



USAID
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AFGHANISTAN

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

December 15, 2010 - January 15, 2011



Prospective and current entrepreneurs during the training in Sharana.

PHOTO: USAID/LGCD

STABILIZATION

Paktika Entrepreneurs Receive Follow-on Small-Business Training:

The U.S. Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Sharana provides engineering skills development for working-age men from across Paktika Province. While the trainees gain practical skills, they often lack the knowledge to manage a business and turn their expertise into income. In close coordination with the U.S. PRT and the Paktika Department of Economy, USAID's Local Governance and Community Development Project (LGCD) provided training in basic finance and management for 30 recently-graduated trainees of the U.S. PRT's Engineering Skills Development Workshop. Designed to complement the PRT's engineering skills

training, LGCD's training seeks to improve the trainees' ability to find follow-on employment and/or start their own small businesses. This activity aims to build on the U.S. PRT's efforts to strengthen and broaden Paktika's economic base, where approximately 48 percent of the rural population derives income from non-farm labor due to the limited availability of arable land. This training is an example of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan's ability to work with multiple international donors to increase the impact and benefit of capacity development activities. Ahmad Rahim and another beneficiary of the project, said, "A few months ago we had our own shops, but we didn't properly manage these businesses. We are very excited to participate in this training and hope we will successfully resume our businesses after the completion of this training."

Solar Lights to Improve Safety in Nad Ali and Gereshk:

In the Nad Ali District of Helmand Province, the district governor, the mayor and the District Stabilization Team, in close consultation with community members, have worked together to increase lighting in Nad Ali – indentifying the illumination of streets and bazaars during the night as an efficient and effective municipal enhancement. Supported by USAID's Local Governance and Community Development Project (LGCD), a total of 50 lights were installed in five key locations around the district. In a similar endeavor in Gereshk, the district center of Nahri Sarraj, installation of 120 lights running along Highway One through to the town center is nearing completion. Further, two local individuals in each district are receiving maintenance training to provide long-term maintenance. Nad Ali and Gereshk have reached security tipping points in the past six months and the municipal enhancement will help build the momentum toward long-term security. In Gereshk, the illumination of the highway is also contributing to improved



The solar lights installed in Loy Bagh area of Nad Ali.

PHOTO: USAID/LGCD



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road safety along this busy main route. These illuminated areas during the night restrict insurgent activity, enhance the local security environment; and allow businesses to stay open later, providing economic benefit. The installation of these lights is a tangible demonstration of district and municipal service delivery.



Women attending the hygiene training in Kabul City.

PHOTO: USAID/LGCD

Communities Receive and Give Training on Good Hygiene Practices:

On December 18, 2010, 120 women from six villages in Kabul Province graduated from hygiene-training workshops, which were supported by USAID's Local Governance and Community Development Project. The workshops were part of the Ministry of Public Health's Community Based Health Care 2009-2013 policy initiative to emphasize training, education, and community outreach as key tools of healthcare intervention. Forty women each from Dih Sabz, Khaki Jabbar, and Kabul City participated in 13 days of training led by skilled female trainers, and received soap, nail cutters, gloves, toothpaste, toothbrushes, and other materials. In Serkai Village of Dih Sabz, 60 women started coming to the center for the training, which was designed for only 40 women. As a

result, the Mali (the head preacher of the mosque) of the village arranged for the remaining 20 women to receive training, expanding the impact for additional families within the community. Through this project, USAID facilitated the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan's presence in isolated areas while empowering communities to address a basic public health concern through training and capacity building.

GIRoA Supports Guzara Youth Association with Office Space and New Furniture: Guzara District, in particular the Zeyaratja Valley, remained nonpermissive and under anti-government influence, with local youth being particularly affected by the instability. The Guzara Youth Association is a nascent youth organization formed to serve as a link between young people and local level bodies of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIRoA). The association seeks to represent and articulate the interests of local youth. The local community and GIRoA had supported the association by providing them with an office; however, they could not supply office equipment and furniture. USAID's Local Governance and Community Development Project, in coordination with GIRoA, provided the Guzara Youth Association with furniture and office supplies including



The furniture for the Guzara Youth Association.

PHOTO: USAID/LGCD



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chairs, desks, tables, stationery items, carpet, and cupboards. Abdul Rashid, head of the association, accepted the equipment on behalf of the organization at a ceremony held on December 27. Equipping the youth association is a step toward helping the organization present itself in a professional manner so it can better engage with local government and aid organizations. It is also a key demonstration of GIRoA's willingness and ability to support grassroots community engagement.

During the ceremony, Abdul Rashid recalled: "We began our work unofficially in Ziaratja School three months ago without any resources or facilities. The community did not take us seriously." He continued, saying: "This equipment will help us to better organize and gives us a professional venue to conduct business allowing us to reach out to more youth and organize more activities in Guzara."



Trainees receive instruction during the diesel engine repair training.

PHOTO: USAID/LGCD

GIRoA Expands Presence in Paktya Province with Engine Repair Training:

Zadran District lacks adequate employment opportunities for working-aged men, and government service delivery has been much lower than in other districts of Paktya Province. Through the support of USAID's Local Governance and Community Development (LGCD) project, 25 working-aged men from Zadran District are receiving training in diesel engine repair, supplemented by basic small-business entrepreneurship instruction to allow them to successfully market their new skills. The activity aims to improve the ability of the trainees to earn income and contribute to the area's overall economic growth with a profession that takes advantage of the vehicle traffic created by the USAID-funded Khost-Gardez road running through Zadran. The director of the Paktya Department of Labor, Social Affairs,

Martyrs and the Disabled has actively supported the training by making several site visits to monitor progress and demonstrate GIRoA's ability to support capacity-building service delivery.

