



SIGAR

Office of the Special Inspector General
for Afghanistan Reconstruction

January 8, 2019

The Honorable Mark Green
Administrator, U.S. Agency for International Development

Ms. Karen Freeman
Assistant to the Administrator,
Office of Afghanistan and Pakistan Affairs, USAID

Mr. Peter Natiello
USAID Mission Director for Afghanistan

Dear Administrator Green, Ms. Freeman, and Mr. Natiello:

This report is the eighth in a series that discusses our findings from site visits at schools across Afghanistan that were either built or rehabilitated by USAID. The 14 schools discussed in this report are in Baghlan province, Afghanistan. The purpose of this review was to determine the extent to which those schools were open and operational, and to assess their current condition. We found that all 14 schools were open and in generally usable condition. Two of the schools that remained open, however, had major structural issues, which were the subject of two alert letters issued in February and March 2018. We also found that there may be problems with student and teacher attendance at some of the schools. In addition, we found that some schools have structural deficiencies (e.g. cracked or crumbling walls or holes in windows) that could potentially impact safety and the delivery of education.

We provided a draft of this review to USAID for comment on December 14, 2018. USAID provided comments on January 2, 2019. In its comments, USAID stated that in addition to sharing this report with the Ministry of Education (MOE), USAID “will request that the MOE provide USAID with an update, within ninety (90) days of the receipt of the report from USAID, on the actions taken by the Government of Afghanistan to correct each structural and operational deficiency identified by SIGAR in its draft report.” USAID’s comments are reproduced in appendix I.

We conducted our work in Baghlan province, and Kabul, Afghanistan, and in Washington, D.C. from December 2017 to October 2018 under the authority of Public Law No. 110-181, as amended, and the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended; and in accordance with the Council of Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency (CIGIE) *Quality Standards for Inspection and Evaluation*. Should you or your staff have any questions about this project, please contact Mr. Benjamin Piccolo, Director of Special Projects, at (703) 545-2142 or benjamin.j.piccolo.civ@mail.mil or Mr. Parker Laite at (703) 545-5966 or parker.s.laite.civ@mail.mil.

Sincerely,

John F. Sopko
Special Inspector General
for Afghanistan Reconstruction

The United States has made significant investments in Afghanistan's education sector since 2002. Specifically as of September 30, 2018, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) reported that it has disbursed over 1 billion for education programs in Afghanistan.¹ USAID's programs have concentrated on teacher training, child literacy, community-based education, textbook printing and distribution, and school construction or rehabilitation. USAID-constructed or rehabilitated schools include primary, lower secondary, and higher secondary schools; teacher training colleges; universities; kindergartens; and trade schools.²

USAID has claimed that the Afghan education sector is an area in which USAID programs "have contributed to measurable positive impacts on Afghanistan's development and stability."³ For example, in USAID's 2014 fact sheet on education in Afghanistan and in response to a 2013 SIGAR request for a list of its most successful programs in Afghanistan, USAID cited an increased student enrollment from 900,000 students in 2002 to 8 million in 2013 as evidence of overall progress in the sector.

Nevertheless, concerns with the Afghan education system have received attention at the highest levels of the Afghan government. The Afghan Minister of Education, Dr. Asadullah Hanif Balkhi, told parliament in May 2015, that nonexistent schools received funding and noted that the ministry's Education Management Information System, used for tracking the number of functioning schools, is imprecise.⁴ Similarly, in June 2015, the Independent Joint Anti-Corruption Monitoring and Evaluation Committee (MEC) reported that "ghost"⁵ teachers have been a long-standing problem, and in most provinces, including Baghlan, teacher attendance sheets are not filled out or are frequently forged.⁶

Concerned by these and similar allegations, SIGAR issued an inquiry letter to USAID on June 11, 2015.⁷ The letter requested information regarding the reliability of data used by USAID to fund, oversee, and measure the effectiveness of its education programs in Afghanistan. In response, USAID stated that it "has been working with the Ministry of Education [MoE] for over a decade, has a good understanding of the challenges of working in Afghanistan, and has developed monitoring procedures, in compliance with standard practices, for USAID projects that do not rely solely on data from MoE."⁸

¹ USAID's active education programs have a total estimated cost of \$500 million (see, SIGAR, *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress*, October 30, 2018, p. 158).

