

REFUGEE EDUCATION STRATEGY

2016-2018

PAKISTAN



Outline

1. Contextual Overview

1.1. Introduction

1.2. Methodology and Strategic Linkages

1.3. Towards Achieving SDG # 4 and Education 2030 Framework for Action in Pakistan

1.4. Country-wide Statistical Overview

1.5. Provincial overviews and progress towards developing provincial educational policies

- Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
- Balochistan
- Punjab
- Sindh

1.6. Key Challenges for Refugee Education in Pakistan

2. Key Objectives of the Refugee Education Strategy

Objective 1: Enhancing quality of and access to primary education for children, especially for girls

Objective 2: Enhancing the quality of education and learning achievements

Objective 3: Youth empowerment, skills training and stronger linkages with education pathways

3. Strategic Approaches for the Implementation of the Refugee Education Strategy

3.1. Mainstreaming refugee students into public education systems

3.2. Supporting access to secondary education

3.3. Implementing innovative education solutions

3.4. Pursuing youth empowerment

3.5. Special focus on refugee girls and women

4. Cross-Cutting Guiding Principles

5. Joint Advocacy and Resource Mobilization

6. Annexes

Annex 1: Implementation Plan of Activities

Annex 2: Key advocacy messages

1. Contextual overview

1.1. Introduction

For over 35 years, UNHCR has been providing access to education for Afghan refugee children. These efforts have been largely successful and a variety of approaches have been adopted to meet the increasing demand and improve the quality of education delivered. UNHCR's initial emphasis was on the provision of emergency education; little has changed since. Government restrictions prevented UNHCR from constructing permanent schools in the refugee villages (RVs), which resulted in high maintenance costs over time, and hampered sufficient expansion of access and quality measures that could respond to increasing numbers of school-going age children.

Over the past five years, UNHCR has spent an average of 4,148,079 USD¹ per year on education support to approximately 75,000 Afghan refugee children in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), Baluchistan and Punjab. According to these data estimates, per child cost per year is reported to be 57 USD, while per child cost per year in Pakistan² is calculated to be 65 USD. The education of refugee children also needs to be seen within the overall complex and challenging education context prevailing in Pakistan. According to UNESCO, the adult literacy rate in Pakistan is only 57%; there are over 7 million primary school aged children out of school and the budgetary allocation to education has been only 2% of the GDP. According to UNESCO UIS Pakistan has the second highest number of OOSC in the world after Nigeria.

Over time, some refugees have migrated from refugee villages to urban centers, while others have remained in rural areas. Migration has posed significant challenges for refugee education, as it has become increasingly difficult for UNHCR to ensure access to education for children who are outside of RVs and who may find themselves in more remote areas which may even be underserved by the Pakistani education system. A further factor which has impacted on UNHCR Pakistan's delivery in terms of education is that the 18th Amendment to the Constitution devolves responsibility for education to provincial governments, each of which have differing administrations, policies and levels of development. The decentralized nature of educational delivery in Pakistan, as well as recent regional geopolitical developments, have put UNHCR Pakistan's operation and its response to education at a critical juncture. On the one hand there is renewed hope that should the situation in Afghanistan stabilize over the next few years, many Afghans will choose to return home in accordance with what is foreseen in the two governments' joint plans for the management, voluntary repatriation and sustainable reintegration of Afghan refugees; on the other hand, in the absence of a national refugee law regulating the rights of refugees, UNHCR remains responsible for ensuring the education of Afghan refugee children and youth and will continue to retain this responsibility for many years to come.

It is now both imperative and opportune to critically examine the Operation's experience in education over the past years, to build on lessons learned and to reset the Operation's education strategy to take account of the changing realities.

1.2. Methodology and Strategic Linkages

This Strategy was primarily developed by the Education Working Group comprising education focal points from all sub- and field offices in Pakistan; the draft has also been shared with sister UN agencies (notably, UNICEF and UNESCO) for inputs. Critical examination and review of the 2011 Population, Profiling, Verification and Response Survey (2011 PPVR) data, the 2014 Participatory Assessments and province-specific refugee education programming and approaches were undertaken culminating in two workshops in which overall strategic approaches for the Pakistan operation were agreed. The development of this Strategy has also been underpinned by the findings of the 2015 Participatory Assessment exercise, completed in October 2015. Its implementation will be further calibrated based on the findings of the mapping of all levels of schools within 10 km radius of urban refugee clusters completed in mid-2016. This Strategy is fully in line with UNHCR's Global Education Strategy 2012-2016, the Child Protection Framework

¹ UNHCR budget updates

² National plan of action 2013-16 (Pakistan)

and the Alternatives to Camps policy and has been peer-reviewed by the Division of International Protection's Education Unit.

The Education Strategy is anchored within the Pakistan Operation's Multi-Year Strategy for Pakistan (2015-2017), which revolves around 3 key operational priorities – 1) durable solutions; 2) protection and assistance and 3) enhanced partnerships and collaboration. The strategic priorities formulated in the 2015-2017 Multi-year Country Strategy envisage a nexus of interventions in the interlinked areas of education, vocational skills training and livelihoods support to enhance investment in youth empowerment, which is a cross-cutting theme for the Operation. With its focus on improving education for refugee children and providing educational and vocational opportunities to refugee youth, the Strategy falls squarely within the overall objectives and outcomes of the regional multi-year Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees (SSAR) Phase II (2015-17). In addition, the Strategy is a foundational element of UNHCR's multi-year Protection Strategy and is inextricably linked to the proposed urban refugee policy to be jointly developed by UNHCR and CCAR and to UNHCR's draft livelihood strategy.

The 25th and 26th Tripartite Commission Conclusions acknowledged and endorsed the importance of strengthening cross-border initiatives targeting youth as a means of fostering sustainable reintegration; this recognition of the importance of youth empowerment has been incorporated by the GoP in its draft policy on voluntary repatriation and management of Afghan refugees, which is currently under development; and in the Government of Afghanistan's strategy on voluntary repatriation and sustainable reintegration, endorsed in 2015. Finally, the 2015 RAHA report '*RAHA – Moving Forward – A Lessons Learned Review of RAHA*' has specifically recommended the prioritization of youth empowerment through education, skills training, and livelihoods.

Fostering existing and new partnerships and synergies

In 2015, the Office initiated discussions with key UN agencies, development actors and donors to identify opportunities for partnerships and synergies in education programming. These efforts will be further advanced in 2016 to ensure effective coordination and implementation of the Strategy. As such, UNHCR will focus on strengthening and expanding cooperation with key Government counterparts at federal and provincial levels, UN agencies, national and international NGOs, as well as civil society and community-based organizations and local groups such as School Management Committees (SMCs).

