

2022



Annual Report

Hope

Dignity

Commitment



Keep the dreams of these communities alive

Let us together preserve and protect the progress that has been made over the past 15 years. The people of isolated regions deserve an opportunity to show their potential so that from within their own country they can play their part to influence and to create a different future for their region and Afghanistan as a whole

A word from the president



Reflecting back onto 2022, I am struck by the feeling that it was the most active and dynamic year ever for our Association. One might wonder how this could be possible in a year that saw such challenges, political turmoil and deep injustice directed at women and girls in Afghanistan.

Deep down however this made us only more determined. What gave me greater strength was the realization that there was never a time when our work was easy. I was also inspired by the courage of the communities we support. This reinforced my will and Nai Qala Association's resilience, and in turn we gave strength to the communities, and ensured continued access to education for their children.

The greater the difficulties, the more important it is to remain firm in leading our Association. We do not have the luxury to hesitate or wait.

Following the announcement by authorities of the ban on female education from the age of 14, I was often asked by children, parents and by our team what Nai Qala Association's next steps would be. I answered that we would continue working and engaging. I could see no other path, as the needs were and remain so great, and the poverty and exclusion in these regions so deep.

So we stayed strong and continued our work. We carried out several workshops, developing the capacities of 100 female teachers and making them leaders in their communities. This is part of an important change in Afghan society, with visibility and recognition for the role of women.

Afghanistan is one of the poorest countries in the world, marked by war and deprivation. We cannot expect problems to be resolved easily. Determination and long-term commitment are needed. To provide hope and open the horizon for the next generation to build a better future.

Like all men and women in Afghanistan sometimes I also feel caught in a cycle of despair and at other times I have rushes of hope. As Afghans we have to face our reality and find our own way. I also come from a background of deep poverty and shaped a different path thanks to education.

To succeed, as the situation remains very fragile, we need the moral and financial support from the world. With this support we have achieved significant, seemingly impossible, results. In the coming pages you will discover how we managed to build another school for 500 girls and boys, against all odds, with the solidarity of the communities and the commitment of our team. This is a powerful example of what can be achieved through humanity and determination.

I would like to sincerely thank all donors, who believe in our work and support us. I wish to thank our entire team that continued to believe in the change, and worked tirelessly throughout the year. As a woman, I believe strongly in the need to play my role and influence the current situation. Even though the role of women is questioned, I must contribute to change as much as I possibly can.

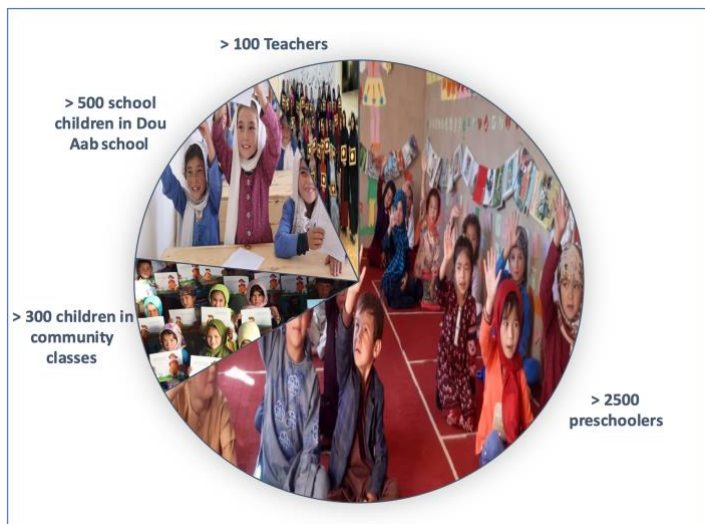
I hope our achievements will inspire you! They are made possible by you and I look forward to your ongoing support, trust and commitment in 2023!

Sincerely,

Taiba Rahim

Key achievements in 2022

Nai Qala Association provides a complete package of education in remote rural regions, from pre-primary age up to access to higher education with a preschool program, construction of school buildings, community-based classes, tutoring classes and teacher trainings.



