



Background paper prepared for the 2019 Global Education Monitoring Report

Migration, displacement and education: Building bridges, not walls

INCLUSION OF AFGHAN REFUGEES IN THE NATIONAL EDUCATION SYSTEMS OF IRAN AND PAKISTAN

This paper was commissioned by the Global Education Monitoring Report as background information to assist in drafting the 2019 GEM Report, Migration, displacement and education: Building bridges, not walls. It has not been edited by the team. The views and opinions expressed in this paper are those of the author(s) and should not be attributed to the Global Education Monitoring Report or to UNESCO. The papers can be cited with the following reference: "Paper commissioned for the 2019 Global Education Monitoring Report, Migration, displacement and education: Building bridges, not walls". For further information, please contact gemreport@unesco.org.

Nicolle Hervé 2018

1. CONTENTS

GENERAL OVERVIEW: AFGHAN REFUGEES IN IRAN AND PAKISTAN	3
Data on education access and educational outcomes	3
National data on Afghan refugees	3
School enrolment	4
Literacy rates	5
Legal Frameworks	7
IRAN: AFGHAN REFUGEES BETWEEN INCLUSION AND EXCLUSION	8
Inclusionary policies in the 1980s	8
1990s - switch from inclusion to exclusion	8
Restrictive education policies towards documented Afghans	9
The Supreme Leader's decree of May 2015 - a break with the past?	10
PAKISTAN: EDUCATING MILLIONS OF REFUGEES IN A DYSFUNCTIONAL SCHOOL SYSTEM	11
Regulatory environment regarding refugees' access to education	12
A political and politicized question	12
A plethora of education providers	14
DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES BETWEEN THE PAKISTANI AND THE IRANIAN POLICY RESPONSES	16
Political context: pragmatism vs. volatility	16
Sociocultural context: different attitudes towards education	17
Geographic distribution: the urban vs. rural divide	17
Quality of education: better infrastructures and pedagogy in Iran	17
BIBLIOGRAPHY	19

GENERAL OVERVIEW: AFGHAN REFUGEES IN IRAN AND PAKISTAN

Afghans began to flee to Iran and Pakistan in 1979 when war broke out in their home country. Currently, there are about one million Afghan refugees in Iran and 1.4 million in Pakistan (UNHCR 2018a; UNHCR 2018b). The majority of them were born in their countries of asylum and have never been to Afghanistan (ICMPD 2017, p. 7). Yet, the preferred solution of the Iranian and Pakistani Governments is for Afghans to repatriate (Zetter and Ruaduel 2016, p. 74; Tyler 2014, p. 19). In addition to registered refugees, it is estimated that there are also between 1.5 and two million undocumented Afghans in Iran and one million in Pakistan (ICMPD 2017, p. 5; Samuel Hall 2017, p. 5). Many of these undocumented Afghans have valid international protection needs, but were unable to receive or maintain refugee status from their host countries (Zetter and Ruaudel 2016, p. 74).

Data on education access and educational outcomes

NATIONAL DATA ON **A**FGHAN REFUGEES

Data on education access and outcomes of Afghan refugees in Iran and Pakistan are scarce. Government authorities either do not collect or share data, while the ability of NGOs and UN agencies to conduct studies is limited by political constraints, security issues and high costs associated with quantitative surveys.

Efforts to provide nationally representative education data on Afghan refugees have been attempted in both Iran and Pakistan. In Iran, Wickramasekara et al (2006) conducted a household survey on a wide range of socio-economic indicators including education among 1,540 Afghan households in 20 cities. In Pakistan, efforts include a 2011 population profiling survey by UNHCR and the Pakistani Government on a number of topics including education (UNHCR and MoSaFR 2012); a UNHCR school mapping covering schools outside Pakistan's refugee villages¹ (UNHCR 2016b); and a UNHCR school mapping covering schools both inside and outside the refugee villages (UNHCR 2017d). There are significant information gaps on educational access and outcomes for Afghan refugees.

Pakistan's refugee camps are called refugee villages. They are onen camp

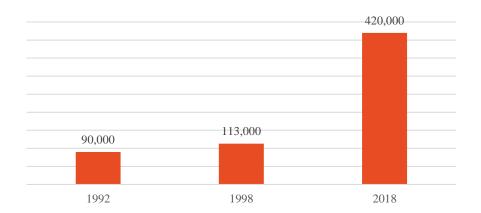
¹ Pakistan's refugee camps are called refugee villages. They are open camps and have developed into fully-fledged settlements with hard infrastructure since their establishment in the 1980s. The share of the refugee population that lives in these villages has steadily declined over time and now only about a third of all Afghan refugees live in these 52 villages.

SCHOOL ENROLMENT

Iran does not publish data on school enrolment among Afghan refugees on a regular basis. According to UNHCR, there are presently 348,000 refugee children and 72,000 undocumented Afghan children enrolled in primary and secondary schools (UNHCR 2018b). It is estimated that three out of four registered and undocumented Afghan children are in school (Shakib 2017). This rate is lower than the national average for net primary enrolment which stood at 99 % for the school year ending in 2015 (UNESCO 2017, p. 318).

