

U.S. Agency for International Development

Advisory Committee on Voluntary Foreign Aid

AFGHANISTAN RELIEF, RECONSTRUCTION AND
DEVELOPMENT: IMPLICATIONS FOR THE U.S.
FOREIGN ASSISTANCE AGENDA"

Meeting Report

Public Meeting – February 20, 2002

ACVFA

Advisory Committee on Voluntary Foreign Aid

**AFGHANISTAN RELIEF, RECONSTRUCTION AND
DEVELOPMENT: IMPLICATIONS FOR THE U.S.
FOREIGN ASSISTANCE AGENDA"**

February 20, 2002

**USAID/DCHA/PVC
Room 7-06-084 RRB
1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20523-7600
Tel: 202.712.5979 • Fax 202.216.3041**

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON VOLUNTARY FOREIGN AID

Public Meeting

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**“AFGHANISTAN RELIEF, RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT:
IMPLICATIONS FOR THE U.S. FOREIGN ASSISTANCE AGENDA”**

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Advisory Committee on Voluntary Foreign Aid
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Public Meeting

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**“Afghanistan Relief, Reconstruction and Development:
Implications for the U.S. Foreign Assistance Agenda”****Welcome and Introduction: William S. Reese, ACVFA Chair**

William S. Reese, ACVFA Chair, welcomed the ACVFA members, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) staff, and meeting participants. Mr. Reese remarked that this is the third meeting since Andrew Natsios became Administrator of USAID, and the third time he has spoken to this group, which shows his interest in what the ACVFA represents as a link to the public.

Mr. Reese pointed out that the ACVFA dates back to World War II. President Roosevelt thought that churches, the Red Cross, and others had something to contribute to the problems in Europe, and needed a way to connect to the U.S. government. Later, USAID was established and the ACVFA continued to advise the foreign assistance program and to connect churches, foundations, and non-profits to the government efforts. The result is a foreign aid program that is both public and private at the same time.

On behalf of the ACVFA, Mr. Reese thanked Mr. Natsios for the recent appointment to the Committee of Stephen Moseley, President of the Academy for Educational Development (AED). Mr. Reese welcomed Mr. Moseley and noted the many hours of time that he has generously contributed over the years to private voluntary organizations (PVOs).

The Conflict Prevention and Disaster Relief pillar at USAID was established prior to September 11, but since then this pillar has been front and center. USAID and the PVO community have rallied around and led in ways that should make the aid community proud. Mr. Reese stated that the agenda of this meeting builds on the discussions at the October 2001 ACVFA meeting on conflict prevention and developmental relief. The morning sessions focus on the application of lessons learned. More is known today about coordination across government agencies, building coalitions of donors, and working with the military. Mr. Reese remarked that in many ways it is a proud moment for USAID and PVOs, although there is still much work to do. The centrality of a well-managed USAID and the importance of the new pillar, as well as what an agile and experienced set of PVOs can do in a region like Central Asia, has been brought to the forefront. Mr. Reese noted that, unfortunately, this is not the last crisis, so the lessons learned from this experience will be very important.

Mr. Reese stated that the afternoon sessions were designed to provide a forum for the discussion of money and resources needed for relief and development programs. InterAction's new campaign to double the amount of development assistance, the \$3.7 billion that is crucial to the aid community, is on the agenda. Mr. Reese noted that discussions about resources must include more than the topic of Official Development Assistance. At the upcoming "Financing for Development" meeting in Mexico, the issues will include development effectiveness, investment, trade, international debt, civil society, and the role of governments. The ACVFA and this meeting are placed in the middle of a continuum of issues that are very important to everyone.

Mr. Reese congratulated Mr. Natsios on the excellent team that he has built at USAID. They bring to USAID an understanding of what the PVO community and NGOs abroad can bring to the development equation. This dialogue is critical to the ACVFA's effectiveness.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

"Peace and Development in Afghanistan and Central Asia: Long-Term Prospects" **Andrew Natsios, USAID Administrator**

Mr. Natsios remarked that the subject of peace and development in Afghanistan is of central importance to PVOs, the U.S. government, the U.S. public, and, of course, to the people of Central Asia. He added that the situation in Central Asia is more complex than it appears. The knowledge and insight in *The Taliban* by Ahmed Rashid is helpful in understanding the issues in Afghanistan and Central Asia today. According to Mr. Rashid, the number of drug addicts in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iran prior to the Taliban was very small, perhaps 30-40,000 in Iran and about the same number in Pakistan. Now there are 3 million addicts in Pakistan and 2½ million in Iran. As a result, Iran now has the most aggressive drug program in the world. Afghanistan was producing 70 percent of the world's heroin. The Taliban imposed a ban on poppy in order to limit production and drive the price up. Heroin is now poisoning Central Asia and profoundly affecting Russia and Western Europe. It is being exported from Afghanistan, but it often gets diverted along the way. There is a concern that this problem will spread through all of the Central Asian countries. Afghanistan is very connected to other countries in the region; one simply cannot look at the country in isolation. One of the problems over the past decade has been that the regional powers were involved in Afghanistan in a very destructive way.

Mr. Natsios remarked that USAID has sent three assessment teams to Afghanistan. One team arrived shortly after September 11 and couldn't get into the country. The second team traveled in December. A third team just completed their assignment. The third assessment was by far the most comprehensive. The team spread out, hired knowledgeable Afghans and held in-depth interviews with 769 people about the economy. They asked how people are surviving and why there hasn't been a famine in light of all that has happened. The results, were both troubling and surprising in some ways, are informing USAID's strategies for reconstruction.

Mr. Natsios described the U.S. government's four objectives in this first phase of the reconstruction effort in Afghanistan.

1. Repatriation and resettlement of refugees and internally displaced persons

Refugee camps are a breeding ground worldwide for terrorism and extremism. People are not employed and the camps are not constructive places to bring up children. They also tend to disrupt the social system that protects women and children from abuse, so there is often an increase in violence. The health problems in refugee camps are horrific. For these reasons, there is a deliberate effort to move as many people voluntarily back to their homes as soon as possible.

2. Restoration of food security

There has been a drought for four years, but the severity and consequences of that drought are not widely understood. Eighty percent of the people in Afghanistan live in rural areas, and two-thirds are farmers or herders. The basis of the pre-Taliban economy was agriculture. Mr. Natsios remarked that years ago, there was a USAID project to transfer apple technology and those trees are still producing in some areas. When the agricultural system was at its full flower in the mid-1970s, Afghanistan exported huge amounts of cash crops, primarily fruits and vegetables, to neighboring countries. USAID provided assistance for this in the 1960s and 1970s. In fact, USAID had a very large mission in Afghanistan and, as a result, there are now dozens of Foreign Service Officers who want to help with the reconstruction effort. There are ninety USAID staff who speak one or more of the Afghan languages. There is a very powerful memory of past USAID work in Afghanistan.

The recent survey, which was done in the southern half of the country, showed that the greatest risk to the agricultural system is the fact that the vineyards and orchards are dying, although the roots apparently are still alive. It will take four to five years to bring vineyards and orchards back to life. If this is not begun soon, the roots will die, and an extremely bountiful agricultural system will be lost. It is of central importance to rescue the vineyards, the orchards, and what is left of the animal stock. Previous reports far underestimated the animal deaths in the south - up to 95 percent have been lost.

The principal agricultural challenge is water to keep animals alive, as well as to rescue the vineyards and orchards. Insufficient water to make bricks to rebuild homes has constrained efforts to address the housing crisis. Lack of water also creates sanitation and health problems. As a result of the new survey data, USAID will shift its focus from seeds to more broad efforts.

Another important finding from the recent survey was that 80 percent of the households in Afghanistan are heavily in debt. The middle class has been virtually eliminated. The country is surviving on relief and the war economy. The debt situation is so severe that men and women do not leave their homes because they might get beaten up or put into

jail for not paying their debts. Afghanistan's elaborate debt system helped people cope during the difficult years, but now it is a huge problem. The survey found that the principal wage earners in most households are teenagers, because the parents cannot go out.

USAID's focus on agricultural reconstruction will include the water system and food security, as well as efforts to avert poppy production. Food security includes food production, livelihoods, and health. Livelihood means increasing family incomes, which will involve public works projects, including rural roads. The health and nutrition indicators for Afghanistan - infant and child mortality, maternal mortality, per-capita caloric intake - are among the worst in the world. Thus, there will be a health component to the reconstruction projects - an ill population cannot fully benefit from improvements in food production and income.

3. Creation of political and economic conditions for stability

This means allowing the markets to function again and rebuilding the roads so that products can get to market. It also means creating jobs to help people become more self-sufficient and to stimulate the economy so that further destabilization does not occur.

4. Rehabilitation of the governance system of Afghanistan

Mr. Natsios emphasized that Afghanistan is still in the midst of war. The U.S. government has some political objectives in the reconstruction of the country. One of these is to help establish a stable national government by supporting the interim government of Hamid Karzai, which is now functioning. In doing that, development assistance has to be visible as U.S. government assistance and has to be seen as directly supporting the Interim Authority of Afghanistan. Independent NGO projects could be counter-productive if they create the impression that the Karzai government cannot deliver services. This may cause some concern to NGOs, but it is a reality. The policy of the U.S. government is that the American presence in the reconstruction efforts - in terms of the American flag and U.S. funding - must be very visible. In some cases, for instance in Mozambique, it was not so important politically or diplomatically that the United States presence was visible, but in the case of Afghanistan it is critical. The United States has made a commitment to help rebuild the country, and our efforts must be seen.

Mr. Natsios related that people in Afghanistan perceive that the United States is not making good on its commitment because the projects are being carried out by NGOs. They do not realize that the NGOs' funding comes from the U.S. government. Mr. Natsios pointed out that few people know that the United States gave a billion dollars in humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan over the last ten years. The United States was by far the largest donor, but it was essentially invisible, which may have been all right then. The perception now must be that the United States is in Afghanistan to stay, and reconstruction projects must visibly reinforce this political objective.

Mr. Natsios also stated that the four primary objectives include schools. Public education is very important because it gets teachers back in the classrooms and kids off the streets.

Since many teenagers are also supporting their families, it is not clear how many will be able to reenter the school system. It is estimated that 1.6 million children will attend school. In cooperation with the University of Nebraska, USAID is printing 9.7 million books (127 different textbooks) for Afghanistan. The Minister of Education helped to write these textbooks. USAID and the Ministry of Education are now reviewing them. USAID is hoping that up to 4 million textbooks will be ready for distribution at the opening of schools on March 23. UNICEF and NGOs are being asked to help in the distribution process.

A sub-objective of the restoration of civil government is the reintroduction of women in leadership positions. Since two-thirds of Afghan teachers are women, getting the schools up and running quickly will help raise the status of women. Afghan teachers have told USAID that they need more training because skills have been lost over the years. As a result, teacher training will be part of the textbook distribution effort. USAID will also make some grants to develop Afghan NGOs in order to build civil society over the long-term. Mr. Natsios concluded by noting that the USAID program is evolving and being refined based on information from the field.

Questions and Answers/Audience Discussion

Jim Dalton, from the Business Alliance for International Economic Development, remarked that he was pleased to hear the Administrator endorse the idea of a strong national government for Afghanistan. In a speech last month, Mr. Natsios had suggested that international NGOs partner with new NGOs to avoid a proliferation of NGOs from abroad coming into Kabul and operating on a scattered basis. Mr. Dalton asked if USAID proposes to referee or inform the NGOs to attain some degree of coordination.

Mr. Natsios stated that the coordination function is primarily a United Nations (UN) function. A senior staff member from UNICEF, Nigel Fisher, has been appointed to the position of Deputy Special Representative for Humanitarian Affairs in Afghanistan. Mr. Fisher has extensive field experience and is well aware of the problem of having too many actors and too little coordination. Mr. Natsios stated that there is going to be a heavy emphasis on the Afghan ministries. The United States intends to support the decisions of the central government of Afghanistan - and the NGOs and the UN will need to abide by them too, or the central government will not be able to function.

Carolyn Taylor from the World Rehabilitation Fund asked if there is any data available on the prevalence of war disabilities in Afghanistan, and what is the USAID plan for the disabled with regard to health and education.

Mr. Natsios replied that the recent survey, at least the verbal report, did not include information about disabled citizens. USAID is aware that it is a very serious problem. Numerous prior reports have shown that the numbers of war disabled in Afghanistan are among the highest anywhere in the world. USAID put \$1 million from the Leahy War Victims Fund into the reconstruction fund to assist people disabled from the war.

Dena Fisher, Executive Director of Seeds of Peace, asked Mr. Natsios to comment on the impact of the Afghanistan efforts on other USAID programs.

Mr. Natsios explained how USAID put together the \$296 million pledge for assistance to Afghanistan. First, the Department of State's Bureau for Population, Migration, and Refugees (PRM) took \$50 million (the unspent portion of the \$125 million PRM received from the President's \$320 million relief fund). That \$50 million is for repatriation of refugees. It did not come out of either State/PRM's or USAID's budget. USAID had not spent \$22 million of \$170 million in the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) budget. That is being used for developmental relief. Then, more recently, \$50 million was put in the Department of Defense (DOD) appropriation for the reconstruction of Afghanistan, and this came to USAID. The remaining amount is food aid. Mr. Natsios pointed out that the United States pledge of \$296 million for Afghanistan is for an eight-month period.

USAID expects to have a budget of \$300 million next year for Afghanistan. Of that, USAID already has \$125 million. USAID will use money from OFDA, Food for Peace, Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI), the Leahy Fund, and the Child Survival account to fund part of next year's budget. To say that this effort is taking resources away from other programs is not quite accurate, because USAID was already spending a lot of money in the region prior to September 11. Mr. Natsios stated that he couldn't say exactly how much money USAID will have in FY2003 because Congress has not yet appropriated it, but the Secretary of State used the figure \$300 million.

