



German Cooperation with Afghanistan

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New Irrigation Infrastructure in Badakhshan Benefits 13,000 Citizens

Teshkan, Badakhshan, 19th July 2018 – Yesterday, the Afghan-German Cooperation handed over a rehabilitated and extended irrigation canal and an office building for the local Water User Association to the governor's office of Teshkan district. In the area, more than 13,000 citizens now benefit from improved watering of agricultural land. That will help boosting local economy and thus strongly improve living conditions. The Stabilisation Programme Northern Afghanistan (SPNA) financed both projects at a total cost of almost AFN 30 million.

Teshkan's district governor, Mr Rouf Fahim, commented: "Water is the source of life. The new canal will provide enough water for the people and agricultural areas. Such projects are vital for economic growth in our district."

In the past, the Dasht-e Zabnorak irrigation canal in Teshkan was in bad condition and lacked water capacity. Agricultural production in the area was low. Residents faced many difficulties due to bad harvests resulting from insufficient watering. Therefore, the provincial government included the canal's rehabilitation and extension as a priority in the Provincial Development Plan for Badakhshan. Teshkan's governor's office and District Development Assembly initiated the project in 2016.

The head of the Badakhshan Kokcha River Basin Department, Mr Rafea Bahman, emphasised: "Such infrastructure projects help to bring peace and stability, decrease poverty, and create job opportunities in our country. We are very thankful for the Afghan-German Cooperation's support."

Today, the rehabilitated and extended canal is equipped with several measures to prevent flooding and to increase the infrastructure's resilience against potential damages. Further, a sophisticated siphon system enables the irrigation of additional farmland. In total, the canal provides reliable and sufficient water for an agricultural area of more than 1,200 acres (about 2,430 jeribs).

The local Water User Association represents private water users in the area and is responsible for managing and maintaining the Dasht-e Zabnorak canal. It further helps to resolve water disputes among water users. The new office building provides an adequate working environment, benefitting about 400 farmers. It offers two administrative rooms, a meeting room and a solar energy system. For future repairs and maintenance of the rehabilitated canal, the office is equipped with a concrete mixer, a stone drilling machine and other tools.

The KfW Development Bank implements the Stabilization Programme Northern Afghanistan (SPNA) on behalf of the German Federal Foreign Office (AA). The programme aims at strengthening local governance structures in Northern Afghanistan and improving the rural population's living conditions. Thus, the programme supports various infrastructure activities and capacity development. So far, SPNA has already completed more than 380 projects in over 50 districts of Badakhshan, Kunduz, Takhar, and Baghlan. At the same time, the project offered job-specific training for more than 18,000 development council members. The programme's total budget amounts to more than AFN 7 billion for the period from 2010 to 2018.