



USAID
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AFGHANISTAN

Date: June 2011

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FACT SHEET

Afghanistan Water, Agriculture, and Technology Transfer (AWATT) Project

OVERVIEW

The agriculture sector consumes approximately 90 percent of the water in Afghanistan. Water for irrigation is crucial to successful agricultural production, but Afghanistan suffers from water shortages because of soil degradation, deforestation, overgrazing, and erosion, often resulting in severe floods during seasonal rains. Population pressure, deforestation, and degraded watersheds contribute to the water supply problem, aggravated by the unregulated use of water for households, agriculture, and industry.

To promote responsible water usage, USAID is improving the management of water resources in the country. The Afghanistan Water, Agriculture, and Technology Transfer (AWATT) project improves community and farm level management of the supply and demand of irrigation water resources, increases agricultural productivity through appropriate agricultural and irrigation technology, and provides technical assistance and training to increase the capacity of the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL) to provide services to rural farmers.

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

- **Integrated water management:** Develop an efficient and equitable community-based irrigation water resource distribution and management system to improve agricultural productivity
- **Appropriate agricultural technology:** Identify appropriate agricultural technologies to increase agricultural productivity and rural incomes in areas subject to seasonal drought and high risks of land degradation, deforestation, or loss of biodiversity
- **Technical assistance to MAIL:** Provide technical assistance to improve MAIL's irrigation, and watershed-management decision-making strategies and outreach capabilities through training and technical skill development of staff in ministries, faculties of agriculture of Afghan universities, and agricultural institutes

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Brought 8000 hectares of land under irrigation
- Created 5600 fulltime equivalent jobs
- Trained over 1040 staff members of MAIL and Directorate of Agriculture, irrigation and Livestock staff members in agronomic, forestry, and improved irrigation technologies
- Trained 200 widows in tree nursery management for income generation within their own homes
- Installed 419 farm turnouts (irrigation water control devices) in Nangarhar and Balkh provinces that reduce water losses and improve water supply at the farm level
- Increased by 50 percent forage crop production in Balkh Province
- Brought 533 hectares of Improved degraded land that is now under natural resource management in Nangarhar, Nuristan and Balkh provinces