

Afghan Action

A brief by Janette O'Sullivan and Trina Jobberns

On the 4th July 2009 we travelled to the district of Karte Se which is on the outskirts of the city of Kabul where Afghan Action is located. As we approached the premises it looked like a regular home, but as we were to find out this was not the case. We were met by Abdullah who is one of the co-founders of Afghan Action.

Immediately we felt his enthusiasm and dedication in helping his people strive for a better way of life. Not by begging or taking hand outs but by teaching valuable life skills that include literacy and the ability to earn an income, helping to secure a better future.

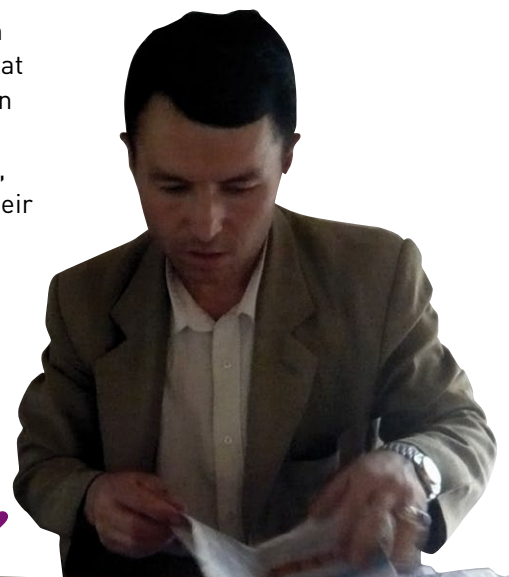
Abdullah whilst showing us around explained that Afghan Action was all about teaching the under privileged how to make traditional handmade carpets, along with equipping the students with useful life skills for their day-to-day lives. These life skills include basic literacy, mathematics and a set of basic business skills for those students who wish to start their own business after completing the carpet making course.

As we proceeded through the front gate we were pleasantly surprised to find a large and well maintained premises. Peering out of some of the windows were the curious faces of the students, wondering who these strange women were, and what they were doing there.

One of the buildings holds the main office with a small medical clinic that is staffed by a part-time nurse. Even though the clinic is under equipped it still provides a significant service, not only to the students, but also their families and the teachers.

Beside the clinic is another room used as a classroom where all students attend compulsory numeracy and literacy lessons. The mastery of these basic skills empowers students to be fully prepared to open their own carpet businesses on completion of the training, should they so wish.

Proceeding to the next building we found ourselves in the food store/ kitchen. The room is a hive of activity and it was amazing to see what can be achieved with the bare minimum cooking equipment, consisting of a couple of bottles of gas and a few pots and pans. The cook was a very energetic man who took great pride in not only his job, but also his workspace, which was kept completely spotless.



A larger building to the left of the kitchen provides the space for all the students to learn and develop their carpet weaving skills. As we went inside we were greeted with shy smiles from all of the students. The group of students is a mixture of age and gender, and includes a disabled boy who was extremely confident, and excited to show us his weaving skills. The carpets are absolutely amazing to look at. We were astounded by the high level of skill and intricacy required to produce such a result. Some of the students had only 3-5 months of experience but the way they moved and the speed of their hands was extraordinary.

The students are selected from a local area in Kabul among the youngsters of the less fortunate families. Prior to being accepted into the program, Afghan Action seeks the opinion of the head of the individual's community to confirm that the candidate is a good person merely trapped in poverty.

As we bid our farewells, the students followed us out to wave their goodbyes. We left with the same enthusiasm as Abdullah and the students, that this project will ensure a brighter future for these under privileged Afghans by giving them unique skills and knowledge that have been passed down through generations.



■ **HAMIDA** is 16 years old. She fled Maidan Wardak Province where they lived in Behsood district after her father was killed in ethnic fighting. At this time her mother decided to leave Behsood for Kabul. Hamida lives in Pole Sokhta with five other members of her family, where they rent a room for US \$20 per month. Her mother works as a cleaner to support the family.

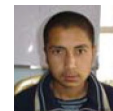
- The Supreme Foundation started its support for Afghan Action in October 2009 by providing food for up to 100 students and staff. Afghan Action has been affected by the global recession and was close to ceasing its activities less than a year ago. The recovery has been slow and the number of students and staff are now at 45. The Supreme Foundation has set an objective to bring Afghan Action back up to 100 students. ■



