

UNICEF Pakistan

Education

Sectoral and OR+ (Thematic) Report

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Acronyms

ALP	Alternative learning pathway
BBEP	Balochistan Basic Education Programme
C4D	Communication for development
DFID	UK Department for International Development
DRR	Disaster risk reduction
ECCE	Early childhood care and education
ECE	Early childhood education
EMIS	Education management information system
ESP	Education Sector Plans
ESPDG	Education Sector Plan Development Grant
FATA	Federally Administered Tribal Areas
GB	Gilgit-Baltistan
GDP	Gross domestic product
GGCMS	Government Girls Community Model School
GGHS	Government Girls' High School
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
HACT	Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
KP	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
MHM	Menstrual hygiene management
NEPF	National Education Policy Framework
NFE	Non-formal education
NGO	Non-governmental organization
ORE	Other resources – emergency
ORR	Other resources – regular
PAK	Pakistan Administered Kashmir
ROSA	Regional Office for South Asia
RR	Regular resources
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WASH	Water, sanitation and hygiene
WinS	WASH in School

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

About 22.84 million Pakistani children aged 5–16 years are out of school, of whom 53 per cent are girls. These figures include children who have dropped out, children who will enter late, and those who have never gone to school at all. There are substantial variances in access to education and retention by gender, province, socioeconomic status and other factors. Learning levels are low; while the average expected years of schooling in Pakistan is 8.8 years, this translates only to 4.8 years of school when adjusted for actual learning.

Ensuring that all children receive a full course of quality education is critical to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG-4) in Pakistan, as well the country's commitment under Article 25-A of the Constitution to ensure all children aged 5–16 years receive a free and compulsory education. Under Goal Area 2 ('every child learns') of the new global Strategic Plan (2018–2022), UNICEF is committed to ensuring that this right is realized.

With the launch of its new Country Programme (2018–2021), UNICEF Pakistan is working at federal level and with provincial governments to create an enabling policy environment for equitable and evidence-based education policies and plans; to develop capacities to ensure that safe, high-quality learning environments are created for basic, alternative, and pre-primary education, and to enhance community awareness of, and involvement in, education to achieve behaviour change around education.

Major bottlenecks in the education sector in Pakistan include:

- Enabling environment: social exclusion and inequity; need for strengthened governance and coordination; policy gaps including those related to early childhood education (ECE) positive school environments; inadequate budget allocations and utilization; and limited capacity to implement equitable and evidence-based education plans.
- Supply: lack of essential inputs including ECE and flexible education delivery models to reach marginalized out-of-school children; lack of education provision at post-primary levels; lack of disaster risk reduction (DRR) and school safety; lack of capacity for school management, teaching (including teacher absenteeism) and learning materials.
- Demand: financial barriers that lead to low participation among disadvantaged families; and sociocultural factors particularly those influencing adolescent girls' enrolment and retention.
- Quality: including gaps in teacher content knowledge, ineffective teaching methods, classroom management and disciplinary practices, poor quality instructional materials; poor quality assessment and data gaps,

Insecurity in some areas of Pakistan, particularly in the former Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), now known as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's (KP) Tribal or Merged Districts, has disproportionately affected schools and education. In 2018, the merger of KP's Tribal Districts into its neighbouring province offered an opportunity to strengthen education in a historically deprived area. Moreover, following General Elections 2018, the incoming government embarked on an ambitious education agenda, the National Education Policy Framework (NEPF) 2018, which built momentum for education action.

Key achievements in education in 2018 were:

- UNICEF supported data and analysis to inform education policymaking through support for key publications such as the Pakistan Education Statistics 2016–2017, Balochistan Education Statistics 2016–2017, and the preparation (with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, UNESCO) of the SDG-4 Gap Analysis to inform education sector planning.
- UNICEF supported all four provinces in preparing for education sector planning under the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) aligned with Agenda 2030 to achieve SDG-4. This included supporting Punjab and Sindh in conducting Education Sector Analyses and developing the strategic ESP frameworks, supporting KP in its application for funding for education sector plan (ESP) development to include the Tribal Districts; and supporting Balochistan in receiving US\$0.5 million for ESP development. In Balochistan, support to

Real-Time School Monitoring was expanded to cover 88 per cent of the province's schools. It was used to identify absentee teachers and contributed to the reopening of 381 schools as teachers returned to duty.

- With UNICEF technical assistance, Sindh developed an implementation framework for non-formal education (NFE) that is anticipated to bring over 600,000 out-of-school girls and boys into education.
- In Balochistan, the success of UNICEF's alternative learning pathway (ALP) approach was demonstrated when the first cohort to complete the three-year programme achieved a 98.6 per cent pass rate on the government's Grade 5 examination.
- About 1.2 million children were enrolled through UNICEF-supported enrolment campaigns, including an estimated 295,000 children who might otherwise not have accessed education.
- In 2018, 310,000 children accessed formal or non-formal primary education with direct UNICEF support.
- A total of 99,400 children (58 per cent girls) accessed quality-enhanced ECE in Punjab, KP and KP's Tribal Districts with UNICEF support, and government engagement was enhanced in KP, Punjab and Sindh.
- School DRR and preparedness was strengthened, and 55,800 children were educated in preparedness and response activities.
- In KP's Tribal Districts UNICEF contributed to education recovery for over 80,000 children (39 per cent girls) through the provision of pre-fabricated schools, teacher training, education supplies, social mobilization and support for establishing and strengthening school committees.
- About 37,400 adolescent girls, their teachers and mothers were reached with menstrual hygiene management information and kits with anecdotal evidence of sustained school attendance in target schools.
- With UNICEF support 900 school community platforms were involved in school improvement planning in Balochistan, enhancing community ownership of local education provision.

In 2019, the second year of its Country Programme, UNICEF intends to build upon the foundation laid in 2018 with by continued support for equity-focused ESP development in all provinces, ECE, ALPs and community engagement, support for NEPF 2018, and a greater focus on adolescents and skill development.

2. STRATEGIC CONTEXT 2018

In 2010, the 18th Amendment added Article 25-A to Pakistan's Constitution, recognizing the justiciable right to "free and compulsory education to all children of the age of five to sixteen years in such manner as may be determined by Law". Subsequently, between 2013 and 2017, all four provincial legislatures in Sindh, Punjab, Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) enacted free and compulsory education acts and the respective provincial departments made subordinate rules of business for implementation of the acts fulfilling this crucial constitutional obligation.

In this legal normative context, Pakistan has taken significant steps to advance the right to education. An encouraging increase in education budgets has been observed, while the Adjusted Net Enrolment Rate in primary education increased from 72 per cent to 77 per cent between 2014–2015 and 2016–2017.¹

However, 22.84 million Pakistani children aged 5–16 years are out of school, including 12.16 million girls. Of these, 5.06 million children (3.03 million girls) are of primary school age.² These figures include children who have dropped out, children who will enter late, and those who have never gone to school at all. There are significant variances in access to education: girls are more likely to be out of school than boys (49 per cent vs 40 per cent),³ particularly at post-primary levels. Poor children and those in rural areas are also less likely to be in school. There are also discrepancies by region: in Islamabad only 4 per cent of children are out of school, while in the most populous province the rate is 17 per cent (19 per cent for girls) and Balochistan as many as 54 per cent of children (65 per cent of girls) are out of school.⁴ There are also significant variances within provinces. By the time they reach Grade 6, 22 per cent of rural children and 14.8 per cent of urban children who have ever attended primary school have dropped out.⁵

The 18th Amendment also devolved education to provincial and area administrations. This created opportunities for close partnerships in evidence-based education sector planning and delivery, but also challenges as the various sub-national administrations possessed different levels of capacity to deliver. At systems level, inadequate financing and utilization of development funds, limited enforcement of legal and policy commitments and challenges in equitable implementation also impede reaching all children, especially the most disadvantaged. While education budgets have increased, at 2.6 per cent of total GDP, public expenditure on education falls short of the 4 per cent target. The country's precarious financial position contributed to only limited improvements in education financing in 2018. At federal level, education received PKR 90,818 million in the revised budget estimates for 2017–2018, rising only to PKR 97,420 million in the budget estimate for 2018–2019, a year-on-year increase of only 7 per cent.⁶

Access to quality education is affected by a range of factors including lack of school infrastructure, especially at the post-primary level, poor learning environments and ineffective teaching and learning models. Even for children who are in school, quality of education remains a major problem, contributing to poor learning outcomes, high drop out rates, and, in many cases, a preference for children to work instead of attending school to learn. Assessments of learning achievements point to a learning crisis, with a large proportion of students scoring at "below basic" levels of proficiency in core subjects.⁷ A new World Bank publication indicates that while the average expected years of schooling in Pakistan is 8.8 years, this only translates to 4.8 years of school when adjusted for actual learning.⁸ Educational supply, quality and school

¹ Pakistan Education Statistics 2014–2015; 2016–2017.

² Pakistan Education Statistics 2016–2017.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Pakistan Social and Living Standards Measurement 2013–2014.

⁶ Budget in Brief 2018–2019.

⁷ National Education Assessment System 2014.

⁸ World Bank Human Capital Index, 2017.

<http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/390321538076747773/Global-Dataset-on-Education-Quality-A-Review-and-Update-2000-2017>

environments are typically inadequate; the latter has particular impact on girls, especially as they reach puberty. Education has also been severely affected by natural and human-made disasters, including long-running insecurity particularly in the north-western areas bordering Afghanistan until recently known as FATA.

Collectively, this points to the significant challenges posed by education inequity and the need for targeted initiatives that address specific challenges in various contexts, reach children who may have been excluded (due to gender, age, madrassah education or other reasons) from mainstream schooling, ensure children enter and stay in education through evidence-based methods such as pre-primary enrolment and school sanitation, design teaching methods and materials to help children improve from where they are and build towards the standards for their age and grade, improve quality of monitoring and learning assessment, collect and analyse data on out of school children, and work closely with devolved provincial and area administrations to prioritize and fund education sector planning.

Pre-primary education is not yet an official “class” in public education and the 3–4 year age group falls outside Article 25A. Data indicate that 63.2 per cent⁹ of children aged 3-4 years do not attend either pre-primary or primary school and are at greater risk of late enrolment, dropout, or remaining out of school altogether. Some progress has been made: for example, legislation and rules of business in Punjab, Sindh and Islamabad Capital Territory also now cover free pre-primary education.

Promising steps were taken in 2018 to improve the enabling environment for education. Following General Election 2018, the newly-elected federal and provincial governments renewed efforts to contextualize the SDG-4 agenda and to achieve Pakistan’s constitutional commitments to education. The new government embarked on an ambitious education agenda, NEPF 2018, with five priorities: decreasing out of school children and increasing school completion; achieving uniformity in education standards; improving the quality of education; enhancing access to and relevance of skills training; and improving literacy. The new provincial governments in Punjab, KP and Sindh developed blueprints for education and accelerated development of new comprehensive costed ESPs in 2018 to set long-term goals for 2030 and medium term five-year priorities.

With UNESCO, UNICEF supported the Government of Pakistan in localizing Agenda 2030 to achieve SDG-4 including the development of a consolidated gap analysis to identify gaps and opportunities for federal-level coordination and support to sub-national administrations in achieving education goals. This provided important inputs to sector planning, particularly from an equity perspective.

A major development in 2018 was the passage of the historic 25th Amendment incorporating FATA into the adjoining KP province. These are now known as KP’s Tribal or Merged Districts. This highly positive development signals an end to the region’s anomalous constitutional position which had long excluded it from the Pakistani mainstream, and offers important opportunities to reach children affected by longstanding insecurity, displacement and under-development. In particular, KP’s Tribal Districts historically had some of the lowest education indicators in Pakistan (31 per cent of children of school-going age are out of school, including 50 per cent of girls).¹⁰ Barriers have included traditional resistance to education especially for girls, extremely weak infrastructure and human resource that was severely affected by many years of insecurity and attacks on schools, and displacement due to fighting that interrupted education for many children. Through its participation in the government’s transition plan for the region, UNICEF has included support to education recovery in KP’s Tribal Districts as a specified component of its work on building education capacity and systems for equitable service delivery.