² For the purposes of this report, we will collectively refer to these facilities as "schools," and individually, unless otherwise noted, as a "school."

³ USAID, *Response to SIGAR Letter to the Department of State, USAID, and Department of Defense Requesting Top Most Successful and Least Successful Projects*, May 9, 2013.

⁴ UNAMA, "WJ Proceedings Summary," May 27, 2015.

⁵ The word "ghost" has been used to refer to teachers, students, and schools that are registered with the Afghan Ministry of Education, but that do not actually exist.

⁶ Independent Joint Anti-Corruption Monitoring and Evaluation Committee, "Vulnerability to Corruption Assessment of Teacher Recruitment in the Ministry of Education," June 2015, p. 6.

⁷ SIGAR, *Afghanistan Education Data Inquiry Letter*, SIGAR 15-62-SP, June 11, 2015.

⁸ USAID, "Response to the Inquiry Letter on Afghanistan Education Data Reliability, (SIGAR Inquiry Letter-15-62-SP)," June 30, 2015.

THE AFGHAN EDUCATION SYSTEM

The Afghan Ministry of Education (MOE) is responsible for administering general education, Islamic education, technical and vocational education, and teacher and literacy training in Afghanistan. The MOE-administered education system consists of three levels:⁹

1. Primary Education: Grades 1 through 6, where students age 7 to 12 learn reading, writing, arithmetic, and national culture.
2. Lower Secondary Education: Grades 7 through 9, for students age 13 to 15.
3. Higher/Upper Secondary Education: Grades 10 through 12, where students age 16 to 18 choose between continuing an academic path that could lead to university or studying subjects such as applied agriculture, aeronautics, arts, commerce, and teacher training.

According to the MOE's Education Management Information System (EMIS) for Afghan fiscal year 1396 (December 22, 2016 – December 21, 2017), Afghanistan reportedly had 16,049 general-education (government run, grades 1-12) schools, including 959 inactive/closed schools, with 8.95 million students enrolled. The number of enrolled students includes both students who regularly attend school as well as those that have been absent for up to three years. The MOE counts students who have been absent for up to three years as enrolled because, it says, they might return to school. In October 2017, a report from the Joint Anti-Corruption Monitoring and Evaluation Committee said that this sub-population represents about 20 percent of total enrolled students, implying only about 7.2 million students were actually attending classes in Afghanistan.¹⁰

To help the MOE gather school data to guide its decision making, and help understand how donor funding is benefitting Afghanistan's education system, donors funded EMIS, which tracks educational statistics such as the number of teachers working and students enrolled in schools. However, the Afghan government, as well as USAID, have stated that the EMIS data is imprecise and inaccurate. In addition USAID funded two assessments of EMIS data quality to identify and address gaps in the system.

USAID's first assessment identified key weaknesses within EMIS, including a lack of oversight, inconsistent monitoring at schools, insufficient capacity and training on EMIS forms and procedures, inadequate financing and overreliance on donor-funded assistance, and lack of coordination resulting in duplicative data collection and inefficiencies. USAID's second assessment focused on verifying EMIS data to assess its reliability and identifying inconsistencies at the national, provincial, and local school levels. The assessment found that EMIS data collection varied at the school-level and there was an urgent need for training. School officials lacked a clear understanding of the EMIS form and how to fill it out, particularly student and teacher data, resulting in data discrepancies and inaccurate information. For example, the assessment documented seven percent more teachers marked present in attendance registers than actually found at schools.

