

Czech Republic making a difference in

Afghanistan



EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT

DURING THE YEARS OF DRAWN OUT MILITARY CONFLICTS, THE SYSTEM OF EDUCATION WAS SEVERELY DAMAGED. DURING THE SOVIET OCCUPATION MUCH OF THE AFGHAN INTELLIGENTSIA, INCLUDING TEACHERS, LEFT THE COUNTRY AND BY THE MID 1990S, THERE WERE ONLY ABOUT 650 FUNCTIONING SCHOOLS IN THE COUNTRY.

While the hard-line Taliban were in power, who viewed independent thinking as their biggest threat, girls had to abandon their education and boys mostly had to make do with the religious madrases.

Even today, children study in the classrooms without heating, with leaking earthen roofs. In the worse case, they are cramped on the floor of a tent without notebooks or other supplies. Statistics show that only 20% of teachers have the necessary qualifications and only less than 30% of Afghan adults can read and write. According to the Ministry of Education, only 6,2 mil children regularly attend school, i.e. only half of the school age population.

The Czech assistance to the educational system in Logar involves mainly building and the renovation of schools. It is based on the assumption that only educated people can guarantee both economic and social

development of Afghanistan. With the reconstruction of schools, the Czech PRT assists in fulfilling the U.N. Millennium Development Goals, according to which all children in the world should have access to elementary school education by 2015.

As of the present day, 14 schools have been built, refurbished or expanded, which means better school conditions for almost 14.000 children. The largest ongoing project is construction of a vocational Agriculture and Mechanical High School in Pole Alam, the capital of Logar. One thousand students will get specialized education along with practical lessons.

“Education is the most important thing in life. All the conflicts we are going through result from a lack of education. Only educated people can prevent further destruction of Afghanistan,” provincial education director.

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The largest project finished is the construction of two girl schools in the area of Khoshi where until recently the girls had to study either in private houses or in mosques. Since late 2009, more than 600 girls can study in dignified conditions. Both schools are running without any problems and with full support from the community.

“Everyone has a right to an education, men as well as women. All the girls from my family will be attending the new school that the PRT is building for us.” Khair Mohammad, the district elders’ representative in Khushi.

Work on other PRT’s education projects continues. During late 2010, three more school constructions were finished in Logar. One of them was a new school building for the pupils in the mountains of remote Azra district. New school buildings with 16 classrooms were finished in Pole Alam and Mohammad Agha districts.

- More than 100 classes in total were built or renovated.

- 14,000 Afghan children will attend the new schools.

- Two schools in the Khushi district open for more than 600 girls.

- The construction and renovation work gave jobs to more than hundred people from 12 local construction companies.

- Once the Agriculture and Mechanical High School is completed, one thousand students will get specialized vocational education there. It will be the only educational institution of its kind in the province.