

**Deutsche Welthungerhilfe (DWHH)**  
**GAA**  
**On behalf of Evaluation Department**

# **Evaluation Report**

**Country:** Afghanistan

**Project title:** Improving the livelihood of the rural population of Saripul Province, east of Sangcharak, Gosfandi District, Afghanistan

**Project number:** AS 1298 / AFG 1075-05

**Allocation amount:** 611.111 €

**Project holder:** Deutsche Welthungerhilfe – German Agro Action

**Project duration:** 01.11.2005 – 31.10.2006



**Dipl.-Ing. Peter. W. Wicke**

**38302 Wolfenbüttel**

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# **1 Summary of the main results and conclusions including an assessment of following aspects**

## **1.1 General Remarks**

The Project AFG 1075 is dealing with the

- Implementation of potable water supply by means of drilled wells that are equipped with hand pumps, inside 27 villages of Gosfandi district, Saripul province, North-Afghanistan;
- Parallel process of health and hygiene education within the same villages;
- Training measures for Operation & Maintenance of the installed wells to ensure sustainability

The Project doesn't pretend to arrange for an integrated rural development, rather to procure an improvement of livelihood of the target people through better access to safe water and more adequate hygienic living conditions in their households, given the limited project implementation time schedule of one year.

## **1.2 Project holder analysis**

### **a) Personnel**

The DWHH (GAA) team is composed of (compare organizational chart):

- Project manager, whose activities include 3 projects in total: DWHH AFG 1075 (ECHO-financed); DWHH AFG 1077 (EC-financed); DWHH AFG 1091 (ECHO-financed)
- Administration / Logistics department; with 1 office manager & 1 accountant plus support people (2 drivers, 8 watchmen, 2 cleaners); shared among the three projects
- Technical - engineering department (5 engineers in total); AFG 1075
- Social – health department (including Gender Unit; 5 persons in total); AFG 1075
  
- 3 drilling companies – contracted on the basis of locally organised public tendering procedures (with a total of 10 available Russian made drill-equipments and 45 persons), including technical supervisors, drilling masters, drilling workers, drivers and other technical personnel

### **b) Logistics and supply**

The above mentioned 3 DWHH (GAA) projects use office facilities (rented house compounds) on three levels: Saripul; Tukzar and Gosfandi that are equipped with

- general office equipment (2 computers, 3 printers, 1 photo copying machine)
- VHF-radios
- SW-Codan-radio system (1 base station and 7 mobile stations for local and regional communication)
- kitchen
- guesthouses
- 8 vehicles altogether, only 2 out of which belong to DWHH (GAA) 1075
- other, minor workshop facilities , mobile laboratory (with water quality test kits), drill hole control tools are also available

### **Judgement:**

The personnel, the equipment as well as the material supply are in total accordance with the needs of the project development, considering difficult and extended logistical operations as well as construction site supplies.

In addition it has to be mentioned that most of the consumption material is purchased locally in order to support the local market facilities.

## **1.3 Analysis of situation and target group**

The area of intervention covers a small part of the province Saripul, i.e. an eastern part of roughly 15x30km extension of the Sangcharak district. The project sites – well points - are located wherever there is relatively guaranteed security and sufficient access.

The targeted people belong to different ethnical groups such as Usbeks, Pashtuns, Tajiks, Aymaks, Hazara and linguistically they communicate in the Dari-language (of Persian origin). There exist cultural as well as economical ties to neighbouring former Soviet Republics (Turkmenistan,

Uzbekistan and Tajikistan) plus Iran. During civil war times many people fled to those neighbouring countries from where they returned recently in huge numbers, but some persons are still abroad and support their home families with money sent back home.