As part of our ongoing examination of the Afghan education sector, and to assist USAID and the Afghan government to improve education-related data throughout Afghanistan, we initiated this special project to determine whether schools purportedly built or rehabilitated in Baghlan province using USAID funds were open and operational, and to assess their current condition.¹¹ To accomplish these objectives, we inspected 14

⁹ SIGAR, *Primary and Secondary Education in Afghanistan: Comprehensive Assessments Needed to Determine the Progress and Effectiveness of Over \$759 Million in DOD, State, and USAID Programs*, SIGAR 16-32-AR, April 26, 2016, pg. 10.

¹⁰ SIGAR, *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress*, January 30, 2018, p. 186.

¹¹ This report is the eighth in a series that will discuss our findings from site visits at USAID-funded schools across Afghanistan (see, SIGAR, *Schools in Herat Province: Observations from Site Visits at 25 Schools*, SIGAR 17-12-SP, November 4, 2016; SIGAR, *Schools in Balkh Province: Observations From Site Visits at 26 Schools*, SIGAR-17-32-SP, March 28, 2017; SIGAR *Schools in Khost Province, Afghanistan: Observations from Site Visits at 23 Schools*, SIGAR-17-66-SP, September 12, 2017; SIGAR, *Schools in Faryab Province, Afghanistan: Observations from Site Visits at 17 Schools*, SIGAR-

USAID-funded projects to rehabilitate or construct schools in Baghlan province between November 2004 and February 2007. We worked jointly with an Afghan civil society organization to locate and conduct site visits of 14 such schools in December 2017 and March-April 2018.

Our site visits lasted for approximately one hour and were conducted during normal school days and operating hours.¹² At each site visit, we observed and recorded information about school resources and structures, completed standardized survey questionnaires, and, where available, interviewed school officials and community members.¹³ We also used Global Positioning System (GPS)-enabled cameras to secure geospatial coordinate- and date/time-stamped photographs for each school. These photos enabled us to determine school coordinates, identify potential problems, and assess general operations and usability for each school facility.

While a single site visit, during one of three possible shifts at a school, cannot substantiate claims of absent or “ghost” teachers or students, it does provide valuable insight into the operations of a school on a normal school day.

CONDITIONS REPORTED AND OBSERVED AT 14 SCHOOLS IN BAGHLAN PROVINCE

We conducted site visits at 14 schools in Baghlan province that USAID paid to construct or rehabilitate and that are now operated by the Afghan MOE. We also interviewed school staff and community members. All 14 schools appeared to be open and in-use, though we have concerns about the structural integrity of two of these schools, which were the subject of two alert letters issued earlier this year.¹⁴ Figure 1 shows the general location of the schools we visited in Baghlan.

