## Terms of Reference: Consultant

## Research on education for returnees and IDP children in Afghanistan: challenges and ways forward

1. **Background**

***Increased internal displacement and return from Pakistan and Iran***

Afghanistan faces a massive displacement crisis, with a combination of the massive return of Afghan refugees (both documented and undocumented) from Pakistan and Iran and increased internal displacements.

As of 28 May, 103,229 individuals have been displaced in Afghanistan in 2017 with 29 provinces recording some level of forced displacement. It is estimated that there are now up to 1.2 million internally displaced in Afghanistan. 56% of the internally displaced are children. Number of displaced people may continue to increase in the coming months, if fighting between the various parties to the conflict escalates. Displacement can either be short term or protracted. It is estimated that 700,000 individuals had been in displacement since 2008. Those in prolonged displacement often end up in informal settlements. Living conditions of those in prolonged displacement are often undignified and unhealthy, without access to healthcare, clean water or education for children[[1]](#footnote-1)

A total of 65,073 undocumented Afghans spontaneously returned or were deported from Pakistan since the beginning of January 2017. As of 27 May, 30,446 registered Afghans have returned to Afghanistan from Pakistan, Iran and other countries under the UNHCR Repatriation programme. Around 99 percent of all registered refugees returning to Afghanistan in 2017 are from Pakistan[[2]](#footnote-2).

From July to December 2016, almost 620,000 Afghan (249,832 undocumented and 370,102 documented) returned or were deported from Pakistan. An estimated 60% of the returning population are children. Most of those returning have lived outside of Afghanistan for decades, and will need support from the government and humanitarian actors both on arrival and as they seek to reintegrate. Documented returnees are eligible for UNHCR’s voluntary repatriation programme, which resumed at the beginning of April 2017 after a winter pause. Returnees benefiting from UNHCR support are less vulnerable than undocumented returnees.

IOM estimates that approximately 600,000 undocumented Afghans could return from Pakistan and Iran in 2017.

427,000 undocumented refugees and deportees from Iran were also recorded by UNOCHA – although caution needs to be exercised with the Iran numbers, as many of the journeys are circular, ie Afghans cross the border multiple times to seek work and repeatedly get pushed back

More than quarter of a million Afghans travelled to Europe in 2015 and 2016 and many are now facing deportation or forced return to their country (for example, an estimated half of the 190,000 who had sought asylum in Germany).

***Education and learning***

Displacements and return have a major impact on education and learning opportunities.

There are around 3.5 million school-age children out of school in Afghanistan, with displacements playing an important role in children either not going to school or dropping from school.

Assessment carried out by Save the Children among returnee children found that around half of the returnees are currently out of school (whereas the vast majority of the children were enrolled in schools in Pakistan before their return). Problems children experience to go to schools are various and include:

1. Lack of capacity of schools to enrol additional children, as the schools are already operating at full capacity (Save the Children’s assessment show that classrooms that used to have 30 students per teacher are now struggling with the influx of returnee children and exceed 60 to 80 students. Most of the schools operate in three shifts and some of them have to operate in four shifts). This is combined with a shortage of education materials
2. Lack of require documentation to facilitate enrolment (although schools have been instructed to immediately enrol all returnees even without documents).
3. Costs associated with education, combined with the impoverishment of return families who lost their sources of incomes/livelihoods as they had to leave Pakistan.
4. Long distances some children must travel to attend schools.
5. Reluctance of some parents to allow children (especially girls) to attend school

With increased displacements, protracted displacement and large number of returnees, large number of children are not going to school and their education is in jeopardy. The influx of returnees and/or IDPs has also an impact on the education and learning of children in host communities, as the schools have to face a massive increase of the number of pupils without a proportional increase of resources (number of teachers, school equipment and materials, etc.).

It is important to note that the government of Afghanistan adopted in a national IDP Policy in November 2013[[3]](#footnote-3), which outlines the responsibilities of national and provincial authorities. If adequately enforced, the IDP Policy could institutionalise legal responsibilities to assist IDPs, help bridge the humanitarian-development gap, facilitate durable solutions for those in protracted displacement and build capacity to respond to short-term displacement. Unfortunately, implementation of the IDP Policy has stalled due to lack of political will and capacity on the part of the responsible government agency, the Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation (MoRR).

