



AFGHANISTAN

a country on the move



Contributions* to UNDP-supported Programmes in Afghanistan (US\$ millions)

United States	164.83
European Commission	138.79
Japan	100.48
United Kingdom	45.65
Canada	42.23
Italy	29.93
Germany	20.98
Netherlands	16.69
Norway	13.25
Sweden	10.44
Denmark	8.42
Switzerland	4.77
Finland	4.41
France	4.28
Australia	3.91
Belgium	2.45
New Zealand	2.12
Ireland	1.93
Luxembourg	1.49
Saudi Arabia	1.00

* Contributions above US\$1 million only, as of February 2005
Source: UNDP Afghanistan

Contributions* to Voter Registration and Elections, 2004 (US\$ millions)

United States	50.70
United Kingdom	23.91
European Commission	22.60
Japan	17.00
Italy	12.24
Germany	8.42
Canada	5.97
Norway	3.99
Denmark	3.86
Netherlands	3.38
Switzerland	3.20
Australia	2.87
Sweden	2.65
Finland	2.47
Belgium	1.24
Other	2.57
Total	167.08

* Contributions above \$1 million, as of 15 January 2005
Source: UNDP Afghanistan

UNDP Project Sites

● State Building and Government Support

Afghanistan Information Management Services (AIMS):

Herat
Jalalabad
Kandahar
Kunduz
Mazar-i-Sharif

Bridging the Public Information Gap:

Bamyan
Faryab
Gardez
Ghazni
Herat
Jalalabad
Kandahar
Khost
Kunduz
Mazar-i-Sharif

Internet and Communications Technology Capacity Building:

Herat
Jalalabad
Kandahar
Khost
Kunduz
Mazar-i-Sharif

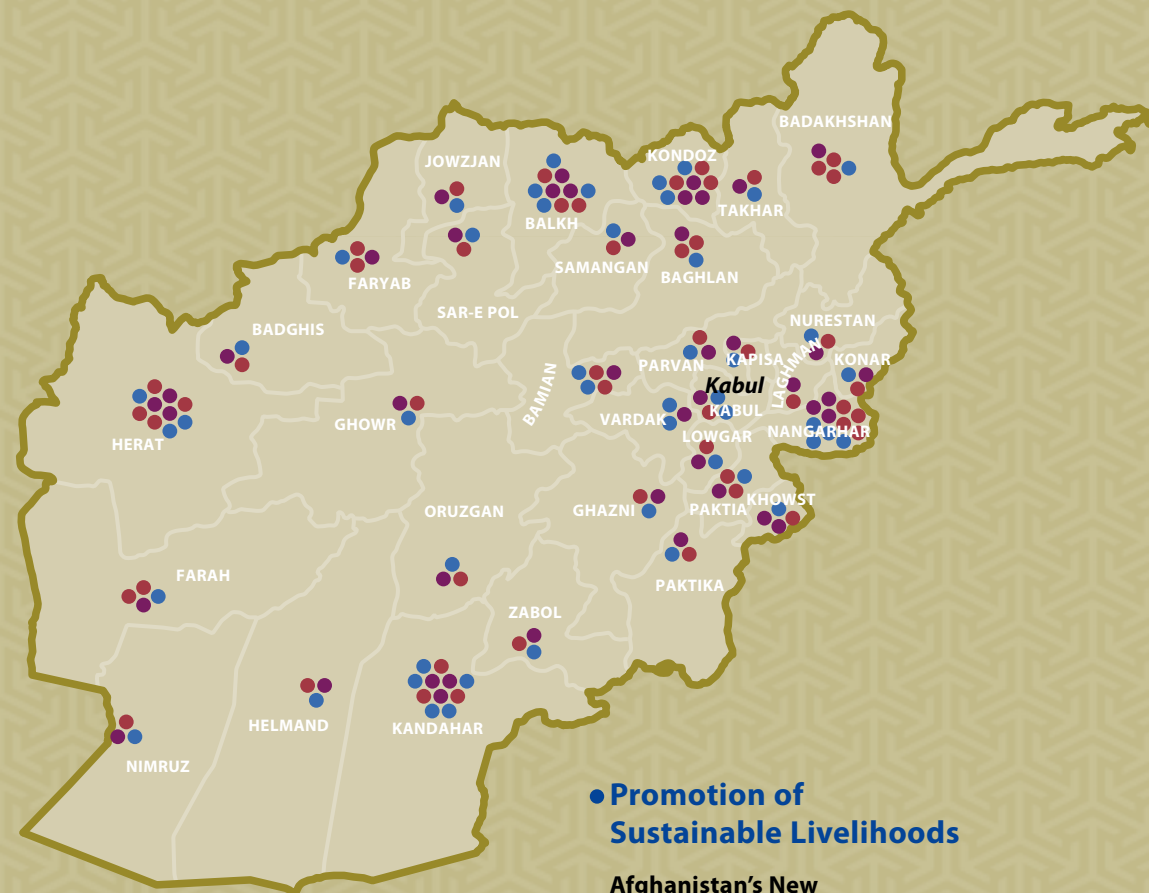
Support to Law and Order in Afghanistan:

Every province in Afghanistan
(through Ministry of Interior)

Source: Map No. 3958.1 Rev. 1

UNITED NATIONS; January 2004

The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.



