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AFGHANISTAN

SUCCESS STORY

Nangarhar Education Faculty Buildings Rehabilitated

Thirty-seven widows and destitute women rehabilitated an entire school which graduates thousands of prospective teachers each year.



Photo: CADG

Newly renovated Education Faculty Building



Photo: CADG

Widow laborer discussing the positive impact her job has had on her life and the life of her family.

The Nangarhar University Education Faculty for years has provided instruction to thousands of prospective teachers, predominantly women, which as a result has elevated the educational and social status of women within the family and their communities. However, the faculty buildings over time fell into severe disrepair. It was no longer a place where students could find safe, sanitary, and well-equipped classrooms. At the same time, another serious issue haunts Jalalabad: the province is home to countless widows and destitute women with no income who have been forced to beg to support themselves and their large families.

In response to both of these dire needs and with the assistance of the Department of Social Affairs, the Department of Women's Affairs, and the Education Faculty Directorate, Central Asia Development Group's (CADG) implementation of USAID's Food Insecurity Response to Urban Populations (FIRUP) Program provided employment for 37 women and 6 men to comprehensively rehabilitate the Education Faculty building. Over the course of the project, the laborers repaired electrical wiring, plastered and painted four offices, one library, and 15 classrooms as well as the building's exterior, and also repaired the doors, broken locks, broken windows, broken glass, and torn screens. Laborers cleaned two annexes which house science laboratories, applied fresh plaster to 3 laboratories, and landscaped the school grounds. The project created 1,692 female days of labor.

This was the first project of its kind in Jalalabad, and has made a tangible difference in the lives of each female laborer. A prime example is forty-five year old Nazer from Beshood District. Her husband died years ago from a heart attack. She was left to support eight family members. Both of her sons are disabled; one is crippled, the other mentally handicapped. "With my wages, I can now buy much-needed medicine for my sons as well as food for my family", she explained. Thirty-five year old Tajek from Kama, who must support 10 family members, happily stated, "Before this project, my little children had to work to provide for us all, but now they can go to school." The Education Faculty Director, Farman Ullah Helaman, echoed his support for this pilot program and how CADG FIRUP's approach of providing a secure, enclosed environment in which women may work should be replicated elsewhere throughout Nangarhar Province and Afghanistan.