UNHCR will continue its collaboration with the Ministry of States and Frontier Regions (SAFRON), UNHCR's main counterpart for Afghan refugees in Pakistan, and the Chief Commissionerate for Afghan Refugees (CCAR) as well as its provincial offices (CARs). In addition, UNHCR will work with the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training and the division in charge of the national Education Management Information System (EMIS), as well as provincial educational departments in order to facilitate the implementation of the refugee education strategy. Where appropriate, MoUs or LoUs will be established. This cooperation will include a strong element of continued capacity-building to enable these actors to assume greater responsibilities in responding to the education needs of Afghan refugees. UNHCR will continue to cooperate with UNICEF, UNESCO, UNWOMEN, ILO and WFP in pursuit of its education strategy and in the implementation of the Incheon Declaration related to the recently adopted Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which – for the first time – explicitly include refugee education, and for which UNESCO has been entrusted to take the lead.

1.3. Towards Achieving Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG #4) and Education 2030 Framework for Action in Pakistan

The 18th Constitutional Amendment provides for free and compulsory education for all children between the ages of 5 and 16 (Article 25-A – Right to Education); still, Pakistan was unable to meet the 2015 Millennium Development Goal of providing universal primary education for its own population.

Pakistan will require strategic support and fully operational partnerships with government, sister agencies and NGOs to meet the Sustainable Development Goal 4, which ensures "inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all," as well as the corresponding education 2030 Framework for Action (Incheon

declaration). Efforts in this regard have already begun. In December 2016, the Federal Ministry of Education, together with UNICEF, UNESCO, UNHCR and leading development partners organized a national consultation on SDG # 4 that has initiated a discourse and built a common understanding of the new agenda among the national and provincial education stakeholders. The consultation has paved the way for provincial consultations, which will eventually result in developing province- and country-specific targets and indicators for SDG #4.

The Federal Ministry of Education has also constituted an SDG #4 cell, which is mandated to engage provinces and development actors, to develop and finalize the country-specific targets and indicators, and to provide oversight on the implementation of SDG #4. UNHCR is coordinating with the SDG#4 cell to make sure that refugee education is part of the targets and reporting indicators, and will work closely with national and provincial education authorities to develop strategic ways forward for refugee children and youth that guarantee their right to access, quality and inclusive education. UNHCR will continue to coordinate with the SDG #4 cell, the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training and other ministerial departments to emphasize the “equity & inclusion” that connects education of refugee children with the SDG # 4 and will seek to ensure that refugee children benefit from all other relevant provisions of SDG#4. Additionally, UNHCR will keep the spotlight on paragraph 11 of the Incheon declaration of education 2030 Framework for Action, which specifically mentions education for refugees, IDPs and those in conflict and emergency situations.

UNDP, on behalf of the UN system, has drafted a concept note on mainstreaming, accelerating, reporting and policy support for the SDGs in Pakistan, which sets out how the UN will support the Ministry of Planning, Development and Reform, the lead agency in the Federal government on SDGs. The concept note also envisages the establishment of inter-provincial forums on education, which will be comprised of the various chairs of the provincial education committees to share and coordinate legislative measures. These are clearly encouraging initiatives that UNHCR must remain fully engaged in, in order to ensure that refugee children are mainstreamed into the national education system by virtue of relevant policies and initiatives.

1.4. Country-wide statistical overview

Pakistan

According to the Ministry of Education and Training of the Government of Pakistan’s Country Report regarding accelerating the MDGs, dated April 2013, the following statistics characterize the state of education in Pakistan:

- 32% of primary age children (5-9 years) are out of school, with a wide variance across provinces, sex and urban-rural locations.
- Estimated information reveals that of all children attending primary school, 70% reach Grade 5 (71% for boys and 68% for girls).
- According to the Pakistan Social and Living Standards Measurement Survey (PSLMS) there are as many as 9.3 million children out of school; the Ministry of Education and Training puts the number of out of school children at 6.7 million.
- The average percentage of population that ever attended school is higher for urban (73%) than rural (50%) areas; there are wide variations across gender within urban as well as rural areas, with males enjoying greater access than females.
- In 2011/2012, Pakistan allocated Rs. 390 billion (or 2% of its GDP) to education and only 90% of the allocation was utilized.
- The pre- and primary subsector spent about Rs. 138 billion (39% of total education expenditure); Rs. 119 million for secondary education (34%) and Rs. 75 million (21%) for tertiary education.
- At the national level, primary education expenditure per primary student is estimated at Rs. 15,000; while expenditure per child (5-9 years) is calculated at Rs. 6,500 per child.

- The Ministry estimates that a total amount of Rs. 313.5 billion would be needed to enroll 7 million out of school children over the following 3 years, based on current formal public school expenditure per primary school student.

Pakistani School system:

The main languages of instruction are English and Urdu.

Primary Education: Grades 1 - 5

Middle Education: Grades 6 – 8, subjects include Urdu, English, arts, Islamic studies, Mathematics, science, social studies

Secondary Education: Grades 9 to 12 with annual examinations. On completion of grade 10, pupils may qualify for a secondary school certificate. If they wish to, they may proceed further to grade 12, following which they sit a final examination for their higher secondary school certificate. During this time, they opt for one of several streams that include pre-medical, pre-engineering, humanities / social sciences and commerce.

Afghanistan:

According to Afghanistan's National Education Strategic Plan (2015-2020) (in draft), the following statistics characterize the education sector:

- 50% of the population is made up of children under the age of 15 years and 36% of the population is at school age (12.4 million) in 2013
- While in 2001 only 1 million children (mainly boys) were enrolled in school; in 2013 over 8.6 million children were enrolled, of which 39% were girls
- Of the 8.6 million children in school in 2013, 185,000 are student in 'cross-border' schools
- The Ministry of Education estimates that gross enrolment ratios for all levels and all types of education were 69% (56% female and 82% male).
- The Ministry of Education estimates that 3.5 million school age children are out of school
- The number of graduates of 12th grade in 2013 reached 291,000
- In 2013, over 261,000 children were enrolled in Islamic education centres of which 20% were female

Afghanistan education system

Two education systems exist in parallel in Afghanistan. Religious education is the responsibility of clerics at mosques, while the government provides free academic education at state schools. The main languages of instruction are Dari and Pashto.

Primary education: From age 7 to age 13 pupils attend primary schools where they learn the basics of reading, writing, arithmetic and their national culture.

Middle education: Three years (ages 13-16) of middle school follow where academic-style education continues. Students must pass an examination at the end of this phase if they wish to study further.

Secondary education: At secondary school (ages 16-19) students have a choice between continuing with an academic path for 3 years that could perhaps lead on to university, or study subjects such as applied agriculture, aeronautics, arts, commerce and teacher training instead. Both programs culminate in a *baccalaurean* examination.

