

JANUARY 2007

AFGHANISTAN NOW

First Parliament Governs

5 Million Kids
in School

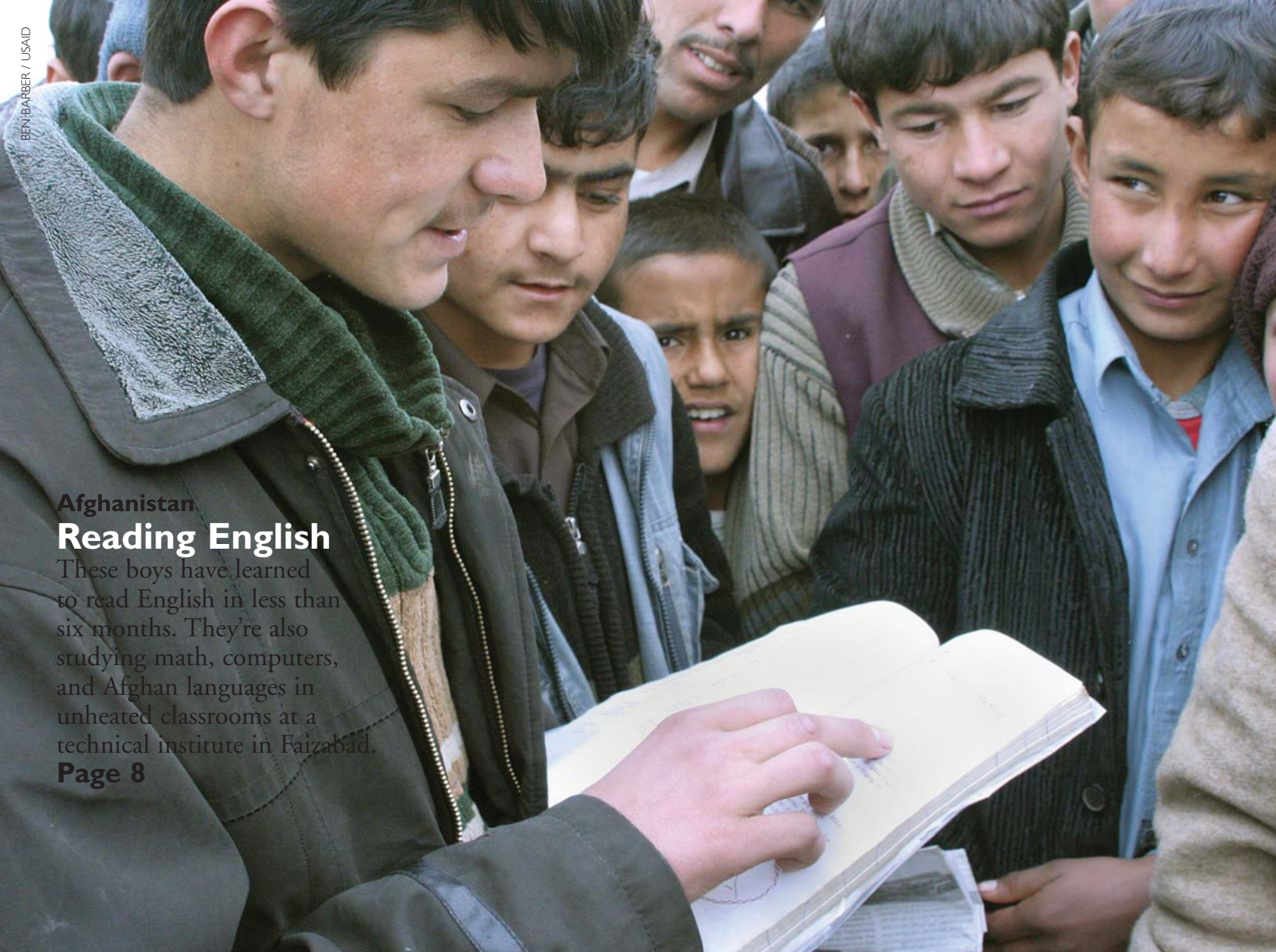
Clinics
Expand Reach

U.S. Agency for International Development



“One of the messages I want to say to the people of Afghanistan is it’s our country’s pleasure and honor to be involved with the future of this country. We like stories of young girls going to school for the first time... a free press... people are able to work and realize their dreams... We’re impressed by the progress that your country is making.”

President George W. Bush
Speaking with President Hamid Karzai
March 1, 2006, Kabul, Afghanistan



Afghanistan Reading English

These boys have learned to read English in less than six months. They're also studying math, computers, and Afghan languages in unheated classrooms at a technical institute in Faizabad. **Page 8**

Afghanistan Grows:

New schools, clinics, shops and homes grow on top of the vanishing ruins of war as U.S. and other donors help the Afghans rebuild and rebound. **2**



PATRICK ANDRADE

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COVER PHOTO: A workman builds a new courthouse in Nangarhar Province.

PHOTO: INGE FRYKLUND

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BEN BARBER / USAID

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Overview

Afghanistan Grows

New schools, clinics, shops and homes grow on top of the vanishing ruins of war.

