training to national counterpart staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provision of supplies and materials (fertilisers, herbicides, insecticides and fuel and lubricants for production)</li> <li>Provision of machinery and equipment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provision of technical assistance and management back-up support to the MOA, other UN agencies and NGOs for emergency agricultural interventions</li> <li>Promotion of refugees and IDPs' return to rural areas</li> <li>Assessment of agricultural input requirements and beneficiary identification</li> <li>Awareness-building in gender issues</li> <li>Data gathering: The project will also provide assistance for setting up a data-generating mechanism essential for undertaking assessments of the food security situation of the country</li> <li>Assistance in the implementation of emergency and short-term rehabilitation projects</li> <li>Assistance to FAO HQ in fund mobilisation</li> <li>Preparation of reports on cropping and food situation</li> <li>Monitoring and evaluation</li> </ul>
<b>Inputs</b>	<i>Personnel</i> 1 Animal health expert (IC, 3-month) 4 Animal health experts (NC, each 5 months) <i>Expendable Equipment</i> Medicines, vaccines etc. <i>Equipment for the Vet Service</i> <i>Training and extension and communication</i>	<i>Personnel</i> 1 national agronomist (9 months) 1 national machinery expert (3 months)  Supplies and materials Machinery and equipment	<i>Personnel</i> 1 international FAO Co-ordinator (5 months in 2 missions) 1 national agricultural economist 6 months 1 national agronomist 6 months 1 national secretary 6 months 1 national driver 6 months

## V. Assessment of Implementation, Efficiency and Management

### A. Efficiency and Adequacy of Project Implementation

#### Projects OSRO/TAJ/702/SWE and OSRO/TAJ/701/NET

501. The implementation of the two projects was scheduled for the spring of 1997. However, due to security reasons, the delivery of inputs was not possible for the 1997 planting season and the project implementation had to be postponed to the spring of 1998.

502. Despite continuing logistics difficulties, the project successfully delivered 450 tonnes of potato seeds and 121 tonnes of fertilisers and pesticides to 24 farms covering an area of 46 ha. Out of 450 tonnes of potato seeds, approximately 100 tonnes of Elite seeds were distributed to more than 150 selected farmers for multiplication and 350 tonnes of seed potatoes Class A were distributed for potato growing.

503. The international seed expert visited the country in several one-month missions and provided valuable technical support to the project.

#### Project OSRO/TAJ/901/SWE

504. The implementation of the project has been slow compared to what was planned in the Project Document. Indeed, although three allotment advices have been received for disbursement by FAO Tajikistan from May 1999 to July 2000 and in December 2000, not all project funds had been used. Planned over an eight-month period, the project has been implemented over more than 20 months. The delays in implementation are essentially due to the capacity building nature of the project (especially the animal health component) that could not be accommodated over such a short period as initially planned.

505. **Support to Animal Health Services.** There are several reasons for the slow implementation of the component:

- The first mission of the animal health expert did not take place until August (4 months after the project started). This was the time necessary to accommodate for the identification of the expert, his availability and the recruitment process slowed down by administrative burdens imposed by the situation of the country (visa and security clearance requirements). This mission was determinant to start the project as it was supposed to define the outputs, activities and action plan.
- The approach developed was innovative for the sector and time was needed to sensitise, convince and obtain support from senior management of the veterinarian department (MOA). At the initial stage of the project, FAO veterinarian staff faced serious disagreements with the Government counterparts (in the Veterinary Department of the MOA).
- Finally, implementation was also compounded by the problems of shortage of supplies on the local market encountered in local procurement of medicine and drugs.

506. Overall, despite the slowness in implementation, project delivery was done according to the Project Document.

507. Over the 20 month life of support to animal health under the project, 163 veterinarians in the Khatlon and RRP provinces signed contracts with FAO for setting-up veterinary field unit (VFU) operations. Veterinarians have been provided with a 2-week refresher course, veterinary equipment and an initial credit in kind in the form of vaccines, medicine and other expendable supplies.

508. Veterinary supplies are procured locally by the FAO office and supplied to VFUs through Zoovetsnab (state organization trading in veterinary supplies) in Kurgan Tube (Khatlon) which was rehabilitated by the Government and contracted by FAO under the project as veterinary field base. Three additional veterinary field bases were established to facilitate local procurement of medicine and drugs by the contracted veterinarians themselves.

509. Local veterinarian consultants have been contracted as planned in the project document and national project staff includes a chief veterinarian, two veterinary monitors and a trainer, 4 stock keepers/ accountants and one driver. The budget could accommodate the recruitment of all the national consultants for a longer period than planned in the project document. This was essential to ensure delivery of the project support to beneficiaries.

510. The international animal health consultations took place through the fielding of two experts in three missions. Both experts delivered technical outputs deemed of high quality and useful by the project staff.

### **Support to Potato Seed Multiplication**

511. FAO support envisaged under TAJ/901 was provided to farmers through the Potato Seed Fund which operates as a relatively independent entity under the Ministry of Agriculture. By decree, the Fund has the authority to enter into contracts and to recruit staff. It should use 90 percent of its proceeds to re-invest in the potato programme, the remainder being at the disposal of the Ministry of Agriculture.

512. As planned in the Project Document, fertilisers and pesticides have been provided to complement the distribution of potato seeds by the Fund. Farm machinery was bought to assist seed potato growers who do not own tractors or cannot access commercial machinery hire services. In addition, a simple agricultural machinery repair shop was established in Garm.

### **Emergency Co-ordination**

513. Under this component, Project TAJ/901 complemented funding from other projects for the posts of the EAC, two national agronomists, and a national programme assistant. Some delays took place in the recruitment of the national programme assistant due to shortage of qualified and English-speaking candidates.

## **B. Project Management**

514. In the absence of an FAO Representative, the Emergency Agriculture Co-ordinator (EAC) has been, de facto, responsible for the management of the overall FAO programme. Both projects have hence been managed by the EAC assisted by a National Program Officer and the national consultants.

515. Despite its very limited financial and human resource means, the Government supported the project implementation, through, among other things, seconding government staff to the project.

516. While efficient operational support has been provided by FAO Headquarters from TCOR, very limited if no technical backstopping was given under TAJ/702 or TAJ/901. The EAC received, on his own initiative, ad-hoc support from technical divisions during his debriefing at Headquarters.

## C. Strengths and Weaknesses in Implementation

### Strengths

517. The strengths of project implementation include well-qualified and committed human resources. The achievements in the projects have to be attributed to a large extent to the quality and the commitments of the FAO staff. While the lack of international exposure of local staff put a high burden on the EAC and the national programme assistant on the very operational aspects of the projects (e.g., procurement), it is compensated by high expertise and commitments from all and a strong team spirit necessary to cope with a difficult environment.

### Weaknesses

518. Project implementation in Tajikistan has been hampered by several factors:

- **Security situation:** the projects have been implemented during a period when insecurity prevailed in many parts of the country. In particular, the insecurity situation in Garm created a one year delay in project implementation (see above). At times, access to the field is difficult if not impossible due to sudden armed fighting. This has had implications on the delivery of projects (among others, less field visits from staff).
- **Poor communication infrastructure:** access to some areas where projects have been implemented has been difficult simply because of the poor conditions of the roads. This had dramatic consequences under project 702 when three people, among whom one FAO staff, died while transporting inputs to the project areas. One of the 11 trucks of the convoy was over-turned by a landslide.
- **Poor institutional and economic environment in which projects are operated:** the limited government institutional capacity makes it difficult to maintain regular contact with sections or departments but interaction is instead frequently personalised and when counterparts staff are transferred, it may take considerable time to re-establish the previous rapport.
- **General poor economic environment:** the general poor economic environment in which the projects are implemented complicates their operational management. The lack of proper legal framework (e.g. on import tariffs and land use and tenure), the shortage of suppliers for local procurement, the random taxation practices and the high transport cost associated to the poor road conditions are indicators of the poor economic environment that negatively affect the projects implementation.
- **Tenuous technical backstopping and support:** relying on individual consultants for the technical support of the projects is not sufficient to ensure a close technical fol-

low-up necessary for the type of projects implemented in Tajikistan. The delay in the first arrival of the animal health consultant is one example.

## VI. Assessment of Results and Effectiveness

601. The combined results from the support provided under the projects 702/SWE and 701/NET<sup>7</sup> (essentially utilised during 1998) on seed potato multiplication and 901/SWE (utilised 1999-2001) on seed potato multiplication and animal health services is assessed in the following sections.

