



SIGAR

Office of the Special Inspector General
for Afghanistan Reconstruction

February 6, 2018

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

Mr. Gregory Huger
Assistant to the Administrator, Office of Afghanistan and Pakistan Affairs, USAID

Mr. Herbert Smith
USAID Mission Director for Afghanistan

Dear Administrator Green, Mr. Huger, and Mr. Smith:

This report is the fifth in a series that discusses our findings from site visits at schools across Afghanistan that were either built or rehabilitated by USAID.¹ The 24 schools discussed in this report are in Kabul province, Afghanistan. The purpose of this Special Project review was to determine the extent to which those schools were open and operational, and to assess their current condition. We found that all 24 schools were open and in generally usable condition. However, we found that there may be problems with student and teacher attendance and staffing at several of the schools. We also found that many schools have structural deficiencies (e.g. roofs that were not structurally sound) that may affect the delivery of education.

We provided a draft of this review to USAID for comment on January 23, 2018. USAID provided comments on February 03, 2018. In its comments, USAID stated that it “will inform the appropriate authorities within the [Ministry of Education] MoE of the schools that SIGAR identified as lacking clean water, having poor sanitation conditions, or showing signs of structural damage and safety hazards.” Additionally, USAID stated that it would “alert the Kabul Provincial Education Director of the observed low attendance rates in the schools identified in the review.” USAID’s comments are reproduced in appendix I.

We conducted our work in Kabul province, Afghanistan, and in Washington, D.C. from May through November 2017 in accordance with SIGAR’s quality control standards. These standards require that we carry out work with integrity, objectivity, and independence, and provide information that is factually accurate and reliable. SIGAR performed this special project under the authority of Public Law No. 110-181 and the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended. Should you or your staff have any questions about this project, please contact Mr. Matthew Dove, Director of Special Projects, at (703) 545-6051 or matthew.d.dove.civ@mail.mil.

Sincerely,

John F. Sopko

Special Inspector General
for Afghanistan Reconstruction

¹ On November 4, 2016, we issued a review detailing our observations from site visits at 25 schools in Herat province (see, SIGAR, *Schools in Herat Province: Observations from Site Visits at 25 Schools*, SIGAR 17-12-SP November 4, 2016). We subsequently reviewed schools in Balkh, Khost, and Faryab (see, SIGAR, *Schools in Balkh Province: Observations From Site Visits at 26 Schools*, SIGAR, 17-32-SP; SIGAR, *Schools in Khost Province, Afghanistan: Observations from Site Visits at 23 Schools*, SIGAR 17-66-SP, and SIGAR, *Schools in Faryab Province, Afghanistan: Observations from Site Visits at 17 Schools*, SIGAR-18-17-SP).

The United States has made significant investments in Afghanistan's education sector since the fall of the Taliban. Specifically, as of June 30, 2017, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) reported that it has disbursed approximately \$940 million for education programs in Afghanistan.² USAID's programs have concentrated on teacher training, child literacy, community-based education, textbook printing and distribution, and school construction or rehabilitation. The schools that have been constructed or rehabilitated by USAID include primary, lower secondary, and higher secondary schools; teacher training colleges; universities; kindergartens; and trade schools.³

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."⁴ 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 management system, the Education Management Information System (EMIS), used for tracking the number of functioning schools, is imprecise.⁵ Similarly, in June 2015, the Independent Joint Anti-Corruption Monitoring and Evaluation Committee (MEC) reported that "ghost"⁶ teachers have been a long-standing problem, and in most provinces, including Kabul, teacher attendance sheets are not filled out or are frequently forged.⁷

Concerned by these and similar allegations, SIGAR issued an inquiry letter to USAID on June 11, 2015.⁸ 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."⁹

² USAID's active education programs have a total estimated cost of \$443 million (see, SIGAR, *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress*, October 30, 2017, p. 212).

³ For the purposes of this report, we will collectively refer to these facilities as "schools," and individually, unless otherwise noted, as a "school."

⁴ 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.

⁵ UNAMA, "WJ Proceedings Summary," May 27, 2015.

⁶ 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.

