

## **MEN, WOMEN, CHILDREN AND LIVESTOCK**

### **A Livelihoods Analysis of the Afghan Registan Kuchi Focused on Gender and Animal Health**



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## Executive Summary

1. The types of Kuchi that utilize Registan's natural resources are:
  - a. Balooch and Pashtun transhumants with movements limited to an area around or between individual wells and nawars in Registan.
  - b. A small subgroup of the above transhumants that utilize Registan during the winter and spring, and move to orchards and other agricultural lands around Kandahar city in the summer.
  - c. A smaller population of long migration nomads that utilize mountain pastures in central Afghanistan during the summer.
2. The Kuchi populations of Registan are distinct from other Kuchi in Afghanistan. The ethno-ecology of their production systems and their livelihood strategies are unlike other pastoral populations in key ways, including migration patterns, specialized livestock, land rights claims, and types of social capital. This population of approximately 10,000 internally displaced families needs interventions targeted to its particular situation. Programs should be targeted to supporting the livelihoods strategies of each Kuchi subgroup in Registan, and the survival of the most vulnerable within each group.
3. Many Kuchi families from Registan claim to have documents that accord them rights of access to water and associated grazing land. These documents were issued between 100 and 25 years ago, under different governments. In most cases it seems that people gained these documents when wells were dug or nawars improved, and a group of people established a transhumant migration pattern around that water source. There is not consistency between documents issued at different times, nor is it understood what rights these documents give holders under the current government. Seemingly, ownership of these certificates was not a critical issue in the past, as interviewees reported that anyone was able to use water and grazing in any area of Registan at any time. However, the Registan Kuchi now point out ownership of a certificate as a critical issue in the right of return to Registan. Cordaid should prioritize working with the Registan Kuchi Shura to record these documents, and create a database of land claims.
4. The most vulnerable populations from Registan are:
  - a. Widows without sons who can work, or sons whose working capacity has been limited by physical or psychological trauma from living through the drought in Registan.
  - b. Non-certificate holding families, more often Pashtun relying on nawars and Baloochi and Pashtun who migrated to Kandahar during the summer.
  - c. The long-term poor, i.e., families who had less than 50 shoats in Registan, relying on income from herding sheep and goats for richer families.
  - d. The Nomadic Kuchi that relied on mountain pastures during the summer, but who can no longer access those pastures for political reasons.

5. The traditional decision and representation structure for Kuchi starts from the ground up, i.e., decision making starts at the family and moves upwards. National policy for Kuchi must support decision making at an appropriate locally representative level (village in the case of Registan, migratory groups in the case of nomads) that feeds into bodies at higher regional levels such as the Registan Kuchi Shura. In other words, political support structures for the Kuchi must recognize and encourage traditional means of organization. For this reason, the current national policy that focuses on a Kuchi representative group to the National Solidarity Program should focus rather on social mobilization for the Kuchi at the local level, thereby enabling elections to national representative bodies.
6. The primary shock in the vulnerability context of the Registan Kuchi is drought. This is in comparison to Afghanistan's other Kuchi groups who, although greatly affected by the drought, have been most affected by political shocks. To support the return of the Registan Kuchi to productive lives, programs need to focus on supporting local livelihood options, not only political support at the national level. For the Registan population, even in the context of humanitarian assistance, this is long-term process. It may take years for wells to fill once the rains start, it will take families years to build up the reproductive capacity of their flocks, and only when the flocks have been re-established will families be able to accumulate the capital necessary to survive future shocks. In this context, focus must shift from short-term humanitarian interventions to a multi-year (3-5 years minimum) livelihoods support program that is coordinated between different humanitarian agencies.
7. In situations of chronic conflict and political instability, humanitarian relief is not short-term. There are examples from Afghanistan, the Horn of Africa and the Democratic Republic of the Congo of humanitarian interventions that span decades. When multiple humanitarian agencies work with long-term internally displaced groups, the target populations often receive conflicting messages, forcing people to make difficult choices based on incomplete knowledge concerning the intended purpose and outcomes of the various programs offered by different agencies. It is recommended that Cordaid takes the lead in creating an autonomous Registan Kuchi Office to oversee and coordinate programming between organizations, and focus on long-term relief for the Registan Kuchi that helps the population make the transition from humanitarian crisis to development through programs focused on livelihood support. It is often the case that humanitarian organizations measure success based on services delivered (amount of food aid delivered, number of people who participated in vocational training), rather than outcomes achieved (change in caloric intake for the average family, retention of family assets rather than distress sales). With the establishment of a coordination office for the Registan Kuchi, focus can shift from measuring short-term indicators that encourage dependency to long-term indicators based on sustaining livelihoods.
8. Women's work is crucial to a Kuchi family's survival. There is a clear gender division of labor, with men being responsible for livestock and sales away from the tent, women being responsible for household work and sales around the tent, and

children being responsible for young stock. However, there is not a clear division of assets, or rights of access to profits from sales. In most instances, cash income is managed by men. Programs focused on gender that are not based on a complete and accurate understanding of the role of Kuchi women in a family's overall livelihood strategy stand a chance of failure, either because they are culturally inappropriate, or because they do not help women increase the overall survivability of the family unit. By encouraging a livelihoods based approach, appropriate gender programming can be achieved.

9. The Registan Kuchi returnee flocks, due to environmental stresses, small flock sizes, and the introduction of technologies that encourage new production practices, will be extremely vulnerable to disease. Therefore, it is important that animal health programs are part of any intervention for the Registan Kuchi, that they be well coordinated, and be targeted to the smallest community unit.
10. From this study there is evidence to suggest that the model of animal health services provision by basic veterinary workers (BVW) working from veterinary field units (VFU) that was supported by agencies in the 1990s does not function in southern Afghanistan today. By no means does this suggest that those programs and the principals on which they were based were faulty! In fact, during the difficult decade of the 90s, the VFUs provided animal health services that would have otherwise been unavailable to settled farmers in the region, and to some Kuchi pastoralists in the spring season. However, evidence suggests that the BVWs trained under these programs no longer provide animal health services to their communities, and now seek casual wage labor opportunities. In addition, evidence suggests that veterinary professionals in southern Afghanistan (technicians and veterinarians) do not support the activities of BVWs trained under these programs.
11. It is recommended that BVW training programs for southern Afghanistan be temporarily halted until an appropriate model of primary animal health can be developed for the region. Cordaid, Mercy Corps, VARA and other organizations with BVW programs should focus on gaining an accurate understanding of the status of veterinary services in southern Afghanistan, including previously trained BVWs, the functionality of the VFUs, animal health priorities in target communities, and the level of community support for a primary animal health care system. Once an accurate assessment is obtained, organizations planning animal health interventions should coordinate their activities to create a standardized animal health service model that is sustainable. To be sustainable, community animal health programs must be based on the following principles:
  - a. Engage in a dialogue process with the Kuchi Shura and other community elders. The goal is to achieve consensus on the design of the program, and to develop an oral contract with the smallest possible community units (likely at the village level) on the nature of the program. The agreement should include the community's support for their BVW at market based prices, and identification of the appropriate person to receive training. Trainees should be committed to a herding way of life, and see their herding activities as their

- primary source of livelihood support. Lack of formal education is not a barrier to being a good BVW.
- b. Conduct participatory assessments of existing veterinary knowledge in each target community, including disease problems and animal health priorities, understanding of disease process and causes, and currently available treatments. The results of these assessments should serve as the foundation for any BVW training program. Keep the training simple, and active.
  - c. Design training programs that are participatory.
    - i. Include community leaders in the training so that they have a good idea of the capacity of the BVWs, and will fully support the BVWs when they return to their communities.
    - ii. Include training on private veterinary services. BVWs must be able to work in a market based pricing system.
    - iii. Trainers should be existing VFU staff from western Kandahar, as well as government veterinarians.
    - iv. Training should include components for both BVWs and VFU staff on linking BVWs to professional structures for re-supply and disease reporting.
    - v. Training should include mechanisms for surveillance reporting that take advantage of BVW visits to VFUs for re-supply.
  - d. BVWs must be mobile, not based at VFUs.
  - e. Integrate local pharmacies, practitioner organizations, and producer organizations into the program. It is critical to identify reliable pharmaceutical supply lines through private distributors.
  - f. Project planning should include annual site visits and continuing education for BVWs and other veterinary service providers, and evaluation of the program by project participants in collaboration with outside experts.
12. Tufts University's School of Veterinary Medicine (TUSVM), in collaboration with Tufts' Feinstein International Famine Center (FIFC) and the Community Animal Health and Epidemiology Unit (CAPE) of the African Union, has over 20 years experience in the design and implementation of community animal health programs in pastoral societies. TUSVM is an excellent resource for organizations planning primary animal health programs, particularly in pastoral societies struggling to survive in situations of chronic conflict and political instability.

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## Introduction

This study was carried out in support of a two-year effort by Cordaid Afghanistan to design programs that will assist the internally displaced Kuchi of Registan to rebuild their lives. Although the exact size of the target population is unknown, estimates range from 6,800 families (IDP National Operation Plan) to over 10,000 families (Van Engelen, 2004). Although there have been anthropological studies of Afghanistan's Kuchis, little is available in the literature on their ethno-ecology based on long term observational studies. In addition, starting with the emergency years that began with the Soviet invasion in 1978, the Kuchi became one of the least contacted populations, receiving minimal intervention and assistance. Therefore, little is known about Afghanistan's Kuchi in general, and their current strategies and vulnerabilities in particular. Of these populations, the Kuchi of Registan remain the least understood group (de Weijer, 2002).

