



**Concern Afghanistan  
OFDA Final Report  
2003 - 2005**

# OFDA Final Report

## Cover Sheet

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**Country/Region:** Afghanistan (Takhâr, Baghlân and Badakshân Provinces)

**Type of Disaster/Hazard:** 2003: Conflict recovery, drought  
2004: Conflict recovery, drought recovery  
2005: Conflict recovery, flooding and landslides

**Time Period Covered by the Report:** 17<sup>th</sup> June 2003 – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2005

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Concern Afghanistan's 'Rebuilding Sustainable Livelihoods Program' covered three program areas according to the objectives of the original proposal:

- 1) Livelihoods/Food security: 'To increase the food security status of targeted people through improving and diversifying agricultural output, increasing access to food through improving household income, and through improving knowledge and use of nutritious foods'
- 2) Water and Sanitation: 'To increase the food security and health status of targeted people through improving their access to, management of, and control over safe water resources'
- 3) Social Infrastructure: 'To increase the access of isolated and vulnerable people to essential services such as markets, schools, and clinics by rehabilitating rural infrastructure'

These programs were implemented in Concern Afghanistan's program areas in northeast Afghanistan, in the provinces of Takhar, Baghlan and Badakshan between June 2003 and September 2005. In all program areas, Concern Afghanistan has either been within reach of meeting or far exceeded its target number of beneficiaries, however all of these numbers are underestimated as it is very difficult to measure the total number of indirect beneficiaries from these long-term, sustainable, and far-reaching projects.

Some of the key achievements in this period, made possible from OFDA funding, included the following:

- A significant contribution of infrastructure projects including schools, medical clinics, roads and water supply systems, which have had an tremendous, visible impact on people's lives.
- Complementary software and hardware services, particularly water and sanitation infrastructures with health and hygiene promotion.
- Environmentally sustainable income-generating activities such as kitchen gardens and nurseries are proving to be viable food security options in the long-term.

This report combines its beneficiary results from the culmination of previous reports and, more significantly, an evaluation of all OFDA funded projects (under this grant) in all areas conducted in November and December 2005. This evaluation provided many 'real-life' success stories directly from the beneficiaries, which are included throughout this report.

Some of the key constraints to project implementation included insecurity, harsh weather conditions and staffing problems, all of which were mitigated by Concern Afghanistan staff through a variety of measures. To correct for these and other constraints, minor adjustments were made in activities to reach the objectives, but the objectives themselves remained the same and the total number of beneficiaries reached exceeded the target.

The end result was over 250,000 people with access to services, goods, and skills that they need to rebuild their livelihoods in a sustainable way.

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## GLOSSARY

AREU	Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit
<i>Baks</i>	A smaller <i>kandas</i>
<i>Burqa</i>	A loose garment (usually with veiled holes for the eyes) worn by the majority of women in Afghanistan
CBO	Community Based Organization
CD	Community Development (team and approach)
CDC	Community Development Council (in the context of NSP)
CDO	Community Development Officer, a member of the NSP team responsible for field facilitation
<i>Chadri</i>	(Dari/Persian) <i>Burqa</i> , also used to denote the Iranian <i>chadâr</i> in some contexts
CPO	Community Project Officer, like a CDO, but for programs other than NSP
CSO	Civil Society Organization
Cycle	In the context of NSP, a description of the number of years a village has been in the program (e.g. Cycle I villages have been in the program one year or less)
<i>Dâhia</i>	(Dari) Traditional Birth Attendant, also TBA
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
EC	European Commission
FP	Facilitating Partner (NSP)
GAA	German Agro Action
GTZ	Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit
HDI	Human Development Index
HSRG	Health Strategy Research Group
IDT	International Development Targets
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
<i>Jirga</i>	(Pashtu) Assembly
<i>Kandas</i>	Water reservoirs dug into the bottom of a hill
KAP	Knowledge, Attitudes and Practice
<i>Khân</i>	(Dari/Persian) An important person, akin to a tribal chief; in Afghanistan, many <i>khâns</i> are or were warlords, and vice-versa
KRBP	Kunduz River Basin Program
LNGO	Local Non-Governmental Organization
<i>Loya Jirga</i>	(Pashtu) Grand Assembly, usually denotes assembly at the national level
<i>manteqa</i>	(Dari/Persian) A group of villages, usually in a geographically contiguous area, which is defined by the local population.
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MDT	Millennium Development Target
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoWA	Ministry of Women's Affairs
MRRD	Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NDF	National Development Framework (key document)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NRM	Natural Resources Management
NSP	National Solidarity Program
OC	Oversight Consultant, refers to the consultant hired to mediate and monitor the implementation of the NSP by the government of Afghanistan
O&M	Operation and Maintenance
PDED	Policy Development and Evaluation Department
PLA	Participatory Learning and Action
PPP	Purchasing Power Parity
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
PTSU	Program Technical Support Unit (Concern)
REFLECT	Regenerated Freirean Literacy through Empowering Community Techniques
SAF	Securing Afghanistan's Future (key document)