⁷ Independent Joint Anti-Corruption Monitoring and Evaluation Committee, "Vulnerability to Corruption Assessment of Teacher Recruitment in the Ministry of Education," June 2015, p. 6.

⁸ SIGAR, *Afghanistan Education Data Inquiry Letter*, SIGAR 15-62-SP, June 11, 2015.

⁹ 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:¹⁰

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 EMIS data for Afghan fiscal year 1395 (December 22, 2015 – December 21, 2016), Afghanistan reportedly had 15,709 general-education (government run, grades 1-12) schools, including 904 inactive/closed schools, with 8.4 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 December 2016, Minister of Education Assadullah Hanif Balkhi said that after adjusting school records to remove registered but permanently absent students, six million students were actually attending classes in Afghanistan.

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, and 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 Kabul province using USAID funds were open and operational, and to assess their current condition.¹¹ To

¹⁰ 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.

¹¹ This report is the fifth 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

accomplish these objectives, we identified 54 USAID-funded projects to rehabilitate or construct schools in Kabul province, which USAID completed between 2004 and 2010. We worked jointly with an Afghan civil society organization to perform limited inspections of 30 such schools from April through June 2017. Our site visits lasted for approximately 1–3 hours 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. Through this process, we identified geospatial coordinates and potential problems at each facility, and assessed general operations and usability.

While a single site visit, during one shift at a school, cannot substantiate claims of 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 24 SCHOOLS IN KABUL PROVINCE

Our site inspection teams interviewed school staff and community members, inspected school grounds and buildings, and obtained photographic evidence at 30 of 54 schools constructed or rehabilitated by USAID and now operated by the Afghan MOE in Kabul province. This report includes results from 24 of the 30 schools visited. We were unable to complete full inspections at six of the schools we visited because we were not provided with complete access to the schools and therefore could not obtain complete information at those locations.¹⁴ All of the 24 schools appeared to be open and in-use. Figure 1 shows the general location of the 24 schools we visited in Kabul.

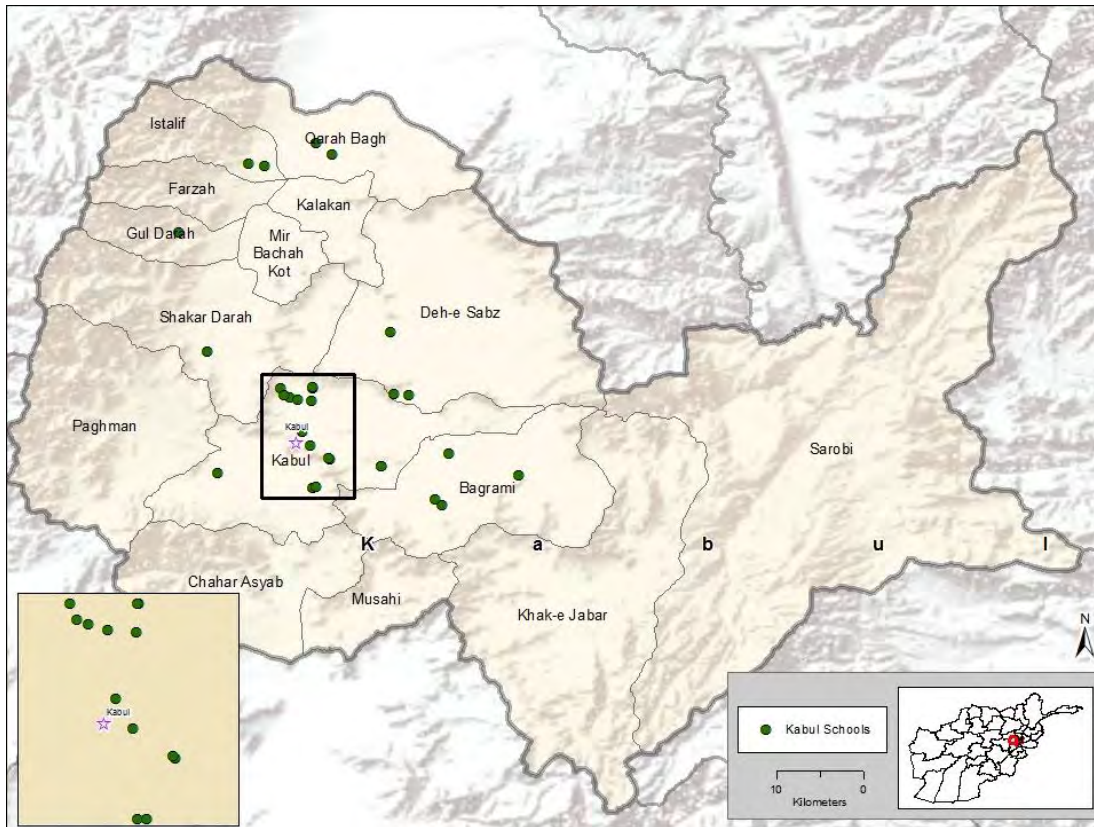
28, 2017; SIGAR *Schools in Khost Province, Afghanistan: Observations from Site Visits at 23 Schools*, SIGAR-17-66-SP, September 12, 2017, and SIGAR, *Schools in Faryab Province, Afghanistan: Observations from Site Visits at 17 Schools*, SIGAR-18-17-SP).

