

Restoring 750 miles of Highway 1

Initiative

On November 10, 2002, President Hamid Karzai officiated at the groundbreaking ceremony to initiate the first day of construction of Afghanistan's main highway, known as Highway 1, from Kabul through Kandahar to Herat. Reconstruction of the 750-mile highway is expected to cost \$250 million and to take 36 months to complete. In collaboration with the Transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan, the United States, Japan, and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia agreed in September 2002 to reconstruct the highway. The United States will provide \$80 million through USAID, which includes funding for demining efforts along the highway carried out by the U.N. Mine Action Center.



Photo by USAID

Reconstruction for the country's principal road system is the key to Afghanistan's economic recovery.

Results

Rebuilding the transportation infrastructure will enable the movement of people, aid resources, and farm and trade goods—all essential to Afghanistan's development. To date, 51 miles of grading and compacting have been completed on the highway. The project is employing thousands of Afghans. During winter USAID is working on the Kandahar to Herat portion to enable year-round construction.

Challenge

The journey from Kabul to Herat is currently an arduous trip that takes several days, because much of the road surface and several bridges have been destroyed due to years of civil war and a lack of maintenance for more than 20 years. President Karzai has stated that reconstruction of the country's principal road system is the key to Afghanistan's economic recovery.

Website: www.usaid.gov/afghanistan

Press Office: 202-712-4320

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