

# **LITHUANIA – AFGHANISTAN**

## **Cooperation for Security, Reconstruction and Development**

Since 2005, Lithuania has been leading a Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) of Ghor Province in Afghanistan. Our main objective is to help Afghanistan become a secure, democratic and self-sufficient state. The importance Lithuania attaches to the success of the UN-mandated ISAF operation and to working with the international community in Afghanistan motivates our involvement.

Lithuania re-established diplomatic relations with Afghanistan in March 2005. Shortly thereafter, Lithuania established a Special Mission in Afghanistan, which expanded its presence in the capital city of Kabul. Lithuania's efforts in strengthening security, good governance and development are primarily focused on, but not limited to Ghor Province in western Afghanistan. A squadron of Special Operation Forces was deployed to southern Afghanistan in 2007. In 2007 Lithuania increased its development assistance budget for Afghanistan up to 2.5 million USD. The central premise of Lithuanian engagement in Afghanistan has been the pursuit of security and development in partnership with the Afghan Government and the people. The reconstruction process will succeed only if the international community and Afghanistan work together.

### **Security and Stability**

- The Lithuanian-led PRT is a multinational and inter-agency effort. Croatian, Danish, Georgian, Ukrainian and United States military and civilian personnel serve alongside 135 Lithuanian military and civilians. Since 2005 over 1200 Lithuanian Armed Forces have been deployed to Afghanistan under the auspices of NATO and Operation Enduring Freedom. Over 10 civilians from the Lithuanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of National Defense and Police Department have played an active role in assisting the Afghan authorities.
- The Lithuanian Parliament has mandated Lithuanian engagement in Afghanistan up to the year 2010.

### **Reconstruction and development**

**Infrastructure, good governance and the rule of law, sustainable development, education, protection of cultural heritage** are the sector where Lithuania has been implementing a number of reconstruction and development projects since 2006.

#### **Infrastructure**

- *Kabul–Chaghcharan– Herat road* project also known as the East-West corridor is a declared priority of the Afghan Government. The road is essential for the isolated province of Ghor and other close regions, as it would increase accessibility to the markets, schools, social and health services. Therefore, Lithuania has started active dialogue with different international donors, such as funds of the Persian Gulf States, and is inviting other members of the international community to contribute to the road infrastructure of Western and Central Afghanistan.
- As for the reconstruction of *Chaghcharan airport* it is highly important to assure that the airport will be good enough to answer needs of PRT as well as to assure a proper economical development of the whole region. This is why Lithuania emphasizes that an insufficient funding of the airport reconstruction, as it is provided in the present moment, can be very harmful for the whole region.

#### **Good Governance and the Rule of Law**

- *Establishment of Civil Service Training Center for Ghor Province in Chaghcharan*: Building sustainable capacity of line ministries and sub-national administration by developing skills of officials to effectively perform their functions and improve service delivery.
- *Afghan National Police (ANP) Capacity Development in the Rural Areas of Ghor Province*: Basic and forensic training of local ANP forces. Establishing a well-organized and professional police force in eight districts that is trained and equipped to provide safety and security for the people of Ghor with minimal international assistance.

- *Support to the Department of National Security:* Providing equipment and basic provisions for strengthening capacity of the Department to fulfill its mandate.
- *Capacity Building for the Department of Women's Affairs:* Supporting capacity building of the Department through education and training and by raising awareness about political participation and role of civil society.
- *Strengthening the Capacity of the Judiciary in Ghor Province:* Increasing operational capacity of justice institutions through the construction of a multipurpose Centre of Justice, Appeals Court and renovation of the current Prosecutor's Office. Also providing specialized training and mentoring courses for prosecutors, judges, law enforcement officers, lawyers and their administrative staff.

### **Sustainable Development**

- *Chaghcharan orphanage and children's centre* designated and engineered by Lithuanian architects will highly reduce the number of Afghan children who lack a proper care and social attention.
- *Children's Vaccination Program:* Vaccinated 10,000 children under 1 year old and 10,000 children under 2 years; 1,000 pregnant women vaccinated.
- *Strengthening Rural Livelihoods through Livestock Services in Ghor:* Training basic veterinary workers and animal husbandry specialists; over 50,000 vaccinations.
- *Assistance to Chaghcharan hospital:* Supplying first aid kits, medical equipment and other technical assistance to the sole regional hospital.
- *Support to pupils from the most vulnerable families:* Providing warm clothes and shoes for children from poverty-stricken families.
- Lithuania financed construction of *micro-hydro power stations* which provide electricity to remote villages.

### **Education**

- *Construction of 19 low-cost durable schools in the Ghor Province:* Improving access to primary school for 6,000 children.
- *Community-based education in remote villages:* Striving to provide basic education to children in remote areas who cannot access formal, government-supported schools. 1500 students enrolled in 1<sup>st</sup> year program, 3000 students in 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4500 in 3<sup>rd</sup>.
- *Assistance to the Department of Education:* Providing school furniture, tents, textbooks, schoolbooks and schoolbags.

### **Protection of Cultural Heritage**

- In 2007 and 2008 Lithuanian archeologists organized expeditions and research studies in the province of Ghor. During the expeditions ancient remains of unknown castles, caves, pottery and other objects were discovered, registered and presented for the Afghan and international society. The expeditions were organized in collaboration with Afghan Ministry of Culture and Youth Affairs and the administration of the province of Ghor.