

ISSUE No1

This newsletter is designed to keep those in the UK with an interest in Afghanistan informed of the work the UK Government is doing to reduce poverty. This edition gives an overview of how Afghanistan is making progress.

NEWSLETTER

ON UK SUPPORT TO AFGHANISTAN

UK & AFGHANISTAN: A PARTNERSHIP

A third of the population in Afghanistan live under the poverty line. One in six children die before their fifth birthday, and the average life expectancy is 44. The UK Government is working closely with the Government of Afghanistan to help improve living standards in the country.

همکاران: افغانستان و بریتانیا

نفوس ثلث از پنجاه سال قبل طفل شش در یک می‌کنند ی ا ب بریتانیا دولت. می‌باشد سال ۴۴ عمر اسط حد و می‌یرد، ی زند وضعیت بهبودی برای افغانستان دولت. مینماید همکاری افغانها ی زند فقر در افغانستان

What does UKaid do in Afghanistan?

UKaid supports the Afghan Government to stabilise insecure areas, stimulate the economy and improve basic services. Progress in these areas will accelerate progress towards a more stable Afghanistan, and offer an alternative to the insurgency.

The aid we have committed to includes:

- **Stabilising insecure areas** by improving policing and accelerating progress towards peace and stability. We will work with international partners to help establish a local government which can deliver basic services.
- **Stimulating the economy**, focussing on moving Afghanistan away from being dependent on foreign aid. We will invest in road and infrastructure projects, which will help provide 20,000 new jobs in transport and mining
- **Improving the effectiveness** of the Afghan Government. We will help it to deliver services like clean water, education and health. We will provide vocational training for 300,000 young people.



UKaid supports the microfinance scheme which is helping Khadija lift herself and her family out of poverty.

“Well spent aid is in our national interest. Nowhere in the world is this clearer than Afghanistan. While the military is there to bring much-needed security, peace will only be achieved through political process backed by development.”

International Development Secretary Andrew Mitchell

What has UKaid helped achieve in Afghanistan so far?

- There has been substantial progress in education. In 2001, less than one million children attended school, almost none of them girls. In 2008/09 more than five million children attended school, more than a third of whom are girls.
- 85% of Afghans now have a healthcare facility in their area, up from less than 10% in 2002.
- Poppy cultivation is down 7% in Helmand this year - building on a 33% reduction the previous year. The opium trade is a key source of funding for insurgents.
- Economic growth has been averaging 11% between 2002 and 2008, and growth is predicted to be 9% this year, thanks to a improving business environment
- In Helmand, UKaid has supported improvements in farming which have helped almost 50,000 people. We have constructed an Agricultural High School in Lashkar Gah, which will train 270 pupils a year in modern farming techniques.



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Farming in Mazaar-e-Sharif

Why is the UK in Afghanistan?

- DFID works closely with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and Ministry of Defence (MoD) in Afghanistan, to ensure an effective cross-Government approach to Afghanistan.
- The UK, along with all other international partners, is working towards a stable and peaceful Afghanistan. We are part of a 47-nation strong international force in Afghanistan. The PM is clear there will not be British troops in a combat role or in the numbers they are now in Afghanistan by 2015. We do not want British troops fighting in Afghanistan for a day longer than is necessary.
- The UK's aid programme supports Afghan priorities which will help improve the effectiveness of the Government. Visible progress in economic growth and basic services will build support for the Afghan Government from ordinary Afghans.
- Stability and development will ensure that international troops can leave and Afghan forces can take charge of security, leading to peace.



Entrepreneur Maryam

Business is a key root out of poverty

Maryam Hashami, 48, is proof of the entrepreneurial spirit which the people of Afghanistan are now demonstrating to the world.

She returned to Afghanistan after spending time as a refugee in Pakistan – and now runs a thriving tailoring business.

She started her microfinance venture, a tailoring business, with a loan of \$1,000 (around £700) from The First MicroFinanceBank of Afghanistan, around five years ago.

The UK Government has supported many entrepreneurs through the Microfinance Investment Support Facility for Afghanistan (MISFA).

At first she ran her business from home, but her success grew and she opened her shop three years ago.

She currently has six staff working for her, who receive training and guidance. Some of her previous staff members have gone on to open up their own businesses.

Maryam, a widow, and mother-of-five, said: “When I came from Pakistan I had some materials, but I had no money for a sewing machine.

“I didn't have any money – and now I own my own home and my own car.

“But I believe everyone should be able to do something for themselves, and need to be able to solve problems for themselves.”

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