Jeffrey Marburg-Goodman, Assistant General Counsel for Contract Management at USAID, stated that one of the hallmarks of Mr. Natsios' tenure at USAID has been the repair of the Agency's financial and procurement systems. Mr. Karzai said at the pledging conference that he planned to establish a procurement board, develop financial monitoring systems, and hire an auditing firm to keep an eye on spending. Given the fear in the donor community about waste and mismanagement of funds, Mr. Marburg-Goodman asked if any thought had been given to providing Afghanistan with technical assistance for procurement reform and financial monitoring.

Mr. Natsios stated that USAID has received a number of very modest requests from Mr. Karzai and his administration. For example, they requested help in designing a budgeting system. The Afghans have extraordinary plans for accountability and transparency, as well as a sense of the risks. If they are able to successfully implement all their plans, they will be able to provide USAID with technical advice on how to improve its financial systems.

In response to a concluding question from Mr. Reese about how the NGO community should follow up on issues related to Afghanistan, Mr. Natsios suggested that the audience to be in contact with Bernd (Bear) McConnell, who has full-time responsibility for the reconstruction. (Although Mr. Natsios was spending a great deal of time on Afghanistan issues after September 11, other Agency priorities are now reclaiming his time.) Mr. Natsios ended by saying that he is very impressed by the work of PVOs and

NGOs in Afghanistan. He noted that during the most difficult times it was often the NGOs and their Afghan staff that kept things functioning.

“USAID’s Response to Current and Future Needs”

BERND McCONNELL, Director, Central Asia Task Force, USAID

Mr. McConnell opened by showing the meeting participants the Vulnerability Assessment Map or VAM of Afghanistan produced last summer by the World Food Programme (WFP). He remarked that this map is probably the single most referred-to document about Afghanistan, and he hoped it would soon be updated to reflect the current reality. He called attention to the red sections of the map where the need for food has been highest. U.S. food assistance -- 253,000 metric tons of food -- was focused on these areas. More than half of the food provided to Afghanistan is U.S. food -- \$146 million worth of U.S. food. A second slide showed the percentage of the requirements (by province) that have been provided in recent months. USAID produced the second map based on official WFP numbers. This map showed far fewer red areas. Mr. McConnell noted that there is a question about the number for Herat, but USAID is confident that this area on the map should no longer be red. Mr. McConnell stated that WFP and implementing partners have done a magnificent job in dealing with the food emergency in Afghanistan, especially moving food under very difficult circumstances.

Mr. McConnell stated that USAID is moving along the continuum from emergency relief to reconstruction in Afghanistan, but there is still a long way to go. As of October 4, money in hand Administration wide equaled \$320 million. Of that amount, \$195 million came directly to USAID and \$50 million more came in the Department of Defense (DOD) appropriations bill. USAID has expectations for further funding, but what the Agency is doing now is based on this limited amount of money. There is not room in this current budget for significant reconstruction; that is yet to come.

Mr. McConnell commented that the survey completed by the team that just returned from Afghanistan is USAID's first in-depth official survey. The USAID presence in Afghanistan comprises only an Acting Mission Director in Kabul and several short-term staff. Until two days ago those people were restricted to Kabul. The U.S. flag was raised over the Embassy in Kabul on December 22, 2001. New information is now coming in and USAID is adjusting in response to this information.

Questions And Answers/Audience Discussion

John Blackton who served in Afghanistan with USAID in 1970s, noted that he welcomed Mr. Natsios' policy that all U.S. assistance will be programmed in ways that reinforce the central government. He stated that there is often pressure on implementers to work with local warlords to get things accomplished. Mr. Blackton inquired about the readiness of USAID to back program implementers when they are challenged by warlords.

Mr. McConnell stated that the U.S. government's position is to support the interim government, and steps will be taken to make sure that this policy is implemented. USAID has come up with a number of project proposals that might have to be modified as a result of the recent survey. These projects involved seeds, fertilizers, livestock, and irrigation. These proposals, totaling approximately \$20 million, have been vetted with the Interim Authority to ensure that the projects fit their priorities and are visibly tied to the government. There must be visible appreciation of the Authority's power to influence change. Mr. McConnell remarked that the international community must not declare victory too soon. There is still a winter and a food emergency. The need for food support in Afghanistan is not going to end soon.

Mr. Blackton asked Mr. McConnell to be more specific in the case of project implementers who want to say "no" to warlords. Will USAID back them up?

Mr. McConnell answered in the affirmative.

Ann Cagigas from La Leche League International stated that her organization is interested in infant nutrition and lactation. If the United States is contributing 51 percent of the food to the relief effort, some type of infant formula must be going to Afghanistan. Ms. Cagigas asked what USAID is doing to support lactation and breastfeeding in Afghanistan.

Mr. McConnell remarked that this is part of the health sector focus. The U.S. food contribution is more than wheat. It also includes corn-soy blend, which is a supplemental food appropriate for children. Mr. McConnell stated that he doesn't think that the United States is sending infant formula to Afghanistan. Participants may obtain further information by calling USAID at 202-712-0014.

Jennifer Jackman of the Feminist Majority agreed with the need to support the interim administration and expressed a concern that resources are not getting to Afghanistan quickly enough, particularly in the case of the Ministry for Women's Affairs whose work is so important to improving the situation for women. USAID has recently begun rehabilitating the Ministry building. She asked Mr. McConnell to elaborate on USAID's plans for programmatic support of the Ministry.

Mr. McConnell stated that USAID hopes the building will be functioning by the International Women's Day Conference, which is being held in Kabul on March 8. Regarding programmatic efforts for women, USAID's view is that all projects should include a gender component rather than having separate programs for women.

Ms. Jackman agreed that it is crucial for USAID programs to integrate gender throughout all the ministries, but since the situation of women has been so devastated, the Ministry of Women's Affairs needs direct support for its programs.

Mr. McConnell remarked that, according to the Bonn agreement, support of the Interim Authority was to be carried out by the United Nations Development Programme

(UNDP), through a small trust fund. The United States contributed its share to UNDP to support the Interim Authority. USAID is aware that the disbursement from the UN is not coming fast enough. USAID is reevaluating its agreement with that division and is moving forward with some direct support to the government. At the same time, USAID is aware that it does not have the resources to do everything and will continue to work with the UN.

Najib Mojaddidi, President of Afghans for Tomorrow, an organization of young Afghan professionals for the reconstruction and development of Afghanistan, remarked that his organization emphasizes a long-term, systematic approach to rebuilding Afghanistan. He asked if USAID has a long-term plan for Afghanistan.

Mr. McConnell stated that USAID does not yet have a five or ten-year plan for Afghanistan but that he hoped that the private sector would help to formulate such a plan over time. He reminded the audience that although USAID has been in Afghanistan for decades, recently it has been on an emergency basis. USAID is just beginning to move into reconstruction. At present, USAID does not have the data to develop a realistic long-term plan.

Herschelle Challenor, from Clark Atlanta University and a member of the ACVFA, asked to what extent USAID would coordinate its educational program in Afghanistan with educational efforts in Pakistan.

Mr. McConnell answered that it is absolutely vital to work with the educational system in Pakistan. USAID has reopened a mission in Pakistan, as well as in Afghanistan. The program in Pakistan, approximately \$40 million right now, will be almost exclusively in the education realm.

A participant from Solar Household Energy, Inc., inquired about fuels currently being used by people in Afghanistan for cooking.

Mr. McConnell replied that animal-based fuels are the principal source of cooking fuel. In the northern part of the country some coal mines are still operating.

Don Crane from ACDI/VOCA asked if there is an anticipated impact from the murder of the Minister of Transportation on the stability of the government or on relief and development activities.

Mr. McConnell responded that he did not see any impact on reconstruction or emergency relief efforts from this event.

Frank Ocwige with Gulf Associates inquired about the extent of USAID work with private, commercial companies to mobilize the reconstruction of Afghanistan.

Mr. McConnell answered that historically USAID allied with transportation companies to move food. To date, USAID has not been approached by reconstruction

firms in Afghanistan. Such firms should start by contacting the U.S. Embassy. The Afghan-American Society in the United States is trying to establish some of those relationships. Mr. McConnell remarked that the reality of what is happening in Afghanistan is unique. There cannot be an Afghanistan unless there is a secure environment. That is the foundation for the policy of supporting the government directly. USAID will continue to deal with the emergency while slowly beginning reconstruction efforts. USAID needs the support of the PVO/NGO community in garnering information on the ground in order to help USAID direct its focus as resources become available.

Panel discussion:

"Linking Relief and Development: Lessons for Afghanistan and Future Crises"

Moderator: William Reese, ACVFA Chair

Mr. Reese opened the panel by stating that these presentations build on the earlier remarks by Mr. Natsios and Mr. McConnell. Mr. Reese remarked that he would stand in as moderator for William Garvelink, who could not participate due to illness.

Susan Woodward, Professor of Political Science,
The Graduate Center, City University of New York

Ms. Woodward stated that she is not a practitioner, but an academic, a scholar, with operational experience that has informed her work. She began her remarks by focusing on the experiences of the last decade. In the first half of the 1990s the international community gained operational experience in various peace building missions. By the end of the decade two main issues were identified:

- (a) The gap between relief and development and
- (b) The conflict between the developmental approach of the international financial institutions and the goals of peace building missions.

By the end of the decade, these two criticisms were beginning to provoke more serious evaluations and assessments, both internally and externally. The World Bank now does regular assessments. The most recent USAID survey is another example. As a result of these more serious assessments about what is actually being produced by foreign assistance, some lessons have been learned. At the same time, the scholarly community has begun to do some comparative research into what promotes success or failure. Ms. Woodward remarked that there is now a body of genuine knowledge about what works and why.

However, the relationship between knowledge and practice is very difficult. It is not easy to change the behavior of individuals and organizations. People draw lessons that support their organizational interests and there are still fights between and within organizations. One result is that there are now two very clearly defined, opposing ideas about what should drive long-term development in Afghanistan. A second result is that

the emergency nature of war always tends to dominate over humanitarian and development operations.

The good news is that USAID missions have the instinct and the knowledge to overcome some of these problems. Ms. Woodward also remarked that Lakhdar Brahimi at the UN really understands these lessons and has been putting them into practice. Ms. Woodward then turned to the lessons at the knowledge level. She noted that her remarks reinforce the remarks of Mr. Natsios and Mr. McConnell.

The most important lessons include the following:

1. There is a need to set priorities.
2. There is a need to set a common political strategy among all donors and actors in the field.

Ms. Woodward delineated three priorities for reconstruction in Afghanistan:

1. **Governance.** Politics must come first. The most important lesson is not to let the process of relief and development get ahead of the political process. The pace has to be reversed. If development rushes ahead of the political structure, one ends up supporting wartime structures and corruption. Bosnia and Herzegovina is a particularly good case study because donors spent a lot of time and money there. The four-year, \$5.1 billion World Bank reconstruction and development program was an extremely successful project, but it has not yet produced development. There is no growth in Bosnia. The reason is that there are no governmental institutions of the kind that are necessary. It is only when the local government authorities lead the setting of priorities and have the necessary administrative capacity, that there can be successful implementation of programs. Ms. Woodward emphasized that the United States needs to support not only the interim government, but also the building of national institutions and capacity. This is the only way to demilitarize the political process and deal with the warlord problem.
2. **Security.** Nothing can happen without security – security for roads, for women and for families. The Taliban accomplished two things in the country. They provided security on the roads and security for women. The new government must also bring security.
3. **Regional Framework.** When there is a conflict like this, the peace building process must be built into a regional framework. In June, before the anti-terrorist campaign, three leading American experts on Afghanistan wrote the following: “The war is not a civil war, but a transnational one. The transnational links are too deep to be untangled and will have to be transformed. A more desirable policy goal than peace alone would be reconstructing the country as part of an interstate and economic structure of an entire region.” There is no way to revive the agricultural system or the transportation system without a regional framework.

Ms. Woodward pointed out that flexibility is also important, especially in response to assessments on the ground. Keeping the aforementioned three principles in mind will help ensure success.

Gene Dewey, Assistant Secretary, Bureau for Population, Refugees, and Migration, U.S. Department of State

Mr. Dewey opened his remarks by telling the audience that USAID and the Department of State are working very well together in this effort, although there are some areas that will present difficulties.

There are five obligatory subjects that seem to come up at most humanitarian meetings and they include:

1. The root causes of conflict or the breakdown of peace
2. Early warning and prevention systems
3. Effective police and judicial systems
4. Internally displaced persons (IDPs)
5. The relief to development continuum.

The relief to development issue was a particularly difficult issue when Mr. Dewey was with the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR). There are precious few success stories. One example of a successful relief to development transition relates to UNHCR emergency response in Ethiopia in 1988. At that time there was a flow of refugees from the West Nile area of Sudan into Southwest Ethiopia. This very enterprising group of refugees requested building materials to build huts and seeds for kitchen gardens. They also asked for land to plant cash crops. That group of refugees was back home in about eight months because they never fell into the dependency syndrome that so often characterizes the refugee camps. We can identify the lessons of this experience. Mr. Dewey never uses the term “lesson learned” – only “lesson identified.”

Mr. Dewey noted some principles that need to be kept in mind for Afghanistan. First, **someone needs to be in charge**. The consensus now is that the Interim Authority is in charge. However, it seems as if the Interim Authority is going to need a shadow UN structure, someone that Mr. Karzai can reach back to and help him deal with donors and implementers. Mr. Brahimi, with Nigel Fisher acting as the point for relief and development, could fill that role. The shadow structure footprint has to be small, but in Mr. Dewey’s opinion it also has to be very robust. And it must provide a framework for the implementing agencies now flocking into Afghanistan. There is a need to avoid the chaos of Kosovo and Albania where more than 300 NGOs were operating without a common structure. The international humanitarian system appeared to be out of control. This must be a priority for Lakhdar Brahimi and Nigel Fisher at the UN. Mr. Dewey commented that this may not be popular with implementers, but it is essential. He

suggested an absolute need for a tripartite accreditation process for NGOs, involving the Interim Authority, the UN, and the NGOs themselves.

