

Program Proposal

Summary

Navn på organisasjon: Afghanistankomiteen/Norwegian Afghanistan Committee (NAC)

Programtittel: Empowering Afghan Youth

Land: Afghanistan

Gjennom det foreslåtte programmet forventer vi å se økt tilgang til, og deltakelse i, tiltak for å tette utdanningsgapet mellom jenter og gutter i Afghanistan. Vi vil gjøre dette gjennom høykvalitetskurs på våre THINK Labs, innen engelsk, IT, kunst og kultur, dialog og andre fag. Vi forventer også å se økte inntektsmuligheter for ungdom som tar kurs ved våre JOB Labs, hvor de får yrkesfaglig kompetanse, samt opplæring i entreprenørskap. Vi vil også sørge for bedre læringsopplevelser og økt inkludering for studenter med funksjonsnedsettelse, som et resultat av støtte til skoler med spesialpedagogiske enheter samt informasjonstiltak for økt kunnskap om funksjonsnedsettelse hos foreldre, søsken og lærere.

Over 2 800 ungdommer vil nås gjennom THINK Labs-programmene, der 65% er jenter. Ved JOB Labs vil vi nå 1 530 ungdommer, der halvparten er jenter, og gjennom kampanjene våre kommer vi til å nå 1 000 barn og ungdom med funksjonsnedsettelse. Vi vil også gjennomføre opplæring og kompetanseheving for lærere, foreldre og søsken.

Afghanistan er i dag det eneste landet i verden der jenter generelt nektes tilgang til utdanning på ungdoms- og videregående-trinnet av landets myndigheter. Dette betyr at nesten ingen jenter får studere eller delta i høyere utdanning. Ved å sette søkelys på at all norsk ungdom har rett til skolegang, og får mulighet til å utvikle sosial kompetanse sammen med jevnaldrende, tror vi at vi vil kunne skape et bredt engasjement for dette prosjektet blant både jenter og gutter i norsk skole. Afghanistankomiteens JOB Labs tilbyr yrkesfaglige kurs innenfor en rekke fagområder som også norsk ungdom kan velge på videregående skole. Dette er tiltak som kan bidra til å styrke båndene mellom norsk og afghansk ungdom i en stadig mer polariserende verden.

Section A: Program

Situation analysis

The Afghanistan crisis, now well into its fifth decade, has trapped millions of Afghans in cycles of poverty, hunger, and lack-of-hope. Driven by political fragility, conflict, and the worsening impact of climate change, these cycles have permeated every aspect of life across the country. Despite improvements in the country's overall security situation since the change of government in 2021, Afghans continue to grapple with an increasingly severe humanitarian crisis.

Poverty is widespread, with an estimated 23.7 million people - more than half of the population - in dire need of humanitarian assistance in 2024 ([HNRP 2024](#)). 15.8 million people face emergency levels of food insecurity with over a million malnourished children ([UNWFP 2024](#)). According to the [Afghanistan Crisis Response Plan \(2024\)](#), an estimated 700,000 Afghans have lost their jobs since the change of governments in 2021 which further exacerbates the ongoing crisis and pushes more families into poverty and reliance on humanitarian support.

Access to education has also remained significantly challenging, particularly for vulnerable groups such as girls, children and youth from economically vulnerable families, and persons with disabilities. UNESCO estimates that 30% of girls in Afghanistan have never even entered primary school. This figure that was also documented by the Afghan Ministry of Education (MOE) in 2018 in a report that showed that more than 2 million school-aged girls were out of school¹ due to various obstacles, including cultural barriers, poverty, lack of infrastructure and school facilities, and security concerns. This situation has worsened

¹ Afghanistan Ministry of Education and UNICEF (2018). All in School and Learning: Global Initiative on Out-Of-School Children – Afghanistan Country Study.

since the Taliban's return to power in August 2021. With some exceptions, girls older than 12 years are banned from secular schooling. Data published by [UNESCO in 2024](#) indicate that at least additional 1.4 million girls have been prohibited from accessing secondary education since the imposed restrictions.