¹² We define a normal school day in Afghanistan as Saturday-Thursday between 08:00AM and 3:30PM.

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 visitation, staff were trained on how to locate and access a school, perform internal and external observations, fill 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 personnel 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 We omitted the partial results from these schools from our report. These schools were SR 79, SR 142, SR 147, SR 149, SR 146, and IOMKBL030.

Figure 1 - Location of Schools Visited in Kabul Province



Source: SIGAR analysis.

Site Visits at 24 Schools in Kabul During One Shift on a Normal School Day: Number of Students Observed

School staff reported that the 24 schools we visited typically operated one shift (2 schools), two shifts (12 schools), or three shifts (10 schools) of approximately 3-5 hours each per school day. We interviewed school staff and asked questions about total enrollment and estimated daily number of absent students. Survey responses were collected and analyzed for irregularities. On average, officials reported a median enrollment of 1,206 students with a median of roughly 1,120 students expected to attend a school on a typical shift, and an expected absentee rate of approximately 5 percent (or about 65 students).

We observed and tallied the students present at the schools during each site visit. A median of 1,000 students were observed at each of the 24 schools inspected in Kabul province, which represents approximately 87 percent of all students expected to be in attendance during the observed shift. At three schools, we observed less than 40 percent of students reportedly enrolled. Table 1 provides a list of reported and observed numbers of students at each school.

Table 1 - Reported and Observed Student Data at 24 Schools in Kabul Province during One Shift on a Normal School 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
IOMKBL012	Dih Sabz	Boys	P, L, H	Open	1140	1200	105%	2
SR 81	PD-11	Co-Ed.	P, L	Open	440	455	103%	3
S173A	PD-8	Girls	P, L, H	Open	2000	2000	100%	3
IOMKBL014	PD-11	Girls	P, L, H	Open	1650	1600	97%	2
SR 134	Dih Sabz	Boys	P, L, H	Open	310	300	97%	2
PRTKBL016	PD-7	Girls	P, L, H	Open	930	900	97%	3
SR 125	Bagrami	Girls	P, L, H	Open	525	500	95%	3
PRTKBL035A	PD-17	Girls	P, L, H	Open	1080	1000	93%	3
SR 80	PD-15	Girls	P, L, H	Open	1800	1600	89%	3
SR 78	PD-11	Boys	P, L, H	Open	1415	1250	88%	3
SR 86	PD-2	Girls	P, L, H	Open	2050	1800	88%	2
S173D	PD-7	Girls	P, L, H	Open	2050	1800	88%	3
IOMKBL051	PD-4	Girls	P, L, H	Open	1150	1000	87%	2
IOMKBL052	PD-15	Boys	P, L, H	Open	1300	1100	85%	3
KSP001	PD-3	Boys	L, H	Open	2746	2300	84%	2
SR 83	PD-15	Co-Ed.	P, L, H	Open	2400	1950	81%	3
SR 150	PD-14	Co-Ed.	P, L, H	Open	3150	2500	79%	1
IOMKBL044	Bagrami	Girls	P, L, H	Open	780	600	77%	2
IOMKBL017	PD-2	Girls	P, L, H	Open	576	430	75%	2
SR 84	PD-2	Boys	P, L, H	Open	1000	700	70%	2
IOMKBL093	Dih Sabz	Girls	P, L, H	Open	1100	700	64%	1
IOMKBL036	Bagrami	Boys	P, L, H	Open	975	350	36%	2
SR 139	Guldara	Boys	P, L, H	Open	120	25	21%	2
S168	Qarabagh	Co-Ed.	P, L	Open	215	5	2%	2
			Median Average		1120	1000	87%	2