### A. Support to Seed Potato Multiplication

#### Effects and Impact

602. **National Level.** The projects have fulfilled their national level objectives to reduce dependency on food aid and to increase self-sufficiency in growing seed potato by successfully importing, transporting and facilitating planting of about 330 tonnes of seed potato together with the required fertilisers and pesticides in 1998, of which about 120 tonnes of potato were procured under 702/SWE (the deferral of planting by one year was dictated by the poor security situation in 1997). The combined production of seed and food potato was 3,600 tonnes (about 81% of an ambitious target). The contribution by the projects to the Potato Seed Fund was limited to about 660 tonnes (53% of the target) since some of the seed growers defaulted on their repayment obligations (resulting in their exclusion from the growing scheme in subsequent years). It is estimated that the inputs provided by the two projects were used to plant 12% of the seed potato production area in 1998.

603. **Seed Potato Growers.** The contributions by the three projects to the seed potato production sector in Garm, Tajikabad and Jirgital districts in the Karategin Valley include:

- **Increased household incomes:** since May 1998, about 180 seed potato producers have benefited from provided farm inputs (on credit terms), advisory services and machinery services (also on credit terms) to produce and sell seed potato and food potato at remunerative prices;
- **Improved farming skills:** sub-optimal husbandry practices of the past (including seeding rates, timeliness of fertiliser application and timeliness of harvesting) have been upgraded through recurrent contacts with the project employed agronomists during the implementation period 1998-2001.

609. Other aspects related to seed potato production sector include:

- **Participation by poorer/more vulnerable farmers:** efforts have been made to engage less resourceful seed producers by limiting the quantity of seed potato allocated to individual farms and by providing machinery services for growers who do not own tractors or suitable implements. However, it is likely that primarily the more skilled farmers with larger than average irrigated holdings have benefited from the support

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<sup>7</sup> The effects of the parallel support for seed procurement provided under OSRO/TAJ/701/NET is inseparable from OSRO/TAJ/702/SWE

provided by the projects since no special training has been provided to less experienced potato growers or to growers particularly affected by the civil disruptions;

- **Promotion of local seed supply networks:** the third objective of 701/SWE—to encourage the emergence of localised supply networks—has not been fulfilled. Contracted seed potato producers have received little training on input procurement, marketing of seed potato (e.g. identification and contracting of marketing agents) or on the aspects of internal co-operation and management. Instead the projects have placed emphasis on building up the Government operated Potato Seed Fund to handle input procurement and provision of machinery services on behalf of the farmers.

610. **Food Potato Producers.** The two projects 701/NET and 702/SWE generated a total production of 1,200 tonnes of seed potato (first and second generation Class A seed) in 1998, equivalent to 23% of the total seed potato production.

611. **Food Consumers.** The effects and impact on consumers of food potato include:

- **Availability of quality food potatoes:** the two projects generated a total production of 2,400 tonnes of high quality food potato in 1998 as compared to an estimated total national marketed production<sup>8</sup> of 110,000 tonnes; and
- **Retail prices:** the projects' impact on prices has been limited since their combined incremental effect on production of food potato is modest in relation to the total marketed production.

612. **Institutional Impact.** The institutional effects and impact include:

- **The Potato Seed Fund:** through the assistance under 901/SWE, the Potato Seed Fund was expected to become a sustainable and economically viable unit in 2000 which, through the marketing of its produce, would generate enough resources to procure the required inputs for the planting in the following year, including Class E and A potato seeds for the multiplication scheme. Although the Potato Seed Fund managed to procure the required inputs for planting in 2001, the budget for 2002 projects a shortfall of about \$10,000;
- **Professional knowledge and skills among supervising/field agronomists:** the four agronomists employed by PSF/FAO have upgraded their technical knowledge and communication skills through informal in-service training received through the projects; and
- **Professional knowledge among NGOs:** several NGOs that promote seed potato production in the Karategin Valley have interacted informally with the FAO staff and consultant whose advice has helped to improve their knowledge of seed production technology and may have contributed to decisions to continue to support seed potato production in 1999 and 2000.

## Contribution to Conflict Resolution

613. The support to seed potato multiplication has benefited an area that may have been more affected by the economic decline and the civil war than most other parts of the country. While the FAO support has contributed to generate incremental incomes

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<sup>8</sup> In 1998, total production of food potato was estimated at 160,000 tonnes of which about 50,000 tonnes were produced by subsistence growers.

among several families and to raise the farming skills among potato producers, it is unclear to what extent former dissident groups have benefited as compared to families loyal to the present Government. However, the ongoing implementation of projects supported by UNOPS and by non-governmental organisations does not indicate that discriminatory policies are being applied but that Government favours a fair distribution of development assistance.

### **Sustainability and Environmental Impact**

614. **Sustainability of Seed Potato Production.** Practical knowledge of more effective husbandry practices for seed potato production has been well established among the growers directly supported by the FAO projects as well as among other seed potato producers. Further dissemination of this knowledge largely depends on the resources and efforts by the Potato Seed Fund in the absence of farmer managed interest groups.

615. The future availability of inputs (seed, fertiliser and pesticides) through the Potato Seed Fund may be tied to the provision of additional financial support to the Fund since the current volume of seed replenishment may not generate sufficient revenue to allow procurement of inputs for all contracted producers. However, the diversity of actors in this field—Government/FAO, NGOs and one commercial company—should ensure that most interested growers obtain the necessary inputs for planting in 2002 and 2003.

616. **Environmental Impact of Project Activities.** Seed potato production promoted by the FAO projects has relied on modest application of approved herbicides for control of weeds and insecticides to control damage by the Colorado beetle and other pests. The limited quantities used are not deemed to have any adverse long-term effects on the production environment. The risk for dissemination of aphid carried virus to low-infected production areas such as the high altitude Jirgatal District is considered to be manageable.

617. Soil erosion implications have been minimal since seed potato is grown on level to gently sloping irrigated land rather than on erodable steep slopes.

### **Gender Equity in Project Implementation and Results**

616. Few women have been engaged in planning, implementation or monitoring of project activities.

### **Cost-effectiveness**

617. The operating circumstances for the projects 701 and 702 have been difficult as manifested by a long input distribution chain, distant production locations, poor road infrastructure, deteriorated national forwarding capacity and a poor security situation.

618. **Procurement and Distribution of Inputs.** The project management has maintained close attention to the procurement, shipping, forwarding, storing, transportation and distribution aspects of the supplied inputs and the incurred losses have been acceptable.

619. **Cost-sharing Arrangements.** The projects have funded seasonal production inputs, machinery traction services and extension and supervisory services while farmers have been responsible for production and marketing of the seed potato. Farmers have reimbursed the Potato Seed Fund for received inputs and machinery contracting services

in kind while the extension and supervisory services have been fully funded by the projects. Other projects promoting seed potato production that are supported by NGOs frequently demand repayment of the cost of provided inputs in cash rather than in kind so as to avoid future marketing risks.

620. **Overall Assessment.** Promotion of expanded production of seed potato in Tajikistan is by necessity a high cost-operation but the projects have maintained operating costs at acceptable levels. However, the principles for cost-sharing with farmers have been generous and it is not clear if the Potato Seed Fund can continue its operations without external fund replenishments. Cost-effectiveness in relation to the objectives of reduced dependency on food aid and increased self-sufficiency in quality seed production, is deemed satisfactory: it is cheaper to import seed than food and the support cost has been reasonable in relation to the volume of the incremental seed potato production generated by the projects.

### Factors Affecting the Project Results

621. **External Factors.** These include:

- + High demand for good quality seed among skilled potato growers (profitability superior to cereal production);
- Deteriorating security situation in 1997 resulting in a one-year implementation delay.

622. **Internal Factors.** These include:

- + Practical approach to seed potato multiplication;
- + Careful planning of support activities to enable shipping, distribution and application in distant production area of more than 1,000 tonnes of farm inputs; and
- + Close supervision of implementation to mitigate against disruptions caused by insecurity and deteriorated infrastructure.

### Government Support

623. Contributions by the Government of Tajikistan through the Ministry of Agriculture have included: (a) participation in the project design processes; (b) provision of the services by one head agronomist based in Dushanbe (part time), in conjunction with office and transport facilities, and three field agronomists (also part time) working in Karategin Valley; and (d) establishment of the Potato Seed Fund through enabling legislative framework.