Kabul, Afghanistan

Driving around this bustling city, one sees dozens of apartment and office buildings built over the past two years. People walk briskly along the streets, shopping for a few oranges, firewood or a kilo of flour amid thousands of small shops.

Out on the roads linking the provinces, thousands of trucks deliver building materials, finished goods, agricultural produce and other items of commerce.

In cities and towns across this Asian nation

of more than 31 million people, freshly-painted schools are packed with students—attendance has jumped from 900,000 to five million since 2001. That's when—after the September 11 attacks on New York and the Pentagon—U.S. and Afghan forces ousted the Taliban, which had sheltered terrorist leader Osama bin Laden and Al Qaida.

Since then, Afghanistan underwent a rebirth—after 22 years of war and Taliban repression. Although security was disrupted in some regions by the Taliban and other militant groups, in 2006 most of Afghanistan was at peace. The country elected its own president and parliament, and it opened up trade with the outside world. It ended theocratic tyranny and put women and girls back into schools as teachers and students; into hospitals as nurses and doctors; into ministries and private companies as staff and leaders.

With the assistance of U.S. and other international aid programs, the pace has noticeably picked up in the past two years.

Largest Refugee Return in History

After the end of Taliban rule, a vast transformation of Afghanistan took place as two million refugees returned home from exile in Pakistan and Iran by 2003. In 2004 and 2005, the continuing refugee returns helped to revitalize the country.

The stream of returning refugees became the largest voluntary return in world history—four million people have come home, and they are still coming. At first, refugee officials warned them not to return. There may be landmines and there may be no jobs, houses, medical care or schools, they said. Since many had not been home since the Soviet invasion in 1979, they sent back a family member to check things out. When they reported that the Taliban were gone and the Americans were there to guarantee safety, the Afghans decided to go home.

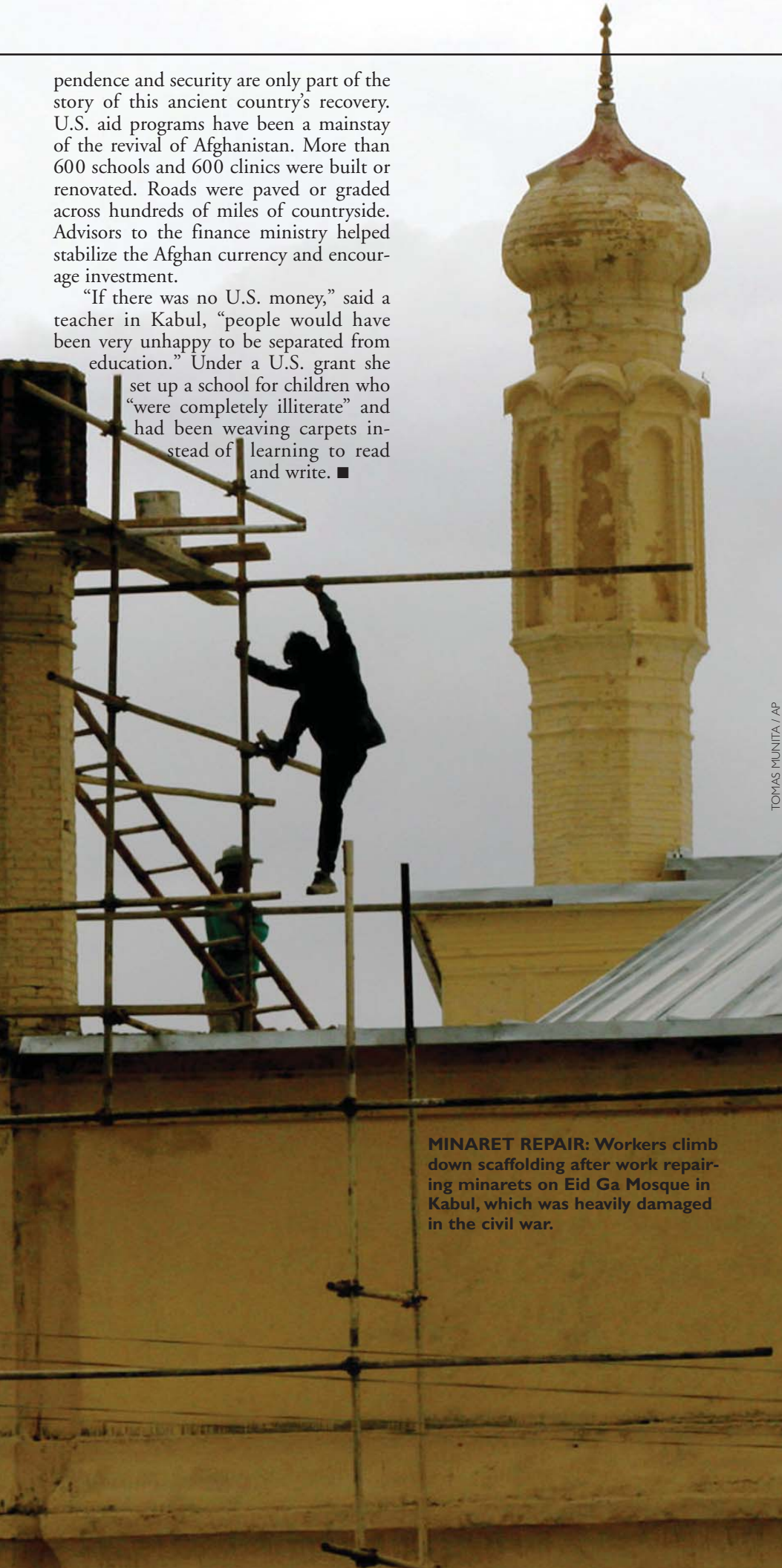
But U.S. military support for Afghanistan's rebirth and inde-

