



Wisconsin Department of Transportation

November 24, 2002

Division of Transportation Infrastructure Development
Office of Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Programs
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Mirwais Qader
1351 South Street #15
Madison, WI 53715

Dear Mir:

I am glad we got a chance to talk about your proposal to support economic development in Afghanistan through micro-financing, small business development, education, entrepreneurship and the development of trade. I hope my suggestions and experiences in working through the U.S. Department of Transportation in South Africa was helpful to you in identifying how major infrastructure, asset development and sub-contracting opportunities can be used as a tool to promote entrepreneurial activities in a nation. I believe that your objectives would be of great value in assisting the poor and facilitating self-sufficiency for the people of Afghanistan, especially women, and I commend your efforts in this nation-building venture.

As you are well aware, small businesses employ about 80% of the United States workforce. Micro-loan programs have been repeatedly shown to be good for economic development. They promote entrepreneurship and spur trade and consumerism among indigenous citizens and make domestically produced products more affordable to native / internal consumers and enhance the standard of living. I believe that your combined lending, development and trade strategy promotes capacity building among Afghans, while discouraging long-term dependency upon foreign aid and firms. Decentralizing economic wealth, skills, and resources from the hands of the well off and a few multinational / foreign firms allows it to be shared by the masses of Afghanistan, contributing to long-term self-sufficiency and sustainability. I believe your project will greatly promote the interest in education, allow for greater participation in the global economy, and promote peace and stability in Afghanistan.

Mir, you have the right idea for Afghanistan and its people, I wholeheartedly support your efforts and I wish you every success in your venture. Please let me know if I can be of any assistance to you as you move forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Eugene Johnson".

Eugene Johnson
Director, DBE