



**Australian Government**

**AusAID**

Ms Lynda Roberts-Hall  
81 Lynton Street  
Mt Hawthorn WA 6016

Dear Ms Roberts-Hall

I refer to your email of 20 October to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Senator the Hon Bob Carr, seeking details about Australia's aid to Afghanistan for women's education and their safety in accessing education. Your email has been referred to the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) for response.

The Australian Government places a high priority on supporting the rights of women in Afghanistan and is working closely with the Afghan Government and the international community across a range of sectors, including education, to improve opportunities for women and girls. Although Afghanistan remains one of the worst countries in the world to be born female, significant improvements have occurred in the lives of Afghan women and girls since the fall of the Taliban regime. Australia's contribution to the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund has supported over 2.7 million Afghan girls to attend school today, compared with almost none in 2001.

In Uruzgan province, AusAID has committed \$35.7 million to the "Children of Uruzgan" program run by Save the Children, to enhance access to basic health and education services for children and their families, with a particular focus on women and girls and those in remote communities. It is estimated that the program supports 300,000 beneficiaries. The Program has established 50 community-based education classes. This means that over 300 girls who were unable to access the formal school system will now receive an education.

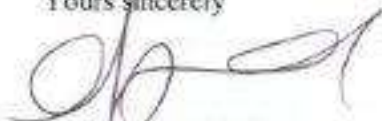
Australia's support through CARE International's Empowerment through Education Program (\$3.5 million) aims to improve access to community-based education in Parwan, Kapisa and Khost Provinces. In 2011, Australian assistance delivered by CARE supported 2,686 primary school students (79 per cent female), 212 lower secondary school students (100 per cent female), 110 primary school teachers (20 per cent female) and 30 lower secondary school teachers (37 per cent female).

Australia has also worked with the Afghan Government to improve its ability to deliver basic education services for girls through targeted initiatives supporting female teachers. Through the Malaysia Australia Education Project for Afghanistan, 30 Afghan women completed Masters Teacher Training and will in turn train a new generation of Afghan women teachers who will be vital role models and mentors for girls in schools. Australia also supported a pilot activity to relocate 7 qualified female teachers to Uruzgan Province, and 13 qualified female teachers to Paktia Province to teach female students. This successful activity will now continue to be supported through the Global Partnership for Education, to which Australia is the fourth largest donor and has committed \$270 million over 2011-2015.

I would also like to inform you that the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Reference Committee of the Australian Senate is currently holding an inquiry into Australia's development programs in Afghanistan. For further detail on the Government's contribution to development in Afghanistan, you may wish to access AusAID's submission (no. 16) at: [http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary\\_Business/Committees/Senate/Committees?url+fadt\\_cte/afghanistan/submissions.htm](http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Committees?url+fadt_cte/afghanistan/submissions.htm)

I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely



Michaela Browning  
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Pakistan and Afghanistan Branch

12/11/2012