School attendance has jumped from 900,000 to five million since 2000.



pendence and security are only part of the story of this ancient country's recovery. U.S. aid programs have been a mainstay of the revival of Afghanistan. More than 600 schools and 600 clinics were built or renovated. Roads were paved or graded across hundreds of miles of countryside. Advisors to the finance ministry helped stabilize the Afghan currency and encourage investment.

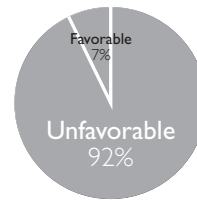
"If there was no U.S. money," said a teacher in Kabul, "people would have been very unhappy to be separated from education." Under a U.S. grant she set up a school for children who "were completely illiterate" and had been weaving carpets instead of learning to read and write. ■



MINARET REPAIR: Workers climb down scaffolding after work repairing minarets on Eid Ga Mosque in Kabul, which was heavily damaged in the civil war.

Taliban

What is your opinion of the Taliban?



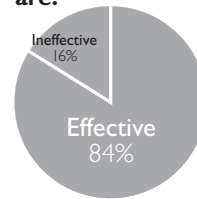
Security

How would you rate the security in your area?



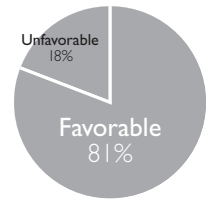
International Aid

International agencies providing aid for reconstruction are?



United States

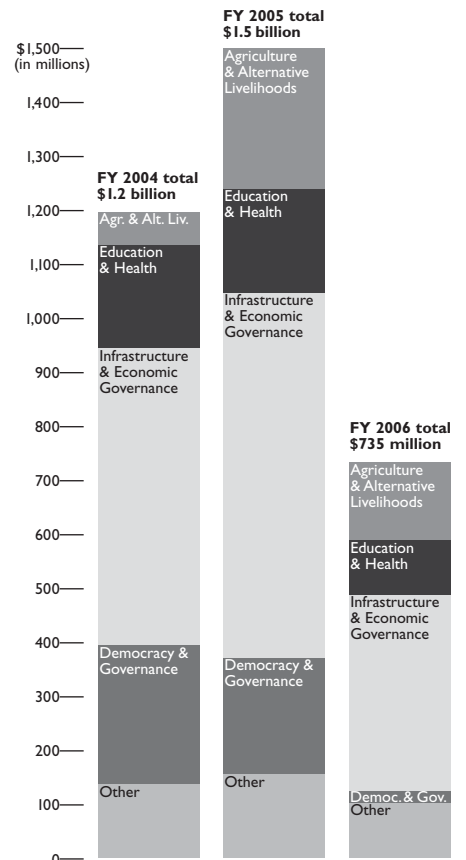
What is your opinion of the United States?



Source: Poll of 2,000 Afghans in November 2006 by the Program on International Policy Attitudes at the University of Maryland. Where the total is less than 100%, some respondents didn't answer or didn't know.

U.S. Funding 2004–2006

U.S. funding for Afghan reconstruction was \$1.2 billion in 2004 and \$1.5 billion in 2005. With Afghan elections over, and aid shifting from emergency to development, aid was set at \$735 million in 2006. Funding in 2007 may increase.



TOMAS MUNITA / AP

Parliament Rules

Men and women from the first democratically-elected Afghan Parliament met in Kabul in 2006 to begin to govern.

Kabul, Afghanistan

The new members of Afghanistan's first democratically-elected parliament crowded the corridor outside the main chamber on a bright, cold day in January 2006, talking politics, politics, politics.

Bearded Pashtun legislators wearing turbans and shawls discussed new laws with colleagues from their region. Clean-shaven men in suits with briefcases debated in another cluster, beneath a painting of ancient Afghan tribes with their camels and horses.

A half-dozen, fashionably-dressed women legislators formed another group as they too debated the future of Afghanistan.

"It's a very good time for us now that we have the parliament—it is a new thing," said a woman member of Parliament from Herat. "A woman's voice is equal to a man's in Parliament and there are even more privileges for women. There are five seats reserved for women from Herat."

