



Hope in Unexpected Places

Seldom Heard Stories of the Afghan People

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This book is dedicated to all those who have not forgotten the people of Afghanistan; to all of those who stood with us to protect Afghan children; to those who believe an Afghanistan free from violence and poverty is possible; and to those who together with us have planted seeds of hope in the hearts of highly vulnerable Afghan children and their families.

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Introduction

This book is a window into the stories of families who live in far-flung places of Afghanistan; places where happiness, hope and miracles are exotic words and too often abstract terms. The book presents a new perspective on the life and resilience of Afghans by sharing stories of hope.

“Hope in Unexpected Places” brings to the life the ways in which Afghans are finding new paths toward a brighter future for their families and their children and embraces the idea of an Afghanistan filled with the joyful laughter of children. The picture this report intends to bring to light is one of hope – hope taking root amidst fragility and bearing fruit in the lives of some of the most vulnerable children—their families and their communities—in the world.

The 16 short stories in this book are different than the stories that are published in contemporary news, which are typically about conflict, war, sorrow and poverty in Afghanistan.

We hope that these stories inspire and encourage you to remember Afghanistan and its people not for war and conflict, but for love, joy, hope and faith.

Narges Ghafary
Communications Manager
World Vision Afghanistan





Country Director's Message

Since 1976 I have engaged with the Afghan people, whom I so dearly care for and highly regard. I have observed from near and far, but also have personally entered into their tragedy of more than 40 years of conflict. It is a conflict imposed upon them by those exerting their influence and quest for control through violence and manipulation for ends that certainly do not benefit the far majority of Afghan children and their families.

So much of the Afghanistan I first encountered as a student those many years ago has been ravaged and every Afghan has been affected by it to one unfortunate degree or other. This is the story the world knows best, and it has been told countless times throughout the past four decades – religious extremism, rampant killing of innocent people, maiming of body, mind and soul, and a host of other tragic negatives most people associate with this country.

But that is a story too often told by those who are distant, or have distanced themselves physically or mentally in such a way that they care not for, or have no access to the other stories being lived out in this place, among these people.

We in World Vision know close up and have had the privilege of helping form some of these other stories seldom heard, stories of hope in unexpected places. In this small book, my colleague Narges, a gifted storyteller, presents some of them.

Jim Alexander
Country Director
World Vision Afghanistan

Afghan Women: Leading Their Country into a Brighter Future

When Bolghis, 40, head of her village's all-woman Shura (women's council) discovered that 25 girls in her community had dropped out of school, she knew it was time for her to apply the knowledge she had gained through World Vision's trainings.

Young women students were being harassed by anonymous motorcyclists in the streets of their villages. Movarid, 16, was one of those affected. After a motorcyclist ripped her headscarf off one day as she was walking to school, her father prohibited her from studying. "It is better for you to stay at home... than be a liability for the family," he told her.

Similar incidents occurred in three nearby villages. After learning of the continued harassments, Bolghis and the Shura members brought the issue before the elders. Together, they went to the district governor to find a solution to the problem.

"The district governor called the nearby police station immediately and requested their support," explains Bolghis. The motorcyclists who had been harassing women and girls were arrested.

Today, girls can study, free from fear and harassment. Almost all the girls who had dropped-out resumed their studies.

Thanks to the training, women Shura members are taken seriously now in their communities and by elders. "Before... we didn't know whom we should call if we were unable to resolve a problem ourselves," explains Bolghis.

Now, the all-women defense force receives and addresses 4-5 cases per month. Those they are not able to solve locally are referred to the appropriate authorities.

Bolghis is grateful for the trust and investment World Vision is making in women in Afghanistan. "You brought life to our roles and responsibilities. You enabled us to be a patient, steady rock for women whose problems can now be heard and solved," she says





Change Arrives on the Back of a Goat

Nazbibi, 10, runs quickly to the other side of the yard and returns with her hands full of grass. She takes a step toward where two small goats graze and joyfully places the food close to their mouths. Livestock is a novelty for her family.

“I used to have 12 sheep,” her father, Ismael, says, until the drought. “I had to sell them one-by-one... to buy food and other essentials... we didn’t have anything else to fill our bellies,” says the hard-working father of six, who grows wheat in the spring and summer and works as a day labourer in a nearby city in the winter.

Nazbibi and her family were recently selected to receive American goats (a mother and two kids) as part of a World Vision animal husbandry programme designed to help improve the nutrition and incomes of vulnerable families.