The second important principle identified by Mr. Dewey is the development of a **comprehensive campaign plan**. There is a need to show the objectives and the range of players to work on these objectives in this complex situation. The U.S. government does not yet have a comprehensive campaign plan for Afghanistan, but it should move in that direction. Someone will have to help the Interim Authority write its plan, just as someone needs to help the U.S. government write its plan.

Mr. Dewey cited an example from the Hurricane Mitch recovery effort. When the Southern Command was given the responsibility for humanitarian work after Hurricane Mitch, the commander rightly referred his request for a political military plan to Washington, DC. He never received a plan. The lesson is that in order to get a plan one has to write it oneself. The military combatant commands are going to have to develop the capability to write comprehensive campaign plans in consultation with political advisors and civilian implementers. It is absolutely necessary to have such a plan for Afghanistan. Mr. Dewey feels that it is part of his responsibility to use the humanitarian edge to push for such a plan because the humanitarian and recovery dimension crosses all the sectors.

Another issue that has been discussed with Mr. Fisher is the need for assignment of accountability by sectors to the mandated players. For instance, it is important to clarify who is responsible for displaced persons in which part of the country. This is one of the major tasks that Mr. Fisher is now working on with the Interim Authority. This will help to avoid some of the problems encountered in Bosnia where there were fifty agencies that had some responsibility for human rights. In effect, nobody had responsibility for human rights. The same problem was evident in Bosnia with respect to repatriation of refugees and internally displaced persons. The fact that so many agencies were involved in this task made it difficult to pinpoint anybody and hold them accountable for getting the job done. The UN shadow that will mirror the ministries in the Interim Authority is critically important in grasping that fundamental principle.

The third key principle is **information management**. Mr. Dewey reflected on the example of the UN's "Finest Hour" - the emergency operations in Africa (OEOA) in 1984-85. Maurice Strong, the co-leader of that effort, attributed the success of the program to early decisions about key elements of information needed on a daily basis. Mr. Dewey emphasized the need for an effective information management plan for Afghanistan. This will require a focus at the top to determine what information is needed, when it is needed, and in what format. The State Department is trying to be supportive of this effort by offering an information management system tailored to the needs of the IAI and UN emergency/rehabilitation managers.

Mr. Dewey stressed that there is also a need for **comprehensive, community based assessments**. This is particularly important with respect to refugees. It will take a lot of rigorous information gathering to determine conditions on the ground for those areas to

which refugees and IDPs will be returning. UNHCR is the lead agency on this issue, but getting reliable information inside Afghanistan is still very difficult. USAID is only now traveling fairly close to Kabul. The eyes and ears in Afghanistan with the widest scope now are the military. In Bosnia, Army Civil Affairs personnel were instrumental in gathering information about displaced person and regions to which refugees would be returning. They could play a similar role in Afghanistan. It is expected that up to 800,000 refugees from Pakistan and Iran, and possibly 400,000 internally displaced persons will return home this spring. The big unknown is the effect of the drought on the return of refugees. While some refugees, mostly men, are returning to their homes to check the situation, the net flow is still out of the country. It is critical to be able to predict whether or not there will be a large return of refugees in the spring.

Mr. Dewey presented the final key principle as **protection and security**. The United States must take a leadership role to make sure this happens. Security includes the development of a police force and a judicial system. Normally, these systems take years to develop, but they have to be done quickly. Security is a critical component in the link between relief and development.

Sima Wali, Executive Director, Refugee Women in Development

Ms. Wali opened her remarks by stating that she is an Afghan and has worked for years in the field of development, empowering women and men affected by conflict. Ms. Wali was one of the three female delegates to the Bonn peace talks on Afghanistan.

The political, social, and physical infrastructure of the Afghan society has been ravaged by twenty-three years of conflict. Two million Afghan lives have been lost. One million people are landmine handicapped. Twelve million Afghan women, out of 24 million Afghans, are living in poverty. The average life expectancy for Afghan men is 40 years; it is less for women. The mortality rate for children under age five is 25.7%. The illiteracy rate is 64% for men and 80% for women. Afghanistan ranks among the most destitute, war-ravaged countries in the world.

Ms. Wali remarked that for the last twenty-three years, the story of Afghanistan has been about overpowering -- by the communists, the Mujaheddin, and the Taliban, all by brute force. There has been no empowerment of the people. The Afghan society is in desperate need of stabilization. The answer to bringing peace and stability lies with the Afghan people themselves. Afghanistan has been granted a "golden opportunity" since Afghanistan has occupied center stage in the war against terrorism. There is a need to forge a strategic partnership with democratic-minded Afghan citizens and the Interim Authority to restore the physical, social, and cultural infrastructure of the country. The Afghan people are ready to end their subjugation and to bring about democratic development.

Ms. Wali pointed out that Afghanistan is a political, multi-ethnic, and Islamic society. Interventions must be based on this reality and sensitive to the changing context of society. Development interventions must also move away from focusing on the capital

city and target other regions. Ms. Wali emphasized the importance of a community-based approach.

According to Ms. Wali, the Interim Authority is desperately in need of cash to pay civil servants, help restore law and order, and set government structures in motion. It is critical that these funds be released immediately. It is also important to have a development scheme that is long-term in focus, three years at a minimum.

One of the challenges of the reconstruction effort is the issue of large numbers of refugees, both internal and external. The majority of the refugees are women, children, and handicapped people. Their needs must be taken into account.

Security is also critical. There is a need to integrate the large numbers of young, armed men into the educational system; vocational education will be particularly important. It is important to take an integrated approach to development. Ms. Wali pointed out that all sectors are interrelated and all issues are women's issues. Successful education is dependent on security, health, nutrition, and gender-equality, as well as on the educational facilities.

Ms. Wali remarked that it is very important that the repatriation of Afghan leaders should not be done individualistically. Special attention must be paid to community based, indigenous Afghan organizations. Many of these groups have a strong record of providing critically needed services in their communities. They provided community assistance in health, education, human rights, and social services at great risk to themselves and their families. It is crucial to include this cadre of democratically minded Afghans in development schemes. While the Afghan men have been waging war, women have been leading these groups. Ms. Wali urged USAID to balance strong political institutions with strong civil society institutions.

Ms. Wali stated that reconstruction and development efforts must work through the Ministry of Women's Affairs. The upcoming *loya jirga*, or national assembly, is very important. There is a need to ensure that strong members of civil society, particularly women, are involved in this process, and that issues pertaining to women are at the table.

There are currently no reliable statistics on Afghanistan. There is a need to come up with key indicators to assist in the development of policies and strategies.

The issue of Afghan ownership is extremely high on the agenda of Afghans. Afghans must lead the reconstruction efforts. There are very qualified Afghan men and women who possess the skills to implement development programs, but to date they have not been included in the larger development schemes. There is also a need to ensure that women are integrated into this process.

Ms. Wali suggested that USAID require U.S. based NGOs working in the region to partner with an Afghan NGO to create Afghan groups similar to U.S. based NGOs. Rebuilding the civil infrastructure will also promote Mr. Karzai's vision for a peaceful

and stable Afghanistan. This strategy is highly dependent on successful development interventions introduced in the social, political, and cultural context. Most importantly, rebuilding and supporting civil institutions is the best insurance against terrorism and extremism.

Nancy Lindborg, Executive Vice President, Mercy Corps International

Ms. Lindborg remarked that since the mid-1980s humanitarian and development workers have been seriously grappling with the issue of moving from relief to development. While there still is not a consensus on the right “label” for this issue, “developmental relief” has gained some currency. The lack of a term indicates to some extent the way in which the community is still grappling with the issue. As a way of bridging the two interests, InterAction has formed a Transition Working Group (TWG), composed of members from the Disaster Response Committee and the Committee for Development Policy and Practice. Some approaches are beginning to emerge that are being applied in Afghanistan.

One approach is to increase the capacity of agencies operational in these environments to understand and program effectively in the face of conflict. Many organizations are trying to apply more robust conflict analysis in their programming. This is important so as not to inadvertently inflame situations and to be able to contribute more appropriately to peaceful solutions from the earliest stages of assistance. Ms. Lindborg remarked that there is also a strong sense that nothing can move forward without security, so that people can return to their homes and feel that they have a stake in the future. Lack of security was one of the primary reasons that people supported the Taliban. The Interim Authority must demonstrate that it can provide security through an effective police force and justice system. Although security is a long-term issue, some sense of security must be established as soon as possible. Mr. Karzai has called for an international security force. That request should be taken seriously, especially in the face of an overwhelmingly armed and unemployed population.

Ms. Lindborg emphasized the need to support local capacity and civil society, but cautioned that donors should not rush in and solidify what are essentially wartime structures. There are some lessons learned from the Balkan experience. There should be attention paid to strengthening the civil society structures at the community level to create constituencies for the government as it emerges. It will be necessary to work at both levels in parallel, and with the recognition that the result will not be a “western-style” government right off the bat.

Ms. Lindborg identified another lesson -- the judicious use of direct distribution programs in assisting only the most vulnerable people in the most acute phases of emergencies. People want the dignity of supporting their own families. Ms. Lindborg applauded USAID for its cash-for-work approach and support of market development. Some places where Mercy Corps worked on the principle of assisting only the most vulnerable, a

blanket distribution program came in behind and essentially wiped out the effects of local development projects.

On a policy level, the reconstruction efforts would be well served by making longer term, flexible funding available now. In Kosovo, by the time there was a long-term approach a lot of time and effort had been spent on short-term proposals and projects. This is a lesson that has been identified, but not learned. Ms. Lindborg encouraged the aid community to think hard about this issue.

Ms. Lindborg stressed the importance of the singularity of each situation. There is a tendency to look for models and formulas, but in Afghanistan the complexities that surround the interim government suggest that one must be very careful about the development approach. A farmer in Afghanistan can make \$19,000 per year growing three-quarters of an acre of poppy. That is an extraordinary amount of money in Afghanistan. There is a need to take this very seriously in planning repatriation and agricultural recovery programs.

Ms. Lindborg underscored Mr. Natsios' comments about the drought. Mercy Corps is working with Afghans that are considering leaving their homes because they are unable to support their families. Reconstruction efforts must involve regional solutions and very thoughtful approaches from the early stages of the recovery program. In closing, Ms. Lindborg emphasized the need for a realistic time frame and a long-term commitment to Afghanistan.

Questions and Answers/Audience Discussion

Norma Gattsek, from the Feminist Majority, remarked that U.S. policy has made it almost impossible for women-led NGOs in the region to obtain grants. Ms. Gattsek asked if the Department of State and USAID would change this policy so that these NGOs could get funding and participate fully in the rebuilding of their country.

Mr. Dewey answered affirmatively, noting that the United States is giving special emphasis to implementers who can assist in the returnee program. This will require a major gender focus for the particular needs of refugee and displaced women and children.

Mohamed Cassem remarked that the Afghan rural sector is almost completely destroyed. There will be a rapid move towards urbanization that will require a focus on urban areas in the reconstruction process.

Najib Mojaddidi asked that people involved in the reconstruction of Afghanistan respect the culture. He urged that the country not be rebuilt on a Western model. The country has been through twenty-three years of hell. Two million Afghan lives have been lost. Afghans must lead the reconstruction effort. There are qualified Afghans all over the world. Currently there are 10 million unemployed Afghans. Mr. Mojaddidi urged that Afghans be trained and employed in their own country, for example in road

building projects that could help create jobs. He inquired about training programs for refugees.

Ms. Lindborg remarked that many refugees have had more access to training and education than their family members who remained in Afghanistan.

Ms. Woodward commented that the development of a stable government takes time. The focus of reconstruction efforts should be on how best to support Afghans in the development of their country.

Rob Williams of Concern Worldwide commented that if the Afghan government is not involved at an early stage, the UN could stand between the NGOs and the government. He asked Ms. Wali about the prospects for NGOs to have a relationship with the government, particularly early on in the process.

Ms. Wali stated that in her talks with Mr. Karzai there was a concern about international NGOs in Afghanistan and the need to create a code of conduct and guidelines for NGO activity. That structure has not yet been defined. The umbrella system of NGOs should work until local NGOs can become viable partners. Ms. Wali hopes that donors will require international NGOs to assist in the development and support of local NGOs. Ms. Wali also stated that the issue of Afghan ethnicity must be taken into account in employment programs. There is also a need to ensure that both urban and rural development occur.

Dan Lounberg of DevTech, Inc., asked Ms. Woodward for more detail about the process of forming the institutional structure of the national government and what kind of inputs, if any, are needed from the private sector.

Ms. Woodward replied that this has been Mr. Brahimi's area of focus at the UN. He has many Afghan experts involved in the process. Norwegian funding is being used to hold study groups of Afghans to discuss government structure and long-term reconstruction plans. The U.S. role is to support this effort. The ministries are not yet up and running. There are many technical concerns from hiring practices to paying salaries at locally sustainable rates, to providing computers, phones, and other technology. Ms. Woodward will be interested to see how the President's proposal that the Peace Corps open a program in Afghanistan in the near future plays out. Ms. Woodward suggested that the private sector could work on the economic issues.

A **participant** commented on the need to listen to the particulars about Afghanistan. Past efforts to introduce templates from other places have been unsuccessful.

Ms. Woodward replied that the comparative lessons reinforce the need to listen to particulars.

PANEL DISCUSSION

"The Budgetary Context: How will global needs be met?"
Moderator: Charles McCormack, CHAIR, ACVFA Relief and Development Working Group

Mr. MacCormack stated that since September 11, humanitarian and development assistance efforts have enjoyed a high level of attention. The U.S. public is tracking foreign relations at levels that have not been seen in decades. The public is aware that, in terms of the war on terrorism, the countries of Central Asia are on the front lines and there is a need for a long-term and sophisticated plan to deal with the issues of this new era. In the near future much attention will be focused in Mexico on the UN Financing for Development Summit. This has renewed the debate about the factors most crucial for successful humanitarian and development assistance. There are issues of national reform, transparency, accountability, reduction of corruption, building national institutions, development of indigenous leadership, trade barriers, globalization, and mobilization of private resources for development. The latter includes not just private investment, but resources such as the Gates Foundation have put into health and corporations have contributed to humanitarian assistance.

