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OTI Afghanistan Program Evaluation (October 2001 – June 2005): Gender Initiatives and Impacts

October, 2005

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Acronyms

ACSF	Afghan Civil Society Forum
AIHRC	Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission
ATI	Afghanistan Transition Initiative (of IOM)
AWEC	Afghan Women's Educational Center
CLJ	Constitutional Loya Jirga
DA	Development Assistance
DoWA	Department of Women's Affairs
EAC	Education and Aid Center
EGAT	Economic Growth, Agriculture and Trade Bureau (USAID)
ELJ	Emergency Loya Jirga
ESF	Economic Support Funds
IDA	International Disaster Assistance
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IWPR	Institute for War and Peace Reporting
MoWA	Ministry of Women's Affairs
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
NGO	non-governmental organization
OTI	Office of Transition Initiatives (USAID)
SOW	Scope of Work
US	United States
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USAWC	United States-Afghan Women's Council
WID	Women in Development (USAID)
WRC	women's resource center

Executive Summary

The United States Agency for International Development's Office of Transition Initiatives (USAID/OTI), the U.S. government's rapid-response agency that promotes citizen participation and political transition in countries emerging from conflict, executed its first multi-million dollar "mega-response" in Afghanistan. From October 2001 to June 2005, OTI committed \$46.6 million of an overall \$70 million Afghanistan budget to project grants. These in-country grants supported a range of activities including the emerging political process laid out in the 2001 Bonn Agreement, civic education, government-facility rehabilitation, independent media, community infrastructure, women's resource centers, schools and kindergartens, and international sector specialists.

Initially, OTI drew upon its experience in countries such as Kosovo and Bosnia to plan activities for Afghanistan, though this European experience did not fully prepare the organization for the challenges of Afghanistan. OTI's response in Afghanistan was anticipated to be significantly larger and more complex than previous OTI programs, but OTI was starting at a much lower level of functionality; since 2001 Afghanistan lacked running water, electricity and communications facilities. Moreover, infrastructure that had once existed had collapsed due to war and neglect, the state was unable to provide basic services, and many of Afghanistan's 25 million citizens were displaced within the country or had become refugees in Pakistan and Iran.

OTI was also entering a peculiar environment where the former administration, the Taliban, had virtually banned women from the public sphere. Thus, OTI's usual work in a stressful, post-conflict environment was complicated by the extreme trauma of Afghan women who had been dehumanized under the Taliban administration and Afghan men who had been powerless to protect them.

In October 2001, OTI began working from neighboring Pakistan to develop a programmatic approach for Afghanistan, however, it did not address the longstanding cultural and, as a result of the Taliban administration, political division between the genders. This seems to have been a shortcoming on OTI's part for two reasons. First, the U.S. administration justified its invasion of Afghanistan, in part, by stating that the U.S. was helping to liberate Afghan women from oppression. Second, everything in Afghanistan is divided along gender lines and nearly all aid agencies working with Afghans over the past two decades had adapted their programs accordingly. To jumpstart its programming and increase its chances for success, therefore, OTI would probably have benefited from a better understanding of Afghanistan's social dynamics, especially gender issues, and targeted its program accordingly.

OTI states that it did not have, nor did it plan to have, a strategy in place to account for the often separate approach required to ensure women participated in and benefited from project programming and the political transition process OTI endeavored to support. That said, some 170 grants totaling \$7.9 million, of OTI's 714 grants totaling \$46.6 million, were designed, to some degree, with programming for women and girls in mind. The programs reached varying degrees of success, with media and civic education courses having the greatest impact. Included in the \$7.9 million is \$3.6 million in earmarked funds, mostly in support of women's resource centers, whose impact is, as yet, unknown since construction delays meant few centers opened prior to OTI's program closure. OTI's focus on funds provision for building construction left little money for more strategic programming that could have been used to capitalize upon Afghans' desire for change and reconnection with the international community.

During its tenure in Afghanistan, OTI relied heavily upon Ronco and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to implement non-media programs. Ronco's contract with OTI was not renewed beyond 2003. With IOM, OTI had a cooperative agreement in which IOM enjoyed tremendous latitude to identify and implement projects. Under this agreement, IOM claimed to have mainstreamed gender issues into each of its projects from 2002 onwards.¹ While IOM implemented a number of programs with female beneficiaries, there was little evidence that project impacts upon women were considered for *each* project. Documentation in the databases of IOM and OTI does not support this. Also, IOM's inability to hire female staff for each of its sub-offices was cited as an explanation for shortcomings in women's programming.

Following more than two decades of war, Afghans, male and female, overwhelmingly supported the political transition laid out in the Bonn Agreement and strove for its success. Since the Taliban period showed that social dysfunction arises when one gender is systematically excluded from the public sphere, OTI programming should have more systematically supported the participation of women in the political and decision-making process, since in the cases where it did, the results benefited Afghan society as a whole and stimulated greater social debate on the roles of women and the future of the country.

To have better accomplished this, OTI in Afghanistan would have benefited from:

- **An initial framework for OTI activities** based on a thorough understanding of Afghan social and political dynamics. An "OTI-Watch" system in which countries of potential OTI engagement are monitored could be developed.
- **Investments in rehabilitation, not new construction**, since OTI was unable to monitor safety and engineering aspects and land deed acquisition was onerous.
- **Understanding Afghanistan's pre-conflict state**, viewed as the peaceful "golden years" by many Afghans, to provide historical context for the traditional and accepted role of women in society and the programs Afghans would likely find acceptable once again.
- **Identifying a few, basic objectives to foster women's participation in the political process**, since OTI is not a long-term development organization.
- **Engaging as soon as possible in the more politically problematic geographic areas** since the initial euphoria following the peace agreement provided an opening for change.
- **Taking risks with projects that encouraged dialogue**, rather than armed conflict, to support public debate that addresses controversial social issues.

¹ IOM, "Gender Mainstreaming: Afghanistan Transition Initiative," September 2004.

Every time (Taliban spiritual leader) Mullah Omar proclaimed another Fatwa² against Afghan women, he chipped away at the authority and self-respect of the Afghan men.

- Nasrine Gross, "Return of the Afghan Man's Dignity,"
Kabul Weekly, second week of January 2003

I. Introduction and Background

The December 2001 Bonn Agreement that laid out Afghanistan's post-Taliban transitional political process was not a comprehensive peace agreement, but most Afghans believed that it "represented the best chance possible for establishing peace, security, and protection of human rights"³ While the Bonn political process is on track, albeit with some delays, the hoped-for peace and security remain elusive in many parts of the country. Even areas seen as relatively peaceful have had outbursts of violence and factional fighting and Afghans sympathetic to Coalition, primarily U.S. forces, fighting in the southeastern Pashtun belt have been targets of violent attacks.

This lack of security impacts Afghans disproportionately. While all are affected, the impact upon women and girls is even more debilitating since a lack of security is considered a valid justification for restricting their movement and denying service provision and access. Moreover, security threats do not have to be imminent. With the pervasiveness of fear throughout Afghan society, even mild intimidation that creates the perception of insecurity is relatively simple to accomplish with devastating results.⁴ The mere hint that women could be at risk results in their continued homebound confinement, limiting their access to vital health and education services, discouraging voter registration and blunting opportunities for them to play a larger role in the public sphere. Afghan men, responsible for protecting Afghan women and their honor, are sometimes powerless to counter the risks women face outside the home. At times, the only response to threats against women is that men ask, sometimes demand, that women stay at home.

When USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI), the U.S. government's rapid response mechanism to support political change, engaged in Afghanistan in 2001, it was within this uncertain security environment tinged with hope and expectation. With the exception of drought-related food relief in the late 1990s and early 2000s, USAID had disengaged from the country and there was little information on hand upon which OTI could draw immediately and begin making programming decisions. Initially, OTI was to "do something," until the dust settled following the Taliban's capitulation in November 2001 and the December meetings at Bonn were held. "Doing something," however, could not include providing the nationwide security Afghans want so desperately.

Over its three-and-a-half-year Afghanistan program, OTI and its implementing partners struggled to find appropriate gender programming within its overarching objectives:

² A fatwa is an authoritative legal interpretation by a mufti or religious jurist that can provide the basis for court decision or government action.

³ Human Rights Watch, "Afghanistan's Bonn Agreement One Year Later: A Catalog of Missed Opportunities," December 5, 2005, pg. 1.

⁴ Chayes, Sarah, "Loya Jirga Focus Groups Study, Kandahar and Helmand Provinces, November 2002-January 2003." Afghans for Civil Society, pg. 9.

1. Increase the Afghan government's responsiveness to citizens' needs
2. Increase citizen awareness of and participation in democratic processes
3. Increase the capacity of the Afghan media
4. Increase the capacity of Afghan civil society groups.

An early, February 2002, International Organization for Migration (IOM) assessment noted that "original and innovative means should be pursued to increase women's participation in community rehabilitation and to foster interaction between genders...."⁵ A strategy to creatively approach women's programming eluded OTI and its main implementing partners, the IOM⁶ and Ronco, though Internews, other media partners and some NGO subcontractors created successful one-off programs. Some in OTI even asked if gender programming in countries such as Afghanistan was appropriate since separate or special consideration for female programming must be given to *each* project if there is to be gender mainstreaming. Since the entire Afghan population was deeply traumatized by two decades of war and the decree-of-the-day edicts of the conservative Taliban, addressing the needs of one segment of the population while ignoring others might have hindered rather than helped the healing and transition process that OTI wanted to support. OTI seemed to operate on the assumption that programs with female Afghan beneficiaries were good, but there was little analysis of which types of programs would best serve Afghan women during the transition period.

OTI's interest in rapid project completion also highlighted the fact that projects in Afghanistan with female beneficiaries took longer to implement. As such, time-consuming projects were thus less desirable. What was never defined, however, was the meaning of "rapid" in the Afghan context. Project implementation in Afghanistan should not have been held to the same time schedule as project implementation in Kosovo, for example, the comparison often cited. Protracted warfare and the dearth of infrastructure in many parts of Afghanistan required that OTI start with a low baseline and work around prevailing security conditions. Even if some OTI-funded projects in Afghanistan took longer than in other countries, they were still implemented "rapidly" for Afghan conditions. Thus, OTI should have concentrated more on balancing the demand for "rapid" with the need for "quality," since in some cases a little more time, perhaps a month or two, would have improved project implementation results and eliminated the need for additional funds to have been allocated for repairs. And, surprisingly, some of the projects with the greatest positive impacts, especially for women, that exceeded OTI objectives were those in which time was not the defining element and risks that pushed the social agenda were taken.

II. Evaluation Methodology

This evaluation of OTI's program in Afghanistan and its impact upon Afghan women and gender relations was conducted from April – July 2005. It was undertaken in response to a request from the USAID Office of Women in Development and the Office of Transition Initiatives. This report complements an evaluation of OTI's overall program in Afghanistan undertaken by Social Impact. Information sources for this evaluation included interviews, site visits, IOM and OTI project databases, and other program-related documents. Interviews were conducted in Washington, D.C. and Afghanistan with USAID and OTI current and former staff; implementing

⁵ IOM, "OTI/AEIP Afghanistan Assessment: Possibilities and Challenges of an Afghanistan Participatory Community-Based Recovery Program," February 11, 2002, pg. 2.

⁶ IOM's OTI-funded program was named the Afghanistan Transition Initiative (ATI). In this paper, "IOM" refers to IOM's OTI-funded program ATI, not all IOM programs.

partners including IOM, Ronco, and NGOs; Afghan government officials, and Afghan community leaders and community members. Written documents from OTI, IOM, Ronco and NGO implementing partners were also reviewed. Three weeks of site visits in Afghanistan included travel to and interviews in Kabul, Helmand, Kandahar, Mazar-i-Sharif, Paktia, Parwan and Samangan.

OTI implemented 714 projects in Afghanistan from October 2001 to June 2005. When choosing sites to visit, the evaluation team tried to strike a balance between places in which it was relatively easy to work and security is generally good – Kabul, Mazar-i-Sharif, Parwan and Samangan – and areas in which it is difficult to work and security has deteriorated – Helmand, Kandahar and Paktia. The evaluation team visited four of IOM’s eight sub-offices. An important omission from the site visits was Herat, but the team was unable to accommodate a visit to the city in its schedule. As a result, the evaluation team relied upon written project documents and an interview with the former head of IOM’s sub-office in Herat (who is now in Mazar-i-Sharif). Annex one of this report lists 71 “site visits” undertaken by the evaluation team. The list includes projects visited by the team and those discussed in depth with implementing partners.

This report addresses the same questions as the overall report prepared by Social Impact, though through the lens of gender concerns, specifically women’s concerns, since most activities in Afghanistan are divided along gender lines. The report that follows is divided into three sections plus a summary and recommendations section and covers OTI’s ability to:

- mainstream gender concerns into programming
- promote government legitimacy
- encourage participatory democratic processes.

III. Did OTI strategically mainstream gender issues into programming in Afghanistan?

When the primarily Pashtun Taliban administration fled Kabul on November 13, 2001, the conditions they had imposed upon Afghans, especially women, were well known. Men were required to grow beards, wear “Muslim” clothing and pray three times a day. Women were virtually banned from the public sphere and only tolerated outside the home under tightly regulated conditions. These restrictions were felt and imposed most aggressively in urban and non-Pashtun areas.

However, it was not just the Taliban who eroded and attempted to deny entirely the rights of Afghan women. From a peak in the 1970s and 1980s where women comprised fifty percent of university students, sixty percent of civil servants and seventy-five percent of hospital workers,⁷ the rights of Afghan women had begun diminishing as a result of the war that followed the 1979 Soviet invasion and the machinations of *mujahideen* commanders vying for control of Kabul following President Najibullah’s capitulation in 1992. At least three generations of Afghans have been impacted by the prolonged warfare – with Afghan females suffering disproportionately. Warfare has resulted in a significant number of widows with dependent children, increased violence against women including rape, decreased educational and vocational opportunities,

⁷ Gross, Nasrine, “The Messy Side of Globalization: Women in Afghanistan.” Speech given at Symposium on Globalization and Women in Muslim Societies. November 2000. <<http://www.kabultec.org/globaliz.html>>

female landmine victims with few marriage opportunities, and a health care system so inadequate that the country's maternal and child mortality rates are among the world's highest.⁸

In October and November 2001 as the Taliban were losing to U.S.-led Coalition and Afghan Northern Alliance forces, women continued to lose. Not only had the Taliban pushed women and girls from the public sphere, they had overtaken their facilities and were fighting from them. Girls' schools and health care facilities became intense battlegrounds and Coalition forces bombed these already degraded buildings. When the Taliban administration finally ran from Kabul, Afghans breathed a collective sigh of relief and celebrated with music, kite flying and beard shaving – all once forbidden under the Taliban. Despite the toppling of the Taliban administration, a change widely viewed as positive, Afghanistan was reborn with crippled infrastructure, a rate of post-traumatic stress disorder estimated to affect thirty percent of the population⁹ and foreign, mostly U.S., troops on its soil actively fighting Taliban and Al-Qaeda remnants.

Thus, it was amidst optimism, deep emotional trauma and a low-intensity conflict along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border that USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) commenced operations in Afghanistan from neighboring Pakistan in October 2001. The December 2001 Bonn Agreement quickly established Hamid Karzai as interim Afghan President to lead the country until the June 2002 Loya Jirga to select a transitional president. In this interim period, OTI seemed uncertain of its overall strategy and even less certain of a strategy that could benefit women, even though "liberating" Afghan women was part of the U.S. administration's justification for launching a war against the Taliban. Support for Afghan women existed at the highest levels of the U.S. administration. On November 17, 2001, just days after the Taliban's capitulation, First Lady Laura Bush gave a national radio address that highlighted the Taliban's brutality. At the same time, the State Department's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor issued the "Report on the Taliban's War on Women." A month later, President Bush signed into law the "Afghan Women and Children Relief Act 2001" designed to support education and health care.

