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WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR AFGHANISTAN

Prepared by

**Nagat El-Sanabary, Ph.D.
WID Consultant**

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ACRONYMS

AAUW	American Association of University Women
AIG	The Afghan Interim Government
AWEC	Afghan Women's Education Center
AWRC	Afghan Women's Resource Center
DPI	Democratic Pluralism Initiative
ESSP	Educational Sector Support Project
FEB	Female Education Program
GTZ	German Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development
IFUW	International Federation of University Women
IRC	International Rescue Committee
ISRA	Islamic Relief Agency
KEP	Kodakistan Education Program
MJB	Male Journalism Program
MSH	Management Sciences for Health
MSOA	Muslim Sister's Organization of Afghanistan
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
PVO	Private Voluntary Organization
O/AID/Rep	Office of AID Representative for Afghanistan
RAP	Rural Assistance Program
RRDA	Rural Reconstruction and Development of Afghanistan
Rs.	Pakistani Rupees
SCF	Save the Children Federation
SCF/UK	Save the Children Federation, United Kingdom
SCF/US	Save the Children Federation, United States
TAF	The Asia Foundation
UNO	University Nebraska at Omaha
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
WID	Women in Development
WELP	Women's English Language Program
WHETP	Women's Health Educator Trainer Program
WHO	World Health Organization
WPA	Women's Public Administration
WJP	Women's Journalism Program

Executive Summary

The purpose of this document is to provide a strategy for using Democratic Pluralism funds of the O/AID/Rep's PVO Support Project to upgrade the status of Afghan women and expand their options both in the refugee camps and inside Afghanistan.

O/AID Rep's support for women's programs is predicated on the U.S. Congressional mandate which stipulates that all U.S. bilateral assistance "be administered so as to give particular attention to those programs, projects and activities which tend to integrate women into the national economies of foreign countries, thus improving their status and assisting the total development effort."

The O/AID/Rep's Afghanistan Strategy document stresses the need to increase emphasis on programs which benefit women and girls in refugee camps in Pakistan, and inside Afghanistan. Although this emphasis is embodied in various O/AID/Rep.'s sectoral programs, the PVO Support Project through its Democratic Pluralism Initiative (DPI) component has become the main funding source for programs specifically targeting females. A major thrust of the Democratic Pluralism portfolio has been to increase the participation of women in Afghan society by expanding their opportunities for education, training, and income generation; supporting their involvement in relevant international forums; and strengthening Afghan NGOs whose programs primarily benefit women, especially those NGOs managed by women. The International Rescue Committee (IRC) and the Asia Foundation (TAF) act as the O/AID/Rep's primary intermediaries for managing the democratic pluralism portfolio. IRC implements a highly successful multi-faceted female Education Program; and the Asia Foundation provides sub-grants in support of the above objectives to NGOs managed by Afghan women and to other Afghan and international PVOs with women's programs.

As a result of the heavy war loss of about one million Afghans, mostly males, Afghan women are a majority in the refugee camps and inside Afghanistan. Consequently, they are expected to share a major responsibility in the process of rebuilding their country. Although their primary responsibility will be in household production, many will have to contribute to agriculture, health, education and other economic activities that meet the basic needs of the people. Most are unprepared for this major task and need training in survival and income-generating skills, in health, education, and related areas. Women and men, the human resources of Afghanistan, are the most important resource for a country that has lost most of its basic social and physical infrastructures. Investing in their education and training is an investment for the future of Afghanistan.

The Democratic Pluralism Initiative of the PVO Support Project of O/AID/Rep has become O/AID/Rep.'s principal instigator of female programs. In order to improve its effectiveness in responding to the needs of Afghan women and in implementing the US Congressional mandate, the DPI hired this consultant to examine and evaluate the DPI-funded projects, and to develop this strategy document.

Field research for both the evaluation and this strategy paper was carried out in late October and early November 1991, and in January 1992. Data was collected through site visits, participant observations, interviews with key personnel in the implementing organizations, and some of the female clientele, and an examination of various program proposals, progress reports, and work plans. The consultant relied also on reports and documents issued by the USAID and several United Nations agencies pertaining to their WID programs in various Third World countries.

The evaluation report concludes that Afghan women's programs have been successful in addressing, on a limited scale, the educational, training, and survival needs of Afghan women and their families. But, these programs function within a set of constraints that limit their effectiveness and impact. These include traditional cultural ideas relating to the status of women and their role in society; inadequate financial resources; poverty, illiteracy, and poor health conditions among the Afghans especially the females; fear of foreign cultural influences particularly on women; the continuing state of strife and fighting inside Afghanistan; lack of coordination among programs and donors; lack of managerial expertise among Afghan NGOs and others implementing female programs; and the absence of an articulated women in development policy and plan for Afghanistan.

The evaluation, dated February 1992, provides the basis for this strategy paper. It discusses the programs and evaluates their efficacy and impact, and recommendations for each specific program. This paper details a strategy for using DPI funds to enhance and expand existing programs, and offer new programs to meet the current and future needs of Afghan women and their families. It details seven strategic objectives and outlines the means of achieving them: 1) continuation, expansion and improvement of current programs; 2) emphasizing programs for integrated adult female literacy; 3) promoting leadership training of Afghan women; 4) promoting the institutional development of Afghan Female NGOs; 5) supporting new programs to promote job creation and self-reliance including income-generating programs, and micro-enterprise development and entrepreneurship training; 6) cooperating and coordinating with other O/AID/Rep's sectoral programs to maximize the use of scarce resources and increase program sustainability; and 7) cooperating and coordinating programs with other donors.

The paper is divided into five main parts. Part I is divided into three sections. The first section provides a general background; the second describes the special situation of Afghan; and the third examines the constraints and risks of providing programs for Afghan women. Part II provides the rationale of using DPI and other O/AID/Rep funds to support programs for Afghan women in the refugee communities and inside Afghanistan. Part III outlines the needs of Afghan women in four main areas: education; health, agriculture, and commerce and industry. Part IV, elaborates seven main strategic objectives for O/AID/Rep's Women in Development (WID) programs and the means of achieving them. The paper concludes, in part VI, with a brief discussion of the implications for women's programs as a result of USAID's moving inside Afghanistan and working as a bilateral donor, after a settlement and the establishment of a government acceptable to all Afghan people.

I. BACKGROUND

This section provides a general overview of the current political and social situation in which women operate. It is divided into three sections. The first section provides a general background of the Afghan situation. The second section describes the situation of Afghan women before the war and in the refugee communities, and inside Afghanistan. The third section discusses the constraints and risks of providing programs for Afghan women.

General Background.

The communist revolution of 1978, and ensuing conflicts, the Soviet invasion, and the war against the USSR that lasted for almost 12 years have had disastrous consequences for the Afghans and their country. During that period, approximately seven million people have fled the country, to escape the violence as well as religious and political persecution. Today Afghans are the largest refugee group in the world. Of these, 3.5 million live in Pakistan, mostly in the Northwestern Frontier Province and Baluchistan. Another 2.5 million refugees live in Iran. The majority of the most highly educated and affluent Afghans have immigrated to the United States, Canada, Australia, Germany, and other Western countries. The lives of all of these people have been dramatically altered by the war. Most of them have lost family members, friends and possessions. Educational and employment opportunities have been drastically reduced. Whether in the camps or in Western cities, many Afghans suffer deep mental distress.

It is estimated that about one-and-a-half million Afghans, overwhelmingly males, were killed in the twelve-year war against the Soviets and the communist regime in Kabul. Consequently about 75 percent of the refugees in Pakistan and Iran are females. Most are heads of households living on rations provided by the UNHCR, and other forms of assistance provided by indigenous and foreign (both Arab and Western) nongovernmental organizations (NGOs).

