

KaravanPakistan Base
Camp, Mardan.KaravanPakistan Volunteers
کاروان پاکستان والٹھیروز

Family kitchen prototype.



Interior of family kitchen prototype.



Distribution of cradles for babies.



Cradles for babies.

Report

by Yasmeen Lari, SI, Chair & CE, Heritage Foundation, Chair, KaravanPakistan

The KaravanPakistan Base Camp in Sheikh Shahzad Camp, Mardan, has been established in a tent utilizing the base and roof cover constructed earlier. The roof cover experiment provided fairly fast construction methodology using local materials.

SHEIKH SHAHZAD CAMP, MARDAN

Last week in the camp the death of two infants and one woman aged 85 was reported, as well as the birth of 10 babies.

The Sheikh Shahzad Camp was established almost four weeks ago. According to the latest figures, there are 37 widows, 26 female-headed households, and 67 disabled people including children; seriously wounded or those with serious medical ailments are 86, and there are 186 pregnant women, who need gynecological care. The total number of families in tents is 1150 and the total population is close to 9,000 persons. It is estimated that among the displaced persons, almost 50% are children.

COLLABORATIVE EFFORT

We are trying to develop collaborative efforts and in this connection meetings were held in Peshawar on 27th and 28th May with relevant authorities in the company of Mrs. Fareeda Nishtar, a Peshawar notable, who has recently raised funds for the IDPs through Floral Art Society activity. We also met with Dr. Fazl-e-Subhani, representative of HERE - Higher Education Rehabilitation Effort - formulated by the NWFP universities under the chairmanship of Vice-Chancellor of UET, Peshawar, Mr. Iftikhar Gilani. The group of students and faculty of various universities are carrying out a most commendable effort in an well organized manner. The visit to our base camp on 30th May of HERE's Prof. Dr. Siddique Akbar was most fruitful in order to work collaborative mechanisms. Mrs. Nishtar and myself also visited a school camp with Dr. Subhani, which has been adopted by the City School, Mardan Campus. The place was a treat to see and all kudos to the City School in the management of the displaced families in a most dignified manner.

DISTRIBUTION OF CRADLES FOR BABIES

The distribution of cradles was begun by distributing 15 cradles. The cradles provide relief from unbearable conditions in the camp and also keep the babies safe from insect on the floor. In view of the popularity of cradles, lists are being

prepared of upto 6-month old babies for provision of cradles. The bliss you saw on the babies' faces when rocked in the cradle, is worth the effort. The cradles are a gift from Childrens Hope Foundation, UK.

CONSTRUCTION OF FAMILY KITCHENS

In collaboration with the camp incharge Mr. Muddassir Malik, who has been working with great commitment, a programme was chalked out for building family kitchens. Groups would be formed of ten families per kitchen where women could cook in rotation. Subsequent to the decision, I had a meeting with a group of women to assess the feasibility. Since the administration had announced the closure of the *langar* (soup kitchen) it was important to ensure that cooking would not take place in inflammable tents. There was a general agreement among women that family kitchen arrangement would be a workable solution, since the soup kitchen, with the best of efforts, had its own drawbacks in providing hygienic food to such a large number of people.

Kitchen structure is built with brick foundations using lime/sand/mud mix, and bamboos for supports and roof structure. Roof and wall covering is of kana matting, plastered with lime/mud/husk mix.

Naheem Shah, our project coordinator, began to organize the construction activity of the first prototype on the night of 29th May. The structure was completed within two days, while another half day was spent in finishing the structure. This prototype is being replicated. There is a requirement of about 115 kitchens. The construction teams have been organized so that 27 kitchens have been taken up on one day and the next 27 on the next day and the teams have been formed to carry out activities sequentially. The administration had suggested the use of Poplar instead of bamboos, which has not been found to be suitable. Further kitchens will now be built with bamboos as in the case of the kitchen prototype. After 54 kitchens have been tested, the remaining will be taken up for construction.

The labour is currently being paid through ILO funding. We are hopeful that ILO will also provide a daily wage to women cooking in rotation in family kitchens.