1. **Scope of the research**

The research will focus on access to education including early childhood, primary and secondary education as well as learning opportunities in safe and protective learning spaces for displacement affected children, which includes returnees (both recent returnees and returnees before 2016), IDPs (recently displaced people as well IDPs in prolonged displacements) and host populations.

The research will focus on two locations of Afghanistan: Nangarhar province and Kabul.

These two locations have been selected for the following reasons:

* Nangarhar is by far the province accommodating the largest number of returnees from Pakistan. Returnees represent 27% of the overall province population. Nangarhar province is also affected by internal displacements.
* Kabul has a large number of people living in protracted displacement and is also a place of return for Afghan returnees

The research will approach the issue of access to education for displacement affected children through various perspectives/lens:

* Displacement affected children and their parents
* Host communities
* Teachers and school principals
* Officials from Ministry of Education at district, provincial and national levels
* Officials from the Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation at provincial and national levels
* Key stakeholders of the Education in Emergencies working group
* Donors and international institutions representatives

Overall, the research will:

* Present a detailed and comprehensive overview of the challenges/barriers displacement affected children (returnees, IDPs and children of host communities) face regarding acces to schoooling, access to quality education and learning opportunities (disaggregated data by gender)
* Set out recommendations aimed at ensuring all displacement affected children are able to access schooling and a quality education

The research will inform Save the Children education programme in Afghanistan targeting displacement affected children. It will also inform Save the Children’s advocacy work in Afghanistan and at a global level to ensure that displacement affected children have access to education (including Save the Children’s engagement with the Global Compacts)

1. **Objectives of the research**

* To analyse the barriers displacement affected children face to access education and quality learning (barriers will be analysed at community, provincial and national levels and will include the links between returnee poverty, lack of access to livelihoods and education)
* To analyse how large scale displacements (IDPs or returnee influx) affect children in host communities and their access to education and quality learning
* To understand, from previous displacement patterns, the significance of education for longer term reintegration success and durable solutions and how access to education may/may not change over time.
* To explore sustainable ways to provide education and learning opportunities for displacement affected children

1. **Key questions/issues**

The research will seek to answer to the following questions/issues in the two target areas (Nangarhar province and Kabul):

***Access to education and to quality learning***

* Overall picture of school enrolment and learning opportunities (early childhood, primary and secondary) for different groups of children: returnees, IDPs and host communities and evolution of these trends over time (recently arrived returnees, returnees who have returned for at least a year, short-term internal displacement, protracted internal displacement, host communities before being affected by arrival of returnees and/or IDPs and after the arrival). For displacement affected children enrolled in schools, which type of school do they attend (public, private, community-based)? For displacement affected children not going to school, especially girls, for how long have they been out of school?
* Overall picture of school enrolment before displacements (Were returnee or IDPs children attending school before their displacement? For how long have they been in school prior to being displaced? In which type of schools?)
* Main barriers to access schooling. Which barriers do displacement affected children face to access schooling (disaggregated data by gender)? Do returnees and IDPs face different barriers? How do these barriers compare to the ones faced by children from host communities? Which barriers displacement affected children consider as the most important? Which barriers do the parents of displacement affected children consider as the most important? Which barriers do school teachers and school principals consider as the most important to enrol displacement affected children in schools? What are displacement affected children doing if they are not enrolled in schools (staying home, working, etc…)?
* How does schooling access evolve over time for displacement affected children? Is access becoming easier after a while into the displacement/return? How do multiple displacements affect access to school enrolment?
* What has been the response of key stakeholders (Ministry of Education, provincial and district authorities, communities, INGOs/NGOs, UN agencies, donors) to ensure that displacements affected children have access to education and learning opportunities? What have been the main factors potentially hampering the response (funding, policy, capacity, etc.)?
* For displacement affected children (disaggregated data by gender) enrolled in schools, what are the main barriers they face to access quality education (language, curriculum different than the one they were following before displacement, teacher/pupils ratio, availability and quality of teaching materials, etc.)? Has the quality of education been affected in schools with large number of displacement affected children being enrolled, and how? Are these barriers to quality education the same for displacement affected children and children of host communities or different? Which barriers do displacement affected children, parents of displacement affected children, teachers and school principals rank as the most significant?
* How significant access to education is for longer term reintegration success and durable solutions? Do children acquire skills to help them integrate into the labour market?

