

What does innovation look like in the most difficult parts of the world?

I walked into a classroom with a group of six-year-olds in Badghis, Afghanistan, and sat down on the carpet between a boy named Adil and a girl named Moska.

This is innovation.

It might not seem like a revolutionary approach to schooling, but in rural Afghanistan, this is new. Traditionally, boys and girls would not be educated in the same building, let alone the same classroom.

Innovation doesn't necessarily have to be a massive breakthrough. Many times, it's the constant iteration of ideas that ultimately leads to doing things differently.

This year, I got the chance to see some of the innovative work being done by World Vision in Afghanistan—where conflict, drought and entrenched gender inequality have made it hard for children (especially girls) to succeed.

Seeing girls in that classroom was not only evidence of impact, but indication of a newfound commitment to empowering women and girls in the generations to come. I was inspired, knowing it required the adoption of a new mindset by teachers, parents, community members and faith leaders.

World Vision helped facilitate iterations to local education systems, so girls like Moska could have the opportunity to reach their full, God-given potential. Little does she realize her community is amid transformation beyond just the classroom.

In Badghis, well water cannot be consumed because of elevated sodium levels; members of the community were travelling five hours to collect water. In order to make drinking water more accessible, World Vision installed reverse osmosis systems, which separate pure water from saltwater, leaving impurities behind. The system runs on solar panels, producing 40,000 litres of clean water per hour.

World Vision is also empowering the community to oversee maintenance and fair distribution through a water management committee. That same committee oversees a solar-powered drip irrigation system that is helping farmers keep their fields green and use water more efficiently.

Encouraging innovation in fragile countries like Afghanistan is just one way that World Vision is helping children, families and their communities overcome poverty and injustice. This Annual Impact Report will highlight other examples of successful innovation we've seen throughout the last year.

Thank you for coming alongside us. When Canadians like you partner with World Vision, it shows that our hearts beat in the same way; we are collectively dedicated to sharing Jesus' love and generosity with the world. Together, we have made a real impact.



Michael Messenger
President, World Vision Canada