Direct beneficiaries of Nai Qala projects in 2022

In 2022:

- We provided pre-school classes for over 2500 children in 90 villages.
- We started a community-based education projects for over 300 children in 10 villages.
- We completed the construction of our 12th school, providing dignified learning environment for 500 children in Dou Aab.
- We improved the teaching capacities of over 100 teachers.

2022 marked the 15th anniversary of Nai Qala Association's activities serving the deprived populations of central Afghanistan. No celebration but sustained action.

School constructions in Yakawlang valley, Bamyan

Completion of Nai Qala's 12th school construction

Construction of Dou Aab school for over 500 girls and boys began in May 2022 and, with good weather, was completed ahead of schedule in October 2022. These children no longer need to sit outside in sun, rain, or snow to attend their classes. The building's walls are constructed with stones from the surrounding mountains; the sand and gravel used for the masonry comes from nearby rivers. The construction company hired men from the village, providing dozens of families with a welcome income in a region where economic opportunities are scarce.

This construction provides suitable study conditions for girls and boys from 6-16 years old living in 5 villages located within one hour on foot from Dou Aab.



Dou Aab School, October 2022

An inauguration ceremony was held for all the children, teachers, parents, and the local authorities. Children from some of Nai Qala's preschool classes also joined the ceremony and were able to get to know their future school. The keys to the school were officially handed over to the principal and the community to the delight of the hundreds of current beneficiaries and the future generations of schoolchildren of Dou Aab.

Marghi School

Completed and inaugurated in November 2021, the school in Marghi hosted its first students for the new school year, in Spring 2022. Nai Qala was then able to provide the school with more books and computers. The school offers a dignified space for over 600 schoolgirls. In 2022, 15 children graduated from Nai Qala's preschool program have started their primary education in the new premises.



Proud and happy schoolgirls in Marghi, May 2022



Inauguration of the library, Marghi School, May 2022

Preschool program

Nai Qala Association's preschool program continued to expand in 2022 with the opening of 25 new classes in the province of Ghazni. Nai Qala successfully ran 90 preschool classes which are linked to the local government primary schools, benefitting more than 2500 children in the provinces of Bamyan, Daikundi and Ghazni.

The success of the preschool program strongly relies on its deep anchorage in the communities. Nai Qala Association not only provides quality preschool education to the communities of these remote mountainous regions, in teaching numeracy, literacy, and basic hygiene but the approach also lays emphasis on the holistic development of the children. We realize particularly in times of crisis the fundamental importance of also nurturing children's physical, personal, social, and emotional wellbeing. The preschool classes influence spreads beyond the children to the parents, families and the entire community creating awareness on child's rights and influencing attitudes towards women's roles in society.



Pre-schoolers, Province of Ghazni, September 2022

Winter preschool classes

To compensate a short school year due to the interruptions caused by Covid-19 in 2021, some preschool classes were being run by the communities in the province of Daikundi over winter 2021-2022; parents provided heated spaces and teachers' remuneration.

It is rewarding to see how communities have learned that leadership and empowerment allows them not to depend only on outside support. This is a way of gaining trust in their own abilities. Nai Qala will continuously invest in such approaches. The tough and unforgiving mountains have shaped the people of Daikundi. Nai Qala has seen directly from working in this province the strength of their determination. Communities put a great deal of value on education and despite the harsh study conditions many students have successfully achieved high grades in the Kankor exams for university entrance. This strong motivation and thirst for education makes Daikundi special and is something we believe should be encouraged.

Inclusivity and equality

Nai Qala Association's beneficiaries from all projects generally come from diverse backgrounds. Most are from minority Hazara communities, and many are returnees from neighbouring countries. They have been internally displaced in search of water and land. There are children with special needs and orphans. Nai Qala Association provides support for the teachers to welcome as many children as possible for the maximum benefit for all.