“Goat’s milk is a source of calcium, protein, and other essential nutrients that growing children need,” says Obeidollah Dorani, a World Vision Livelihoods Manager. And, American goats produce large quantities of milk and are well-adapted to the Badghis climate.

Before receiving the goats, Zainab, Nazbibi’s mother, says the family couldn’t afford to eat milk or other dairy products regularly. Now, they can. “The mother goat gives me half a litre of milk per day. I make yoghurt... When we don’t have other food for lunch or dinner, we eat yoghurt and homemade bread,” she says.

In Badghis, drought has caused multiple crop failures, leading to high rates of malnutrition and chronic health problems. Through the provision of goats, World Vision aims to improve the well-being of children in this area and equip parents to be able to provide for their children’s needs.

Badghis is Now a Safer Place to Live

The province of Badghis is surrounded by majestic mountains that change colour with the seasons. In spring, the mountains are dressed in garments of green, covered in sprouting wheat. In summer, as the wheat gets ready for harvesting, the sheaves and the mountains turn yellow and brown. And, in winter, white snow reminds farmers to prepare for spring once again.

Beneath the beauty of the changing seasons lies another story. “The nature you are seeing here isn’t always at peace with the villagers,” says Mamlaket, 45, a woman whose wrinkles suggest a life as rugged as the mountainous terrain. “Every year, we are dealing with floods and fires.”

Her village is especially disaster-prone and short on financial resources. As an agricultural society, everything families own and their incomes are linked to their land. Two years ago, Mamlaket and her husband lost nearly all they had in a flood. “It was very difficult,” she recalls. “We didn’t know how to get out of harm’s way or [how to] take protective measures.”

When water isn’t a threat, fire is. “Each year, we are certain to have a wildfire,” says Hashim, 42, a pistachio farmer. “Wheat and pistachio trees are very dry... they catch fire easily,” he says, explaining that because of their remote location, farmers were tasked with controlling the flames. “We didn’t even inform the government.”

Today, World Vision is working to help families address the risks they can and prepare for those they can’t through the creation and equipping of Disaster Risk Reduction committees. The groups, made up of 10 men and 10 women, learn to address disasters in a systemic manner with each member playing a specific role.

“Before, there was no such coordination among the villagers,” says Hashim. “Now, we know what, when and where we should go [when a disaster happens].”





A Dream Renewed

What started as a normal day for Khatema, 9, joyfully playing in the village with her friends quickly turned into one of the worst days of her life. Her world and her dream of becoming a teacher came crashing down when her brother interrupted their game with a message; their father had decided to marry her off.

Khatema ran home. When she found her mother with tears flowing from her eyes, she knew the message was true. After all, the same thing had happened to her 12-year-old sister just two years before. "I went into the stable... and I started to cry," she says.

Child marriage is common in Afghanistan; 57 per cent of girls are married before the age of 19. The custom is often used, as was the case in Khatema's family, to use the bride price to pay off debts and resolve financial pressures for families living in poverty.

Khatema's mother, Fatmina, never wanted her daughters to live through what she did as a girl. But she felt powerless when her eldest daughter was sold into marriage. "I didn't know what I could do or whom I could ask for help," she remembers. This time she did.

Fatima knew that her neighbour, Razia, had been trained by World Vision to resolve domestic conflicts. She went to her for help. Razia immediately asked her husband to speak with Ghafoor, Khatema's father, and try to persuade him to call the marriage off.

It wasn't an easy task. Ghafoor used his economic situation to justify his decision. It took a whole week of discussions and interventions by Razia's husband and local leaders before Ghafoor eventually changed his mind.

Today, Khatema can breathe easy and enjoy her childhood once again. "I am so happy. I feel relieved...like something heavy has been lifted from my shoulders," she says.





Young girls on their way to school in Qala-i-Naw city, capital of Badghis province.



Students from one of the three schools in Maslakh Internally Displaced People camp, Herat province.

Helping Afghan Women and Their Unborn Babies

Decades of conflict and instability have interrupted Afghanistan's basic health infrastructure. Limited access to obstetric care, particularly in rural areas, as well as a lack of information about maternal health, and a lack of trained health workers makes Afghanistan one of the most dangerous places in the world to be a mother or a baby.

Nasrat, 27, knows the effects of this situation first-hand. "Nine years ago... I didn't have any information about pregnancy and its dangers," she says. "When the signs of delivery started, my mother-in-law called a traditional birth attendant to help."

