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February 14, 1966

INFORMATION MEMORANDUM FOR THE ADMINISTRATOR

SUBJECT: Issues Paper for Review of Education Sector in Afghanistan

The Mission's background paper is thorough and incisive. It exposes succinctly the problems a country like Afghanistan faces in trying to cope with the needs for skilled and trained manpower brought about by economic development and its plans for building an educational system capable of producing the skills.

One aspect which is not clear from the Mission's paper is the setting of education in Afghanistan's overall development plans. What share of available resources is devoted to education? What portion of the Government's budget?

A number of important areas upon which we may wish to focus our discussion are the following:

1. Need for Manpower Planning

It appears that up to now there has been little effort by the Afghan Government to look systematically at its future needs for trained manpower and to shape its educational structure to meet the defined needs and priorities. The Mission's conclusion, as also emphasized by NFSA/ID and TCR, that the USAID should assist the RGA with a systematic study of manpower needs is most appropriate. Besides a manpower study what other actions does the Mission consider essential to create a permanent manpower planning capability given limited Afghan administrative capacity?

2. Priorities in Education

Even without a thorough manpower survey, certain priority needs may be pinpointed. Agriculture is and will continue to be the country's most important production sector. Yet there are only two agricultural schools in operation. What priority does the Afghan Government give to vocational agricultural training? In this connection, NESA/ID - TCR's concern about the abandoned U.S. role in vocational agricultural education is relevant. An analysis of why we think we "failed" in this important area might be instructive. Given that there are other donors active in this field, have they been more successful? Should we again become involved?

This raises the more general problem of educational priorities. Besides broadening the base of the educational pyramid by expanding primary school education, what is the RGA's thinking for the next Five Year Plan with regard to priorities in the technical fields? Could inter-country

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1. Issues paper - Education - AF. 2. Education - AF.
3. Sector analysis - Education - AF. I. Ranis, Gustav.
II. Title.

cross-sectional studies, such as Tinbergen's, be used as a point of reference?

3. RGA Coordination of Educational Programs

In view of Afghanistan's dependence on external assistance, the problem of the coordination of foreign assistance takes on major significance. Do the offers of assistance for specific projects by external donors, which are designed to meet, in part, their own political objectives, tend to distort the priorities in education the RGA may have established? Therefore, the question is how is the Afghan Government coping with the coordination aspects of external as well as domestic programs in education? What influence could the U.S. bring to bear for creating within the Afghan Government an improved capability for integrating the various efforts to meet priority needs?

4. Experience with University Contracts

There may be some question of whether the device of contractual arrangements with U.S. educational institutions is functioning satisfactorily. We note that NESAI/ID - TCR in their comments on the Mission's Paper, raise the question of relevance to Afghan needs of U.S. educational administrative patterns and curricula formats. What is the Mission's experience in this regard? What kinds of improvements may be desirable?

GR

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ADMINISTRATOR'S REVIEW OF EDUCATION SECTOR IN AFGHANISTAN
AID/W COMMENTS ON USAID/A'S BACKGROUND PAPER

I. STATEMENT OF GOALS

A. Afghanistan Education Goals:

The shortage of trained manpower is more severe, hence, a greater barrier to development in Afghanistan than it is in most underdeveloped countries. The Royal Government of Afghanistan has placed high priority on improving this situation, but the magnitude of the task is considerable with only 10% of the population literate, only 16% of the primary school age children in school, and a drop-out rate after the sixth grade of about 75%. Faced with popular pressures and the need for more teachers, more buildings, more materials, etc., the RGA has tended to plan in terms of purely quantitative goals. Only recently has thought been given to the need for relating education goals to other aspects of national development. In response to this need, increasing resources are being brought to technical higher education and teacher training through a blending of the contributions of various foreign donors.

B. USAID Education Goals:

Within the broad goals of the RGA, the USAID will support those education activities that effectively advance economic and social development. The USAID objective is to assist the RGA to meet its goals to produce better trained manpower in the priority fields related to economic development. The major aspects of USAID assistance are to encourage and help the RGA to:

1. Improve the quality of education through:
 - a. Primary school curriculum revision and textbook preparation;
 - b. Secondary level teacher education and curriculum improvement;
 - c. University Administration and development of the Faculties of Education, Agriculture, and Engineering;
 - d. Expansion of in-service/on-the-job training;
 - e. Development of a system for middle-manpower training;
2. Make a more precise assessment of manpower needs; and
3. Improve planning, coordination and evaluation of educational programs.