SAG	Self-help affinity group
<i>Shari'a</i>	(Arabic) Islamic law
<i>Shura</i>	(Arabic) Traditional decision-making body at the village, <i>mahallah</i> or <i>manteqa</i> level. Differs from CDC in that it is usually not elected, nor does it meet regularly
TBA	Traditional Birth Attendant, also <i>dâhia</i>
UNAMA	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VDC	Village Development Council (AKDN)
<i>Wali</i>	(Arabic) Provincial government representative
<i>Wiloyat</i>	(Arabic) Province, the largest administrative unit after the nation in Afghanistan.
WMC	Water Management Committee
WUG	Water Users Group
<i>Wuluswâl</i>	(Dari/Persian) District government representative
<i>Wuluswâli</i>	(Dari/Persian) District, the second smallest <i>legally recognized</i> administrative unit in Afghanistan
<i>Zamindâr</i>	(Dari/Persian) Landowner, sometimes used to refer only to owners of larger tracts of land

## 1. ASSESSMENTS AND SURVEILLANCE

### 1.1 Appraisal and Livelihoods Survey

The delay in grant approval rendered initial 2002 assessments outdated; to rectify this, staff planned new and far more comprehensive livelihood assessments for all program areas in early 2004. In 2003, Concern took the initiative to join a group of NGOs working to monitor livelihoods indicators across the country. Staff made excellent progress in initiating wide-ranging and in-depth livelihood assessments using OFDA funds early in the project, and in cooperating with the emerging National Surveillance System (NSS), an inter-agency effort to improve nutritional and food security monitoring. Concern's global livelihoods adviser visited Afghanistan in February 2004 to provide technical guidance to field staff charged with these tasks. Around the same time, the NSS collapsed due to changing donor priorities.

To counter these constraints, management staff decided to concentrate the livelihood assessment on a small number of key districts, so that the process would be completed in at least some areas before significant program activities began; for other areas, more conventional and speedier rapid assessments and consultations with local authorities would be prioritized. Projects were designed on this basis and other data.

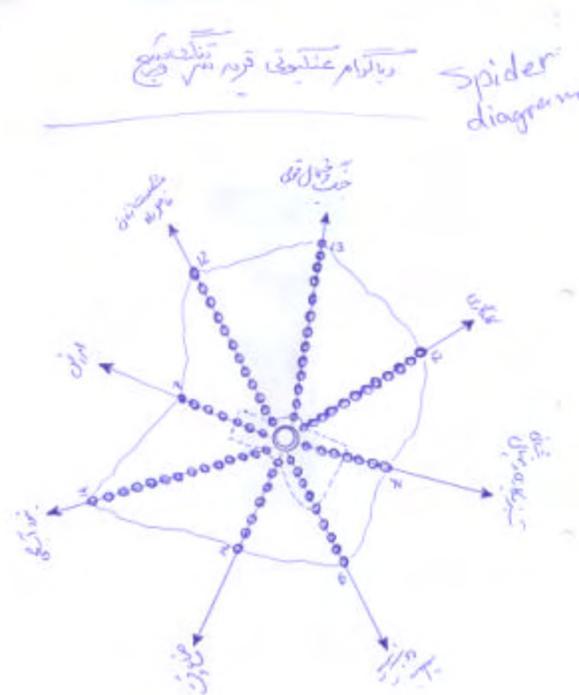
A consultant was hired to analyze the livelihoods data, and a final report was made. This report was significant in that it presented a wide-ranging cursory assessment of the areas in which Concern works, especially some districts that had not previously been surveyed by NGOs. It is attached as Annex I and the data was used to frame the 2005 participatory program evaluation (see below).

### 1.2 Monitoring

Concern's monitoring strategy includes two main components:

- line-management reporting and supervision with field monitoring, and
- monitoring through the Program Technical Support Unit (PTSU).

Monitoring through line-management and field visits has been conducted regularly throughout the project. The results of these visits were used to verify all information used in progress



#### Tracking Indicators through Participatory Tools

Spider diagrams can be used with illiterate and timid groups to encourage them to speak more openly about their preferences and priorities, as well as to track change.

Each arrow from the center represents an area of concern related to the topic of discussion. The diagram above is about problems related to water, and the top-center arrow (13 points) represents "conflict and disagreements between groups."

Concern staff used these to assess people's opinions of problems, first, in order to determine which projects were the most urgent. Then, in late 2005, the staff went back to the villages to see how things had changed.

As we can see, for the focus group that drew this diagram, water-related conflict went from being a very important problem, to one with no significance at all, showing that (a) there is now enough water for all and (b) the social component of the project was successful.

reports, as well as to supplement it with contextual information and to gather some success stories.

Monitoring by members of PTSU was generally used to form the basis for support sessions by that unit, e.g. improved and adapted training sessions on toolkits and processes of community development, special workshops on integrating hygiene education into environmental health projects, and so on. It was also used to further verify field reports as a spot-checking mechanism.

### 1.3 Evaluation

In December 2005, field staff conducted an evaluation of all rural programs<sup>1</sup> under the supervision of the Senior M&E Advisor and the Documentation Officer. The evaluation was based on the fieldwork and framework presented by the livelihoods analysis, but was conducted according to the community development approach in which villagers were asked to analyze changes in their own lives.

The evaluation lasted approximately one month and took between 50 and 100% of the field staff's time. At that time, they were also trained in writing success stories, using participatory information gathering tools to track change, analysis of change, and impact reporting.