Conditions differ considerably in the refugee camps, in resistance-held areas inside Afghanistan, and in regime-held urban centers. Those living under the communist regime have been indoctrinated with the party ideology and suffer the hardships of war and the ensuing economic and political instability. Those in the resistance-held areas are refugees in their own country, isolated and dispossessed. They have little access to educational and health facilities and other basic services. The 3.5 million refugees who live in tent villages in Pakistan are dispossessed, disenfranchised, and live under difficult circumstances.

Assistance provided by the vast number of relief organizations -- over 150 Western, Arab, and Afghan NGOs -- has helped to alleviate the suffering of the refugees and some Afghans living in resistance-held areas. Assistance came in the form of rations, provided mainly by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), health and educational services,

and income-generating activities. But hardships and even despair have become the lot of a vast numbers of Afghans, especially the females.

The withdrawal of Soviet troops in 1989, inspired hopes of an imminent settlement and return of the refugees to their country. But this did not happen. Instead, shelling and bombardment continue between the Mujahideen (resistance fighters) and the communist regime. The stoppage of arms' shipments to both the Kabul regime and the Mujahideen, in January 1992 according to an agreement between the former Soviet Union and the United States, did not stop the fighting either. It is hoped that current efforts to reach a political resolution of the conflict will succeed in establishing a government acceptable to all Afghan people, thus ending the current impasse.

In the meantime, donor agencies and the Pakistani government have become impatient and anxious for the Afghans to return to their country. Funding for refugee programs had dwindled, as efforts began to focus on cross-border programs. Furthermore, with the collapse of the former Soviet Union, and the dramatic changes in Eastern Europe, the Afghan question has lost its urgency, and the Afghans fear their cause will be forgotten. They argue that much of the assistance provided is motivated by a relief mentality that helps perpetrate refugee dependency instead of helping them become self-sufficient.

As everyone anxiously awaits a settlement, there is a recognition of the difficulties ahead. As the Afghan Policy Strategy indicates "the road to reconstruction will not be easy nor straightforward." Given the nature and extent of the uncertainties which surround Afghanistan's future and the role of AID assistance, this WID strategy, like the general Afghan strategy, presents a broadbrush rather than a definitive plan of how AID should focus its resources on upgrading the status of women and expanding their options both in the refugee camps and inside Afghanistan. It does so while cognizant of the uncertainties, the risks, and the long road ahead towards the rebuilding of a free Afghanistan.

The transition from cross border operations, including the work with Afghan refugees necessitated by the continued state of war inside Afghanistan and the need to help disenfranchised groups, to the reestablishment of a bilateral program operating inside Afghanistan will be long and uncertain. This WID strategy takes this into consideration as it stresses current needs and concerns, while preparing for a transition that may take much longer, and be much more complex than is currently expected.

Anticipation of resettlement, should not, as specified in the Afghan policy strategy, ignore the plight of Afghan refugees living in camps in Pakistan. Current legislation specifically directs AID to ensure that women and girls in the camps and inside Afghanistan benefit from AID assistance. This strategy is predicated on continued US interest in and financial support for the Afghan people in their current struggle for survival, and in the anticipated periods of renewal and reconstruction.

The Situation of Afghan Women

The position of women is one of the hottest controversies of Afghan society this century. Any modernization of women's conditions to date has been the result of government action. Improvement of their status in legal and social terms has been seen by traditionalists, who have had a strong impact on Afghan society for decades, as an undesirable Western, non-Islamic influence. It has been perceived as a threat to tradition, which would cause unrest in family and community life. Women's participation in public life, in formal education and in the labour force, has therefore been strongly resisted (Myrdal, 1960; Dupree, 1980). Consequently, any improvement of their status that has been introduced by small enclaves of progressives has been met by a corresponding counteraction by traditionalists." (Hanne Christensen 1990, 16-17))

Before the war, female Afghan refugees had some of the lowest development indicators in the world: high infant and maternal mortality rates, low life expectancy (40 years for women as compared with 42 for men) and an illiteracy rate of 95 percent. The war has exacerbated this already serious situation. It destroyed the educational, health and economic infrastructure of Afghanistan, led to the death of thousands of professionals, and disabled countless others. The historic educational disadvantage of Afghan females has worsened in the camps and in rural Afghanistan.

Yet, Afghanistan, like many developing countries, is a country of contrasts. Despite the high illiteracy rates, thousands of Afghan females enrolled in educational institutions from elementary schools through colleges, including 4000 in higher education. Women attended coeducational colleges in Kabul University including medical, engineering, law and agriculture colleges. Many educated Afghan women participated in the workforce as office workers, school teachers, engineers, doctors, lawyers, and judges. Women gained the right to vote in 1965 and two were elected members of Parliament. Although most Afghan women were segregated and wore the burqa or chador outside their homes, many had adopted Western clothes and worked in offices with men.

Afghan village women participated in various economic activities, mainly doing farm work -- planting, hoeing, and animal husbandry. Some urban women worked in factories especially in textiles and food processing. Carpet weaving and traditional embroidery involved many women in various Afghan provinces. The economic activities of women differed from one province to another. In some provinces women did most of the farm work, in others they were more secluded and had little involvement outside their homes.

But the environment is very different in the camps where women are secluded, veiling is mandatory, and female mobility is severely restricted. This is part of a general Islamic revivalism trend in all Muslim countries, which is aggravated among the Afghans by the ongoing threat, to the culture and religion, posed by the Soviet-backed ~~policy of~~ deliberate policy of cultural transformation. This has led to a greater stress on the authentic culture and

an ideology of family where women's place is in the home. The consequence has been a reinforcement of women's seclusion and restriction from public life.

Another cause of the more restrictive camp environment is the different ethnic and social groupings of the Afghans. Inside the country, families lived in homogenous communities where people knew and trusted each other. In the camps, different ethnic groups live together in congested quarters that make men more protective of their women folks. Political tensions and divisions aggravate the situation of women who become a target of ideological conflicts among various political groups.

The decimation of the Afghan population, particularly men, has had a devastating effect on the females living in the refugee communities. Women make up 75 percent of the Afghan refugees in Pakistan, and 20 percent of adult married women are estimated to have been widowed due to the war. In addition, at any given time, a percentage of adult men and older boys are absent on *jihad* in Afghanistan. In 1986, 8 percent of the entire male refugee population was found to be absent from the camps in *mujahideen* service in Afghanistan. These figures point out a "considerable temporary (sometimes permanent) absence from the home community of Afghan men." (Hanne Christensen 1990)

Peasant women who worked freely in the fields, nomad women who roamed in the hills tending their flock, and city women who participated in education and employment with men, found themselves restricted to the confinement of camp living. Many women had to don the veil, burqa, and chador for the first time in their lives. Fearing cultural and political threats, Afghan militants strike back at all foreigners, and women have become an easy target in that battle. Seclusion was reinforced, and wearing the chador, *burqua*, or the new *hijab* (black coat and head cover) became mandatory. Afghan women are caught up in the ideological culture war not only between the Muslims, communists, and the Christian West, but also among different Afghan resistance movements.

Those living in urban areas in Pakistan -- Islamabad, Karachi, and Lahore -- face fewer restrictions than those living in the camps, Peshawar, and Quetta. But they have other problems. An Afghan woman manager mentioned that less attention is given to programs for urban refugees many of whom have had interrupted education, lost jobs, and need either to continue their education or to work to help support their families. Many of the urban refugees are from Kabul and will be returning there after settlement.

