



UNITED NATIONS NATIONS UNIES

U.N. IN ACTION

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UN SUPPORTS CENSUS IN AFGHANISTAN

VIDEO

AUDIO

NARRATION

CROWDS (19")

Nobody knows for sure how many people there are in Afghanistan. Most censuses of countries occur every ten years. But, it has been more than 23 years since Afghanistan counted its population and catalogued their living conditions.

WAR (14")

More than two decades of war made nationwide censuses impossible. In addition, millions of people were uprooted. Estimates of the population vary widely from 14 to 25 million.

MISSION (27")

Recently, a mission from the United Nations Statistics Division, based in New York, arrived in Afghanistan to help the country's central statistical office organize a population and housing census scheduled for 2005. The 2001 Bonn Agreement that put the country on the path to peace, specifically stated that the United Nations should conduct a census in Afghanistan, as soon as feasible.

NARRATION

VILLAGE/WIDE (9")

In Chaharekar, a village located northwest of the capital city, Kabul, the first stages for the forthcoming census are already underway.

RAHILA INTERVIEWS (28")

As part of this plan, the Afghan government has begun preparing a master list. This contains all cities, villages, communities, dwellings and households in the country. For the first time since 1979, women field enumerators are being used. Theirs is a crucial contribution towards rebuilding this long-suffering nation. Rahila Arif, a former math teacher, is one of 61 women working for Afghanistan's Central Statistical Office.

ARIF: (in Dhari)

RAHILA ARIF ON CAMERA (22")

"I feel that this activity that we are undertaking is being looked at positively by the population. We are going to do our best to count how many men, women, and children there are so that we can provide our statistic office with accurate information."

NARRATION

INTERVIEWS/PAINTING (28")

A census provides vital information to government policy makers, researchers, academics, and private investors on the social and economic status of the entire population. Information from censuses is used to plan housing, roads, schools, hospitals and many other services. It is vitally important that people participate – for people count, says Mary Chamie, Chief of the UN's Demographic and Social

Statistics Branch, who led the mission to Afghanistan.

CHAMIE:

MARY CHAMIE ON CAMERA (20") "Right now in Afghanistan, there are villages that are formed that are not even on the maps and the census is identifying these villages, putting them back on maps. It is very important that people be counted so that they are represented, and so that they can be planned for by the government and by non-government organizations as well."

NARRATION

KIDS (25") The government is preparing to count its people under very difficult circumstances. Afghanistan is a vast territory with poor communications. Security risks remain high. Landmines and unexploded ordnance continue to present a grave danger. The 2005 census will be a major step forward, taking stock of Afghanistan's most important resource for the future: its people.

LOGO (20") This report was prepared by Chaim Litewski for the United Nations.