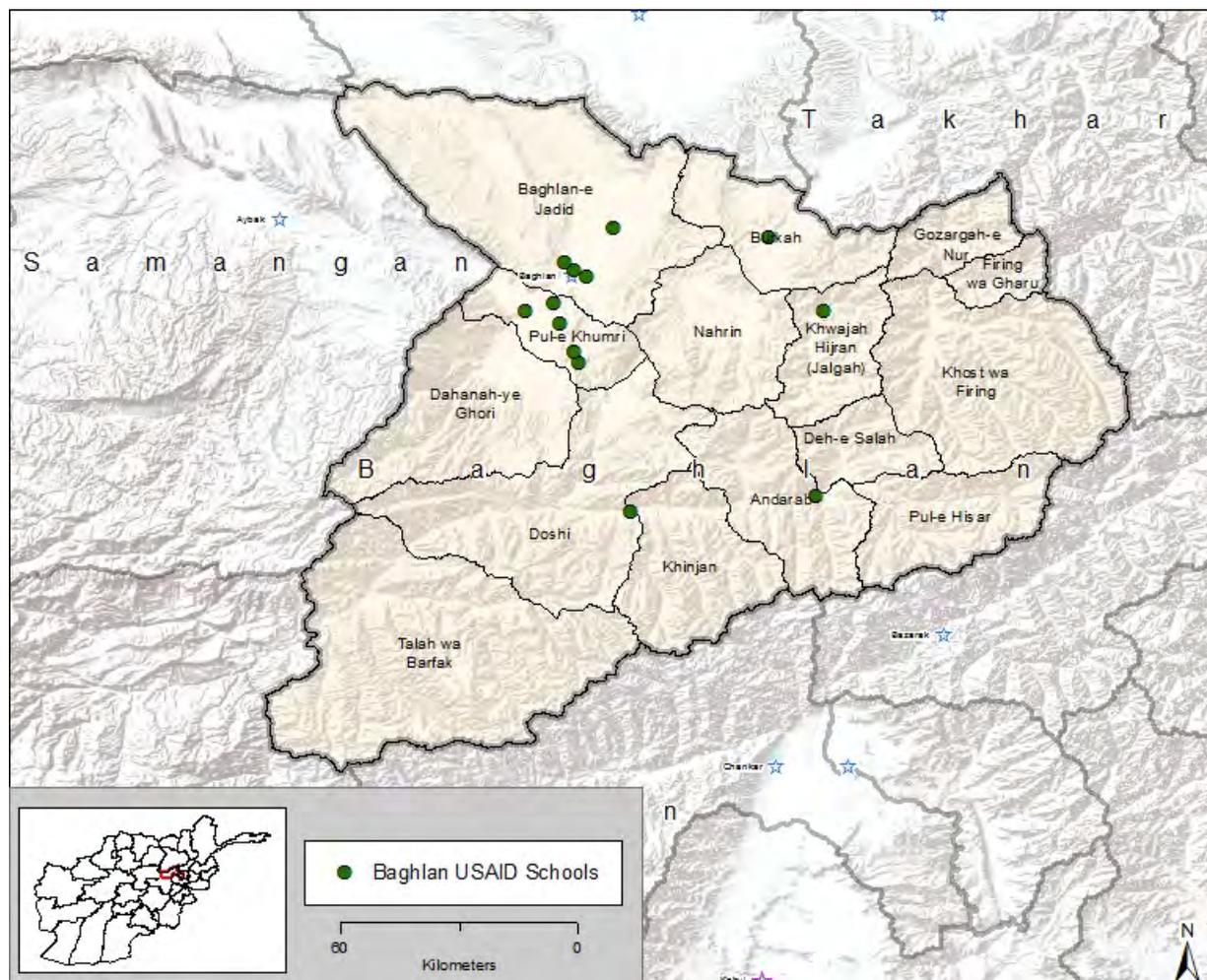
18-17-SP SIGAR, December 12, 2017; *Schools in Kabul Province, Afghanistan: Observations from Site Visits at 24 Schools*, SIGAR 18-31-SP, February 6, 2018; SIGAR, *Schools in Kunduz Province, Afghanistan: Observations from Site Visits at 6 Schools*, SIGAR 18-40-SP, April 4, 2018; and SIGAR, *Schools in Parwan Province, Afghanistan: Observations from Site Visits at 14 Schools*, SIGAR 18-67-SP, August 21, 2018.

¹² We define a normal school day in Afghanistan as Saturday-Thursday between 08:00AM and 3:30PM. In this instance, our inspectors visited the schools in Baghlan province twice. The first inspection in December 2017 occurred during school holidays and so inspectors were unable to observe the classes in session, though we were able to conduct structural surveys and staff interviews. SIGAR inspectors returned in March and April of 2018 to observe normal classes.

¹³ The survey had eight sections: general observations, school compound observations, student and teacher observations, building observations, staff interviews, community interviews, interview background, and inspector input. Prior to completing on-site visits, staff were trained on how to locate and access a school, perform internal and external observations, fill out questionnaires properly, and take GPS-embedded and date/time-stamped photographs. One official from each school was asked to complete the survey/questionnaire and provide responses for the school to provide insights related to student and teacher enrollment and attendance, school functionality, and other relevant information. An inspection supervisor attended several site inspections to ensure that staff collected survey information in a standardized manner, accurately accounted for all questions on the questionnaire, and properly photographed facilities.