The main results of the evaluation, as analyzed by the team and the Senior M&E Advisor, were:

- Beneficiaries were generally extremely pleased with OFDA's infrastructure inputs, such as schools, clinics, and water supply systems. Access to these services has had an enormous impact on people's lives at a very personal level (see 'success stories' throughout this report).
- Staff and beneficiaries alike had a difficult time adjusting to the community development approach, in which the people took more responsibility for inputs, outputs and outcomes, *however* there were notable successes in this area and the approach should be continued, and OFDA inputs have been maximized through this approach.
- Some of Concern's most sustainable and successful projects, as rated by beneficiaries and also in terms of cost-effectiveness, have shown to be water and sanitation infrastructure coupled with health education, kitchen gardening and other food-production endeavors for the extreme poor (which has brought thousands of families up to nearly \$1 PPP per day), and its nurseries, which thanks to Concern's cost-recovery and partnership approach, have been able to support thousands in re-planting their orchards and forests.

## 2. BENEFICIARIES: TARGETED AND REACHED BY OBJECTIVE

The table below provides an overview of the number of beneficiaries targeted and reached in 2005, and the cumulative number of beneficiaries targeted and reached over the period of the project, according to the objectives, and subsequent programs:

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<sup>1</sup> All OFDA projects were implemented in rural areas.

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Number of beneficiaries targeted (2005)</b>	<b><i>Number of beneficiaries reached (2005)</i></b>	<b>Cumulative Number of Beneficiaries targeted</b>	<b><i>Cumulative Number of Beneficiaries reached</i></b>
<b>Livelihoods/Food Security Program</b>				
'To increase the food security status of targeted people through improving and diversifying agricultural output, increasing access to food through improving household income, and through improving knowledge and use of nutritious foods'	16,000	<i>83,743<sup>2</sup></i>	80,568	<i>89,617</i>
<b>Water and Sanitation Program</b>				
'To increase the food security and health status of targeted people through improving their access to, management of, and control over safe water resources'	64,930	<i>60,655</i>	83,770	<i>79,495 (NB-see constraints)</i>
<b>Social Infrastructure</b>				
'To increase the access of isolated and vulnerable people to essential services such as markets, schools, and clinics by rehabilitating rural infrastructure'	0 (cumulative reached in 2004)	<i>38,969</i>	94,234	<i>216,081</i>

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<sup>2</sup> Conservative estimates on the total number of direct and indirect beneficiaries. Note that "indirect" beneficiaries include children of people with raised incomes, who are normally the primary beneficiaries of raised incomes.

### 3. LIVELIHOODS/FOOD SECURITY

#### 3.1 Kitchen Gardens (2003, 2004, 2005)

Concern Afghanistan has been implementing the kitchen garden project for several years. Kitchen gardens enable families with very little land and no other way of supporting themselves to ensure a small income and to improve their food security. Families receive seeds, basic training on how to plant the seeds, and follow up to ensure that they are properly tending their gardens.

Data for 2005:

Activity	Output	Outcomes
Kitchen Gardens (1,097)	1,097 families had access to basic nutrition and a small income	Over 5,300 people are free from hunger and their basic health improved.

#### Success Story: Zebonisâ's Story

Zebonisâ is a widow who lives in the District Four of Faizâbâd city, called Chatta. The earth in Chatta is excellent and many of Faizâbâd's gardeners live there. Zebonisâ, however, was not one of them. After her husband died, all she was entitled to was a tiny patch of land, which she had no money to farm. She told Concern her story:

*"I am a widow, and I live with my four children. Out of everything, my husband had, only this small land plot is left. Every year, I tried to plant something but it was very little and we hardly had anything to eat.*

*This year, one of the women from Concern came to my house because she had heard I was very poor. She gave me some seeds and showed me how to sow and cultivate them. I was finally able to plant most of my land with those seeds.*

*This year has been a happy year for me. I was able to feed my family with the fruits of this garden, and I was also able to sell some of it in the bazaar and save some for winter. I have also stocked up with seeds for sowing next year. Those seeds include onion, turnip, cucumber, tomato, radish, carrots, cauliflower, and aubergine (eggplant)!*

*Anyway, I am really pleased with the result of this project and I hope it continues. It is having a good effect on my children and me. I am so proud that I am no longer hungry and that I am earning our family's living."*

#### 3.2 Apiculture (2005)

This year, at the request of the local authorities who wanted to provide some form of support to the many widows and disabled people living in Farkhâr District without any form of income, Concern designed a pilot project to train vulnerable people in beekeeping. Beekeeping is popular in Farkhâr and across south Takhâr and north Baghlân Provinces.

Data for 2005:

Activity	Output	Outcomes
Apiculture (10)	10 families have access to a sustainable livelihood option	Over 60 people have a sustainable improved quality of life.

### 3.3 Free food distribution to absolute poor (2003, 2004, 2005)

Every year, Concern's nurseries produce surplus vegetables from their kitchen garden training grounds. These vegetables are then distributed among the poorest of the poor: the homeless and destitute in the district centers. These families have no land on which to plant vegetable seeds or anything else. They are not homeowners: they live in borrowed homes or shacks from neighbours or distant family members. Nor do they have able-bodied men in their families.

