



USAID | AFGHANISTAN

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



USAID partners with the Afghan Government and other donors to strengthen Afghanistan's education system.

- Since 2008, Afghanistan's nation-wide literacy rate has increased by 5%; since 2005, the youth literacy rate has increased by more than 16%.
- According to The Asia Foundation's 2015 Survey of the Afghan people, 67.8% say they are satisfied with education for children in their area.

Photo credit: USAID/Afghanistan

Education

Three decades of conflict devastated Afghanistan's education systems and institutions. In 2002, an estimated 900,000 boys attended school, while women and girls were almost completely excluded from educational opportunities. Since then, the Afghan government, USAID, and international donors have worked closely to rebuild Afghanistan's education sector. The Ministry of Education, with support from USAID and other donors, has built more than 16,000 schools, recruited and trained more than 154,000 teachers, and increased net enrollment rates for school-aged children is close to 60%. Today, according to Ministry of Education, more than 9 million students are enrolled in schools, 40 percent of whom are girls. Over one million Afghan learners are enrolled in schools as a result of USAID assistance and over 5 million primary grade students benefit from USAID assistance.

A strong education system that includes professional teachers and high-quality learning materials and methodologies is essential to Afghan economic growth, democratic development, and stability. Afghanistan has one of the youngest populations in the world, making quality education for rapidly growing numbers of school-aged boys and girls a top national priority.

OUR WORK

USAID education strategy focuses on addressing urgent needs and strengthening Afghan processes and institutions to build a national educational system that can sustain itself in the long term. As more Afghans attend school and seek skilled employment, there is a growing need and demand for textbooks, learning spaces, trained teachers, and innovative approaches to improve quality and to expand access to education at all levels.

IMPROVING BASIC EDUCATION

USAID supports improving the quality of basic education by helping to train more than 154,000 Ministry of Education (MoE) teachers, including more than 54,000 women and by distributing more than 130 million textbooks to schools. Women and girls attend school more often when they do not have to travel long, sometimes dangerous distances, making easy access to schools an important priority. USAID has helped over 84,000 Afghan girls attend community-based education classes, eliminating the need for Afghan girls to travel long and sometimes dangerous distances to attend school.

USAID also works directly with the MoE to build a sustainable national educational system. USAID advisors are helping the MoE strengthen financial and human resources management, procurement, and monitoring and evaluation systems. USAID and other donors have assisted the Ministry's development and implementation of national plans for strengthening Afghanistan's education sector. The National Education Strategic Plan III (2014-2020) establishes policies and objectives for the next five years, and focuses on preparing skilled and competent citizens through the education systems to sustain Afghanistan's socioeconomic development and social cohesion through three components: Quality and Relevant, Equitable Access and Efficient and Transparent Management.

SUPPORTING HIGHER EDUCATION

According to the Afghan Central Statistics Organization, public university enrollment has increased from 7,800 in 2001 to 174,425 in 2015, 21% of which are women, and demand for higher education continues to grow. USAID is helping Afghanistan's higher education professionals effectively manage the growth in demand for higher education while also improving academic quality. The University Support and Workforce Development Program helps improve the management capacity of the Ministry of Higher Education and 11 public universities to manage this growth, improve academics, and create new opportunities for Afghan students pursuing higher education. USAID helped develop Afghanistan's first Information Technology associate degree at Kabul Polytechnic University to link students with growing industries; launch the first associate degree in Bio-Medical Equipment Technology at Kabul Medical University to develop local healthcare talents; establish a new Master's Degree of Educational Leadership and Management at Shaheed Rabbani Education University to cultivate Afghan educational leaders. Similarly, with USAID's assistance, the American University of Afghanistan (AUAF) enrolls 41% female students – one of the highest percentages of female enrollment in Afghanistan. AUAF has offered Afghanistan's first western-style Master of Business Administration degree since 2011 as well as opened Professional Development Institute to provide professional training and certification programs.

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