When the refugees return to their villages, normalcy is expected to loosen up the restrictions upon women who will have to resume their traditional roles in farm and family production. Village elders, male and female, will once again act as mediators facilitating work on behalf of women and their families.

Yet it is also anticipated that the period of resettlement will include years of low-level local struggle for power. Women will continue to be a target of point-counter-point attacks, and the redefinition of their roles in society will be a long stormy process as it has been since the

1920s. The ideological debate on Muslim women's rights and their role in society will be a focal point in the resettlement and reconstruction process. It is already underway in conferences and discussion group meetings, in fatwas (edicts) issued sporadically and distributed through leaflets mailed or posted in public places, as well as in occasional violent incidents involving women's programs.

Risks and Constraints

Work on behalf of female Afghan refugees and women in rural Afghanistan is hampered by several constraints that must be taken into consideration in planning and implementing women's programs, and general programs with a women's component. All programs for Afghan women in the camps and in Afghanistan run the risk of being rejected by a community which makes work on behalf of women difficult and frustrating. The following discussion identifies two sets of constraints: constraints pertaining to the Afghan communities; and constraints pertaining to the funding and implementing organizations.

Following are the constraints arising from the Afghan context.

Afghanistan's restrictive cultural and religious environment. There is a belief among certain strata of Afghan society, in the refugee communities and inside Afghanistan, that female education is counter to Islamic teachings. This has led to stiff opposition and lack of interest in educational and other programs that specifically target women. Edicts are issued at various times condemning female education and threatening women who attend schools or work in offices. Although they have no justification in Islamic texts which encourage teaching and learning for both males and females, these allegations inhibit girls and women from attending classes.

Restricted Female Mobility. This makes it very difficult to plan and implement centrally located programs for females in Peshawar or across the borders. It is also expected that, after resettlement and the return of the refugees to their country, it will be difficult to recruit females for education and work in rural areas, unless adequate numbers of females from these areas are trained either in Pakistan or across the borders.

Poverty and Underdevelopment. The majority of Afghan women, in Pakistan and across the borders, are burdened with time-consuming domestic tasks such as collecting firewood, hauling water, washing clothes in rivers or canals, processing food for family consumption. Survival rather than education is a primary concern for these women.

Fear of Foreign Cultural and Religious Influences on Women. As a result of the communist regime's forced mobilization of women for education and work, and their indoctrination in communist ideology, the Afghans mistrust foreigners and fear their

influences particularly on the females. As Nancy Dupree has noted, there is a fear that "humanitarian assistance merely masks the sinister introduction of unacceptable Western influence values and evil permissive practices inimical to Islamic values regarding women in particular." These fears have led to misunderstandings and mutual suspicion between the Afghans and expatriate funding agencies. As a consequence, many Afghan girls and women are constrained from participating in available literacy, educational and training programs, and those who attend have to be transported to and from centrally located classes, which increases the per-unit cost of such programs.

The Continuing State of War, Strife and Factionalism. This contributes to the high level of uncertainty and anxiety among the Afghans, and impatience and frustration among the donors and the host country, Pakistan. It is also estimated that there are over a million mines inside Afghanistan, planted by both parties to the conflict. This is a major threat to people's lives. Security considerations are currently a constraint on cross-border work, especially for women who are caught not only in the ideological cross-fire, but also in a life-threatening physical environment if they choose to return to their country.

The constraints pertaining to the NGOs and donor organizations include the following.

Inadequate Information. There is not enough data about the real skills level among educated female Afghan refugees, nor about successful and replicable women's programs in other Islamic countries, including Pakistan. Because of this, valuable resources are not being utilized for the benefit of Afghan women and their communities.

Shortage of Financial Resources for Education and Training. This is a problem for all the donors which calls for care in the use of scarce resources to maximize their reach and impact. A special problem with women's programs is the added cost of providing transportation to and from female training programs.

Lack of Coordination among Donor and Implementing Organizations. This leads to duplication of efforts and waste of scarce resources.

Lack of Managerial Expertise. This is a problem for all Afghan NGOs especially those run by women. Despite their education and commitments, the Afghan women managers lack the experience in various aspects of organizational management: personnel, finance and budgeting, as well as proposal and report writing.

Difficulty of Supervising, Monitoring and Evaluating Cross-Border Programs. This constraint on programming for both women and men is expected to change once a settlement is reached and USAID moves inside Afghanistan.

These constraints and risks have resulted in excessive concern, among all funding and implementing agencies, about the perceived sensitivity of the issue of female education and training. This concern leads, in turn, to hesitancy and unwillingness to try new projects and experiment with new ideas. Undoubtedly, the risks and constraints have to be weighed carefully in designing and implementing programs for women. They call for sensitivity and appreciation of the Afghan people's desire to maintain their national identity. But they should not obstruct female educational and training efforts.

The O/AID Rep, other donors, and all implementing organizations recognize the difficulties and strive continually to overcome them. They recognize that the fierce historical aversion to outside influences and the fragmented, often adversarial, conditions of Afghanistan's existing political landscape dictate that initiatives on behalf of women be planned and implemented with caution and acuity.

II. RATIONALE

The O/AID Rep's support for women's programs is predicated on the U.S. Congressional mandate which recognizes women's vital role in economic production, family support and overall development. That mandate stipulates that all U.S. bilateral assistance "be administered so as to give particular attention to those programs, projects and activities which tend to integrate women into the national economies of foreign countries, thus improving their status and assisting the total development effort."

Consequently, the U.S.A.I.D. Afghanistan Policy Strategy document, developed by the O/AID/Rep, stresses the need to increase emphasis on programs which benefit women and girls in refugee camps in Pakistan, and inside Afghanistan. Although this emphasis is embodied in various O/AID/Rep.'s sectoral programs, the PVO Support Project through its Democratic Pluralism Initiative (DPI) component has become the main funding source for programs specifically targeting females. A major thrust of the Democratic Pluralism portfolio has been to increase the participation of women in Afghan society by expanding their opportunities for education, training, and income generation; supporting their involvement in relevant international forums; and strengthening Afghan NGOs whose programs primarily benefit women, especially those NGOs managed by women. The International Rescue Committee (IRC) and the Asia Foundation (TAF) act as the O/AID/Rep's primary intermediaries for managing the democratic pluralism portfolio. IRC implements a highly successful multi-faceted female Education Program; and the Asia Foundation provides sub-grants in support of the above objectives to NGOs managed by Afghan women and to other Afghan and international PVOs with women's programs.

Furthermore, O/AID Rep's support of women's broader participation in its programs for Afghans is based on a belief that women's participation in all levels of program planning and implementation will increase the positive impact of the programs and their sustainability.

This support is also compatible with international concern and commitment to the empowerment of women and their integration in the economies of their countries as a critical factor in achieving broad-based, sustainable economic growth. In 1985, the forward of the AID Report on the First Decade of Women in Development stated that, " Our goal for the future is to integrate WID into every Bureau and Mission of this agency not just as a legitimate issue, for AID Policy makes it such, but as a development tool with its own set of specialized skills, techniques and methodologies." (quoted in USAID. Women in Development 1991, Foreword)

Furthermore, the O/AID Rep's commitment to improving the living conditions of Afghan women and their families is not based solely on economic considerations but also on the principles of equity, democracy, and access to resources. It is a moral commitment to disenfranchised groups, of whom women are a majority.

By helping enhance women's productive capacities and develop their full potential, the O/AID Rep contributes to developing 75 percent of the Afghanistan's human resources, the females. This will enable them to share the responsibility for the survival, rehabilitation and reconstruction of the Afghan nation. This is especially important because, as is the case in the refugee camps, a vast number of the women in post-war Afghanistan will be heads of households either as widows, or providers for disabled male family members. These women need assistance to acquire the skills needed to prepare them for their current survival needs, and anticipated responsibilities in post-war Afghanistan. Expanding Afghan females' involvement in the mission's programs and helping rural women acquire survival skills will help contribute to agricultural and food security, a basic goal of the Afghanistan policy strategy.

