

# Summary of DFID's work in Afghanistan 2011-2015

June 2012

## Why we work in Afghanistan

Over thirty years of conflict have left Afghanistan one of the poorest countries in the world. Average life expectancy is just 48. A third of the population lives below the poverty line – the equivalent of 60p per day. Only one in four Afghans can read and write, and one in six children die before their sixth birthday. The country will fail to reach most of the Millennium Development Goals before 2020. Women and girls still face enormous challenges participating in politics and decision making.

Afghanistan is one of the UK's top international priorities. A weak and politically unstable state fosters insecurity and holds back social and economic development. Poor governance and corruption hamper the delivery of basic services such as education and health, and undermine ordinary Afghans' trust in the Government. Tackling these issues will both reduce poverty and improve stability and security in Afghanistan, the region and beyond.

Our vision is a more peaceful, stable, viable and prosperous Afghanistan. This is a long-term goal that requires DFID's presence well beyond the end of 2014, when UK combat troops are withdrawn. The plan sets out how DFID will work to help put Afghanistan on a clear and irreversible path towards this vision by focusing on three critical areas: supporting peace, security and political stability; promoting economic stability, growth and jobs; and helping the state to deliver improved services.

## What we will achieve

Over 2011 – 2015, UK aid in Afghanistan will:

- Boost the incomes of 200,000 Afghans; and create 20,000 jobs
- Provide technical and vocational education and training in Helmand for 15,000 young people and contribute to the Afghan Government's target of training 300,000 young people
- Contribute to nearly 5.5 million children attending primary school in 2013/14 – at least 40% of them girls
- Build or upgrade 105 kilometres of roads in Helmand and contribute to the rehabilitation of 2295km of rural roads across the country by 2013
- Encourage at least 4.3 million Afghans (1.7 million women) to vote in 2013 and 2014 elections
- Help the Afghan Government improve public financial management, address corruption and strengthen delivery of basic services
- Reduce the impact of conflict and natural disasters through effective humanitarian aid



*"We can rebuild this country. We want the students to learn how to grow legal crops here, not illegal ones"*

- **Muhammed Nur**, farmer and teacher at the Helmand Agricultural High School, which is funded by the UK and teaches 16-25 year-old students modern farming techniques and alternatives to growing poppy.

Photo: David Gill/Development Pictures



## Who we will work with

The UK is a long-term partner for Afghanistan. DFID's approach is to work mostly with and through the Government to enable the country to stand on its own feet and to improve how the state responds to the demands of the Afghan people. The Afghan Government is increasingly taking the lead by working to create better opportunities and improve lives for ordinary Afghan men and women. DFID's programme supports the Afghanistan National Development Strategy and the Afghan Government's National Priority Programmes.

*"When I came from Pakistan I had some materials, but I had no money for a sewing machine. I didn't have any money – and now I own my own home and my own car."*

- **Maryam Hashami**, a small business owner in Kabul. She was helped by a microfinance initiative supported by the UK, which has helped hundreds of thousands of people start their own businesses in Afghanistan.

We work closely with other international donors and partners, such as the United States, the United Nations, the World Bank, the European Union and the Asian Development Bank. We work with the private sector, civil society and other development partners to support peace and prosperity. Our choice of partners and programmes is based on their efficiency and effectiveness in delivering what is needed.

DFID Afghanistan is located within the British Embassy in Kabul. We work closely with other UK government departments to achieve the UK's objectives in Afghanistan. We also have a team working in the international Provincial Reconstruction Team in Helmand.

## How we will work

More than ever, in the current financial climate, we have a duty to demonstrate our work is achieving value for money for the UK taxpayer. Results, transparency and accountability are our watch-words. We are committed to channelling at least half our annual budget through Afghan Government systems since this is the most effective way of ensuring the state can deliver directly to its people. But we will only do this when we can guarantee the right mechanisms are in place to safeguard UK taxpayers' money. We have a robust system of checks and balances in place to ensure UK aid helps those it is intended to.

We are fully committed to being transparent about DFID funds spent in Afghanistan whilst ensuring that this does not compromise the safety and security of our staff and partners. We will also encourage the Government of Afghanistan and other partners to become more transparent and accountable to the public. DFID Afghanistan's programme budget is £178 million per year for the next three years (2012/13 to 2014/15).

## More information

For a more detailed breakdown of Afghanistan's Operational Plan, and for more information on DFID's work in Afghanistan, please visit [www.dfid.gov.uk/afghanistan](http://www.dfid.gov.uk/afghanistan) and <http://ukinafghanistan.fco.gov.uk>.

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