The greatest information gap concerning the Registan Kuchi pertains to women. Also, although a livestock keeping population, little is known about veterinary needs and demands of the Registan population. Therefore, this assessment had the following objectives:

1. Document the ethno-ecology of production systems, both pastoral and agricultural, in the targeted area of repatriation and amongst the targeted population.
2. Assess current livestock production in the targeted area and of the targeted population, and determine livestock service needs. This assessment shall include an institutional analysis of currently available services, and a study of current ethno-veterinary practices and diseases of concern.
3. Evaluate a preliminary community based animal health program for poultry farmers in the targeted population to determine scaling-up and expansion potential.
4. Determine the livestock income generation potential of women in the targeted population, in particular:
  - a. Women's traditional role in society in Registan, changes and consequences.
  - b. Women's ideas about the future and impression of possible interventions (zero grazing, irrigated grazing, etc).
  - c. Recommendations for vocational training.

Given the limited amount of time available for this assessment (10 days in April 2004), the above objectives were overly ambitious. Baseline information was obtained for each objective, and is presented in this report. However, in-depth knowledge will be critical to the success of programs for the Registan Kuchi, and it is recommended that further studies be carried out to deepen and strengthen the information provided in this report. During program design, gaps in knowledge should always be identified, and their clarification should be a first step in any implementation plan.

## Concepts

This analysis was designed based on concepts from three complementary methods. Each is briefly introduced below:

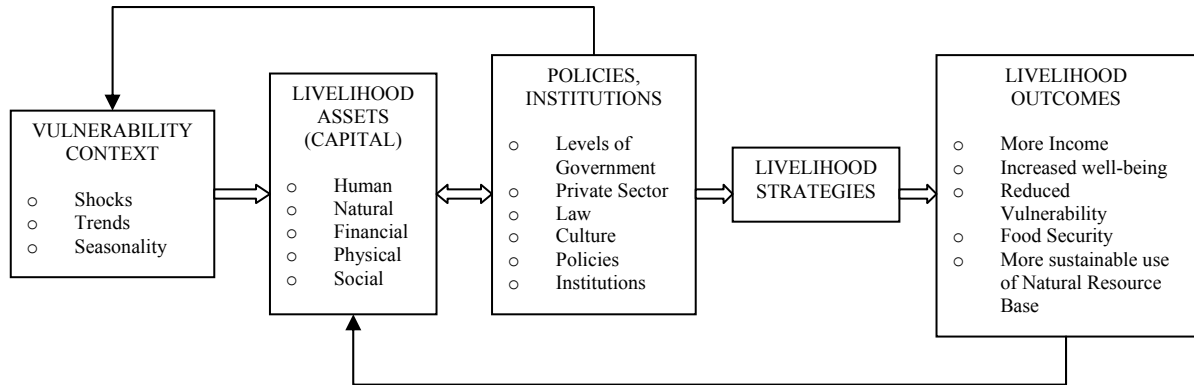
*Participatory Learning and Action.* PLA is based on the concepts and learning gained from the widespread practice of rapid information gathering techniques, such as rapid and participatory rural appraisal (Pretty et al, 1995). It recognizes that research and interventions that involve targeted communities in design, implementation and analysis will be more representative and accurate than more traditional extractive data gathering techniques. Also recognized is the right of targeted communities to be a part of the programming process. When targeted populations are integrated into program design, implementation and analysis, the chances of positive outcomes increase. Social mobilization and community development are facilitated through such participatory processes.

The tools used in PLA are based on observations by researchers, and reports and observations from informants. These tools focus on involving communities in the gathering and display of information and data in ways that are appropriate to the cultural context, often visually and based on the sharing of memories and stories. It is understood that in any community there are many perspectives, and information from multiple sources must be sought and triangulated. Within veterinary medicine, the techniques of PLA have been adapted to gathering information on baseline knowledge within communities (ethnoveterinary knowledge), disease patterns (participatory epidemiology), and surveillance for diseases of concern (participatory disease search) (Mariner, 2000; Catley and Mariner, 2002).

A good background resource on PLA theory and techniques is Participatory Learning and Action: A Trainer's Guide by J. Pretty et al, 1995, International Institute for Environment and Development, London.

*Livelihoods Analysis.* The sustainable livelihoods approach became a focal point in DFID policy in 1998. It allows one to look at processes and strategies at household and community levels for people's survival, well-being, and advancement. The approach encourages the identification and support of all types of capital (human, natural, financial, physical and social) that people use to achieve desirable livelihoods outcomes, as well as the vulnerability context (shocks and stresses) that creates barriers that prevent families from achieving positive outcomes (Westley and Mikhalev, 2002).

The DFID sustainable livelihoods framework can be represented as follow (reproduced, with modifications, from Paine and Lautze, 2002):



By understanding the capital and the vulnerability context of a community, one is able to create holistic programs that support coping strategies in times of stress. Livelihoods analysis is also, by nature, participatory, and supports the transition from analysis to program planning with communities. Carney, 2002, proposes four steps in creating programs that sustain livelihoods:

1. Analyze how people thrive and survive and identify key opportunities/leverage points.
2. Attain agreement among key stakeholders on the desired outcome.
3. Clarify the operational context and development factors that determine what is feasible.
4. Decide on the nature of the intervention.

When using the livelihoods analysis approach, one must be careful to remain objective and not automatically adopt conventional wisdom (i.e. pastoralists do not know how to farm), particularly in Afghanistan where very little research on livelihoods systems has been carried out (Pain and Lautze, 2002). Within the approach, a careful exploration of secondary data, literature and other printed resources, is important.

Three papers on the sustainable livelihoods approach to research and interventions in Afghanistan at the national level are:

Addressing Livelihoods in Afghanistan by A. Pain and S. Lautze, 2002, Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit, Kabul.

Understanding and Monitoring Livelihoods under Conditions of Chronic Conflict: Lessons from Afghanistan by A. Pain, 2002, Overseas Development Institute, London.

Qaht-e-Pool, "A Cash Famine", Food Security, Malnutrition and the Political Economy of Survival: A Report from Kabul, Heart and Qandahar, Afghanistan by S. Lautze et al, 2002, Tufts University, Medford.

Frauke de Weijer wrote a Pastoral Vulnerability Study for the AFSU/VAM Unit of the World Food Programmes, 2002, that incorporates some principles of sustainable livelihoods.

*Gender Analysis* provides a rare opportunity to focus on women in society using sex-disaggregated statistics, gender specific statistics, or gender-sensitive indicators (UNDP, 2001). When using the tools of PLA, a gender analysis' focus is on searching for and analyzing gender-sensitive indicators concerning the norms and rules that govern the roles of women in society. Similar to a livelihoods analysis, one not only asks what women do in a particular society, but what are the policies and institutions that govern women, particularly issues such as productivity, capacity and decision making, as well as barriers to women's success or ability to change. Again, one must be careful to remain objective and not automatically adopt conventional wisdom, i.e. women are the most vulnerable in a society. By purposefully including gender as an objective in an analysis, one facilitates the transition from research to programming.

An excellent reference is Gender Analysis by the UNDP Gender in Development Program, 2001.

Why nest a gender analysis in a participatory pastoral livelihood assessment? One weakness of using the livelihood assessment methodology is that it, "Inadequately considers the deeper social institutions of power relations, especially as they relate to gender and gender sensitive dynamics" (Pain and Lautze, 2002). By nesting a gender analysis in a livelihoods assessment, the attempt was to focus on gender specific indicators as they pertain to the well-being of the family unit over time (i.e., reflecting historic roles as well as the current situation), while recognizing the strengths of PLA methodologies, particularly when it comes to understanding animal health and production issues.

There are many complexities involved in studying and creating programs for pastoral people. By nature, pastoral communities are remote and isolated. Often the target population is of a different culture than the researchers or project implementers. Technologies and data types that are usually accessible prove to be inaccessible in pastoral communities. For instance, the counting of livestock and other important assets is not usually done, and is often culturally inappropriate.

Pastoral livelihoods tend to be highly vulnerable, because of the exploitation of marginal lands and the frequency of environmental shocks; therefore pastoralists tend to be highly flexible and opportunistic in their livelihood choices (Jost, 2003). Survival strategies in one year can be very different from other years. Pastoralists will engage in casual labor, practice agriculture, or diversify their livestock holdings, based on a variety of factors. Many pastoral societies are in flux, due to diminished grazing lands, continued drought and herd losses, outside influences and policies, and increasing interest in exploring alternative livelihoods options. In addition, pastoralists tend to have a multi-year concept of cycles, particularly drought (Sollod, 1990). Therefore, short-term humanitarian interventions that focus on relief rather than rebuilding livelihoods may be destructive to a vulnerable population's survival capacity.

For these reasons and more, pastoral communities often respond well to participatory approaches that allow for data to come in the context of stories where interrelations rather than enumeration are the research priority. Due to the flux and change that characterize pastoral societies, and the integral role that pastoral women tend to play in creating successful livelihood outcomes, nesting a gender analysis within a livelihoods analysis was thought to be the most appropriate way to rapidly gain reliable information to meet this study's objectives.