The target people correspond to

- over 15000 families (> 100.000 persons) in 27 locations (dispersed in about 100 smaller villages / hamlets) and live/work in
- 4 “pronounced” river catchments plus 2 isolated areas of Gosfandi district (one of these project sites is remotely located and close to the district frontier, but attended by the project because of the road “access” through Gosfandi); the total intervention area covers roughly 450 km<sup>2</sup> (a north-southern strip of 15 by 30 km; Gosfandi East)

The target population live on the basis of traditionally well established small agriculture / horticulture (on irrigated plots – with *traditional* management) and animal husbandry; many of them are just struggling for survival. Demographic explosion takes place on an alarming scale, so the pressure on the available land is high. There are many returnees (coming back from the “paradise Iran”) who have been re-integrated into their “homes” and they contribute to even higher “pressure”. Each traditional house compound absorb up to 28 persons (3 or 4 families). Ex-ante-project Water & Sanitation facilities were deplorable, but now at least the drinking water supply has improved significantly through the project intervention. Many necessities have still to be attended to, especially in the small scale agriculture & animal husbandry sector.

The selection of beneficiary groups depends on certain conditions:

*For the placement of well construction*

- highest priority for villages in case there doesn't exist any wells (this depending on former NGO interventions)
- respecting a minimum of 75-100 families per well, i.e. about 30 – 40 house-compounds per well
- degree of poverty – remote locations being preferred
- protection of wells against animal access – avoidance of contamination (considering hygiene aspects)

*With regard to the gender issue*

- female vulnerability is taken into account; especially considering the returnees in the area.

A precondition for the start of all planned activities is that questions like landownership, access to the newly established wells and problems of water distribution are settled with the elders, the village representative and the water authority person (“mirab”). Also it has to be mentioned that operating/maintenance personnel (to be trained) must be available in order to guarantee the functioning of the facilities in the future.

The following requirements have to be fulfilled by the beneficiaries:

- guaranteed free access to the well
- agreement on community participation (small scale local material supply, several bags of cement)
- commitment for fees to be collected (in the case of pump breakdowns) for future maintenance and repair (each individual well point needing special attention since there is no grid installation)

The project sites selected up-to now are located in distances no farther than 3 hours drive from the logistical bases because of the sometimes unstable security situation and also because of the precarious state of roads and bridges. There is a need to intervene in sites situated farther away, too.

Until recently the projects have been attended to in a more physical and technical manner, mostly addressing the male villagers. Because the water handling and other parts of the water management is the duty of the female villagers, it was necessary to enter into a gender-related component not only concentrating on physical achievements. By posting a gender consultant accompanying the program, DWHH (GAA) established an additional line which considers community involvement on the whole.

**Judgement:** The selected villages correspond to actual intervention needs and comply with target people expectations.

## 1.4 Analysis and assessment of project preparation

On the basis of a fact-finding mission (composed of DWHH professionals from Mazar-i-Sharif,) the project Proposal was prepared in early 2005 and submitted to ECHO, Kabul office and a parallel proposal (Projektvorlage) was presented to DWHH (GAA)'s head office in Germany. This was accepted by both, DWHH (GAA) and ECHO, considering the budget sharing in a relation of 10% (DWHH (GAA)) and 90% (ECHO).

**Judgement:** The project preparation was mainly in line with local intervention requirements and the outcome at the end of the year 2006. However, there was a certain disparity in the well-site selection from the beginning, since DWHH (GAA) 1075 was concentrating its efforts on the Sangcharak river basin whereas in another parallel catchment-area, i.e. that of Sayade only a very small number of wells was considered although that river basin presents even more necessities for intervention. This place Sayade is a little away from Gosfandi, thus influences in logistics. Another detail relates to a village (with around 100 families), called Aabdara which was initially included in the program but has no road access, neither for DWHH (GAA)'s project team members nor for well drilling people (with their big machines). This place was left out of the project intervention, although a socio-economic assessment of the village had been already prepared by some local agents (community health workers). From the beginning focus lay not only on physical achievements but also on accompanying measures, these being totally justified:

- *Health / hygiene education through educators / facilitators*; this not having been possible to complete within the given time period (1 year) the process is “on-going” and the area still covered with health education measures, too, through additional ECHO funded projects.
- *Training of local O&M personnel (mechanics) for sustainability of drilled wells*; this is - on a minor scale: “on-going” by multiplication

## 1.5 Analysis and assessment of planning /project planning matrix

The Project Planning Matrix is hierarchically defined by an Overall Goal, Specific objectives and related expected results plus indicators, and the activities. The project is focussed on a one year-stand and two tier project intervention approach (water / hygiene – health education) rather than on multiple development schemes.

