



German Cooperation with Afghanistan

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Reconstructed Road in Mazar-e Sharif Benefits more than 134,000 People

Mazar-e Sharif, Balkh, 6th February 2019 – Yesterday, provincial officials and representatives of the Afghan-German Cooperation inaugurated the reconstructed Dasht-e Shor Road in Nahr-e Shahi District, Balkh Province. The road benefits more than 134,000 people. Balkh's Department of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (DRRD) supervised the reconstruction works that were completed seven months ahead of schedule. The Afghan-German Cooperation's Regional Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) financed the measure at a total cost of about AFN 100 million.

In the past, the two kilometres long Dasht-e Shor Road's bad condition caused high transportation costs and frequent traffic jams. Locals also suffered from heavy environmental pollution and flooding caused by insufficient drainage. Balkh's DRRD therefore prioritised the road's reconstruction. After approval by the Provincial Development Committee, RIDF initiated the project's implementation. DRRD's Director, Mr Abdul Basit Aini, said, 'The people of Dasth-e Shor had serious problems in the past, especially during winter and spring. They are very happy to have a high-quality road now.'

The road has a total width of 16 metres, including seven metres wide asphalted carriageways. Shoulders on both sides of the road with a width of nine metres improve the structure's stability and provide space for emergencies or parking. New road markings and traffic signs facilitate traffic. Further, an improved drainage system on both sides of the road at a total length of more than four kilometres as well as 46 culverts prevent flooding in the area.

Balkh Province's Deputy Governor, Shujauddin Shuja, emphasised, 'The people of Dasht-e-Shor demanded that we build such a road, but because of the local government's limited budget we could not meet this demand. We greatly appreciate the German government's financial support.'

It is now easier for locals from surrounding areas to commute and transport goods to city markets. This will stimulate economic growth, creating additional jobs and income opportunities. In addition, citizens can now access social services, schools, health centres and other vital infrastructure more easily, improving their living conditions. During reconstruction works, more than 200 local people benefitted from daily job opportunities.

In addition to implementing the project, RIDF offered on-the-job training, coaching and mentoring sessions for engineers and managers working at the DRRD. Activities aimed at developing the department's capacities for identifying, managing, implementing and maintaining similar urban projects independently in the future. The DRRD is responsible for operating and maintaining Dasht-e Shor Road.

KfW Development Bank implements the Regional Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). The programme aims at improving economic and social infrastructure in Northern Afghanistan while enabling provincial administrations to plan and implement development programmes independently. Since 2011, the programme has funded, constructed or rehabilitated more than 160 kilometres of roads, 50 kilometres of irrigation canals and 11 protection dams against flooding or erosion in the provinces Balkh, Kunduz, Baghlan, Takhar, and Badakhshan. In Samangan, RIDF is currently implementing two school rehabilitation projects. At the same time, the programme has organised about 900 job-specific on-the-job training, coaching and seminars for more than 3,000 engineers and governmental employees facilitating the independent realisation of future infrastructure projects.