¹⁴ In February 2018, we issued an alert letter warning of severe wall and structural damage at School SR 06 in Baghlan. In March 2018 we issued another alert letter warning of severe ceiling, roof, and wall damage at School SR 09 in Baghlan. The poor condition of these schools represents a serious threat to both the lives of students in the schools and the delivery of education. (See SIGAR, *Alert Letter: Structural Damage at Educational Facility SR 06*, SIGAR, 18-32-SP, February 27, 2018 and SIGAR, *Alert Letter: Structural Damage at Educational Facility SR 09*, SIGAR, 18-36-SP, March 30, 2018).

Figure 1 - Location of Schools Visited in Baghlan Province



Source: SIGAR analysis

Site Visits at 14 Schools in Baghlan During One Shift on a Normal School Day: Number of Students Observed

School staff reported that the 14 schools we visited typically operated one shift (3 schools), two shifts (7 schools), or three shifts (4 schools) of approximately 3.5-4.5 hours each per school day. We interviewed school staff and asked questions about total enrollment and the estimated daily number of absent students. Survey responses were collected and analyzed for irregularities. Officials reported a total enrollment of 8220 students across all 14 schools with an expected absentee rate of approximately 14 percent (1254 students) for a total of 6966 students expected to attend on a typical shift across all 14 schools.

We observed 5370 students present across all schools, which represents approximately 77 percent of all students expected to be in attendance during the observed shift. We observed five schools with less than 70 percent attendance of students enrolled. Table 1 provides a list of reported and observed numbers of students at each school.

As shown in Table 1, most of the schools we visited appear to be well attended, with nine schools having 70 percent or more of enrolled students present during the shift we observed, and, of those nine schools, three had attendance exceeding 90 percent of enrolled students.

Table 1 - Reported and Observed Student Data at 14 Schools in Baghlan Province During One Shift on a Normal Day

USAID School No.	District	School Type	School Level	Observed Operational Status	Reported For this shift (Students) ¹	Approximate Number Observed in One Shift ² (Students)	Observed Student Percentage ³	Reported Number of Daily Shifts
S030A	Puli Khumri	Boys only	P, L, H	Open	690	665	96%	3
SR 09	Puli Khumri	Boys and Girls (co-education)	P, L	Open	500	480	96%	1
S029A	Puli Khumri	Girls only	P, L, H	Open	380	350	92%	2
SR 03	Puli Khumri	Boys only	P, L, H	Open	630	550	87%	3
S025A	Andarab	Boys only	P, L, H	Open	200	160	80%	2
S031A	Puli Khumri	Boys and Girls (co-education)	P, L, H	Open	824	650	79%	1
SR 02	Puli Khumri	Girls only	P, L, H	Open	1287	1000	78%	3
SR 05	Baghlan Jadid	Boys and Girls (co-education)	P, L, H	Open	260	200	77%	3
S024A	Burka	Boys only	P, L, H	Open	400	300	75%	2
SR 06	Baghlan Markazi	Boys only	P, L, H	Open	230	150	65%	2
S027A	Khuja Hijra Jilga	Boys and Girls (co-education)	P, L, H	Open	320	200	63%	1
SR 04	Baghlan Jadid	Boys and Girls (co-education)	P, L	Open	645	400	62%	2
S032A	Baghlan Markazi	Boys and Girls (co-education)	P, L, H	Open	300	150	50%	2
S033A	Khinjan	Boys and Girls (co-education)	P, L, H	Open	300	115	38%	2
Total					6,966	5,370	77%	

Note: C – college or university; H – higher secondary school; L – lower secondary school; and P – primary school Source: SIGAR analysis.

Observed students may reflect double counting of students observed both inside and outside of schools.