## B. Support to Animal Health Services

### Effects and Impact

624. The start of the field operations was delayed until May 2000 when the first training course for district veterinarians in Khatlon Province was conducted. Since the support has been provided during less than a one-year period, the expected impact on animal health has not yet materialised<sup>9</sup>.

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<sup>9</sup> Further support to animal health services has been provided under 001/SWE and 102/SWE.



625. **Veterinary Practitioners.** The approximately 170 veterinary practitioners, who have benefited from the support “package”—refresher training, clinical equipment, vaccines and drugs, knapsack sprayer and a bicycle—have acquired/established:

- upgraded knowledge of prophylactic practices;
- improved skills in diagnostic methodology;
- basic clinical facilities that enable them to treat more animals than by relying exclusively on farm visits; and
- replenishable supply of basic drugs on credit terms for both prophylactic and curative purposes that allow them to carry out more timely and effective treatments than in the past.

626. **Animal Health.** While the project documents did not include indicators for assessing the attainment of objectives of this component, it appears that the incidence of some epidemic diseases, including brucellosis, has declined in the project areas in the first half of 2001 compared to the same period in the two preceding years.

627. **Livestock Owners.** Farmers are being sensitised to correct animal husbandry practices through interaction with veterinarians during administration of vaccines or ordinary consultations. While no field campaigns have been carried out to sensitise a larger portion of the livestock owners to improved animal health practices, FAO sponsored radio broadcasts have included advice on animal nutrition and health.

### Contribution to Conflict Resolution

628. Like the support to seed potato multiplication, the assistance to improved animal health services has benefited an area that has been much affected by the economic decline and the civil strife. While its contributions to conflict resolution may be rather obscure, it can be assumed that the provision of veterinary services on market terms outside the Government institutional sphere is seen as being without discriminatory connotations. The increased availability of services on reasonable economic terms may even generate increased trust in the ability of Government to facilitate better rural services.

### Sustainability and Environmental Impact of Results

629. The vaccines supplied through the support project serve to suppress the future incidence of epidemic livestock diseases in the project areas. They thus have a long-term effect on animal health (once a critical portion of animals are vaccinated, epidemic viruses find themselves without a self-sustaining host population).

630. While the professional and livelihood situation of project supported veterinary practitioners vary, there are indications that the revenue generated from selling vaccines and drugs to livestock owners (e.g. 20% mark-up on wholesale prices) is sufficient to sustain continued veterinary operations without supplementary operational support. Most practitioners supplement the income derived from sales of vaccines and drugs by charging locally adapted fees for clinical services performed *in-situ* at the livestock owners or at the clinic (in addition, most practitioners have been provided with state farm land for subsistence production and modest surplus sales). The sustainability of the operations at the field level is also corroborated by the willingness of additional veterinarians to join the scheme (the current “waiting list” includes about 20 applicants).

## Gender Equity in Project Implementation and Results

631. Although women frequently are responsible for husbandry and health of small stock (sheep, goats and poultry), no efforts appear to have been made during the planning process to design an implementation approach that would target women as recipients of information on improved animal health practices.

## Cost-effectiveness

632. In relation to the intentions and principles of the FAO emergency support, the assistance provided by the project has had only an indirect effect in improving the situation of poor or particularly vulnerable livestock owners (mainly through the facilitated vaccination services). The original intentions have undergone a gradual change during the project formulation process to provide a support package that facilitates an institutional transformation rather than to alleviate the plight of livestock owners affected by the civil war.

633. However, the project has carried out its activities in a cost-efficient manner through good use of available personnel and material resources. The project management has maintained close attention to the procurement, shipping, forwarding, storing, transportation and distribution aspects of the supplied inputs. It must also be mentioned that the approach adopted by the project represents a practical and cost-effective way to achieve privatisation of veterinary services and thus increased access to critical services by a large number of livestock owners. Through low-cost support (local refresher training, basic standard equipment and simple revolving credit fund for replenishment of common vaccines and drugs) through a small management unit to a cadre of committed veterinary practitioners who have accumulated considerable practical experience since the time of their basic institutional training, the project has been able to clear the path for expanded privatisation of veterinary services in the rest of the country.

## Factors Affecting the Project Results

634. **External Factors.** These include:

- + Demand for vaccines and drugs at cost among livestock owners.

635. **Internal Factors.** These include:

- + Practical approach to private veterinary service operations;
- + Careful planning and scheduling of support activities;
- + Close supervision of implementation; and
- Occasional hesitation within the Ministry of Agriculture to implement privatisation policies within a decentralised framework.

## Government Support

636. Contributions by the Government of Tajikistan through the Ministry of Agriculture have included: (a) participation in the project design processes; and (b) provision of the services by one National Animal Health Expert, two national Trainers/Monitorers and one national Trainer; and (c) provision of structures for veterinary bases (from which vaccines, drugs and other supplies are provided to the participating veterinarians).

## C. Emergency Co-ordination

637. Evaluating the results and impact of coordination function(s) is not an easy task as there is no concrete and quantified results that would permit to analyse its effects and impact. The following is based essentially on reports produced and self-assessment by the EAC as well as on discussions with other actors in the agriculture sector. What follows attempts to examine what has been undertaken to achieve the various outputs as defined in section IV and their possible impacts.

### Coordination Mechanism

638. Coordination mechanisms are of two kinds: (i) institutional coordination and (ii) ad-hoc and/or project-related coordination.

639. **Institutional Co-ordination.** Institutional coordination has been carried out, among other things, through monthly agriculture coordination meetings convened and chaired by the FAO emergency coordinator. These meetings have been held regularly since 1997 and gather about ten attendees from international agencies being active in the agriculture sector (major ones: WFP, CARE, ACTED, Action Against Hunger, GAA, AKF) and representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture. Topics discussed have been diverse: government activities (for instance, laws and regulation affecting agriculture sector and taxation issues), sharing of information on the agriculture situation and prospects, respective programmes of international agencies, selected topics, e.g. FAO contribution to UN-CAP and impact of the 1998 floods in Khotlan on agriculture.

640. Based on the minutes of the meetings, it appears that they constitute a genuine forum for exchanging information and views of issues of common concerns among international agencies and the Government. However, it may not be a sufficient mechanism for enhancing true collaboration when it comes to agencies' policy, strategy or simply mode of interventions. A case in point has been the multiple interventions in the seed multiplication sub-sector and the divergence among the agencies on the terms and conditions applied to credit-in-kind to farmers. Credit-in-kind is provided to farmers for potato seed multiplication through three agencies: Aga Khan Foundation, German Agro-Action and FAO. All intervene in the area of the Karategin Valley. Terms and conditions of credit-in-kind to farmers diverge depending on the agency providing the assistance. Despite the effort made during the agriculture coordination meeting to raise the issue at several occasions, there is no effective harmonization among the three agencies.

641. The attendance is low relative to the numbers of agencies involved in agriculture and not regular and systematic from those that have attended coordination meetings. There is no representative from the World Bank (there is a WB office in Dushanbe), although multilateral finance institutions are by far the major international actors in agriculture.

642. With a view to progressively increasing Government's involvement, the EAC has regularly passed the chairing of the meetings to the International Program Coordinator of the Ministry of Agriculture. As of April 2000, the responsibility for holding and chairing these monthly meetings has been transferred to the Ministry of Agriculture. Meetings have been held regularly with a high attendance from various agencies. This represents a concrete positive step of FAO's support to the Government in building-up ownership and taking the lead on coordination of assistance in agriculture.

643. The emergency coordination unit had set-up a computerized database of projects in agriculture as a tool to exchange information among the various actors in the agriculture sector. It provided useful information on activities and support provided by international agencies by theme and sub-sector. It was regularly up-dated and discussed at the monthly meetings. This activity has been taken over by OCHA as part of the development of a comprehensive data base on international assistance in Tajikistan.

644. Institutional co-ordination is also carried out through participation by the EAC in various co-ordination meetings by other agencies. The most important of those being:

- UN Country Team weekly meetings convened and chaired by the UNDP Resident/ Humanitarian Co-ordinator on policy, strategy and operational matters of concern to the UN agencies. A representative of international NGO as well as of the multi-lateral finance institutions attend these meetings;
- OCHA co-ordination meetings focusing on humanitarian assistance;
- Other sectoral co-ordination meetings such as the Food Co-ordination Meetings convened and chaired by WFP on issues of food security, vulnerability, targeting and food aid; and
- Ad-hoc meetings with other agencies. At least once a week, a meeting takes place between the FAO EAC and a representative of another agency.

