

ANNUAL REPORT

2012



The Norwegian Afghanistan Committee

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A Word from the Secretary General

NAC in 2012 and Beyond

The efficiency and effectiveness of development assistance to Afghanistan has been much in the media in 2012. Evaluations of Norwegian and international aid were published and discussed by politicians and the public alike. The Norwegian Afghanistan Committee (NAC) received much praise. We have achieved positive results within education, health and natural resource management. These results are well documented and have proved to be sustainable. The midwifery education programs in Nangarhar and Wardak have been lauded as good examples of development assistance with a real impact for the development of women, families and communities. The NAC has educated more than 300 midwives, 10 % of the total number registered midwives in the Country. Evaluation reports document that the mortality rates among mothers and children in Afghanistan have been reduced. One out of seven women used to die in childbirth; today this has been reduced to 1 in 11. Mortality rates among children have gone down from 200 out of 1000 new-born children to 149. The numbers are still staggeringly high, but more mothers and more children survive. The fact that a mother survives a birth and that a new born will be able to live and grow up is invaluable for the family, the local community and society at large.

This proves that good results demand long-term commitment and focused and targeted interventions. There are no quick fixes and short term solutions for Afghanistan; development takes time.

External and internal valuation of our work is important. This is the very foundation of the development of our work and our programs. Natural resource management has been a core component of our work since 1997. In particular we have been concerned with deforestation. Trees can protect the lives and livelihoods of people from avalanches and earth slides. In 2012 we developed our intervention further through the Community Based Disaster Risk Management Program. In rural and remote areas of Afghanistan the existence of local communities depend on their natural resources; this makes them vulnerable to natural disasters. This program aims to strengthen the abilities of local communities to reduce the risk and to manage and organise their communities effectively in a crisis situation.

Finally, I would like to thank our donors (both large and small), our co-operating partners, employees and volunteers who have made invaluable contributions, not only in 2012, but year after year. Together we have had the necessary patience, and the conviction that what we are doing is right. We are thus very pleased that we can enter 2013 with reinforced links with our important cooperating partners.

Liv Kjølseth
Secretary General



The Norwegian Afghanistan Committee

Our Organizational Structure

The Norwegian Afghanistan Committee (NAC) is a member-based solidarity organization, operating solely in Afghanistan where we deliver activities with a multi-input approach to rural development, primarily in two provinces, Badakhshan and Ghazni, but also in Laghman, Wardak and Nangarhar. Our ultimate goal is to improve the quality of life of the people in our focus areas, working in close collaboration with government authorities and other national and international stakeholders.

NAC aims to support the long-term interests of Afghanistan and to strengthen the basis for development and self-sufficiency and thereby democracy and human rights. This includes building capacity of local institutions and involving them in our work. In Norway, the focus is on information and advocacy work, as well as following up on the projects in Afghanistan. The cornerstone of our organization is the fundamental belief in freedom, independence and a better life for all.

Our Structure

NAC operates with a Head Office in Oslo, a Country Office in Kabul, and regional offices in Badakhshan and Ghazni. We have more than 130 employees in Afghanistan. Our staff possess the qualities of experience, knowledge and commitment in order to make the organization grow. Most of our staff are Afghan nationals. At the main office in Oslo we have 2 employees, who are aided in their work by with the support of dedicated and specialized volunteers.

Our Approach to Development Work

NAC operates with a needs-based approach. That means that we develop our programs and projects based on the needs that we identify through a consultative process between our staff and the communities we serve. We can therefore make sure that our activities are based on community priorities and support those who are most in need. We focus our work on rural areas, targeting the most vulnerable groups, including women and children.

We work within the sectors of health, environment, agriculture, community-based infrastructure and education through an integrated approach which aims to improve living standards and achieving rural development goals. Additionally, our projects support the eight UN Development Goals and are in line with the Afghan National Development Strategy. Our activities include:

- Advocacy and Information
- Agricultural Production, Food Security and Livelihoods
- Civil Society Support
- Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction and Management
- Community Productive Infrastructure
- Community Health, Hygiene and Nutrition
- Education: Formal and Non-Formal
- Friendship Schools Project
- Health Sector Development Training including Community Health Nurses, Community Midwives and Hospital Midwives
- Support of Afghan Midwives Association
- Water and Sanitation

Our History



NAC was established in Norway in 1980 in response to the Soviet invasion in Afghanistan. Local committees immediately rallied public opinion against the invasion and called for solidarity for the Afghan population caught in the middle of the conflict. Fundraising, advocacy and information work became the core member activities.

In 1983 NAC opened its first office. Due to the poor security situation in Afghanistan it was placed in Peshawar, Pakistan. The first field office was established in Ghazni in 1986 and in Badakhshan in 1991. In 1997, a liaison office was opened in Kabul. In 2002 this became NAC's Country Office. Today NAC is still a solidarity organization with active members working for the wellbeing of the Afghan population. But it is also a professional organization with international donors and being a large receiver of the Norwegian aid budget for Afghanistan.

The Country Context - Afghanistan

The decision to withdraw the international troops from Afghanistan opened up a debate about the results and the consequences of the military intervention, aid effectiveness as well as to what extent Afghanistan had progressed during the last decade. It became a year of calculating, estimating and evaluating the international community's contribution as well as interference in the country. The World Bank estimates that 57 billion dollars has been spent on aid by the international community. But where did the money go?

Measuring Results and Impact

The year of 2012 was a year filled with reviews and evaluations of the development aid spent since the NATO intervention in 2001. The answers were clear: progress was made but with mixed results. Some major achievements are evident, such as the economic growth, gains in basic health and education as well as improved key social indicators including mortality rates. However, in regards to good governance and the building of active and democratic institutions, Afghanistan is far behind, showing even worsened indicators in the recent years.

Needs and Challenges

Afghanistan remains one of the world's least developed countries and one of the poorest countries in the world. An estimated 36 % of the population is still living below the poverty line, and around 20% are highly vulnerable and within the risk of falling below the line. The country has some of the highest rates of child- and maternal mortality rates in the world and in addition, its population is extremely vulnerable to natural disaster and climate changes. Considering the Millenium Development Goals, Afghanistan has not had the same progress as other developing countries. In all larger surveys where countries are rated, Afghanistan remains at the bottom. As the foreign troops leave, it is clear that democratic institutions are not yet fully developed, and that the system of sub-national governance, particularly at the provincial level, remains nascent in development.

As insecurity threatens to spread, there is a compelling need for continued international investments in initiatives that strengthen the capacity and accountability of government and civil society structures, while ensuring stable, secure and sustainable livelihoods for the rural population. But, as the military leaves there will also be a decrease in civilian aid.

The Development Transition

In the years to come, Afghanistan will not only experience a transition within security but also within development. As the responsibility for the country's security is handed over to Afghan National Security Forces, an expected decline will happen within civilian aid. It is therefore more important than ever that the money spent is used in the most efficient and effective way.

The lessons learned of the aid evaluations in 2012 spoke a very clear language. In order to achieve tangible results, real and sustainable impact as well as aid effectiveness, development programs need to be anchored in certain principles; local ownership, alignment with national priorities, coordinated with other stakeholders, based on the needs of the people and managed to achieve results. Development that is dependent on military interests, donor-driven or short sighted, fail in achieving sustainable solutions and results. The Afghan people need to be actors, driving their own development, in stead of relying heavily on NGOs and external assistance.



Female beneficiary, Argo, Badakhshan



Literacy course in Darayem, Badakhshan

Rural Development

NAC has more than 30 years of experience working with Afghanistan. We started our work with smaller health service delivery projects in Ghazni. Today, we are running large multi-sector projects within health, education, community productive infrastructure and natural resource management. All projects target rural areas. We focus our efforts on improving the living standards of the Afghan people living in rural and remote areas, by helping them to help themselves.

Poverty in Rural Areas

Three decades of conflict have left Afghanistan as one of the poorest countries in the world. Since 2001, significant improvements have been made within governance, social services and infrastructure, however, the ongoing conflict has left most Afghans in poverty, experiencing hardship and insecurity. An high number of the overall Afghan population, 36 percent, live below the poverty line. However, the poverty is most severe in rural areas, where more than half of the population is estimated to be below the poverty line and a remaining quarter just below it. The poorest people include small-scale farmers, landless people and female heads of households.

Poverty generally has a rural face, worldwide as well as in Afghanistan. Around 10 million of the Afghan population are rural poor and live in extreme poverty without adequate means to achieve food security for themselves and for their families. They lack access to clean water, sanitation, educational opportunities, health services as well as support from the government. In order for them to live a more decent life, interventions within many sectors are needed.

Our Approach to Sustainable Development

NAC works with a rural development approach. That means that we believe that through targeting the rural poor population, we will be able to better contribute to the overall development goals of sustainable growth, jobs, poverty reduction and equitable development.

The overall country development goal cannot be achieved unless directly tackled at the rural level. In order to improve the living conditions of people in the longer term, coordination across sectors is vital, enabling people to participate in social and economic development.

NAC therefore implements projects with a multi-input and integrated approach to rural development. Through this approach, we provide assistance simultaneously within several sectors of the society in order to stimulate positive social action. This enables synergies between sectors to emerge and move social and economical development forward more rapidly and comprehensively than sectoral work alone. Through our needs assessments on the ground, we can see that most rural communities require support in a range of areas. This includes securing access to land and water as well as an adequate infrastructure. It also includes health care and educational opportunities, as well as access to markets, which is essential for economic activity. Agricultural development contributes to better nutritional security and health but also to the sustainable management of natural resources. It helps generate income and jobs, and is therefore a fundamental prerequisite for successful development, especially in a country where almost 80% of the population are dependent on agriculture.

In order to ensure that we are really responding to the needs on the ground, we work with a results-based management approach where we focus on what impact our projects have and the changes they contribute to.



Children of Samati village, Badakhshan



Shah Mari School, Badakhshan

Cross-Cutting Themes

NAC addresses a number of cross-cutting themes that we have identified as so important that they cannot be addressed in isolation. Our projects aim to support the Afghan National Development Strategy (ANDS) including its cross-cutting themes. In order to support drug demand reduction, NAC's approach to livelihoods as well as orientation towards poverty reduction contributes towards the Government's counter-narcotic objectives. Our interventions are focused on livelihood diversification, increasing agricultural productivity, incorporating new techniques such as improved varieties and new crops, and raising awareness.

NAC addresses climate change, environment and disaster risk reduction through the development of risk consciousness in our natural resource management interventions at both household and institutional levels. We do environmental impact and disaster risk assessments for our activities and sensitize the communities for disaster risk messages in both our health and education activities. In addition, NAC directly implements disaster risk reduction and management projects.

Particular Focus on Women

Women's rights and gender equality is NAC's third cross-cutting theme. The focus on women and girls is important as women in Afghanistan are severely affected by the conflict, resulting in high levels of poverty, lawlessness, human rights abuses and violence. Poverty strikes women more than men. In Afghanistan women in general, but rural women in particular, are socially and economically excluded due to cultural practices.

NAC mainstreams gender and equal rights through our programs by designing our interventions to ensure that women are included, and that the impact of income generating activities for women is maximized as well as their institutional impact. Through our bottom-up approach, we can ensure that the activities are owned by the communities. We also make sure that progress made for women is measured specifically. That provides us with an opportunity to feed government authorities with experiences and lessons learned that can be used for future policy dialogue as well as a wider promotion of gender-balanced development processes.

The Integrated Rural Development Program

NAC's largest program in 2012 was the *Integrated Rural Development Program* which was launched in 2010 and implemented in Ghazni and Badakhshan provinces. Prior to that, NAC had been engaged in sectoral programming—within natural resource management, environment, health and education—but had not implemented programs with an integrated approach. However, in 2010, NAC decided that in order to reflect a more integrated approach to sustainable development in Afghanistan and developed the program.

The 3-year program was finalized in 2012. In 2013, NAC will continue the program through a second phase; the *Integrated Rural Development Program II* which incorporates learning from the IRD I through a large review conducted at the end of 2012.

The IRD program aims to reduce poverty by enabling rural communities to make informed choices that promotes sustainable and equitable development of their communities.

The program targets more than 100 communities in four districts (Argo, Darayem, Keshem, and Yaftal) of Badakhshan, and two districts of Ghazni (Jaghori and Malistan). It reach es 41,312 direct beneficiaries in Badakhshan and 42,000 direct beneficiaries in Ghazni through interventions of strengthening agriculture, providing alternative livelihoods, safeguarding the environment, strengthening community participation, improving basic education and literacy level as well as health status, empowering women and creating enhanced opportunities for rural communities.

IRD's Activities and Sectoral Coordination

Health

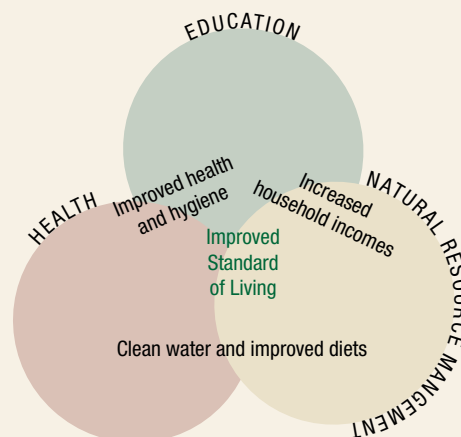
Family Health Action
Groups
Hygiene Education
Nutrition
Water and Sanitation

Education

Teacher Training
PTA Training
School Maintenance
Vocational training and
business development

Natural Resource Management

Resource protection
Agricultural protection
Ecological restoration
Sapling production
Vegetable production
Food preservation



Key Achievements in 2012

During 2012, our projects continued to keep a core focus on agriculture and natural resource management, formal and non-formal education, vocational training, health interventions, and infrastructure activities. Through our integrated approach, where communities take part in a wide range of interlinked interventions, NAC managed to directly support around 90,000 people to make a better life for themselves and achieve greater food security, improved health and education.