The following tables provide a snapshot of the overall state of education for Afghan refugees in Pakistan, as well as enrolment data for the total registered Afghan refugee children (6-17 years), and primary school age children (5-11

The findings of the 2011 PPVR survey conducted in refugee households in Pakistan suggested that:

- Only **33%** of Afghan refugees were able to read and write
- Female literacy could be as low as **8%**
- Net refugee enrolment at the primary school level was approximately **29%**
- Only **30%** of enrolled children were girls
- The dropout rate in schools operated by UNHCR in refugee villages (RVs) was **70%**
- Female dropout rate was **90%**.

Total registered Afghan refugee children (6-17 years): Enrolment in schools

- Children (6-17 years) comprise 39% of the total registered Afghan refugee population in Pakistan
- 51% (40% in RVs and 56% in urban areas) Afghan refugee students are enrolled in following schools:
 - Afghan private schools (43%)
 - Pakistani public schools (23%)
 - Refugee village (RV) schools (25%)
 - Others (non-formal, Pakistani private, religious etc) (10%)
- According to this data, the percentage of out-of-school Afghan refugee children is 49% (60% in RVs and 44% in urban areas)

Primary school age registered Afghan refugee children (5-11 years): Enrolment in schools

- 367,000 primary school age children (5-11 years) account for 24% of the total registered Afghan population
- Of the primary school age population:
 - Over 61,000 (17%) attend schools in refugee villages
 - An estimated 180,000 children (49%) are not enrolled in schools

years).

Overall, UNHCR provides education to over 72,246 refugee children through 175 schools, which represent x% of the total registered 5-17-year-old population. Girls at primary level constitute 33% of the total children enrolled in primary school enrolment; only 4% of adolescent girls are known to attend secondary schools. The pupil-teacher ratio (PTR) is 53 children per teacher, significantly higher than the national average of 40 children per teacher. Number of students per classroom at primary level is 52:1, though the ratio average is higher in lower primary: 62:1, or 55% higher than the acceptable national trend of 40:1. Similarly, recent data denote that the student/latrine ratio is 117:1. That means that UNHCR minimum WASH standard coverage requires a 300% increase in appropriate WASH facilities for females, and a 100% increase for males. The gap in appropriate infrastructure poses a threat to enrollment and retention and triggers drop-out as well. The primary completion rate is reported to be 65% in RV schools (65% children of those who sit in grade 5 examination pass). Approximately 60% of children between the ages of 6 and 17 years are not enrolled in any school.

The main reasons for poor school attendance, retention and completion cited by refugees in the PPRV interviews were economic and socio-cultural. As is well known the PoR card merely entitles holders to reside legally and temporarily on Pakistani soil and protects the holder from *refoulement*. No other rights attach to the card, with the result that most PoR cardholders are forced to work within the informal or 'black' economy and/or may be underpaid or exploited. This places significant strain on family finances and in some cases forces PoR cardholders to resort to

negative coping mechanisms such as putting their children to work or marrying them off. With the enactment of the National Action Plan following the Army Public School massacre of December 2014, PoR cardholders have found that incremental and largely informal privileges such as use of SIM cards, freedom of movement/establishment, access to driving licences, etc. have been curtailed. Socio-cultural factors appeared to be especially influential in contributing to the lack of female participation in education, particularly in relation to issues such as early marriage, domestic responsibilities, and negative beliefs about the ultimate added value of education for girls compared to education for boys. Some families cited protection concerns, specifically in relation to the distance between home and school. A further reason for poor rates of school attendance is the perception of some refugee parents that there are insufficient opportunities for refugee children to enter secondary or higher education after Grade 8, which is regularly cited by parents as a particular barrier militating against girl children staying in school after Grade 6. Other challenges include the poor quality of education provided in most refugee village schools, as compared to public Pakistani schools.

In addition to the above reasons for poor school attendance, it is clear that the number of schools is insufficient to meet the ever-increasing demand (some 50,000 to 60,000 refugee children are born in Pakistan every year) and UNHCR acknowledges the difficulties it faces in providing quality education due to poorly qualified teachers, chronic absenteeism and poor supervisory oversight, inadequate remuneration, poor school infrastructure and other factors.

1.5. National policy context & Provincial overviews and progress towards developing provincial educational policies

Pakistan is party to most of the main covenants and treaties which incorporate express provisions relating to children’s right to education, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the International Covenants on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and Civil and Political Rights, the Conventions on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; in addition, Pakistan has also ratified certain relevant ILO Conventions, such as the Worst Forms of Child Labor and Forced Labor Conventions. Despite the 18th Constitutional Amendment, which enshrines the right to free and compulsory education for all children between the ages of 5 and 16 (Article 25-A – Right to Education), and which devolves the responsibility for education to provincial governments, progress has been uneven across the various provinces. The federal government’s education remit is now limited to federally administered territories, such as the capital, Islamabad, and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), and to higher education. It is also responsible for inter-provincial co-ordination and implementation of international treaties. Federal bodies such as the education ministry and its curriculum wing have been dissolved. Until the provinces devise legislation on education policy and planning, existing laws, regulations and curriculum remain in place³.

Issues common to all provinces include the need to formulate educational policies based on international education norms and standards, the need to establish operational and technically sound education fora to address educational gaps, the need for curriculum reform, improved teacher performance, enhanced regulation of private institutions and allocation of funding. These are issues that require technical expertise UNHCR does currently have, and so greater efforts will need to be made to reach out to, and work with, the relevant technical sectors, departments and experts.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

About 976,218 (64%) registered Afghan refugees in Pakistan are hosted in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province. 45% of these refugees reside in 43 refugee villages while 55% live in urban and semi-urban areas. UNHCR data indicates that over 375,794 (38%) of the total registered Afghans in KP are children and adolescents of school going age (6-17 years) and that 229,120 school-aged children are enrolled in various types of schools in rural and urban areas (approximately 30% are girls).

Region/ province		6-17 years Afghan Refugees
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³ International Crisis Group Asia Report no 257 June 2014

	Registered Afghan Refugees	Total 6-17 years	In RVs	In Urban areas
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP)	976,218	375,794	120,254	255,540

Enrolment	Afghan private schools	Public schools	RV schools	other schools	Total
	94,000 (25%)	55,000 (14.6%)	53,000 (14.1%)	27,120 (7.2%)	229,120 (61%)

UNHCR provides basic education coverage (grades 1-8) in 33 of the 127 RV schools and primary education (grades 1-6) in all 127 of these schools. However, grade 8 will be phased out as 1,553 students (22% girls) will graduate in May 2016. Currently UNHCR employs more than 860 teachers along with 133 community funded teachers. UNHCR funded schools provide education to some 53,000 children in KPK; 31% are girls. Approximately 94,000 children are enrolled in Afghan self-help schools (mostly primary to secondary level) while an estimated 55,000 children are enrolled in Pakistani public schools. The remaining enrolled Afghan children access madrassahs, private Pakistani schools, Project/NGOs run, community driven and party run schools.

