

New Flood Protection Wall and Irrigation Channel Benefits Almost 20,000 Takhar Citizens

Takhar's Provincial Governor, Mr Abdul Haq Shafaq stated, 'Safeguarding the right bank of Taloqan River in Haji Rashid area was a vital project. It protects Haji Rashid and Zargari areas from flooding and provided employment for more than 2,400 people. We ask the residents and relevant departments to now pay serious attention in the operation and maintenance of the project.'

In recent years, heavy floods severely damaged houses in the two densely populated villages of Haji Rashid and Zargari. The flood damaged infrastructure in the surrounding areas and a bridge built by the Department of Rural Rehabilitation and Development. The Nurullah Irrigation Intake, which supplies water to 400 ha of farmland and to a micro-hydropower plant, was also affected. Takhar's Provincial Development Committee prioritised the construction of a new flood protection wall and the rehabilitation of one irrigation channel based on the development priorities set for the province. Construction works started in December 2018 and lasted for 16 months.

The new protection wall will safeguard the two villages, the local irrigation systems and farmlands. It will help increase agricultural productivity and stimulate economic growth. At the same time, living conditions will improve. Residents are building houses and gardens along the river bank as they no longer fear flood damage and land erosions. The construction works created temporary employment for more than 80 local labourers on daily wages for about a year.

The provincial Acting Director of TRBA, Mr Qiamuddin Sultanti said, 'With the implementation of this project, many drinking wells of Taloqan Water Supply System have been protected as well as a 200-metre-long bridge and the Haji Rashid and Zargari areas. The intake of Haji Norullah Canal was also reconstructed to supply water to agricultural land and more than 75 *Jeribs* of land was restored behind the new protection wall.'

During the implementation period, RIDF offered on-the-job training, coaching sessions and workshops for engineers and managers working for TRBA. These activities aimed at improving TRBA's capacity for identifying, managing, implementing and maintaining similar projects independently in the future. TRBA is responsible for the operation and maintenance of this infrastructure project.

The KfW Development Bank implements the programme Regional Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). RIDF aims to improve the living conditions in northern Afghanistan by providing basic infrastructure and empowering administration and citizen groups to plan, implement and operate infrastructure projects. Infrastructure measures include the construction of roads, irrigation canals, flood protection walls, and schools as well as the development of the power grid. Since 2010 the programme has funded, constructed and rehabilitated more than 270 km of roads, 98 km of irrigation canals and 15 flood protection dams. Furthermore, the programme has constructed 29 school buildings and connected 5,750 households to the power grid. So far, 5,500 government employees have taken part in RIDF training courses that aim to train provincial governmental personnel. This will enable Afghan institutions to implement projects like these independently in the future.

Teaser text:

Yesterday, provincial authorities together with the director of Taloqan River Basin Agency (TRBA) inaugurated a flood protection wall in the city of Taloqan, Takhar Province. Due to COVID-19 safety regulations, a limited number of about 15 participants attended the handover ceremony. The 1.5-kilometre-long wall will protect two villages as well as infrastructure along the Taloqan River, and 2,000 *jeribs* (400 hectares) of land from floods, benefitting almost 20,000 local citizens. The Afghan-German Cooperation's Regional Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) financed the project at a total cost of about AFN 122 million.

Priority area:

Gute Regierungsführung

Province:

Takhar

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