Overall Key Achievements in 2012

- In the last year for the Integrated Rural Development program, it was evident that NAC's transition from sector-oriented programming to a multi-input approach was successful. The case study of the Pesta-e-Kalan village where NAC provided support in all sectors to a displace village showed rapid and sustainable results;
- As a result of our new programmatic approach, NAC's program is entirely based on needs and not donor-driven. As parts of our program can be funded by different donors, we do not have to adjust our programs to them;
- Our Regional Offices staff showed that they have attained high levels of competency and capacity and are able to manage large project funded by multiple donors. This is an important asset should the security situation in Afghanistan deteriorate during the coming years;
- Through a small grant from GTZ for the Disaster Risk Reduction program in 2011-2012, NAC was able to build internal capacity and consolidate the work which led to a 3-year multi-million Community-Based Disaster Risk Management program funded by Norad, with a large geographical expansion;
- NAC's largest organizational achievement was our involvement and visibility in the provincial sector working groups and development councils where NAC is an important player, particularly within disaster risk reduction and natural resource management.

Education

NAC conducted physical improvements in 40 schools, all providing a safer and more child-friendly school learning environment for up to 27,284 students. NAC supported 351 school teachers in developing improved teaching methodologies to ensure effective student participation. NAC also created an enabling environment for parents and teachers to come together and take actions regarding the schools. Through university exam courses, 240 students got the required knowledge needed to pass university entrance exams. Furthermore, 54 communities are now regularly involved in their schools' activities through active parent-teacher associations. The communities take ownership over the schools and are able to increase enrollment, decrease absence as well as repair the school and deal with existing challenges in the school environment. Finally,

community-based schools and accelerated learning classes provided education to 150 rural students who had no previous access to basic education. Through literacy campaigns, 2,700 people were targeted and NAC mobilized an additional two districts in order to conduct girls' education campaign.

NAC's literacy courses enabled 300 women to read and write basic words and sentences, and do calculations. They are now able to help their children with homework, read signs and do shopping independently. They are respected in their families and have increased their awareness about everyday life skills. Additionally, 104 trainees were provided with vocational skills enabling them to support their families and be self-sufficient.

Health

During 2012, NAC trained 405 community Hygiene Promoters to reach out to communities and school children with key messages on health and hygiene issues. NAC organized and trained Family Health Action Groups to take part in outreach activities to promote health awareness. A total of 320 women were trained and reached 3,840 households. NAC provided sanitation facilities and maintenance training to communities and schools. The 19 latrines NAC built reduced open defecation and provided privacy for 300 people. The newly installed water point sites in 27 villages provided 8,875 beneficiaries with a safe water supply. NAC supported the installation of safe water sources in schools, thereby improving health conditions for 5,768 students, and safe school latrines reaching a total of 6,942. In addition, 22,000 children were treated with de-worming tablets.

At the Community Midwifery school in Wardak province, 25 midwives graduated in May. Another 25 students continued their studies despite that a large explosion hit and damaged the school in November. NAC also launched a new school for training 24 community-health nurses in Laghman together with the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan. At the Hospital Midwifery School in Jalalabad, 24 hospital midwives graduated after two years of studies, 16 of them have already found employment. An additional 38 students were enrolled at the school in February and will graduate in 2013



Midwifery graduation in Nangarhar



University preparation course in Argo, Badakhshan

Additionally, NAC continued its support to the Afghan Midwives Association. Leadership training was given to 24 representatives from six different provinces.

Natural Resource Management

During 2012, NAC made important contributions to farmers in their respective areas of operation. Over 400 farmers were trained in natural resource management, agricultural techniques and crop diversification. They were supported to enhance their yield and income from farming through more effective agricultural techniques and access to markets through creating links to value chains. Around 450 hectares of land were provided with facilities for irrigation and improved water systems. NAC supported 250 women to take part in agricultural activities, and enhanced their self-confidence, ability to generate income as well as food security. Additionally, 15 school demonstration orchards were established in order to provide school children with an opportunity to practice various horticulture techniques.

NAC conducted environment awareness raising campaigns, targeting over 1,000 participants. All activities were implemented in partnership with the relevant line department. The local authorities were also included through the planning process as well as invited to take part in any training that NAC conducted. One indicator for success indicator was that NAC in 2012 successfully managed to hand over three watersheds and one farm to government institutions and communities.

Civil Society

In 2012, NAC continued its civil society support program in Badakhshan. Through the project, 12 self-help groups consisting of altogether 343 marginalized women were successfully established despite the security challenges during the poppy elimination operations that took place in the summer. All groups received training on the essentials of SHGs and 9 groups were also provided with specific skills

training including carpet weaving, knitting and food processing. Through the project's second component, NAC surveyed 25 civil society organisations who showed need in reinforcing their organisational capacities, essential management skills, proposal and reporting writing skills as well as human resources and financial management. NAC provided training to the CSOs in order to bridge the needs, through a qualified trainer from the Training Research Center (TRC).

Community-Based Disaster Risk Management

In 2012, NAC continued its cooperation with the Gesellschaft fuer Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) within community-based disaster risk reduction in Badakhshan. NAC increased the awareness and capacity of 22 at-risk communities to prepare for, mitigate and respond to extreme natural events through several steps. The communities were trained in disaster response, and disaster management teams were established. The communities made village disaster management plans and assessments of hazard vulnerability and capacity. NAC trained masons on constructing safe houses and stockpiles, as well as learning new methods for seismic resistance building. NAC assisted the communities in establishing facilities where emergency stockpiles can be stored. Also, the cooperation between relevant stakeholders such as government authorities and NGOs was strengthened.

In November, 2012, NAC signed a new contract with Norad for the support of a three year community-based disaster risk management program for four districts in Badakhshan with the aim of reducing human, social and environmental losses due to natural disasters in these 60 at-risk communities. This will be done through strengthening both the capacity of the communities as well as the government authorities. In 2012, a large baseline survey was conducted and provided NAC with detailed information about the districts. Through GIS techniques, this information will be compiled and transferred to maps that can be used for future reference.



Our Work: Education

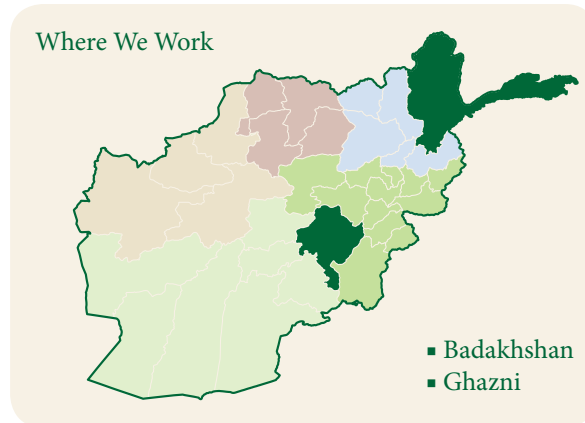
In 2012, NAC continued to work with both formal and non-formal education. We engaged with both communities as well as government institutions in order to provide Afghan children with access to school, a better quality of their education, a friendly learning environment and improved access to higher education. NAC also provided vocational training for both women and men.

Subject Knowledge Training

NAC conducted subject knowledge training for science teachers in Ghazni and Badakhshan in mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, geometry and trigonometry. From this activity, 351 teachers directly benefited through improved teaching skills and knowledge. A total of 27,284 students (13,375 boys and 13,909 girls) from 40 schools of Ghazni and Badakhshan, indirectly benefited from these courses through the improved quality of teaching. During the training, NAC noted several positive effects, such as behavior change of the teachers, increased subject knowledge and improved teaching skills. Now, the teachers use lesson plans, and make sure to apply local materials and interactive methods in their daily teaching activities.

Parent-Teacher Associations

In 2012, NAC established and supported Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) in 40 schools in the two provinces. The purpose was to make sure that the communities are involved in their schools. During the course of the year, workshops were conducted in three separate phases for the schools' PTA members and included topics like community participation and capacity building.



The workshops were conducted for 519 PTA members. An additional 39 PTA members from Argo and Daryem were also trained in bookkeeping. As a result of the PTA training, finance committees have been established in 40 schools. The attitude of the community has positively changed. The communities are involved in the schools and are now collaborating closely with the school administration on school issues. They conduct meetings on a monthly basis, regularly visit the schools to see the students learning processes, and also engage in solving problems within the school where possible, for example regarding students enrollment or absence.

The Parent-Teacher Association in Qarqul village

Haji Jamalluddin is 48 years old and the high school principal in Qarqul village in Darayem, Badakhshan. He is one of the Parent-Teacher Association members where NAC works. Here he tells us more about the work of his PTA and what they have learnt in 2012:

"Our Parent-Teacher Association was established already in March 2011 through the support of NAC. During 2012, we have received more support and training in order to strengthen our involvement. As a result of the PTA's commitment, we are now able to attract the community's attention and have a closer relationship. Our school's financial committee has for example collected AFS 85,000 to be used for the school. Also, an additional AFS 50,000 was donated from the Provincial Education Department. Part of this money was used to construct an administrative office which we didn't have before. During the past two decades, most of the district's systems, including the educational, were destroyed, and we have faced many social and economic problems. Through NAC and the engagement of parents

and teachers, we now have proper facilities, lab and library and we have built the capacity building of our staff. All of this has helped us to improve the learning and teaching environment.



School Management Training

In 2012, NAC launched school management training for 40 schools in Ghazni and Badakhshan. The participants were mainly principals and clerks, and the objective of the training was to improve the capacity of the schools' administrations, a common bottleneck to running of schools in Afghanistan. This was a problem early identified by NAC in many of the targeted schools and seen as crucial for sustainable future solutions for these schools. All together, 75 people participated in the training which covered topics such as school management and human resources.

The training brought positive changes in the school management as the staff are now applying the new skills and knowledge in their daily performance. Also, the behavior of the principals has changed, especially in terms of solving school problems in more participatory ways. The principals are now able to create safe learning environment for the students and to monitor the schools. In addition, the relationship between the schools' administration and the communities has improved.

Community-Based Schools

Due to the mountainous and remote locations of some villages, many girls and boys are out of school and do not have the opportunity to attend classes. In 2012, NAC identified several villages and established Community-Based Schools for children who were not able to reach the schools in their remote areas.



Girls in Girls Nr 2 School, Faizabad, Badakhshan

In total, 150 boys and girls from the two provinces were organized into 6 classes. NAC provided textbooks, stationaries and training for both students and teachers. As a result, students with no previous access to schools have received education in languages, mathematics, art and religion. They are able to read and write words and simple sentences, as well to read and count numbers from 1 to 100.

Laboratories and Libraries

NAC provided ten schools with one library set and one laboratory set. The activity was conducted in both provinces, as many schools lacked both laboratory tools and equipment. Each library set provided contained 467 copies of different books, including books on religion, psychology, geography, history, journalism, science as well as magazines and other general books. Each of the laboratory sets included 459 items, including physic, biology and chemistry subjects. The sets needed to be combined with an improvement of the teachers' knowledge and teaching skill, and therefore NAC provided laboratory training for 11 science teachers. The training was facilitated by the Science Center of the Ministry of Education.

NAC also launched school competitions between pupils, either within one school, or externally between different schools. Through the competitions, the students focused hard on learning more of the science and language subjects. As the students' knowledge and abilities are improved, it affects the quality education in the whole target area.

Inclusive Child Friendly Education Training

Inclusive Child Friendly Education Training is a method used by the Ministry of Education. The purpose is to provide equal education for all, regardless of their gender, abilities, disabilities, background, health conditions and circumstances.



Boys in Girls Nr 2 School, Faizabad, Badakhshan

During 2012, NAC conducted inclusive child friendly education training in four schools in Ghazni and Badakhshan. A total of 40 teachers attended the training. As a result from the training, the teachers' attitudes changed. They are now capable and willing to create friendly classroom environments. They are able to give the students a more active role in the classes, enhancing the learning process.



Literacy Course in Malistan, Ghazni



Literacy Campaign in Badakhshan

Accelerated Learning

NAC established two classes for 100 students for accelerated learning in Badakhshan. The students enrolled will complete two grades in one year. NAC provided textbooks and stationeries for students, and trained the teachers on making lessons plans, teaching methods, active learning and child psychology. The outcome of the learning process showed that the students had learnt to read simple words and sentences and were able to count.

University Entrance Courses

Every year, many students graduate from high school and take the concours exam in order to enter university. However, most of them do not pass the exam due to insufficient knowledge. This is particularly a problem in the more remote areas, where students, for example, do not have access to needed science courses. NAC therefore provided subject courses for 130 boys and 110 girls in grade 12. Subjects covered were mathematics, physics, biology, chemistry, geometry, and trigonometry. The students practiced through demonstration exams, being familiarized with different forms of the concours exam, choosing faculties, and answering potential questions.

Literacy Campaign

A one-day literacy campaign was conducted in Argo and Darayem in Badakhshan and in Malistan, Ghazni. More than 2,700 people, including representatives from local authorities as well as teachers and students, participated in the campaign. The community elders addressed the importance of literacy in Islam, and the educational authorities addressed the education right for all Afghan citizens. In Malistan, NAC included environmental awareness and some fruit and non-fruit trees were distributed. This is a good example of NAC's multi-input approach and coordination between different sectors. The short-term result of this activity is that communities are aware and engaged in education. In the long-term, literacy rates will increase.

Literacy Courses

Through cooperation with local authorities, NAC identified vulnerable women to take part in literacy courses that were established for 300 women through the IRD program as well as 1,000 women through the support of WFP. The women were trained by female community educators. NAC distributed textbooks, stationeries, and teaching materials and necessary items like white board and furniture. The evaluation of the course showed that 90 % of students can read, write, and are able to do addition and subtraction within learnt numbers and digits. The literacy teachers learned new teaching methodology for literacy classes and in Badakhshan, the 12 community educators found jobs and were able to change their life conditions through the project.

NAC provided life skills training for the 1,300 women in order to enable them to make informed decision about their lives, livelihoods and family-related issues. Topics addressed through the training are civic and organizational training with emphasis on citizens' rights and duties, the role and responsibility of the Government, women's rights, and the role of civil society. The training also covers public participation and greening of community area as well as training on nutrition, health and hygiene.