Data for 2005:

Activity	Output	Outcomes
Free food distribution (62)	62 families saved from hunger	Approximately 370 temporarily saved from hunger

#### Success story: Khadija's<sup>\*</sup> Story

Khadija is originally from Iran. She married her husband when he was in Iran as a migrant worker and moved with him to Farkhâr district in Afghanistan nearly ten years ago. They led a simple, poor but average life for several years, and had four children together.

Last year, Khadija's husband was killed in a construction accident when a wall collapsed on top of him. Since then, his family has threatened to kick Khadija out of the tiny room she shares with all of her daughters and that she must go back home. Iran is over a thousand kilometers away, even by the shortest route, and Khadija has no money to get there. There are no telephones in Farkhâr<sup>3</sup> so she cannot call her family.

Unlike most Afghan women, Khadija completed a full course of schooling and is literate. However, she has nobody to allow her to go to work, or to be her *mahram* when she travels. Besides, there are almost no jobs for women in the little centre of Farkhâr.

When Khadija was informed that she had been selected as one of the people to receive food at the beginning of Ramazan, she was relieved. "*I have nobody,*" she repeated again and again, despairingly. She received enough food to last her until Eid and to give her children proper food on the holiday itself.

In the future, her hope is to somehow contact her family in Iran and return, although it may be difficult, because her children have no passports.

### 3.4 Self-Help Affinity Groups (SAGs) (2005)

This was the first year that Concern Afghanistan worked with SAGs as a part of its livelihoods program. Three members of staff, including one woman and two men, went to study with the Indian NGO Myrada, which has been a pioneer in reaching the poor and working on social change in South Asia. After reporting to Concern, the teams set up plans to begin facilitating the start-up of SAGs in Afghanistan.

<sup>\*</sup> Not her real name.

<sup>3</sup> After the project, Concern women staff arranged to follow up with this particular young woman, in an attempt to help her contact her family in Iran.

Data for 2005:

Activity	Output	Outcomes
SAGs (51)	51 SAGs formed to serve the absolute poor	534 absolutely poor women and 402 absolutely poor men have access to credit lines and savings places

#### Success Story: Hâji Murâd's Story

Hâji Murâd is 45 years old and has lived in Sar Qoruq village his entire life. His family is very poor and they only have one milk-giving goat to survive. Concern came to his village earlier this year to discuss self-help groups with the people. He told Concern:

*"My wife was with child. One day, out of the blue, she got very sick, but at that time, I didn't have any money in the house. I was very worried but I only had one goat. So, I brought it to the bazaar to sell, only I couldn't find anybody to buy it. I was getting so discouraged and worried about my wife.*

*Suddenly I remembered the self-help affinity group in our village. I went to the SAG chairman and cashier and told them my story. They gave me a loan of 3,000 afghani [\$60.00 USD] and I was able to use the money to send my wife to a clinic in Taloqân in the city. I am supposed to return the money after ten days."*

### 3.5 Tool Distribution (2003, 2004, 2005)

Poor families from three villages requested assistance in rebuilding their homes and farms from Concern through tool distribution. Many people lost all of their assets during the war and had no savings with which to replenish their non-essential supplies, such as mid-size farming tools.

Data for 2005:

Activity	Output	Outcomes
Tool distribution (450)	450 farmers received tools with which to farm and improve their yields	Approximately 2,700 people have a better quality of life

### 3.6 Wheat Seed Distribution (2003, 2004, 2005)

At the request of a number of farmers, Concern imported three different varieties of improved wheat seed to help them renew their stocks. Although the seeds had been recommended by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in Takhâr, different varieties were distributed to each village in order to test their response to local conditions.

Data for 2005:

Activity	Output	Outcomes
Wheat seed distribution (3,290)	3,290 farmers had access to improved wheat seeds to improve their yields	3,290 farmers have the possibility to improve their yields.

### Success story: Amina's\* Story

Amina is a widow. In many areas of Afghanistan, women do not have the right to work in the fields alone, so even if they have land, they may not see much of its profits. Amina was one such woman, but her situation changed when she got involved with the wheat seed distribution project.

Amina told Concern staff: *"I am a widow with no mahram. I have no income besides one jerib (200 square meters), which is far away from the village. Before this Concern project, I was in very deep trouble because strangers appointed to help me farmed my farm, and I was not getting much of the harvest - not even enough to eat my two meals a day.*

*I had many problems with money until Concern staff put my name on the list of needy people and I got wheat and fertilizer. I was trained in how to use them, and since I do not have any relatives to work on my land on my behalf, I asked the shura to help me so that I could work with them.*

*I followed the sowing instructions that Concern gave us, and by the grace of God, the harvest was good, three times more than the previous year's harvest. This is such a happy day for me- people are borrowing improved seeds from me, though before I was borrowing normal seeds from them."*



*Afghan woman making bread.*

### 3.7 Nurseries and Reforestation (2002, 2003, 2004, 2005)

The mountainous areas of Takhâr and Badakhshân are at extremely high risk from natural disasters, which are linked, to deforestation and desertification in the south. In combating the devastating results of deforestation, Concern is committed to two important, long-term projects:

- Maintaining two large nurseries, one in Faizâbâd and one in Farkhâr that serve as repositories of different tree varieties;
- Supporting village nurseries and distributing trees for reforestation in public areas and plantations.

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\* Not her real name.

