



Rebuilding Afghanistan

Weekly Activity Update for August 7 – August 13, 2003

Issue 25

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:

This week marks the second week of streamlined customs procedures in Kabul, following the Presidential signing of the Customs Reform and Modernization Initiative and the Minister of Finance's directive to implement immediate improvements in Kabul Customs. Improvements include:

- A new entry processing unit and a new single Afghan Customs Coding Document (AACD) form;
- A simplified passenger processing system including a red door/green door system and a quick pay and release system for travelers carrying commercial goods;
- Improved processes that reduce the administrative steps to release goods from 18 to six steps.

In addition, the new systems and processes allow for greater monitoring of the customs exemption program, allowing the Ministry of Finance to make better policy decisions about who should be entitled to exemptions. This project in Kabul is a pilot which will provide the model for introducing a common national customs system in the provincial customs houses.

Development of independent Afghan media continues:

- Radio Khilid, the first radio station to broadcast live 24 hours/day, went on air this week. Radio Khilid is one of the first private-sector radio stations in Afghanistan to be granted a government broadcasting license. The station currently broadcasts 24 hours of music, but by late August will include segments featuring cultural information, chat shows, and news bulletins. USAID provides Radio Khilid with studio and transmission equipment, as well as training for the Afghan staff.

On July 22, 2003, USAID signed agreements with the Afghan Ministry of Communications to construct and/or renovate post offices in Kabul, Kunar, Bamiyan, and Parwan provinces. The post offices in Bamiyan, Kunar and Parwan will also provide a secure location for the USAID-supported Codan communication system, installed earlier this year to provide the public in all provinces with voice, fax, and email communications, at a fee.

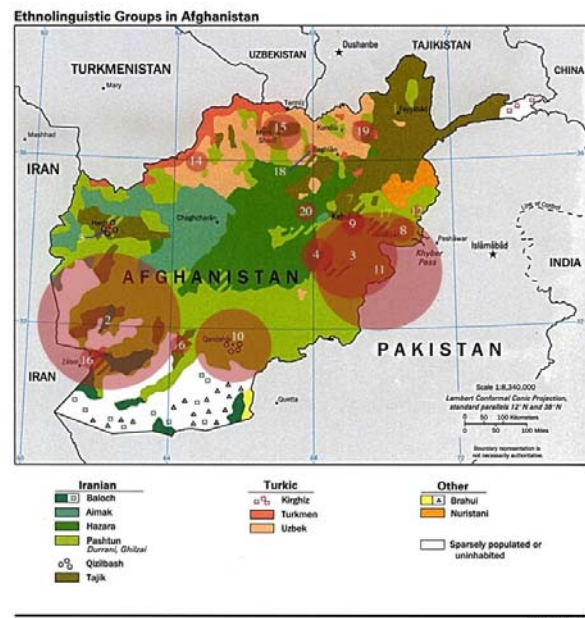
Recent Progress (continued):

The Ministry of Communications (MOC) continues to expand telephone service:

- US advisors are assisting with a digital switching equipment tender that will result in 42,000 new telephone lines in Kabul, Jalalabad, and Kunduz.
- Advisors facilitated meetings on interconnection between a new mobile phone company (GSM standard), the MoC, and the operator of an existing network. Entry of a new company will make the mobile phone market more competitive and expand availability, where land lines are so scarce.

1 Customs procedure code	2 Customs Registration No	3 Date	4 Consignor / Exporter Name & Add	
6 Declarer (Name and Add)				
7 Tax identification No	8 Type of Transport	9 Flight / vehicle No	10 Country of export	11 Country of origin
13 Bill of lading No	14 Place of Loading/ reloading	15 Invoice Currency	16 Official Exchange rate	17 Documents attached for clearance of goods
19 Marks & Numbers		20 Total No of packages	21 Total gross weight	22 Consignment No
24 No and kind of packages Description of Goods		25 Invoice Value	26 Gross Weight	27 Customs Value
24a		28 Custom Rate	29	30

Portion of the new customs form now being implemented under streamlined procedures at Kabul Customs.



USAID conducted analysis on existing radio coverage as part of its effort to develop independent media. Shown above are approximate station footprints for existing broadcasters in Afghanistan. To date, only 37% of Afghans have access to local radio broadcasts.

Expanding Educational Opportunity

Program Goals

- 1,000 schools and at least 18 provincial women's centers 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

The construction of women's centers in Ghazni, Farah, Baghlan, Parwan, and Jalalabad are in various stages of implementation. Land rights are being negotiated for the first three centers while groundbreaking ceremonies occurred earlier this summer for the centers in Parwan and Jalalabad.

Each women's center will include classrooms and daycare facilities and be staffed by 25 Ministry of Women's Affairs employees. The centers will provide a variety of education and training opportunities to local women, including literacy, health, and small business training. Thirteen additional centers are being planned in other areas around the country.



Women's centers will provide educational and training opportunities. Shown is an existing USAID-funded women's center in Chaikar.

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 supporting the commercial launch of a new safe water additive, Clorin, to help combat diarrhea, a top killer of children in Afghanistan. To expand the product's availability for sale throughout Afghanistan:

- A team of three sales agents visits pharmacies and non-pharmaceutical outlets (e.g., grocery stores), to train shop owners in the product's use and put them in touch with Clorin wholesalers. Through a mark-up, wholesalers have an incentive to keep their retailers well-stocked. In addition, all registered doctors in Kabul will receive a briefing from Ministry of Health staff on the product and a promotional bottle of Clorin. To date, sales agents have sold 16,000 bottles.
- Two public service announcements, one introducing Clorin and the other giving instructions on its use, have been produced in Dari and Pashtu and are being broadcast on Afghan radio and television.



A poster for the safe water additive, Clorin

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