

## Reconstruction of Two Roads Benefits More Than 100,000 People in Mazar-e Sharif

Eng. Abdul Basit Aini, Director of DRRD stated, 'Together with the RIDF technical team we worked hard to complete these two road projects. Fortunately today we are witnessing the inauguration of the projects.'

The two reconstructed roads are the 1.5 km road connecting the Mazar-e Sharif – Sholgara Highway and the Firqa – Pul-e Babu Road in Dehdadi District, and the 3.7 km Sajadia to Amiri Town Road in Nahr-e Shahi District. In the past, the gravel roads became muddy and flooded on rainy days due to the lack of a drainage system. Now, these two upgraded and asphalted roads have a functional drainage system, minimising the threat and destruction of seasonal flooding for residents and neighborhoods.

The roads give fast and easy access to the city, and clear the environment of dust and mud. They will increase accessibility to markets, schools and health services, thereby helping to improve education, health and business opportunities. This will contribute to improving the livelihoods and living conditions of the people in the area. These roads now even facilitate comfortable and safe biking and driving for everyone.

Up to 1,200 vehicles use the road leading from Mazar-e Sharif – Sholgara Highway to Pul-e-Babu Road and around 2,700 vehicles use the Sajadia to Amiri Town Road every day. Reconstruction works involved widening the existing gravel roads to an average 11 metre-wide roadway, including a six to seven metre-wide asphalt carriageway and a minimum 1.75 meters gravel shoulder on each side. Side ditches along the roadside drain rainwater from the road.

Balkh Governor, Mohammad Ishaq Rahguzar, said, 'We hope to have continuous support from the German government regarding infrastructure projects and their implementation.' He added, 'RIDF did its part and completed the project, now it is the Local Government of Afghanistan and the people's turn to take care of the maintenance.'

In addition to funding the reconstruction of the roads, RIDF also offered on-the-job training, coaching and mentoring sessions for the engineers and managers of DRRD in Balkh. These activities aimed at developing their capacity to design and construct urban roads in a practical manner. At the same time, DRRD ensures the operation and maintenance of the existing roads infrastructure.

*The Regional Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) is 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. Since 2011, the programme has funded, constructed and 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 on-the-job training sessions, coaching and seminars for more than 3,000 engineers and governmental employees, facilitating the independent realisation of future infrastructure projects.*

Teaser text:

Yesterday in Mazar-e Sharif, the Governor and Deputy Governor of Balkh, the Director of the Department of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (DRRD) of Balkh Province, and other provincial government officials along with people elders and representatives inaugurated two reconstructed roads. The newly improved roads benefit more than 100,000 residents in the area, providing them with safer and easier access to the city and surrounding areas. The Afghan-German Cooperation's Regional Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) supported the DRRD with the implementation of the two projects and funded the reconstruction with a total cost of approximately AFN 188 million.

Priority area:

Stabilisation

Province:

Balkh

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