The importance of skills training and income generation, for both men and women, cannot be over-emphasized in a country where people know more about using guns and fighting wars than being involved in constructive activities. Income generation, and human resources development in general, will contribute greatly to the demilitarization of the Afghans, by providing constructive skills especially for young people who knew nothing but war for most of their lives. As one woman manager said, while people are waiting to go back they must be trained.

The O/AID/Rep.'s Democratic Pluralism Initiative has been a catalyst in supporting programs that empower Afghan women and help develop their human capital to enable them to survive in the harsh realities of refugee living, and to prepare them to contribute to the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Afghanistan. This Women in Development Strategy for Afghanistan helps focus attention on the unique needs of Afghan women, provides a plan for enhancing women's participation, and outlines means for their achievement. While acknowledging the need for all O/AID Rep's sectoral programs to integrate a WID component, the strategy fosters collaboration and coordination among all sectors, and between O/AID Rep and other donors. By so doing, it helps avoid duplication of effort and maximize the use of scarce resources.

III. THE NEEDS OF AFGHAN WOMEN

The education, training and income generation needs of Afghan women are vast and the programs available for them are very limited. Our interviews with various foreign and Afghan women and men, and our visits to the refugee camps and to various training programs and health facilities have demonstrated that the most pressing needs are for education, health services and training, and income generation. The depressingly high female illiteracy rate necessitates the expansion of female literacy and schooling; poor health conditions puts a premium on health services and training; and the pervasive poverty of Afghan females and their families requires training in income-generation and micro-enterprise development.

It is generally recognized, by the donor community and the NGOs, that a wide gap exists between the opportunities available to females and males, and that female educational and training programs, both formal and non-formal, are quite limited. Very few programs target females, and those that are available tend to be in traditional fields related to women's domestic functions. As for formal education, there are fewer schools for females, than males, at the primary and secondary levels, and practically no higher education worthy of the designation. Furthermore, with the exception of two office skills programs, there are no real vocational education and training programs for women. Furthermore, while females are currently a majority in Kabul university, and there are various vocational and technical programs for urban females, the majority of women living in rural areas inside Afghanistan have no access to education and training. In short, the needs are as great among the refugees as they are across the borders.

Educational Needs

The educational needs of Afghan women range from basic literacy, to formal education at the primary, intermediate, secondary and higher levels, vocational training and continuing education, as well as pre- and in-service training of school teachers and administrators.

Available statistics indicate that only 1.5 percent of the Afghan females of primary school age are enrolled in schools in Pakistan, as compared to 15 percent of the males. Opportunities for post-primary education are extremely limited. This situation threatens to perpetuate the high illiteracy rate among Afghan females, waste valuable human resources, and continue the Afghan's dependency on others for support and survival.

The existence of a large number of foreign assistance agencies serving and employing Afghan people has heightened the need for Afghans who are proficient in English. Additionally, the number of Afghan NGO's is rising constantly and all of them have to deal regularly with development assistance agencies, especially when seeking funding for their own projects. Women and men alike write and negotiate proposals for funding and have to develop management and proposal writing skills. These skills are essential for the deforeignization efforts currently underway. It is expected also that in post-war Afghanistan, the need for

people proficient in English will continue as multilateral and bilateral organizations get involved in the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the Afghan nation.

Health Needs

As noted above, the health indicators for Afghan women and children are very low, and their needs for health services, education and training are great. Support by the World Health Organization, O/AID/Rep's Health Sector Support project, Save the Children U.K, the Islamic Relief Agency (ISRA), the Norwegian Committee for Afghanistan and the Swedish Committee all help in providing health services, health education, and training of health personnel. Most of these organizations provide health education to thousands of Afghan women. All these programs are based on the fact that most Afghan women are illiterate. But no attempt has been made to integrate a literacy component into health education in order to alleviate the illiteracy problem which is major cause of many health problems, as proved by the burgeoning literature on female education.

Agriculture-Related Needs

As previously noted, many Afghan women did play an important role in agriculture before the war, and they will resume their agricultural work when they return to their country. The rebuilding of Afghanistan will require restoration of the agricultural sector, a task in which women must play an even larger role than before because of the high male casualties of the war. Yet the agricultural sector has been the least responsive to the needs of Afghan women farmers, and the O/AID/Rep's Agriculture Sector Support Project has no programs for females.

Needs Related to Commerce and Industry

Because the war destroyed the Afghan economy, its reconstruction will be a daunting challenge. Both men and women will have to share the responsibility for restoring the Afghan economy. Women's involvement may be difficult, but this should not prevent the development of training programs to upgrade their skills and train them for gainful employment, including self-employment.

Interviews with Afghan women pointed out the need for income generation and micro-enterprise development both for the agricultural, commercial and industrial sectors. Yet, at the time of this consultant's visits in late 1991 and early 1992, there were no programs designed to improve the income-generating opportunities for either rural or urban women.

Only two programs provide office business skills to Afghan women: the IRC's Women's Public Administration Program, and the ESSP Office Skills Program. Other organizations, such as the Afghan Women's Education Center in Islamabad offers typing classes in both Dari and Pashtu. These programs are extremely inadequate in preparing Afghan females to play an active role in the Afghan economy, mainly because they reach relatively few women.

Furthermore, despite the shortage of employment opportunities for females in Pakistan, entrepreneurship training is not available, and the opportunity of preparing women for self-employment is lost.

The women's programs offered by various foreign and indigenous Afghan organizations are too few and too limited in focus to meet the needs of Afghan women and to prepare them to play an active role in their communities and country. The O/AID Rep's Democratic Pluralism Initiative has undertaken an evaluating of its funded programs for Afghan women to determine their effectiveness in meeting the needs of Afghan women, and to examine ways of enhancing and expanding them to increase their impact and efficacy. The findings of that evaluation report (El-Sanabary, February 1992) provide the basis for this WID strategy.

IV. A WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT (WID) STRATEGY FOR AFGHANISTAN: THE ROLE OF THE O/AID REP'S DEMOCRATIC PLURALISM INITIATIVE (DPI)

Goal and Objectives

A major goal of the Democratic Pluralism Initiative, which this WID strategy aims to accomplish in the present and over the next few years, is to use the Democratic Pluralism funds to upgrade the status of Afghan women and expand their options both in the refugee camps and inside Afghanistan. The specific objective of DPI has been to fund women's programs designed specifically to meet their education and training needs.

Within the background, constraints, and needs given above, and to accomplish the stated goal of the Democratic Pluralism Initiative, the DPI Strategy for Women in Development will strive to achieve the following six objectives:

1. Continue, expand, and improve current programs;
2. Expand and improve programs for adult female literacy;
3. Promote leadership training of Afghan women;
4. Promote the institutional development of Afghan NGOs;
5. Support new programs to support job-creation and self-reliance
6. Coordinate programs with other O/AID/Rep's Sectors;
7. Coordinate programs with other donors.

Following is a discussion of each of these objectives and the means of achieving them.

Strategic Objective No. 1. :

Continuing, Expanding and Improving Current Programs:

O/AID/Rep, through its Democratic Pluralism Initiative will continue its support of the current programs for women through its cooperative agreements with the International Rescue Committee (IRC) and the Asia Foundation (TAF). The programs will be expanded and improved according to the recommendations contained in the evaluation report prepared by this consultant. (El-Sanabary, February 1992) The recommendations included improvements in the scope of the programs; operational aspects; technical content; equity, sustainability and impact. Following is a brief summary of the DPI-funded women's programs.