The comparison with enrolment figures from the 1990s shows that the trend is a rising one. In 1992, when the number of Afghan refugees in Iran was much higher than today, the number of Afghans in Iran's primary and secondary schools was just slightly over 90,000 students (57,000 boys, 33,000 girls). In 1998, enrolment had risen to 113,000 students, including 52,000 boys and 61,000 girls (Samady 2001, p. 87).

Figure 1: Number of Afghan refugees and undocumented Afghans in Iranian government schools (available years)



In Pakistan, net primary enrolment for the age group between 5 and 9 years in 2011 was 39 % for refugee boys, 18 % for refugee girls and 29 % for both genders (UNHCR and MoSaFR 2012, p. 45). This was significantly lower than the national average in Pakistan which was 77 % for boys, 67 % for girls and 71 % for both genders (World Bank 2018). A UNHCR survey from 2016 assessed net primary enrolment among refugee children outside the fifty-two refugee villages to stand at 26 % (UNHCR 2016b, p. 19). In 2017, another UNHCR survey suggested a net primary enrolment rate of 22 % among refugee children inside and outside the refugee villages (UNHCR 2017d, p. 14). All reports indicate significantly lower enrolment among girls than among boys. For instance, in the fifty-two refugee villages, only 18 % of girls are enrolled in school (UNHCR 2017d, p. 14). When compared with national averages, enrolment continues to be significantly lower among Afghan refugees than among the average Pakistani population: in the school year ending in 2015, net primary enrolment in Pakistan was 79 % for boys, 68 % for girls and 74 % for both genders combined (UNESCO 2017, p. 318).

Very little information is available on secondary schools. For Pakistan, reports suggest that between 5 % of adolescents (UNHCR 2016a, p. 43) and 20 % of youth aged fifteen to twenty-four (UNHCR and MoSaFR 2012, p. 13) attend school. For comparison, the national average for net lower secondary enrolment in the school year ending in 2015 was 53 % for male and female students combined. Information about secondary enrolment rates among Afghan refugees in Iran does not exist.

Boys Girls Total

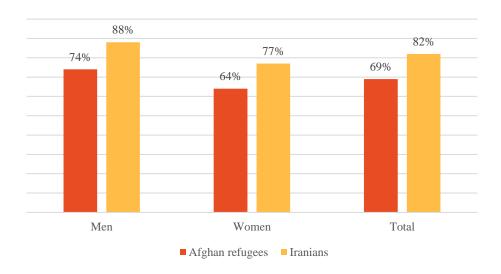
Afghan refugees National average

Figure 2: Net primary enrolment among children 5-9 years of age, Pakistan, 2011

LITERACY RATES

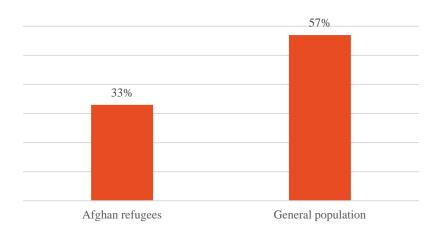
For Iran, Wickramasekara et al (2006, p. 40) put the literacy rate among Afghan refugees aged 6 and above at 69 % (64 % for females, 74 % for males). In the 1980s, only 19 % of Afghan refugees in Iran were literate. In 1992, the literacy rate had increased to 41 % (Samady 2001, p. 86). In comparison, the literacy rate among the general Iranian population aged 15 and above stood at 88 % for men, 77 % for women and 82 % for both genders (World Bank 2018).

Figure 3: Literacy rate population aged 15 and above, Iran (2005)



In Pakistan, the literacy rate among Afghan refugees aged 10 and above stands at a mere 33 %, with a large gap between males and females (UNHCR and MoSAFR 2012, p. 42). In comparison, the literacy rate for the total Pakistani population aged 15 and above was 57 % in 2012 (World Bank 2018).

Figure 4: Literacy rate Pakistan (2012)



These low literacy rates are confirmed by research among Afghan returnees from Pakistan in Nangarhar, one Afghanistan's provinces bordering Pakistan: only 20 % of men and women aged 15 and above (7 % among women and 38 % among men) are reportedly literate (Samuel Hall 2016, pp. 18-19).

Legal Frameworks

Iran is a signatory to the Convention and Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees, while Pakistan is not. The Convention commits states to give refugees the same treatment as nationals with respect to primary education, and to treat them as favourably as possible with regard to secondary and tertiary education (article 22).

Both Iran and Pakistan have ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child which requires states to progressively make primary education compulsory and free to all, and make secondary education available and accessible to all children (article 28). Both countries have also ratified the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights which, in article 13, also calls for free and compulsory primary education for all, as well as the accessibility and availability of secondary education.