645. During discussions with some heads of UN agencies, high appreciation and visibility of FAO's participation and contribution was pointed out to the mission at several occasions.

646. **Ad-hoc Co-ordination.** Co-ordination has also been done under the concrete framework of projects through partnerships, collaboration and field work. Co-ordination through projects is well-illustrated by the partnerships established between UNHCR, WFP and FAO on the emergency provision of agricultural inputs to returnees, land-lease farmers and the rural poor funded under several projects<sup>10</sup>. These interventions aim at improving living conditions and food security situation of targeted population groups through the promotion of more self-reliant activities. They target returnees registered and assisted by UNHCR and WFP land-lease beneficiaries. The latter are no longer beneficiaries from WFP food aid and instead have been provided with land-lease arrangements under the umbrella of WFP intervention. FAO's contribution consists in the distribution of agricultural inputs and extension services to farmers through local agronomists.

647. FAO national staff play also an important role in liaising with agencies intervening in agriculture in their areas of responsibilities through day-to-day dialogue in the field.

### Management and Enhancement of FAO's Programme

648. Enhancing FAO's programme in Tajikistan and managing operations constitute by far the bulk of the EAC activities. As the programme stands now, 90 percent of the time of the EAC is devoted to the management of operations.

649. Since 1997, year of the fielding of the emergency coordinator, the programme has steadily built up thanks to his active commitment to do so. This is shown in Table 1 pre-

<sup>10</sup> See Table 1 on FAO's programme in Tajikistan (OSRO/TAJ/904/NOR, OSRO/TAJ/001/SWE and OSRO/TAJ/002/HCR).

sented in Section III on the overview of FAO's programme in Tajikistan. This is also reflected in the increasing success in fund mobilisation by FAO through the UN-CAP.

**Table 3: UN CAP for Tajikistan- Requirements by FAO and Donors Contributions**

Year Covered by the UN-CAP	Requirements (US\$)	Donors Contributions (US\$)	% covered
1998	3,626,150	56,000	1.5
1999	3,390,000	325,000	9.6
2000	3,515,200	802,430	22.8
2001	3,010,875	742,414	20.8

*Source: OCHA, Tajikistan- May 2001.*

650. The programme table clearly shows the diversity and hence the complexity of the FAO programme in Tajikistan and the attempt of the EAC to reflect the “emergency nature” of the situation in Tajikistan, by balancing emergency agriculture interventions and rehabilitation/ development actions.

651. However, the FAO's program is not quite the result of a comprehensive programming whereby needs and priorities are matched with FAO's support principles and priorities. The program is very much donor driven (through their response to UN-CAP) and constrained by the framework of the UN-CAP through which FAO is mobilizing funding.

652. The short time frame of the UN-CAP (one year) and the funding mechanism (only partial donor response to the appeal) impose constraints on the design of the projects that are not appropriate when dealing with complex responses aiming at enhancing longer term processes. This has been clearly shown when evaluating the support to animal health services. Planned to be implemented over 8 months, the project has been implemented over 20 months (under TAJ/901 funding) and continues thanks to additional funding through another project. Furthermore, the limited funding available through the UN-CAP does not permit to provide the technical support that is necessary to manage projects with a relatively high technical content through capacity building, training and technical advice elements. In particular, because of the limited international exposure of local experts, support from international experts is a condition for developing and implementing operations in specific areas. This support can not be expected from the EAC who is primarily involved in the day-to-day management of projects and who does not necessarily have the expertise required.

653. Finally, the absence of programming implies that FAO is involved in areas where other agencies are also present with much more means and therefore with potentially a greater impact. This is the case of the seed multiplication scheme where other actors are providing substantial support.

### **Backstopping and Advice**

654. Backstopping and advice are provided extensively by FAO staff (international and national) to the Government and project beneficiaries. The EAC has regular meetings with the Minister of Agriculture and works very closely with key staff of the Ministry. FAO staff is also well known and their technical support is well appreciated in the field.

655. This valuable support to government staff has been permitted by: (i) the integration of FAO's activities within the Government's structure at various levels (e.g., the Manager of the Potato Seed Fund is an employee of the Ministry of Agriculture, the

support to private animal health services is provided in close collaboration with the Veterinary Department of the Ministry); and (ii) contacts created through project implementation.

### Promotion of Key Themes

656. Under this output, the main activity relates to the promotion and awareness building on gender issues in Government agriculture planning as a means of increasing and/or enhancing the food production of rural women.

657. The mission found that very little if none is done by the staff and under the FAO programme to integrate gender aspects and promote more gender-focused interventions.

### Information, Analysis and Assessment

658. Setting-up a data-generating mechanism, collecting information on the food security situation, preparing reports on the crop and food situation in collaboration with GIEWS and assessment of agricultural input requirements and beneficiary identification were all activities planned to contribute to the delivery of high quality analysis and assessment to Government and the International Community.

659. Many activities have been carried out until recently. Among others, the following ones can be mentioned:

- Preparation of Food and Agriculture Bulletin using extracts from GIEWS publications for distributing to members of the agriculture co-ordination committee. This has proved to be time-consuming for the FAO staff for information available on Internet. The production of Bulletin stopped since the responsibility of the meetings has been handed over to the Ministry of Agriculture.
- Preparation of regular reports for GIEWS based on the cautious use of the government statistics, reports from FAO field staff and the EAC's own assessment.
- Conducting a household food security survey in 1999 by FAO staff. About 100 households have been interviewed. A report was prepared by the EAC.
- Preparation of the agriculture section of the UN-CAP (assessment of the situation, needs and strategy) and preparation of project profiles.

660. The monitoring of the food security situation and the production of reliable data on the agriculture sector appear to be a very difficult task in a context where government statistics are poor and in view of the limited staff capacity and time of the FAO unit. Much information is exchanged through coordination mechanisms and by collecting individual agency experience and assessments. However, this is not sufficient to provide a sound basis for producing credible assessments. Because of the severe shortage of information, monitoring the food security situation and producing regular analysis and assessment that can be used for decision-making by the international community and the government would require means and capacity that are far beyond the FAO Unit. In this respect, the EAC has appealed for the financing of such a monitoring system in the two last UN-CAP without success. The mission believes that this is an area for which there is a high demand and for which FAO is best placed to respond. Furthermore, it would greatly contribute to reinforce FAO's visibility and to enhance its programme in the country.

## Monitoring and Evaluation

661. The projects that the mission is reviewing have been lacking clear indicators in the project document for outputs to be assessed. The project management has compensated for this weakness by establishing project data bases from which it is possible to derive the necessary information for assessing project outputs. The mission has been able to assess results for the seed multiplication activities and the support to animal health on the basis of detailed monitoring data.

# VII. Conclusions

## A. Projects Design and Relevance

701. **Positive Aspects.** The findings by the evaluation mission on the design of the two projects include:

- The projects build on existing resources in the country, through the use of staff at the national and local levels who have been largely under-utilised in the past. Most of these experts are government staff seconded to the projects. The approach is effective in bringing government staff in contact with the projects and, in doing so, in promoting national ownership of project activities and results.
- Within their design framework, the projects are cost-efficient in making use of limited resources for reaching substantial number of ultimate beneficiaries, that is live-stock owners in the case of the support to animal health and potato growers in the case of the seed multiplication scheme.
- The projects have been carefully sequenced with detailed plans of action that have proved useful tools for project implementation.

702. **Other Findings.** These include:

- One major deficiency in the project design lies in the absence of any consideration and assessment relating to potential population groups targeted through the projects and in particular women. Furthermore, targeting population groups most affected by the economic crisis and the war was clearly not a concern when formulating these projects. The approach adopted in both projects and in all components is essentially technical. These concerns are in fact, better addressed in other projects of the FAO's programme in Tajikistan<sup>11</sup>.
- The Project Documents are leaving out many design aspects while simultaneously being vague or confused about their objectives, outputs and activities. This is largely accounted for by the limited amount of time that could be put into their formulation and the constraints imposed by the framework of the Consolidated Appeal. However, project design has been largely done during the first mission of international experts both for the seed multiplication scheme (under 702) and the

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<sup>11</sup> Among the Swedish funded projects, two projects have explicit targeting of vulnerable groups: OSRO/TAJ/001/SWE (2000) "Agriculture Assistance to Returnees and Land-Lease Private Farmers" and OSRO/TAJ/101/SWE (2001) "Post-Drought Irrigation Rehabilitation and Support to Animal Health Services in Tajikistan".

support to animal health (under 901). This should be acknowledged when assessing project design.