The IRC's Female Education Program (all in Peshawar except the Community Based Primary Education for Girls which is in nearby Camps) has provided education and training for Afghan females from the pre-school to the secondary level and continuing adult education programs for working and non-working educated women.

IRC's Programs.

- o The Lycee Malalai Secondary School for girls (enrollment 220)
- o Women's English Language Program (enrollment 540 per semester)
- o Community Based Primary Education for Girls (enrollment 980);
- o Women's Health Educator Trainers Program
- o Women's Public Administration Program,
- o Female Journalism Program, and
- o Female Program Administration.
- o Co-sponsorship, with Save the Children U.S., of management training seminars for Afghan women managers.

The Asia Foundation through its cooperative agreement with AID provides grants to support various women's programs ranging from literacy and skills training to female higher education, to participation in international forums and study tours. As the following indicates, support is mostly provided for female refugee programs, but includes also several ones across the borders.

The Asia Foundation's Programs

Refugee Programs:

- o The Afghan Women's Education Center in Islamabad: literacy and skills training; and English language classes.
- o The Afghan Women's Resource Center in Peshawar: initial start-up support; literacy and skills.

- o The Muslim Sisters Organization of Afghanistan: Ummahat-ul Mumineen Women's University in Hayatabad.
- o Naheed Shaheed School in Peshawar.
- o The Khorasan Assistance Group: Civic Education and Literacy.
- o Participation in International Forums in Pakistan and the United States, and study tours in Egypt and the U.S.

Cross-Border Programs:

- o Save the Children Federation (U.S.): Poultry Project in Kandahar
- o The Shahuda Clinic and School (Quetta): literacy classes for women in the Jaghori district in Ghazni.
- o Reconstruction and Rural Development of Afghanistan: literacy classes for women in Wardak.

These programs will continue to receive DPI funds but will be expanded to reach more women, and improved in quality to enhance their effectiveness and impact. Other improvements will be accomplished through mechanisms proposed to achieve the other six objectives of this strategy as detailed in the remainder of this document.

Strategic Objective No. 2:

Expanding and Improving Programs for Adult Female Literacy

The evaluation report (El-Sanabary, February 1992) dealt extensively with the issues of female literacy, and made numerous recommendations for improvement. The DPI strategy continues the emphasis on female literacy, not as an end in itself, but as a means of empowering women by providing them with skills and tools to better understand their environment, communicate with members of their immediate family and community, and acquire marketable skills.

Many of the recommendations made by this consultant with regard to literacy are already being implemented including 1) the creation of a taskforce on female literacy; 2) the development of appropriate female literacy textbook; 3) communication and cooperation among coordinators and teachers of the various female literacy programs; and 4) training of literacy teachers. Staff of the DPI, the Asia Foundation, and the Educational Sector Support Project (ESSP) have begun collaboration in their support of female literacy. Workshops are being held to discuss literacy curricula and methods; a female literacy textbook has been prepared by a consultant for the ESSP, and teacher training workshops are planned. Yet the road toward an effective literacy program for Afghan females, and males, is going to be lengthy and difficult, and requires courage and persistence. ESSP plans also to develop a female literacy teacher guide and supportive audio-visual materials.

Furthermore, part of the DPI strategy in the next few years will be to pursue a more aggressive and innovative approach to literacy education. In collaboration with the ESSP and other donor, female literacy programs will be expanded to reach the largest possible number of female refugees, and inside Afghanistan whenever possible, without sacrificing quality.

In addition to the above activities, the O/AID/Rep's WID strategy for the next few years, will focus on training the literacy graduates to use their education to teach other women and children, in what I call a "home-school" literacy program to begin in Pakistan and be continued inside Afghanistan. Literacy teachers will be asked to identify promising graduates to receive additional training and teaching materials -- to be used in setting up classes in their homes, for small groups of women or children. This effort will be closely coordinated between DPI and the ESSP, and possibly some other sectoral projects or other donors.

Strategic Objective No. 3.

Promoting Leadership Training of Afghan Women

As part of its strategy aimed at improving the above programs, DBI will pursue a concerted effort to enhance the leadership and managerial skills of their Afghan women managers, in response to the expressed needs of the women' managers interviewed for this study. Managerial training will be discussed in the next section of this document, here we focus more on the general area of leadership training, although both are strongly inter-related. The Afghan women managers, and other educated Afghan women, have been able to participate in several programs supported by AID funds and the Asia foundation including the following:

- International Forums in Pakistan and the U.S.
- A study tour to Egypt, by a group of Afghan women, to visit WID programs there and get acquainted with Egyptian women's participation in the economy.
- Monthly discussion group meetings coordinated by (The Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief (ACBAR)
- Limited Participation in on-going conferences and seminars dealing with the reconstruction of the Afghan nation.

The DPI strategy supports women's continued involvement in these programs and will provide the resources to facilitate it. But, because gender segregation deprives women of being equal partners in programs designed mainly for males, special effort will be made to facilitate gender-segregated female leadership training programs.

The importance of leadership training, through these and other programs, derives from the fact that Afghan women will share the responsibility for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of their country. Their participation cannot be limited to carrying out development tasks but

must include involvement in decision making and planning for the development of the Afghan nation. Cooperation among all donor in this effort is essential.

In the evaluation report referred to earlier, I discussed 1) women's participation in international forums (Such as the Association of Women in Development (AWID) conference in Washington D.C.; and 2) study tours to the U.S. or Third World countries. I recommended limiting the participation in international conferences, and increasing study tours to Islamic countries and to WID programs in Pakistan. My recommendations are based on the feedback received from the Afghan women who participated in both the U.S. conference and Egyptian study tour. These activities should be coordinated with the new HRD project's In-Country and Third Country Training. Female involvement in the Participant Training program in the U.S. will be the responsibility of the HRD Project, although this can be coordinated with the DPI-funded programs.

Strategic Objective No. 4:

Promoting the Institutional Development of Afghan Female NGOs.

The evaluation report prepared by this consultant noted the vulnerability of all Afghan NGOs providing female programs. They are completely dependent for survival on donor support. Those who depend solely on one donor are more vulnerable than those who have multiple sources of support. All of them function under extreme uncertainty caused by short-term year-to-year funding. I visited an excellent paramedical training program that closed its door, and shelved its educational materials and equipment, when funding was not renewed. Every single Afghan organization lives with that threat, especially the female organizations which face added moral threats from opposing community groups. Another source of vulnerability of the female Afghan NGOs is their dependence on one strong woman founder or manager, who is often unable or unwilling to delegate responsibilities to others. In this case, the organization thrives on the energy and stamina of that leader. The loss of that one leader, to immigration, marriage, or other reasons, threatens the whole survival of the organization. Only the Afghan Women Educational Center (AWRC) has the structure and constitution that enabled it to continue its operations when its woman manager immigrated to the West. There is always the risk of a change of direction of the organization, but at least it can survive the loss. This cannot be said of any other female organization, or other organizations providing women's programs.

Therefore, a major goal of this DPI WID strategy is to promote the institutional development of the female Afghan NGOs receiving AID funding. This will be achieved through A) staff development; B) technical assistance; and C) administrative support.