She says the most important issue for her is women's rights. "The women of Afghanistan still have a lot of trouble," she said. "We are overwhelmed by force in the name of [extremist] Islam. There are under-age weddings. Most important is to teach women what are their rights. Now, it is like a habit. They don't go to anyone to ask for their rights. But gradually it is getting better."

Not only did U.S. and other aid groups register 12 million voters and support the first free parliamentary elections since 1969, USAID also brought all its members to Kabul for training on parliamentary procedure, writing and understanding laws, budgets and planning.

USAID and the UN Development Program also helped set up a library with computers, software and a website, said the head of public relations for the parliament. She brings a visitor inside the refurbished chamber as the afternoon session begins.

Men in traditional turbans and robes, who might recently have enforced rigid Taliban rules on keeping women out of public life, now sit next to women who speak out with a freedom and confidence undreamed of only five years ago.

Each member has a microphone and as they are recognized by the chairman, they rise to address the issues. As in any legislature, some items tend to be emotional.



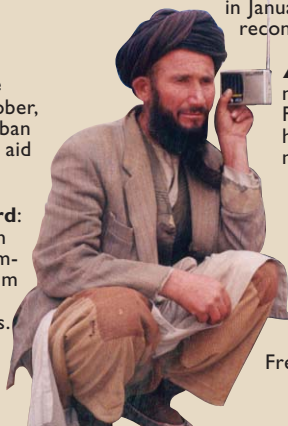
AHMAD MASOOD / AP

2001

▲ **9/11 Attack on U.S.:** World Trade Center, Pentagon hit by hijacked planes September 11.

▲ **U.S., British Remove Taliban:** Beginning in October, Afghanistan freed from Taliban rule. U.S. sets \$320 million aid plus massive food relief.

▲ **Bonn Accord:** Allies and Afghan leaders in December create interim government and path to elections.



Free radios brought news

2002

▲ **Tokyo Aid Pledge:** Donors meeting in January pledge \$2 billion in reconstruction aid.

▲ **ISAF Arrives:** The International Security Assistance Force arrives in January to help U.S. and Afghan forces maintain order in Kabul.

▲ **Karzai Selected:** Hamid Karzai became head of the transitional government in June.

2003

▲ **New Currency:** In January, a new, more stable currency was distributed.

▲ **Draft Constitution:** The new charter was completed in March.

▲ **Kabul-Kandahar Road:** The rebuilding of the road was completed by USAID in December.



Loya Jirga picks government

SWEARING-IN: Newly elected members of the first Afghan Parliament hold the Quran as they are sworn in, Dec. 19, 2005, marking a major step toward democracy after the ouster of the Taliban in 2001.



2004

▲ **Three Million Refugees:** In February, the return of Afghans after decades of exile in Pakistan and Iran reached three million.

▲ **\$8.2 billion Pledged:** At the Berlin conference, donors pledged massive aid.

▲ **Karzai Elected:** December 7 he became the first democratically elected president of Afghanistan.

2005

▲ **Five Million in School:** The number of children in school leaped from 900,000 in 2001. About 35 percent today are girls.

▲ **Parliament Elected:** First free elections for parliament held September 18.

▲ **24 PRTs Deployed:** The military-USAID-State Department Provincial Reconstruction Teams around the country reached 24 by December.

2006

▲ **\$10.5 billion pledged:** At the January London Conference, the international community pledged massive aid and signed the Afghanistan Compact pledging democratic development.

▲ **Cabinet approved:** In April, the parliament approved nearly all of Karzai's cabinet choices.



Woman reads 2005 ballot

STATE DEPT.



PLANNING FUTURE (left): Leaders of Badakshan Province government, the private sector, NGOs, USAID, and other donors meet in Faizabad to plan development. They said their problems included: poor roads, security, border access, training, mines, drugs, and agriculture.

YOUNG TEACHING OLD (right): Shoghla, 19, teaches ex-mujahideen commanders who fought the Soviets for 10 years, and then fought each other. They have now laid down their arms and are being trained by a USAID program to use computers, write and edit documents, surf the internet in Dari and Pashtu and prepare for jobs in the peace-time economy.

First to galvanize attention is the question of ending security roadblocks in the Afghan capital which make it hard for the legislators, as well as all residents of the city, to get around town. It proves thorny because of the need to balance security against free flow of traffic.

Signs of Change

With U.S. and other support, Afghan leaders from many of its factions, tribes, social groups and political elements met in Bonn in December 2002, to set up a path towards democracy and economic recovery. Then, U.S. and other foreign assistance helped conduct Emergency and Constitutional Loya Jirgas (assemblies) inside Afghanistan in 2003 and 2004. These selected an interim government and drafted a constitution. Aid paid for travel, lodging, construction of meeting tents and experts to teach the new representatives the nuts and bolts such as

writing laws, creating budgets and other issues.

A nationwide campaign registered 10 million Afghans who defied threats of violence and voted in overwhelming numbers in September 2004—electing President Hamid Karzai. The next national balloting took place in September 2005 for the parliament, which met for the first time last December; and for provincial councils. These new councils are working to establish their authority and role in regions long dominated by traditional shuras, non-elected bodies formed of elders and tribal leaders.