## **Methods**

A secondary data review proved to be crucial to this study. Although very little information is available in the literature on the Kuchi, and the Registan Kuchi in particular, information on Afghanistan, particularly the new policies that can influence the livelihoods of the Kuchi, is available. The literature reviewed, as well as useful theoretical texts, is listed in the reference section of this report.

Key informant interviews were conducted with veterinarians from the VARA veterinary programs, the Kandahar Director of the Ministry of Refugees, the Veterinary Department Director in the Kandahar Ministry of Agriculture, the paraveterinary technician from Spin Boldak VFU, as well as several representatives of international organizations with programs in Kandahar province.

Large (10 – 21 participants) focus group interviews were held with two groups of nomadic Kuchi women from Zhari Dasht camp, two groups of nomadic Kuchi women camped near Kandahar, and a group of Baloochi women from Maingar Camp. Small (3 participants) focus group interviews were held with two groups of Baloochi women from Toloqan Camp, one group of Baloochi women from Qalai Shamir Camp, and one group of Pashtun women from Murshan Camp. Focus group interviews were also held with four BVWs trained by VARA, six Kuchi Shura elders, and two Kandahar carpet merchants.

Site visits were made to the Zhari Dasht Camp and the Kandahar Veterinary Clinic established by the FAO. Because the western refugee camps were not accessible, women for focus group interviews were brought in by car to Kandahar.

Due to the limited time available for this study, only a small number of interviews and site visits could be made. This should be kept in mind when considering the information obtained. It is recommended that findings critical to the implementation of programs be researched in further depth.

## **Who are the Registan Kuchi?**

In her Pastoralist Vulnerability Study, de Weijer, 2002, identified four types of livestock owning populations in Afghanistan. Using de Weijer's categories, but modifying the

definition of each category to differentiate those pastoralists with short migrations from those with long range migrations, there are:

1. Nomadic Kuchi
  - live in tents year-round
  - Annual migration (vertical and horizontal) between lower elevation winter pastures and higher elevation summer pastures
  - Pashtun
2. Semi-nomadic (transhumant) Kuchi
  - live in tents year-round
  - Annual migration (horizontal) aimed at taking advantage of seasonal pasture availability only in lower elevation semi-arid to arid zones
  - Baloochi and Pashtun
3. Semi-sedentary Livestock Farmers
  - Part of the family migrates with livestock
  - Part of the family lives in village year round
  - May carry out crop agriculture
  - Several ethnic groups
4. Sedentary Mixed Livestock Farmers
  - Entire family lives in village year round and primary source of livelihood support is crop agriculture
  - May hire a Shepard to take livestock to pasture
  - Many ethnic groups

Registan is a desert area in southern Afghanistan that is home to livestock keepers. The majority of Registan's inhabitants are semi-nomadic Kuchi of Baloochi or Pashtun ethnicity. The Baloochi are concentrated in the southeast of Registan, while the Pashtun are concentrated in the northwest. There are few cultural differences between the two groups, indeed intermarriage between the Baloochi and Pashtun in Registan is reported to be common.

There are a few differences in the ethno-ecology of the production systems of the Registan Baloochi and Pashtun. Annual migration pattern for the majority of the semi-nomadic Kuchi in Registan is within the limits of a single source of water, either a well or nawar (natural depression that has usually been deepened and improved to catch more water). The livestock kept by the two ethnic groups is the same. In general, the Baloochi tend to exploit the higher elevations in Registan, where wells are the main source of water. Most remain in the territory of their well throughout the year. Their migration involves moving away from the well for three months to small nawars that fill with spring rains, and moving back within vicinity of the well in the summer when the nawars are empty.

The Pashtun tend to exploit the lower elevations in Registan, where improved nawars are the main water sources. Therefore, Pashtun migrations are between an improved nawar for six months during and after the rains in the spring, and a stream that holds water throughout the year for the remaining six months.

Both Baloochi and Pashtun women report that spring is the easiest season in terms of work because grass and water are easy to find. Fresh milk is also readily available for the family because the sheep and goats have recently given birth. However, spring is the season with the most animal health problems. In summer the family moves near to the well as the nawars empty and the grass dries. In the winter the rains start and the nawars fill. However, the grass remains dry and sparse for a considerable time into the rainy season, therefore grazing is difficult.

Both women and men report that prior to the drought all people who brought livestock to Registan were welcome to graze their animals and access water. However, many of the semi-nomadic Pashtun and Baloochi of Registan also claim that their families hold papers that give them access rights to grazing and water in Registan. These rights of access seem to be related to some difference between classes of Registan residents in the past, and have become critically important to the issue of right of return of the Registan IDPs.

The Kuchi Shura elders report that approximately 90% of Pashtun and 80% of Baloochi from Registan hold papers that give them access rights. They obtained these papers between 25 years ago, during the time of Zahair Khan, to 100 years ago, during the time of Mir Abdul. It seems that the papers were awarded by governments as wells were dug or nawars improved. Papers were given to families who settled into migratory patterns around a particular water source. However, women from families without papers report that their families have been using the same water source for the same amount of time as the families with papers, a claim supported by women from families with papers. Somehow, possibly for political reasons, a minority of families were left out of the paper distribution process. However, the ethno-ecology of their livestock production mirrors that of those Kuchi with papers, and they are fully integrated into village structures.

Another type of semi-nomadic Kuchi exists in Registan. These are families that moved from Registan in the winter where they had free access to grazing, to Kandahar fruit orchards during the summer where they paid to access grazing. These families seem to be without papers, and may have been moving from Registan as natural resources became limited in the summer months. Other than the utilization of fruit orchards by this small minority, the role of agriculture in Registan Kuchi livelihood strategies remains unclear from this research. Other papers (Van Engelen, 2004; Gul et al, 2003) report the possibility of grazing on riparian wetlands, and the possibility of agriculture being carried out by some Registan Kuchi near such wetlands and near nawars. Although opium wage labor is now a major component of the financial capital of the Registan Kuchi living in the IDP camps, none of the interviewees in this study reported that it was part of their livelihood strategy while living in Registan.

A second type of Kuchi that frequented Registan is the nomads, known as the ‘Tarakai’ by the semi-nomads of Registan. The Tarakai, all Pashtun, passed through Registan for the spring grazing. These migratory families spent only a few days in any one place, and intermarriage with the Kuchi of Registan, although it occurred, was rare.

Social coordination and decision making for the Registan Kuchi were centered on the well or nawar. The smallest recognized social unit was the core family, usually consisting of parents and their children, with a few additional extended family members in one or more tents. The livestock included 50-300 shoats, 1-7 camels and 1-5 donkeys. Decisions for the family, although they may have been discussed, were usually taken by a male elder. A migratory group around a water source usually consisted of 1-5 such families, usually related, overseen by a male elder. All of the migratory units utilizing a water source together were known as a 'village', consisting of up to 30 to 40 families. A village usually contained a single ethnic group (Baloochi or Pashtun), but different tribes. A village was overseen by a male elder advised by a male council. A 'cluster' consisted of a group of villages, overseen by a male elder advised by a council of male elders. The 'Kuchi Shura', established with the aid of Cordaid, is a male decision making body pulled together from male elders at the cluster level. 'Registan', consisting of all clusters in the Registan desert, is overseen by Hadi Amanulla, as reported by the Kuchi Shura.

### Report on livelihood

The livelihood of Kuchi women in their region Registan in the past. The role of women was as below.....

- 1) Taking care of children and home.
- 2) Taking care of Lambs and Kids along with their young sons used to take them outside for grazing.
- 3) Taking care of sick animals in home.
- 4) Making different types of products from milk as yoghurt, curat (dried butter milk) and also taking oil and butter from milk.
- 5) They were making carpets and blankets for their own use and also for selling.
- 6) They used to make bags for oil, wheat and water.
  - Oil bag from sheep skin
  - Wheat bag from sheep wool.
  - Water bag from goatskin.
- 7) They were taking goat hair for making rope for animals lead rope.
- 8) Also cleaning, washing of wool was a job for women for making of blankets and bags.

The women in their home used to sell the products of milk hidden from Men. The women also used to sell carpets and blankets to merchant coming to their home. Or men used to take the goods for selling in the market if the merchants didn't come to their homes.

### The Kuchi women current situation in the camps...

The women live now in the Panjwai and Maiwand camps. Some women are participating in the Vocational Training Courses. But the majority of women are doing nothing, sitting in their tents. The vulnerable families with female heads of house hold are fetching wood and animal dung from the edge of mountains or far away from their home for the survival of her family.

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Registan is in the midst of a drought that started seven years ago. By five years ago, most of the livestock in Registan had been lost to the drought. There was also loss of human life. Of each focus group interviewed in this study, at least one woman had lost her husband and elder sons to the drought. It is unknown if a similar rate of death occurred amongst women. Most Registan Kuchi were removed from the area and placed in IDP camps near Kandahar five years ago by the Taliban. By that time, the vast majority of the livestock assets had been lost.

