German Cooperation with Afghanistan

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Improving Infrastructure in Afghanistan: Rehabilitated Road Will Benefit more than 72,000 Citizens in Balkh

Mazar-e Sharif, Balkh, 30th July 2018 – Last weekend, the ground-breaking ceremony for the reconstruction of a road connecting the towns Sajadia and Amiri took place in Mazar-e Sharif, Balkh. The road is almost four kilometres long and is located in the district Nahr-e Shari. Provincial government officials and representatives of the Afghan-German Cooperation attended the event. More than 72,000 citizens will benefit from improved traffic conditions. Balkh’s Department of Rural Rehabilitation and Development implements the project and monitors construction works. The Afghan-German Cooperation’s Regional Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) finances the activity at a total cost of about AFN 110 million.

Balkh’s governor, Mr Mohammad Ishaq Rahguzar, appreciated the project and emphasised: “Balkh’s government and citizens have been working on infrastructure projects for years. We are very happy to witness the realisation of another project in our province.”

Currently, the road connecting Sajadia and Amiri is in poor condition. It is extremely dusty, polluting the area when traffic passes. In addition, the road’s drainage system is insufficient, hindering traffic and causing inconveniences for locals during rainy season. About 3,000 vehicles use the road daily.

The consul general of the Federal Republic of Germany, Mr Karsten Geier, expressed his gratitude to the attendees and commented: “It is my pleasure to be here today and participate in the ground-breaking ceremony of a project that brings people together.” He added: “It is a good thing that the project will be implemented by local engineers and workers.”

The road’s rehabilitation will improve traffic conditions in the towns Kart-e Wahdat, Sajadia, Amiri and neighbouring areas. Access to markets, schools, businesses and health care facilities will improve, stimulating economic activity in the region. Citizens will further benefit from a cleaner environment as well as reduced vehicle maintenance costs and noise pollution. The road will be safer and more comfortable to use. Reconstruction works are estimated to last for 21 months and will create job opportunities for many locals throughout the process.

During the project’s implementation, RIDF will offer on-the-job training, coaching and mentoring sessions for engineers and managers working at Balkh Province’s Department of Rural Rehabilitation and Development. These activities aim at improving the department’s capacities for designing, constructing and maintaining urban roads 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 seven years the programme has funded and 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 of Balkh, Kunduz, Baghlan, Takhar, Badakhshan. 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. In Samangan, RIDF is currently implementing two school rehabilitation projects.

Released by the PR-Unit of the German Cooperation with Afghanistan.
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