



## COI QUERY

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| Main subject                               | <b>Education sector: personnel and students</b>  |
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The target audience is caseworkers, COI researchers, policy makers, and decision making authorities. The answer was finalised on 20 August 2020. Any event taking place after this date is not included in this answer.



## COI QUERY RESPONSE

### 1. Education in Afghanistan

Article 5(1) of the Afghanistan Education Law stipulates that [informal translation] ‘education is compulsory for children aged between six and nine years old’.<sup>1</sup> According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), education is compulsory from the age of seven to fifteen years old in Afghanistan.<sup>2</sup>

According to UNICEF, 3.7 million children, aged between 7 and 17 years old were deprived of schooling in Afghanistan,<sup>3</sup> 60 % of them being girls.<sup>4</sup>

The Afghanistan National Statistics and Information Authority (NSIA) indicated that as of 2018, there were 14 888 schools [*maktab*s], including 6 211 primary, 3 856 secondary and 4 821 high schools, and there were 1 068 [government] Islamic education schools including *madrassas* (religious schools) and *Dar-ul Hifaz* (institution where Quran is learnt by heart<sup>5</sup>) in Afghanistan.<sup>6</sup> The Royal Danish Defence College (RDDC) cited Afghanistan official sources reporting that in 2018, there were 5 000 *madrassas* and *Dar-ul Hifaz* throughout Afghanistan registered with the Ministry of Hajj (pilgrimage) and Religious Affairs, and 1 200 public and 200 private *madrassas* registered with the Ministry of Education. According to the same source, the number of unregistered *madrassas* across the country could not be specified, but it could be fairly stated that they are mostly located in rural areas, with some present in major cities, including in the areas under the Taliban control.<sup>7</sup>

According to Thomas Ruttig, co-director and senior analyst of Afghanistan Analysts Network (AAN), the term *maktab* is used for state-run schools and *madrassa* for a religious school, (‘in popular language, these terms interchange’) while the word *Taleb* (*Taleban* in plural form) is used for a madrassa student.<sup>8</sup> RDDC stated that in 2018 some *madrassas* were actually managed by the government.<sup>9</sup>

According to RDDC, there are three categories of *madrassas* in Afghanistan:

<sup>1</sup> Afghanistan, MoJ, [رسی جریده، د پوهنی قانون [informal translation ‘official gazette, education law’], 24 July 2008, [url](#), p. 13

<sup>2</sup> UNESCO, Afghanistan, education system, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>3</sup> UNICEF, Child alert, preserving hope in Afghanistan, protecting children in the most lethal conflict, 16 December 2019, [url](#)

<sup>4</sup> UNICEF, Getting girls back to school in Afghanistan, 8 October 2019, [url](#)

<sup>5</sup> Voice of Jihad, Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, 7 Dar-ul Hifaz set up in Badakhshan; books, magazines distributed, 4 January 2020, [url](#)

<sup>6</sup> Afghanistan, NSIA, Number of Government General Education, Technical & Vocational and Islamic Schools, Students and Teachers by Sex 2002 - 2018, n.d., [url](#); Afghanistan, NSIA, تعداد مکاتب، شاگردان و استادان مکاتب تعلیمات عمومی، تخصصی مسلکی و دینی 1397 – 1381 - [informal translation : ‘number of schools, general education students and teachers, vocational and state Islamic schools by sex 2002 - 2018’], n.d., [url](#); SIGAR, Reintegration of ex-combatants: lessons from the U.S. experience in Afghanistan, 17 September 2019, [url](#), p. 84

<sup>7</sup> RDDC, The role of *madrassas*, assessing parental choice, financial pipelines and recent developments in religious education in Pakistan & Afghanistan, 31 January 2018, [url](#), pp. 25

<sup>8</sup> AAN, Schools on the frontline, the struggle over education in the Afghan war, n.d., [url](#), p. 4 and 14

<sup>9</sup> RDDC, The role of *madrassas*, assessing parental choice, financial pipelines and recent developments in religious education in Pakistan & Afghanistan, 31 January 2018, [url](#), pp. 103 -104

- Some of them are managed by the government, with a curriculum of 40 % scientific and 60 % Islamic education;
- Some of them are registered with the government, but not managed by the government, and the registration criteria is to include mathematics and science in the [Islamic] subjects;
- Some of them are not registered with the government and are mostly found in the Taliban-controlled zones.<sup>10</sup>