Iran has adopted national legislation pertaining to refugees that states that refugees should benefit from the same rights accorded to Iranian nationals when it comes to the use of medical, cultural and social services (Iranian Government 1963). Pakistan has initiated a process to adopt a national refugee legislation in 2013 (Zetter and Ruaudel 2016, p. 75). In February 2017, the Federal Cabinet approved the National Plan on Voluntary Repatriation and Management of Afghan Nationals that commits the government to adopt a national refugee legislation (UNHCR 2017e).

IRAN: AFGHAN REFUGEES BETWEEN INCLUSION AND EXCLUSION

Inclusionary policies in the 1980s

Throughout the 1980s until the early 1990s, Iran's government stressed the importance of education for all, including for girls. Iran's Supreme Leader at the time said that it is a religious obligation to educate oneself and one's children. In Iran, the refugees of the 1980s were exposed to public awareness raising campaigns on education and a society that values education as a right and an obligation. Quickly, Afghan refugees – initially hostile towards modern education and girls' education - began to change their attitudes (Hoodfar 2007, p. 274).

A minority of refugees (less than 10 % in the 1980s, now down to 3 %) settled in camps, where they are provided by the Iranian Government with schools free of charge to this date (WFP and UNHCR 2016, pp. 8-9). The majority moved to (peri-)urban areas where almost all Afghan refugee children attended government schools alongside their Iranian peers (Hoodfar 2010; Rajaee 2000, p. 50). Until 2004, registered Afghan refugees had access to the Iranian education system at primary, secondary and university levels free of charge (Hugo et al 2012, p. 267; Abbasi-Shavazi et al 2005, p. 12).

1990s - switch from inclusion to exclusion

Beginning in the early 1990s, the policies of the Iranian Government shifted towards incentivizing repatriation and preventing Afghan entry (Hoodfar 2007, p. 270; Abbasi-Shavazi et al 2005, p. 10; Rajaee 2000). The issuance of documents allowing indefinite legal residence was stopped and temporary residence cards were only given to a small number of Afghans (HRW 2013, p. 32). This policy was enforced in spite of a continued influx of Afghans seeking protection from the Afghan civil war and the arrival of the Taliban in the mid-1990s. A large number of Afghans seeking protection in Iran remain undocumented to date.

Undocumented Afghan refugees were unable to legally access public services, such as education. However, in practice many Iranian schools allowed undocumented Afghan refugees to register until the late 1990s when the government started to enforce its policy on school enrolment more strictly (Tousi and Kiamanesh 2010, p. 94; Hoodfar 2007, p. 291). Restrictive policies were eased for a brief period (2001-2004) when a new regulation allowed for the return of undocumented Afghan refugees to education facilities. However, as discussed in more detail below, this policy was rescinded in 2004 (Attar 2018; Tousi and Kiamanesh 2010, p. 94).

In response to the exclusion from the governmental school system, many Afghan communities formed their own informal self-funded and self-governed schools. These schools took very low school fees to finance their operations and depended also on voluntary work of teachers. Quality of education was low, but for many Afghans – especially undocumented Afghans without access to government schools – they were the only viable alternative (Hoodfar 2007; Hoodfar 2010). The Iranian Government initially condoned the informal Afghan schools and many Iranian officials were sympathetic of the efforts of Afghan parents to ensure education for their children. In the late 1990s, government policy became stricter and many Afghan schools were forced to shut down (Squire 2010, p. 15), as the Iranian Government was eager to create factors to push refugees and irregular migrants back to Afghanistan.

There are no figures regarding the overall impact of the informal Afghan schools on the education status of undocumented Afghans. Wickramasekara et al 2006 (p. 41) state that 8 % of all Afghan refugees in Iran in 2006 had received their education in informal schools. It is estimated that there were around 350 Afghan informal schools in Tehran in 2005-2006, servicing 100,000 students (Hugo et al 2012, p. 268).

Restrictive education policies towards documented Afghans

Having recognised access to education and other public services as a pull factor for Afghan refugees, the Iranian Government began to restrict access also for registered Afghan refugees. Regulation since the mid 1990s allowed Afghan refugees to register only in primary and secondary schools in the city for which their refugee documentation was issued (Hoodfar 2007, p. 268). This was a problem for Afghans who had moved to different parts of the country since their arrival in Iran. In 1997, the government introduced a regulation that imposed high fees on university education for all foreign students. This regulation stipulated that foreigners were only allowed to study in six cities in Iran. The cities of Zahedan and Kerman, where large numbers of Afghans reside, were not among them (Squire 2010, p. 23).

The most severe restrictions were introduced in 2004 when a new Iranian Government directive stated a total ban on the enrolment of undocumented Afghan children and allowed the Ministry of Education to receive fees from Afghan refugee children, and a small number of prestigious schools to receive full tuition fees. Furthermore, the directive banned Afghan students from enrolling in pre-university centres, vocational schools and boarding schools. The ban on pre-university centres meant that Afghans could no longer apply for the nation-wide university entrance examination. The completion of pre-university courses was, at the time, a prerequisite for application to the university examination, blocking Afghan access to higher education in Iran (NRC 2017).