● Democratization and Civil Society Empowerment

Comprehensive Disabled Afghans Programme:

Farah
Herat
Jalalabad
Kandahar
Mazar-i-Sharif

Rebuilding the Justice Sector:

Badakhshan
Baghdis
Herat
Kunduz
Nangarhar

Support to the Human Rights Commission:

Badakhshan
Bamyan
Bikundy
Gardez
Herat
Jalalabad
Kandahar
Kunduz
Mazar-i-Sharif
Mymana

Voter Registration and Elections:

Every province in Afghanistan

● Promotion of Sustainable Livelihoods

Afghanistan's New Beginnings Programme (ANBP):

Bamyan
Gardez
Herat
Jalalabad
Kandahar
Kunduz
Mazar-i-Sharif

Mine Action Programme:

Kandahar
Nearly all provinces
(through USAID)

National Area-Based Development Programme (NABDP):

Every province (through MRRD)

Partnership for Private Sector Development (PPSD)

Business Advisory Centres to be established in:
Balkh
Herat
Kabul
Kandahar
Kunduz
Nangarhar

Recovery and Employment Afghanistan Programme (REAP) and Programme Implementation Unit (PIU):

Jalalabad
Kandahar
Mazar-i-Sharif

“Neither the United Nations nor anyone else can be a substitute for a functioning state with popular support. Our challenge is to help the Afghans help themselves.”

— Kofi Annan, United Nations Secretary-General

Afghanistan at a Glance:

Population: **28.5 million**

Capital: **Kabul**

Life expectancy at birth: **44.5 years**

Area: **647,500 sq km**

Literacy: **29 percent of Afghans over 15**

Population that is disabled: **1 million**

Unemployment rate: **30 percent**

Infant mortality rate: **165 per 1,000 live births**

UNDP's Current Programme Budget* for Afghanistan, 2005 (US dollars)

State Building and Government Support
\$182.88 million

Democratization and Civil Society Empowerment
\$1,259.15 million

Promotion of Sustainable Livelihoods
\$314.31 million

Total budget:
\$1,756.34 million

* as of February 2005
Source: UNDP Afghanistan



introduction

In the three years that have passed since Afghanistan emerged from armed conflict and began fashioning itself anew, the country has witnessed changes that would have been unimaginable in the eyes of its own people just a short time ago. Today it stands on the threshold of another transition—from recovery to long-term development.

In many parts of the country, the legacy of years of civil war encounters the spirit of a new beginning. Girls across the country are attending school; a new network of roads and landmine clearance are paving the way for reconstruction; and the disarming of militias and holding free and fair elections are laying the foundations for a peace that is both enduring and democratic.

With a total budget of over US\$1.5 billion, largely comprised of aid from donors, the United National Development Programme (UNDP), along with the Government of Afghanistan, the United Nations system, donor countries, international financial institutions and other partners, is leading an expansive effort together to improve the lives of 28.5 million Afghans. UNDP, as leader of the UN Development Group that coordinates the work of major UN agencies, draws on the confidence of donors and decades of experience to help the Afghan government meet its new responsibilities while preparing for the challenges ahead. The task of rebuilding Afghanistan requires a foundation of trust and partnership. It is trust that enables a government to invite UNDP advisers into its ministries to jointly and strategically apply knowledge and resources most effectively. This collaboration has already yielded significant results.

UNDP is active in three broad areas in Afghanistan: assisting in the creation of sustainable livelihoods for the poor, bolstering state institutions' ability to govern, and nurturing a civil society that will one day hold that state accountable.



**Afghanistan's historic
Loya Jirga came about
in June 2002.**

In December 2001, the Bonn Agreement formed an Afghan Interim Authority and devised a roadmap for creating an internationally recognized government. As the path to democracy and rule of law became visible, it was apparent that the Afghan government needed support to begin implementing its obligations under the Bonn process. UNDP stepped in to bolster the Afghan government meet its new duties by helping to establish a Constitution Commission, a Human Rights Commission, and a committee charged with convening a traditional *Loya Jirga*.

Under the Bonn process, UNDP swiftly re-designed its priorities in the country and moved to provide assistance and leadership in the international response. At that time, Afghanistan was stagnating in the vacuum left by war and the collapse of its nominal institutions. Newly-appointed leaders of the interim government lacked the basic infrastructure and equipment to operate, including transportation, suitable office space and equipment. The situation demanded a nimble response. Before most other aid organizations had hit the ground, UNDP took the unprecedented step of setting up a mechanism for paying the salaries of the country's civil servants. This vital and early support was made possible by the establishment of the Afghanistan Interim Authority Fund, which channeled \$72 million in donor funds to the Afghan Interim Authority just four days after it assumed office. The Fund put the fledgling civil service in motion, and laid the foundation on which the political process has since unfolded.

At a conference in Tokyo in January 2002, the international community pledged about \$4 billion to help Afghanistan embark on its reconstruction effort. That momentum produced the historic *Loya Jirga* of June 2002, where 1,500 delegates elected a leadership to head the country's transitional government. As the Afghan government wanted a system to ensure that donor funds were properly spent, UNDP helped create

a Donor Assistance Database, which has already tracked 85 percent of external aid into the country. The system is a milestone in the country's recovery, and serves as a tool that enables the government to manage assistance and coordinate the national budget, while strengthening the confidence of donors and the international community.

In the months that followed, UNDP worked with the UN Assistance Mission to Afghanistan (UNAMA) to help the Afghan government prepare and write its new constitution. Hundreds of public consultation meetings were held across the country and in refugee communities abroad, and despite a still fragile political situation on the ground, the process moved forward. In January 2004, a *Loya Jirga* ratified a new Constitution, a blueprint for Afghanistan's emerging democracy, that is, in the words of President Hamid Karzai, "a mirror for all Afghan nations."

In early 2003, UNDP helped Afghanistan launch itself in cyberspace with the recovery of the "www.af" domain name. This achievement marked not only Afghanistan's return to the global virtual community, but has underscored the key role of information technology and management in reconstruction—an important facet of UNDP's support to the Afghan government. In April 2004, donors convened once again in Berlin and renewed pledges to Afghan reconstruction amounting to over \$8 billion. By this time, the country had begun witnessing tangible signs of recovery. "No scorecard can account for what has been achieved here, given our starting point," recalled former UN Country Director Ercan Murat. "When I arrived ministers lacked desks. Today the country is an emerging democracy."