A. Staff Development and Management Training

This DPI strategy will encourage increased participation of the women managers of the Afghan female NGOs receiving DPI funds through participation in management training seminars and workshops as those sponsored by the IRC's Female Education Program, with the cosponsorship of Save the Children/U.S. The training provided so far has been effective in improving the managerial skills of IRC's women. But restricting access of other women managers, even those receiving DPI funds, deprives them a good opportunity to enhance their managerial capacities and improve the operation of their organizations. This WID strategy encourages opening the access in these seminars to all managers receiving DPI funds. The following are the types of management training seminars which Afghan women managers have found useful. Four were provided by IRC: a Report Writing' Workshop; a Financial Reporting System' workshop; a Program Planning Seminar; and a Micro-Enterprise and Entrepreneurship' workshop. Two courses were co-sponsored by Save the Children /U.K. and IRC: a Trainers Foundation' course; and a Survey and Sampling course. This is in addition to the various classes provided as part of IRC's Women's Public Administration Program and the Educational Sector Support Project's Office Skills Program for females. Many women managers have also been able to take English language classes to enhance their communication skills.

The Afghan women managers interviewed for this study indicated also their need for training in skills of planning and running staff meetings; organizing and offering workshops; staff evaluation, and supervision techniques. All indicated an ongoing need to improve their computer skills. Workshops and seminars are good vehicles for staff development. These seminars should not be restricted to the organization providing the training but should be made accessible to women managers from other programs receiving A.I.D. funding. A workshop or a seminar for five or six people can easily accommodate up to 15 participants. This should increase their impact on the women participants and their organizations.

On-the-job training has been the best training for women especially those working with expatriate NGOs. As one report indicated, the NGOs are "a living classroom for management" for the Afghans. (Holtzman and others, April 1990).

As mentioned, many of the female Afghan NGOs are based on personalities: hard-working highly motivated women who are willing to do everything, and do not involve others in planning or decision making. These women need to be introduced to the concept of participatory management and delegation of responsibility. Every organization should be encouraged to have an organizational chart with clear responsibilities of the various staff members. This does not necessarily mean adopting Western management styles, because many of these people are capable managers. But they need to help institutionalize their organizations and maximize the use of available physical and human resources.

B. Administrative Support

There is a great need for administrative and technical support to Afghan women who work with expatriate and Afghan NGO's. The need among the latter is greater since they have no direct contact with expatriates with more extensive administrative experiences. The Afghan women interviewed for this study expressed a need for administrative development and technical support. This is an area for fruitful collaboration among the Democratic Pluralism Initiative, the Human Resources Development Project, and the Educational Sector Support Project.

C. Technical Assistance.

Most of the Afghan NGO managers interviewed for this study expressed a need for technical support for the ongoing operation of the organizations. Having a resident part-time technical adviser is one way of providing this assistance. Providing short-term consultants to help the organizations improve the administrative structure, develop job specifications, work plans, prepare budgets and periodic reports is another way of providing technical assistance. Information sharing and visitation among managers of various DPI-funded projects can be of great benefit to all managers.

Strategic Objective No. 5

Supporting New Programs to Promote Job Creation and Self-Reliance.

A major objective of DPI will be to support new programs to meet the current survival needs of Afghan women refugees and their sisters across the borders, and to prepare them for their anticipated multiple roles in the family and society in post-war Afghanistan. Support will be provided for: 1) income-generation; and 2) micro-enterprise development and entrepreneurship training. This new emphasis builds upon lessons learned from current O/AID/Rep's WID activities, and the experience of USAID-funded WID projects in other Third World countries (as reported in numerous AID documents).

A. Income Generation

As of early 1992, DPI funds supported only one income-generation project for women: a poultry project implemented by Save the Children/US in the Mandara district of the Nangarhar province in Afghanistan. Another poultry project (in the Hangu camp) was funded by O/AID/Rep through its cooperative agreement with IRC's Rural Assistance Project (RAP). Furthermore, income-generating skills -- sewing, tailoring, knitting, and crochet-- are provided as part of literacy classes. The poultry projects are successful but very few, and the traditional skills provided to women in literacy classes are inadequate in meeting the massive survival needs of Afghan women and their families. Therefore, greater attention needs to be given to new and innovative income-generating programs for females.

Support for viable and sustainable income-generating projects for women will aim at increasing their earning capacity and self-reliance. These projects will build upon women's traditional activities and their indigenous social networks. They will be designed to meet the genuine needs and concerns of Afghan women and their families, to help women produce goods for home consumption as well as for marketing in the community. Depending on the project, women must be instructed in how to purchase the materials and market their products. DPI will steer away from support of handicrafts projects because they do not promote self-reliance but maintain dependency.

Income-generation projects, which are suitable for both the refugee communities and inside Afghanistan, are generally very popular because they have tangible identifiable results. The fact that they are more difficult to manage than education and training programs should not preclude their consideration. This strategy can only provide guidelines for the kinds of income-generating programs worthy of consideration, but cannot be specific about which ones to choose at this time. Choice of specific activities will be based on research on the traditional activities of women in the camps and in various Afghan provinces, and will depend upon their viability, cost, relevance to local needs, and sustainability. Priority should be given to projects that meet people's basic needs for nutrition, clothing, and shelter. A choice may be made from among the following:

- o Animal husbandry: poultry, goats, sheep, rabbits, etc.
- o Bee keeping and honey production;
- o Kitchen gardens and forestry projects;
- o Food Processing (making jams, juices, food preserves, food-drying, dairy products, etc.
- o Carpet weaving
- o Silk-culture,
- o Making school uniforms, bags and shoes.
- o Making shoes and slippers.
- o Sewing and tailoring.
- o Weaving gelims, jackets and shawls, scarves, and gloves (this is particularly suited for the cold areas inside Afghanistan where the raw materials are available, the products can be used in the local community.

Since Afghanistan is a large country where resources differ from one region to another, choice of project activities should be suited to local resources and needs, emphasis must be placed on items that utilize local raw materials and tools and serve a local market. For instance, in areas where wool and looms are traditionally available, and where people need wool clothes, a natural income generation activity will be the making of wool jackets, shawls, hats, and scarves. Choosing projects based on local needs and resources, this ensures the acceptability and sustainability of the projects. This is far better than producing items for an unpredictable tourist or international market.

These income generating activities help create jobs not just for the women, and men, producing the items, but will create jobs for other people in the community. Such projects may also encourage work among teams where people of different interests and skills contribute to the project in different capacities. For instance, some women will be more involved in home production, others (who are less restricted in their movements) can do the purchasing and marketing. For instance in a bee-keeping project, some women can handle the book keeping, others can make the beehive boxes, and others can do the actual care of the bees.

B. Micro-Enterprise Development and Entrepreneurship Training

This is another important activity proposed to expand the DPI portfolio and increase its impact. This is because the experience of the USAID, the UNDP, the ILO, and the World Bank in many Third World countries, over the past ten years, has proved that microenterprise credit projects which serve the very poor are a very effective means of increasing the participation of marginal groups into the development process in their country. Likewise, the experience of the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh, and the Principal Bank for Development and Agricultural Credit in Egypt support this finding. Therefore, micro-enterprise credit projects are becoming a very important development tool. The growing literature on such projects shows that they tend to be very successful in providing direct benefits to relatively large

numbers of poor people. Based on a large study of 32 microenterprise project, Boomgard concluded that "such projects are suited to the goal of integrating women into the development process." (quoted in Blumberg 1989). Furthermore, research has proved that women clients are better than male clients in job creation, and that women's payback record is at least as good as the men's. (Blumberg 1989)

Because of the difficulties involved in setting up and managing micro-enterprise and loan projects, the O/AID/Rep is not yet ready, but is urged to consider the option. DPI staff have been looking at various credit programs and exploring possibilities of initiating a limited program for Afghan women. During a study tour by a group of seven Afghan women to Egypt in November 1991, the group visited various micro-enterprise projects supported by loans ranging from 50 to 1500 Egyptian pounds (\$ 18.00 to 500), through a revolving loan fund from the Principal Bank for Development and Agriculture Credit. They were impressed by the program and hoped to institute a similar program for Afghan women. Several team members wanted to visit Egypt for a longer period to learn more about the logistics of setting up and running the program, and the Egyptian managers of the project welcomed the idea. I recommend that this idea be followed up.

