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INTERNATIONAL RESCUE COMMITTEE
Program for Afghans

Project Assistance Completion Report

for

UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

concerning

Grant # 306-0211-G-00-1205-00

Female Education Programs



International Rescue Committee

G.P.O. 504, PESHAWAR - PAKISTAN

May 3, 1994

Mr. John Huxtable
USAID-Afghanistan
American Embassy
Islamabad

Ref: Completion Narrative Report, Female Education Programs
Grant No. 306-0211-G-00-1205-00

Dear Jack,

It is with sadness but a great deal of pride that we send the final narrative report of activities of IRC's Female Education Programs which you have so generously supported over the past three years. We are sad, of course, because your support must come to an end. We are also sad that, because of security problems, the program was never able to move into Afghanistan as both you and we had hoped at the outset of our agreement.

But both of us have a great deal to be proud about as you will see when you review the report. May I repeat just a few of the highlights?

At the end of the grant, the program was supporting 25 girl's refugee schools in the NWFP with an enrollment of nearly 10,000, roughly doubling project goals.

More than 450 teachers in girl's refugee schools had participated in teacher training courses, again nearly doubling project goals.

The Women's Health Educator Training Program, a special component of the program, had trained more than 100 other teachers in health-related topics and helped to set up 25 health education departments in refugee schools, hospitals and clinics.

More than 500 women had enrolled in at least one course in the Women's Public Administration Training Program. Courses included office management, accounting, and computer operations.

Even more successful was the Women's English Language Training Program which enrolled more 2,700 women during the grant period as well as started special courses to improve the skills of women teaching English in refugee girls' schools.

These are all achievements which USAID should be proud of. I hope the record will be brought to the attention of your colleagues

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here as well as in Washington. I also hope that USAID will sometime in the future be able to continue its valuable development services to a peaceful Afghanistan.

On behalf of the many beneficiaries of the Female Education Program, I want to thank you and assure you that it has been a pleasure to work with you and your colleagues.

Sincerely,

John

John E. Dixon
Director

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I. BASIC PROJECT DATA

Project title: Female Education Program for Afghan Refugees

Grant number: # 306-0211-G-00-1205-00

Date of authorization: 05/16/90

Date of original agreement: 01/01/91

Amount authorized: \$920,000

Amount obligated: \$920,000

Amount disbursed: \$669,418 as of March 31, 1994

Original and revised PACD: Original June 30, 1992; Revised April 30, 1994

Grantee's authorized representatives: John Dixon and Linda Anderson

Implementing agencies: International Rescue Committee

II. PROJECT GOAL AND PURPOSE

This project was initiated with the goal of contributing to the educational and professional development of Afghan refugee females through provision of culturally-appropriate technical and material support to each of six IRC Female Education Programs. These programs have served both rural and urban females living in the Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP) of Pakistan and were designed to provide refugee women and girls with skills which will be beneficial to their families and communities in both their current situation as well as upon their repatriation to Afghanistan.

Specific goals for these individual programs are as follows:

1. **Lycee Malalai Girls' Secondary School:** Lycee Malalai was established in order to provide access to quality secondary education to Afghan refugee girls living in the Peshawar area at a time when no other opportunities existed. Due to the co-sponsorship of this school by Jamiat-i-Islami at the outset of the project, IRC's primary goal was to provide monetary, technical and supervisory support for the school, while transferring the administrative responsibilities to Jamiat-i-Islami.
2. **Women's English Language Program (WELP):** The goal of IRC's Women's English Language Program has been to improve the English language skills of Afghan refugee women living in the Peshawar area through the provision of English language instruction in as many as seven different skill levels. An additional goal has also been to expand the pool of potential Afghan female English teachers as well as to improve the skills of employed English teachers by offering special teacher training seminars.
3. **Female Education and Teacher Training Program (FETT) - (formerly known as *Community-Based Primary Education Program for Girls*):** FETT has sought to improve the quality of education in Afghan refugee girls' schools in NWFP and to expand access to education for girls in this province by providing financial, material and technical assistance to girls' primary schools and by conducting teacher training seminars for Afghan female teachers.
4. **Women's Health Educator Training Program (WHETP):** The goal of WHETP has been to improve the level of health education among Afghan refugee women and children by training female health educators to teach health issues in primary disease prevention and hygiene and by facilitating the creation of health education departments in refugee hospitals, clinics and schools and the placement of WHETP graduates in these departments.