Supporting Girls' Education

At the end of 2012, NAC in cooperation with GIZ-BEPA, funded by the Swiss Development Cooperation, launched the project *Active Communities for Equal Education* in Argo and Baharak Districts in Badakhshan. The purpose of the project is to involve communities, discuss perceptions and solutions and raise awareness on school-related opportunities and responsibilities in order to provide the necessary change in attitudes and behavior that will facilitate an increase in the enrollment and retention of girls in school. The project continues in 2013 with awareness campaigns and roundtable discussion with communities and their leaders.



Tailoring course in Malistan, Ghazni

Vocational Training: Tailoring

NAC conducted classes in tailoring for six months for 200 women from Ghazni and Badakhshan. The classrooms were equipped with essential items like sewing machines, cloths and scissors that the participants could also use for starting business after the training. One outcome of this training was that five tailoring groups were established in Jaghori and Malistan. These groups are planning to establish sale points in the districts to serve the communities, however, it is too early to report on the results of their businesses. The participants from the classes in Badakhshan are working individually and providing clothes for their children and families.

Vocational Training: Car Mechanic

NAC established a six-month carpentry training where total, 18 unemployed men from Ghazni and Badakhshan were identified and organized in three centers. During the training, NAC hired expert trainers to teach them practically. NAC also provided carpentry tools for all trainees. The graduated trainees are now able to make windows, doors, tables, chairs, and other carpentry products. Most of the trainees are planning to open their own workshops in the future, but it is yet too early to see any outcomes of this.



Car mechanic course in Malistan, Ghazni



Carpentry course in Argo, Badakhshan

Vocational Training: Carpentry

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Vocational Training: Mobile Mechanic

NAC identified six unemployed men in Jaghori and Malistan districts to participate in a six-month mobile mechanic training. The trainees were provided with appropriate tools for doing reparations, and trained by an expert trainer who also had his own shop and network. After graduation, the trainees have opened own shops in the local market, and are now working for income generation. Their economy situation have improved and they are proud to serve their community. The income of graduated trainees from mobile mechanic is estimated to around 200 – 250 \$ per month. The mobile mechanic has proven to be a very successful intervention.



Mobile mechanic training in Jaghori, Ghazni

Now Nasiba can support her family

"My name is Nasiba and I am 32 years old. I live in Gardan sang village, Sang e Masha, in Ghazni. I have four children but my husband died three years ago. After that, we faced a lot of problems with my family's livelihoods. But through some donations from people in our community, we could continue our life. I didn't know any profession through and I couldn't cover my family's living expenses and also my son was very young and couldn't work. This year NAC came to our village and offered embroidery courses. Our CDC nominated me to join the course since I am so poor. During the six months of the course, we learned different kinds of embroidery. It was so interested to learn and I felt very fortunate. Now I've started to work in the market and so far I've earned about 10,000 Afghanis. All of my customers are satisfied and I already have more orders. Now I have a plan to open an embroidery shop in the Sang e masha bazaar in Jaghori district"



Infrastructure Activities

NAC's infrastructure activities under IRD are, in one way or another, strengthening the role and functions of other activities under health (through WASH), education (through school rehabilitation and maintenance) and natural resource management (through securing livelihoods and agricultural land – irrigation).

As for schools, due to weak government institutions, as well as immobilized communities, schools have not had any maintenance procedures and services since their construction. They also lack a suitable environment for recreational activities, such as sport fields and playgrounds.

School Sport Fields and Playgrounds

During 2012, NAC built three playgrounds in Ghazni. These playgrounds will ultimately benefit over 4,400 students, and 18 laborers directly benefitted from being employed as labors for the project. NAC also provided equipment or play toys including benches, slides, swing and seesaws. As a result, 4,400 school children and their after-comers have access to good facilities for playing and doing sports within their school environment.

Suitable School Environment

In 2012, NAC supported six schools in Badakhshan and Ghazni Provinces which acquired improved environment. The school buildings were renovated and Parent-Teachers Associations as well as future future school maintenance procedures established. NAC coordinates between the infrastructure and education activities, renovates a school and then establishes a PTA if that is not already available at the school. After the PTA is in place, NAC trains them on how to raise and utilize money for school maintenance. A financial committee is established, which in cooperation with the PTA, school authorities and community members, manages the fundraising and school maintenance activities. Through this initiative, school finance committees of many schools have been able to raise thousands of Afghani for the maintenance purposes of their schools.

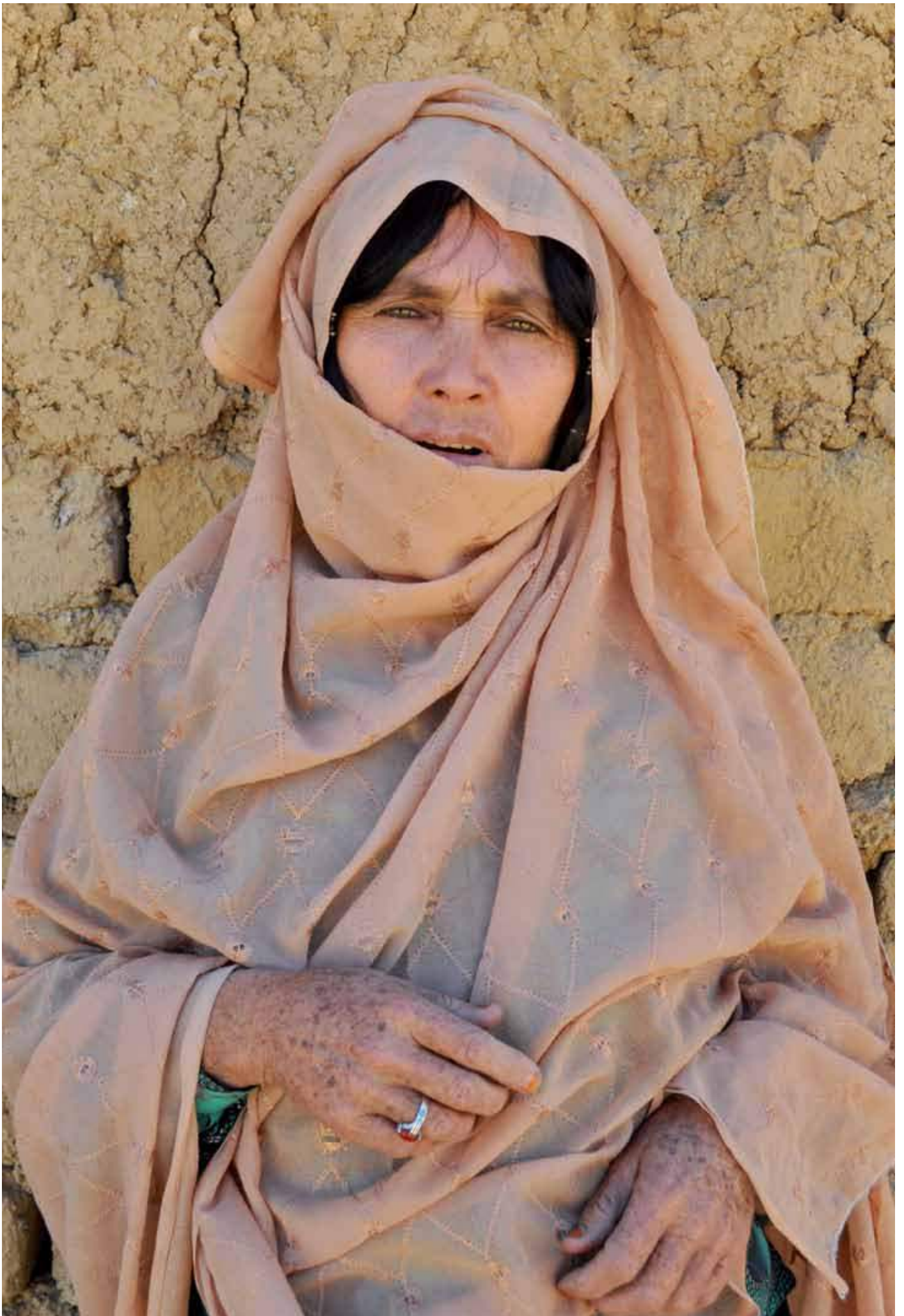
In 2012, school maintenance works was completed and then handed over to the school authorities, communities and PTAs, As a result, six schools with a current enrollment of 5,119 students, have benefitted. The schools have new concrete floors, stable and improved ceilings, plastered and painted external and internal walls, new windows and doors, new blackboards, concrete pathways, and graveled campuses.

Challenges: Education

Due to decades of conflict, generations of children have not had access to education. The large influx of international aid has made positive changes possible. Since 2001, Afghanistan has experienced an eightfold increase in school enrolment, and never before have so many girls been enrolled in school. Still, 42 % of Afghan children do not have access to education. The numbers are much higher for girls than for boys, and in remote and rural areas compared to urban areas. Few girls qualify for higher education as they never finish the full cycle of basic education. The quality of education and the low degree of child-friendly teaching methods is another worrying factor.

- In 2001, 1 million went to school, only a few were girls. Today 7-9 million go to school. 38% are girls
- 40 % of girls attend primary education, 66 % of Afghan boys
- For secondary education, the enrolment rate is 38 % for boys and 15 % for girls
- The attendance rates for girls are less than half of that for boys

Source: UN and the Afghan Ministry of Education



Our Work: Health

In 2012, NAC continued to work with health, hygiene and nutrition for communities and schools under the Integrated Rural Development Program. Altogether 20 villages were targeted with a total of 29,678 direct beneficiaries. Our health activities specifically target women which is of particular importance since it is often the women who bear the main responsibility for bringing and managing water, cleaning the children and the house, personal and family hygiene as well as preparing food. NAC also continued to support the training and employment of community and hospital midwives as well as community-health nurses in 3 provinces.

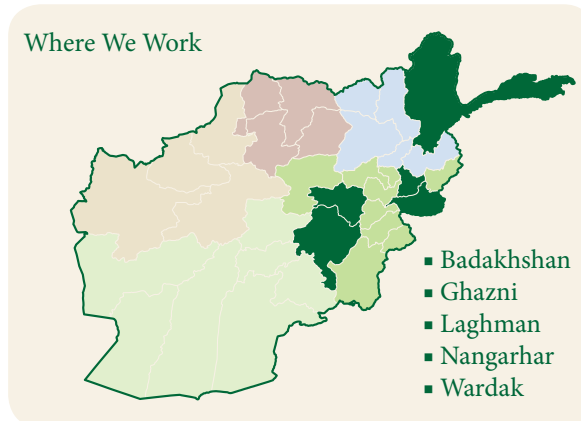
Hygiene Education

During 2012, NAC trained 405 Hygiene Promoters in health and hygiene using the *Information, Education and Communication* package which covers topics such as personal hygiene, waterborne diseases, safe drinking water, waste disposal, vaccination, control of diarrhea, breast feeding, child nutrition, and family planning. The Hygiene Promoters then visit families at least 1-2 times per month to support them with putting the new habits into daily practice. They often use pictorial guidelines and flipcharts to transfer knowledge to the communities, who are often illiterate. 205 of the Hygiene Promoters were teachers from 37 schools. Together with the principal, the Promoters also established school health committees that are responsible for continuing the education of the students. NAC also did refresher training for 240 Hygiene Promoters that were trained in 2011.

First Aid and De-worming

NAC trained 214 school Hygiene Promoters on First Aid and distributed 54 First Aid kits to 37 schools. The training included triage of patients, how to provide symptomatic treatment and referral to health facilities. During the year, a new area in Yaftal-i-Payen was added to the First Aid training, with nine extra teachers. NAC also conducted a de-worming campaign for 10,000 school children under 15. Additionally, 12,000 children who were targeted in 2011, received a new dose in 2012.

Where We Work



NAC distributed 50 sets of hygiene materials to 37 schools in both provinces. Some schools received two kits due to the large amount of students enrolled.

As a result, the schools and communities demonstrated an increased level of health awareness, particularly about safe drinking water, food safety, personal and environmental hygiene. Previously, there was no awareness on how to deal with waterborne diseases, clean water, its benefits and no utilization of health facilities. After the training, more people made latrines, sent their children and women to health facilities to be vaccinated, and asked for assistance during pregnancy. The communities were also able to make ORS (Oral Rehydration Solution) to be used for children with diarrhea.



Hygiene and first aid kits for schools in Badakhshan



Student washing her hands in Badakhshan

Family Health Action Groups

Family Health Action Groups is an approach where NAC utilizes female community members to voluntarily spread health awareness and key health messages, especially among mothers in order to achieve healthier homes and lifestyles and increase the use of available health services. The aim is to build a strong information and referral system that will help community health workers attend to pregnancies, births, family planning and cases of illness.

During 2012, NAC mobilized 20 villages and selected 320 women to form 20 Family Health Action Groups. The women were selected based on set criteria: having children, being respected in the community, and being willing to work voluntarily and take responsibility of 10-15 households around her house. All 320 FHAG members received training on health and hygiene, including reproductive health, antenatal and postnatal care, benefits of breastfeeding, family planning, immunization, nutrition and hygiene practices, and referring patients to health facilities. Ten FHAGs in Badakhshan also received refresher training. In 2012, the FHAG members reached 3,840 households where they held regular awareness raising sessions, 1-2 times a month for each household.

NAC conducted a follow-up knowledge, attitude and practice (KAP) survey which showed that the impact of hygiene education from theory to practice had benefitted from supplementary visits, including household walks and an increase of more practical examples and exercises. In principle, all beneficiaries showed that they have basic knowledge concerning hygiene, and have changed their habits to practicing a more hygienic lifestyle.

The knowledge of the FHAGs helps the communities to live a healthy lifestyle, and to ultimately decrease morbidity and mortality rates caused by preventable health problem for people in general, and of women and children in particular.



Hand washing training in Badakhshan

Hygiene Campaign

NAC conducted a one-day hygiene education campaign in Badakhshan for 200 community members, where more than 50% were females. The campaign focused on personal hygiene, safe drinking water and common diseases. NAC also gave hygiene training to 23 government staff from the Department of Women's Affairs, the Provincial Disaster Management committee as well as 32 NAC staff.

Results

In October, 2012, a follow-up KAP survey was conducted in order to see the progress towards the set indicators. The observations made during the project cycle, as well as evaluations and follow-up KAP survey indicates improvements in health and hygiene in target population in 2012. The improvements included:

- Most of the participants knew how to protect their drinking water and water reservoir;
- The participants could practice methods to clean dirty water and knew how to rehydrate their sick child when there is no oral rehydration solution (ORS);
- The participants knew how to dig a hole for garbage and items that threatens the surrounding environment;
- The participants expressed responsibility and said that they will transfer all the information to others in their communities.

