AEA
Afghanistan Education Action
Charity number: 1208464

Afghanistan Education Action

Annual Report 2025

Report of the Trustees and Financial Statements for Afghanistan Education Action for the year ending 31 December 2025

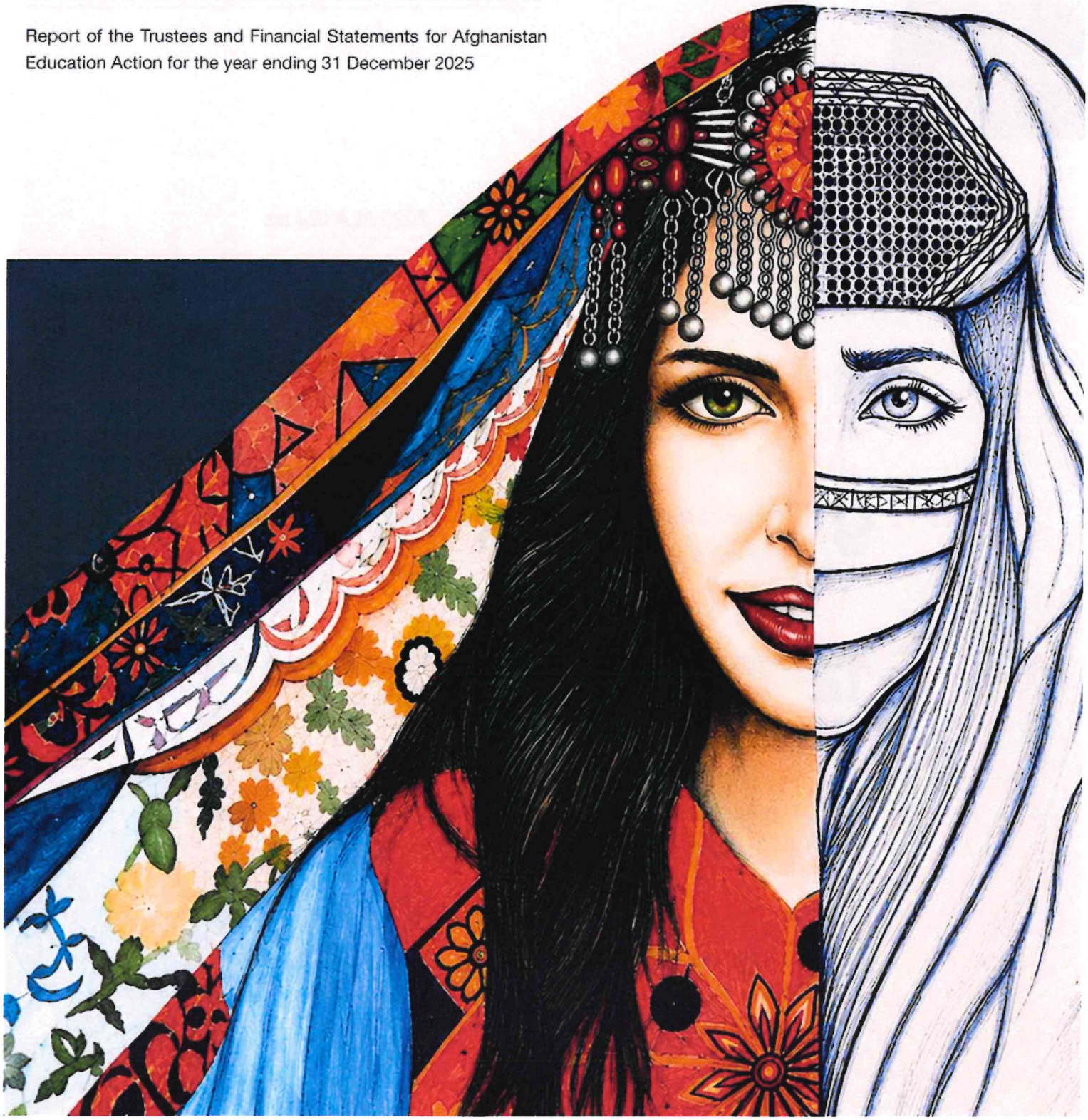


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Executive Statement

As the Taliban's ban on girls' secondary and further education for women continued into its fourth consecutive year, Afghanistan Education Action's (AEA) mission to provide quality online education was more pressing than ever.

What began as an emergency response to the closure of girl's schools in 2021 with the Herat Online School had, by the end of 2025, expanded into three schools providing online learning to more than 1,500 girls and young women, as well as boys.