KP has tended to lag behind other provinces in terms of implementing education policies, but there are signs that the KP government, with the help of UNICEF, DFID and others, is beginning to engage more on educational issues. The KP Elementary and Secondary Education (E&SE) Department is now set to approve the minimum standards of quality education, which have been prepared in consultation with the stakeholders from all the provinces and federal government to maintain uniformity in the education sector. The minimum standards cover issues such as curricula, textbooks, teachers, students' assessment, and the school learning environment, etc.

Overview of the KP Education Sector Plan (2015-2020):

The ESP is formulated around 4 groups: (1) More Effective Teachers; (2) Better Schools and Facilities; (3) Every Child's Right to Education; and (4) Good Governance and Management. Each of these Policy Groups is further disaggregated into a series of policies.

- (1) More Effective Teachers
 - a. Training and selection of new teachers
 - b. Development of a consolidated needs-based approach to continuing professional development
 - c. Redevelopment of teaching cadre employment rules
- (2) Better Schools and Facilities
 - a. Establishment of a sustainable approach to the provision of school facilities
- (3) Every Child's Right to Education
 - a. Launching new benefits for children most at risk of educational deprivation
 - b. Scaling up partnerships with the private sector
 - c. Launching a drawdown fund for use in emergency situations
- (4) Good Governance and Management
 - a. Testing and updating population data
 - b. Developing district officials' management skills
 - c. Pegging education budget to inflation.

Refugee education is not mentioned in the ESP however the ESP is to be revised in line with commitments under SDG4 and UNHCR is engaging with the Department in a bid to encourage the Department to include refugees under the third group – Every Child's Right to Education which at present is focused on initiatives such as cash transfer projects and voucher programmes for the poorest children, and the creation of emergency funds.

Brief overview of statistics:

According to the ESP, the estimated number of school age children in KP at the end of 2015/2016 is 7.2 million and will rise to 8.1 million by 2020.

Further, in 2015/2016:

Preschool and Grades 1-5: 3.5 million children, rising to 4.1 million in 2020

Grades 6-8: 1.5 million children, rising to 1.7 million in 2020

Grades 9-10 (secondary): 968,000, rising to 1.08 million in 2020

Grades 11-12 (higher secondary): 913,000, rising to 1.02 million in 2020.

The ESP is not budgeted.

Baluchistan

Baluchistan hosts a total of 302,734 registered Afghan refugees of which 120,198 are children and adolescents of school going age (6-17 years). 173,501 persons (57%) of the whole registered population are residing in urban and rural settlements of the Quetta district of which 72,649 (24%) are children. In Quetta urban, the Afghan community is operating 44 community-based private schools for approximately 22,815 Afghan children.

Region/ province	Registered Afghan Refugees	6-17 years Afghan Refugees		
		Total 6-17 years	In RVs	In Urban areas
Baluchistan	302,734	120,198	38,463	81,735

Enrolment	Afghan private schools	Public schools	RV schools	other schools	Total
	22,815 (19%)	5,000 (4.2%)	17,646 (14.7%)	1,000 (.8%)	46,461 (38.7%)

UNHCR is providing access to free education to 17,646 Afghan children (37% girls) residing in 10 refugee villages through 39 primary schools; 10 of those schools additionally will facilitate secondary classes until x date. Additionally there are 28 satellite classes⁴, 15 Home Based Girls Centers⁵ and 13 Early Childhood Education (ECE) classes. A total of 17,646 Afghan children (24% of 72,007⁶), including 6,450 girls (37%) and 11,196 boys (63%) are enrolled in ECE to upper secondary classes. In parallel to formal education, about 5-10 % of the youth enrolled in secondary classes are given an opportunity to undertake vocational training as a means of offering better livelihood opportunities. A total of 480 teachers, including 130 females, (27%), are appointed in these schools. The average teacher-student ratio for primary grades to grade 8 is 1:40.

In Baluchistan the Education Department has established a Policy, Planning and Implementation Unit which is responsible for coordinating, facilitating and complementing the efforts of the Education Department in addressing issues such as curriculum review, textbook development, assessment methodologies and enhancing the information management system.

Punjab

⁴ Linked with the mother school for reporting

⁵ Independent setup and report directly to partner staff

⁶ HIS data 2014

There are 172,558 registered Afghan refugees in Punjab, of which 71,619 children are of school going age (6-17 years): 37,192 males (52%) and 34,427 females (48%). UNHCR supports nine schools (four for boys and five for girls) and 48 teachers (26 female and 22 male) in one refugee village Kot Chandna that accommodates 1,600 refugee children. According to data shared by the Home Department, there are some 5,228 Afghan students enrolled in public schools in 4 districts of Punjab. The data for the rest of the districts is not available. There are 7,000 Afghans enrolled in Afghan private schools in Islamabad and Punjab. Sixty-eight Afghan students are enrolled in tertiary education through distance learning in Punjab.

Region/ province	Registered Afghan Refugees	6-17 years Afghan Refugees		
		Total 6-17 years	In RVs	In Urban areas
Punjab	172,558	71,619	22,918	48,701

Enrolment	Afghan private schools	Public schools	RV schools	other schools	Total
	7,000 (9.8%)	5,228 (7.3%)	1,600 (2.2%)	200 (.3%)	14,028 (19.6%)

In Punjab the School Education Department has already begun to undertake structural reform of the Punjab Curriculum and Textbook Board with a view to curriculum review. Other reforms include a school reforms roadmap, competitive ranking of districts and real-time monitoring. The Punjab SED is exploring improving access through the introduction of public private partnerships, while other education departments have been involved in reinforcing teacher training and development of continuing professional development programmes. The National Commission of Human Development (NCHD) has established community-based informal education schools which are being handed over to the provincial education authorities. Punjab province has also developed a Youth Policy with initiatives such as paid internships, vocational training, scholarships, etc.

Sindh

In Sindh, as with other provinces, the Education Department is engaging with development actors such as World Bank, UNICEF, DFID, USAID, CIDA and JICA to effect reforms through a Reforms Support Unit. Reforms have been initiated in areas such as recruitment, curriculum, professional development of teachers and the development of accelerated learning programmes for children and adults. There are currently about 65,000 Afghan POR card holders residing in Sindh. Sindh has 24,000 (5-17 years old) of school going children among which approximately 2500 of children are enrolled in schools. There is no Provincial education data management system in place in Sindh, it is challenging to get accurate number of school going children. There is no Refugee village in Sindh. There are 6 community based schools in UC1 and UC 5 in Karachi. These schools are run by community on a commercial basis. These schools use Local Curriculum with incorporation of religious education. There is no restriction on access to public schools in Sindh urban clusters but distance and involvement of children in incoming generation activities are major barriers.

