



Human Concern News

THE PHOENIX WILL RISE

BY: KALEEM AKHTAR

On my recent trip to Afghanistan, I traveled by land on the unfriendly mountain passes from Pakistan to Jalalabad and Kabul, on roads that defy description. It is unnerving to travel in a land that is littered with 10 million mines, and shiny yellow cluster bombs that rained down during the recent war on Afghanistan. 30% of these bombs remain on the ground ready to maim and kill.

War ravaged Afghanistan for more than a quarter century. Whole infrastructure is destroyed leaving a chronic shortage of everything. Six years of the worst droughts of the century compounded the agony of a devastated nation.

Deceitfully, all appears calm in Afghanistan. In reality, however, Afghanistan remains volatile and frightening. Heavy presence of the American army and ISAF personnel is visible in Kabul. You see them in their caoties, tanks and armored vehicles and jets. Unmanned surveillance planes circle the city. Let us not forget the many Canadian soldiers who are also there, risking life and limb for the peacekeeping efforts.

Miles and miles of graveyards bear witness to the tragedy of Afghanistan. Two million people, mainly men, perished

in the fighting, leaving tens of thousands of widows and hundreds of thousands of orphans behind. The internal displacement continues because of the returnees from Pakistan and Iran. No reconstruction has yet taken place and probability for development projects is distant.



Afghans displaced in their own country

I met people living in the ruins of the capital. Children of the returnees from Iran and Pakistan that were born in exile playing amidst the ruins of their parents old homes. Many Afghans, who were refugees in Pakistan, are lamenting their decision to move to Kabul where, once again, they have become displaced. Warlords still control major parts of the country. No force can overthrow them. Without their involvement, no government would succeed.

Still, Kabul is home to 2.5 million Afghans and appeared alive, bustling with cars and land cruisers, buses and people, rush hours and traffic jams. Many other Afghans from the diaspora have gone to Afghanistan to take part in the much needed rehabilitation and reconstruction projects.

Despite of all the problems, there certainly are improvements made in Afghanistan. Millions of children are back to school. The loya jirga (the traditional consultative body of Afghan elders) met again to decide about forming a civilian government and approved a constitution that guarantees women their rights. Unfortunately, due to lack of security, elections have been postponed.

Auspiciously, 8 billion dollars have been earmarked for the development of Afghanistan by donor countries and aid agencies.

HCI has been working in Afghanistan for more than two decades and continues to provide relief to the needy while focusing on long term development projects. Funds are required to continue our work to help Afghanistan rise like the Phoenix from the ashes of war to meet its glorious future.

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Charity Does Not Decrease Wealth...

Please Give Generously

AFGHANISTAN

HCI Maintains its Commitment to Afghans for Better Life

Primary School in Narang



Education for girls in Afghanistan

HCI's Afghanistan office completed construction of a primary school for girls with a capacity of 160 students. This project was jointly funded by World Food Program (WFP) and HCI. Project budget was \$48,800.



Building Schools, Building Futures

Construction of Water Wells



Children waiting for water

In Kunar Khas, HCI with UNICEF's help built deep wells for nine schools. They also provided 10 schools with sixty latrines. Project budget was \$57,500.



Another water project in Afghanistan

Food for Work

HCI, in cooperation with World Food Program (WFP), continues this unique program where laborers for a road construction are paid with food increasing the rewards of development programs. In the District Watapur, Kunar 15 000 families benefited from the construction of 11 KM road to in their village. In addition, 470 laborer were given employment. Total project budget was \$98,800.



Building Roads: laborers hard at work

Volunteers needed

HCI is currently looking for enthusiastic individuals to work as volunteers. If you are interested in helping, please call us at (613) 742-5948
Toll Free: 1-800-587-6424

DJIBOUTI

Assistance Provided to the Victims of Torrential Rains and Flash Floods

The recent flash flood following the torrential rains in the tiny Horn of Africa country Djibouti was the worst in recent memory. The torrential rains burst open the Ambuli river banks. It devastated the capital as well as outlying areas. Farmers living along the riverbank lost all their crop. In addition there was extensive damage to the infrastructure. Houses were destroyed, hundreds died and the lives of 100,000 people were affected.