Inspired by the philosophy of the Iranian scholar Turan Mirhadi, that education can "*transform great sorrow into great work*," at AEA we firmly believe that education is not just an academic exercise, but a means of sustaining hope, building resilience and achieving personal empowerment.

Our students bore testimony to this, attending hundreds of hours of classes, producing beautiful artwork and inspiring short stories, writing award winning podcasts and theatre pieces, and securing places in universities and colleges abroad - we couldn't be prouder of them!

All this and more was achieved in the face of huge challenges including intense levels of state repression, government-imposed internet blackouts, a dire humanitarian situation and spiralling poverty, and laws that are effectively imprisoning Afghan women and girls in their homes. Yet, families continue to search for safe ways for their children to learn.

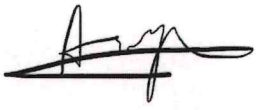
In response, we strengthened our resolve and expanded our network of volunteer teachers, added new subjects to the curriculum, set up a psychological support and wellbeing team, and supported our students to apply for further education abroad. We also invested in strengthening our digital resilience and organisational and governance infrastructure to ensure safety, security and sustainability.

None of this would have been possible without the generous support of our donors including The Belacqua Charitable Trust, Changing Ideas, Chichester Quakers, Choose Love, The Funding Network, The Green Hat Foundation, HCD Memorial Fund and The Roddick Foundation.

We are enormously grateful for this support and to all those who have donated skills and services for free, to our volunteer teachers and mentors, and to Children on the Edge whose support has been instrumental in enabling us to develop and grow.

Heartfelt thanks to you all for sharing our commitment to the right of every child to a quality education.





Louise Kenny
Chair of Trustees

Angela Ghayour
Chief Executive Officer

2025 AT A GLANCE

1,500+ STUDENTS

Girls, young women and boys accessing quality online education across Afghanistan and beyond.



3 SCHOOLS

Herat Online School, Persian School and International School delivering innovative online learning programs.



150+ VOLUNTEER TEACHERS

A dedicated network of volunteer teachers and mentors providing hundreds of hours of online teaching.



15 STUDENTS PLACED OVERSEAS

Supported to gain places in universities and colleges abroad to continue their education.



42 STUDENTS RECEIVING SCHOLARSHIP MENTORING

Receiving academic mentoring and guidance to access scholarships and future opportunities.



100% COMMITMENT

To holistic education, mental wellbeing, digital safety and creating hope for a brighter future.



Mission & Objectives

But the truth is, no wall can stop knowledge. A girl who is determined to learn will always find a way toward the light, even in the darkest days. And let us not forget: Stars shine brightest when the sky is darkest.

"Sara", International School

AEA's MISSION is to enhance access to quality education while caring for and empowering, vulnerable communities, and simultaneously championing human rights, democratic values, and the advancement of art, culture, and environmental initiatives. Through education and advocacy, we strive to create positive and lasting change in Afghanistan and beyond.



AEA's OBJECTIVES are to advance the education of women, girls and boys in Afghanistan or those of Afghanistan or Persian origin who are deprived of quality education in the country where they are residing through providing online Persian and English language schools and physical, mental and emotional support to students. We aim to:

- **Provide Holistic Online Education** based on a well-rounded curriculum encompassing core subjects, digital literacy and other practical skills, critical thinking, and democratic values.
- **Promote Peace and Tolerance** by creating a community of learners where women, men, boys and girls learn side by side, respecting and responding positively to differences.
- **Ensure Gender Equality and Inclusion** by addressing gender stereotypes, promoting women's rights, and creating an environment that respects diversity.
- **Support the Emotional Wellbeing of Students**, building their resilience and responding to individual and collective psychosocial needs.
- **Foster Community Engagement and Civic Responsibility** by encouraging students to actively, yet safely, participate in local initiatives and projects.

Educational Programme & Student Support

Programme Snapshot

The Herat Online School
Foundational education across core academic, creative and practical subjects.

The Persian School
Preparation route for students seeking entry to the International School.



The Scholarships Department
One-on-one mentoring and support for students applying for placements and scholarships abroad.

The International School
Structured international-level secondary education and preparation for overseas opportunities.

By the end of 2025, AEA was supporting more than 1,500 young learners to access quality online education, gain internationally recognised qualifications, and apply for further education abroad. Responding to student demand, we established a Language Department to provide intensive English, German, French and other language training and a Scholarships Department to support students to identify and apply for places in overseas colleges and universities.