Some important results shown in the survey was:

- The percentage of households having access to safe drinking water within 10 minutes (by foot) in Ghazni was 37 % in 2011 and increased to 59% in 2012;
- The percentage of households using safe water sources was 59 % in 2011 and increased to 86% in 2012;
- The percentage who washed their hands after defecation was 32 % in 2011 and increased to 93% in 2012;
- The percentage of households using latrines with commode, septic tank or improved traditional latrine was 1 % in Ghazni in 2011 and increased to 15% in 2012.



Hygiene training material



Construction of water well in Malistan, Ghazni



Latrine constructed by NAC in Argo, Badakhshan

Infrastructure for Health

To support our health activities, NAC's infrastructure activities focused on constructing water, sanitation and hygiene facilities. Many communities and schools where NAC work do not have access to safe drinking water. The people either drink contaminated water or altogether do not have access to drinking water. Some communities have to go a long way in order to bring water and the water that retrieved is often not safe as it comes from unprotected canals or ponds. Providing safe drinking water for the communities and school children is therefore a crucial point in order to achieve increased health and hygiene levels. Many community members and school children suffer from waterborne diseases.

Safe Drinking Water for Schools

In 2012, NAC provided safe drinking water for six schools in Ghazni and Badakhshan through small water storages or water wells equipped with hand pumps. The children in the schools had been suffering from waterborne diseases and dehydration, causing both illnesses as well as absence from classes.

The facilities constructed in 2012 benefits 5,768 students, both girls and boys. The facilities, in combination with the health and hygiene training, show many results. As the students now have access to safe drinking water, the health problems related to unsafe drinking water have been significantly reduced. This includes direct effects such as decrease of sickness amongst students and staff, but also indirect effects such as a decrease in absence from classes.

Safe Drinking Water for Communities

In 2012, NAC provided safe drinking water facilities to 27 villages in Badakhshan and Ghazni. Two types of water supply were implemented; protected water wells and gravity piped systems. Two members from each community were trained on how to maintain the

hand-pumps for the wells and provided with equipment. As for the pipe system, water has now been driven from a source to protected storages and from there water is being distributed through pipes and taps to the households.

The health conditions of the community members have improved. They now have water available in the vicinity of their houses which also provides comfort to the households. Additionally, the communities can use the water for kitchen gardening and growing trees in their yards, resulting in small trees and vegetable plots in or around the houses in the communities. Women and girls get the highest advantages from these activities as in the Afghan rural context, women and children are responsible for supplying water to the households. Also, in case of disease outbreaks, women suffer the most as having direct contact with pathogenic matter while cleaning and fetching water. When small children get sick, it is the women who take care of them and in most cases getting exposed to the disease of their children.

Latrine Construction

In order to improve the hygiene and sanitation in Pesta-e-Kalan village (a village recently moved to a new location), NAC planned to build altogether 50 latrines for the community. Out of these, 31 latrines were built in 2011, and the remaining 19 were built in 2012. The community members were directly involved in the construction process. NAC also built a five-compartment set of latrines for six schools in Ghazni and Badakhshan.

Before NAC's intervention, the communities and schools either used unprotected latrines or open spaces for defecation, which were the source of many diseases and dirtiness of the environment. As a result, more than 300 community members in Pesta-e-Kalan and six schools with 6,492 students have access to sanitary and improved latrines. Women and girls especially benefited from the latrines that contributed to their comfort and privacy.

Hospital Midwifery Education - Jalalabad

NAC started supporting the Nangarhar Institute of Health Sciences in 2002, at a time when it was difficult to recruit students, particularly from remote areas. Families from the conservative eastern provinces of Afghanistan are normally reluctant to send their girls to any education outside of the home village, where they stay in a compound away from their family. In 2012, however, IHS had nearly double the amount of applicants from ten years ago. Many families were eager to send their daughters to school, which is a sign of the increased acceptance. Through the generous contribution of FOKUS, IHS has so far graduated 331 midwives, around 10% of the total number of graduated midwives registered by the Ministry of Public Health.

Graduates and New Students of 2012

In December 2012, 24 hospital midwives graduated after two years of education that involved both theoretical training as well as practical work at the Jalalabad provincial hospital. Upon graduation, the hospital midwives can be deployed to various health facilities in the province including both district and provincial hospitals. Already, 16 of the graduates have found work. In February 2012, 38 new students were enrolled and are planned to graduate in 2013. The new students are from the eastern provinces in serious need of female health professionals, including Nooristan, Paktika and Kunar.

Community-Health Nurses - Laghman

At the end of 2012, NAC launched a new community-health nursing education program in Mehtar-Lam, the provincial capital of Laghman in a joint venture with the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan. Through the project, 24 girls from remote districts will be trained for 24 months.

Supporting the Afghan Midwives Association

Being a midwife has become a more widely accepted profession in Afghanistan during the last years even though the culture in country doesn't normally allow for young and unmarried women to work outside of their homes. But as the communities see the benefits of having a skilled female health worker, the acceptance rises. However, there is still a need for centralized support and coordination, which is where the Afghan Midwives Association can play a crucial role. The Afghan Midwives Association (AMA) is the first labor movement in Afghanistan for women. It was established in 2005 in order to promote and strengthen the midwifery profession, the role of the midwife, and ensuring the well-being of women and families in Afghanistan.

NAC works to strengthen AMA's organizational and programmatic capacity, including strong leadership, and high technical capacity. In 2012, NAC supported AMA's Leadership Development Program.

Basria graduated from IHS Jalalabad

"My name is Basria and I am 22 years old. I am single. I have 9 brothers and 4 sisters, and I am the oldest. I come from a quite rural area in my district, and I already was aware that the number of women who dies during delivery in Afghanistan is so high. Therefore I wanted to become a midwife. It is a way for me to serve and work for my people. Additionally, my family was very supportive of me pursuing my studies and becoming a midwife. So, I nominated myself to the concurs exam. After I passed it, I was nominated to be enrolled at IHS. It is a national program, where the Ministry of Education nominates students to be enrolled, based on their performance.

I've been really happy with my studies, both the practical and theoretical part. I have already delivered more than 28 babies by myself! When we started having practical work in the hospital, I was really worried. I wanted to deliver a baby, but I wasn't sure if I could do it! But now I feel really confident, and I know that I have both enough knowledge and experience. I feel happy today, because after two years of very hard work, from both the students and the teacher's side, we have finally reached the graduation day. Also, my brother and uncle are here at the family, and I feel my family's support is present!"

Reshad, Basria's brother says:

"From the first day she mentioned this idea both my father and I thought it sounded so interesting to send her to IHS and we gave



her the permission to study in this institute Now we are so proud of her and we expect her to serve and work to the people. As a fact, her sister has also enrolled to be a midwife in a community midwifery school. I'm requesting all families to allow their daughters or sisters to go to schools or universities and let them to study. All of us should leave behind the idea which says the females should not study or learn. Rather they should go to institutes and universities and learn something, this is written even in the Holy Quran which emphasis for learning for both men and women.



Student at the nursing school in Laghman



The midwifery school in Wardak after the blast in November

Community Midwifery Education -Wardak

During 2012, NAC ran one midwifery education school in Wardak province, located in the central highlands of the country. The population size of the province in combination with the predominantly rural population and the very limited numbers of trained health care workers, poses many great and ongoing challenges in order to provide health care services. In addition, the province is one of the more conservative provinces in the country, an additional challenge.

NAC runs the school in Maidan Shahr, the provincial capital of Wardak, through the financial support of the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan. In 2012, two batches were studying at the school. The first batch, with 25 students, graduated in May. The second batch are continuing their studies and will graduate in 2013. All students are from various districts of the province. Every student needs to pass 3 semesters of 8 months each. The program aims to provide the students with knowledge within antenatal, natal and postnatal care as well as educate them about nutrition, hygiene, health practices, childhood, family planning, communicable and easily preventable diseases through theoretical and practical work. In addition, NAC offers an extra-curriculum to the students which includes women's rights, conflict resolution and sports.

The School Severely Damaged in Wardak Blast

On Friday, the 23rd of November, a large suicide blast hit central Maidan Shahr and damaged several buildings, including the Midwifery School. The blast occurred just outside the midwifery school and dormitory. The student's accommodation facility was totally destroyed into ruins, practically nothing is left of the building. Also the midwifery school suffered by damaged windows and doors framework and equipment. Since it was holiday, all student and teachers were on leave and the building was unattended except for two guard who got minor injuries.

NAC was naturally deeply saddened by the incident but was relieved to hear that none of our staff or the midwifery students had been seriously injured. The target was some kind of government facility and the school was unfortunate to be in the proximity.

NAC has found a new location for the school and lessons will start again on 5 January 2013. All of the students have said that they want to return to continue learning and serve their people. During the time the school was closed, the trainers of the school received extra training in Kabul on topics that included time management, English and Communication.

Challenges: Health

During the last decade, many contributions have been made to improve the health system in Afghanistan and results have been achieved. Still, Afghanistan is among the worst places to be a mother, and one of the most dangerous places to be born, especially in rural areas. Many factors explain the gaps and deficiencies of the health system. Most important is the lack of skilled health personnel, especially female, in particular in especially in rural areas. There is also a lack of proper infrastructure which makes health facilities reachable for the rural population. The lack of general health information and dangerous traditional practices also explains the high death rates of causes that could easily have been prevented or treated.

- One out of seven children die before the age of five
- One out of eleven women die from causes related to pregnancy and birth
- Only 57.4% of households are within one hour walking distance from a public health facility
- Only 48 % meet skilled antenatal care (at least one visit) during pregnancy
- Life expectancy at birth is 62- 64 years

Source: Ministry of Public Health, Afghanistan and Save The Children



Our Work: Natural Resource Management

In 2012, NAC continued to work with agricultural production, food security, livelihoods and forestry and rangeland rehabilitation. In a country where 80 percent of the population live in rural areas and mainly relying on agriculture for their livelihood, natural resources and how they are managed directly affect poverty and wellbeing. NAC therefore aims to integrated environmental protection and community development through a scheme of different activities.

Horticultural Development

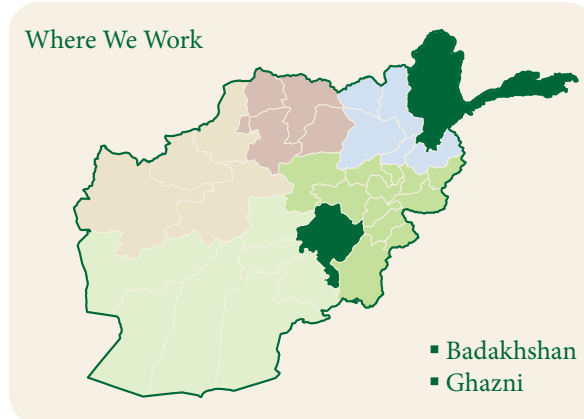
In 2012, NAC established 35 different kinds of orchards, including both commercial and demonstration orchards for farmers and schools, 15 in Badakhshan and 20 in Ghazni. These orchards cover an area of 2.3 hectares with 1,175 saplings (159 apricots and 1,016 apples).

There was no previous existence of proper horticulture sector interventions where NAC is working but now 400 farmers have been included in the horticulture value chain and understand the value chain development process and gaps within it. They also have knowledge on the difference between local and improved varieties. So far, over 55 farmers have self-replicated the orchard management learnt from NAC's interventions through the 35 demonstration orchards. The orchards show positive impact and function as good demonstration examples for those who own land.

Kitchen Gardens – “Foster Mums”

In order to engage women in agricultural activities, NAC continued its “Foster Mums” program during 2012 with the support of both Norad and the World Food Programme. NAC established 10 demonstration, training and extension gardens in the districts to train the women. As a result of these 10 gardens, 1,250 women managed to set up one kitchen garden each. The kitchen gardens allow the women to produce their own vegetables and thereby increase their food security. Each of the women received 12 varieties of vegetable seeds; onion, cucumber, leek, radish, coriander, turnip, cabbage, spinach, okra, eggplant, lettuce and tomato, to establish their own kitchen garden. The quantity and variety of vegetable seeds was subject to the availability of land, the quality of the soil, as well as access to a demonstration kitchen garden in the village for practical training.

As a result, the 1,250 women have learned technical skills of producing as well as using vegetables. They have also been familiarized with new kinds of vegetables, such as lettuce and coriander. The women have a better understanding of the importance of vegetables in relation to nutrition and food security. During the project, the women became self-sufficient in terms of vegetables and increased their food security.



Vegetable Processing

In October, a three-day training on fruit and vegetable processing was held for trainers in the Badakhshan regional office, including the NRM team, community educators and trainers. The training was on various methods of vegetable processing and preparing vegetables. As a result of the training, NAC's staff were able to train women on fruit and vegetable processing and provide them with essential tools and equipment. The women are now able to preserve fruits and vegetables for family consumption during the winter time.

Through the vegetable cultivation and demonstrations at the household level, including training on how to process vegetables, NAC could notice quick results. While visiting villages, the standing crop appeared healthy and harvests were large. Vegetable packages have a high potential to be expanded to a very large number of households and kitchen gardens or smaller plots can also be established even for people who don't have any land. The demand for these types of interventions is high. As others can see how a small intervention like this can really increase food security and compliment the food intake within the family, they become interested in establishing the same type of gardens themselves.

A small part of the women who participated in this component also managed to sell some of their harvest and made around 1000 AFS per harvest. This showed a good potential for future business development.

Potato Demonstration Plot

During 2012, nine potato demonstration plots were established in Ghazni and Badakhshan, covering 4,060 m² of land. At these plots, gardeners and farmers can exchange experiences and be given practical training to encourage them for future production. Through the plots, 270 farmers received on-the-job practical training during 35 field farmer days. The training led to an increased knowledge amongst the farmers regarding new methods of potato cultivation. Previously, when the farmers used traditional methods, they would harvest 5-6 kg potato from 1 kg local seed. By using the new methods, they can now increase that number to 7-9 kg with the same local seed. Additionally, by introducing improved varieties of potato over 9 demonstration plots 270 farmers were exposed to the results of harvest on improved varieties.