5. **Women's Public Administration Program (WPA):** WPA has operated with the goal of increasing the office management, administrative and entrepreneurial skills of Afghan refugee women living in the Peshawar area by offering courses and workshops ranging from a few weeks to six-months in duration. With such skills, these women will be better equipped to work in refugee relief or in reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan.
6. **Female Programs Administration (FPA):** The FPA office was established in order to provide support to and improve the administrative and program management skills of the Afghan female staff at the six female education programs in order that they may effectively manage eventual programs and participate in the rehabilitation efforts in Afghanistan.

III. PROJECT COMPONENTS

1. **Lycee Malalai Girls' Secondary School:** During the period the school was supported by IRC, the Lycee Malalai offered classes in grades seven through twelve to Afghan refugee girls. Classes were held six days a week and included the following subjects:
 - Science (chemistry, biology, physics)
 - Arts (history, geography)
 - Language (Dari, Pushto, Arabic, English)
 - Home economics (hand tailoring, cooking, drawing)
 - Islamic studies

The two-semester academic year began in February and ended the following January. The first semester was four months long, followed by a three-month summer holiday and a five-month second semester.

Starting in 1992, the school also began offering primary classes for girls and boys in levels one through six. The majority of these classes were offered in the afternoon from 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., when the secondary classes were not in session. The school also operated a pre-school for children of the teaching staff, which also admitted a limited number of children from the community.

2. **Women's English Language Program (WELP):** WELP offers two kinds of training to Afghan women: classes in English as a foreign language and training seminars and workshops for women aspiring to be English teachers and for already employed English teachers. Concerning the first activity, English instruction is offered to students at seven different levels, ranging from beginner to level six. Communicative and student-centered techniques are used to teach four main skills: reading, writing, speaking and listening. Throughout most of the grant period, two four-month terms of instruction were offered each year. In 1994, the program adjusted the academic calendar to allow for three three-and-a-half month terms during the year.

WELP also offers several types of teacher training opportunities. At least once a year (1993 excepted), WELP organizes a basic English language teacher training workshop of four to five weeks' duration. Participants in these workshops are women with English language skills who wish to be effective language teachers. To address the need for Afghan women who are advanced-level English teachers, the program also held one six-month Intensive English cum Teacher Training course. This course focused both on upgrading the English language skills of the participants and on training them in effective pedagogical skills. In 1993, WELP also began working with English teachers employed in Afghan girls' schools, offering a training course and providing in-class monitoring and technical assistance. Finally, the program's training staff conduct periodic in-service training workshops for all the teachers employed in the program.

3. **Female Education and Teacher Training Program (FETT):** FETT supports female education for Afghan refugee girls by 1) providing financial and material support to refugee girls' schools in the NWFP and 2) by providing teacher training seminars and workshops to female teachers employed in refugee girls' schools. Regarding school support, FETT pays teacher salaries and, in some cases, rent and utilities for the girls' schools, in addition to providing textbooks and materials. The program staff also pay monitoring visits to the schools to check attendance records and to observe the teachers and assist them in their use of instructional materials and effective teaching techniques.

During the grant period, FETT's training activities ranged from offering a three-month Master Teacher Trainer course to conducting ongoing teacher training seminars, mini-seminars and workshops for female primary teachers in pedagogy and specific subject areas. The program also offers seminars to Afghan women working as school administrators. Regular monitoring of the teachers is carried out by the program staff to ensure that the teachers are effectively using the techniques learned during the training sessions and to assist them with any areas of difficulty. FETT staff developed the curricula and all instructional materials needed for each of the seminars and workshops.

