



**Save the Children in Partnership with
Avaya Charitable Fund**

Building Boundary Walls at Schools In Afghanistan

Final Report, March 2022

Our Deepest Thanks

Save the Children is deeply appreciative of the steadfast support Avaya and your employees have shown to us over so many years. Whether enabling us to build classrooms for girls or provide children with safer, more resilient spaces in which to learn, you have given children in our sponsorship communities access to resources they would otherwise not have, resources that keep them safe now and will help them enjoy happier and more fulfilling futures.

It is our pleasure to submit this final report on our successful 2021 project to build boundary walls to enhance the safety and security of students at two schools in Afghanistan.

The Project

Afghanistan is not an easy place to be a child – especially a girl. Avaya’s generous gift enabled Save the Children’s Afghanistan Sponsorship program to build school boundary walls at two schools – Tukzar No. 1 Girls’ School in Sancharak District, Sar-i-Pul Province and Yimbulaq Secondary Mixed School in the Maimana District of Faryab Province.

In building these walls, the project brought protection and safety to 1,162 students. It did the same to 43 female



Prior to the installation of the boundary walls, male passersby could see the female students and teachers when they were outside – something that is not always acceptable in Afghan culture.



Once the walls were completed, female students and teachers could feel safe and secure in their school’s outdoor space.

teachers. The walls are necessary because in Afghanistan, girls and women have some boundaries relative to appearing in public, especially in schools where they are not to be seen by men which may result in them not be able to continue their education. Girl going to school that have surrounding walls feel safer and show a good retention rate at school.

The project began in April 2021 and ended in December 2021 and was completed within the allocated budget.

Project Accomplishments

The Sponsorship team conducted several coordination meetings at the community, school, district education department and provincial education department level to engage various stakeholders including local shuras, Parents, Teacher and Student Association (PTSA) members and school management teams throughout the project implementation. The construction work was carried out by a contracted construction company and COVID-19 prevention protocols (wearing masks, frequent hand-washing, social distancing, not sharing personnel items, food and other SOPs) were strictly followed.



Female students can now enjoy outdoor games in this beautiful space without fear thanks to the boundary walls made possible through the generosity of Avaya.

To ensure the quality of the construction work, the Sponsorship team together with education department engineering unit focal points and local shuras conducted regular joint monitorings during different phases of the work. This included ensuring the quality of materials, the progress of work based on the timeline and provision of support for better implementation of this project.

The school officials and PTAs and shura in coordination with the Sponsorship team assigned maintenance committees (including representatives from the community, PTAS members, school management members and representatives from the education department) to ensure that proper maintenance is in place

Challenges

As per initial the charter, the project was due to be completed in October 2021 and the final report to be submitted in November 2021. However, due to the security challenges and collapse of government resulting in continued suspension of Save the Children Afghanistan operations, this work was delayed. Fortunately, Save the Children resumed all operations in target provinces on mid-October. We restarted the work and completed the project in 2021 and postponed the report submission to mid-February 2022.

Lessons Learned

- Joint effort between the program team, local shuras and the technical unit of the education department was a very effective approach in continual monitoring and supervision of the project and ensuring the work was progressing as per agreed contract and quality
- Giving a lead role to PTSA and local shura increased the sense of ownership among the community and the Save the Children team witnessed frequent visits from local shura and community members throughout the construction work, underscoring that engagement.
- Schools with standard structures and security perimeter walls increased the confidence level of children and also positively affected the attendance rate, especially of girls, Parents reflected their sense of feeling positive when their girls attend the school that has protection walls and are more willing to send their daughters to the schools.

Quotes from the Field

"I am very happy to play with my friends in our school compound. Previously we could not get together in our school compound during breaks because the passersby could see us, and my friends and I did not feel safe. Now we can walk freely all around the school and play during our break times."

Khatera,* 13-year-old student in grade six, Faryab Province

"As a teacher, I am very delighted to see an increased sense of protection, confidence and safety in my students' eyes. The surrounding wall means protection for us, considering the societal sensitivities, so that girls and female teachers feel more secure in school with a security perimeter wall. This also positively affects the learning outcome for our students. I want to say huge thank you to Avaya for this contribution and for helping Afghan girls get a better education in these remote areas."

Feroza,* 37-year-old school teacher in Sar-i-Pul Province

"Most of the adolescent girls and their families were reluctant to send their daughters to school because of the school being within open space. Those who could come would not walk out of the classroom to avoid being seen in public. We [the shura] work as a bridge between the community and the school. One of the key concerns parents used to share was safety and protection of their daughters, and lack of boundary walls was causing that. Now our school has the wall, and our daughters can attend the school without fear of harm and feel more safe. On behalf of parents and local shura members, I would like to thank the Avaya for this kind support."

Haji Abdul,* Head of the Local Shura in Tukzar village, Sancharak district, Sar-i-Pul



As always, thank you, Avaya, for partnering with us on this unique project and what it provides – and will continue to provide – to both the children and to their communities, helping girls learn while preserving their safety and their feeling of wellbeing for many years to come.

Some additional photos appear on the following pages.

Of course, I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

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Before Photos



Before photos from Tokzar #1 Girls School, Sar-i-Pul Province



Before photo from Yimbulaq Mixed Secondary School, Faryab Province

After Photos



Walls surrounding the two schools now keep female students and teachers safer and more comfortable. Thank you Avaya for making this a reality!