Programming such rhetoric into reality – and the "visible, measurable, on-the-ground results"¹⁰ demanded by the U.S. Administration – remained extremely challenging, however. The publicity that Afghan women received about their plight was not supported on the ground by an assistance strategy articulated by OTI or programming developed by OTI's implementing partners IOM and Ronco. While no one expected OTI or the U.S. government to resolve every problem faced by Afghan women, the spotlight shown by the U.S. on Afghan women living under Taliban rule raised expectations that assisting Afghan females in post-Taliban Afghanistan would be a top priority. OTI, as the quick-response mechanism supporting U.S. foreign policy in transition countries, could have selected one issue affecting Afghan women to which it could have been positioned to respond strategically, but OTI-financed projects tended to be small, randomly-selected projects. No coherent strategy to support Afghan females was developed by OTI to demonstrate consistent, nationwide U.S. support for the women whom U.S. forces had apparently liberated.¹¹ While OTI might claim that its mission was, in fact, to support small,

⁸ The U.N.'s Afghanistan Human Development Report notes that Afghanistan ranks 173rd of 178 countries on the U.N.'s Human Development Index. <<http://www.undp.org/dpa/nhdr/af/AfghanHDR2004.htm>>

⁹ UNDP, "Afghanistan's National Human Development Report: Security with a Human Face," February 2004, pg. 60.

¹⁰ John B. Taylor, Under Secretary of Treasury for International Affairs, Remarks to the Afghanistan-America Summit Georgetown University, Washington, DC, November 10, 2003.

¹¹ October 26, 2001, President Bush announced the commitment of \$320 million in humanitarian food aid, due to Afghanistan's prolonged five-year drought, and repatriation assistance to refugees returning to Afghanistan from

unrelated projects, then the disconnect between the political rhetoric of the U.S. administration – with its calls to support and liberate Afghan women – and the on-the-ground realities of OTI programming – which was ad hoc in its support of women, somewhat harmed the image of the U.S. administration and that of the Afghan administration that the U.S. was attempting to enhance through OTI. That said, during its tenure in Afghanistan, OTI funded meaningful and important projects that benefited women. These projects, in the context of overall OTI assistance, will be examined in the sections that follow.

October 2001 – December 21, 2001

Coalition Forces Bombing Campaign and Taliban Capitulation through Bonn Agreement to Assumption of Interim Presidency by Hamid Karzai 5 OTI grants totaling \$1.29 million

When OTI began approving grants for its Afghanistan programming in October 2001, U.S.-led Coalition forces were actively bombing Taliban-held positions countrywide in a campaign that had begun October 7. Few expected that the campaign would be so short, with the Taliban administration abandoning Kabul on November 13. The five grants approved during this chaotic period were media related and supported humanitarian bulletins on emerging events, expanded reporting by the Voice of America, a media assessment and radio distribution. During this initial period, OTI scrambled to gain up-to-date information on Afghanistan and follow the rapid, day-to-day developments as they unfolded.

Thus initial activities did not, and were not intended to, target women or address gender issues specifically. The media bulletins and radio distribution¹² probably benefited men and women, though the activities were for immediate consumption by Afghans, including a significant refugee population in Pakistan of some three million.¹³ Moreover, radio distribution to a population that relied on radio as its most important news source might not have been the best use of funds since many Afghans already had radios and it would have been difficult in late 2001 to find and give radios to families that did not have them. Since the so-called targeted beneficiaries have since scattered and many have repatriated, such activities are difficult to evaluate more than three years later at the end OTI's Afghanistan program. And while the media assessment conducted during this period is available, the brief and rapid nature of the report's information collection limited its future utility.

OTI project documentation for this time period includes an initial "Gender Needs Assessment for Afghanistan." The two-page document notes that political reform, socio-economic transformation and security reform are key to gender equity in Afghanistan. The needs assessment, which appears to have been written by a World Bank staff member,¹⁴ proposes that gender perspectives be mainstreamed into all development and reconstruction programs in Afghanistan and that civil society organizations be consulted throughout. The strategy does not specify OTI's role in reaching the outcomes proposed which include improvements in social indicators, a functioning Ministry of Women's Affairs with provincial outreach, gender training for senior civil servants, and inclusion of women in local *shuras* (councils).

neighboring countries. While Afghan populations including women and girls benefited from this assistance, these funds and related programming fall outside the scope of this review.

¹² Activities surrounding radio distribution could not be confirmed and it was suggested by OTI that the radios remain in Ramstein Air Force Base in Germany.

¹³ About 3.5 million refugees have since repatriated from Pakistan and Iran.

¹⁴ A World Bank staff member identification number is at the end of the document.

December 22, 2001 – June 16, 2002

**Assumption of Interim Presidency by Hamid Karzai through Emergency Loya Jirga
81 OTI grants, \$8.97 million overall (average \$111,000)**

**29 OTI grants, \$1.05 million with at least one component targeting women and girls
(average \$36,200)**

During the interim period from the December 2001 Bonn Agreement to the June 2002 Emergency Loya Jirga, 81 grants totaling \$8.97 million were approved by OTI. Of the OTI grants approved during this period, about 29 had a component targeting women and girls. Though this represented 35 percent of projects, this totaled just \$1.05 million, or 11.7 percent of funding. Projects included girls' and coeducational school rehabilitation, kindergarten rehabilitation in key ministries, hospital renovation, and support to the newly created Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA).

The majority of the total \$8.97 million committed during this initial period supported:

Program	Grants	Funds Allocated	Percentage of total
Emergency Loya Jirga	5	\$3.18 million	35.4%
Media	17	\$1.95 million	21.7%
International Sector Specialists for IOM and Ronco	3	\$1.17 million	13.0%
Schools	19	\$0.87 million	9.7%
UNDP Trust Fund: Salaries for Afghan government officials	1	\$0.50 million	5.5%
Government Building Rehabilitation	10	\$0.39 million	4.3%
Health Facilities	3	\$77,301	0.86%
Kindergartens	5	\$55,000	0.60%
Female Micro-enterprise Training	2	\$13,900	0.15%
Other	16	\$0.80 million	8.91%

*Figures may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.

Education. The Taliban had tried to deny formal education to girls by closing girls' schools. Women responded by conducting clandestine classes for girls in their homes and hiding school records. Teachers also went to rural areas where the Taliban were less restrictive and where girls' education was unofficially tolerated.¹⁵ Once the Taliban had been deposed, the most visible sign of their demise was that of girls going to school. And, to quote an IOM engineer, "Before the Taliban, we Afghans did not care so much about education. But the Taliban raised the demand for education because they did not let us have it. Now we want *only* education."

Reopening schools was difficult, however. Many girls' and some boys' schools had been turned into barracks, munitions dumps and office space for Taliban officials. The schools that had remained open under the Taliban administration had received little support and many had also been neglected by the previous, especially *mujahideen*, administrations.

¹⁵ Interview with the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan, October, 2003.

Following President Hamid Karzai's selection as interim president, OTI elected to fund the following education projects:

- Twelve girls and coeducational schools, \$566,000, in Bamian (1), Herat (3), Kabul (2), Logar (1), Mazar-i-Sharif/Balkh (3) and Samangan (1)
- Eight boys' schools, \$238,000, in Bamian (1), Kabul (2) and Herat (5)
- Kabul teacher training facility, \$118,000
- Review of textbooks in Peshawar, Pakistan, \$16,000, to ensure they were "free of violence or other objectionable" content.

School rehabilitation was not spread equally around the country. Only one girls' school was in a Pashtun area and Herat received eight of the twenty rehabilitated facilities. U.S. forces were positioned in Herat at the time and there was a close partnership with the Governor, Ismael Khan.¹⁶ In Mazar-i-Sharif, the Sultan Razia girls' school (IOMKBL006) was selected for rehabilitation because it had been occupied by the Taliban and then bombed by U.S. forces. The school required extensive renovations as did a teacher training facility (IOMKBL006) in Kabul. The Sultan Razia school and the teacher training facility consumed 32 percent funds committed for school rehabilitation this period.



Water Supply in Ministry of Information and Culture Kindergarten

OTI-funded infrastructure work subcontracted through IOM, OTI's main implementing partner,¹⁷ was not always satisfactory, however. The Sultan Razia school, for example, required an additional \$7,664 in work to repaint, undertake plumbing repairs and replaster. The teacher training facility and most of the schools in Herat also required an additional funding allocation to repair initial work. This was not uncommon. A May 2005 evaluation report by Altai Consulting noted that 25 percent of IOM infrastructure projects visited had "quality" issues. They also reported that 14 percent of IOM infrastructure projects required additional rehabilitation work.¹⁸ From the beginning, IOM and OTI lacked a monitoring and evaluation unit to oversee the quality of the work OTI was funding, though the need was evident from the beginning.

Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA). Discussions surrounding the Bonn Agreement elevated what had been an Afghan women's association to ministry status. Sima Samar, head of an NGO, Shuhada, was selected as the MoWA's first minister. Initial discussions with the

¹⁶ Ismael Khan was a warlord widely criticized by women's and human rights groups for his restrictive policies and conservative interpretation of Islam. U.S. support of Khan was considered controversial.

¹⁷ IOM was selected as OTI's implementing partner because they had several field offices in Afghanistan and had worked as OTI's implementing partner in other countries. IOM was also willing to do virtually any type of project for OTI.

¹⁸ Altai Consulting, "A Study of the Afghanistan Transition Initiative (ATI) Impact & Lessons Learned," May 2005, pg. 33.

minister focused on the new ministry's mission, objectives and programming. Minister Samar favored running the ministry like a women's NGO, while advisors proposed that she seek an advocacy role for the ministry. The new ministry was sited on the grounds of the women's organization in buildings that had been occupied by the Taliban.

During this period, OTI funded three MoWA projects for \$110,000. Rubble was removed from the shelled auditorium the MoWA inherited (IOMKBL004), but funds to repair the collapsed roof were not made available, thus events such as the celebration of international women's day in 2002 were held in the 'open-air' auditorium.¹⁹ Other funds supported ministry building rehabilitation (IOMKBL008) and supplies for a Kabul-based women's resource center (RON009). While the support was important, it was incomplete and insufficient to help establish a functional ministry, even though this was one of the goals of OTI.

Ministry Kindergartens. Under Afghanistan's communist governments of the 1970s and 1980s, many Afghan ministries established kindergartens on ministry premises. Kindergartens opened as more women entered the work force, enabling mothers, even those still breastfeeding, to return to work with their infants and children. Men are allowed to bring children to kindergartens if they are widowers or if their wives are too ill to care for the children. The facilities function more as daycare centers than kindergartens, though some attempt is made to teach basic subjects to children. A fee of 50 afghanis (one dollar) per month per child is charged to cover lunch.²⁰

Kindergartens are important facilities for women and are regarded as highly safe places for children. OTI recognized the importance of such facilities and provided priority funding to Ronco²¹ to rehabilitate kindergartens in five ministries: Agriculture and Livestock, Information and Culture, Rural Rehabilitation and Development, Reconstruction, Water and Power. The \$55,000 committed, however, does not reflect a high level of commitment nor was it sufficient to fund high quality rehabilitation. Three years on, the repair work is unsatisfactory – with leaky roofs and pipes and broken door handles the norm. Much of the damage is not from normal wear and tear and appears to have been the result of low quality building repairs. Water supply was a problem in kindergartens visited at the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock and the Ministry of Information and Culture. Neither kindergarten has a facility or room for washing and changing children even though there are 70 to 100 children per facility. Women at the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock carry water to the building. Despite the difficulties, the Afghan women staff keeps the facilities remarkably clean.



Children in Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Kindergarten (donated toys on shelf)

¹⁹ As of June 2005, the auditorium was still without a roof.

²⁰ While one dollar may seem nominal, civil servants make, on average, forty dollars per month.

²¹ Ronco's contract was not extended beyond the end of 2003.

Gender Advisor. Due to the security restrictions limiting the number of USAID and OTI staff allowed in Afghanistan at any one time, a gender expert was hired through a strategic agreement with the NGO Mercy Corps and later through IOM. Since Afghan sensibilities require most activities to be divided along gender lines, hiring a gender advisor was critical. During the first six months of 2002, however, there was a “lack” of funding for gender-related projects. This statement, made by at least three interviewees, seems incongruous with the U.S. administration’s position that the U.S. was in Afghanistan, in part, to liberate and support Afghan women. Instead, priority funding of \$4.85 million, more than half of OTI funds this period, was given to support the Emergency Loya Jirga and the salaries of civil servants and international consultants. The “shortage” of funds for women’s programming limited the contribution the gender advisor could make since opportunities that arose were difficult to capitalize upon. The exact amount committed during this initial period for the gender advisor’s salary, housing and travel expenses is unclear, though it appears to be at least \$200,000 (IOMKBL001; IOMAFG004; RON024).

Media. During the first six months of 2002, OTI supported 17 media projects (not including loya jirga-related media projects) for \$1.95 million. About \$1.8 million covered training and equipment for the state-run Radio Afghanistan.²² Another \$148,000 funded two media organizations: AINA and the Development and Humanitarian Services for Afghanistan (DHSA). The media projects did not have specific components targeting women at this time, though with additional OTI support, AINA went on to provide numerous opportunities for female journalists and began setting up a nationwide media distribution network that later carried printed and audio materials that addressed issues of concern to girls and women. DHSA later founded Radio Killid and “Morsal,” a women’s magazine. Projects with Radio Afghanistan were later abandoned due to the lack of reform within the state media sector.

Emergency Loya Jirga. The Emergency Loya Jirga (ELJ) to elect a transitional president for Afghanistan in June 2002 was the last and the most significant event during this initial phase. The United Nations, overwhelmed with the responsibilities of conducting the ELJ, asked the U.S. government to assist in organizing the event. Five grants totaling \$3.18 million (35% of funding for this period) were allocated to IOM, UNDP, the Institute for War and Peace Reporting, and an individual, Larry Sampler. This allocation represented the most significant OTI funding pledges in early 2002.

The ELJ was critical to advancing Afghanistan’s political process and developing confidence in future political events that would impact the lives of all Afghans, male and female. Larry Sampler, the ELJ’s main logistical organizer, was key to the success and smooth operation of the event for the 1,500 Afghan delegates that included 160 women. Importantly, the women’s participation was facilitated by the event’s tight security arrangements, since a lack of security might have been used as an excuse to deny women’s participation. ELJ delegates selected Hamid Karzai, a moderate, to continue to lead Afghanistan. President Karzai had demonstrated his commitment to the rights of Afghan women shortly after assuming his role as interim president by signing “The Declaration of the Essential Rights of Afghan Women.” The document states that women are entitled to equality with men, equal protection under the law, institutional education in all disciplines, freedom of movement, freedom of speech and political participation and the right to wear or not wear the burqa or scarf.

²² Currently, about 35 percent of Radio-Television Afghanistan’s employees are female, though it is uncertain how many women were employed in early 2002.

June 17, 2002 – January 4, 2004

Transitional Presidency of Hamid Karzai through Constitutional Loya Jirga

394 grants, \$18.8 million overall (average \$47,000)

89 grants, \$5.23 million listed in the OTI database as having a ‘gender’ component (average \$58,764)

Once Hamid Karzai had been selected as President of Afghanistan’s Transitional Authority on June 16, 2002, the U.S. government gained confidence in Afghanistan’s future stability. During the next eighteen months, representing almost half of OTI’s tenure in Afghanistan, overall OTI grant approval increased from an average of 13.8 to 21.3 grants per month. However, projects with a component targeting women and children increased only marginally, from 4.3 to 4.9 projects per month.

In June 2002, OTI issued to implementing partners a document outlining funding criteria for small projects, those ranging from \$5,000 to \$50,000. The criteria included supporting the Afghan government, promoting ethnic balance, encouraging community participation and reintegrating women into society. The criteria provided direction, but lacked detail. For example, the first objective was to “reinforce the peace process by providing visible rehabilitation or reconstruction results for the Afghan people.” The guidelines did not specify how to link peace and reconstruction, however. Additionally, the requirement to “reintegrate women into society” is vague. Afghan women had disappeared from Afghanistan’s public sphere, but they remained part of society as a whole.