In the meantime, the O/AID/Rep encourages all its sectoral programs, for men and women, to provide Afghan participants in their programs with skills in entrepreneurship and micro-enterprise development as a means of promoting self-reliance and encouraging job creation.

IRC's Female Education Program is already planning to offer a course on entrepreneurship as part of its Women's Public Administration Program. A one-week workshop, conducted by a Pakistani consultant, was designed to help the managers of IRC's Female Education Program develop the curriculum for the course. IRC has also contacted the College of Business Administration at Peshawar University to seek assistance in developing the course.

Strategic Objective No. 6.

Cooperating and Coordinate with Other O/AID/Sectors.

A major objective of this WID strategy is to promote cooperation and coordination with other O/AID/Rep's sectoral programs. This coordination will help avoid duplication of effort, allow for better utilization of scarce human and fiscal resources, and improve the effectiveness and sustainability of the programs. The following discussion examines other O/AID/Rep's sectoral projects and make recommendations as to how the DPI portfolio can coordinate with them to maximize O/AID/Rep's assistance to women.

Cooperation and coordination among various O/AID/Rep's sectoral projects may be achieved in several ways:

- o Sharing of physical and human resources: technical expertise, library resources, educational materials, seminar or facilities.
- o Communication: sharing information and learning from each other's experiences.
- o Collaboration on specific projects.

Cooperation and coordination will necessarily differ from one sector to another depending mainly on the programmatic aspects of each. Two sectors have the greatest potential for a coordinated approach to women's programs: education and human resources. Both the new ESSP and HRD projects have components devoted to equity issues, with special focus on women, which should be coordinated with DPI-funded programs. The health Sector reaches large numbers of women who may be targeted for literacy. The agricultural sector may be difficult to coordinate with and will require more creativity, initiative and persistence. The following discussion deals separately with four sectors: education, human resources, health and agriculture.

A. Education

Many possibilities exist for coordinating DPI-funded women's programs with The Educational Sector Support Project's (ESSP) educational programs for Afghan females in the refugee communities and inside Afghanistan. The following ESSP programs offer good opportunities for cooperation: The Master Teacher Trainer Program; Curriculum development of textbooks and supplementary teaching materials Provision of textbooks and teacher salaries for female schools; Office Skills Training Program; and Participant Training. (The last two programs will be shifted to the HRD Project and will be discussed in connection with that sector in a later section of this report.

Collaboration is expected, and has already begun, in the area of female literacy. The following activities are either underway or are planned in cooperation between ESSP and DPI.

- o Taskforce on female literacy has been formed and meets regularly to discuss and review literacy curricula.
- o ESSP has developed a female literacy textbook for use in all literacy classes, after testing and revision.
- o ESSP is willing to help provide the following support for the DPI-funded literacy programs: teacher training for literacy teachers, literacy textbook and teachers' guide, and audio-visual materials.

- o ESSP has the resources and is willing to cooperate on efforts to improve testing and evaluation of literacy instruction.
- o ESSP is willing to provide literacy kits for use in the home-school literacy program envisioned in this strategy and the evaluation report (February 1992).

Other areas of collaboration include the following: provision of textbooks and supplementary teaching materials to the female schools and the women's university.

B. Human Resources Development

The new Human Resources Development (HRD) Project, expected to start in August 1992, includes several areas that can be coordinated with the women's programs supported by DPI. The following areas will be important to coordinate:

- o Basic Office Skills training should be coordinated with IRC's Women's Public Administration Program especially in the area of entrepreneurship training.
- o Basic Trades Skills. For instance garment making and food processing, which were incorporated to accommodate the training needs of women, should be coordinated with the income-generating activities of an expanded DPI portfolio.
- o In-Country Professional Training offers a good opportunity for the professional training of female managers of DPI-funded women's programs.
- o Participant Training can help facilitate the training of Afghan women manager in Islamic countries.

C. Health

The Health Sector Support Project and its implementing agency, Management Sciences for Health (MSH) provides services and training to thousands of Afghan females inside Afghanistan. This a far greater number than that reached by all other O/AID Rep's sectoral projects combined. This offers a great opportunity to reach the rural women inside Afghanistan with literacy and health education. The large number of clinics, supported by the HSSP in various Afghan provinces, can be used for literacy and health education. The clinics have become a place where women congregate not only to receive health care but also to socialize. This strategy envisions an approach that integrates literacy into health, by providing health education materials that combine pictures and written messages. This way, literacy can be provided indirectly without the use of special literacy teachers.

Furthermore, the main contractor for the ESSP, Management Sciences for Health (MSH) has an excellent library of health videos, slides and charts which can be shared with the medical

college of Ummahat ul-Mumineen Women's University. This will help improve instruction of health-related topics at the university. The Afghan Institute of Public Health, which is supported also by O/AID/Rep may be a valuable resource for materials and practical training for the students of the medical college of the OMSA's Women's University.

D. Agriculture

Coordination with the agricultural sector can be established in the areas of female literacy, animal husbandry and food processing. For instance IRC's Rural Assistance Project (RAP), which is funded by AID, implements a poultry project for widows in the Hangu camp. There should be sharing of ideas and resources in this and the existing poultry project (implemented by Save the Children/U.K.) and the animal husbandry projects proposed above.

RAP offers literacy education for males in the Hangu camp but not for females. Through dialogue and sharing of resources, RAP may be able to introduce literacy for females also.

The Agriculture Sector Support Project and its contractor, Volunteers in Technical Assistance (VITA) offers a wide range of training programs for males but not for females. For instance, a female component may be introduced to train female para-veterinarians for animal husbandry or female agricultural extension workers.

Further cooperation with the agriculture sector will be needed to facilitate various income-generating projects such as kitchen gardens, reforestation, food processing, and animal husbandry. Survey research, supported by the agriculture sector, may provide the data on the crops specific to various Afghan provinces and the farm activities of the rural populations to help identify which food processing or animal husbandry projects would be appropriate for the different Afghan rural areas. This research should seek disaggregated information on women's role in agriculture and related activities to help in designing programs that meet the needs of rural women.

Strategic Objective No. 7.

Cooperating and Coordinating with Other Donors

A multitude of Western, Arab and Islamic donors support programs for the Afghans, many of which include a female component. The list is extensive and a comprehensive coverage is beyond the scope of this report. Given the limitations of time and space, only a few examples will be provided. The following discussion identifies some activities supported by non-O/AID/Rep sources to indicate how the O/AID/Rep strategy can complement and support other programs

The programs the other donors fund for Afghan women include adult female literacy, the training of traditional health workers Birth Attendants, Lady Health Visitors, and Basic Health

Workers), income generation (mostly needlework, sewing and tailoring), formal education in primary, secondary, and high schools, office skills training, and English language instruction.

Coordinating with these donors will be based mainly on sharing of information and resources to support and complement each other, learn from past experiences, maximize the use of scarce resources, and increase the effectiveness of programs and their sustainability. The following donors and their programs are only some examples of the range of areas of potential collaboration and the means of achieving it.

- o Information Sharing: exchanging documents relevant to women's programs, attending joint meetings, and learning from each other's experiences.
- o Sharing human resources and expertise
- o Sharing textbooks and supplementary teaching materials.