USAID also funded a radio network to connect the central government with the remote provinces, so they can communicate reliably for the first time.

Rule of Law

Despite holding its first democratic elections and taking other major steps away from decades of warfare, lawlessness and Islamist repression, Afghanistan still needs fair, open and strong police and judicial systems.

From Kabul to Badakshan to Mazar-e-Sharif, self-styled “commanders” with a few dozen gunmen under their control, take what they want from the shops without paying. They take young girls for their wives and the parents are too intimidated and powerless to object. They seize land and houses without offering the fair market price.

U.S., NATO and other trainers have been working with local and national Afghan security forces to improve the quality of police and soldiers and develop an ability to stand up to the commanders and to protect ordinary citizens.

U.S. aid has also built courts, trained judicial staff, and republished a collection of Afghanistan’s laws. ■

Presidential Election

March 2004:
Do you think that the elections will be free and fair, or do you think that they will not be free and fair?



October 2005:
Do you think that last year's elections were free and fair, or not free and fair?



Source: Survey carried out in all but three provinces; field-work by the Afghan Media Resource Center and Afghan Center for Social and Opinion Research; conducted for the Asia Foundation and ABC News by Charney Research. In 2005, some 1,039 Afghans were interviewed; in 2004, 804 were interviewed.

SHAH MARAI / AP



PRESIDENT AND THE POLICE: President Hamid Karzai presented Afghan police with certificates for their work, in Bamiyan, 200 km northwest of Kabul, July 27, 2005.



Democracy and Civil Society Results

- **Peaceful, democratic elections:** October 2004, for president; November 2005, for parliament and provincial councils.
- **Parliament meets:** Passed national budget and approved presidential cabinet.
- **Fighters chose peace:** 60,000 gave up weapons; joined civilian labor force.
- **Afghan National Army:** The U.S. Defense Department trained thousands of Afghan troops and police to provide security.
- **Judges trained:** USAID and other aid programs train officials and staff, and provide computers and other support.
- **Independent media:** Set up 32 radio stations; trained women journalists; supported Pajhwok Afghan news agency supplying daily news to radio stations and newspapers.
- **Designing development:** Teams of local officials, business leaders, NGOs and aid workers are planning development of regions.



PRTs Bring Aid

Faizabad, Badakshan Province—On a frozen country road German troops stop to ask villagers about security, food and other issues.

The troops are from one of the 24 Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) across Afghanistan run by the United States and other NATO countries.

From the PRT military base outside the city, USAID and Danish aid workers, German and Czech soldiers and Croatian police trainers fan out daily to provide security, aid and advice to Afghans as they rebuild the country.

The PRT civil-military model was created to provide security for international assistance from attacks by Taliban, Al Qaeda or other hostile elements.

PRTs have distributed hundreds of millions of dollars to build or repair schools, clinics, hospitals, roads, power systems and government buildings. ■



ARMY MEDIC: A U.S. army doctor (in uniform) speaks to a patient (right) through interpreter (left) at a special clinic set up by the PRT in Ghazni province in a village.

Schools for 5 Million Children

Over 600 schools were built or repaired and 48 million textbooks distributed to five million students.

Kabul, Afghanistan

The temperature is just above freezing as a half dozen workmen lean out from their wooden scaffolds to plaster the walls of the sprawling Panjsad Family High School in the

northern part of this city.

Inside the courtyard, although schools are on three-month winter vacation to spare students the unheated classrooms, a dozen boys play fierce games of volleyball amid a frozen expanse of snow and ice.

"All of our schools were damaged and destroyed in 20 years of war," said Ajmal, 18, taking a break from watching his friends play ball.

"This work," he said, pointing towards the men fixing walls, roofs, windows, and floors, "will improve the school. It's good

quality work and the people are satisfied."

The work at Panjsad is carried by a U.S. program that has built or repaired over 600 schools around the country since 2001 when the Taliban were driven from power and school enrollment skyrocketed from 900,000 to five million.

By January 2006, the aid program had refurbished 162 schools and was working on 118 more—earthquake-resistant structures costing about \$40,000. International Organization for Migration (IOM) also had built nine new schools and was at work on 25



REPAIRING SCHOOL: Workmen at the Panjsad Family High School in Kabul battle the cold but keep on with renovations under a USAID grant, preparing for the return of 10,000 students after winter break.

BEN BARBER / USAID

others—for \$140,000, each will have eight classrooms, external latrines, and an electric generator. “It’s a challenge to build the quality and quantity we’re aiming for,” said one aid contractor.

Mirwais, 15, said parents of most of his 10,000 fellow students in the Panjsad School are illiterate. There are three shifts, and many sit in tent classrooms in the courtyard.

While it’s easy to deliver plaster, cement, wood, steel sheets, and other materials to schools in Kabul, Herat, Mazar-i Sharif or other cities, schools in remote villages are reached only across miles of dirt tracks that turn to mud in the rain and snow, sinking delivery trucks to their axles and even the windows of the driver’s cab.

