ACBAR
Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief

REPORT ON A MISSION TO KABUL

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REPORT ON A MISSION TO KABUL CITY

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- Dr. Ahmad Shah GAF member
- Eng. A. Ghafar ARR member

BACKGROUND:

Outbreak of Cholera and some acute Gastro Enteritis cases in Kabul and some northern and north-western provinces such as Mazar-i-Sharif, Ghor, Herat, Kandahar, Pul-i-Khumri was officially announced by the Ministry of Public Health (MOPH) -Afghanistan in mid-summer of the current year. The MOPH made an appeal to the world community, the UN and the Peshawar based national and international organizations to assist them in treatment and control of the diseases. Some agencies replied to the appeal very quickly and positively. WHO, UNICEF and some other organizations started their assistance. Chlorine was distributed to the people to be used. Seminars, to up-grade public awareness, were arranged by MOPH with the assistance of WHO. But most of the agencies were still confused as cholera was not officially confirmed by some of the Kabul based international agencies such as ICRC and MSF-France. WHO was the only source to confirm cholera.

In July of the current year, delegations of some agencies (including ACBAR) visited Kabul in order to sign protocol with the Kabul Government. During their stay in Kabul they found that the following might be the main causes for the outbreak and spread of diseases:

- non-availability of clean water for daily use
- accumulation of rabish and human waste in highly populated residential areas as well as in the crowded parts of the city.

This matter was raised in the Emergency Kabul Meeting held on 9 August in ACBAR. The delegations that had visited Kabul urged members to take some active steps in this regard. Therefore, it was agreed to form a team of experts in drinking water, construction, sanitation and logistics to conduct a quick survey of the problem in Kabul and report back to the next Kabul Coordination meeting to be held at the end of August. It was also agreed that a member of ACBAR Office should lead the team.
THE OBJECTIVES OF THE MISSION:

The main objectives of the mission were to -

a) contact the key offices in Kabul to collect information about the sources and existing facilities for the supply of drinking water,

b) contact the various offices about waste disposal and their present capacity for cleaning-up - and to identify the priority areas to be cleaned in the city,

c) visit the key sites in the city to make a real assessment of the situation.

PROVISION OF FACILITIES FOR THE JOURNEY -VEHICLE, FUEL, ACCOMMODATION AND OTHER EXPENSES:

A vehicle for 5 to 7 people was rented for Afs.65,000 per day (approximately Rs.1450 per day). The vehicle rent was accepted to be paid by CARE. Fuel expenses were provided by ACBAR. Pre-departure for Kabul, the Swedish Committee was contacted to accommodate the team members in their Guest House during stay in Kabul. The team was given a letter to the person in-charge of the guest house. Other expenses of the team members were accepted by each participant agency.

During stay in Kabul the team was well looked after by the SCA representative in-charge of the SCA Guest House. Their assistance and help was appreciated by the team members.

ROAD CONDITIONS AND SECURITY TO KABUL:

The journey started at 6:00 am, Saturday, 14 August from ACBAR Office. It took two hours to Toorkham. Since it was the Independence Day of Pakistan and the Flag Ceremony was about to take place, the border was closed temporarily. After half an hour the ceremony was finished and vehicles were allowed to cross the line. Since our vehicle did not have cross border permit it was not allowed to cross immediately but after negotiations the problem was solved.

The team arrived in Jalalabad at around 10 am and without any stop continued for lunch to Sorobi. Crossing Surkhakan area the vehicle had a flat tire. It was replaced by the spare one in a few minutes.

There were three checkposts; Naser's, Zaman's and Shariaty's charging transportation vehicles. Since ours was a private Pajero, it was not bothered. Some more posts were up to Sorobi but they were not charging vehicles.

The team reached Sorobi around 1:00 pm and had lunch and afternoon prayer there. Passing Mahipar, the team arrived Kabul City at about 4:30 pm. and went straight to the SCA Guest House in Shahr-i-Naw.

The road from Jalalabad to Mahipar was in a bad condition (physically).
KABUL CITY:

On the way into Microryans, it was noted that the city was crowded as any other city outside Afghanistan. The atmosphere was normal and people were returning homes from their businesses and jobs. A lot of buses, taxies and private cars in the streets and the vehicle was often stopped because of traffic.

No security incidents were seen in the city during the stay. Occasionally sporadic firing was heard in parts of the city. Most of the shops and business centers were open until 6:00 pm and in Shahr-i-Naw the shops were open even up to 9:00.

