

Interview with Nazaneen regarding the new School - Dec. 2008

1. What kind of work sustains these children's families?

Most of the families make their living as farmers. More than half of them are jobless and will travel into Jalalabad, 30 km away to look for a day's work, a week's work etc. Many of them rely on help from large NGOs

2. How far do the children come to get to school, and do they come on their own?

Most of the children walk to school on their own and since they all live in this village they don't have too far to walk.

3. Are the children in 3- or 4-hr. sessions, with at least two separate sessions going on in a day?

The children attending Nazaneen's school come at 8 am and stay until 1:30 with a break for lunch. She only has one shift because that way the children are at school for at least 5 hours of learning a day. It is usually the schools in the cities that have the two shifts and these children only attend for 2 - 3 hours per day which Nazaneen feels is just not enough time for children to learn everything they need at each grade.

4. What are their houses like?

Most of their houses are made out of mud and some are living in tents. There is no electricity and the women have to walk to the community well, perhaps a km away to get their water.

5. Do they have pencils, notebooks, any textbooks, and any computer access?

Nazaneen has bought many of these items for the students, (could always use more though) from the markets in Jalalabad in which many of the items are originally from UNICEF but she is buying them on the black market.

Her school has no computer access and there isn't any in the village. She feels that computer access is very important and would like to be able to provide this for her students.

6. How long (in months) is the school year and during which months?

The school year starts in September and goes to June. For the last two summers, Nazaneen has held summer school and many children have attended. Usually there is no summer school offered for children.

7. Do the children have any sports or recreation or music-making?

They do not have any organized sports or recreation. The children, both girls and boys love to play soccer. Music is not a subject in Afghanistan's schools. No, she does not have music classes or instruments etc.

8. Will they have desks and blackboards in the new school?

Nazaneen is hoping to buy used blackboards for the new school. She knows through another person who has had a school built in the area where she can purchase furniture at

a good price but she doesn't expect to be able to do that right away. The children will probably sit on rugs to start off with.

9. Are many of them from families where the mother is the sole parent?

There are some children who come from single parent homes, either a single mother or a single father. She didn't really specify a number or percentage though.

10. Are any of the mothers getting literacy training or other forms of education?

The short answer is NO, but that this an area where Nazaneen would love to be able to provide training for parents; many of whom are illiterate. She has spends a great deal of time and effort trying to set things up for this, but finds it very frustrating that there is so much corruption and bribery trying to get the help.

11. What is the water supply and is there a need for filters to have clean water?

As I mentioned before, there is no water at people's homes as they go to a community well. The school has a small well and if this is not enough to deal with the washrooms that have been built, she may need to have a larger well dug which would cost 2 - 3 thousand US.

12. Is there lighting?

There is no electricity in the village, but at her school she has a generator.

13. How far from Jalalabad is the new school?

The new school in the village is about 30 km from Jalalabad. The road is very bad, if you want to call it a road and has been very difficult for Nazaneen because of her bad back. Ash just said in a recent email that there has been a road completed by US Aid to the village from Jalalabad. (Jalalabad is an area where the US troops patrol) It is a gravel road and is making the trip to the village faster and easier.

14. How many children will be in the new school, and will there still be a tent school on the site?

Nazaneen said at the present time there is well over 1000 children coming to the school now. These numbers could rise. So, yes she will still be using the tents but will be having them close to the bldg.

15. What proportion of these children are returning refugees from Peshawar and elsewhere?

She estimates that there are 5-6 thousand refugee families in the village from Pakistan. There are also many refugee families in the Jalalabad area. She mentioned that there is a huge internal refugee camp about 1 1/2 hours from Jalalabad

16. Do the children take tests, exams, and have some kind of report on their progress?

Yes the do and Nazaneen in her reporting to CW4WA and CSAW has described the expectations she has of her teachers in this regard, also their own planning of program,

keeping daybooks, evaluation of students etc. We have some photos of Nazaneen handing out certificates to students there this past spring.

Additional information from the interview: She talked about a student who recently died from an illness and that if they had been treated by a doctor their death could have been prevented. These families have no money to take their children to a doctor she said.

She also talked about students as young as 10 who will **find a few days work here** and there working on road construction so that they can help out their families.