



The Value of the American Dollar...in Afganistan - Razeia Rasoul

Background: In July 2007, I proposed providing direct support to the sick people in Kabul who were very poor. I was unable to make any plans in advance until I got the money from the Julie Foudy Foundation.

I was very excited to find out that my proposal was approved. On the day that I received the money from the Foundation, I started my research. I spoke with a friend of my mother's who works in one of the hospitals. She told me about several hospitals and one where most of the patients don't have any money, Rabia Balkhi (Bal hee').

Accomplishments: Once I knew where I was going, I asked my mother and sister to help. It was good that my mother came because the hospital staff didn't believe me when I told them that I was there to help the sick patients. I told them that I had money from the Julie Foudy Foundation in America and that I was going to give money to the patients who needed it the most. I talked to the head of administration and the doctor in charge. The letter from the Foundation with the award was very important – when they saw it, they believed me!

The doctor said that what they needed the most was equipment to destroy biological waste (like used gloves and gauze). I explained that I didn't have enough money this time – and that my plan was to help people. She then sent me to meet with two other doctors who told me about the patients. I met with the patients or their families and heard their stories. So many stories were so sad but I had to decide how much money to give to each person. It was very difficult and I wished then that I had more money to give.

The two people who received the highest amounts had serious situations. In one case, a woman who had just given birth to a baby girl was left by her husband. She had no money and no way to care for her baby. Her mother was there to help, but she had no money either. I gave her 2,000 Afghanis (about \$40). This would be enough money for a little while. She was very grateful.

The second person who received more money was a woman who had a major medical procedure and was very sick. She could hardly get up even to say hello. She had lost a lot of blood and needed a transfusion but her family had no money to pay for it. I also gave her 2,000 Afghanis (about \$40).

I also paid the volunteer staff (they get paid by the patients if they have money) so that they would be paid to care for the sick people.

In most of the other cases, I gave each person 1,000 Afghanis (about \$20). In all, I gave money to about 15 people. They asked who gave the money to help – I explained about the Julie Foudy Foundation and how this grant of money happened. I got their permission to take their pictures and tell their stories. When I got home, my mother and I talked about how we never thought this would happen – but it did and it made me very happy to be able to do so.



I don't know how each patient used the money, but I do know that they needed it very much.

I am grateful to the Julie Foudy Foundation for making this possible.

Razeia Rasoul