



Rebuilding Afghanistan

Weekly Activity Update for January 8 – January 20, 2004

Issue 43

United States Agency for International Development

EXPANDING EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

Program Goals

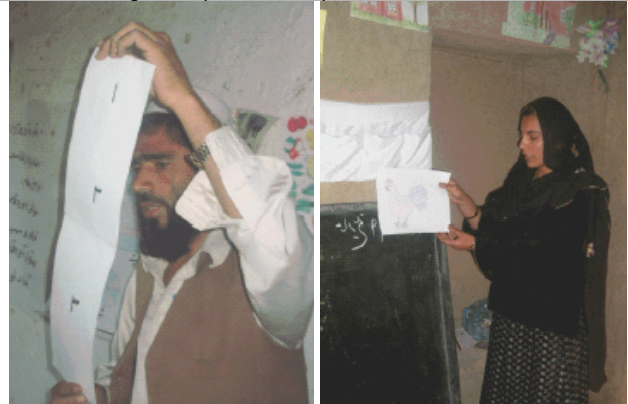
- 1,000 schools and at least 18 provincial women's centers rehabilitated or constructed.
- 10.2 million textbooks printed & distributed for 2003 school year
- 30,000 classroom teachers trained.
- 80,000 students enrolled in accelerated learning programs to reach their appropriate grade level.

Recent Progress

Afghanistan Primary Education Program (APEP) is a three-year USAID program designed to provide new schools for communities that demonstrate a commitment to education, training of teachers, textbooks, accelerated learning programs, and advisers to the Ministry of Education. APEP programs are underway in the Nangarhar, Faryab, Baghlan, and Kunduz provinces.

- **Accelerated Learning:** APEP is currently implementing an accelerated learning program designed to move a disproportionately large number of over-aged first-grade students into age-appropriate grades. The goal is to enhance retention of older students, especially older females, currently in lower grades, and to expand access to students who are not easily accommodated by existing public schools. Currently, 600 accelerated classes are operating with nearly 16,000 students enrolled, including 7,000 girls. Accelerated learning programs will be implemented in the following 14 provinces: Baghlan, Farah, Faryab, Ghazni, Kabul, Kandahar, Kapisa, Kunduz, Logar, Laghman, Nangarhar, Paktia, Paktika, and Parwan.
- **Training Mentors to Teach Accelerated Curricula in Nangarhar Province:** APEP is working to train mentors on skills needed to teach over-aged students a basic but accelerated education. The program equips mentors with modern, interactive, and student-centered teaching methods. As a result, 200 APEP trained mentors are teaching 5,000 over-aged students throughout Nangarhar province. To sustain the program, the newly trained mentors have created 108 village education committees that will manage their respective community-owned schools.
- **Student-Centered Learning:** Student-centered learning is a new concept for many in Afghanistan, including those who have received an education and are trained teachers. In typical Afghan classrooms rote learning and memorization are the norm. The teacher may often use corporal punishment and the content of the curriculum is often not relevant to the daily realities of children. Through the APEP mentor training program, teachers learn student-centered learning methods where the teaching atmosphere for students is friendly, welcoming, and encourages questions—allowing every student to express him/herself.

Recent Progress (continued):



APEP trained mentors teaching an accelerated learning classes



A student of an APEP trained teacher



Foundation and wall construction of a new school.

INCREASING ACCESS TO BASIC HEALTH CARE

Program Goals

- 400 health centers renovated or constructed in rural areas, providing services to an estimated 12 million people.
- 11 million beneficiaries assured improved access to basic services in 13 provinces; 4.4 million women and children given access to services through USAID's health care initiative grants.
- 3,400 new community health workers, 990 midwives, 6,000 clinic staff trained.
- Make safe water systems, iodized salt, contraceptives, mosquito nets and other health products available at reasonable prices using existing trading and marketing systems.
- Develop a public health education program with the Ministry of Public Health (MOPH); strengthen MOPH capacity at the national and provincial levels for guiding effective health care policy.

Recent Progress:

The USAID-funded REACH (Rural Expansion of Afghanistan's Community-Based Healthcare) program aims to improve the health of women of reproductive age and children under 5 years of age through increased use of basic health services in rural areas.

- **Health Management Information System (HMIS):** USAID worked in collaboration with the Ministry of Public Health to launch a unified information system for Afghanistan's health care system, allowing the Ministry of Public Health and Non-Government Organizations to respond to the needs of local Afghans in the various provinces.
- **HMIS Workshop:** A training of the trainers workshop was conducted in Kabul from December 21 – 25. Participants of the workshop came from 12 provinces, including Ministry of Public Health officials and trainers from 16 Non-Government Organizations (NGOs), of which 13 are receiving REACH grants to deliver a basic package of health services to rural Afghans. The workshop was integral to ensuring a common understanding of the purpose and use of the HMIS among both the Ministry of Public Health and its NGO partners. Upon completion of the workshop, the participants will conduct similar trainings for NGOs and Ministry of Public Health staff in their home provinces. This workshop will be repeated at least twice in order to cover all provinces in the country.

Recent Progress (continued):

- **HMIS Forms:** Participants of the workshop learned about the new design and content of health care forms that provide information about health care service provision in the community level clinics, as well as provincial hospitals. The forms have been adapted for the use of health workers at all levels, including the community health workers with limited literacy. The forms will enable the Ministry of Public Health to follow progress in the expansion of the basic package of health services that is the Ministry of Public Health's highest priority. In particular, the HMIS forms are intended to provide data for individual case management; to help health workers better manage, organize, and monitor their services and facilities in the community; and to provide data to NGO, provincial, and national program staff.



This model clinic under construction in Qala-e-Qazi is due for completion by the end of January 2004.

Note: Progress on the Afghanistan Ring Road is reported in USAID's Weekly Afghan Road Update.