

“Children’s Aid Afghanistan”

Annual Report Christmas 2021

by Annette and Reinhard Erös

Edit. We are pleased to publish the Annual Report 2021 of “Kinderhilfe Afghanistan” (German Aid for Afghan Children). For decades, Dr Reinhard and Annette Erös have been committed to helping the civilian population in Afghanistan. Through their independent and specific work for “Kinderhilfe Afghanistan”, help arrives where it is urgently needed.



Reinhard Erös
(Photo ma)

The year 2021 will go down in the history books of Afghanistan and the NATO countries: after 20 years of war waged by perfectly trained and well-equipped soldiers of the largest military alliance in history, in league with 300,000 Afghan soldiers and police trained by the West,

against a technically and numerically far inferior group of “Islamist holy warriors”, the last Western soldiers retreated in shameful defeat back to their home countries on 15 August. The Afghan army surrendered the capital Kabul to the insurgents without a fight.

In the following days, almost all Western aid organisations also left the country and the people in the Hindu Kush in chaos and misery. At a cost of about 1,300 billion dollars, not only the probably most expensive war in history was lost,



Food distribution November 2021. (Photo ma)

but the attempt to build a democratic state using mainly military means also failed. This defeat is already having an impact on the West’s standing, capabilities and credibility in the world.

President *Ashraf Ghani*, previously a director at the World Bank, who was installed by the USA in 2014, secretly left Kabul with his entourage with a sum of money of about 150 million dollars and has since resided in a feudal hotel in the United Arab Emirates. According to *Transparency International*, he is remembered for the highest corruption rate in the world and an explosive increase in the heroin production. The West has played no small part in both “world records”.

The horror pictures from Kabul airport, where tens of thousands of Afghans desperately tried to flee the country on the last planes, could be

“The West is taking the people of Afghanistan hostage”

The head of “Kinderhilfe Afghanistan” *Reinhard Erös* has raised serious accusations against the Western states: because they no longer support the country financially since the Taliban took power, about one million children would starve there in winter.

Winter has begun in Afghanistan and hundreds of thousands of children are suffering abject poverty, reports Reinhard Erös, founder and director of “Kinderhilfe Afghanistan”, who regularly sees the situation there for himself. There is a lack of food and warm clothing. “If this does not change, [...] then about one million children will starve to death in Afghanistan in winter.”

“This does not have anything to do with the Taliban being in power, but with the fact that the

West is now stopping the money it has poured into Afghanistan for 20 years in order to put pressure on the Taliban to follow our Western ideas once again – and thereby taking the people of Afghanistan – the children and women – more or less hostage in return.”

The right thing to do is to release the frozen foreign accounts – even if this means giving the Taliban a free hand. Because this “hostage-taking”, as Erös calls it, means the death of hundreds of thousands of children and that “is a most serious violation of Western values.”

Source: <https://www.inforadio.de/rubriken/interviews/2021/12/9/-der-westen-nimmt-die-bevoelkerung-afghanistans-als-geisel-.html> from 9 December 2021

followed by the whole world on the screens for days. Since the past few weeks, hundreds of thousands more have been urging to leave the country. And their numbers, heading for Europe, will increase significantly in the coming weeks and months.

Since then, *Kinderhilfe Afghanistan* has been receiving daily enquiries from our donors and friends as to whether and how our projects in the east of the country will continue. We can re-assure you:

The running of our schools and our computer training centres, the lectures at the university and the medical care at our health facilities are carried on undisturbed. Only in the educational institutions some things have changed:

After the end of the summer holidays – from 5 September – the lower and middle school girls are now taught in the morning and the boys in the afternoon – i.e. both separately. The upper classes are currently attended only by boys. In some provinces – especially in the north of the country – the Taliban government has meanwhile already lifted the school ban for girls in the upper classes. We expect this to be implemented throughout the country in the foreseeable future.

In several talks with the new ministers and the governor, we have raised the issue of girls, A-levels and studies and were met with “cautious” approval. At our university, male and female students continue to sit in the same lecture hall, but separated by a curtain.

All our staff go about their daily work undisturbed. After almost twenty years, schoolchildren, teachers and parents can now leave the house, go to school, to the bazaar or to work in the fields without fear of US army helicopters and drones, without panic of street bombs and fighting between Taliban and Afghan security forces.

After two failed harvests, there is a brutal hunger. The *World Health Organisation* (WHO) warns that in winter more than half of the population is at risk of serious and most severe health impairments from nutritional deficiency, malnutrition and undernourishment and expects hundreds of thousands of deaths. Marasmus (lack of protein and fats) and kwashiorkor (hunger oedema with starvation belly) in infants and children were rare in the country in previous years. Now the numbers are virtually exploding. Food prices

have more than doubled in the past 12 months. Many families are selling their belongings to survive at all. We have therefore launched a major new project alongside our ongoing work: *fighting hunger and feeding infants, young children and their mothers.*

At hotspots in camps around Kabul with its more than 500,000 refugees – *internally displaced persons* (IDP) – and to particularly poor families in the provincial capital Jalalabad, we distribute food parcels containing rice, flour, peas, cooking oil, tea and sugar to more than 1,000 families every day. In this enormous logistical work we are supported by our older pupils and students. In the clinics we have increased the daily distribution of *baby food tenfold.* To improve medical care in the countryside, we deliver especially important medicines to the doctors every week. Depending on donations, we will be able to continue distributing food and medicine into 2022.

The *doctors’ surgeries* in the provinces of Nangahar, Kunar and Laghman, which have hardly been supplied with electricity so far, will be completely fitted with *photovoltaic roof systems.* This will enable round-the-clock electric power even in the dark season. In all these new projects, we have experienced the grateful support of the new rulers. Because of the increasing so-called *load-shedding* (power failure), we are also equipping the *Christian-Muslim schools* we built in Sargoda/Pakistan with photovoltaics. By mid-2022, we will have reliably supplied all our facilities there with electricity.

We are particularly happy and proud of our staff: none of our teachers, none of our doctors has so far withdrawn from the projects and tried to leave the country.

This certainly has something to do with the fact that we have always involved the religious dignitaries, including mullahs close to the Taliban, in our projects from the very beginning. The new rulers and authorities know that corruption never played a role with us.

We have been successful in making clear to the US army commanders that they do not have to “protect” our projects, but that their soldiers must not even attempt to be near the schools.

This approach is known to the new rulers and is now appreciated by them. So we can count on them not only not to hinder our work, but to support it. This is already the case. Both during food

distribution and during the construction of the photovoltaic systems in the villages, "Taliban policemen" are present, drinking green tea to-

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gether with our staff and ensuring that the work goes smoothly. Presumably, the issue of Afghanistan will become less important in politics and the media in the coming weeks. In order to help the oppressed people in the Hindu Kush, information is still needed. We are therefore happy to come to you to present and discuss the topic "Quo vadis Afghanistan" at events. Simply invite us.

If you would like to receive information on a regular basis, we would be happy to add you to our mailing list. Just send us an e-mail.

We wish you a blessed Advent and Christmas season and a healthy, peaceful New Year.

Yours, Annette and Reinhard Erös

(Translation "Swiss Standpoint")