

# **BAM**

## **Earthquake Recovery Programs**



## **Progress Report**

**June 2004**

## Overview:

On December 26, 2003, an earthquake measuring 6.9 on the Richter scale and centered near the ancient city of Bam, hit Iran. Though the number of casualties remains a point of debate, the government estimates at least 26,000 dead and tens of thousands injured with approximately 90% of the city destroyed.

Relief International was able to be one of the first NGOs to respond to the earthquake in Bam with medical and food supplies due to its presence in Iran after responding to the 2002 Qazvin earthquake. Focusing on sustainable solutions Relief International has built on a history of successful relief and rehabilitation programs internationally to provide deep impact interventions to better the lives of disaster victims.

### 1) Shelter:

Providing a shelter with a solid roof and moving from tent camps back to survivors' original villages is one of the surest means of restoring livelihoods to families affected by disasters. In January 2004 RI started the permanent housing program in the two villages of Esphikan and Poshtrood. These are the largest villages in the area affected by the quake and are both adjacent to Bam (separated from the city by a river). These two villages sustained the highest level of damage among all the villages. Revised and updated estimates by the local authorities puts the number of shelter units needed in these villages at 871 rather than the previously requested 1,060.



**RI team selecting location for new shelter**

At this time 85% of digging is done, 60% of balancing and adjusting is completed, 60% of rebar stage is finished, 50% of rebar installation is done. Metal frames deliveries are continuing Correcting previous figure, RI's team reports that 272 foundations have been completed by the end of June.



**Family in front of the frame for their new shelter being constructed by RI**

Based on our last estimation we estimate that with the current level of funding RI will complete 780 units. This due to several factors including mainly the continued increase in the price of metal and cement and the increase in the number of shelter units at 60 square meters (for families of 4 and up).

Currently an average of 7 to 10 units are being completed daily. RI has the capacity to complete 10 everyday but there are shortages for basic construction materials such as concrete.

RI's construction team consists of a staff of six fulltime and one part time employee. The team works full force from 8:00 in the morning to 9:00 in the evening.

## 2) Camp Based Social Services Facilities: Clinic, Water/Sanitation & Education & Cultural Center

In the Sina camp RI has constructed a five-room clinic and a public restroom and washing facility. In addition RI has constructed a school, a library and an internet center in this camp. In Wahdat Camp RI built a five-room school and has been providing clothing and food to over 200 vulnerable children since the initial relief phase of the earthquake.

**Schools:** All 131 schools in Bam and the surrounding villages were destroyed or damaged beyond use, with officials estimating that 18-20,000 students were in dire need of school facilities and teachers. There are now 8,200 students left in Bam. Children in Bam are anxious to continue their education and to have outlets of entertainment that are critical to the healing process after such a traumatic disaster. In response, RI has constructed two schools in each of the Sina and Wahdat camp the largest camps for the displaced.



**Students in a new school at Sina Camp**



**Schools built by RI provide facilities where the children of Bam can safely continue their education.**

**Top Left:** Children happy to be back in school.

**Above:** Students gather outside the school waiting for class to begin.

**Left:** The school at Sina camp has become a meeting place for youth at the camp.



**Clinic:** RI completed the construction of a health clinic in Sina camp which is now in full use. For many survivors of the earthquake, this is the first time they have had access to such health services. The clinics are well stocked with the necessary relief supplies and run by an experienced health staff.



### Community Educational and Cultural Center

RI's recently completed educational and cultural center in Sina camp is being fully utilized by the community. The complex includes a five-room school, a computer/internet center (10 computers with instructional classes and internet access). A library sponsored by the **Iranian Association of Boston** includes 2,000 volumes and is one of the most popular facilities in the camp. Two large tents with concrete flooring and air-conditioning each with a capacity of 200 serving as a Community Center and a Women's Center.

In one tent RI has set up a movie house with assistance from local philanthropists from the city of Kerman. The cinema a popular attraction provides specialized programming for children and adults at separate hours. This tent is also being used for larger meetings and community gathering. For example, currently the space is being used on a regular basis for meetings of Narcotics Anonymous. The facility is also used for the conduct of national university entrance exams in Bam allowing students in Bam to not fall behind the national university entrance competitions. The tent is also being used as a cultural center with a painting workshop for children in collaboration with Society for Protecting the Rights of Children, a national NGO led by Ms. Shirin Abadi, the recent Noble Laureate in Peace. The center serves not only the residents of the camp but all of Bam's residents.

#### **Internet & Computer Center:**

Operates in four shifts with three shifts dedicated to training for 73 students from:

8:00am-10:00am  
10:30am-12:30pm  
4:00pm-6:00pm

From 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm children can play computer games. This center is staffed by 3 local employees (2 female and 1 male).







**Women are among the most frequent users of RI's internet center in Bam.**



**Outside the internet center**

**Library:** The library sponsored by the **Iranian Association of Boston** operates from 8:30am to 12:00 noon and 2:00pm-6:30pm. At any one time there are 35 people on average who are checking out books. 70% of those using the library are children and the rest adults. The library has received requests for more Iranian fiction and children's books. The library is operated by one female local employee.

<p><i>RI constructed libraries are used all hours, day and night...</i></p>		
		<p><i>...And are popular with both children and adults who line up to borrow books.</i></p>

**Cinema:** The Cultural Center has one nightly film screening. The shows are very popular and the tent is crowded. RI is planning to add more chairs and afternoon shows. "It is really Cinema Paradiso!" says one of RI's staff members.



