

# Light of Pamir

Orphanage project status report and recommendation  
Patrick Firouzian, Global Roots



## Baharak, Afghanistan

In October of 2010 Patrick Firouzian, Global Roots' senior volunteer, VP and board member traveled to Baharak, Badakhshan to work with our local partner, Janagha Jaheed, on the Light of Pamir orphanage project. Patrick accomplished all goals including:

- The delivery of \$12k worth of equipment needed to start the orphanage
- The evaluation of physical and mental state of the orphans and their current living conditions.
- Evaluate the location chosen for the orphanage.
- Understand and validate each line item of Janagha's initial proposal.
- Firm up relationships with Afghan command (Assadulah, Barat) and USAF (Lt. Colonel Willi, Colonel Madura and supporting personnel) to ensure continuity of the partnership for future air lifts.
- Make recommendations for the project's next steps



## A shelter and training center for innocent and needy children

Janagha Jaheed, a respected humanitarian who has helped CAI build schools in Badakhshan, showed us the desperate plight of Afghanistan's children of war.

*"In our time and society, the orphans are the first needy people to be helped especially in Afghanistan. Most lost their father and mother to the wars. There are many orphans in Badakhshan unable to feed themselves; we forget that they have the right to have education, nutrition, freedom and many more basic needs. It is important to start to do something for them.*

*There are no orphanages in Badakhshan, due to lack of budget, Light of Pamir will be the first one, God willing."*

### Light of Pamir Orphanage – targets

#### Children Shelter

Provide shelter, adequate nutrition, and care in an environment conducive to child development.

#### Training center

Teach young children as early as possible the tools they will need to have to live a healthy and

#### Sustainability

Leverage skills and infrastructure to reduce costs and engage in revenue generating activities

Give special attention to those children with glance aversion, attachment disorder and other mental problems commonly related to isolation and lack of attention in the formative years. If handled appropriately, children with these afflictions can be healed enough to live healthy lives.



## Orphan situation

In every school we went, after asking the principal, we were introduced to clusters of orphan children, sometimes making up 5% of the school's total population

### Physical and mental condition

The condition of the children is poor – even critical in some cases. The weather is still warm; in winter they probably will lack adequate food and clothing.

The ones I met had threadbare clothes and ruined shoes. The boys were very dirty and rough. Some of the children were unusually shy (above the norm in my opinion, even considering circumstances), some were showing signs of trauma.

After interviews, key themes were the need for a proper living environment, food, clothing, education, books.

Most touching were the children who spoke of lacking parental support for security and affection.

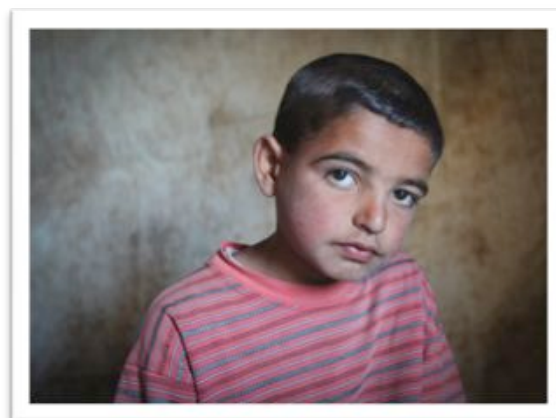


### Shelter, clothing, nutrition

We visited the nearby home of several orphans. We found a sick one who was lying down in the common sleeping room of a poor farmer's home. He was silent, unanimated, and had missed school for weeks. According to Janagha, he was malnourished. The house was typical of that of a subsistence farmer, with a shared, unheated bedroom, kitchen and restrooms, farm animals sharing the courtyard where the children play. This was a foster home of sorts but resources are not enough to give anything but shelter to orphans.

Clothes seemed adequate for summer but all of the children I interviewed imparted a fear of cold winter weather, likely because of poor heating and lack of proper clothing.

Nutrition is essential for young children and adopted children need to compete for it. More often than not, orphans fall on the short side and are therefore more vulnerable to sickness.







## Orphanage potential location

The house we have chosen is ideally sized and situated in downtown “new” Baharak, five minutes to a primary school.

It was an NGO office, now vacant, so it has higher construction standards than average local homes. Monthly rent: \$700. Not much to rebuild, just quick fixes to the kitchen and bathrooms. The home will need heaters and furniture. We brought some of this but more is required.

The house has six large rooms, three on each floor. Three bathrooms, one on each floor and one outside in the far corner of the garden. There is a kitchen off the garden, one large lobby, a staircase, storage under the staircase, and a large terrace. It also has room for two cars, a guard desk, and two guard/cook bedrooms.

We also visited three plots of bare land. Prices vary from \$12 to \$24k, distance to town is five to 15 minutes and water is available.