II. USAID CONTRIBUTIONS

The USAID assistance in education is centered in contracts with Teachers College, Columbia University; University of Wyoming; Educational Services Incorporated; and Southern Illinois University. These contractors are working in primary and secondary teacher training; helping to establish a Faculty of Agriculture; and to establish secondary and university level technical education programs and facilities at the Faculty of Engineering and the Afghan Institute of Technology.

III. AID/W OBSERVATIONS

AID/W shares the concerns expressed by the Mission Paper and in addition wishes to raise further issues for consideration. We agree with the USAID that solution to many of Afghanistan's economic and social problems is contingent, in large degree, upon improving the quality and enlarging the scope of public education.

Agriculture and animal husbandry are, and will long remain, the basis of Afghanistan's economy. Again, quantity and quality of production are far below the potential and need; but improvement requires more and better-trained manpower, from agricultural administrations, engineers and teachers down to the peasant farmers, whose capacity for absorbing new methods and practices is limited by their low literacy level.

Industrialization, the exploitation of mineral resources and the improvement of communications all have limited potential at best; nevertheless, all of them require an adequate number of trained engineers and technicians. Existing facilities for training technicians and the process of improving the quality of their training are still inadequate. Moreover, to provide a sufficient number of candidates for such training, both the quantity and quality of middle-school and secondary school education must be greatly improved.

NOTE: USAID efforts to support vocational agriculture schools have not been very successful and in 1965 were terminated. Unless other donors assume the responsibility for advising in the VoAg education, AID/W feels USAID should again involve itself in this vital area of education. In addition, USAID efforts should support the introduction of agricultural information into the elementary grades, ideally reinforced by on-the-farm training.

The RGA, the USAID and other donors are attacking the education program on many fronts, and necessarily so. Kabul University is being assisted by A.I.D. in developing a single campus, and an improved administrative structure and in up-grading Faculties (Colleges) of Engineering, Agriculture and Education.

NOTE: There is evidence that some specialist contractors limit their interest and activities to specialized deficiencies that become self-perpetuating program goals to the exclusion of broader program concerns. Careful review should be made of the tendency to develop transplanted U. S. institutions at Kabul University. The use of English as the instructional language, the use of U.S. textbooks without collorary development of indigenous materials, the quality and content of teaching should all be carefully evaluated. Further, evaluation of "majors" offered at K. U. is needed to determine if U. S. specializations are really what graduates should have to meet Afghanistan's manpower needs.

The teacher training system for preparing secondary and primary level teachers, the revision of school curricula and the preparation of teaching materials are the foci of A.I.D. effort on the pre-university level. Teacher education is and will continue to be the area of greatest need and of greatest multiplier potential. Until recently all of the external assistance in this area came from A.I.D., but a compromise arrangement now provides for U. N. agencies to handle assistance in primary training.

NOTE: There are dangers inherent in having UNESCO provide major assistance in primary teacher training while expecting USAID to help prepare primary curricula and textbooks. Educators agree that these areas are inseparable and that RGA must show more ability now to coordinate donor assistance than has ever been previously demonstrated.

Development of the Afghan Institute of Technology (AIT) through construction of a new physical plant, training of staff, and improvement of curriculum, is designed to provide a future supply of middle-manpower technicians. Hitherto, the AIT has been chiefly a source of supply of candidates for the Faculty of Engineering. It had been planned to shift this burden to the Lycees which were to be reoriented for that purpose.

