



Barakat Group: News & Events
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Barakat Company Ltd. signs agreement with AVIPA PLUS to supply and distribute 2,000 sets of tractors and implements for Afghanistan's major agricultural mechanization program.

Agriculture is the mainstay of Afghanistan's economy. It is the main source of national output and employment. 85% of Afghanistan's population of 30 million is directly dependent on agriculture.

Nearly a third of the people in Afghanistan are unable to get enough food to live active, healthy lives.

IRD is implementing the Afghanistan Vouchers for Increased Productive Agriculture (AVIPA) Plus project. AVIPA Plus is a U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) project aimed at increasing rural family farm production and productivity, as well as strengthening links between the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and its people.

Discussions in 2010 between the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL) USAID, and AVIPA Plus resulted in an agreement to undertake an agricultural mechanization program targeting "middle farmers" with 1-25 hectares of cultivated land, producing more than they require for subsistence, and selling their surplus production in commercial markets. Accordingly, AVIPA Plus and the MAIL agreed to undertake an extensive agricultural mechanization program by promoting two-wheel tractors and associated farm implements. The potential impacts of agricultural mechanization technologies on Afghan Agriculture would include more intensive cropping systems, better use of production inputs, reduced production costs, increased labor productivity, and improved market access.

As part of the above Program, AVIPA Plus signed a contract with **Barakat Company Ltd.** on the 19th of December 2010 to supply and sell 2,000 complete packages to the middle farmers throughout Afghanistan.

Under this program, by end of March 2011, Barakat Company would complete the below mentioned scope of work:

- Delivering 2,000 sets of two-wheel tractors and implements to four regional sales offices: (Western – Herat; Northern - Mazari Sharif; Northeastern – Kunduz; Central – Parwan/Kabul).
- Collecting co-payments from farmers and providing receipts for co-payments.
- Operating regional sales offices where IRD can inspect equipment, and farmers can collect their sets of tractors and implements.
- Providing warranties for one year, beginning when farmers take ownership of their tractors.
- Providing up to 15 local trainers at each regional training center. The trainers are employed by Barakat Company and receive initial training from IRD.
- Establishing training center(s) at the four regional sales offices. Approximately 500 farmers will be trained at each center to safely operate and maintain the two-wheel tractors and implements. Each training cycle will require five days. There will be no more than 20 farmers in each class. For each class, two class room trainers and four field trainers will be available.

- Training 80 mechanics, selected by IRD in target districts, how to repair two-wheel tractors and implements.
- Establishing repair services and a supply chain for spare parts that provide farmers and mechanics daily access to spare parts and repair services.

This farm mechanization program enables Afghan farmers to increase the productivity of their labor and land. The two-wheel tractors are expected to help farmers plant and harvest multiple crops per year, reduce labor required, and reduce production costs to generate more income for farmers.

While the tractors will significantly increase the ability of farmers to till land, the tractors also serve a variety of uses including drilling of seeds and fertilizers, reaping crops, threshing and transporting up to 1.5 tons in the accompanying trailer. These tractors can also be used for irrigation pumps, for flour mills and for electric generators.

Overall, this program will continue to make available 6,000 two wheel tractors and implements in eighteen key agricultural provinces.

This technology has already been used in China and other Asian countries bringing with it greater prosperity.

This Program will increase agricultural productivity, and by doing so, build a brighter future for the Afghan population.