During this period, OTI received earmarked funding of \$3.6 million for women’s programming. In September 2002, the U.S. State Department provided \$100,000 in Economic Support Funds (ESF) for women’s activities and kindergartens; in March 2003, \$2.5 million in International Disaster Assistance (IDA) funds were given for women’s resource center (WRC)²³ construction and women’s activities; and in June 2003, an additional \$1 million in Development Assistance (DA) funds from EGAT/WID were provided for women’s resource center construction. Expenditures on kindergarten rehabilitation of \$260,000 during this period exceeded the \$100,000 ESF allocation. However, only \$1.88 million of the \$3.5 million allocation for WRC construction was committed during this period, mostly due to bureaucratic and legal entanglements discussed later in this section. Ultimately, some \$2.37 million was committed to WRC construction and furnishing and it is assumed that the remaining \$1.13 million was allocated to other women’s programming.

Also during this period, IOM claimed to have made greater attempts to gender mainstream by “assessing the implications for men and for women of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programs, in all areas and at all levels.”²⁴ IOM’s claims of gender mainstreaming are not fully supported by its programming outputs, however and IOM lacked female staff in at least two offices. Interviews and a review of project documentation does not show that women were consulted for *each* project or that proposed projects fully took into account project impacts upon women.²⁵

²³ Women’s resource centers (WRCs) were earlier referred to as provincial resource centers (PWCs). For this paper, WRC will be used.

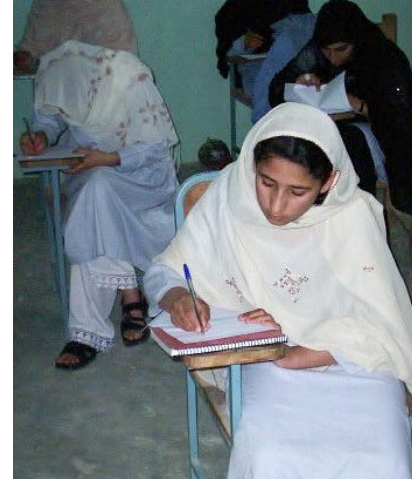
²⁴ IOM, “Gender Mainstreaming: Afghanistan Transition Initiative,” September 2004, pg. 3.

²⁵ IOM highlighted the constraints of gender mainstreaming in Afghanistan and documented them in its report, “Gender Mainstreaming: Afghanistan Transition Initiative,” September 2004, pgs. 25-26.

Program	Grants	Funds Allocated	Percentage of total
Community Infrastructure (not including schools)	190	\$7.91 million	42.07%
Media	52	\$3.10 million	16.50%
Women's Resource Centers	10	\$1.47 million	7.80%
Schools	27	\$1.20 million	6.38%
Constitutional Loya Jirga	10	\$0.69 million	3.67%
Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission	2	\$0.55 million	2.90%
Salaries for International Advisors	9	\$0.45 million	2.39%
Teacher Training Institutes	3	\$0.37 million	1.90%
Presidential Spokesperson	2	\$0.31 million	1.64%
Women's Income Generation	13	\$0.29 million	1.50%
Kindergartens	11	\$0.26 million	1.39%
Vocational Agriculture Training	3	\$0.22 million	1.20%
Accelerated Learning	2	\$0.13 million	0.69%
Mixed-Gender Hospital Training Facility	1	\$53,200	0.28%
Women's Dorm for Medical Students	1	\$40,700	0.22%
Other	58	\$1.75 million	9.30%

*Figures may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.

Education and Vocational Training. OTI continued to finance the rehabilitation of single-sex and coeducational schools, mostly in the north and west. Agreements for about 27 schools totaling \$1.2 million (6.38% of funding for this period) were signed. The distribution of schools did not promote "ethnic balance" since only four schools were in the southern part of the country and of these, the facility in Tirin Kot, Uruzgan was turned from a girls' school into a boys' school when it finally opened in 2005.²⁶ The schools in the north were being enlarged through the construction of additional classrooms in expectation that more female students would attend school. The evaluation team was unable to confirm that more girls were attending classes in these rehabilitated facilities, but since it was already common for girls to attend school in these areas, it is likely.



Lashkar Gah Nurse Training Facility

²⁶ IOM Kandahar reported that the local community was required to build the school's surrounding wall. The wall would protect the school and enable girls to have a culturally appropriate facility. The community failed to build the wall, probably because they did not really want or were not ready for a girls' school in their conservative and remote area. Building the wall would have signaled support for the girls' school. A U.S. Provincial Reconstruction Team agreed finally to build the surrounding wall, though the community then opened the school to boys.

Other mixed-gender and female-only education projects funded by OTI during this period included:

- Rehabilitation of teacher training institutes in Badakhshan, Badghis and Kunduz (\$367,300)
- Rehabilitation of a women's dormitory for medical students in Kabul (\$40,700)
- Accelerated learning courses for youth and young women in Parwan and Kapisa (\$126,000)
- Women's vocational agriculture training institute in Helmand (\$219,000)
- Mixed-gender training facility at Lashkar Gah hospital in Helmand (\$53,200).

The training facility at the Lashkar Gah hospital hosts three-year nurse training programs for men and women in separate classes. At the time of the evaluation team's visit, the students were taking year-end exams. The facility was well-constructed as was the nearby women's agriculture training institute. However, no women were seen at the agriculture institute and it did not appear to be the site of ongoing training. IOM staff confirmed that in four visits they had not seen any women at the center, either. A report from Mercy Corps (IOMAFG071) shows photos of women in training, though it notes that only three of fifty women reported that the training would impact their income. The institute includes a large agricultural plot, but it appears that men are now using the facility to incubate and hatch hundreds of chicken eggs and grow vegetables for their own income generation purposes. The institute may be more beneficial as a mixed facility, with courses alternating for males and females, but it is unclear who is running the compound and how it is being used.



Problematic Construction at
Gardez Provincial Women's
Center

Income Generation. About 13 projects totaling \$294,000 (1.5% of funds this period) supported income generation training for small-scale, traditional activities related to tailoring, poultry raising, literacy, business literacy, food hygiene, market gardening and beekeeping. Trainings targeted some ten to thirty women per activity and many included an additional health education or literacy component. According to IOM staff, training women in health and education topics was the real objective, but they had to make such trainings attractive to communities by highlighting a project's income generation component and potential. Implementing NGOs, however, often focused their attention on the income generation portion of the training and some courses were never carried out. The lack of clarity within IOM and NGOs, therefore, led to disappointment in cases where the income generation training was not sufficiently supported with marketing skills so that women completing the training could generate income. In a market gardening project (IOMHRT035) in Herat, for example, women and men worked in neighboring agricultural plots, but women were not allowed to bring the produce to market. Men, therefore, kept a large portion of the women's income. By contrast, during the same period, two projects totaling \$118,000 in Bamian rehabilitated city markets burned by the Taliban. While these two projects were good investments, the average was

\$59,000 per project for male beneficiaries and \$22,600 per project for female beneficiaries and the projects benefiting males did not have sustainability issues.

In addition to the projects supporting traditional women's employment, less traditional employment opportunities were supported in two projects. A \$50,000 grant in Mazar-i-Sharif rehabilitated a state-owned grain silo (IOMMZR008) that had been a Taliban prison. The silo had once employed 450 people, of which 160 were women. When the evaluation team asked to visit the silo, however, it was told that the silo was no longer operational. Another project in Farah supported the production of cement blocks by men and women (IOMHRT058). Despite difficulties with the contractor, high quality cement blocks were produced and sold. According to IOM project documentation, men found it "peculiar to buy blocks produced by women ... [b]ut as the quality was good, they had no further objections."²⁷ Like many OTI-supported income generation projects, however, not enough attention was paid to marketing. There were too many beneficiaries for the income the project was able to generate. Women did gain confidence, however, and men and women saw that women can undertake less traditional work with successful results.

Also during this period, IOM proposed adding a provision to all construction contracts requiring that contractors working on OTI-funded projects hire males *and* females. IOM proposed that contractors be required to have a workforce that would be 6.9 percent female. IOM came up with this percentage by asking staff members at a planning meeting to propose possible percentages of female employment that could be imposed upon contractors. The average figure, 6.9 percent, was thus rather arbitrarily selected.

According to documentation and interviews, this requirement was never strictly imposed since many communities and contractors balked at the idea of women's employment in construction. In other cases, male unemployment was high and communities and contractors were unwilling to "sacrifice" these jobs to women. In cases where women were employed, however, there were success stories. This included gabion weaving in the north and lunch preparation for contractors near Heart – both activities that can be done in the home. While the decision to require that 6.9 percent of workers be female was arbitrary, the concept was worthy and IOM should have worked more strategically to alleviate the concerns of men and regularize non-traditional female employment. Even normally conservative Pashtun women in Paktia told the evaluators that they were willing to work – without being asked if they wanted to work – and Afghan men have often shown flexibility in approving non-traditional projects for women if it results in additional household income. At times, detractors from this approach were IOM's own Afghan staff who were unwilling to support non-traditional projects and unable to come up with innovative approaches to women's programming.

Ministry of Women's Affairs, Women's Resource Centers. On January 8, 2003, USAID/OTI, MoWA and IOM signed a memorandum of understanding in which the U.S. agreed to support the construction and furnishing of fourteen women's resource centers (WRCs) that would facilitate training, research and communications. The U.S. formally committed \$2.5 million over two years to construct the centers. Since Afghanistan has 34 provinces, fourteen centers had to be prioritized, thus a list was developed by Women's Affairs Minister Sarabi in consultation with the USAID/OTI gender advisor. Five centers were designated for Pashtun-dominated areas, though there is no information on how priority provinces were selected.

²⁷ Source: IOM database.

There was also no indication of who would fund the additional twenty centers required to cover all provinces.

The agreement did not foresee the difficulties that would arise. The MoWA, a new ministry, did not have land in the provinces, thus land had to be acquired to construct most centers. This land acquisition and attempts to secure land deeds resulted in delays that dragged on for months as the courts, with their own functional difficulties, attempted to determine land ownership. The Government of Afghanistan also required that buildings be 40 percent complete before deeds could be transferred – while OTI required that land deeds be in hand prior to construction. In addition to the bureaucratic and legal delays, architectural designs for the WRCs had to be approved by the MoWA. Finally, ‘small, medium or large’ designs were approved, though they proved unsatisfactory to many locals. Typical complaints revolved around security – the lack of a protection wall and guardhouse²⁸ - and the inability to modify structures for hotter climates. Oddly, despite the prescriptive measures for building design, no standard list of furnishings and equipment was drawn up and the director of each center is free to make her own shopping list to be handed over to IOM. These wish lists are often extensive and have to be cut back by IOM staff.

MoWA staff is also less experienced than other civil servants and their roles as well as the roles of these new centers have not been fully clarified by the ministry. Moreover, some MoWA provincial staff head other organizations including schools and NGOs. It appears that some provincial directors of women’s affairs see WRCs as opportunities to expand their own work and personal agenda, not that of the government. As a result of these issues, two and a half years after signing the memorandum of understanding, only a handful of centers have opened. Some of the difficulties can be attributed to the fact that the centers arose as a result of discussions in Washington, not Kabul.

At the same time USAID/OTI signed the \$2.5 million-WRC agreement, the U.S.-Afghan Women’s Council (USAWC) announced \$1 million in grants to support training at WRCs. The USAWC was created by President Bush and President Karzai in January 2002 as a high-level political body comprised of notable American business people and Afghans to support projects for Afghan women. To date, however, the USAWC has been unable to raise funds to an amount that matches its political power and influence in Afghan women’s affairs, including WRCs. To date, the \$1 million in grant money for training at WRCs has not been raised.

Media. During this period, OTI approved 52 media grants totaling some \$3.1 million, a significant increase over the previous period. Programs to train and with a likely impact upon women included:

- Establishing 12 community radio stations, four with women journalists and managers
- Women’s journalism, photography and filmmaker training at AINA
- Kabul-based commercial Radio Arman
- Campus radio stations at Herat and Kabul universities established through Sayara
- Radio programs developed by the Baltic Media Center explaining Afghanistan’s constitutional process and by the Afghanistan National Participation Association highlighting women and the family, society, rights and politics.

²⁸ Since every facility in Afghanistan, especially those for females, requires security, not making adequate security arrangements is a major oversight.

A generator provided to state-run Gardez Television and Radio station (IOMAFGI 14) that is not connected to the city power grid also impacted women indirectly. The station broadcasts information about a range of topics, including health, education and elections. Station staff reported that women enjoy listening to broadcasts in Pashtu,²⁹ the local language, and are able to learn at home since most are not literate and this is the easiest way for them to obtain new information. For the upcoming parliamentary elections, the Gardez station has been searching for a way to boost its signal since it is currently able to broadcast only in a 20-kilometer radius. A booster would allow the station to reach more women, many of whom prefer state-run media.

OTI-funded journalism training through AINA directly benefited a handful of women journalists, though their work seems to be having a wider impact. For example, a class project entitled “Afghanistan Unveiled” by four women filmmakers was broadcast in the U.S. and Europe. AINA also set up a large media production and research center in Kabul that was open to all journalists – Afghan and international. The center is unique in that it has been able to overcome traditional male-female tensions in its work environment and daily operations and Afghan women felt safe working with AINA and undertaking less traditional journalism work. The current fate of AINA is unclear, however. Several of its senior international staff left to set up a private firm, Altai Consulting, and many of AINA’s clients followed. AINA received twenty grants totaling \$2 million over three years, but it has had difficulty reaching sustainability in a country where advertising is uncommon.

OTI’s support for commercial radio Arman FM was a gamble at first since the grant recipients were a team of three brothers, Afghan-Australian, whose expertise was in finance and management, not broadcasting. The station has proven a resounding success, however, not only as a functional radio station, but also for pushing the social agenda. The station’s format includes music, discussions about social issues and news. Initially broadcast only in Kabul, the station sparked wide debate on gender relations since male and female DJs and presenters were on the air at the same time, a revolutionary concept for Afghans, especially post-Taliban. Conservative Afghans argued that unrelated men and women on the air together was un-Islamic, while others supported the programming. To date, male and female DJs are still on the air together, possibly having smoothed the way for even more mixed-gender, culturally acceptable activities in the public sphere. In addition to the radio presenters, the station has also hired and trained a number of female technicians, fostering women’s professional development in a less traditional field.

Constitutional Loya Jirga. The December 2003 Constitutional Loya Jirga (CLJ) was another significant political event and the second loya jirga to be held according to the Bonn Agreement. Of the 500 delegates to the CLJ, twenty percent, about 95, were women. Some women, including Malalai Joya, a 25-year-old woman from Farah province, made headlines with their criticism of President Karzai’s inclusion of warlords in the constitutional drafting process. Women anxiously awaited the final draft of the constitution since this document was to define their future rights. After several days of debate, the constitution was revealed. It guaranteed equal rights and duties to men and women, though it also stipulated that “no law can be contrary to the beliefs and provisions of the sacred religion of Islam.” No further guidance was

²⁹ For more information on women’s radio listening, see: Internews, “Media Monitor: Afghan Women and the Media,” March 15, 2004 <http://www.internews.org/publications/Afghan_Media_Monitor_4.pdf>.

provided on the interpretation of this article and many Afghans, especially women, worry that conservative interpretations of the Quran based on this provision could limit their rights.³⁰

OTI was less involved in logistical arrangements for the second loya jirga and instead supported the CLJ process through ten grants to media and civil society organizations totaling \$694,000 (3.67% of funding this period). The media grants funded the production of educational radio talk shows prior to the CLJ and journalist training for real time coverage of the CLJ. In November 2002, OTI also provided \$52,000 to the constitutional drafting committee charged with writing a draft constitution for consideration at the December 2003 Constitutional Loya Jirga.