It is a vital role of preschool that girls and boys are encouraged to spend time and play together. They learn and are accustomed to respecting each other and see that they are equally capable of doing certain things. This lays the foundations for a gender-balanced future.

Community based education program

Through its school constructions and preschool programs in underserved areas of mountainous regions, Nai Qala Association was able to observe the lack of formal school facilities and the still high proportion of out-of-school children. To cover this gap, Nai Qala Association has been piloting a community-based education program in 10 villages as a follow up to its preschool program since September 2022. Over 300 children are benefiting from Nai Qala Association's community-based education project. The classes are located in the provinces of Bamyan, Daikundi and Ghazni, in remote

villages where the association runs a preschool, to ensure that all children realize their right to education.

Education with a minimal and flexible infrastructure

For children of primary school age from remote areas the Ministry of Education has established alternative teaching in community buildings or private homes, with a teacher from the local community. Today, although most of these community classes are supported by NGOs, the Ministry of Education is committed to supporting such non-formal education and officially recognizes community classes as an



Distribution of material on their 1st day of school, province of Daikundi, September 2022

outreach provision within the national education system. Community based education is a recognized and efficient means to provide education to remote communities where access to school is difficult.

After hiring villagers who have the required qualifying criteria set by the government, Nai Qala Association provided training for 10 teachers, with the support of the *Aga Khan Development Network* (AKDN). After the training, the teachers returned to their villages and now each oversee about 30 children, aged 7 to 8 (sometimes up to 13) for an intense school year. Nai Qala, with the in-kind support of AKDN, has provided each community with a black board, carpet, stationery, note- and textbooks so that everyone is equipped to follow the class. Additionally, Nai Qala coordinators ensure a follow up with each class, making good use of the preschool team in place.

The program has been running over winter and the school year will be completed in the spring 2023.

Training Teachers

Nai Qala's teachers are at the heart of our programs. We care about the quality of education and are committed to the teachers who provide it.

The preschool teachers attend workshops not just to increase their teaching capacity but also to increase their knowledge on children's development, child protection issues and their awareness of health topics. The workshops are also a good opportunity to exchange good practices and provide suggestions for improving the program.

In 2022 we provided in-service training to 65 teachers in our preschool program. 25 new preschool teachers and 10 community classroom teachers received pre-service training. We have also piloted workshops to prevent school violence, bringing together dozens of Nai Qala preschool and state primary school teachers. Training sessions and workshops were held in all three provinces of Bamyan and Daikundi and Ghazni.

The deputy education director of Daikundi came to the Nai Qala workshop and made a moving and important speech: *"Education is our only hope. We do not have anything else to hold on to. Nai Qala Association has been one of the most committed NGOs to support us especially in this difficult time. Thank you, Nai Qala Association, for standing by us on this path today"*.



Annual refresher course for preschool teachers, province of Bamyan, May 2022

Child protection

Nai Qala's preschool and community-based education classes offer safe spaces for children: teachers set an environment favourable to learning, where children feel safe and cared for. Teachers act as role models not only for pupils but also for their parents and the local community. Teachers act as ambassadors in their communities to pass on the messages of non-violence, for the better.

Through the preschool program Nai Qala has gained insight into the issues of child protection and has seen that children are often seen as a burden and beating is common practice within both family and school environments. Nai Qala has an improved understanding of children's rights and their protection in the communities.

Teaching the community about the rights of children has a far-reaching impact on the children's overall well-being and development.

The experience of a preschool teachers after attending training: *"With Nai Qala preschool course, I learned that children are not little adults, that we need to respect them and that they have emotions. As soon as I went back to my village and my class, I started to behave differently with a boy who did not behave, and I used to humiliate. I saw changes and today he is a very nice boy. Although I still feel guilty, I am happy that I learned about children's rights and emotions."*

Women's empowerment

Nai Qala Association's female president is a role model in a country where female leadership is still rare. There is a greater participation of women in Nai Qala's projects than in any other similar project in the region. This delivers a powerful message of cultural change. Nai Qala's president and the teachers are an inspiration throughout the regions concerned and beyond. In region after region, women approach our president and tell her how motivated and inspired they are to see that women can have such an impact on society.