These cultivations and demonstrations have proven positive results. In the future, there will be an even higher demand for quality potatoes, an important part of the food security compliment. Any surplus will be sold at provincial markets which has higher demand. During the course of the implementation, NAC observed that the adaptation of the improved variety brought in from Tajikistan and introduced in Ghazni, had no comparable results to Badakhshan, which is located just next to Tajikistan. This clearly shows how important adaption to the environment is in order to get results.

Cereal Production – Experimental Plot

In 2012, NAC introduced improved seed varieties that are suitable to the local system with the aim of ensuring seed security. NAC established two experimental plots for cereal production in Jaghori and Malistan. Each variety covered a 35 m² surface, totaling to 288 m². The experimental plots were successful. The farmers found that the Sulha variety was most useful in Jaghori, and Ariana in Malistan. Therefore NAC introduced these two varieties and trained 80 farmers.



Wheat field outside Faizabad, Badakhshan

Field Farmer Days

A Field Farmer Day (FFD) is a tested participatory approach to engage farmers on practical training and exposure to new methods on different themes of their day-to-day farming life. NAC organized several need based FFD in both provinces. During 2012, NAC trained 2,257 beneficiaries, including farmers, “Foster Mums”, community members and cooperative members through conducting field farmer days in Ghazni and Badakhshan. During the field farmers days, the farmers get together and are trained in horticulture development, vegetable development, fodder production, reforestation, cereal, and poultry development.

Participatory Technology Development (PTD)

Participatory Technology Development is an approach that links participatory research with extension. It promotes the internal capacity of rural communities so that they are able to themselves find out innovations which meet their needs, suit strengths and weaknesses of households and communities and are functional in the societies where they live and work. During 2012, NAC established 27 PTD groups:

- 7 PTD on pruning for 133 famers in Ghazni
- 1 PTD on urea treatment for 22 farmers in Ghazni
- 7 PTD on plastic tunnel vegetable production, Ghazni
- 3 in Darayem, 2 in Argo, and 7 in Yaftal on vegetable production in plastic tunnels, 360 farmers in Badakhshan also received practical training on the tunnels

Through the PTD, NAC can ensure that farmers have active knowledge through the active participation of all cycles of the process during the training. For example, through the wheat cereal experiemental plots, farmers participated in sowing, irrigating, weeding and harvesting and NAC can observe their participation. The farmers can see the impact of using improved varieties including how food security was improved just after two months of improved seeds and practices.



Farmer during practical training in Badakhshan

Rangeland Rehabilitation and Management

Pastures and rangeland management is a base for live-stock development in Afghanistan. In 2012, NAC implemented a range of activities to improve pastures and make sure that pastures are being used in a more sustainable and adequate manner. This process demands the involvement of both communities as well as relevant government institutions that need to be mobilized and trained in order to stop practices of overgrazing. Additionally, alternative sources for animal fodder in order to relieve the burden of the rangeland and pasture needs to be in place.

During 2012, NAC mobilized communities in coordination with the Community Development Councils. It was a pilot phase and three communities in each district of Argo, Darayem and Yaftal (Pesta-e-Kalan) were mobilized for range land rehabilitation. The total area targeted was three hectares of land, with one hectare in each district. In these areas, there are 5-12 kinds of natural bushes growing. The communities learned about the benefits of range land management and rehabilitation and now understand the importance of it in order to mitigate landslides and recurrent floods.

NAC has been engaged in rangeland management and rehabilitation for several years. In 2012 it was estimated that over 70 NAC trained people or ex-employees are working with communities, individual farmers and private farm owners today, replicating NAC's methods of rangeland management and rehabilitation.

Reforestation - "Foster Mums"

NAC works with so-called "Foster Mums", who are vulnerable women in rural areas. Through a combination of natural resource management, food security and livelihood skills, NAC aims to provide these women with work that they can do from their home and skills which they can utilize after the completion of the project. In March, NAC established 250 home-based nurseries with 50 families. Each of the participants received five varieties of fruit and non-fruit seeds for establishing their own home-based nursery. NAC distributed 85,000 polyethylene bags.

A home-based nursery plot for demonstration was established in each village for practical training, including preparation of the nurseries, methods for mixing soil, sand and manure, methods for seedling as well as methods for water and irrigation.

Through the technical support and training provided to the 250 Foster Mums, the women and their families received extra income by selling the saplings. Also, it was an additional success indicator that 70% of the plants survived. A normal success indicator for plant survival of this type is set at 40%.

Tree Plantation Campaign

"My name is Haikal and I am 55 years old. Our village is 21 kilometer away from the center of Argo. Last year, NAC came to our village and did a tree plantation campaign. In the past, we were not aware on how we could benefit from our land, and didn't know so much about plantation. We lacked motivation and enough confidence to do plantation ourselves. When NAC came to our village, they provided us with trees



and showed how to do plantation. Now, we were able to plant trees in an area of around one hectare. All saplings have grown and we have a very nice and green surrounding. We have also cultivated some animal fodder and by selling those we earned about 6000 AFS. With that money we bought a water pipe for our garden. I am happy that we have learned so many useful things, such as understanding that our land is suitable for cultivation, and how to cultivate and irrigate. I am planning to do the same work and plantation in my personal land in the coming year."

Land Use

During 2012, NAC encouraged 20 farmers in Badakhshan to use their land more effectively, as in making the land capable of yielding more crops. Through practical training of the farmers, NAC managed to improve the use of 10 jeribs of land.

Previously, the farmers used the land for growing rain fed wheat every other year. After NAC's intervention, the farmers are able to irrigate the land every year and obtain crops. The previous harvest from one jerib land was around 175 kilogram, now the farmers will be able to harvest 420 kilogram of wheat every year.

Environment Awareness Campaign

During the campaigns of 2012, NAC communicated messages on tree plantation, environmental conservation, and the importance of trees in hadiths. NAC also conducted meetings with governors, municipalities, the Director of Agriculture, district governors, CDCs and community representatives to discuss tree plantation and participation. NAC engages in environment campaigns in order to raise awareness on the negative effects the misuse of natural resources can have. Activities such as cutting forest, waste storage and extending pasture land are common practices of natural resource mismanagement in Afghanistan.

Livestock Development: Poultry

NAC's poultry activities aim to increase and improve the number and conditions of poultry in the villages, thereby securing livelihood on a household level through the production of meat and egg. In 2012, NAC distributed 1,200 chickens to 60 families. Each family also received one feeder, one drinker and a 150 kg fodder ratio.

As a result, 60 families have increased their direct income by selling on an average 450 eggs each per month, totaling to 2,700 AFS income per month per family. These 60 families have also increased their capacity and potential to increase their number of chickens through NAC's training on micro poultry farming. The families have also received access to an improved nutrition source. Furthermore, a number of communities have directly benefited by having access to eggs and chicken meat in village markets at affordable prices.

Maintenance of Farms and Watersheds

NAC has been implementing a variety of environmental programs since 1993. Many of them have been related to social forestry and have included demonstration farms, as well as the establishment and management of both watersheds and nurseries. Since 1997, NAC has established nine demonstration farms and nurseries, watersheds and reforestation sites. Here, saplings and vegetable plants have been produced and later distributed to beneficiaries to take part in our natural resource management activities. This was a shift of work that NAC has been engaged in since 2010, in line with the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock.

During 2012, NAC planted 44,784 saplings on community land by providing saplings and technical assistance to the communities who themselves did the actual planting. NAC also conducted maintenance work of the sites and assisted communities in future maintenance. NAC could also see clear results of the interventions from earlier years in terms of community replication.

NAC's farms and nurseries in Badakhshan hold a stock of 303,654 non permanent saplings; around 124,319 are ready for 2013 spring plantation. This stock should be considered a substantial resource in terms of natural resources that can be made available for further extension work in province. In November, 2012, NAC signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (DAIL), Badakhshan in order to hand over four farms and watersheds. From January 2012, the DAIL is fully responsible for the farms without any direct involvement of NAC who only assists with technical issues when required.

- Chusha Garmuk Watershed
- Farmanquli demonstration farm
- Jare-i-Shah Baba
- Keshem Watershed

As a result, DAIL is now able to manage four of the farms and watersheds by themselves. Furthermore, 303,654 saplings of fruit and non-fruit trees were produced on farms managed by NAC. Additionally, 124,319 plants were ready for permanent plantation in spring 2013. Over 400 seasonal laborers were employed on the farms, resulting in an overall income of 66,940 USD against 13,388 labor days. In addition to the financial income, these laborers also received technical training on farm management, plant protection, weeding, grafting, pruning, irrigation and plantation. These trainings will ultimately benefit the whole community they come from, as it will provide them with knowledgeable labor who are able to manage farms.

The activity showed a 71.15% survival rate among the plants, which is far higher than the estimated minimum success rate at 40% for forestry activities. NAC also achieved a success in the community-based plantation as the communities were able to run the sites themselves. This shows high levels of potential sustainability for the future, as NAC continues to hand over sites to the relevant government departments, and only assist on a needs-basis with technical support.



Farmer in Toghboy village, Badakhshan



Saplings in Darayem district, Badakhshan



Irrigation canal built in Malistan, Ghazni



During the construction of an irrigation canal in Malistan

Fodder Production - Farmers Support

NAC distributed 3,264 kg of alfalfa and clover seeds to 988 farmers in order for them to provide sufficient fodder to their domestic animals. As a result, the farmers were able to harvest 1,402,528 kilograms of fodder. The average price of one kilogram of fodder is 10 AFS and the total value of the harvest would therefore be around 280,505 USD. In addition, the farmers were able to keep some of the fodder over the winter season and could feed their animals without having to buy fodder. This meant that many of the farmers who would normally sell their animals during the winter and get smaller profit because animals were in bad shape, could now keep them. The farmers now had fodder to feed around 280,505 different kinds of animals (sheep, cows and donkey), in one day. This also reduces the pressure on the pasture fields

Infrastructure for NRM

NAC's infrastructure activities for NRM focused on irrigation for secure livelihoods and agricultural land in order to help farmers and communities to improve water supply and management of irrigation. During 2012, NAC built several irrigation projects including canals, diversion dam, water storage, siphon, piped irrigation system and super passage. As a result, many acres of land were preserved. Beside the

improvements of irrigation systems, a good contribution was made in preserving the land and environment. The irrigation structures not only contributed to the improvement and saving of agricultural land, they also gave the opportunity to the community members to use running water for domestic purposes.

Many local level conflicts are connected to water and land disputes. Due to lack of water as well as severe and sustained drought, both the cultivation of crops as well as handling livestock has become increasingly difficult. The rate of land and water-related conflicts is high and increasing. NAC therefore conducts conflict analysis whilst working with water and land resources.

Maintenance of the Projects

In order for the infrastructure projects to be properly maintained in the future, NAC took the following steps:

- Built all projects from local materials and employed local labor so that they can repair and maintain the works in case of damages
- Established PTAs and mobilized communities to raise funds and maintain the schools themselves in the future
- For water supply project, the communities were trained on how to use and maintain the water supply networks.

Challenges: Natural Resource Management

Agriculture is the main source of income in Afghanistan. Over 75% of the population live in rural areas.

The main drivers of agricultural growth – technology, roads, irrigation, and education – need to be developed. Opium production is another problem. It takes up land and water resources that could have been used for cultivating needed crops. The country's limited forest resources have also suffered. Reduction in vegetation on hillsides has led to floods and widespread soil erosion. Severe overgrazing and drought has contributed to the decline of the livestock population.

Institutions are weak and in a country with market-driven agriculture such as Afghanistan, both public and private institutions need capacity, staff and regulatory framework to succeed. To enable faster economic growth and rural poverty reduction, agriculture needs to grow at least 5% per year over the next decade. However, the overuse of natural resources in combination with cultivation methods with low sustainability will make growth within this sector difficult. Accordingly, Afghanistan has a long way to go in order to become food secure and self-reliant.

Our Work: Civil Society

NAC's projects target those who need it the most and put an extra focus on women in rural areas. They are the people mostly affected by the conflict, resulting in high levels of poverty, lawlessness, human rights abused and violence. Due to cultural practices, opportunities for Afghan women to take active part in public life are limited, making women victims of social and economic exclusion. Women's participation in decision-making process is very low, even at the community level. In order to ensure that the needs and wills of women is also represented, a stronger civil society is needed.

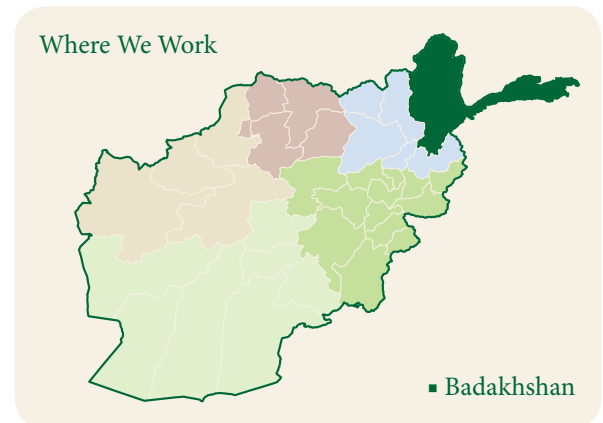
Working with Self-Help Groups

In 2011, NAC launched a civil society support project which established and supported so called self-help groups and focused on social and economic empowerment of women through the funding of the Norad.

The self-help group approach is widely believed to be a safe approach of organizing poor and marginalized people to come together and solve their individual problems. Rural women are encouraged to support and help each other through a financial intermediary, for the purpose of forming common interest groups where resources are pooled, and profits shares reinvested or shared between the members. The approach is guided by a strong belief by the individual that change can be brought through collective efforts.

The Self-Help Groups of 2012

In 2012, the project targeted 12 new SHGs and 5 already established groups which consisted of 9 – 23 rural and marginalized women, whose objective is to save, borrow and invest funds. NAC has assisted these women through strengthening their skills, assets and capacity and helped them to form common interest group. By providing them with the necessary practical knowledge and an opportunity to learn a vocational skill.