Two NGOs made important contributions to related civic education training. The Afghan Civil Society Forum (ACSF), a consortium of NGOs founded at Bonn, received \$354,000 from OTI and another \$1.65 million from international donors to conduct nationwide focus groups and training on the Afghan constitution and elections – training 1.8 million Afghans, a portion of whom were female. The Afghan Women’s Education Center (AWEC) received \$56,000 to provide peace building, political process and elections training to 780 non-literate Pashtun women. Through the project, a female *shura* was formed in Ahmedabad, Paktia. The process was so overwhelmingly successful that it was replicated in other parts of Paktia, a predominantly Pashtun province bordering Pakistan where it is difficult for outside agencies to work. The trainings resulted in high rates of female voter registration; solid, basic understanding of the Afghan political process by non-literate women; a demand for female education; and the understanding that mothers can create peace by raising boys who respect peace.³¹

Support for the CLJ and Afghan political processes also resulted in the strengthening of the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) whose creation was mandated in the Bonn Agreement and realized in a decree issued by President Karzai in June 2002. The AIHRC is charged with investigating human rights abuses and “realizing” democracy. The AIHRC is headed by Sima Samar, former Minister of Women’s Affairs, and has a women’s rights unit. In February 2003, AIHRC received \$51,000 in equipment for its resource center and in April 2004, OTI transferred \$500,000 in operational support to a UNDP trust fund in support of the AIHRC. The AIHRC is currently advocating for a national reconciliation process to address past human rights abuses, including abuses against girls and women.

³⁰ For an analysis of the Afghan constitution and its impact upon women, see Madhavi Sunder’s article, “The New Afghan Constitution: Will It Respect Women's Rights? Will Its Mixture of Religion and Democracy Work?” <http://writ.news.findlaw.com/commentary/20040115_sunder.html >

³¹ Shinkai Zahine, the head of AWEC, was initially concerned that the men of Ahmedabad, Paktia would not be receptive to AWEC’s training initiatives. She met with the men and they accepted AWEC’s training agenda. She is now a member of Ahmedabad’s male *shura*, and, surprisingly, four members of Ahmedabad’s female *shura* met with the male *shura* in this very conservative province to instruct men that voting cards for men and women have equal value, thus women cannot be denied the right to vote.

January 5 – November 3, 2004

Nationwide Voter Registration Campaign to Announcement of Hamid Karzai as Winner of Presidential Election

182 grants, \$14.1 million (average \$77,500)

46 grants, \$1.63 million with at least one component targeting women (average \$35,400)

Program	Grants	Funds Allocated	Percentage of total
Media	50	\$6.75 million	47.8%
Community Infrastructure	76	\$3.79 million	26.9%
Presidential Spokesperson	4	\$1.13 million	8.0%
Salaries for International Advisors	5	\$0.54 million	3.8%
Ministry of Health Housing	2	\$0.39 million	2.8%
Women's Resource Centers	5	\$0.38 million	2.7%
Women's Income Generation	14	\$0.28 million	1.9%
Mayor of Kabul	1	\$0.20 million	1.4%
Political Party Registration	1	\$82,300	0.58%
Civic Education for Women	4	\$66,800	0.47%
International Women's Day	4	\$24,200	0.17%
Women's Internet Club	1	\$21,500	0.15%
Other	15	\$46,953	3.33%

Income Generation. OTI's presence in Afghanistan was extended beyond December 2003, the initial expected closeout date. During this period, grant making for projects with female beneficiaries remained unfocused and insubstantial. Fourteen grants totaling \$279,000 (1.9% of funding this period) supported mostly traditional income generation projects for women including poultry raising, bee keeping, soap making, tailoring, carpet weaving and cheese making. Computer and carpentry training were also carried out in Herat and Kabul, respectively, and these were also small programs. Project ideas continued to lack creativity and seem to have arisen from IOM or local NGOs, not Afghan communities and rarely from women.

While the courses and income generation training were important for the women who attended, and health education and literacy courses were often included as a "bonus," the number of women trained is not significant and is unlikely to produce a "ripple effect" of change. If each of the 13 trainings reached an average of forty women,³² then some 520 women benefited. Field visits and monitoring reports revealed that women were frustrated with aspects of the income generation training, the portion of the project with the most appeal to them. For example, in a leather bag making project in Wardak, women were unable to continue making the bags they had been trained to sew because they could not travel to Kabul to purchase the required materials. In Gardez, women were trained to make preserves, though their production was taken by the NGO providing the training – and no compensation was offered to the women. In Kabul, female carpenters appreciated their training, but their products are not able to compete with those of men who have had years of training.

Despite the difficulties of project sustainability and organizing activities for women in Afghanistan, the projects succeeded on one level – they brought women out of their homes. Training sessions allowed women to be seen beyond the walls of their compound and meet

³² The figure of forty women per project might be generous.

other women several times for a particular purpose acceptable to the local community. Traveling to and from training centers or the homes of other villagers put women in the public sphere, an area often restricted to them by local culture. In rural areas, this physical movement, even of heavily veiled women, and visibility were probably the greatest project outcomes and could have been an objective of OTI-funded activities for women.

Other Women’s Projects. Other projects targeting women during this period included publication of “Morsal,” a weekly newspaper for women (\$161,000), support for International Women’s Day celebrations (\$24,200), creation of a women’s Internet club³³ at Balkh University (\$21,500) and civic education training prior to the first ever national presidential election on October 8, 2004 (\$66,800). However, the grants for women’s programming pale in comparison to the \$1.13 million allocated to train and support the office of one person, President Karzai’s spokesperson, during the same period. While the U.S. wanted to demonstrate support for the Afghan President and it did so by ensuring his office was represented professionally, the U.S. could have done the same for Afghan women by selecting an issue of importance to them and providing dedicated funding. While celebrations such as International Women’s Day are interesting, they do not advance a specific agenda since events focus on a single day, March 8, and in essence “expire” on March 9.

Media. The most significant portion of funding this period supported fifty media grants totaling \$6.75 million (47.8% of funding this period). Large grants went to AINA to support its media center (\$1.12 million); the Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR) to establish Pajhwak, an independent Afghan news agency,³⁴ to train journalists to report on the constitutional drafting process and the Constitutional Loya Jirga (\$1.47 million); Radio Arman FM to expand its signal to five provinces (\$421,000); and Tolo TV, a new independent television station founded by the same media group that started Arman FM (\$2.12 million). The independent television station also began pushing the social agenda like its sister station Arman FM. Men and women are on TV together and the news features a female weather person. While Tolo receives criticism similar to that leveled at Arman FM, state-run Television Afghanistan has begun imitating Tolo and now has a female weather person, also.

November 4, 2004 – June 30, 2005
Post-Presidential Election Period to Closeout of OTI Program
50 grants, \$3.46 million overall (average \$70,000)
8 grants, \$187,300 for projects with a component targeting women (average \$18,200 for seven projects and \$60,000 for one provincial women’s center)

Program	Grants	Funds Allocated	Percentage of total
Media	23	\$2.26 million	65.3%
Community Infrastructure	13	\$0.56 million	16.1%
Mayor of Kabul	2	\$0.30 million	8.7%
Income Generation for Women	4	\$0.10 million	2.9%
Women’s Resource Centers	1	\$60,000	1.7%

³³ It was reported that boys demanded and were granted access to the Internet club. When the evaluation team visited, however, the center was closed and it was unclear when and how often it was open.

³⁴ OTI through Internews had initially tried to build the capacity of state-run Radio and Television Afghanistan, but the results were so disappointing they elected to fund an alternate media source.

Program	Grants	Funds Allocated	Percentage of total
Ministry of Health Housing	1	\$50,000	1.4%
Civic Education for Elders	1	\$15,100	0.44%
International Women's Day	1	\$11,000	0.31%
Toys for Kindergartens	1	\$3,000	0.001%
Other	3	\$0.10 million	3.15%

During this final phase of operations, few projects included a component targeting women. Some \$2.26 million (65% of funding for this period) supported media projects, including \$294,000 for two large media studies by Altai Consulting and \$613,000 for Pajhwok, the newly independent news agency that broke away from IWPR when dissatisfied with their management. AINA also received \$156,000 to shore up its finances.

Women's programming received about five percent of overall support in this final phase of OTI programming. Grants were mostly for small-scale income generation training. A \$3,000 grant to make toys for kindergartens was also approved. The toys were welcomed at the centers, but the publicity surrounding the distribution of the toys far outweighed their economic and social value.³⁵ The Ministry of Women's Affairs received \$11,000 to celebrate International Women's Day 2004, and rehabilitation work began on the women's center in Faryab province. The WRC represented the largest grant targeting women – \$60,000. The WRCs left unfinished as of June 30, 2005 were handed over to USAID for completion.



Parwan Provincial Women's Center



Parwan WRC: Weak support on railing

³⁵ The toys were seen in two kindergartens, but the stuffed animals were used as decorations since children are not accustomed to playing with toys and the items were seen as too nice to be given to the children.

IV. Did OTI promote government legitimacy and how did such support impact women?

In December 2001 as part of the Bonn Agreement, Hamid Karzai was chosen to lead Afghanistan through an interim period leading to a national political process and elections. The new central government needed desperately to establish legitimacy since leadership for the past thirty years had been chaotic, with one administration after another toppled as communists, the mujahideen and finally the Taliban, sought and gained control of Kabul.

The gains made by Afghan women in the 1960s and 1970s were lost in the years of political upheaval and war. While women remained active throughout much of the war in university administrations, government service including the health and education fields, and the military, each year of warfare brought new challenges. *Mujahideen* commanders and warlords, many with U.S. support, rose to power and violence against women and their kidnapping and forced marriage increased. When the Taliban took Kabul in 1996 and much of the country came under its control it was, ostensibly, to bring peace and provide security for women who had suffered increasing victimization. The Taliban proved the worst violators of Afghan women's rights, however. But when they were toppled, regional warlords resumed their power struggles that included sexually violating women of rival ethnic groups and physically assaulting women who did not follow Taliban edicts, even though the Taliban was no longer in power. As a result, Afghan women, who were deeply traumatized, remained traumatized and were not able to begin the healing process.³⁶

President's Karzai's administration was not elected or even selected by a wide segment of the population, but Afghans were ready for a change and the majority of the population accepted the new interim administration or at least the peace it brought. However, the Afghan government had no funds of its own and its ability to raise taxes was limited. The new administration, therefore, was entirely dependent upon the international community to fund the political process laid out at Bonn that was supposed to lead to a legitimate national government in two and a half years.

National Political Process. OTI did not commit itself initially to a high level of support for Afghanistan's national political process since these activities fell under U.N. auspices. However, when the U.N. realized it would be unable to ensure smooth running of the June 2002 Emergency Loya Jirga, the first political milestone where a national council would elect a president, the U.S. government was asked to provide logistical and financial assistance. The U.S. responded through OTI.

This support to Afghan's first political milestone proved critical for Afghanistan's domestic and international credibility. OTI grants in support of the Emergency Loya Jirga (ELJ) totaled \$3.18 million. The funding and related programming were important not only in financial terms, but also for ensuring that this first major political event of "new" Afghanistan ran smoothly. In terms of logistics and security, it did. There were complaints about the inclusion of warlords in the process, though this may have been President Karzai's strategy for gaining their support rather than provoking their opposition. The ELJ also counted 160 women³⁷ among its 1,500 delegates, a

³⁶ Human Rights Watch, "Taking Cover: Women in Post-Taliban Afghanistan," May 2002.
<<http://hrw.org/backgrounder/wrd/afghan-women-2k2.htm>>

³⁷ Approximately 20 female delegates were elected from the provinces and another 140 were appointed since it was difficult to find women who could run as delegates for the Emergency Loya Jirga.

significant gain for women who had been excluded from the political process under the Taliban administration. The ELJ was the first national political development in years that took place in the capital with the support and attention of nearly all Afghans, many who watched and listened to proceedings with hope and pride. The success of the complicated logistical and security arrangements the ELJ required were a direct result of the OTI mechanism that allowed people such as Larry Sampler to be hired quickly and funds to be transferred rapidly. These arrangements also facilitated the participation of women who might not have been able to participate had security not been a high priority.

The Emergency Loya Jirga was the model for the Constitutional Loya Jirga (CLJ) of December 2003, however the U.N. was better able to manage logistical arrangements for this event. OTI grants in support of the constitutional process were significantly less than those for the ELJ and totaled about \$694,000. Grants went mainly to support focus groups organized by civil society organizations such as the Afghan Civil Society Forum (ACSF) and media groups such as the Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR) that trained journalists to report on the constitutional drafting process and the Constitutional Loya Jirga event. These OTI-funded grants impacted Afghans' understanding of the constitution-writing process at a national level and were able to reach men and women, though not equally. An evaluation of ACSF's outreach programs highlights challenges and successes and includes a section detailing women's training on the constitution.³⁸ There were many lessons learned, including that it was possible, though not necessarily easy, to reach women in remote areas and for these women to understand the basic constitutional and rights issues under discussion. Moreover, the educated women conducting the training learned much about rural Afghanistan and rural women, loosely knitting urban and rural women together as they began to discover and demand their newfound rights as Afghan women.

Additional OTI-funded training on the constitution was ad hoc and supported outreach to religious leaders, village elders and women in Baghlan, Bamian, Kapisa and Paktia provinces. Such training was not systematic and reached only a handful of communities where NGOs worked or could work. The approach was not strategic nor did it target specific communities identified as those of greatest need. Paktia was a province in which training could be described as a critical need, but outreach was done because AWEC could work there, not because the community was on a "critical" list since one did not exist.

OTI provided even fewer grants in support of activities for the October 2004 presidential elections; though some of the earlier training on the constitutional process conducted by civil society organizations such as the ACSF were relevant. Media reporting on all aspects of elections such as preparations, election day, and ballot counting was important and in high demand by Afghans and the international community, thus the media structure funded by OTI continued to provide awareness and serve the political transition process.

At a national level, therefore, OTI-funded grants enhanced the legitimacy of the government by funding programs. Women may not have benefited equally from the process since they are less literate and less politically powerful, however, they appear to have benefited overall. They took part in the Emergency and Constitutional Loya Jirgas, participated in trainings, and voted in the presidential elections. Some behind-the-scenes political machinations³⁹ marred these events in

³⁸ Azarbaijani-Moghaddem, Sippi, "Technical Lessons Learned from the Afghan Civil Society Forum (ACSF)/swisspeace Civic Education for the Constitution Process," 2003.
<http://www.swisspeace.org/uploads/ACSF/Publications/Final%20Evaluation%20Report_constitution_swisspeace.pdf>

³⁹ Some Afghans feel that the U.S. ambassador played too large a role in loya jirga events.

the eyes of some Afghans, especially women, but the flaws do not belong to OTI. Where OTI could have been stronger, however, was in thinking through the political process from the beginning, as detailed in the Bonn Agreement, and ensuring that OTI programming supported specific steps in the transition process. OTI's successful support to the ELJ came as a result of a request by the U.N., support to the CLJ was modest, and there was little direct support for the presidential election, even though one of OTI's objectives was to increase public information on the political process. OTI relied heavily on its media partners to broadcast messages about the political process, but Afghans also needed face-to-face training to understand the complicated process.

Sub-national Administration. While OTI support at the national level for the overall political process was effective for establishing the legitimacy of the fledgling Afghan administration, the record is mixed when looking at linkages between national and sub-national levels of government and communities. There are several reasons. First, the Afghan civil service is bloated. A civil service reform program has begun, which has turned the attention of civil servants from government work to securing their positions. Second, with an average monthly wage of forty dollars, civil servants feel that it is not their responsibility to monitor projects implemented by NGOs, international organizations and contract employees who are paid at least ten times more. Additionally, some civil servants are new to government employment or in new ministries, the most relevant example being the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA). Since the role of the MoWA remains unclear, however, some staff members are not interested in expanding their workload and level of responsibility since they see the additional burden as having no personal benefit.

The two ministries most involved in projects in which girls and women were to be beneficiaries of OTI grants were the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Women's Affairs. However, in the June 2002 document outlining funding criteria for OTI-supported projects, OTI did not specify that government officials had to be involved in projects, just that their priorities should be supported. OTI basically left the methods of including government officials up to its implementing partners and their NGO and private sector sub-contractors.