4. **Women's Health Educator Training Program (WHETP):** WHETP carries out two primary activities: 1) conducting a training course for potential public health educators in refugee hospitals, clinics and schools, and 2) facilitating the establishment of health education departments in such facilities using the skills of the trained health educators.

The training course, which has varied in length from four to six months, prepares the participants to transmit health messages in primary disease prevention to Afghan women and children. The course curriculum is composed of three components: 1) community health education, which covers such topics as basic anatomy, pregnancy, labor and delivery, health care problems, disease prevention and community health; 2) teacher training, which covers the teaching of preventive health care, teaching methodologies and evaluation; and 3) a teaching practicum, during which the participants are placed with refugee hospitals, clinics or schools where they practice presentation of health education messages, using the techniques and concepts that they learned during the academic portion of the course.

In conjunction with the training course, the program works extensively to facilitate the creation of new health education departments in refugee schools, clinics and hospitals and the placement of WHETP graduates in these departments. When necessary, WHETP pays a start-up fee to cover the cost of initiating the department and paying the health educator. Otherwise, the host facilities pay the educators' salaries, while WHETP provides monitoring, supervision and refresher training.

5. **Women's Public Administration Program (WPA):** WPA trains Afghan women in practical administrative skills by offering a wide range of semester courses and mini-workshops covering office operations and management. The courses offered include bookkeeping, accounting, office administration, typing and computer operating. The computer courses cover such software programs as WordPerfect, Lotus 1-2-3, dBase, MLS (Dari word processing) and DOS (disk operating system). During much of the grant period, two semesters were held per year. Early in 1994, however, the program began to offer courses three times per year, with Dari and English as the languages of instruction. The program also developed a new component which involves training women in entrepreneurship skills, so that they may set up and manage small businesses both in the refugee communities and upon their return to Afghanistan.
6. **Female Programs Administration (FPA):** The FPA office has been responsible for providing administrative and liaison support for the FEP programs. Such support has included management training workshops for managers of the FEP programs; administrative oversight and guidance for each of the programs; monitoring of FEP classroom instruction and review of curricula; and liaison with other IRC programs and with related organizations and agencies.

IV. INPUTS

The following two tables provide details of the project inputs from 1991 to 1994:

Table A

USAID INPUTS: 1991 - 1994					
Funds		Equipment			
Amount (\$)	IRC Program	Item	Unit	Unit Acquisition Cost (\$)	IRC Program
180,591	FPA	computer, IBM	1	1,700	WHETP
255,666	WELP	computer, IBM	1	1,737	WHETP
227,203	WPA	photocopier	1	4,750	WHETP
47,328	Lycee Malalai	computer, Fujitech	3	856	WPA
362,991	FETT	computer, laptop	1	817	WPA
193,647	WHETP	models, anatomical	2	664	WHETP
1,267,426	TOTAL	printer, Proprinter	1	590	WPA
		printer, Epson	1	753	FPA
		refrigerator, Dawlance	1	504	WPA
		stabilizer (STAVOL) 1000	2	171	WPA
		stabilizer (STAVOL) 110v - 220v	1	122	WHETP
		chairs, computer	10	195	WPA
		desk, small	1	16	WELP
		typewriters	2	228	WPA
		chairs, revolving	6	159	WPA
		table, steel	1	24	WPA
		tables	2	146	WHETP
		stools	4	33	WHETP
		chairs, computer	2	57	WHETP
		chairs	6	98	FETT

NOTE: A vehicle purchased with USAID funds (\$11,656), despite U.S. government protests, was auctioned by the Karachi Port Trust in November 1993. See December 9, 1993 letter to Carlton M. Bennett for details.