While the provinces are gradually moving towards establishing strong systems for service delivery in education, significant efforts and technical support are required to achieve SDG-4 targets and constitutional obligations under Article 25A. A major challenge from 2018 and

⁹ National Education Assessment System 2014.

¹⁰ Pakistan Education Statistics 2016–2017.

onwards is the country's financial crisis and resultant reductions in development budgets in a sector where development spending was already low.

In 2018, UNICEF initiated a new Country Programme developed in agreement with the Government of Pakistan and its sub-national administrations. With the global UNICEF Strategic Plan 2018–2021 developed in parallel, in Pakistan UNICEF had the opportunity to align the new Country Programme from the very outset with corporate strategic priorities and global commitments including the SDGs.

Its strong focus on equity and evidence-based support for children reflects the priorities of the No Child Left Behind agenda. Its results framework is reflected in joint One UN work plans to prevent the duplication of efforts in accordance with the United Nations Sustainable Development Framework (UNSDF) 2018–2022 for Pakistan. The education component of UNICEF Pakistan's strategy is informed by UNICEF's global education strategy 2016–2030 and addresses key bottlenecks in inadequate financing, limited enforcement of policy commitments and challenges in equitable implementation that impede reaching the most disadvantaged children.

The 2018–2022 Country Programme for Pakistan comprises six programme components. The key education outcome is aligned with Goal Area 2 (Every child learns) of the global Strategic Plan (2018–2021) and is based on the following theory of change:

- **If** education sector governance continues to improve and become more evidence-and equity based; and
- **If** there are more equitable and quality early childhood care and education (ECCE) and basic education services available, including alternative learning pathways for disadvantaged girls and boys, including adolescents; and
- **If** knowledge, motivation and engagement of parents, children and other duty bearers for on-time enrolment and completing a full course of education is enhanced,

Then more children and adolescents, particularly the most marginalized out of school children and girls, are more likely to enter school at the right age, remain in school, complete a primary education, and transition to lower secondary level, with improved learning.

This theory of change translates to Outcome 3 of UNICEF's Country Programme (2018–2022) and its corresponding outputs, as follows:

By 2022, more children, particularly girls, benefit from equitable and appropriate early childhood education and basic education services.

- Output statement 1: By 2022, national, provincial and district education departments and institutions are strengthened to develop evidence-based policies, plans and budgets for equitable ECE and basic education services.
- Output statement 2: By 2022, public duty-bearers have the capacity and systems to deliver quality, equitable and safe early learning and basic education services, including alternative learning pathways, to the most marginalized girls and boys, including for those affected by emergencies.
- Output statement 3: By 2022, families and communities actively support on-time enrolment, retention, completion and transition to post-primary, especially for girls.

All outputs cover the country's provinces (Balochistan, KP and its Tribal Districts, Punjab and Sindh) and areas (Gilgit-Baltistan or GB, and Pakistan Administered Kashmir or PAK). UNICEF worked closely with the federal and provincial Ministry and Departments of Education, development partners and academia to provide technical support and policy advice for effective implementation of education policies and plans to provide opportunities of access to out of school children. UNICEF also worked with Non-Formal and Literacy Departments, other technical units and wings, and reforms and implementation units established in all provinces, and with civil society organizations for service delivery at the grassroots.

3. RESULTS

As Pakistan's strategic context shows, there is a need to focus efforts on developing a strong enabling environment, with robust legislation, costed evidence-based plans, and innovative equity-focused initiatives to bring all girls and boys into school and to provide them with a high-quality education, including children from the most disadvantaged and marginalized communities. Strengthening the capacity of duty-bearers enables them to reach out to specific groups of children with pre-primary education and NFE and alternative pathways to education, as well as to ensure high quality teaching and learning in supportive and safe school environments. Finally, creating demand for and ownership of education at all levels and for all children amongst communities is crucial to ensure sustainability. These areas were prioritized in the first year of UNICEF's new Country Programme 2018–2022, as agreed with the Government of Pakistan and its provincial administrations.

Key indicators for success of education outcomes

Indicator	Baseline (2017)	Target (2022)	Status (2018)*
Number of primary school age out of school children	6,000,000	3,000,000	Data expected to become available in 2019 <i>Source: Sector Management Information System</i>
Gender parity index for the primary education completion rate	0.86	0.91	Data expected to become available in 2019. <i>Source: Sector Management Information System</i>
Average learning outcome results in core subjects	Grade 4 scores: English reading: Basic (494) English writing: Below Basic (290) Science: Basic (433) Urdu reading: not available Urdu writing: not available Maths: not available	Grade 4 scores: English reading: Proficient (551–650) English writing: Basic (401–550) Science: Proficient (551–650) Urdu reading: TBD Urdu writing: TBD Maths: TBD	Data expected to become available in 2019. <i>Source: Sector Management Information System</i>

* Updated data on high-level indicators is expected to become available in 2019 with the publication of Pakistan Education Statistics 2017–2018 (enrolment and equity indicators) and an updated National Education Assessment System report (quality indicators).

Output 1: By 2022, national, provincial and district education departments and institutions are strengthened to develop evidence-based policies, plans and budgets for equitable ECE and basic education services.

Under this output UNICEF seeks to address key determinants of change essential to equity-focused education sector development and reform at national, provincial and district levels, while advocating for more resources and equity-based allocations.

Actions in 2018 aimed to address identified education sector bottlenecks related to governance (including the coordination role of Federal Government in coherence and SDG-4 planning), legislation and policy (including ECE and the effective implementation of Article 25-A), budgets

(including equity-based financing for education), and coordination (including establishing a basis for equity-based ESPs and effective use of education management information systems, EMIS). Progress against the components of this output are described below.

Better knowledge on issues related to out-of-school girls and boys, and equity financing to inform policy advocacy

At federal and provincial levels, UNICEF supported dialogues with parliamentarians, education departments and other stakeholders on draft studies of equity in education financing in KP, Punjab and Sindh. These were used to raise awareness of inequities in budget allocations and utilization, as well as implementation challenges. Such dialogues will continue in 2019.

To enhance the availability of granular, up-to-date data on out-of-school children, UNICEF contributed to the completion and launch of the Pakistan Education Statistics 2016–2017 report. This document uses EMIS data to provide detailed statistical snapshots and trends in enrolment, effectiveness, supply of institutions, human resources and physical infrastructure for education in all provinces and areas of Pakistan. Its publication, along with support for the Annual Status of Education Report 2018 and the integration of the online Education Atlas and EMIS enabled major efficiency gains in the dissemination of current education data.

UNICEF supported data analysis on out-of-school children using the Five Dimensions of Exclusion approach developed globally in collaboration with UNESCO-IIES, providing data on enrolment and retention for various groups of children. The database and draft study (prepared in 2017) was used as a key reference document for equity-informed analysis and formulation of ESP strategies. The national SDG-4 Gap Assessment report was completed, led by UNESCO and UNICEF, as inputs to provincial ESP processes for alignment with SDG-4. The gap assessment report also informed sector planning to ensure that ESPs respond to the achievement of SDG-4 priorities, with a distinct focus on equitable access to quality learning.

Equity-focused and risk-informed provincial education sector planning, budgeting and implementation

Upstream work was prioritized in 2018, laying the ground for effective, costed, evidence-based policies and plans supporting the achievement of Agenda 2030 goals in Pakistan. At the national level, a collaboration with UNESCO and the Federal Ministry of Education led to the completion of the national SDG-4 Gap Assessment report. This drew on six sub-national reports finalized in the previous years to provide inputs to provincial ESP processes for alignment with SDG-4.

UNICEF had previously successfully served as Coordinating Agency for the GPE in Balochistan, Punjab and Sindh, facilitating evidence-based policy dialogue, coordination, monitoring and planning in education platforms at various levels. In 2018, UNICEF advanced this work in partnership with the UK Department for International Development (DFID), as co-chairs of the National Education Development Partner Group to liaise with the Ministry of Federal Education and development partners. This partnership supported the government in allocating the next US\$100 million GPE grant for Pakistan, and coordinated inputs to the new government's education agenda on out-of-school children, quality, standards and skills. The government investment case on out-of-school children in the new NEPF 2018 was informed and supported by analysis from UNICEF's Regional Office for South Asia (ROSA).

Across Pakistan's sub-national administrations, sector planning advanced significantly. As Coordinating Agency in Punjab and Sindh, UNICEF provided support to the ESP development process, working closely with government, grant agents (DFID and World Bank), Local Education Groups, and the lead technical partner, UNESCO-IIEP. In both provinces, Education Sector Analyses and prioritizations were finalized as foundations for costed ESPs. ESPs developed based on this support, and aligned with Agenda 2030/ SDG-4 targets, will be finalized in 2019.

In Balochistan, with support from UNICEF as Coordinating Agency and Grant Agent, the government's Education Sector Plan Development Grant (ESPDG) proposal was awarded US\$ 0.5 million for ESP development in 2019. The change of government in the province led to renewed commitment to education, and reforms under the Balochistan Basic Education Programme are now on track and reflected in annual public sector development programmes.

This created a positive environment for UNICEF's planned support in capacity development for teachers, student learning assessment, EMIS and Real Time School Monitoring, and middle school ALP curriculum development.

UNICEF as newly-appointed Coordinating Agency and DFID as Grant Agent supported the KP government to submit its ESPDG application to the GPE. This will support ESP development in 2019 to include the newly merged Tribal Districts, and thus further the integration of the latter into mainstream education planning and delivery.

These are significant milestones towards developing credible equity-focused and evidence-based ESPs that translate Government commitments into action, contextualize the SDG-4 agenda, align development partners, and support domestic and international resource mobilization.

UNICEF achieved its 2018 target for development of an effective ECE policies. This was achieved through support for the second National ECCE Conference which featured new research and yielded an ECE Action Plan. UNICEF contributed to ECE policies in Punjab and Sindh; in KP UNICEF was instrumental in establishing an ECE working group for policy and standards.

Strengthened data and information systems, and assessment systems

UNICEF's role in the promotion of accountability and evidence-based decision-making remained a powerful driving force for improved education governance, especially in Balochistan. In this province the Real-Time School Monitoring was expanded to cover 88 per cent of the province's 14,000+ schools (estimated enrolment 1 million children) and a Complaint Management System was launched, resulting in improved transparency and accountability. Absent teachers received 3,120 warnings using data collected through this system, while 5,933 chronically absent teachers saw their salaries reduced or withheld. These measures contributed to reducing teacher absenteeism and led to the reopening of 381 closed schools as teachers returned to duty, as well as savings of PKR 89.9 million in salaries for the provincial secondary education department. UNICEF also extended technical assistance in the development and dissemination of the first ever report on education statistics in Balochistan, and supported data systems in KP's Tribal Districts and an education data dashboard in Sindh to support evidence generation for planning.

Parliamentary approval of legislation for the Balochistan Assessment and Examination Commission was achieved in 2019. UNICEF supported capacity development for this new body through the Aga Khan University Examination Commission, complemented by technical expertise from ROSA. This informed quality-enhanced professional development for teachers in the province.

Data functions are being gradually institutionalized in government budgets. A teacher competency profiling study was completed in Balochistan, informing teacher professional development reforms. In KP, an ECE Situation Analysis was completed and findings endorsed by the government, paving the way for the province's first ECE policy in 2019. Additionally, UNICEF contributed to an out-of-school children census in KP used for annual education planning.