Ministry of Education: School Rehabilitation. With OTI funding, more than forty schools were constructed or rehabilitated. The Ministry of Education was the lead government ministry in these projects, though the Ministry of Reconstruction and Rural Development and Ministry of Planning were sometimes involved, also. Government involvement and effectiveness in project implementation were mixed. In a typical example, involvement of the Ministry of Education in the construction of the Qarchaqui School in Badghis (IOMHRT023) led to increased visibility and credibility for the ministry, according to project documentation. There were delays in completion of the school due to the onset of winter and some lack of capacity with the contractor, but during this time, the ministry met with the community and the school board to discuss construction issues and provide updates and information. In doing so, the ministry highlighted their role and established their credibility.

Rehabilitation of the Sultan Razia school in Mazar-i-Sharif followed a different track (IOMMZ010). The initial OTI-funded work to repair the school following Taliban occupation and bombing by U.S.-led Coalition Forces was unsatisfactory. OTI provided additional funding and a two-month timeframe to make a further \$7,450 in repairs to this important facility that offers classes for 6,000 girls in two shifts. Replastering, plumbing and repainting was ongoing during the May 2005 site visit by the evaluation team, but the school's assistant director complained about the workmen's slow pace. However, in addition to the noise of the

reconstruction work, the school had other problems. Nearly half of the teachers were not in attendance, with low pay cited as justification for their absence. The students' chairs were rickety and unstable, although their procurement had not been part of the OTI grant. The Ministry of Education was responsible for ensuring teacher attendance, securing desks and chairs for the school, and monitoring school rehabilitation, but there appeared to be weaknesses in overall facilities management. These weaknesses impact the project overall, thus even if the school is repaired satisfactorily, there are other problems that will tarnish the reputation of the school and the Ministry of Education. Low pay and poor quality furnishings are not limited to this school and are not an issue OTI can resolve, but they affect project outcomes and the government's ability to gain legitimacy through OTI-financed projects.

Other issues impacting government legitimacy included the selection of schools to be rehabilitated since schools selected for work were those visited by the ministry, not necessarily those most in need of renovation. Ministry of Education officials were not able to or did not want to travel to remote areas and concentrated their efforts on areas easiest to reach. And, despite the so-called ease of reaching the facilities that were rehabilitated, the work on many was unsatisfactory. A list of 34 projects that were reopened and allocated additional funds for rehabilitation work included 14 schools and training centers, 40 percent of projects on the list.

MoWA: Income Generation. With the Ministry of Women's Affairs, government engagement with OTI-funded projects usually revolved around income generation training – some that targeted poor and vulnerable women – and the construction of women's resource centers – that directly benefit MoWA staff. Income generation projects included sewing, carpet weaving, preserves making and beekeeping. Communities were sometimes reluctant to participate in such projects since NGOs were normally contracted to conduct income generation training before communities had been consulted about such training and understood its purpose. NGOs had to motivate communities to participate, therefore, rather than respond to community requests. A project in Badakhshan was one such example. The implementing NGO, Education and Aid Center (EAC), had to address the reluctance of a community to participate in a beekeeping and honey making project. According to project documentation, EAC had to speak with men and women in the local community and involve the provincial Department of Women's Affairs (DoWA) to gain project support. The community finally agreed to the project and it reportedly went well. One result was good government relations with the community and men supporting a women's project. This and related projects may have gone more smoothly, however, had such consultations formed a part of project design, not project implementation.

In Paktia province, a project implemented by the Afghan Women's Education Center (AWEC) began in a similar manner, with an NGO prepared to work, but the response of the "beneficiary" community uncertain. The head of AWEC wanted to work in Paktia, a high-security risk province, but was uncertain how she and her NGO would be received by the local Pashtun community. Nervous, she met with the male *shura* that listened to her and offered their trust and permission to conduct income generation and peace training for women. In the eight months of training that followed, women and men in six villages attended workshops about rights, including women's rights, elections and peace. Some 120 women also received training in candle making, tailoring and embroidery, though the focus of AWEC's involvement was peace training. The initiative was so successful it was repeated in other districts in Paktia⁴⁰ and, to

⁴⁰ Some of the project's success can be attributed to the fact that many in Paktia lived in Pakistan as refugees. Pakistan exposed some rural Afghans to new amenities such as electricity and facilities such as schools and clinics.

everyone's surprise, the percentage of women registered to vote in Paktia exceeded that of men by two percent.

Developing a relationship with Paktia's provincial DoWA director ran into several complications, however. AWEC invited the director to attend the peace workshops and she attended one, but declined subsequent invitations. Around the same time, the director was organizing her own OTI-funded trainings, tailoring, and jam and preserves making projects in her home (the women's resource center was still under construction). It was thought by some AWEC staff that the director did not like competition from other female-headed NGOs operating in "her" territory, thus she had little interest in supporting AWEC activities for women.⁴¹ While the director's attitude was personality-driven, not a reflection of MoWA policy, her behavior affected government–community relations and legitimacy.

MoWA: Women's Resource Centers. Personality issues also affected, and continue to affect, the completion of fourteen women's resource centers (WRCs)⁴² that are linked to the Ministry of Women's Affairs. U.S. government funding of \$2.5 million for these centers was committed in January 2003, though by June 2005, only a handful of centers was at or near completion. Their functions also remained unclear. Provincial MoWA staff members see the new centers as office space, while OTI envisions them as training and support centers for provincial women.

WRCs in Helmand, Paktia and Parwan were visited by the evaluation team. Directors of the centers in Paktia and Parwan discussed the physical structure and furnishings of the WRCs more than the types of training programs they hoped to offer. Moreover, since the MoWA as a new ministry did not own land in provincial capitals, land acquired for WRCs tends to be on the outskirts of town. The WRC in Helmand, still being completed, is one such example. The semi-remote location worried the director who expressed concern about how trainers and women would reach the center since there is currently no bus service.⁴³ The center she runs now is in a rented building near the center of town. She has asked representatives from the MoWA in Kabul to visit Helmand, see the programs she runs, and officially open the new center, but as of May 2005, her requests had been ignored.

It is unclear how these centers will affect government legitimacy. Those that are well run and able to provide services will obviously bring legitimacy. The majority of rural women will have difficulty accessing these centers, however, since women's freedom of movement remains limited. To reach rural women, the MoWA will have to conduct outreach from provincial capitals into rural areas, though this will not be easy. It is difficult to staff some offices and even then, many women are reluctant to travel and some of the provincial DoWAs have no vehicles. Sometimes the excuse is a lack of security and other times government employees simply do not see travel as part of their work. Even the minister has traveled little since assuming her position and provincial staff report that they have received few if any visits from Kabul-based staff, even though such visits have been requested. UNIFEM, the U.N. agency supporting programs benefiting women, has played a role in building the capacity of the MoWA since its creation, but that has not been enough to ensure a functioning ministry and provide outreach to

⁴¹ Afghan Women's Educational Center, "Women's Community Participation, Awareness Raising and Support," September 8, 2004.

⁴² Three additional centers were constructed with USAID, not USAID/OTI, funding. They are not considered in this report.

⁴³ It is expected that a civic center will be built in the same area as the WRC and such a facility will attract public transportation, but the center's completion date is still unknown.

women province-wide. Of course, the ministry needs time to develop, understand its role, and become effective, but that is a long-term goal not achieved through infrastructure alone. And, to quote a member of Ahmadabad, Paktia's women's *shura*, "We need education and freedom. We don't need buildings."

IOM, as implementing partner, tried to foster government-community relations in some projects by asking ministry staff to accompany them on project monitoring visits. Sometimes, securing ministry participation was as simple as sending a car to pick up an official. At other times, a nominal per diem was required since officials felt that those making more money – the international organization and NGO staff – were responsible for monitoring work and did not see their role in the project. Other times, the ministry "contribution" was complaints about work being done. While their criticism usually focused on minor issues, such as paint color, some officials made little meaningful contribution to projects.

At the sub-national level, therefore, government legitimacy as a result of an OTI-funded project differed from project to project; was sometimes impacted by issues beyond the control of the community, OTI or the implementing partner; and was personality driven. IOM also had different capacities, female staffing and security concerns in each of its sub-offices, impacting the development of relationships. There was also a high turnover of international IOM staff, though the Afghan IOM staff remained relatively constant. Recommended guidelines for engaging government staff could have been developed and employed across ministries, with an attempt to gain the same level of support in all parts of the country with all ministries impacted by OTI grant-funded projects.

Media. Media projects impacted government legitimacy and women's lives. Each time the media pushed the social agenda, often with respect to women's issues, the government response was awaited – since its response would signal continued support for or curtailment of women's rights. An important example occurred in January 2003 when state-run Kabul Radio and Television played a 1970s video of female singer Salma. Members of Afghanistan's Supreme Court objected to the broadcast, stating that women should not be seen singing and dancing on television. Kabul Radio and Television, with the support of the Karzai administration, ignored the protests and continued playing such videos, saying that the new constitution guaranteed the equality of men and women, making women's appearance on television legal and equal to that of men.

While the video of Salma was not related to an OTI project, the discussion surrounding its broadcast impacted OTI-funded projects, notably independent and community radio stations, especially those with female broadcasters and presenters. AINA, Arman FM, the Internews network of independent radio stations, and Tolo TV all benefited from the liberalization of the media and the government's support of women on radio and television. Though the geographic areas in which women are able to be heard on the air are limited, the fact that their legal status was upheld was a victory for women and the wealth of media projects OTI funded in support of women's programming and pushing the social agenda.

Programming on OTI-funded independent stations impacts the legitimacy of the government because programs considered controversial are debated and the government must take a position. While the Afghan government has not always stood on the side of a free and independent media,⁴⁴ it has not interfered with programming on OTI-funded media outlets. This

⁴⁴ In June 2003, the editor-in-chief and a journalist for the weekly "Aftab" were accused of blasphemy and the fatwa department of the Supreme Court issued death warrants.

means that even though male and female DJs and presenters are on the air together at Arman FM and Tolo TV (projects receiving 5% of all OTI grants) and some of their programming is considered controversial, the broadcasts are still permitted and the government has not moved to ban them. To date, this has represented important gains for women and demonstrated government commitment to women's rights and development.

V. Did OTI encourage participatory, democratic processes in projects it funded and, if so, what impact did these processes have upon women's connectedness to each other, their communities and local authorities?

Afghans have a history of discussing issues and reaching consensus through participatory, democratic councils called "*shuras*" or "*jirgas*."⁴⁵ Decisions of *shura* members affect an entire community and recommendations address anything from dispute resolution to capital punishment. Traditionally, Afghans have not included women on these decision-making bodies, however, that has started to change. Following President Karzai's assumption of power in December 2001, the status of women and their political power in the public sphere have increased. Developments have included:

- Female delegates at the 2002 Emergency Loya Jirga and 2003 Constitutional Loya Jirga
- Female *shuras* created under the National Solidarity Program, a primarily World Bank-financed project that funds community block grants nationwide
- Presidential election in which all votes were counted equally and a female candidate ran for president.

OTI funded projects amidst these major social changes and OTI grants in support of education, income generation, civic education, media development and women's resource centers promoted different levels of connectedness.

Women's Connectedness to Each Other: The rehabilitation of girls' and coeducational schools was important since it *reopened* public space for Afghan females. However, it did not necessarily increase women's connectedness to each other. Income generation and civic education projects, by contrast, connected women in *new* ways and prompted social change in some villages. However, OTI funded only 22 income generation projects for women totaling \$423,000, less than one percent of all grants. An estimated 900 Afghan women, a very small number, benefited from such training. The trainings combined income generation (IG) skills with health and literacy courses. The IG portion of the training was used to lure women to courses and obtain the permission of reluctant husbands and fathers who were interested in women's income earning potential, but not necessarily their learning potential – at least initially.

Though the health and literacy training were supposed to take precedence, income generation activities got the most attention, and in some cases, the health and literacy training did not take place. Overall, the economic benefit of the training was marginal at best since training did not include marketing or marketing support. The women's market garden in Herat was one such project where a lack of marketing skills hindered women. Where income generation projects succeeded, however, was in providing social and psychological benefits. One of the most common comments made about income generation projects was that they provided women with a legitimate reason to leave the house and meet women they might not have met

⁴⁵ *Shura* is used most commonly in Dari and *jirga* is used most commonly in Pashtu.

otherwise. While leaving the house and talking to other women may seem trivial, they are important freedoms for Afghan women, many of whom have limited movement, are unaware of their rights and are almost invisible in their own communities. There is also anecdotal evidence that women involved in training and meetings are for the first time telling their husbands that “outside responsibilities” require that they be away for part of the day. Others have told their husbands to take lunch with them to the fields since training or meetings will run through lunchtime and the women will not be at home to prepare food.

The evaluation team asked women if there was a difference between talking to women in their own home versus talking to women in another gathering place, such as in the home of a village leader or a nearby training center. Women in the Amadabad, Paktia *shura* (IOMGDZ048) responded that when they got together as a *shura*, they discussed girls’ education, voting and voter registration, and literacy. They added that they had not discussed these issues in the past because they were “blind,” but literacy, peace and income generation training had opened their eyes and minds.

Civic education courses, including a project run by the Afghan Civil Society Forum (ACSF) in 302 districts, had a similar impact and brought women together to discuss their political and human rights (IOMAFG027). Educated women worked with non-literate women and each learned about the other as they bridged the urban-rural divide. Importantly, educated, mostly urban, women began to understand the mentality of rural women, the physical hardships of rural life, and the challenges to improving the quality of life in rural areas, especially for women. However, not all educated Afghan women are equal. Women-led NGOs hired educated Afghan women, though many of these women had little training experience and were unprepared to train others. This was not taken into consideration adequately by organizers at the ACSF.⁴⁶ OTI also did not fully consider the constraints of working with recently-established, women-led NGOs, though working with women-led NGOs was an OTI goal. NGOs established in the 1980s and 1990s by Afghan refugee women in Pakistan had significantly more experience, making these NGOs more successful in working with communities. Newer organizations could not have been expected to perform to the same standards.

The training courses built the capacity of all women involved. In projects where trainees were treated fairly,⁴⁷ trust developed between women who initially saw themselves as very different from each other. The experiences are important for shaping Afghanistan’s social and economic development since it is the educated women who will serve as links between the Afghan government/international community and non-literate women. Facilitating these linkages should have been a broader OTI objective.

Women’s Connectedness to their Local Communities

Some OTI grants connected women to their local communities by increasing women’s presence in the public sphere and expanding their roles. Prior to implementation, projects involving women and girls had to be discussed with the community whose decision makers were men. Especially in rural areas, these discussions about females meant they existed, and projects targeting females meant they were people worthy of financial investment. Sometimes men were

⁴⁶ Azarbaijani-Moghaddem, Sippi, “Technical Lessons Learned from the Afghan Civil Society Forum (ACSF)/swisspeace Civic Education for the Constitution Process,” 2003, pgs. 54-60.

http://www.swisspeace.org/uploads/ACSF/Publications/Final%20Evaluation%20Report_constitution_swisspeace.pdf

⁴⁷ Women in a jam making project in Gardez organized by the Director of Women’s Affairs and an NGO, the Female Rehabilitation and Development Organization, felt cheated by the program since they were given just a few jars of jam and the rest was taken by the NGO.

reluctant to allow outsiders to work with women in their villages since men feared outsiders might bring “immorality.”⁴⁸ It is unclear how many proposed projects were rejected by male community members, but often, initial reluctance did not become a major stumbling block. Logically, men, who are tasked with protecting women, needed to know who wanted to work in their village and why. Once programs were explained, they were implemented with village support, facing only the usual problems of working in rural Afghanistan – insecurity, weather extremes and a lack of capacity.

Education. In addition to providing education and employment opportunities, girls’ school rehabilitation returned female students and teachers to the public sphere since they had to travel to and from school. This visibility reconnected women and girls with the wider community physically and psychologically – since the community agreed it was acceptable for women and girls to return to the public sphere and women and girls could again believe they had the right to travel outside their compounds.

Infrastructure. Also, OTI-funded small-scale infrastructure projects such as bridges and handpumps brought some benefits to women, though projects were not undertaken for that reason. Such projects marginally connected women to the larger community since bridges make it is easier to transport women to health care facilities (IOMAFG005), where they exist, and handpumps bring water closer to the home (IOMKBL183), allowing women to meet at a central location. Women were seldom, if ever, consulted on project design, however, so in some cases adjustments had to be made after project completion. In Qalai Patak, Gardez (IOMGDZ003), for example, water taps were placed so close to the ground that women could not wash clothes and dishes. The taps later had to be changed.

