

IASC Secretariat
INTER-AGENCY STANDING COMMITTEE WORKING GROUP
20 June 1997

Item 2. Afghanistan

The following issues should be addressed collectively by the UN agencies:

An inter-agency decision on the following principles:

- Adherence to human rights is the overall condition for UN collaboration with Taliban;
- Both humanitarian and rehabilitation/development activities must benefit both women and men;
- Both women and men must be able to participate in the humanitarian and rehabilitation/development activities;
- Continued dialogue with Taliban, but no UN institution building as long as the Taliban discriminatory practises continue;
- No UN agency should consider moving back to Kabul until all international and national female staff are allowed to return to work with assured security.

Immediate actions to be taken:

- Agencies in the field to develop common programme and operations guidelines. For example, UNICEF is paying the female national staff who are no longer allowed to work in Kabul. However, this is not the case with WHO and perhaps some other agencies;
- Include a professional female staff member on the United Nations Special Mission to Afghanistan (UNSMA) headed by Norbert Holl;
- Include a professional woman as part of every UN mission. This would enhance the credibility of the UN on women's rights issues;
- Develop jointly indicators to monitor progress in collaboration and application of principles;
- ERC to send out a letter to agencies to respect/implement policy guidelines.