



marred by the resurgence of hostilities in Kabul in August and December 1992, causing vast destruction to the capital city and the consequent fleeing of large numbers from their homes. The continuing lack of security and stability in Kabul has prevented the restoration of essential services, further exacerbating the deprivation of the poorest segments of the city's population. Moreover, access to Kabul for the purposes of providing humanitarian relief was repeatedly impeded during the second half of 1992. In the face of a worsening humanitarian situation in Afghanistan, the Secretary-General launched, on 5 June 1992, the Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for Emergency Assistance for Afghanistan. The Appeal sought US \$179.7 million, although less than half of that amount was eventually contributed.

Operation SALAM/J. Mohr Photos

Mine Clearance Training

During 1992, the Office for the Co-ordination of United Nations Humanitarian and Economic Assistance Programmes relating to Afghanistan (UNOCA), established in June 1988, has responded to the dramatic political developments in Afghanistan and has adapted its structure and staffing to cope with the new demands. The events of 1992 have underlined the importance

The mandate of the Office for the Co-ordination of United Nations Humanitarian and Economic Assistance Programmes relating the Afghanistan (UNOCA), as established in June 1988, has been:

- to act as the central co-ordinating office for the various components of the action undertaken within the United Nations system on behalf of the Secretary-General;

- to monitor operations in the context of an integrated United Nations programme of humanitarian and economic assistance, while implementation of particular programmes remains the responsibility of the agency concerned;

- to discuss and negotiate with all concerned parties, when necessary, on behalf of the United Nations system;

- to direct and organize special tasks not within the mandate of any particular United Nations agency or programme (such as mine clearance and mine awareness);

- to adopt a flexible and geographically decentralized approach to meeting humanitarian and economic needs on the basis of a realistic assessment, area by area, of the feasibility of projects and the local population's capacity to absorb the assistance.

of co-ordination among the United Nations agencies at all levels. Under the supervision of the Personal Representative of the Secretary-General, UNOCA has provided a number of essential services in this context. These include the collection, analysis, and dissemination of up-to-date information regarding developments in Afghanistan. UNOCA has maintained close links with the co-ordinating bodies representing international and Afghan non-governmental organisations. The role of the NGOs continues to have great importance for the implementation of the humanitarian programmes in Afghanistan.

While the lack of security in Kabul has prevented the agencies from reviewing and evaluating on-going programmes since August 1992, routine monitoring of rural based projects has continued largely uninterrupted.

Mine clearance remains an urgent activity and a prerequisite for the provision of humanitarian assistance, as well as for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Afghanistan. During 1992, UNOCA has continued to exercise direct responsibility for the management of the mine clearance programme. With the return of refugees, the largest voluntary return of long-established refugees in recent history, the need for effective mine clearance in many parts of the country has intensified. It is estimated that up to two million Afghan refugees will return from neighbouring countries in 1993, further straining communities in a country virtually without infrastructural support.

Humanitarian assistance provided by the United Nations will remain essential in 1993. In January 1993, a Consolidated Appeal for Emergency Humanitarian Assistance for Afghanistan, amounting to US \$138.1 million, covering the period January to September 1993 and focusing upon "life sustaining" assistance for clearly identified target population throughout Afghanistan, was launched by the United Nations, in consultation with the Afghan authorities. ■