Traditional livestock keeping roles for men included taking animals away from the home for grazing and watering, treating sick animals, sheering sheep and wool, and taking animals to market. Men also sold secondary products (yogurt, blankets, etc) made from livestock in the markets. Women took care of young or sick animals left at the home, milking, making secondary products from milk, and making crafts and household items from animal products. Women were able to sell secondary products to merchants who came to the home. Children were responsible for guarding the young animals near the camp.

Each species provided specific services to families, and were perceived to have more or less value in a family's survival. In this study sheep were consistently listed as the most valuable animals to a family's overall well-being in Registan. The services they provided included lambs for sale, oil, milk products, wool and meat. They are also hearty, good at walking long distances and surviving extreme cold, while their meat is found to be the tastiest. Goats, although important because they provided approximately the same services as the sheep, were reported to be weak in the winter and less capable than sheep of surviving prolonged periods without food. Wool sells for a higher price than goat hair, and lambs are worth twice as much as kids. However, when the sheep had no milk the goats continued to milk for two months. Camels were found to have the second highest importance to family well-being, providing transport during migrations, moving goods to market, and giving valuable young for sale.

When asked to rank the relative importance of each species in terms of cash income now and in the past, the camel was consistently reported to be of primary or secondary importance, because it provides steady income from the sale of firewood, and a young camel is worth approximately 10 sheep when sold.

Kuchi Shura response to the relative importance of each species of livestock in terms of cash income (using proportional piling of beans).

Registan	Camps
Sheep – 7	Camel – 18
Camel – 6	Chicken – 2
Goat – 4	Sheep – 0
Donkey – 2	Goat – 0
Chicken - 1	Donkey – 0

Families with camels in the camps can sell firewood. No sheep or goat products are sold in the camps.

## Registan Kuchi Livelihoods

*The Vulnerability Context.* “That part of the environment external to the household and of which the household has little to no control” (Pain and Lautze, 2002).

Within the livelihoods framework, the vulnerability context has three components. The first consists of the shocks and stresses to the household. Lautze, 2002, identified three categories of shocks and stresses in Afghanistan: climatic, political and economic. For

the semi-nomadic Kuchi of Registan, the shock of primary importance is the drought. The Registan Kuchi cannot return while the drought persists, and even after the drought the vast majority will not be able to return without assistance from programs focused on restocking and the rehabilitation of infrastructure such as wells.

All interviewees from Registan reported stresses due to insecurity and political crisis over the past 25 years that made it difficult to survive at times. However, they were able to cope with these stresses until the drought destroyed their flocks.

“We were a group of young men moving in Registan with 12 camels loaded with wool for the market. We were caught in the middle between the Russians and the Khalquyan (Afghans helping the Russians). The Russians thought we were Mujahadeen with weapons on our camels. They fired on us, and all the camels and two men died. When the Russians found out their mistake, they allowed us to keep the bodies.”

- Ghulam Haider, Kuchi Shura

Political or ethnic discrimination was not reported by Pashtun and Baloochi Kuchi from Registan interviewed in this study. However, it must be kept in mind that this population of IDPs is suffering from a form of political discrimination in that they are not beneficiaries of national policy initiatives, most of which are aimed at settled populations that are easier to identify and work with.

In addition, there is a large number of Nomadic Kuchi either in the same camps, in Zhari Dasht Camp, or camped in or

around Kandahar. Although most of these Kuchi have suffered significant livestock losses from the drought, there seems to be a remnant of shoats left, particularly for those Kuchi camped near Kandahar. However, these nomadic Kuchi report political discrimination as their primary reason for having become IDPs. The root cause of this discrimination is long standing bias against Kuchi by other ethnic groups after Kuchi were given pastures for grazing in the central highlands by early governments, and then received the support of the Taliban. It is likely that, without some form of conflict resolution and consensus building between Kuchi and settled populations, this group of Kuchi will not regain access to their traditional summer grazing pastures.

The second component of the vulnerability context is adverse long-term trends. Two potentially adverse trends have been identified during this study. The psychological impacts of the drought and five years of living in IDP camps are poorly understood and deserve further study. In addition, until the drought the Registan Kuchi utilized a narrow set of livelihood strategies. The introduction of technological interventions to aid the return of this population to sustainable livelihoods (agriculture, zero grazing, reseeding) will have a significant impact on social structures and coping strategies. These potential impacts are poorly understood and deserve further study.

The third component of the vulnerability context is the impact of seasonality on successful livelihood outcomes. Seasonal income or food production demands smoothing mechanisms for consumption, and smoothing mechanisms are more readily available to those families with diverse asset packages. Three seasonality issues have

been identified in this research. Much male casual labor in the eastern IDP camps is currently tied to opium production, creating financial capital seasonality. Equivalent seasonality would be attached to casual labor in other agricultural contexts. Smoothing of consumption of this financial capital requires reliable savings mechanisms while people are living in the camps. In the short-term, returnees to Registan will not have seasonal concerns as far as income, as they will be highly vulnerable year round (few physical or financial assets to smooth consumption). In the long-term Kuchi pastoralism is highly season according to when young-stock can be sold (primary source of income).

The most vulnerable populations identified in this research are the following:

1. Widows without sons who can work, or sons whose working capacity has been limited by physical or psychological trauma from living through the drought in Registan.
2. Non-certificate holding families, more often Pashtun relying on nawars and Baloochi and Pashtun who migrated to Kandahar during the summer.
3. The long-term poor, i.e., families who had less than 50 shoats in Registan, relying on income from herding the livestock of richer families.
4. The Nomadic Kuchi that relied on mountain pastures during the summer, but who can no longer access those pastures for political reasons.

*Livelihoods Assets.* Although focus in this study was placed on women's access to assets, it was found that, in general, assets were accumulated and managed within the context of the family. Therefore, in most cases men have decision making power over the disposition and utilization of assets. Exceptions to this generalization will be pointed out.

*Human capital* – Of all the forms of capital recognized in the livelihoods framework, human capital is the only one that is increasing for the Registan Kuchi. In Registan the Kuchi had no access to formal education. Informal education consisted of mothers training daughters in the production of crafts, and rare instances of learning the Koran from elders. Although there are no formal schools for children in the IDP camps, families do have access to programs from agencies to teach children basic skills, as well as more informal structures for the teaching of reading and writing skills. In addition, small numbers of adults have access to vocational training. Participation in such training programs may be an indicator of willingness to try different livelihood options. Most women report a hesitancy to return to Registan if educational and health programs are not put in place. Health has also likely improved due to better access to both preventative and curative health care for both children and adults in the camps.

*Financial Capital* – In the past, families had access to the following forms of financial capital: livestock sales, occasional wage labor for men, herding for others in poor families, the sale of milk products and handicrafts. Women had greater chance of accessing money if they could sell handicrafts and milk products to merchants who visited their homes (camps). Merchants from Kandahar visited Kuchi in Registan to purchase crafts. This often lead to a disadvantage in terms of trade in favor of merchants searching for antiques, who brought low quality new items such as carpets and traded them for high quality and valuable antiques.

Currently families have access to financial capital from male wage labor. The rate of men working seems to vary per camp. In Zhari Dasht it was found that most men were away from the camp working as casual laborers in Kandahar or on the surrounding farms. In the western camps, due to their isolation, wage labor is more difficult to find, and is seasonally related to poppy production. Firewood sales are an important source of income for families. Camel owners are much better off as they can search further, carry more, and sell in more advantageous markets. However, firewood gathering is also an important source of income for poor families, particularly female headed households.

A small minority of very wealthy families also seem to profit from the rental of their remaining physical assets such as cars and tractors.

Bibi Gula was the second wife of her husband, who died in Registan from thirst with the first wife. She takes care of six daughters ages 18 to 5 (the youngest four are her own), and seven sons, ages 30 to 6 (the 6 and 10 year olds are her own). The 30 and 25 year old sons are married but have no children, and no source of work. All of the children and Bibi Gula search for firewood in the nearby hills, carrying it back to the camp on their backs where they sell it to a wood merchant.

- Qalai Shamir Camp Focus Group, including Bibi Gula

For women, the sale of firewood is the most important source of income. A small minority are able to sell crafts, particularly rugs and blankets. The women report that those with the traditional knowledge may be able to sell a maximum of two to four carpets a year at 500-700 Afghanis per carpet. The number of women engaged in craft sales is low because no woman reports being able to purchase the necessary supplies on her own. Only those few women that are well known receive commissions to make rugs and blankets. The women feel that this is a major barrier to the success of vocational training programs that teach them crafts, because if they do not have the capital to purchase the supplies there is no point in having the skill. A few women also report selling eggs as a benefit of the VARA poultry training program.

The women interviewed report that most families lost their livestock holdings in Registan during the drought (i.e., were unable to sell their livestock before they died). Therefore, there are no banked funds from the sale of the livestock that they had owned in Registan. In the IDP camps the women report no banking mechanisms for financial capital. Their

“A Kuchi, I don’t know from where, brought in a Koran. The letters are in gold. The dots on the words are diamonds and other precious gems. The Kuchi sold it for 130,000 Pakistani rupees. I hope to sell it for 6,000,000 Pakistani rupees.”

-Kandahar Antiques Merchant

families had access to loans in Registan, using their livestock as collateral, but there are no lending mechanisms to which they have access now.