## B. Project Implementation

703. The findings by the evaluation mission on the implementation of the projects include:

- Overall, both projects have been well implemented thanks to close supervision and adequate management by the FAO project staff. Implementation of project 901 has been slow, reflecting partly inadequate planning at the design stage (obviously too short time frame) but also as the result of a number of external factors. These factors include: (i) the insecurity situation prevailing in many parts of the country (ii) the poor communication infrastructure making access to project areas difficult and costly; (iii) the weak government institutional capacity putting limit on government's involvement and support in project implementation; and (iv) the general poor economic environment under which projects are operated complicating their operational management.
- Valuable international expertise has been provided under both projects through the fielding of short-term missions. Despite the high quality of their contribution, it is recognised that relying on individual consultants for the technical backstopping and support of the projects is not sufficient to ensure the close technical follow-up necessary for the type of projects implemented in Tajikistan.
- The achievements of the projects have to be attributed to a large extent to the quality and the commitments of the FAO staff. While the lack of international exposure of local staff put a high burden on the Emergency Agriculture Co-ordinator (EAC) and the national programme assistant on the very operational aspects of the projects, it is compensated by good expertise and full commitments from all and a strong team spirit to cope with a difficult environment.

## C. Project Effects and Impact

704. **Support to Seed Potato Multiplication.** The findings of the evaluation mission on the effects and impact of this support include:

- The projects have contributed to improve the income of more than 150 seed growers supported by the projects and have also made quality seed potato available to a large number of growers of food potato. Efforts have been made to engage a number of less resourceful seed producers by limiting the quantity of seed potato allocated to individual farms and by providing machinery services for growers who do not own tractors or suitable implements.
- In addition, the projects have served to upgrade knowledge of effective practices for potato production not only among the seed potato growers but also among the district agronomists conveying advisory services to the growers and staff among non-governmental organisations supporting seed potato multiplication at other bulking sites.

705. Other findings include:

- The approach adopted by the projects to support the establishment of a Government managed Potato Seed Fund may be a less sustainable option for assistance to future



seed potato production than encouraging the seed growers to assume responsibility for input procurement, in-kind credit operations and marketing of production.

- While TAJ/702 has certainly had an impact on all groups of the population by making available quality seed for production of food potato, the effect of the seed multiplication activities to improve the situation of vulnerable groups has been indirect rather than direct (mainly by making quality seed potato available at market prices through the regular commercial channels).

706. **Support to Animal Health Services.** The findings of the evaluation mission on the effects and impact of this support include:

- The provided support (classroom and practical refresher training, equipment and veterinary supplies on credit basis, the selling of which provide a sustainable income to the practitioner) has served to rapidly improve the level and the quality of the services by 170 veterinarians to livestock owners in the four pilot areas. An additional benefit to the farming community may be that the project, by supplying drugs with price mark-ups that reflect its actual operating costs rather than the profit opportunity offered by an oligopolistic supply situation, helps to lower the prices of drugs and vaccines sold by commercial traders.
- The service improvement effect has been achieved at a modest direct project cost per benefiting veterinarian while the overhead costs for managerial and supervisory services are reasonable. The adopted approach points the way for further privatisation of veterinary services in other parts of the country in a sustainable way.
- While livestock owners may not generally represent the least resourceful households in sedentary farming communities, two particular aspects of the supported animal health services serve to facilitate that also the poorer livestock owning families obtain access to affordable preventive and curative services. Most of the supported veterinarians are residing within the villages that they are serving and upgraded vaccination services are thus likely to be extended to all households, even if some families are unable to meet their full cost. In addition, the low prices on drugs and vaccines maintained by the supported veterinarians make their application defensible on both economic and financial grounds for the large majority of livestock owning households.

707. **Emergency Co-ordination.** The findings by the evaluation mission on the effects and impact of the emergency co-ordination function include:

- While there is no standard measure to assess the results and impact of the co-ordination function, the mere existence of a substantial programme of FAO operations in Tajikistan gives an indication of the good performance achieved under co-ordination. From no operation in 1997, more than twelve projects have been implemented or are under implementation. Furthermore, the recognition of the role FAO can play in the overall assistance to the country is reflected, to a certain extent, in the steady increase in donors' response to FAO's appeal under the framework of the UN-Consolidated Appeal, from 1.5% to over 20% coverage of FAO's requirements.
- An overview of the FAO programme in Tajikistan since 1997 reflects a commendable attempt to balance the need for providing an immediate response to food security problems of farm families as well as for promoting more sustainable initiatives aiming at rehabilitation and longer-term development.

- Effective co-ordination with other agencies as well as with the Government has been most effective when FAO started to build its own programme and to implement operations. With the presence of major actors in the field of agriculture (multilateral financial institutions and some international NGOs), there is an obvious limit to what FAO can achieve in terms of co-ordination with the International Aid Community. This limit is less restricting with FAO becoming proactive in the sector.
- The same applies to the backstopping and support provided to the Government. Valuable support to government staff has been permitted by (i) the integration of FAO's activities within the Government's structure at various levels and (ii) contacts created through project implementation.

708. Other findings include the following:

- The FAO program is not the result of a comprehensive programming whereby needs and priorities are matched with FAO's support principles and priorities. The program is to a large extent donor driven (through their response to UN-CAP) and constrained by the framework of the UN-CAP through which FAO is mobilising funding. The short time frame of the UN-CAP (one year) and the funding mechanism (partial donors' response to the appeal) impose constraints on the design of the projects that are not appropriate when dealing with complex responses aiming at enhancing longer term processes.
- The limited funding available through the UN-CAP does not accommodate the technical support that would be necessary to manage projects with a relatively high technical content through their capacity building, training and technical advice elements. In particular, because of the limited international exposure of local experts, support from international experts may be a necessary requirement for developing and implementing operations in specific technical areas.
- The absence of programming implies also that FAO is involved in areas where other agencies are also present with much more means and therefore with potentially greater impact. This is the case of the seed multiplication scheme where other actors are providing substantial support.

## VIII. Suggestions for Follow-up Actions Regarding the FAO Program in Tajikistan

801. Any follow-up actions would have to take into account that Tajikistan is still in a situation of emergency in many respects. While the country is entering a new phase aimed at achieving reconciliation and consolidation of national institutions, it is recognized that this process faces tremendous economic and social constraints emanating from the collapse of the Soviet Union and further aggravated by the civil conflict. Among them are the extreme poverty of the vast majority of the population and its high dependency on humanitarian aid. In analysing the role FAO plays and can play in the future, these complex problems in Tajikistan should be kept in mind. The suggestions by the mission include:

- **Fielding of a Programming Mission:** such a mission would define priority areas for FAO interventions in the medium and long-term, taking into account the priority

needs during this transition period and be based on a thorough assessment of major other actors strategies in Tajikistan and the comparative advantage of FAO.

- **Extension of the Emergency Co-ordination function by two to three years:** funding should be mobilised for ensuring that the role of an international emergency co-ordinator be maintained in Tajikistan on whom the enhancement and the management of FAO's presence in Tajikistan highly depends. However, the terms of reference for this function should be revised to reflect more realistic objectives, focusing on program enhancement and management.
- **Fielding of an International Junior Consultant:** to focus on food security monitoring and assessment, targeting issues and gender sensitisation. The most realistic mechanism to fund such a function may be the Associate Professional Officer Scheme.
- **Extension of coverage of private veterinary services:** a project should be formulated with a view to extending private veterinary services towards national coverage using the strategy of TAJ/901 that has proved effective. Funding for such a project should not be part of the UN-CAP but should be raised through "normal" trust fund mobilisation channels. Technical division (AGAH) should be closely involved in its formulation and similar experiences in the region should be used to define a longer-term strategy for the sub-sector.

## IX. Lessons Learned and Emerging Issues

901. The lessons learned for other emergency operations and the issues that are emerging from the evaluation process at this stage are summarised below.