UNICEF also provided technical assistance to sub-national government bodies for the development of policies, strategies and plans on priority themes. This contributed to costing the NFE Policy 2017 in Sindh and the first NFE Policy and Social and Behavioural Change Communication Strategy for enrolment through NFE in Punjab.

Output 2: By 2022, public duty-bearers have the capacity and systems to deliver quality, equitable and safe early learning and basic education services, including alternative learning pathways, to the most marginalized girls and boys, including for those affected by emergencies.

Under this output, UNICEF seeks to strengthen the systems and human resources delivering education to Pakistani children and creating an environment in which more girls and boys attend formal and non-formal early learning and basic education. It addresses the effective and equitable provision of alternative pathways to learning that acknowledge the nature of Pakistan's

education challenge: a high number of out-of-school over-age children, children enrolled in religious education, and children vulnerable to disaster.

Actions in 2018 aimed to address key bottlenecks related to supply of essential inputs (including support for teachers trained in ECE, innovative measures such as flexible ALPs that enrol all children everywhere, and education provision in insecure areas), supply of adequately staffed services (including trained teachers and essential supplies) and quality.

Progress against the components of this output are described below.

Broadened alternative learning programmes

Under this component UNICEF promotes the institutionalization of broadened ALPs that provide second-chance education and pathways to enter mainstream basic education and a particular focus on differential needs of the most marginalized adolescent out-of-school girls. This approach aligns with the No Child Left Behind agenda in education by addressing bottlenecks that affect participation in learning opportunities, and draws on lessons learned from 2017 of the need to support governments in broadening the variety of ALPs within the education system to reach different groups of marginalized children.

In partnership with USAID, who led the development of an implementation framework for the Sindh NFE Policy 2017, UNICEF provided technical assistance which produced a comprehensive implementation plans and costing model for the province, aiming to bring over 600,000 out-of-school children and adolescents to school in five years (see case study). Other critical policy developments achieved through collaborative work with the government and development partners included the finalization of the first NFE Policy in Punjab, with a corresponding social behaviour change communication strategy for enrolment of out-of-school children, and consolidating the KP government's commitment to develop its first NFE/ALP policy which is expected to be endorsed in 2019.

With direct UNICEF support, nearly 318,000 out-of-school children (47 per cent girls) accessed formal or non-formal primary education. This marked a significant over-achievement of the target for 2018, and was achieved through better targeted enrolment drives in focus districts based on data on out-of-school children. Moreover, the resumption of enrolment drives in Sindh after a gap of seven years also contributed in exceeding targets. Through UNICEF's integrated approach to support, from strategic to community level, 1.2 million children (47 per cent girls) were enrolled in target districts, with an estimated 15 per cent enrolling as an outcome of campaigns.

The expansion of ALPs, especially those aimed at over-age adolescent girls and boys, is a key strategy for out-of-school children in a context where there is a large population of adolescent who dropped out or never attended school. UNICEF used its engagement in direct service delivery in ALPs to credibly leverage policy influence, and generate evidence and government buy-in for cost-effective quality programming and scale-up. Following the demonstrated success of the approach, governments in all provinces committed to scale up ALPs; Balochistan committed PKR 600 million and provided free textbooks for ALPs while KP committed PKR 300 million for ALPs in six districts.

UNICEF and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) strengthened their partnership to enhance ALP service delivery, capacity building and system strengthening, including co-chairing the NEDPG NFE/ALP sub-group at national level. UNICEF co-chaired similar NFE working groups in Balochistan and KP with government, and was an active partner in Sindh.

In total, 550 ALP centres benefited from UNICEF direct support in Pakistan's four provinces reaching over 17,500 children (against a target of 13,100 children and including 44 per cent girls). This fell short of the 2018 target of 856 ALP centres, largely due to funding shortfalls, however with new JICA funding obtained, UNICEF expects to catch up to targets in 2019. In 2018, thematic funds supported ALP teacher training and the printing of ALP curriculum and other learning materials.

The success of the ALP approach in Pakistan more broadly was demonstrated in Balochistan, where the first batch of ALP students completed the three-year programme and achieved a 98.6 per cent pass rate on the government's Grade 5 test.

High quality, contextualized pre-primary models and ECD platforms

Aligned with global priorities under Agenda 2030, UNICEF positioned early learning as a key component of the new Country Programme. This was in response to lessons learned in previous years which showed that whilst there was increasing prioritization of ECE in Pakistan, implementation was hampered by poor understanding of its benefits for timely enrolment, readiness and retention. To this end, with the 3–4 year age group currently falling out of the scope of Article 25-A, UNICEF continued work at federal and provincial level to support and strengthen policy engagement. This included support for the National ECCE Conference 2018, and positioning ECE as a key component of the new Country Programme agreed with government partners.

Provincial differences in the prioritization and progress of ECE exist. There was strong government engagement in Punjab and policy development was completed in Sindh with government implementation planning and costing in progress for 4,500 ECE classes. Policy development was initiated in KP with the establishment of a new Technical Working Group for ECE coordination, with UNICEF as a key actor. This contributed to the completion of a provincial Situation Analysis on ECE with findings endorsed by the KP government, paving the way for the province's first ECE policy formulation in 2019.

With service delivery experience informing efforts to leverage policy, UNICEF supported ECE interventions to enable children, mainly girls and those from disadvantaged backgrounds, to access quality ECE. UNICEF directly supported 2,784 ECE centres with child-friendly and age-appropriate supplies, room décor and capacity building, enabling over 99,000 children (58 per cent girls) to access quality-enhanced ECE in Punjab, KP and KP's Tribal Districts. This fell short of targets for 2018. UNICEF is advocating with provincial governments and development partners to increase resources earmarked for ECE: in some provinces (e.g. KP) UNICEF is the only development partner providing technical or financial resources, while Balochistan a dormant ECE policy and resource constraints on UNICEF interventions proved barriers to expansion.

UNICEF also supported development of ECE reading materials in English and Urdu to enrich the quality of learning.

Safe and protective school environments, disaster preparedness and resilience, and education recovery in KP's Tribal Districts

Given Pakistan's volatile track record of natural disasters, disaster risk resilience and preparedness at school level remained a priority, and UNICEF supported provincial governments to set up province-wide systems. Under the USAID-funded Safer Schools programme and partly through UNICEF resources, disaster risk resilience and preparedness was strengthened in 284 schools in KP, Sindh and Balochistan, educating 55,800 children (50 per cent girls) in preparedness and response activities. This model will inform ESP development for further scale-up.

In KP's Tribal Districts, under the EU-funded FATA Transition and Recovery Programme aimed at strengthening education, social cohesion and peace-building, UNICEF cooperated closely with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Government and local NGO actors to achieve integration and synergetic efforts to support returnees and their communities in rebuilding education. To address the longstanding difficulty with obtaining official permission (no-objection certificates) for specific development initiatives in the region, UNICEF is supporting the gradual strategic shift in education programmes towards greater involvement by the education department.

UNICEF contributed to education recovery for over 80,000 children (39 per cent girls) through the provision of pre-fabricated schools, teacher training, education supplies, social mobilization and support for establishing and strengthening school committees. UNICEF has, since 2017, also provided support for girls' post-primary transition by supporting the creation of a pool of trained local female teachers to address chronic shortages in the area. These measures are helping build the foundation for protective school environments equipped with the necessary supplies and human resources to mobilize parents to send their children to school without fear. UNICEF

remained a key player in humanitarian preparedness and programming in KP's Tribal Districts, delivering the majority share of cluster targets alongside implementing partners.

To enhance teaching and learning across basic, pre-primary and non-formal education, UNICEF supported training for a total of 5,155 educators. These included 770 ALP facilitators (79 per cent women), 3,066 formal education teachers (40 per cent women) and 1,319 pre-primary teachers (66 per cent women) who improved skills to plan and implement child-friendly lessons, conduct multi-grade teaching, and gain knowledge of ALP, formal and ECE curricula to ultimately contribute to quality-enhanced education for almost 155,000 girls and boys annually and to feed into the national priority of improving education quality.

Output 3: By 2022, families and communities actively support on-time enrolment, retention, completion and transition to post-primary, especially for girls.

Under this output UNICEF utilizes Communication for Development (C4D) approaches to enhance community demand for a complete course of high quality education for all girls and boys. Ensuring that children enrol in school on time, attend regularly, and transition to post-primary at the right age, requires knowledge, motivation and active engagement from communities and parents. To this end, UNICEF's education programme built strong linkages with its water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) programme to address identified bottlenecks, including availability of school infrastructure and child-friendly environments. UNICEF actions in 2018 under this output focused particularly on bottlenecks related to social and cultural practices and beliefs including lack of awareness, low value given to education including pre-primary education, and lack of community involvement in and ownership of schools. They also addressed concerns about quality of school management and oversight and the availability of appropriate school facilities and knowledge (related to WASH and menstrual hygiene) that respond to the particular needs of girls.

Progress against the components of this output are described below.

Conduct social and behavioural change communication with parents and communities to increase enrolment, especially for girls

UNICEF's new Country Programme reinforced its focus on addressing bottlenecks to education for adolescent girls, aligned with the Gender Action Plan 2018–2022. A key factor in dropout at secondary level is the lack of hygiene and sanitation facilities, particularly those suitable for menstruating girls and women. Shame and cultural taboos around menstruation are also deterrents to attending school.

To help prevent dropout due to a lack of menstrual hygiene management (MHM) facilities, UNICEF supported MHM awareness sessions and distributed kits in 936 schools and ALP centres in Punjab and Balochistan, reaching 37,440 adolescent girls, their teachers and mothers. This substantially exceeded the 2018 target of supporting 380 schools with interventions specifically targeting girls, and anecdotal evidence suggests sustained attendance of adolescent girls in these schools. MHM awareness sessions were conducted not only for adolescent girls in focus ALPs but also for their teachers and mothers, who were instrumental in supporting girls' attendance. WASH in School (WinS) activities ensured provision of WASH facilities for all girls particularly menstruating girls. MHM kits were also provided for individual girls and schools

In Punjab, UNICEF's education programme collaborated with its WASH programme on a WinS strategy through which all 54,000 government schools in the province, with an estimated enrolment of 10 million girls and boys, were notified to form WASH Clubs, with monthly monitoring and reporting. Direct support led to WASH Clubs established in 100 Punjab Education Foundation coeducational schools, with 300 students (60 per cent girls) as WASH Champions. These draw on peer education and school-based activities to promote hygienic practices such as washing hands with soap.

UNICEF further supported the Punjab government to develop a PC-1 project document (2018/2019) for separate toilets in girls' schools for MHM, initially for PKR 15 million.

In Balochistan and Punjab, MHM and WinS initiatives were implemented as a package and the two provinces achieved 151 per cent of the annual target of 380. In Sindh, 100 teachers were provided with capacity-building on hygiene promotion, while in KP and its Tribal Districts progress was limited due to a lack of funds and a socially conservative environment.

Following the end of the Every Child in School Initiative in 2016, UNICEF prepared a report documenting best practices and lessons learned from this major initiative implemented in 36 districts to increase enrolment and reduce dropouts using communication for development, public outreach, social mobilization, community engagement and other measures. This report was prepared in 2018, and provides evidence to underpin new programmes, finetune existing programmes, and improve programme delivery.

Recognizing the internal challenge of monitoring the success of community-focused programmes, such as enrolment campaigns, UNICEF recruited a new education specialist to lead a dedicated effort to develop an effective performance monitoring system. An initial assessment of existing systems was launched to lead towards a responsive monitoring system.