Data for 2005:

Activities	Output	Outcomes
Establishing village nurseries (26)	-26 villages have access to private nurseries (around 0.5 hectares each)	-132,428 trees distributed around the provinces, protecting about 800,000 square meters of land (based on reported use of trees)
Non-fruit tree sapling distribution (100,000)	-The distribution of over 100,000 trees to prevent erosion and improve the scenery around Takhâr and Badakhshân (each tree can help protect up to one square meter of land on average);	-30,339 fruit trees will support families' incomes (incl. in total above) -123 people trained
Fruit tree sapling distribution (30,339)	-The distribution of over 30,000 fruit trees that can prevent erosion but that also provide families and beneficiaries of public institutions like schools with a source of income and nutrition.	
Agricultural training (123)	-The training of 20 students from the agricultural college in Farkhâr; -The training of 20 students from the agricultural college in Takhâr; -The training of 36 villagers to maintain village nurseries in as many villages across four districts;	

### 3.8 Para-vet Services (2005)

Livestock plays a vital economic and food security role in Afghan rural economy. Most families have stocks of sheep, goats and cows. Alongside the major economic supports that they offer, milk and milk products provide supplementary foods for rural communities, especially for children. However, preventable diseases remain rife, and there is little in the way of veterinary services available. In addition, Afghanistan's veterinary services used to be provided by the government, but this system was destroyed during the war.

Data for 2005:

Activity	Output	Outcomes
Para-vet services (27)	27 para-vets trained and equipped	3,000 animals in 27 villages vaccinated

#### Success story: Abdur Rahim's Story

Abdur Rahim is 45 years old and comes from the village of Dasht-e-Chinâr. Concern came to his village to discuss veterinary services with them in early 2005 and they agreed to participate. He told us his story:

*"More than half of the villagers in Dasht-e-Chinâr are involved in some form of livestock business. I used to have a goat and a donkey, but they died of foot-and-mouth disease. Like most of our people, I had a lot of problems with animal disease. But then Concern came to the village and offered to train one of our young men in veterinary services. Gul Mohammed was selected and he went on a six-month training course. He has come back as a veterinarian and up to this day, none of us has lost any animals."*

### 3.9 Pest-control Services (2004, 2005)

Harmful pests and diseases regularly destroy significant amount of crops and fruits in Afghanistan. Services to control such damage are not available in remote villages. Pest controllers are trained and given a start-up kit including pesticide, and 'sent on their way' to make their own living with their skills and equipment. They are also taught how to replenish their store of pesticide and replace their equipment. They are not tied to a particular village by contract, but because they come from the village, they are very likely to stay, because of strong family ties.

Data for 2005:

Activity	Output	Outcomes
Pest-control services (17)	17 pest-controllers trained and equipped	25% of residents of the target villages have used the pest control service

#### Success story: Faizullah's Story

Faizullah is from Chapakhâna village in Rustâq District. He is 45 years old, but is already almost a *rish-safed* ("white beard") with his peppered beard and hair, and is a satisfied customer of the pest control services.

He told Concern: *"I am a farmer. For three years in a row, I lost my crops because the plants were ruined by the weather and by being exposed to the elements, as they say."*

*This year, a man from our village who is called Qurbân was nominated to go to the Concern training of pest controllers. When he came back to the village, I asked him to treat my crops. He sprinkled this medicine on my plants in time. I think that because of this, my crops have improved this year."*

*It also seems that the pests which used to live here have gone to the neighbouring villages."*

### 3.10 Poultry Project (2003)

The poultry project for Badakshan was cancelled in 2005. It was originally conceived as a potential project in 2003, targeting women to engage them in women's groups in order to generate additional income and open doors for discussions on their own future role within their society. Although this was feasible in many of Concern's other target areas, the inaccessibility, time for transport, altitude, harsh winters and other factors that affect the transport and viability of live chickens or eggs to the Ragh district, made this a non-viable project for Ragh and its sub-districts.

## 4. WATER AND SANITATION

### 4.1 Health and Hygiene Education (Improved hygiene) (2005)

This year was Concern's first year implementing health and hygiene education to supplement water and sanitation projects. A local specialist has been hired to help run this program in 2006 with support from the Senior Water and Sanitation Advisor. The program includes educating people on:

- washing their hands after using the toilet
- preventing animals from defecating near water points
- keeping fingernails clean
- covering food from flies and insects
- preventing transferable disease
- keeping drinking water away from exposure

Data for 2005:

Activity	Output	Outcomes
Health and Hygiene education (9,393)	9,393 people have access to information about good health and hygiene practices	There is significant anecdotal evidence to show that most if not all people have changed at least some practices, and Concern's new health and hygiene coordinator, with the M&E advisor, is looking at ways to measure this more objectively

#### Success story: Abdul Qâdir's Story

Abdul Qâdir is the young son of Abdul Wali. He is a schoolboy and is in the fourth grade of the Sar-e-Rustâq School, which Concern is constructing in the village. Abdul Wali proudly told the following story about his son:

*"My son attends a school where Concern is teaching hygiene education. One day he came home, and was doing his homework when I arrived. When he saw me coming back from the toilet, he told me seriously, 'Father, before you come in, you should wash your hands.' I was delighted by his argument and asked him to bring me the bowl, pitcher and soap for me to wash my hands. It's good that he is learning such things at school."*