Table B

INPUTS FROM OTHER DONORS: 1991 - 1994										
Funds from Other Donors (\$)										IRC Program Recipient
BvL	SV-FEP	SV-FETT	US-BRP	Canada	RIJ	USIS	ODW	Asia F.	IRC	
	33,477								25,000	FPA
630,715									11,695	KEP
	83,422					16,250	11,077		30,293	WELP
									3,484	WPA
								10,079		WJP
	11,858		75,493		10,537		27,729			Lycee Malalai
	152,685	89,338		64,236			35,883			FETT
630,715	281,442	89,338	75,493	64,236	10,537	16,250	74,689	10,079	70,472	
Total Input in Funds from Other Donors = \$ 1,323,251										

ACRONYMS/ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE ABOVE TABLE:

Programs

FPA Female Programs' Administration
 KEP Kodakistan Education Program
 WELP Women's English Language Program
 WPA Women's Public Administration Program
 WJP Women's Journalism Program
 FETT Female Education and Teacher Training Program
 WHETP Women's Health Educator Training Program

Donors

BvL Bernard van Leer Foundation
 SV Stichting Vluchteling
 US-BRP United States Bureau for Refugee Programs
 Canada Canadian High Commission
 ODW Operasjon Dagswerk
 Asia F. Asia Foundation
 RIJ Refugees International Japan

V. PROJECT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

During the almost three-and-a-half years of this project, IRC's Female Education Program made considerable progress toward the goal of contributing to the educational and professional development of Afghan refugee females in the NWFP. In most cases, the individual programs surpassed their project targets, training more women and supporting more female students and girls' schools than anticipated. When necessary, programs responded to changing needs in the refugee community by initiating new activities. Likewise, given the periodic influxes of new refugees fleeing the continual intra-factional fighting in Afghanistan, many of the female education programs expanded their services and activities to accommodate increased demands. Following is a brief review of the individual programs' accomplishments during the grant period.

1. **Lycee Malalai Girls' Secondary School:** Having grown considerably from its first enrollment of 30 girls in 1987, the Lycee Malalai continued to expand throughout the USAID grant years. Early in 1991, the Lycee Malalai began its fifth academic year with a total of 208 refugee girls enrolled in grades seven through twelve. After extending the scope of the school in 1992 to include primary classes for girls and boys, the Lycee reached its highest enrollment in the fall of 1992, with a total of 478 students (230 secondary and 248 primary). One of the primary reasons for this dramatic rise in enrollment and for the opening of afternoon primary classes was the arrival of thousands of new refugees from Kabul, following the renewed fighting that began in August 1992. (For total enrollment figures throughout the project, refer to part 3 of this section titled *Female Education and Teacher Training Program*, as this program was responsible for supervision of the school and maintenance of official attendance records.)

Given the co-sponsorship of the Lycee Malalai with Jamiat-i-Islami, an Afghan political party known for its support of female education, IRC had initially anticipated playing a limited role in the support and administration of the school. In 1991, IRC transferred the administration of the school to Jamiat-i-Islami, while continuing to provide technical and monetary support. During the first quarter of 1992, IRC requested that the Afghan Education Authority of the Afghan Interim Government (AEA/AIG) assume responsibility for payment of the teachers' salaries, coordination of policy, and provision of books and materials. However, following the political changes in the Afghan government that occurred during the second quarter of that year, the Afghan Interim Government was dissolved, and the former AEA/AIG began operating as an agency of the Ministry of Education in Kabul.

With the dramatic changes in Afghanistan during that year, the Jamiat representative in charge of Lycee Malalai left for Kabul and no one came forward to fill the position on a permanent basis. Since there was no Jamiat authority or representative in Peshawar to oversee the administration of the school, IRC once again took responsibility for the school in September 1992, at the request of the Jamiat representative who was previously overseeing the school. As of September 1, IRC began paying salaries and providing other financial and administrative support to the school. IRC's Female Education and Teacher Training Program assumed responsibility for supervising and providing technical assistance to the teachers and staff at the Lycee. At the end of the first semester of 1993, Jamiat-i-Islami requested IRC to return management of the school to Jamiat, a request which was acceded to. An inventory of school equipment and books was completed and Jamiat was given responsibility for providing secure storage during the summer months.