“We use donkeys in some places to transport materials,” said Karoline Lund of IOM. This delays work and raises costs.

Kabul University

At Kabul University, the country’s premier higher education institute, students and teachers walk under the trees on paths between the buildings. Wisps of smoke rise from the stovepipes of offices where a few administrators work during the winter break.

“During the time of the Taliban only a small number of people could study here,” said Nazir, 25, a first-year science student. “Books and materials were not good. Now they are better and the teachers are too. More people are coming here because they are more interested—the level of understanding in the country is increasing.”



LEARNING IN THE COLD: At the Badakshan Institute of Technology, students in unheated classrooms learn to use computers, read English, do math and hone other skills for business and government jobs they hope to find as Afghanistan develops.



“We covered the first, second and third grade in one year.”

A teacher of accelerated education classes in Kabul

Catching Up

Kabul, Afghanistan—In a small classroom, off a snow- and mud-covered street, 28 girls and young women gather daily, studying to make up for their lost childhood education.

“We covered the first, second, and third grade in one year,” says their teacher. “In six months we completed the fourth grade. Now we are on the fifth grade.”

Illiteracy, especially among girls, is a legacy of the Taliban in Afghanistan. However, since the Taliban’s collapse in 2001, more than 34 percent of students are girls, highest in Afghan history.

More than 170,000 students—who

range in age from 10 to 22—are in “accelerated learning” classes because their educations are so far behind. Of the accelerated learning students, about 58 percent are girls.

“I had no education,” said one student, Rohena. “Study is important to know things and get knowledge. I want to be a doctor.” Her cheeks turn red with embarrassment as she speaks.

The accelerated learning program is funded by USAID which prepares Afghan teachers to compress the work of one year into a few months. They also learn to have students participate and not just lecture to the class. ■



LEAPING AHEAD: Students attend an accelerated learning class in Kabul. They had missed all their education when the

Taliban barred girls from school. Behind them a stove heats the room.

Education Results

Since 2001, USAID supported:

- **Printing** 48.5 million textbooks in Dari and Pashto

- **Accelerated learning** training for 10,496 teachers serving 170,000 students

- **International School** of Kabul opened to provide American-style teaching

- **Radio-teacher training** program to all 34 provinces, reaching 65,000 teachers daily

- **Advisors** to the Ministries of Education and Higher Education

- **American University** of Afghanistan opened in 2006

- **Kabul University Women's Dormitory** for 1,100 students built

- **Balkh University** built the Faculty of Agriculture in Mazar-i Sharif

- **Literacy and occupational skills** program to older girls and women

Farzawa, 27, a recent graduate in pharmacy, was on campus to prepare for another exam for her diploma. "Under the Taliban, I had to wear a burka and stay home," she said. "I'm happy that I can come out of the home and complete my education and help my family. This is happiness—completing university."

At the medical school, a professor of pharmacology said the University of Arizona and other donors are helping improve the facilities, especially the medical library, but more help is needed. About 40 percent of medical students are girls, he said.

What is very clear is that Afghans, who have one of the lowest literacy rates in the world, are eager to educate themselves and their children. The isolated attacks on schools and teachers by hostile Taliban holdouts have not dented this commitment. ■



BEN BARBER / USAID

Faizabad, Badakshan Province, Afghanistan

Midwives Train to Save Lives

The young women sit shyly around the carpeted room as they talk about their midwifery courses. They are the frontlines of a new battle to save lives in their towns and villages.

More women die in childbirth in this province than anyplace on earth—6,500 out of 100,000 births according to the U.N. Children's Fund and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

To fight this, U.S. aid has created 18-month midwife courses for young women who live in a dormitory, receive free food and lodging, and will return to their villages ready to save lives.

"I have already delivered nine babies myself," said Sairam, 18, who attends deliveries in this provincial capital while studying in the program. "They were all normal. I have seen a breech [when the baby is sideways or

feet first] but I did not do the delivery then."

Her fellow students suddenly speak up, telling how they would deal with a breech delivery. They also learn how to use medicines to stop postpartum bleeding, a common cause of death.

When asked how they will deal with the older women who have traditionally assisted births—and who lack knowledge of sanitation and medicine—one young woman notes: "we will appoint them as assistants."

Since the average woman has eight children, part of their role will be to assist in family planning. "The younger generation wants less children," said one.

When asked if they knew of someone who had died in childbirth, they all slowly raise their hands. "Yes. We all do," said one. ■



BEN BARBER / USAID

FUTURE DOCTORS: Students chat outside Kabul University Medical School, which is being fixed up with U.S. and other international aid.



Health

Clinics, Caregivers and Medicine

U.S. aid rebuilds hospitals and clinics, trains nurses and doctors and provides free medicine to millions.

Kabul, Afghanistan

Fixing up Afghanistan's health care is a huge task. When the Taliban were ousted in 2001, the country had one of the world's worst rankings on the U.N. Human Development Index: 173 out of 178 nations.