Recognising the enormous psychological and emotional stress that our students face as a result of isolation, social exclusion and other pressures, AEA also offered psychosocial support from a network of volunteer trained therapists. During 2025, we integrated clinical-led crisis support, monthly mental health initiatives, and individual counselling into the core curriculum in all three schools.

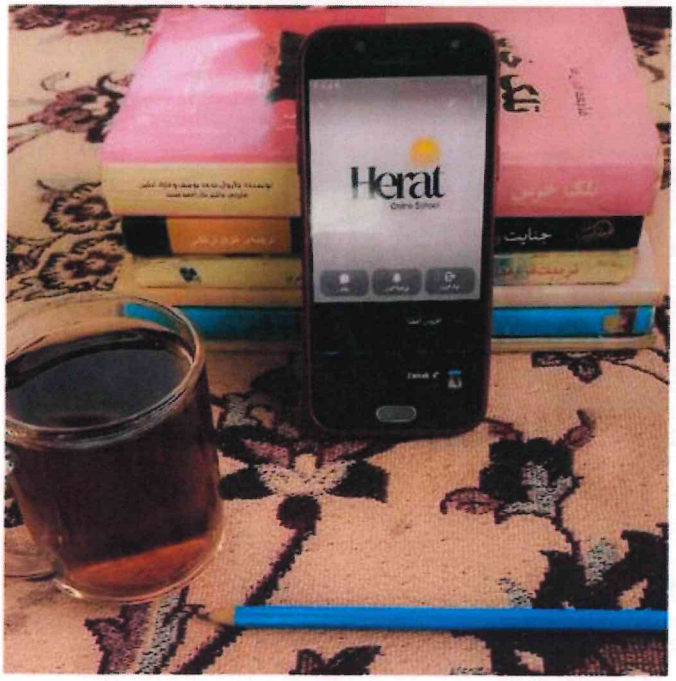
The majority of AEA's students are girls and young women excluded from formal education. However, we also welcome boys into our classes, recognising that that they are also entitled to a quality, well-rounded education and in order to counter the effects of Afghanistan's increasingly extremist education system.

The Herat Online School: AEA's largest programme provides foundational education in math, science, computer science, women's health, English and Persian literature, art, philosophy, creative writing and calligraphy and many other subjects. Attended by hundreds of students daily it is supported by a network of volunteer teachers from across the world. In 2025, the school:

- Supported over 1,000 students.
- Launched new programmes including preparation for the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) and digital design and literacy classes.

The Persian School was established in 2025 to provide Herat Online School students who wish to continue their studies with one year preparation for entrance exams to the International School. In 2025 it:

- Supported 473 students through self-paced courses.
- Prepared 45 Students for enrolment in the International School in 2026.



> "My light of hope is still on, and it will never be switched off. Even if schools are closed, studying in an online school like AEA is the biggest hope for me and all the other girls who study in this well-managed school. We will all shine perfectly."
>
> "Nilofar", Persian School

The International School provides structured international-level secondary education, English-language instruction, TOEFL preparation, mentoring, to prepare students for education abroad and livelihood opportunities in Afghanistan. In 2025:

- Enrolment doubled from 16 students to 32.
- Weekly instructional hours increased from nine to 15 hours.
- The volunteer faculty expanded to 24 teachers, with additional teachers recruited for the 2026 academic year.

The Scholarships Department was also formally established in 2025. Our team of volunteer mentors developed a standardised processes for identifying higher education opportunities abroad, supported students with admissions, visa applications, and examination and interview preparation, while providing administrative and emotional support throughout the complex process.

During the year, AEA's Scholarship Department:

- Provided 42 students with intensive support from five dedicated mentors.
- Successfully supported students to achieve international placements in universities in Thailand, Hungary, and Portugal, bringing the total number of AEA students pursuing education abroad to 15.

AFSOON'S STORY

– IN HER OWN WORDS:



"After I lost my right to education the first thing I wanted to do in that unfair and unbearable situation was to learn despite all the odds. I joined Herat Online School in 2021 at the heart of despair. There not only did I find an environment to learn but also kindness, humanity, and sympathy... The school feels like home where I can be myself and learn in a space where I always had dreamed of.

And after five years of the takeover of the Taliban I never felt like I'm behind. No matter how difficult it was, but I resisted, I kept going, and most importantly I kept learning. With the help of my teachers and the school I managed to receive a scholarship in one of the countries in Europe and now I'm able to study again and to be a glimmer of hope for the girls in my homeland."