Building a house on purchased land would need \$50 to \$60k. This option would allow optimal design of the children’s home, and ensure long-term growth and safety. We might want to consider a new structure as a second step.



## Baharak

Baharak has 50,000 habitants, nested in a large valley, surrounded by rivers, blessed by good soil. Great weather (warmer than Kabul), many orchards, a vibrant bazaar. People are peaceful and easy.

The area was heavily affected by Russian and Al-Qaeda attacks, but extremists have been pushed away long ago.



## Airlift supply

Oct 22nd to Oct 31st, 2010. Assadullah and Barat arranged two helis to Baharak, in two trips. I flew up on the 26th, stayed up overnight and originally planned to return on the 29th. Weather did not permit the timely return flight so I drove back through Kunduz. The second cargo will be flown there when weather allows helis to go over the Selang pass.

### The team

US air force and navy, one Croatian pilot, a Dutch army and a full afghan crew.  
Colonel Madura planned to join but could not make it.  
Rosie (Dutch gender advisor) was "held back" by her chain of command. We had a US navy PR/photographer on board to document this trip.



### The cargo

We had many boxes of toys offered by Dutch families, and the purchases made in Kabul by Janagha's cousin. Altogether, the 2 helis were packed full during both trips.  
Crew helped load and unload the cargo from the ISAF gate to the warehouse (container). Clearance at the ISAF base proved very challenging



### Toys and toothbrushes for a lasting smile

We brought many smiles to over 50 boys and girls who came over to greet us, with toys, books and toothbrushes. Among them were orphans from the nearby primary schools. Most gifts were donated by Dutch families.



### Collaboration

LTC Willi (Jeep) gave opportunity to deserving servicemen to join the missions, giving them a window to Afghanistan, which they would otherwise never get from their desk or warehouse at ISAF. All of them told me how happy they were to contribute in a meaningful way to the peace and well being of this country. Getting out of Kabul feels like breathing again.  
It's a win-win collaboration. USAF had their PR and media team, Croatians and Dutch were glad to collaborate, Afghans are always delighted to join such mission.





# The making of Light of Pamir project – step by step

## Phase 1 - The shelter house

Comfort and food for 20 of the most needy children. It's also a foundation for scaling to 40 children and bringing up vocational training.

The nutrition food line item is the highest. We revised the costs and discussed at length. I also validated costs with villagers.

Getting a balanced diet is costly. That said, Janagha and I discussed ways to reduce this cost over time. We will need to find a F&B specialist to help us with these questions. A second and third opinion would help.

Children would be staying at the orphanage; the older ones would attend the nearby primary school. We discussed a variety of programs to engage the children in early development. More characterization is necessary. We are working with a few organizations already.

### Kitchen (\$957):

plate	60	\$ 110
tea cup	120	\$ 40
teapot	36	\$ 63
bowl for soap	50	\$ 60
steam boiler	2	\$ 50
pot	2	\$ 120
flat wash - tub	4	\$ 56
pail	10	\$ 40
water can	4	\$ 40
fruit plate	60	\$ 240
dust bin	6	\$ 48
spoon and fork	120	\$ 80
knife/card	10	\$ 10

### Salaries (\$2,450/month)

House mother/father	1	\$ 600
Accountant/Finance/Admin	0.5	\$ 200
Nurse	1	\$ 350
guard	1	\$ 300
cook	1	\$ 300
cleaner	1	\$ 250
teacher	1	\$ 450

### Upfront cost

Fitting the rental house will take two months and an additional investment of \$5k. We already invested \$12k for essential infrastructure (heaters, blankets, chairs, mattresses, fridge,.....see detailed spreadsheet).

### Furniture (\$10,267):

office desk	5	\$ 500
office chair	10	\$ 210
dining table	10	\$ 1,350
TV table	1	\$ 100
beds	25	\$ 3,000
file cupboard	2	\$ 280
closet	8	\$ 1,440
pillows	26	\$ 260
table clothes	150	\$ 375
blanket	26	\$ 1,352
carpet	50	\$ 1,400

### Facility (\$3,265):

heater	6	\$ 720
television	1	\$ 250
mobile set	2	\$ 440
camera	1	\$ 300
dish antenna	1	\$ 150
generator	1	\$ 700
refrigerator	1	\$ 180
washing machine	1	\$ 180
iron	1	\$ 60
brazier	1	\$ 95
gas picnic	2	\$ 190

It would be devastating for orphans to join this house, this family, and be told a few months later that it's closing due to lack of funding. Janagha had concerns starting this phase one without enough reserves to sustain 6 month.