Mr. MacCormack remarked that the question of how to finance effective humanitarian and development assistance could not be more acute. The U.S. economy is emerging from a recession with tremendous demands for homeland security and military rebuilding, as well as deficits. There is a very extensive list of international priorities and an official U.S. development assistance budget that is essentially a billion dollars less than it was a dozen years ago.

Mr. MacCormack noted that the panel builds on the policy discussions of the morning sessions. The speakers will discuss their views on the current public interest in foreign affairs, important international commitments, and the tremendous pressure to find the resources to finance those commitments.

Mary McClymont, President, InterAction

Ms. McClymont stated that InterAction has 160 member organizations that are involved in relief and development activities in over 100 countries worldwide. InterAction recently launched a five-year public education and advocacy campaign, called the "Global Partnership for Effective Assistance."

The campaign has three goals:

1. Increase development and humanitarian assistance.
2. Improve aid effectiveness and impact.
3. Build international partnerships (in the process of accomplishing the first two goals).

In the broadest sense, the InterAction campaign is making an effort to reinvigorate the U.S. role in building safe, stable democratic societies. Ms. McClymont stated that it is critically important to inform the U.S. public about foreign assistance programs, especially the fact that they work. InterAction targeted seven accounts in the larger

foreign operations budget. The goal is a doubling of these accounts over five years, moving the budget from \$3.8 billion to about \$7 billion. The campaign seeks to raise all seven accounts, not just a few at the expense of the others.

Ms. McClymont stated that the time is particularly ripe for this campaign. Although the campaign was being planned prior to September 11, recently there has been more public conversation about foreign affairs and how relief and development work can bring peace and security both abroad and at home. Many leaders have addressed these issues. Secretary Powell has frequently commented on terrorism and the conditions that precipitate terrorism. A letter from 92 members of Congress was sent to President Bush, urging him to think about increasing the international affairs budget. Many Congressional leaders have called for this increase. InterAction has a list of quotes that is available to interested parties. Ms. McClymont referred to the upcoming UN Financing for Development conference where major financial institutions will be thinking long and hard about effectiveness and what it will cost to meet these important goals.

Ms. McClymont shared the results of recent public surveys by InterAction. They found that the American public has a sharpened focus on the world and sees a connection between their lives and the lives of people in Afghanistan, people that don't get enough to eat, can't go to school, or are unemployed. The U.S. public understands that there is a connection. InterAction believes that it is a great moment for broader, substantial education because the U.S. public is more willing to hear these messages.

InterAction also found that the public believes in building self-sufficiency, giving people the basic skills needed to improve their lives. This results in good will towards the United States, as well as more stability around the world and at home. Surveys also showed that Americans believe in the Golden Rule. The generous American spirit endures despite the very difficult economic picture at home. Americans believe in partnership and teamwork. They don't want America to do everything, but they do want America to work with others and do its part. They also want effectiveness and worry about corruption and waste, but the public does believe that programs work when they are shown the successes.

Ms. McClymont expressed some disappointment in the budget that went to Congress this year. The new reality is not reflected in that budget. There is only a modest increase in the seven development accounts. After adjustment for inflation and population, this level of funding is, in reality, a billion dollars less than a decade ago. Moreover, in light of the critical and long-term needs in Afghanistan, there is not enough money in the new budget for effective reconstruction. In sum, the public believes in these goals, but this is not reflected in the budget.

RODNEY BENT, Deputy Associate Director for International Affairs, Office of Management and Budget (OMB)

Mr. Bent remarked that the "President proposes, but the Congress disposes." Mr. Bent stated that there is no question that September 11 changed the focus of the

Administration. There is also no question about the tremendous needs worldwide. If the international affairs budget could be doubled, tripled or even quadrupled, it still would not meet the tremendous need. Budgeting is about the allocation of scarce resources. Measurement, effectiveness, and impact are important considerations that require attention in the budget process.

Mr. Bent stated that he felt that the proposed budget is relatively good. There is a 5% increase in the Foreign Operations budget. The FY2003 budget provides \$750 million more than the FY1993 budget, reflecting substantial growth for international affairs. Development assistance has grown 14% over the last three years. People are aware of the links between terrorism and the U.S. role in the world. The development assistance budget that the President proposed recently is roughly \$250 million more than last year. PL480 Title II will go up by \$335 million. The number of Peace Corps Volunteers will double over the next several years.

Mr. Bent noted that the real challenge of the budget process is to demonstrate the impact of the programs against the budget numbers. He concluded by inviting the audience to bring their knowledge of effective development programs to the budget debate, particularly in the public realm. There is a need to demystify the federal budget and help the American public, press, and Congress better understand these issues.

Charlie Flickner, Majority Clerk, Subcommittee on Foreign Operations, Export Financing and Related Programs, Committee on Appropriations, U.S. House of Representatives

Mr. Flickner remarked that the morning session had been very informative. He noted that Congress recognizes the need for more resources for Afghanistan and the surrounding region, but also sees the absolute need to make sure that those resources are used effectively. Mr. Flickner reinforced the point made earlier by Mr. Natsios that all U.S. assistance will have to be identified with the United States, since its purpose is to implement foreign policy. Mr. Flickner remarked that this may mean a move away from supporting the objectives of NGOs in grants and contracts to supporting the objectives of the government of the United States. There are scandalous examples of groups that go into foreign countries and essentially conduct their own foreign policy.

Mr. Flickner noted that the meeting participants include many people and organizations that have made a huge difference in the lives of many people around the world. There are some, however, that advocate "silver bullets" and simple solutions, and these groups will not be supported. One solution that really is quite simple is to invest in education. Mr. Flickner suggested that the Foreign Operations Subcommittee would support the use of resources for education programs in Afghanistan and, in fact, would be supportive of many of the points mentioned by Mr. Natsios, Mr. McConnell, and Mr. Dewey.

Mr. Flickner agreed with the other panelists that the needs are great and funds are insufficient, but he emphasized that a test of potential effectiveness is necessary. USAID must straighten out its management problems. Mr. Flickner expects President Bush to force improvements very quickly. He asked the audience to pay attention to Secretary

O'Neill's questions about what there is to show for past development efforts, particularly in parts of the world where development groups have been working for 40 or 50 years.

Peter Smith, Professional Staff Member, Committee on International Relations, U.S. House of Representatives

Mr. Smith stated that he has been with the Committee on International Relations for only five weeks and could not speak with authority for the Committee, but would talk about the areas he will be working on. His focus over the next year will be reaching out to the food assistance, refugee, and development assistance communities to understand their issues, hear their views and represent these on the Committee.

Mr. Smith stated that the majority of the Committee members are supportive of the President's budget request. However, there are some areas of concern, including funding for HIV/AIDS. Mr. Hyde introduced a bill that authorizes a larger amount of assistance than the President's budget. Before Mr. Smith had arrived the Committee staff worked very closely with a wide variety of groups to develop a bill that the staff thinks should go forward.

The Committee staff is also interested in the farm bill, particularly the trade title. Echoing earlier comments, Mr. Smith remarked that many aspects of the farm bill were contemplated prior to September 11 in a budget environment that was much different than today. Several years ago both farm commodities and budgets were in surplus. Mr. Smith stated that he does not know what is going to happen when the House and Senate go to conference, but ultimately the food assistance programs will require some adjustment. The Committee staff is generally supportive of the Global Food for Education initiative, but there may be a need to reassess the manner in which it is funded. The objectives of the program as intended by the original sponsors included education, improved childhood nutrition, and the furtherance of American foreign policy through the appropriate and prudent use of food supplies. Mr. Smith expressed a need to work together to see that these objectives are achieved within the new budgetary context.

The Committee members and staff were very encouraged to hear the Commissioner of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) and the Assistant Secretary of State reiterate the President's commitment to 70,000 refugee admissions this year. The Committee staff is extremely interested in the funding request for Afghanistan and looks forward to the Administration coming forward with realistic and appropriate numbers for FY 2003, based on a vision and supported by a budget that reflects what the United States has achieved in humanitarian assistance so far.

Questions and Answers/Audience Discussion

Mr. MacCormack remarked that clearly the issues go beyond the dollar amounts. There are questions of impact, accountability, priority, and national security -- and the stakes of these decisions have never been higher in the minds of the public.

Stephen Mosley of the Academy for Educational Development and an ACVFA member asked the panelists to give some examples of what they consider effective programs.

Mr. Flickner replied that he heard some of those examples during the morning sessions. He suggested that effective programs are those that are measured well and sensibly, not necessarily according to the strictures of the Government Reporting and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA). Aid works well when donors work with good governments and do not try to set up alternative structures. Government institutions, security, and ownership by the people involved also are prerequisites for successful programs. Mr. Flickner asked the participants to consider the case of Pakistan where a lot of money will be invested in education over the next few years. Mr. Flickner suggested that NGOs work with Assistant Administrator Lori Forman and her colleagues in USAID's Bureau for Asia and the Near East to develop goals that can be measured every few years, rather than the current impossible-to-meet annual measures. It should be possible to know in two or three years whether progress is being made in Pakistan.

Mr. Bent remarked that he has faith in GPRA. It is important to look at inputs, outputs, and outcomes. It is more than just a transparency issue. Sometimes there are good programs that work, but there may be disagreement about whether or not they should be federally funded. Mr. Bent also stated that many ineffective programs could be more effective. The challenge is to put together a set of criteria for effectiveness that relies on more than just a few measures. The emphasis should be on how one designs a program, rather than on the reporting requirements. It is important not to tie the bureaucracy into knots in a quasi-academic exercise that is not tied to resource allocation. There is a need to have a richness of discussion about what works or doesn't work, including discussions of goals, expectations, constraints, and participants. That is the feedback being sought from the NGO community.

Don Crane, from ACDI/VOCA, asked Mr. Smith to elaborate on the issues of food assistance and the Global Food for Education initiative.

Mr. Smith replied that he could not go into detail, but considering the declining agricultural surpluses and the declining budget surplus there is a need to look carefully at the food aid program, including projected results and program efficiency. He noted that this might be painful for some government and private organizations.

Niels de Terra, International Resources Group, stated that among the many indicators of poverty, one that isn't often mentioned is energy poverty. Nine years ago only 4% of the population of Afghanistan had access to electricity. The government needs energy for security and to light and heat public buildings. It also needs technical assistance to develop an energy sector policy. While mistakes in humanitarian assistance can usually be corrected relatively quickly, mistakes in energy infrastructure can be difficult to correct. This is an area where the private sector and USAID have prior experience. He asked the panelists to comment on energy assistance for Afghanistan.

Mr. Flickner remarked that there is a South Asia regional initiative designed to bring together the countries of Bangladesh, Nepal, India, and perhaps Pakistan and Afghanistan. It has struggled for survival because it was funded through the Economic Support Fund. Mr. Flickner stated that Mr. de Terra is absolutely correct in his assessment of the importance of energy. Nothing can happen in terms of reconstruction or inter-regional links without restoring transmission lines and preventing total deforestation of the country. According to Mr. Flickner, this is one of extraordinary gaps that resulted from the focus of Congress and the aid community on selected silver bullets. Within USAID, other issues are dominating, and energy is being neglected. Also, because of downsizing, USAID has lost most of its energy experts.

John Blackton commented that he spent half of his career in the two countries that received the most U.S. foreign assistance historically, Egypt and Pakistan. Neither of these countries has performed very well according to recent indicators. While there are many reasons for failure, some of the problem can be traced directly to U.S. foreign policy. The United States invests in regimes that are listless, not serious, not accountable, and not purposeful. Foreign aid given to these regimes doesn't achieve much. Mr. Blackton asked Mr. Flickner to comment on the likelihood of a dialogue between Congress and the Administration on the effectiveness of providing aid in these environments.

Mr. Flickner suggested that in the case of Egypt, the agricultural program has worked. He noted that the previous Chairman of the Subcommittee had set in motion a reduction in the Economic Support Funds for Egypt and Israel that has freed up money for other programs. The Subcommittee is also trying to give the Administration some flexibility to work with different regimes. The Administration's hesitant approach to Uzbekistan is sensible. The government meets none of the positive criteria laid out by Mr. Blackton, and the United States is not rushing to pour in resources. In Mr. Flickner's view, the test of effectiveness of aid will be in Pakistan. The Musharraf government is quite serious about human and social development; however, if Pakistan is treated as an afterthought to Afghanistan, it will be a missed opportunity.

Annette Hartenstein of the Institute for Reconstruction and International Security through Education asked the panelists to comment on trade as an enabling force for job creation and exports in developing countries.

Mr. Bent responded by asking participants to consider why the United States or European countries don't open their markets up more fully to developing countries. The Administration espouses free trade, but issues arise in relation to specific industries – textiles, steel, footwear, electronics, and so forth.

Mr. Flickner related the example of Pakistan's efforts to convince the United States to remove textile quotas and reduce tariffs on textile imports. Resistance from the U.S. textile industry has defeated this proposal each time it has been brought up, most recently during President Musharraf's visit.

Herschelle Challenor, ACVFA member, remarked that next year will be thirty years since the basic human needs strategy was devised by the House International Relations Committee. She noted the old adage “If you keep doing things the way you’ve always been doing them, you’re going to get the same results.” There have been very dramatic changes recently and there is an opportunity for Congress to take leadership on this. The United States knows from its own development the importance of telecommunications, energy, and transportation. Ms. Challenor suggested that the United States has the expertise and capacity to focus on energy and technology in Afghanistan. Other donors could provide assistance in basic human needs. She challenged the Congress to change its focus.