The great strides taken toward creating a democratic society accelerated with a UNDP-supported drive to register Afghans to vote in national elections. This \$99 million drive



**Afghanistan recovered
its Internet domain
www.af in 2003.**



Haneef Atmar,
Afghanistan's Minister
of Rural Rehabilitation
and Development.

registered 10.5 million Afghans, and despite the looming threat of insecurity, eight million of them voted in the October 2004 presidential elections.

The forthcoming parliamentary elections for about 250 representatives, which UNDP will help coordinate with the Afghan government and other UN agencies, will be a fresh opportunity for Afghan citizens to participate in building consensus. "Democracy without political parties means nothing, but we must strike a balance," says Umer Daudzai, a UNDP staff member seconded as President Hamid Karzai's chief of staff. "We must also work to make every Afghan feel Afghan."

Today, one of the most important challenges for the Afghan government is to reclaim the faith of its citizens. Constant threats to security are a harsh reality in Afghanistan and constitute the most immediate barrier to the country's recovery. But as government institutions become more functional, they will become more adept at delivering services and countering the threat of insecurity with the tangible promise of a better life. UNDP is providing policy advice to ministries and training civil servants, building their capacity to deliver on Afghans' expectations. "What we've achieved around the country is unprecedented in the history of Afghanistan," says Minister of Rural Rehabilitation and Development, Haneef Atmar. "And it was UNDP that pumped blood into the heart of this ministry."

The objective now is to support the Afghan government as it works toward meeting its Millennium Development Goals—benchmarks for progress that include the alleviation of poverty, promotion of gender equality, and improvements in child mortality and maternal health. It is the advancement of such targets, as UNDP Administrator Mark Malloch Brown puts it, "that will provide the war-weary men, women, and children of Afghanistan with the first glimmerings of a peace dividend."



“The presidential election was a historic milestone. The enthusiasm and determination of the people of Afghanistan to go and vote was a powerful reminder to us all of the strength of the desire for democracy and freedom.”

— *Rosalind Marsden, Ambassador of the United Kingdom to Afghanistan*



Braving harsh weather and uncertain security, women voters cast their ballots for president.

Dreams of Democracy with one election a success, Afghans eye the next

Democratic governance is at the heart of UNDP’s assistance to the Afghan people. In partnership with UNAMA and the Constitutional Commission of the interim Afghan government, UNDP helped organize a Loya Jirga that ratified a new Constitution. As part of this process, the commission trained female delegates to the Loya Jirga and provided them with a manual developed by the Ministry of Women’s Affairs to help them lobby and network around gender issues. The ability to promote civil society and political participation, however, is still uneven, given the continued presence in some areas of factional elements whose patronage networks and militias infringe on public space. But high voter turnout in the country’s first direct election shows that Afghans are eager to choose their own leaders and are optimistic about the transition toward a peaceful and democratic environment. UNDP played an instrumental role in the success of last year’s presidential election, through its Voter Registration Project and its overall support to the electoral process and the Interim Afghan Electoral Commission. The project, with a total budget of \$96 million from donors including the European Commission, the United Kingdom and the United States, sought to ensure that all citizens, including returnees, women, and nomads, were able to register to vote, and reached out to each group through civic education.

UNDP’s activities in the spheres of civil society and democracy are extensive, as are its networks of partnership. The Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission emerged out of four working groups supported by UNDP and other UN agencies, and it carries out human rights protection and promotion programmes in seven offices across the country. It regularly broadcasts media messages on human rights, and trains civil society and government officials on topics such as women’s and children’s rights. In the past two years, the Commission’s Kabul office alone has processed over 1,800 cases of human rights abuses. UNDP and its UN partners,



OUTCOME:

- 10.5 million Afghans registered to vote
- 8 million Afghans participated in presidential elections, including 3.2 million women
- 21.5 million ballot papers printed
- 122 computers used to process voter registration cards
- 1,800 cases of domestic violence, forced marriage, and other kinds of abuse handled by the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission in one year

“Many of the fundamental measures needed to secure stability and confidence in Afghanistan are being taken, all of which are vital not only for the country’s peace and stability, but for the region as a whole.”

— **Mark Malloch Brown, UNDP Administrator and Chief of Staff to UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan**



A voter education drive tutored Afghans across the country in the mechanics of participatory democracy.



with a total budget of \$13.8 million, support the Commission’s activities, as it works to sensitize society and erode cultural traditions that tolerate forced marriage and domestic violence.

K A B U L — For a quarter century, the village of Farz and the village of Khakibaba have been separated—by a river, by a dispute over water rights and by ethnic animosity. The village elders of Farz vowed their families would die of thirst before taking water from Khakibaba. The unenviable job of getting the villages to vote at a single polling station fell to Husnia, a 27-year-old election worker with wiry glasses and a laugh like wind chimes. “I told them, ‘the more of you vote, the more you can ask for from the government,’” she recalled. “But if you don’t turn up, no one’s going to pay you any attention.”

On the day of the national election, the feuding villagers arrived at the polling centre, lined up in orderly procession, and voted for president. The day was cold, dusty and windy, but about eight million other Afghans (four-fifths of registered voters) did the same. The nation took a historic, headfirst dive into real democracy. “The presidential election in October 2004 was a historic milestone,” said Rosalind Marsden, the United Kingdom’s Ambassador to Afghanistan. “The enthusiasm and determination of the people of Afghanistan to go and vote was a powerful reminder to us all of the strength of the desire for democracy and freedom.”

