Summary of findings:

a) a number of small-scale flood protection projects are being effectively carried out directly with local communities in Alingar, with minimal inputs from UNCHS Habitat.

b) the effects on local timber prices of the manufacture of windows and doors will, as expected, need to be closely monitored by UNCHS field staff, in order not to disrupt local supplies.

c) the system of producing essential building materials locally, and making use of funds on small-scale community projects, seems to be well accepted in the district.

Objectives

The mission was undertaken in order to:

a) monitor ongoing UNCHS-supported work on flood protection and improved access to remote villages in the Alingar area.

b) assess progress on a UNCHS-supported carpentry project for the production of windows and doors in Mehterlam.

c) monitor the second phase of concrete beam production in Surkhakan, Qarghai and the distribution of outputs to families in the area.

d) monitor school repairs in Mandrawar, funded from sales of beams produced under c) above.
Itinerary

The mission travelled to Mehterlam from Peshawar by public transport on 12th September, and proceeded onward via Badiabad to Alingar on 13th. They travelled to Qarghai on 14th September, and returned to Peshawar via Jalalabad on 15th September.

Bridge repairs in Alingar district

A number of bridges had been identified for repairs and flood-protection works during a previous mission to the area (see separate mission report dated July 1993). Under these small-scale projects, UNCHS was to provide cement and tools, with FFW inputs from WFP for labour.

Pule Alingar has been improved through the construction of some 300 metres of stone masonry walling along the approach to the bridge, as well as repairs to brickwork on the main spans (see attached photos).

The mission went on to see work on flood-protection close to a pedestrian footbridge in walling in Kanda. Work is under way on foundations for the 100 metres of walling, with some 12 metres of stone masonry completed. Discussions were held with the site supervisor about further flood-protection works.

Carpentry workshop in Mehterlam

The mission went on to visit the UNCHS-supported carpentry project producing windows for sale to those re-building in the area. The workshop has been set up in the local cinema close to the bazaar. 25 carpenters were employed on the project, with an additional 25 trainees working under their supervision. The standard of workmanship was high, and some 370 windows and 360 doors had been produced on the site to date.

Given the difficulties of storage, it was agreed that distribution of the outputs (which had been agreed with and certified by the shura) should begin on 14.9.93. A total of 616 beneficiaries had been identified in the district, and 100 pairs were distributed during the visit of the mission.

The effect on local timber prices of this type of manufacture will, in future, need to be monitored if local supplies are not to be unduly disrupted. While it might be possible that the knowledge of a UN-supported project in the district has encouraged the rise in prices, costs were fixed at the start of the subcontract with local suppliers. If bazaar prices rise excessively due to such projects, those re-building in the area might suffer, reducing the beneficial effect of the approach.
VIEW OF ALENGAR BRIDGE BEFORE REPAIRING

SHOWING ALENGAR BRIDGE AFTER REPAIRING
A view of the house used concrete beams belongs to Sayed Hason in Karem Abad Village

Shows spacing of beams with two row of fired brick under beams for bearing load
Concrete beam production in Qarghai

The second phase of production on the site at Surkhakan aims to manufacture 4,260 beams for distribution to those re-building their homes locally. Some 2,100 beams had been produced, and material for the remainder had been delivered to the site. 551 beams had been distributed in accordance with lists agreed with the shura.

The subcontractor also has responsibilities for advising beneficiary families in the use of the beams, and four homes built using the beams were visited by the mission. Most house-builders had used fired bricks for bearing under the beams, and the spacing was felt to be satisfactory. Both timber boards and, in a few cases, reeds had been used for the secondary supports above the beams.

Mandrawar school

Repairs to the damaged Mandrawar school in Qarghai had been identified as a priority for funds raised from the sales of beams under the first phase of beam production in Qarghai. It had been agreed with the shura that the building should be reconstructed with mud bricks, using concrete beams from the production site. Two thirds of the walling is complete, and lintels laid for windows and doors. The project is expected to be complete before the winter.