For those with access to school, the quality of education is a major issue. This is attributed again to multiple problems, including a shortage of qualified teachers and poor teaching strategies. According to the World Bank (2018), on average, fewer than two in ten teachers in Afghan schools use effective teaching strategies and methods such as project-based learning, to promote student learning and participation.

Generally, boys have had greater access to education, but there are certain historically deprived groups of school-aged boys who have never attended school. This is particularly significant for boys who, due to poverty, must engage in full-time work in agriculture and livestock (in rural settings), must work on the streets (in urban areas), or are displaced from their home districts to work elsewhere to fulfill their household's basic livelihood needs. These obstacles, while severe, are further compounded for persons with disabilities. This group faces a more daunting and intersecting set of barriers that puts them in a significantly greater vulnerability compared to their peers without disabilities.

The interconnected nature of these challenges and barriers creates a self-reinforcing cycle that traps Afghan youth in a state of perpetual crisis. Breaking this cycle requires a comprehensive approach that addresses not only the immediate humanitarian needs, but also investments in long-term solutions. Given that youth represents 52% of Afghanistan's population (IOM, 2024), they must be at the forefront of these efforts. Empowering young people to take a leading role in their communities is key and can be achieved by providing access to quality education and opportunities to acquire marketable skills, even amid severe crises and emergencies such as where we are now.

The following section describes the proposed program interventions and concepts and illustrates how these interventions will lead to expected changes.

Program description

The proposed intervention provides flexible, quality education (both within formal and informal settings) and job skill development opportunities for youth with a focus on vulnerable groups of girls and boys. All the activities under the proposed program are designed to address the identified problems outlined above, directly linked to the expressed needs and priorities of youth and aligned with UN Sustainable Development Goals including SDG 1: No Poverty, SDG 4: Quality Education, SDG 5: Gender Equality, and SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities. The activities will be implemented as follows:

1. THINK Labs:

The THINK Labs encompass our approach to furthering and bridging educational opportunities, including through non-formal education, supplementary education on school subjects (e.g., science, mathematics and languages), preparation for Kankor (university entrance) exams, life-skills and other citizenship education. The concept comes from "forward THINKing" and has evolved from the programs developed by NAC in 2015 at the peak of the refugee crisis where youth had lost faith in their future within Afghanistan. The goal is to provide children and youth with a safe place where they can be seen and heard, learn skills that can help them thrive and develop, and to facilitate a safe space where children and youth can be together across social and ethnic divides, as a microcosm of how Afghanistan could and should be. Experiences from the THINK Labs over the past years have demonstrated the popularity and relevance of the courses offered in rural communities, and how the THINK Lab courses have proved useful for bridging education for vulnerable groups in education and skills development, particularly in remote communities. Even if other education programs suffer under restriction by the Afghan government, key ministries have embraced the idea of THINK Labs. These are now the only education programs open to girls above grade 6 in most target communities, this has been achieved through placing the programs in under our MOUs with the Ministry of Public Health (MOPH) and the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Authority (TVET-A), that are less exclusive of women and girls than the Ministry of Education (MOE).

Through the proposed program, NAC will work with eight THINK Labs to deliver new THINK Lab courses to an additional 2,800 youth participants. The target locations are Badakhshan, Daikundi, Faryab, Ghazni, Kabul, and Paktia, where NAC has already established THINK Labs and has active projects in education, health, natural resource management, climate change, and disaster risk reduction. For further details on the proposed courses, please refer to Output 1.1.

2. JOB Labs

JOB Labs is a new NAC concept developed based on the expressed need for shorter Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) courses. The concept focuses on both improving employment opportunities for youth with formal educational backgrounds but limited marketable and entrepreneurship skills. Practical job skills and entrepreneurship education will also be provided to support income-generating opportunities for youth and enable young people to establish their own micro-businesses.

