

Afghanistan Update

A humanitarian initiatives and progress report

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Recent News

Afghan reconstruction success linked to tackling corruption

United Nations officials said tackling corruption in Afghanistan is the single most important hurdle in realizing reconstruction goals, according to an article [dated December 18th](#). Secretary-General's Special Representative Kai Eide told the UN News Service, "We must all demonstrate - every day and at all levels that we reject corruption. The example we all set will shape the future. It can restore trust. It can bring development. It can meet the most basic human needs. It can turn resignation into hope." Mr. Eide, who also serves as the head of the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan said the problem of corruption in government is "pervasive" but steps have been taken to combat the problem. In Kabul, the central government has ratified "the UN Convention Against Corruption, elaborating the Anti-Corruption and Administrative Reform strategy, and establishing the High Office of Oversight to coordinate national anti-corruption efforts," the UN news agency reported.

US plans to deploy more troops to Afghanistan

Military officials in the US have announced more troop deployments to Afghanistan to combat the growing violence against the Taliban, [MSNBC reported](#) on December 20th. The additional troops should arrive by the beginning of the summer in 2009. Agence France-Presse reported that Afghan officials are [welcoming](#) the news. According to Foreign Ministry spokesman Sultan Ahmad Baheen, the extra troops would be sent to the southern border of the country which abuts Pakistan and is the most active Taliban area.

Bayat Foundation Announcements

News from the US-based organization

Bayat Foundation Friends show support

Robert L. Livingston, The Livingston Group, LLC President and former US Congressman (LA-1st, 1977-1999) agreed to be a Friend of the Bayat Foundation 501(c)3 organization to show support for the Bayat Foundation programs to improve the quality of life and rebuild Afghanistan. Congressman Livingston said, "The more we can provide concentrated resources for the benefit and welfare of the Afghan people, the sooner we can achieve a sense of stability in that region of the world."

Doris Buffett, Founder and President of the Sunshine Lady Foundation with educational programs for women and children to break cycles of poverty and abuse, agreed to be a Friend of the Bayat Foundation 501(c)3 organization. "The Afghan women I have met and worked with have my wholehearted respect and admiration. Although I am 80 years old, I hope during my lifetime to see them take their place under the sun as first class citizens, well-educated, free to use their talents to help free their country from despots. I am happy to become a Friend of the Bayat Foundation which supports the aims I embrace."

Grant awarded to the FACONE for printing of 5,000 children's songbooks

In November the Bayat Foundation 501(c)3 organization based in the USA announced a \$10,000 grant to The Folk Arts Center of New England for the printing and distribution of 5,000 copies of *Qu Qu Qu Barg-e-Chinaar: Children's Songs from Afghanistan* to children throughout Afghanistan. The songbook was first created in 1966 by a Peace Corps volunteer in Kabul and since 2002 when nearly extinct, nearly 10,000 copies have already been printed and distributed by various sponsors through a collaborative preservation campaign. Save the Children, Creating Hope International and Youth Education Services will assist in the distribution to kindergartens, orphanages and learning centers in Parwan, Berekab, Sar-e-Pul, Faryab, Balkh, Baghlan, Nangrahar, Bamiyan, Kabul, Herat and Paktia Provinces and the Kabul/Qarabagh District. Toronto musician Vaheed Kaacemy recorded the book's 16 songs with a group of Afghan-Canadian children in Farsi, Pushto, Uzbeki and Hazaragi, eight of which are from the original songbook. The 24-page songbook with a 60-minute CD/cassette contains the Dari lyrics for all the songs, musical notation and illustrations including some of the children's drawings from the original songbook.

News from the Kabul-based NGO

Miriam Bayat Maternity Hospital in Faryab Province inaugurated

The Mariam Bayat 50-bed maternity hospital in Maimana City, Faryab Province, was inaugurated in October 2008 by Bayat Foundation Chairman Ehsan Bayat in presence of the governor, health ministry president, members of parliament, high ranking authorities and a large number of local residents.

Computers presented to Satara High School in Faryab Province

Paper products for writing and desktop computers were presented this fall to the students of Satara high school in Faryab Province by Bayat Foundation Chairman Ehsan Bayat in the presence of the governor.

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