### Project Planning

- More operational guidance on FAO's policy, strategy and priorities in the transition period from the emergency phase to the rehabilitation and development phase should be provided to the emergency co-ordinators and partners in the field. Such guidance may cover the following areas/issues:
  - Target groups for emergency support: (i) criteria: poverty status and vulnerability aspects; and (ii) methods for identification/assessment;
  - Criteria for FAO intervention, including: (i) internal capacity and competitive advantages; and (ii) presence of other support organisations within the sub-sector;
  - Practical means for approaching/mobilising and supporting populations that have been adversely affected by conflicts, natural disasters and/or deteriorating economic conditions, including: (i) early support to internal self-organisation, (ii) facilitation of participatory planning by beneficiaries together with the support organisation; and (iii) strategies for the beneficiaries to take over of the responsibilities of the support organisation during a phase-out period;
  - Planning methodology, including formulation of project objectives, definition of output and impact indicators and risk assessment;
  - Clarification of FAO's expected role and FAO's position on various issues that are particular significant in post-emergency situation, such as: (i) trade-offs between targeting vulnerable groups for immediate impact vis-à-vis achieving

longer term sustainability; and (ii) the process of transfer of “ownership” from the support organisation to the recipient population during the progression from the emergency phase to the development phase.

- During the transition period, a comprehensive country programming aiming at defining FAO’s role in the country and examining medium and long term perspectives is important to ensure a consistent FAO strategy in the country. That would also assist the EAC in mobilising funds beyond the framework of the UN-CAP, using “normal” trust fund channels.
- The programming exercise may define a number of sub-programmes within which assistance from different projects may be arranged for mutual reinforcement and additional clarity. This is particularly relevant when support intended for immediate impact is combined with support aiming for longer-term effects. (This exercise has already been initiated in Tajikistan by the EAC).

### **Project Design**

- Project documents should be well-prepared and include systematically a logical framework with, in particular, indicators for monitoring and evaluation, as well as risks and assumptions; and
- More backstopping missions by concerned FAO-Headquarters Technical Services during project implementation, with corresponding budgetary implications, should be included in project documents.

### **Project Implementation**

- It is essential to increase technical support and follow-up when moving from emergency agriculture interventions to longer-term and more complex projects. To this end, mechanisms should be established to engage FAO technical divisions not only in the project formulation but also in the close follow-up of project implementation.

### **The Emergency Co-ordination Function**

- Co-ordination in the agriculture sector within the international donor community as well as with Government is most effective when FAO is itself implementing operations. This is particularly true when there is no permanent FAO representative function.
- Providing reliable information (assessment and analysis) on the food security situation and the agriculture sector, if well performed, is an effective way of enhancing FAO’s credibility and visibility in the field. However, this requires financial, human and time resources that are beyond the capacity of the emergency co-ordinator who is essentially involved in program management.
- Emergency co-ordinators work quite in isolation and under difficult situation. It is important to enhance mechanisms for increased exchange and consultations among EAC and with TCOR. Regular meetings should be organised to this purpose.

## ANNEX 1:

**Terms of Reference for Evaluation Mission**

27.3.01

**Terms of Reference for a  
Joint Evaluation by  
the Government of Sweden and FAO****FAO's Relief and Early Rehabilitation Programme****Second Phase – Evaluation of Selected Field Projects and Preparation of a Synthesis  
Evaluation Report on Swedish-Funded Agricultural Relief Operations****1. Background**

The Government of the Kingdom of Sweden has for a number of years funded agricultural relief operations through FAO's Special Relief Operations Service (TCOR) with a marked increase in recent years. The Government of Sweden expressed the wish to review, together with FAO, the Swedish-supported projects with a view to further improving their quality. The Government indicated to FAO in December 1999 that it agreed to the draft terms of reference proposed by FAO for this joint evaluation and that the evaluation should take place in two stages.

The first stage of the evaluation comprised a selective desk review of emergency relief operations in 13 countries, which was completed by a consultant in January 2000. The desk review examined twelve projects in eight<sup>12</sup> African countries, five projects in four<sup>13</sup> Asian countries and one project in Europe (Kosovo). It also proposed three countries (Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Liberia and Tanzania) for a more in-depth review by a field mission in the second stage. The Swedish Government wished the selected countries to have different types of issues for relief assistance and to be located in different regions.

Based on the results of the desk study and after consultation between the Swedish Government and FAO, it has been decided to evaluate two projects in each of the following two countries: Tajikistan and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPR Korea) for the second stage of the evaluation exercise.

**2. Purpose of the Evaluation (stage two)**

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<sup>12</sup> PR Congo, DR Congo, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda

<sup>13</sup> DPR Korea, China, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan

Within the overall terms of reference for this joint exercise (see Annex), the purpose of this second stage is twofold:

- **Part I:** To analyse and assess in depth the efficiency and effectiveness of the selected projects in the two countries with particular focus on the **projects' results** in the field (see section 3 below). The evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations will be prepared separately for each country.
- **Part II:** To prepare an **overall synthesis evaluation report**, based on the review results of the selected projects in two countries but drawing on findings and issues arising from the desk review. The synthesis report should reflect all the main points contained in the overall terms of reference for this joint evaluation, and will be prepared following the broad analytical lines presented in section 4 below.

The evaluation work will draw on interviews with concerned technical and operational FAO staff, a review of project files maintained in FAO Headquarters and field visits to the two selected countries (DPR Korea and Tajikistan).

### 3. Part 1: Evaluation of Selected Swedish-funded Relief Operations

The following projects have been selected for field evaluation in each country:

#### *Tajikistan:*

**OSRO/TAJ/901/SWE:** US\$ 324,950 – April 1999 to March 2001 (extended) – “Emergency Assistance to Animal Health and Potato Seed Production”.

**OSRO/TAJ/702/SWE:** US\$ 130,676 – December 1996 – May 1997 Emergency Supply of Agricultural Inputs for the 1998 Cropping Season.

#### *DPRK:*

##### Double Cropping Programme and Potato Production

**OSRO/DRK/001/SWE:** US\$ 910 643 “Support to the Spring Double Cropping Programme. Project completed in Dec. 2000”.

**OSRO/DRK/101/SWE:** US\$ 811 000, “Spring Double Cropping Programme 2001”.

For each project, and to the extent that data is available to the team, the evaluation should cover the following points.

#### Project Design

- ❖ Adequacy of rationale and justification of the project;
- ❖ Quality, clarity and adequacy of project design, including clarity and logical consistency between, inputs, activities, outputs and objectives (quality, quantity and time frame);
- ❖ Adequacy of identifying the target groups, including their potentials and constraints as well as considerations of gender aspects;

- ❖ Realism and clarity in the specification of prior obligations and prerequisites (assumptions and risks);
- ❖ Realism and clarity of external institutional relationships, and in the managerial and institutional framework for implementation and the work plan;
- ❖ Likely cost-effectiveness of the project's design;
- ❖ Extent of connectedness with follow-up rehabilitation activities (if any).

### **Project Implementation**

Both the process and the context of the operational phase of work should be analysed, with focus on:

- ❖ Efficiency and adequacy of project implementation including availability of funds as compared with budget, for both the donor and national component, and quality and timeliness of input delivery by both FAO and under the national component;
- ❖ Managerial adequacy, including work planning, monitoring and reporting, the extent of national support and commitment, and the quality and quantity of administrative and technical support by FAO;
- ❖ Strengths and weaknesses in implementation, including main factors responsible.

### **Project Results**

- ❖ Key outputs produced to date, including the quantity and quality as compared with work plan, and their adequacy in achieving the immediate objectives;
- ❖ The extent to which the target beneficiaries, especially the vulnerable groups, have benefited from the project, including the strengthening of their capacity for self-reliant food/agricultural production;
- ❖ The prospects for sustaining project results by the beneficiaries and the host institutions after the termination of the project (connectedness criteria), including actions taken by them for this purpose;
- ❖ The observed cost-effectiveness of the project, taking into account the assessment of any particular conditions relating to the emergency situation which may cause cost levitation for all donors and partners in the humanitarian effort;
- ❖ Overall strengths and weaknesses of the project in the light of the results, including the main contributory factors, issues and lessons for the future.

## **4. Preparation of the Synthesis Evaluation Report**

The synthesis report will be prepared on the basis of the findings and recommendations of the desk review as well as on the field project evaluations. The synthesis report will highlight the main findings and recommendations accordingly along the following lines:

### ***Identification and Design:***

Assessment should cover both the process for relief operations identification and preparation as well as the quality of resulting design (as expressed in the project documents), with special attention to the following points:

***Rationale or Justification for Proposed Relief Operations:***

- ❖ Relevance to the wider socio-political context in which relief operations or projects are to operate;
- ❖ Adequacy of problem analysis and identification of issues the relief operations are intended to address;
- ❖ Structure and inter-linkages of proposed relief operations, with attention to the role or function assigned to the Swedish-supported operations in the broader context of the overall FAO emergency programme in the beneficiary country.