Out of the 12 SHGs, 75% started a business activity within their communities. Their choice of business and how they identified that was up to the group members themselves to decide even if NAC provided suggestions and guidance. The groups did different activities such as baking, carpet weaving, tailoring, knitting, vegetable processing, buying and reselling goods and selling nuts. A lesson learned was that the group members themselves best knew the potential business opportunities as well as the needs and demands of their communities.

The groups also managed to save money that can later be reinvested in the businesses.

Saira from the Batash Self-Help Group

“Through the self-help groups, I’ve learnt to make pickles, jam, tomato paste, and cookies which I can now use to make money. I used to give my green tomatoes to the animals, but now I can make good pickles and chutney from them which I did last winter and then sold in the market. Through the self-help groups I have learnt to make enough money that I can also save and re-invest. Now I even collect green tomatoes from my neighbors, process and sell it to the people around and in the market. From the money that I make, I can cover my own and my children’s expenses and save. NAC also gave me 9 bags of wheat and oil which I used to make bread, cookies and bulani. I was able to earn 40 000 AFS from selling those products and I could then improve my house, make new mattresses and buy house utensils. In the future I will continue to use my new skills to support my family. I am very happy that women are now allowed to support themselves”





Women discussing in Argo, Badakhshan



Women registering their weekly savings, Pesta-e-Kalan

Best Practices and Lessons Learned

The Qarabulaq village hosted one of the most active groups and is a good example of some of the best practices and lessons learned. Since the beginning of the project, the women showed a high interest in being SHG members. Although more than 20 women were initially selected to be part of the group, NAC felt that cohesion within the group was very important and that it was best to reduce the number, keeping the most interested and active women. The Qarabulaq group started by tailoring headscarves to sell in the village. One of the members was already a skilled tailor and she supported other group members. Some members independently went to the market and identified a good supplier. Before religious celebrations, the group also bought plates, vases and glass cups for tea from the district center to re-sell in the village. It was clear that the motivation of the members was a crucial factor for succeeding with the project. To have a key person who could act as a driving force was also a factor for success.

Building Capacity of Civil Society

For the project in 2012, NAC added a component which aimed to strengthen the capacity of existing civil society organisations in the province. A strong and vibrant civil society arena is a crucial factor in order to make sure that the needs and wills of the entire

population, including women, is taken into consideration in the development of the country, and decentralising participation and decision-making. But the role of civil society in Afghanistan remains weak in the rural areas, making it an important area to support. NAC therefore targeted 25 CSOs in Badakhshan in order to assess them and build their internal, operational and coordination capacities.

After the organisations had been assessed, NAC trained them on various topics leading to improved organisational structure, abilities to mobilize resources independently as well as improving their capacity to work with each other and coordinate. This was done in coordination with the Badakhshan Development Forum.

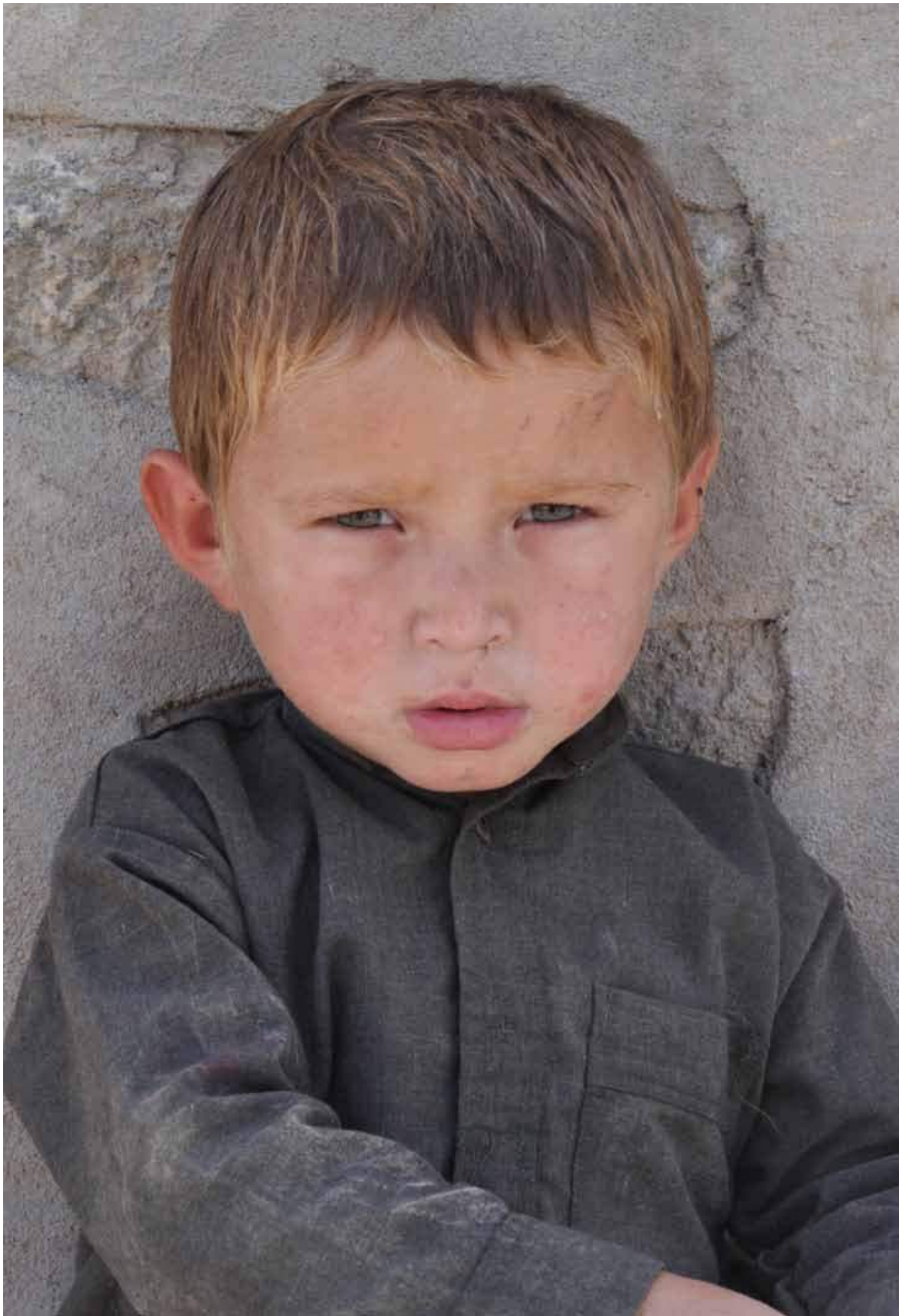
The Badakhshan Development Forum

In 2012, NAC continued to work with the Badakhshan Development Forum, a network established in 2004, consisting of a number of NGOs that are all aiming to foster open, regular and constructive dialogue between the main development actors (including the government and private sector). NAC also supported the development of the civil society centre that the forum has opened where many valuable training materials are being made available. NAC also worked with the Badakhshan Civil Society Development Forum and facilitated the cooperation between them and their partners

Challenges: Civil Society

A vibrant civil society with a large number of organizations, or institutions independent of the governmental structure, is crucial for democratic development, freedom of speech and ensuring that development is in line with the interests and needs of the people. The civil society arena in Afghanistan remains weak even after 10 years of international support. There are few organizations, unions and community groups, especially in rural areas. Even though the number of newspapers and radio and TV stations has skyrocketed, the impact of the media is still very limited. Accordingly, Afghanistan lacks the control mechanisms and the actors problematizing governmental

decision-making. Additionally, there are very few actors that can function as mediators between individuals and the decision-makers on a higher level. Participation and decision-making is highly centralized, almost isolated, to the national level. The result is that the needs and wills of the population in general, and women in particular, are not being seen to. In Badakhshan, there are a number of civil society actors in place, however their capacity is low and there is a great lack of coordination between them. In order for women to become active social society actors, their social and economic status needs to be improved.



Our Work: Disaster Risk Reduction

The Badakhshan province is particularly prone to natural hazards such as earthquakes, flash floods, drought, landslides and avalanches. Located in the northeastern corner of the country, the province is mountainous, and many villages are situated along floodplains and on steep slopes. Up to 70% of the province is inaccessible during the winter months, and some districts for as many as six months out of the year. During the wet season of 2010, the province was hit by numerous floods; causing enormous destruction, and damaging a considerable number of houses and large areas of arable land.

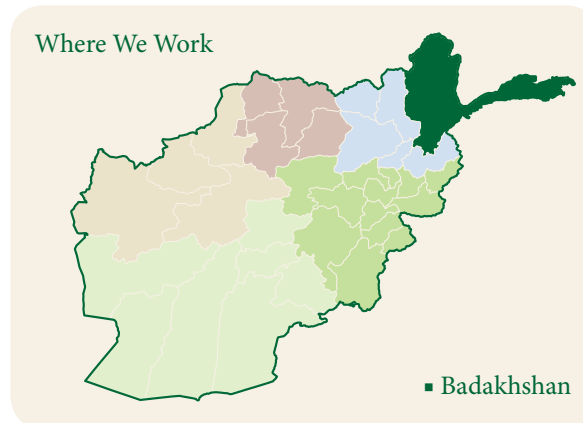
Working With Disaster Risk Reduction

NAC has been working with Disaster Risk Reduction since 2011 through the funding of the German Development Cooperation (GIZ). In 2012, the cooperation between NAC and GIZ continued through the implementation of three phases of the Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction project. The work also expanded through a new Community-Based Disaster Risk Management project, funded by Norad.

Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction

In 2012, NAC implemented three phases of the Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction project which was initiated in 2011. Each phase covered a period of three months (Phase 2: January - March, Phase 3: April-June, Phase 4: July- September) and had the same overall goal - aiming to reduce the human, social, economic and environmental losses due to natural hazards in targeted villages in Badakhshan, by helping at-risk communities reduce their vulnerability and develop resilience to extreme natural events. The activities carried out therefore included institutional capacity building, awareness raising and assisting at-risk communities to prepare for, mitigate, and respond to extreme natural events. The way of work was also to serve as a model, which could be replicated in other areas.

The second phase targeted target 7 villages in Faizabad as well as the 5 villages targeted in 2011 in Argo and Yaftal. The third phase targeted the 12 villages plus an additional 7 villages in the district of Khash. In the fourth phase, NAC included 8 new communities and the overall target for the whole project reached 22 villages for 2012 in five districts; Argo, Yaftal-i-Payan, Faizabad or Yaftal-i-Bala and Khash. For each village, NAC did rapid assessments, core and refresher training on basic disaster awareness training including life saving techniques, common hazards and coping strategies, first aid, basic search and rescue and stockpile management. NAC also assisted did participatory hazard and vulnerability capacity assessments with all communities, help them to do village disaster management plans and establish village emergency response and search and rescue teams and conducted drills and simulations.



Stockpiles and Masons' Training

In the third phase of the project, NAC constructed 3 stockpiles in district centres in Argo, Khash and Yaftal where necessary supplies in preparation for a disaster can be stored. NAC also followed up on the villages stockpile management to ensure that it was properly prepared. Additionally, NAC trained masons on the project site so they could learn new methods for building safe houses. The purpose of the stockpile store construction was to demonstrate a model of seismic resistant buildings that would be replicable in the communities, on the one hand, and provide facilities where emergency stockpiles could be stored for disaster response purpose in the district, on the other hand.

Provincial Coordination

NAC also contributed to the strengthening of the cooperation of relevant stakeholders that are active within disaster risk reduction and management in the province. These stakeholders include NGOs working with communities on DRR and DRM projects, but also local authorities and institutions such as the Afghanistan National Disaster Management Assembly (ANDMA), the Department of Women's Affairs and Provincial Disaster Management Committee (PDMC). Through the DRR Working Group, members from all these organisations and institutions can meet at least four times a year to discuss activities, progress made and future plans. Through this group, coordination has increased.



Simulation in Argo, Badakhshan



Simulation in Samati, Badakhshan

Results

Through the project with GIZ, 22 new communities now have awareness on gender-sensitive basic disaster management including life saving techniques, common hazards and coping strategies, first aid, basic search and rescue and stockpile management and has shown active understanding through drills and simulations. 7 communities have received refresher trainings. All villages have village emergency response and search and rescue teams and village disaster management plans in place. In addition, three stockpiles have been constructed in Argo, Yaftal and Khash. In total, 32 masons know how to build safe houses against earthquake, flood and landslides. The provincial coordination has been strengthened and local authorities have increased their capacity and understanding on gender issues in disaster risk management. They have also received updated information from NAC on the targeted villages and districts.

A New CBDRM Project for 2012-2014

In late 2012, NAC launched a new project funded by the Norad. The Community-Based Disaster Risk Management (CBDRM) project will run for three years, and target 60 communities in four districts of Badakhshan; Raghistan, Kohistan, Yawan, Arghanj Khwa. The project builds on NAC's previous experiences from 2011-2012.

The overall goal is to reduce human, social, and environmental losses due to natural disasters in these 60 at-risk communities in Badakhshan. This will be done through strengthening capacity, increasing knowledge about natural hazards and their potential impact as well as improving coordination in disaster preparedness, management and response. NAC targets people from the community level up to the provincial level. The activities on the community level focuses on strengthening the capacity of the communities to better prepare for, mitigate and respond to natural hazards and disasters, as well as increasing the resilience of rural livelihood systems to respond to frequent summer drought events. On an institutional level, the project targets both local institutions, district and provincial authorities as well as national and international stakeholders in coordinated disaster risk management. Furthermore, it aims to build the institutional capacity of provincial government disaster response teams.

Baseline Assessment

The project kicked off in 2012 by the launch of a baseline study of the targeted areas. The study was conducted from October 2012 - January 2013 and generated data from 400 households. The baseline study showed that all targeted schools were highly vulnerable and had almost none or no previous knowledge or training.

