



# IOM IN Afghanistan

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## GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL OPENING IN KUNDUZ PROVINCE

Donor: U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).

IOM Afghanistan is implementing a major Schools and Clinics Construction and Refurbishment Programme in Baghlan, Balkh, Farah, Faryab, Herat, Jawzjan, Khost, Kunduz, Paktya, Samangan and Sar-e-Pul provinces. This programme will result in the construction of 34 new schools and the refurbishment of 92 schools. The programme also includes the construction of 60 new health clinics.

Health and education remain top priorities in the ongoing development efforts in the country, so this project is very important to the population.

The Bibi Khadija Central Girls High School in Kunduz City is part of this programme and was refurbished by IOM. The school is one of the oldest in the area. U.S. Ambassador and Special Presidential Envoy Zalmay Khalilzad presided over the ribbon cutting ceremony celebrating completion of the refurbishment.



IOM Kunduz: U.S. Ambassador and Special Presidential Envoy Zalmay Khalilzad cutting the ribbon at the opening ceremony of Bibi Khadija school.

## DDR REINTEGRATION - SMALL BUSINESS START-UP FOCUS

Donor: UNDP: Afghanistan's New Beginnings Programme (ANBP).

Views from the Beneficiaries:

**Mr. Hashmatullah and Mr. Mahmood Shah**, formerly soldiers of the 10th division from Paghman District, Kabul province had the idea to start a private bodybuilding gym after they were disarmed and demobilized from their unit. With the assistance of IOM, they submitted a business plan which was subsequently approved for funding and the gym is now in full operation.



IOM Kabul: Former combatants, Mr. Hashmatullah and Mr. Mahmood Shah in front of their bodybuilding gym.

Before joining the military ranks, Mr. Hashmatullah and Mr. Mahmood Shah were refugees in Pakistan. They were employed as instructors in a bodybuilding gym for several years during which time Mr. Mahmood Shah competed and won various competitions. When asked what prompted them to leave the military life, they said, "We left the military life because we wanted a normal safe life, free of weapons, with our families." Also, "we want to serve the youth of the nation and hopefully the gym will deter them from drug abuse and criminal activities."



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Since the opening of the gym, membership has risen to approximately 50 members. Moreover, the two ex-combatants now have gainful employment and plan to expand the current facility and acquire additional equipment in the near future. Mr. Hashmatullah and Mr. Mahmood Shah have socially and economically reintegrated back into Afghan civil society. They are grateful for this opportunity and encourage other former combatants to take advantage of reintegration opportunities offered to them. As with all DDR projects IOM continues to monitor their business in order to evaluate the project's impact and follow the progress.

### **WINTER AID DISTRIBUTION COMPLETED TO VULNERABLE POPULATIONS**

**Donors: United States of America, Australia, Finland, New Zealand and Norway.**

IOM has helped more than 2,160 families in northern and western Afghanistan with winter supplies as severe winter conditions caused much suffering across the country.

After conducting a joint assessment with the Ministries of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD) and Refugees and Repatriation (MoRR), IOM distributed winter kits which included boots, coats and blankets to former internally displaced people (IDPs) and refugees who have recently returned home. The winter kits were also distributed to especially vulnerable families in host communities.

Over 1,380 winter kits were distributed in Samangan, Faryab, Kunduz and Takhar in northern Afghanistan under the programme. In western Afghanistan, another 781 winter kits were provided to families in Herat and Badghis provinces through the programme.

IOM is also currently a part of the emergency flood preparations that are being coordinated by the MRRD and many UN agencies and NGOs. IOM has already distributed dozens of tents to communities affected by floods and landslides. Another 2,000 tents will be contributed to the emergency response efforts.

### **9 AFGHAN OFFICIALS ATTEND 3 INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES ON MIGRATION MANAGEMENT ISSUES**

IOM organized the participation of nine high ranking Afghan officials to three international conferences and workshops regarding various aspects of migration management during the month of March.

A member from the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and a member from the Afghan Civil Service Commission attended a training programme on Labour Administration and the Protection of Migrant Workers from March 1-4 in Bangkok, Thailand.

From March 8-10 six Afghan officials attended a conference on management of overseas employment and labour migration in Tehran, Iran. A sound base for continuing inter-regional dialogue was established

between Pakistan, Iran and Afghanistan at the conference. Afghan representation at the conference included members from the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation and the Afghan Civil Service Commission. The conference was hosted by the Iranian Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and was co-sponsored by IOM and ILO.

The final European Commission funded technical workshop on migration management and technical cooperation for Central Asia and Neighbouring Countries was held from March 14-16 in Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic. The workshop focused on "Legal and Regulatory Frameworks for Migration Management". Members from the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs represented the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan at the workshop.

IOM plans to continue these valuable capacity building and dialogue exchanges in technical cooperation on migration related issues over the course of the year.

### **IOM SUPPORTS INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY IN 11 PROVINCES AND WITH THE MINISTRY OF REFUGEES AND REPATRIATION (MoRR) IN KABUL**

At the request of the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA) and provincial Departments, IOM helped to commemorate International Women's Day (IWD) on March 8, both in Kabul and eleven other provinces of the country in events funded by USAID.

Women leaders were invited to attend from both provincial capitals and from districts within their provinces. Events included speakers such as the provincial Governor, Director of Women's Affairs, school teachers, female delegates and others. Poems and songs were presented at the celebration.

Additionally, IOM supported the Women's Day activities at the MoRR main compound at Jangalak. The event was attended by over 150 women working with the MoRR. The MoRR Minister, Dr. Mohammad Azam Dadfar attended the celebration.



IOM Kunduz: Commemoration of Women day in Kunduz.