

PRESS RELEASE

United Nations Development Programme

Afghanistan Country Office, Shah Mehmood Ghazi Watt, Kabul



In commemoration of the World Refugee Day, 20th June 2007

Inauguration of the AliceGhan Project – in support of the reintegration of Afghan returnees and IDPs

Kabul, 20th June 2007 - Following the commemoration of the World Refugee Day today, on 21st June 2007, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) will hold an official on-site inauguration ceremony of the AliceGhan initiative in support of Afghan returnees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs).

The AliceGhan project aims to provide housing and sustainable livelihood support to 1,400 eligible returnees and IDPs with funding of USD 7.3 million from the Government of Australia.

The name "AliceGhan" derives from the combination of "Alice Spring" – a place in Australia which has strong linkage with Afghan migrants to Australia – and "Afghanistan", symbolising the partnership and commitment between these two countries.

"The Australian Government is proud to support the work of the Afghan Government and the United Nations in assisting Afghan refugees and displaced persons to return home. The AliceGhan project is a partnership which will provide housing and sustainable reintegration support for many returnees to Afghanistan and should serve as a model for similar projects elsewhere in Afghanistan in the future" said H.E. Brett Hackett, Ambassador of Australia to Afghanistan.

The target site is Barikab, Qarabagh District in the north of Kabul Province, where the project aims at supporting the construction of 1,400 earthquake resistant houses in addition to provision of basic infrastructure and livelihood support. It is one of a number of plots allocated by the Government of Afghanistan to accommodate returned refugees and IDPs across the country. Beneficiary participation, building of sustainable community and the creation of a replicable model for the future returnee/ IDP settlement construction are the principles that guide the implementation.

AliceGhan is directly implemented by UNDP in close partnership with the Ministry of Refugees and Repatriations, the Ministry of Urban Development and Kabul Governor's Office who play a lead role in the planning process. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT) also provided support and advice during the project formulation and implementation stages.

AliceGhan aims to support community-built mud brick housing based on labour intensive construction methods – upon the principle of maximum good for a maximum number of beneficiaries. Beneficiaries will be selected by the project's Beneficiary Selection Committee, with priority given to female headed households, the disabled, the vulnerable and highly impoverished families. They will be provided with housing construction materials to build their own houses and necessary training, skills and oversight from the project. Deep wells, access roads, community centre, clinic and school are part of the site plan, designed by the Ministry of Urban Development.



H.E. Minister Pashtun of MoUD, MoUD staff and UNDP team examines the AliceGhan site plan out in the field. (May 2007)

The on-site inauguration is scheduled on 21st June 2007 at the Barikab site, and the construction of wells and a carpentry workshop will follow immediately. Media persons interested to participate in this event can contact the project focal points.

Should you require more information about this press release, please contact:

Saroj K. Basynet
AliceGhan Project Manager
tel: 0797-720-986,
saroj.basnyet@undp.org,

Abdul Rahman Ulfat
National Community Relations Coordinator
tel: 0799-334-911
ulfat.abdulrahman@undp.org