Notwithstanding these shifts in IRC's role at Lycee Malalai, the school nevertheless continued to pursue its goal of providing access to quality secondary education for Afghan refugee girls. As mentioned, this goal was later expanded to include primary education for both refugee girls and boys. Trainers from IRC's Teacher Training and Textbook Program, who conduct training seminars in math and science for middle and secondary teachers, provided training and follow-up monitoring for the Lycee's math and science teachers. Likewise, IRC's Female Education and Teacher Training Program conducted in-service

pedagogical training and monitoring of the school's teachers to ensure that student-centered techniques were practiced in all classes.

2. **Women's English Language Program (WELP):** WELP stands out as one of IRC's most successful female education programs - one which has not only trained several thousand refugee women in its English classes over the past three-and-a-half years, but which has gained and maintained a reputation for excellence in training refugee women in practical and effective English skills as well as in English language teaching skills. WELP surpassed the project's target of 1,800 refugee women trained in English language classes, by training 2,700 women during the grant period. Due to continued high demand, the program has frequently adjusted and expanded the course offerings and schedule to accommodate additional students. Even with such actions, the program has been forced to turn dozens of applicants away each term.

Throughout the grant period, English instruction was offered in seven levels, beginner through level six, with a strong emphasis on communicative teaching techniques. In addition to providing on-going in-service training workshops for the teaching staff, WELP has continually sought ways to improve the quality and effectiveness of programming. In 1992, the program initiated a new system of testing that was less textbook-based and that provided a more accurate indication of students' overall language competence in the four basic language skills. This, in turn, encouraged the students and teachers to use supplementary materials more extensively than in the past, when instruction was mostly textbook based. In another effort to meet the demand for English language skills amongst the refugee community, WELP this year began to offer classes in *survival English* to refugee women who do not need extensive English grammar or writing skills.

It is difficult to quantify the number of graduates who obtain employment following their studies at WELP. However, many participants are already working when they enroll in classes, are already students, or go on to get jobs after completing the program.

The program also exceeded its project target of training 100 potential English language teachers: By the end of the grant, a total of 110 had participated in one of the program's teacher training seminars or workshops. The majority of these graduates attended one of the program's four or five-week *Potential Teacher Training* workshops. These workshops trained women who had completed the highest level of English instruction and who were interested in becoming English language instructors. Graduates of these workshops formed a pool of teachers who could be selected to teach beginning and mid-level English courses at WELP. Until late 1992, the Potential Teacher Training workshops were given by the Afghan academic manager, often with the assistance of an expatriate consultant or volunteer. However, in December 1992, the program trained, for the first time, three of its full-time teachers to be teacher trainers. These trainers went on to assist the academic manager in holding two more teacher training workshops during the remainder of the grant period. During the last six months of the project, a fourth full-time teacher was also being trained as a teacher trainer.

To address the need for Afghan women who are advanced-level English teachers, the program also initiated a six-month Intensive English cum Teacher Training course that focused on refining the English language skills of the participants and on training them in effective pedagogical skills for advanced English teaching. Of the seven graduates of this course, six were successfully employed at the WELP program, while one relocated to another city. Other new initiatives include a training course and in-service assistance offered to Afghan women teaching English in refugee schools. The need for such training was perceived after IRC staff observed the low level of English and language teaching skills in female classrooms.

An estimated 60 percent of the graduates from WELP's teacher training seminars have found employment upon completion of their training or were already employed when they enrolled in a course. Many of these teachers were hired by WELP, while others were referred to refugee girls' schools and to other female English language training programs.

