

## New Flood Protection Wall to Benefit 24,000 Balkh Citizens

German Consul General Mr Karsten Geier said, 'Water is the source of life and of all wealth. However, like all good things, it needs to be managed carefully. I am happy that the flood protection wall will ease the lives of 24,000 people in five villages of Sholgara District. I am confident this wall will be representative of our efforts of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Balkh Province and Sholgara District. This is nothing else than good governance, which is at the heart of every democracy.'

Currently, the villages of Sare-e Mang, Abdul Rahimzai Bala, Abdul Rahimzai Payan, Baghi Palwan and Borgi situated in a valley in Sholgara District are prone to heavy floods that can cause severe damages. The 3-metre-high flood protection wall will protect homes, gardens, schools, markets, roads, health clinics and agricultural land from future flooding. By safeguarding these, the project promotes socio-economic development in the area and improves the locals' living conditions.

Engineer Abdul Basit Aini, Director of DRRD stated, 'Every year flooding causes a lot damage along the river. Fortunately, there will no longer be flood threats after the implementation of the project in this area.'

The wall will protect about 1,500 jerib (300 ha) of agricultural land, thus also protecting agricultural production and jobs. Many locals will profit from new job opportunities thanks to the construction works. The construction works will start in April 2020 and will last about 22 months.

Mohammad Ishaq Rahguzar, Balkh Governor, said, 'Germany is not going to support us a lifetime, therefore I request from the community elders to take care of such an important project.'

Throughout this period, RIDF will offer on-the-job training, coaching and mentoring sessions for engineers and managers working with DRRD. These activities aim at improving the department's capacities for identifying, managing, implementing and maintaining similar projects independently in the future.

*The Regional Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) is being implemented by KfW Development Bank 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. In the past 7 years the programme has funded and constructed/rehabilitated more than 160 kilometres of roads, 50 kilometres of irrigation channels and 11 protection dams against flooding or erosion in the provinces Balkh, Kunduz, Baghlan, Takhar, Badakhshan and is now implementing two school rehabilitation projects also in Samangan. At the same time, the programme has organised about 900 job-specific on-the-job trainings, coaching and seminars for more than 3,000 engineers and governmental employees facilitating the independent realisation of future infrastructure projects.*

Teaser text:

On Saturday, the Afghan-German Cooperation and the Provincial Director of the Department of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (DRRD) signed a contract for constructing a 1.5-kilometre flood protection wall along Balkh River in Sholgara District. A number of provincial officials attended the event that took place at the Governor's Office in Mazar-e Sharif. More than 24,000 people living in five villages will benefit directly from this new flood protection wall. The Afghan-German Cooperation's Regional Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) finances the project at a total cost of about AFN 118 million.

Priority area:

Gute Regierungsführung

Province:

Balkh

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