The project aims at *Contributing to the Improvement of livelihoods of the rural population in Saripul Province, Northern Afghanistan*, with the self imposed option for quick accomplishment – within 12 month. *Remarks:* Considering the extremely difficult overall circumstances in which the target people live (remote area, poor resources) and the given tight project time-schedule, it is to the credit of DWHH (GAA)'s management & project staff that this “goal” was achieved – but just rendering a contribution and **not claiming an overall improvement** of the socio-economic picture.

*Operational Specific Objectives:*

- Availability and quality of drinking water in Gosfandi area is increased
- Health status of target population has improved through thorough hygienic education
- Sustainability is reached for the implemented drinking water supplies

*Assumptions:* The security situation in project area has stabilised; there is a decreased danger of prolonged draught period in the project zone; access to the project region is guaranteed; political frame work conditions have improved

Results	Indicators	Sources - verification
Improved access to good quality water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 160 wells established (later reduced: 144x – drilled wells; as was explained)</li> <li>● 90 % of people are satisfied</li> <li>● 75 families per well</li> <li>● 10% - min. – reduction of water related diseases</li> </ul>	Project documents; supervision reports; accountancy data; Documented interviews with target group; Registers on regional / district levels - involvement of MRRD
Changed behaviour related to use of higher quality drinking water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 50% of target people educated</li> <li>● 80% of better water supply demand: covered</li> </ul>	Follow-up monitoring through Health service (documented:

and improved health / hygiene conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 25% of people apply better hygienic habits</li> </ul>	clinic / PHD); Reports from CHW / CHC
Water committees established - functionally servicing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 28 committees operating</li> <li>• 80% of people participating</li> </ul>	Existence of functional O&M personal – control with village authorities

#### Activities:

- well point assessments in detail
- establishment of technical designs for the wells
- elaboration of time schedules
- tendering, selection – contracting of local well drilling companies – execution of works (including material supply)
- on-the-job training of holder’s local technical staff (through supervision / controlling / monitoring)
- health / hygiene education for target group
- creation of O&M services / establishment of water committees

### 1.6 Analysis and assessment of project implementation

After twelve months a number of 139 wells have been handed over to the concerned communities. Due to the conditions (depth of water level, geological strata) the number of machine-drilled wells had to be higher than foreseen while in the regions where the program was carried out until now there was a lower number of hand-dug wells required/possible than planned.

The provision of 139 wells means access to safe and permanently available water to approximately 100000 people (it has even to be considered that a higher number of people will benefit in the wake of future refugee returnees).

The proportions for the numbers of new machine-drilled / older hand-dug wells to provide for, were based on experiences in the areas that DWHH (DWHH (GAA)) and other NGO have been working until now. There are variations due to special ethnic conditions in the surroundings of different wells. The proportions between the numbers of tube wells and hand-dug well (the latter being in decline; all of the new well installations have been made with drill equipments) are expected to change when the work is continued in the whole province.

The operational specific objective: *Provision of safe drinking water with wells plus improvement of health status of target people through raised awareness and practice of health & hygiene components;* was achieved under tough circumstances – timely, logistically and administratively.

The strategy to give remote target groups a chance for survival and development, i.e. to try to hold them back in their homelands sticks to the general project concept and fits into the country’s aim to offer perspectives for the marginalised population in such far away places. They should not enter into the already overcrowded big cities (Mazar-i-Sharif / Kabul).