1.6. Key challenges for refugee education in Pakistan

The main challenges facing the Pakistan operation in the refugee education sector include:

Contextual challenges:

- Persistent family poverty
- Social and economic barriers prevent girls' attendance, retention and completion rates
- Low attendance and high dropout rates indicative of endemic socio-economic and quality issues

Challenges:

Policy:

- Systematically including refugees in Provincial Education Sector Plans
- Increasingly challenging political environment for refugees with possible repercussions on social cohesion between Afghan and host populations
- Uncertainty surrounding PoR card renewal

Supply side:

- Insufficient access to secondary and tertiary education for refugee children due in part to the low quality of primary education
- Insufficient opportunities for dropouts and youths to access quality vocational or para-professional courses leading to acquisition of marketable skills.
- Recurrent soft costs associated with provision of basic services indicates that access has always been prioritized over quality
- UNHCR's financial outlook

Quality:

- Difficulty maintaining quality education in RV schools in the absence of the requisite technical monitoring expertise and oversight by supervisory provincial education authorities or specialist entities
- Curricula and language issues, although evidence has shown that for primary school-age children having grown up in Pakistan many may have already sufficiently assimilated the local language to permit them to undergo primary schooling without significant negative impact on the child's development

The education sector in Afghanistan, while beset by its own huge challenges, has seen exponential education growth since 2002. USAID reports that more than 8 million students are enrolled in Afghan schools today, including more than 2.5 million girls.⁷ Efforts are already underway to engage with Afghan educational counterparts and stakeholders within the context of the renewal of Tripartite Agreement between the Governments of Afghanistan and Pakistan and UNHCR. Specifically, issues surrounding certification, equivalence and curriculum harmonization are being discussed in an effort to remove barriers to the reintegration of Afghan students into the Afghan education system upon repatriation.

From 2016, funding to the Pakistan programme for Afghan refugees will be reduced in line with an overall reduction in funding to UNHCR programmes worldwide as the organization grapples with emergencies on multiple fronts. This financial downturn is coupled with an expected increase in the number of Afghan refugees opting for voluntary repatriation as the Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees (SSAR) is progressively implemented, along with the mutually reinforcing Government of Pakistan (GoP) and Government of Afghanistan (GoA) strategies for voluntary

⁷ <http://www.usaid.gov/afghanistan/education>

repatriation and management of Afghan refugees, expected to be finalized in 2016. Nevertheless, despite hopes for an increase in repatriation, a significant number of Afghan children will continue to remain in Pakistan, particularly as the security situation in Afghanistan continues to evolve.

Against this backdrop, it is of paramount importance that UNHCR Pakistan recalibrates its approach to educational programming by adopting forward-looking measures aimed at the provision of **quality** primary education for as many refugee children as possible, and equipping returning refugee youth with the necessary skill sets for sustainable integration into, and contribution towards the rebuilding of Afghanistan. At the same time, UNHCR must develop a viable and responsible disengagement strategy for its largely parallel education programme in Pakistan, which will not be financially sustainable in the 2016 budget landscape and beyond.

2. Cross-cutting Guiding Principles

Since the Pakistan Refugee Education Strategy, in full alignment with the UNHCR Global Education Policy,⁸ seeks to pursue mainstreaming of Afghan refugee children into national services, UNHCR will also need to be systematically engaged in efforts to address the challenges present in the Pakistan education sector (in those contexts where refugees have been mainstreamed, or UNHCR hopes to mainstream refugees). Reports such as the National Annual Status of Education Report⁹, which is based on an annual citizen-led assessment survey of the Pakistan education sector highlight the very complex and challenging educational environment in Pakistan.

UNHCR cannot and does not expect to devolve its educational obligations to the Pakistan educational system without committing to lending strategic support to provincial educational authorities: thus reinforcing that partnership, community engagement and collaboration with development actors will remain of primordial importance, as will the not inconsiderable support that can be provided through established RAHA structures and funding.

As such, three main principles will guide and underpin the Education Strategy:

1. **Strengthen partnerships, synergies and collaboration** with relevant experts and stakeholders in the education sector, both within and outside Pakistan, including the GoP, provincial education departments and authorities, UN agencies (UNICEF, UNESCO, ILO), development partners (USAID, DFID, World Bank, etc.) and private-public partnerships, among others. In addition, establishing or strengthening youth committees to ensure that efforts undertaken on their behalf are grounded in a full understanding of their challenges will be equally important. A list of relevant interlocutors, at country level, and at provincial level, is attached as Annex 2. As a first step the Country and Sub/Field Offices will develop 3Ws and strategically engage with key interlocutors, including through following action, as appropriate:
 - a. Establish refugee education working groups at provincial level including refugee students, NGOs, INGOs, provincial education authorities, relevant line ministries (Education, Women's Affairs, Social Welfare, etc.) Where provincial-level SDG working groups are in existence these would of course be the optimum forum for deliberations on education and youth-related issues; however it may still be beneficial to have a refugee education working group if not all stakeholders are invited to attend the SDG working groups, which are government-run.
 - b. Establish memoranda of understanding with UNICEF, UNESCO, ILO, etc., and with PEDs, MoE and EMIS to implement the strategy to disengage from parallel education system and expand access of refugee children to national school system. Also, enhance effectiveness of existing education programme for refugee children by applying successful models of UNICEF, UNESCO and ILO, such as child friendly schools etc.
 - c. Develop joint provincial education strategies

⁸ 2012-2016 UNHCR Education Strategy (<http://www.unhcr.org/5149ba349.html>) and the UNHCR Policy on Alternatives to Camps (<http://www.unhcr.org/5422b8f09.html>).

⁹ www.Aserpakistan.org, provisional publication 17 December 2015

- d. Develop advocacy strategies, etc.
 - e. Develop joint resource mobilization strategies
 - f. Enhance interaction with communities
2. **Reinforce and support community-based education initiatives** to promote autonomy and provision of quality services. As a first step Sub/Field Offices will conduct a mapping of such institutions and initiate engagement with selected communities to ascertain whether any innovative programming initiatives could be employed to boost their own activities. In addition, a mapping of youth groups and their capacities, and the provision of support to such youth groups and committees will also be important.
 3. **Optimize RAHA structures and funding opportunities**, which, in defined circumstances, can be used to increase the absorption capacity of Pakistani schools which already count Afghan refugee children amongst their school populations. As at end 2015, RAHA funding has undertaken over 415 interventions in the education sector, representing 12% of the total 3,500 RAHA interventions undertaken so far. This percentage needs to be significantly increased and agreements about the numbers of refugee children who will benefit will need to reflect both investment and SDG leverage. Sub/Field Offices will meet with RAHA counterparts to jointly develop the beginnings of a portfolio of projects covering youth empowerment/education. Leveraging RAHA programming, partnership, networks and collaboration will continue to form a foundational element for the implementation of the Strategy.