Today, Afsoon is part way through her Batchelor's Degree in bio-medical engineering!

Beyond the Classroom:

Student Voices, International Advocacy and Recognition

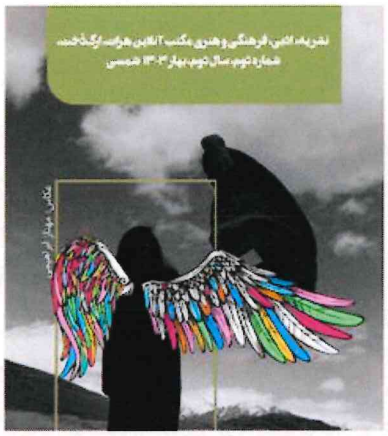
AEA is committed to supporting our students' freedom of expression and their boundless creativity —supporting routes through which their voices can be heard and through which they can showcase not only their talents but also their resilience.

We advocate for the right of all Afghan children and young people to quality education that enables them to fulfil their potential, realise their dreams and ambitions, and participate fully and equally in the social, cultural and economic life of their country.

We work to keep the situation of Afghanistan's children in the public eye and to enable the voices of our students to reach national and international audiences. We are enormously proud of the high-quality writing, art work, theatre performances and broadcasts produced by AEA current and former students and hugely grateful for the recognition that they and AEA are receiving internationally.

Key achievements and landmark moments in 2025 included:

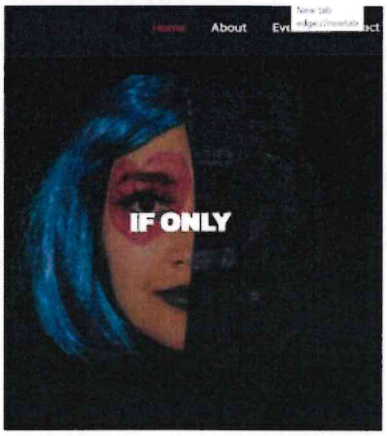
- **Girls Make Their Voices Heard in Online Magazine**: In June, Herat Online School students published the second edition of their digital magazine, ArgDokht (Daughter of the Palace). The Persian language magazine, available on Telegram and Instagram, included reflections, stories, artwork and poetry about the situation of women and girls in today's Afghanistan and their quest for freedom and equality. This followed the first edition, published in December 2024, to welcome the forthcoming New Year.

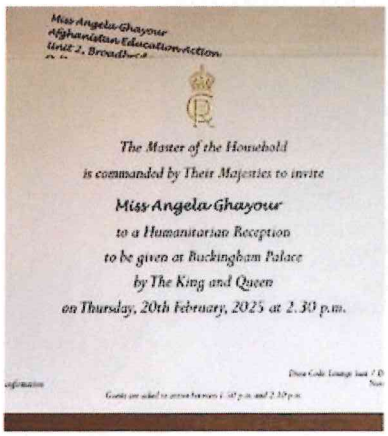




- **AEA Student Radio Programme Wins Gold**: BBC Radio 4's Assignment: Afghanistan: Our Whole Life is a Secret, written by and recording the daily life under Taliban rule of AEA student "Leila" (and narrated by the daughter of AEA's CEO!), was awarded Gold in the Best Factual Single Episode Award of the Radio Academy Audio and Radio Awards 2025. It was also a winner of the prestigious Amnesty Media Awards 2025 for outstanding human rights journalism.

- **Award-Winning Theatre Piece Sell Out Performance**: "Ay Kash / ای کاش / If Only", created in secret and online by Under the Starry Afghan Sky, a collective of 11 former AEA students of the Herat Online School in collaboration with the Cosmino Theatre, had its UK premier at the Leeds Playhouse in October. With pens, paints, and voices, the young women shared their memories and experiences since the Taliban took power as well as their hopes and dreams for a better future. In a post-show talk, AEA's CEO, Angela Ghayour, spoke to the audience of 500+ people about AEA's work and the situation of women and girls in Afghanistan today. The piece is continuing to tour with further dates in the UK in 2026.




The Master of the Household
is commanded by Their Majesties to invite
Miss Angela Ghayour
to a Humanitarian Reception
to be given at Buckingham Palace
by The King and Queen
on Thursday, 20th February, 2025 at 2.30 p.m.

- **Royal Recognition:** Angela was honored to attend a Humanitarian Reception hosted by the King Charles and Queen Camilla at Buckingham Palace in February for "exceptional individuals and organisations contributing towards humanitarian efforts across the globe." The invitation was testimony to Angela's extraordinary work and the contribution that AEA is making to the lives of women and girls in Afghanistan.