In September 2019, SIGAR reported on the presence of *madrassas*, managed by the Taliban Education Commission.<sup>11</sup> For instance, in July 2020, local residents told AAN about a pro-Taliban *madrassa*, with 100 talibani (*madrassa* students), in Moghulkhel village of Mohammad Agha district in Logar province.<sup>12</sup>

### 1.1 Impact of the conflict on education

In October 2019, the Centre for Strategic and Regional Studies (CSRS) reported that education in Afghanistan was affected by war, insecurity and corruption, and that 7 000 schools out of 14 000 in Afghanistan did not have buildings.<sup>13</sup> According to the New York Times, many schools that were built after the collapse of the Taliban regime [in 2001], have been closed or destroyed due to armed clashes.<sup>14</sup>

According to UNICEF, by the end of the year [2018], over 1 000 schools were closed as a result of ongoing conflict and rapid worsening of the security situation.<sup>15</sup> UNAMA indicated that armed conflict severely affected education in Afghanistan in 2018,<sup>16</sup> with a significant impact in 2019.<sup>17</sup>

During the period of 1 January and 31 December 2019, UNAMA documented 70 incidents that impacted access to education,<sup>18</sup> compared to 191 incidents during 2018.<sup>19</sup> The incidents included direct attacks on schools or their destruction by accident; harming of education personal including killing, injury and abduction; and threats against education facilities and personnel. In 2019, in total, four education personnel were killed and four were injured, as well as nine students were killed and twenty-nine were injured.<sup>20</sup>

In 2018, the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) indicated that schools [in Afghanistan] have been increasingly used as 'military, ideological and political battlefields'<sup>21</sup>, and as a centre of violence,

<sup>10</sup> RDDC, The role of *madrassas*, assessing parental choice, financial pipelines and recent developments in religious education in Pakistan & Afghanistan, 31 January 2018, [url](#), pp. 103 -104

<sup>11</sup> SIGAR, Reintegration of ex-combatants: lessons from the U.S. experience in Afghanistan, 17 September 2019, [url](#), p. 84

<sup>12</sup> AAN, A threat a Kabul's Southern gate: a security view of Logar province, 18 July 2020, [url](#)

<sup>13</sup> CSRS, Education in Afghanistan; from claims to reality, 10 October 2019, [url](#)

<sup>14</sup> NYT, Homes lost and lives trampled, rural Afghans urgently want peace, 5 March 2019, [url](#)

<sup>15</sup> UNICEF, Afghanistan sees three-folds increase in attacks on schools in one year – UNICEF, 28 May 2019, [url](#)

<sup>16</sup> UNAMA, Protection of civilians in armed conflict annual report 2018, 23 February 2019, [url](#), p. 14

<sup>17</sup> UNAMA, Protection of civilians in armed conflict, 2019, 22 February 2020, [url](#), p. 27

<sup>18</sup> UNAMA, Protection of civilians in armed conflict, 2019, 22 February 2020, [url](#), p. 27

<sup>19</sup> UNAMA, Protection of civilians in armed conflict annual report 2018, 23 February 2019, [url](#), p. 14

<sup>20</sup> UNAMA, Protection of civilians in armed conflict, 2019, 22 February 2020, [url](#), p. 27

<sup>21</sup> NRC, Armed men cut the throats of three school employees, 16 August 2018, [url](#)

according to the Washington Post.<sup>22</sup> The United States Department of State (USDOS) indicated that, in 2019, the Taliban and Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) used schools as military posts in Afghanistan.<sup>23</sup>

For instance, in July 2020, Salaam Times, a U.S. army-sponsored media, reported that the Taliban used a high school in Taloqan, the capital of Takhar province, as a hideout to attack ANSF, and that after the clashes, they proceeded to burn the school, including 10 000 books.<sup>24</sup> For more information see sub-chapter 2.5.1 The impact of conflict on education, in [COI Report: Afghanistan - Key socio-economic indicators. Focus on Kabul City, Mazar-e Sharif and Herat City](#).