HCI immediately mobilized all its resources to help the victims. Contacts were established with the Djibouti Canadian Center. Special appeals were made, flyers were distributed, and announcements at various centers were

made encouraging people to donate for the victims.

A fundraising program was held in Ottawa on May 1, 2004. All proceeds were utilized for the procurement of more than half a million dollar medical aid package. This aid package will help combat various diseases such as diarrhea, cholera and malaria, which became rampant due to the water contamination. It will also help alleviate the malnourishment and other sicknesses.

HCI hopes that, given availability of fund, it can build other projects such as schools, health centers and initiate family livelihood projects. HCI appeals to you to donate generously for these projects.



An HCI school project in Africa



HCI water project in Africa

Outreach Programs to Help the Sick and Malnourished

Recently a massive medical aid package worth over \$ 400,000 was sent to Guyana. Medicines have been distributed to the outlying hospitals and health centers through the Government Pharmacy Bond, and through community outreach programs.

HCI Guyana conducted thirteen outreach programs and was able to connect with various communities.



Medicines distribution

HCI Guyana is involved in other community based programs such as the

provision of food hampers to the needy, meat for food project as well as a child sponsorship program to care for the basic needs of the children.



Community outreach program

INDIA

Update on Rehabilitation & Reconstruction Project for Earthquake Victims

HCI executive director traveled to India on a monitoring visit of the earthquake rehabilitation project for South Asia Partnership India.

This project was supported by several Canadian NGOs, including HCI, which SAP Canada brought together in a cooperative effort to assist some of the victims of the disaster in Gujarat. HCI alone had provided \$100,000 for this project.

The monitoring mission involved visits to livelihood reconstruction and water harvesting projects in Bhujodi, Dhaneti, Padhar and Gajavandh.

The members of the ten occupation based self-help groups formed for promoting and undertaking micro-credit and micro-entrepreneurship development efforts were all women from the less privileged communities belonging to Rabari and Harijans. Health and hygiene education programs with focus on mother and child, training program on micro credit entrepreneurship development and literacy program also formed part of this project.

HCI executive director also met with a number of beneficiaries who conveyed their satisfaction with the project; sewing machines, related training and credit programs.

Opportunity was availed to visit the beneficiary victims of communal violence, and other HCI projects in Gujarat, particularly the medical project in Dhrub.



Success story: from a bull and cart to owning a house

IRAN

Helping to Recover from a Devastating Earthquake

On December 26, 2003, the most lethal earthquake of the past decade struck the city of Bam and its surrounding villages in Kerman province causing heavy death toll, massive displacement and heart-wrenching devastation.

HCI, with the generous help from the Iranian embassy in Ottawa, airlifted a more than 600,000 dollar worth of medical aid package to Bam helping thousands of the injured, sick and malnourished.

Later, HCI Pakistan regional office director, Ali Nawaz, visited the effected area to evaluate the distribution of the medical aid package. He reported that HCI has successfully completed its Emergency Relief Phase with its medical aid package.

As the next phase, HCI decided to proceed with the construction of a prefabricated weather and earthquake resistant clinic which is urgently needed to ensure timely and efficient care for the people of Bam.

HCI executive director, who was visiting Pakistan, included Bam in his trip to finalize the construction of this medical project. The clinic will cost approximately \$90,000 to build and will include reception, OPD rooms, ward, casualty room, laboratory, x-ray room, Pharmacy and store and rest room. The project can be extended if more funds are received by HCI.

IRAQ

Medical Aid Package Successfully and Safely Delivered to Falujah

HCI cooperated with its partner the Near East Foundation (NEF) in Jordan to deliver the second medical aid package to the people of Iraq. The wholesale value of this package was \$ 627,525.