The teachers selected by Nai Qala Association are local women from the communities where they work. The communities learn to accept authority coming from female teachers and they gradually see that a gender equal society works. In 2022, Nai Qala has provided job opportunities for 100 women.



Preschool teachers, Daikundi, October 2022

All Nai Qala's local employees receive training on human rights and gender equality. Each staff member embodies the organization's values through exemplarity of his/her practice and actions, in the office and in the field. Education coordinators have become Nai Qala's best ambassadors to promote girls' education, by discussing with the community and motivating parents in door-to-door operations.

Participations, collaborations, and partnerships

Nai Qala collaborates with a wide range of partners in Afghanistan. Nai Qala has regular contact with NGOs working in the same sector and in the same region, and exchanges information and advice to ensure projects are not duplicated as well as explore potential joint opportunities. Among others, in 2022:

Nai Qala attended roundtables organized between NGOs and government representatives. These were face-to-face discussions, both in Kabul and in the provinces, to exchange views on the role of NGOs in society.

Upon invitation of NGOs and international agencies, Nai Qala's President took part in various high-level events and round tables and was a speaker at online and presential events to make the voice of remote Afghan women and children heard, and raise awareness about challenges met by women-led organisations: she spoke at the virtual event "The evolving humanitarian situation since August 2021 - A discussion with NGOs" in March 2022 organized by the Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief and Development (ACBAR).

Nai Qala's president attended the Asian Regional Humanitarian Leadership Program for Women organised by UN Women and ICVA and the Regional Humanitarian Partnership Week in Bangkok to represent the voice of Afghanistan, Afghan women and share experiences in the field of education. These are wonderful opportunities for learning and exchanging knowledge.

Nai Qala was very honoured to have visits in the field from 2 majors international NGO that were able to see the impact of our projects with their own eyes and had the opportunity to see the changes brought about by the preschool program both in the children and in the communities. Such visits are a recognition of our work and are opportunities to learn and progress. *“The biggest pride and joy of my year was to welcome such guests to show them our work in the rural regions of Yakawlang”* Samira A., education coordinator.

Nai Qala is grateful to NGOs such as *Save the Children*, the *AKDN*, the *Swedish Committee for Afghanistan* and *ACBAR* who provided training to its staff and opportunities for sharing experiences; these partnerships are key to grow the expertise (as per the examples shown in the next section) and improve the organisation. An assessment of Nai Qala’s capacities was conducted by an *Save the Children* and *IRC* in our office in Kabul: *“It was a great learning experience for the whole team. It was the biggest contribution and support that Nai Qala Association Kabul team ever had. The auditors were very helpful, had many good questions and gave constructive advice”* Resai Z., finance officer.

The Team in Afghanistan



Nai Qala team members, Kabul, March 2022

More than ever Nai Qala’s all Afghan team based in Kabul or in the field has shown their strong commitment towards our projects and the remote communities. The political situation continues to be turbulent, but the team remains focused and concentrated on their work. Nai Qala is very grateful to work with such a diligent, motivated and loyal team. Nai Qala is especially very proud to preserve so many jobs for the team and the teachers and to continue to give hope to Afghans in the current situation.

“Working for the Nai Qala Association was one of the best decisions I’ve ever made. I can use the skills and talents Nai Qala helped me build to make it proud”. Qasem A., human resource manager.

“Dealing with community, government sectors and participating in provincial and NGOS meetings helped me to grow my technical, social and leadership skills. Training and technical workshops provided by Nai Qala Association during 2022, strenghtened my management skills, built constructive team-work spirit, and improved my planning and project design capacities”. Ehsas R., project manager.