No one suspected it could go so well. UNDP managed a sweeping effort that both encouraged Afghans to vote, and enabled them to do so at thousands of polling stations across the country. The interim Afghan government, and UNDP—along with their partners UNAMA and the Joint Electoral Management Body—had signed up close to 10.5 million Afghans to vote in the national election. Women accounted for over 40 percent of the voters. The credit for this goes to civic educators like Husnia, who trekked to places where radio could not go, explaining to women what an election was all about.

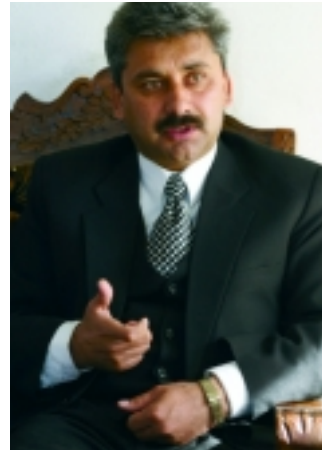
For many educated, civic-minded Afghans, the election has stirred fresh ambitions. Here are a few whose lives it has changed:

Parliament Mom

Zohreh Motahar is a 42-year-old mother of six with a degree in architectural engineering, and a great bouffant of silver hair. She walks with a limp courtesy of a fall in the wooded alley near her house, as she groped her way home one night after a day registering voters. In the weeks and months she spent teaching women about politics, she found it most instructive to point to herself: “Look at me, I’m a Muslim, I have kids, but I work and hold my head up.” Countless women took one look at her honest face and asked her to represent them. Now she’s considering running for parliament. “It’s intimidating,” she said, “the idea of being accountable to all those people. But that’s mostly my husband’s fear, and I’m working on him.”

Not Just a Walk in the Park

“Nation, freedom, and respect for human beings.” Candidate Sebghatullah Sangar knows his party’s slogan for the parliamentary elections is less than catchy, but in a nation that blames political parties for years of tyranny and conflict, he is moving gingerly. With his smart suit and slick sound-bites, the 32-year-old head of the Republic Party of Afghanistan is tutored in the political arts of the West, with the street credibility he needs to win votes. He stayed here through the rough years, and plans to launch an “ultra grassroots” campaign for parliament targeting a young generation of Afghans, with candidates in 20 provinces. His goal is getting people to like politics again, encouraging participation indirectly through activities like clean up of Kabul’s parks. “In five years,” he said, “we’ll put regionalism behind, stop getting hung up on whose languages gets used, and have a great parliament.”



Like most of Afghanistan’s new generation politicians, Sebghatullah Sangar reaches out to young Afghan voters.

“One of the things I think we do have to keep in mind is that, yes, Afghanistan is a broken country, but the people are not broken. The people are willing to work, and they are trying to find a way to improve their lives, and they’re tired of war.”

— Julia Taft, former Assistant Administrator and Director, Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery, UNDP



Access to clean drinking water saves countless lives across the country.

Rebuilding a Nation reviving rural Afghanistan

The National Area-Based Development Programme (NABDP), a flagship national programme, aims to revive rural Afghanistan’s most vulnerable areas, while building the government’s capacity to lead village-based participation in development. Decades of conflict have ravaged Afghanistan’s rural areas and many villages lack basic infrastructure, clean drinking water, and access roads linking them to major cities. Because recovery priorities vary from province to province, NABDP works with the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD) to help provinces plan projects targeted to their unique and most immediate needs—a strategy that accelerates recovery and provides an exercise in local democracy. UNDP finances the programme’s core management team, directs funds to other UN agencies assisting NABDP, and provides technical support to the MRRD. The programme budget amounts to \$58 million in donor aid from Belgium, Canada, Italy, Japan, Sweden and the United States to build shelters, schools and district offices, among other rehabilitation projects. A key component includes training MRRD staff in monitoring and evaluation to build the Ministry’s ability to oversee its own provincial coordination.

Afghanistan’s cities, also struggling with the blight of war, are plagued by massive job insecurity and devastated infrastructure. From rebuilding cities to securing gainful employment for tens of thousands, the Recovery and Employment Afghanistan Programme (REAP) promotes urban recovery through a cash-for-work project. REAP has undertaken the rebuilding of drainage channels, schools, parks, and vocational training centres for women, and provides workers with tools they can use to offer their skills later to other potential employers. Working with a \$10 million total budget in financial support from the European Commission and Japan, the UNDP-led programme has



OUTCOME:

- 3,800 shelters built for refugees and the internally displaced
- 45,000 people gainfully employed through cash-for-work programme
- 285 km of roads rehabilitated
- 70,000 farming families across the nation receive fertilizer



A UN-supported programme is helping to rebuild burned down villages and homes in the Shomali Plains.

employed 45,000 people in a range of rehabilitation projects that have so far repaired 285 km of road, and planted 12,000 trees. Moving ahead, REAP is directing its efforts to building the state's capacity in urban development, so that Afghan cities can turn directly to their government to meet their emerging needs.

SHOMALI PLAINS — When math teacher Abdel Jamil first came back to Mir Bachehkot, he walked straight to the school where he taught before his native village became a battlefield, expecting the worst. He had prepared himself for walls riddled with bullet holes and for sacked classrooms. Instead, he found a charred piece of land. “We are not starting from zero, but below, below, below zero,” he said, spreading his arms to wingspan, at a loss to express the magnitude of the task.

Mir Bachehkot was a classic model of war's casualty, a village where every building was burned to the ground, where returning refugees picked through rubble of former homes, and only a few crumbling brick walls stood as reminder of the community that once was.

But in the last two years, the village has stumbled back to its feet, wobbly but standing. The UN-supported National Area Based Development Programme has built shelters, a health clinic, a district administration building, a court, and to Abdel Jamil's special satisfaction, a custard-coloured school. About 70 percent of former residents, around 8,000 families, have returned from dispersal abroad or within the country, and 1,500 live under newly-built shelters; 14 other schools have sprung up, where 10,000 students (of whom 3,000 are girls) now attend school. “Such projects are how the poorest people can most directly profit,” said Christian Meerschman, the representative of Belgium, which helps fund the programme.