HCI continues to send aid to Iraq

The delivery reached its target group through the efforts of HCI/NEF volunteers Mr. Younis Suleiman Ali and Mr. Khalid Banat from NEF Jordan Staff.



Medical packages for needy Iraqis

The aid package was cleared through the customs at Aqaba port which has become seriously overloaded because of the Iraqi war. It was taken to Falujah and stored, as a safe and secure distribution area, at the Jordanian Military Field Hospital in Falujah.



Doctors from beneficiary hospital

Since 1991, HCI has been providing Iraqis with bottled water, water purification units, medicines, food items, and implementing micro enterprise projects. Ever since the recent war erupted, HCI's total aid package is in the tune of \$1.2 million.

LEBANON

Meeting the Challenges of the Physically Challenged

HCI, together with its partners, NEF and the Lebanese National Association for Rehabilitation of the Disabled (NARD), has developed an innovative approach "Disability Job Match" involving the Internet as a resource for information and exchange. The process of promoting this new program will raise awareness and educate the disabled, their families and friends, potential employers, and service providers. In addition the program will provide disability related information and education to countless others, including employers and the community at large.

The program has been developed and a pilot conducted. What remains is to actively promote the program to attract significant numbers of individual job seekers and employers. The project can expect to reach an estimated 1,500 adults per year beginning its second year - with at least one-half of these contacts resulting in either part-time or full time employment. Proven effective, there are opportunities for expansion across the Middle East. The budget for this project is \$ 55,000.



Beyond challenges: creating a job bank

Facilitating Access to Credit

HCI and NEF have completed the first phase of a project designed to facilitate access to credit for low-income earners and those with disabilities. Phase One mobilized grant funds amounting to US \$180,000 (including US \$130,000 raised in Lebanon) for loan capital and provided over 250 loans. At the end of this phase, seed capital was transferred to the five participating local NGOs, which assumed responsibility for their own lending operations.

The second phase of the project has begun. It involves working with two of the five NGOs to form larger, more formal micro-finance institutions (MFIs). These MFIs will make loans directly to low-income individuals and will also provide additional loan capital obtained from commercial banks to the three smaller NGOs, and ultimately to an additional seven NGOs in rural areas.

With limited funding and creative financial management, the project is capable of

creating a significant resource for helping poor and low-income families to improve their economic and social situation.



A new future through personal business

Skill Training and Micro Lending for Micro-enterprise Scheme

During his recent trip to Pakistan, HCI executive director visited a unique skill training micro-enterprise and micro lending project that has been successfully launched by HCI in Lahore. Initially this project was established in a small facility but due to the popular demand from the community to enlarge the project and provide training to more girls, it has been shifted to a new, larger facility.

The training in different trades; embroidery, dress designing, tailoring, etc., will provide the trainees with possibility of self-development and self-reliance. It will enhance the skills of the trainees and provide them with the technical skills necessary for managing and operating their own businesses.



Training in the traditional arts

After the completion of the training, the candidates will be provided with the opportunity of getting micro-loans and will be helped in setting up their own small businesses. This will certainly help bring economic benefits to the graduates and their families.

This project will have far-reaching effects on a community which is very poor and lives under sub-standard socio-economic levels. More activities, such as the literacy program, word processing and other computer programs have recently been added to this project.

Women Empowerment - an Extra-ordinary Project

HCI supports the Lahore based Ladies Club Model Town, Industrial Home and "Behood Centre" which has been working since 1938. The Club is well known and highly respected due to the philanthropic effort of its dedicated members who manage it as a welfare institute providing multi-purpose services to a society at large.

3 volunteer lady doctors, a nurse, a traditional birth attendant, and a pharmacist provide free medical assistance and diagnostic tests. Many patients are being helped on a daily basis. A dispensary covers medicines at no cost. HCI helps by sending medicines whenever possible.

The center operates a host of other projects and programs which include computer literacy program, display center, and a tailor shop. It provides traditional education, and social and community education of the women. As well as, English and fine arts classes.