Capacity building

We believe in strengthening the capabilities of our staff therefore we continuously invest in their capacities. In 2022, Nai Qala enhanced its organisational, technical and softs skills:

Technical and organisational skills: Nai Qala’s civil engineer attended workshops on water management and well construction provided by *DACAR*, a key knowledge especially for areas where water might be scarce.

Procurement training for Nai Qala Association staff members was provided by *Save the Children* to the office management team.

Nai Qala’s education project manager completed a training course on using *Sphere* standards in project cycle management, to improve the quality and accountability of humanitarian assistance, and the team attended a course on monitoring and evaluation that will help improve and design projects.

A Community Based Education workshop was provided by the *Swedish Committee for Afghanistan* to Nai Qala's education coordinator for the province of Ghazni; she also attended a course on mentorship and teacher circle training to facilitate the follow up and coaching of Nai Qala teachers in the communities. She proudly shared this newly acquired knowledge with her colleagues coordinating the education program in Bamyan and Daikundi.

Soft skills: Nai Qala team attended a training on safeguarding provided by *Save the Children*. This supports Nai Qala's effort to advocate for and put in place a safeguarding mindset in its programs.



Safeguarding training, Kabul, October 2022

Last but not least, Nai Qala Association ran an internal training on protection from sexual exploitation and abuse for its staff members and local partners to raise awareness about a sensitive topic that is unfortunately still a reality in the country. Staff members said: *"It was very new for us to talk about such a topic. I know this exists but never imagined talking about it in such a way."* "We cannot ignore or be indifferent. All of us have a big moral responsibility. Really interesting to feel this." A contractor who participated to the construction of Dou Aab school: *"Thank you for opening our eyes. It is not bad to talk about it. We must be aware to save even one child."*

Continuity and stability during political upheaval

In 2022 Nai Qala Association has continued its programs without interruption. Nai Qala strongly believes that political events should not jeopardize the education these children deserve.

The withdrawal of international funds and collapse of the banking system were significant challenges that Nai Qala Association has been able to overcome and was able to continue to pay the salaries and run the projects.

2022 ended with the shocking news of the ban on access for girls to higher and university education, as well as on women's right to work in humanitarian activities. This represents a major new challenge for Nai Qala Association. Despite the new pressures, Nai Qala's mission and vision remain unchanged, and its fundamental values are the same. Nai Qala remains fully committed and is operational. Taiba Rahim continues to lead the work of the Association.

Nai Qala's position is to stand strong and stay consistent. We shall honor all Afghan girls by continuing our support. This is not the time to give up. We will keep our projects. Nai Qala Association tries to make changes through influence. The needs of these communities have not changed. They are isolated and cut off from the politics of the cities and they still aim to extract themselves from deep poverty.

Education is a fundamental human right and it applies to girls and boys equally. Any limitation of that right is unacceptable and not investing in female education is a mistake for Afghanistan's future and development. We must all work to influence change in this regard.

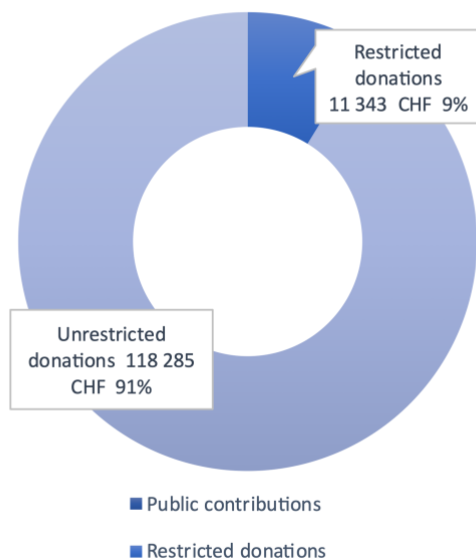
Nai Qala Association is not distracted by outside influences and stands firm and continues to bring long lasting change to the society.



