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BAKHTIAR: It was perhaps the children of Afghanistan who suffered the most from the war that ravaged the country three years ago. Their education was put on hold while Afghan leaders set out to rebuild schools and the country's infrastructure.

Those images of inspired -- oh, excuse me, those images of war inspiring three people here in the United States to do what they could to get the children back in school. They actually started the organization called the Rebuilding Afghanistan Foundation, and last night the group held a ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate the completion of their first school funded with the help from RAF.

Since the war, 5 million students have returned to class. That's huge. But, says a representative of the Afghanistan embassy in Washington, there's still a long way to go.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

HELMUT KARZI, SECRETARY, AFGHANISTAN EMBASSY: Thirty-five percent of schools in Afghanistan are taught in buildings, just imagine, 35 percent. In rural areas, schools are taught in tents and containers. But (UNINTELLIGIBLE) the people of Afghanistan are devoted, and they're committed. You know, they've taken this part of peace and prosperity.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BAKHTIAR: Two of the three founders of the Afghan charity are with us this morning to talk about their work, Alexandra Coolidge, joining us from West Palm Beach, Florida, and Elizabeth Hartnett is in New York.

Thank you both for joining us. This is such an amazing project. It is good to have you with us.

Elizabeth, I understand you're the architect of this. Tell me how you came about coming up with this idea. What made you want to get involved?

ELIZABETH HARTNETT, REBUILDING AFGHANISTAN FOUNDATION: Well, Rudy, I came up with this idea around the time that the U.S. went into Iraq. And I saw the American public's attention really shift from Afghanistan to Iraq. And I will tell you, that concerned me a lot, because myself and my two co-founders, we really believed that the successful reconstruction of Afghanistan is and was vitally important, not only for the Afghan people but also for security here at home.

And we wanted to do as much as we possibly could as private citizens to help them (UNINTELLIGIBLE).

BAKHTIAR: Alexandra, tell me a little bit about this foundation.

ALEXANDRA COOLIDGE, REBUILDING AFGHANISTAN FOUNDATION: Well, the Rebuilding Afghanistan Foundation has two primary goals. And the first goal is to spread awareness of the dire state of education in Afghanistan. Right now, about 90 percent of Afghanistan is illiterate. And if we want this country to be self-sufficient and to take control of itself, we need to promote educational systems there.

And our second major goal is to build actual schools, to help construct the infrastructure so that this can be possible.

BAKHTIAR: Tell us about the Wardok (ph), the school, the elementary school that's opening up in Wardok, Afghanistan, Elizabeth.

HARTNETT: Ah, the Wardok School. Well, that is an elementary school, and it's going to be for about anywhere between 300 and 400 boys and girls ages 6 to 15. And I think what is particularly interesting about this is that roughly 90 percent of those children will be in first grade, and that is just because they have not had education.

So the U.S.-based charity that is actually doing the building and the overseeing of that school on the ground is going to make sure that there are advanced night classes for the children, particularly for the older children, so they can get up to speed as quickly as possible.

BAKHTIAR: Amazing, amazing project. And I understand you have a pen-pal operation going there, people communicating with the States. That's very exciting. And so exciting for girls there, who, before the Taliban regime was overthrown, actually not getting an education.

So bravo to you girls. Congratulations on the opening of your new school. It is very exciting to see people like you doing such amazing things all around the world and in the American name.

Alexandra Coolidge and Elizabeth Hartnett, thank you both.

HARTNETT: Thank you very much for having us.

COOLIDGE: Thank you.

BAKHTIAR: Thank you.

HARRIS: Great story.

BAKHTIAR: It's very, very...

HARRIS: Yes, great story.

BAKHTIAR: ... inspiring.

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