¹ Reported students are adjusted to account for daily reported absent students.

² Observed students reflect the sum of students on school grounds; in cases where we were unable to conduct a precise count without interrupting school operations, we approximated the number of students observed at the facility.

³ The Observed Student Percentage column reflects the observed students as a portion of total attendance. However, since SIGAR did not observe attendance across all shifts, we could not determine how the proportion of students observed in one shift compares to other shifts at each school. This figure represents the percentage of students observed on-site compared to the total adjusted number of students reported by school officials during the survey interview.

Photos 1 and 2 show students at a well-attended school attending class, and Photos 3 and 4 show the classrooms at a poorly attended school where less than xx percent of students were present during the one shift operated by the school.

Photo 1 - Students in Well-Attended Classes at School S030A



Source: SIGAR: April 7, 2018

Photo 2 - Students in Well-Attended Classes at School S029A



Source: SIGAR: April 2, 2018

Photo 3 - Poorly Attended Facilities at School S032A



Source: SIGAR: April 4, 2018

Photo 4 - Poorly Attended Facilities at School S033A



Source: SIGAR: March 31, 2018

Site Visits at 14 Schools in Baghlan Province during One Shift on a Normal Day: Number of Teachers Observed

School staff reported a total of 253 teachers assigned across all schools with 240 expected to be on-site during our visits. For 10 schools, we observed that at least 70% of the teachers assigned to the school were present. For the other 4 schools, between 56% and 68% of the teachers were present. Notably, 3 of these 4

were the same schools that also had some of the lowest student attendance rates (see Table 1).¹⁵ Table 2 provides a list of reported and observed numbers of teachers at each inspected school.¹⁶

Table 2 - Reported and Observed Teacher Data at 14 Schools in Baghlan Province During One Shift on a Normal Day

USAID School No.	District	School Type	School Level	Observed Operational Status	MOE Reported for current Shift ¹ (Teachers)	Approximate Number SIGAR Observed In One Shift (Teachers)	SIGAR Observed Teacher Percentage ²	Reported Number of Daily Shifts
SR 05	Baghlan Jadid	Boys and Girls (co-education)	P, L, H	Open	9	9	100%	3
S032A	Baghlan Markazi	Boys and Girls (co-education)	P, L, H	Open	9	9	100%	2
S024A	Burka	Boys only	P, L, H	Open	10	10	100%	2
S025A	Andarab	Boys only	P, L, H	Open	7	7	100%	2
S029A	Puli Khumri	Girls only	P, L, H	Open	13	12	92%	2
SR 06	Baghlan Markazi	Boys only	P, L, H	Open	9	8	89%	2
SR 03	Puli Khumri	Boys only	P, L, H	Open	23	20	87%	3
SR 09	Puli Khumri	Boys and Girls (co-education)	P, L	Open	15	13	87%	1
SR 02	Puli Khumri	Girls only	P, L, H	Open	47	40	85%	3
S031A	Puli Khumri	Boys and Girls (co-education)	P, L, H	Open	14	10	71%	1
S027A	Khuja Hijra Jilga	Boys and Girls (co-education)	P, L, H	Open	22	15	68%	1
S030A	Puli Khumri	Boys only	P, L, H	Open	32	20	63%	3
S033A	Khinjan	Boys and Girls (co-education)	P, L, H	Open	12	7	58%	2
SR 04	Baghlan Jadid	Boys and Girls (co-education)	P, L	Open	18	10	56%	2
Total					240	190	79%	

Note: C – college or university; H – higher secondary school; L – lower secondary school; and P – primary school Source: SIGAR analysis

¹ MOE reported teachers are adjusted to account for daily reported absent teachers.

² The SIGAR Observed Teachers Percentage column reflects the approximate number of observed teachers in one shift as a portion of teachers reported for that shift.

