



# International Rescue Committee in Afghanistan: *Education and Child Protection* www.theIRC.org

## Overview



For over 10 years, IRC’s Education Program has delivered quality community-based education in villages where there are no schools. We establish community-based schools in rural areas, train teachers and school management committees, conduct adult literacy and early childhood development classes, and supply classrooms with education materials. As part of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) funded Partnership for Advancing Community-based Education in Afghanistan (PACE-A), IRC is working in five provinces to bolster Afghanistan’s education system. With support from Stichting Vluchteling (SV), we provide education for former refugees who are returning home.

We work closely with the Ministry of Education, and since 2004 we have integrated more than 500 community-based schools and 400 community-based school teachers into the government education system.

*Community-based schools provide learning opportunities in rural, isolated areas where no government provided schooling is available.*

Since 2003, IRC’s Child Protection Program has worked to decrease risks to children’s wellbeing with support from USAID’s Displaced Children & Orphans Fund (DCOF)). In 2005, IRC became one of the only organizations in Afghanistan helping children with hearing and visual impairments attend mainstream government schools. With support from EuropeAid, this initiative is expanding to four additional provinces in conjunction with the community-based education project.

## Education

IRC’s Education Program aims to expand quality learning for marginalized communities and their children, particularly girls and women. In 2006, we enrolled over 5,000 students in community-based schools, integrated over 3,000 students into government schools, conducted literacy training with 1,445 adults, and trained over 800 teachers.

Currently, we mobilize communities to establish School Management Committees, which locally manage community-based education; create community-based schools, adult literacy and early childhood development classes; train community and Ministry of Education teachers; and work with the Ministry of Education to determine education needs.

*Literacy rates in Afghanistan are among the lowest in the world. The problem is particularly acute for women and girls; by some estimates literacy rates are roughly 50% for males and 20% for females.*

## Child Protection

IRC’s child protection program conducts community education, health, and advocacy activities designed to raise awareness of the rights and needs of children. In 2006, the Child Protection Program successfully integrated 49 children with visual and hearing impairments into mainstream government school classrooms and trained 138 teachers in sign language or Braille, and techniques for including children with disabilities into mainstream classes. Expansion of this initiative will include the integration of an additional 100 children with sensory disabilities in community-based schools.

Currently, other activities include mobilizing and training communities to establish Community Working Groups, which locally identify and manage community-based activities that reduce risks to children; providing teacher training using Healing Classrooms, a module that aims to improve teachers’ skills to promoting psychosocial wellbeing in the classroom; fostering public awareness of child protection issues and promoting children’s participation in media; and providing psychosocial support for children through such means as playgrounds, green spaces, and sports.

**INTERNATIONAL RESCUE COMMITTEE**  
House No: 61, Kochai Afghana  
Shash Darak, District (9)  
Kabul, Afghanistan

**AFGHANISTAN CONTACT**  
Ciaran Donnelly: [Ciaran.Donnelly@theIRC.org](mailto:Ciaran.Donnelly@theIRC.org)  
**NEW YORK CONTACT**  
Aaron Rippenkroeger: [Aaron.Rippenkroeger@theIRC.org](mailto:Aaron.Rippenkroeger@theIRC.org)