Three decades of war and disorder have caused widespread destruction of public institutions and facilities in Afghanistan. The situation may well deteriorate further.

**HOW OXFAM IS HELPING**

Oxfam first provided support to projects in Afghanistan in 1964, and has been directly providing humanitarian and development assistance in the country since 1991, including during Taliban rule.

We work in seven provinces – directly through our staff in two provinces, and through our partners in the others. We aim to:

- help people sustain good livelihoods
- reduce the impact of crises and disasters
- empower women and girls socially and economically

**IN NUMBERS**

- 300,000 total people helped
- 45,000 helped with livelihoods

**GENDER EQUALITY**

We promote gender equality in every aspect of our work, and try to ensure that women and men benefit equally from it. Our focus is three-fold:

- ensuring women have a right to basic services such as health, education and economic opportunities
- ensuring women have access to justice and ending violence against them
- ensuring women have greater representation and leadership in public and private spheres of life.

*Direct beneficiary figures for the period 2010-11*
Since 2001 we’ve run rural development and water and sanitation projects in the southern provinces of Kabul and Kandahar. We have:

- extended the water distribution network
- built sanitation facilities
- provided vocational training to women
- trained local authority personnel

“We used to get water from about an hour away. We had to make a lot of trips each day. Now, it’s so much easier.”

Mala, Samar village

Collecting water (some days up to 15 times a day) is a chore for Afghan women and children. Oxfam has been helping improve families’ access to water by installing tapstands and water piping.

We want policy changes to reduce poverty and promote rural development, reconstruction and stability. We want to see:

- a greater focus on women’s rights, security and protection
- greater support for peace-building at the local level
- increased support for agriculture
- greater international assistance to the country
- greater transparency and accountability within government
- better protection and support for civilians, people forced from their homes, and refugees – all of whom are at risk every day because of the country’s insecurity and the ongoing military operations.

Children read their school books in class. In 2008, Oxfam worked with local people to build the village school at Razak, in Shar-i-Buzurg. The school is now run by the Ministry of Education.

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