SEVERAL SCHOOLS HAD STRUCTURAL AND OPERATIONAL DEFICIENCIES

During our site visits we noted several schools had structural and operational deficiencies, including roof damage, broken windows and doors, faulty wiring, missing or broken light bulbs, no electricity or water, missing or broken tables and chairs, and overall poor sanitary conditions. Some of these deficiencies could potentially affect safety and may contribute to lower attendance of students and teachers.

Most Schools Lacked Electricity and Functioning Lights

We found that 8 of the 14 schools we visited did not have access to electricity in the classrooms or offices. Moreover, none of the schools had functioning lights. Five of the 14 schools did not have functioning lights due to faulty wiring, and missing or broken bulbs. Photos 5 and 6 show one of the common issues, exposed nonfunctional wiring and missing bulbs, at two of the schools.

¹⁵ Numbers are rounded.

¹⁶ Numbers are rounded and only reflect the number of teachers observed on school grounds during site inspections. It does not provide additional context into the reasons for a teacher's absence or whether the absence was sanctioned by school officials.

Photo 5 - Exposed Wires at School SR03



Source: SIGAR: April 4, 2018

Photo 6 - Unusable Lights at School S033A



Source: SIGAR: March 31, 2018

Observations on Access to Water and Overall Sanitary Conditions at the Schools we Visited

Twelve of the 14 schools we visited had access to water, with one school relying on the local river for water and 11 other schools depending on wells. The two schools that did not have access to water reported either an empty well or a broken water purifier as reasons for lack of access. Photo 7 shows a broken water purifier at school S032A and Photo 8 shows a functioning well at school SR 05.

We also noted that several schools face sanitary issues relating to toilets. While all of the 14 schools had functioning toilets, none had toilets that appeared to be cleaned or maintained.

Photo 7 - Broken Water Purifier at School S032



Source: SIGAR: April 4, 2018

Photo 8 - Functioning Well at School SR 05



Source: SIGAR: April 4, 2018

Structural Deficiencies At Several Schools Could Present Safety Hazards

During our site visits, we observed schools with structural deficiencies, including some deficiencies that potentially put the safety of students and teachers at risk.¹⁷ Specifically, we found three schools with cracks or large holes in their roofs, 10 schools with roofs that leaked, and six schools had broken windows. Six of the 14 schools had damaged walls and damaged doors. Photos 9 and 10 show structural damage at two of the schools.

Photo 9 - Structural Damage at School SR 09



Source: SIGAR: April 2, 2018

Photo 10 - Structural Damage at School S025A



Source: SIGAR: March 31, 2018

Photos 11 and 12 show examples of broken windows and broken doors at Schools S024A and S027A.

Photo 11 - Broken Windows at School S024A



Source: SIGAR: April 5, 2018

Photo 12 - Broken Door at School S027A



Source: SIGAR: April 5, 2018

¹⁷ See alert letters SIGAR 18-32-SP and SIGAR 18-36-SP.

We found that only 4 of the 14 schools had enough tables and chairs for the students who were present. In classrooms at 10 schools, we observed that students were sitting on the floor. Additionally, we observed classes conducted outdoors at 11 of the 14 schools. Photos 13 and 14 show examples of classrooms SIGAR observed, where students were sitting on the floor or where class was conducted outside. Moreover, several of the facilities had stockpiles of broken furniture on school grounds. Photos 15 and 16 show broken furniture at schools S031A and SR 02.

Photo 13 - Class Outdoors Without Seating at School S027A



Source: SIGAR: April 5, 2018

Photo 14 - Class Outdoors at School SR 02



Source: SIGAR: April 5, 2018

Photo 15 - Broken Classroom Furniture at School S031A



Source: SIGAR: April 2, 2018

Photo 16 - Outdoor Broken Furniture Pile at School SR 02



Source: SIGAR: April 7, 2018

CONCLUSION

We visited 14 schools built or rehabilitated by USAID in Baghlan province, and found that all 14 were open and in generally usable condition. Two of the schools, however, had major structural issues which were the subject of two alert letters issued by SIGAR in February and March 2018. In response to those alert letters, USAID stated that it has taken action to “inform the Ministry of Education and the Baghlan Provincial Education Directorate of the situation and of the hazards of continued use of the facilitie[s].” We observed that roughly 77 percent of students were in attendance across all 14 schools. We also observed that roughly 79 percent of teachers were present at the time of our inspections. In addition, we observed that some of the schools we visited lacked access to water, had poor sanitary conditions, and/or showed signs of potential structural damage and safety hazards, which could potentially impact the safety of teachers and students.