Mr. Bent posed the question of the United States’ competitive advantage in these areas. He asked the audience to consider the appropriate role for the U.S. government, private sector, and international donors based upon their comparative advantages.

Mr. Smith agreed that there is a need to look very carefully at the limited resources available for Afghanistan and ensure that the United States isn’t replicating efforts by others or supplanting activities that could be done by the Afghans themselves.

Ms. Challenor expressed her view that the U.S. government and private sector should work together, as is being done in other countries. Ideally, the government would provide money for infrastructure, and then bring in the private sector to provide technical capability and financial investment. This would introduce change and innovation that will promote growth, and at the same time broaden the constituency for foreign aid.

Mr. Flickner replied that it takes a few dynamic people on Capitol Hill and in the Administration to refocus things. The U.S. government bilateral program has largely abandoned infrastructure to the multilateral development banks. The faults of bilateral aid are glaring in the areas that Mr. Natsios has addressed --financial management, procurement, and human resources. Still, the United States has one of the best aid agencies in the world, thanks partly to NGO implementers. The 1960s system with division of labor between bilateral and multilateral organizations is gone and a new approach has not arisen to replace it.

Ali Seraj, an Afghan American, commented that in the course of this meeting he has heard much about the multitude of problems in Afghanistan. It is necessary to understand every region and tribe in order to understand the country. Any policy that is formulated must be formulated for the different sections of Afghanistan rather than the country as a whole. With the all problems faced by the interim government today, the solution is simple – money. While the donor nations committed billions of dollars to Afghanistan, unfortunately none of that has materialized in real terms to the interim government. Today, the warlords have more influence than Mr. Karzai because they have printed money over the years and they are able to pay their employees. In order for Mr. Karzai to be an effective leader of all of Afghanistan, he must be empowered to pay government salaries.

Mr. Seraj illustrated his point with an example from the Ministry of Communications. The Minister's salary is \$40 per month. The Minister was given \$10,000 to help fix the telecommunication system that has 6,000 employees. He had to make a choice between putting windows in the eighteen story building, cleaning the building, or paying salaries. Poor people in the rural areas have heard that other countries have given billions of dollars to Afghanistan, but since they don't see the effects of that money they think that the interim government has pocketed the money, as has happened so often before. They do not understand that the world is waiting for Afghanistan to develop a banking system, an accounting system, and so forth. Mr. Seraj and many others are investing private money in Afghanistan, but there must be a strong government to provide a sense of security for the private sector. Mr. Seraj asked when the U.S. government is going to empower Mr. Karzai with enough money to run the government.

Mr. Flickner responded that the notion of a comprehensive plan is important. Mr. Karzai must give the impression that he is really running the government or he will not remain the leader. The United States may be out of the country in six months unless there is a comprehensive plan to address these governance and security issues. Mr. Flickner agreed that Afghanistan needs a currency that people can be paid in, as opposed to warlords printing their own money. As Mr. Dewey said earlier, if the UN doesn't quickly set up a coordinating system and stand behind the Afghan government as a shadow, then the fate of the Afghan people will continue to be miserable.

Mr. Seraj commented that not only the fate of Afghanistan is at stake. Because of the events of September 11, the future of Afghanistan and the United States are tied together. Even if Afghanistan is destroyed completely, the world will remember what has happened. Mr. Seraj reminded the audience that countries with nuclear weapons surround Afghanistan. The United States presence in the region is necessary to keep this powder keg from exploding. Security for Afghanistan will bring security in the region and, in turn, the world.

Julia White, from Improve the World International, commented that talk of money brings up the issue of effectiveness, transparency and accountability on the ground. She asked the panelists what they would propose as a line of action for organizations interested in these issues.

Ms. McClymont replied that InterAction is working with USAID on these issues, making recommendations, and sharing best practices. Ms. McClymont was encouraged by Secretary Powell's statement that the United States has a great deal to show for aid and there is no limit to opportunities that he would have to spend additional money wisely. The aid community knows a lot of things that work, but there is a need to share that information with the public and Congress.

Bruce Cohen, from Interns for Peace, commented that on September 11 the United States was bombed by nineteen people. They were economically, not socially, empowered. Over 80% of youth in the Muslim world think that Osama bin Laden is a hero. Mr. Cohen suggested that the United States train community peace workers in

every country in which it works, empowering them to make changes in their communities. These peace workers give a message that is pro-people, pro-development, and pro-reconciliation. Otherwise, money is distributed for good causes, but not to people who are pro-peace. Mr. Cohen questioned giving money to local NGOs for their staffs. Instead, he suggested that the local NGO partner with an international agency. Empowerment is about who makes program decisions, not who is distributing the money. Money given to local agencies often goes into the pockets of the elite.

Mr. Flickner referred the audience to a recent article in the Los Angeles Times about the experiences of peace groups in Colombia. Mr. Flickner stated that programs like Seeds for Peace and Interns for Peace are more a matter for private charity than public investment.

Mr. MacCormack thanked the panel and the meeting participants for their remarks. He noted that there were some areas of agreement. One is the importance of energetic, committed and transparent governments. Another is freer trade, but that is difficult to attain. A third area of agreement is the need to apply lessons about what works and communicate it more clearly to the American public, the U.S. Congress, and the Executive Branch. The stakes have never been higher and the public has never been more aware of these issues. The discussion is really about how to produce a future world that is safe, peaceful, and represents core American values.

Reports From Breakout Groups On Afghanistan

GROUP 1

"Political Dynamics And Governance,"

Moderator: William Fuller, ACVFA Member

Speakers: Bill Cole, Asia Foundation; John Blackton, Former Mission Director, USAID Afghanistan

Mr. Fuller reported that the group looked at three questions:

1. What kind of government system stands the best chance of success?
2. What are the major challenges faced by the government?
3. What is the role of donors and implementers?

General discussion points:

- Competence in the Cabinet of the interim government is spread thin. Questions were raised about their capability to respond to multiple donors and NGOs.
- The *loya jirga* will determine the future leadership of the country and will set government priorities. The warlords are already jockeying for position in the *loya jirga*.

- Mr. Blackton maintained that Afghanistan is “governable” based on historical precedents. He emphatically discouraged the notion that NGOs ought to be dealing with the warlords.
- Strengthening the central government is important. The new government is going to have to deliver in order to survive. Many international NGOs have experience in capacity building. NGOs in Afghanistan want a strong central government for stability and security.
- Democratization is a very difficult process. Some voter education might be a worthwhile endeavor. Nobody expects the development of a democratic process in the short-run.
- The group also recognized the changing nature and the fragility of civil society groups in Afghanistan.

Challenges:

1. Dealing with the warlords. The links between the central government and local governments are critical. Warlords will necessarily be involved in local administration. A suggestion was made that teachers be paid directly by the central government, bypassing the warlords. NGOs and donors need to be consistent in dealing with warlords.
2. Balance of ethnicity. Government appointments are one way to try to balance ethnicity. Afghans have had a lot of experience in dealing with different factions and have expertise in negotiation.

GROUP 2

“Promoting Women’s Equality”

Moderator: Elise Smith, Chair, ACVFA Gender Working Group

Speaker: Sima Wali, Refugee Women In Development

Ms. Smith reported that the group looked at short and long-term priorities for women’s equality. Ms. Wali provided insights and specifics for these issues.

Short term priorities:

1. Strengthen and support the Ministry of Women’s Affairs. It is critical that the Ministry have the capability to take leadership on policies affecting women. The Ministry has a critical need for cash to organize, hire a qualified staff, and begin to develop programs. The Ministry needs to take leadership in making sure women and women’s issues are represented at the *loya jirga*.
2. Capacity building for NGOs and community groups. These small, but effective groups should be maximized in their work. There is a need for training and leadership development for women. There is an issue around how resources are

going to flow to local NGOs. It was suggested that U.S. PVOs be required to share some percentage of their funds with local NGOs. Afghan women have expressed a desire to have funds go directly to women's groups. At least, all international NGOs should make sure they have a strong gender component, and work with local NGOs as much as possible.

Other issues:

Women's rights and equality as related to *sharia*. Afghan women need to take the leadership on this issue. There are rights for women, but after years of Taliban rule, many women are not aware of that. There is a need to bring these women back into the system.

Other rights that Americans identify and take for granted must be viewed within the cultural context of Afghanistan. If the male population is alienated, it will not advance the cause of women.

In conclusion, Ms. Smith noted that there are huge challenges. In supporting Afghan women, the donor community can contribute to the goals of reconstruction with full participation of women. She emphasized the importance of consulting with women's organizations in planning for reconstruction. Every sector should do a gender analysis to help guide programming.

GROUP 3

"Rebuilding The Agricultural Sector"

Moderator: Peter Reiling, ACVFA Member

Speakers: Rolf Campbell, Land O'Lakes;

Robert Pelant, Heifer Project International

Mr. Reiling reported that the group looked at three questions:

1. What are the major challenges in reconstructing the agricultural sector?
2. What strategies and program options are most appropriate and likely to be successful?
3. What needs to be communicated to political leaders to ensure that women's special needs are being met and their potential to contribute to long-term development is realized?

Rolf Campbell from Land O'Lakes and Robert Pelant from Heifer Project International gave excellent presentations and provided a foundation for the discussions.

General observations:

- It is difficult to speak of Afghanistan without considering the region as a whole.
- There is tremendous geographical and cultural diversity within the country.
- Agricultural solutions cannot be discussed in isolation of other sectoral solutions.

Challenges in reconstructing the agricultural sector:

1. The number one challenge is security. It is difficult to talk about agricultural development when there are still so many landmines in the country.
2. There are tremendous needs for infrastructure development.
3. There is a brain drain throughout the country.
4. The food system is dysfunctional, from input to supply.
5. Access to water is a major constraint.
6. In some regions there is a shortage of labor.

Strategies:

1. Utilize homegrown solutions. Afghans for Tomorrow, a group of young Afghan professionals working full time on development issues in Afghanistan, shared some of their concerns and issues about reconstruction.
2. Establish corridors of security.
3. Start with a focus on subsistence.
4. Identify high-value opportunities.
5. Look at the agricultural value chain from inputs to distribution and marketing, and make appropriate interventions at all levels.
6. Work closely with local NGOs.
7. Hand off programs to local NGOs as soon as possible.

Gender Concerns:

1. Get a handle on how involved women are already and how involved they want to be.
2. Communicate to leaders that women are a tremendous resource for all sectors.
3. Assist in coalescing women's and action groups and use them as a channel for the distribution of assistance.

GROUP 4**"Education Sector Reconstruction"**

Moderator: Dr. Herschel I e Challenor, ACVFA Member:

Speaker: Sameena Nazir, International Human Rights Law Group

Ms. Challenor remarked that the group had a very rich discussion about education. The speaker, Ms. Nazir, addressed the challenges by talking about the context.

Challenges:

1. Overcoming the strong impact of the Taliban
2. Destruction of infrastructure
3. Brain drain
4. Changed cultural values as a result of the Taliban rule, including family relationships
5. Severe lack of resources
6. Lack of security
7. Lack of policy consistency in terms of governments for the past 20 years

8. Effects of long-term deprivation of education on the population
9. Lack of teacher training
10. Uncertainty among returning Afghans about how their degrees will be recognized

Strategies:

1. Restore the infrastructure of schools, from buildings to school supplies.
2. Train teachers in subject matter, curriculum development and administration.
3. Rely on employees, not volunteers.
4. Develop high level political commitment to education.
5. Educate adults, as well as girls and boys, particularly in literacy skills.
6. Recognize that this is going to be a gradual transformation.
7. Rely on Afghan-Americans with the needed language skills.
8. Use non-formal and mass communication systems creatively.

The group discussed the issue of secularization and religious involvement in schools. Americans need to be reminded of the importance of Islam in the region. It was suggested that perhaps religion should not be eliminated from the schools, but there should be greater oversight of the curriculum.

Mr. Reese thanked the meeting participants for a long, hard day and reminded everyone of the date of the next ACVFA meeting, May 22, 2002.

**"Afghanistan Relief, Reconstruction and
Development: Implications for the U.S.
Foreign Assistance Agenda"**

Advisory Committee on Voluntary Foreign Aid

Meeting Agenda

Annex 1

Advisory Committee on Voluntary Foreign Aid

Public Meeting

Wednesday, February 20, 2002
9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Grand Hyatt Washington Hotel
1000 H Street, NW
Washington, D.C.

Agenda

"Afghanistan Relief, Reconstruction and Development: Implications for the U.S. Foreign Assistance Agenda"

- 8:30** **Registration, Independence Foyer** (*Independence Level 5B, 3 Escalators down from Lobby Level*)
- 9:00** **Welcome/Introduction** *Independence Ballroom E (Independence Level 5B)*
William S. Reese, ACVFA Chair
- 9:15** **Keynote Address** *Independence Ballroom E*
"Peace and Development in Afghanistan and Central Asia: Long-term Prospects," Andrew S. Natsios, USAID Administrator
- Questions and Answers/Audience Discussion**
- 9:45** **"USAID's Response to Current and Future Needs," Bernd McConnell, Director, Central Asia Task Force, USAID** *Independence Ballroom E*
- Questions and Answers/Audience Discussion**
- 10:15** **Break**
- 10:30** **Panel Discussion: "Linking Relief and Development: Lessons for Afghanistan and Future Crises," Moderator: William Garvelink, Senior Deputy Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance, USAID; Speakers: Susan Woodward, Professor of Political Science, The Graduate Center, City University of New York; Gene Dewey, Assistant Secretary, Bureau for Population, Refugees and Migration, U.S. Department of State; Sima Wali, Executive Director, Refugee Women in Development; Nancy Lindborg, Executive Vice President, Mercy Corps International** (*Independence Ballroom E*)

This panel will focus on lessons that would be of use to policymakers and practitioners as Afghanistan moves from relief to reconstruction and long-term development.