### 4.2 Water Supply Systems (Access to clean water) (2003, 2004, 2005)

Access to clean water is one of the key factors contributing to the appalling hygiene conditions and health status of the majority of the population in the whole of Afghanistan. Concern Afghanistan implemented a number of comprehensive water supply systems from 2003 to 2005, enabling access to potable water for 79,495 people. A combination of water supply constructions in targeted areas ensured the sustainability of these systems. Some of the individual systems included:

- Water reservoirs
- Piped water schemes
- Water source protection
- Dug wells
- Deep wells

Data for 2005:

Activity	Output	Outcomes
Water Supply Systems (13)	13 water systems constructed for 14 villages	44,262 people now have access to clean drinking water and enough water to wash

#### Success story: Water Supply in Dasht-e-Chenâr

There has been a settlement on the site of Dasht-e-Chenâr village for 200 years. Previously, the villagers got their water from a spring, which was contaminated by animals. Villagers say that many children died from water-borne diseases in the last four years. Lack of access to water was also an issue. The canal where the spring water was channelled ended on the hill above the village, so the old, the weak and the young could not get there. Often there was not enough water. In winter, the villagers got drinking water by melting snow; last summer they were without water for 50 days, and had to collect water from a settlement one hour away.

In 2005, the community (men and women together) highlighted the lack of drinking water as their main problem. Concern offered to help the villagers build four stone reservoirs, and a pipe to channel the spring water to them.

Since summer is a busy time for a farming community such as Dasht-e-Chenâr, the villagers decided to pay 15 men from the poorest families to complete the work. These men laid pipe for the new canal, and collected stones and sand from a nearby river for the reservoirs. The community paid a total of 250,000 Afs (around 5000 USD) for the labourers, and the gravel, stones and sand. Concern paid for the pipe, cement, steel bars and a mason, and supplied an engineer.

The four reservoirs have been functioning since October. With better water, the quality of food has improved: there is more demand for flour, as bread tastes better, and tea has more flavour, and fewer leaves are needed for each cup. Villagers say they now bathe every day, instead of once a week, and that they've started to drink several litres of water a day. Previously the spring was not channelled, and water was wasted; now the village has *more* water, as well as *better* water.

There have been financial benefits as well. Before, villagers had to pay for a donkey, metal water containers (which frequently broke), and in some cases a special labourer, to collect clean water from a neighbouring village. Now they will each be able to save over 20,000 Afs (US\$400) a year, to spend on better food and clothes for their families, and improvements to their houses.

Social tensions have been reduced. There used to be fights over water, because there wasn't enough. Having worked together to tackle this 200 year-old problem, the villagers say: *"All of the community is happy. We are all closer now"*. The people of Dasht-e-Chenar also no longer feel the stigma associated with living in a village with bad food and bad water. And last but not least, because the four reservoirs are at different points within the village, everyone – young, old, healthy and unhealthy alike – has access to clean water.

#### 4.3 Sanitation Services (Access to Sanitation facilities)

In Afghanistan, field defecation is the norm. But the past few years have seen large numbers of people move from the villages to the district and provincial centres, in order to cope with the drought and to take advantage of rehabilitated social services such as schools and clinics. Although these towns rarely have slums *per se*, sanitation is an enormous problem. This year, local government and Concern staff planned a number of public and private latrine projects to help educate people on public sanitation and to improve sanitation conditions.

Data for 2005:

Activity	Output	Outcomes
Sanitation services (4)	4 public latrines in the main public areas of Farkhâr	- Approximately 5,000 people are expected to benefit from access to sanitation on a regular basis - Approximately 2,000 people in Farkhâr centre are estimated to benefit from improved sanitation near where they live

## 5. SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

### 5.1 School construction (2003, 2004, 2005)

School construction is an enormous need in a country where 60% of the public infrastructure is estimated to have been destroyed, and where there have never been more than 30% of girls enrolled in school in recorded history. At present, most people teach and study in tents, if in anything at all. In Afghanistan's continental climate, where temperatures go below -40C in the mountains in the winter, this is a terrible hardship and many students take more than one year to pass classes because they cannot attend during the cold weather. In many villages, there is a building for the boys' school, but not for the girls, and girls are prevented from going to school because they cannot be seen sitting with boys.



Data from 2005:

OFDA-funded school in Rustâq.

Project	Output	Outcomes
Girls Schools / Compounds	2 girls' schools were constructed for approximately 1,950 girls	-3,950 girls able to continue their education -7,600 boys able to continue their education -Attendance is improving in all areas where the schools have been built, although records are too spotty to accurately measure this.
Mixed Schools	5 mixed schools were constructed serving approximately 6,000 students (30% of them girls)	
Boys School	1 boys' school <sup>4</sup> was constructed, which will serve approximately 3,600 boys	

<sup>4</sup> NB The Swedish Committee for Afghanistan had already constructed a girls' school in the same neighbourhood, so only the boys were without adequate facilities.

### Success story: Fawzia's Story

Fawzia is fifteen years old and lives in the centre of Rustâq. Like many girls her age, she wants to get an education and perhaps eventually become a teacher herself.

