

Karla Schefter

Karla Schefter was born in East Prussia, Germany and trained as a nurse between 1960 and 1963. She specialised in surgical nursing and was involved in many projects setting up new surgical services and training staff to run them. Since 1989 she has worked with the German Afghanistan Committee. The Chak-e-Wardak Hospital opened its doors in the same year and now has 40 beds. It is the only hospital in the province serving more than 400,000 inhabitants. Karla works there for nine months every year.

Her special interest lies in helping Afghan women. To meet this goal, Karla built a vocational training centre for Afghan women within the hospital compound, which now stands as one of the very institutions in Afghanistan where women have a chance of being trained in health related professions and work to earn their families' living.

It is owing to her dedication and consistency that the project survived extremely difficult times, and has grown despite this. The hospital is not only an institution caring for the physical needs of patients.

Amidst an environment of war, destruction and despair, it is a sign of hope for a better tomorrow in a country which, in many aspects and to many people, represents an almost hopeless case of never-ending hate and violence. Karla Schefter is making it possible for the hospital to exist.