Mir Bachehkot is just one of the hundreds of towns resurrected since 2001, when 2.4 million Afghan refugees began streaming back from Iran and Pakistan. While its transformation is not yet typical of the rest of the country, it illustrates the impact the central govern-

ment is having on the lives of rural people. “Ultimately, the challenge is to reproduce this on a country scale,” said Soroush Javadi, a senior capacity development adviser to the Ministry of Rural Reconstruction and Development.

A Schoolteacher's Winter Thursdays

Abdel Jamil points to the algebraic proofs above the blackboard. School is in recess during the frigid winter of the Shomali Plains, but he comes here one day a week to tutor physics to refugee children catching up on years of schooling they missed while selling gum on the streets of foreign cities. His goal is for his students to skip a grade each year.

The Thursday class files into the room, bundled in woollen caps and scarves, and sit two to a desk for warmth. Some, like 10-year-old Nasser Ahmed, were taught the Koran in Pakistan, but know nothing about gravity. Others displaced within the country, like Hafizullah, 16, are strangers to the classroom. “I feel it a little bit,” Hafizullah says. “But there are others even older than me, and everyone understands.”

Principal Niaz Mohammed steps in the classroom. He doesn't see the small miracles taking place inside the school, the grades skipped, and the mixed boys and girls primary classes that are Abdel Jamil's pride. He sees no electricity, no science labs, and no library. He sees his teachers commuting 32 km each day from Kabul.

“We're in the dark ages,” he complained.

“We were,” corrects Abdel Jamil softly. When he first returned, he taught class under trees. Today, he sees a generation that will emerge from his classrooms, able to read and write.

The Clinic Next Door

The next sign of Mir Bachehkot's renaissance is the new health clinic. Dr. Lailma, an obstetrician, treats a steady stream of patients each day, in a clinic staffed by female nurses in crisp white coats and frosted nails. Farzaneh, a 10-year-old with a bloated stomach, sits beside Dr. Lailma's desk, eyeing the doctor warily, arms crossed over her dirty flowered vest. “She won't eat anything,” her mother says.

Dr. Lailma scratches out a remedy on a pad. It's stomach worm, one of a handful of maladies that commonly afflict Afghan children who drink unclean water. She turns to her mother, 45-year-old Nafaz Gol.

When mothers with several children such as Nafaz Gol come in, Dr. Lailma tells them about the importance of spacing out their babies, to reduce the chance of dying during childbirth. “They don't understand, and their husbands are stubborn,” she says. “But I keep telling them. And they eventually accept it.”



Children of returnees make up for lost years in crammed classes.



Doctors on duty treat both women and children.

“What we’ve achieved around the country is unprecedented in the history of Afghanistan. And it was UNDP that pumped blood into the heart of this ministry.”

— Haneef Atmar, Minister of Rural Rehabilitation and Development



Deminers risk their lives each day, removing war's remnants from the ground.

Cleaning Up After War landmines litter the road to reconstruction

Afghanistan is one of the most heavily mined countries in the world. Thousands have been killed or wounded by mines, and estimates suggest around four percent of the population—or about one million people—are disabled. Landmines are inhibiting the rehabilitation and reconstruction of wide swathes of the country, preventing the safe return of refugees and internally displaced persons, and inflicting injuries upon a population with no healthcare system. UNDP, in coordination with the UN Mine Action Centre for Afghanistan (UNMACA), works with the Afghan government under the Mine Action Programme for Afghanistan (MAPA) to create conditions conducive for socio-economic development. UNDP addresses the landmine problem from a long-term development perspective by undertaking projects that render agricultural land usable again and enable the construction and maintenance of roads. Critically, UNDP helped carry out a Landmine Impact Survey that equips planners with data on the impact of landmines in communities. Streamlining and organizing landmine data makes it easier to provide immediate information on population resettlement, and facilitates a better long-term strategy for mine action, classifying areas by priority and impact. The programme has already cleared the Kabul-Kandahar highway, and has ongoing projects across the country to clear roads around Ghazni, Grishk, Jalalabad and Kandahar.

The mine action programme has a total budget of \$58 million, with funding from Australia, the European Commission, Japan, the United Kingdom, the United States Agency for International Development and the World Bank. The challenge now, with the shift toward long-term development, is to concentrate on de-mining and victim assistance



OUTCOME:

- 5.5 million explosive devices destroyed since 1990
- 74,000 refugees sheltered at Zhari Dasht camp, on land recently cleared
- 52 anti-tank mines destroyed
- 300 miles of the main artery Kabul-Kandahar highway cleared of mines and UXOs

“No scorecard can account for what has been achieved here, given our starting point. When I arrived, ministers lacked desks. Today, Afghanistan is an emerging democracy.”

— Ercan Murat, former UN Country Director

Nomadic Kuchi families are vulnerable to landmines.



projects that are required in order for reconstruction and socio-economic integration of victims to move ahead. A parallel objective is the imminent and full transfer of the mine action programme from the UN to the Afghan government. UNDP is helping government counterparts establish a national mine action institution capable of managing all aspects of the programme, and is facilitating the transfer process, slated for completion by the end of 2005.



Zainullah, a Kuchi boy, convalesces after his mine accident.

KANDAHAR — No one told Zainullah that bombs could outlive wars. He found out for himself on a hazy afternoon hike into the hills surrounding Kandahar. As he and two friends climbed the crags, the fetid, sewage-streaked camp they call home disappearing into the distance, Zainullah chanced upon a mysterious plastic object the size of a Rubik’s cube. As any young boy might, he picked it up, appraised its odd corners, and tried to saw it in half. He heard a bang. Saw his two friends reel back. When his eyes cleared and he looked down, he noticed some of his fingers were missing. “We don’t know about these things,” said his father, tucking the blankets on the hospital bed where Zainullah sits motionless. “We learn about them like this, when they happen.”

