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EDUCATION SECTOR SUPPORT PROJECT

306-0202

Background:

The Education Sector Support Program (Project No. 306-0202) was authorized on August 8, 1986. The original life of the project funding was \$8.9 million and was increased to \$30.3 million in December 1988. The current Project Assistance Completion Date (PACD) is December 31, 1992.

The University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO) is the technical assistance contractor for the ESSP. UNO has a long history of interest in and support for the Afghan cause.

The implementation agency for ESSP is the Educational Center for Afghanistan (ECA), an all-Afghan group of educators which is controlled by the Seven Party Alliance.

The project objectives are:

- To create and maintain primary schools in the liberated areas of Afghanistan by providing teachers, supplies, student supplies, textbooks and teachers' salaries.
- To promote literacy among war-affected Afghan young adults by conducting literacy classes.
- To improve teachers' competency by conducting short-term training for primary teachers and literacy trainers.
- To provide an organization to plan and implement the educational activities which are sponsored.
- To provide opportunities for previously trained Afghan professionals to upgrade their skills in a specially designed university level program.

Project implementation began in October 1986. By December 1986 UNO/EAC had initiated Literacy Training for Mujahideen in their winter camps, and by September 1987 had sent supplies to 1306 primary schools grades 1-3 inside Afghanistan. By July of 1988 the project schools had added another 304 new schools all grades 1-4. Total schools supplied is 1610. ECA schools planned is 1948 and ECA fully supported schools with verification, salary approval and supervision is 636.

ESSP staffing includes four expatriates (two of whom are Afghan-Americans) and 20 local staff on the UNO technical assistance team, as well as a full-time staff of 74 at ECA offices in Peshawar and Quetta.

Accomplishments to Date:

The Education Council of the Seven Party Alliance has been activated as the principal policy making board for the ECA. The Council is composed of

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the directors and presidents of the Education Departments of six of the seven parties. It approves all major ECA undertakings.

The ECA has been established and is in operation. Assisted by the UNO team, the ECA has been primarily responsible for the accomplishment listed immediately below. The main center is in Peshawar with a regional office in Quetta.

The first large undertaking of the ECA was literacy training for Mujahideen in their winter camps near Peshawar. Textbooks (in Dari and Pashto) were written and 529 literacy classes for about 8,000 students were conducted during January - April 1987, shortly after project mobilization. The literacy program was further improved in 1988 with the development of training manuals and materials and the training of some 600 teachers. These teachers last winter have trained over 12,000 Mujahideen in seven camps.

Textbooks and instructional materials for grades one through six have been developed and published in both of the national languages of Afghanistan. A total of 500,000 copies of textbooks have been printed. These materials have the full approval and support of the parties.

Primary school kits have been sent to a total of 1,610 schools in all 29 provinces of Afghanistan. Kits include textbooks, instructional charts and maps, and supplies for students and teachers.

The training of some 190 District Directors of Education was recently completed. These Directors have reentered Afghanistan to supervise and train primary school staff in the districts of 29 provinces.

A monitoring/verification system has been designed and implementation has started. Ten level I monitoring teams with questionnaires and cameras operated inside Afghanistan during August-December, 1987. More level I teams were trained this past spring and 14 of them are now operating in all 29 provinces. Additionally, 29 level II teams have been trained and are operating inside Afghanistan. The monitors have verified 636 schools as ECA fully supported schools. Teachers' salaries have been or are being sent to these schools.

All textbooks and materials supplied to the schools have been reviewed, revised and are being re-printed for distribution.

A fully documented database is in process with data definitions, checking procedures, verification processes, and data analysis programs. The database includes base information, supply, salary and personnel data; and a monitoring file on all schools.

In February 1988, an initial 21 students started studies at UNO under the

Afghan Scholarship Program (ASP). Managed jointly by the UNO and The Asia Foundation (as subcontractor), the program will refresh and upgrade previously trained Afghan professionals who have been engaged in Jihad the past several years, thus enabling them to contribute more effectively to the reconstruction of Afghanistan. A second group of 21 student started their studies September 5th, 1968.

Planned Future Activities:

As the war draws to a close, plans for resettlement of the Afghan refugees are being drawn up. The return of the refugees will not be easily arranged. Working against their return will be conditions which include continued political instability, the presence of millions of land mines through the countryside, shortages of food and health facilities, and the disruption of the economy, especially agriculture. Some refugees and displaced persons will be reluctant to abandon living in Pakistan, Iran or new locations within Afghanistan. Rehabilitation of war-damaged facilities will be essential, as will recovery from war wounds, illness and the general disruption of personal lives.

One of the most basic governmental services, education, will be crucial to the transition from wartime to peacetime. The existence of functioning schools will help maintain returned refugees as well as prepare children at a basic primary level and offer literacy-deprived adults broader opportunities to participate in the economy of the recovering nation. The desire for education has been strongly expressed by all groups to be involved in resettlement and rehabilitation: the commanders and people inside Afghanistan, the political parties and the refugees.

The project is comprised of three major activities and, one pilot component to be implemented as follows:

- Improvement of Rural Primary Schools: support of the rural primary education program will be provided at a level of approximately 1,000-1,610 schools. This includes the continued support of the Education Center for Afghanistan (ECA) and the University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO) technical team. The amended project allows for expansion of the school curriculum into the 8th grade over three years, and the production of materials and texts for grades 7 and 8. The primary school component also support some text revision and allows the ECA to distribute its texts to other schools in Afghanistan and in the refugee camps. District Directors inside Afghanistan will also continue to receive training and support.

- High School Textbook Revision Pilot Activity: under this pilot activity high school textbooks currently being used in Pakistan and Afghanistan will undergo minor revisions and be distributed to fifteen high schools in Afghanistan on a pilot basis. Any further production and distribution of high school textbooks will be supported by other donors.

- Literacy Training: the project plans to continue the literacy program for the Munahideen in the winter camps near Peshawar and Quetta during 1988-89. In the following years, consideration will be given to an ECA proposal for basic adult literacy training inside Afghanistan that would take advantage of the existing ECA primary school system.

- Manpower Development: manpower needs will be addressed by training Afghans in basic clerical and management skills necessary for the rehabilitation of the country. The activity will be competed among U.S. organizations working with Afghans. The selected organization will conduct classes for developing priority skills as identified by studies. At the same time, the organization will refine skills areas to be taught and course content. The manpower development program will be "portable" so that it can be moved into Afghanistan at the earliest appropriate time. The invitation for applications (IA) will be issued to U.S. organizations now working in Pakistan with Afghans and which are experienced in manpower development.

Because of the war in Afghanistan, monitoring of the project-supported schools will be carried out by Afghans trained to examine the existence of schools and, to the extent possible, the quality of teaching. It is expected that USC personnel will begin to assume some of the monitoring tasks, if conditions permit within the life of the project.