

WORSAJ EDUCATION PROJECT 2014



Proposal: A school construction for 588 girls at Pastab School, Worsaj, NE Afghanistan

What is the Worsaj Education Project?

Afghan Connection (AC) set up the Worsaj Education Project in 2011, in conjunction with its long-standing partner, the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan. The focus of this project has been to support education for a population of 80,000 in the remote district of Worsaj, Takhar Province in Northern Afghanistan, where barely a single adult woman can read or write.



This initiative has allowed AC to address the issues that keep children from accessing and completing an education. Working across the educational 'value chain', AC supports school construction for schools who have little or no facilities, community-based education for children in the more remote villages who cannot reach such schools, teacher training as standards of teaching are so low and there are very few female teachers in Afghanistan and finally the provision of training and infrastructure for the District Education Authorities so that over the coming years this education program will be maintained.

What problem would **this** project like to solve?



AC has prioritised Pastab School for a new school building as part of the Worsaj Education Project. Why? Pastab School, which covers grades 1-12, serves 588 girls. Currently the girls have to share the local boys' school where there are 487 male students. It is too small to house all the children and according to custom, Afghan boys and girls study in separate shifts. As a result, there are 2 shifts in operation, one in the mornings for the girls and one in the afternoon for the boys. Consequently, none of the children benefit from a proper education but study for just a few hours each day. The aim is to construct a building for the girls, so they would have their own separate classroom block with a surrounding wall.

Project proposal and costs:

The proposal is to build a new school building for the girls and the boys will keep the current school building. Due to limited space, the building will be a 2-storey block and will comprise 8 classrooms, 4 admin offices and a retaining wall. The total cost of this project will be £171,000. The community has donated \$16,000 to buy this land and will also give free labour for construction. In this way, the community has ownership and care for the future of the school.

Budget breakdown for construction of 8 classrooms in a 2-storey building, 4 admin rooms and retaining wall

	Total Project Cost (\$)
Project Staff (local staff, skilled and unskilled labour)	52,000
Equipment	1,700
Materials	170,000
Transportation/Fuel	6,500
Other	1,900
Total	232,100
SCA management and supervision costs	11,605
Grand total for construction	243,705
Furnishing and Equipping	13,500
Afghan Connection 10% operating costs	25,720
Total cost of project in dollars	282,925
Total cost of project in Sterling	£171,000

AC payments are fixed in US dollars. All costs are subject to variation in exchanges rates. Exchange rate 1 USD = 0.604

Information about AC's local delivery partner:

AC has worked closely with its implementing partner, the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA) for over a decade. The SCA have been present in Afghanistan for over 30 years. Committed, well respected and experienced, they know how to get things done on the ground. By channeling funds directly through the SCA, AC has been able to ensure that there is no corruption, money raised is focused on projects and is within budget.

How will a new school building benefit the community?

- Both the girls and the boys will have their own separate buildings and so children will have access to 2 available shifts. This means that all students will be able to benefit from a proper school day.
- A new separate school for the girls, with a surrounding wall, will encourage parents to let their girls stay in school beyond grade 6 and it will also persuade more parents to send their girls to school in the first place.
- As a result less children, especially girls, will dropout of school and more will complete an education.
- More educated students, especially girls, will improve the quality of family life. An educated population will help to develop the overall prosperity in this poor, isolated area.

Why is school construction so important?

Safe, separate schools for girls and boys help to make the Worsaj Education Project acceptable to the conservative elements of society, and means that girls can both access and complete an education.

In this district, where barely an adult woman is literate, nearly all children are attending school, girls in equal numbers to boys. Listening to the local communities and operating in a culturally sensitive way has helped to achieve this result.

How will the project be sustained once the building has been completed?

The Ministry of Education, via the local education authority, will continue to run the school and there will be no direct need for on-going AC commitment. The Ministry will thus fund the education of the children and the locals will maintain the buildings or seek help through the District Education Department to maintain buildings. However, AC will continue to visit the school and the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan employ school consultants who operate throughout the Takhar region and will visit the school at regular intervals.