The markets were full of goods. Food items were available everywhere in the markets. At the beginning we were a little cautious about food consumption, especially, fruit. But later on it was understood that there were no problems and we were able to eat the melons and grapes. It was the beginning of the season for the two excellent products where Afghanistan has some of the best varieties in the world.

AT THE ACTUAL BUSINESS:

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS:

The morning of 15 August, the team visited the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Director General for Economic Affairs, Mr. Hafizullah Ayoubi was given the letter prepared by ACBAR. He extended any cooperation to the team and appreciated the good will of the NGO community.

THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING:

Ministry of Planning was visited at 10 am, Sunday, 15 August. The Deputy Minister, Mr. Sultan Husain, and the Chief of Work and Social Affairs, Eng. Esmatullah, received the letter for the Minister of Planning. They were briefed about the objectives of the mission. Mr. Sultan Husain welcomed the plan of the NGOs and urged them for an effective contribution in this connection. Then, the letter was taken to the Minister and an appointment was made for the next day to visit Minister of Planning.

Eng. Esmatullah, as the regulator for contacts with different concerned authorities, assigned one of the senior staff of the department to establish contact with different authorities. The Ministry of Planning was informed that the time of the team in Kabul will be very short, to arrange two important appointments with the Ministry of Rehabilitation of Rural Development and the Ministry of City Construction and Housing for the same day.

The next day a meeting had been arranged with the Minister of Planning Mr. Ali Jawed. When the team arrived to the office of the Minister, the Deputy Mr. Sultan Hussain and
heads of the most of the departments were present there. Although he was informed by the Deputy the first day but once again he was briefed about the objectives of the mission. Mr. Jawed extended his full cooperation to the completion of the assignments of the team.

The Minister of Planning urged the team to visit the south and south-western parts of the city controlled by Hezb-i-Wahdat, the group he belonged to. He assured any kind of security for the safety of the team. The team agreed to the request.

During the visit with both, the Minister of Planning and the Minister of Public Health, the Kabul TV team was present and the reports were transmitted through the Kabul Radio and Television.

MINISTRY OF REHAB. OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT:

At 11:00 am, Sunday, 15 August a meeting was held with the Minister of Rehabilitation of Rural Development (MRRD), Mr. Sayed Is-haaq Gawhary. The deputies and heads of some concerned departments also attended the meeting. They were briefed about the aims of the mission. The Minister and his colleagues warmly welcomed the team.

The Ministry has dug some shallow wells in different parts of Kabul City and has installed some hand pumps. They were requested to provided information on their activities regarding water supply and the facilities they have at this time. Mr. Gawhary said that they were short of money and the required equipment. The equipment they used for digging wells has been mostly looted during the last one and half year and much of what's left are out of use because of missing parts. He said that since eight months the water supply system in Kabul has been paralysed. Khair Khana, Microryans plus areas with mutly stories apartment complexes and the center of the city are the most populated areas. Only Khair Khana has a population of over a million. The old city, south and west of Kabul are also problem areas. In addition to the above-mentioned places, Bagramy, Chaar Aasyab and Deh Sabz are also areas with a big population.

The MRRD said that they have dug 4 half-deep wells in Pul-i-Khishiti Mosque, Khair Khana, Leprocy and Malalay Hospitals with the assistance of MSF-France. The Ministry also chlorinated 6,000 shallow wells. It was stated that there is enough man power with the Ministry. Hundreds of requests are from the community asking to dig wells for them. It was also stated that the non-availability of electricity has added to the size of the problem. At the end of the meeting when the MRRD was asked about their urgent needs to make their programs operational, they submitted a list which will be added to the end of this report.
After ending the meeting with the MRRD authorities, the team had the second appointment with the Deputy Minister of City Construction and Housing (MCCH), Eng. Mohammad Salem Karimi. Eng. Karimi spared enough time to discuss the problem and highlighted the operations of the Water Supply Department.

The water supply system was established in Kabul in 1923. Unfortunately, none of the previous governments paid attention to the expansion and improvement of the system. He added that the full output of the system before destruction was 86,000 cubic meter to supply 800 to 900 thousand people with drinking water. The present population of Kabul city is over 2 millions and the need of clean water is estimated at 225,000 cubic meters. However, present output at the maximum is 10,000 cubic meter provided electricity is available.