The midwife stayed with her day and night, but, Nasrat's cervix never opened beyond 8 cm. On the third night, the pain became so unbearable she lost consciousness.

"My husband found a car and we went to Herat hospital," she says. Two hours later, her son was born. "I was in a lot of pain and couldn't walk for three weeks," she says.

Complications from her first birth made Nasrat unable to have more children. Her experience motivated Nasrat to become a midwife through World Vision's midwifery programme.

Today, Nasrat works alongside her husband (who went on to become a doctor) as a midwife. On a normal day, she sees 40 patients. Patients like Parigul, who came to her clinic after she lost her baby during birth in the hands of a traditional birth attendant who couldn't remove the placenta. The patient's family brought her to the clinic where Nasrat helped her heal physically.

"I am here to give services to pregnant women," she says. "Now, women in this village can access health services, have a safe delivery and have healthy children."

In the communities where World Vision-trained midwives work, access to quality healthcare has increased and new-born mortality rates have decreased.





From Housewife to Trained Farmer

Sara, 38, was only 17 when she got married. She carried with her the dream of learning to read and write.

Unfortunately, she soon discovered that her husband, like her father, believed women had no use for social activities or personal development. "I work as much as I can to bring you food and provide everything that you need," he told her.

Sara's husband, Sayad, did work hard, but his monthly income of \$250 USD could barely provide enough food for their large family. There was very little left for anything else.

"One day, Jawad, my third child, asked for money to enrol in an English class... we didn't have enough money," remembers Sara, who told him with a heavy heart that when he was older, he would be able to work and pay for his English class.

Sara dreaded the start of school. "I was happy that my children were going [to school]... but I felt bad that I couldn't buy them new uniforms and sufficient school supplies," she says.

Sara longed to help. But, like many women in Badghis, she had few options or opportunities.

In order to address gender inequality in this area, World Vision partnered with Shuras (community councils) and religious leaders through a programme called Celebrating Families. Sayad agreed to participate with Sara.

Sara was then selected to participate in a programme where she would learn about agriculture techniques. She was shocked when Sayad agreed to let her do it.

"I understood that my dream... was coming true!" she says. She started putting the training into practice by growing potatoes and tomatoes.

"With the first income I receive, I want to enrol Jawad in English class... [and] for the next school year, I will buy my children new uniforms and school supplies," she says proudly.

Hunted by Hunger

Gulbibi, 20, is deep in thought as she gently rocks a cradle inside the small tent she now calls home.

She and her family are among the more than 51,000 Internally Displaced People who now live in makeshift tents and settlements in Herat city.

Gulbibi's husband, Mohammad Amin, used to be able to provide for his family's needs through his harvests of cumin, sesame, wheat and peas. "When my children got sick... we just took some [of our products] to the bazar and sold [them] for money," she says.

But, failed rains led to failed crops. Soon, Mohammad Amin and many other farmers were forced to make a difficult decision: sell their livestock and eat their seeds, or starve. By the time they left Badghis province, Gulbibi's family had nothing left.

Today, Mohammed Amin works as a day labourer. On a good day, he earns \$2 USD. Oftentimes, however, he returns empty handed. Because of their extreme poverty, the family's diet is restricted to tea and bread—a nutrient-poor diet for anyone; but a recipe for malnutrition for young children, like their 1-year-old daughter Nasima.

Gulbibi knew her daughter wasn't well. But, when Nasima turned pale, lethargic and lifeless, she knew she had to act.

Out of desperation, she brought her daughter to World Vision's mobile clinic. The doctors told her Nasima was suffering from malnutrition.

Unfortunately, she is not the only case. "[Last] month, we had 45-50 cases of severe malnutrition," says Dr. Teimor, one of World Vision's mobile health team doctors.

Nasima was given therapeutic foods to help her gain weight. In one month, Nasima gained half a kilo. Gulbibi is relieved her daughter's weight and health are improving. "I can feel she is getting heavier day-by-day," she says.





The village of Qutos in the northwestern province of Ghor.



Nutrition Classes Give Belal a Second Chance at Life

Rahima was only 14 years old when she was married to a 50-year-old man as his third wife. She didn't meet her husband until the wedding day. As a third wife, Rahima was married to bear children, because the other wives could not.

As a young bride, Rahima struggled as a mother. "I lost four of my children; two sons and two daughters when they reached six or seven months old," she recalls.

Twenty years later, Rahima has four children: Abdullah, 14; Habiba, 10; Aminullha, 7; and Belal, 23-months.