Questions and Answers/Audience Discussion

12:00 Lunch (*Participants on their own*)

1:30 Panel Discussion: "The Budgetary Context: How Will Global Needs be Met?" Moderator: Charles MacCormack, Chair, ACVFA Relief and Development Working Group; Speakers: Mary McClymont, President, InterAction; Rodney Bent, Deputy Associate Director for International Affairs, Office of Management and Budget (OMB); Charlie Flickner, Majority Clerk, Subcommittee on Foreign Operations, Export Financing and Related Programs, Committee on Appropriations, U.S. House of Representatives; Peter Smith, Professional Staff Member, Committee on International Relations, U.S. House of Representatives; Heather Flynn, Senate Foreign Relations Committee.
(*Independence Ballroom E*)

This panel will focus on the larger context of foreign assistance post-9/11 and meeting global development needs in light of our commitment to the reconstruction of Afghanistan.

3:00 Break

3:15 Breakout Groups on issues related to Afghanistan: *These groups flow from the morning panel and are intended to continue the discussion of what constructive, new things need to be done at the policy and programmatic levels to ensure long-term development. Each group will have a moderator/rapporteur and one or two lead speakers to kick off the discussion.*

- 1) "Political Dynamics and Governance," Moderator: William Fuller, ACVFA Member; Speakers: Bill Cole, Asia Foundation (recently returned from Kabul); John Blackton, Former Mission Director, USAID Afghanistan
Independence F (Independence Level 5B)
- 2) "Promoting Women's Equality," Moderator: Elise Smith, Chair, ACVFA Gender Working Group; Speaker: Sima Wali, Refugee Women in Development
Independence G (Independence Level 5B)
- 3) "Rebuilding the Agricultural Sector," Moderator: Peter Reiling, ACVFA Member; Speakers: Rolf Campbell, Land O'Lakes; Robert Pelant, Heifer Project International
Independence H (Independence Level 5B)
- 4) "Education Sector Reconstruction," Moderator: Dr. Herschelle Challenor, ACVFA Member; Speaker: Sameena Nazir, International Human Rights Law Group
Independence I (Independence Level 5B)

4:30 **Reports from Breakout Groups** *Independence Ballroom E*

5:00 **Adjournment of Public Meeting**

**"Afghanistan Relief, Reconstruction and
Development: Implications for the U.S.
Foreign Assistance Agenda"**

Advisory Committee on Voluntary Foreign Aid

**Breakout Group
Session Notes**

Annex 2

ACVFA Public Meeting, Wednesday, February 20, 2002**Break-Out Groups on Issues Relating to Afghanistan****POLITICAL DYNAMICS AND GOVERNANCE****Moderator: William Fuller, ACVFA Member****Speakers: Bill Cole, Asia Foundation; John Blackton, Former Mission Director, USAID Afghanistan**

Bill Fuller: The purpose of this session is to exchange views on the political dynamics in Afghanistan and how it relates to donors.

Questions to be discussed:

1. What is donor/PVO role on issues of governance?
2. What is NGO role? What will government look like? Strong vs. weak center?

Mr. Fuller introduced the speakers and reported that Mr. Cole would talk about the political scene and dynamic of politics, and Mr. Blackton would discuss the specifics of different views of politics and what changes could mean for donors and programs in Afghanistan.

Bill Cole: Key points to set the political context.

- Bonn Agreement:
 - Interim Authority 3 bodies: Karzai's administration, Special Commission, Supreme Court
 - The Interim Authority will be in place for six months during which time a loya jirga (national assembly) will be held to choose a new interim government, which will rule for 18 months.
 - Two years from the date of convening the loya jirga, free and fair elections are to be held.
 - Karzai's Cabinet was chosen to represent many interest groups. Under Taliban, little functioned, so now there is little administrative structure in place.
 - Interior, Defense and Foreign Affairs Depts. had some base in former government, so they probably function best now.
 - Women's Affairs and Reconstruction Depts. have no previous history, starting from scratch.
 - Ministers themselves are doing most of the work.
 - Much overlap of responsibilities makes coordination difficult, very confused situation.
 - Civil Service Commission, Human Rights Commission also planned
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- **Loya Jirga:** Tasks to ensure fair elections:
 - Before the commission has even selected criteria for delegates, etc., warlords are trying to appoint delegates. UN has to step in to help the process. Very difficult to do this without troops and reliable information.
 - Ensure worst warlords kept at distance, while remaining transparent and fair in selection of delegates.
- **Civil Society:** The development community expects a lot. Afghan NGOs have played a huge role historically, and now much is expected. Most still based outside the country, few see a return anytime soon. Also, tend to be focused on relief activities, and few have the capacity to get involved in government and policy.
- **Centralized vs. de-centralized governance:** The reality is that the local power of the central government is already showing signs of fracturing (with help from foreign backers), favoring de-centralized power.

John Blackton: Donors, Implementers and Warlords: How to avoid failure with these actors:

Mr. Blackton, who worked in Afghanistan both in the early 1970s and in the 1990s, reminded the participants that after 23 years of civil war, Afghanistan has been left in ruins. The new government, if properly construed, however, has the opportunity to create the conditions for a better life for the Afghan people.

Mr. Blackton put forth for consideration of the group some suggestions that others have made regarding how the donors, the PVOs and the NGOs might choose to operate in the Afghan political context. He emphasized that he did not agree with these suggestions.

First, Anatol Lieven, a British historian who covered the region for the *Financial Times*, and has more recently been a fellow at the U.S. Institute of Peace and at Carnegie has argued that:

“The melancholy truth is that for the foreseeable future, Afghanistan cannot be governed, either by the "international community" or by Afghans themselves. It can at best be managed to prevent a renewal of conflict and give ordinary Afghans the chance to restart basic economic activities with some security-trade, markets, the restoration of irrigation systems in the countryside and so on.”

In the January issue of *Prospect*, Lieven stated (also quite wrongly):

“To describe Afghanistan as medieval is an undeserved compliment to its dark-age tribal structures. Even in the 1950s modernization didn't touch people outside the cities. Western-backed democratic state building is not an option; the best we can hope for is an era of unsupervised peace.”

Second, a very experienced development analyst with extensive African experience, Marina Ottaway at the Carnegie Endowment, has suggested that

“The existence of a highly decentralized, quasi-medieval system necessitates that the international community embrace the second, more realistic path to reconstruction in Afghanistan.

This reality requires that the international community embrace the following strategies:

- 1) Abandon the unrealistic idea of building a strong central government. Instead, define the minimal tasks that must be performed by the central government and accept that warlords and tribal leaders will control the rest. Provide an international presence to ensure Kabul's status as an open city.
- 2) Work with warlords, despite their odious nature, in a pragmatic way that acknowledges their firm entrenchment in the Afghan power structure. Formal structures to maintain liaisons between warlords and donors will be necessary to ensure, for example, that aid is adequately distributed in areas where the interim government lacks enforcement authority.”

Mr. Blackton emphasized that both of these writers are wrong. From the beginnings of the modern Afghan nation after the treaty of Rawalpindi in 1919 until the Russian Invasion at the end of the 1970s, Afghanistan experienced increasing degrees of constitutionalism, limited representative government and modest but not inconsequential programs of social and educational modernization.

Viewed in the aggregate over this half century, the slope of progress was positive. Viewed under a microscope, the positive slope was the usual statistical summation of a range of volatile ups and downs - but one in which the “ups” outbalanced the “downs” over time.

Whenever the steepness of the slope was increased too fast - for example when King Amanullah sought to import Attaturk's reform package from Turkey in the late 1920s - there was harsh political backlash from the keepers of conservative custom - the Khans, and the leaders of the most powerful tribes. For all that, however, Afghanistan gradually took on the trappings of a nation state moving from an unrestricted monarchy to a constitutional monarchy to a somewhat parliamentary monarchy to an autocratic and somewhat constitutional republic. At the end of this period in the mid-1970s, more than half the students in the University were women. More than half of the civil service (counting all the clerical and administrative positions) was female.

Equally importantly, relatively robust patterns of relationships between the center and the periphery had been established. Afghanistan was not Bismarck's Germany, but it was not

a tribal warlord state. In areas like health, education and the national gendarmerie, the writ of Kabul was considerable. In realms like justice, the balance was more complex - with modern civil and criminal codes well established in the urban courts, while most rural legal disputes were still being settled by a mixture of tribal and customary law lightly influenced by the national judicial codes.

The trend in the early and mid-1990s among donors and development programmers to work through warlords meant in the long run that national programs of public health or primary schooling declined, with a resultant decrease in the aggregate levels of health and education.

Mr. Blackton reaffirmed that Afghanistan is not a medieval and ungovernable society. It is an ethnically and tribally complex society that has proven that it can achieve moderate levels of governance. He made a number of recommendations for donors and implementers:

- Donor assistance should be planned (by the donors) and executed (by the implementing agencies) in ways which strengthen the hand of the central government - which will continue to be a relatively weak hand, but which needs help, not hindrance, from the foreign aid world.
- The donors should very strictly avoid direct donor dealing with the warlords unless they happen to enjoy formal positions of governance - for example, as real provincial governors appointed by Kabul.
- The program implementers will have to work with warlords in many cases, but they should do so in ways that do not formalize and legitimize the warlords any more than necessary. Specifically,
 - NGOs will probably have to sit down with Ismail Khan or his henchmen (none of them have many hench-women) to work out an immunization protocol for western Afghanistan.
 - NGOs should not give Warlords Sherzai, or Dostom or Ismail Khan sign-off authority on primary school textbooks and curriculum as they used to enjoy in the cross-border aid program.
 - NGOs will need to coordinate travel plans with warlords at times to ensure the safe passage of staff.
 - NGOs should not pay 10% of the aid commodities as a safe passage fee; large donors should support the NGOs' position on this.

Mr. Blackton cited examples from his experience in Afghanistan of the tension that can exist between day-to-day program goals and foreign aid principles. For example,

- More babies can be reached with well-baby materials if an NGO cooperates with warlords;
- By letting a warlord take out a few offending pages that talk about girls at work from the primary school readers NGOs can obtain support for community based road and irrigation projects.

The correct response to these tensions is to say "NO." Of course, this is an oversimplification. The realities on the ground are always more shaded and complex. But the underlying concepts are important:

- The large donors must take great pains to structure the assistance in consort with the government in Kabul. Andrew Natsios has promised that USAID will do this.
- The implementers on the ground will make some day-to-day accommodations with the illegitimate regional political powers, but they must look to the big donors to back them up in drawing clear limits to those day-to-day accommodations. USAID's leadership has promised today that they will do this.

History won't judge this period by the success or the failure of any particular development project or any set of projects. It will judge this period by whether or not Afghanistan has returned to the modest, but positive slope of progress on the path to constitutionalism and social and cultural development.

Each of you, each of us --- will play some small part in shaping that historical judgment.

- **Floor comments:**
 - **Ron Johnson, RPI:** If donors won't payoff warlords, then someone will have to provide benefits to warlords, could be central government. If these are the only two choices, then we must try and do the least damage and preserve the central government. But delivery of services will be done well below central government. Ministries will be resource providers, but not implementers. Overlay this with issue of warlord powers—they will have a role.
 - **John Blackton:** As an example of operating under these conditions, here are three theoretically different ways to paying teachers: (1) USAID or other donor could provide funding to Ministry of Education, and they will deliver paychecks; (2) Khan says to Karzai, "Trust me. I'll pay them if you give me the money"; or (3) CARE or CRS (large PVOs) will be on the ground and pay teachers themselves. This will not empower anyone. Afghanistan is one of the highest per capita recipients of foreign assistance. Used the Cold War to run government off of donor resources.
 - **Bill Cole:** Three points: (1) The resource will be there; (2) There is a necessity of commanders to lead locals. You want to work with the Ministries to deliver resources locally and build local image of the central government having the

ability to deliver services locally; and (3) The UN is there now to negotiate with warlords. This capacity needs to be transferred to central government.

- **Audience Question:** Any needs for technical assistance to the central government?
 - **John Blackton:** The needs are limitless. They need working ministries, need police academies, need financial advice on dealing with donors....etc.
 - **Audience:** Government is not the same as Governance. What is the prospect for democratic governance in Afghanistan?
 - **Bill Cole:** They need beginnings of legitimate economy...good first step. Democratic process is unrealistic at the moment. We just can't use categories like this yet. Where will Rule of Law fit in?
- **Question:** How can we plant initial seeds to take first steps? Is there a plan for what Afghanistan will look like in 5 years?
 - **John Blackton:** There is some space for PVOs/NGOs in helping to keep locals informed and involved in the process. And traditionally in Afghanistan, the big issues have been taken down to the grassroots level for votes.
- We need to use the lens of ethnicity. How to do this?
 - **John Blackton:** We need to be careful as Americans about this. It's more complicated than ethnicity. Issues are also what families, clans, town/valley are you from. Also Sunni vs. Shiite. It's just one part of a very complicated story. Afghans understand this much better than we do.
 - **Bill Cole:** In an Afghan traditional Shura, everybody who matters is represented. Things are arrived at through consensus, not vote. They work to make sure everyone gets something out of a deal.
- **Judy Gilmore:** Is there a role for NGOs in strengthening the state?
 - **John Blackton:** Yes, for example in influencing school curriculum, not just service delivery. Must be a PVO/NGO marriage.
- **What are the security needs for any of this development to happen?** The Germans are leading the establishment of civilian security and the U.S. is doing the army. What do we know about civilian security? As far as donors are concerned, nothing has happened on the ground. Only promises.
 - **Bill Cole:** The Police are ex-troops left in Kabul mixed with British and German soldiers. There are not many guns, because you have to have a real reason to carry one. In the rest of the country, new commanders have re-emerged to fill the vacuum. Violence comes when warlords confront each other for control. It will probably get worse before it improves.
- **Jim (audience):** worked with USAID in Afghanistan in the 1960s. Nathan Associates got USAID to train economists, financiers, etc. for the Ministry of Planning. And despite the loss of intelligentsia, they were gradually accepting of Asia

Foundation to advise in law and Ministry of Commerce. Very successful, had manufactured products on the world market. This shows the capability of Afghans.