University education was further complicated by regulations issued in 2012 whereby Afghan students had to renounce their refugee status and obtain an Afghan passport and visa. The government banned foreigners (including Afghans) from studying a total number of 30 subjects in Iran (HRW 2013, p. 67).

The Supreme Leader's decree of May 2015 - a break with the past?

In 2015, the Supreme Leader issued a decree requesting Iranian schools to accept all Afghan children – undocumented and documented. Following this decree, on 20 April 2016, the government endorsed a directive including a number of improvements for refugees and undocumented Afghans, including – among other things - the creation of an educational support card for undocumented Afghan children that protects them for deportation during their studies; and the permission for all Afghan students to enrol in elementary and secondary level education up to the secondary school diploma. The directive did however stop short of abolishing school fees for Afghan children.

The Supreme Leader's decree had a positive effect on access to education for undocumented Afghan children. An additional 51,000 undocumented children enrolled in Iran's government schools in 2016 (Zolfaghari 2016). Yet, challenges remain. In areas with high numbers of Afghan refugees, the school system struggles to absorb all the new entrants. Also, some refugee families are faced with negative perceptions and ostracism from local schooling management, making it difficult for them to enrol their children (Guardian 2014). There are also significant socio-economic constraints, including the cost for school fees that many Afghan families struggle to afford (NRC 2017).

PAKISTAN: EDUCATING MILLIONS OF REFUGEES IN A DYSFUNCTIONAL SCHOOL SYSTEM

Afghan refugees' access to education in Pakistan has been affected by the country's geopolitical interests in Afghanistan. In the 1980s, Pakistan encouraged the political mobilisation of male Afghan refugees to fight against the Soviets and the Soviet-backed government in Afghanistan. Schools, particularly *madrassas*, were used to incite the Afghan youth to participate in the conflict in their home country. The main objective of such schools was to produce fighters against the Communist enemy (Ghufran 1998, p. 15; Khattak 2007, p. 576; Preston 1991, p. 73). In the 1980s and 1990s, the seven Afghan political parties in exile (the *mujahedeen*) operated between 500 and 600 schools directly (Samady 2001, p. 86).

Access to education for Afghan refugees in Pakistan needs to be seen in the context of a generally weak education system. The country has the second-highest number of out-of-school children in the world: twenty-five million Pakistani children do not go to school (UNHCR 2016a, p. 45). Pakistan spends only about 2 % of its GDP on education, the lowest share among all countries in the Southern Asian region (ICG 2014, p. 1; Jenner 2015). Quality of education in the governmental schools is low (ICG 2014). Pakistan's schools, teachers and students are frequently the targets of attacks by extremists and militants (HRW 2017).

Politically, tensions between Pakistan and Afghanistan also play a strong role on the governmental determination to further develop long-term educational roadmaps and plans for Afghan refugees: between July 2016 and December 2017, the Pakistani government triggered the mass returns of 440,000 of the country's 1.5 million registered Afghan refugees, as well as approximately 340,000 of the country's estimated 1 million undocumented Afghans (UNOCHA 2017, IOM-UNHCR 2018).

Regulatory environment regarding refugees' access to education

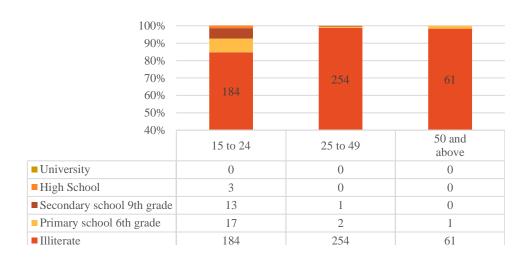
In 2010, the Pakistani constitution was amended to include an obligation of the state to provide free and compulsory education for all girls and boys between five and sixteen years of age. The provision does not discriminate between citizens and foreigners, and basically legalised the existing practices in the school system that gave foreigners generous access to education. In practice, registered Afghan refugees as well as undocumented Afghans can register in government schools, as long as they can produce a valid birth certificate (Zetter and Ruaudel 2016, p. 77; Margesson 2007, p. 6; Hasan 2018).

The 2010 amendment also devolved executive and legislative functions in education to the provincial level. Since the adoption of the constitutional amendment, a number of provincial assemblies as well as the National Assembly have adopted legislation regarding the right to education. A 2012 bill adopted by the National Assembly for Islamabad stipulates that "every child, regardless of sex, nationality or race, shall have a fundamental right to free and compulsory education in a neighbourhood school" (National Assembly Secretariat 2012, p. 1329).

