



"The Voice of Working Women"

R *Rebuilding Afghanistan*



Rebuilding Afghanistan Brings Hope to Women

The United States is fulfilling its commitment to help Afghanistan build a new and better future - a future free from terror.

Story Continued

U.S. aid programs are helping Afghan women by restoring and increasing the educational and economic choices that were taken away during Taliban rule.

"The United States and Afghanistan share the belief that a secure, stable Afghanistan, at peace with its neighbors, is critical to achieving our shared goals. We agree that a lasting, permanent solution for Afghanistan's security needs must be based on strengthening Afghanistan's own capacities." **Joint Statement of New Partnership Between U.S. and Afghanistan - January 28, 2002**

Since October 1, 2001, the U.S. has committed \$840 million in humanitarian and reconstruction aid to help the people of Afghanistan. These resources are being devoted to the rebuilding of Afghanistan's infrastructure as well as health, educational and economic programs that will help the country and its citizens return to a path of political and economic stability.

While most U.S. government-directed programs for Afghanistan benefit all Afghan citizens, \$100 million of the U.S. aid package is specifically devoted to help women. Highlights of U.S. assistance in Afghanistan include:

- \$2.5 million for the construction of 14 neighborhood-based women's centers that offer vocational training, networking, social services, and other training programs for widows and orphans.
- The refurbishing of the Afghan Ministry of Women's Affairs building, which was also provided with technical advisors, and a women's resource center with internet access for computer training and materials on women's rights.

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- Refresher training and instructional kits for Afghan teachers, 65 percent of whom are women. In addition, Afghan students - many of them girls who were once prohibited from receiving a formal education - received over 15 million textbooks from the U.S.
- Logistical support to help establish the current government and political system, which includes the active participation of women. At the Loya Jirga meeting in June of 2002 to establish the current government, 220 of the 1700 participants were women. One year earlier, women were still required to be accompanied by a man when outside the home.



President Bush and Afghan President Karzai have also mobilized private sector support through the U.S.-Afghan Women's Council. Through this Council, Afghan women who work in government ministries will receive educational and leadership training, thanks to private sector support from America.

Much progress has been made in providing increased educational, economic, and political opportunities for the women of Afghanistan. The Women's Bureau is proud to support these efforts.

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