- Loya Jirga coming along very well. Will determine what next government will look like. Nobody knows what will come out. Will government change totally?
- **Distinctions between donors and implementers:**
 - Will we get a summary of what NGOs think they will need from USAID to be effective?
 - **John Blackton:** You need to agree on common standards, so as not to “carve up fiefdoms and become PVO warlords”. There needs to be constant dialogue.
 - **Bill Cole:** USAID will have a role in helping implementers stand up to warlords. Is USAID willing to enforce sanctions against those that do cut deals with warlords, even if it brings results?

ACVFA Public Meeting, Wednesday, February 20, 2002**Break-Out Groups on Issues Relating to Afghanistan****PROMOTING WOMEN'S EQUALITY****Moderator: Elise Smith, ACVFA Member, Winrock International****Speaker: Sima Wali, Executive Director, Refugee Women in Development**

Elise Smith:

- What can be learned from Afghan women?
- How can USAID and NGOs help with gender integration?
- How best can organizations be involved with shaping women's roles?

Sima Wali:

- Some statistics on Afghan women:
 - One woman dies every thirty minutes while giving birth
 - 70% of all diagnosed tuberculosis cases occur in women; this is the highest TB rate in the world
 - 80% of women can not read or write
 - Women's suicide rate increases by the day

Given these dire statistics, what can be done to assist Afghan women? Women must be viewed as resources for development. The needs of those who suffered disproportionately during the war must be taken into account in development programming. There are Afghan non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that have been providing critically needed services during the difficult times. Refugee Women in Development works with Afghan women and men at the grassroots level, focusing on capacity building, empowerment, and leadership development.

Support for the Afghan Ministry of Women's Affairs (MOWA) is essential to ensure that women's rights and access at the highest levels are safeguarded. The new head of the MOWA, Dr. Sima Samar, has requested technical assistance to develop a mandate for Afghan women. Women must play a key role at all levels of government to ensure gender mainstreaming.

Afghan women must understand their rights within Islam and receive information on international human rights and humanitarian laws and standards. Imparting knowledge on Islamic *Sharia* is a must for women who want to use Islamic and cultural traditions as arguments to support their position on women's empowerment in all sectors of society.

Foreign experts need to rely on Afghan counterparts to acquire the facts and gain a comprehensive understanding of the region. Changing the attitudes of Afghan men through educational programs will facilitate gender integration.

Suggested strategies for improving the status of women:

- Support the Ministry of Women's Affairs, the Afghan Interim Authority and the representation of women at the loya jirga, pushing for gender equality in the new Afghan Constitution.
- Provide the MOWA with the resources its needs to do the job.
- Appoint Afghan women as deputies in key government ministries.
- Reestablish the Afghan Women's Institute.
- Develop key indicators and statistics to guide programs and policies.
- Provide leadership training to Afghan women and their NGOs.

Longer-term strategies:

- Ensure gender equality in the Constitution, civil and customary laws.
- Educate women about their rights within Islam and international laws.
- Rebuild civil society institutions with particular attention to vulnerable groups.
- Provide institutional and individual technical assistance and direct funding.
- Coordinate partnership between international and Afghan women-led NGOs.
- Empower Afghan women by involving them as decision-makers at all levels of government and international organizations.

DISCUSSION:

Ms. Smith: What other recommendations would the group make to USAID to help carry out its mandate for women in development in Afghanistan?

Ms. Wali: USAID can play a key role in ensuring that the cadre of civil society Afghans, particularly Afghan women's groups, and their institutions are transferred to Afghanistan. U.S. NGOs must be held accountable for developing Afghan counterparts and leaving them with enhanced skills to carry on the work of rebuilding their country. Ms. Wali suggested that U.S. NGOs be required to designate at least 30% of their budgets for grants to Afghan NGOs.

Participant: As women's organizations have grown over the years, USAID has developed grant programs to supply financial support. Would such a program be applicable?

Ms. Wali: Initiatives to support the work of Afghan women-led NGOs and, to strengthen their capacity will be very important.

Participant: Is there a database to match U.S. PVOs with groups in Afghanistan?

Ms. Smith: I am not aware of any. [Editor's Note: The International Organization for Migration has a database of Afghan expatriate professionals willing to work in the reconstruction of Afghanistan that matches individuals with vacancies on projects in Afghanistan. The database can be accessed at <http://www.iom-rqa.org/>. USAID also has a database at <http://www.usaid.gov/about/afghanistan/volunteer.html>.]

Participant: At the Tokyo conference, it was suggested that an office be established in every province to facilitate women's programs. However, funding from UNDP is not sufficient to do this. Are there other options for funding?

Ms. Wali: For the transfer of knowledge to be successful, information technology and communications resources need to be integrated into development programs. This will help to facilitate the participation of women in rural areas.

Participant: Afghan women's understanding of Islam is important, but it appears a re-education in the attitudes of both genders is an immediate need. This reshaping can bring about development in the right tone.

Sima Wali: Afghan women must upgrade their knowledge of *Sharia* and women's rights within Islam and international laws. Gender mainstreaming must be taught and enforced in schools and in the government. The UN must play a key role in the reshaping of male attitudes.

Participant: Reproductive health education is essential.

Participant: Women FBI and police officers should be sent to help Afghan women combat daily violence.

Sima Wali: Security is a prerequisite for development. Chairman Karzai is receptive to promoting gender equality.

ACVFA Public Meeting, Wednesday, February 20, 2002**Break-Out Groups on Issues Relating to Afghanistan****REBUILDING THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR****Moderator: Peter Reiling, ACVFA Member****Speakers: Rolf Campbell, Land O'lakes; Robert Pelant, Heifer Project International**

Mr. Reiling: The purpose of the breakout session is to discuss the issues raised during the morning panel session and to inform donor and NGO strategies for rebuilding the agricultural sector in Afghanistan.

Questions to address in this session:

1. What are the major challenges facing Afghanistan in reconstructing its agricultural sector over the short and long term?
2. What kinds of strategies and program options are most appropriate and likely to have long term success, given the current political situation?
3. What needs to be communicated to political leaders and other to ensure that women's special needs are met and their potential to contribute to long-term agricultural development is realized?

Rolf Campbell:

Constraints and challenges to the rehabilitation of agriculture in Afghanistan:

- Environment – drought, pasture destruction, challenges of climactic zones
- Loss of seed stocks, animals, depletion of personal assets, very high food grain prices
- Infrastructure under 50% irrigation system in use, non-functional roads, communication, extension services, government services, input businesses
- Professional talent – brain drain
- Refugees – As much as 20% of population displaced
- Highly regional conditions complicating aid assessments and delivery
- Factional alliances and divisions, threat of instability and conflict, land mines
- Chronic hunger – long-term conditions of malnutrition, food insecurity
- Food system – processing, distribution systems no functioning, existing food not affordable
- Drug trade – Opium taken out of production, no replacement income provided

Some additional observations:

- Only 12% of the total land in Afghanistan is arable.
 - 85% of the population are directly dependent on agriculture.
 - In 1982, Afghan dried almonds and apricots accounted for 60% of the world market. By 1990, that figure was down to 16%.
-

- Before 1988, livestock accounted for 40% of the total export earning of Afghanistan. It is estimated that there was a 40% reduction by 2001.

Embedded in many constraints are the opportunities.

The Afghanistan food system value chain must be rehabilitated at all stages and levels, from the natural resources to the marketing and distribution. There have to be effective transactions at each level. Farmers must be encouraged to improve their land, pastures and infrastructure.

Agriculture Business Organization:

- Organize affiliated producers as integrated supply and marketing operations
- Create women farming clusters organized around community relationships
- Position integrated groups as competitive producers and traders of branded agricultural specialty products for domestic and export markets
- Identify and engage agricultural leaders for aggressive hand-off interventions
- Fashion incentives to farmers

Agricultural Food Systems:

- Leverage current food aid strategically
- Diagnosis of causes and effects; reintegrating a fragmented market;
- Interrupt destructive individual market decisions to preserve the system
- Develop on a human scale

Ideas to Enhance Rehabilitation Aid:

- Road map of deployment – who is going to do what?
- Reconstruction newsletter with data base and field diagnostics
- Coordinating body for USAID, donors and NGOs
- Corridors of security
- GOA assurances and engagement
- Market channels encouraged – food aid to food trade
- Rational/guidelines for relief to development continuum
- Disciplined hand-offs ASAP to government, industry, academia
- Regional strategy for staging, supply, trade
- Consortia, collaboration; donor money that evokes effective NGO behavior
- Mapping agricultural capacities
- Mechanisms for connectivity with and among Afghans outside of the country and within.

Robert Pelant: The concept of “nation state” has dictated relations on our planet for many years. In Afghanistan, the challenges in rehabilitating the agricultural sector are tremendous. Sectors and sectoral approaches (which the breakout sessions are addressing) are artificial creations. A lot of players in rehabilitation are large bureaucracies trying to function in a chaotic world.

One of the principles that Heifer Project International (HPI) uses is the promotion of indigenous breeds. With the loss of such large numbers of animals that is not totally possible, but Kashmir types of goats are appropriate.

Gender Equality:

Even during training about animal production one must consider how to help women use their capabilities. It is important to increase women's participation in grass roots projects. HPI did training for women during the Taliban era, but it was carried out in secret. There are great opportunities in some of the refugee camps to provide training that can equip people for a better life back home.

Some focus areas:

- Afghan led initiatives and partnerships
- Household gardens
- Agroforestry
- Small holder development
- To sector or not to sector?
- People from various professional backgrounds and ethnic backgrounds working together
- Refugee camps and refugees --training, repatriation
- Diversification – NGO/business ventures etc.

GROUP DISCUSSION

Mr. Reiling: What are some of the other challenges facing Afghanistan in reconstructing its agricultural sector?

Participant: Indications are that drug trafficking is expected to soar. How will this affect agricultural reconstruction and how much is it an issue of law enforcement?

Mr. Reiling: Poppy is grown in specific high, remote areas. It isn't an agricultural problem; it is a police problem. The crucial agricultural problem is water.

Participant: There is no question that it is an issue of policing and policy. When government policy is clear, farmers will look for other options. At an ICARDA workshop recently, several days were spent discussing priorities for agricultural research over the next decade in Afghanistan. More information can be found at www.futureharvest.org.

Jane Pratt, ACVFA member: What are the causes of this extraordinary drought? Afghan farmers need inputs to replace what they lost, but without water the inputs won't help.

Participant: The international agricultural research centers are looking at the effects of climate change in that entire area. That area is flagged as a red zone.

Mr. Campbell: Farmers need to be involved in responsible and appropriate agriculture.

If it is already desert, one shouldn't bring in more animals.

Mr. Pelant: There has been a tremendous amount of deforestation out of human need for fuel.

Jim Henson, ACVFA member: The mechanisms for disseminating information to people through camps, schools, agricultural schools, etc. need to be rehabilitated. In the short term, establishing relationships with institutions in the region can help while the infrastructure is being rebuilt.

Participant: Most of the women who were malnourished were heading up their households (men were fighting or in another country). Will these households be able to use the inputs? Many women could not take part in the food for work programs because of so many responsibilities at home.

Participant: Any lasting solution has to take into account the whole value chain. It is important to identify the high priority subsections and work on the whole chain.

Ms. Pratt: One must look at integration across the region, as well as across the agricultural sector. In mountain areas it is necessary to have an integrated approach because there are so few opportunities for intervention.

Participant: There is a terrific shortage of labor. The average Afghan farmer is a woman with too many responsibilities. How can modern technology be brought in as soon as possible?

Participant: One of the biggest problems is land mines. There are 10 million mines that need to be cleared in Afghanistan.

Mr. Campbell: It is very difficult to get information and real time data on what is going on in Afghanistan right now, province by province. Hopefully that will change with the assessments done or planned by the World Bank, USAID and others. Nobody is using Afghan professionals in the U.S. They are an excellent, untapped resource.

Participant: Afghans for Tomorrow, a group of Afghan professionals in the U.S. is trying to come up with a plan for each sector of the country. Data doesn't always tell the whole story. There is a need to understand the informal economy; only Afghans can do that.

Participant: Marketing is extraordinarily important. Farmers know how to farm; they need advice on marketing. USDA routinely taps the resources of the U.S. land-grant system to assist with market development and extension outreach in other countries.

Martha Cashman, ACVFA member: There seems to be very little effort made to reach out to local representatives of countries that have a strong investment in seeing the

country get back on its feet. The only way to get long term sustainability is to involve stakeholders.

Mr. Reiling: To find solutions, ask locally. Technoserve started running business competitions to get new ideas in different countries. Through these competitions they are coming up with very practical high-impact answers.

Mr. Reiling: What needs to be communicated to political leaders and others to ensure the full participation of women?

Mr. Campbell: The organization of women around existing organizations needs to be strengthened and worked with in empowering and creative ways. It is important to find ways to coalesce and form more powerful groupings around economic activities. It is also necessary to get a handle on the gender issues as they exist in the country and find out what role women want to play.

Participant: Afghanistan has 35 different languages. In some areas only the women farm; in other areas both men and women work in the fields. Many people have never been exposed to the outside world. Education is the most important need and should come first.

Participant: The beauty of many community development programs is that there is a fair amount of money made available on a grant basis to local groups. This could be a valuable part of the program in Afghanistan for agriculture or other sectors.

Participant: The issue of gender is the most personal area of society. Sometimes there are unintended consequences of well-intentioned programs. It is critical to work with local NGOs but stay involved and develop useful, productive programs.

Participant: Flexibility is important. What works in one area of the country won't work in another area.

