

USAID Assistance to Afghanistan 2002-2008

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 27, 2008

Press Office: 202-712-4320

Public Information: 202-712-4810

www.usaid.gov

Nearly 25 years of war and violence devastated Afghanistan's politics, economy, and society. In 2001, when the Taliban was forced out of power, half of Afghanistan's people lived in absolute poverty, and virtually all of the country's institutions and much of its infrastructure were destroyed. To help rebuild the country and combat terrorism, USAID is working to create economic growth, effective and representative governance, and the human capital base needed to eliminate the conditions that breed extremism.

With over \$3.4 billion spent on development programs in Afghanistan since 2002, USAID provides the largest bilateral civilian assistance program to Afghanistan. USAID's total budget in Afghanistan over the past six years breaks down into the following amounts:

Pledged	Obligated	Disbursed
\$6.3 Billion	\$5.1 Billion	\$3.4 Billion

*See Footnotes

Our work continues to be a vital support to Afghanistan in its efforts to ensure economic growth led by the private sector, establish a democratic and capable state governed by the rule of law, and provide basic services for its people.

Today, with USAID's support, over 5.7 million students are enrolled in school - over five times more than in the Taliban era. Girls now comprise 35 percent of the total number of students enrolled, which is a higher percentage than at any time in Afghan history. Also with USAID's assistance, approximately 80 percent of the population is within walking distance of a health care organization, contributing to a 22 percent drop in infant mortality. Afghanistan now has an internationally recognized currency. Now, there are more than 4 mobile phone companies with over 4 million subscribers.

When USAID arrived in 2002, there were only 50 kilometers of intact paved roads. To date, USAID has built or rehabilitated approximately 2,700 kilometers of roads, including 715 kilometers of the Ring Road, national highways, and provincial and rural roads. Construction and rehabilitation of the Ring Road has reduced travel time (by over 50 percent from Kabul to Kandahar and by approximately 45 percent from Kandahar to Herat). As over 60 percent of Afghans live within 50 kilometers of the Ring Road, the road is extremely important for trade, economic development, and education and health access.

Similarly, Afghanistan's energy infrastructure was in dire shape; only about 6 percent of Afghans had access to reliable electricity in 2001. USAID is working to expand Afghans' access to electricity by contributing to the construction and expansion of the North East Power System, which, when completed in mid-2009, will reach approximately 25 percent of the rural population. Energy projects, by their nature, take a long time; therefore, USAID is working on keeping the lights on in big cities like Kabul and Kandahar by procuring generators and helping to operate and maintain them.

USAID has over 20 personnel in 19 provincial reconstruction teams (PRTs) across Afghanistan working on smaller projects with immediate local impact such as: community and government buildings, clinics, schools, capacity building for government, radio stations, gender activities, agriculture, water/irrigation projects, energy (micro-power) and roads projects. PRTs completed over 440 of these projects from 2003 to 2007.

USAID Accomplishments since 2002

AGRICULTURE

- Increased overall agricultural production by \$1.75 billion from 2003 to 2006
- Improved the institutions, technology and local capacity necessary for increased agricultural productivity
- Extended access to financial services and credit necessary for agribusiness development
- Disbursed over 28,000 micro-finance loans; women make up 75 percent of recipients

ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT

- Provided immediate income alternatives to poppy production through cash-for-work programs
- Over \$25 million paid in salaries to over 270,000 Afghans
- Infrastructure rehabilitation achieved through cash-for-work programs also helps long-term development
- Helped over 1,000,000 farmers produce and market high-value vegetable crops, generating \$17 million in sales; currently exporting some high-value crops to Dubai
- Since 2007, 782 MT of pomegranate exports worth approximately US \$1,532,900 in sales.

INFRASTRUCTURE

- Rehabilitated over 1,650 kilometers of roads, including regional and national highways, over 1,000 kilometers of Farm-to-market and cobblestone roads and over 18 kilometers of district roads under PRTs
- Working to "keep the lights on" in the major cities by procuring generators and helping the Government of Afghanistan learn to operate and maintain the generators
- Contributing to the construction of the North-East Power System (NEPS) which will provide long-term expanded access to reliable, low-cost electricity

ECONOMIC GROWTH

- Both GDP and GDP per capita doubled since 2002
- Kabul Industrial Park open and two more industrial parks (Kandahar and Mazar) will open soon, with the prospect of 10,000 new jobs
- Restored 80 percent of property deeds in Afghanistan, essential in property ownership
- Supported over 50 women-run business associations, providing training and increasing opportunities for women entrepreneurs

EDUCATION

- Over 170,000 students (55 percent girls) have completed an accelerated learning program to recover years of education lost under the Taliban
- over 65,000 teachers through radio-broadcasts and 10,500 teachers through accelerated learning program
- Printed and distributed over 60 million textbooks nationwide for grades 1-12
- Constructed/refurbished over 680 schools

HEALTH

- Significantly expanded access to basic health services:
- Approximately 80 percent of Afghans are within walking distance to some form of health care, an increase from 9 percent in 2002
- Over 7.5 million Afghans receive health services each year
- Built or rehabilitated over 670 health facilities and trained over 10,500 health workers
- More than 95 percent of children - over 7.2 million - have now been inoculated against polio,

DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE

- Provided voter registration, education and logistical assistance in support of the successful 2004 presidential and 2005 parliamentary elections

- Helped re-establish a functioning Parliament after 30 years of war
- Built or rehabilitated 40 courthouses and justice facilities in 18 provinces
- Compiled and republished Afghanistan's entire body of law
- Trained over 950 judges and virtually all members of Parliament, legislative drafters, provincial counselors and journalists
- Established or upgraded 36 independent community radio stations, whose broadcasts reach 60 percent of the population
- Helped establish Tolo TV, currently the top-rated independent television station in the country
- Helped establish the Independent Electoral Commission and the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission

*** Foot Notes**

- Pledged - This represents funding enacted by Congress, through appropriations acts.
- Obligations - are formal commitments for the payment of funds for specific goods or services.
- Disbursements - Payments made using cash, check, or electronic transfers for specific goods or services delivered.