Only 40 percent of Afghan children are vaccinated against major diseases, and just 25 percent of the population has access to safe drinking water and sanitation. There is just one doctor per 6,000 people, and one nurse per 2,500 people. A fifth of children die before they reach the age of five.

Tuberculosis, cholera, hemorrhagic fever, measles, meningitis, pertussis and malaria are widespread.

But clean new clinics are sprouting up around the country, built by U.S. and other aid programs. They dispense free vaccinations to prevent polio and fight many other illnesses.

In the capital of Badakhshan, a northeast province, workmen funded by U.S. aid are transforming the main hospital from a dark, dingy, unsanitary place. They install sanitary tile floors, electricity, plumbing, air conditioning, heating and medical technology. And a team of hospital administrators trained by USAID is modernizing health care.

The pharmacy now distributes free medicine to patients such as Parween, 7, who came with her mother Sharifa. They rest on a clean bed, receive free meals and have been seen by doctors and nurses.

"With U.S. aid we have completely rehabilitated the hospital—paint, windows, plaster, electricity, latrines," said a pediatrician at the 80-bed Faizabad Provincial Hospital.

Teams of Afghan doctors and managers

were trained, and were then able to improve sanitation and health care, and to fight corruption. Close monitoring of drugs, supplies and treatment has cut theft and bribery. Some \$125,000 in U.S. aid was spent to rehabilitate the main building and administration offices; and \$380,000 went to manage the hospital for seven months.

"Mortality and morbidity has decreased," said the pediatrician. "We now have respect from the people—they are happy and trust the staff."

In Kabul, at the Wazir Akbar Khan Hospital—the capital's main trauma center—doctors from Loma Linda University Adventist Hospital in Southern California have

CLINIC REHAB: (above) This clinic in Teshkan District of Badakhshan Province got a \$40,000 USAID Quick Impact project which fixed the roof, plastered and painted interior and exterior walls, installed window panes and set up a clean water source.

enforced cleanliness, fought corruption and improved health care.

To keep out dirt, a gruff gatekeeper blocks visitors from entering without removing street shoes and donning plastic sandals.

One patient, Habibullah, lies in bed with an IV in his arm dripping fluids and medicine to combat his heart troubles.

Resting against a white pillow on clean sheets, warmed by a small electric heater, he said: “Now it is so clean, so well-equipped, and so good.”

A \$3 million USAID grant provided medicine; fixed or installed ventilators, heart monitors, defibrillators, x-ray and other machines; and upgraded the emergency room.

U.S. surgeons teach the Afghan doctors and work side-by-side with them caring for patients in the 210-bed institution. ■

**“Now it is so clean,
so well-equipped,
and so good.”**

Habibullah, a patient at Kabul's main trauma center,
Wazir Akbar Khan Hospital

BEN BARBER / USAID

PROVINCIAL HOSPITAL: USAID hired Afghan managers to upgrade the hospital in Faizabad, north of Kabul. They renovated floors, electricity, operating rooms and wards; and stocked the pharmacy with medicine and supplies.



Health Care Results

- **USAID built or renovated 630 health clinics** by November 2006.
- **\$50 million in health grants** went for women and children.
- **Over 7 million people** in 14 provinces have health services.
- **Treatment and counseling** for infant, childhood and maternal health reached 450,000 patients monthly.
- **\$9 million worth of essential drugs** were supplied since 2003.
- **7,500 health workers** were trained.
- **800 midwives** graduated from USAID courses.
- **Clorin, a water purification solution**, is provided and promoted.



Backbone of a Nation

Building roads to link Afghan villages and cities to each other, and helping farmers grow more and reach markets, is raising the overall economy.

Faizabad, Afghanistan

Farmer Arabab, 59, stands in his striped green robe at the edge of his snow-covered plot of ground, pointing to its far edge. "All this was poppy," he said. "Red and blue poppies. I grew it for three years and then stopped."

He is one of thousands of Afghan farmers who turned to poppy in the hope of raising his family out of poverty. With income from opium he paid for a new house, an old small car and an electric generator. Now his children do their homework at night and the family watches satellite television broadcasts.

Afghanistan quickly became the source of 80 percent of the world's opium and heroin. President Hamid Karzai urged farmers not to grow the illegal drug. Arabab and other farmers listened to that appeal and to promises by their governor and foreign aid groups to help them improve their legal farming.

To help Afghan farmers shift away from opium poppies, USAID spent \$188 million through 2006 on "alternative livelihoods" to provide other ways to earn a decent living.

Among the ways U.S. aid helps farmers shift from poppies are:

- Some 1,500 kilometers of roads have been built, part of a wide plan to link remote

farms to the bustling markets of Kabul, Mazar-i Sharif, Kandahar and other cities.

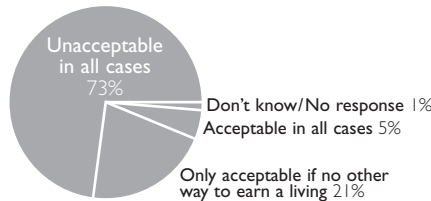
- 660,000 farmers in all 34 provinces received improved wheat and vegetable seeds along with fertilizer.
- 225,000 Afghans were hired to repair 5,300 kilometers of irrigation channels damaged by neglect, war or flooding.
- Livestock is getting veterinary treatment.

