

Engaging People's Participation in Peace through "Effective Development"

Since May 2002, Future Generations Afghanistan has worked with communities to build local upon local ingenuity and resourcefulness for lasting peace and development.

In Baghlan, Ghazni, Nangarhar, Zabul, and Uruzgan provinces, Future Generations focuses on the rapid mobilization of community development councils and action groups for self-help projects linked to government initiatives. To date, these communities have established:

- 365 registered Action Groups with 1,936 members working together to improve governance and meet their basic needs
- 933 home and mosque-based classes integrating literacy, health, and income-generation for 25,597 beneficiaries, 71% being women and girls
- Youth and sports activities for nearly 5,000 boys and girls
- 80 Community Development Councils through the National Solidarity Program, which provides block grants to implement small scale reconstruction projects based on local priorities

In parallel, Future Generations implements a Carnegie-supported research initiative that focuses on the role of the National Solidarity Program and its more than 20,000 community development councils in building democratic, local institutions.

The above experience points toward the need for a more locally accountable financing system for development, one that is based on local priorities and monitored by well-trained community councils. By increasing local skills and knowledge, Future Generations supports each community's efforts to meet its own needs, thereby fostering ownership of development projects and capacities for local governance.