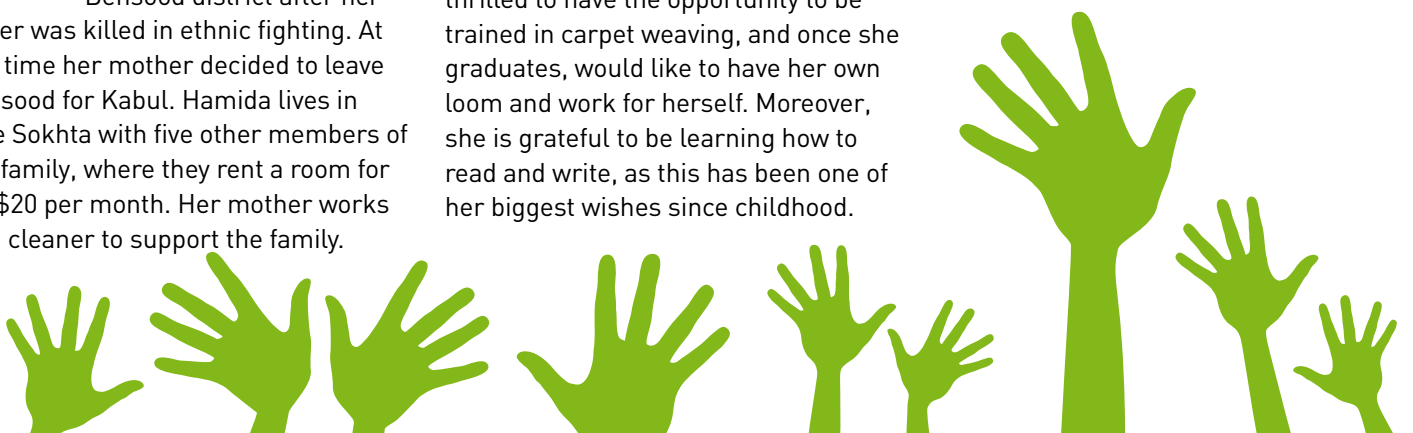
Hamida will be the second bread winner in the family once she graduates from Afghan Action. Her wish is one day to be able to have a loom and weave carpets from home and sell them in the market.



■ **BIBIGUL** is 17 years old from Balkh province in North Afghanistan. Her father was killed in the war and due to drought, her uncle moved them with his family to Kabul. At present her uncle is the only bread winner in the family. He works as a laborer in construction sites as and when he gets a day's work. Bibigul is thrilled to have the opportunity to be trained in carpet weaving, and once she graduates, would like to have her own loom and work for herself. Moreover, she is grateful to be learning how to read and write, as this has been one of her biggest wishes since childhood.



■ **JAFFAR** came to Kabul from Behsood District of Maidan Wardak Province. He was born with learning difficulties and lives with his family. His father sells waste rubber he collects from junk yards around Kabul. Jaffar has been with Afghan Action for over two years now, and may remain a trainee due to his mental disability. Jaffar loves to study and shows dedication and commitment to his school work. He especially appreciates the meals he receives at Afghan Action as he is used to only having only one cooked meal a day.



The Supreme Foundation

The Supreme Foundation was established to relieve communities in hardship in the conflict areas where the Supreme Group operates. Priority is given to programs that advance the wellbeing of children. The Foundation's mission is underpinned by the traditions and values on which the Supreme Group was founded.

The Supreme Foundation focuses its work on children and their future. Projects concentrate on improving the living conditions, wellbeing and education of children who are disadvantaged. Other projects that assist disadvantaged communities will also be considered on their merits as a secondary commitment.

Supreme Group employees, family members and business associates donate their time, resources, energy and ideas to perform volunteer work with the Foundation. Administration of the Foundation remains the responsibility of the board, made up of Supreme employees. Fundraising and charitable projects are handled by project committees overseen by Supreme employees, their family members and external volunteers. ■

Get involved!

The Supreme Foundation would like your support. The Foundation has received a generous start-up donation from the Supreme Group. In addition, the Supreme Group will remain a primary contributor, with a commitment to match every employee donation, dollar for dollar.

But the scope of work that is planned for the Foundation cannot be supported solely by Supreme.

To enable The Supreme Foundation to support a growing number of communities, additional funding is needed. Much of this will come from fundraising events organized by employees, and from external sources.

As a valued associate, the Supreme Group requests your assistance in particular. You can become a corporate sponsor of the Afghan Action Program by either becoming a sponsor for meals or students.

To support the Foundation's work please contact charity@supreme-group.net

Participation Rates to provide a daily lunch for 100 students and staff

One month	US \$2,500
Three months	US \$7,500
Six months	US \$15,000
Twelve months	US \$30,000

Participation Rates for six months of training

One student	US \$600
Three students	US \$1,800
Five students	US \$3,000
Ten students	US \$6,000

In return, you will be provided with:

- the opportunity to be involved in this worthy cause
- the opportunity to directly help students in need and improve their wellbeing.
- the opportunity to promote your participation in the Foundation as part of your organisation's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) agenda
- regular news of the Foundation's projects