*RI's cinema is a most welcomed attraction.*

**Women's Center:** The second tent serves as a Women's Center. RI has begun women specific programs such as micro-lending to women. Training for the Micro-credit program targeting women is held in this space. RI is also working with a national NGO to train women in income generating activities such as sewing to make clothing. Some women are known to be coming to the Center from two hours away. An office room is included in the complex for administration and night guard.



**Women gather for a meeting at RI's Women Center**

The educational facilities and the clinic in these camps are extremely well received and in great demand. Youth from the camps began to use the schools even before it was fully completed. The library project promises to be a popular hit and potentially replicable in the villages as well as in the camps. The Internet center is also in great demand both as a service as well as a training facility.

### **Income Generation & Micro-credit for Women**

In May RI completed a survey of women's income generation opportunities in association with local NGOs. The objective was to identify pockets of most need and the most feasible response. Preliminary review of the survey indicated that the most feasible income-generation opportunity was in livestock. Most families in Bam's villages rely in great part for their income on the sale of milk from one or more cows, as the climate in Bam is most appropriate for the cultivation of hay. As a result Bam is known as a national source of milk products. Tending to cows for milk is a task mainly done by women. However, many livestock have perished.

Bam has very cultivated land and it produces hay 8 times a year. Milk is second source of income after dates in Bam. Animal husbandry, milk production and farming are especially critical to restoration of livelihoods in Bam. Many villagers lost their head of household and with them a steady source of income that often supports extended families. 70% of all milk processed in factories in Kerman that distribute the produce nationally are collected from Bam. There are 7,000 individual families who produce milk. This produce is traditionally sold to 13 milk collector stations ran by a single company that receives most of the profit. RI is considering loans to women milk producers that allow them means of direct access to the market.

In July RI began a micro-lending program to women in the villages of operation. RI has set up a micro-credit fund with the participation of local philanthropic business entities targeting women with the provision of one cow per women as well as with other income generation opportunities. RI will also form cooperatives so that the women can obtain a better price for their milk rather than the current sole reliance on middlemen. To-date six women have received loans from the program and have already begun to earn income. The program is expected to grow to 100 women borrowers in 2 months. A team of micro-credit experts from RI is currently in Bam to help train local staff in the management of micro-credit programs.

### **3) Other:**

#### **OFAC License:**

On June 26<sup>th</sup>, RI obtained an extension to its Department of Treasury License for operations in Iran. The License is renewed for a three month period.

**General:**

According to reports, in the last six months, 11,327 people - about 11 percent of the total population - have moved into prefab accommodation in temporary camps. There are 23 temporary camps in Bam. From the start Bam's residents were reluctant to leave their land that is the main source of their livelihoods. Many grew dates in their gardens and wanted to stay by their plots to resume farming as soon as possible. This is the reason RI decided to focus on the rebuilding of permanent shelter in the villages rather than pre-fabricated housing in camps. It is estimated that about 30 percent of the population is now housed in prefabs in the city and the authorities continue to highlight the need for shelters for Bam and surrounding villages.

**UN/NGOS:**

Many NGOs and UN agencies have been withdrawing from Bam due to a lack of funding. A number of Iranian NGOs are quite active and on the mark with focused high impact programs. RI is working with a number of Iranian NGOs to strengthen local capacity and to meet the needs of widows and other especially vulnerable groups who lost family in the earthquake.

**Future Projects/Proposals**

*Cultural Center in Espchikan and Poshtrood:* Responding to the needs stated by youth in Espchikan and Poshtrood villages RI is soon begin the construction of a Cultural Center to include a Library, a Cinema and an Internet Center to serve both Espchikan and Poshtrood. Funding for this project is made available with a generous grant from the Swiss Development Cooperation office.

*English Language Classes:* RI is starting English Language Classes as of July in response to demand from youth and adults in Bam.

*Internet Café:* Consideration is being given to making the internet center available as an internet café for use in the evenings and at hours when computer training is not in session.

*Local NGO Registration:* RI plans to have a local NGO chapter registered in Iran.

Near \$2,200,000 has been raised for RI's programs in Bam. This support has been made possible by generous donations from:

- Thousands of individuals;
- Multiple Iranian-American community associations including the Persian Cultural Society of Florida, San Diego Persian Cultural Club, the Iranian Association of Boston, the Unity Project, Persian Cultural Center/Iranian Foundation, Nias Foundation, Persian Club of UC Santa Barbara and the National Iranian American Council; the Persian Center (N. Calif);
- Corporate employee donation programs including Cisco, Intel, Edison, Hughes Network Systems, Synopsis, Magma Design Automation and Countrywide;
- Foundations such as the Wells Fargo Foundation, the Flora Family foundation, The Hassenfeld Foundation, The Guzik Foundation, Terry & Jane Semel Charitable Foundation, Community Foundation Silicon Valley, California Community Foundation, Ralston Family Fund and the Clinton Family Foundation, Sagheb Family Scholarship Fund, Architecture for Humanity;
- Iranian-American media including IRAN-TV [Shabkhiz] Network (Reseda, CA);
- Corporate donations such as the Amini Innovation Corporation and Intel;
- RI's Board of Directors and staff, and;
- A generous matching grant from Pam and Pierre Omidyar.

**RI EXPRESSES DEEP GRATITUDE TO ALL THE DONORS ABOVE FOR MAKING LASTING POSITIVE IMPACT IN THE LIVES OF THE PEOPLE OF BAM.**