



Sultan Ibrahim School Dedication



School construction began in December, 2003 and the new facility will be used by 2000 students, both boys and girls. It will serve 10 villages in northern Afghanistan, one and a half hours north and west of Mazar-i-Sharif. It was built by the men of these communities, together with JDA Afghanistan staff overseeing material purchase, delivery, logistics and construction.



The students and community lined up and applauded as Ethel Frogosa, JDA Country Director for Afghanistan and Bob Hedlund, JDA Founder and CEO and other invited dignitaries walked through this human corridor to the school entrance. Speeches were made by various officials and documents signed.

The building has 13 rooms, which includes teachers and administration rooms, and is furnished with desks and chairs for a cost of \$86,000. The desks are made for two students to sit together, but because of the number of students, each will seat three. There will be three sessions of school each day in order to accommodate all the children. It is designed and structurally built for two floors in

Sultan Ibrahim is the fifth school that JDA has completed in northern Afghanistan, and JDA is seeking out new sources of funding to continue to provide schools for Afghan children.

The girls were all wearing new uniforms, thanks to the efforts of a woman's group from a church in Arvada, Colorado. They raised more than \$12,000 to supply the school with uniforms and equipment which in turn, gave employment to twentyfour seamstresses from the area.

Bob reflects, "It was a humbling experience. As I walked through the line of children, I had tears in my eyes, I was so thankful to be able to play a part in building a school for them, and fulfilling the dreams of the many men and women that asked us to help build schools for the future leaders of their country. They want their children to replace weapons with a pencil and a book."

... And this is how a new school is celebrated!

A classroom was converted into a makeshift kitchen for the preparation of the celebration dinner. "Osh" (rice pilaf with meat and carrots) is prepared in 7 large fire pits. A plate will serve 4 people who will eat out of it together using their right hand. The table is set on the floor, the usual custom for most rural Afghan people.