- 3. Female Education and Teacher Training Program (FETT):** FETT is another of IRC's female education programs which both exceeded its project targets and which expanded and adapted its activities to the changing and growing demands of the Afghan refugee community in the NWFP during the period from 1991 to early 1994. At the end of 1991, the program was supporting nine refugee schools enrolling a total of 1,071 students (257 girls and 814 boys). By the spring of 1994, FETT was supporting 25 girls' schools with a total enrollment of 9,649 students (6,387 girls and 3,262 boys), a figure nearly double the project target of 4,500 students for any given academic year. In the four academic years spanning the grant period, 63 schools were supported, surpassing the target of 35. A total of 17,178 students were enrolled in these schools during this period. (This total includes student enrollment at the Lycee Malalai, as FETT was responsible for supervision and attendance records at the school.)

In parallel with the school support activities, the program was also able to expand the scope of its teacher training services dramatically during the project period. In the first year of the grant, a single female manager trained 15 female teachers in three in-service technique workshops. By the end of the project, FETT had trained 455 female teachers, including 14 master teacher trainers, nearly doubling the project target of 250 teachers to be trained. In order to accommodate teachers who could not participate in the full 24-day technique seminar, the program staff developed shorter six-day mini-seminars and one-day workshops to be taught in the refugee camps. In response to the need for subject-specific training, the program also developed curricula for and conducted seminars in school administration, history/geography and Arabic. In addition, the staff has nearly completed work on the curriculum for a math seminar. Due to the lack of any significant health education in refugee schools, starting in 1993 FETT has also worked closely with the administrators of several FETT-supported schools to establish health education departments in their schools. In collaboration with IRC's Women's Health Educator Training Program (WHETP), FETT arranged for the placement of 7 WHETP graduates in eight new departments. These health educators are responsible for transmitting health messages in disease prevention and community health practices to the students.

Given that all participants in FETT's training seminars were teachers working in girls' refugee schools, the program's post-training employment rate was 100 percent.

- 4. Women's Health Educator Training Program (WHETP):** During the grant period, WHETP trained a total of 112 Afghan women in its health educator training courses, surpassing the project target of 100 women. On an ongoing basis, WHETP staff have revised the health education curriculum to include additional relevant materials. During the project, teaching materials on drugs, environmental health, over-population and wheat-based oral rehydration therapy for children with diarrhea were developed and incorporated into the curriculum. Starting in 1993, the program also adapted and simplified some of the sample lesson plans that are included in the training curriculum and are designed for use in health facilities, making them more appropriate for primary school health education.

In conjunction with the training course, the program also worked extensively to facilitate the creation of new health education departments in refugee schools, clinics and hospitals and the placement of WHETP graduates in these programs. When necessary, WHETP paid a start-up fee to cover the cost of initiating the department and paying the health educator. Otherwise, the host facility pays the educator's salary, while WHETP provided monitoring, supervision and refresher training. Over the past five years, at least 25 local refugee hospitals, clinics and schools established health education departments with WHETP's support and encouragement. Due to the closure of many refugee health

facilities over the past year, an emphasis was placed on starting health education departments in primary schools. During the grant period, approximately 40 percent of the women who participated in a WHETP training course were employed as health educators. An estimated 30 percent of the participants emigrated to other countries. Of the remaining 30 percent, it is not known whether employment was found in fields other than health education.

WHETP monitoring staff carried out regular visits to the health education departments to observe the health educators and to discuss the impact of the health education with the facilities' staff. The feedback was often quite positive, with staff indicating that they had noted changes in the personal and family health practices of the patients coming to their facilities. The following story relates the impact of one particular health message on an extended refugee family:

An Afghan Woman's Story: Empowering Other Women

During a visit to a refugee hospital, a WHETP staff member had the opportunity to talk with an older woman who had, some time earlier, attended a health session on breast-feeding that was conducted by a WHETP graduate. The woman commented that she now insists that the women in her family begin breast-feeding immediately after birth rather than waiting the traditional four to seven days. By attending the health session, she had learned about the benefits of colostrum, the immunity-building breast milk which is produced in the first days after labor. She said that she was proud to pass this health message on to the female members of her family.

