
Rebuilding Afghanistan

Weekly Activity Update for July 21 to July 28, 2004

Issue 64

United States Agency for International Development

STRENGTHENING THE GOVERNMENT

Program Goals

- Support the Bonn process: the Constitutional, Human Rights and Judicial Commissions; the 2004 elections; and a free and independent media.
- Strengthen government budgeting, revenue generation (e.g., customs), monetary management, private-sector related legal and regulatory frameworks, and promote private enterprises.
- Build capacity to carry out other legitimate government functions and support reconstruction of health, judicial, education, economic, agricultural and transportation infrastructure.

Recent Progress:

- **Averting a Food Aid Shortage:** As a result of quick action by USAID and the international donor community, a significant break in food supplies for Afghanistan has been averted. In February 2004, the World Food Program projected a major food aid shortage of approximately 140,000 metric tons. As of July 25, this shortfall has since been reduced to less than 25,000 metric tons, and it is likely this residual shortfall will be eliminated in the coming months. USAID's contributions since February totaled 51,000 metric tons, and represented nearly 44 percent of food aid contributions provided by the donor community since February. The substantial reduction in the projected food aid shortage will allow the World Food Program to respond more effectively to the ongoing drought in Afghanistan.
- **Industrial Park Ground Breaking Ceremony:** On July 22, in an effort to promote long-term economic growth, the first of three USAID-funded industrial parks broke ground in Bagrami, Kabul province (eastern Afghanistan). The ceremony was attended by the Minister of Commerce Sayed Moustafa Kazemi, Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad and USAID Mission Director Patrick Fine. The park will cover nine hectares and host up to 95 separate industrial textile plots. It is expected to be open for operation by October 2005, and will serve as a catalyst for economic growth. The park will be integral in organizing and concentrating scarce public infrastructure resources, facilitating private sector investor interest and generating employment opportunities. By leasing or buying space in a USAID supported industrial park, investors can enter a new market with reduced financial risk, and can bypass delays related to site acquisition, zoning and permit acquisition. The other two USAID-funded industrial parks in Kandahar (southern Afghanistan) and Mazar-e-Sharif (northern Afghanistan) will break ground next month.

USAID helped prevent a major food aid shortage by providing an additional 51,000 metric tons of food to the people of Afghanistan.

Bagrami industrial park ground breaking ceremony. In the front from the left: Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad, Minister of Commerce Sayed Moustafa Kazemi, USAID Mission Director Patrick Fine and the Industrial Parks Regulatory Advisor Malik Mortaza.

The Minister of Commerce (left) and Ambassador Khalilzad (right) breaking ground at the Bagrami industrial park.

INCREASING ACCESS TO BASIC HEALTH CARE

Program Goals

- 400 health centers renovated or constructed in rural areas, providing services to an estimated 12 million people.
- 11 million beneficiaries assured improved access to basic services in 13 provinces; 4.4 million women and children given access to services through USAID's health care initiative grants.
- 3,400 new community health workers, 990 midwives, and 6,000 clinic staff trained.
- Make safe water systems, contraceptives, mosquito nets and other health products available at reasonable prices using existing trading and marketing systems.
- Strengthen MOH capacity at the national and provincial levels for guiding effective health care policy; develop a public health education program; determine a sustainable health finance policy; strengthen human resource development; improve hospital management; and expand and improve the HMIS.

Recent Progress:

The USAID-funded REACH (Rural Expansion of Afghanistan's Community-Based Healthcare) program aims to improve the health of women of reproductive age and children under 5 years of age through increased use of basic health services in rural areas.

- **Education Campaign to Reduce Child Mortality Rates:** On June 30, USAID helped fund a diarrhea reduction campaign to teach children proper hygiene, with the goal of reducing the incidence of bacterial and viral outbreaks that lead to diarrhea and possibly death. USAID is currently working with the Ministry of Health to monitor and expand the program to priority provinces—where diarrhea outbreaks are greatest. Other donors supporting the campaign are UNICEF, the World Health Organization and the CDC.
- **USAID Efforts to Reduce Maternal Mortality Rates:** From time to time, USAID reports on personal stories related to its work, and because Afghanistan's maternal mortality rate is the highest in the world, USAID and the Afghan Ministry of Health provide health services that focus on maternal health care. For example, at a clinic in Badakshan province that is staffed by a USAID-funded physician and Afghan midwives, three women's lives were saved over a span of three weeks.

In the first week, a woman, who had been in labor for three days, arrived at the clinic after being carried from her village—a day's walk away. After a diagnosis determined the fetus to be dead, the physician removed it, and saved the life of the mother.

The following week, another woman arrived with a similar story of her contractions stopping after being in labor for three days. The next day, she was carried to the clinic, and the physician diagnosed a ruptured uterus that required an immediate operation. After putting together a makeshift operating room, the surgery commenced and the operation was a success.

Two days later, a third woman arrived with a similar story: she had been in labor for seven days but the pains had stopped on day three. She was infected and severely malnourished. Her family had carried her for two days over the mountains and they had refused to take her to a hospital in Faizabad province. Thus, the physician operated by performing a hysterectomy and giving high doses of antibiotics. Incredibly, she recovered.



Dr. Koshal quizzes an Afghan girl during an education campaign in Kabul.



Dr. Jacqui Sinclair (left), the obstetrician and gynecologist running the health clinic in Ragh, stands next to her Afghan midwife in their delivery/operating room.



When complete, this USAID-funded clinic at Shewak village in Paktia province is 50% constructed, and will provide services similar to that of the clinic in Badakshan province.