Develop capacity of schools and school management committees to enhance education demand and institutionalize participatory enrolment and retention measures in School Development Plans

Empowering communities and parents to demand education for all builds shared ownership of the responsibility for ensuring that no child is excluded. To achieve behavioural change and community engagement in education, UNICEF supported training for the members of 3,985 school community platforms such as School Management Committees. This included active involvement in school management and monitoring to create a shared sense of mission and commitment to making schools child-seeking and child-friendly in order to attract and retain children from marginalized families.

School improvement planning involved parents and other community members in devising plans and mobilizing resources to improve the school environment and to hold educators to account. UNICEF supported the involvement of 900 school community platforms in school improvement planning in Balochistan. Sindh and Punjab developed plans to roll-out school improvement planning in 2019, while KP is revising the financial mandate of its school community platforms.

Community members were also motivated to become active participants in enrolment campaigns, drawing on a diverse range of community-based strategies to persuade their peers to educate their daughters and sons.

Support government in public advocacy campaigns, and build its community outreach capacity to increase enrolment

As part of demand-side interventions to increase enrolment of out-of-school children, UNICEF continued strategic support to government public advocacy campaigns in all provinces. These included support for major enrolment drives, with participation by political leaders and education officials and school community platforms across UNICEF's 36 target districts, that encouraged parents to bring or keep their girls and boys in school. This approach instilled a greater sense of responsibility in schools and communities to enrol and retain all children.

In 2018, UNICEF contributed to the enrolment of 1.2 million children (47 per cent girls) in formal and non-formal education. An estimated 295,000 children who might otherwise not have accessed education, enrolled because of these campaigns.

In Sindh, UNICEF played a catalytic role in the government revisiting its enrolment and retention drive after a gap of seven years. Support was provided to campaign planning and roll-out, mass communication activities and data generation through an enrolment dashboard across all districts of the province. In Balochistan and KP similar social mobilization approaches were applied. Punjab included a focus on early learning to change community perceptions on the value of early learning, with orientations for 1,990 local community and School Council members (725 women). Mothers were encouraged to visit ECE classes to observe the attractive, child-friendly environment, to improve on-time enrolment and school readiness.

Technical assistance

In 2018, education staff and resources were utilized to work in partnership with government counterparts and non-governmental implementing partners and in cooperation with education development partners across the four provinces and at federal level to strengthen the education system and enhance access to education for all children.

UNICEF programmes and support were effectively monitored, with 96 per cent Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT) assurance activities completed: 16 spot checks against 16 planned; 33 programme visits against 35 planned had been conducted by 31 October. Complementing these efforts, technical assistance missions and field visits were conducted to ensure effective programme implementation, information and evidence gathering, sound advocacy work and overall quality assurance.

Rolling workplans were devised at provincial and national levels. Their implementation status and progress towards country programme indicators were monitored through mid-year and end-year joint sector reviews. The annual planned budget of US\$ 17.42 million was fully mobilized, including funding for subsequent years. Of the planning amount for 2018 under the country programme, over 97 per cent was utilized with the remainder re-phased for implementation in 2019. Funding shortfalls were particularly experienced in planned activities for programming in early learning.

Lessons learned

- At system level, the importance of provincial sector planning in providing direction and focus for all development partners was validated through UNICEF's leading role as the GPE coordinating agency in all four provinces. Despite delays due to the change in government, progress was achieved, including the finalization of Education Sector Analyses and priorities for Punjab and Sindh as the basis for costed ESPs in 2019, and the submission of ESPDG proposals for Balochistan and KP that will underpin Education Sector Analyses and ESP development in 2019.
- Despite growing awareness about the critical role of ECE for the holistic development and well-being of children, little progress was made towards ECE legislation as a fundamental right of children accompanied by adequate resource allocation in national and provincial budgets. Though this was partly attributable to the change in government in 2018 (and consequent change in personnel), sustained advocacy and technical advice are needed to spur action on legislation and resource allocations for ECE.
- Adolescents remain a large and under-served population in Pakistan. The number of out-of-school children skyrockets after primary school age, with over 17.7 million children aged 10–16 years who are not in middle, high or higher secondary school.¹¹ Innovative interventions to bring these children (especially girls) to school and retain them for a full course of education are required. The lesson learned in previous years of the need to support a wide range of NFE models to reach different groups (e.g. madrassah students, adolescent girls, children involved in child labour, etc) was validated in 2018 through the expanded ownership of ALP models by various provincial governments.
- While UNICEF's education theory of change is largely valid, it lacks a focus on the skills development component of the UNICEF Strategic Plan (2018–2021), which is also a major priority area in the Government's NEPF 2018 initiative. However, the launch of Generation Unlimited offers UNICEF an opportunity to expand support for adolescents, particularly those in alternative pathway education programs such as ALPs, in terms of skills development.
- Political will for sustained and equitable allocation of resources for education and technical and organizational capacities and system to translate policies into actions remained a continuing challenge. UNICEF technical support for costed ESP development and implementation plans, as well as evidence-based dialogue with policymakers are

¹¹ Pakistan Education Statistics 2016–2017.

required as key strategies to enhance allocations responding to the needs of marginalized. Long-term engagement with ministries of planning and finance to meet the long-held challenge of ensuring increased and equitable allocation of resources is also required.

- While UNICEF provided support (including technical expertise from ROSA), to education assessment systems, including the Balochistan Assessment and Examination Commission, technical challenges persist and will require long-term technical support.

Results assessment framework

Output 1	Status			
By 2022, national, provincial and district education departments and institutions are strengthened to develop evidence-based policies, plans and budgets for equitable ECE and basic education services.	Significant progress was made with education sector planning, with education sector analyses completed in Punjab and Sindh, ESP grant proposal approved for Balochistan, and a proposal for KP covering its Tribal Districts prepared. Policy work further advanced government funding and programming for out of school children, quality and early learning.			
	Indicators	Baseline (2017)	Target	Status of Indicator
	Availability of strong evidence of successful and cost-effective innovations to improve access and learning for the most disadvantaged children.	2 <i>(scored out of 4)</i>	2018: 2 2019: 2 2020: 2.5 2021: 2.5 2022: 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partially achieved Score: 2
	Existence of provincial education strategy/plan that promote equity in terms of access and learning.	None Four provincial plans to be reviewed.	2018: Balochistan: reviewed; KP: n/a; Punjab: developed; Sindh: endorsed and operationalized. 2019: Balochistan: developed and endorsed; KP: n/a; Punjab: endorsed; Sindh: endorsed and operationalized. 2020: Balochistan: operationalized; KP+TD: reviewed; Punjab: operationalized; Sindh: implemented. 2021: Balochistan: operationalized; KP+TD: developed; Punjab: operationalized; Sindh: implemented. 2022: Balochistan: operationalized; KP+TD: operationalized; Punjab: operationalized; Sindh: implemented.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partially achieved, with ESP development planned for 2019. Balochistan: Application to the GPE for ESP development grant approved. KP+TD: An application to the Global Partnership for Education for ESP development grant has been prepared. Punjab: Education Sector Assessment has been completed and draft ESP objectives and strategies developed. Sindh: Education Sector Assessment completed and draft objectives and strategies prepared.
	Existence of an effective early learning policy with clear budget allocation in place.	-2 <i>(score denotes: initiating)</i>	2018: 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully achieved Score: 2 KP+TD: A technical working group has been notified for

				<p>ECE policy development and has met to chalk out a roadmap for policy development</p> <p>Punjab: The ECE policy will be finalized after finalization of the Punjab ESP.</p> <p>Sindh: ECCE Curriculum and Standards have been approved and an ECCE Directorate established.</p>
Output 2	Status			
By 2022, public duty-bearers have the capacity and systems to deliver quality, equitable and safe early learning and basic education services, including alternative learning pathways, to the most marginalized girls and boys, including for those affected by emergencies.	More than 30,000 previously out-of-school children (63 per cent girls) accessed education through ALPs (11,763) and enrolment campaigns supported by UNICEF. New early learning partnerships are in place to benefit 72,300 disadvantaged children. Strengthened ALP partnerships support system strengthening, service delivery and programme quality.			
	Indicators	Baseline (2017)	Target	Status of Indicator
	Primary school aged out-of-school children in the reporting year accessing formal or non-formal education with support of UNICEF.	163,693	2018: 146,300 2019: 192,300 2020: 198,300 2021: 204,300 2022: 195,300	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully achieved <p>In 2018 312,751 children accessed formal or non-formal education with UNICEF support.</p>
	Number of children benefiting from early childhood education through alternative approaches (such as home based provision of ECD, accelerated school readiness models, parent education, among others) with support from UNICEF.	78,958	2018: 112,920 2019: 146,620 2020: 174,820 2021: 203,020 2022: 215,220	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partially achieved <p>In 2018 99,389 children benefited from ECE using alternative approaches with UNICEF support.</p>
	ECD centres benefiting from UNICEF interventions.	2,606	2018: 1,304 2019: 4,764 2020: 5,804 2021: 6,844 2022: 7,484	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partially achieved <p>In 2018 2,784 ECD centres benefited from UNICEF interventions.</p>
	Number of ALP centres benefiting from UNICEF interventions.	689	2018: 856 2019: 1,756 2020: 2,106 2021: 2,406 2022: 2,106	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partially achieved <p>In 2018 550 ALP centres benefited from UNICEF interventions.</p>

Output 3	Status			
By 2022, families and communities actively support on-time enrolment, retention, completion and transition to post-primary, especially for girls.	As a result of demand-side interventions, retention (especially of adolescent girls) in 876 schools and ALP centres was supported through menstrual hygiene management and WASH interventions, and capacities of members of 3,985 school community platforms to enrol out of school children, improve and monitor schools were enhanced.			
	Indicators	Baseline (2017)	Target	Status of Indicator
	Number of schools supported by UNICEF with interventions targeting specifically girls (e.g. segregated toilets, sanitary pads, MHM, etc.)	83	2018: 380 2019: 480 2020: 480 2021: 480 2022: 530	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully achieved. In 2018 936 schools were supported with interventions specifically targeting girls.
	Number of School Management Committees or Parent Teacher Associations or school communities (or similar structure) that received training funded by UNICEF	3,356 (ALP, ECE)	2018: 4,262 2019: 5,982 2020: 6,577 2021: 7,174 2022: 6,870	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partially achieved. In 2018 3,711 School Management Communities and similar structures received support from UNICEF.
	Active involvement of school management committees at primary and secondary levels in the development of school improvement plans and monitoring of schools	2 (scored out of 4)	2018: 2 2019: 2 2020: 2 2021: 2 2022: 2.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully achieved Score: 2

Case study: Modelling NFE implementation in Sindh

Top-level results

UNICEF supported the development of a simulation model on NFE in Sindh that is guiding the implementation of the province's NFE Policy to bring out-of-school girls and boys into school. This is the first-ever such exercise in Pakistan, and underpins a detailed implementation framework that is being incorporated in education sector planning and future budgeting to provide a pathway to learning for the 52 per cent of Sindh children of primary to secondary school age who are currently out of school.¹² The resulting model provided a pathway to enrol over 617,000 children, including 367,000 girls, aged 3–16 years, into NFE programmes in Sindh over the next five years.

Background

An estimated 22.8 million children of school-going age remain out of school in Pakistan. Sindh, the second-most populous province of Pakistan, also has the second-highest number of out-of-school children, at 6.4 million, of whom 3.4 million are girls.

There are many reasons for children dropping out or never enrolling. While the primary issue is insufficient quality education supply, socioeconomic reasons and child labour, lack of awareness, and cultural factors are also key contributors. Poverty is a major reason for being out of school, and low literacy in communities leads to a vicious cycle that is hard to break. Girls are more likely to be out of school than boys, due to cultural reasons, early marriage, or because their contribution to the household (in terms of domestic work or income generation through child labour) is valued more highly than education. Additionally, late entry or interruptions to education make it more difficult or impossible for children to re-enter formal education.