Key: C – college or university; H – higher secondary school; L – lower secondary school; and P – primary school

Source: SIGAR analysis

Notes:

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.

As shown in Table 1, most of the schools we visited in Kabul province appear to be well attended, with 20 schools having 70 percent or more of reportedly enrolled students present during the shift we observed, and of those 20 schools seven schools had attendance exceeding 90 percent of reportedly enrolled students. Photo 1 shows students at a well-attended school attending class, and Photo 2 shows the grounds and a hallway at one of the three poorly-attended schools.

Photo 1 – Students in a Well-Attended Class at School IOMKBLO14



Source: SIGAR: June 11, 2017.

Photo 2 – Empty Facilities at School SR 168



Source: SIGAR: April 25, 2017.

Site Visits at 24 Schools in Kabul During One Shift on a Normal School Day: Number of Teachers Observed

School staff reported a median average of 38 teachers assigned to each school with 37 expected to be on-site during our visits. Our site visits found a median average of 35 teachers on school grounds, i.e., approximately 86 percent of the number of teachers reportedly assigned to the shift, although we visited two schools where less than 60 percent of assigned teachers were on-site during the observed shift.¹⁵ In addition, one school (SR 139) appeared to have far more teachers than expected. At SR139, we observed just 21 percent of reported students, but more than six times the number of expected teachers, thus raising obvious questions about this school's reporting and attendance data. 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 24 Schools in Kabul Province during One Shift on a Normal School Day

USAID School No	District	School Type	School Level	Observed Operational Status	Reported for current Shift1 (Teachers)	Approximate Number Observed in One Shift2 (Teachers)	Observed Teacher Percentage3	Reported Number of Daily Shifts
SR 139	Guldara	Boys	P, L, H	Open	4	25	625%	2
SR 81	PD-11	Co-Ed.	P, L	Open	13	15	115%	3
SR 134	Dih Sabz	Boys	P, L, H	Open	9	9	100%	2
IOMKBL051	PD-4	Girls	P, L, H	Open	36	35	97%	2
IOMKBL093	Dih Sabz	Girls	P, L, H	Open	16	15	94%	1
PRTKBL035A	PD-17	Girls	P, L, H	Open	38	35	92%	3
IOMKBL012	Dih Sabz	Boys	P, L, H	Open	24	22	92%	2
S173D	PD-7	Girls	P, L, H	Open	56	50	89%	3
IOMKBL044	Bagrami	Girls	P, L, H	Open	18	16	89%	2
PRTKBL016	PD-7	Girls	P, L, H	Open	45	40	89%	3
IOMKBL036	Bagrami	Boys	P, L, H	Open	15	13	87%	2
IOMKBL052	PD-15	Boys	P, L, H	Open	44	38	86%	3
SR 86	PD-2	Girls	P, L, H	Open	58	50	86%	2
S168	Qarabagh	Co-Ed.	P, L	Open	6	5	83%	2
S173A	PD-8	Girls	P, L, H	Open	60	50	83%	3
SR 78	PD-11	Boys	P, L, H	Open	50	40	80%	3
KSP001	PD-3	Boys	L, H	Open	72	57	79%	2
IOMKBL014	PD-11	Girls	P, L, H	Open	69	53	77%	2
SR 125	Bagrami	Girls	P, L, H	Open	17	13	76%	3
IOMKBL017	PD-2	Girls	P, L, H	Open	21	15	71%	2
SR 84	PD-2	Boys	P, L, H	Open	34	23	68%	2

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.

