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Dear Friends and Partners of Shelter Now,

As is well known, women and children are often the ones who suffer most during times of war. And it is these two groups who are the focus of two projects introduced in this latest Shelter Report.

One of them is a project exclusively for women – something of a rarity in Afghanistan. The other is dedicated to helping the children of refugees who are now teenagers and young adults: this one offers training in agriculture in Herat, coupled with plans to set up a cooperative.

Our report this time also offers insight into the history of the ancient and beautiful city of Herat in western Afghanistan.

There are a number of encouraging developments to read about this time. There are still things that are moving forward in Afghanistan.

Best regards,

Udo Stolte



Impressions of Herat - in former times named „Pearl of Persians East“



SHELTER report



News from Herat

Ewald Göttler, our Project Manager in Herat, reports:

Herat, a modern city with a rich history -As mentioned in previous Shelter Reports, since August 2007 we have been in the process of setting up a new branch of Shelter Now International in Herat, the largest city in western Afghanistan. Herat is around 3000 years old and was long considered the pearl of eastern Persia, to which Herat belonged for many centuries. The rulers of Persia, modern-day Iran, have left their mark on the city to this day, evident in the language of the Heraties, their cuisine and the architecture of the city. Nevertheless, the people here are proud to be Afghans, and cherish their rich culture and tradition. The minarets of Herat, 7 huge towers that are the remains of a medieval center of learning, testify to the city's great past. During the heyday of the Silk Road, there were more than 4000 caravanserais in this city. The reason was that two routes of the Silk Road went out of Herat, there was the southern route which led to the Persian Gulf and on to Arabia and the western route which passed through Mashad, Iran and through to Antioch, or Antakya as it is known today on the Mediterranean Sea. Modern-day Herat is also a trading city, but the main direction in which the goods flow has now reversed and is no longer east to west but west to east. Virtually all the goods delivered to Afghanistan from the west – be it vehicles, machinery, equipment or consumer goods – pass through this city. Compared to most other major Afghan cities, Herat is not doing badly. Most of the streets are tarmacked, for several years now the city has had electricity 24 hours a day, very much the exception in Afghanistan. The water from the tap is safe to drink (a privilege enjoyed by none of the other major Afghan cities) thanks to work done over the past 6 years with the help of the German development organization GTZ. But there is still plenty to be done here to bring the people into the 21st century and still enough misery and distress where help is needed:

Dental treatment vs. simply pulling teeth

The lack of dental care – and how our dental clinic can help

Putting down roots vs. a life on the run

Giving refugees returning from Iran the opportunity to start a new life (beginning an agricultural cooperative west of Herat)

Providing vocational training to break the cycle of poverty

Development of training courses for young people from the refugee camps around Herat.





When Feridun (as we'll call him) was deported from Iran together with his family, he faced huge challenges. He had lived and worked in Iran for more than 10 years, but now he had no money, no job, nowhere to live and no prospects for the future. The work experience that he had in agriculture and as an artist creating traditional Persian paintings on wooden plaques did not appear to be any use to him in Herat. As he could not afford to pay for an apartment in the city, he moved to the newly built town of Taghi Naghi. But apart from a house in the desert, he found nothing there that could offer him any long-term prospects – no jobs, no transport facilities to the city, no shops, no health care. But when the people of Taghi Naghi took part in a training program provided by the German aid organization HELP e.V, their situation changed. Every day, men and women were driven to an agricultural training center 7 km away where they received lessons in farming and horticulture. The families also received food through the program, and all the costs for medical care were paid for by HELP. As the end of the training course



approached, Feridun and his colleagues were once again faced with the question of how they would continue to live after this period where everything was provided for them was over. And so the people of Taghi Naghi and myself sat down together, and developed the idea of setting up a farming cooperative, in order to turn what they had learned into a concrete job prospect. The landowner whose premises had been used for the training, was willing to lease some land for the cooperative, where Feridun and his colleagues will hopefully plant their first wheat this autumn. They plan to plant saffron too. Each family will also have a vegetable patch which they will cultivate individually as they see fit. However this dream of independence will remain a dream unless Shelter Now is able to raise the necessary capital to cover the initial outlay for irrigation, machinery and seeds. These funds would provide the start-up capital for 25 families to break out of the cycle of illegal migration and expulsion. With your donation, you can help give Feridun and his friends a real chance to see their courage and tenacity bear fruit. (project nr. 5015)



Mulberries



Beauty is once again allowed in Afghanistan. Another Shelter Now project manager tells us about a project that is exclusively by and for women:

Ladies' Center

Right in the heart of our city, we have created an oasis especially for women. The women in this land suffered greatly under the Taliban, and continue to experience little esteem. And so we wanted to start up a project designed specifically to meet their needs – which is how our Ladies' Center was born.

We started very small, about two years ago. We now have 10 female workers, four of whom are deaf, and one man who works as a guard.

During this period, we provided intensive training for the women, so that now we are able to offer a number of services in our Ladies' Center such as manicures, pedicures, face massage, haircuts, hair-dyeing and the traditional painting of hands with henna. But women can also just drop by for a cup of tea if they want and spend their free time at the center.

This project is particularly valuable for our staff who are deaf. For them, it is the first time in their lives that they are able to contribute to the family income, which means their families no longer view them as a burden.

Last month, we had an average of around 35 customers and 45 jobs a week. We invest a lot in our staff, providing further training for them so that they can gain a good grounding with us, which will enable them to pass their knowledge on to others. One of our staff members who is deaf and mute trained with us as a hairdresser. She in turn is now training up another apprentice, a lady who is not deaf, teaching her how to cut hair.

Our workers and also our customers have really blossomed through this project, which has been specifically developed by and for women. We are amazed at how popular the Ladies' Center is, it seems to exactly meet the needs of the women.

If you would like to support this women's project, it's called "Ladies' Center" and the project no. is 10606. The Afghan women deserve something better than they've experienced in the past. Our other projects are also continuing. For more information, please see our website at www.shelter-now.org.

On behalf of our Afghan and Pakistani project partners, we would like to thank you all for your continued interest and support, which allows us to invest in these people.

Kind regards,

Udo Stolte
and the Shelter Team.



Here our account details for donations:

Inside Germany:

Shelter Now Germany e.V.
Nord/LB Braunschweig
Acc. no. 25 230 58
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Please state your name and address if you require a receipt for tax purposes.

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European account number:
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