Thus, achieving SDG-4 and fulfilling the constitutional obligation to provide a complete course of education requires not only expansion of formal education at primary, lower secondary and secondary levels, but also innovative and equity-focused approaches to providing alternative education pathways that respond to the needs of a range of different marginalized groups including children who have passed primary school entrance age or have experienced dropout. Such measures can provide a course of education to marginalized children or enable them to re-enter basic education after completing an accelerated course that responds to their specific circumstances.

UNICEF has a longstanding partnership with education authorities in Sindh, and has supported the province's Joint Education Sector Reviews to monitor progress against its education sector plans. This, along with its experience in piloting ALP initiatives in other provinces of Pakistan, positioned it to support the provincial government in developing and implementing systematic and sustainable ALP provision. ALPs in Sindh are covered under NFE.

Rationale

The Sindh Assembly promulgated the Sindh Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2013 to fulfil the province's obligations under Article 25A of the Constitution. Sindh is committed to the international SDG agenda, including SDG-4, which encompasses a policy focus on out-of-school children with an emphasis on skills-based, equitable and lifelong learning.

To fast-track improvements for such children, and recognizing that the education challenge faced by the province cannot be met through the regular schooling in the formal school system alone, UNICEF, government and other development partners have focused on NFE to reach out-of-school children and adolescents who missed out, or dropped out, before the completion of primary or middle-level schooling.

In 2017, the Sindh Cabinet approved the Sindh NFE Policy 2017 and formally launched it in March 2018. However, most education interventions in Sindh are funded as projects by development partners or the federal and provincial governments, rather than as integral

¹² Pakistan Education Statistics 2016–2017.

components of education delivery. Major NFE reforms have included curriculum and learning materials development and enhanced service delivery through the establishment of centres in various districts. While these discrete NFE interventions show promising local results, the process lacks cohesion, standards and broader impact, particularly in terms of mainstreaming NFE students in basic education. These efforts were not underpinned by robust institutional and structural work and occurred on the margins of education policy and systems reform. Lacking structures and capacity, the Government of Sindh could not allocate more than minimal finances to NFE despite the scale of the need.

UNICEF support was intended to strengthen NFE structures and capacity within government in order to provide a foundation for NFE planning and budgeting and thus provide a foundation for the implementation of the NFE Policy for the next five years, from 2019–2020 to 2024–2025.

Strategy

As a member of the NFE Task Force of the Government of Sindh, UNICEF provided significant technical support to the Sindh Education & Literacy Department to develop a simulated implementation plan for the NFE Policy 2017.

UNICEF's technical support focused on the simulated expansion of the NFE system in the province, based on key indicators and standards, and also identified associated costs. The simulation model was prepared as a guide to implementation, monitoring and financing of the NFE Policy 2017. It simulates a targets-based expansion of the system in terms of the numbers of disaggregated NFE centres, tutors, support staff, stationery, kits/teaching learning materials and monitoring and evaluation resources required. The model also calculates detailed annual cost outlays for each component of the NFE system and accounts for one-time activities such as addressing information gaps, development of standards, etc.

UNICEF staff supported the NFE Policy Sub-Committee of the NFE Task Force to hold consultations on different parameters of the simulation exercise and then led the development of the simulation model in house, projecting the targets, based on indicators, and associated physical, teaching and non-teaching human resources required to meet the targets. This was the first such exercise in Pakistan.

Resources

UNICEF provided support primarily in the form of in-house technical assistance. Education staff at UNICEF's field office in Karachi (Sindh) participated in NFE Policy subcommittee meetings and discussions. One staff member from the UNICEF Country Office worked on the implementation framework, simulation model, costing and write-up.

Progress and results

The resulting implementation plan provided a coherent framework and a structured and connected implementation network for more effective institutional efforts. This included mapping out and delineating roles for key education actors in the province: the Sindh Education Foundation, Directorate of Curriculum Assessment and Research, Provincial Institute of Teacher Education, Sindh Textbook Board and Directorate of Literacy and NFE Sindh.

The framework was developed in a way that will support sustainability of current efforts and set the medium-term direction for the Sindh Directorate of Literacy and NFE to meet the challenge of out-of-school children. The plan also lays down markers for fast-tracking the process of mainstreaming out-of-school children and adolescents into the formal schooling system.

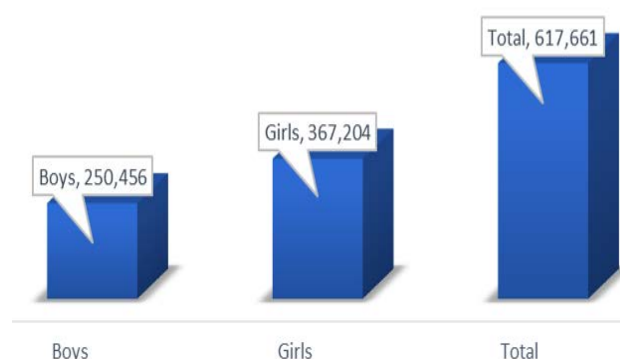


Figure 1: Number of children estimated by model to benefit from NFE programmes.

As Figure 2 shows, the simulation modelled the number of NFE learners entering programmes each year. As formal school enrolment increases, the number of new learners entering the NFE centres decline.

The Sindh Education and Literacy Department, being aware of the significant challenge posed by having over

half of girls and boys aged 5–16 years out of school, owned and approved the simulation model and is including its targets and related calculations in the new Sindh Education Sector Plan which is currently under development under GPE with UNICEF support. Implementation of the plan will be crucial to meeting the education needs of girls and boys in Sindh province, particularly those from the most marginalized backgrounds.

Lessons learned

Plans and policies without simulation models do not provide a clear picture of the flow of learners and the resources required to cater to those learners over time. Simulations and resource modelling, on the other hand, equips decision- and policymakers with the tools to think concretely in terms of the system capacity required, clearly see the trade-offs involved, and set targets that are financially and technically feasible.

The model also calculates the impact of standards and metrics (e.g. tutor/ learner, classroom/ learner and tutor/ classroom ratios; tutor salaries, etc.) and serves as a powerful tool for informed discussions on their practicality and feasibility.

This helped tremendously in decision-making for the implementation of the Sindh NFE Policy.

The experience demonstrated that involving all stakeholders in developing models ensures ownership and utilization in annual budgeting and allocation processes. While the simulation model was developed with the full involvement of the NFE Directorate and key stakeholders within the education department, other government stakeholders, such as the finance and the planning and development departments were not involved, which could create hurdles in actual budgeting and allocations.

The simulation model as a tool can be applied to other policies and upstream work in Sindh and other provinces in support of informed and realistic decision-making and policy implementation.

Moving forward

Institutional and structural work in NFE is a massive challenge in all provinces and areas of Pakistan, where similar education challenges exist in differing contexts. UNICEF will apply this approach in other provinces to bring all stakeholders together and support a coherent and structured approach using powerful modelling tools. ECE and NFE planning is underway in Balochistan, Punjab and Sindh with UNICEF positioned to provide similar forms of technical support.

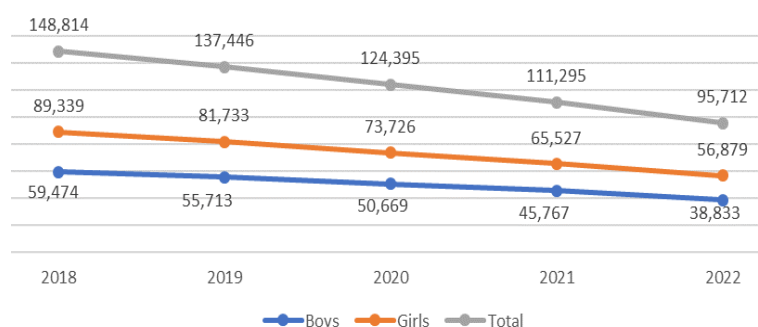


Figure 2: Number of new learners estimated by model to enter NFE programmes over five years.

4. FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

The total resources planned for programme activities in 2018 were US\$ 17,424,300 (see Table 1 below). The amount planned by funding type as follows: Regular Resources (RR) US\$ 5,850,000 (34 per cent); Other Resources – Regular (ORR) US\$ 9,100,000 (52 per cent); and Other Resources – Emergency (ORE) amounting to US\$ 2,474,300 (14 per cent). Overall, 81 per cent was planned for “Equitable access to quality education”, 17 per cent for “Learning outcomes” and 1 per cent for the “Skills development” programme area.

Table 1: Planned budget for the thematic sector, 2018 (US\$)

Programme area	Funding type ¹	Planned budget ²
22-01 Equitable access to quality education	RR	4,200,000
	ORR	7,800,000
	ORE	2,174,300
22-02 Learning outcomes	RR	1,500,000
	ORR	1,200,000
	ORE	300,000
22-03 Skills development	RR	150,000
	ORR	100,000
Total Budget		17,424,300

¹ RR: Regular Resources; ORR: Other Resources – Regular; ORE: Other Resources – Emergency.

² Planned budgets for ORR and ORE do not include estimated recovery cost (only programmable amounts).

Thematic country-level contributions from Norwegian National Committee of US\$ 1.5 million and US\$ 23,750 from United States Fund for UNICEF (see Table 2), contributed to support NFE/ALP opportunities. This included access to alternate and flexible opportunities for out-of-school and drop-out children aged 9–15 years to enrol/re-enrol and complete certified primary education. During 2018, this contribution supported ALP activities for 12,438 children and adolescents (55 per cent girls) in Balochistan, Punjab and Sindh and included the establishment of ALP centres in remote and under-served areas, the training of teachers and community mobilisation to enrol girls and boys. Activities in KP are expected to commence in 2019.

Table 2: Country-level thematic contributions to thematic pool received, 2018 (US\$)

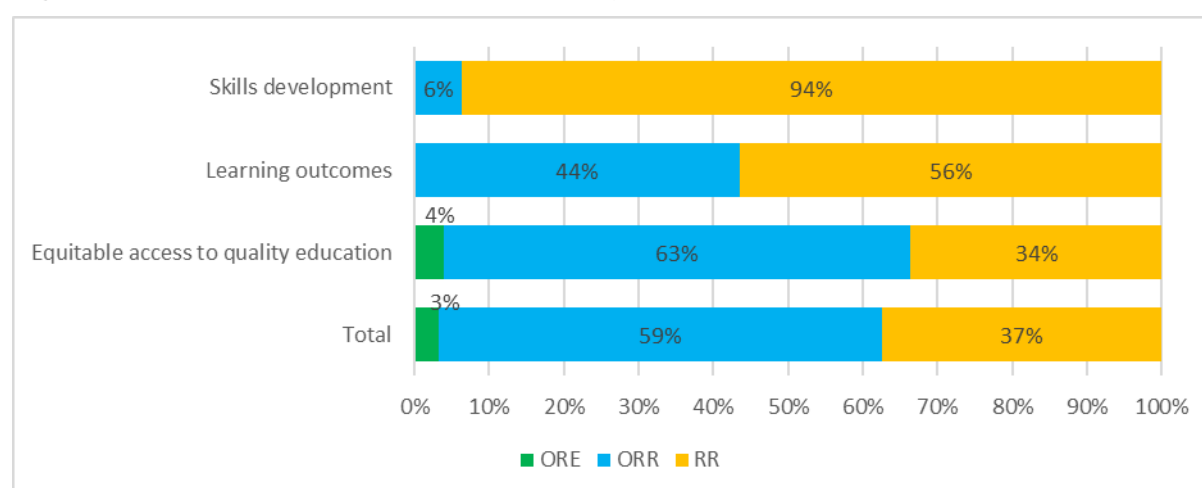
Donors	Grant number	Contribution amount	Programmable amount
Norwegian Committee for UNICEF	SC1899040008	1,500,000	1,428,571
United States Fund for UNICEF	SC1899040002	23,750	22,619
Total		1,523,750	1,451,190

Total expenditure under this goal area in 2018 amounted to US\$ 14,620,444 or 85 per cent of the planned amount for the year (see Table 3 below). Expenditure comprised: Other Resources – Emergency (3 per cent), Other Regular Resources (59 per cent), and Regular Resources (37 per cent). Of the total expenditure, the least expenditure from the planned amount was from Other Resources – Emergency.

