



# Rebuilding Afghanistan

Weekly Activity Update for August 14 – August 20, 2003

Issue 26

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 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

- Accelerated learning classes for 15,000 students (5,000 each in Faryab, Nangarhar, and Baghlan provinces) will begin in September. Communities and mentors in all three provinces were selected following community surveys conducted during the summer. Training of community supervisors is complete for Faryab province; training will begin this week for Nangarhar and Baghlan provinces.

The community surveys showed that in Faryab and Baghlan, demand for the accelerated learning is much greater than the 5000 slots allotted for each province and nearly 50% of those interested were girls. In contrast, in Nangarhar, while over 5,000 students were interested in accelerated learning, only 18% of those interested were girls. The survey results suggest that in Nangarhar, more community mobilization may be necessary to convince parents to send girls to class and ensure their security.



*Groundbreaking ceremony for the construction of a women's center in Jalalabad on August 3. USAID/Kabul Mission Director and the Deputy Governor of Nangarhar Province attended the event held in the tent, above, festooned with flags of the Afghan central government.*

## 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

- This week USAID will award grants to NGOs to operate health clinics providing basic health services throughout rural Afghanistan. Thirty-three organizations successfully submitted applications for grants, which were due on July 24<sup>th</sup>, 2003. The grants review committee consists of the representatives of USAID, the Ministry of Health, and technical advisors. Four Afghan nationals with significant experience in healthcare and working with Afghan NGOs are on the review panel.

In the meantime, bridge funding was provided to the NGOs who have been conducting community-based healthcare over the past year. This was done to ensure continuity of services until the new grants are awarded.

## 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:

Advisors supporting the Bonn process reported the following accomplishments:

- Completion and release of an interim report on the results of the public consultative process on the constitution. The draft report identifies the following themes in Afghan citizens' feedback: a strong desire for democracy and freedom; recognition and protection of human rights; equal opportunity and participation; upholding the virtues of Islam; peaceful coexistence and unity; and reconstruction and improvement of livelihood.
- Completion of preliminary preparations for the first judicial infrastructure reconstruction site in Mazar-I-Sharif. Drawings for tender documents and criteria to determine the list of bidders are now ready.
- Submission of the draft political parties law to the Afghan president for signature. This draft law is a major improvement over previous iterations; if passed in its current form, it will prevent political parties with militia affiliations from registering, and makes clear that arms and political parties don't mix. It also contains a provision prohibiting foreign government financing of individual political parties.

### Recent Progress, Continued:

- On August 5, the Municipality of Kabul held a ceremony to celebrate the renovation of Shar-i-Naw Park in central Kabul. The USAID-supported renovation included landscaping, installation of park benches and trash receptacles, renovation of four tea houses, and repair of basketball and volleyball courts. The renovated park in the center of the city provides the people of Kabul with a tangible and public symbol that life is returning to normal in this city of over 2.5 million.



*Kabul residents enjoy a walk in the city's newly renovated city park. USAID received a priority request to renovate the park from Kabul's mayor based on citizen appeals.*

## 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

- During spring and summer 2003, USAID provided 900 metric tons of fertilizers to 14,100 households for crops other than wheat. While wheat producers had been the focus of previous distribution programs in the spring and fall of 2002, this fertilizer distribution went to households planting rice, maize, mung bean, potato, vegetables, fruit nurseries, and vineyards.

Helping farmers to diversify production is an important issue in Afghanistan right now. The 2003 wheat harvest has been estimated at 5.37 million tons, the largest harvest on record according to the recently released FAO/WFP Crop and Food Supply Assessment. As a result, market prices for wheat have fallen sharply in some of the principal producing areas. Crop diversification will help to provide profitable alternatives for Afghan farmers.



*Rice fields ready for planting. USAID supplied 14,100 households with fertilizer for rice, maize, mung bean, potato, vegetables, fruit nurseries, and vineyards throughout spring and summer 2003.*

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