The work done by ACBAR, (Assistance Coordinating Committee for Afghan Relief), and the resources of its library ERIC (Educational Resources and Information Center) are important to this coordination, despite existing difficulties. The meetings, sponsored by ACBAR to discuss issues of programming for Afghan women, have fostered a dialogue, among women and men, on the difficult issues involved in planning and implementing female programs and related issues. The monthly women's discussion group meetings have helped foster dialogue among Afghan women of various political orientations, and facilitated networking among the women. These efforts should be supported and encouraged.

It is also important to coordinate efforts with the various United Nations organizations serving the Afghans in the refugee areas and inside Afghanistan: UNESCO, UNICEF, WHO, UNDP, UNHCR, and UNOCA. These organizations conduct research, issue reports, and provide services to the Afghans.

The World Bank will be important to cooperate with. The Bank's involvement after resettlement in Afghanistan will be extensive and there will be numerous opportunities for cooperation on programs for Afghan women.

Other donors and NGOs with whom cooperation should be mutually beneficial include the following also:

The Norwegian Committee for Afghanistan funds educational programs, including the Ummahat ul-Mumineen Women's University; and is currently building schools for girls inside Afghanistan which they wish to coordinate with other organizations for their operation.

Pak German has an extensive health education program for Afghan women which uses simple textbooks that may be utilized in DPI-funded literacy classes.

The Swedish Committee for Afghanistan develops textbooks and other curriculum materials.

The Australian Relief Committee has a health and sanitation program that reaches large numbers of Afghan families.

Save the Children Federation U.K. has extensive experiences working with communities inside Afghanistan and in the refugee camps involving Afghan women in both health education and handicrafts projects.

Save the Children, U.S. (SCF/US) provides income-generation to thousands of Afghan women in Islamabad and some refugee camps. The organization, which is already implementing a poultry project in Nangarhar funded by DPI funds, is conducting a survey of appropriate income generating projects in Nangarhar also. The information gained from this needs survey should be useful to DPI in identifying and supporting income-generating programs for Afghan women.

The Salvation Army provides income-generating programs including kitchen gardens, food processing, and tailoring in the Haripur camp.

CARE International: does not have a specific programs for women but has an agricultural survey of agriculture and natural resources in Kunar which provides excellent information about agricultural products and the activities of men and women in that province.

ISRA (the Islamic Relief Agency) supports literacy and income-generating programs for Afghan widows and orphans (mainly sewing and tailoring); and had a training program for paramedical personnel which was suspended for lack of funds. That program has an excellent laboratory and audio-visual materials that may be shared with the medical college of the MSOA's women's university

By determining which programs it wishes to emphasize, DPI can then identify the agencies involved in similar programs and coordinate with them.

V. IMPLICATIONS OF USAID'S MOVING INTO AFGHANISTAN

This section discusses the implications for women's activities if and when O/AID/Rep moves into the reconstruction phase after a settlement of the Afghan problem and the establishment of a new administrative structure acceptable to all Afghans.

It is difficult at this time to predict what the social and political climate will be inside Afghanistan during the early years after the institution of a new government. It is expected that there will be a long period of disorganization and reorientation of the social and economic structures. Any action with regard to women will depend to a large extent on the type of government in power, and its level of commitment to the question of women. The communist regime in Kabul has followed a policy of forced mobilization of women for

nolitical and economic activities which alienated the traditional groups. The new government will have to be more careful and may have to follow a middle-of-the-road policy with regards to women. The controversy over the role of women in Afghan society will continue as there will be those who support an active role for women and others opposed to women's involvement in public life. What can be stated with certainty is that Afghan women will have to play a role in rebuilding the social and economic system of their country. Their role will be greatest in family production and reproduction. The economic, educational, and health needs of women and their families may become overwhelming when dealt with on a national scale. But they have to be met at both the macro- and micro-levels. The new government will need assistance from many sources, and it is expected that USAID will play a major role in the survival, rehabilitation, and reconstruction of the Afghan nation.

There will necessarily be many changes in women's programs, some can be consolidated, other may be replicated, and some may have to change their focus. One thing is sure, the education and training provided to the refugees will have an impact on women, their families, and communities.

As indicated in my evaluation report (February 1992), most of the current programs supported by the O/AID/Rep for Afghan refugees in Pakistan can be moved or replicated inside Afghanistan. The programs provided for women inside Afghanistan, such as the income generating and literacy programs can be expanded with the mobilization of financial and human resources. All programs proposed in this document are suited for either for rural or urban areas inside Afghanistan. The income-generating and micro-enterprise programs should be easier to provide in Afghan towns and villages. This is because, as some of the Afghan leaders interviewed for this study indicated, they will be able to use existing community networks. In the villages, there is a structure and people know each other, the community elders, male and female, have a great say in community affairs. They can, if approached in the right way, support and facilitate women's programs.

Finally, the dialogue has been going on for a while among the leadership of the Afghan refugees in Pakistan, about preparing for reconstruction and the role of women in the process. A three-day seminar, sponsored by the Norwegian Committee in December, entitled "From Aid During Times of War to Aid for Reconstruction and Development" involved women and men, in gender segregated areas, in a dialogue about rehabilitation and reconstruction. Women talked about women's rights in Islam and what they can do to allow greater participation for women within an Islamic framework, Women's role in the Reconstruction Process," the Effects of War on the Role of Women and Their Role in Jihad." The O/AID/Rep supported women's participation in such a dialogue, which is bound to continue.

When asked about what can be done now to prepare for the anticipated changes, the people interviewed for this study indicated the need to expand the level and scope of cross border programs for women, prepare people mentally and emotionally for the changes through discussion forums, and providing training in needs assessment, decision making strategies, strategic planning, community participation and mobilization skills.

The following quote from a report by a UNHCR team (1989) is appropriate in this regard.

There is a clear quest now for the accelerated development of human resources and systems at all levels, so as to meet the requirements of the repatriation, reconstruction and nation building processes in Afghanistan. These processes obviously require, beyond the current skills levels, technical and managerial cadres, teachers and instructors as well as their trainers and other "multipliers", clerical and administrative personnel, in much higher numbers and of better quality than is available now. Few documents exist which could help to replicate and multiply educational and training activities or economic support efforts across the borders and without outside assistance. There is a need for a measured strategy for the accelerated development of these human and system resources and for a highly differentiated vertical and horizontal division among agencies. (UNHCR 1989, pp. 2-3)

Concluding Remarks

All discussions of the subject of women's involvement in reconstruction emphasize the following. First, Afghan women must be involved in planning for the reconstruction of their country. Second, this planning must stress women's role in the context of their homes and communities. Third, men must also be involved in planning programs for women in order to gain their acceptance and support of women's projects. Fourth, all programs should be perceived as contributing to the welfare of women, their children, their families and communities. Fifth, there must be assurances that men's concerns regarding their own participation in programs are taken into account.

In addition to supporting programs that target women, gender issues must be integrated in all O/AID/Rep's sectoral programs for the Afghans. All programs must make a concerted effort to include women and men from various Afghan provinces who will utilize their training later inside Afghanistan.

To minimize resistance for female programs necessitates working through supportive Afghan political and religious leaders to gain their trust, and to ward off potential danger to the women and the programs.

Sustainability of Programs is extremely important and must be stressed in all current programs for the Afghans, in the refugee communities and inside Afghanistan. The AID Policy strategy focuses on basic, rural-based interventions. It emphasizes minimal continuing cost requirements to maximize sustainability through cost-sharing, fee-for-service, and mutual responsibility (where local communities and families share with the public sector and donors the costs associated with the services provided). Fee-for-service, however, may accentuate class and gender inequities. Therefore, other means of cost-sharing must be considered.

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