A political and politicized question

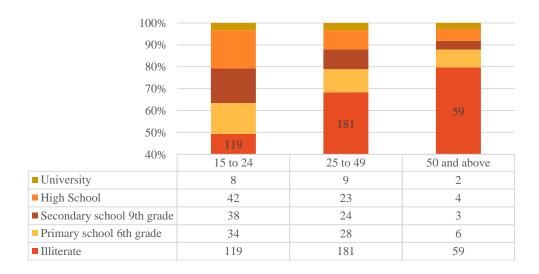
Beyond the theoretical and legal framework, the *structural* weaknesses of the national system of education in Pakistan – especially in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) – and the ongoing *context* of mass returns and persistent political tensions between Pakistan and Afghanistan are the two main parameters to understand the situation of Afghan refugees. The figures detailed in this subsection are extracted from a 2017 NRC/Samuel Hall study, which presents a picture of Afghan refugees, often born and raised in Pakistan (Peshawar and Charsada, mainly) and returned – voluntarily or not – to Afghanistan (mainly Nangarhar). According to this study, literacy rates and skills of Afghan refugees in Pakistan are extremely low and contribute to worsen their socio-economic vulnerability (in Pakistan and upon return). A disaggregation by gender or age further nuances this picture. In the surveyed households, 80% of the respondents above the age of 15 are illiterate, with significant differences by age bracket: 66% for the 15-24 segment, 83% for the 25-49, and 88% for the 50+ segment. Moreover, 93% of surveyed women above the age of 15 are illiterate – the 15-24 segment faring relatively better with 85% of illiteracy 'only'. By contrast, 62% of surveyed men above 15 are illiterate (49% for the 15-24).

Figure 5: Education level (15 and beyond - female respondents)



The graph below confirms the significant gender and generational gaps: a symbolic majority of male youth (15-to-24-year old) have achieved – at least – primary school compared to the older segments of the surveyed population.

Figure 6: Education level (15 and beyond - male respondents)



When asked to specify the reasons why household school-aged children were not attending school or had stopped attending school, respondents indicated different reasons with a stark difference between girls and boys, drawing a contrasted picture of the educational situation. Persistent socio-cultural norms and preconceived notions of gender roles still prevail among surveyed returnee families and prevent girls from attending school: 57% of surveyed school-aged girls reported not attending because their family did not allow schooling and 17% because they had to help with household chores. By contrast, the main reasons why surveyed school-aged boys reported not attending school were: 1) earning some money (44% vs 1% for girls); 2) financial constrains (23% vs 7% for girls); 3) education seen as secondary (15% vs 4%). These factors suggest that Afghan refugee families in Pakistan have adopted a very gendered and pragmatic cost-benefit analysis approach to education: most families simply cannot afford to prioritize education over short-term income generation (brick kiln, carpet weaving, agriculture). And as pointed out by a UNICEF Child Protection specialist: 'the less educated parents are, the less likely they are to see the longer-term added value of education.'²

Table 1: Determining factors for dropping out of or not attending school

Reasons	Frequency	Percentage	Girls	Boys
Our family did not allow schooling	396	34%	57%	1%
The individual needed to earn some money	234	20%	1%	44%
Our family cannot afford schooling (fees, manuals)	168	14%	7%	23%
There was no school available in the neighbourhood	124	10%	11%	10%
The individual needed to help with household chores	122	10%	17%	2%
Our family does not considered education as a priority (value)	101	8%	4%	15%
The individual was sick or disabled	25	2%	1%	4%
Access to school was not safe	12	1%	1%	1%

A plethora of education providers

While the figures from the NRC/Samuel Hall study are concerning, they also present positive trends, which suggests a growing awareness of the potential advantages of education among parents and youth. In this regard, the offer of education is quite large and Afghan refugees can choose from a number of education

² Interview with UNICEF-Afghanistan, Child Chief Protection, December 2016.

providers in Pakistan. In addition to the government, the private sector as well as religious organisations have traditionally been very important in Pakistan's education sector (Waters and LeBlanc 2005, p. 140). 60 % of children in urban areas go to private schools (ICG 2014, 22). Finally, a UNHCR assessment from 2016 suggests that 25 % of all Afghan refugees go to government schools, 21 % go to Pakistani private schools and 53 % go to Afghan private schools (UNHCR 2016b, p. 21). This assessment did not collect information about the many Afghan refugees that attend *madrassas*.

Afghan refugees living in one of the fifty-two refugee villages benefit from educational services provided by UNHCR and other international development partners. At present, UNHCR provides primary and some secondary education to around 57,000 refugee children in these villages (UNHCR 2018a). The majority of these schools only provide education until grade eight. The drop-out rate at UNHCR schools stands at 70 % (UNHCR 2016b).

Outside the refugee villages, there is a high number of Afghan private schools that are registered – through the Afghan consulates or embassy in Islamabad – with the Afghan Ministry of Education (UNHCR 2017d, p. 10). Some Afghan refugee families are able to send their children to more expensive private schools, while poorer Afghan use cheaper private schools (Jenner 2015, p. 8). For people whose livelihoods were disrupted due to forced displacement, informal education is an important component of education. When too old to re-enter the formal education system, literacy classes or vocational training provided by NGOs have often been the only options for vulnerable Afghan refugees to get at least some education (Jenner 2015, p. 8; Ahmad 2018). Many Afghan refugees attend *madrassas* (UNHCR 2017, p. 4; Jenner 2015, p. 9). While they do not offer formal primary and secondary education, many teach at least basic literacy and numeracy skills. *Madrassas* are free of charge and provide free food and shelter, an attractive option for poor refugee families.

DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES BETWEEN THE PAKISTANI AND THE IRANIAN POLICY RESPONSES

At the level of outcomes and education access, we see that the Afghan refugee population in Iran is much better educated than the Afghan refugee population in Pakistan. As shown above, school enrolment at primary levels in Iran is more than double that of Pakistan and so is the literacy rate. Also, gender disparities are much smaller in Iran. While the purpose of this paper is not to explain the reasons for this divergence comprehensively, it can point to some key differences in the Afghan refugee situations in Iran and Pakistan, as well as some differences in the policy responses between the Iranian and Pakistani governments.

Political context: pragmatism vs. volatility

The Iranian government has become more pragmatic with regards to the presence of Afghan refugees on its soil and sees education as the cornerstone of its policy towards refugee integration and support, as shown by the Supreme Leader's decree of May 2015. Considering the worsening political and economic context in their home country, it is assumed that protracted Afghan refugees are not likely to return to Afghanistan and many of them are already second- (if not third-) generation refugees; by contrast, in today's context, Iran is also preparing for the possible massive exodus of Afghan refugees – should the security situation deteriorates further in Afghanistan. Integrating protracted, recent, and future refugees in an efficient educational system is the only durable political solution for Iran and the government has clearly acknowledged that.

In Pakistan, with a much weaker educational system and 25 million out-of-school children, it is *de facto* more challenging to develop a long-term and ambitious educational roadmap for Afghan refugees, especially in the FATA region which is more socio-economically deprived and where the security context remains particularly volatile. Moreover, the chronic tensions between Afghanistan and Pakistan often put refugees in a situation of pawns in the regional political game – hence setting aside the question of their access to good quality education.

Sociocultural context: different attitudes towards education

The first major difference between Afghan refugees in Pakistan and Afghan refugees in Iran is that the latter generally display much more progressive attitudes towards education, including education for girls. When Afghan refugees first arrived in Iran, they were generally hostile towards modern education and girls' education. The awareness raising campaigns of the Iranian government that started in the 1980s and the generally positive attitudes of the Iranian society towards education for both genders have likely had a transformative impact on them (Hoodfar 2007).

In Pakistan, by contrast, attitudes towards education among Afghan refugees were not so much shaped by government policies, but by militant and extremist groups that fought a *jihad* in Afghanistan and were against girls' education and modern educational reform (Ahmad 2018; Hasan 2018). In addition, education for Afghan refugees in Pakistan was influenced by geopolitical considerations: many schools for Afghans focused on preparing young men for *jihad*, based on conservative or extremist interpretations of Islam. In this context, there was little room for the teaching of productive skills or a modern re-evaluation of gender roles.

Geographic distribution: the urban vs. rural divide

Secondly, the divergence in educational outcomes may also have been influenced by the differences in the geographic distribution of Afghan refugees in Iran and Pakistan, which is heavily influenced by government policy. In Pakistan, many areas in which Afghan refugees settled were under-served by schools (UNHCR 2017c, p. 10; Jenner 2015, p. 11). A large proportion of Afghan refugees settled in remote refugee villages where public services had to be established by humanitarian agencies, which made them also dependent on the ebbs and flow of international aid money. In Iran, by contrast, the majority of Afghan refugees settled in (peri-)urban areas where they attended existing government schools together with their Iranian hosts. The number of Afghans in Iranian camps never exceeded 10 % of the total refugee population in the country (Rajaee 2000, p. 50).

Quality of education: better infrastructures and pedagogy in Iran

Thirdly, the quality of the schools to which Afghans had access to differed considerably between Iran and Pakistan. In Pakistan, *madrassas* – religious schools – are very popular among Afghan refugees (Jenner 2015).

The education provided in these institutions focuses on religion and does little to prepare girls and boys for the realities of the labour market. In addition, Pakistan's government schools also suffer from a wide range of deficiencies (ICG 2014). While the Iranian education system also faces challenges, it is generally seen as having made significant progress since the 1980s (Salehi-Isfahani 2009). The considerable advancement of education in Iran has benefited the Afghan refugee population in spite of the government's restrictive education policies towards Afghans.