***Solutions to access to education and to quality learning***

* Based on the analysis of the barriers displacement affected children face to have access to education and learning opportunities, which measures could be put in place to ensure that all displacement affected children are enrolled in schools and provided with learning opportunities? Are there policy gaps preventing displacement affected children from being enrolled in schools?
* Based on the analysis of the barriers displacement affected children enrolled in schools face to have access to a quality education, which measures could be put in place to ensure that all displacements affected children (boys and girls) have access to a quality education? Are there policy gaps preventing displacements affected children from having access to quality education?
* What are the main recommendations for each of the key stakeholders involved in the enrolment of and provision of quality education to displacements affected children?

1. **Research methodology**

A consultant or a small team of consultants will be recruited to lead this study. The consultant is expected to suggest a suitable methodology or methodologies in a technical proposal which will be further elaborated during the inception phase.

It is anticipated the methodology for this research will comprise:

* Desk reviews related to Afghan returnee and IDP children’s access to schooling and to quality education.
* Review of existing national education and IDPs policies/plans and their provisions related to education for displacement affected children.
* Review of UN 2017 humanitarian plans for Afghanistan and their provisions related to education for displacement affected children (including current level of funding of education in emergency response).
* Collect relevant data and statistic on returnee and IDP children who have/do not have access to education and who have dropped out of school through the existing data source such as IOM, UNHCR, and the Ministry of Education. This data should be disaggregated by gender, age, education level, etc.
* Interviews with stakeholders at national and provincial level (officials from Ministry of Education, officials from the Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation, Members of the Education in Emergencies working groups, donors)
* Field work in the two target areas, including :
  + Focus group discussions and interviews with displacement affected children (returnees, IDPs and host communities) and their families/caregivers.
  + Focus group discussions and interviews with teachers/school principals in schools accommodating significant numbers of displacements affected children
  + Observation of classrooms/schools/informal education/community-based education for returnees/IDPs children in target areas
  + Interviews with local authorities’ representatives.

The research should adhere to Save the Children’s standards regarding child safeguarding.

1. **Deliverable**

The main outputs will comprise of

* A 30-page report which includes:

-A 2-page summary of the study (including the findings)

-Desk review finding

-Field assessment (data analysis, consolidations of interviews and observations)

-Finding responding to the key questions/issues highlighted in paragraph 4

-Proposed recommendations broken down by main stakeholders

* A standard power point presentation of the research

In the report, a particular emphasis should be on giving a voice to displacement affected children, their parents and the communities they live in.

1. **Timeframe**

The timeframe of this study is 3 months. The research consultant is expected to commence by September 2017. The assignment is expected to be delivered by November 2017. The work will include:

* Development of the methodology, work plan and basic report structure
* Desk study
* Travel and interviews in the two target areas
* Report writing
* Incorporating comments from Save the Children and delivery of final report

1. **Location and Remuneration**

This position is home-based and requires travel to the field in Afghanistan to gather information for the purpose of the study. Transportation cost (from home country to Afghanistan and domestic travel), accommodation and food cost associated with field research will be covered by Save the Children.

Successful candidate will be remunerated competitively.

1. **Application**

Interested applicants are invited to apply and submit the following documents:

* A 2-page technical proposal detailing research methodology for the study
* A budget proposal and proposed number of day to complete the study.
* A sample of published materials preferably on access to education for children on the move
* Organization profile with a resume of the lead researcher

1. Over Half a Million Afghans Flee Conflict in 2016: A look at the IDP statistics. Afghan Analyst Network, December 2016

   <https://www.afghanistan-analysts.org/over-half-a-million-afghans-flee-conflict-in-2016-a-look-at-the-idp-statistics/> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Afghanistan Weekly Field report, May 2017 - OCHA [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <http://morr.gov.af/Content/files/National%20IDP%20Policy%20-%20FINAL%20-%20English(1).pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)