The Project DWHH (GAA) AFG 1075 - Saripul had planned to provide an initial number of 160 drilled or hand dug shallow wells over a period of 12 months. This number however was turned down to 139 (144 holes – 5 without tube equipment because of non-existent water) because only drilled well installations have been realised, these being more expensive than hand dug wells.

#### Degree of fulfilment / results - Judgement

It can be taken for granted that the promoted drinking water supply measures are now covering most of the necessities in the project area – presenting a kind of **success story**, also considering the many parallel interventions of DWHH (GAA) and NSP. But, what is still needed is a “deeper” health / hygiene education process, and this requires in the near future - as a next step - good co-ordination with the local branches of the concerned ministries (Health / Education). On the Gosfandi level co-operation between DWHH (GAA)’s health staff and the Gosfandi clinic personal plus local health promoters already exists, and this needs continuity.

## 1.7 Impact with regard to development

*It is worth to point to the following Indicators, when talking about the project impact:*

- Obviously, the daily time needed to supply individual households with safe drinking water has decreased (through the provision of wells in relatively short distances from house compounds). The project has a deep impact on the target population and most people are very grateful and satisfied. The project intervention presents a sort of confidence promotion among the concerned villagers.
- There is an improved knowledge about hygiene, water borne diseases; water borne diseases have decreased on a significant percentage – this having contributed to a slightly better health situation; but deeper education procedures are still needed. In any case, people state an improvement of hygienic conditions.
- Operation and Maintenance (O & M) service for the installed hand-pumps in wells is guaranteed (by more than 95%) through the trained mechanics who attend on the basis of paid labour when contracted by the villagers in cases of technical trouble - actually, a transfer (multiplication) of technical knowledge is continuing to those remote places (5%) that still have problems. But they themselves approach to the trained mechanics (in order to contract them) of village-groups who are in line with O&M procedures.

For the *disease reduction indicator* however, there are no reliable sources of verification yet, since implementation of the 140 drilled drinking water wells were recently finished and no statistical data are available until now. But local MoPH representatives (from clinics) express readiness to supply such data soon.

## 1.8 Project management

There exist practically 3 levels of management:

- Saripul office with overall steering / controlling (but also handling the other ECHO/EU projects) supported by the Afghan Regional DWHH (GAA)-office in Kabul
- Gosfandi outpost (including health office) for intermediate control and supervision (plus education)
- Target villages for DWHH (GAA)'s direct intervention (3 main central river valley, 1 valley apart & 2 separate places) where site engineers (plus health educators, too) were steadily operating in close contact with entrepreneurs and beneficiaries.

The management structure is adequate and operational. This is reflected by the proper overall project outcome.

There was a continued exchange of information among DWHH (GAA) headquarters in Germany, Kabul office and Saripul; mostly by E-mail, but also through “Currier service” (finance documents – related). This internal communication also includes important decision-takings, such as selection of entrepreneurs (3 drilling companies) and the signing of contracts. In this latter context, however the project was “blamed” by MRRD-officials for not having been invited to the “selection-meetings” and subsequent contract signings. The evaluator shares the view of the project management and its pragmatically oriented approach (which was agreed with ECHO).

Internal Monitoring & participative Evaluation is reached pragmatically – trough continued control and supervision of the work places, registering of well related data (water quality analysis; monitoring of geological strata, depth, GWL etc.). A certain special feed-back by the beneficiaries is given through the total acceptance of well points and the related satisfaction about the project intervention.

The financial administration was in line with DWHH (GAA)'s standard computerised procedures (WinPACCS was applied). At the moment of the evaluation (per 16.11.06) a small amount of the budget was not spent.