# The making of Light of Pamir project – step by step

## Phase 2 - The Training center

We believe we need to provide orphans with the best chances to integrate high-school and/or learn practical skills. We will build a computer learning center and teach children from typing to drawing to using accounting software. I discussed this at length with Janagha and we agree this is the right skillset to bring here (I was skeptical at first but Janagha explained his rationale which we can share as needed). We also want to bring carpet-weaving machines from Kabul for those older children more inclined to arts or manual labor.

We believe it is very important to develop children as early as possible, and maintain the balance between labor at the farm and developing new skills. There needs to be some thoughts put into that, Discovering children talents, developing them, forming teachers and leaders,... these are the themes to explore in phase 2.

### Salaries (\$3,250/month)

Accountant/Finance/Admin	1	\$ 400
guard	2	\$ 600
cleaner	2	\$ 500
driver	1	\$ 300
House mother/father	1	\$ 600
Accountant/Finance/Admin	1	\$ 200
Nurse	1	\$ 350
cook	1	\$ 300

### Incremental cost

Additional costs (on top of phase 1) would be \$15k, or \$25k with a carpet-weaving machine. This would add 2 computer labs, and ensure comfort, nurturing and vocational education for 40 children.

### Training equipment (\$25k):

computers	14	\$ 8,400
projector	1	\$ 1,200
computer desk	10	\$ 700
computer chair	10	\$ 200
classroom chair	25	\$ 375
classroom/lab	2	\$ 5,000
carpet weaving machine	2	\$ 10,000
flip chart	50	\$ 25
projector board	1	\$ 50

Note that the computer acquisition cost (\$8,400) could be waved if we find a way to have USAF transport computers from San Jose (CA) to Kabul.

# The making of Light of Pamir project – step by step

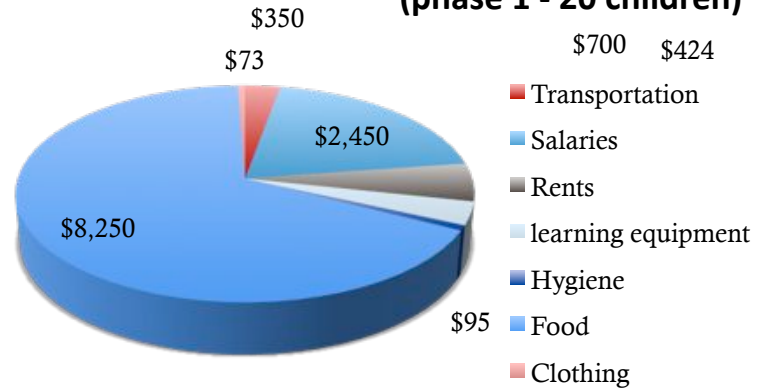
## Run Rates and capital inflow schedule

### Phase 1

Monthly run-rate is **\$12k for 20 children** (and 5 employees).

We discussed the high food costs and in light of the malnutrition, Janagha suggested to start with a good diet of proteins (eggs), fresh vegetables and diary products. In phase 2, these costs are reduced.

**Monthly Runrate (phase 1 - 20 children)**

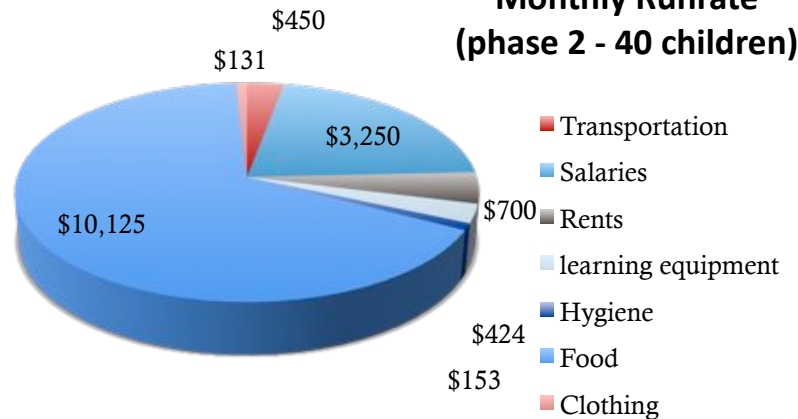


### Phase 2

Monthly run-rate is **\$15k for 40 children** (and 5 employees).

Note that the run-rate is made of salaries and other expenses, and reduces the cost of the food through economies of scale, and also learning on how to optimize the kitchen.

