

Girls Return to School in Mazar-e-Sharif

On November 20, 2002, 5,000 girls walked in the doors of the Sultana Razia Girls' School after being banned for more than six years. Located in Mazar-e-Sharif, this school is one of the largest girls' schools in northern Afghanistan. The renovation cost more than \$200,000 and included the restoration of 32 fully functional classrooms. This project is one of many which are part of a joint initiative between the governments of Afghanistan and the United States to build or rehabilitate 1,000 schools over the next three years.



Photo by IOM-ATI staff

Before

Sultana Razia Girls' School was closed during the Taliban regime and used as a refuge for Taliban forces. As a result, the school was destroyed and then abandoned when the Taliban fell from power.

After

Five thousand girls now attend the Sultana Razia Girls' School. During the opening ceremony, one 21-year old student said "I want to become a lawyer because I want to bring justice and freedom to Afghanistan ... especially for women." One of her teachers added, "To teach makes me feel like I am helping Afghanistan. I couldn't fight before, but now I can help make Afghanistan better."



Photo by USAID – D. Alexander

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