***Project Design:***

- ❖ Relevance and realism of proposed rehabilitation and immediate objectives of relief operations, including adequacy of identification of target groups and needs ;
- ❖ Scheduling and linkages/complementarity of the project activities, to the extent that they are conceived as part of the broader FAO emergency programme in the beneficiary country;
- ❖ Adequacy of means-ends analysis, including realism of planned duration, timeliness of interventions and identification of measurable targets (quantified inputs and outputs) as a realistic basis for monitoring;
- ❖ Extent to which gender-related aspects have been considered in the project design and formulation of results;
- ❖ National/local institutional arrangements for implementation of relief operations, including co-ordination with other agents and partners and the role assigned to them and to FAO;
- ❖ Expected local constraints and risks;
- ❖ Potential contribution to rehabilitation of the agricultural sector and/or expected sustainability.

***Project Implementation:***

The evaluation should focus on:

- ❖ Analysis of how and to which extent the relief operations have generally been able to adjust and respond to the specific emergency, including the adequacy of project management and support by the host government, FAO and donor;
- ❖ Assessment of key factors, both positive and negative, that have affected significantly the implementation process, including the identification of good practices.

***Project Results:***

Particular attention should be given to:

- ❖ Analysis of outreach and the impact of the operations on the different groups of the affected populations;



- ❖ Extent to which relief operations have influenced the vulnerability and/or capacity of target group(s) to cope with the severe emergency situation, and eventually initiate recovery;
- ❖ Analysis of the attention and support given to women and, more generally, disadvantaged groups in project implementation, and how equitable inputs distribution is ensured;
- ❖ Assessment of the functioning of the different channels that implementing partners have used for providing assistance, as well as the cooperation mechanisms set up with other humanitarian organizations;
- ❖ Identification of the sustainability and development enhancing effects of the operations, including overall impact (or extent of rehabilitation achieved) on the sector;
- ❖ Overall assessment of strengths and weaknesses of the emergency operations, including the key contributory factors as well as issues and lessons for the future.

## 5. Composition of the Mission

The evaluation team will consist of two persons: one assigned by FAO's Evaluation Service, and the other assigned by the Government of Sweden: the team leader will be designated by FAO and SIDA by joint agreement. The beneficiary governments will also be invited to designate a suitable person to participate in the country mission. The cost of such national participation would be borne by the donor.

To preserve the mission's independence of judgement, mission members should have had no previous direct involvement with the project with regard to its formulation, implementation or backstopping. Moreover, nationals nominated as mission members should preferably be persons with an intimate knowledge of the country's institutions and policies as well as its recent history and experience of emergency aid, particularly in the agricultural sector.

## 6. Timetable, Budget and Itinerary of the Mission

The second phase of the evaluation will be implemented as follows:

- **1- 4 May: Briefing in Rome**
- **6 – 16 May: Mission to Tajikistan**  
Briefing in Dushanbe (2 days)  
Field visits (5 days)  
Report writing and debriefing (3 days)
- **21-24 May: Preparation of the Synthesis Report**
- **4-15 June: Mission to DPRK**  
Briefing in Beijing (1 day)  
Briefing in Pyongyang (2 days)  
Field visits (5 days)  
Report writing and debriefing in Pyongyang (3 days)

- **18-22 June: Rome: Preparation of Synthesis Report and Debriefing**

The overall time allocated to the preparation of the synthesis report will be 8 days. The draft report will be discussed at the debriefing of the mission, and will be finalised by the mission leader within two weeks thereafter.

Budget for the FAO component: It is understood that this will be covered by the Government of Sweden, and the amount is estimated at US\$ 36,000 (one staff member for 40 days, US\$ 16,000, travel costs and DSA US\$ 18,000, miscellaneous/contingencies US\$ 2,000)

## **7. Consultations**

The mission will maintain close liaison with the Representatives of the donor and FAO and the concerned Government ministries, as well as with national and international project staff. Although the mission should feel free to discuss with the authorities concerned anything relevant to its assignment, it is not authorised to make any commitments on behalf of the Government, the donor or FAO.

## **8. Reporting**

The mission will prepare its draft reports for discussion at debriefing at FAO after its field visits. The individual country reports will follow the usual format with appropriate adaptation as per the present terms of reference. The mission will also prepare an overall synthesis evaluation report, drawing overall conclusions and recommendations, based on the individual country reports and reflecting also salient points arising from the desk review report.

The mission is independent and responsible for its reports, which may not necessarily reflect the views of the Government, the donor or FAO. To the extent possible, individual country reports will be completed prior to departure from the country and the findings and recommendations discussed with all concerned parties and wherever possible consensus achieved.

The mission will also complete the FAO Project Evaluation Questionnaire.

The mission leader bears responsibility for finalisation of all parts of the synthesis evaluation report, which will be submitted to FAO within two weeks of mission completion. FAO will submit the synthesis report to the donor and individual country reports to the Government and donor, in all cases together with its comments.

**Annex 1****Summary Scope of the Terms of Reference for the Overall Evaluation**

The review will focus on performance and results assessment of relief operations funded by the Government of Sweden since 1997. Assessments will be based on efficiency, effectiveness and connectedness criteria which the review mission will need to define and adapt to the specificities of this particular evaluation. While the definitions of efficiency and effectiveness criteria are standard and well-known, it is recalled here that “connectedness” is understood to address the issues of linkage between relief and rehabilitation, and it is intended to measure or assess the extent to which relief operations have successfully paved the way for rehabilitation and full recovery, or, alternatively, the extent to which relief operations constitute an effective pre-defined or implicit “exit” strategy, or component thereof. In evaluating the selected Swedish-funded projects, the review mission will also have to take into account the performance of FAO over the entire cycle of emergency operations and in the context of actions and attitude of other key partners involved in the process, including host government, and other partner organizations (e.g. OCHA, WFP, NGOs).

The scope of the evaluation will include the following key items:

- Assessment of the effectiveness of the projects in realising immediate objective(s) and the extent to which technical and production capacity of the target beneficiaries are strengthened, as well as the institutional capacity of national counterpart or beneficiary agencies and other organizations concerned in contributing towards rehabilitation and eventual longer term development objectives (connectedness criteria).
- Identification of major factors that have facilitated or impeded the progress of the relief operations in achieving the intended outputs, effects (planned and unplanned) and impact on direct beneficiaries and on the ultimate target group(s).
- Relevance of relief operations to “immediate relief” or “catch the next crop” objectives as well as rehabilitation and (where applicable) development priorities and needs.
- Clarity and realism of the immediate objectives and design of the relief operations, including specification of output targets and identification of beneficiaries as well as assumptions made regarding prospects for rehabilitation and eventual recovery.
- Based on the foregoing, identification of main issues, lessons and recommendations.



## ANNEX 2A:

**Mission Work Schedule, May 2001**

Day	Date	Time	Location	Activity/Event
Wednesday	2 May	P.m.	FAO, Rome	Briefings (TCOR; Evaluation Dept.)
Thursday	3 May		FAO, Rome	Briefings (Inv. Centre; TCOR; GIEWS; TCOR)
Friday	4 May		Rome-Istanbul-Bishkek	
Saturday	5 May		Bishkek-Dushanbe	
Monday	7 May		Dushanbe	Meetings with UN Resident Co-ordinator, OCHA Co-ordinator, WFP Country Director, UNHCR Head of Office, Minister of Agriculture, National Expert Animal Health Services.
Tuesday	8 May		Garm District	Travel to Garm. Meeting with Khukumat representatives, PSF contractors/farmers
Wednesday	9 May		Hait District	Meeting with PSF contractor/farmers; visit to potato store and farm machinery sites
Thursday	10 May		Garm-Dushanbe	Travel Back to Dushanbe – Work with FAO staff.
Friday	11 May		Kurgam Tube	Visits to veterinary clinics; Kurgam Tube veterinary Base; irrigation pumps
Saturday	12 May		Dushanbe	Meetings with representatives of seed potato project and animal health services project; report drafting
Sunday	13 May		Dushanbe	Meeting with Ms. Svetlana Balkova, Ministry of finance; report drafting
Monday	14 May		Dushanbe	Debriefing FAO Co-ordinator; report drafting
Tuesday	15 May		Dushanbe	Visit to veterinary training course and Dushanbe Veterinary Base; preparation of findings summary; round-up meeting with FAO/MOA staff
Wednesday	16 May		Dushanbe-Bishkek	Travel to Bishkek Report drafting
Thursday	17 May		Bishkek-Rome	
Friday	18 May		FAO, Rome	De-briefing; preparations for North Korea visit