In Aybak, Samangan (IOMMZ056), a water reservoir created difficulties for the village women. During construction, the foremen asked the women to cook their lunch. The men brought just enough meat and vegetables for themselves, and did not offer to share the food with the women or pay them for their services. The women resented being used as unpaid servants. The women also commented that the placement of the water reservoir was problematic since it was built near a small stream that swells during seasonal flooding. Thus, when the spring torrents came and the women were alone in the village, they had to band together to move stones that would redirect the muddy floodwater away from the drinking water reservoir. The women were proud of their efforts and pleased that they had protected the water not only for their village, but for those from neighboring villages who also drew water. Few except the village women knew the role they had played, but their efforts connected them to the wider community and earned the wife of the man charged with overseeing the reservoir a key to the reservoir’s door.

Media. Women were also connected to the local community through media, mostly radio, in two ways. First, radio brought women’s voices and women’s opinions into the home to be listened to by men and women. For example, local radio stations such as Radio Rabia Balkhi in Mazar-i-Sharif and Radio Zohra in Kunduz bring women’s and men’s voices with a familiar language into the home. This is important since many women understand only their local dialect.⁴⁹ Also, locally produced health and election messages and local news, appeal to Afghan

⁴⁸ In the 1970s, Soviets and Afghan communists advocated for girls’ education and liberation from the veil. Rural communities were scandalized by the short skirts and dresses worn by urban women. This tension in part fueled the long-running warfare of the 1980s and 1990s.

⁴⁹ Men tend to understand more languages and more dialects since they hear and speak other languages in the market.

women more than national and international events.⁵⁰ Second, radio links all Afghans. And even if more complicated national programming is produced in Kabul, such programming connects all Afghans to the national, on-going political process.

Over its three-and-a-half-year program, OTI funded numerous media outlets through the Internews network and Moby Capital partners including 14 community radio stations, three independent radio stations, and one TV station. Larger independent media, Arman FM and Tolo TV, also connected women to the greater community, though it was in terms of advancing the social agenda for all women. Female DJs and TV presenters placed women squarely in the social arena and opened new possibilities for women's careers, visibility, and influence in the public sphere. Though currently limited to large cities, the stations' music and entertainment programming is popular among men, too.

Women's Connectedness to Local Authorities

The Ministry of Women's Affairs and Ministry of Education were the government bodies most involved with OTI-funded projects involving women, though there was an inherent "women's connectedness" associated with these ministries since they already employed female school teachers and other women. In terms of outreach to more women, however, the record is mixed.

Ministry of Education. The Ministry of Education is responsible for running government schools. With the thirst for education and the return of female teachers to the workplace, the ministry did not have to conduct outreach to attract girls to its facilities. In fact, the ministry was overwhelmed by the three million children nationwide, more than double the number expected by the government, who flooded back to schools in 2002. The reopening of facilities highlighted the ministry's lack of teachers and funding to pay its existing employees. OTI supported the rehabilitation of some 40 primary and higher education schools, but concentrated only on physical structures, sometimes not ensuring that latrines and water supplies were also provided (IOMMZR004). OTI also did not supply desks, chairs, and supplies to schools, leaving their provision up to the over-stretched ministry.

Ministry of Women's Affairs. In contrast to the Ministry of Education's clear mandate, the MoWA, has an unclear mandate and uncertain program funding. While some provincial DoWA directors organized programs in their provincial offices, others conducted outreach and became involved in OTI-funded income generation programs. As mentioned earlier, MoWA staff in Badakhshan was credited with playing a significant role in the success of a beekeeping training, while the director in Paktia was reluctant to play a role in civic education and peace building training conducted by AWEC.

Although income generation projects were only a small part of the OTI grant portfolio, in provinces in which the DoWA director was dedicated to programming and outreach, linkages were established. What is not clear at this time, however, is whether follow-on projects will be developed to take advantage of the synergies created. Funding constraints in the ministry will limit activities to those with external donor support. Furthermore, women recognize that the Afghan government is unable to fund projects and funds come from the international community.

⁵⁰ Altaï Consulting, "Afghan Media: Three Years After," September 2004 to March 2005.
<<http://www.altaiconsulting.com/dyn/monitoring-and-evaluation/projects/media-evaluation-reports.html>>

One such example is the construction of the women's resource centers (WRCs). The construction stimulated some increased contact between provincial MoWA staff and Kabul-based MoWA staff, but provincial women outside the ministry have had little if no involvement in the centers. In remote areas, it is unlikely women have even heard of the centers. Moreover, if they have, it is unlikely they see the WRC as a facility that can serve their needs since the difficulties of reaching the centers make their services impractical for most women. Travel to provincial capitals from remote areas is difficult, and women must be accompanied by a male relative. Moreover, WRCs are limited to 14 of 34 provincial capitals. Their impact initially will likely not extend beyond these cities and their immediate surroundings. It is unclear when the other twenty centers will be constructed and who will fund them.

Despite the difficulties of linking MoWA staff with women province-wide, it is even more difficult to link male officials with women. Male government officials expressed interest in learning women's opinions about projects, but they were unable to approach the women directly. They are constrained by cultural considerations that keep men and women separate and do not allow men to ask questions about another man's female relatives. The women also want to have their voices heard by government officials, but as yet, the link does not exist.

Improving Connectedness. There is an assumption by many that Afghan women do not know how to go about improving their lives, so they are often not asked. While it is true that non-literate women can have difficulty articulating the types of projects that might benefit them, when time is taken to discuss issues in a language the women can understand, they make practical suggestions.

For example, women in Paktia told the evaluators that a girls' school should be constructed in their village. They thought that one day a week, after school hours or on Fridays, the school could be used to host a women's-only market. Women would be buyers and shopkeepers selling their own products. The market would provide not only income and a chance to improve numeracy skills, but also an opportunity for women to gather in a culturally acceptable place to share ideas and meet other women.

OTI's implementing partners, IOM in particular, did not develop a method for soliciting and incorporating such input from female beneficiaries into project design. Women were not asked what types of programs they would find useful and, after project implementation, their experiences were seldom incorporated into lessons learned and new projects. Instead, project ideas were generated during discussions among IOM, NGOs and government officials. Women were expected to accept the projects designed to "benefit" them. Also, less traditional projects involving women, such as their employment in construction projects, were not discussed with women themselves, but agreed between the contractor and IOM. This approach resulted in community reluctance to participate in some projects, though after discussions, communities often agreed to participate. Better designed projects might have arisen had the discussions been undertaken prior to project design so that community concerns could have been taken into consideration and thus delays minimized.

In OTI's July 2002 strategy (draft), the only objective that mentioned women proposed that OTI programs:

Build stronger connections between civil society and emerging government structures **by engaging key civic groups as partners to bridge communities and**

government entities in the identification and implementation of projects with particular attention to women and women's issues.

Women still need separate “bridges” in Afghanistan to establish connectedness with local authorities. OTI did not adequately identify and begin to develop systematically a way to support such linkages, however. In some cases, experienced NGOs such as ACSF and AWEC were the means to link women with government ministries and wider political developments. In other cases, ministries such as the Ministry of Women's Affairs should have been further supported to reach out more actively to women rather than construct facilities that in some ways limit them by situating them in buildings. OTI funded both types of initiatives and both had successes, but the funds committed by OTI in Afghanistan were divided among too many actors to have made an impact overall on Afghan women during its three-and-a-half-year tenure.

VI. Summary and Recommendations

From October 2001 to June 2005, OTI approved 714 grants totaling \$46.6 million for projects in Afghanistan. Of these, some 170 grants totaling \$7.9 million, about 17 percent, were designed, to some degree, with women and girls in mind.⁵¹ This figure includes some media programming, but does not fully capture elements where women were trained to become media professionals, especially with regard to Tolo TV and Arman FM where hiring women became routine. In sum, however, \$7.9 million is not a significant sum of money over three and a half years, especially considering that \$2.5 million of this amount funds the construction and furnishing of women's resource centers whose function is as yet unclear.

Overall, projects targeting women and girls came through support of media, education, income generation, Ministry of Women's Affairs, and civic education projects. Despite attempts at gender mainstreaming, project implementation that could in some way benefit women and girls lacked an overarching national strategy, resulting in a patchwork of barely-related projects. Since there were similar needs nationwide with respect to females, programming that was more replicable should have been piloted early on, tested and refined by NGOs rather than “invented” for each project. The strategy would not have had to be complicated and could have been a table of proposed projects followed by proposed input from women.⁵²

Based on the findings of this review, the following are recommendations to OTI applicable to this and other Afghanistan-like conditions:

Have a framework for OTI activities at the outset. OTI and OTI staff were new to Afghanistan and USAID had not been significantly engaged in the country since the early 1990s. There was a shocking lack of information about country conditions and Afghan social and political dynamics, especially the possibilities for supporting Afghan women. Afghanistan could have been identified as an “OTI-Watch” country, and a researcher could have followed political developments in Afghanistan as well as media, humanitarian assistance and civil society actors over the years. Obviously, the date or even possibility for engagement would not have been known, but OTI would have been much better prepared to engage on the ground and could

⁵¹ Not included were seven grants totaling \$331,000 for water supply projects and three grants totaling \$450,000 funding construction of a housing compound for health professionals where women were noted to be potential beneficiaries. If these were added in, the percentage would rise to 18 percent.

⁵² Pages 52 to 55 of a 2002 European Commission food security report provide a simple, yet effective, model <http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/cpcm/cp/doc/afgrmm_food.pdf>.

have had a framework for operations rather than throwing money initially at a handful of ill-conceived projects. OTI also would have been much more aware of the successes NGOs, civil society organizations and U.N. agencies had working with Afghan women in Afghanistan and refugee camps in Pakistan and how these successes came about.

Invest in rehabilitation, not new construction. Construction of new facilities is generally beyond the timing and scope of a two-to-three-year OTI program. The Omara Khan school in Kabul, the women's resource centers, and the Women's Agricultural Training Center in Helmand faced difficulties in construction, safety, usage and land deed acquisition. New construction tested the bounds of OTI's abilities, made even more difficult by the fact that OTI had no international engineers on staff. OTI-funded rehabilitation work was sometimes as problematic as new construction, but OTI has more flexibility when dealing with additional months to rehabilitate a facility, not additional years to complete new construction. Moreover, OTI should *invest* in rehabilitation to produce quality work since ministry buildings and schools are permanent government structures whose functionality will impact the legitimacy of a government for years.



Two years' construction results at the Omara Khan School in Kabul

Understand Afghanistan's pre-conflict state to use the comfort zones of the past to reach the future. OTI funded rehabilitation work in fifteen ministry kindergartens that were culturally acceptable and remembered fondly from the pre-war, communist government days. That the kindergartens were not new concepts made such projects easy to implement. The kindergartens brought back to work female civil servants who had been banished to their homes during the Taliban administration. Kindergarten rehabilitation also created a demand for more such facilities, signaling that women wanted to return in force to Afghanistan's public sphere.

Identify a few basic objectives to foster women's participation, especially in the political process. OTI was not in Afghanistan for the long haul and could not have been expected to resolve all of the problems facing Afghan women. Calls by the U.S. Administration to liberate Afghan women, however, raised expectations that assisting women was to be a top priority. With OTI's objective of supporting increased participation in the political process and widespread Afghan support for the new political process, OTI missed an opportunity to identify 'increased women's participation in the political process' as a specific objective and develop an appropriate strategy. Socio-cultural norms in Afghanistan require a separate strategy to reach women, and OTI's failure to articulate one or two objectives targeting Afghan women and develop a gender strategy, especially since the U.S. Administration was strongly voicing its support, seems to show an unwillingness to fully take on the complicated environment in which it worked and develop an appropriate and inclusive program.

The objective of ‘increasing women’s participation in the political process’ could have been one of the most important aspects of OTI programming and included a two-pronged approach to separately target urban and rural women. The small and sometimes confusing approach to income generation projects, the most common way OTI and IOM tried to include rural women in projects, expended time and money that could have been programmed for more targeted results. Additionally, had provincial MoWA offices and local women-led NGOs, upon whom

OTI and IOM relied for female program implementation, been following a nationwide approach, all women involved in such programming would have moved along a similar trajectory.



Non-functional toilet facilities with locked door and missing door handle at the Kabul courthouse

OTI also could have had the basic objective of making Afghan women more visible in their communities, since the Taliban had done everything it could to make them invisible and nonexistent. Increasing ‘visibility’ includes girls going to school, women being treated at clinics, and women finding employment. While OTI supported schools, clinics and women’s employment, the most important element of these activities was the return of women and girls to the public sphere and the resumption of an active role in public life and the country’s future, not the mechanics of project implementation.

Engage as soon as possible in the more politically problematic geographic areas. OTI and its implementing partners worked where they could in Afghanistan, a country with a high level of insecurity, an emerging drug trade and drug mafia, and riddled with landmines. OTI is proud to claim it has projects in every province, but the distribution of projects is highly inequitable, with the northern provinces and the west benefiting most. Those are the areas in which it is easiest to work and the areas that will progress even without external assistance. To make the transition process lasting, therefore, OTI should concentrate its efforts in the areas that might get left behind by the swiftly moving political processes. For example, it is difficult to work in some southern Pashtun areas due to increased violence. One PRT team member noted that in the early stages of the transition, some now difficult areas had been relatively calm, and OTI missed an opportunity by not capitalizing on the initial peace dividend and working in these areas.

Take risks with projects that encourage dialogue, rather than armed conflict, to support public debate that addresses controversial social issues. Two resoundingly successful types of projects were not obvious “winners” in the initial stages. Funding major independent media – Arman FM and Tolo TV – with non-media partners in a market where advertising was virtually unknown and a women’s *shura* in a conservative Pashtun area would not have been flagged as projects likely to produce successful results or receive Afghan government support. However, both projects were the ideas of Afghans with a vision for the “new Afghanistan,” who had successful track records, were willing to push the social agenda and take

calculated risks. These projects paid off much more handsomely than typical small infrastructure rehabilitation projects that communities or the government might have been able to do on their own.

