



# Rebuilding Afghanistan

Weekly Activity Update for October 9 – October 15, 2003

Issue 33

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:

- **Constitutional Loya Jirga (CLJ) Update:** Registration of those who will elect CLJ participants is complete in nearly half of the provinces; turnouts for these meetings have been generally large, though with some security concerns. Renovations of the Polytechnic Institute in Kabul, site of the CLJ, are well underway. The renovations include the dormitories, cafeteria, and gymnasium, which will benefit the Institute's students after the CLJ has concluded.
- **Judicial Reform:** Work to refurbish three courthouses (in Mazar-e-Sharif, Gardez, and Bamyan) is underway; plans for a fourth (Bamyan Appeals Court) have just been approved. All four court buildings will be complete before the end of the year.

### Recent Progress (continued):

- **Customs:** A new program for training and licensing customs brokers is being rolled out, now awaiting final approval with the Director General of Customs. The program will be in place in Kabul in early 2004. Under the program, only licensed customs brokers will be able to clear commercially imported goods.
- **Budget Planning:** USAID is assisting the Ministry of Finance to refine procedures for the Government of Afghanistan's internal budget process. Under this new process, a major new Ministry of Interior project for 1000 Jeep-type vehicles and 200 troop transport trucks has been approved. This \$10 million project will be used to provide vehicles for police in every district of Afghanistan.
- **Banking Sector:** Modernization and refinement of the Central Bank's accounting procedures continues. As an interim measure, the Central Bank is starting to provide services to the general populace through its network of branches. Recently, improved foreign currency transaction accounting procedures were introduced to help process transactions for the Haji Umrah pilgrimage, reducing processing times by two-thirds.

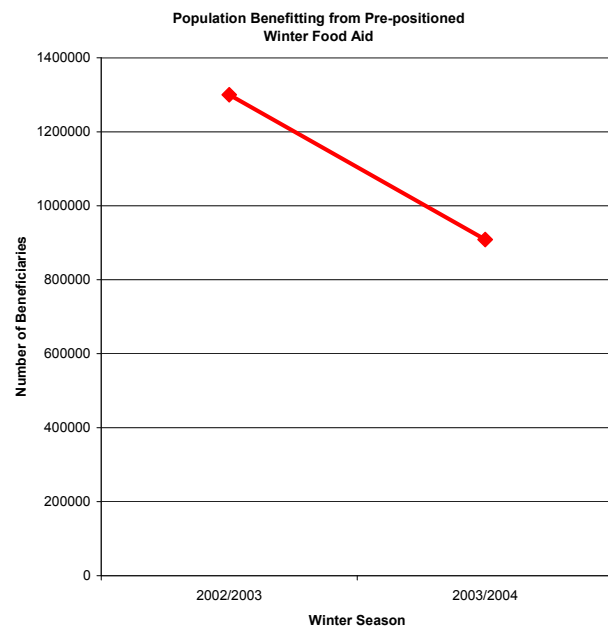
## Revitalizing Agriculture/Creating Jobs

### 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

- Pre-positioning of winter food aid for vulnerable populations has begun. The pre-positioning of these commodities is needed in areas where severe winter weather will prevent vehicles from entering during winter months. In 2002, the number of vulnerable people benefiting from the pre-positioned commodities was 1.3 million; this year it is 900,000. This 31% reduction reflects the overall reduction in vulnerable people requiring food aid, due in part to this past year's record harvest.



Graph shows the decrease in number of Afghans requiring pre-positioned food aid during the winter months. Sources for 2002/2003: WFP and ICRC; Source for 2003/2004: WFP.

## 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

- USAID's project to build provincial women's centers in 18 provinces is well underway. In addition, a small grants program funds a wide variety of small business training for women, political participation workshops, and literacy courses. The table at right summarizes some of the results accomplished this fall under this grants program. A total of 13 grants have been recently awarded to women's NGOs.

SMALL GRANTS FOR WOMEN: RECENT RESULTS	
Grant Name (province)	Recent Results
Women's Political Participation (Herat, Ghor, Badghis)	Second workshop held in Herat in September; 550 women to participate in total.
Poultry Training (Logar)	Chicks distributed to 75 vulnerable women at end of September; daily classes and home visits by trainers ongoing in October.
Literacy for Women and Girls (Kapisa)	Classes ongoing for 100 women and girls
Tailoring Course (Gardez, Paktya)	Course will complete in late October; 60 women enrolled
Hygienic Food Preservation Course (Parwan)	40 women trained to date; next course to begin early October
Cosmetics Training Course (Logar)	Course began 9/20; course oversubscribed a second course is planned.

## 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

- Throughout the summer months, the Mobile Mini Children's Circus toured Afghanistan, bringing hand washing and hygiene messages to Afghan children. With support from USAID, the group produced 15 shows for an average audience size of 1,000 children.
- Work continues to extend the capacity of the Afghan Ministry of Health (MOH) at the provincial level. As a first step, USAID and MOH/Kabul assessed the provincial health office in Takhar province during the week of September 14 – 20. The assessment's major findings related to the provincial office's human resources, management, and financial resources. Subsequent assessments will cover all 13 of the provinces in which USAID grants will be awarded to NGOs for service delivery.



An over-size dirty hand illustrates how germs cause sickness (above). The shows attracted large crowds of children (below).



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