Zainullah had no way of knowing his discovery was a leftover bomblet. He belongs to a tribe of Kuchis, pastoral nomads who exist on the fringes of cities here, pushed by conflict and drought into blighted shantytowns. Their culture spurns both fences and outsiders, and they unblinkingly cross minefields to graze their animals or collect firewood. As nomads, they are uniquely vulnerable to the remnants of war in the ground.

When UNDP helped MAPA undertake the task of demining the highway from Kabul to Kandahar, extra metres of road bank were cleared on each side for a “Kuchi corridor.” The vast majority of the Kuchis’ problems, from lack of clean water to fertile grazing land, will linger for years, but an end is in sight to dying on landmines.

Safety in Stones

Little pyramids of red stone mark a killing field. White means cleared. Blue indicates a former battlefield with possible munitions. Folk wisdom has absorbed the marking system, but you wouldn’t know it from the figures: on average explosions injure or kill three people each day. MAPA, a partnership between the UN and the Government of Afghanistan, says landmines and unexploded ordnances, or UXOs, still litter 716 kilometres of land (a tennis court worth of contamination for every Afghan).

The Front Lines, Again

Clearing the road from Kandahar to Grishk is UNDP’s next task. For the workers stooped over metal detectors, the process is arduous and risky. But Afghans say they view demining less as labour, more a means of redemption. Some deminers describe their work as charming snakes out of the ground, others as second jihad, a struggle to help their communities go about daily life without fear.

Damar, a 32-year-old former militiaman, teaches mine awareness to refugees streaming back into Kandahar. The returnees know about landmines, but trip over them anyway, as they look for old homes or rebuild new ones with the haste of the long displaced. He convinces schoolchildren that explosives masquerading as playthings can blow them apart, that the heavily-mined hilltop behind their school is no place to play.



Once cleared of landmines, Afghanistan's road network will become safer for people and vehicles.

“DDR is key to the government’s ability to maintain security. But it also has a major impact on the psychology of ordinary Afghans, helping them realize the future will not be like the past.”

— Norihiro Okuda, Ambassador of Japan to Afghanistan



Counselors guide ex-combatants through disarmament, step by step.

Between War and Peace

militiamen surrender weapons, pick up ploughs

Security in Afghanistan depends first and foremost on the dismantling of armed militias and the dethroning of warlords who run them. This is the central task of the Afghanistan New Beginnings Programme (ANBP), an effort led by the Afghan government—supported by UNDP—to disarm, demobilize, and re-integrate militiamen into civilian life. ANBP’s current total budget of \$167 million, with major funding from Japan, and additional contributions from Canada and the United Kingdom, operates eight regional offices around the country to carry out various projects. UNDP is supporting ANBP to collect combatants’ weapons, provide them with vocational training, and help them find civilian jobs. UNDP is also helping ANBP in security reform and by providing the capacity for a nationwide disarmament and reintegration programme. With assistance from national and international non-governmental organizations, the re-integration phase implements programmes in agriculture, micro-business, and various spheres of job training, from carpentry to tailoring. One cadre of ex-combatants participates in a Mine Action for Peace Programme, where they return to their communities as mine awareness educators and de-miners. In the last year, demobilization momentum has surged and ANBP has disarmed over 38,000 combatants. Beyond improving security around the country, disarmament enables the government to bolster its Ministry of Defense, and build a new Afghan National Army. With the majority gainfully employed, the programme aims to finish disarming lingering militias and then move to a nationwide strategy of eliminating heavy weapons.

A parallel security priority is the creation of a renewed national police force, free of the inefficiency that once undermined the nominal police of Afghanistan. Germany is the lead donor for training Afghan police and helping establish police training facilities across the country. UNDP, along



OUTCOME:

- Over 38,000 combatants disarmed
- 24,218 weapons cantoned, including 8,433 heavy weapons
- 31,643 ex-combatants gainfully employed or in vocational training
- 681,805 pieces of ammunition identified between January–March 2005 in ongoing nationwide survey
- 53,400 policemen are paid on a regular basis
- 1,190 radio-equipped police vehicles in Kabul and provinces

Soldiers of the 530th infantry turn their heavy weapons over in Kandahar.



Disarmed units line up to demobilize.

with UNAMA, established a Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan (LOTFA), that in coordination with the Ministry of Interior channels funds from the international community to paying police salaries, acquiring non-lethal equipment, and rehabilitating facilities. In 2003, salaries were successfully paid to police staff in all 32 provinces. LOTFA has also computerized the payroll scheme, a major step in weeding corruption from the system, and impeding its return. The programme works on a total budget of \$226 million, mainly from contributions from the European Commission, United States and the World Bank.

KANDAHAR — For 17 years, Captain Amanallah rose each morning with his fellow soldiers of the 530th infantry, drank tea, and either cleaned or used his gun. They roamed over snow-blanketed fields together, survived a Soviet kidnapping, and fought against the Taliban, over months that blurred into a life. When Taliban rule ended in Kandahar, Amanallah stuck with his unit. He belongs to a generation of men reared by war, who grew up fetching sodas for the *mujaheddin* before joining their ranks. “We feel like leftovers,” said Captain Amanallah, a burly 32-year-old soldier.

Nearly three years later, with the country moving on, Captain Amanallah can too. Late one unusually warm morning, he arrived with his unit in a convoy of pick-ups and land cruisers at an old military barrack in central Kandahar. They ate their last breakfast of hot bread together as soldiers, packed a truck bed full of heavy artillery weapons, and showed up “to DDR” (“disarm, demobilize, and re-integrate,” an acronym that is now a verb and a noun in two Afghan languages).