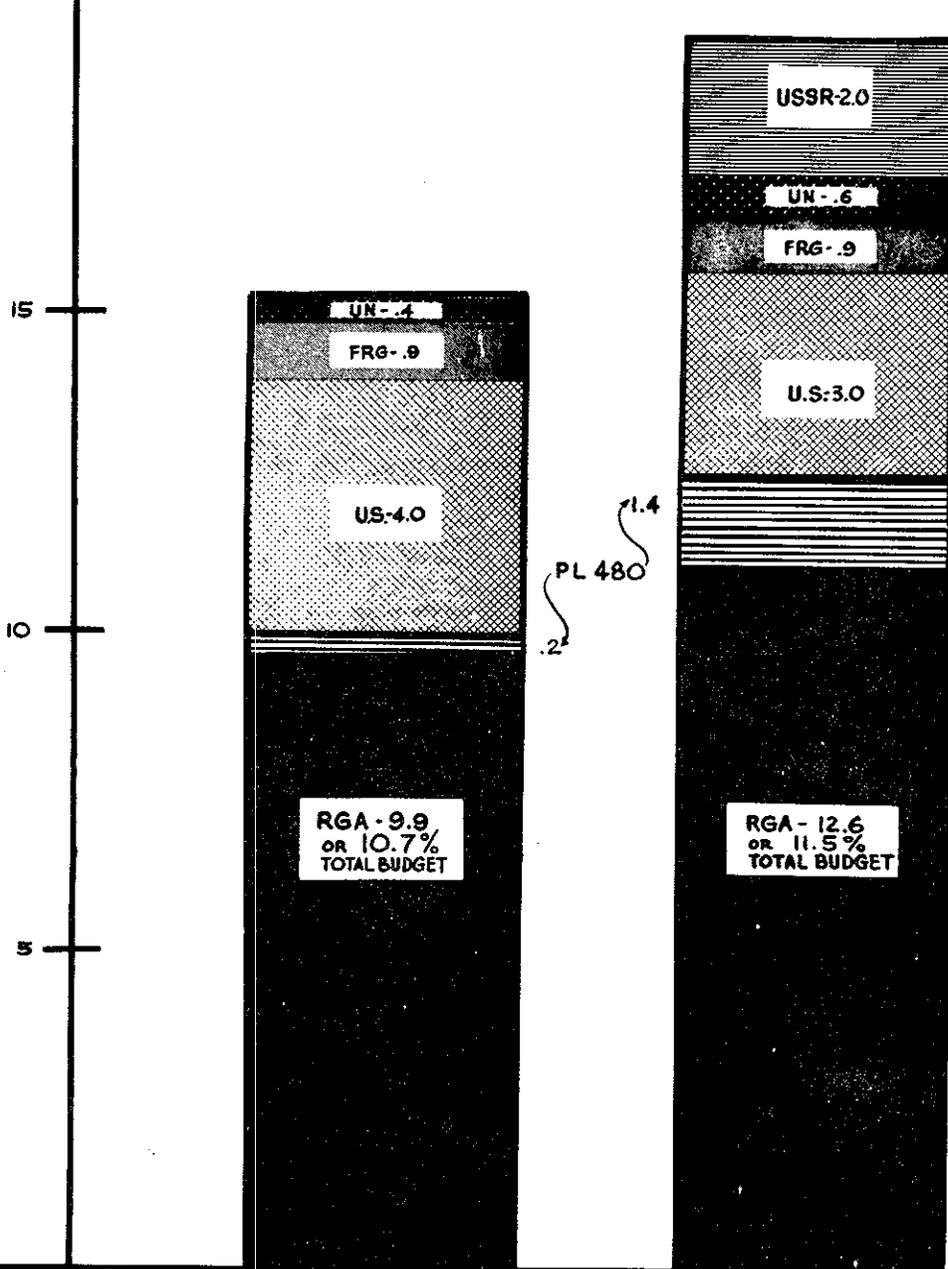
NOTE: The Mission's dilemma is that reorganization of the lycees may take too much time and money, but that developing an AIT which can cover both functions (i.e., pre-university preparation and terminal middle-manpower education) may require, eventually, a dramatic expansion of the AIT project.

IV. SUMMARY

The view of the RGA that it is "too poor to refuse any offer of assistance" has led us to some instances of duplication and waste. When U. S. assistance began, more than a decade ago, we could not wait to gather, organize and analyze data on social and economic needs before plunging into a desperate situation where "any help was valuable help". Unfortunately, in the succeeding years, A.I.D. continued to offer assistance without undertaking necessary educational and manpower research. Even today our program of assistance to education is not based upon reliable manpower data but rather upon opinions of what is thought to be necessary to the Afghan development. AID/W should encourage and give full support to the USAID plan for assisting the RGA in a systematic study of manpower requirements. This study, coming as it does many years late, should be given top priority as the basis for future education program planning.

