



# FACT SHEET

## Gardez-Khost National Highway (NH08)



Typical "before" condition of the Gardez-Khost road.



Typical "after" condition of the Gardez-Khost road.

### PROGRAM SNAPSHOT

**Project Start Date:**  
May 2007

**Project Finish Date (est.):**  
October 2013

**Phase I - TO8 (\$175 Million):**  
Louis Berger Gp./Black & Veatch  
May 2007 – March 2012

**Phase II (\$5.5 Million):**  
Road Operations & Maintenance  
Mashriq Engineering  
Construction Company (MECC)

**Phase III (18.5 Million):**  
Contractor: MECC  
August 2012 – June 2013

**Phase IV (TBD):**  
Contractor: TBD  
April 2013 – October 2014

63km Section 1 & 3 (Completed)  
38km Section 2 (In Progress)  
101 km Total

**Major Project Challenges**  
Terrain, Security, Tech Difficulty

**Location:**  
Paktia and Khost Provinces

### OBJECTIVE

The objective of this USAID-funded project is to build an all-weather asphalt road, meeting national highway standards, 101.2 kilometers in length from the center of Gardez to the edge of Khost City. The road will provide high-speed connection for a designed traffic level of 7,000 vehicles per day from Khost to Gardez, Kabul and the rest of Afghanistan.

### BACKGROUND

The condition of the Gardez-Khost Highway at project start-up was a combination of unimproved roadway and partially graveled or paved surfaces. Overloaded trucks and an under-designed road contributed to extensive damage over decades of constant use, with frequent flooding and landslides in the mountains often making the road impassable. The road begins in central Gardez and extends 23 kilometers southeastward over the Sata Kanda Pass at 2,900 meters (9,500 feet) above sea level. From the pass the road follows a river characterized by high cliffs on one side and steep drop-off on the other. The road drops to 1,500 meters elevation at kilometer 70 (Shamal District, Khost Province) and flattens out in the broad Khost River valley, reaching 1,200 meters elevation at Khost city. The project includes bridges, causeways, drainage structures, excavation, river training and asphalt pavement construction to international standards.

### STATUS

In Phase I , USAID tasked the Louis Berger Group/Black & Veatch Joint Venture (LBG/BV) plan, design and construct the Gardez to Khost National Highway. Construction started in 2008, after numerous delays mostly due to security problems, Sections 1 and 3 (km 0-27 and km 65-101.2) were completed in January 2011. USAID lacked the confidence that LBG/BV would complete the road on time or within budget, therefore the contract with LBG/BV was not renewed to continue construction after the expiration date of February 29, 2012 (Plus 10 Day Extension March 10, 2012).

In Phase II, USAID recognized the need to provide Road Maintenance and Snow Removal throughout Section 2 for a period between Phase I and Phase III. Most of Section 2 is located in mountainous/avalanche prone areas and maintenance was necessary to keep the road throughout.

The remaining construction activities within Section 2 (km 27-65) also known as Phase III (13km) & Phase IV (25km) are scheduled to commence August 2012 and March 2013 respectively. Phase IV is currently in the procurement process and is expected to be completed April 2013; Phase IV is therefore procurement sensitive.

### ANTICIPATED IMPACT

Besides connecting Kabul to Gardez, Khost and the border with Pakistan, economic, health, educational, political, and security benefits to the population of Paktia and Khost provinces will provide the greatest chance for stability in this region. As many as 2,000 jobs for Afghans have been created during construction. Average travel time (Gardez to Khost) was typically 6 to 8 hours prior to project start (10 hours for trucks); with about half the road paved by May 2010. The average travel time has been reduced to 3½ hours for passenger vehicles and 5 hours for trucks. Traffic has significantly increased to approximately 3000 vehicles per day and rising, which is a basic practical economic growth indicator.