5. **Women's Public Administration Program (WPA):** In regards to its original goal of training women in public administration and office management skills, WPA has matched the performance of the other FEP programs' by also surpassing its life-of-project target. By the end of the grant, 543 women had participated in WPA training courses, exceeding the goal of 500 women. The courses offered include office management, accounting and bookkeeping, typing and computer operating. As with the other programs, WPA was committed to responding to the needs of the Afghan female refugee community and adjusted and expanded its course offerings accordingly. By the end of 1991, the program had initiated its first six-month Office Management class that was more comprehensive than the previously offered four-month class. During the same period, WPA started an Advanced Computer class as well as Intensive Office Management workshops for women already working in different organizations. The program also expanded its selection of intensive computer workshops to include DOS (disk operating system) and MLS, a Dari word processing software package. Likewise, by the end of 1993, WPA was developing and offering customized computer and management workshops, tailored to the needs of particular organizations or persons requesting the training.

Until mid-1993, an estimated 65 to 70 percent of the women trained in the above mentioned courses found employment upon completion of their training. For the remainder of the grant period, the post-training employment rate dropped to approximately 50 percent, primarily due to the closure of a large number of refugee-related organizations and offices.

In 1992, WPA developed a new component that involves the training of Afghan women in entrepreneurial skills. The goal of the three-month Entrepreneurship course was to provide women with the necessary skills needed to set up and manage a successful small business. Prior to the end of the project, the program trained 44 women in four Entrepreneurship courses, falling short of its initial goal of 84 women. While a considerable amount of interest in such training was expressed by Afghan refugee women, follow-up surveys of the first group of graduates indicated that various constraints (mostly cultural) prevented a majority of them from establishing businesses in Pakistan (two women were able to start

businesses involving garments, potato chips, cosmetics and fruit). Many of the women stated that it would be far easier to start businesses once they return to Afghanistan. For this reason, the program eventually discontinued the course as well as the idea of offering a similar course to illiterate women.

6. **Female Programs Administration (FPA):** The FPA office played a critical role in ensuring continued high quality in and effective coordination of the academic services provided by the above-mentioned FEP programs. While originally staffed by a single coordinator, an assistant and a general accountant were subsequently added to help with the workload. This team was responsible for providing administrative and managerial oversight and support for FEP's six programs. Each year, numerous workshops were held for the program managers in areas of program management and office procedures. Under the new accountant, FPA also initiated a centralized accounting system for all FEP programs.

The coordinator was also responsible for observing classes in all programs and providing feedback and suggestions regarding teaching techniques and curricula. The coordinator also advised each of the programs in ways to reduce staff and maximize their use of funds. In addition, she helped initiate the process of training Afghan women in all programs to become more self-reliant. As a result, several programs successfully took steps to increase the degree of community participation in their activities.

The FPA office also played an important role in coordinating efforts between the female education programs themselves and between FEP and other IRC programs and outside agencies. For example, expertise in instructional techniques was frequently shared amongst the FEP programs and staff from some FEP programs attended training workshops organized by other FEP programs. Liaison with outside programs resulted in the sharing of training curricula and materials, the arrangement of special training for FEP staff, and the procurement of books, tents and rent for FEP-supported schools, to name only a few such activities.

VI. LESSONS LEARNED

Following is a summary of the key lessons learned in managing the female education programs included under this grant:

- If implemented in a careful, tactful and culturally-acceptable manner, innovative programs for Afghan women are perfectly feasible. The success of IRC's diverse female education programs testifies to this. Their implementation hinges less on what specific activities are carried out than on the way the program is conducted.
- The successful programs at IRC have had courageous, committed and non-partisan Afghan women working to develop them. Their first priority being the education and training of Afghan women, they may be required to dress conservatively, work in separate facilities and keep a low profile, but they achieve their objectives. Wherever there have been Afghan women with political or other personal objectives, there have been problems. Similarly, expatriates who work closely with Afghans to determine the most effective and acceptable strategies are the ones who avoid most problems. Attempting to implement programs the "Western" way is a virtual guarantee of failure.
- Afghans are only too eager to improve the quality of their own and their children's education. If given training, they will actively do so. Despite having been exposed from earliest times only to chanting and rote memorization, for example, teaching techniques which are traditional throughout Afghanistan, Afghans are quick to see the advantages of more participatory methods and are anxious to learn, master and demonstrate such techniques to others. In one program after another, IRC found the Afghan staff

to be open to suggestions for improving educational methodologies - ranging from instructional techniques to classroom management principles.

- Even when adequate outside funding is available, community contributions must be required from the very outset and careful thought must be given to what is to be provided and what salaries are to be paid. In this way, when funds begin to run out, expectations are less high. Once community involvement in the activity is ensured, the program has a better chance of sustainability. IRC began this practice of requiring community contributions several years ago. In retrospect, however, IRC as well as other NGOs should have been cautious, for example, about providing transportation to schools and high salaries to teachers. IRC now no longer provides transportation for schools that were previously receiving it and all salaries have returned to the levels that the Afghan Interim Government set two years ago. Most schools have adjusted to the change and some are even beginning to solicit assistance from the community in the form of facilities or contributions for food for pre-schoolers and transportation for teachers.

It is clear, however, that the next step - of having the Afghans fully support the education of their children - will be very difficult. It would have been much better to have started the community contribution process earlier and encouraged the Afghans to be more self-reliant, perhaps through a phased decrease in funding coupled with training in self-support.

- Careful screening of training course candidates is essential. In the case of the Women's Health Educator Program, as mentioned previously, 30 percent of the women who graduated from one of the program's training courses during the grant period emigrated to another country. While some emigration is to be expected, IRC recently made changes in the screening process so as to reduce the possibility of prematurely losing potential health educators from the program.
- The impact of cultural constraints surrounding the target population must also be factored into programming. As mentioned above, despite the broad interest in the Entrepreneurship course, the most significant constraint preventing refugee women from establishing a small business in Pakistan was cultural.

VII. SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability of the female education programs funded by USAID can be examined on several levels. For those women who have received specific skills training or teacher training - the primary and secondary school students, teachers and teacher trainers, English language students, teachers and teacher trainers, public administration students and teachers; and health educators and health educator trainers - these skills are sufficiently well implanted as to remain with them over the long run and can readily be transferred to their own country long after IRC programs have ceased to exist. This process is already well under way. FEP staff have reported that several FEP-trained primary school teachers and health educators are currently working in those fields in Afghanistan. Within the refugee community, many graduates from the Female Public Administration Program and Women's English Language Program have gone on to work with Afghan-related NGOs.

All of the FEP programs will continue until the end of 1994, following the end of USAID funding, and most, if not all, will continue into 1995. Two of the programs - the Women's English Language Program and the Women's Public Administration Program - have the capacity to generate income, which will allow them to continue their activities in the short term with limited outside support and enhance the eventuality of their becoming self-supporting businesses. Even where financial self-sufficiency is not possible, the institution-building the programs have fostered is readily transferrable to the Afghanistan context.

For the programs in general, prospects for long-term sustainability will ultimately depend on the political will of the future government in Kabul. Certain programs have the potential of being incorporated virtually intact into Afghan educational institutions or government ministries or departments. The Women's Health Educator Program into the Ministry of Health, the Female Education and Teacher Training Program into the Ministry of Education, and the Women's Public Administration Program into an appropriate institution or ministry, are cases in point.

Despite the uncertainty that clouds the future in Afghanistan, it can be said that a majority of the program staff - teachers, trainers and management - as well as the beneficiaries - teachers, trainers, office administrators/managers, health educators - of the six female education programs which have been supported by USAID since 1991, have gained skills and possess the motivation and determination to pursue the process of providing and expanding education and educational opportunities for Afghan women and children.

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