- **AEA in the Media**: Angela's numerous interviews with UK and European media including, with the BBC Persian Service, VOA, NN Press and The Press Project contributed to building public awareness of the plight of Afghan women and girls and AEA's vital work in providing the life-line of education.



Organisational Development & Resilience

As a recently established charity, AEA is focused on putting in place the organisational structures and processes needed to support and sustain its education programmes. AEA's success relies on its ability to reach its students safely and securely and on the commitment, skills and experience of a wide network of volunteer teachers as well as a small team of management and administrative staff based in many different countries.

AEA's Resilience Put to the Test

Unstable connections and state-imposed telecommunications blackouts severed internet connections between our teachers and students for days in 2025. But our decentralised management systems, staff training and protocols, and a suite of pre-downloaded materials, recorded lessons, WhatsApp-based learning, and flexible virtual classrooms enabled our students to continue learning and remain connected to supportive communities without interruption.

During 2025 we invested in:

Staff/Volunteer Recruitment and Training

Managers and administrative staff were appointed to our 3 schools and the Language Department, and over 150 new volunteer teachers recruited and trained. We also added two part-time positions (finance and fundraising) to strengthen our headquarters' operations.

Supporting Women's Leadership

AEA actively invested in women's leadership - the majority of AEA's teachers, volunteers, and educational coordinators are women and many are former AEA students.

Building a Robust Digital and Operational infrastructure

We invested in strengthening our online learning platform to ensure continuity in the context of internet shutdowns, electricity shortages, and unstable connectivity. We also reorganised internal communication systems to support a fully digitised, decentralised management model.

Strengthening Internal Systems, Processes and Governance

We introduced new financial protocols, safeguarding and other policies and recruited two new Trustees to broaden the range of skills and experience of our Board.

Diversifying Funding

We worked on a fundraising strategy to identify new funders and diversify our funding sources, including a new merchandise range!

FUTURE PLANS & PRIORITIES

Going forward, AEA will continue to develop its educational programmes, ensure the continuity of access to existing students and build our capacity to offer more Afghan women, girls and boys quality education and the possibility of further education abroad. Our priorities are:

1. **Strengthening AEA's Digital Security and Resilience**
   Continuing the development and implementation of a dedicated Learning Management System to streamline student registration, track academic progress, and enhance data security.

2. **Ensuring Continuity of Access to Learning by Students**
   Building on our tried and tested approaches to countering internet interruptions and power outages, by further developing and deploying offline educational resources and "low-bandwidth" learning modules.

3. **Expanding the Reach of Education Programs**
   Gradually expand our capacity to provide more students, in particular those from rural and more marginalised/disadvantaged communities, with access to quality education.

4. **Ongoing Curriculum Development & Scholarship Pathways**
   Continue to develop AEA's curricula in line with international standards and explore routes to providing students with qualifications that ensure eligibility for international higher education opportunities.

5. **Building the capacity and resilience of the AEA team**
   Provide structured weekly training and mentoring sessions for all AEA team members and grow our capacity to offer wellbeing and other support to our staff and teachers.

6. **Strengthen Governance and Safeguarding**
   Recruit trustees with additional/complementary skills and experience and ensure ongoing reviews and effective implementation of policies and protocols on all aspects of AEA's work and legal requirements, including safeguarding.

7. **Strengthen Planning and Ensure Sustainable Funding**
   Introduce systematic planning processes and continue to develop a diverse range of funders (inter alia, trusts/foundations, individuals, merchandise) to ensure the sustainability and growth of AEA's operations.

Finances

Financial position

For the year ended 31 December 2025, the total receipts were £156,451 (2024: £nil) and there was a surplus of £105,806 (2024: £nil).

Unrestricted reserves at 31 December 2025 were £105,806 (2024: £nil).

Reserves policy

The Trustees have reviewed their policy with reference to Charity Commission guidance and consider it appropriate to maintain reserves sufficient to support the prudent financial management of the charity.

The Trustees aim to maintain free reserves equivalent to approximately three months of charitable expenditure and grant commitments.

