Mission Statement

Demonstrating God’s love by enabling people affected by conflict and disaster to restore their lives and rebuild their communities.

Partners

ASA
American Soybean Association

WiSHH
World Initiative for Soy in Human Health

USDA
United States Department of Agriculture

WFP
United Nations World Food Programme

CANTERA PARTNERS
From the Leadership

We at Shelter For Life International continue to see our role as agents of transformation in markets and societies that have been devastated by wars and natural disasters. In 2013, the pursuit of this goal guided us to restore farm-to-market rural roads to restore a sustainable source of income, rebuild the broken irrigation systems to bring back the stability of food production, replant thousands of fruit trees to address malnutrition, ground-water restoration and soil stability, and provide small and medium size loans to entrepreneurs in some of the remote parts of the world. In all these efforts, our organization has applied a set of innovative, cost-effective and sustainable methods which are meant to last for a very long time.

The 13th century Persian poet, Saadi Shirazi, verbalized the duties and responsibilities of an honorable soul in one poem, which is as follows:

On the path of the honorable man
See the stumbled, extend a hand
Abolish the root that sows evil
Nourish the branch that bears fruit
Unaffected by the sorrows of others
Inappropriate to call you a man

The Shelter For Life teams at Headquarters and in the field offices have worked tirelessly to embody the character of the honorable man. Our staff and supporters have made tremendous sacrifices and worked countless days to assure a more prosperous, peaceful and stable life for those we are called to serve.

It is our honor to express our gratitude to you, our friends, donors and supporters, for your continued prayers, support, interest and involvement with the work of Shelter For Life International.

The Management and Board of
Shelter For Life International
The Road to Market Revitalization
Shelter For Life’s innovative work in northern Afghanistan, the Soybeans in the Agricultural Rehabilitation of Afghanistan Initiative (SARAI) project, that began in 2011 was successfully completed at the end of 2013. The project, funded by the USDA and in partnership with the World Initiative for Soy in Human Health (WISHH), expanded in scope each year and thus benefited an increasing number of people. From a modest start in one district of Takhar Province in 2011, the work expanded to another district in Kunduz Province in 2012. In 2013, another seven districts were added to the project, including four districts in Balkh Province.

The project included several components including infrastructure, cash-for-work employment for local laborers, soybean distribution and market creation, farmer trainings, and microfinance. The combined effect of these interventions served beneficiary communities in ways that not only exceeded project targets but also produced some additional unforeseen positive outcomes.

The SARAI project concentrated on areas known for fertile land, but often without regular water supplies. Much of this land depended on rain-fed water for crop irrigation, which made it susceptible to both flooding and drought. Some irrigation systems built earlier had been damaged by war and floods and become derelict. To rectify this situation SFL built eight irrigation systems consisting of 28 individual projects including aqueducts, spillways, intakes, and canal repairs.

Along with the construction of irrigation systems, SFL established water management committees made up of local people in the areas served by the new or improved irrigation systems. These committees were given the responsibility of maintaining the waterways, regulating equitable apportionment of water to farmers, and mediating in the event of any disputes over water allocation.

The building and rehabilitation of local roads was an important part of improving conditions for local farmers to more easily transport their crops to market centers. SFL improved or built more than 50 kilometers (30 miles) of roadways, which connected more than 70 directly benefiting communities to local and regional markets.

Approximately 200 local laborers were hired, each for 15 months, to build the irrigation systems and roads. Altogether the infrastructure projects benefited more than 70,000 farmers and laborers directly. An even greater number of people, such as those who benefited from the increased soybean production, were indirectly helped.

Soybeans grown by year
- 2011: 342 acres
- 2012: 865 acres
- 2013: 1,603 acres
farmers’ family members, were aided indirectly from these projects.

In 2013, the SARAI project saw increased soybean growing activity over previous years, and more than 5,000 farmers received soybean planting packages (18% of them were women). Along with the seeds, these farmers were given extensive training in raising soybeans as a rotation crop. SFL field agronomists followed up with tracking crop progress throughout the growing season, and advised farmers how to care for their crop and maximize their yields. Ongoing training was given during 30 farmer field days - occasions when dozens of farmers were brought together for continuing instruction from the SFL agronomists. In addition, agronomists conducted field visits for checking crop conditions and progress combined with personal interaction with individual farmers.

Farmers were required to sign contracts with the Afghan Soybean Factory (ASF) in Balkh Province so that at harvest time the soybean crops could be processed into flour and oil by the factory. Since some of the soybean fields, particularly those in Kunduz and Taloqan Provinces, were some distance from the factory, transporting some of the harvested soybeans presented a challenge. SFL and the ASF arranged locations and schedules to facilitate the collection and transport of the harvested yields to the factory. Farmers were paid for their crops upon delivering their yields at the crop collection points. A total of 166 metric tons of soybeans were collected and sold to the factory for processing.

A vital and integral component of the SARAI project was the provision of microcredit to farmers and some craftsmen supporting agricultural activities, with the purpose of increasing the return on locally produced crops and livestock. The loans, about $400 each, were used to purchase livestock, farming equipment, or seeds, to increase agricultural output and farmers’ income, complement local food production, and stimulate rural enterprise development.