## 1.9 Recommendations

Because of the limitation of intervention sectors (two tier approach: water & health) as well as the short implementation schedule, the following is still needed on an extended scale

- Follow-up in hygiene education – at least over 3 month time
- Follow-up monitoring of ongoing mechanic training (especially: Shekyar / Choghdan), this involving control missions of DWHH's still available engineers

*Further ideas for additional and future project interventions are related to*

- Follow-up in water & sanitation related promotion measures in remote places (distribution of microbiological filters; here it is imperative to reduce the still reigning weakness in the acceptance and correct use of filter applications through target households)
- Improvement of general small scale infrastructure (reservoirs as “buffer-stock”; canals; access roads; “watsan” facilities for DWHH (GAA)'s own out-posts)
- Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM) necessities in context with small scale rural household economy: improved irrigation plots in back-yards by means of intensification and better managed plant cultivation; starting with this task by means of local deep-inside-investigation
- Job creation – through paid “cheap labour” during next-stage project interventions
- Micro-regional Rural development (household small animal husbandry promotion / women implication: poultry / bee-keeping etc.)
- Integrated Economic Development (prospects)

## **1.10 General conclusions**

DWHH (GAA) has been managing (at least until the end of 2006) simultaneously three projects in the intervention area (AFG N° 1077, 1091,) that are dealing with a multitude of activities: water supply, small infrastructure, hygiene education, temporal job-creation; local and small scale institution strengthening.

In the neighbouring province Sheberghan an agricultural project financed with BMZ-funds has just started its implementation.

*Strategy for DWHH (GAA) in the Saripul Province – considering a time horizon from 01.012007 till 31.12.2009:*

Given the good standing and high reputation of DWHH (GAA) in Saripul Province it's worth to capitalise the co-operation experiences and maintain its presence and even more strengthen actions in Afghanistan's North with emphasis on fine tuning of already finished projects / taking follow-up measures for more sustainability / using a holistic approach instead of two-tier sector bound interventions (this is not sufficient: drinking water & health) / putting DWHH (GAA)'s strategy in line with Afghan official bodies – working with appropriate Afghan Ministries (Health, Education, Reconstruction & Rural Development, Agriculture & Animal Husbandry / Food, Irrigation & Water Resources Management) / putting emphasis on job creation – creating small enterprises – self employment – facilitating microfinance.

Continued intervention of DWHH (GAA) in (southern Saripul province) is particularly justified since this geographical zone of Afghanistan is considered “poppy-free”, where there is space for NGO activities and a socio-economically “sound” development.

Focus of intervention should be upon selected sub-areas of Saripul province, i.e. an assembly of villages that show “Success Stories”.

### *Issue of Special Attention: Gender*

Given the still reigning archaic / patriarchal structures & overall delicate picture of women's role in the Afghan society (i.e. total discrimination of females and non-existence of emancipation) it will not be easy to change the situation in the short run. Modest efforts for a better treatment of females in their families maybe considered in future DWHH (GAA)-projects within the context of diversified home/household economies such as small animal husbandry (rabbits, poultry), artisan manufacture and horticulture. Education is in this context the key for women's development in their society; the young girls already go to primary schools (learning to read / write and understanding their situation). Reconstruction of schools is still needed because many pupils (girls & boys) in the project intervention area use UNICEF tents as classrooms.

*More involvement of Local Players:*

Given the precarious and remote DWHH (GAA)-project intervention areas with rather rough living conditions in this part of Afghanistan (Provinces: Saripul / Sheberghan) it's worth thinking about some kind of reformation when "handling" DWHH (GAA)'s projects. There is considerable fluctuation among the expatriate staff (Europeans) although these have established – for instance - a small Saripul-based "Solidarity Community", living in "touch" with one another in house compounds in close neighbourhoods.

However, contracts for key expatriate project management personal should last only for around one year – leaving enough space for transition periods when they are being replaced. Locals on the other hand work more continuously but need steady supervision and assistance by DWHH (GAA) expatriates for capacity building purposes, related to both, improvement of technical skills and deepening the socially oriented education missions. Certain members of the international staff can act as back-up people on the basis of short-term missions. Special auditing / administration procedures can be monitored through DWHH (GAA)'s main Afghanistan Office in Kabul, allocating the Regional Directorate a more important role – taking the Netherland NGO DACAAR as an example - but not renouncing the semi-autonomous state of the decentralisedly operating projects.