3. Key Objectives of the Refugee Education Strategy

The UNHCR Global Education Strategy 2012-2016, focuses on 1) increasing access to quality primary education, 2) expanding secondary education access, 3) providing safe learning environments, 4) providing opportunities for lifelong learning, 5) meeting educational challenges with innovation, and innovation connected to ICT where appropriate.

In the context of Pakistan, the following key objectives have been identified for the 2016-2018 Refugee Education Strategy:

Objective 1: Enhancing quality of and access to primary education for children, especially for girls.

The Pakistan operation will focus on improving access of children to quality primary school education, with particular focus on girls' education.

This objective will be achieved through following **actions**:

- a. Progressively phase out of UNHCR provision of primary education in RVs where state facilities exist nearby, following analysis of the mapping exercises conducted in 2015 and 2016. RAHA funding, which is administered jointly by UNHCR and CAR, will be used in consultation with provincial education departments, to increase the absorption capacity of such state schools, which accept refugee children.
- b. Establishing schools **only** where no state facilities exist or absorption capacity is low
- c. Working with the Basic Education Community Schools programme (BECS), a federal government supported initiative, which establishes "pop-up" remedial schools to assist dropout children to acquire a Grade 5 level education, following which they can be mainstreamed into the Pakistani public school system
- d. Establish or scaling up on home schooling for girls
- e. Support Afghan private schools and community-based schools
- f. Mainstream students with special needs including by supporting the upgrading of special needs facilities
- g. Upgrade school facilities, including safety, WASH and gender-sensitive features such as provision of transportation to promote a safe learning environment that fosters girls attendance
- h. Conduct social mobilization campaigns to increase school enrolment, including on birth registration.

Objective 2: Enhancing the quality of education and learning achievements.

The Pakistan operation will focus on improving the quality of primary school education for maximum transferability to secondary school education, whether in the country of asylum or in the country of origin.

This objective will be achieved through following **actions:**

- a. Strengthen teacher capacity, training, professional qualifications, remuneration & retention, and increase oversight in conjunction with provincial education departments, monitoring and supervisory authorities and development donors
- b. Address curriculum issues, including equivalency issues with relevant educational stakeholders and counterparts in Afghanistan
- c. Enhance the effective involvement of School Management Committees/Parent Teacher Associations in school management
- d. Develop, in conjunction with relevant technical experts, minimum school standards for community-based schooling
- e. Support the Afghan Consulate's Education Section which is the relevant body in Pakistan for the accreditation and oversight of Afghan schools. .

Objective 3: Pursuing youth empowerment, skills training and stronger linkages with education pathways.

The Pakistan operation will focus on youth empowerment by equipping youth with marketable skills and/or providing opportunities to re-enter formal education, improving access to higher education opportunities and providing a particular focus on out-of-school-youth (OOSY).

This objective will be achieved through following **actions:**

- a. Develop partnerships and collaboration with relevant Pakistani stakeholders (both governmental and non-governmental) to ensure refugee youth are included in, or have equal access to, educational and vocational training schemes specifically targeting youth
- b. Working with technical/industry stakeholders to include OOSY and refugees in their programmes, as well as identify/develop courses of varying lengths, designed to provide basic and functional literacy, in line with certified standards for maximum cross-border or external transferability and income-generation
- c. Pilot educational/vocational voucher schemes
- d. Coordination with service providers and government certified partners on vocational and skills training, for example National Commission of Human Development (NCHD)
- e. Cross-border analysis of required skills sets and livelihood opportunities
- f. Identification of Ministry of Education and other accelerated learning programmes for OOSY
- g.
- h. Financial and other support for 'gifted' children who demonstrate intellectual aptitude to enter/proceed with higher/tertiary education
- i. Working with stakeholders to address barriers to effective entry of Afghan youth into Pakistani secondary and tertiary education institutes.

The Pakistan operation will need to be involved in developing and contributing to policy shaping as a means of achieving the 3 objectives above.

Objective 4: Policy changes to optimize refugee education pathways.

This will be achieved as follows:

- a. Advocating for inclusion of refugee children in Provincial Education Sector Plans
- b. Advocating with development donors to encourage them to include refugees within their contributions to the Provincial Education Sector Plans

- c. Engaging through UNHCR Afghanistan on achieving an equivalence regime that facilitates integration of repatriating refugee children within the Afghanistan school system
- d. Engaging with the Ministries of Education to promote short courses designed to address existing deficiencies in the Afghan curriculum in relation to Urdu and English
- e. Working with Pakistani vocational training providers and accreditation bodies to improve access to accredited and certified courses
- f. Advocating for inclusion of Afghan teachers in teacher training, continuing professional development and supervisory regimes
- g. Working with the Afghan Education Attaché Department to promote accreditation of private and community-based schools
- h. Working with community schools to develop a minimum standards package that meets accreditation criteria
- i. Working with Provincial Education Departments to include Afghan schools within public school monitoring and evaluation/supervisory regimes
- j. Advocating with RAHA contributors to increase contributions towards education

4. Strategic Approaches for the Implementation of the Refugee Education Strategy

The following strategic approaches will be employed by UNHCR and partners to facilitate the implementation of the Pakistan refugee education strategy:

3.1. Mainstreaming refugee students into public education systems

UNHCR's education strategy will establish the means to mainstream Afghan children at scale into nearby state-run schools where available, and satellite schools or classrooms where possible, in ways that deliver benefits to refugee and local children alike. The RAHA initiative provides a suitable and well-established platform to support this process as it allows for channeling support and resources to both local and refugee communities, thereby contributing to social cohesion and peaceful co-existence.

UNHCR will adapt the approach adopted under its current health strategy to inform the refugee education strategy, which envisages gradual phase out of certain schools where public facilities exist and can absorb refugee caseloads. Accordingly, UNHCR will effect an institutional behavioural change by engaging closely with provincial education departments and development partners with clear timelines for action and handover and the, establishment of joint monitoring and budget planning processes so as to ensure that all stakeholders are pro-actively engaged in the implementation of the Refugee Education Strategy as it reflects SDG4 goals, national targets and UNHCR's participation in those national targets on behalf of refugees. UNHCR recognizes that there will be certain contexts, especially in remote areas of KP and in Balochistan, where it will not be feasible to mainstream in the short term because of issues related to language of instruction. Possible transition for those remote communities will be considered and planned for separately.