Table 3: Expenditures in the thematic area by results area, 2018 (US\$)

Organizational targets	Expenditure amount			
	ORE	ORR	RR	All programme accounts
22-01 Equitable access to quality education	474,899	7,688,487	4,127,617	12,291,003
22-02 Learning outcomes	-1,478	974,198	1,259,934	2,232,654
22-03 Skills development	3	6,101	90,683	96,786
Total	473,423	8,668,786	5,478,234	14,620,444

Figure 1: Expenditures in the thematic area by results area, 2018 (%)



Total expenditure of thematic funds for education was US\$ 2,196,712 (see Table 4 below). The sources of funds received were the 2018 allocation from the global education thematic funds, and multi-year country-level thematic funds. The breakdown of expenditure of thematic funds by programme areas is as follows: Equitable access to quality education (78 per cent); Learning outcomes (22 per cent); and Skills development (0 per cent),.

Thematic funds remain instrumental in strengthening UNICEF programmes and responding to the critical emerging needs, not foreseen during the planning of the Country Programme. They were critical to building partnership and linkages with other development partners and donors, when the need arose to off-set donors' limitations to fund components of a particular initiative of strategic importance.

Without flexible funding, UNICEF's education programme would not have been able to achieve results in:

- Education sector planning and sector coordination.
- Policy and planning support for NFE and ECE, along with support for the continuity of successful programmes and demonstration models for scale up.
- Behaviour change interventions to attract children to school and retain them for a full course of education, with a particular focus on the most vulnerable and hard to reach areas.
- Evidence generation on learning assessment and the publication of *Pakistan Education Statistics 2016–2017*.

- Procurement of supplies accompanying interventions to bring children into education who may have been excluded from mainstream schooling.
- In particular, flexible thematic funding was critical for ECE interventions, which are not yet formally part of the public education system and are not funded by other donors.

Table 4: Thematic expenses by results area, 2018 (US\$)

Organizational targets	Expenditure		
	ORE	ORR	All programme accounts
22-01 Equitable access to quality education	2,627	1,703,375	1,706,001
22-02 Learning outcomes		484,125	484,125
22-03 Skills development		6,585	6,585
Total	2,627	2,194,085	2,196,712

Figure 2: Thematic expenses by results area, 2018 (%)

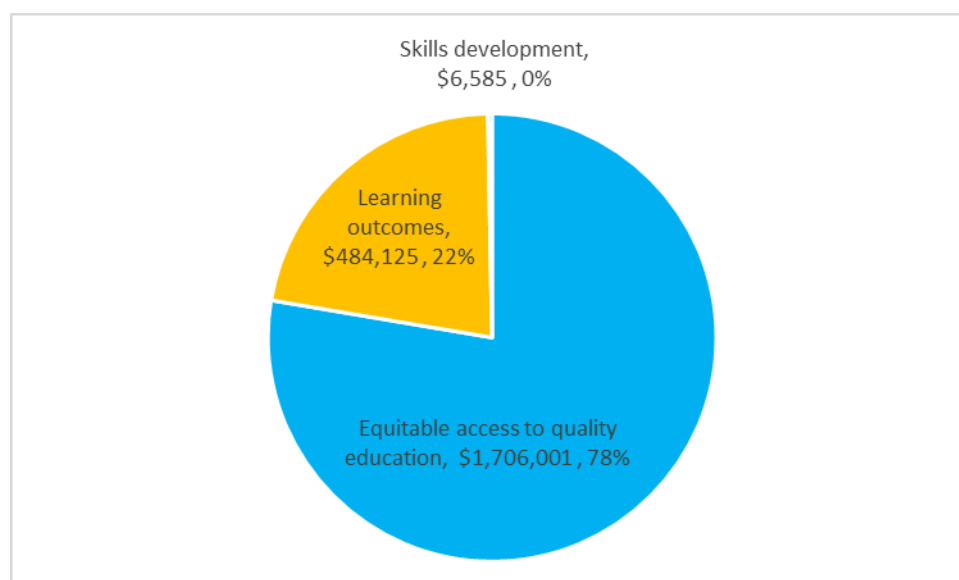


Table 5: Expenses by specific intervention code, 2018 (US\$)

Specific Intervention Codes	Expense
22-01-05 Provision of (formal and non-formal) multiple-levels or alternative pathways of education (including in temporary learning spaces)	5,034,368
22-01-08 System strengthening - risk informed programming, including climate, resilience, disaster, conflict, and emergency preparedness	2,047,611
22-01-09 Peacebuilding education	1,282,678
22-01-10 System strengthening - gender-responsive access (excluding SRGBV)	-1,166
22-01-15 Education sector planning including coordinating role, SDG 4, etc.	213,132
22-01-99 Technical assistance - Equitable access to quality education	1,556,420
22-02-01 Provision or procurement of early learning / pre-primary education learning materials	43,637
22-02-02 Provision or procurement of primary education learning materials	1,003,888
22-02-03 Provision or procurement of secondary education learning materials	55,646
22-02-04 Provision or procurement of multiple-levels (or alternative pathways of education) learning materials	533,216
22-02-05 Provision or procurement of accessible learning materials for children with disabilities	13,956
22-02-06 Digital learning materials and ICT in education	20,632
22-02-22 System strengthening - gender-responsive teaching and learning (excluding SRGBV)	-1,542
22-02-26 Education sector planning including coordinating role, SDG 4, etc.	39,156
22-03-11 Education sector planning including coordinating role, SDG 4, etc.	70,545
26-01-01 Country programme process (including UNDAF planning and CCA)	327,850
26-02-02 MICS - General	272,624
26-02-08 Programme monitoring	100,087
26-03-07 Strengthening C4D in Government systems including preparedness for humanitarian action	2,269
26-05-01 Building evaluation capacity in UNICEF and the UN system	31,545
26-05-03 Country Programme evaluations (including UNDAF evaluations)	27,635
26-06-04 Leading advocate	27,821
26-06-05 Leading voice	113,103
26-07-01 Operations support to programme delivery	1,566,731
27-01-06 HQ and RO technical support to multiple Goal Areas	214,289
27-01-15 CO programme coordination	4,694
28-03-05 Management of advocacy and communication at HQ	293
28-07-04 Management and Operations support at CO	19,324
Grand Total	14,620,444

The initial estimate for education under UNICEF Pakistan Country Programme 2018–2022 was US\$ 68.6 million. However, in the first two years of the Country Programme the requirement has raised due to increased need on the demand side. Flexible thematic funds, funds from bilateral and multilateral donors, and UNICEF's internal resources will assist the education programme to achieve the planned results.

UNICEF's work plan for 2019 has a planned budget of US\$28.33 million (see Table 6 below), of which 61 per cent per cent is currently funded (US\$ 17.31 million). A funding shortfall remains, amounting to US\$ 11.02 million, and is particularly acute in Outputs 1 and 2 which aims to assist public duty bearers have the systems and capacity to deliver quality, equitable, gender-sensitive education.

Table 6: Planned budget for 2019 (US\$)

Output	Funding type	Planned budget ¹	Funded budget ¹	Shortfall ²
Output 1: By 2022, education departments and institutions are strengthened at all levels to develop evidence-based policies, plans and budgets for equitable early learning and basic education	RR	1,375,441	1,375,441	
	ORR	4,056,717	3,709,004	347,713
Output 2: By 2022, public duty bearers have capacity and systems to deliver quality, equitable, gender-sensitive and safe early learning and basic education	RR	2,992,056	2,992,056	
	ORR	6,832,331	6,042,089	790,242
	ORE	9,267,613	877,544	8,390,068
Output 3: By 2022, families and communities actively support on-time enrolment, retention, completion and transition to lower-secondary education, especially for girls	RR	1,151,837	1,151,837	
	ORR	2,652,434	1,162,876	1,489,558
	ORE	62,787	5,945	56,842
Sub-total Regular Resources		5,519,333	5,519,333	
Sub-total Other Resources – Regular		13,541,481	10,913,969	2,627,513
Sub-total Other Resources – Emergency		9,267,613	877,544	8,390,068
Total for 2019		28,328,427	17,310,846	11,017,581

¹ Planned and Funded budget for ORR and ORE excludes recovery cost. RR plan is based on total RR approved for the Country Programme duration.

² Other Resources shortfall represents ORR and ORE funding required for the achievements of results in 2019.

5. FUTURE WORK PLAN

UNICEF will build on the partnerships and the priority engagements undertaken in 2018, under the Country Programme 2018–2022, guided by the global Strategic Plan (2018–2021), Agenda 2030 and national and provincial priorities.

In July 2018, a new government took office and formulated NEPF 2018, while all provinces advanced, to varying degrees, the development of new ESPs to boost their emerging education reform programmes. These are significant developments and it is imperative to tap into the opportunities they create to influence and shape new goals and targets. UNICEF's support for education sector planning in the provinces will remain central to this effort.

UNICEF's education workplan 2019 will thus dovetail with priority initiatives initiated in 2018 and include new priorities emerging from the National Education Policy Framework and provincial ESPs in accordance with its mandate, capacity and strategic intent.

A cross-cutting priority in 2019, aligned with the NEPF's five priority areas, is to foster partnerships and synergies for the provision of opportunities for adolescents in education, skills development and empowerment. Conceptualization, design and implementation is underpinned by Generation Unlimited, the new global partnership for and with young people.

In 2019, key areas of work towards the intended outcome, that by 2022, more children, particularly girls, benefit from equitable and appropriate early childhood education and basic education services, include:

Output 1

To create an enabling environment for advancing inclusive education reform, UNICEF will work closely with the national, provisional and district education authorities and other stakeholders including development partners, civil society organizations and academia to:

- Support education sector planning and ESP implementation mechanisms.
- Generate evidence to inform planning and programme delivery.
- Build partnerships and forums at various levels to advance sector dialogue, mutual accountability and transparency.
- Strengthen data systems, including national and provisional EMISs and student learning assessment systems.

Output 2

To contribute towards enabling children to access formal and non-formal education opportunities, increase retention and reduce dropouts, UNICEF will:

- Support provision of second-chance education through ALPs, particularly for children and adolescents from disadvantaged backgrounds, and prioritizing skills development opportunities for adolescents.
- Support provision of effective pre-primary/ECCE, encouraging low-cost and innovative approaches in collaboration with government and other partners to ensure scalability and sustainability.
- Address school-based violence to create safe and protective school environments (in collaboration with its child protection programme) including emergency preparedness, mitigation/prevention, and response capacity.
- Focus on the recovery and development of the education system in KP's Tribal Districts.
- Support opportunities for adolescents in education, skills development and empowerment.

Output 3

Based on lessons learnt from implementation in 2018 and evidence from the “Good Practices and Lessons Learned from the Every Child in School Initiative, Pakistan” report, UNICEF will:

- Gradually integrate social and behaviour change communication programmes into programme strategies.
- Orientate and develop capacity of school management committees and parent teacher associations to demand quality education and to introduce and strengthen participatory approaches for school development for increased enrolment and retention of children in school.
- Build government capacity on public advocacy and communication with communities and parents to build effective home-school partnerships and enhance the latter’s role in school effectiveness.