Challenges: Disaster Risk Reduction

Natural disasters such as floods, drought, landslides and earth quakes are commonplace in Afghanistan. The risks and consequences of the disasters are intimately connected to human activity such as cultivation, harvesting, logging, gazing of house animals and house building. It causes erosion and soil degradation, which affects the fertility and productivity of the available farmland, forcing communities to plant on steeper and more hazard-prone slopes. Erosion and the loss of vegetative cover increases both the frequency and intensity of flooding, as well as the likelihood of landslides. Coupled with these concerns, are the effects of poverty and conflict

on both livelihood systems as well as the lack of knowledge and capacity of the communities to identify, prevent, and mitigate hazards, and lack the capacity to adequately respond to disasters. Accordingly, poor farmers experience natural disasters with fatal results, that could have been avoided.

In addition, Afghanistan has very weak national institutions on both national and local level which leads to lack of disaster management, particularly in terms of responding timely and sufficiently to disasters.

Case Study - Khanaqa Village

Badakhshan province is susceptible to a range of natural hazards such as earthquakes, droughts, landslides and avalanches. The winters are often long and cold with heavy snowfall and as spring approaches, the province goes through its wet season where it is hit by floods and flash floods. Most flash floods occur along small streams, and you can determine your risk by knowing your proximity to these. However, as rural populations in Afghanistan settled down, these risks are not taken into account.

The Khanaqa village is one of the villages affected by flash floods every year. It is located 16 kilometers far from Faizabad, the capital city of Badakhshan, in a mountainous area with valleys and stream running through them. The village is divided in four valleys and has a population of 610 people, or 119 families. Last year, a large flood hit the village and completely destroyed four homes and hundreds of livestock. Fortunately, no one died. Some of the villagers tell us more :

A flash flood is a rapid flooding of geomorphic low-lying areas: washes, rivers, dry lakes and basins. In Badakhshan, flash floods are mostly caused by heavy rain or meltwater from ice or snow flowing over ice sheets or snowfields. Flash floods are distinguished from a regular flood by a timescale of less than six hours.



Mr Haqnazar, a village elder

Haqnazar is 65 years old and one of the elders and leaders of the village. He tells us about the village and its history with nature:

"We have encountered so many difficulties; floods on the one hand and then drought and lack of land on the other. Every season there is some challenge of nature that we have to face. Also, most of the villagers here do not have enough land to grow on as our village is located between the river and the mountains. Therefore we only have a few fruit trees on the hillside. The main reason that our village is hit with floods every year is because of the steep valleys and low water absorption by the ground. The flood that hit us last year was very dangerous. It completely destroyed four houses and also, and hundreds of animals died. Who knows what will hit us next year?"



Abdul Rahman, directly affected by the flood

Abdul Rahman is one of those severely affected by last year's flood. He explains:

"The air started to darken slowly. We were around 14 people in my house at that time. Then, suddenly, the flood came. We didn't even have time to take anything out of the house. Fortunately, with the help of neighbors, we were able to take our children and families out of the house. But all our belongings was taken by the flood. Also, our animals were swept flood came. We were only able to save one cow. We were forced to move to a new location which is in a flatter and more safe area and where we set up a tent. But we didn't have any money so we were then forced to sell our only cow. So now, for more than a year, we don't have any land or livestock left"



Where the flood hit the village



Abdul Rahman's house which was destroyed

Our Work: Advocacy and Information

Being a Norwegian NGO, most of the information work and advocacy is done in Norway. The public in general and Norwegian decision makers are our main target groups. As the focus on Afghanistan had decreased with the withdrawal of NATO-soldiers, NAC is working hard to hold the level of attention high.

Our Core Activities

Our information work and advocacy work aims to define the key questions in the debate on Afghanistan, and give accessible and in-depth information on the most important political processes concerning Afghanistan's development. We want to contribute to a critical debate on Norway-Afghanistan politics and the overall international presence. We aim to influence Norway's agenda by giving advice, asking critical questions and give relevant background information. We engage in:

- Articles at our web page www.afghanistan.no
- Posts for our Facebook page
- Newsletters
- Seminars and open meetings
- Publications and brochures
- Editorials and general press work
- Presentations and participation in panels
- Advocacy and meetings with decision makers
- Information work in schools, web based teaching programs for elementary school

Focus Areas of 2012

NAC operates with defined focus areas and core topics which are the fundament of our general information and press work and advocacy. In the recent years, we have had special focus on how Afghanistan is doing with regards to the Millennium Development Goals. We have a special focus on MDG 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 7 as they are closely related to our work in Afghanistan. We focus on the efforts, improvements, and challenges connected to each goal, and suggest solutions based on experience.



Afghanistan After NATO

In August 2012, NAC published *Afghanistan after NATO*, a booklet with short and comprehensive articles about the most central topics related to the so-called NATO-period. The publication had articles on NATO's role, how Afghanistan is doing with regards to the MDGs and how the efforts within the health sector, especially midwifery education, have contributed to the reduction of both child and maternal deaths in recent years. The article *Where did all the money go* gave an in-depth description on why all the efforts have not brought more sustainable results. It also contained an article on whether natural resources as minerals, oil, gas and gold can reduce the country's aid dependency. The publication was distributed to our main target groups on our seminars, external seminars and in meetings with Norwegian decision makers. It was also sent to journalists, members and other organizations and NGOs.



The covers of two of NAC's information products



Six of the Millennium Development Goals



In December pupils at Krohnengen were interviewed while making gifts and writing letters for their friends in Afghanistan



Norwegian ladies waiting to hear about Afghanistan, in January 2012

Media Placements

NAC views the media as an important arena for public information and advocacy. We are continuously participating in the Norwegian media debate on Afghanistan. In 2012, we had comments or editorials in many of the largest Norwegian newspapers on topics related to development aid, the security situation, maternal health and education. All-in all, this resulted in 14 media placements in newspapers as *Dagsavisen*, *Aftenposten*, *Klassekampen*, *Adresseavisen* and *Bergens Tidende*, as well as Norad's magazine *Bistandsaktuelt*.

NAC also produced editorials together with other partners. On the International Women's day, an editorial in collaboration with the Norwegian Association of Midwives was published in *Dagsavisen*. The topic was the importance of midwifery education. This clearly reached the decision makers, as State Secretary Torgeir Larsen answered in the same newspaper a few days later. We also do active media work, feeding journalists with inputs and pictures to push for them to cover our focus areas. This resulted in 16 media placements in 2012, giving an overall 44 media placements in 2012.

Seminars

In 2012, NAC arranged seven seminars. The largest was held at Litteraturhuset in April. The topic was Afghanistan's natural resources with focus on resources such as minerals, copper, iron, gold, lithium, oil and gas. Also the rural sector was covered. The main questions were: Is Afghanistan in a position to reap the profits of its natural resources to the benefit of its people? Does the Afghan government have the capacity to ensure that companies who invest commit to transparency and social and environmental responsibilities? Around 100 participants were gathered for a whole day, commenting actively in the panel debate. Our six smaller seminars covered a variety of topics such as the rights of women when women's rights activist Wazhma Frogh visited Norway and participated in our seminar.

New Committee – Information Committee

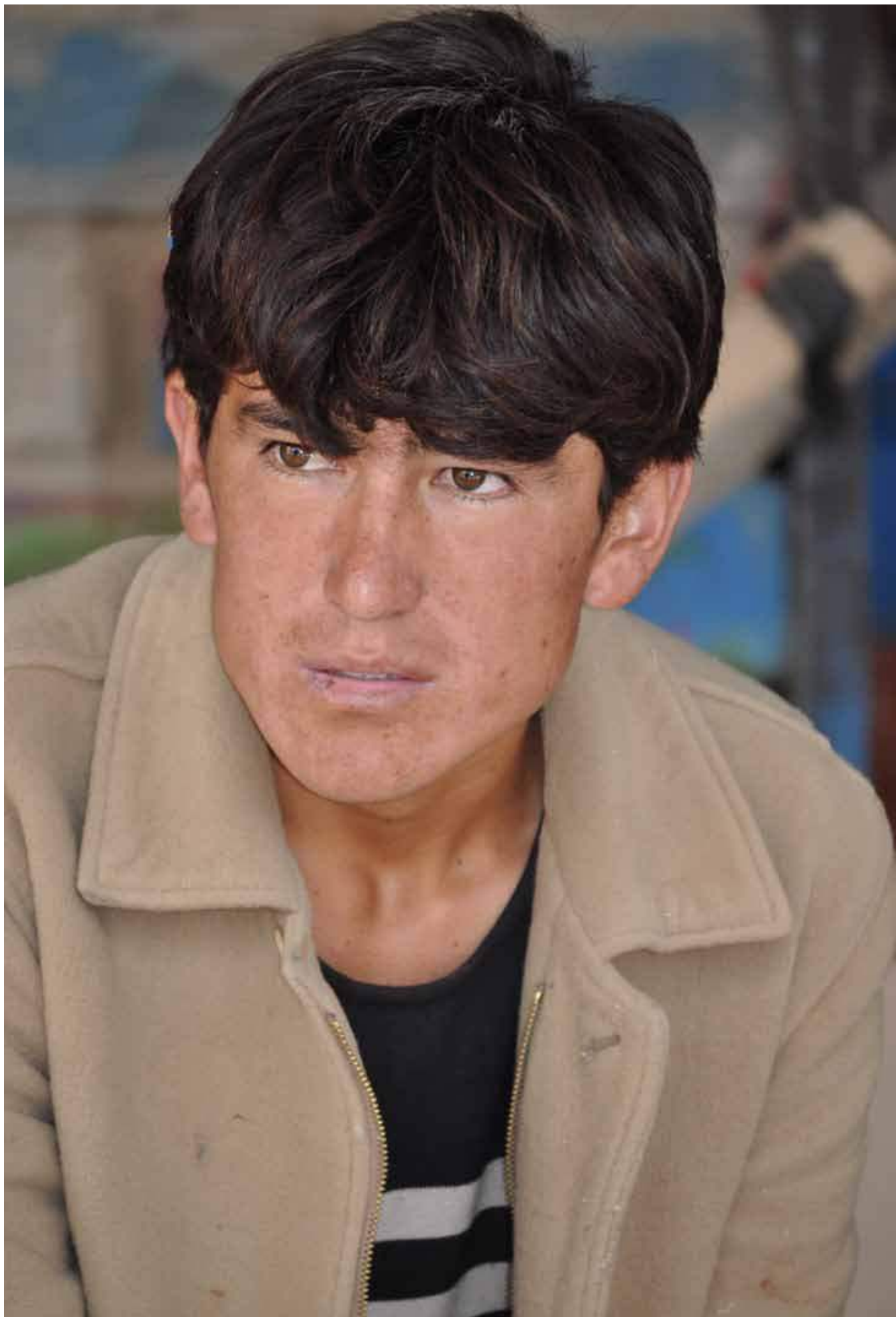
NAC is a member organization and dependent on the contribution by volunteers. For several years, NAC has had Project and Women's Committees, following up programs in Afghanistan. In 2012, we also established an Information Committee with the mandate to contribute to making NAC a knowledge-based organization, and to promote information services. The committee is an important support for the secretariat.

Network of Norwegian NGOs Working in Afghanistan

In 2011, NAC took the initiative of forming a network of Norwegian organizations working in Afghanistan. Today, NAC is the coordinator of this unofficial network consisting of FOKUS, The Norwegian Red Cross, CARE, The Norwegian Refugee Council and The Norwegian Church Aid. Representatives from each organization meet regularly and the network's main focus is advocacy. In 2012, we met the State Secretary twice, and had four meetings with the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In these meetings the network's agenda was in line with our defined core topics. However, the network is also an important arena for exchanging information, experiences and coordinating advocacy agendas. In September we published an editorial together.

Lectures, Panels and Presentations

In 2012, NAC did many external activities. On several occasions, the Secretariat or members participated in panels, public meetings or workshops on NAC's behalf. Contributing in a variety of different settings, we reached groups of new people with our key messages. These occasions gives an opportunity to meet people face-to-face and answer questions they have directly. It is also a nice opportunity to present main findings in big reports or rates on child- and maternal death as well as to tell stories and show pictures of people in Afghanistan and their lives.



Our Work: Volunteer Committees

Bergen Committee

The Bergen Committee is an active local committee that is involved in coordinating NAC's local activities in Bergen. The Committee has a particular focus on the Friendship School cooperation as Bergen hosts one of the schools. In 2012, the Committee held several meetings in Bergen but also attended meetings and seminars in Oslo. In October, two members traveled to Afghanistan together with a teacher from Krohnengen Friendship School. The trip to Afghanistan positively impacted the partners from both the Committee and the school. Upon their return to Bergen, they were contacted by the media and interviewed by Bergens Tidende. For the International Women's Day, the Committee organized an event in connection with the celebration. During the international week, two members organized a stand on Torgalmenningen with pictures from the visit to Afghanistan and distributed brochures.

The Committee also supported the Krohnengen school in organizing their yearly Christmas market where pictures from Afghanistan were shown, a seminar was conducted and Afghan meat balls were made. The Afghan ambassador attended the event opening. The Christmas market had a very positive impact on the people that attended and also made a record profit of 61,237.50 NOK to be used for projects in Afghanistan.

Information Committee

The current Information Committee is new as it was re-established in February 2012. Since then, the Committee has been supporting the offices in Oslo and Kabul with various documents, activities and on-line related material. In particular, the Committee has been working closely with NAC's Information Officer at the Oslo office.

Some of the main products that the Committee has assisted with during the year are: the booklet *Afghanistan after NATO*, a press release for the 2012 Annual Meeting as well as several policy briefs. The policy briefs aim to communicate the organization's standpoint on various issues that are of crucial relevance for the Norwegian government and organizations working in Afghanistan. They cover topics such as Women's Rights, Education, Environment and Natural Resource Extraction, Integrated Rural Development Approach, Corruption, Transparency and Donor Responsibility.

The Committee also supported the Oslo office with organising over seminars and meetings. Since the Committee is rather new, we would gladly encourage members and none-members to join the so we can grow and work more efficiently towards better support of Oslo and Kabul office, and a stronger influence on policies related to Afghanistan.

Project Committee

The Project Committee gives technical assistance and advices for the development and implementation of projects and ensures alignment with NAC's strategies.