Although herd sizes were discussed in general terms with interviewees, no attempt was made to accurately count past or current

livestock holdings. Discussions of herd sizes in the past were consistent with reports in the secondary data. A family of approximately 5-15 members might have had between 50 and 300 shoats, 1-7 camels and 1-5 donkeys. Currently livestock holdings, particularly shoats, seem to depend on the camp. In general, every 3 to 5 families have between 1 and three shoats. Although sheep were more valuable to families in Registan, goats are more common in the camps. There seems to be a revolving system of goat ownership in the camps in which families that have new born babies will try to buy a goat from another family to supplement the child's milk supply. On average, every 30<sup>th</sup> household will have a camel, every 15<sup>th</sup> will have a donkey, a few families will have rabbits and pigeons, and most will have poultry, mostly local breeds. Approximately one out of 100 families own a cow.

When they entered the IDP camps, the distress sale of physical capital was the most important mechanism for families to generate physical capital. This included antiques, family heirlooms, crafts and jewelry, as well as basic assets such as pillows and cushions.

Physical capital – The women and men interviewed during this study report that they have little or no physical capital left. Both women and men report that their rescue from Registan was an emergency event, leaving no time for planning. Some wealthier families had the time to bury their large assets, although it seems that thieves have been able to find and take most of these goods. Most families report simply leaving behind those things that they could not carry in their arms. What physical capital they were able to bring with them has since been sold for the purchase of basic commodities such as bread.

#### Physical Capital, Sheer Baner's Family

Past	Present
Livestock	Factory quilt from agency
4 tents (2 cloth, 2 wool)	Pillow made from an old dress
Mattresses	
Quilts	
Pillows	
Carpets	
Kuchi Blankets	
Kuchi Jackets for the men	
Hammocks with wood supports	
Goat skin water bags (traditional craft)	
Sheep skin oil bags (traditional craft)	

Environmental capital – Beyond water and grazing for livestock, interviewees did not report accessing environmental capital, either in the past or currently. Natural products were not a major component of livelihoods strategies, although men do recall plants that are important for the preparation of traditional medicines, and the dyes used for woolen handicrafts came from natural sources such as plant extracts.

The focus on water and grazing access as the most important forms of environmental capital highlights the importance of the certificates held by most families granting them

access to these commodities. It is of critical importance that these certificates are documented and a database of access claims be established. Although the security situation makes it difficult for agencies to reach the camps to carry out such work, the issue is important enough that the Kuchi Shura would be the ideal group for carrying out the process. It would only be necessary for one or two members of the Kuchi Shura to be trained in the use of a digital camera to photograph the papers, the completion of a simple record form, and an announcement and visitation plan to be developed that ensures all community members are made aware of the documentation process. The pictures can then be used by Cordaid to create a certificate database. Now that the availability of water and grazing has become the limiting factor in how many of the Registan IDPs can return, Cordaid and other agencies must anticipate that lines will be drawn in the sand based on who has what certificates. It would be wise to create a database before conflict builds, and begin working with land rights experts in Afghanistan to formulate plans and propose policies at the appropriate local, regional and national levels for resolution of this issue. If return occurs before the issue is addressed, the most vulnerable will fall victim to the more powerful.

**Social capital** – In the previous section, the social structure of Registan was discussed based on families, migratory groups, villages (well or nawar) and clusters. In this section, the focus will be on women’s social capital.

For women, the most important organizational structure is at the level of the village. Women are represented at the village level by a female elder that is helped by a council of female elders. ‘Helping groups’ were informal groups of women, pulled together by female elders, to help newly arrived women set up their tents and cook their first meals. There were also spontaneous helping groups established to organize and take care of things like marriages festivities. Although a Registan Kuchi woman’s tribe is important for her self identity, it is not a primary source of support or coping mechanism. For example, when a focus group from Toloqan Camp was asked to create a matrix score of different problems they face and the people they can go to for their resolution (neighbors, family, female elders, male elders at different levels, tribe) they reported the following:

- When daily problems occur, such as a lack of food or the need for help in herding the livestock, a woman goes to her neighbors.
- When a woman is sick or two women are arguing, the matter is taken to the village female elders.
- When a child is sick, or a serious problem occurs like a family lacking a WFP ration card, the matter is taken to the village male elders.

At no point did the Registan women report that their tribe was the primary source of arbitration or relief from problems. This village based support network is now facilitated by the fact that most villages have tried to locate together in the IDP camps. The women’s helping committees now resolve minor problems, like when a woman needs small things such as a bit of sugar or flour.

The nomadic Kuchi women interviewed all reported that their strongest source of social capital was their tribe. Even within the IDP camps, they will often go to tribal members who live in different camps when they need help with things like cooking for a wedding. This is likely a result of their former nomadic lifestyle, where family units were more isolated during their migrations.

*Barriers.* The following barriers to sustainable livelihoods for the Registan Kuchi have been identified.

1. Certificate vs. non-certificate holders – Non-certificate holders show a frank awareness that their lack of formal documentation as Registan Kuchi will put them at a serious disadvantage when it comes to determining who will have a right to return to Registan.
2. Lack of Livestock – Before return can be contemplated, stocks of sheep and goats in sufficient numbers to be reproductively viable need to be created. Although it is important for agencies to identify and target the poorest of the poor in their relief programs, it would be a mistake to target only poor families in a Registan restocking program. The traditional structures supported more and less well off families living in the same community, where the less well off families could benefit from the surplus stock of wealthier families in the form of animal loans and income from contract herding. Providing animals to only poor families will create extreme vulnerability for those families if they return to Registan outside of this traditional village support structure.
3. Lack of Camels – The Registan livelihood strategy is semi-nomadic. Families without camels (or possibly donkeys) that are returned to Registan will not be able to migrate. This dynamic could create a concentration of animals around dependable water sources (wells), resulting environmental damage. In addition, these families would not have access to the coping strategy of being able to move their flocks when grazing in one area is depleted, and will not be able to get products to markets for sale.
4. Lack of physical or financial capital – Families without access to capital other than livestock risk being unsustainable during times of stress that limit livestock numbers. Income generating opportunities for men, and savings and loan mechanisms for families, should be part of any return program.
5. Gender – Female headed households without access to income from male labor should be the primary targets of alternative livelihoods programs.

## **Healthy Animals Ensure the Ability to Cope**

The priority sheep and goat diseases in southern Afghanistan are currently anthrax, sheep and goat pox, enterotoxaemia, tick born diseases, and FMD. The priority camel diseases are sarcoptic mange and tick born diseases. The priority poultry diseases are new castle's and infectious choryza. Now and into the foreseeable future, due to the lack of forage and limited water available, all disease problems will have a nutritional component. Hungry animals get sick, and problems that in normal circumstances are minor, such as some endoparasitic infections, can have serious consequences in malnourished animals.

In addition, during a restocking program it must be kept in mind that rains will bring more livestock diseases and fatalities, as will more intensified production schemes unfamiliar to the Kuchi (zero grazing, stover grazing, etc.).

*Ethnoveterinary knowledge in Southern Afghanistan.* When asked how sick animals were treated in Registan, most interviewees in this study reported that men treated the animals themselves using ethnoveterinary knowledge held by family members, or by other members in the village or cluster. Although the ethnoveterinary knowledge of the interviewees in this study was not explored in depth, when asked to discuss changes in the flora of Registan, the Kuchi Shura elders were eager to list and describe the many plants they use for medicinal purposes. In a 1998 survey of Kuchi, Barker et al found that 98% of Kuchi in Afghanistan carried out their own treatments.

Davis, 1993, found that the Registan Kuchi living as refugees in Quetta had a sophisticated body of ethnoveterinary knowledge. Similar results were obtained from several other surveys and studies carried out by Tufts University School of Veterinary Medicine research teams inside Afghanistan, as well as with southern Afghanistan refugees in the Quetta area (Jost, 1996). During her study, Davis administered a quiz on animal health and diseases to 18 men and 17 women. Although she found that the women in her study had a level of ethnoveterinary knowledge equivalent to the men, this could not be verified during this study. During her research Davis also found that women were often responsible for treating sick animals left at the tent during the day, which might explain the high level of ethnoveterinary knowledge in her study population. Women had a particularly high level of knowledge about mastitis, easily explained as women are responsible for milking animals. Although the Registan Kuchi women interviewed in this study were able to report the key diseases occurring in their area, their knowledge (diseases present, incidence, and seasonality) was much less extensive and reliable than that of the men. The exception was knowledge related to poultry, which are entirely managed by women. They also reported that they were not responsible for treating sick animals, now or in the past. When sick animals were left at the tent, they were treated by the men once the appropriate medicines could be found.

*Animal Health Services in Southern Afghanistan.* All Kuchi reported that there were no veterinary services available to them in Registan. Most said that they treated their animals themselves using traditional medicines. Some reported that men would seek western type drugs, usually in Chama or Quetta, rarely in Kandahar. None of the interviewees reported using the system of veterinary field units (VFUs) located in the districts north of Registan and staffed by basic veterinary workers (BVWs), technicians and veterinarians, although the director of the veterinary department for the Ministry of Agriculture in Kandahar reported that the VFUs in Kandahar province were meant to provide services to the Registan Kuchi. The paraveterinary technician from the Spin Boldak VFU reported that his main period of income generation is the spring, when the nomadic Kuchi herders move through his region. He purchases his pharmaceuticals in Quetta, and then gives them to transporters to move them to Kandahar, and to manage tax obligations at the border and in Kandahar.