SR 83	PD-15	Co-Ed.	P, L, H	Open	90	60	67%	3
SR 150	PD-14	Co-Ed.	P, L, H	Open	160	80	50%	1
SR 80	PD-15	Girls	P, L, H	Open	98	48	49%	3
			Median Average		37	35	86%	2

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

Notes:

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

² Observed teachers 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 teachers observed at the facility.

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

SEVERAL SCHOOLS IN KABUL PROVINCE HAD STRUCTURAL AND OTHER DEFICIENCIES

In addition to documenting the number of teachers and students observed, we examined the basic physical condition of the 24 USAID-constructed or -rehabilitated schools we visited in Kabul province, and identified several schools lacking basic needs. Additionally, we found schools that had structural deficiencies, faulty wiring and broken light bulbs, and poor sanitary condition that could potentially endanger students, teachers, and other occupants.

All of the Visited Schools Lacked Functioning Lights

During our site visits, we observed and documented whether the schools had electricity and interviewed school staff to inquire about school operations. We found that 20 schools had access to electricity in the classrooms or offices, however all schools lacked some functioning lights due to faulty wiring, broken bulbs, unconnected power, or other reasons. Photo 3 shows one of the common issues, exposed nonfunctional wiring and missing bulbs, at one of the schools.

Photo 3 - Exposed Wires and Missing Bulbs at School SR 78



Source: SIGAR June 20, 2017.

Observations on Access to Water and Overall Sanitary Conditions

Twenty-three of the 24 schools we visited had access to clean water. School SR 125 in Bagrami district was the only school without access to clean water; the school had an empty well. Photo 4 shows the empty water well, and Photo 5 shows an example of a functioning well at School IOMKBL093 in Maymana.

Photo 4 - Empty Well at School SR125



Source: SIGAR May 8, 2017.

Photo 5 - Functioning Well at School IOMKBL093



Source: SIGAR May 7, 2017.

Our site inspections found that several schools face sanitary issues relating to toilets. Of the schools inspected, all of the 24 schools had functioning toilets, but only three of those schools had toilets that appeared to be cleaned or maintained.

Potential Structural Deficiencies Effect Delivery of Education

During our site visits, we observed schools with structural deficiencies, including some deficiencies that potentially put the safety of students and teachers at risk. Specifically, we found one school with a roof that was cracked and 10 schools with roofs that leaked. We also found that 12 schools had damaged walls, one school had damaged stairs, nine schools had broken windows, and 20 schools had damaged doors. Photo 6 shows ceiling and structural damage in one of the schools.

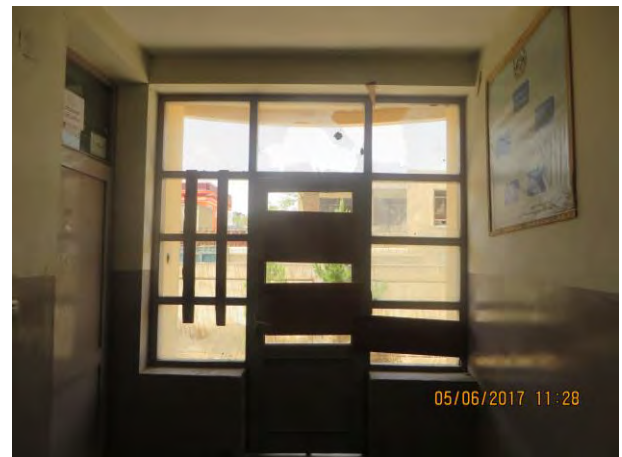
Photo 6 - Ceiling and Structural Damage at School PRTKBLO35A



Source: SIGAR June 7, 2017.

We also observed missing or broken doors and windows at 20 of the 24 of the schools we visited, Photo 7 shows an example of broken windows and broken doors at School S173A

Photo 7 - Broken windows at School S173A



Source: SIGAR June 5, 2017.