Her husband passed away six months ago. Children and wives were all he left behind. He wasn't even able to leave a small plot of land for Rahima.

Today, she spends her days working in her neighbours' houses, doing their laundry and their cleaning. But, her hard work is not enough to provide for the needs of her children. To survive, she asked her son, Abdullah, to work also.

Rahima knew she wasn't caring for her Belal's needs, but she didn't know what else she could do. The child was skinny, pale and lethargic when Rahima brought her to a World Vision growth-monitoring session. He weighed just 4.2 kg, half of what a healthy 7-month-old should weigh.

"When I heard that my son was severely malnourished, I gave up," says Rahima. "I didn't want to [spend] the last days of his life coming to nutrition classes."

But, Khatera, the World Vision's Nutrition Assistant convinced her to come. Rahima participated in a 12-day class where mothers learn to cook nutritious food from locally-available ingredients.

By the 12th day of the course, Belal had gained 200 grams! Rahima was pleasantly surprised.

She continues to use what she learned in the classes for Belal and her other children. Today, he is a happy, healthy 10.11 kg toddler.

Money from Honey

Below the majestic peaks and the red flowers that blanket the hillsides of Badghis province each spring lie some painful scars and ugly truths. Despite the area's natural beauty, Badghis is a difficult place to survive, especially for women.

Traditional and cultural practices have forced women to play a weak role in Afghan society and kept them out of educational settings. Without skills it is especially hard for women to generate an income.

To help bridge this gap, World Vision introduced beekeeping as a means of income-generating for women and people with disabilities. The 220 families selected to participate in the training were pioneers in their community; most were brave women, like Sadgul, 25.

"When beekeeping was introduced... I had never tasted [honey] before," says Sadgul. During the training, she and the other participants not only learned how to properly care for their bees, they also learned about the health and nutritional benefits of honey, especially for children.

After finishing the training, Sadgul and other graduates were given two bee boxes to start their production.

During her first season, Sadgul was only able to produce 5 kilos of honey. Her family ate every drop. "My children love eating honey," says Sadgul, with a smile. "If I allowed them, they would eat honey 10 times a day."

Her initial success and her children's appetite motivated her to expand her business. She added 14 new boxes. This past year she collected 116 kilos of honey. "With the money I earn from the selling of honey, I can buy notebooks, pens and school bags for my children," explains Sadgul.

Beekeeping not only transformed Sadgul's financial situation, it also impacted how she sees herself. "Now, I believe in myself. There is no need to hide myself from society anymore," she says.





Economic Freedom and So Much More for Women in Badghis

For women of Badghis, life is confined to the four walls of their homes. When they do get outside, their view of the world is restricted to a thin ribbon of semi-transparent fabric. Many have no choice but to bury their childhood ambitions and talents in the responsibilities of life.

But, things are beginning to change. In the first ever all-women's market, a buzz of laughter fills the air and women move about free from fear and the confines of their burqas.

Fatima, 30, is one of the first 28 women to realise her dream of owning her own shop. Her income from her work as a tailor has more than doubled, from \$55 to \$130 USD per month, giving her economic freedom and improving her family's ability to care for their children. "Now, I go home in the evenings with money," she says. "I buy whatever I want for myself and the children."

The market not only gives Fatima and other vendors financial independence, it also helps them emotionally. "I leave my family problems at home and chat and laugh with other women. We can joke and forget life's challenges for a while," she says.

Establishing the women's market wasn't easy. World Vision leaders first met with the Governor and the religious affairs department. After they had given their support, World Vision partnered with Imams who committed to use Friday prayers to convince men that women working outside of the home is acceptable.

Fatima's husband attended one of these Friday prayers. Although he was adamantly against her working outside of the home, his eyes and mind had been opened. She could hardly believe her ears when he asked if she still wanted to start her own shop.

The market has been so successful that the government is building a three-story building capable of holding 45 women-run businesses.



An Internally Displaced People camp in Herat province.

The Smell of Fresh Bread; The Smell of Success

In Badghis, Afghanistan, a region where traditional values prevail, simply being a woman is enough to confine you to your home. Here, women are seen as weak and unwise. Those who are forced by their circumstances or choose to work outside their homes are often shamed.

In the midst of this often-hostile environment, World Vision is planting seeds of hope and transformation, by equipping women to carry out income-generating activities through producer groups that raise poultry and sell eggs. These initial seeds are growing, producing fruit and multiplying their impact.

Recently, 20 women who participated in producer groups came together to form a savings group. In just 10 months, the women were able to save \$300 USD.