In the proposed project, NAC will conduct seven JOB Lab courses for 1,530 youth, aged 15-20 in rural and semi-urban communities in Badakhshan, Daikundi, Faryab, Ghazni, Kabul, and Paktia to ensure coverage of both ethnic majority and -minority communities. The courses are designed and proposed based on local market needs, aspirations and interest of youth, suitability, employment opportunities in the future, and availability of relevant instructors. Please refer to the relevant outputs for details of the proposed courses.

3. Disability Inclusion

Currently, NAC implements community- and institution-based rehabilitation initiatives for persons with disabilities (with a special focus on children and youth) in 60 districts across 14 provinces. As part of this comprehensive program, NAC provides educational opportunities for youth with disabilities by supporting several partner special schools and community-based preparatory education settings and physical rehabilitation centers. Youth with disabilities will also be included in all THINK- and JOB Lab programs.

At NAC, we recognize the challenges that persons with disabilities face in their learning journey. To address these issues and expand our impact, we propose a multifaceted approach that builds upon our existing initiatives.

The proposed program will expand our efforts to provide quality education for youth with disabilities. The target groups include youth with physical, sensory, and learning disabilities in NAC partner learning settings. Through this program, NAC will provide training of teachers, disability services, learning resources, and enhancing support to students through various extracurricular activities. This includes establishing and supporting youth-led organizations to improve students' participation and engagement while fostering leadership and self-advocacy skills. We aim to transform students from passive recipients of support to active participants in their educational journey. To this end, we will implement additional support programs within our existing education settings, engaging students in reasonable adjustment initiatives and decision-making processes that impact their learning experiences.

Expected result and framework

Program Goal: Increased resilience among supported youth and contributing to an empowered Afghan society.

Outcome 1: Improved access to - and participation in - quality bridging education among youth.

Output 1.1: Provided youth with further educational opportunities through NAC THINK Labs

The output covers all activities associated with preparing and conducting the THINK Lab courses to provide youth flexible educational opportunities. It includes the recruitment of 96 THINK Lab facilitators and mentors, development of course materials and running of activities in the THINK Labs. Through this

output 2,800 youth aged 13 – 19 (minimum 65% female) will benefit directly from the THINK Lab courses. The key activities under output 1.1 are:

Activity 1.1.1: Enroll students in THINK Lab courses

The students will be identified and enrolled based on our THINK Lab enrollment criteria that includes a vulnerability assessment to ensure the program reaches the most vulnerable groups of youth in the targeted provinces. Through the process, a total of 2,800 youth will be identified and enrolled in the 8 THINK Labs in the targeted provinces.

Activity 1.1.2: Recruit THINK Labs’ facilitators and mentors

A total of 88 facilitators, mentors, and guards will be recruited for a duration of 3 – 36 months during the program life cycle to facilitate the designed courses in the 8 THINK Labs. They are responsible for the day-to-day running of the THINK Labs. At least 65% of the facilitators will be female.

Activity 1.1.3: Organize training for THINK Labs’ facilitators and mentors

The facilitators and THINK Lab mentors will receive a 10-day initial training at the beginning of the program and a 4-day refresher training in the second and third years of the program.

Activity 1.1.4: Conduct courses at THINK Labs

The duration of the courses will vary between 3 to 12 months, depending on the subjects and content. Over the three-year program period, a total of 2,800 youth aged 13 to 19 (with at least 65% female participation) will complete their courses. The details of the proposed courses are as follows:

Course Details	# of participants per class	# of classes (three years)	# of participants (three years)
English language: Each course intake is designed to last one year, with 10 months of classroom instruction and 2 months dedicated to project assignments. The course is structured for 2 hours per day, 5 days a week.	20	32	640
Information and Communication Technology (ICT): The package includes basic computer and IT skills, covering key MS Office applications such as Word, PowerPoint, and Excel, as well as internet usage (browsing), and basic coding. Each course is designed to last 6 months, with 2-hour classes held 5 days a week.	20	32	640
Arts and illustration: The training focuses on developing painting, drawing, and illustration skills, including the use of digital tools. Each course is designed to last 6 months, with 2-hour sessions 5 days a week.	15	16	240
Dialogue and communication: The course will focus on personal development including public speaking, self-confidence, and dialogue skills. Through this activity NAC will also facilitate establishment of youth groups and forums. It is designed for 3 months, 5 days a week with 2-hour sessions per day.	20	32	640
Kankor preparation and school subjects: This course covers school subjects such as science, mathematics, and languages, with a particular focus on supporting girls who have been banned from attending school due to recent government decisions. It will also provide additional support to boys in schools where the quality of teaching is poor. The course is designed to last 6 months, with 2-hour classes held 5 days a week.	20	32	640
<i>All courses will also include cross-cutting topics such as citizenship education, conflict transformation skills, psychosocial support, and climate change.</i>			
Total		144	2,800

Output 1.2: Improved youth access to learning resources at NAC THINK Labs & JOB Labs

The output covers both the development of curriculum and materials for the proposed courses as well as the distribution of the materials for the participants. This includes learning resource packages,

curriculum, course materials, and modules. All participants will have access to the materials through THINK Lab libraries and physical distribution of materials to students.

Activity 1.2.1: Development of course curricula and materials for THINK labs and JOB Labs:

The curricula for all proposed courses will be developed through the active engagement of youth participants (using a project-based approach) to ensure their needs are identified and addressed. NAC will also engage external volunteers for peer reviews of the materials to ensure the quality of developed materials.

Activity 1.2.2: Establishment of libraries at THINK Labs

Through this activity, NAC will establish and resource 8 libraries at THINK Labs with both NAC internal developed materials and external learning resources.

Activity 1.2.3: Distribution of materials and stationery

Overall, 5,330 students at THINK Labs, JOB Labs and schools providing special needs education will receive learning kits throughout the three-year program.

Outcome 2: Improved livelihood opportunities for supported youth by fostering employability and increased job creation

Output 2.1: Youth provided with marketable vocational education and entrepreneurship training through NAC JOB Labs

The output encompasses both vocational skills training and entrepreneurship courses for young people aged 15–20 at seven NAC JOB Labs. The first component prioritizes youth with limited formal education, aiming to equip them with skills for income-generating opportunities and start their own mini business within their local communities. The second component targets youth with at least a grade 9 education, providing them with the knowledge and skills needed for employment. In total, 1,530 youth, aged 15 - 20 (at least 50% female) will benefit from this initiative. The key activities under output 2.1 are:

Activity 2.1.1: Enroll participants in JOB Lab courses

The participants will be identified and enrolled based on JOB Lab enrollment criteria, including grade 9 education for entrepreneurship courses. Overall, 1,530 students will be enrolled throughout the three years of the program in consultation with local community stakeholders.

Activity 2.1.2 Recruit and train JOB Labs course facilitators

A total of 76 facilitators will be recruited for a duration of 3-6 months to run the courses planned in the JOB Labs. The facilitators will be recruited from the same location where we conduct courses (if available); otherwise, we will recruit from nearby communities and provide them with transportation and accommodation. All the facilitators and mentors will receive a 5-day orientation training at the beginning of the program with follow-up refresher trainings in the second and third year.