It is fortunate and commendable that Pakistani public schools do not generally discriminate against Afghan children enrolling in Pakistan public schools. The Pakistan Refugee Education Strategy will harness partnerships and communities to reinforce the absorption capacity of existing state-run educational facilities within accessible distance to refugee villages. A mapping of Pakistani public schools within a 5 km radius of RV schools was completed in 2015. In 2016, a further mapping of schools within a 5 km radius of urban refugee clusters has been undertaken. . The results of these mappings indicate that country-wide, out of some 564,000 children in schools within a 5km radius of RVs or urban refugee clusters, some 100,000 or 18% are Afghan children.

Where public schools are present and with funding able to absorb refugee children, this will be preferred solution. Savings made through this approach will be used to improve UNHCR-run schools in remote areas where no state schools are present or are not within a reasonable distance of RVs. At the same time, communities which have already

taken the initiative of establishing schools will be supported and innovative virtual or IT-based technologies will be explored to assist in enhancing the quality of education. For example, UNHCR has been approached by an NGO which is pioneering a programme featuring the use of tablets with lesson plans for teachers, who will then be remotely monitored. This is reportedly being considered for Punjab and there are indications that KP is also considering using similar technology to increase access to quality education.

Supporting state-run schools where possible provides opportunities for partnership and collaboration with provincial Pakistan education authorities that struggle to maintain and increase school services and facilities for local student populations. Including refugee children in national and provincial primary education programmes can also facilitate their eventual access to secondary education, which in turn improves their solutions profiles, feeding into the overall aims of the SSAR, which are in part to create the conditions for sustainable reintegration. Such an approach also affords refugee children the flexibility to remain in Pakistan to pursue their education if conditions allow. This approach feeds neatly into the Government of Pakistan's national Comprehensive Policy on Voluntary Repatriation and Management of Afghan Refugees Beyond 2015 which envisages the adoption of a visa regime catering to the needs of various categories of Afghans, such as students, businessmen and certain categories of 'vulnerable' women. With either option, refugee children get the opportunity to pursue their education, earn a living and become a functional members of whichever society they choose.

For those areas where UNHCR disengagement is not possible, due to remoteness or lack of state-run facilities, and RAHA interventions are not feasible given the demographic composition of the population, UNHCR will continue to meet its obligations to refugee children to provide educational services, while seeking to improve upon the quality of education provided and identifying long term solutions through collaboration and advocacy.

This approach would require a thorough analysis of the following:

- Availability/absorption capacity of state-run institutions in conjunction with mapping of locations of RV schools and Afghan private education facilities, and student population (already conducted in 2015)
- The needs of refugee and Pakistani children located in areas which are underserved from an educational perspective, where the state has no immediate plans to provide schools, and where UNHCR, regional education authorities and development partners can collaborate to establish access and programming for the particular needs of those communities
- The extent to which the quality of services provided by the Afghan private education facilities and community-based schools can be brought into line with minimum standards thereby giving students an opportunity to advance within Pakistani or Afghan educational systems

Key challenges

- Parents of Afghan children who are encouraged to enroll in state schools and learn in Urdu/English may feel that their children will be disadvantaged upon return and entry into the Afghan school stream, in which Dari/Pashto are the languages of instruction. It is generally true that returning children are required to repeat a year. Strenuous efforts will need to be undertaken and have begun to promote a bilateral agreement between the two governments to ensure that such children can integrate into the Afghan school stream without having to repeat any school years. Further discussions between the 2 governments may need to take place on language of instruction issues within the overall context of the SSAR.
- The quality of teaching in most Afghan private schools, community-based schools and RV-based schools is inadequate and needs significant inputs to bring it up to an acceptable level, which requires robust oversight, monitoring and thus investment.
- Possible negative political fallout on the basis that Pakistani authorities may perceive this approach as favouring local integration 'by stealth', which will need to be carefully counteracted by highlighting the potential and benefits advantages from a solutions-perspective.

3.2. Supporting access to secondary education

In relation to secondary (and tertiary) education for refugee children, UNHCR's approach will be to provide refugee children with the best possible means to access secondary schools whether in Pakistan or in the home country. This can be achieved by improving the quality of primary school education to such an extent that children can transfer into secondary education, which is free in both Afghanistan and Pakistan. Improving the quality of primary education through better teaching capacity, parent literacy and involvement, provincial education regulatory monitoring and other known best practices can positively impact enrolment and transition rates. Other initiatives that would remove barriers to transition include provision of English and Urdu language courses to enable children who have studied under the Afghan curriculum to successfully apply for secondary education in Pakistan.

Given funding limitations and sustainability concerns, the Operation will not pursue provision of secondary schooling in those contexts where public secondary schools are accessible, but can consider providing limited (largely regulatory) support to Afghan private secondary education facilities in those contexts where it is not possible for young refugee children to access or safely access state schools. Nevertheless, the Operation is engaged in identifying and addressing some of the barriers faced by refugee children in accessing Pakistani secondary schools and will continue its efforts to advocate against discriminatory practices affecting refugee children.

Key challenges:

- The resources required to improve the quality of primary education through improving teacher delivery, etc. are severely lacking.
- Fewer secondary/tertiary opportunities in Pakistan for children who have studied under the Afghan curriculum
- Equivalency issues need to be addressed through the two governments
- Difficulty faced by girls wishing to access secondary/tertiary due to lack of culturally acceptable facilities, etc.

3.3. Implementing innovative education solutions

Given the size of the population and the remote nature of some refugee communities, it is clear that UNHCR should also be prepared to adopt and promote innovative approaches to education and supplemental learning support, such as the use of distance learning, ICT, or web- and mobile technology-based solutions that can provide children and young people with greater access to learning materials, greater flexibility for learning opportunities, and greater control over their own learning.

Innovation will require significant engagement with specialist education agencies. UNICEF and UNESCO already have established programmes in Pakistan that address challenges that are common to local and refugee children and youth. Both organizations support education planning and policy development in Pakistan, and have close working relationships with the MoE, ILO and WFP. Both support programming that specifically addresses girls' education. Both have explored educational partnerships in remote regions.

UNESCO'S Education Strategy 2014-2021, adopted in October 2014, has objectives that closely align with UNHCR's education objectives, including actions related to expansion of learning opportunities, quality education and learning achievement through teacher education and ICT. Partnership with and the planning involvement of both UNESCO Pakistan and UNICEF Pakistan could add credence with donors, influence supplemental education budgets for refugee hosting regions in the federal and provincial budgets, and expand opportunities for greater support to regions that regularize access to refugee populations; the increased quality and access benefits will remain after solutions are found for Afghan refugees.