ACVFA Public Meeting, Wednesday, February 20, 2002**Break-Out Groups on Issues Relating to Afghanistan****EDUCATION SECTOR RECONSTRUCTION****Moderator: Dr. Herschelle Challenor, ACVFA Member****Speaker: Sameena Nazir, International Human Rights Law Group**

Herschelle Challenor: The major questions to be addressed by this session are:

- What are the major challenges facing Afghanistan in reconstructing its education sector over the short and the long term?
- What kinds of strategies and program options are most appropriate and likely to have long-term success, given the current political situation?
 - For USAID and other donors?
 - For NGOs?
- What needs to be communicated to political leaders and others to ensure that the needs of girls and boys are met and their potential contributions to long-term development is realized?

Ms. Challenor began with some remarks that are based on Ahmed Rashid's book on the Taliban:

- Within 3 months after the capture of Kabul, the Taliban closed down 63 schools affecting 103,000 girls and 148,000 boys as well as 11,000 teachers, 7000 of whom were female;
- The Taliban shut down Kabul University and sent home around 10,000 students including 4000 women;
- Even before the Taliban came into power, illiteracy was a major problem in Afghanistan where female illiteracy was 90% and male illiteracy was 60%;
- Across huge areas of rural Afghanistan, schools were destroyed in the war against the Soviet Union and subsequent anarchy;
- By December 1998, UNICEF reported that the country's educational systems were in a state of collapse with 9/10 girls and 2/3 boys out of school; and
- All warlords used boy soldiers as young as 12 years.

Ms. Challenor introduced Sameena Nazir, the Program Director for Afghanistan and Pakistan for the International Human Rights Law Group (IHRIG).

Sameena Nazir: Adding to the account provided, it is important to look at reconstruction in today's context. Since 1994, Afghanistan has suffered from the strong effects of Talibanization. Schools were turned into military camps or have been completely destroyed. A brain drain has taken place with the brightest of the bright leaving, especially women. The Taliban destroyed the confidence of a nation. During the Taliban era, good traditional values were destroyed, such as respect for one's mother or a female

teacher who used to solve children's problems and get involved in their futures. Children saw their mothers beaten in front of them. This shattered their confidence and beliefs. Teachers had no status. There was a severe lack of resources, unmet needs and unprecedented challenges. There is still a lack of security because military action is taking place in some parts of country. There has been a lack of policy consistency. Afghanistan had several wars and governments, and this is partly why it has no consistency in government policies and systems.

Also, when thinking about public programs and education policy, one has to keep in mind the sense of deprivation that exists. We must consider the effects of the Taliban regime on parents and parental roles, as well as on society in general. Today, many members of the Taliban are still in country. So that adds to current uncertainty. Lastly, there is the refugee problem. Thousands of Afghans were educated in Pakistan. For every school the Taliban closed in Afghanistan, one opened in Pakistan. The Afghans educated in Pakistan are uncertain about whether their Pakistani degrees will be recognized. The Taliban did not recognize these degrees. Keep in mind this context, when designing education programs for Afghanistan.

Suggestions:

- Make resources available: schools, buses, books, desks, tables, pencils.
- Make human resources available: teachers who know their subjects well.
- More than 50% of the teachers were women. They have not been teaching for 6 years. So they need refresher training and school management training. The introduction of Taliban type of education has disrupted the system. Afghanistan needs a modern system. It's great that there are volunteers, but if we want to seriously develop a modern education system and careers in education, there should be a long-term plan and resources. There should be at least a five-year plan with a progressive vision.
- Afghanistan needs political will. Right now, everyone is keen on helping Afghanistan. But political will can go down quickly. High-level political commitment must be sustained both in Afghanistan and in the United States. Policies must be for the long-term.
- There are great possibilities for benefiting from international resources such as teachers, libraries etc. Must find ways of establishing links and getting these resources.

Another important question is who should be educated? Should it be only children, only girls, only soldiers, or also the 40-year-old who never finished school. Adult literacy is also important. Parents must share the same enthusiasm. Parents must be involved. Afghanistan's adult population has to be educated. But realistically, these education policies should be implemented gradually.

We must remember that Afghanistan is an Islamic country. But mixing education and religion always leads to devastating results. Only minimizing religious influence can create a serious and sustainable modern education system. It would be a mistake for the

Ministry of Religious Affairs to be involved in administering education. Afghanistan has a mosque-based religious school infrastructure that has to be integrated into the modern system, rather than vice-versa.

Keeping in mind the drought and poverty, we have to be careful to show that education has economic value. Otherwise parents will send children to weave carpets, for example, rather than send them to school, especially in families without a father. Education has to be presented as adding to the economic value of children. This makes vocational training important. Children must not just be taught Arabic, or English or arithmetic, they must be also taught practical skills. Otherwise education will be seen as a luxury. Education must be linked to reality.

In closure, training for teachers must be emphasized. It would be useful to bring teacher trainers from similar backgrounds. As NGOs or donors we need to be careful to study Afghanistan's education policies. Education is not yet seen as a basic right. But it is important to ensure that government policies and structures recognize education.

Also, like in other countries, education for Afghan children should be enjoyable, with an emphasis on the arts as well.

Herschelle Challenor: The speaker has already identified the major challenges. Are there any other challenges?

Mojadidi (representing Afghans for Tomorrow): There is one thing I disagree with the speaker. There is a difference between building schools and camps. One of our aims is to develop schools, train teachers and develop curricula. I went to school in Afghanistan until the 4th grade. Before the war, the education in Afghanistan was excellent. There are a number of Afghan experts on education. The rural areas of Afghanistan need smaller schools, because the villages have small populations. We are working on a comprehensive approach to education in Afghanistan. If anybody wants to help children in grades 1-6, contact us.

Sameena Nazir: I want to clarify that I did not say that I wanted to build schools in refugee camps. I said the refugee children should be integrated into the education system in the country.

Participant: Can you please comment on education for children with special needs?

Sameena Nazir: Thinking about who will be educated will open up this question to answers. I'm not an education expert, but knowing the background of the children is critical to designing an education system.

Participant: Can you say a bit more about the role of religious education? Is there a strong history of education through the Madarassa schools?

Sameena Nazir: I don't think that there is a strong Madarassa history of education. But there is a strong history of Mosque education. Later this became politicized and children were used for purposes other than education. The Taliban too manipulated the system and also created new educational institutions. During the past 6 years the Taliban strengthened the Madarassa schools. Parents also responded to this reality and sent their children to these schools. The Mosques and related schools gave the students food. Also, Afghan parents want their children to learn the Koran.

Herschelle Challenor: My understanding is that Madarassa were started by Saudis. We are talking of 30,000-40,000 boys who only had this kind of education. The current Minister of Education says that the first thing to do is to secularize schools.

Participant: "Secularize" is not the preferred term. This word is misunderstood in Afghanistan because we give it a different meaning. I suggest using another word, like "liberalize" for example. Any attempt to isolate religion will backfire.

Majeed Shams: The history of Islam is over 1400 years. The Islamic concept of education is very sensitive, because we are talking about the meaning of education in about 35 languages and for different tribes. There are different ways of approaching Islamic education. The question is not getting rid of Madarassa schools, but teaching different subjects in these schools and in a different way. My Grandfather used to wake me up early morning when I was a child in Afghanistan. We went to Mosque at 5 in the morning because we were scared of God. Now I know how gracious and merciful God is because I got a chance to get out of Afghanistan and learn Islam my way. We need to teach Islam the correct way. Also, I need to understand Islam in my language, not in Arabic or Pakistani.

Sameena Nazir: It is important to keep away from Islamization of everything. I disagree about the backlash. People can see the bad impact of religion. Make education a technical profession. Separate the Ministry of Religious Affairs from the education system. If we are serious about education, technocrats need to manage it.

Participant: Islam has made a great contribution to global society, to the human family. But the mullahs are afraid of losing their authority. The subject of separating religion and education has been discussed a lot in the Muslim world. Good luck! Religion is a way of life for us.

Herschelle Challenor: Think of the golden age of Islam: maps, mathematics, science. I don't think a broader education is against Islam.

Participant: The two speakers who spoke of integrating Islam with modern values are right. It would be wrong to make democracy/diversity training in opposition to Islam. Regarding fundamentalist people, you have to integrate their values.

Sameena Nazir: There is a very strong movement of moderate Muslims who have not been heard, not listened to. I urge policy makers not to make culture an excuse for not providing quality education for Afghan children. There should be nothing to say that what is good for the child in Arlington, VA, is not good for the children in Afghanistan. Children are children everywhere. Culture should not be the excuse for not developing a modern education system.

Adele Liskov: I want to make some comments on non-formal education. There is whole generation of people who did not benefit from schooling in Afghanistan. Is there a way of integrating, for example, health service with education or micro-credit with education?

Sameena Nazir: We need to be creative. I have a friend who called from Kabul saying that he cannot find furniture - no wood or woodcutters. In every sector there is this problem of scarcity. No skills and materials to produce anything now. If production is to be sustainable, the raw materials should come from the local areas. All this requires assessments to figure out what to produce and what type of education is needed.

Participant: We are trying to establish a school in Afghanistan. But there are so many problems in trying to keep children in school after they reach 10-11 years. Also, there are discrepancies between rural and urban areas. There are no roads to get to schools, no teachers and writing materials. Men and women have to be trained separately. How can we overcome these problems?

Participant: There was a *New York Times* article with a list of organizations interested in helping.

Herschelle Challenor: Can we have specific suggestions of projects?

Sameena Nazir: It is very expensive to implement education projects in Afghanistan and also difficult to do these without local collaboration. We went to Kabul to start a Legal Aid project. But every woman wanted to learn English, because all the people getting jobs know English. We need to give them what they want.

Participant: We know what happens when you take Afghan project people who know English but not their own language. This skews the results. We have to be very careful.

Participant: I represent a health organization. What kinds of work are Afghans doing in this area? I came across several Afghan run organizations here trying to do this kind of work, but without the resources. So establish links between these organizations and NGOs. Some Afghans are setting up their own organizations. That is how I would push.

Participant: Yes, I'm from Afghanistan. We have a lot of educated people who want to go back and teach. But if there are no schools and books what are they going to teach. I was in Afghanistan recently and it is so sad. There are schools standing without windows and the chairs all burnt. We want to teach, but we don't have the chairs and other things.

We need some help to go back there. Apart from schools, we think there should be factories. We are talking here, but over there people don't know anything.

Sameena Nazir: That's not true. Some people in the camps are very educated. The constraint is that although the Taliban are gone, it takes time for people to take the initiative. Some Afghan women in Pakistan want to return and help. But they don't want to wear veils. They are scared. I know people who go to the office and they are sent back. They have no desks, no salaries and no jobs. I would strongly recommend that you continue. Invest in a few good trainers. It is a very critical time. People's eyes are on when the king returns. We have to wait for the correct time.

Participant: You said that there are some people who don't want to go back. Who are they? We have a long list of people who want to go back. They know that with the backing of the international community it will be OK. I am very optimistic.

Sameena Nazir: I'm only referring to some refugee professional women. I'm not saying that nobody is willing. After all, there are about 3 million refugees.

Herschelle Challenor: We have to wind up although we have not been disciplined. I want to ask about the right of education and special needs. Rashid said that about 70% of Afghans have lost members of their family. Also, there are more Afghan women who are doctors and lawyers since men have died in the war. Will this be a problem?

Sameena Nazir: No, I don't think it will be a problem. It is a reflection of a post-war situation. Also, in traditional society more women are encouraged to do jobs involving care-giving, such as, teachers and doctors, while men do more adventurous jobs. The real problem is that there is a large population without education. We have to focus on learning but also un-learning. The Taliban have made deep changes. Families that did not cover their women, now want their women to be covered. I also recommend non-traditional forms of education like TV, radio, and newspapers.

**"Afghanistan Relief, Reconstruction and
Development: Implications for the U.S.
Foreign Assistance Agenda"**

Advisory Committee on Voluntary Foreign Aid

ACVFA Information

Annex 3

Advisory Committee on Voluntary Foreign Aid

Fact Sheet

The Advisory Committee on Voluntary Foreign Aid (ACVFA) was established by Presidential directive after World War II to serve as a link between the U.S. Government and private voluntary organizations (PVOs) active in humanitarian assistance and development work overseas. Comprised of 24 private citizens with extensive knowledge of international development, ACVFA helps provide the underpinning for cooperation between the public and private sectors in U.S. foreign assistance programs.

As stated in its charter, the Advisory Committee's role is:

- To consult with, provide information to, and advise the Agency for International Development (USAID) and other U.S. Government agencies on development issues relating to foreign assistance in which the U.S. Government and PVOs interact;
- To provide information and counsel to the PVO community on issues of concern regarding their relations with USAID and other U.S. Government agencies; and
- To foster public interest in the field of voluntary foreign aid and in PVO activities.

ACVFA meetings provide opportunities for information exchange and consultation between USAID and other governmental agencies and the nongovernmental community. The Committee brings together USAID and PVO officials, representatives from universities, international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), U.S. businesses, and government, multilateral, and private organizations to foster understanding, communication, and cooperation. The meetings focus on timely topics selected from a wide range of issues and challenges that affect the relationship between the official foreign assistance program and the private voluntary community. Following these deliberations, the ACVFA provides specific recommendations to the USAID Administrator.

ACVFA members are appointed by the USAID Administrator for terms of varying lengths up to three years. Members embody diverse perspectives and experience, and are experts on private voluntary organizations and international development including PVO comparative advantages in relief and development, aspects of PVO programming, and the relationship of PVOs with USAID. The members serve without compensation. Public meetings are held three times per year.

For more information on the Advisory Committee for Voluntary Foreign Aid, please contact Noreen O'Meara, ACVFA Executive Director, in the Office of Private and Voluntary Cooperation (PVC) at 202-712-5979, nomeara@usaid.gov. ACVFA meeting reports are available after each public meeting. For copies of these reports and other ACVFA publications, please contact the ACVFA Director or visit the ACVFA website at www.usaid.gov/hum_response/pvc/acvadir.html.

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