

# ANBP SUCCESS STORY: FOCUS ON PEACE, DEVELOPMENT AND REFORMED COMMANDERS

## DIAG Success Story: Northern Region

### “We Dropped Guns and Got Roads, Power and Health Clinics”

**Mr. Rahman Samet, the district governor** of Dawlat Abad in Faryab Province says, “By implementing the DIAG process, the security environment will be considerably improved as the illegal weapons are handed in to DIAG”. He added that the three main development projects inaugurated recently are associated with improving the security by implementing weapons collection. Mr. Samet added that the projects would provide options for livelihoods for the local people and pave the way for better security in the district.

The former IAGs have disbanded and are now playing a new role as civilians involved in restoring normalcy. The district governor says the former commanders of illegal armed groups (IAGs) are currently occupied in small entrepreneurial work, performing their role as village elders and getting involved in farming activities in the district.



Haji Abdul Baqi (left), chairperson of the District Development Assembly (DDA) of Dawlat Abad district, expressed his satisfaction with the implementation of DIAG. He added that the Disbandment of Illegal Armed Groups (DIAG) project had led to a significant improvement in the security situation, especially when compared to the decades of war and crises.

Auraz Muhammad S/O Haji Halim (below) is one of the most influential former *Jehadi* commanders of *Hezbi Islami* in the region. He handed over his weapons to DIAG and disbanded his IAG. Auraz Muhammad says that he can actually see the value of peace and stability in the region in the form of asphalt roads crossing the district, gravel roads leading to the villages, schools and clinics that are functional and several other development projects coming up in the district.

Auraz, a farmer who now tills his own land, clearly has put his Jehadi life behind him and is working towards making his fellow citizens' life more secure, comfortable and free of lethal weapons.

The reform of these and other members of IAGs demonstrates that DIAG is achieving one of its main goals, which is returning IAGs to civilian life.



Haji Khair Mohammad (right), a community elder and a member of the Popalzai tribe, expressed his satisfaction with DIAG implementation. He explained that the security situation in Dawlat Abad has changed for the better. He added that in the past there was not a single shura, even in the district; but now there are shuras in every village of the district.



Abdul Wodood (left) is one of the most influential former Jehadi commanders of Hezb-i-Jumbesh-i-Mili Afghanistan in the region. He handed over his weapons to DIAG and disbanded his group, and says he is happy for having cooperated with DIAG. "We have fought to bring justice and rule of law in our land. There is no need to keep weapons anymore. I am now experiencing the joys of being a civilian and am busy in agriculture activities on my own land," said Mr. Abdul.

### **District Profile of Dawlat Abad**

Dawlat Abad District is located 60 kilometers north of Maimana, the capital city of Faryab. The main occupations of the residents of this district are agriculture, livestock breeding, and handicrafts, especially carpet-weaving. The district is characterized by long, dry spells affecting agricultural productivity and leading to loss of animal life. Rearing of the "Qaraqul" sheep has been a major source of income and occupation for generations of local residents.

The population of this district is approximately 112,000 people, living in 56 villages. The ethnic combination is Uzbek, Turkmen, Pashtun, and Arab. The district has 14 boys and girls schools and two clinics for health services.

The Provincial DIAG Committee nominated Dawlat Abad for the implementation of DIAG. Three IAGs in the district cooperated with the DIAG process by handing in their weapons and disbanding their armed groups.



Three development projects implemented in the district following compliance with DIAG include a city power station (left), putting down gravel roads in 36 villages, and reconstruction of the Main Square in the district center. Dawlat Abad lies on the main highway, and it has also benefited from the asphalt road built in recent years.

The local residents as well as the district authorities consider DIAG compliance as a key factor in maintaining security and promoting development in Dawlat Abad.



Construction of a gravel road in Dawlat Abad



Reconstruction of the Main Square in Dawlat Abad