6. EXPRESSION OF THANKS

UNICEF takes this opportunity to thank all its partners and donors who provide generous contributions, technical expertise and personnel to help achieve the results envisaged by UNICEF's Education Programme in Pakistan. Without such valuable assistance, many of the achievements realized would not have been possible. In particular, UNICEF acknowledges the flexibility of thematic support, which was crucial in achieving results in 2018 and looks forward to continued partnerships to ensure vital support to the children of Pakistan.

ANNEX 1: HUMAN INTEREST STORIES

Early childhood education promotes tolerance and harmony

A. Sami Malik



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Muskan (5) who is Muslim, and Kanhaiya (4), who is Hindu, have become good friends in their ECE class in Rahim Yar Khan district, Pakistan.

Rahim Yar Khan district, Punjab – “Like siblings, five-year-old Muskan Ishaq and four-year-old Kanhaiya Krishan stick together during and after school hours,” says Iram Akmal, a teacher who has been trained in ECE and works at the Government Girls Community Model Elementary School.

“Muskan is from a Muslim family, while Kanhaiya belongs to the Hindu minority. Like these two, many of my students come from different ethnic communities but in the ECE class they all learn, play and even pray together. Congeniality among these children has brought their families closer and is promoting social cohesion in a diverse community.”

In Rahim Yar Khan district, families belonging to different religions and ethnicities live together. Though these communities live in peace and harmony, minor issues erupt among children in school or on the playground. Often, these issues arise out of misconceptions about each other's religious beliefs and practices.

“Students in the ECE class are young and have impressionable minds. What they learn here will help form their future personalities. We not only try to make learning easy and attractive for them, but also teach them the importance of tolerance, peace, harmony and strong communal ties,” says Iram.

UNICEF is prioritizing pre-primary education in South Asian countries, to ensure that children are equipped through play-based learning with the skills they need to complete primary and, if possible, secondary education. Early childhood care, development and education lay the foundation for a child to progress and prosper in life. ECE promotes the emotional, social,

physical and cognitive development of a child to provide them with solid foundations for lifelong learning and a well-rounded personality.



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Iram Akmal, ECE teacher at the Government Girls Community Model Elementary School, Rahim Yar Khan district checks Muskan and Kanhaiya's work.

“Since Hindu and Muslim families live together in our district, some minor problems can arise from time to time, especially among children in school,” says Surmi Devi, Kanhaiya’s grandmother. “Being in the minority, we used to get worried. However, the overall environment in schools has really improved. There is no physical punishment and teachers ensure that students do not bully each other. Our children go to school without any apprehension of being singled out as a minority.”

“The head teacher, the ECE teacher and the caregiver are all so friendly with children that they have no fear of going to school. Every morning, they are excited to go and when they come back, they tell us all that they have learned during the day. Muskan often comes to our house to play with Kanhaiya and he also goes over to her house. I pray for these children to remain friends forever and our families to always live together in peace.”

In 2015, UNICEF and the Education Department collaborated to introduce the ECE programme in six districts of the Punjab, the most populous province of Pakistan. UNICEF and partners trained head teachers, ECE teachers, caregivers and members of School Management Committees in how to help young children learn and grasp new concepts through play. UNICEF also provided multifaceted technical support, environmentally-friendly classroom décor and ECE learning kits with specialized items for early learning through play and exploration. The same year, ECE classes started in selected public schools of Lahore, Rawalpindi, Jhang, Toba Tek Singh, Rajanpur and Rahim Yar Khan districts.

“Ever since the introduction of ECE in schools, children’s interest in learning has skyrocketed,” says Rubina Shaheen, an official of the Education Department in Punjab. “The interactive approach used by ECE teachers encourages children to speak up and participate. They look forward to learning and try to apply their minds objectively and collectively.”

“Initially, ECE was introduced in selected primary schools which had at least three rooms and two teachers. According to the new policy, every primary school will have at least four teachers, one of whom will be trained in ECE to work with pre-primary students.”



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Kanhaiya, right, watches intently as his sister, centre, and his friend Muskan, left, play a game of Ludo.

ECE has multiple benefits and its positive impact on children’s learning and personality-building is tangible. It serves as a catalyst for children to learn, a foundation for children to complete primary and secondary education, an encouragement for parents to get involved in their children’s academic and extracurricular progress, and an incentive for teachers and head teachers to enhance their capacity.

While on one hand, ECE encourages children to participate in play and activity-based learning, develop their decision-making power and learn how to socialize, on the other, it enables the teacher to assess a children’s strengths and weaknesses and help them accordingly.

In Punjab, ECE classes are functional in nearly 12,000 schools, benefiting around 100,000 pre-primary students. ECE classrooms provide an attractive and colourful environment, learning materials and toys that most parents cannot afford to provide at home being financially disadvantaged.

“Even before the first year of school, children from lower socio-economic groups, ethnic and linguistic minorities, and children with disability are more likely to miss out quality play-based early learning opportunities,” says Rubina Nadeem, Education Specialist, UNICEF. “ECE generates interest in playful learning and the likelihood that children continue their education through primary level and beyond. This means that every girl and boy who benefit from ECE is more likely to access primary and secondary education, helping them fulfil their right to quality education.”

A cherished chance to go to school

Adresh Laghari



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Shehnaz (13) writes out English sentences on the blackboard at the UNICEF-supported Haji Azeem Kalmati ALP Centre in Lasbela district, Pakistan.

Lasbela district, Balochistan – In Balochistan's rural landscape – a barren environment with patches of green bushes and scattered populated pockets – schools are a rarity. And even when there is one, parents are often reluctant to let their daughters leave home and go to school.

One girl was luckier than the others. Samira managed to become a teacher after a long, difficult journey through life. Her sisters were not given the opportunity to study but they struggled so their younger sister – Samira – could. Their commitment seems to have given Samira an endless supply of energy as she teaches at Haji Azeem Kalmati ALP centre.

Parents living in conservative communities are often reluctant to send their daughters on long journeys to school. This is why UNICEF and partners have developed such ALP centres. Located at the heart of villages, they offer more flexible hours than a formal school. This means that students can study an accelerated curriculum and still have time to help their families in the fields if they are boys or take care of younger siblings if they are girls. This is a decisive factor when it comes to convincing parents to send their children to school.

Samira is passionate about her job at the centre, where she uses the modern, child-friendly teaching techniques she was taught as part of the training programme. Instead of rote learning, she uses playful techniques to help students remember their lessons in English, Urdu, mathematics and science. She also teaches extracurricular subjects such as how to maintain good hygiene and adequate sanitation.

Samira is personally involved in the performance of each of her students. One of them is 13-year-old Shehnaz Aziz, who is writing English sentences on the blackboard under Samira's watchful gaze.

“With her beautiful hands, Shehnaz has turned my dream of becoming a well-known teacher a reality,” Samira says.

Shehnaz has been studying in the centre for more than two years. She was among the first three students to enrol and is now preparing for the exam to pass the primary school certificate.



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Samira, the ALP teacher at Haji Azeem Kalmati Alternative Learning Programme, Lasbela district, Pakistan, has been trained in modern teaching techniques to educate children who were out of school.

Shehnaz's father, Aziz, is an electrician and the only man in the village to have installed an electrical water pump at home. He says he did it so his children would not spend too much time and energy fetching water from the well in the village. They no longer must go and fetch water three or four times a day – a single trip is now enough.

“I am not educated but I am glad to know the importance of education,” says Aziz. “I cannot think of a reason not to send my children to school.”

Shehnaz says that she is given less chores at home so she can do her homework. For her, going to school is a daily celebration because she gets to spend time with her friends and to learn new things every day.

The centre is one of many established or expanded thanks to US\$ 5 million which were generously donated by Norwegian citizens through the Norwegian National Committee for UNICEF. In 2017, UNICEF Norway collected donations from citizens all over the country to help educate children around the world, especially those living in areas lacking in educational infrastructure. Haakon, the Crown Prince of Norway, presided over this annual event in keeping with a royal tradition dating back to 1974. The centres funded through this initiative are being installed or expanded in partnership with the Balochistan authorities.



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Shehnaz and her brother fetch water from the well near their village. Since their father installed a water pump at home they no longer need to perform this arduous task.

Shehnaz is proud that her grades are among the top three in the class she attends with 13 other students. "I keep asking myself questions about what I have learnt at school during the day, so I can memorize my lessons better. I do this all the time, even when fetching water," Shehnaz says. "My friends and my brother get annoyed because I spend so much time studying, but I want to keep learning more and more."



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Shehnaz shares a moment of joy with her sisters in their home in Lasbela district, Pakistan. All three are now regular school-goers.

ALPs provide a route to education for the children who are excluded, such as those living in impoverished agricultural communities. The key to success is the involvement of local partners and community members. This helps build ownership and sustainability and makes it easier to convince parents to send their daughters – and sons – to the centres.

For Shehnaz, the centre is a cherished opportunity to learn and build a better future. She hopes that other children will be as lucky as she is.

“I cannot imagine a life where all the children in the area could not have the chance to go to school,” she says. “I hope many others will be given the opportunity to learn.”

Giving Pakistani adolescents a second chance

A. Sami Malik



© UNICEF/PAKISTAN/A Sami Malik

At a UNICEF-supported Non-Formal Education Centre in Quetta, Pakistan, Safeerullah Khan (14) has had an opportunity to learn despite being obliged to work and support his family.

Quetta district, Balochistan – For Safeerullah Khan, the day begins before dawn. After saying his morning prayer, he tucks his belongings under a wooden shelf, puts on his worn-out shoes and runs to the main road to catch public transport. Then he hops onto one of the many commercial vans speeding to a suburban area where the city's biggest fruit market is located.

Quetta, the capital of Pakistan's Balochistan province, is famous for its fruit. Countless trucks from various parts of the province arrive at the city's fruit market at daybreak. Fruit and vegetable cartons are offloaded, counted, their sides reinforced with metal strips, and sold to fruit vendors. In the wee hours of the morning, this is where countless people earn their livelihood by working as labourer. Some of these – like Safeerullah – are children.



© UNICEF/PAKISTAN/A Sami Malik

Rising before dawn, Safeerullah tucks his belongings under a wooden shelf, puts on his worn-out shoes and runs to the main road to catch a van that will take him to the city's largest vegetable market.

Safeerullah is only 14 but he has already seen the tough side of life. His father, the only breadwinner of the family, died four years ago, leaving behind a widow and eight children. The family lives in a modest two-room house in a poor neighbourhood. Neither Safeerullah nor any of his siblings have ever been to school.

Since the death of his father, Safeerullah and his older brother have become the family's breadwinners. Sociocultural barriers and lack of education restrict their sisters to the four walls of their house.

"I always wanted to go to school but my parents wanted me to work in the fruit and vegetable market with my father and older brother," Safeerullah tells. "Anyway, after my father's death, I did not have a choice."

"Every morning, I go to the market, which is located 10 kilometres from our house. I put metal strips on fruit cartons so they don't break open during transportation. I load the cartons onto commercial vans to make some extra money."



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From early morning till around 1pm, Safeerullah works in the vegetable market, strapping fruit cartons, numbering and inventorying them, and loading them onto vans that will carry them to the city centre.

A year after his father's death, Safeerullah had a surprise – a lady came to see the family and asked his mother to let him learn.

Because Safeerullah had never been to school, he could not enrol in the regular educational system. But the lady, who turned out to be a school teacher, said that there was still an option for him: non-formal education centres.

For many years, UNICEF has been supporting the Government of Pakistan to put children back in school through non-formal education services. This gives a second chance to the nearly 23 million Pakistani children who have never been to school or dropped out – one out of two school-age children.

The centres offer special methodologies and teach an accelerated curriculum, helping young people catch up with the years of schooling they lost and reintegrate the mainstream education system. They operate with more flexible hours, making it easier to convince parents to send their children. For instance, Safeerullah's mother agreed to send him only after being told that he could continue working in the morning, and go to the centre in the afternoon.