In 2012, the Committee was involved in a range of activities throughout the year and held regular meetings and working groups. The main focus of the Committee was the work linked to the IRD II application where they provided technical assistance. The Committee also established a special working group that gives direct input to proposals and program documents. In 2012, the Committee was involved in designing the ToR for NAC's organizational review which was conducted during the year. The Committee also played an important role in supporting the Kabul office in the development of more compact and concise reporting formats. They also helped in ensuring better project application monitoring and follow-up of progress as well as follow-up on the progress of NAC's projects in Afghanistan.

Women's Committee

During 2012, the Women's Committee continued to function as a platform where women from the Afghan diaspora and women living in Norway meet every other month to be engaged in advocating for women in Afghanistan through project and information work.

The Committee continued to have a close working relationship with the Norwegian Association of Midwives and assisted the Oslo and Kabul office on a needs and opportunity-basis. Some of the members of the committee visited Afghanistan in June 2012 and met with the Afghan Midwives Association as well as visited the Institute of Health Sciences in Jalalabad. During the International Women's Day, the Committee participated in a parade in Oslo. The Committee also held an open meeting on reproductive health on 15 November where also the Afghan Ambassador to Norway participated.

Our Work: Friendship Schools

NAC currently has three pairs of Friendship Schools; Vinderen School in Oslo is friends with Gul Dara School just outside Kabul, Krohnengen School in Bergen is friends with Girls No 2 School in Faizabad, Badakhshan and in 2012, a new pair was added when Sulitjelma School in northern Norway was connected with Ganda Chasma Middle School, also located in Badakhshan.



Girl at Gul Dara shows proudly a letter from her Norwegian friend at Vinderen



Students working at the Christmas market at Krohnengen School in Bergen

Cultural Exchange and Learning

The main goal of our Friendship Schools program is for the children to engage in cultural exchange and learning. For each grade, various types of activities and themes are carried out. The pupils exchange letters, pictures, drawings and handicrafts. Experience and knowledge about each other's country and culture are derived parallel teaching programs, as for instance exchanging knowledge about growing potatoes. This exchange means a lot to the pupils in both countries. The Norwegian schools also use the teaching packages available on our web page. These covers topics as Afghan history, culture, religion, and humanitarian situation.

Fundraising

For the Norwegian schools, the Friendship Schools program also involves fundraising. Through their friendship day in June, Vinderen raised 88,557 NOK for that was used to make improvements in their friendship school Gul Dara outside Kabul. Krohnengen raised 61,237 NOK through their Christmas market for their friendship school Girl's No 2 School in Faizabad. Both occasions were visited by the Afghan ambassador to Norway, Manizha Bakhtari. The money raised by the schools in Norway was used to make needed improvements in the friendship schools but also for other schools that are targeted within NAC's education activities.



Ghost maraton at Vinderen. One of many creative ways to raise money for their friends in Afghanistan



Pricelist. Friendship Days 2012 at Vinderen Elementary School in Oslo

Budget and Expenditures

Our Finances in 2012

In 2012, NAC implemented 11 projects in the provinces of Badakhshan, Ghazni, Laghman, Nangarhar and Wardak. The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs remained the largest donor of NAC, supporting the Integrated Rural Development Program, which was finalized during the course of the year. NAC received funds from eight donors:

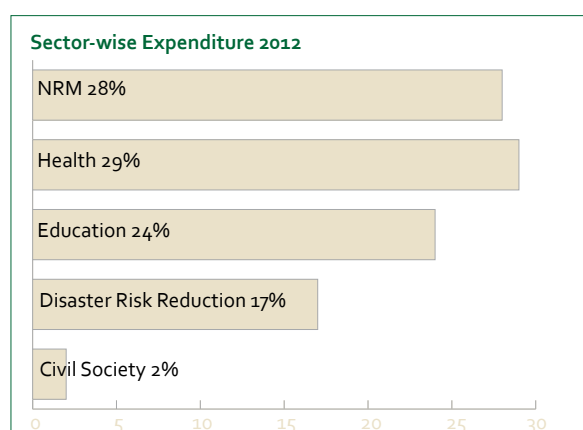
- Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA)
- Forum for Women and Development (FOKUS)
- World Food Programme (WFP)
- German Development Cooperation (GIZ)
- Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad)
- Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA)
- Health Services Support Project (HSSP)
- Ministry of Public Health, Afghanistan

During the course of the year, NAC initiated new cooperation with some of the previous donors. A new Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction project was launched through the support of Norad for 1,750,000 USD over the course of three years. NAC also launched a cooperation with the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan through a two-year project of Community Nursing Education with a total budget of 449 000 USD. NAC expanded its cooperation with GIZ/BEPA through the Active Communities for Equal Education, a 6-months project. The World Food Programme and FOKUS continued their support. The Friendship School project was supported by the school children of the partner schools in Norway who raised more than 27 000 USD. Through fundraising letter campaigns, the Head Office in Oslo raised money from individual donors in Norway that were used for the Norad and the FOKUS projects where NAC was required to provide a 10% match.

Donor	Funding in 2012 in USD
MFA	3,547,710
FOKUS	185,860
Norad	554,056
Friendship Schools	27,113
WFP	104,146
GIZ	367,107
SCA	215,825
HSSP	77,673
MoPH	19,518
Total:	5,099,008

Sector-wise Expenditure

Of the overall annual budget, activities within the Natural Resource Management sector accounted for 28 % of expenditures, while the Health sector accounted for 29% and Education for 24 %. The programmatic areas of Disaster Risk Reduction and the Civil Society Development accounted for 17% and 2% respectively.



During 2012, NAC implemented projects in five geographical areas. The highest expenditures were in Badakhshan with 2,797,285 USD where NAC is implementing the project, the Integrated Rural Development Program but also many other projects including the new Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction Program funded by Norad and two projects with support of GIZ. The second highest expenditure was in Ghazni with 1,377,765 USD where NAC implements the IRD program but also a project through the WFO. Nangarhar, Laghman and Wardak Province all adds up to 519,756 USD through NAC's Health Development training at three separate schools. NAC also spent 46,894 USD through work with the Friendships school outside Kabul and in Peshawar.

Geographical Area	Expenditure in 2012 in USD
Badakhshan	2,797,285
Eastern	178,785
Ghazni	1,377,765
Kabul	33,429
Laghman	72,443
Peshawar	13,465
Wardak/Maidan	268,528
Total:	4,741,700

NAC's Team

NAC currently operates with a head office in Oslo, a country Office in Kabul, regional office in Faizabad, Badakhshan with a sub-office in Yawan, and a regional office in Jaghori, Ghazni province with an field office in Ghazni City. Currently we have a team with over 130 employees. In addition to that, NAC has 35 project staff working with our Community Midwifery School in Wardak and the Community Health Nursing School in Laghman. NAC aims to keep a gender balance and around 30 % of our staff are female.

Oslo - Head Office

In 2012, the Oslo Office had two employees; NAC's Secretary General and an Information Advisor. The Head Office holds the overall responsibility for the organization, coordinates and implement activities in Norway, engages in information and advocacy work as well as donor relations and fundraising.



Ghazni - Regional Offices

In Ghazni, NAC has 2 offices. The Jaghori office with 26 staff and the office in Ghazni City with 7 staff. Out of these, staff, 17 are program officers and 16 are operational staff, working in order to implement projects in natural resource management, education, infrastructure and health in Jaghori and Malistan districts.



Kabul - Country Office

The Kabul Country Office has 44 employees including Country Director, Program Director as well as the Knowledge Management and Grants Department. The Country Office is responsible for the overall operation support including Finance, Administration and Human Resources. It also has an Internal Auditor. NAC furthermore has 35 project staff in Laghman and Wardak.



Badakhshan - Regional Offices

Our regional offices in Badakhshan have 62 employees with 48 in the Faizabad office and 14 in the sub-regional office in Yawan which opened at the end of 2012. The offices are administered by the Provincial Coordinator. Out of these, 34 are program officers and 28 operational staff. In 2012, NAC closed down the sub-regional office which was located in the Keshim district.



NAC's Board 2012-2013

Board Members 2012/2013

The Board is the Norwegian Afghanistan Committee's highest decision-making entity, and is elected for a one-year period at the Annual Meeting. The Board for 2012-2013 consists of the following members:

▪ Hege Jacobsen, Chair of the Board

Hege Jacobsen works as a Project Manager for Norsk Hydro. Prior to this position, she has worked in several UN agencies. She holds a Master's degree in Business Administration and a Bachelor's degree in Middle Eastern and North African studies from the University of Oslo. Hege has extensive experience within information technology, project management, quality systems and organizational work. She has served as a member of the Board since May 2007.

▪ Farid Ghiami, Deputy Chair of the Board

Farid Ghiami is originally from Afghanistan and a trained journalist from the University of Mazar-e-Sharif. He is currently conducting part-time studies in Social Studies with HF Management at the University of Stavanger. He has previously worked as a Deputy Manager at the Stavanger Reception Center for Asylum Seekers. Currently, Farid Ghiami works as a supervisor for Smi Human AS. He has been a NAC member since 2006, and was elected to the Board in May 2010.

▪ Elisabet Eikås, Project Committee Representative

Elisabet Eikås is a social anthropologist and wrote her thesis on youth and public participation in Kabul. At her previous position as a Project Coordinator for the Norwegian Peace Center, she worked with young refugees living in Norway. She has also worked as a Program Advisor at NAC's Country Office in Kabul, from 2009 to 2011. Elisabet Eikås currently works for Landinfo. She became a member of the Board in 2012, and is also the Head of the Project Committee.

▪ Andrea L. Rivrud, Women's Committee Representative

Andrea L. Rivrud holds a Master's degree in Middle Eastern studies from the University of Oslo. She has previously worked as the Organization Secretary for NAC in Norway, and she was also the previous secretary of the Board. She currently works for Oslo Municipality as a Project Manager for two projects within the Groruddalen Project. She also does a lot of volunteer work and monitoring for various NGOs.

▪ Farshad Tami, Information Committee Representative

Farshad Tami is originally from Iran but has spent most of this life in Lebanon. He moved to Norway in 2007 to pursue his studies and now holds a Master's degree from the University of Life Sciences in Ås. He has worked with several NGOs and UN agencies with refugees and humanitarian relief. His last stationing was in Pakistan, as the Provincial Cluster Coordinator for the UN. Farshad Tami was elected to the Board for the first time in 2012, and is the Head of the Information Committee.

▪ Solveig Sandalsnes, Bergen Committee Representative

Solveig Sandalsnes has been employed by Bergen Municipality for more than 35 years, now for NAV. She has been a NAC member for approximately 20 years and been on the Board during several periods. Solveig visited NAC's projects in Afghanistan in 2004 and 2012. She received Bergen municipality's Equality Award in 2008.

▪ Anne S. Hertzberg, Board Member

Anne Hertzberg is a trained psychologist and physiotherapist. She has worked with health and rehabilitation projects and the social sector since 1995. She has worked in East and Southern Africa, as well as Eastern and Southern Asia and has spent two years in Eritrea and been in and out of Afghanistan since 2002, where she has mainly worked for the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan and the Ministry of Public Health. Anne Hertzberg is a member of the Women's Committee.

▪ Gry Synnevåg, Board Member

Gry Synnevåg is the Head of Department at Noragric, the Norwegian University of Life Sciences (UMB) in Ås. She has broad experience from teaching and researching, as well as development with a focus on rural development, NRM, food security and sustainable agriculture in Africa and Asia. She has done reviews and evaluations for Norad, the Foreign Ministry and international organizations. From 2004-2008, she worked as a resident representative for the Norwegian Church Aid in Kabul.

▪ Tonje Merete Viken, Board Member

Tonje Merete Viken is a journalist with a background from Dagbladet, NRK and Nettavisen. She has had assignments within journalism and information for various NGOs, such as the Norwegian Refugee Council and the Norwegian People's Aid. She has also worked as an Information Advisor for NAC, and been Deputy Leader and Head of the Board. In 2009, she worked for the Food and Agriculture Organization in Afghanistan. She holds a Master's Degree in Middle Eastern and North African Studies.

▪ Substitute Members

Mike Fergus - substitute for the Project Committee, Masooda Dustiyar - substitute for the Women's Committee, Shaima Noor - substitute for the Information Committee, Helge Liland - substitute for the Bergen Committee, Andreas Koestler - substitute Board Member, Terje Skaufjord - substitute Board Member, Marte H. Moe - substitute Board Member

NAC's Key Messages

Maintain Aid Levels to Afghanistan

The Norwegian Afghanistan Committee encourages the Norwegian Government to maintain the current aid level to Afghanistan, and allow for the funding to go where the poverty and needs are the greatest.

Use the MDGs as guidance

Aid assistance must be motivated by fundamental human rights and seen as a tool for achieving the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals and other international and Afghan targets for poverty reduction. Aid should not function as a tool to achieve diplomatic, military or security goals.

Fair Distribution

The needs of the population must be taken into account when aid is distributed. Norwegian authorities should contribute to an equitable distribution of the aid by ensuring that it is more evenly distributed between provinces and districts. This is a prerequisite for a successful state.

Local Ownership

The Norwegian Afghanistan Committee has extensive experience working with local ownership of development. In our view, this is a prerequisite for sustainable development. International NGOs need to cooperate closely with local authorities as it is crucial in order to increase the local capacity as well as give the local population the tools and capacity need to continue development projects also after the international actors have left the country.

Ensure Women's Participation

Women must be included in all areas, at all levels and in all decision-making processes. This is a prerequisite for proper and equitable priorities that benefits everyone. Women's situation was part of the rhetoric that justified the war in Afghanistan already from the start. We can not turn our backs on Afghan women now. On the contrary, we must strengthen the efforts to ensure that women's rights are upheld.

The Norwegian Afghanistan Committee
has more than 30 years of experience working with Afghanistan.
We will remain after the soldiers leave!

NAC offers

- 30 years of experience and commitment
- Rootedness in local communities
- A long-term holistic approach to sustainable development
- Cost-efficient high quality projects
- Focus on the people who are most in need, including women
- Ability to adapt to changing circumstances

The Norwegian Afghanistan Committee (NAC) is a member-based solidarity organisation with local committees in Norway. NAC aims to support the rights of the Afghan people for independence and democracy, as well as contribute to the reconstruction and development of the country. Our work builds on knowledge exchange and a mutual understanding and friendship between the Afghan and Norwegian people.

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