



A history of struggle moving towards a future of hope.

Afghanaid supporters are crucial to an increasingly important mission.

Whilst we have been involved in Afghanistan since 1981, this year marks 25 years of Afghanaid working as a UK registered charity in Afghanistan. We have outlasted Soviet occupation, civil wars and the Taliban regime and are weathering the current instability.

Should we be celebrating? To be just as needed now as we were in 1983 does not seem a cause for congratulation but there is pride to be drawn from never having abandoned a place described by its own President as 'an unlucky country.'

Achieving this milestone proves that as long as Afghanaid can benefit Afghanistan we will strive to support its people and commit to build a secure, stable and prosperous country. The presence of more than 40,000 international troops in Afghanistan shows the global importance of this aim.

In 1983 we were providing emergency relief assistance inside

25 YEARS

Afghanistan and running a fleet of ambulances across the border into Pakistan.

In the past quarter of a century we've added engineering, agriculture, animal husbandry, community infrastructure, vocational training for women, health education, child development and micro-finance to our work.

Now, among other projects, Afghanaid helps farmers turn away from growing the poppies

which produce an estimated 97 per cent of the UK's opium by training them to produce alternative crops. We help a nation of women rendered all but invisible by the Taliban to assert their rights and set up their own businesses. We are giving children back their childhood through basic education and the chance to play sport.

We make but two requests of you: give your money and your time. This year we will be launching a series of appeals and public donations which are a vital source of funding for a country where there are always fresh pleas from communities for our help.

We are also seeking to recruit a network of volunteers up and down the UK to give talks, stage fundraising events and help to recruit more supporters.

Information on both forms of support is on the last page of this newsletter. As we set course for our next 25 years please join us

AFGHANAID 20

March

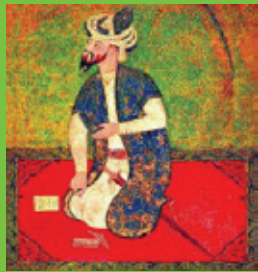
April

May

June

July

**Celebrate Babur's
525th Birthday**



Babur restaurant is hosting a festival of Afghan cooking from 1-18 March. £1 from every Afghan meal purchased will be donated to Afghanaid.

Babur
119 Brockley Rise,
Honor Oak Park SE23
020 8291 2400
www.babur.info

**Flora London
Marathon Team
2008**



Afghanaid has 15 dedicated individuals (see their smiling faces above) taking on the challenge of running a 26.2 mile race and raising £18,000 for Afghanaid.

Volunteer your time and help us to cheer them on - **13 April**.
Call 0207 065 0825

Evening in Brighton
with Bijan Omrani and Bill Woodburn, the author and photographer, of *Afghanistan: A Companion and Guide*.



Join us on the **8th of May** for a lively book discussion and photography presentation followed by live Afghan music. Contact Afghanaid for more details 020 7065 0825.



Lend a hand to Afghanaid this summer.

Volunteering your time is a great way to meet new people, learn more about Afghanaid and help us to raise awareness and funds to support our work in Afghanistan.

**Human Rights
Watch International
Film Festival and
Afghanaid present**

'Buddha Collapsed
Out of Shame'
by Hana Makhmalbaf
(UK Premiere)

Set in the Afghan province
of Bamiyan.
20 March (Ritzy, Brixton)
<http://hrw.org/iff/>

Edinburgh Marathon



Raise funds for Afghanaid by running a full marathon or get a team of 4 and run 6.5 miles each!

China Bike Ride
(7-18 May)

**Afghanaid Limited
Edition T-Shirt**

**Coin Street Festival and
Refugee Week**

Recommended readings for 2008 from Afghanaid...

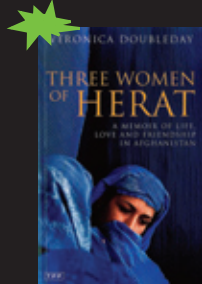
Available from Afghanaid Shop.

The Swallows of Kabul
by Yasmina Khadra



A slim volume, this book is beautifully written. The imagined descriptions of Kabul - the author has never actually been to Afghanistan - are incredibly evocative. By concentrating on the stories of three main characters, Khadra illustrates the devastating effects of war and the Taliban rule on the lives of individuals.