The VFU system was established in the early 1990s as a component of the community animal health programs for Afghanistan implemented by organizations such as Mercy Corps International (MCI) and the FAO. The concept called for the establishment of VFUs in each district, to be staffed by one or more paraveterinary technicians (PVTs) overseen by veterinarians. The PVTs at each VFU would oversee a group of BVWs that were meant to be the primary animal health care providers for their communities.

The FAO took over support of the VFU system in the mid-1990s, covering the salary of the VFU staff and providing pharmaceuticals. The FAO also instituted a disease outbreak reporting system whereby VFU staff provided information on outbreaks to the FAO, who passed the information on to the government Veterinary Department. During the late 1990s, in an effort to encourage privatization, the FAO phased out support for the VFUs, although free pharmaceuticals such as anthelmintics and vaccines are still provided on a sporadic basis by the FAO.

At this point the VFUs seem to exist in an unclear state between private, public, and agency supported. The VFUs are seen by the Veterinary Department to be part of the department's extension service to the rural areas, but technically owned by the FAO, who they believe has primary responsibility for their function. Two VFUs in Kandahar province (Spin Boldak and Maywan) are staffed by one PVT each, whose nominal salaries are covered by the government. No salary support is provided to other VFUs. The PVT from Spin Boldak reports that his main source of income is from the sale of pharmaceuticals. At this point, no working BVWs seem to be associated with the VFUs. There has been a significant contraction of staff numbers, and some VFUs have stopped functioning entirely. The FAO reports that it supports only one VFU, in Kandahar city, and only specialized programs within that clinic, such as artificial insemination. The disease outbreak reporting system appears to have broken down. The FAO receives reports from some VFUs, which it occasionally supplies to the Veterinary Department. The Spin Boldak PVT says he has not submitted a report in at least six months because it is no longer required of him by the FAO. The Veterinary Department reports that in the past there were no private veterinary practitioners, although now there are private veterinary centers in Kandahar city run by former public employees.

The Spin Boldak PVT interviewed during this study worked for MCI for two years (1993-1995) as a trainer of BVWs. He reports that, to his knowledge, the BVWs that he trained in that program are not working now. After their training they were attached to VFUs and were supplied with pharmaceuticals by MCI and FAO. Many stopped working when the supply of pharmaceuticals ended. He indicates that he personally

“Previously the BVWs were supported by the MCI and FAO programs. Once support from those programs ended, there was no reason to continue working with the BVWs. I cannot support BVWs because I don't go to the field from the VFU unless a farmer comes to the clinic and requests my assistance. If there were five BVWs working at the VFU, and they all go with me to treat a farmer's animal when I am called, how would we split the 100 Afghani received from the farmer?”

-Sharaf Uddin, PVT Spin Boldak

cannot support BVWs as community-based animal health workers in his rural area because his case load is too low. Only a few farmers come to the clinic to request his service, and he does not visit the rural areas unless a farmer calls him from the clinic. To his knowledge there are no networks of BVWs in southern Afghanistan. His former trainees are now working as casual laborers in shops and other professions.

There appear to be two main reasons why the BVWs trained during the 1990s are no longer working: inadequate expectations on the part of the BVWs concerning the nature of their work (expectations to be paid employees), and inadequate support of BVWs by technicians and veterinarians associated with the VFU system. Community-based animal health workers in remote pastoral areas must be mobile members of their own communities in order to be effective. To base BVWs at VFUs encourages the

#### **A Sustainable Community Animal Health Program**

1. Engage in a dialogue process with the Kuchi Shura and other community elders. The goal is to achieve consensus on the design of the program, and to develop an oral contract with the smallest possible community units (likely at the village level) on the nature of the program. The agreement should include the community's support for their BVW at market based prices, and identification of the appropriate person to receive training. Trainees should be committed to a herding way of life, and see their herding activities as their primary source of livelihood support. Lack of formal education is not a barrier to being a good BVW.
2. Conduct participatory assessments of existing veterinary knowledge in each target community, including disease problems and animal health priorities, understanding of disease process and causes, and currently available treatments. The results of these assessments should serve as the foundation for any BVW training program. Keep the training simple, and active.
3. Design training programs that are participatory.
  - a. Include community leaders in the training so that they have a good idea of the capacity of the BVWs, and will fully support the BVWs when they return to their communities.
  - b. Include training on private veterinary services. BVWs must be able to work in a market based pricing system.
  - c. Trainers should be existing VFU staff from western Kandahar, as well as government veterinarians.
  - d. Training should include components for both BVWs and VFU staff on linking BVWs to professional structures for re-supply and disease reporting.
  - e. Training should include mechanisms for surveillance reporting that take advantage of BVW visits to VFUs for re-supply.
4. BVWs must be mobile, not based at VFUs.
5. Integrate local pharmacies, practitioner organizations, and producer organizations into the program. It is critical to identify reliable pharmaceutical supply lines through private distributors.
6. Project planning should include annual site visits and continuing education for BVWs and other veterinary service providers, and evaluation of the program by project participants in collaboration with outside experts.

expectation on the part of the BVWs of full employment as animal health care providers, and the expectation that clients will come to their centers to request their services. Private veterinary professionals at centers such as the VFUs must not see BVWs as competition working from the same clinic, but as an opportunity to expand their business into remote areas that they cannot reach.

Over the past two years VARA has trained over 100 BVWs as part of its vocational training programs. The VARA BVW program may be more sustainable than the 1990s models because it has stronger links to the community, the

trainees having been nominated by elders in the camps. The Registan IDP communities in the western camps report using the BVWs in the camps, although they also report that they have no other choice. However, results from this study indicate that the knowledge of the VARA BVWs is somewhat weak. This is likely the result of a training program that was not based on ethnoveterinary studies of existing veterinary knowledge and practices, not based on participatory studies of disease priorities for the target communities, and that was overly technical. It also seems that their work has fallen off sharply after finishing the free drugs given to them by VARA.

The BVWs trained by VARA have set up clinics in the camps. Although the VFU model may be appropriate in the short term for the camps, it will not be appropriate as a primary animal health service model for Registan.

Animal health programs for Registan must support the livestock production practices of the region's Kuchi. Such programs must be founded on careful planning and an extensive dialogue process with the targeted communities in order to be sustainable. See the adjacent textbox for recommendations on building a community based animal health program for the Registan Kuchi.

The Spin Boldak PVT is an excellent resource for the design of BVW trainings. Agencies in Kandahar that are implementing community animal health programs need to work together to standardize approaches, ensure the appropriateness of programs, and focus on sustainability.

Tufts University's School of Veterinary Medicine (TUSVM), in collaboration with Tufts' Feinstein International Famine Center (FIFC) and the Community Animal Health and Epidemiology Unit (CAPE) of the African Union, has over 20 years experience in the design and implementation of community animal health programs that support sustainable livelihoods in pastoral societies. TUSVM is an excellent resource to organizations planning primary animal health programs, particularly in pastoral societies struggling to survive in situations of chronic conflict and political instability. Key reading for any organizations implementing community animal health programs is [Community-based Animal Healthcare: A Practical Guide to Improving Primary Veterinary Services](#) by A. Catley et al, 2002, ITDG, London.

## **Sustainable Kuchi Livelihoods and Gender**

A livelihoods based approach to Cordaid/VARA programming and implementation is recommended. This will ensure the appropriate targeting of programs, their sustainability, and a natural transition from programs targeted towards IDPs to those supporting return to Registan and engagement in alternative livelihoods. This approach will allow Cordaid and VARA to identify vulnerable populations and the barriers that exist to their ability to cope and ensure well-being. Focus should be placed on creating and supporting the types of diverse capital that allow vulnerable populations to overcome such barriers. This approach will also help the Kuchi Shura become more of a partner in

the identification of vulnerable populations, and the implementation of programs targeted towards the most vulnerable. By encouraging the Kuchi Shura to be a greater partner in program assessment and implementation, the eventual return to Registan becomes a more transparent and participatory process.

Cordaid should consider creating an office for coordinating Registan Kuchi programs that is autonomous in the Cordaid system. Autonomy would allow the staff of the coordinating office to focus on the long-term humanitarian needs of the Registan Kuchi. This office should function on a minimum of a three to five year programming timeline that is more in tune with the needs of the Registan Kuchi. The coordinating office should also form a consortium of NGOs in Kandahar with similar activities, and that are committed to livelihoods support rather than short-term assistance. This concept is similar to the food security councils that are created in most situations of chronic conflict and political instability, and allows for the exchange of ideas, sharing of information, and standardization of key activities such as community animal health programs.

Women are integral to the survival and well-being of Kuchi families. Gender targeted programming should focus on supporting the capacity and productivity of women within the Kuchi family's overall livelihoods strategy, and not attempt to reproduce models of gender programming from other contexts. Gender programs can only empower women when they are appropriate to and emerge from the local context, giving women the knowledge and capacity to ensure the overall wellbeing of their families. Organizations must work with the Registan Kuchi to identify appropriate gender focused initiatives. To support this process, there should be a staff person dedicated to gender programming within the Registan coordinating office. Cordaid should also encourage the creating of a women's council as part of the Kuchi Shura.