**Monthly Runrate (phase 2 - 40 children)**

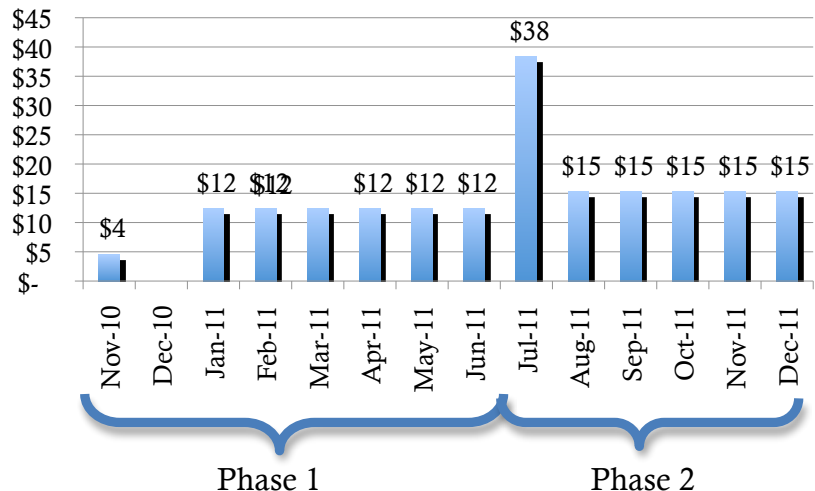


### Capital inflow schedule

Funds needed for phase 1 (startup, fitting and 6 month of operation): **\$78k**

Funds needed for phase 2 (training equipment and 6 month of operation): **\$115k**

**capital inflow (thousands)**



# The making of Light of Pamir project – step by step

## Phase 3 - Sustainability

We would like to make this operation as independent as possible. Upon successful operations of the house and of the training center, we will work with Janagha to reduce food costs.

## Transparency, project oversight, roles and responsibilities

We have invested significant time and resources to evaluate and start this project. Janagha and Global Roots have worked on a weekly basis since April 2010, and we have in turn worked with USAF and CAI since then. It is apparent that we all aim at the same target: helping the innocent children of Afghanistan, impoverished and victims of wars.

The approach is to give total ownership of this orphanage to Janagha (MSSRO). He has proven able to manage complex projects all over his country. He has hired and managed over 20 people and he has navigated complex legal and political environments. Janagha has a deep support network in the region and he is well respected.

I suggest the roles and responsibilities to be as follows:

- **Responsible** (the person who owns the project): Janagha Jaheed
- **Accountable** (the persons who make sure it happens): Phase 1: Global Roots. Phase 2 and beyond: Janagha
- **Supporters** (the people helping execution): CAI, USAF, Afghan Air Corps, MSSRO
- **Consultants** (the people who give input): Greg Mortenson, Global Roots childhood development psychologists and social workers
- **Informed** (the people we inform on progress): All of the above, plus donors and prospective donors

Global Roots maintains frequent communication with MSSRO and intends to have a mission to Baharak every six month to review progress and take action as necessary.

## MSSRO: Marco Polo Social Services and Reconstruction Organization



MSSRO was created under the initiative and leadership of Janagha. *“When I started this NGO, everyone thought I was a fool. No-one was around”* he said. Since then, he has built many schools around the country and employs over 20 workers.

Janagha is now ready to go to the next step: addressing the lack of support to the most deprived children, the orphans of his town. We believe he is a genuine leader, with integrity, caring, and the passion required to lead this project.



## Suggested next steps

- Review the detailed run-rate spreadsheet and get to a final figure. Areas to finalize are cost for food and salaries.
- Discuss the phase one, phase two and next phases scope. Assess risks and find remediation
- Allocate funds to start Phase 1, with enough reserve for six month run-rate
- Think actively on ways to make our children house more sustainable (reduce costs, find sources of revenue,...)
  
- Plan next mission with General Assadulah: the general talked about going to Khuanhan (not sure of the spelling), a very isolated area near Tajikistan. I think that is where he is from, and he wants to transport us there in May/June. The place badly needs support. Janagha confirms this and he also has plans to get there. We can easily plan a mission with Assadulah's support to come back in Baharak and airlift precious cargo (training equipment and medical supplies) and carry on to Khuanhan.
- Plan a mission with General Barat: I spoke with him earlier and he would like us to support a primary school right outside the base. It is important to also support the General as he ensures us resources for our airlifts.

## Contact Information

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### About Global Roots



**Global Roots**  
nurturing life

Our mission is to improve the lives of orphans and disadvantaged children with support of local humanitarians from all over the world. We feel the best way to bring about positive change is to offer assistance to the humanitarians who have already taken the first step to help the children in their local community. They are our heroes and it is through them that Global Roots works to protect the world's most valuable asset, its children.

We are a 100% volunteer non-profit organization registered in USA, that supports carefully chosen humanitarians who are seeing to the needs of disadvantaged children in areas of blight, famine or civil unrest. All of our programs are designed to give the world's most disadvantaged children a shot at a healthy and productive life. Global Roots is driven by generous donations from individual donors and workplace donation matching programs.

Visit us at <http://www.GlobalRoots.org>