



**USAID**  
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**AFGHANISTAN**

USAID 50 ANNIVERSARY

SNAPSHOT

## Girls Caught in the Crossfire

**Two girls shot during a battle received assistance from a USAID project**



Photo: USAID/ACAP

*The brother of an injured six-year-old girl collecting assistance kits.*

***Sayeeda's family runs a successful grocery shop after receiving help. They paid off their debts and now earn enough money to afford essentials such as food. The solar panel allows the children to study at night.***

Six-year-old Sayeeda and her best friend Fareeda were out playing near their home when bullets started whizzing past them. A shoot-out had erupted between insurgent fighters and international troops. Both girls ran for home. Moments later, Sayeeda was shot in the chest. As Fareeda stopped to help her friend, she also was shot.

Sayeeda and Fareeda both survived. Sayeeda's 30-year-old brother Khanzad described the day the incident happened: "It was really shocking to see my little sister drowning in blood. I took her to the hospital expecting her to die, but she somehow survived." As the main wage earner in the family, Khanzad had to shoulder the cost for his sister's medical treatment. "It cost me a huge amount," Khanzad added. "My family had no savings so we had no choice but to borrow money."

Each year in Afghanistan, conflicts between insurgents and the international military result in injury or death to hundreds of children. USAID provides assistance kits to the families of civilian victims. The purpose of the assistance is to provide comfort during a time of hardship and to help families earn an income.

Khanzad set up a small grocery shop with the grocery items received from USAID. The family, from the Asadabad District of Kunar Province, also received household items, including a solar panel, crockery, blankets, and rugs. Fareeda's family received the same assistance.

"The project staff reached me soon after the incident to help," said Khanzad. "The assistance has had a great importance in my life. We have overcome most of our debt problems with the income we make from our grocery shop. It is profitable and helps us meet the challenges of hunger and inflation. The household items have furnished our house and met our needs. The solar panel means that my children can keep on studying until late at night. It has also reduced our burdensome electricity bill."

The USAID project has assisted more than 9,600 families across the country.