She told Concern her story: *"I studied up to the seventh grade in the Sar-e-Rustâq school. That was last year, and up to then, the boys and girls studied in one class together. But now my father has forbidden me from continuing my education, because in our culture, young men and women cannot study together in one classroom. I cannot study with boys after I have become a young woman. For one year, I sat at home, hopeless without any chance to finish my education.*

*This year, our people asked Concern to build a special girls' wing of the school. They constructed a special building for us, and I feel like a very lucky girl, because I can continue my education."*

## 5.2 Health facility construction and rehabilitation (2004)

As part of the infrastructure program, Concern assisted in helping the rehabilitation of two medical clinics in 2004: one health clinic in Rustaq and one TB clinic in Ragh, Badakhshan. The details and number of beneficiaries for these are stated below<sup>5</sup>.

Data for 2005:

Project	Output	Outcomes
Health Clinic Rehabilitation	One health clinic was rehabilitated, serving 35 surrounding villages (20,000 beneficiaries), with a capacity of 30 beds.	The hospital serves 120 patients on a daily basis and Concern supports a maternity unit, which services around 30 women per month. It increases access to medical facilities for 20,000 people.
TB Clinic rehabilitation	One TB clinic was rehabilitated, serving the population of five districts (5000 beneficiaries)	The clinic provides services to 20 patients on a daily basis, but is available to 5000 beneficiaries.

## 5.3 Women's literacy classes and REFLECT (2005)

This was the first year in which Concern worked on adult literacy. Literacy in Afghanistan is dismal, with some estimates as low as 15% for women including Kabul. In addition, Concern enthusiastically took over GOAL's REFLECT (Regenerated Freirean Literacy through Empowering Community Techniques) program in Kabul in 2005, thereby increasing its outreach capacity and bringing new skills and knowledge to the team.

Although REFLECT requires special mediation and teaching methodology, the general set-up of all classes is the same. People gather with others of the same gender in groups of 10-15. A literate person (preferably a local teacher or professional) is identified from the same neighbourhood or *masjed*, and this person is hired on a nominal salary as a teacher. The teachers are trained in a specific methodology (in Takhâr, they used the government's adult literacy program) and then work under the monitoring of Concern CPOs. In the past, Concern literacy classes have been short in duration, but in the future, the longer-term REFLECT methodology that allows more people to learn at their own pace, will be used.

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<sup>5</sup> Technically, the total number of beneficiaries for both clinics is the total number of the populations in the targeted area. However, due to issues of access and relative health status, the beneficiary number has been estimated conservatively in order to reflect a more representative beneficiary figure.

Data from 2005:

Project	Output	Outcomes
Women's Literacy Classes	1,919 men, women and children in rural Takhâr gained access to basic education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>60% of beneficiaries surveyed had attained a basic level of literacy</li> <li>Hundreds of girls and boys will be able to enter the formal school system next year</li> </ul>
REFLECT	1,500 women in Kabul gained access to basic education and support	

### Success story: Habiba's Story

Habiba regularly attends the women's literacy classes in Rustaq, a village in Northeast Afghanistan. Habiba has suffered particular hardship in her life, compared to her fellow classmates. She is disabled on the right side of her body, and is also blind in her right eye. Habiba married when she was 20 years old and had three terminal childbirths. Due to the lack of midwifery care, Habiba lost so much blood during all three births that after her third, she became paralysed. Her husband divorced her, married another woman, and had children with her. Habiba was left to live with her mother and father, and remain tied to household chores.

Habiba joined the female literacy class because she had become hopeless of everything else in her life, but was interested in reading newspapers and also keeping herself busy. She has been attending the class for three months (since its inception) and can now read and write with her functioning left eye and hand. While she suffers from constant pain, she greatly enjoys reading Dari literature and in the future, aspires to learn more through reading and studying.

While providing the education she was denied as a child, the literacy classes also provide Habiba with a significant social circle. She has made many friends through the literacy classes and its relaxed atmosphere allows her to discuss her life and problems. If Habiba did not attend the classes, she would be confined to her parents' house. Her family are extremely proud of her and permit her to visit her friends' houses in the neighbourhood.

Habiba explained that when she was younger she aspired to be someone great and successful; now she believes that that dream will never come true. By working through her disability and learning to read and write in only three months, Habiba has undoubtedly become someone great and successful.



*Habiba demonstrating her ability to read.*

## 6. OVERALL PERFORMANCE

### 6.1 Discrepancies and Adjustments

Mainly due to the fact that expertise in the areas of water and sanitation were not found until much later in the project (see §6.2.3), much more effort went into social infrastructure early on. Because of this, the target number of beneficiaries exceeded 100,000 people. Conversely, the number of water and sanitation beneficiaries reached was slightly less than the target (by around 5,000). However, the total number of beneficiaries reached was greater than planned.

Some adjustments were made to activities supporting the results, e.g. replacing poultry farming in Râgh with apiculture in Farkhâr, and so on. However, the planned results were all reached by the end of the project life. Likewise, whenever the project managers found that some beneficiaries were not able to form water cells *per se*, the oversight of water systems was transferred to the local *shura*, a traditional mechanism for solving problems, and project management committees underneath them.

The means of monitoring performance indicators had to be changed mid-way through the project as the intended means of measuring change, a national mechanism, was transformed (this was noted as a possible risk in the logframe). However, Concern was able to combine its previous work with participatory M&E methodologies to successfully gather data on change and impact that can be attributed to the project.