Eng. Karimi stated that there are four main water supply zones for Kabul City:

a) The Logar River Zone with the capacity of 34,000 cubic meter per day providing water for Bagramy, Shewaki, Noor Mohd Shah Mena, Rahman Mena and the old Microryans. It was expected to re-operate (for the time being) the project with the capacity of 10,000 cubic meter per day.

b) Alauddin Zone with the capacity of 32,000 cubic meter providing water to the south parts of the city including Karte Seh, Karte Chaar, Dehmazang and Jamal Mena. This system was assisted by the Government of Japan.

c) Qargha Zone with the capacity of 5,000 cubic meter providing water for western parts of the city including Bagh-i-Bala and Karta-i-Mamorin.

d) Fazel Baik Zone with the capacity of 12,000 cubic meter also providing drinking water for western parts of the city.

In addition to the four zonal systems, there were about 30 deep wells providing water to some areas, not covered under the zonal program.

Eng. Karimi said that lack of spare parts and electricity are the main problems for re-activation of the water supply systems. He added that in the last years, the Water Supply Department had enough tools and equipment. Although the Department did not receive any outside assistance for the last 14 years and if it was not looted and destroyed, the Department was in position to run the program for 10 years more.
The Deputy of MCCH mentioned that at present all of the drinking water is supplied from shallow wells (one to two meters deep) which is the main cause for cholera and other intestinal diseases. He said that, as a member of a mission, he had gone to Islamabad sometime ago. The mission was going to talk to the UN officials about their assistance to the Afghan Government in different sectors. According to him drinking water supply was not included in the UN programs at all.

Eng. Karimi added that cleaning of Microryans plus other multi stories apartment buildings is the task of this Ministry. But at present there is severe lack of equipment and shortage of fuel to run the existing vehicles. He said that in addition to financial assistance the Ministry needs technical assistance, including the literature, too. Hand pumps is one of the urgent needs of the MCCH. The Deputy Minister of MCCH said that they have enough man-power in hand. According to the estimation of the Ministry, the amount of fuel needed for the cleaning of areas under their responsibility, amounts to 120,000 to 150,000 liters. Some 200 shovels are also needed for the program. Chlorine is also a need.

When the MCCH was asked about the present capacity of their operations, they replied that they have only 2 functional trucks. If fuel is available, the number could be increased to 5 trucks. It was added that there are 8,000 family apartments and the daily disposal is 100 cubic meter. If 3 cubic meters disposal is carried in a truck, 30 to 35 trucks are needed to remove the daily disposal. The waste is taken to Chamtala, north of the city, which is about 17 kms from the Old Microryans.

The Deputy Minister of the MCCH mentioned that if the waste are not cleaned and piled on the ground in residential areas, in the long run the under ground water will be polluted in a way where there will be no chance to clean it. He said that at present the under ground water in Afghanistan is the cleanest in the world.

It was mentioned that Kabul River is a big source of pollution. Most of the vegetables sold in Kabul markets are washed in this river. In some places children swim in the shallow stream of the river.

The other deputy Haji Karim was also present in part of the meeting.

MINISTRY OF PUBLIC HEALTH:

The mission was received by Dr. Sayed Mohammad Amin Fatimi, Minister of Public Health at 9:00 am, Monday, 16 August in his office. He warmly welcomed the mission. There was a seminar, to be inaugurated by the Minister, at the conference room of the Ministry at the same time. Dr.
Fatimi requested the team to take part in inauguration of the seminar. The seminar was for Women's Association to upgrade public awareness against problems such as cholera. So far 10 seminars have been conducted.

After the inauguration of the seminar, Dr. Fatimi spared time to discuss the problems with the mission. Dr. Fatimi said that a large amount of waste is collecting on the streets in Kabul City daily which is the main cause for the outspread of cholera and other diseases. Destruction of drinking water systems and provision of water from surface wells is another reason for the spread of diseases. Dr. Fatimi said that the last floods in the city also added to the dimension of the problem.

Rate of mortality during the period of the problem was stated as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date Range</th>
<th>Number of Cases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20 June - 22 July</td>
<td>67 cases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 July - 28 July</td>
<td>32 &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 July - 3 August</td>
<td>13 &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 August - 11 August</td>
<td>15 &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 August - 14 August</td>
<td>6 &quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

He said that from 20 June to... the observation in Kabul was:

- Total cases registered: 15,304
- Total samples examined for cholera: 4,156
- Total samples cholera positive: 1,519
- Total mortality cases: 132

Reports about the provinces are not fixed but so far 6,245 cases have been reported from Badakhshan, Baghlan, Balkh, Herat, Kunduz, Kandahar, Takhar, Sorobi and Nijrab. The mortality cases were 397.

At present all of the provinces are under control and there is a decrease in the number of mortalities. The problem is in its descending stage. Since most of the cases have a slow spread and does not show severe symptoms, the supervision from the patients is not done carefully, therefore, the endemy of the disease in the future is expected and the disease may re-appear.