While Afghan refugees in Iran do comparatively better in Iran than in Pakistan, a push to improve school access is however needed in both countries. In Iran, a quarter of all refugee children and undocumented Afghan children are still out of school. In Pakistan between two thirds and three quarters of all refugee children and undocumented Afghans are out of school.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abbasi-Shavazi, M.J., et al. 2005. *Return to Afghanistan? A Study of Afghans Living in Tehran*. Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit.
- Arani, A.M., et al. 2015. Privatization of Education in the Islamic Republic of Iran: One Step Forward, One Step Back. *Cogent Education*, Vol. 2, No. 1, pp. 1-8.
- Attar, M. 2018. Key Informant Interview with Mojgan Attar, Education Officer, Norwegian Refugee Council,
- DRC. 2013. Socio-Economic Survey of Refugees Living in Pakistan. Danish Refugee Council, May 2013.
- Economist. 2018. *Pakistan is home to the most frenetic education reforms in the world*. The Economist, 4 January 2018. Available at https://www.economist.com/news/briefing/21733978-reformers-are-trying-make-up-generations-neglect-pakistan-home-most-frenetic. Accessed on 26 March 2018.
- Evans, J. 2012. Educating Extremism: The Failure of Pakistan's Education System and the Radicalisation of its Students. *The International Journal of the Humanities*, Vol. 9, No. 5, pp. 163-168.
- Guardian. 2014. *The price of an education for Afghan refugees in Iran*, Marketa Hulpachova, Tehran Bureau, 5 September 2014. Available at https://www.theguardian.com/world/iran-blog/2014/sep/05/iranthe-afghanistan-refugees
- Ghufran, N. 1998. Afghan Refugee Children in Pakistan. Prepared for the Conference of Scholars and Other Professionals Working on Refugees and Displaced Persons in South Asia, Bangladesh, on Feb 9-11, 1998.
- Hoodfar, H. 2007. Women, Religion and the 'Afghan Education Movement' in Iran. *The Journal of Development Studies*, Vol. 43, No. 2, pp. 265-293.
- Hoodfar, H. 2010. Refusing the margins: Afghan refugee youth in Iran. D Chatty (ed.), *Deterritorialized Youth:* Sahrawi and Afghan Refugees at the Margins of the Middle East. New York & Oxford, Berghahn Books, no pages.
- HRW. 2013. *Unwelcome Guests. Iran's Violation of Afghan Refugees and Migrant Rights*. Human Rights Watch.
- HRW. 2017. Pakistan: Attacks on Schools Devastate Education. Prosecute Militant Group Violence against Students, Teachers. Human Rights Watch, 27 March 2017. Available at https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/03/27/pakistan-attacks-schools-devastate-education. Accessed on 26 March 2018.

- HRW. 2018. *Iran. Events of 2017.* Available at https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2018/country-chapters/iran. Accessed on 26 March 2018.
- Hugo, G. 2012. Refugee movement and development Afghan refugees in Iran. *Migration and Development,* Vol. 1, No. 2, pp. 261-279.
- ICG. 2014. Education Reform in Pakistan. Asia Report No 257. Brussels, International Crisis Group.
- ICMPD. 2017. Migration Profile Iran. International Centre for Migration Policy Development.
- IOM-UNCHR. 2018. Returns to Afghanistan in 2017- Joint IOM-UNHCR Summary Report, Kabul, Afghanistan.
- Iranian Government. 1963. *Regulation Relating to Refugees (1963)*. Available at http://www.refworld.org/pdfid/3f4a23767.pdf
- Jenner, Ch. 2015. *Breaking the Cycle. Education and the Future for Afghan Refugees*. Norwegian Refugee Council & UNHCR.
- Khattak, S.G. 2007. Comparative Perspectives Symposium: Women in Refugee Camps. Living on the Edges: Afghan Women and Refugee Camp Management in Pakistan. *Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, Vol. 32, No. 3, pp. 575-579.
- Kronenfeld, D.A. 2008. Afghan Refugees in Pakistan: Not All Refugees, Not Always in Pakistan, Not Necessarily Afghan? *Journal of Refugee Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 1, pp. 43-63.
- Malik, A.A., et al. 2017. Mapping the Structure of Well-Being and Social Networks of Refugees. A Case Study of Afghan Refugees in Peshawar, Pakistan. Washington D.C., Urban Institute.
- Margesson, R. 2007. *Afghan Refugees: Current Status and Future Prospects. CRS Report for Congress*. Congressional Research Service.
- Mujahid-Mukhtar, E. No date. Situation Analysis of the Education Sector. UNESCO.
- National Assembly Secretariat. 2012. *An Act to Provide for Free and Compulsory Education to All Children of the Age of Five to Sixteen Years*. Islamabad, The Gazette of Pakistan.
- NRC. 2017. Afghan Children's Access to Education in Iran. What happened after the Supreme Leader's Decree?

 Norwegian Refugee Council. Available at https://d3gxp3iknbs7bs.cloudfront.net/attachments/e821bf7c-2036-470d-8ee0-9325f4cd9634.pdf.

 Accessed on 26 March 2018.
- NRC-Samuel Hall. 2017. *Welcome to Limbo Skills, jobs, and livelihoods for Afghan returnees in Nangarhar –* study commissioned by NRC Afghanistan.

- Preston, R. 1991. The Provision of Education to Refugees in Places of Temporary Asylum. Some Implications for Development. *Comparative Education*, Vol. 27, No. 1, pp. 61-81.
- Rajaee, B. 2000. The Politics of Refugee Policy in Post-Revolutionary Iran. *The Middle East Journal*, Vol. 54, No. 1, pp. 44-63.
- Salehi-Isfahani, Djavad. 2009. Iran: Poverty and Inequality since the Revolution. Brookings Institution.

