



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

MoU signed: Government of Netherlands to support the development phase of the National Agricultural Education Program

Afghanistan's government represented by their Excellencies Minister of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock, Mr. Mohammad Asif Rahimi, and Minister of Education, Dr. Farooq Wardak, and Netherlands ministries of Cooperation Development, and Agriculture, Nature and Food Security, represented by Mr. Gerda Verburg, Minister of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality of Netherlands signed an MoU on cooperation in the field of agricultural education, training and extension, on Saturday, 4th April, 2009, at the Government Media and Information Centre (GMIC).

Based on signed MoU, Government of The Netherlands has agreed to become lead donor in the field of agricultural education, training and extension by donating € 5.000.000 (five million Euros) to the inception phase until November 2010. On the basis of the plans developed during the inception phase, the Netherlands will commit additional contributions, to be confirmed in a follow-up MoU.

Activities by the signatories in the inception phase until November 2010 will include the development of the National Programme for Agriculture Education, formulation of a National Agricultural TVET policy document, development of a National Agriculture Education Centre (NAEC) in Kabul, comprising units for teacher training, curriculum development, applied research and documentation and staff training for the staffing and redevelopment of two regional institutes: a training centre near Kabul, and an agricultural school with training centre in Uruzgan.

After the inception phase, signatories plan to implement the multiannual National Programme for Agriculture Education in cooperation with other donors, redevelop the substantive and educational functions of two Regional Institutes as linking pins between the NAEC at the central level and the agricultural practice at province and district level, establish a centre near Kabul for practical training in small scale urban horticulture and establish an agricultural school with attached practical training centre in Uruzgan.

This MoU integrates earlier commitments in this field such as the letter of Cooperation between MoE and the Royal Netherlands Embassy of 8 January 2009, as well as the MoU on agriculture education in Kandahar between MoE, MAIL, MRRD and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) signed on 12 March 2009.

MAIL has included agricultural education, training and extension in the top priorities of its National Agriculture Development Program that is going through its finalization phase.