Gender directed vocational training programs should focus on livelihoods support, and should be assessed according to the positive livelihoods outcomes created. It is often the case that vocational training programs implemented as part of a humanitarian intervention are evaluated according to services delivered, such as the number of women trained. A livelihoods approach would measure changes in the vulnerabilities in women's lives as the outcome.

The VARA poultry training program serves as a good example. When asked for indicators of how successful the program had been, VARA livestock program staff stated how many women had been trained: 1440 women in poultry production, and 250 women in how to use egg incubators. Although these numbers reflect the activities of VARA staff, they do not indicate the impacts of the poultry programs on the lives of the target population.

During this study, women that participated in the training, as well as their male family members, reported positive outcomes from the program: the eggs they produce are eaten by children in their households, and surplus eggs can be sold for between 1 and 2 Afghani each. Therefore, the program has increased food availability and income generation for women. However, possible unintended outcomes are:

- a. Men sell the eggs when they have to be taken to a bazaar (when no local merchants purchasing eggs from women at the camps).
- b. The training was highly technical, much of it being difficult to understand for the participating women. This is reflected in the high poultry mortality rate reported by women.
- c. It is unclear if the incubator program has been effective.
- d. Only approximately 1 out of 10 households benefited from the program.
- e. The program is IDP livelihood appropriate, but is not appropriate for supporting livelihoods in Registan (exotic breeds will not survive in Registan).

By identifying the livelihood indicators to be measured before implementation, and basing continuous assessment on those indicators, an accurate and timely picture of the impacts of a program will be obtained that allows for modification and improvement of programs over time. Women's training programs should also be geared to the most vulnerable. Participation in such training programs may be an indicator of willingness to try different livelihood options, however there are indications that the most vulnerable are not always the beneficiaries of such trainings. Several women mentioned in this study that they feel that such programs are taken advantage of by better off people in the camps, who aid agency facilitators find easier to access and communicate with than the extremely vulnerable.

All vocational training programs aimed at increasing cash income should be based on market surveys. What is the local demand for the products or skills? Can a more extensive demand be created by facilitating merchant's access to products? What are the cost and availability of supplies? What are the local mechanisms for trade in the products? Cordaid should focus on supporting access to markets to ensure maximum impacts of vocational training

programs for women, such as their embroidery and carpetry programs. For example, Cordaid should find a few merchants that are willing to go to the camps on a regular basis and buy eggs for urban consumption (assuring a more sustainable price than 1-2 Afghanis, and that profits from sales go directly to women). A carpet center has recently been established in Kandahar to supply the local carpet trade. Cordaid could work with the carpet center to create a reliable market for Kuchi crafts (carpets, blankets and embroidery).

In addition, programs aimed at improving diets as an outcome (egg program) should include an education component on the causes and treatment of childhood nutritional diseases.

“When people with education come to the camps with questionnaires we are shocked and don't know what to say to them because we are uneducated and don't know about such things. So the more powerful (the more wealthy and sophisticated) are able to get more things from the aid agencies because they know how to answer their questions.”

- Lal Bibi, Toloquan Camp

## Monitoring the Registan Ecosystem

At the time of this study Cordaid and CADG were engaged in an assessment of Registan and its people. Teams were in Registan to assess pasture and water availability, while studies were being designed to assess capacities and needs amongst the Registan Kuchi. While such assessments are critical to designing programs, it is important to involve the target community in design and implementation of the assessment. The marginal role of the Kuchi themselves in the Registan assessment was pointed out by the Kuchi Shura as indicating a lack of transparency and trust between implementing agencies and the target population.

“The walking of the sheep causes the land to become soft. The urine and feces are good for the land.”

- Haji Akbar, Kuchi Shura

It is often the case that pastoralists are extremely observant of their environments. During this study, some attempts were made to assess Kuchi ecosystem knowledge. Although the extent and depth of the results obtained are minimal, the results are encouraging and should be followed-up in more depth. Male elders emphasized animal performance as the most important indicator of pasture quality. Sheep and goats must give good milk, they must gain weight, and the wool and hair must be healthy. At the end of each day, the rumen is visually examined to ensure that the animal has gotten enough to eat.

Several local indicators prove the observation skills of the Kuchi, and their sophisticated understanding of ecosystem processes. Male elders report that when they camp at a new pasture, they know if the soil is healthy the first night if the locally prepared bread (nan) comes out of the ground crispy. They explained that they know that a healthy soil is high in nitrogen and has good water storage capacity. In such a soil, the stored water steams the bread, making it crispy. Kuchi women monitor the quality of the grazing by the amount of butter fat in the milk each day. Kuchi men also show excellent recognition of the benefits of appropriate animal impact on pasture quality.

A monitoring system for Registan should be based on the indigenous knowledge of community members concerning the health of their ecosystem. This will ensure that the monitoring system is meaningful to the community, and that it is timely in identifying problems. The Kuchi can monitor:

1. Wells
2. Canals
3. Vegetation
4. Herd health
5. Progeny histories of select herds

Supplement monitoring with participatory mapping and timeline exercises should occur on an annual basis.

## **Conclusion – Scaling up by Informing Policy**

The traditional Kuchi decision and representation structure starts from the ground up, i.e., decision making starts at the family and moves upwards. National policy for Kuchi must support decision making at an appropriate locally representative level (village in the case of Registan, migratory groups in the case of nomads) that feeds into bodies at higher regional levels such as the Registan Kuchi Shura. In other words, political support structures for the Kuchi must recognize and encourage traditional means of organization. For this reason, the current national policy that focuses on a Kuchi representative group to the National Solidarity Program should rather focus on social mobilization for the Kuchi at the local level, thereby enabling elections to such national representative bodies.

By supporting the formation of a Registan coordination office focused on long-term programming that will meet immediate humanitarian needs while planning for the return of populations to Registan and the transition to development, Cordaid will ensure appropriate, targeted programs for Registan's Kuchi that support successful livelihoods outcomes.

Although this study provides baseline knowledge concerning the Registan Kuchi and their livelihoods strategies, further assessments to provide more in-depth knowledge should be obtained, and should be the basis on which programs are designed. The filling in of knowledge gaps should always be the first step in the implementation plan of any program.

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The following literature proved to be valuable sources of secondary data for this study, or provides background information on key concepts. Most publications from ITDG, IIED, ODI, FAO, FIFC, AREU and UNDP can be downloaded from their websites.

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**Tashcoir**

She is waiting for me  
 To leave talking to the men  
 Walk behind the house

Holding my hand  
 She leads me to a carpet  
 Spread beneath a tree  
 We sit

She speaks to me  
 In a voice  
 Too soft and gentle to hear  
 I move closer, lean forward

Her daughters appear  
 One carrying roti and sweet butter  
 The other green tea  
 I catch a shy smile  
 Behind the shadow of a chowdar  
 As the youngest sits  
 Opposite of me

Splashes of colors  
 These chowdar  
 Hues of the rainbow  
 Hiding the women below

She pours tea  
 Sprinkles sugar on butter

Dips roti  
 Leans close  
 Hands it to me

I take the buttered roti  
 She takes my other hand  
 We drink tea and eat in silence  
 Four women  
 The only points of color  
 In the desert valley  
 Where she lives  
 I, the first non-family  
 She has ever seen

When we finish  
 She pulls my hand  
 Draws me near  
 Speaks again

Her voice so frail  
 So gentle  
 I cannot hear  
 And lean so close  
 Our chowdar part  
 Our cheeks touch  
 I hear her words  
     *“tashcoir*  
     *tashcoir”*

She thanks me  
 For being here

## APPENDIX I – INTERVIEW GUIDES

### Women’s Focus Groups

1. Introduce the appraisal team
2. Identify the respondents
3. MAPPING with ANNUAL TIMELINE
  - a. Home location of participants
    - i. Movements in home location with annual timeline
    - ii. Movements of social significance with annual timeline (locations of significant relations)
    - iii. Natural resources that support women’s livelihoods (water, grazing, weaving, medicines, etc) with annual timeline
  - b. Current location of participants
    - i. Location of homes and herds in relation to camp
    - ii. Movements of herds (daily and/or annual timeline)
    - iii. Natural resources that support women’s livelihoods (water, grazing, weaving, medicines, etc)
4. HISTORICAL TIMELINE (when and how did they become IDPs)
  - a. Political events
  - b. Natural events
  - c. Economic events
5. LIVELIHOODS ANALYSIS (current and historic)
  - a. Human capital – Use an analysis of a participant’s FAMILY TREE
  - b. Natural capital – What is of value in the participant’s environment?
  - c. Financial capital – Sources of income
  - d. Physical capital – What do the participants own that is of value (including livestock)?
  - e. Social capital
    - i. Relations of trust, reciprocity and exchanges (PROPORTIONAL PILING of most important relations to women)
      1. With what social entities do women identify themselves and for what purpose? - *How do women identify themselves (with what groups, like family, tribe, ethnic group, camp)?*
      2. What role does social capital play in affecting access to other types of capital? – *Does belonging to certain groups help them access people, natural resources, money, goods?*
      3. What exchange mechanisms exist (goods, services, etc) – *How do women help one another in times of need?*