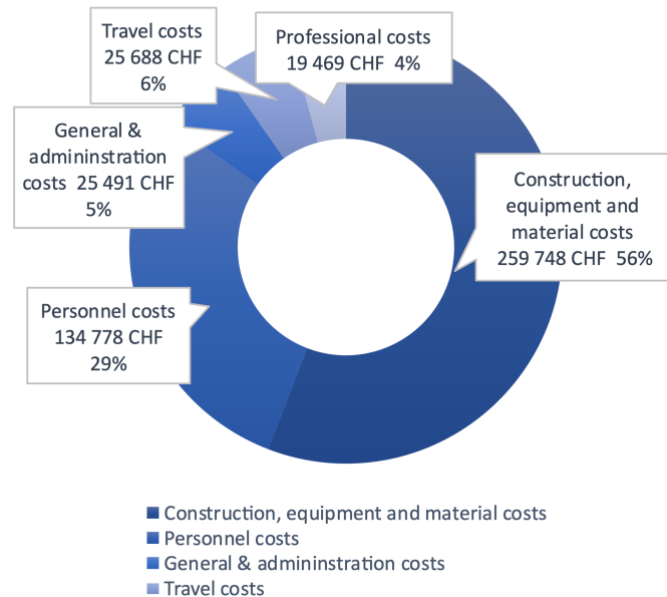
Preschool class, Daikundi, August 2022

Financial Report 2022

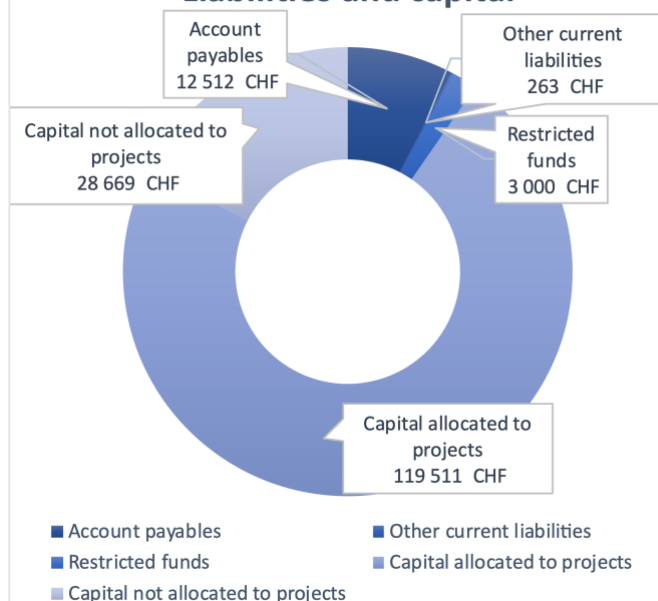
Income



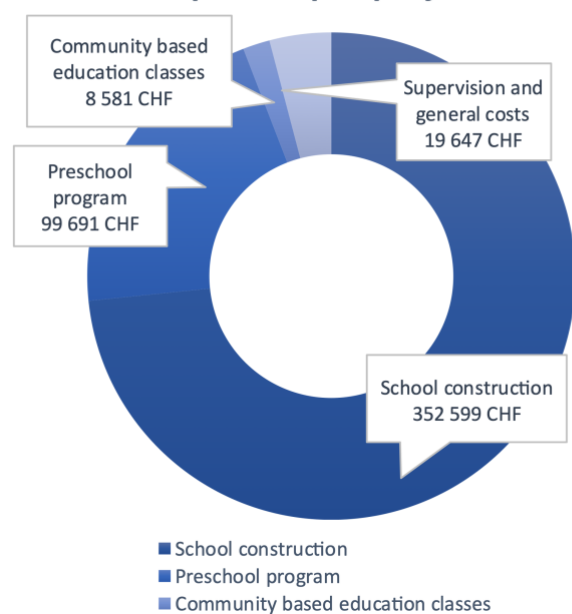
Operating expenses



Liabilities and capital



Expenses per project



These are final figures based on accounting books, as of December 31, 2022.

All donations are tax deductible in Switzerland.