A day care center provides exclusive service to working women at very minimal charges. Its social welfare programs help the needy and the disabled.

The center also includes an industrial home which imparts vocational training to girls in dressmaking, crafts and skills, fabric painting, cooking, and language classes. A Beauty Parlor is training girls as beauticians to earn their livelihood.

The center direly needs a testing lab that includes an ultra-sound machine, ECG machine, Blood and pathology testing equipment. \$10,000 are immediately required to furbish this lab.

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Plan Your Charity on a Monthly Basis
 Our Pre-authorized Payment Plan (PAP) is designed to provide an affordable means for donors to support the continuation of HCI's programs and projects. A designated monthly contribution of your choice is automatically transferred from your account into HCI's account. This program is the heart of HCI's financial system since it provides a secure ongoing base of funding while minimizing administration costs. Take advantage of the form on page 8 to make your Pre-Authorized Payment Pledge today.

PALESTINE

HCI in the West Bank and Gaza

Environmental Action Project (EAP):

Current HCI/Near East Foundation involvement in the West Bank centers around five villages north of Nablus. These villages with a total population of over 25,000 people are: Yasid, Bathan, Talluza, Beit Imrin, and Asira al Shamaliya.

The two organizations are cooperating in an Environmental Action Project (EAP) to address one of the West Bank's most serious problems, solid waste disposal. Working with village councils, schools, local associations, universities and youth organizations, to establish a model for a sustainable solid waste collection and recycling process for the area. The preparation of a dumping site is well underway, and a variety of public awareness and educational campaigns have been conducted. These have significantly increased community awareness, promoted greater local participation, and helped to establish a sense of ownership over project activities.



Cleaning for a better future

Future EAP activities will involve the establishment of a practical system of garbage collection and sorting at the household level, provide for timely transfer of sorted garbage to the project dumpsite, help to identify viable markets for recycled products, and establish a systematic process for separation and sorting of garbage to the demands of businesses for recyclables. EAP provides jobs, improves environmental sanitation, increases health status, encourages voluntarism, helps to develop local leadership, and instills good project management skills. Total project budget is approximately \$ 1 million.



Cooperating with international and local organizations for a cleaner environment



Preparing a garbage dumping site

Let There Be Light and Water Too: HCI/NEF have just completed the "Let There be Light and Water Too" project in the West Bank which restored water and electricity services to 3, 500 individuals, and 200 small businesses in five communities located in a cluster north of Nablus. The budget for this project was \$80,000.

As conditions in Gaza become clearer and begin to settle, HCI/NEF are exploring possibilities for future partnerships internationally and locally with organizations in Gaza.



Making a difference in Gaza

Nurturing a Child, Nourishing a Nation:

HCI/NEF continue supporting this unique project that help primary school children suffering from acute malnutrition or inadequate nutrition by providing dairy supplement. To complement this project, HCI is planning to initiate a milk production project to help rural families of 100 farmers to purchase sheep and cows for milk and dairy product manufacturing. It is one practical way to enhance family income and increase nutritional status during this very difficult period. Such activities are particularly relevant for women, girls, and youth who frequently remain close to the home. HCI plans to establish a revolving "fund" of live animals that will allow needy families to buildup small herds and to repay these in the form of young animals. These will then be redistributed to other needy families.



HCI's Nutrition Supplement Project

Not only will this project meet immediate needs for increasing family incomes and nutritional supplements but will also help to reinforce and later maintain the revival of a local dairy industry. It can also pave the way for later involvement with local businesses and agencies specialized in the field of animal husbandry and dairy production.



Primary school children receiving their dairy supplement

Helping the Victims of Strife in Dafur State

Sudan is once again in the limelight. The ongoing internal war and telling poverty continue to plague this country. The new crisis emerged in Dafur State where more than a million people were forced to flee their homes due to the conflict between different factions. This conflict has already claimed many lives.