Activity 2.1.3 Conduct Job Lab courses

The duration of the courses will vary between 3 to 12 months, depending on the course subject. Over the three-year program period, a total of 1,530 youth aged 15 to 20 (with at least 50% female participation) will complete their courses in the following thematic areas:

Course specification	# of classes (three years)	# of participants (three years)
Vocation skill trainings: The proposed trainings include sustainable farming (e.g., organic farming, smart food processing, animal husbandry), handicrafts, embroidery and sewing, mechanics and repair (including motorbike and electric generator repair, and mobile phone maintenance), carpentry and woodwork. The number of participants per class will be between 10 – 20. Each course is designed to be 3 – 12 months, with 4 hours per day held 5 days a week.	92	890

Entrepreneurship courses: This course covers training in basic finance & accounting, HR, administration management, web development, graphic design and video editing. The number of participants per class will be around 20 youth. Each course is designed for up to 6 months, with 2 hours per day held 5 days a week.	32	640
Total	124	1,530

The first categories of courses designed and proposed for youth with no or limited formal schooling background while the second categories will target youth who have completed at least their nine grades in schools. Please also note that:

- due to the current government rules, girls and boys will participate in separate activities. These gender-specific courses will also be designed to address cultural and societal sensitivities.
- all JOB Lab courses will include cross-cutting elements such as PSS, dialogue and conflict transformation, and citizenship education. Due to the current situation, all courses will be gender segregated.
- the courses' overview, content and number of participants are subject to change based on local demand, suitability, and feasibility.

Output 2.2: Youth equipped with business start-up resources and job-seeking skills

The output covers providing grants and start up kits for youth graduates from vocational courses as well as job-seeking support and mentorship for students from entrepreneurship programs at the JOB Labs.

Activity 2.2.1: Provide start up grants and kits for vocational skill-course graduates

Through this activity, some graduates of vocational training courses will receive start up grants of USD 100 and essential equipment and materials required to kickstart an enterprise. The kit will consist of basic tools to facilitate the start of the business. Both will support the successful startup of enterprises and mini businesses at the community level.

Activity 2.2.1: Provide job seeking skills and mentorship for entrepreneurship graduates

Graduates from entrepreneurship programs will receive additional support and mentorship for job seeking. This includes short-term workshops and training and job-seeking services.

Outcome 3: Enhanced learning experiences and inclusion for students with disabilities

Output 3.1: Students with disabilities are supported with learning opportunities in safe and inclusive environments

This output covers all the activities for youth at NAC partner special schools/settings. It includes facilitating extra-curricular activities such as establishing and supporting youth led organizations, providing disability devices and tools such as learning assistive technologies, and providing learning resources including stationery kits and libraries. The key activities under output 3.1 are:

Activity 3.1.1: Support youth with stationery and learning resources

Through this activity a total of 1,000 students will receive stationery and learning resource kits. The activity includes the provision of equipment for existing libraries and learning kits for students with disabilities. The activity also includes provision of need-based assistive learning equipment.

Activity 3.1.2: Conduct extra-curricular programs for youth with disabilities

Through this activity NAC will facilitate extracurricular programs such as psycho-social support and dialogue and communication competency development, provide EdTech solutions and adaptive learning technologies, and establish youth organizations, all with the aim to enhance learning experiences and academic performance.

Output 3.2: Teachers and parents have enhanced knowledge about the rights to education for persons with disabilities

To enhance the knowledge about the rights to education and increased accountability for protecting the rights of persons with disabilities at school and community levels, this output is proposed to facilitate trainings and campaigns on the rights to education for persons with disabilities for teachers and parents.

