Back to the Future

Non-governmental organisations, by definition and inclination, strive to be apolitical. For them, day-to-day life with the Taliban has been replaced by the realities of the Afghan Interim Administration, which is running the country until an alternative is found acceptable to Afghans and their benefactors - the donor nations providing the billions of dollars for reconstruction aid to put the country back on its feet. Except that they aren't. Running the country, that is, and this presents huge and early familiar problems for aid and development teams.

The Afghan Interim Administration (AIA) was established with the aim of transitioning the country to a democratic system of governance. However, some issues persist, such as the lack of governance in the south of the country, where the Taliban hold significant influence. The AIA has been criticized for its inability to provide basic services and implement effective governance, leading to a lack of legitimacy and trust among the population.

MONEY

Money does not speak itself - an individual or organisation has to do the spending. Much of that about to be spent in Afghanistan will be on major infrastructure projects such as road and bridge construction, hospitals and schools, water and sanitation programmes - host schemes that will go to international tender as commercial activities. Who controls the money, and how they control it, is critical. Corruption in the informal currency market is unlikely to attract much international confidence - will determine the future of the country, its economy and the face of its people. Work is in hand to re-establish the exchange rate and rebuild the banking system, but careful hands in an accountable manner will eventually attract the appropriate attention of the IMF. Some money will go to the non-governmental organisations (NGOs), the smaller players in the game of reconstruction and development.发展, however, is a problem.

A KIND OF ORDER

Non-governmental organisations have operated in Afghanistan for over thirty years. They have provided a range of services spanning the spectrum of development and social programs, employing considerable energy, tenacity, and integrity - have continued to provide even when times were hardest.

Some of the hardest times were between 1995 and 1996, immediately prior to the Taliban taking control of the majority of the country. The so-called "inspectors" had killed the gap left by the retreating Russians, and sought the end war that raged for years and is even now only held in abeyance, rather than resolved. The IMF - and in 1996, locally popular - rose as the