With their savings, the women decided to start their own small business. After much deliberation, many consultations, and taking into consideration the culture and needs of their community, they decided to start a bakery.

To save money, they built a tandoor (traditional oven) by hand. And, to support others, they decided to hire a vulnerable woman (who was not a member of the savings group) to bake the bread; enabling her to have a much-needed income for her family as well.

The bakery is thriving. Not only are the women selling bread in their community, they have also set up points of sale in nearby villages.

Demand for their handmade bread is so high, they had to hire two additional bakers, creating two more jobs for other vulnerable women in their community.

"We had no idea that we would receive such a lot of orders," says Sara, one of the savings group members.

The bakery currently earns \$9 USD per day and profits are split equally between savings group members and the bakers.





The Best Possible Start in Life for Children

Mothers in Afghanistan are busy. Women are responsible for washing, cooking and taking care of small children. In rural areas, almost everything must be done by hand. Although they may want to, mothers don't regularly have time to play with their children. This was Nazifa's story before World Vision started an Early Childhood Development (ECD) space in her community.

"Every morning, when Nazifa and my younger child woke up, [they] would go outside and play," says Najiba, 34, Nazifa's mother. "I was happy as [this meant] I didn't have to hear their complaints."

Armed with traditional experiences, Najiba defaulted to corporal punishment when her children needed correction. Things changed after Nazifa and Najiba participated in the ECD space.

In addition to preparing children for school in areas where school enrolment rates are below the already low national average, the ECD spaces also aim to improve the health, knowledge and skills of caregivers. While their children get ready for formal education, 30 mothers also attend education sessions weekly where they are exposed to topics to help them better care for their children.

Among other things, Najiba learned alternative discipline techniques. "I learned that if I was angry, I should first calm myself. Then, [I should] think of an alternative punishment," she says.

According to a recent evaluation, children who attended ECD sessions were better equipped to start the learning process in formal education.

"The programme prepared my daughter for school," says Najiba. "It also taught her everyday knowledge essential to surviving in today's society such as: manners, the importance of good hygiene, health, feelings, and compassion," says Najiba who is proud that Nazifa, now 8, is one of the top students in her second-grade class.

Washing and Flushing Away the Pains of the Past

Women in blue Burqas walk into the compound of Langer health clinic, many holding the hands of their children. This 20-year-old clinic is the only health facility in the area. It provides healthcare services to the more than 11,000 residents of 30 surrounding communities. Staff here receive an average of 120 patients a day!

Despite the demands for its services, the centre lacked clean water and had only five functioning pit latrines, none of which were suitable for menstruating women or people with disabilities. Without indoor plumbing it was no surprise that men and children practiced open defecation.

According to Goldasta, a midwife with the clinic, “People used the grounds next door as an open-air toilet.” The odour and flies were especially bad during the summer.

“We have always taught people about hygiene... but the clinic [itself] wasn't clean because of the lack of water and toilets,” says Goldasta.

Thanks to support from World Vision, the clinic was able to build toilets suitable for men, women, children and people with disabilities. As a result, people no longer use the grounds for defecation and women don't have to wait in lengthy queues.

World Vision was also able to install a water system inside the clinic compound which provides water for the more than 120 patients and visitors a day.

With water from the tap, staff can wash the floors and toilets any time they get dirty. “We were always told to wash our hands after each time visiting a patient,” says Goldasta. “But, to be honest, it wasn't possible. Now, with running water... we can [wash our hands] anytime.”





A farmer in his wheat fields in Badghis province.



Water and Knowledge: Equipping Farmers for Success

“I was born a farmer,” says Aziz, 45. A good work ethic and a strong sense of duty was the inheritance Aziz received from his father.

Aziz worked hard, often from dawn to dusk and under the scorching sun in an effort to provide for his family. But, no matter how hard he tried, his efforts were never enough because his income—like 80 per cent of those living in Badghis province, an especially drought-prone area—depended on the year’s rain and traditional agricultural techniques.

“I was an illiterate farmer,” he says. “I felt bad that I couldn’t provide my children with necessities, such as school supplies.”

Aziz wasn’t the only one struggling to provide for his family. In response to food insecurity issues, World Vision started a project where farmers, like Aziz, learned modern farming methods, received improved seeds and were connected to markets where they could sell their produce at a higher price. Without access to a reliable source of water, however, their hands were still tied.