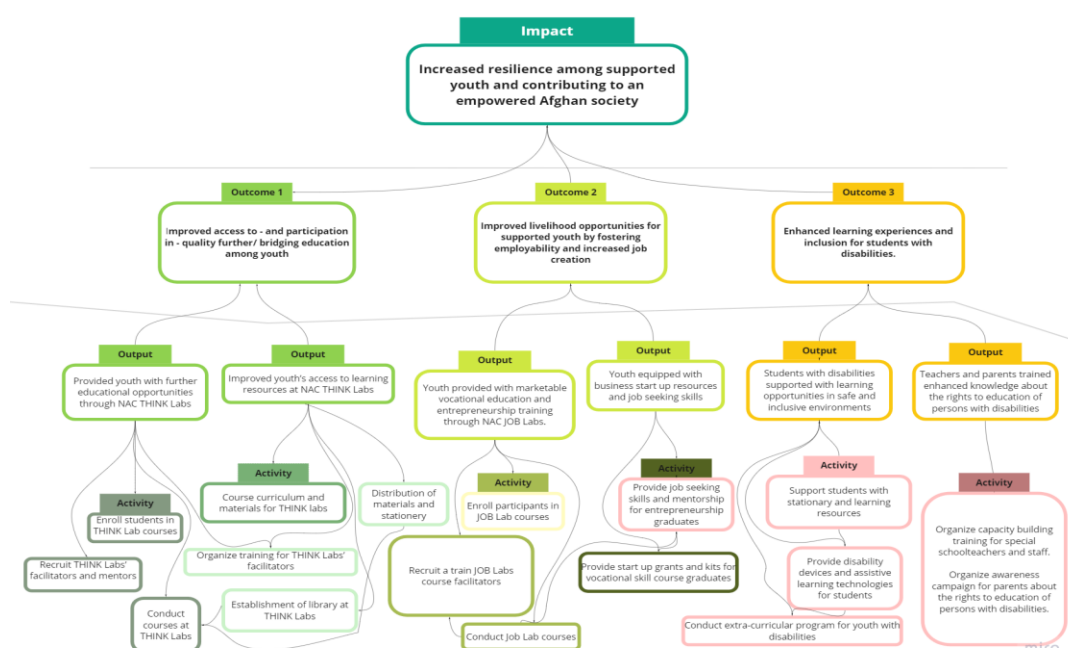
Activity 3.2.1: Organize capacity building training for special schoolteachers and staff.

A 10-day training program will be conducted for 100 schoolteachers and staff, consisting of a 6-day initial training in the first year and a 4-day refresher training in the second and third years. The training will focus on the rights of persons with disabilities, inclusive education, child-friendly classroom management, and pedagogy such as project-based learning.

Activity 3.2.2: Organize awareness campaign for parents about the rights to education of persons with disabilities.

In this activity NAC will organize campaigns for parents of students with disabilities. The campaigns aim to educate parents and community members on the rights to education for persons with disabilities. The expected number of participants in this campaign is estimated to be 600 parents.

Theory of Change:



Please refer to **Appendix II** for the logical framework of the proposed program.

The target groups

The proposed program primarily aims to provide educational opportunities, vocational training, and support for youth and persons with disabilities in targeted provinces. The target groups are divided into primary and secondary categories as follows:

Primary target groups

- Youth aged 13-19 at THINK Labs courses (at least 65% females) prioritized based on their vulnerability assessment results.
- Youth aged 15-20 at JOB Labs program, at least 50% females
 - a) Youth with limited formal education (for vocational skills training)
 - b) Youth with at least grade 9 education (for entrepreneurship courses)
- Students with disabilities, including youth with physical and sensory impairments.

Secondary target groups

- THINK Lab facilitators and mentors (at least 65% females)
- JOB Lab course facilitators (at least 50% females)
- School teachers and staff with special needs education competencies
- Parents, siblings, and community members

The program is designed to reach a diverse group of youth, as well as those who directly support them in their rights, education and livelihoods. The program will identify and select target groups based on NAC's selection criteria, which includes a vulnerability assessment to ensure the program reaches the most vulnerable populations in the targeted provinces.

Local partners and stakeholders

While remaining a direct implementer, NAC will collaborate with relevant stakeholders at national, provincial, district, and community levels to ensure our initiatives effectively reach target groups in Taliban-controlled Afghanistan - and - that the changes are sustainable.