Three Women of Herat
by Veronica Doubleday



A fascinating read about ordinary life in Afghanistan before the Russian invasion. The author journeys through three friendships telling their stories and illuminating the intricacies of the Afghan female culture. This book reminds the reader of the power and strength of female friendships.

An Unexpected Light
by Jason Elliott



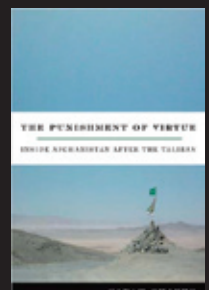
This book is distinct from the many travel books in which the author portrays himself heroically discovering new lands. Instead, it offers a humble and genuine insight into Afghanistan and its wondrous people and landscape.

**The Fragmentation of
Afghanistan**
by R. Rubin Barnett



A detailed account of historical events in Afghanistan during the last three decades. Its unique look into the structures of Afghan society is rare and extremely useful for understanding Afghanistan. A serious book for the serious readers.

Punishment of Virtue
by Sarah Chayes



Through the analytic eye of an American journalist, the author traces the rise of Afghanistan through the perceived epi-centre, Kandahar, highlighting the disquieting failures and contradictions of foreign policy in the global mission to build a democratic, Afghan nation-state.

08

CALENDAR

August

September

October

November

December

Bristol Kite Festival (30 & 31 Aug)

Afghanaid will be holding kite running demonstrations and kite making workshops at this year's festival.



Kite making has a long tradition both as a sport and source of income in Afghanistan. Outlawed by the Taliban, kite flying and fighting has once again taken flight in Afghan society.

Afghanaid Green Tea Morning

Encourage friends, family and co-workers to organise Green Tea Mornings.

Find out how you can host a Green Tea Morning and get a Green Tea Morning kit by emailing amanda@afghanaid.org.uk or calling 020 7065 0825.



Afghanaid Comedy Night

Join us for a night of laughs as some of the biggest talents in comedy take to the stage. More details will be available on our website www.afghanaid.org.uk later in the year.



London to Paris Bike Ride
(10-14 Sept)

Peru Trek
(11-21 Sept)

Berlin Marathon
(28 Sept)

China Trek
(4-13 Oct)

Chicago Marathon
(7 Oct)

Kilimanjaro Trek
(17-26 Oct)

Peru Trek
(23 Oct - 2 Nov)

New York City Marathon
(2 Nov)

Vietnam Cycle
(4-16 Nov)

MELA Festival

Innocent Village Fete

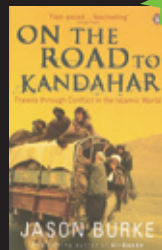
World Fair

The Kite Runner by Khaled Hosseini (signed by the author)



A coming-of-age novel set amidst the political turmoil of Afghanistan. This book tells the story of the friendship between two Afghan boys and in doing so, enlightens readers with interesting facts about Afghan society, culture and history.

On The Road to Kandahar by Jason Burke



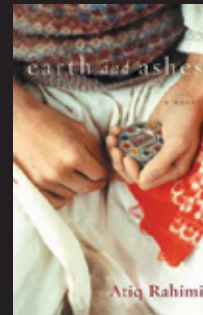
Jason Burke, an Afghanaid supporter, takes his readers on a personal and political journey through Afghanistan and the other countries of the 'Islamic world'. Reviewing every quadrant of Islam, he draws out the significant differences between the region's various Muslim communities and challenges Western misconceptions.

The Taliban by Peter Marsden



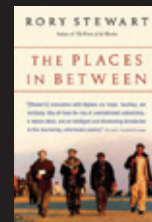
This book captures the author's unrivaled knowledge of Afghanistan, its politics and its people. One amazing chapter sweeps through 9,000 years of history, while others provide a rich analysis of the Taliban's arrival. This book deserves a place on the bookshelf of anyone seeking to understand why Afghanistan remains pivotal in world politics.

Earth and Ashes by Atiq Rahimi



This novella describes Afghanistan's long history of conflict through the experiences of three generations. It shows how the grief and trauma of war can effect the behaviour of individuals, which in turn can lead to much larger political repercussions.

