



**U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
BUREAU FOR DEMOCRACY, CONFLICT, AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE (DCHA)
OFFICE OF U.S. FOREIGN DISASTER ASSISTANCE (OFDA)**

AFGHANISTAN – Complex Emergency

Situation Report #2, Fiscal Year (FY) 2004

April 26, 2004

Note: The last situation report was dated October 3, 2003.

BACKGROUND

Two decades of war in Afghanistan, including a decade-long Soviet occupation and ensuing civil strife, left Afghanistan impoverished and mired in an extended humanitarian crisis. A devastating four-year regional drought compounded the crisis, drying up wells, parching agricultural land, killing livestock, collapsing rural economies, and eventually exhausting the coping mechanisms of many ordinary Afghans, forcing affected populations to leave their homes in search of food and water. International relief agencies, with support from the U.S. Government (USG), have long been active in providing humanitarian assistance to the Afghan people, even during the restrictive years of the Taliban. USAID’s Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA) continues to assess the humanitarian needs of vulnerable Afghans and provides funding for the relief programs of USAID/OFDA implementing partners.

NUMBERS AT A GLANCE	SOURCE
Total Population	28,717,213
Internally Displaced Persons	184,000-300,000
Total Refugee Returns, January 1-April 24, 2004 (Assisted Returns)	77,361
Total Refugee Returns, March 2002-January 23, 2004 (Voluntary Assisted and Unassisted)	2,668,000

Total FY 2004 USAID/OFDA Assistance to Afghanistan (to date).....\$9,819,299
Total FY 2004 USAID Assistance to Afghanistan (to date)\$31,519,299

CURRENT SITUATION

Expansion of ISAF mandate. In October 2003, the United Nations (U.N.) Security Council expanded the mandate of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), by authorizing the force to maintain security outside the capital city of Kabul. The U.N. Security Council also extended ISAF’s mandate until December 2004. ISAF’s 6,500 peace-enforcement troops from 35 countries are commanded by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and are distinct from the U.S.-led Coalition force in Afghanistan. ISAF troops are currently in Kabul and the northern city of Kunduz.

Status of Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs)
 On January 6, 2004, ISAF assumed command of the U.S.-led Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Kunduz, marking the first step in the expansion of NATO’s mission in the country. Coalition forces, in cooperation with the Transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan (TISA), established the first PRT in Paktia Province in December 2002. There are currently 12 PRTs countrywide, and eight additional PRTs are expected by this summer. The purpose of the PRTs is to strengthen the presence of the central government,

improve security, and facilitate the delivery of reconstruction assistance. USAID staff on the PRTs coordinate USAID activities among the PRTs, local communities, and Afghan officials; help identify possible new activities; and monitor and report on current USAID-funded activities.

Ratification of a new constitution. On January 4, 2004, 502 delegates at a special Constitutional Loya Jirga (CLJ), or grand council, ratified a new constitution. The constitution grants wide-ranging authority to the president, who will be directly elected by national vote. The president will require parliamentary approval for actions such as setting national policy and administrative reforms. The constitution provides specific equality between men and women under the law and accords women 25 percent of the seats in the lower house of the new bicameral parliament.

Voter registrations. In December 2003, the TISA began to register voters in anticipation of elections to end the country’s transitional period of governance, as mandated by the 2001 Bonn Accords, signed after the fall of the Taliban regime. According to the U.N., as of

April 2004, out of 10.5 million Afghans eligible to vote, 1,760,997 had registered, 29 percent of them women. Current security conditions and lack of funding have prevented registration teams from accessing many parts of the country.

Elections delayed. On March 28, 2004, Afghan President Hamid Karzai announced that both Afghan presidential and parliamentary elections will be held together in September 2004 instead of June 2004 as originally scheduled. The elections were rescheduled due to low voter registration, threats by Taliban remnants, and security problems.

Disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) initiatives. In March 2004, TISA formally announced plans to reduce its armed militia forces by 40 percent and collect all heavy weapons prior to June 30. Disarmed former combatants will be integrated into society through an extensive reintegration program, with a small number joining the new national army or Afghan National Police. As of April 2004, the DDR campaign has disarmed approximately 6,225 men, most of who are assisted by the re-integration program. The DDR program will process approximately 100,000 former combatants throughout the country.

In December 2003, the United Nation's Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the U.N. Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) began a joint campaign to demobilize nearly 5,000 child soldiers. The campaign began in the northeastern part of the country, where local committees formed in the Badakhshan, Baghlan, Bamiyan, Kunduz, and Takhar provinces. By mid-January 2004, UNAMA and UNICEF had identified and registered 90 percent of the child soldiers for the program in Kunduz Province.

Ongoing security concerns. Security continues to be a major concern in Afghanistan, particularly in the south and east, due to factional fighting and attacks by al-Qaeda and Taliban fighters against Coalition troops, Afghan forces, and international and local relief agencies. Large areas of the southeast are restricted due to threats of Taliban attacks against humanitarian workers. The ongoing violence has undermined the reform process, impeded reconstruction efforts, obstructed the voter registration process, and hindered the delivery of relief assistance to many areas of the country.

Reported attacks against civilians from October to December 2003 exceeded the number of attacks that occurred in the 20 months following the signing of the Bonn Agreement in 2001. To date, in 2004 alone, violence has claimed the lives of more than 200 people

countrywide, including relief workers, government employees, militants, and Afghan and foreign troops.

In recent months, relief workers and civilian contractors have increasingly found themselves as the targets of attacks by unidentified armed groups, particularly in the south where the majority of internally displaced persons (IDPs) are located. On February 15, four deminers were shot dead while traveling in vehicles from Herat to Farah City. On February 22, a Louis Berger helicopter in southern Afghanistan came under small arms fire, killing one person and seriously injuring another. On February 26, five Afghan relief workers were killed after their vehicle was ambushed northeast of Kabul. On March 6, the President of the Afghan Red Crescent Zabul branch was killed by armed men in the southern province of Zabul. Violent incidents have been on the rise since last spring in the south, east, and southeast areas of the country, except for a short respite during the winter.

Violence in Herat. Approximately 100 people were killed in the western Afghan city of Herat on March 21, 2004, after factional fighting erupted following the assassination of the Aviation and Tourism Minister, who was also the son of the governor of Herat. This is the second aviation minister and third senior government minister to be killed since the fall of the Taliban in December 2001. Following the fighting, 1,500 troops from the Afghan National Army deployed to Herat to restore calm and stability.

Violence in Faryab Province. On April 6, 2004, fighting erupted between forces loyal to Uzbek regional warlord General Abdul Rashid Dostam and forces loyal to local warlord General Hashim Habibi, also a commander in Dostum's 8th Corps, in Faryab Province in northwestern Afghanistan. In response, the interim administration deployed 500 troops from the newly-trained Afghan National Army to restore stability. As of April 12, 2004, the situation was calm.

Afghan repatriations. Since the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) began assisting repatriation in March 2002, more than 2.3 million refugees have returned to Afghanistan with the help of UNHCR. An additional estimated 400,000 have returned without U.N. assistance. As of April 2004, according to UNHCR, there were approximately 1.5 million registered Afghan refugees in Pakistan and 1.4 million Afghan refugees in Iran. Repatriations from Pakistan were suspended in November 2003, following the killing of a UNHCR employee in Ghazni. Assisted repatriation from Pakistan resumed on March 3, 2004. Repatriation from Iran has continued without suspension.

As of April 24, 2004, according to UNHCR, 77,361 Afghan refugees have returned home this year, almost all of them from Iran and Pakistan. The pace of returns from Pakistan has increased rapidly since repatriation resumed in early March 2004. According to UNHCR, an improvement in stability and security in parts of the northeast, center, and west of Afghanistan will allow UNHCR to move toward active encouragement of returns to some selected areas. UNHCR is not actively promoting the repatriation process given security concerns in Afghanistan, but is facilitating the repatriation process for those who wish to return. UNHCR's voluntary repatriation program is scheduled to run until March 2006.