DDR is the primary task of ANBP, a UNDP-supported programme that since 2003 has disarmed over 38,000 soldiers. It aims to erode the culture of weapons and patronage that has underpinned years of conflict, and clear the landscape for civilian politics, and a unified national army. “This is key to the new government’s ability to maintain security,” said Norihiro Okuda, Japan’s Ambassador to Afghanistan. “But it also has a major impact on the psychology of ordinary Afghans, helping them realize the future will not be like the past.”

Farewell to Arms

On the day of their disarmament, Captain Amanallah and his unit received \$10 for transportation, a huge sack of wheat, a medal, and a how-to-get-your-life-back kit: civilian clothes, counseling, job training, literacy classes, and a small stipend to live off during the process.

Disarmament programmes the world over usually falter when it comes to reintegration, according to Peter Babbington, acting head of the Afghanistan New Beginnings Programme. “We’re offering everything under one roof, and that’s why we’ve been so uniquely successful,” he said.

Vocational counselors in Kabul help ex-combatants pick employment tracks—from agriculture to small business—suited to their age, temperament, and geography.

In the Kheir Khaneh district of Kabul, former officer Abdel Hakim, 29, has opened up a general construction store with seed money from ANBP.

During the 10 years he fought in the Panjshir Valley, he saw his family every two months at most. He commanded about 20 men, defended Kabul when it was attacked, and witnessed a friend burned to death beside him. He is eager to put such recollections behind him, and tend his goods instead. “At first it was hard,” he said, of the transition. “It was like figuring out how to live all over again, and slowly.”



Ex-combatants select vocational paths for the next phase of their lives.

“It’s not just building a courthouse that makes a justice system, it’s what happens inside that courthouse. Building capacity is critical. It will sustain the astonishing achievements we’ve already seen here.”

— Patrick Fine, Country Director of USAID Afghanistan



Judges reviving the practice of law, from courtrooms to codes.

A Justice System Comes to Life

reforms underway to establish rule of law

Bringing the rule of law to Afghanistan is vital to the success of the entire reconstruction effort, and is ultimately the test by which Afghans will measure the credibility of their own government. The challenges for legal reform are Herculean in scope as the country’s intricate justice system functions, often informally. UNDP, through a joint programme with UNAMA and the Afghan government, is assisting the Judicial Reform Commission as it leads the way in administrative and structural reforms for justice institutions. With a \$6 million total budget, largely comprised of aid from Italy in addition to Canada and the United Kingdom, the programme trains new judges and lawyers, and is rebuilding or rehabilitating court-houses and justice offices in Badakhshan, Herat, Kabul, Kunduz and Nangarhar. Though progress has been achieved in cities, enhancing justice at the district level remains an important task. UNDP is pursuing a new project together with the European Commission to train justice professionals at the district level, rehabilitate infrastructure, and bring legal awareness to communities.

K A B U L — Those who seek her out are all fleeing—wives fleeing violent husbands, girls fleeing betrothals to wizened old men, adolescent boys evading sentences in adult prisons. The task of Judge Aziza Sheirbaz, head of the women’s council of the Supreme Court, is not just to advocate on their behalf, but to persuade them that rights are universal. For this purpose, the 42-year-old judge has a standard lecture, which she delivers in terse staccato: “Rights are something you want for yourself. But you already have your own rights under Islam. Don’t let the *mullahs* exploit your religion.”

Since the end of 2001, Judge Sheirbaz’s freedom to defend women’s rights has risen. She spends most days rushing into court-rooms coaching the judges and chastising the sluggish defense



OUTCOME:

- 270 judges being trained under Judicial Reform Commission training programme
- 1,700 students at Kabul University Law and Sharia Faculty will study under reformed curriculum
- 125 new law graduates from Kabul University in 2004
- 12,000 copies of human rights monthly magazine distributed



Judge Aziza Sheirbaz is at the forefront of legal reforms.

lawyers. “How do you fight cases when the courthouse roof is collapsing, and the lawyers are ill-trained,” she demands crossly, rapping her hand on her desk.

Judge Sheirbaz is impatient, but she knows that change is coming. The Afghan government, with support from UNDP, has set out on a sweeping overhaul of the country’s legal system.

A Healthy Constitution

On 4 January 2004, a *Loya Jirga* passed a new Constitution that promised rights and the rule of law to all Afghans, not just the men. UNDP is helping enable the country’s legal institutions to implement the Constitution, and the rights it guarantees. But in Afghanistan “guaranteed” is in the eye of the beholder, and that’s why Judge Sheirbaz, who knows her new Constitution well, is concerned about who will be doing the guaranteeing. “It’s not just building a courthouse that makes a justice system,” said Patrick Fine, Country Director of USAID. “It’s what happens inside that courthouse. Building capacity is critical. It will sustain the astonishing achievements we’ve already seen here.”

For jurists like Judge Sheirbaz, legal institutions are as just as the judges who run them. She thinks the legal education system needs to produce better ones, more adept at dispensing justice.

Parsing Laws, Passing the Bar

Afghanistan is technically governed by civil legal code. But Kabul University, producing almost all the country’s legal practitioners, trains students in either secular law or *sharia* (Islamic law)—two competing and often non-complementing legal traditions. Advised by Massimo Papa, a Law Curriculum Development Specialist for UNDP, a council of professors from the law and *sharia* faculties recently designed a new programme that merges the two schools into a single curriculum. “This is a conceptual tool for developing legal institutions, but also a new society,” said Papa. “We’re dealing with minds here.”