One of the great success stories of the microfinance program was the number of women participants. Of the nearly 1,500 borrowers, nearly 30% were women. In many instances these enterprising women substantially increased the income of their families - sometimes earning money on their own for the first time - and significantly advanced the status of women in their families and communities.

Other side benefits of the SARAI project included boosting local vegetable production, improving the local transport system, and by increasing family income more parents were able to send their children to school. The SARAI project contributed in important ways to the economic and social uplift of communities in northern Afghanistan.
Feeding a Future Generation and Stabilizing Communities in Northern Afghanistan

In the second half of 2013 SFL partnered with the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) to implement three projects in Takhar, Kunduz, and Sari Pul Provinces.

In Takhar SFL distributed high energy biscuits to more than 35,000 school students in five rural districts over a four-month period. The biscuits provided an important dietary supplement for children in areas where the amount and quality of available food is often below optimum nutrition standards.

In another project, in rural Kunduz, SFL repaired 85 kilometers (53 miles) of neglected and broken down irrigation canals. The canal rehabilitation greatly increased the water supply to area fields while reducing their susceptibility to flooding and drought, and will improve the local production of field crops and vegetables for years to come. Upon completion of the project the responsibility for maintaining the canals was handed over to local government and community leaders.

Three thousand laborers were engaged to work on the canal repairs in a food-for-work program that distributed food items - mainly flour, oil, and salt - to the workers in return for their labor. Some surplus food that remained was distributed to poor families and widows.

In remote Sari Pul Province, mostly mountainous terrain leaves villages at risk of landslides and floods. To help protect one vulnerable community, SFL built 3,000 meters (9,800 feet) of terraces and a 500-meter (1,600-foot) retaining wall. Following the construction work 9,000 pistachio trees were planted on the terraces. Together the terraces and trees will stabilize the hillside and protect against erosion and make landslides unlikely. As the trees grow their roots will help keep the soil intact and improve groundwater retention to help grow vegetables, fruit, and grain. Pistachio trees are native to this part of Afghanistan, and once mature their nuts will provide a source of nutrition and income to the local community.
Building Roads to Peace in Senegal

The Casamance region of southern Senegal is rich agricultural land, with fruit tree orchards and fertile soil for fields. However, in the early 1980s a rebel movement in the region began fighting for independence, and this conflict displaced some 60,000 area residents from their lands and livelihoods. In recent years a peace process has been underway, with several peace deals and ceasefires between the government and rebel forces, and now peace and stability is returning to the area.

In an effort to revive agricultural production in the region, the USDA is funding a project for SFL to build 120 kilometers (75 miles) of farm-to-market roads. This infrastructure will provide vital transportation links from agricultural areas to a main national highway that is connected to major market centers.

SFL has played a part in negotiations between the Senegal government and local rebel forces concerning the locations of the roads. Landmines laid during the conflict along the route of the planned roads are being removed by demining companies. After the ground is clear of mines, SFL will begin the road building activities in the spring of 2014.

To successfully implement this project, set to run through the end of 2015, SFL will employ up to 500 day laborers and be the largest employer in the area. By providing local employment and infrastructure development SFL is making an important contribution to trade and peace in the region.

REBUILD
FARM-TO-MARKET
CONNECTIONS

IMPROVE
INCOMES,
BOOST LOCAL
ECONOMY

PROMOTE
PEACE AND
STABILITY

Men constructing a farm-to-market road in Senegal
Introducing SEMA
Sustainable Economic Microfinance for Afghanistan

Over the past several years SFL has managed three microfinance programs that have been part of US Government-funded projects in Afghanistan. Together these programs extended loans to more than 4,500 borrowers. To build on the success of this work SFL is developing SEMA, a microfinance institution that will continue to offer credit to individuals and small businesses in northern Afghanistan.

SEMA will focus on offering small and medium size loans to farmers and others, such as craftsmen and small businessmen, involved in agricultural production and trade. SEMA’s loan recipients will use the money they receive to purchase things such as livestock, seed for crops, or upgrade farm implements. Since women have comprised a sizable and valuable subset of loan recipients, SFL will work to increase the number of women borrowers.

SFL is in the process of registering SEMA with the Afghanistan Government. We look forward to serving northern Afghanistan with loans for small and medium enterprise development for many years to come.
Shelter For Life International
Statement of Activities
For the Year Ended December 31, 2013

REVENUE AND SUPPORT

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<tr>
<th>Source</th>
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<tr>
<td>Federal Grants and Contracts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contribution and Support</td>
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<td>Other Income</td>
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EXPENSES

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<td>Afghanistan Programs</td>
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<td>Senegal Program</td>
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<td>Support Services:</td>
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<td>Administration</td>
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<td><strong>Total Support Services</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Total Expenses</strong></td>
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CHANGE IN NET ASSETS

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<td>Net Assets – Beginning of Year</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Net Assets – End of Year</strong></td>
<td><strong>$796,192</strong></td>
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