IDP returns. The current number of IDPs in Afghanistan has decreased from the 2002 high of 900,000 to 184,000, although unofficial estimates of current IDP numbers are as high as 300,000. Insecurity in many areas of Afghanistan and disputes related to land and property are major constraints to IDP return. Security and political concerns in the north and persisting drought conditions in the south are also impediments to return. While people remain displaced throughout the country, the majority of IDPs are located in southern Afghanistan. Since the fall of the Taliban in 2001, USAID/OFDA implementing partner International Organization for Migration (IOM) has assisted with more than 420,000 IDP returns.

Food security. Preliminary findings from the December 2003 National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment identified 3.86 million people as unable to meet 100 percent of minimum food needs. Of this number, 3.2 million people cannot meet 80 percent of minimum food needs. The countrywide assessment covered rural areas, and excluded the urban vulnerable population and areas that were inaccessible due to insecurity. The southern and eastern provinces had the highest percentage of food insecurity.

Potential break in pipeline. According to the U.N. World Food Program (WFP), the food pipeline is sufficient until the summer of 2004 as there is enough food in place and less need during the summer harvest season. However, potential pipeline breaks during the last half of 2004 may affect winterization, refugee and IDP returns, DDR, and education programs. WFP is seeking additional contributions from donors to forestall projected shortfalls of 114,000 metric tons (MT) in the food pipeline during the last half of 2004.

Polio eradication efforts. On January 26, 2004, the Afghan Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) launched a three-day child vaccination campaign against polio by deploying 40,000 volunteers across the country. Polio is endemic in Afghanistan, although the country

recorded only eight cases in 2003. MoPH officials expect to eradicate the virus by the end of 2004.

Tetanus vaccination campaign targets women.

On March 31, 2004, UNICEF began a nationwide campaign to immunize four million Afghan women and girls aged 15-45 against tetanus. This campaign is critically important in Afghanistan as 90 percent of Afghan women give birth at home. This is the first of three campaigns to be implemented in 2004, and UNICEF deployed 57,000 vaccinators throughout the country.

Depletion of snowpack may affect crop yields.

Unseasonably high temperatures since the middle of February 2004 have caused snow cover to decrease across much of Afghanistan as snow at lower elevations melts. Below-normal precipitation during the same period has limited the build-up of new snowpack, while reducing water availability for rain-fed agriculture. If high temperatures and low precipitation continue, the water supply may be too low during the growing season, potentially causing stress on crops and impacting yields. Since Afghanistan is mainly dependent on water from melting snowpack for irrigation, the combination of unseasonably warm temperatures and low precipitation, which limits new snow and depletes existing snowpack, is of concern.

Earthquake in Badakshan Province. On April 6, 2004, an earthquake with a magnitude of 6.6 struck Badakshan Province along Afghanistan's northeast border with Pakistan at 1:54 a.m. local time. The epicenter of the earthquake was in Jurm District, 50 miles south-southeast of Faizabad. According to the Afghan Red Crescent Society (ARCS), the earthquake resulted in at least one death. ARCS also reported that several buildings in Faizabad collapsed, and minor structural damage occurred across the region.

USG HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

On November 17, 2003, Chargé d'Affaires to Afghanistan David S. Sedney redeclared a complex humanitarian disaster in Afghanistan for FY 2004 due to the unstable humanitarian situation.

USAID/OFDA assistance. In response to the complex emergency in Afghanistan in FY 2004, USAID/OFDA has provided emergency humanitarian assistance in the form of grants and in-kind contributions to U.N. agencies, international organizations (IOs), and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), totaling more than \$9.8 million. USAID/OFDA provided approximately \$1.7 million to the Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED) for winter programs and cash-for-work programs and more than \$2.3 million to Cooperative Housing Foundation