Evaluation Team Site Visits, May – June 2005

Location	Project ID	Grant Title	Grant Amount	Evaluation Mechanism
Kabul				
Kabul	RON007	Kindergarten Rehabilitation: Ministry of Agriculture & Livestock	\$23,945	Site visit
Kabul	RON010	Rehabilitation of Ministry of Information and Culture Building	\$96,845	Site visit
Kabul	RON011	Kindergarten: Ministry of Information and Culture, Kabul	\$9,966	Site visit
National	RON029	Provision of Communication (CODAN system) for 7 provinces	\$81,690	Site visit to Helmand
Kabul	RON047	Establishment of Arman FM – Private Radio Station in Kabul	\$228,802	Meeting with the Mohseni Brothers
Kabul	RON048	Office Supply for Women’s State Minister Office, Kabul	\$4,857	Site visit; Meeting with Minister
National	RON053	Provision of Communications (CODAN system) for 21 Provinces and 4 in Kabul	\$194,728	Site visit to Parwan
National	RON060	Peace Building Training for 50 Afghan Journalists in 15 Provinces	\$9,171	Meeting with SDF
Kabul	RON064	Construction of Guard House for Ministry of Information & Culture	\$4,435	Site visit
Kabul	RON073	Renovation of Kabul Courthouse	\$81,658	Site visit
Kabul	RON074	Support for 12 Provincial Peace Building Workshops	\$36,580	Meeting with SDF
Kabul	RON077	Renovation of Kabul Courthouse to Protect Property Documents	\$57,077	Site visit
Kabul	RON079	Provision of Peace Building Training of Trainers	\$33,082	Meeting with SDF
Kabul	RON085	Production of Marble Signs for USAID Projects	\$5,191	Site visits
Kabul	RON086	Peace Training for Community Leaders	\$1,956	Meeting with SDF
Kabul	RON087	Renovation of New City Park	\$32,552	Site visit
Kabul	RON093	Salary for System Analyst for Property Documents	\$3,350	Meeting with Randy Willard
Kabul	RON095	Boundary Wall for National Archives Building	\$25,630	Site visit
Kabul	RON102	Organization of Kabul Property Documents	\$26,206	Site visit to courthouse

Location	Project ID	Grant Title	Grant Amount	Evaluation Mechanism
Kabul	SAMPLER	Technical Support to UNDP Loya Jirga Logistics (Larry Sampler)	\$81,175	Meeting with Larry Sampler
Kabul	UNDP002	UNDP Trust Fund – Loya Jirga Operations	\$3,000,000	Meeting with Larry Sampler
National	IOMAFG004	Gender Sectoral Expert – Judy Benjamin 2	\$47,113	Phone Interview
National	IOMAFG006	Production of Project Signs	\$30,645	Site visits
National	IOMAFG008	Training for Afghan Women Film Makers, Kabul	\$97,110	Meeting with AINA
Kabul	IOMAFG024	Gender Sectoral Expert – Judy Benjamin 3	\$7,919	Phone Interview
Kabul	IOMAFG027	Public Education of the Constitutional Processes in 302 Districts	\$353,850	Meeting with Afghan Civil Society Forum
Kabul	IOMAFG050	Rehabilitation of the Post Office Building in Shahrenaw, Kabul	\$47,136	Site visit
Kabul	IOMAFG080	Four Film Clips Promoting Women and Development in Afghanistan	\$34,570	Meeting with AINA
Kabul	IOMAFG087	Independent Commercial Television: Transmitter Equipment	\$298,626	Meeting with the Mohseni Brothers
Kabul	IOMAFG091 to 095	Independent Commercial TV: Transmitter Infrastructure & Equipment	\$284,738; \$283,724; \$276,140; \$293,001; \$286,531	Meeting with the Mohseni Brothers
Kabul	IOMAFG108 IOMAFG109	Independent Commercial TV: Studio Production Equipment	\$286,531; \$108,640	Meeting with the Mohseni Brothers
Kabul	IOMAFG125	Assessment of the Role of Media & Journalists in the Election Period	\$14,882	Meeting with The Asia Foundation
Kabul	IOMAFG139	Monitoring & Evaluation of Media Investments	\$75,640	Meeting with ALTAI Consulting
Balkh	IOMAFG140	AINA Photography Exhibit, “Election Through Afghan Eyes”	\$12,992	Meeting with AINA & viewing of exhibit in Kabul
Kabul	IOMAFG145	Monitoring & Evaluation of Media Development Throughout Afghanistan	\$197,660	Meeting with ALTAI Consulting
Kabul	IOMAFG159	Research and Analysis of Survey of Afghan Media Development	\$96,180	Meeting with ALTAI Consulting
National	IOMAFG164	Evaluation of ATI Program	\$74,650	Meeting with ALTAI Consulting
Kabul	IOMAFG172	Wall Painting Event – CAFÉ Compound Wall	\$2,531	Site visit

Location	Project ID	Grant Title	Grant Amount	Evaluation Mechanism
Kabul	IOMAFGI73	Toys for Kindergartens in Ministries	\$3,000	Site visit of 2 Kindergartens
Kabul	IOMKBL001	Gender Sectoral Expert – Judy Benjamin I	\$51,621	Phone interview
Kabul	IOMKBL003	Rehabilitation of Media Resource Center in Kabul	\$33,619	Site visit, AINA
Kabul	IOMKBL004	Ministry of Women’s Affairs, Zinab Auditorium Rubble Removal, Kabul	\$9,477	Site visit
Kabul	IOMKBL006	Rehabilitation of Teachers’ Training College Facility, Kabul	\$117,690	Site visit
Kabul	IOMKBL008	Renovation & Capacity Support, Ministry of Women’s Affairs, Kabul	\$40,404	Meeting with Minister Jalal
Kabul	IOMKBL030	Construction of Omara Khan School	\$255,000 +	Site visit
National	IOMKBL100	Website for Ministry of Women’s Affairs	\$2,428	Web search
Kabul	IOMKBL101	Construction of Provincial Women’s Center in Parwan Province	\$123,032	Site visit
National	IOMKBL103	Furnishing and Equipment for 14 Women’s Resource Centers	\$630,000	Site visits to Parwan and Helmand
National	IOMKBL108	Production of Project Signs for Women’s Resource Centers	\$2,000	Site visit to Parwan
Kabul	IOMKBL119	NGO Capacity Support to Monitor Insecure Regions of Afghanistan	\$77,973	Meeting with Afghans for Afghans
Kabul	IOMKBL209	Repair to Bomb Damaged Street	\$128,707	Site visit
Farah	IOMOTI002	Peace & Conflict Resolution Workshops for Provincial Leaders	\$40,756	Meeting with SDF
Balkh	IOMOTI003	Organization of Provincial Property Documents for Balkh, Kandahar, Herat	\$50,000	Site visit
Gardez				
Paktya	IOMAFGI114	Generator for Gardez Television Station, Paktya	\$9,121	Site visit
Paktya	IOMGDZ003	Reservoir & Pipe System for Irrigation & Drinking Water	\$14,915	Site visit but couldn’t find it
Paktya	IOMGDZ047	Education & Tailoring Course for Women in Gardez	\$15,517	Site visit; meeting with director
Paktya	IOMGDZ048	Supporting Women’s Programs & Training in Amad Abad, Paktya	\$56,352	Meeting with women’s Shura
Paktya	IOMGDZ049	Construction of Provincial	\$96,732	Site visit

Location	Project ID	Grant Title	Grant Amount	Evaluation Mechanism
		Women's Center in Paktya Province		
Paktya	IOMGDZ052	Koz Pearoz Khel/Saparhay Khowarh culvert & retaining wall	\$22,000	Site visit but couldn't find it
Paktika	IOMGDZ069	Food Preservation & Marketing Training for Women, Paktya & Paktika	\$19,258	Site visit; meeting with participants
Kandahar				
Helmand	IOMAFG071	Women's Vocational Agriculture Education, Lashkar Gah	\$55,801	Site visit
Kandahar	IOMAFG111	University Media Centers and Training, Kandahar & 3 Provinces	\$277,972	Site visit
Kandahar	IOMKHD001	Restoration of a Women's Wing of the Kandahar Hospital	\$20,220	Site visit
Helmand	IOMKHD003	Construction of Training Facility at Lashkar Gah Hospital, Helmand	\$53,216	Site visit
Helmand	IOMKHD005	Rehabilitation of Lashkar Gah pipe system, Helmand Province	\$47,800	Site visit
Helmand	IOMKHD006	Agriculture Training and Radio Programs for Women in Helmand	\$78,289	Site visit
Helmand	IOMKHD007	Establishment of Vocational Agricultural Center for Women	\$85,097	Site visit
Kandahar	IOMKHD008	Repair of the Arghandab Bridge	\$5,055	Site visit
Kandahar	IOMKDH012	Construction of a Ground Reservoir	\$55,208	Site visit
Kandahar	IOMKHD042	Power Poles and Electrical Supplies for Loya Wala	\$26,401	Site visit
Kandahar	IOMKHD044	Transformers & Electrical Equipment for Lashkar Gah water system	\$27,714	Site visit
Kandahar	IOMKHD053	Rehabilitation of 50 culverts in Loya Wala	\$53,068	Site visit
Kandahar	IOMKHD054	Construction of 22 culverts for secondary roads, Panjwai	\$18,183	Site visit
Kandahar	IOMKHD055	Drainage canal rehabilitation for Panjwai District	\$10,553	Site visit
Kandahar	IOMKHD057	Rehabilitation of irrigation canal in Panjwai District	\$37,205	Site visit
Kandahar	IOMKHD060	Construction of a Post Office in Panjwai District	\$14,026	Site visit
Helmand	IOMKHD063	Construction of Helmand Provincial Women's Center	\$92,934	Site visit

Location	Project ID	Grant Title	Grant Amount	Evaluation Mechanism
Kandahar	IOMKHD066	Rehabilitation of 8km drainage canal in Loya Wala	\$87,000	Site visit
Mazar-i-Sharif				
Mazar-i-Sharif	IOMMZR002	Construction of New Classrooms in Hashim Barat Girls' School	\$34,264	Site visit
Samangan	IOMMZR004	Rehabilitation of Dowlat-abad Primary (secondary) school	\$27,464	Site visit
Mazar-i-Sharif	IOMMZR010	Rehabilitation of Sultan Razia Girls' School	\$179,531	Site visit
Samangan	IOMMZR033	Construction of Lab-e-Jari Taghan intake in Shiberghan of Jawzjan	\$86,093	Site visit
Samangan	IOMMZR039	Construction of dam & retaining walls in Aybak, Samangan	\$31,363	Site visit
Samangan	IOMMZR044	Rehabilitation of Marjan Irrigation System in Aybak District, Samangan	\$9,885	Site visit
Samangan	IOMMZR056	Construction of Three Water Reservoir Pools, Aybak	\$70,203	Site visit
Mazar-i-Sharif	IOMMZR066	Internet Club at Balkh University	\$21,544	Site visit
Parwan				
Parwan	RON053	Provision of Communications (CODAN system) to 21 Provinces and 4 in Kabul	\$194,728	Site visit
Parwan	IOMKBL101	Construction of Provincial Women's Center in Parwan Province	\$123,032	Site visit
Parwan	IOMKBL109	Agricultural Skills Radio Program for Rural Women in Parwan Province	\$8,179	Site visit
Parwan	IOMKBL092	Reconstruction of Jabalseraj City Bridge	\$40,054	Site visit
Parwan	IOMKBL110	Elections and Human Rights Radio Programming for Women, Parwan	\$10,120	Site visit
Parwan	IOMKBL183	Construction of Bore Wells and Hand Pumps, Baglam, Parwan Province	\$34,387	Site visit

List of Persons Interviewed

Helmand

Caretakers of the Agriculture Vocational Training Facility
 Fauzia Olomi, Director, Department of Women's Affairs/Women's Resource Center
 Students of Lashkar Gah Nursing Training Facility

Kabul

Judy Benjamin, former USAID Gender Advisor (by telephone)
 Irene Chen, Program Officer, Sanayee Development Foundation
 Eric Davin, Program Officer, researcher in IOM/ATI evaluation, Altai Consulting
 Fareeba, Kindergarten Principal, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock
 Ernst Fassbinder, Country Director, AINA
 Dr. Massouda Jalal, Minister, Ministry of Women's Affairs
 Hamid Jalil, Director, Sanayee Development Foundation
 Jahid Mohseni, Director/COO, Moby Capital Partners
 Saad Mohseni, Director, Arman FM
 Rahela Nazirabi, Kindergarten Director, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock
 Saila Niazi, Kindergarten Director, Ministry of Information and Culture
 Malachi O'Rourke, Program Officer, researcher in IOM/ATI evaluation, Altai Consulting
 Azizurrahman Rafiee, Managing Director, Afghan Civil Society Forum
 Barbara Smith, former OTI officer, program officer in Asia Foundation/Afghanistan
 Joerg Stahlhut, Program Officer, Sanayee Development Foundation
 Jamie Terzi, Program Manager, Afghan Women's Educational Center
 Mitash Thakkar, Program Officer, researcher in IOM/ATI evaluation, Altai Consulting
 Neelab Zarif, Director, Afghans for Afghans

Kandahar

Trainees in female health education course at Panjwai district clinic, Kandahar
 District governor, Panjwai District, Kandahar Province
 Mayor, Panjwai municipality, Kandahar Province
 Deputy Mayor, Panjwai municipality, Kandahar Province
 Head and members of Panjwai district men's shura
 Representative of Panjwai district Kuchi (nomadic) community
 Doctors and patients in Kandahar hospital

Mazar-i-Sharif and Samangan Province

Nafisa Gheyasi, Directress, Hashem Barat Girls High School, Mazar-e Sharif
 Habibullah Habib, Chancellor, Balkh University, Mazar-e Sharif
 Abdul Hadi, Hydro-technical Department (Samangan), Irrigation Department, Government of Afghanistan
 Mohammed Azim Hashemi, Deputy Chancellor, Balkh University, Mazar-e Sharif
 Qandi Horani, Director, Community Fora Development Organization, Mazar-e Sharif
 Women responsible for maintaining water reservoir in Aybak district, Samangan
 Zahira, Headmistress, Sultan Razia School, Mazar-e Sharif
 Zewar Kamal, Assistant to Director, Sultan Razia School, Mazar-e Sharif

Paktia Province

Mahera Ahmedzai, Leader of Women's Shura, Amadabad
 Dien M. Darwash, Chief of Information and Culture, Gardez
 Female shura members, Amadabad
 Halima Khazan, Director, Department of Women's Affairs, Gardez
 Miriam, Member of Women's Shura, Amadabad (daughter of Mahera Ahmedzai)
 Abdul Ahmad Rodwal, Head, TV and Radio Gardez
 Trainees in preserves making course (Gardez)

Parwan Province

A. Hay Darwesh, Director, Ministry of Communications (Charikar)
 Abdel Ahad Ranjbar, Journalist, Radio Peace (Jebel Seraj)
 Ms. Shajan, Director, Parwan Women's Resource Center
 Women using handpump (Baglan)

International Organization for Migration (IOM)

Abdel Ahad, Program Engineer, Kandahar Field Office
 Marzia Akbari, Gender Assistant, Kabul Field Office
 Muhammed Omar Andar, Senior Program Assistant, Kabul Field Office
 Philippe Branchat, former IOM field office director, Bamyan Field Office
 Beth Dunlop, Assistant ATI Program Manager, IOM/Afghanistan
 Ghotai Ghazialam, ATI Program Manager, IOM/Afghanistan
 Elyas Gheyasi, Senior Program Officer, Mazar-e Sharif Field Office
 Paul Greening, ATI Program Manager, Kabul Field Office
 A. Shuja Helmandi, Program Assistant, Kandahar Field Office
 Kristine Jacobsen, Assistant ATI Program Manager, IOM/Afghanistan
 Mehboob Jalal, Program Officer, Gardez Field Office
 Nasim Karim, IOM Officer-in Charge, Kandahar Field Office
 Brian Kelly, Senior Program Manager, IOM/Afghanistan
 Stephen Lennon, Former Program Officer, IOM/Afghanistan
 Martin Ocaga, Field Office Director, Mazar-e Sharif Field Office
 Larry Sampler, former Operations Director for ELJ, grantee to IOM/Afghanistan
 Engineer Shakeer, IOM Program Officer, Mazar-e Sharif Field Office
 Hortensia Vidauri, Head of Gardez Field Office

OTI/Washington and Afghanistan

Jason Aplon, Senior Advisor, OTI/Washington
 Michelle Barrett, Deputy Country Representative, OTI/Afghanistan
 Elizabeth Callender, OTI Program Manager, OTI/Washington
 Jessica Davey, Country Representative, OTI Afghanistan
 Rob Jenkins, Deputy Director, OTI/Washington
 Adam Kaplan, OTI Media Advisor, in IOM/Afghanistan
 John Langlois, Senior Media Advisor, OTI/Washington
 Karma Lively, Operations Manager, OTI/Washington (formerly of OTI/Afghanistan)
 John Rigby, Senior Advisor, OTI/Washington

Justin Sherman, ANE Team Leader, OTI/Washington
 Mary Stewart, Head of M&E, OTI/Washington
 David Taylor, Director, OTI Washington
 Rachel Wax, Program Officer, OTI/Washington

Ronco Consulting Corporation

Randy Willard, former Chief of Party for Ronco Consulting in Afghanistan

U.S. Agency for International Development

Barry Primm, Deputy Mission Director, USAID/Afghanistan
 Craig Buck, former USAID/Afghanistan Mission director
 Vijitha Eyango, Senior Education/Gender Advisor, SPOTS Office, ANE Bureau
 Patrick Fine, Mission Director, USAID/Afghanistan
 Alonso Fulgham, incoming USAID/Afghanistan Mission director
 David Hoffman, former director of D&G Office, USAID/Afghanistan
 Renu Jain, Basic Education Advisor, USAID/Afghanistan
 Bob Jiminez, former Program Officer, USAID/Afghanistan
 Elizabeth Kvitashvili, Director, CMM Office, DCHA Bureau
 Nitin Madhav, Program Development Officer, Afghanistan Program, ANE Bureau
 Abdul Saboor Miakhel, for Program Officer, OTI/Afghanistan
 Shaperai Naziri, former Program Assistant/Gender Officer, OTI/Afghanistan
 Nick Marinacci, Manager of PRT Program, USAID/Afghanistan
 John Patten, USAID Representative to Kandahar PRT, USAID/Afghanistan
 Jeanne Pryor, Officer-in Charge, Afghanistan Program, ANE Bureau
 Idrees Rahmani, former Senior Program Officer, OTI/Afghanistan
 Barbara Rodey, Senior Advisor for Gender, USAID/Afghanistan
 Bob Sammon, USAID Representative to Gardez PRT, USAID/Afghanistan
 John Schweiger, Eastern Regional Development Advisor to PRTs, USAID/Afghanistan
 Rick Scott, Program/Project Development Officer, USAID/Afghanistan
 Bob Wilson, former Deputy Director of USAID/Afghanistan

U.S. Department of State

Eric Fisher, Political/Economics Officer, US Embassy in Afghanistan
 Charlotte Ponticelli, Senior Coordinator for International Women's Issue
 Christa Skerry, Former OTI/Afghanistan Country Representative, now in State/CRS

Evaluation of OTI's Program in Afghanistan: Focus on Gender Scope of Work

I. OTI Background

The USAID Administrator created OTI in the Bureau for Humanitarian Response (now called the Bureau for Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance, DCHA) to assist priority countries to make successful transitions from crisis to recovery and stability. The volatile political and economic nature of transitioning countries requires fast, emergency-type political responses that show immediate, visible and positive effects.

