

Estonia's contribution to rebuilding Afghanistan

The civilian component

Since 2006, Afghanistan has been one of Estonia's priority partner countries for development co-operation. In September 2006, the Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs sent its first diplomat to Afghanistan's Helmand province. In the summer of 2007, the Estonian special mission to Afghanistan moved to Kabul, and in March 2008 an Estonian medical expert from the mission was sent to the Lashkar Gah Provincial Reconstruction Team to focus on the development of the Helmand province's health sector.

In 2008, Estonia's development aid to Afghanistan is three times more than last year, that is currently 255 600 EUR. Estonia's development co-operation projects are focused on Helmand province and Kabul.

- In Helmand, medical equipment with a value of 70,500 EUR was given to the pediatric section provincial hospital (Bost Hospital), in co-operation with the Estonian Red Cross, with the goal of improving the quality of treatment of children and reducing child mortality in the hospital.



Special equipment for the premature babies in Bost Hospital. July 2007.

- In January 2008 Estonia provided financing to cover the cost of the fuel for the power generator of the Bost Hospital for the winter months.

According to the Estonian strategy on development co-operation and humanitarian assistance, special attention shall be paid from 2006-2010 to improving the situation of children and women in developing countries.

In 2008 Estonia will continue to assist the provincial hospital by donating medical equipment necessary to provide comprehensive healthcare services and is considering expanding the project to district hospitals in Helmand province.

- In Kabul, 32,000 EUR was given to help the Afghanistan Centre at Kabul University (ACKU) start the construction of new premises for storing their collection of publications about Afghanistan, which will give better access to these materials to the students and professors of the University.

As important part of the multilateral co-operation Estonia has donated funds respectively:

- a total of 38,400 EUR in voluntary donations to support the UN High Commissioner of Refugees (UNHCR) in 2002 and 2003 in easing the situation of refugees in Afghanistan.
- 42,000 EUR toward the fight against narcotics in Afghanistan. The funds went to the Counter Narcotics Trust Fund (CNTF) in December 2005.
- 32,000 EUR to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in 2007 for the Afghanistan Population and Housing Census project to assist Afghan authorities in conducting the National Census in summer 2008.

Estonia's representatives in Afghanistan

In addition to chargé d'affaires in Kabul and medical expert in Lashkar Gah PRT, 4 more civilian experts from Estonia are working in Afghanistan.

Since March 2007, the Estonian Ministry of Defence has been sending civil experts to the Combined Security Transition Command - Afghanistan (CSTC-A) in order to further the relations between the Afghan Parliament and the Ministry of Defence. Since 2008, Estonian police officer and administrative employee are serving as members of the EU Police Mission to Afghanistan (EUPOL Afghanistan), and an Estonian civil servant on security operations is contributing to the United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan (UNAMA).

Estonian Ambassador to Afghanistan Harri Tiido presented his credentials to President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan Hamid Karzai on 24 March 2008. Ambassador Tiido resides in Tallinn, Estonia.

Estonia's military contribution

Estonia joined the war on terror in Afghanistan in 2002, taking part in the US-led operation "Enduring Freedom". Since 2003, Estonia has taken part in the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan (ISAF). Currently Estonia has 140 troops in Afghanistan, located mainly in the southern province of Helmand together with the armed forces of the United Kingdom and Denmark.

Additional information:

http://www.vm.ee/eng/kat_674/9517.html