



Basic Services

Going back to basics



Afghanistan has some of the lowest education levels in the world. In Kandahar province, only 26% of men and 5% of women can read and write. Here, children are attending a community-run school. Canada is building and repairing 50 schools in Kandahar province in addition to training thousands of teachers.

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In Canada, having access to food and water, and an education is normal; in Afghanistan, however, these basic needs are more difficult to come by.

What Canada is doing

Canada is supporting the Government of Afghanistan to deliver those basic services to its people, thereby paving the way for economic development. Nationally, only 35% of men and 18% of women can read and write. Only one third of schoolchildren are girls. A lack of female teachers affects the access young girls have to education. Canada is working with the Afghan Ministry of Education to help develop the country's national education strategy, and supporting community-based education as well as literacy- and teacher-training programs across the country.

Economic development also depends on access to water. Repairing the Dahla Dam and its irrigation system is one of Canada's three signature projects.* This project will create thousands of seasonal jobs for local construction workers and boost the local economy. Once the system is repaired, farmers will be able to grow more food to feed their families and grow legal crops to sell at the market.

Microfinance loans can give Afghans a fresh start by helping them establish new businesses or buy land and animals. Canada is a lead donor to Afghanistan's microfinance sector, with particular emphasis in Kandahar province. For each business started, new jobs are created.

* Canada's other two signature projects focus on improving education and eliminating polio.