Reference & Administrative Details

Detail	Information
Registered Charity Number	1208464
Registered Office	The Grains Store, Hills Barns, Appledram Lane South, Chichester, West Sussex, PO20 7EG
Chief Executive Officer	Angela Ghayour
Trustees	Mandy Fazeli (appointed 30 May 2024) Jill Frampton (appointed 30 May 2024) Louise Kenny (Chair) (appointed 3 July 2025) Lucia Withers (appointed 3 July 2025) Laura Blake (resigned 25 March 2025) Dr. Ahmad Ali Shariati (resigned 1 September 2025)
Independent Examiner	Marcus Cridland B.A. (Hons) F.C.A. Scott Vevers Ltd Chartered Accountants and Registered Auditors 65 East Street, Bridport DT63LB
Bankers	Lloyds Bank
Contact	office@afghanistaneducationaction.org www.afghanistaneducationaction.org

Structure, Governance & Management

Legal Structure and Management

Afghanistan Education Action (AEA) is a registered CIO. It is registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales.

During the 2025 financial year AEA had four trustees on its Board (from a maximum of 12). New trustees are appointed by existing trustees and provided with a structured induction and key documents including the Charity Commission 'Essential Guide to Being a Trustee, AEA's Business Plan, financial performance reports and all policies.

In accordance with AEA's Constitution (dated 30 May 2024), the Trustees delegate the day-to-day running of AEA to the CEO and other staff. The Trustees meet quarterly to review and agree the charity's strategic goals against AEA's Charitable Objects set out in the Constitution.

Risk Management

AEA operates in a complex environment in which the safety and security of students, staff, teachers and others involved in or associated with it are of paramount importance. Trustees review risks on an ongoing basis, with particular emphasis on safeguarding, digital security and operational risks.

During 2025, the trustees and AEA's management prioritised the development of governance policies, safeguarding frameworks, risk management planning and organisational resilience procedures. The trustees also reviewed the reserves policy to ensure that available funds are sufficient to permit the charity to continue operating for the coming year.

Partnership with Children on the Edge

The UK registered charity, Children on the Edge, has been working alongside AEA since 2022 and continued to support us in our first full year as a registered charity, providing mentoring, technical support and guidance on leadership and management, finance and fundraising, as well as administrative support.

Public Benefit Statement

The Trustees confirm that they have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing AEA's aims and objectives and in planning future activities.

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and the receipts and payments accounts in accordance with applicable charity law and the Charity Commission's guidance.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping property accounting records sufficient to show and explain the charity's transactions and to disclose with reasonable accuracy the financial position of the charity.

On behalf of the board:

Louise Kenny

Louise Kenny
Chair of Trustees

Date: 27.08.2026

Independent Examiner's Report

I report to the Trustees on my examination of the accounts of Afghanistan Education Action for the year ended 31 December 2025, which are set out on pages 16 and 17.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

As the Trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act'). I report in respect of my examination of the Charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1.Accounting records were not kept in respect of the Charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2.The accounts do not accord with those records; or
3.The accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

M. Cridland

M. Cridland BA(Hons) FCA
Scott Vevers Ltd
Charted Accountants & Registered Auditors
65 East Street
Bridport, Dorset DT6 3LB

Date: 01/09/26

Receipts and payments accounts

For the period 01/01/2025 31/12/2025

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	*Restricted funds* to the nearest £	*Endowment funds* to the nearest £	*Total funds* to the nearest £	*Last year* to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Grants	137,806	-	-	*137,806*	-
Donations	1,479	-	-	*1,479*	-
Organisation Donations	17,086	-	-	*17,086*	-
Other income	80	-	-	*80*	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	*156,451*	-	-	*156,451*	-
A3 Payments					
Advertising	99	-	-	*99*	-
IT software	14	-	-	*14*	-
Bank charges	61	-	-	*61*	-
Insurance	1,093	-	-	*1,093*	-
Legal fees	48	-	-	*48*	-
Consultants - UK	22,057	-	-	*22,057*	-
Consultants - International	8,400	-	-	*8,400*	-
General expenses	114	-	-	*114*	-
Staff salaries & pensions	18,742	-	-	*18,742*	-
Travel expenses	17	-	-	*17*	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	*50,645*	-	-	*50,645*	-
Net of receipts/(payments)	*105,806*	-	-	*105,806*	-
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	-	-	-	-	-
Cash funds this year end	*105,806*	-	-	*105,806*	-

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Current account	105,806	-	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	105,806	-	-

	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets		-	-	-
		-	-	-

	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B3 Investment assets			- -	-
				-

	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use			-	-
			-	-
			-	-

	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
B5 Liabilities	HMRC		1,850	
	NEST		218	
			-	

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
	Louise Kenny	Louise Kenny	27.08.2026



Thank You

to our partners and everyone else who makes AEA's work possible.

AEA
Afghanistan Education Action