 Available at https://www.brookings.edu/opinions/iran-poverty-and-inequality-since-the-revolution/.

 Accessed on 8 April 2018.
- Samady, S.R. 2001. Education and Afghan Society in the Twentieth Century. UNESCO.
- Samuel Hall. 2017. Welcome to Limbo Skills, Jobs, and Livelihoods for Afghan Returnees in Nangarhar.

 Commissioned by NRC Afghanistan.
- Samuel Hall. 2013. Designing Livelihood Programmes for Displaced Populations in Urban Settings in Afghanistan: Labour Market Assessment in Afghanistan and Pakistan, commissioned by the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), Afghanistan.
- Schmeidl, S. 2002. (Human) Security Dilemmas: Long-Term Implications of the Afghan Refugee Crisis. *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 23, No. 1, pp. 7-29.
- Shakib, S. 2017. *How Can Iran Educate a Million Afghan Refugees?* Deutsche Welle, 22 September 2017. Available at http://p.dw.com/p/2kWWI. Accessed on 26 March 2018.
- Squire, C. 2000. Education of Afghan Refugees in the Islamic Republic of Iran. Report Commissioned by UNESCO Tehran. December 2000. UNESCO.
- Tehran Times. 2017. *370,000 Foreign Nationals to Receive Free Schooling in Iran*. Tehran Times, 15 September 2017. Available at http://www.tehrantimes.com/news/416785/370-000-foreign-nationals-to-receive-free-schooling-in-Iran. Accessed on 26 March 2018.
- Tousi, M.D, and Kiamanesh, A. 2010. Basic Education Status of Afghan Refugees in Iran. G. Elliott et al (eds.), Education and Social Change: Connecting Local and Global Perspectives, New York, Continuum, pp. 94-107.
- Tyler, Dan. 2014. Reframing Solutions for Afghan Refugees. *Forced Migration Review*, Issue 46, pp. 18-21. Availabe at http://www.fmreview.org/sites/fmr/files/FMRdownloads/en/afghanistan.pdf. Accessed on 8 April 2018.
- UNESCO. 2017. Global Education Monitoring Report 2017/8. Accountability in Education: Meeting Our Commitments. UNESCO.

- UNHCR and MoSaFR. 2012. *Population Profiling, Verification and Response Survey of Afghans in Pakistan* 2011. UNHCR and MoSaFR.
- UNHCR. 2012. Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees to Support Voluntary Repatriation, Sustainable Reintegration and Assistance to Host Countries.
- UNHCR. 2016a. Missing Out. Refugee Education in Crisis. UNHCR.
- UNHCR. 2016b. *Mapping of Education Facilities and Refugee Enrolment in Main Refugee Hosting Areas of Pakistan*. UNHCR Pakistan.
- UNHCR. 2017a. 2016 Participatory Assessment with Afghan Refugees (POR Cardholders) in Pakistan. UNHCR.
- UNHCR. 2017b. Global Trends. Forced Displacement in 2016.
- UNHCR. 2017c. 2017 Participatory Assessment. Findings and Recommendations. UNHCR Pakistan. Available at https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/62360. Accessed on 28 March 2018.
- UNHCR. 2017d. *Mapping of Education Facilities and Refugee Enrolment in Main Refugee Hosting Areas and Refugee Villages in Pakistan*. UNHCR Pakistan.
- UNHCR. 2018a. *Factsheet Pakistan January 2018*. Available online at http://unhcrpk.org/contacts/fact-sheets/. Accessed on 26 March 2018.
- UNHCR. 2018b. Islamic Republic of Iran. Global Focus UNHCR Operations Worldwide. Available at http://reporting.unhcr.org/node/2527#_ga=2.59933165.1567820380.1522065384-1410056084.1521723788. Accessed on 26 March 2018.
- UNOCHA. 2017. Afghanistan Returnee Crisis Situation Report No. 5; 12 January 2017
- Waters, T., Leblanc, K. 2005. Refugees and Education: Mass Public Schooling without a Nation-State. *Comparative Education Review*, Vol. 49, No. 2, pp. 129-147.
- WFF, UNHCR & BAFIA. 2016. WFP, UNHCR Joint Assessment Mission. Islamic Republic of Iran. WFP & UNHCR.
- Wickramasekara, P. 2006. Afghan Households in Iran. Profile and Impact. Final Report. ILO and UNHCR, Geneva.
- World Bank. 2018. World Bank Open Data. Available at https://data.worldbank.org. Accessed on 23 April 2018.
- Zetter, R., Ruaudel, H. 2016. Refugees' Right to Work and Access to Labour Markets An Assessment. Part II: Country Cases (Preliminary). KNOMAD.

Zolfaghari, H. 2016. Statement by H.E. Dr. Hossein Zolfaghari, Deputy Minister of Interior of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the 67th Session of the Executive Committee (3-7 October 2016, Geneva).