The Place In Between by Rory Stewart



This book tells the true story of Stewart's solo walk across Afghanistan in 2002. Traveling on foot from Herat to Kabul, via the mountains of Ghor, a province Afghanaid works in, Stewart encounters tribal elders and teenage soliders, Taliban commanders and foreign aid workers. He offers an intimate glimpse of the ideologies and traditions of Afghanistan.

HAPPY MOTHERS DAY? NOT IN AFGHANISTAN

When you celebrated Mothers' Day or International Women's Day this March, did you spare a thought for Afghanistan, where a woman will die in childbirth every 28 minutes?

For every mother who dies giving birth in the UK, 174 will die in Afghanistan. Last year, Badakhshan, one of the provinces where Afghanaid works, earned itself the unwelcome distinction of having the world's highest maternal mortality rate.

Badakhshan sits in the furthest North-eastern part of the country, sharing a border with China. This province is remote and has extreme terrain which, compounded by a severe lack of roads and transport, means that many medical emergencies can never receive help.

It is not just harsh geography and a lack of infrastructure that causes such extreme death rates; a poor diet and social norms

that discriminate against women are also responsible.

Approximately 40 per cent of girls in Badakhshan are married before the age of 15, and some when no more than seven. The bodies of many women and girls are stunted by years of semi-starvation.



A newborn baby who made it to the health clinic.

It is no wonder then that many will die in labour, their bodies not mature or fit enough to deal with childbirth. For every woman or girl who dies, 20 or more are injured or disabled.

How Afghanaid Improves Maternal Health and Saves Lives



Child Rights: In our child peer groups for boys and girls aged eight to 18 issues of forced and early marriages are discussed. Children are then able to educate their peers and parents as to the dangers of early marriage.

Nutrition: To date we have built 375 kitchen gardens and established 122 private orchards providing women with the tools and expertise to grow their own herbs, fruits and vegetables, making a significant impact on the nutritional health of those women and their families.

This March when you think about women in your lives past and present, keep in mind those Afghan women whose daily struggle is unimaginable to us. Please make a donation to help us support these women and girls.

Infrastructure: To date Afghanaid has built or rehabilitated 1650 km of road creating vital links and connecting communities through some of the toughest terrain on the planet. We also build many retaining walls to stop roads washing away in spring floods.

Women's Health: Our basic health workers are volunteers based in villages who help educate their peers in basic health issues like good hygiene and sanitation. Health educators also teach at our Women's Resource Centres.

LEND A HAND TO AFGHANAID

We need your time, skills and enthusiasm. Every contribution is valuable whether it is helping to run a stall at a festival, giving a talk at a local school or hosting a fundraising green tea morning for your friends.

This year we're planning to be in Brighton, Bristol, Edinburgh and London as we widen the range of our fundraising efforts.

We would welcome any other ideas for events anywhere in the UK and will help wherever possible with publicity material or speakers. With just five UK staff, we are always in need of extra pairs of hands. You can give your help as a one-off effort when we are in your area or for the long haul.

It is just as valuable to give your time as your money so contact Amanda Curley on amanda@afghanaid.org.uk or 020 7065 0828 to become involved.

AFGHANAID NEWS IN BRIEF

London moves to Afghan beat

Afghanaid and Afghan Students Association held a concert of Afghan music in London, to raise funds and awareness and celebrate Eid, the Muslim holiday marking the end of Ramadan. London-based Afghan pop singer Sattar Sahill and classical tabla player Yusuf Mamoud performed in front of an appreciative audience, with many people dancing in the traditional Afghan style. Ticket sales and a stall selling Afghanaid goods raised nearly £1000.

New stock for Afghanaid shop

We're currently planning the products for our online shop to expand the range of goods we stock and appeal to all budgets. In April, London Office members will be traveling to Afghanistan and are planning to bring back designs and artwork from our children's programmes for t-shirts and mugs. If there's anything you'd like to see us selling then contact Amanda at amanda@afghanaid.org.uk

Raise funds by recycling

By recycling your phone and printer cartridges you can both raise funds for Afghanaid and be green. It costs you nothing. You receive pre-paid and addressed envelopes to send to Recycle4Charity and Afghanaid gets £1 for every cartridge and half the retail value of a mobile phone. Businesses who deal in larger amounts can get a bin and Recycle4Charity will collect it for free. There's a link at www.afghanaid.org or call us and we'll send you some envelopes.

Afghanaid volunteer at a summer festival