Habib Jan, a trainee, described the importance of the training: "All the trainees are among the poorest in their villages, and they don't have jobs. That's why they are here. Our communities have a high demand for engine repair skills, and we hope this will be a good source of income for us in the future."



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Municipalities and Communities Work Together to Improve Helmand's Bazaars:

In recent weeks, USAID's Local Governance and Community Development (LGCD) Project launched two community stabilization grants (CGSs) in Gereshk and Nad Ali of Helmand Province. On behalf of the shopkeepers of the Gereshk bazaar, the mayor approached USAID's LGCD for funding that would enable the community to engage in the city's development. In response, one CSG, the first CSG ever implemented in Gereshk, will clear large amounts of rubbish, soil, and rubble that had built up in the bazaars drainage system over years of neglect. This work supports the municipal enhancement of Gereshk, which is the district center of Nahri Sarraj, and has seen improved security in recent months. This grant also boosts employment in the area, providing job opportunities for 45 working-aged males and demonstrating the ability of the mayor to respond to local needs. Another CSG, in Nad Ali Town, will rehabilitate the area of the town bazaar which has fallen into a state of disrepair after years of conflict; it also originated as a request from municipal leadership. A community workforce of 35 people will clear and level the old bazaar road, which is currently unusable, and clean and level the nearby sports field. Both CSGs are demonstrating the active role of municipal leadership in responding to community needs and providing targeted government service delivery.



Laborers clearing out the Gereshk Bazaar drainage system.

PHOTO: USAID/LGCD



District Mayor distributes certificate to workshop participants.

PHOTO: USAID/LGCD

District Officials in Mohammad Agha Receive Capacity Building Training:

On January 5, the Mohammad Agha acting district governor and district mayor participated in the closing ceremony of a leadership and management training for thirty district government members, supported by USAID's Local Governance and Community Development (LGCD) Project. The event marked the trainees' successful completion of one-week workshops in management and leadership, covering finance, human resources, and project management, as well as conflict resolution, leadership, procurement, communications, and information technology. The training follows a stabilization survey conducted by USAID's LGCD in Mohammad Agha last year, in which residents expressed little faith in the government's ability to provide services. This training will

build the capacity of these government officials to be able to respond citizens' needs more efficiently and proactively in the future.



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USAID's Community Based Stabilization Grants (CBSG) Celebrate Completion of School Project:

On January 5, 2011, USAID's CBSG program celebrated the completion of a school furniture project near Puli Khumri, Baghlan Province. The Baghlan provincial director of education, Baghlan deputy field program officer, deputy of Baghlan provincial council, Baghlan provincial council members, head of Baghlan Department of Information and Culture, head of EQUIP Program for Education, Community Development Council members, and school teachers from the Zaman Khail Boys' High School attended the ceremony. Speakers at the ceremony stressed the importance of community-based stabilization initiatives and thanked CBSG for implementing these fundamental projects. Since the school opened it has lacked proper equipment

and facilities leading to a gap in trust between the government and the public. By working with local government officials and community leaders to procure the necessary equipment, CBSG is helping the government to improve the educational environment for 2,300 students and 78 teachers, helping to alleviate public mistrust of the government.



School procurement project closed.

PHOTO: USAID/LGCD

DEMOCRACY & GOVERNANCE

Rule of Law Stabilization (ROL-S) Formal Program: USAID's ROL-S Formal Judicial Training/Court Administration Component trained 30 judges from Herat (15), Badghis (4), Farah (2), Ghor (7) and Nimroz (2) provinces in Herat City on Commercial Law and Procedure, Competition Law, Gender Awareness, ACAS, and Judicial Code of Conduct. It also trained 16 judges from Kandahar (13) and Uruzgan (3) provinces in Kandahar City on Criminal Law, ACAS, and Judicial Code of Conduct. USAID also funded the first Judicial Inspection tour of all seven district primary courts in Bamyan Province. The inspectors evaluated judicial performance and building conditions.

USAID's ROL-S Formal Legal Education Component facilitated a two-day conference of deans and senior professors from all nine Sharia faculties (Kabul, Khost, Kandahar, Takhar, Nangarhar, Balkh, Herat, Kunar, and Al Biruni-Kapisa) in Kabul to discuss curriculum revisions and improvements. The conference ended with an agreement on a uniform curriculum that incorporates the curricula from faculties in Egypt, Jordan, and the United Arab Emirates. Also the conference established a standing committee comprised of members from each faculty to continue work on curriculum issues, course syllabi, and the expansion of the master's program at Kabul University Sharia faculty.

Rule of Law Stabilization (ROL-S) Informal Program: USAID's ROL-S Informal Program facilitated a meeting of 90 respected elders from Kandahar, Uruzgan, Zabul, and Helmand provinces on December 28 through 29 in Kandahar City. They have agreed to act as volunteers



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to resolve disputes in the RLS-I pilot districts. Participants discussed the best approaches to resolving inter and intra-tribal disputes in their respected regions.

Kabul City Initiative (KCI): USAID's program to support Kabul City started an inventory and preliminary survey of neighborhood parks. In consultation with Kabul's Director of Greenery Department, two neighborhood parks were selected where a preliminary site survey was conducted and concept notes were prepared for the proposed improvements. Other districts' concept notes previously submitted include Paghman Hill's Park and Park Shahre Naw. KCI has already provided furniture and equipment for its greenery efforts.