The closer collaboration for UNHCR with UNICEF, UNESCO and provincial education departments in the context of the SDG4 framework offers UNHCR a unique opportunity to explore some of these initiatives and ensure refugee children can also benefit.

Key challenges

- Stronger cooperation with sister UN agencies, development actors, etc. has always proved challenging for UNHCR, given its history and structural distance from line ministries
- Engaging with, and convincing provincial education departments of the merits of these initiatives may require intensive focus on partnership development and specialist resources
- These initiatives are generally heavily resource-dependent, at a time when the so-called 'Afghan situation' is already being downplayed on the world stage
- Lack of infrastructure to host some innovative initiatives may prove challenging, in particular in more remote areas

3.4. Pursuing youth empowerment

For youth empowerment, the strategic focus will be on aligning with and amplifying access to ILO, UNESCO and UNICEF programming already targeting Pakistan youth with vulnerabilities similar to refugees, including exploring how the SDGs, in particular SDG 4 can be leveraged to serve the needs of refugee young people. UNDP is also managing youth empowerment and social cohesion schemes, and discussions have begun with UNDP counterparts in all areas of the country on identifying ways in which refugee children can benefit from these initiatives. In addition, it is crucial for UNHCR to engage with government-funded projects and initiatives, an example being TUSDEC (Technology Upgradation and Skills Development Company) which is a full-service private-public partnership offering services ranging from vocational training, job placements, microcredit financing and other initiatives. Engagement with TEVTA and other specialist government agencies is equally important. Such programming aims to equip young men and women with the necessary skills and support to help them develop and realize their potential, and enter into gainful employment. For UNHCR, this includes supporting children to remain in formal education for as long as possible. Again this will require innovative and creative approaches, such as the use of voucher schemes, remedial classes, home-based industry, and promoting technical streams in secondary school curricula, as well as sustained advocacy and engagement with sector specialists.

The recent Global Refugee Youth Consultations in Islamabad have demonstrated that UNHCR should tap into a vibrant youth sector which has its own ideas on how to tackle their problems. The enormous potential of the refugee youth to act as mentors, peer supports, volunteers and advocates was very evident. This a resource that UNHCR will need to make efforts to mine and follow up on in a strategic manner.

Key challenges

- Relatively few accredited schemes and programming targeting youth
- Plethora of vocational training institutes etc., with questionable or largely unregulated courses
- Insufficient job opportunities
- Prohibitive costs associated with such schemes, with few specialist actors
- State- or province-run courses with insufficient places to cater to needs and/or inherently discriminatory access procedures
- Insufficient opportunities for out-of-school youth to re-enter formal or enter vocational training schemes
- Insufficient opportunities for girls/young women that address socio-cultural concerns

3.5. Special focus on refugee girls and women

Refugee girls and women require special support, as they are especially vulnerable, in both the Pakistan and Afghanistan contexts, to cultural and other barriers that limit girls' enrolment, ability to stay in school or to advance into meaningful livelihoods. Again collaboration within the framework of SDG4 (# 4.5 which refers to eliminating gender disparities in education and equal access to all levels of education) will provide an entry point for UNHCR to leverage. UNHCR will need to work in collaboration with partners active with similarly vulnerable populations in Pakistan to remove as many barriers as possible and to exercise leadership in generalizing the existing good practices in its repertoire, such as home-based schooling and community-based or mobile-based literacy classes for women, for the benefit of both refugees and vulnerable girls and women in hosting areas. Other initiatives will also need to be

prioritized to improve women's literacy and involvement in education, whether as teachers, resource persons, or school committee members, including ensuring girls who have attained higher levels of education (Grade 10-12) are supported in pursuing further education where possible, particularly in teaching and nursing; working with UNESCO and other stakeholders on women's literacy initiatives.

Key challenges

- Socio-cultural barriers to girls' advancement at all levels of the education pathway
- Insufficient opportunities for girls/women to acquire marketable skills that provide meaningful livelihoods (and not just 'pocket money')
- Insufficient number of female teachers and other resource staff to overcome parents' reluctance to educate girls
- Girls will not necessarily be able to access Pakistani schools due to lack of gender-sensitive facilities

5. Joint Advocacy and Resource Mobilization

During the past five years, UNHCR has spent some 20,740,394 USD to educate some 75,000 children each year; amounting to approximately 4,148,079 per year. The cost per child per year varied in each year but the average cost for all the five years is recorded to be 57 USD, which is less than Pakistan spends on each child each year (65 USD).

From 2016 funding to the Pakistan programme for Afghan refugees will be reduced in line with an overall reduction in funding to UNHCR programmes worldwide as the organization grapples with emergencies on multiple fronts. This financial downturn is coupled with an expected increase in the number of Afghan refugees opting for voluntary repatriation as the Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees (SSAR) is progressively implemented, along with the mutually reinforcing Government of Pakistan (GoP) and Government of Afghanistan (GoA) strategies for voluntary repatriation and management of Afghan refugees, expected to be finalized in 2016. Nevertheless, despite hopes for an increase in repatriation, a significant number of Afghan children will continue to remain in Pakistan, particularly as the security situation in Afghanistan continues to evolve.

Clearly, in this context of shrinking funding, a protracted caseload, which is subject to declining interest in the face of more visible refugee crises, the importance of advocacy and resource mobilization cannot be overemphasized. This will need to be undertaken by UNHCR unilaterally and within the context of collective initiatives, such as the Delivering as One – UN OP II or the SSAR. Advocacy for resource mobilization will need to be professional and evidence-based and target a wide range of stakeholders for maximum effect.

The following actions will be undertaken to mobilize resources for the implementation of the Strategy:

- a. Advocacy campaigns to be developed within the framework of the provincial education working groups or jointly with sectoral experts (UNICEF, etc.)
- b. Joint resource mobilization initiatives, based on empirical evidence, to be undertaken within the framework of provincial education working groups, unilaterally by UNHCR or jointly with UN sister agencies, etc.
- c. Appointment of 'education ambassadors' for specific themes, e.g. girls' education, children with special needs, etc.
- d. Enhanced information collection to ensure evidence-based outreach and advocacy
- e. Use of peer celebrities, etc. to raise awareness
- f. Sponsorship, Twinning with foreign colleges, etc.
- g. Promotion of accomplishments of Nansen Award winner(s)
- h. Country level (and limited field level) engagement in international and regional fora such as WISE, Global Forum on Education, etc.

6. Annexes

Annex 1: Implementation Plan of Activities

Annex 2: Key advocacy messages