The victims fled to neighboring Chad, a vast and dissolute place, to seek refuge. Many have also become internally

displaced in many other areas within Sudan.

HCI was approached by its partner to immediately provide help to these victims who need clothing, shelter, food and medicine. HCI has been able to ship a container load of medicines and supplies to help the sick, the injured and the malnourished. This 600,000 dollar aid package will help thousands of victims in several health centers and community health

clinics that are hastily set up in various refugee camps.

HCI's help to war-torn Sudan is substantial and continual. It involves supporting various basic needs projects. Help is also provided to 260 children through child sponsorship program and to several physically and mentally challenged children. \$75,000 was channeled for these programs.

ON THE HOME FRONT

Public Education and Awareness Raising Programs

In the past few months, HCI conducted several public education and awareness raising programs in many cities across Canada to educate Canadian publics on the crises that face the people in many poor and strife-torn countries. Another objective was to raise their awareness about the dire needs of the victims.

Five such programs also included fundraising events in Mississauga, Hamilton, Ottawa and Montreal to help the victims of earthquake in Bam, flood victims in Djibouti, war victims in Iraq and the victims of strife in Palestine. Funds raised were utilized for HCI projects and programs in these countries.

Human Concern News - Feedback
We are constantly upgrading our newsletter. Our newsletter is intended to update donors, volunteers and interested parties on HCI's activities.

We want to hear from you. Tell us what it is that you like, or dislike. What do you want to see in later issues? We would like to know.

HCI's Aid Packages: Providing Medical Aid to the Needy

HCI and Health Partners International of Canada (HPIC) have been working in partnership to provide much needed medical aid for the needy, hurting and malnourished people of this world.

Over the years, HCI and HPIC have worked closely to provide medical aid to millions of people throughout the world. These efforts saw many thousands of people getting relief from a variety of ailments. The medical aid packages include medicines to treat high blood pressure, arthritis, allergies and ulcers, as well as other medications such as painkillers, antibiotics, anti-viral, antacids, vitamins,

cancer treatment, cough syrup and much more.

HCI, together with HPIC, has been able to bring a great deal of hope to people in need throughout the world in countries such as Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Guyana, Trinidad, Iraq, Pakistan, Sierra Leone and Sudan, to name but a few.

Our partnership is truly affecting the lives of millions of people. In this fiscal year alone, HCI safely and effectively distributed close to three and a half million dollars (wholesale) in medical aid to many countries.



One of many lifesaving medical packages



A Child Needs You...

As wars and violence continue to plague our world, children continue being the innocent victims of atrocities. They are orphaned and displaced. Innocent children who only know a life of deprivation...no education...no food...no home...no future.

Open your heart and let a child in! A child's precious life can be changed with a mere \$1/day. Please skip the coffee and sponsor a child now! Fill out the form on page 8!



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*Please feel free to
call your local
representative*

Development Projects

Rehabilitation and reconstruction projects help those in need rebuild their lives independently rather than relying on outside assistance. HCI's development projects are geared towards achieving this objective. They promote self-reliance. Please support our projects with a generous contribution.

- Agriculture/Water Human Resource Development
 Education Micro-enterprise
 Health Care Emergency Relief Assistance

Child Sponsorship Program

Millions of children die each year from preventable diseases, famine, and war. HCI's Child Sponsorship Program provides continual financial assistance for medical, educational and basic needs of children.

- Afghanistan Guyana Somalia
 Bangladesh India Sudan
 Bosnia Pakistan
 Palestine: HCI operates a school sponsorship program

I would like to give:

- Monthly Quarterly
 Semi-Annually Annually

Bosnia & Palestine School : \$60 monthly
Others: \$30 monthly

HCI is a non-profit organization, dedicated to help "alleviate human suffering" through sustainable development projects and emergency relief assistance programs that foster self-reliance and preserve human dignity.
Charitable Registration :
107497125RR0001

Yes! I Will Support HCI Projects and Programs

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