ANNEX 2B:

## Key Persons Met by the Mission

### Sweden

Frederik Frisell, Sida (Jan Erikson)

Mr. Taslimur Rahman, Head of Liason Office UNHCR

### Rome

Anne Bauer, Chief TCOR

Laurent Thomas, Senior Operations Officer TCOR

Hilde Niggeman-Pucella, Operations Officer TCOR

René J.C. Verduijn, Operations Officer TCOR

Liselott Jonsson, Operations Officer TCOR

Marijke M.J. Drysdale-Woltring, Economist, GIEWS

Michael A. Larinde, Seeds Specialist, AGPS

Anton Rychener, Economist, Investment Centre

### Karategin Valley

Mahmedsharit Tolibov, Hkukumat Chairman, Garm District

Mullojon Ahmedov, Hkukumat Dep. Chairman, Garm District

Abdul Baqi Mehraban, UNOPS Area Manager

Said Umarov, Chief Khukumat Agr. Department, Garm District

Mahmedmuso Daulatshow, PSF agronomist

Sharithoja Tashripov, PSF contractor/farmer

Ali Saidov, contractor/farmer

Kurbonali Nosirov, contractor/farmer

Rahmonali Azizbekov, contractor/farmer, Hait

Mr. Muhtorov, contractor/farmer, Hait

Rahimbek Mirzow, contractor/farmer, Hait

### Tajikistan

#### Dushanbe

##### *FAO Unit*

Pavel Cernohorsky, FAO Emergency Co-ordinator

Gulfia Osipova, FAO National Programme Assistant

Toshali Mukimov, Chairman Potato Seed Fund

Hamraev Karamatullah, NAHS

Zahir, Trainer/Monitor

##### *Government*

Mr. Tursunboy Rakhmatov, Minister of Agriculture

Svetlana Balkhova, Farm Privatisation Support Project

##### *UN agencies*

Matthew Kahane, UN Resident Co-ordinator

Hadj-Chikh Bouchan, WFP Country Director

### Khatlon Province

Faiz, Trainer/Monitorer

## ANNEX 3:

**List of Consulted Documents****Policy Guidelines**

Sida. *Action Programme for Poverty Reduction*. 1997

**Planning Documents**

OSRO/TAJ/702/SWE Project Document *Emergency Supply of Agricultural Inputs for the 1998 Cropping Season* (December 1996–May 1997),

OSRO/TAJ/901/SWE Project Document *Emergency Assistance to Animal Health and Potato Seed Production* (April 1999–March 2001)

OSRO/TAJ/901/SWE Emergency Assistance to Animal Health in Tajikistan: *Design and Implementation of a Sustainable Animal Health Program*, Draft Report, Abdul Baqi Mehraban, September 1999

OSRO/TAJ/901/SWE Emergency Support to Reach Sustainable Delivery of veterinary Services in Tajikistan: *Design and Implementation of a Sustainable Animal Health Program*, Draft Report, Dr. Sediqullah Khaliqyar, July 2000

**Implementation Reporting**

Seventh Summary Interim Progress Report, FAO Co-ordinator in Tajikistan, Oct 1999

Eighth Summary Interim Progress Report, FAO Co-ordinator in Tajikistan, December 1999

Ninth Summary Interim Progress Report, FAO Co-ordinator in Tajikistan, April 2000

Tenth Summary Interim Progress Report, FAO Co-ordinator in Tajikistan, July 2000

Eleventh Summary Interim Progress Report, FAO Co-ordinator in Tajikistan, December 2000

**Follow-up/Evaluation Reports**

TCOR: Tajikistan *Emergency Supply of Agricultural Inputs for 1998 Spring Planting Season* (OSRO/TAJ/702/SWE; OSRO/TAJ/701/NET), Final Report, February 1999

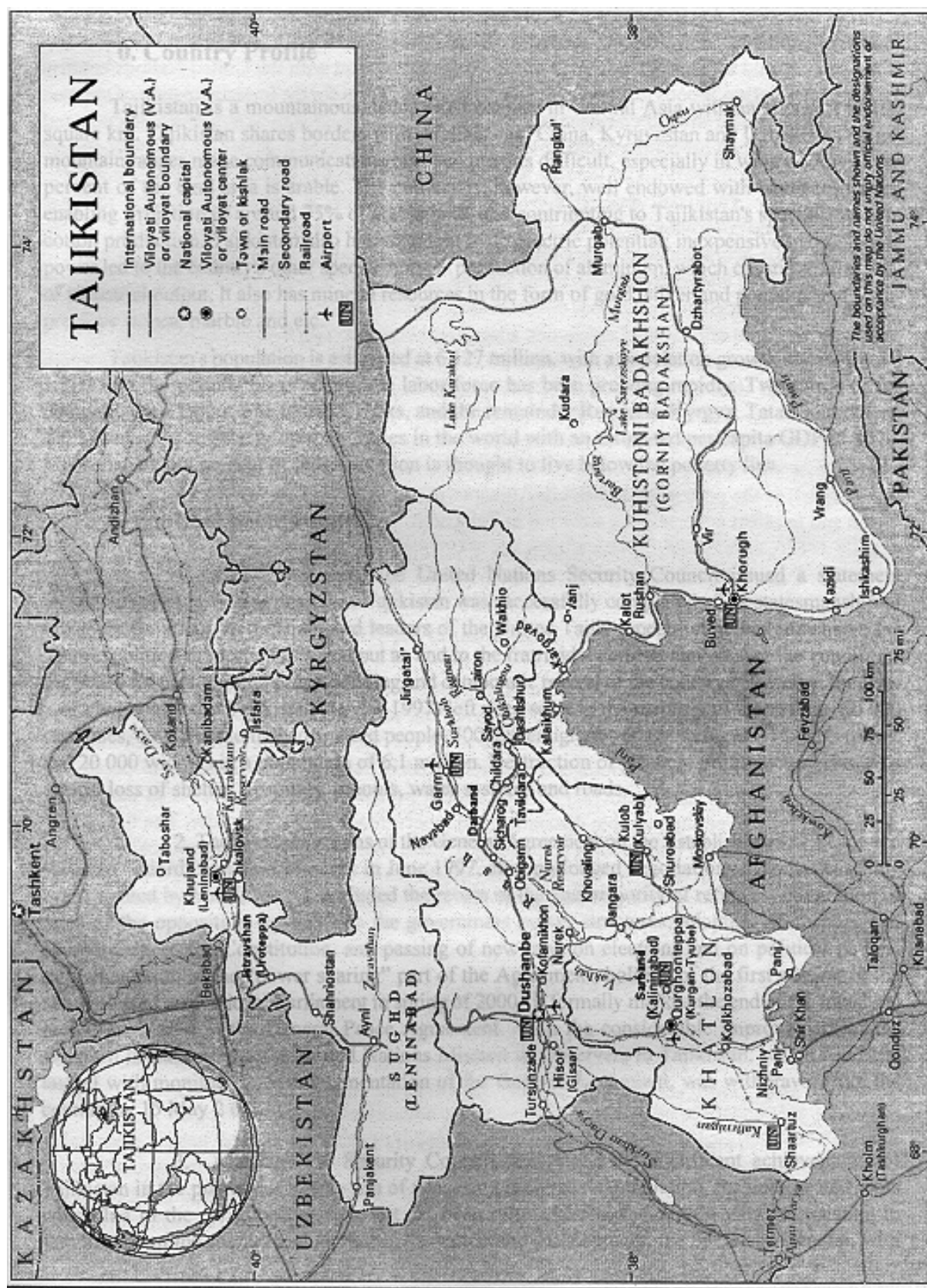
FAO Relief and Early Rehabilitation Programme: *Overall Analysis of Swedish Funded Relief Operations* (Desk Study), 2001

**Other Reports**

TAJ/00/ /A/01/\*\*\* *Participatory Seed Production Programme of Improved Varieties of Food and Fiber Crops* (undated)

TCP/DRK/8927(T): *Disease Free Seed Potato Multiplication to Increase and Sustain Food Availability in North Korea*, P.C. Gaur, September 2000

World Food Summit Follow-up: *Draft Strategy for National Agricultural Development, Horizon 2010*



**Map of Tajikistan**