- ii. Common rules, norms and sanctions - How do rules and norms influence resource use? – *Are there rules for how women behave or work together? What about in their social groups like family and tribe?*
    - iii. Connectedness, networks and groups
      - 1. What organizations do women belong to?
      - 2. Who has access to organizations, and is any group or individual actively excluded?
      - 3. Who do people rely on in times of need? Vertical linkages (patron/client) vs. horizontal (relations of solidarity) – *When you need help, who or what group can you ask for help?*
      - 4. Why do people seek to become members of certain groups?
    - iv. MATRIX SCORING of strength of different social linkages
6. Livestock
- a. Women's Work
    - i. What work do you do with animals now? What is your responsibility?
    - ii. In Registan, what work was your responsibility with the animals? What resources did you have to do your work?
  - b. Importance of Livestock
    - i. Please indicate the relative importance of the different species of livestock that you had in Registan to your family in terms of its well being (PROPORTIONAL PILING).
    - ii. Please indicate the relative importance of the different species of livestock that you had in Registan to your family in terms of cash income (PROPORTIONAL PILING).
    - iii. Is one species more important for cash income to women than men?
  - c. Disease importance in Camps
    - i. Please list the three most important diseases (sheep, goats, chickens) of livestock.
    - ii. Please indicate the relative importance of the three diseases you have mentioned in terms of the overall wellbeing of your family.
  - d. Disease importance in Registan
    - i. What were the three most important diseases (sheep, goats, camels, chickens) of livestock in Registan.
    - ii. Please indicate the relative importance of the three diseases you have mentioned in terms of the overall wellbeing of your family in Registan.
7. Livelihoods Support
- a. Income Generating Activities (PROPORTIONAL PILING)
    - i. What sources of income does your family have? What were the sources of income in Registan?

- ii. Do women have sources of income that are separate from the family's? Was this different in Registan?
    - iii. What decision making power do women have over income generated for the family? What about the income that women generate?
  - b. Livelihoods Resources
    - i. What other resources or sources of support does the family have now to meet the family's daily needs for food, water, shelter, health and education? (MATRIX SCORING of important sources)
    - ii. What do you do when these resources fail?
    - iii. What resources and support did the family have for meeting daily needs in Registan? (MATRIX SCORING of important sources)
    - iv. What did you do when these resources failed?
  - c. Changes in vulnerabilities and how they affect women's ability to cope (drought, disease, markets, land access, etc)
  - d. What does your family have to pay for regularly?
  - e. What do women pay for regularly?
- 8. Project Interventions (ask women for proposals, MATRIX SCORING of desirability)
  - a. Livelihoods Support in Registan
    - i. Rehabilitate wells – food for work program
    - ii. Range improvement
    - iii. Aforestation for firewood
    - iv. Irrigation scheme on northern Helmund province
    - v. Health programs
      - 1. Dispensaries
      - 2. Village based medical workers
    - vi. Education programs
      - 1. Childhood
      - 2. Women's literacy
    - vii. Services
      - 1. Veterinary services – What should they look like? Do women need special services?
      - 2. Agriculture/Livestock Extension
      - 3. Security
      - 4. Financial - credit
  - b. Livelihoods Support in Camps
    - i. Restocking within camps for returning Kuchi – sheep and goat
    - ii. Restocking within camps for non-nomadic Kuchi – small ruminants and cattle
    - iii. Fodder production for Kuchi in camps
  - c. Training Programs in Camp
    - i. Poultry keeping
    - ii. Rabbit keeping
    - iii. Small ruminant husbandry

- iv. Cattle husbandry
- v. Agriculture
- vi. Carpentry
- vii. Wool spinning and carpet weaving
- viii. Tanning
- ix. BVWs

## Basic Veterinary Workers

1. Introduce the appraisal team
2. Identify the respondents
3. Livestock species kept (camps and in Registan)
  - a. Please indicate the relative importance of the different species of livestock that you have/had in Registan to your family in terms of its well being (PROPORTIONAL PILING).
  - b. Please indicate the relative importance of the different species of livestock that you have/had in Registan to your family in terms of cash income (PROPORTIONAL PILING).
4. Disease (each species, camps and in Registan) – Proportional Piling
  - a. What are the diseases by species
  - b. For each species, please indicate the relative importance of the diseases you have mentioned in terms of the overall wellbeing of your family (camps and in Registan)
  - c. Develop disease lexicon (Pashtun and Balooch)
5. Veterinary Knowledge – Matrix Scoring of Disease Signs and Causes
6. Training
  - a. How were the BVW trainees chosen
  - b. What did the BVW training consist of
7. Support Structure
  - a. Pharmaceutical supply line
  - b. Veterinary supervision
  - c. Surveillance and reporting
  - d. Retraining
  - e. Cost recovery
8. Veterinary Service Availability (traditional, primary, formal)
  - a. What do people in the camps do if they have a sick animal? Who do they call?
  - b. What kinds of veterinarians are available to people in the camps? – Proportional piling
  - c. What did people do if they had sick animals in Registan? Who did they call?
  - d. What kinds of veterinary services were available in Registan? – proportional piling
  - e. Did they have access to BVWs in Registan? Who were they?

**Male Elders**

1. Introduce the appraisal team
2. Identify the respondents, tribe and home area
3. Livestock species kept (camps and in Registan)
  - a. Please indicate the relative importance of the different species of livestock that you have/had to your family in terms of its well being and food security (PROPORTIONAL PILING).
  - b. Please indicate the relative importance of the different species of livestock that you have/had to your family in terms of cash income (PROPORTIONAL PILING).
  - c. What animal products do men sell? What do women sell? When is there a conflict between who can sell what?
4. What are the differences between the Balooch and Pashtun of Registan?
  - a. Animal husbandry (species kept, movements, resources used, etc)
  - b. Do the Balooch and Pashtun have different rights to land and water?
  - c. Why do some people have land while others don't in Registan? Is this a difference between the Balooch and Pashtun?
4. Disease (each species, camps and in Registan) – PROPORTIONAL PILING
  - a. What are the diseases by species?
  - b. For each species, please indicate the relative importance of the diseases you have mentioned in terms of the overall wellbeing of your family (camps and in Registan).
  - c. Develop disease lexicon (Pashtun and Balooch).
5. Veterinary Service Availability (traditional, primary, formal)
  - a. What do people in the camps do if they have a sick animal? Who do they call?
  - b. What kinds of veterinarians are available to people in the camps? – PROPORTIONAL PILING
  - c. What did people do if they had sick animals in Registan? Who did they call?
  - d. What kinds of veterinary services were available in Registan? – PROPORTIONAL PILING
  - e. Were there ever any BVWs in Registan? Who were they?
6. How can one measure the health/goodness/quality of a pasture (grasses, soils, trees, animals, erosion, carrying capacity, animal performance, etc)?
  - a. How can a pasture reach a state of being overgrazed?
  - b. What does an overgrazed grass look like?
  - c. What are the impacts of herds of animals on soil?
  - d. What has caused the degradation of pastures in Registan? How can we monitor for the improvements that should occur with better management?

**APPENDIX II – JOST PROGRAM**

<b>Day</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Activity</b>
15 April (Thu)	Travel Delhi - Kabul Kabul	– Meeting with Stephanie Koenen and Rezaul Hassan, CORDAID
16 April (Fri)	Kabul	– Planning and preparation
17 April (Sat)	Travel Kabul - Kandahar Kandahar	– Meeting with Piet Tesselaar and Stephen Maynard, CORDAID – Introductory visit to VARA
18 April (Sun)	Kandahar	– Introductory visit to Kuchi Shura, 10:00 – Visit to Zharia Dasht IDP camp, two focus group interviews Nomadic Kuchi women, 11:00 – Meeting William Hall (manager) and Kristina (range scientist), CADG, 5:00
19 April (Mon)	Kandahar	– Focus group meeting with Panjwaj Maingar IDP camp Balooch women, 9:30 – 2:30
20 April (Tue)	Kandahar	– Two focus group interviews Kandahar Nomadic Kuchi women – Meeting VARA BVWs, 2-4:00 – Meeting Dr. Niamatalla Parganase, Poultry Director VARA, 4:00
21 April (Wed)	Kandahar	– Meeting Dr. Niamatalla Parganase, Poultry Director VARA, 9:00 – Kuchi Shura, focus group interview male elders, 10:00 – Focus group Baloochi women Toloqan Camp, 1-3:00 – Meeting Jeff Shannon, Interos Community Director, 3:30
22 April (Thu)	Kandahar	– Meeting Hadi Khan, Ministry of Refugees, 8:00 – Meeting Dr. Savali, Ministry of Agriculture Veterinary Department, 10:00 – Visit Khandahar Veterinary Clinic, 11:00 – Meeting Mr. Allaudin, FAO, 2:30 – Meeting Mr. Kamal, WFP, 4:00
23 April (Fri)	Kandahar	– Focus group Baloochi women Qalai Shamir Camp – Focus group Pashtun women Murshan Camp
24 April (Sat)	Kandahar	– Focus group Baloochi and Pashtun women Toloqan Camp
25 April (Sun)	Kandahar	– Key informant interview, Kandahar carpet merchants – Sharaf Uddin, PVT Spin Boldak VFU
26 April (Mon)	Travel Kandahar - Kabul	
27 April (Tue)	Kabul	– Meeting Jo Grace, Livelihoods Research Coordinator, AREU – Report Preparation
28 April (Wed)		- Report Preparation
29 Apr (Thu)	Travel Kabul - Delhi	