At the national level, NAC coordinates its THINK Labs, JOB Labs, and Disability Inclusion programs with the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Authority (TVET-A), an independent directorate that separated from the Ministry of Education (MOE) years ago, as well as with the Ministry of Public Health (MOPH). NAC has active Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs) with these government stakeholders at national level to facilitate its activities in the targeted provinces.

At the provincial and district levels, NAC coordinates with relevant line departments to ensure smooth project implementation and to address any potential risks that may disrupt the process.

Most ministries under the Taliban-led government remain supportive of initiatives targeting youth. The only exceptions are the Ministry of Education (MOE) and the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE), which is why the proposed program initiatives have been placed under MOUs with TVET-A and MOPH. As an alternative we are also seeking cooperation with the Ministry of Information and Culture (MOIC) and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MOCI) that are considered to be more women friendly. In addition to the relevant ministries mentioned above, NAC also coordinates with provincial and district governors, that all political and wields considerable influence and power. Their support has been instrumental in ensuring that our THINK- and JOB Labs are open for both female and male youth. As a consequence, no NAC staff or students have been threatened by state actors after the Taliban takeover in August 2021, instead NAC has been able to provide some level of protection to its staff during a very volatile time in Afghan history.

When identifying partner communities, NAC mainly focuses on rural, hard-to-reach, and remote areas that have been neglected by aid organizations. These have often suffered the most from armed conflict, and are lacking development, educational, and job opportunities. To ensure effective implementation of the proposed program, NAC specifically targets districts where we have an active presence, a long history of engagement, and with strong ownership of NAC programs.

Risk assessment and mitigation measures

Please refer to Appendix III for NAC comprehensive risk assessment and mitigation measures.

Budget

The total proposed budget is: NOK 14,990,400. Please refer to Appendix I for the detailed breakdown.

Section B: Information about the organization

Organization and competence

NAC is a membership-based solidarity organization doing long-term development work in rural Afghan communities since 1979. For NAC, solidarity embodies the values of equality, inclusivity, friendship, and respect. We see solidarity as a personal commitment to reduce poverty and contribute to an empowered

and peaceful society in Afghanistan. This also means standing by the people of Afghanistan irrespective of which government is in power.

We work on locally led development and maintain close collaboration with local communities in the planning, execution, and follow-up of our programs. This approach ensures that our work in Afghanistan is sustainable and meets the needs of the communities we serve. Currently, we run several development and humanitarian programs and projects in education, health, livelihoods, and natural resource management, funded by Norad, Sida, EU, UN, and other institutional and private donors.

NAC has a Secretariat in Oslo with 8 employees, but most of our staff is based in Afghanistan and lives there. It is important to us that the Secretariat supports operations in Afghanistan - not the other way around, and that we use local expertise and create local jobs in Afghanistan. NAC currently employs some 2,000 staff, both in Afghanistan and Norway. With over 40 technical staff in communications, content production, and knowledge management based in both Afghanistan and Norway, we are well-equipped to execute information campaigns both in Norway and internationally. Our capacity for producing high-quality communication materials, including videos and photos, allows us to actively contribute to ODW's information campaign in Norway.

NAC is part of a European network of organizations working on Afghanistan, as well as a Norwegian network with a focus on the country. In Norway, we collaborate also with organizations such as the Nansen Center for Peace and Dialogue (NCPD), and the Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO) to integrate dialogue and peace building initiatives in our programs in Afghanistan. Additionally, we have strong connections with the Afghan diaspora in Norway and include members of the Afghan diaspora in most of our events, but also aim to promote voices from inside Afghanistan towards the Norwegian government and towards the public. With funding from Norad, we have also been promoting Afghanistan and sustainable development to members of Norwegian youth parties, an initiative we have been engaged in for several years.

Given the restrictions by the current government on taking and using pictures and videos, it is essential that NAC has already secured a permit to take and use photos and videos of our programs across the provinces, including use by donors. As such, NAC will be able to provide information and communication materials about program progress to ODW and youth at Norwegian schools throughout the program period.

