



Afghan Connection (AC) Cricket Project

The Afghan National Team is a symbol of hope for the people of Afghanistan. Its players have come from the dusty refugee camps of Pakistan, where their families sought refuge from the years of war and chaos in Afghanistan. They have returned to their country, climbed up the world cricket rankings and gained International One Day Status and a place in the Twenty20 World Cup 2010. These men have inspired the dreams of a new generation in Afghanistan. Cricket is taking a grip on this war torn nation and bringing hope to its people.

In a wonderful partnership with the *MCC Spirit of Cricket* and the *Afghan Youth Cricket Support Organisation (AYCSO)* and funded by a 3 year pledge from a private donor, AC is taking cricket to all corners of Afghanistan. Each year AC builds 10 concrete wickets in schools across Afghanistan. All these schools receive funds to repair buildings, construct latrines and wells or add new classrooms. The school children receive cricket kit and can attend cricket camps.

AYCSO runs up to 10 camps a year for us, led by Raees Ahmadzai and members of the Afghan Cricket Team. In 2010, camps were held in Khost, Laghman, Logar and Wardak, all areas where security is poor and aid is minimal. At one camp 12,000 children turned out for 50 places. Three camps were held for a total of 240 girls led by female coaches from Pakistan - a first in Afghanistan. One of these was a three day camp for 140 girls and 200 boys, held with UNICEF as partners, to celebrate Peace Day 2010.

AC has also teamed up with *Cricket for Change* (a UK based Charity) and ran a camp in Kabul to train and equip 24 trainees to be able to set up and run their own street cricket programmes for children, including those with disabilities.

In 2011 AC will build ten more pitches and upgrade recipient schools. It will hold cricket camps in Bamiyan and Herat to determine the level of interest in these areas, and high performance camps for boys in Kunduz, Khost and Laghman.



There will be a further three camps for girls and camps for disabled boys and girls, who would otherwise never have the chance to play sport. We hope to team up with Cricket for Change to train up more coaches and multiply our teaching of street cricket, reaching thousands of children across Afghanistan. This will culminate in national street cricket tournaments at the end of the year.

www.afghanconnection.org

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