(CHF) for transitional shelter assistance and host community support. In support of winter cash-for-work projects, USAID/OFDA provided more than \$789,000 to Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and more than \$1 million to International Medical Corps (IMC). To support assisted IDP returns, USAID/OFDA provided \$1 million to IOM. USAID/OFDA also provided more than \$2.5 million to Shelter for Life (SFL) for transitional shelter assistance. In support of an agro-meteorologist, USAID/OFDA provided more than \$398,000 to the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

USAID/FFP assistance. USAID's Office of Food for Peace (USAID/FFP) has provided 33,800 metric tons (MT) of P.L. 480 Title II Emergency Food Assistance to WFP thus far in FY 2004, valued at approximately \$21.7 million. USAID/FFP food assistance is targeting approximately five million beneficiaries in FY 2004. USAID/FFP funding supports critically needed relief and reconstruction activities aimed at achieving several objectives, including assisting food-insecure families to meet basic food requirements, supporting the return and integration of refugees and IDPs, rehabilitating malnourished children, and, increasingly, improving the capacity of vulnerable groups to cope with food insecurity through the creation of assets (e.g., repair or construction of irrigation systems, farm-to-market roads, health clinics, and schools) and the acquisition of skills. The improvement of community-based infrastructure and basic skills is also promoting economic recovery and development.

USAID/OTI assistance.¹ The goal of USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives (USAID/OTI) in Afghanistan is to increase citizen awareness of and confidence in the process of recovery, rehabilitation, and democratic political development. OTI programs help establish space for longer-term development assistance by providing rapid support showing immediate peace dividends to the people of Afghanistan. OTI's current implementing partners are IOM-Afghanistan Transition Initiative and Internews. Since USAID/OTI's program in Afghanistan began in October 2001, USAID/OTI has obligated more than \$64 million. In FY 04, USAID/OTI obligated approximately \$17.5 million.

State/PRM assistance.² To date in FY 2004, State/PRM has provided \$30.5 million in funding to support refugee assistance programs in Afghanistan,

Iran, and Pakistan, with another \$33.1 million to follow in the coming months. This includes \$22 million in funding to UNHCR to support assisted repatriation programs and provide reintegration assistance. State/PRM has also provided \$8.5 million to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to support water and sanitation programs and provide emergency response for conflict victims.

State/PRM's funding supports the voluntary return and reintegration of refugees and IDPs to their homes in Afghanistan. To this end, State/PRM supports critical activities in the sectors of shelter; water and sanitation; primary, reproductive, maternal, and child healthcare; food and nutrition; primary education; mine education and awareness; economic assistance; and capacity building.

¹ USAID/OTI funding is considered transitional rather than emergency/humanitarian, and is therefore not included in the funding table on the following page.

² State/PRM funding is region-wide rather than countrywide, and is therefore not included in the funding table on the following page.

USAID HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO AFGHANISTAN

<i>Implementing Partner</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Amount</i>
USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE			
ACTED	Winter programs to include snow clearance, trash collection, support to social institutions, and capacity building; Cash-for-work programs to include snow clearance and road rehabilitation, trash collection, and winterization.	Baghlan, Takhar, Faryab provinces	\$1,696,263
CHF	Transitional shelter assistance and host community support	Kabul area	\$2,332,336
CRS	Winter cash-for-work project	Herat Province	\$789,344
IMC	Winter cash-for-work project; non-food item distribution	Kabul area	\$1,088,853
IOM	Assisted return program	Countrywide	\$1,000,000
SFL	Transitional shelter assistance	Kabul area	\$2,514,028
FAO	Agro-meteorologist	Countrywide	\$398,475
TOTAL USAID/OFDA.....			\$9,819,299
USAID/FFP ASSISTANCE			
WFP	33,800 MT of P.L. 480 Title II Emergency Food Assistance	Countrywide	\$21,700,000
TOTAL USAID/FFP			\$21,700,000
TOTAL USAID Humanitarian Assistance to Afghanistan in FY 2004 (to date).....			\$31,519,299

* USAID/OFDA funding represents committed and/or obligated amount as of April 26, 2004.



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USAID/OFDA bulletins appear on the USAID web site at http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/humanitarian_assistance/disaster_assistance/.