

Teaching the Teachers



Recruiting Afghan teachers to rural areas, such as Shin Kalay, is difficult. Even if available, they would lack the immediate family support important to sustain motivation and concern. While building suitable apartments for teachers is one of our goals, appropriate housing is currently not available.

With an eye on the school's growing need for teachers, our principal is holding classes for our 7th grade students who are capable of teaching lower grades. English, math, and sciences are being emphasized in both a morning and afternoon session, six days a week.

This may appear to be a small step, but it is very important for us to build our own local staff of dedicated teachers who can provide the best for the students of Shin Kalay.

Coe College Provides Hope

Dr. Mohammad Khan Kharoti, our founder, has known from the beginning that to be successful students at our school need to learn English. But, teachers with a proficiency in English are especially hard to find in Afghanistan.

Mohammad recently had the opportunity to share these thoughts with the administration of his alma mater, Coe College in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Shortly after his visit there, he was invited back to speak at a conference and to explore the possibility of a Coe College summer program to teach English to selected teachers and advanced students from our school starting in 2008.

An opportunity to gain such knowledge is beyond the imagination of rural Afghan students. To have the program provided by an institution of such high scholastic standing, and taught by staff with extensive ESL training experience, would be a major boost in achieving our goal of **academic excellence**.

Our hope that this program will come to fruition cannot be overstated.

Building for Growth

The Shin Kalay Village Elders have demonstrated their support and ownership in their school from the beginning. Current unrest has demanded caution and patience. However the elders feel that we should again proceed with building additional classrooms needed to serve new grade levels.

In light of this encouraging guidance, the GVS Board has released funds to start construction. The new classrooms will be nearly 50% larger. This larger space and our relatively low students per class ratio will provide a superior learning environment. (The government standard is 50 students/class, whereas our maximum is 30 students/class.)

With the change in the size and with rising costs, it is expected that further funds may be necessary to complete this project.



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A Unique Outreach To Rural Afghanistan

The following national statistics reflect the effects of years of war and instability on this Central Asian country. Recently there have been large investments in schools that should significantly improve the lives of Afghans, but sadly, very few of the funds are reaching rural communities.

Afghanistan Statistics

(Primary Source: UNICEF)

- Adult Literacy rates: Men 52%; Women 22% (Literacy rates are much lower in the rural areas where, for women, they may be well below 10%)
- Life expectancy at birth: 43 years despite a very low HIV rate of 0.1%
- Median Age: 17.5 years (half that of the U.S.)
- Infant mortality: 163/1000 (16%)
- Under five mortality rate: 257/1000 live births nearly 26% (4th highest in the world!)

Green Village Schools' activities are highly unique in that we are operating totally in a rural area where the living conditions are quite primitive. There are no utilities, little community wide sanitation, no medical services, and few good roads. And yet with our local contacts, and thanks to cell phones and visits to the school by Dr. Kharoti, we have been able to build a school with less money than anywhere else. And the students (1,000+ at last count), both boys and girls, keep coming in increasing numbers.

Much more needs to be done. **Please help the children of Shin Kalay overcome the obstacles they face.** They are eager to learn and the village elders actively support the school, but we need your financial help to build a school of academic excellence unheard of in rural Afghanistan.

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