To address the water infrastructure issues, World Vision worked with families and the community to improve and expand existing irrigation systems. “Through the construction of nine dams, 32 canals, 52 intake dams and nine solar pumping wells... we [were able] to turn 9,000 Jirib (1,800 hectares) into irrigated land,” says Mr. Faraidon Barekzay, World Vision’s Zonal Manager in the Badghis area.

Today, thanks to increased agricultural knowledge and the newly established water canal in Aziz’s village, lands which were previously unplatable due to water shortages and limited knowledge, are now being cultivated.

Not only are the plants flourishing on Aziz’s land, he and his family are as well. “Instead of doing manual labour [in the off season] I planted vegetables like tomato, potato and cereal crops,” he says.

Youth Clubs Restore Hope, Create Dreams for Adolescents in Afghanistan

“Believe in yourself, don’t allow problems to break you,” says Fareshta, a World Vision Counsellor, sitting in a small room surrounded by a group of young girls. Her recommendation is a tall order considering that everyone participating in the event has their own heart-wrenching story to tell.

Once a week, girls and boys between the ages of 12 and 18 gather separately in 25 gender-specific youth clubs where they receive psychosocial counselling.

Among the girls, one stands out. She is captivated by the counsellor’s words; repeating every sentence. Her name is Narmagul. She is 15.

She grew up in Ghor, where violence was common. “I remember the sound of gunshots,” she says. When she was a still young, Narmagul’s father lost one of his legs in a mine explosion. This accident forced her brother to look for higher-paying work in another province—work that never came. He was killed by a suicide attack shortly after leaving Ghor.

With her father unable to work and her brother dead, the burden of providing for the family fell on her mother. Financial pressures caused Narmagul’s father to force her to marry at 13.

“I didn’t want to get married,” she says. “I wanted to go to school to become a doctor.”

Marriage didn’t fix Narmagul’s problems. It only made them worse. “[My husband] was always looking for any small excuse to beat me,” she says. One day, he nearly beat her to death. Her father accepted his error of marrying her off and helped Narmagul get a divorce.

But, Narmagul’s life didn’t return to normal. Even after her divorce, she saw no future for herself.

Things started to change when she joined the youth club. “I forget my problems,” she says. The youth clubs have helped her process her past and focus on her dreams.





Nadir, 10, is thrilled with the new school year.



Students in an Internally Displaced People camp in Herat province.



The Sweet Taste of Fresh Water

Few things are as satisfying as water when you are thirsty. But, if you live where the water is salty, like Suleiman, 14, your thirst might seem eternal.

"It took me almost 4 hours to reach the river," says Suleiman. "I went with my donkey. I tried to go early in the morning... [especially] in the summer."

At the river, Suleiman would fill his barrels alongside his donkey, who was drinking from the same water. "When I was younger, I thought this was a common thing," he explains.

Although Suleiman loved going to school, he often didn't have the energy to walk to school. "I was so tired and [I] couldn't concentrate," he remembers explaining how he also felt pain in his legs and back from the chore of hauling water.

Not only was the water far away and contaminated, it was also salty. As a child, Suleiman was diagnosed with kidney stones and told to drink clean water, an impossible task.

To address the issue of water access and the salinity of the water, World Vision established a solar-powered reverse osmosis water treatment system, which now provides clean drinking water for 4,900 people in the Ab Kamari district.

Because clean water is available closer Suleiman and other children are healthier and have more energy to study. "[I] only walk 20 minutes to collect water from the tap [now]. I have enough time to do my school homework and play with my friends," he says, joyfully.

Not only does Suleiman have more energy, he is also motivated to study. "I don't know how the system works," he says. But, he wants to find out. "I want to be an engineer to make such systems for the villages that have salty water," Suleiman explains.

Our Donors



About World Vision Afghanistan

World Vision has been working in Afghanistan since 2001, when our operations began in response to an emergency. Within a few years, the organisation moved toward rehabilitation and then on to long-term development programming. Since 2011, we have focused our operations in Herat, Ghor and Badghis provinces in the western region of the country, including Bamiyan province. As World Vision, we strive to ensure all children: experience good health; are educated for life; are cared for, protected and participating, and experience the love of God and their neighbours. We are proud to say that we have an excellent reputation among Afghan communities and feel privileged to be widely accepted in the provinces in which we work. We see everything we do as a partnership between us, communities and our donors.





World Vision is a global relief, development and advocacy organisation dedicated to working with children, families and communities to overcome poverty and injustice. World Vision serves all people, regardless of religion, race, ethnicity or gender.