Our Actions towards the Sustainable Development Goals agenda

Nai Qala Association's initiatives contribute to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development.



SDG 4 Education: Nai Qala's school constructions increase school attendance and reduce the dropout rate in formal education. Attending a preschool program increases children's retention in the formal education system. Through its community-based education program, Nai Qala brings education where there are no learning opportunities



SDG 1 No Poverty: In 2022, Nai Qala provided teaching and supervision positions to 100 young women from remote communities, as part of its education projects. Their salary increases the economical means of hundreds of individuals in deprived communities.

Nai Qala hires local employees only and works with local companies and service providers. The construction of a school improves the livelihood conditions for the community thanks to the generation of income, the acquisition of new skills and business opportunities.



SDG 5 Gender Equality: Women and girls suffer discrimination in all parts of Afghanistan. Improving access to education contributes to reducing the gap.

Inclusive education has the best chance to achieve cultural change, whereby boys develop a better understanding of the role and contribution of girls in society and support the interests of women and girls.



SDG 3 Good Health and Well-being: Nai Qala's preschool program has proven efficient in improving hygiene conditions of children and their families. Children learn to wash their hands, their teeth and to use latrines; their new habits drive changes in the whole community.



SDG 2 No Hunger: preschool group discussions with parents raise their awareness about the importance of feeding children and slowly change the habit of feeding children last or sending them to bed on an empty stomach.



SDG 16.2 End abuse, exploitation, trafficking, and all forms of violence against children: Nai Qala Association promotes a violence free culture and raises awareness in the communities on the rights of children.



Empowering local communities

It is often the custom to bring someone from the city disconnected from the realities of the village to make a speech, but at the inauguration of Dou Aab school Nai Qala asked one of the villagers to speak. He was not accustomed to people from outside the village listening to him. He felt ashamed to be an illiterate peasant, poorly dressed and unable to speak correctly. He was shy and feared he would be mocked for speaking. Eventually he was convinced, and he was very proud to represent his village and give a short speech even in front of strangers.

Looking forward

The shocking end to 2022 with news of the ban on access for girls to higher and university education, as well as the limitations on women's right to work in humanitarian activities represents a major new challenge for Nai Qala Association. In hard times it is always important to remind ourselves of our vision and our mission and, despite the new pressures, these and our fundamental values are unchanged. Nai Qala Association remains fully committed and is operational.

We intend to continue our plans for 2023. We aim to continue our preschool and CBE classes, our teacher training and construction projects and start the child protection program.

We believe we cannot let the communities down, so we remain steadfast and loyal and together with these deserving people; we will persevere, stay strong and stay engaged. To succeed in this, to show that there is space for education, and that an NGO run by a woman can exist in today's Afghanistan, we need the moral, political, and financial support of donors.

The key purpose of Nai Qala Association's financing strategy is to ensure that our core work is maintained and sustained in the longer term and that we make effective use of all financial support received.

The period of intense difficulty in Afghanistan is not over but through each crisis Nai Qala Association remains committed to the communities it serves. Communities that are resilient, determined and motivated to rise above all obstacles to improve education and create a better future. Nai Qala Association is flexible and able to adapt to new and changing circumstances without deviating from its core values.



Creating an education culture in deprived communities

Sitayish is one of the 2500 children benefiting from Nai Qala's preschool program. When Nai Qala visited her class, she passionately insisted on demonstrating how well she had learned her numbers.

At the same time, her parents are under deep economic pressure and need their children to help to support the family's livelihood. The solution they have found is that Sitayish and her sister take turns shepherding the animals and therefore also take turns going to their classes. In other words, they each go to school every second day, but at least they both benefit from some form of education.

Thanks to our donors

We are immensely grateful to all our donors for their support. We give them our heartfelt thanks for placing their trust in us. Each donation makes a difference and supports neglected communities in Afghanistan. Together we remain actively engaged to bring hope to these remote regions.

