



Rebuilding Afghanistan

Weekly Activity Update for July 24 – July 30, 2003

Issue 23

United States Agency for International Development

Strengthening the Government

Program Goals

- Support the Bonn process: the Constitutional, Human Rights, and Judicial Commissions; the June 2004 elections; and a free and independent media.
- Improve government access to revenue (e.g., customs).
- Build capacity to carry out other legitimate government functions and support; reconstruction of health, judicial, education, economic, agricultural and transportation infrastructure.

Recent Progress:

US advisors assisted the Afghan government in the following efforts:

- Issue a presidential decree in early July to introduce fundamental customs reforms. These reforms included: simplified clearance procedures; a harmonized system of codification and classification of goods for export and import; and adoption of customs clearance agents to reduce the number of individuals in and around customs houses to minimize the risk of corruption and tax evasion.
- Finalize and distribute a consolidated fee schedule for Central Bank services. Confidence in Central Bank services on the part of international organizations has been increasing as evidenced by UN requests to make more than 7,000 payments per month locally.

Revitalizing Agriculture/Creating Jobs

Program Goals

- 100% increase in average productivity for 500,000 farm families through improved technologies, better infrastructure, and access to markets.
- 615 irrigation projects repaired/constructed to increase water use efficiency by 50% and agricultural productivity by 20%.
- 1000 km of improved village feeder roads rehabilitated.
- 1000 village agricultural market centers built.

Recent Progress

Work continues on rehabilitation of major dams:

- Irrigation engineers completed a site assessment and cost estimate for the Shah Rawan intake and its irrigated area. This project will rehabilitate the 35-year old intake off the Amu Darya River and other structures within the 45,000 hectare irrigated area. The area grows sweet barley, melons, rice, vegetables, peaches, apricots, almonds, mulberries, and cotton. The infrastructure in the irrigated area would benefit greatly from some repair and increase agricultural production.
- A pre-bid meeting to repair the Zana Khan dam (see picture at right) was conducted on July 20th; bids are due on July 29th.



Zana Khan Dam gallery building will be repaired as part of a soon-to-be awarded contract.

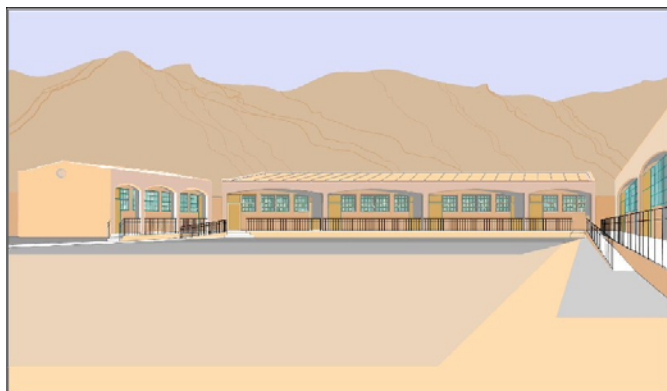
Expanding Educational Opportunity

Program Goals

- 1,000 schools rehabilitated or constructed
- 10 million textbooks printed and distributed for 2003 school year
- 30,000 classroom teachers trained
- 60,000 students enrolled in accelerated learning programs to reach their appropriate age level.

Recent Progress

- Construction contracts are about to be awarded for earthquake-resistant reinforced concrete schools after extensive coordination with the Ministry of Education (MOE) on design and specifications. Site assessments have been completed for 51 schools; MOE has approved 24 of these and 27 are pending.

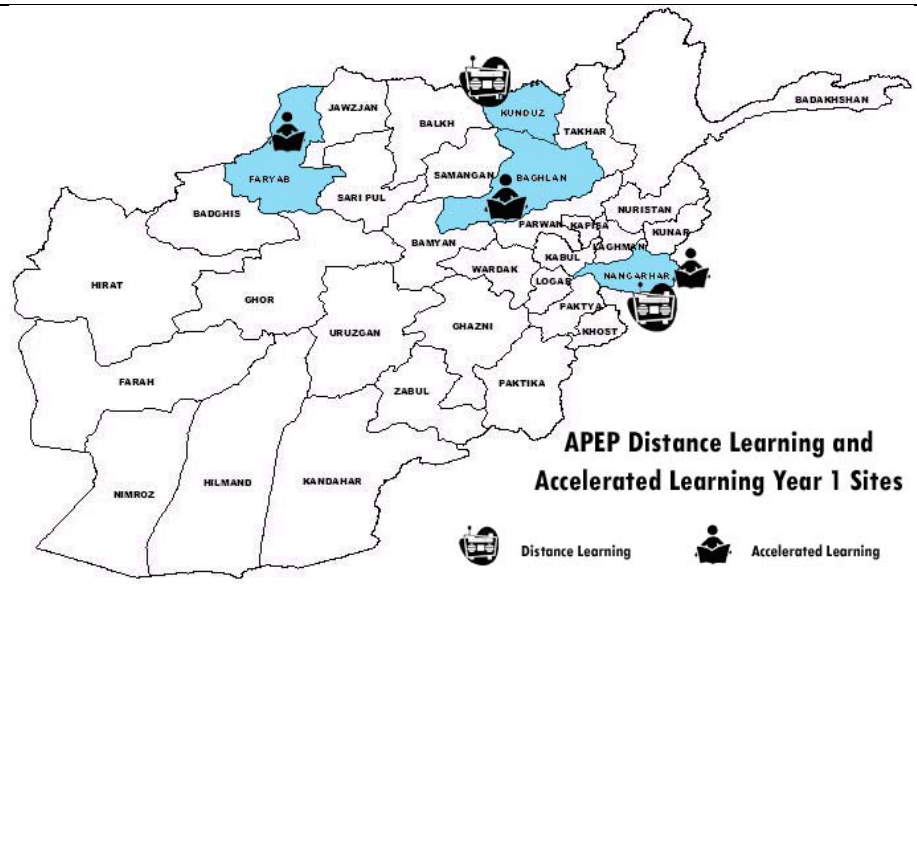


Pictured above is an earlier version of the model school design.

Expanding Educational Opportunity, Continued

Recent Progress

- Accelerated Learning Update:**
 Training of master trainers and provincial trainers is complete for Faryab province. These trainers will begin to instruct school teachers on methods for teaching overage students in accelerated learning programs. Training of trainers for accelerated learning programs in Baghlan and Nangarhar will begin in August.
- Teacher Training Update:**
 Teachers will be trained via a radio-based distance learning program. Programs to build awareness of this program are now airing to build listenership. - More than sixty scripts have been written and are being recorded in Dari and Pashtu. By September four distance learning programs will be aired in Dari and Pashtu.



Increasing Access to Basic Health Care

Program Goals

- 400 health centers renovated or constructed in rural areas
- 13 million women and children given access to basic health care through grants to NGOs to operate clinics
- 3,300 new community health workers, 180 midwives, 4860 clinic staff trained
- Make oral rehydration salts, iodized salt, contraceptives, mosquito nets, and other health products available at reasonable prices using existing trading and marketing system
- Develop public health education program with the Ministry of Health (MOH); strengthen MOH capacity at the national, provincial and district levels for guiding health care

Recent Progress

USAID is working with the Ministry of Health (MOH) to design and site health clinics:

- The final design of the earthquake-resistant reinforced concrete health center is being completed. Proposals from construction contractors will be received in the next week.
- A full-time assistant is now in place at MOH to assist with design and construction specifications. Training is now underway for MOH Construction Department in computer drafting and construction specifications.