UNICEF currently supports 400 NFE centres across Pakistan thanks to generous funding from JICA. About 15,000 children have benefited from the project in Balochistan alone so far, including Safeerullah.



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At the Non-Formal Education Centre in Quetta, Pakistan, the teacher, Raheela Jabeen, watches Safeerullah as he resolves a maths sum.

A crucial task to ensure the success of the programme is to convince families to send their children to the centres. This is what Raheela Jabeen, the lady who visited Safeerullah's house, does. Every day she teaches at the Non-Formal Education Centre in Ittehad Colony where Safeerullah studies. Once the classes have ended, she visits local families whose children do not go to school.

"Many children are not in school because their families are either too poor, or don't understand the value of education," she says. "This is a conservative society and it is not easy to talk parents into sending their children, especially girls, to the centre. Every day I go door to door and tell them why it is good for children to study. This is how I found Safeerullah and many others who are now learning at the centres."

Raheela says that Safeerullah has a gift for mathematics, and will soon graduate from primary education. What he has learnt at the centre has already helped the boy improve his living conditions.

"I used to put metal strips on fruit cartons and load them in the vans, earning 300 to 400 rupees (US\$ 2.50–3) a day," says Safeerullah. "Now that I know mathematics, I can also number the cartons and make an inventory. As a result, I earn twice as much!"

Safeerullah plans to go on studying in secondary school, where he should be able to attend classes only in the afternoon thanks to a double shift system. His mother no longer objects to his studying as it has already helped raise the family's standard of living.

Safeerullah has also become a role model for others.

"Some of the boys who work with me were impressed by my ability to read and write, and how I was able to earn more," he says. "They have started enrolling in the centre as well."

Making schools safer for children

Fatima Shahryar and A. Sami Malik



© UNICEF/PAKISTAN/A Sami Malik

Many of the students training in emergency preparedness at the Government Girls High School Mission Road, Quetta district, Balochistan, recall the terrorist incident that occurred in their neighbourhood a year previously.

Quetta district, Balochistan – Quetta, the capital of Pakistan’s largest province Balochistan, is located in the most active seismic zone of the country. Earthquakes are frequent and the city was almost destroyed in 1935 by a jolt recorded at 7.7 on the Richter Scale. Most recently, a 4.4 magnitude earthquake struck the city in November 2017 causing loss of life and property. Balochistan has, in recent years, also been the hub of human-induced disasters. Security-related incidents, of which many occurred in Quetta, have created an environment of fear and uncertainty amongst the residents. Densely populated residential areas, commercial centres and even high security zones have been subject to attacks.

The 27th night of the holy month of Ramadan is a night for Muslims to offer special prayers. Usually, the next day is a working day. The announcement declaring it a holiday came very late in the evening and many students at the Government Girls’ High School (GGHS) Mission Road did not receive it.

“It was an unusual day to begin with,” relates Hamna Hashmi (13), a Grade 9 student. “When we arrived at the school that morning, the watchman at the gate told us that the school was closed. As we turned back, the van that brought us had already left. We went inside the school and sat in our classroom with a teacher trying to contact our families using her phone. Then, the most terrifying thing happened. BANG! A huge blast shook the ground and rattled doors and windows of our school building.”

At 8:45 am on 23 June 2017, the sound of a huge blast ripped through the city of Quetta. A vehicle laden with explosives had blown up at a busy intersection just outside the office of the Inspector General of Police, Balochistan. Within minutes, ambulances and security personnel

were all over the place. Many were killed and injured and nearby buildings were shaken and damaged.

“The deafening sound of the blast, followed by people shouting and human body parts falling into the schoolyard was so terrifying that we started screaming and crying. We did not know what to do. We had never experienced anything like this in our lives. And of course, we were not trained how to react in a situation like this,” says Hamna. “But now we are. We are trained to handle such situations sensibly, in an orderly manner and without panicking.”



© UNICEF/PAKISTAN/A Sami Malik

Shakeel Ahmed, a trainer from the Balochistan Boys Scout Association, trains students on emergency preparedness at the Government Girls High School Mission Road, Quetta, Balochistan.

When disaster strikes, natural or human-induced, the most vulnerable and often most affected are children who often experience long-lasting psychosocial stress and disrupted education. To ensure that every child has access to education in a safe environment, UNICEF with generous support from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), initiated the ‘Resilient, Informed and Safer School and Communities’ programme in Pakistan.

The programme started in 2014 and its implementation has continued in a phased manner in three provinces: Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan. Under this programme, UNICEF has partnered with respective provincial governments and civil society organizations to train students, teachers and community members to protect themselves in emergency situations. The objective is to increase the capacity of children, parents, teachers and community members to prevent and cope with disaster, so that its effects could be mitigated. The programme also aims to increase advocacy around sector policies, plans, coordination and communication for education and its role in DRR.

In 2016, the Safer School Programme was initiated in three districts of Balochistan: Quetta, Jafferabad and Naseerabad. In collaboration with the Department of Education, Balochistan, UNICEF’s implementing partner, Balochistan Boy Scouts Association started conducting school-based DRR trainings.

“The first training was held at our school in March 2018 and several refresher courses have taken place thereafter,” says Shaista Fehmid, the teacher in charge of supervising school-based

DRR trainings. “The training sessions have really helped us organize and prepare for unforeseen emergency situations. On the day of the blast in Ramadan and at the time of an earthquake a few years back, students and teachers ran out of the classrooms, pushing and jumping over each other. Many received minor injuries that could have been easily avoided. Now we are trained and conduct regular drills during which children form lines, move out of the classrooms in an orderly manner, gather at well-marked spaces in the school and exit the building through emergency exits only.”



© UNICEF/PAKISTAN/A Sami Malik

Hamna and her classmates demonstrate how to use a sling to support a broken arm.

So far, over 14,000 students and 600 teachers have been trained in 100 schools of the Balochistan. Additionally, 1,500 members from communities have also been trained to participate with students and teachers in mock DRR drills to effectively promote safer school through community engagement.

Hamna says, “The first aid trainings have been particularly helpful. One day, I was going to the market on a motorbike with my father, when a car hit us. I was safe, but my father’s leg was injured and he could not move his foot. From what I have learned in the trainings, I quickly took off my scarf, and wrapped it around his foot securing it in a safe position until the ambulance arrived and we took him to the hospital. I have helped several people with what I have learnt in our DRR trainings. It makes me feel like a superwoman, or at least her best friend,” she says, giggling.



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Students share their experiences with their teacher, Shaista Fehmida, at the Government Girls High School, Quetta, Balochistan.

“The Safer Schools Programme has had a positive impact on students, teachers and communities,” says UNICEF Education Officer Sagheer Ahmed. “School-based DRR trainings have been very helpful in boosting students’ confidence as they feel empowered to handle emergencies using the techniques that they have learned. The Balochistan Boy Scouts Association has done a great job by adapting these trainings as part of their regular activities and introducing the Safer School approach to children and adolescents across the province.”

Bringing girls back to school

Fatima Shahryar



© UNICEF/PAKISTAN/Fatima Shahryar

Sumaira (12) is delighted to have returned to education at the Government Girls Community Model School in Kachhi district, Pakistan.

Kachhi district, Balochistan – “I stopped going to school last year as there was no washroom, water or electricity in the one I used to attend,” says Sumaira (12), who is now a Grade 4 student at the Government Girls Community Model School (GGCMS) in the village of Rind Ali. “With only two rooms, the school building was not good at all. As a result, I stayed home for a full year.”

“It was then that one day my friend brought me to this school. I loved it instantly. It had classrooms with beautiful wall paintings, a clean washroom and a big playground. I convinced my parents and though it was a bit far from my home, they got me admitted here. I love coming to this school and have become a keen student.”

Rabia Kausar, who is the acting headmistress says, “We believe that education is a basic right and all children should have access to it.”

Balochistan is the largest province of Pakistan. Around 60–70 per cent children in the primary and secondary age group are reported to be out of school in the province. More girls than boys are out of school: 78 and 63 per cent respectively. GGCMS is the only school in district Kachhi that has classes up to Grade 8. The area is dominated by tribal leaders who do not encourage girls’ education. The population of the district is largely poor and depends on cattle farming or daily wage labour.

Sumaira says, “At my old school, besides studying, we also had to work at our teachers’ homes. We would help them with daily household chores like cleaning, washing utensils etc. It became so difficult that I had to quit school. But here, at my new school, it is so different. Our teachers are like friends and we only study and play.”



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Sumaira was out of school for a full year because her school lacked sanitation facilities.

To improve the existing education system and provide children an impetus for quality learning, UNICEF with funding support from the European Union, initiated the Balochistan Basic Education Programme (BBEP), in 2016. Implemented in 11 districts of the province, the programme is led by the Education Department, Balochistan.

With guidance and in close collaboration with the Secondary Education Department, management committees have been established at different levels to ensure schools are functioning well and children are provided education in a child-friendly environment. These committees include Parent Teacher School Management Committees at the school level, Local Education Councils for several schools in school “clusters” and a District Education Group.

“Enrolment of students has increased twofold due to the renovation of school infrastructure and introduction of child-friendly teaching methods. The overall learning environment has improved considerably and students as well as teachers are more confident and happy. All of us feel a refreshing and positive change in the right direction.” says Umme Sulait, District Officer Education, Kacchi.

“At the time when we received funds for renovating the school infrastructure, we knew we had to exclusively focus on including sanitation facilities and safe drinking water. The presence of a washroom and drinking water alone has encouraged parents, even from the neighbouring villages, to enrol their daughters at GGCMS Kachhi,” says Umme Sulait. “Seeing these girls return to school gives us a great sense of achievement. Implementation of the BBEP has made it certain that the children of Balochistan have a bright future.”



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Sumaira's teacher corrects her work at the Government Girls Community Model School.

In this conservative region, women and girls have limited access to basic education, health and other resources. This is compounded by the fact that over a third of girls drop out of school in Grades 4 and 5. Not coincidentally, this is the age at which most girls begin to menstruate.

To reduce the number, teachers and students at all girls' schools in the focus districts are being trained on MHM. Highly qualified trainers are conducting these trainings with BBEP support. Schools are also provided MHM kits that have all the essential sanitary supplies. The trainings have been completed in 83 schools so far, and will be continued for the remaining schools in programme districts.

"We have observed that since the time our students have received training on MHM, they are more self confident and comfortable," says Rabia Kausar. "Earlier girls would go on leave and stay absent from school, but for past two months, all girls have been regular. MHM trainings have brought tremendous reduction in absence from school."

BBEP has numerous examples from communities where rejuvenated schools have proven that good teachers and schools can enrol, teach and retain children. Providing a safe and comfortable environment to children, especially girls, not only helps them learn better, it improves their chances of contributing to society.



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Students of Government Girls Community Model School show their hands after washing them properly with soap as taught by their teachers.

“Government Girls Community Model School, Rind Ali, is an example of how community involvement can change schools into fun learning environments for girls and boys”, says UNICEF Education Specialist Palwasha Jalalzai. “BBEP is demonstrating pathways to achieve quality education in the province. In addition to school improvement through community engagement, BBEP is reforming learning assessment, real time monitoring and capacity building of the teachers; all coming together at the school level to enable provision of quality education to students across the targeted programme schools. While there are many happy, living stories like that of Sumaira, we aim to see hundreds more in the years to come.”

ANNEX 2: DONOR FEEDBACK

UNICEF is working to improve the quality of our reports and would highly appreciate your feedback. Kindly follow the link below to provide feedback on the Pakistan Education Thematic Report 2018. Thank you!

[Online donor feedback form.](#)