Germany Contributes to Afghan Refugees’ Education in Iran

Tehran, 21 December 2014 – The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Iran remains committed to assist the Government of Iran in the field of education as a burden-sharing gesture and to appreciate the support they are providing to refugees’ education. This assistance comes in part through Donor government contributions and further enhances the access of refugees to education. The Government of Germany has had a share in this assistance and generously contributed 668,449 US dollars to cover parts of the educational needs of refugees in Iran.

“Due to various crises in the region, Iran has been hosting a considerable refugee population for over 30 years now. Germany is well aware of the immense challenges arising out of this situation.” said the German Ambassador to Iran, Dr. Michael von Ungern-Sternberg. “We therefore want to give our contribution to improve living conditions of refugees while assisting the Government of Iran in its difficult task and we are convinced that the solution to the refugee problem requires a regional approach.”

Contributions in line with education go towards the construction of schools, provision of literacy courses for adult refugees and over-aged refugee children who were deprived from schooling due to various reasons and also distribution of school uniforms. Education, through schooling or literacy courses is indeed one of the crucial elements of the Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees (SSAR), a regional strategy supporting voluntary repatriation and sustainable reintegration while also supporting the efforts of host countries to assist refugees. With this donation, the Government of Germany will contribute to enabling the now more than 330,000 refugee students studying in Iranian schools in becoming self-reliant empowered individuals who will themselves one day have a share in rebuilding Afghanistan and it will also contribute to the provision of literacy classes for 3,355 adults and over-aged children.

The German Ambassador noted that education is the key to a bright future for Afghanistan, “Highly qualified Afghans will make an important impact both in Afghanistan and in their respective host countries. Thanks to the newly built schools in Tehran, Kerman, Qom and Mashhad, some more young refugees will obtain access to primary education while learning side by side with their Iranian classmates.”

While thanking the German Government for its generous gesture, UNHCR’s Representative in Iran Sivanka Dhanapala emphasized, “Increasing knowledge through education is a sure way of addressing solutions for any difficulty we face in our lifetime. Education is an investment in the future and radiates with optimism.”

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