RGA AND PRINCIPAL DONOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO EDUCATION

MILLIONS OF DOLLARS •
20



1964

1965

TOTAL EDUCATION FUNDING
RGA BUDGET
FOREIGN CONTRIBUTIONS

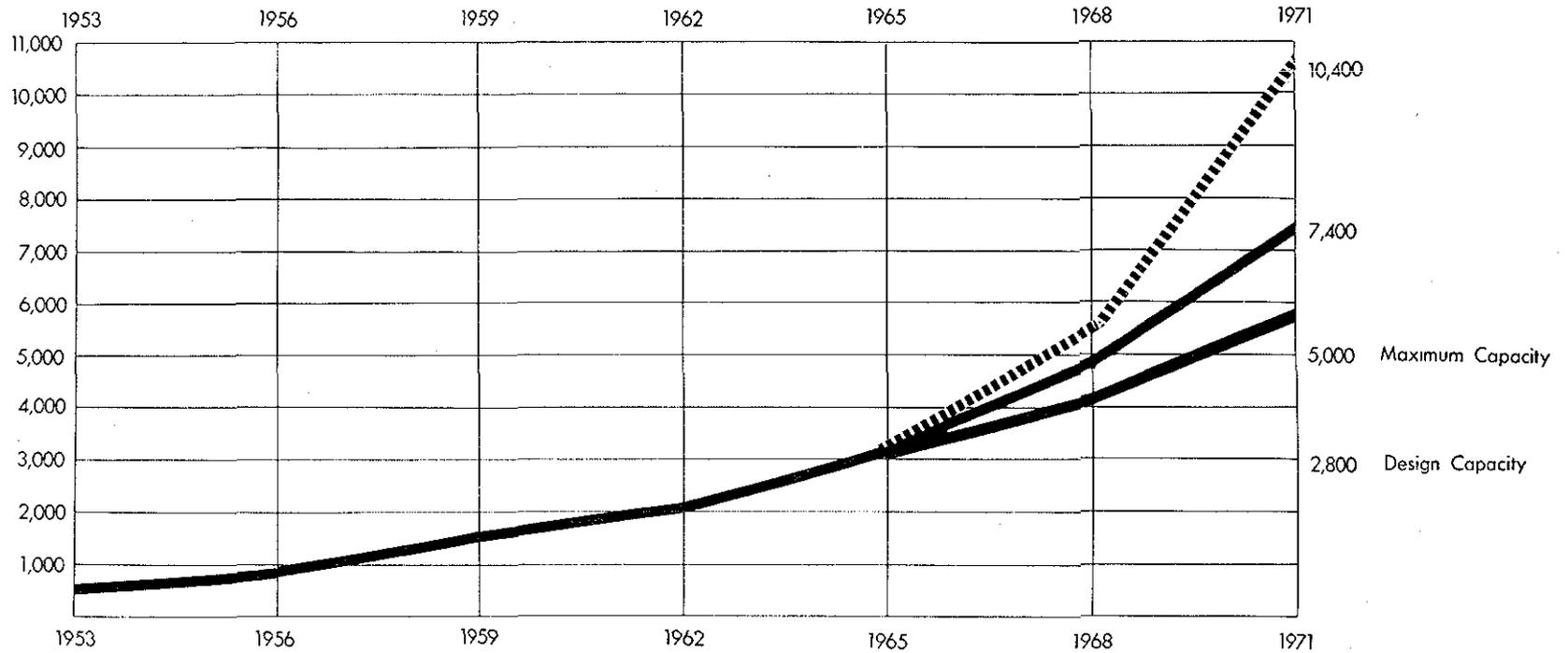
15.2
9.9 (65.1%)
5.3 (34.9%)

19.1
12.6 (65.7%)
6.5 (34.3%)

KABUL UNIVERSITY

ENROLLMENT 1953-1965

ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS 1965-1971



— Actual Enrollment

Projected Enrollment

— Based on Restricted Admissions

— Based on Past Enrollment

..... Based on High School Graduates