Countries experiencing complex crises resulting from internal conflict and civil war have special needs that are often not addressed by traditional emergency assistance programs. OTI enables USAID to capitalize on 'windows of opportunity' where quickly deployed aid can make a critical difference to a country's transition to peaceful, democratic government. Interventions are tied to pivotal events, such as cease-fires, peace accords, or the advent of progressive leadership, often through key elections. OTI responds swiftly to these events with near-term, high-impact actions that support a country's transitional needs.

While operating in a country, OTI works to bring new groups into the transition process, tests new activities for advancing democratic governance, and provides fast and flexible support for immediate transition needs. OTI's program options for transition responses include: 1) expanding democratic political processes, 2) enhancing citizen security, 3) promoting reconciliation, 4) supporting peace negotiations, and 5) capitalizing on cross-cutting themes, including community-based approaches and media activities. As appropriate and necessary, relationships and practices that prove productive may be handed off to the USAID mission or other donors for further development when OTI phases out its assistance.

II. Afghanistan – Country Background

Since the ouster of the Taliban regime by Coalition Forces in November 2001, Afghanistan has been following the provisions of the Bonn Agreement negotiated under UN auspices by major opposition group and diaspora leaders. Under the Agreement, a 30-member Afghan Interim Authority (AIA) headed by Hamid Karzai was inaugurated on December 22, 2001. In June 2002, the AIA convened a nationwide *Loya Jirga* (Grand Assembly) where some 1,600 delegates from around the country established the Transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan (TISA) and elected Karzai president.

The Bonn Agreement also charged the TISA to convene another *Loya Jirga* to adopt a constitution, which was done on January 4, 2004, paving the way for nationwide presidential and parliamentary elections. Afghanistan held its first national democratic Presidential elections on October 9, 2004. Hamid Karzai was announced as the official winner on November 3, 2004. Parliamentary are tentatively planned for September 2005.

At the same time this highly complicated and difficult political transition has unfolded, the new government – with substantial support from the international community – has been confronting the legacy of more than two decades of almost uninterrupted war and conflict. While some notable accomplishments have been achieved in these efforts – government bodies are up and running, thousands of buildings, bridges, irrigation canals, and water facilities have been built or refurbished, and hundreds of thousands of girls are going to school for the first time – the challenges facing the TISA are daunting. The country's physical, educational, and social infrastructures have been largely destroyed or marginalized. Further exacerbating the situation is a lack of security, characterized by increasing activity on the part of remaining terrorists and Taliban elements, occasionally violent episodes of political jockeying among regional warlords, a burgeoning poppy and illicit opium trade, and an increasing crime rate.

III. OTI Afghanistan

OTI's overall goal is to support the process of recovery, rehabilitation and political development in post-conflict Afghanistan. OTI's work in Afghanistan supports USAID's strategic priorities, which include infrastructure, food security, economic development, democracy and governance, and education and health. Working with central and provincial governments, national and international NGOs, informal community groups, and media outlets, OTI identifies and supports critical initiatives that facilitate implementation of the Bonn Agreement, which was designed to move the country further along the continuum from war to peace. OTI's rapid support for activities in Afghanistan's transition period was designed to establish credibility and space for longer-term development assistance.

Responding to rapidly unfolding events in October 2001, OTI supported the development of relevant and timely information on humanitarian assistance, particularly internally displaced persons and other vulnerable groups, including women. Activities included production of a daily humanitarian information bulletin for radio broadcast, distribution of 30,000 radios, small grants to build communication and education among civil society groups, and expansion of the Voice of America's broadcast capacity in the region. In support of the June 2002 Emergency *Loya Jirga* (grand assembly held to authorize an interim administration for Afghanistan) OTI provided: technical and operational support for the UN Operations Center; a short-wave radio transmitter and extended transmissions during the assembly; assistance to the *Loya Jirga* Commission; radio and print journalist training prior to the *Loya Jirga*; and a public information officer for the President.

Post *Loya Jirga*, OTI reviewed its strategic directions in order to build on the momentum created by the event along with the average Afghan's hope for peace. One goal was to assist the interim government, along with the Afghan citizenry to play a constructive role in developing and adopting a new democratic constitution at the constitutional *Loya Jirga*, which was successfully held in December 2003 according to the schedule outlined in the Bonn Agreement.

OTI efforts are focused on communities that are at risk, including communities that are geographically or ethnically isolated, and communities with poor links to national, provincial, and local authorities or international development support and communities with large returnee populations and demobilized soldiers, and women and girls. OTI has been building national, provincial and local governance capacities by planning and implementing projects which are guided by community priorities, creating and/or strengthening linkages between the national,

provincial, and district government, improving the communication infrastructure, and implementing a wide-ranging media strategy.

USAID/OTI's program in Afghanistan is scheduled to end in June 2005. To date, OTI has obligated \$55 million for the program. OTI's fiscal year 2002 budget was \$27 million, the 2003 budget was \$19.5 million, the 2004 budget was \$25 million, and the 2005 budget is about \$1.2 million. Projects are funded in 34 provinces of the country. To date over 696 grants and sub grants have been cleared for implementation.

OTI's funds for Afghanistan come from various sources, including Transition Initiative Funds (TI), International Disaster Assistance Funds (IDA), Development Assistance Funds (DA), and State Department Economic Support Funds (ESF). OTI's current implementing partners are the International Organization for Migration-Afghanistan Transition Initiative (IOM-ATI) and Internews. IOM-ATI offices are currently located in Kabul, Bamyan, Gardez, Kandahar, Kunduz, and Mazar-e Sharif, and Herat. Previous USAID/OTI partners included the Voice of America (VOA), United Nations Development Program (UNDP), and Ronco.

Program Goals and Objectives

GOAL: to increase citizen awareness and confidence in the process of recovery, rehabilitation and democratic political development in post-conflict Afghanistan.

OBJECTIVES: OTI's program in Afghanistan currently has three objectives, to:

1. Increase the Afghan government's responsiveness to citizens' needs;
2. Increase citizen awareness of and participation in democratic processes; and,
3. Increase the capacity of the Afghan media.

Program Activities

In general, OTI projects are designed to: Re-establish relationships and routines that give communities cohesiveness; Strengthen economic recovery by improving essential commercial and public infrastructure; Contribute to sustainable stability and recovery by helping the Afghan government to function outside Kabul and respond to community priorities; Improve communications infrastructure; Strengthen independent media, and; Create and/or strengthen linkages between the national, provincial, and district governments. Local NGOs, community groups, and other USAID implementing partners are also engaged to facilitate linkages. Many projects also provide short term employment opportunities for men and women.

Activities to date have included providing essential goods and services that individuals and the market cannot provide on their own; improving essential commercial and public infrastructure such as reconstructing schools, public buildings, roads and bridges; repairing water systems; building women's centers and funding women's education and income generating programs, strengthening independent media to provide access to fair and balanced information, and providing information about the evolving political situation at a local and national level.

Gender Activities

While gender has not been articulated as an objective, OTI's implementing partners have made a concerted effort to include women in most major program components, including media,

infrastructure projects, and training programs. At the beginning of the program, gender was not clearly identified as a major goal, but it increased in importance over time due to the influx of gender-specific funds, key personnel, and other factors to be identified and examined. For example, one of OTI's earliest activities was to support kindergartens in a number of ministries, allowing women to return to the workforce in the government. OTI received funds earmarked for the construction of provincial Women's Resource Centers in collaboration with the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA). OTI small grants have gone towards girls schools, female run radio stations, documentaries on women's rights, health/literacy classes, income generation/skills training courses for women, and Ministry-level gender training, for example. Additionally, women have been incorporated into infrastructure and other projects unrelated to gender activities in order to improve their role in society. **A comprehensive list of gender and/or women-focused grants is attached.**

IV. Objectives of the Evaluation

OTI's program has gone through several phases over the past four years and objectives have been altered to respond to the changing political and physical environment. Evaluators will need to consider these factors while conducting the evaluation. Bearing these factors in mind, the evaluation will be able to assess OTI's success in meeting the goals of the program as well as the ability to re-target in a dynamic atmosphere.

There are four basic themes to be addressed by the final evaluation. They are:

1. How did the OTI program eventually evolve to include women and women's issues, and why? What was the overall impact of gender earmarked funding within the context of the OTI program, and how did OTI's strategic approach evolve in response to key funding and staffing changes? How was this reflected in staffing patterns, grant development, disbursement of monies, and project implementation, as well as relationship building? How did OTI incorporate women's issues into projects that may not be friendly to women's participation, and has this had any impact on women's roles in Afghan society?
2. What was the impact of OTI gender programming on the status and participation of women at a ministry level (namely the Ministry of Women's Affairs and the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development), as well as among local partners and implementing organizations? What was the broader impact on women and their communities, and on society at-large? Has OTI's support to the MoWA achieved the desired impact on MoWA's ability to successfully advocate women's issues and rights in Afghanistan?
3. What are the best practices and lessons learned with regards to designing, staffing, implementing and monitoring programs targeting women in conflict/post-conflict environments? What have been the best measures of success in the Afghanistan program?
4. How has focusing on gender/women's participation specifically contributed to achievement of OTI's three program objectives?

Within the context of examining these broader questions, OTI's success towards achieving its specific goal and associated objectives, as stated above, will need to be evaluated. Specifically, the evaluation should explore the following topics:

- How have OTI's media programs broadened the role of women as DJs, news presenters, journalists, students, videographers, and listeners? How has increased access to information made an impact on women and the view of women in Afghan society? How did Internews address gender?
- Has there been a noted increase in women's participation in OTI projects? Has the focus on women's participation contributed to opening dialogue on wider issues? Has there been a change in women's status and opportunities, or at least in attitudes about women and how they should be treated?
- In a culturally challenging country like Afghanistan, was OTI able to assist in the advancement of women's rights while working within the context of a conservative culture? Was OTI able to be sensitive to the culture so as to work within while still progressing?
- Explore the evolution of the MoWA and the provincial level Department of Women's Affairs within the context of OTI programs. What impact are they making, and what additional tools/training/resources do they need? What is the current status of the WRCs?
- What was the impact of specific small grants for women, for example the gender training for the MRRD, women's income generation projects, the Ministry child care centers, women-run radio stations, etc? What are the lessons learned from these small grants?
- Explore the internal mechanisms developed by IOM to increase women's participation in infrastructure projects, such as developing and communicating a gender mainstreaming strategy, introducing gender into tendering requirements, hiring and retaining female staff, and directly engaging the DoWA and MRRD in order to build capacity. What role did Gender Task Forces play? Did OTI include women in determining which projects would be implemented, and how successful was this approach?
- How have OTI partners addressed internal/external resistance to the inclusion of women? How do others perceive the gender integration efforts of OTI partners? Is a focus on gender appropriate for transitional programming?

These basic questions will be more clearly defined through discussions with OTI Washington and field staff during methodology and work plan development. Note: See Annex A with resulting concise list of questions.

V. Methodology

The evaluation team will be responsible for developing an evaluation strategy and methodologies that include a mix of qualitative and quantitative data collection and analyses approaches. Specific methods, and the appropriate instruments, will be developed in concert with OTI Washington. The gender team will work in tandem with the team for the broader OTI/Afghanistan evaluation.

VI. Evaluation Components and Deliverables

1. (13 work days, Washington, DC)

Conduct literature review and desk study including OTI/Afghanistan grants data base
 Draft workplan
 Develop methodology and instruments
 Interview key Washington, DC stakeholders
 Finalize workplan

2. (18 work days, Afghanistan)

Collect evaluation data from Kabul and fields offices as well as from other stakeholders
 Conduct initial analysis and develop initial findings
 Confer with field staff and gender evaluation team at mid-evaluation
 De-brief with USAID/Afghanistan staff (present a 5-7 page report of key findings) at end of evaluation

3. (16 work days, USA and Washington)

Produce complete draft report
 Debrief to OTI Washington and collect comments from Washington and the field
 Produce final Report

Final Report

The outline for the final report shall comprise, but not be limited to the following:

Executive summary;

Table of contents;

Introduction and background;

Introduction should describe transition/conflict setting (challenges and opportunities) for reforming the way communities and countries do business. Why is it important to engage women? How is this the same/different from traditional/longer-term development settings?

Summary description of evaluation objectives;

Description of methodology and data sources, and limitations of the study;

Analysis and statement of findings;

Recommendations for future OTI programs.

VII. Timeframe

Activity	Location	Time	Dates
Selection of Evaluation Team	USA		End March 2005
Review OTI documents; discuss work plan and other needs with relevant OTI staff; begin interviews with OTI Washington-based Europe and Eurasia team members and other relevant field	USA	13 business days	April 26 – May 12

Activity	Location	Time	Dates
partners with offices in the Washington, DC area.			
Review additional documents as needed/appropriate; adjust work plan as needed; interview OTI and IOM staff, USAID and Embassy representatives and contractor staff as appropriate; conduct quantitative and qualitative survey work; analyze and debrief/report on preliminary findings.	Afghanistan	18 business days	May 15 – June 5
Write final report; circulate for review/comments; incorporate feedback; finalize report; debrief OTI Washington staff and others.	USA	16 business days	June 6 – June 27

The evaluation team will be responsible for making its own arrangements for translators, transportation, housing, and other logistics. The team is also responsible for its own work space, computers, and printers, as well as taking the necessary security precautions while in Afghanistan.

VIII. Composition and Qualifications of the Evaluation Team

The evaluation team shall consist of two individuals: one senior level evaluation analyst and one mid-level evaluation analysts who is an in-country national. The senior level evaluation analyst should have extensive experience designing and conducting evaluations, and analyzing both quantitative and qualitative data.

Evaluation research: Academic experience in the social sciences evaluating programs, particularly with community participation, media and civil society organizations, in countries undergoing transitions;

Survey and statistical analysis: Academic preparation and experience in survey research methods (survey design, sampling techniques and statistical computer applications);

Rapid appraisal techniques: Academic training and experience with rapid appraisal techniques (survey development, direct observation, focus group interviews, community interviews and key informant interviews);

Local knowledge: General knowledge of Afghanistan's unique political, social, economic, and cultural environment and specific knowledge of Afghanistan; and,

Language abilities: Ideally, some members of the team will have a demonstrated knowledge of Dari, Farsi, Pashtun, and/or other local languages.