Rehydration, sanitation, chlorination and the propagation of health education are the main parts of the tasks of this Ministry. The logistic of the next years is one of the controlling principles of the next years. The total number of wells chlorinated is 50,000 and the amount of chlorine distributed was 200 barrels 65 kg each. Some 700,000 O.R.S. has been distributed.

Absence of a secure place for slaughter of animals and keeping Kabul River in uncleaned conditions are some other factors caused propagation of some diseases in Kabul. He said, when it was examined, the water coming through the
pipelines also showed cholera positive. It means that the piping system has been damaged in some parts allows infiltration of dirt into the system. Dr. Fatimi added that there are around 100,000 shallow wells in Kabul City where half of them have been covered since 20 June 93. According to him, DACAAR promised to supply one million bags of chlorine where only 6,000 were received.

The Minister of Public Health once again made an appeal to the international community to assist in sanitation and cleaning of Kabul City. However, the next day he announced on the TV that campaign against cholera will be completed by Mid September.

During the meeting with the Minister of Public Health, the Deputy, Dr. Kadkar and the Head of the External Affairs Department were also present.

KABUL MUNICIPALITY:

In the afternoon of the same day, 16 August, the schedule was to met the Deputy of Kabul Mayor for Technical Affairs, Eng. Mohd Jan Sadeq. The Kabul Municipality is responsible for cleaning activities in the city. The Head of Sanitation Department and the Deputy for Planning were also present in the meeting. They were very happy to see the representatives of international missions coming to offer assistance.

After they were briefed about the aim of the mission, they were asked about the on-going plan for cleaning and the present capacity of their cleaning operations. They said that, unfortunately, the tools, equipment and budget needed for the Municipality are just above the Zero level. The Municipality Authorities said that around 1,600 cubic meters solid waste is coming out from the houses in Kabul City. If the fuel is available the Municipality will be able to remove only 315 cubic of it. The remaining is piled over from day to day. Previously, there were 100 trucks were at work to clean the city but now only one quarter are operating. The Municipality promised if fuel and some other essential things such as battery and tires are supplied half of the vehicles will be made operational. The need to make 50 trucks operational and clean the disposal in first round was indicated 1,000 liters diesel and 2,000 liters petrol. Lack of electricity was counted a major problem for the implementation of programs. Hand tools such as shovels and wheel barrows were also requested. A complete list of some urgent needs is attached.

The Municipality used to have around 10 tankers to clean the septic wells (used for toilets) but only 4 are operational (provided the fuel is available).

Drinking water supply to the parts of the city where no piping system is existing is also the task of Municipality.
This section used to have 13 tankers but only one is now in hand of the program.

The Municipality said that they have around 1,200 cleaning staff which could be used for cleaning. It will be more effective if they are given an amount in kind or cash to compensate the gap existing between their regular payment and their expenditure. They said to speed-up the cleaning operation after office hours work could be planned. The Municipality can manage up to 600 personnel/day. MSF-France has been paying Afs.1,000 to 20 employees who are busy cleaning the toilets of the schools.

When Eng. Sadeq was asked about the priority areas to be taken under urgent consideration, he said that Khair Khana, especially the 40-lane area, Microryans & other multistories residential buildings, the Old City and center of the city are the priority areas.

A VISIT FROM THE SOUTH AND SOUTH-WESTERN PARTS OF THE CITY:

After the meeting with the Minister of Planning arrangements were made to see the Southern and South-western parts of Kabul City. This part of the city which includes Deh Mazang, Karte Chaar, Karte Seh, Jamal Mena (including Kabul University), Khoshal Khan Mena, Kote Sangi, Alauddin and Barchi are under Wahdat control and have been made abandoned to the regular citizens of the area for almost a year. With the assurance given by the Minister of Planning, the team was able to go to the far west (Barchi) and far South (Darul Aman) parts of the city. These areas had the same problems felt in other parts of Kabul City. Observation from that part of the city was ended at around 6:30 pm.

A VISIT FROM OLD CITY:

The Old City was also part in the program. On the morning of Tuesday, 17 August, the Deputy Minister of Planning Mr. Khalil Mehdi contacted the Kabul Garrison to prepare facilities for the team to visit the Old City. A short visit of this part of the city was made. It was seen that life was returning to normality in Jada-i-Maiwand where half of the apartment buildings and half others were closed for the past one year. The streets were full of mud and bricks of destroyed buildings. An intensive operation is needed to clean the streets and lanes in order to prepare the area for the return of its citizens.