## 6.2 Constraints encountered

As reported throughout the project, there were three main constraints to implementing the project: security, harsh weather conditions, and staffing. Of these, two were listed as assumptions in the logical framework. In the future, they may be switched to “risks”.

Type of Constraint	Predictable?	In risks or activities column in logframe?	Actualized?	Mitigated?
<b>Security</b>	Yes	Assumption-continued political and security stability	Yes	Yes (redoubled efforts during secure periods)
<b>Weather</b>	Yes	Assumption-favorable climatic conditions	Yes	Yes (redoubled efforts during good weather periods)
<b>Staffing</b>	Somewhat – however not to that extent	No	Yes	Yes (no-cost extension requested and granted)

What follows are detailed descriptions of the different constraints as faced throughout the project.

### 6.2.1 Security

While Afghanistan has not seen anything close to the kind of large-scale violence that might lead to the closure of programs or projects, sporadic violence and threats continued from 2002 through 2005 causing minor delays, as Concern was forced to restrict movements and put projects on hold. Although the logical framework included the assumption that the situation would remain generally secure, Concern did not anticipate so many incidents throughout the project. This will be corrected in logical frameworks in the future.

Security incidents that delayed the program included:

- A specific threat to Concern staff in Khost, leading to severe delays in implementation and eventually, to Concern’s pulling out of the district (the pull-out was influenced by, though not totally based on, this incident);
- A spate of threats and “small” incidents in the spring of 2004, preventing movement around Taloqan and flights to the field, etc., delaying supervision and proactive planning for some time;
- A number of kidnappings, notably that of three UN workers in Kabul in October 2004, which prevented movement by senior staff to many field areas as they were on stand-by for relocation at some points, and the road to the airport was off-limits;

- In spring 2005, protests that swept Afghanistan following a harsh winter and allegations of anti-Islamic behavior by US forces prevented staff movement for a considerable amount of time, and staff in some areas were grounded for nearly a month altogether.

Concern also took planned security measures with relocation during the presidential elections, and voluntary relocation during the recent parliamentary elections.

### **6.2.2 Harsh Weather Conditions**

Concern is working in some of the least accessible areas of Afghanistan, insofar as terrain and weather go. Concern was aware of these potential constraints, and these were to some extent factored into its implementation plans. However, the project still proved to be somewhat ambitious and weather was a factor in some delays, both for the 2003-2004 winters and the exceptionally harsh winter of 2004-5.

### **6.2.3 Staffing**

It has long been understood that there is a paucity of qualified staff in Afghanistan. However, like many agencies, Concern was taken by surprise when some larger donors scaled up their activities so rapidly throughout 2003, especially as many qualified staff were drawn away from NGOs and into the private sector (as Roshan expanded throughout the country at this time, and many private contractors in Kabul started work on roads around the country).

Concern took a number of measures to mitigate the situation, including:

- A review of staff salaries and benefits in 2003
- An across-the-board increase in salaries and benefits in early 2004
- Adjusted recruiting methods and some revised qualifications, to attract more local (i.e. rural) applicants, as many of the typical pool of applicants had been offered positions in Kabul.

Staffing remains a major problem, however, and to this day a number of positions have not been filled.

## **6.3 Adjustments made to any objective**

No adjustments were made to any objectives.

## **6.4 Summary of Cost-effectiveness**

Because this project straddles relief and development work, it is very difficult to quantify the benefits. In particular:

- Afghanistan's economy has been growing by nearly 50% per year during the life of the project, and it would be foolish to try to attribute any particular benefit to this project alone;
- With under 30% literacy and lower rates in rural areas, and minimal local record-keeping, there exist no reliable records of use of any particular social infrastructure, so only broad estimates and generalizations can be made as to the number of beneficiaries and statistics on how different beneficiaries benefit from the project;
- The vast majority of benefits from this project, such as improved health and lives saved, cannot be fully quantified (even if some health benefits may be quantified in part).

Therefore, Concern has prepared a modified cost-effectiveness table based on the number of people who have seen some degree of improvement in their life. All in all, the average cost per input is around \$5.00, although because many people received more than one benefit (i.e. access to a clinic and a form of livelihood support), the overall cost is around \$7.50 per person.

SECTOR	People reached	Total Cost	Cost / Person
Livelihoods	89,617	\$530,790.00	\$5.92
Education	79,495	\$272,672.00	\$3.43
Social Infrastructure	216,081	\$1,077,061.00	\$4.98
<i>All</i>	250,000	\$188,0523.01	\$7.52

## 6.5 Cumulative Achievements

The OFDA grant for the Rebuilding Sustainable Livelihoods Program has had a substantial effect on the lives of thousands of people. Roughly accounting for the overlap inherent in an integrated program, Concern estimates that the project has had a direct, positive effect on the lives of no fewer than 250,000 people.

As demonstrated throughout this report, sometimes the smallest inputs have had the greatest outcomes. However, much of the impact, coming from the most sustainable and long-term investments in schools and reforestation, will not be seen for a decade or more.

Moreover, thanks to synergies built between this OFDA grant and Concern's long-term programs in livelihoods, environmental health, and education programs, the benefits will continue to grow.