This year we are especially grateful for the generous contributions of:

Fondation Philanthropique
Famille Firmenich

Association Most

Private Foundations, small
companies, not for profit
organizations,

Soroptimist International
Club de Nyon-Rolle

Rotary Club de Nyon

and the dozens of individual
private donors and families

We deeply appreciate all donors who have been remarkable partners in support of Nai Qala's activities over the past 15 years.

About Nai Qala

Nai Qala Association's statutes established it as a Swiss-based non-for-profit organization that is formally registered with the Ministry of Economy in Afghanistan. Nai Qala Association's board is made up of experts in humanitarian and development activities. The dedicated in-country team of Afghan staff with specific skills runs the organization's office in Kabul and oversees the daily activities both in Kabul and in the field. The President, Mrs. Taiba Rahim, a trained teacher has a hands-on approach and implements and monitors closely all the projects

Since 2007, Nai Qala Association has been active in the development and delivery of quality basic education to under-served remote communities in rural Afghanistan. All Nai Qala's projects focus on community participation, and together, we have worked to build twelve schools for over 10,000 children, facilitated tutoring programs and established 100 preschool and community-based classes in the provinces of Ghazni, Bamyan and Daikundi.

Our Mission

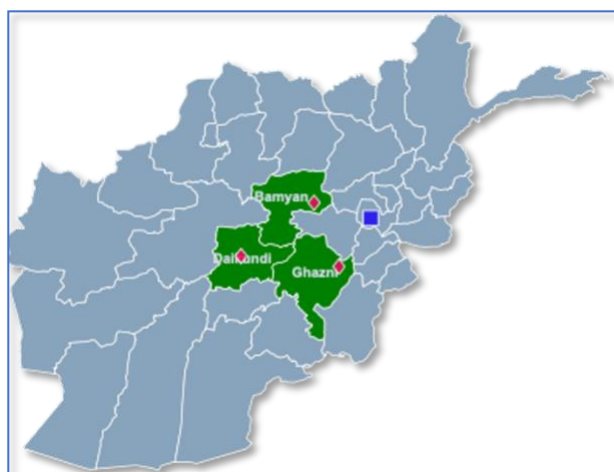
Nai Qala Association's engagement is based on the determination to strengthen the dignity, self-confidence, and sense of initiative of the populations in remote regions of Afghanistan and of women in particular. Improved access to education and health is a fundamental human right and crucial to move beyond poverty, exclusion, humiliation and discrimination.

Our Vision

An educated, healthy, and balanced society in which women and men lead social, cultural and economic changes in an inclusive manner that enables their children – boys and girls – to thrive, focusing on neglected parts of Afghanistan.

Geographical coverage

In 2022 the Nai Qala Association operated in the provinces of Bamyan, Daikundi and Ghazni, mountainous regions of central Afghanistan.



Focus on the provinces with Nai Qala activities in 2022

Province of Bamyan:

- 1 school construction
- 45 preschool classes
- 3 community-based education classes

Province of Daikundi

- 20 preschool classes
- 5 community-based education classes

Province of Ghazni

- 25 preschool classes
- 2 community-based education classes

Hope for a dignified future



*Happy girl graduated from the preschool program
Province of Daikundi – November 2022*

Let us together give children an opportunity to explore their talent, prove their capacity by becoming a teacher, a doctor, an engineer, or any other professional that would help to improve the situation in Afghanistan. These should be opportunities for life, not just for the short term.

By building new facilities and improving access to education, we wish to give them the possibility to influence the future of their community. Investing in them means investing in their families, their communities, and the future of the country.

Join us for an educated, healthy, and balanced society for rural Afghanistan

Support our mission with a donation:

By bank transfer: Association Nai Qala, CH 1266 Duillier,
UBS Switzerland SA, 1260 Nyon
IBAN: CH66 0022 8228 5702 1701 N (for donations in CHF)
IBAN: CH78 0022 8228 5702 1761 F (for donations in USD)
SWIFT/BIC: UBSWCHZH80A

info@nai-qala.org www.nai-qala.org