Expertise, experience and the willingness to strengthen youth participation

Although NAC currently does not have any exclusively 'youth-only' projects, in all our active programs, youth are a key target group. We have extensive experience working with youth and implementing initiatives with diverse groups of youth in our projects in education, livelihoods, natural resource management, disaster risk reduction, and health. The following are some of our initiatives and approaches towards youth participation and empowerment:

Child- and Youth-Led Organizations: NAC supports schools and communities with the establishment of child- and youth-led organizations. These include sports clubs, school emergency response teams, cultural and social activity groups, and environmental protection committees in partner schools and communities. Between 2022 and 2023, NAC established and supported over 150 such youth-led groups, reaching 100,030 children and youth through our education programs. These organizations provide opportunities for youth to take leadership roles and positively influence their schools and communities.

Project-Based Learning: NAC promotes project-based learning in its educational programs and trainings, giving students greater space over their learning processes. This approach allows students to choose what topics to study, how they wish to learn, and which resource materials to use. It fosters teamwork, collaboration, and critical thinking among students. We are not only implementing this method with children and youth but also enhancing the capacity of teachers and facilitators in this strategy to ensure its institutionalization and long-term sustainability.

Winter Camps: The initiative ensures continuity of learning during school winter breaks, allowing students to use their winter breaks effectively by participating in our IT, science subject and language programs and courses. The program has been particularly important in addressing learning gaps caused by school closures due to the pandemic, displacement, and change in government, especially supporting girls to continue their education by bridging their learning gaps.

Dialogue and Conflict Transformation: Dialogue and conflict transformation are cross-cutting themes across all NAC program components. We train community members, including youth, in dialogue and effective communication skills. In 2023 alone, NAC trained 3,291 community members, teachers, and students in dialogue skills. This approach empowers participants to actively contribute to conflict resolution and peacebuilding in their schools, communities, and districts.

Community-driven Development: NAC is strongly committed to a community-driven approach in its rural development program. This approach is highlighted in the 2022 CMI report reviewing Norwegian programs in Afghanistan, which describes NAC as having “the most elaborate and best-functioning system for involving, maintaining, and strengthening community-based organizations.” The report noted that NAC’s approach ensures that “communities and their members are actively involved from project planning to monitoring.” Youth play a central role in NAC’s community-driven development initiatives, including education, health, livelihoods, and disaster risk reduction, through their active participation in needs assessments, community mapping, and project reviews.

Building on this foundation, NAC will continue and further enhance youth participation through the proposed program by:

- Adopting project-based learning across THINK Labs, JOB Labs, and Disability Inclusion components of the proposed program as our key pedagogical approach, allowing youth to lead the learning process in these centers.
- Involving youth throughout the entire project lifecycle - from design to evaluation. This process has already begun, with a group of youth within NAC actively collaborating on the development of this proposal.
- NAC has a mentorship and feedback mechanism in place. Throughout program implementation, NAC will ensure the effective use of regular, structured mentorship and two-way feedback systems, ensuring that youth receive the support needed for meaningful participation and that their voices are heard.

Monitoring, reporting, and financial control

NAC is committed to ensuring the quality and timely implementation of projects and programs, and this commitment is reflected in its professionally managed knowledge management and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system. The organization has a dedicated monitoring team that oversees the implementation process from start to finish.

Monitoring: The M&E team will work closely with the program team and will develop a joint monitoring and evaluation plan centered around outcomes, outputs, and indicators and the monitoring activities will occur throughout the program duration.

Reporting: M&E and program teams together will ensure timely internal and external reporting.

- Internal: NAC has monthly M&E reporting on all projects through the NAC Monthly Overview and Activity Tracking Sheets (MOATS); progress on indicators will also be reported through the MOATS.
- External: NAC will ensure reporting based on donor guidelines and templates.

Audit: NAC conducts regular financial audits through both internal and external audit mechanisms to ensure effective financial control.