Under the new curriculum, students will study comparative Islamic law for the first time. This may seem like an academic exercise, but Judge Sheirbaz knows its real life implications. Certain schools of *sharia* grant women wider divorce rights than others, but in courtrooms where the judge often subscribes to the narrowest school of thought, she can’t argue her case.

Just four years ago, when bullets whizzed around the country and the Taliban consulted the seventh century for legal advice, Judge Sheirbaz would never have believed these sorts of changes were possible. Now she is optimistic. She recently completed a one-year training course herself.



A campaign takes up violence against women.



Staff at the Ministry of Women's Affairs chart policy.

“In a country such as Afghanistan, where carrying out development activity is often difficult, working with UNDP was a judicious choice. UNDP’s experience and professionalism was like having insurance in the face of these daunting challenges.”

— Jean-Pierre Guinhut, Ambassador of France to Afghanistan



UNDP supports vocational training, including instruction on computers, for Afghans living with war and poverty-related handicaps.

Challenges and Opportunities

The roadmap to Afghanistan’s future will be long and difficult. But the course has been firmly set.

UNDP is setting its future priorities according to the needs of the Afghan people, and the requirements of their government—the promotion of good governance, and the consolidation of security across the country. Elections for the lower house of parliament in 2005 will bring Afghanistan still closer to a society based on genuine democracy and the rule of law. In preparation for these elections, UNDP is supporting the Joint Electoral Management Body, and establishing a parliamentary secretariat that will in turn help new members play the crucial role of elected lawmakers.

Human rights can only be entrenched in a society whose people feel secure, and whose courts have the capability to impose the law. UNDP is broadening the scope of its activities in legal sector reform, to aid the Afghan government in bringing access to justice to the district level. A new programme will strengthen the state’s role in providing local justice, and encouraging a rights-based perspective to justice reform. Tackling corruption is an essential component of building a just society, and the office of President Hamid Karzai has asked UNDP to support its newly-created



Women braved weather and security to cast their votes.



OUTCOME:

- 255 trainees enrolled in Cisco Academy training centres
- 9 telekiosks installed in post offices and at Kabul airport to promote access to computers and the Internet
- 11 information and communication technology centres established in Kabul and provinces have trained 3,000 people
- 4,000 maps and CD-ROMs created and sold by project on information management



Local businesses are beginning to thrive in Afghanistan.

anti-corruption unit. UNDP will help assess the size of the problem, and help the government build institutions, which are transparent and accountable.

In many fields, Afghanistan's growth is nascent—private sector development, awareness and response to the scourge of HIV/AIDS, and protecting and preserving the environment. UNDP is working with the Afghan government to weave all these objectives into its long-term development planning.

The growth of the opium economy and the lack of security pose residual challenges to Afghanistan. The government is seeking to devise comprehensive strategies to diversify livelihoods, and make other sectors lucrative for the nation's poor.

All of this will take time. The international community needs a horizon of not months or years, but decades. UNDP's continuing presence in the country is a practical fulfillment of its unwavering support for the people of Afghanistan.



Children in today's Afghanistan are able to attend school.

UNDP is the UN's global development network, advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help people build a better life. We are on the ground in 166 countries, working with them on their own solutions to global and national development challenges. As they develop local capacity, they draw on the people of UNDP and our wide range of partners.

Acronyms

AIHRC	Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission
ANBP	Afghanistan New Beginnings Programme
LOTFA	Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan
MAPA	Mine Action Programme for Afghanistan
MRRD	Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development
NABDP	National Area-Based Development Programme
REAP	Recovery and Employment Afghanistan Programme
UNAMA	UN Assistance Mission to Afghanistan
UNMACA	UN Mine Action Centre for Afghanistan
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

Photo Credits:

All photos by Wakil Kohsar/UNDP except for the following pages:

p 2 – Katrin Kinzelbach/UNDP

p 3 – illustration by Sam Ferro/UNDP

p 5, 6, 7, 8, 27 – Marie Frechon/UNDP

p 13, 21 – Gary Holub/UNDP

p 14, 15, 17 – Luke Powell/UNDP

Cover: Luke Powell/UNDP; Wakil Kohsar/UNDP; Marie Frechon/UNDP

Produced by UNDP's Bureau for Resources and Strategic Partnerships in collaboration with the Communications Office of the Administrator, New York.

Special thanks to UNDP Afghanistan, the Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific and the Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery, New York.

For further information:

In New York, please contact: yoshiyuki.oshima@undp.org

In Kabul, please contact: zahira.virani@undp.org

www.undp.org.af

Printed on recycled paper through environmentally-compatible technologies by Toppan Printing, Somerset, New Jersey, USA.

Matters of Fact

- Scarred by over two decades of armed conflict, Afghanistan's Human Development Index falls among the bottom six of 177 ranked countries
- With a life expectancy of 44.5 years, living to 50 is considered reaching old age
- In Badakhshan, a maternal mortality rate of 6,500 per 100,000 is the highest ever recorded in any part of the world
- Afghanistan's education system has suffered severely from war, with 80 percent of the country's 6,870 schools damaged if not completely destroyed
- Four million children, 40 percent of them girls, have enrolled in school since the fall of the Taliban
- Afghans comprise the second largest number of refugees and internally displaced people in the world
- Since the fall of the Taliban, over 2.4 million Afghan refugees have returned from Iran and Pakistan
- While gender insecurity remains entrenched, Afghanistan's new Constitution grants men and women equal rights before the law
- In October 2004, over eight million people voted in presidential elections
- For the first time in Afghanistan's recorded history, a comprehensive census of the country's population will be undertaken in 2006

Sources: Afghanistan's National Human Development Report 2005, *Security With a Human Face*; Afghanistan's Millennium Development Goals Report 2004, *Opening Doors to Opportunity*



United Nations
Development Programme

One United Nations Plaza
New York, NY 10017
www.undp.org