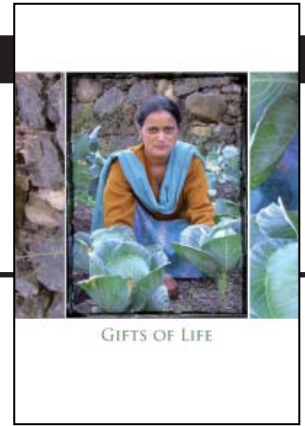


# ORGANIC VEGETABLE GARDEN



*TEAR Australia supports development projects which focus on the poorest and most marginalised people and give priority to their rights, interests and initiatives. These projects are implemented in partnership with local agencies. One of the agencies training people in vegetable gardening is ORA Afghanistan.*

## ORA AFGHANISTAN

Around the local health clinic in Pul e Charkhi, in Afghanistan, rows of vegetables grow under the hot sun. The kitchen gardens supply food for the clinic, nourishing vegetables for those recovering from illness. As patients and their visitors enter the clinic, they've been impressed by the hospital's ability to grow vegetables in such a barren area. The gardener, a qualified agriculturalist, has often been asked to demonstrate his skills and teach others how to grow their own food.

Many of the people in the village live in a camp for internally-displaced people. Some are realising that the camp may be a long-term home, and are wanting to invest in farming the area around their settlement. For them, a vegetable garden would be a way to provide for their families, transferring their farming skills to a smaller scale.

In response to community interest, the clinic, run by TEAR partner ORA International, has extended its vegetable garden to encourage the whole community to grow their own produce. The agriculturalist, an older man, has been given permission by the community to teach both the men and the women's gardening classes in the community, as he is a trusted person.

He'll begin with those already training as Community Health Workers. These volunteers are already motivated to improve health in the community, and will be role models for health and hygiene in the communities. Their training course is six months long, which will be a considerable sacrifice for the volunteer positions. As a part of the course, they will learn to establish and maintain kitchen gardens, and be given the resources to begin their own household plot. They'll also learn to propagate their own plants and maintain a hothouse. By the time they're ready to begin their health work, they will have gained the practical knowledge and experience to set up household vegetable gardens in Pul e Charkhi, and be ready to motivate others to begin gardening.

The challenge for these new gardeners will be to find ways to cart water from the community pumps to their gardens, and how to get the most out of the rocky soil. The clinic garden has its own water and a full-time gardener, so replicating its success will be a challenge.

The project will also begin a second demonstration garden in the nearby primary school, after the principal specifically requested the project to use the grounds of the school for a garden. The school has a good water supply, and the students and teachers will be responsible for maintaining the garden.

## OTHER TEAR AUSTRALIA PARTNERS PROVIDING THIS ITEM:

Prodigal's Home (India), Symbiosis (Bangladesh), Emmanuel Hospital Association Bhawan (India), Discipleship Centre (India), Chong Lu Hostel (Thailand).

*GIFT CARD IMAGE: Abni Swari's cabbages are thriving. She is a leading member of her local farmers' group in India and enjoys trying out different crops to find new sources of food and income.*



*Hothouses at the clinic grow the seedlings for the gardens.*



*Much of the population in Pul e Charkhi lives in the camps for internally-displaced people. The tents are now making way for more permanent dwellings as families settle in for the long-term.*



## GREEN GIFTS...

*...seek to address social, economic and health problems in ways which are sustainable within the environment, and which enable communities to build resilience to environmental challenges that may threaten their well-being.*