RECOMMENDATION

To help ensure that students and teachers in Baghlan attend schools that are safe and have access to basic utilities, we recommend that USAID share the results of this review with MOE, so that the structural and other deficiencies we identified can be brought to the attention of those responsible for addressing them.

AGENCY COMMENTS

We provided a draft of this review to USAID for comment on December 14, 2018. USAID provided comments on January 2, 2019. In its comments, USAID stated that in addition to sharing this report with the Ministry of Education (MOE), USAID “will request that the MOE provide USAID with an update, within ninety (90) days of the receipt of the report from USAID, on the actions taken by the Government of Afghanistan to correct each structural and operational deficiency identified by SIGAR in its draft report.” USAID’s comments are reproduced in appendix I.

APPENDIX I – USAID COMMENTS ON DRAFT REPORT



USAID | AFGHANISTAN

MEMORANDUM

January 2, 2019

TO: John F. Sopko
Special Inspector General for
Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR)

FROM: Jeff Cohen, Acting Mission Director 

SUBJECT: USAID Response to the SIGAR Office of Special Projects
Draft Report – *Schools in Baghlan Province,
Afghanistan: Observations from Site Visits at 14 Schools*

REF: SIGAR Transmittal email dated 12/14/2018

USAID thanks SIGAR for this opportunity to comment on the subject draft report.

USAID is pleased to learn that SIGAR reported and observed that all 14 schools visited by it during the subject special project review were open and in use, and that it determined that approximately 77 percent of students and 79 percent of teachers were in attendance at these schools.

In its draft report, SIGAR also states that it observed structural and operational deficiencies at some of the 14 Baghlan Province schools visited, namely a lack of electricity or functioning lights, poor sanitation, and structural deficiencies which could present safety hazards (including two schools that are the subject of SIGAR alert letters to USAID in February and March 2018). As a result of these observations, SIGAR's draft report includes one recommendation:

To help ensure that student and teachers in Baghlan attend schools that are safe and have access to basic utilities, we recommend that USAID share the results of this review with the [Ministry of Education (MOE)], so that the structural and other deficiencies we identified can be brought to the attention of those responsible for addressing them.

U.S. Agency for International Development
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Email: publicaffairs@usaid.gov
<http://ambassador.usaid.gov>

USAID agrees with this recommendation. In addition to sharing SIGAR's report with the MOE, we will request that the MOE provide USAID with an update, within ninety (90) days of the receipt of the report from USAID, on the actions taken by the Government of Afghanistan to correct each structural and operational deficiency identified by SIGAR in its draft report. USAID will share with SIGAR any response we receive from the MoE. For the foregoing reason, USAID requests that this recommendation be closed by SIGAR upon receipt of this USAID memorandum.

cc: Omar Robles, Acting Controller, USAID/Afghanistan
Kristian Moore, U.S. Embassy/Kabul
OAPA Audit
James Borger, Acting Education Office Director, USAID/Afghanistan

This project was conducted
under project code SP-193.

SIGAR's Mission

The mission of the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) is to enhance oversight of programs for the reconstruction of Afghanistan by conducting independent and objective audits, inspections, and investigations on the use of taxpayer dollars and related funds. SIGAR works to provide accurate and balanced information, evaluations, analysis, and recommendations to help the U.S. Congress, U.S. agencies, and other decision-makers to make informed oversight, policy, and funding decisions to:

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- prevent fraud, waste, and abuse; and
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