



Rebuilding Afghanistan

Weekly Activity Update for October 3 – October 8, 2003

Issue 32

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:

- **Customs Reform:** The Ministry of Finance agreed to a strategy for regionalizing customs reform. The customs modernization model tested at the Kabul Customs House will be expanded to regional implementation sites in Mazar-e-Sharif, Jalalabad, and Herat.

Recent Progress (continued):

- **Banking Sector:** The National Bank of Pakistan began processing its application for a permit to open a branch in Afghanistan with the Central Bank. Afghan and American Financial Services, a group that includes President Karzai's brother and Jack Kemp (former HUD Secretary), began formal inquiries about a banking license for a bank they will call New Afghan Bank. The bank will concentrate on new construction lending and small/medium enterprise lending.
- **International Trade:** A USAID advisor assisted in finalization of a multilateral agreement on trade, transit, and investment between Afghanistan and China, Iran, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. The agreement was signed at the annual general meeting of the World Bank and IMF held in Dubai in late September.

Expanding Educational Opportunity

Program Goals

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

Recent Progress

- On September 27th, a ceremony was held to place the foundation stone for the Parwan Women's Center. In attendance were Habiba Sarabi, Minister of Women's Affairs for Afghanistan, Governor of Parwan province Zarar, and Parwan Director of Women's Affairs, Shah Jan. Minister Sarabi expressed her hope that these centers will be a place for women from the local population, government officials, and NGOs to meet, learn, and exchange ideas and information. Governor Zarar articulated how the centers open the door for discussions of education and rights of both men and women in Afghanistan. The Governor also emphasized his support for the security and protection of women's rights. Each center will be equipped with audiovisual equipment, computers, libraries, and a daycare center.
- Excavation work began this week for a new model school in Kabul and two new schools in Ghazni province. Excavation work is almost complete on a fourth school in Qarabagh district of Kabul province.



Minister of Women's Affairs Habiba Sarabi accepts a gift at the groundbreaking ceremony for the Parwan Women's Center..

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

- Following official groundbreaking ceremonies on September 13th, excavation for nine new clinics is now underway in Kabul and Ghazni provinces.



Ministry officials at National Planning Workshop in March 2002.

Sector Snapshot: Capacity Building at the Afghan Ministry of Health (MOH)

In addition to building clinics and providing grants to NGOs to provide health services, USAID helps to strengthen MOH capacity. Accomplishments to date include:

- Revising the MOH organizational chart, creating Terms of Reference for MOH Departments, and drafting job descriptions for key positions;
- Carrying out an assessment to determine the location of and services being provided by health facilities throughout the country. The results have been used to create provincial health plans and determine the locations of new health facilities;
- Defining and costing a Basic Package of Health Services to address the major causes of morbidity and mortality in women and children;
- Developing a Health Worker Certification and Testing scheme;
- Involving the MOH Grants and Contracts Management Unit in the USAID grants program, in order to train the MOH to manage grants;
- Developing and implementing a National Health Management Information System for planning and decision making;
- Strengthening Provincial Health Departments and creating Provincial Health Coordination Committees comprised of representatives from the MOH, UN agencies, and NGOs working in the provinces;
- Drafting a National Drug Policy, Medicines Law, Drug Regulations, National and Regional Essential Drugs Lists, Guidelines for Drug Donations and Guidelines for Medical Equipment Donations;
- Creating a National Information, Education and Communication Strategy (IEC) and strengthening the IEC Department at the MOH, which recently began to broadcast public health radio messages.

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

- Throughout the Fall 2002 and Spring 2003, USAID funded a series of cash-for-work projects to draw labor away from the poppy harvest and build community infrastructure. In Nangarhar, Samangan, and Takhar provinces, known for poppy production, USAID funded 50 irrigation projects, which repaired canals, intakes, springs, and underground irrigation tunnels resulting in irrigation for over 30,000 hectares. 92,500 person-days of employment and cash payments of \$280,000 to local laborers were generated.
- Construction supervision of the Zana Khan Dam and Sardeh irrigation projects in Ghazni province has been suspended due to security concerns. Supervision will resume pending discussions with local officials regarding security conditions.



Strengthened canal walls increased irrigation in Khogyani District, Nangarhar.



This aqueduct project allows a small irrigation canal to cross a stream in Pachir Wa Agam district, Nangarhar. Note the fine stonework done by local masons.

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