



ROOTS of PEACE

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ONE YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF TALIBAN TAKEOVER OF AFGHANISTAN
Roots of Peace Succeeds in Planting 1.1 Million Fruit Trees in 2022
for Food Security Amidst Dire Challenges

August 15, 2022—San Rafael, California—The Taliban Takeover of Afghanistan took place on August 15, 2021, thrusting [Roots of Peace](#), an U.S. based NGO, and hundreds of organizations into confusion and fear. Yet, one year later, this woman-led humanitarian organization has managed to overcome daunting obstacles in their mission to cultivate peace through agriculture, by overseeing a bountiful harvest in 2021 and planting over 1.1 million fruit trees in Afghanistan in Spring 2022.

Heidi Kuhn, Founder and CEO, Roots of Peace, will be the Keynote Speaker at Dominican University, Guzman Lecture Hall, in San Rafael, California, on August 15, 2022 at 10:00am/PST to reflect upon the incredible strife of their Afghan workers and expatriates, as they struggled for their lives to evacuate Afghanistan, as the unexpected ‘Fall of Kabul’ occurred within a few days. Event link [here](#).

Despite the chaos, Roots of Peace rallied after a two-week pause to ensure that their employees could continue to oversee and support the harvest of fresh fruits and vegetables in a country which is 80% dependent upon agriculture for jobs. This was a defining moment for Roots of Peace, as hundreds of organizations fled Afghanistan. Yet, Kuhn took bold steps to remain in country and continue operations.

“Nature does not wait for peace treaties to be signed, and our responsibility was to the Afghan families who trusted in our sacred promise to deliver a bountiful harvest—rather than allowing the fruits to rot in the fields,” stated Kuhn. “Parents are forced to make stark decisions as to which children to feed amid massive starvation.”

Roots of Peace has worked in Afghanistan for over two decades and planted over 6 million fruit trees in all of Afghanistan’s 34 provinces.

Today, this American NGO employs over 400 Afghans and manages a total of \$85 million US dollars--\$30 million from USAID and \$55 million from U.S. Department of State INL and UNDP. This US/Afghan team is on target to provide food security and jobs in a country where there is rampant unemployment, and cultivating a ‘Harvest of Hope’ for Afghan farmers and families.

- This [PBS REPORT](#) from September 2021 sheds light on Roots of Peace’s intense efforts after the takeover
- This [ABC7 Report](#) from early 2022 provides a six month update on Roots of Peace’s efforts in Afghanistan.

At this time, nearly 20 million people in Afghanistan—almost half the population—are facing acute hunger, according to a UN report. The crisis of foods security is acute, and hunger persists at unprecedented levels. **Roots of Peace managed to 1.1 million fruit trees in Spring 2022.**

The business of peace relies upon ‘turning guns into shovels’ by providing jobs for young men and women in agribusiness. In the most heavily mined country on earth, Roots of Peace continues to turn MINES TO VINES—teaching hundreds of thousands of young Afghans to restore the earth through agriculture, and provide hope and dignity for rural farmers as they feed future generations.



Heidi Kuhn and Afghan Farmer harvesting fresh grapes in Shomali Plains, Afghanistan (September 2019)

For more information, please visit www.rootsofpeace.org

ABOUT ROOTS OF PEACE

For the past 25 years, Roots of Peace has worked in war-torn countries around the world to remove the remnants of war, landmines and unexploded ordinances, and restore the land in order to rebuild peaceful communities for generations to come.

More than 500 million smallholder farming households across the world live on less than \$2 a day. Building a sustainable, regenerative source of income that gives families livelihoods and stability is one of the most pressing issues to be addressed in post-conflict countries. With the help of Roots of Peace, farmers are addressing the key challenges to increased income by applying modern technology and farming techniques that result in increased yields and sustainability.

The Roots of Peace “Mines to Vines” approach has impacted over one million farmers and families. By removing landmines and the remnants of war, Roots of Peace frees land held hostage by unrest. In Afghanistan, it has facilitated the export of fresh fruits, nuts and spices to markets around the world, contributing to the increase in Afghan agricultural exports from \$250 million in 2014 to over \$1.4 billion in 2020. Roots of Peace’s award-winning methodology is rooted in building a business model for peace: providing market-driven solutions tailored to rural communities in war-torn lands and serving as a catalyst for industry-wide development across the world.

For more info and the chance to donate to Roots of Peace, click [here](#).

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