As Arabab and a half-dozen of his neighbors sit in the house that opium money built, the farmer tells a visitor that the wheat seed and fertilizer he got was enough to plant a sixth of his land. But wheat, or any other legal crop, doesn't bring as much cash per acre as opium.

Badakshan province saw a drastic reduction in opium during 2005, along with a few other provinces where strong leaders urged people to obey the law. But in 2006, many farmers shifted back to poppy and Afghanistan remained the world's top opium producer.

Opium Cultivation

What is your opinion of the cultivation of poppies for opium?



Source: Survey carried out in all but three provinces; fieldwork by the Afghan Media Resource Center and Afghan Center for Social and Opinion Research; conducted for the Asia Foundation and ABC News by Charney Research. 1,843 Afghans were interviewed in 2004–2005.

The Afghan government was beginning to use tractors to plow under any fresh poppy it found in the hope that farmers would be persuaded to end its cultivation. "We really want to stop growing poppy," said Arabab.

Raisins and Nuts

Afghans have for centuries grown or collected nuts, grapes, mulberries, apricots and other fruit. The high plateaus are perfect for drying the fruit and nuts which were then sent by camel and horse caravans to Delhi, Tashkent, Shiraz and Cairo.

Now U.S. aid is building small factories in several provinces to dry fruit and vegetables for shipment by truck and plane around Asia. Aid groups also are helping restore the



WATER CONTROL: Officials check the water flow in a 400-year-old canal along a major river in Badakshan Province, repaired through international assistance so farmers can irrigate crops.



SEEDS AND FERTILIZER: Afghan farmers turn in seed and fertilizer vouchers through a U.S. program that seeks to replace poppy with legal crops.



rootstock of the vineyards north of Kabul which had been destroyed by the Taliban. These will supply the sweet raisins to domestic and international markets.

As the road system improves, fertilizer and improved seeds flow cheaply to farmers who then ship out harvests to Kabul, Pakistan and elsewhere.

Afghan businessmen are also seeking to open new border crossings for trade between Badakshan province and neighboring Tajikistan, Pakistan and China, which all have good roads and eager markets. Even the world's finest blue Lapis Lazuli stones, mined in Badakshan, would find their way more easily to world markets once borders are open and roads improved.

Afghan Ring Road

The biggest infrastructure project in Afghanistan has been the U.S.-funded ring road linking its major cities. The Kabul to Kandahar stretch was finished in 2004 and the 557 kilometer stretch from Kandahar to Herat is nearing completion. Saudi Arabia and Japan also contribute to this road which is an economic lifeline linking the country's farms, markets, cities and towns.

In general, although attacks by Taliban and other groups disrupted parts of the south and southeast; and commanders still held sway in other areas; most of the country continued to make progress in the economy, education, health, roads and civil society since the 2001 end of Taliban rule. ■

Results: Agriculture, Roads

- USAID increased agricultural income by 9% from 2003 to 2005.
- Aid improved irrigation of 341,000 hectares.
- Rebuilt 5,300 irrigation structures and canals.
- Employed 200,000 Afghans on public works.
- Assisted Ministries of Agriculture, Commerce and Irrigation; Kabul University's Faculties of Agriculture and Veterinary Sciences.
- 28,000 loans to small businesses
- 20 million farm animals vaccinated.
- Gave 40,000 MT of fertilizer and 14,000 MT of seed to 660,000 farmers
- Built 389 km of the Kabul-Kandahar Highway; 326 km of the Kandahar-Herat Highway; and 800 km of secondary roads were constructed.

DRIVING ACROSS THE DESERT: Workers build a road from Ghazni to Gardez in September 2005, linking the region to the main highway connecting

Kabul to major cities. The U.S. funded Quick Impact Program cost \$4 million and included mine clearance.





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PAKISTAN

Ten Major Achievements

Afghanistan Continues to Rebuild with International Help

- 1 Democratic elections:** 7 million voted for president in 2004, and for parliament and provincial councils in 2005.
- 2 Roads link the country:** Kabul–Kandahar road built; Kandahar–Herat road nearly complete; 800 km of local roads.
- 3 Agricultural output rises:** Grain up 24%; livestock and poultry income up \$200 million.
- 4 Fighters choose peace:** 60,000 ex-combatants gave up weapons and joined civilian work force.
- 5 Domestic revenue up:** \$260 million in 2005.
- 6 Healthcare expands:** Reaches 7 million people.
- 7 Older students catch up:** 170,000 make up lost years in accelerated learning program.
- 8 Construction expands:** Thousands of homes and offices are built in cities and towns.
- 9 5 million refugees return:** Largest return in history continues from Pakistan refugee camps and Iran.
- 10 Education booms:** 3.2 million boys and 1.8 million girls enrolled.



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