In the afternoon of the same day Khair Khana, the most populated part of the city was visited. It seemed that some kind of cleaning operation had been carried out in this area.
MSF, WFP, WHO AND UNICEF:

WFP, WHO, UNICEF and MSF-France were supposed to be visited on Wednesday, 18 August. Since the telephone numbers of these offices were not known it was first started with MSF-France. Arriving at the gate the Director along with some staff were about to leave for Paghman. They said that they will be back at the office for lunch so an appointment was made for 2:00 pm. But when the office was contacted at 2:00 there was no sign of the staff.

The second target was WFP. The team met with the acting officer in charge of the office. He provided information on their activities and participation in cleaning operations. WFP said that they will be very happy if see some experienced NGOs from Peshawar take part in operation and expressed their support to such NGOs. WFP has already given food assistance to the Kabul Municipality to be used for cleaning of the city.

The third and fourth offices were WHO and UNICEF to be visited but the offices in-charge were not available.

PACKING AND RETURN TO PESHAWAR:

At 5:00 morning 19 August the team had packed up and left for Peshawar. Passing Sorobi there were more posts and even individuals stopping vehicles for money. Our vehicle was also stopped by some individuals seemed to be temporary migrants from somewhere else. After they understood that the vehicle belongs to any agency and the passengers are people of different NGOs, it was allowed to go. The vehicles had flat tire twice on the way.
PRIORITY NEEDS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:
- The main problem and cause of the disease is lack of clean drinking water in the whole city. The daily used water is supplied from the shallow wells of 1 - 10 meters deep. Therefore it is recommended to:

i) Provide covers and hand pumps for those not covered. According to the statistics of MOPH 50,000 out of 100,000 wells were covered and chlorinated up to 20 June 93.

ii) Supply enough chlorine to chlorinate the wells not done in the first phase and have some enough amount to be used for the second and third round until the main zonal piping system is made functional. Even after that there will be a large number of the residents who will be using the wells dug under the emergency circumstances. Therefore, chlorination of these wells should be done from time to time.

iii) Consider the supply of some equipment for the Department of Water Supply, Ministry of City Construction and Housing, to re-activate the Zonal water supply systems.

- A program should be organized for cleaning up of the disposal and the human waste from the city. This could be done through the supply of the needs shown by the Kabul Municipality and the Ministry of City Construction and Housing. The other alternative is that the NGOs take responsibility of cleaning one or some parts of the city. In this case the existing man power and equipment could be hired.

In addition to the clearing of rubbish, removal of destroyed materials which block the streets and the surface canals, is also a priority. Otherwise, it might be destructive, especially, during the rainy season. One of the main causes of further heavy destruction during the last floods was the blockage of ditches and the canals channelling the flood streams to the river.

- Construction of some latrines in some parts of the city seems essential. Lack of this facility causes the city major problems with human waste. The central parts of the city, bazaars, and the Kabul River are very dirty in this regard. The locations and the future maintenance of the latrines could be discussed with the relevant authorities.

- The donor agencies are to be encouraged to support the Kabul authorities in rehabilitation of electricity and extension of piped water system to meet the need of the growing population in Kabul City.

- It is recommended that agencies should try to at least open their sub-offices in Kabul. The sub-office will provide better and easier understanding between the Government and the agency.
LIST OF THE URGENT NEEDS PREPARED
BY
KABUL MUNICIPALITY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.N.</th>
<th>NAME OF THE ITEM</th>
<th>AMOUNT</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>cleaning project</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Petrol oil</td>
<td>2000 liter/day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Diesel oil</td>
<td>1000 liter/day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Wheel borrow</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Shovel</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Kuland</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Battery</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Tire 20X900</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Wheat for 600 people</td>
<td>4,21 mt/day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>water supply</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Petrol oil for tankers</td>
<td>1000 liter/day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Battery 12 volt</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Digging of half-deep wells</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Tanker provision for water</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Darul-Aman Palace is one of the famous buildings of Kabul, partially destroyed during the last fighting.

Meeting of the team members with the Technical Assistant of Kabul Mayor at his office.
One of the garbages in Khair Khana Mena, and a group of children who are going to collect wooden and paper made materials to be used as fuel.

Rubbish has spilled out from one of the garbages in Microryon, a highly populated residential area in Kabul City.
Kabul River with its uncleaned shallow stream is used as a place for swimming (children) and washing of cloths and vegetables.

Out of 100 trucks used by Kabul Municipality, less than a quarter are operational now.