We observed classes at 22 schools and found that classrooms at only 7 of the 22 schools had enough tables and chairs for the students who were present: in classrooms at 6 schools we

observed that students were sitting on the floor. Additionally, we observed classes conducted outdoors at 4 of the 22 schools. Photos 8 and 9 show examples of classrooms SIGAR observed, where students were sitting on the floor or where class was conducted outside. In addition, several of the facilities had stockpiles of broken furniture or unused computer equipment on school grounds. Photos 10 and 11 shows broken tables and chairs at school KSP001 and unused computers at School IOMKBL052.

Photo 8 - Sitting on floor at School IOMKBL044



Source: SIGAR May 10, 2017.

Photo 9 - Class outdoors at School PRTKBL016



Source: SIGAR June 12, 2017.

Photo 10 - Broken furniture pile at School KSP001



Source: SIGAR May 22, 2017.

Photo 11 - Unused equipment at School IOMKBL052



Source: SIGAR June 17, 2017.

CONCLUSION

We visited 24 schools built or rehabilitated by USAID in Kabul province and found all 24 were open and in generally usable condition. We observed that roughly 87 percent of students were in attendance across all 24 schools. We also observed that roughly 86 percent of teachers were present at the time of our inspections.

In addition, we observed that some schools in Kabul province lacked clean water, had poor sanitation conditions, or showed signs of structural damage and safety hazards. We encourage USAID to share the results of this review with the Afghan government and advise the MOE: (1) to investigate the three schools (SR168, SR 139, and IOMKBL036) where we observed low attendance; and (2) that fixing the structural and other deficiencies highlighted in this report could reduce the safety risks to students and school staff, and improve the delivery of education.

AGENCY COMMENTS

We provided a draft of this review to USAID for comment on January 23, 2018. USAID provided comments on February 03, 2018. In its comments, USAID stated that it “will inform the appropriate authorities within the [Ministry of Education] MoE of the schools that SIGAR identified as lacking clean water, having poor sanitation conditions, or showing signs of structural damage and safety hazards.” Additionally, USAID stated that it would “alert the Kabul Provincial Education Director of the observed low attendance rates in the schools identified in the review.” USAID’s comments are reproduced in appendix I.



USAID | AFGHANISTAN

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

MEMORANDUM

February 3, 2018

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

FROM: Herbert Smith, Mission Director *W*

SUBJECT: Mission Response to Draft SIGAR Review Letter titled:
“Schools in Kabul Province, Afghanistan: Observations
from Site Visits at 24 Schools” (SIGAR-18-XX-SP)

REF: SIGAR Transmittal email dated January 24, 2018

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

USAID is pleased to learn that all 24 schools visited were “open and in generally useable condition,” as reported by SIGAR in the subject review. We are also pleased that SIGAR found that approximately 87 percent of students and 86 percent of teachers were in attendance across all 24 schools during the time of SIGAR inspections.

USAID notes, as the report indicated on page 5, that these schools are “now operated by the Afghan Ministry of Education (MOE) in Kabul province” and are no longer USAID’s responsibility.

USAID will inform the appropriate authorities within the MoE of the schools that SIGAR identified as lacking clean water, having poor sanitation conditions, or showing signs of structural damage and safety hazards. Additionally, based on SIGAR’s findings, USAID will alert the Kabul Provincial Education Director of the observed low attendance rates in the schools identified in the review letter.

USAID continues to work closely with the Afghan government to increase access to quality education by training teachers, expanding community-based education, developing transparent and accountable systems, supporting higher

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education institutions, and strengthening the ability of the MoE to administer a nationwide education system.

cc: Ravindral Suaris, Controller, USAID/Afghanistan
Joan Simon Bartholomaus, U.S. Embassy/Kabul
OAPA Audit
Cristina Olive, Education Office Director, USAID/Afghanistan

This project was conducted
under project code SP-160.

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:

- improve effectiveness of the overall reconstruction strategy and its component programs;
- improve management and accountability over funds administered by U.S. and Afghan agencies and their contractors;
- improve contracting and contract management processes;
- prevent fraud, waste, and abuse; and
- advance U.S. interests in reconstructing Afghanistan.

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To obtain copies of SIGAR documents at no cost, go to SIGAR's Web site (www.sigar.mil). SIGAR posts all publically released reports, testimonies, and correspondence on its Web site.

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