## 2. Position of the Taliban towards education (2018-2020)

According to Thomas Ruttig, as of 2012, ‘the Taliban had drafted a new pro-education policy’ [...] that described the Taliban’s education system, which was made up of six institutions including ‘schools, village day madrassas, boarding madrassas, dar -ul Hefaz (schools to learn the Quran), university and specialised religious institution’.<sup>25</sup> In a report provided by the Embassy of Denmark in Kabul, Ashley Jackson, a researcher, consultant and writer, indicated that [as part of the Taliban’s education structure], the Education Commission designates a shadow education representative on provincial level, and the latter appoints district ‘focal points’, who are typically supported by ‘helpers and school monitors including educated male *mullahs* or *mawlawis*.<sup>26</sup>

According to Thomas Ruttig, the Taliban position towards education and government-run schools has shifted significantly during the period between 2001 and 2016.<sup>27</sup> In June 2020, HRW indicated that the Taliban position had changed from a complete opposition towards government schools to an oversight of education services in some provinces.<sup>28</sup> The United States Institute of Peace (USIP) indicated that Taliban’s policy towards education changed mainly due to local pressure.<sup>29</sup> In an interview with HRW in April 2019 in Doha, Taliban officials stated:

‘We have to take into account local norms. In Kunduz, Samangan, Logar, people are more open-minded about girls’ education. In Uruzgan, Helmand—the people are not open to this. We cannot impose from the top. We are working to change peoples’ minds.... The Kunduz conflict is different from Helmand—we cannot establish the same rules and guidelines for all of Afghanistan. It has to be done in a case-by-case manner until the whole country is under our control.’<sup>30</sup>

<sup>22</sup> The Washington Post, During Afghan elections, schools double as voting places – and become Taliban target, 14 August 2019, [url](#)

<sup>23</sup> USDOS, Country report on human rights practices for 2019, Afghanistan, 10 March 2020, [url](#), P. 22

<sup>24</sup> Salaam Times, Taliban set fire to high school in Takhar, burning 10 000 books, 17 July 2020, [url](#)

<sup>25</sup> AAN, Schools on the frontline, the struggle over education in the Afghan war, n.d., [url](#), p. 27

<sup>26</sup> Embassy of Denmark in Kabul, Life under Taliban shadow government, 18 June 2018, [url](#), p. 11 - 12

<sup>27</sup> AAN, Schools on the frontline, the struggle over education in the Afghan war, n.d., [url](#), p. 24

<sup>28</sup> HRW, You have no right to complain, education, social restrictions, and justice in Taliban-held Afghanistan, 30 June 2020, [url](#)

<sup>29</sup> USIP, Service delivery in Taliban-influenced areas of Afghanistan, 30 April 2020, [url](#), p. 8

<sup>30</sup> HRW, You have no right to complain, education, social restrictions, and justice in Taliban-held Afghanistan, 30 June 2020, [url](#)

According to Salaam Times, since May 2018, the education institutions have continued to be targeted by the Taliban. In Takhar province, they notably threatened to kill education personnel (including principals, teachers and students) in retaliation to the arrest of Amir Mohammad Muzamel, a Taliban shadow education director, by the National Directorate of Security (NDS).<sup>31</sup>

In an interview with EASO on 27 July 2020, co-director at the AAN Kate Clark, explained the recent position of Taliban towards education:

'When in 2009 and 2010 the Taliban's Layha [code of conduct<sup>32</sup>] changed, the general order to attack schools and teachers was dropped. In general, Taliban seem not to particularly like schools, but schools are popular with many of the people living in areas under their control, particularly boys' education. Generally, in districts that don't have schools, if the Taliban take control, they don't open schools. In some districts in Helmand, they have opened schools eventually because local people have travelled and seen what is happening in other places and wanted education for their boys, at least. Schools for small girls, primary education, is usually not a problem, but, again, if there are no girls' schools in areas coming under Taliban control, the Taliban will not open them. In such districts, people are likely not to be very interested in having girls educated anyway. However, local people do support girls' education, they may lobby for it. In Obeh district of Herat, for example, people managed to keep their schools for girls open right up to 12<sup>th</sup> grade. The Taliban said they had to have female teachers only. There weren't enough, so they organised for girls who had finished 12<sup>th</sup> grade to fill the gaps. Basically, what happens with schools is quite variable; it all depends on the local commander and the population.'<sup>33</sup> See section [3. Women in education](#).

The Royal Danish Defence College (RDDC) cited Center for Conflict and Peace Studies (CAPS) research team that interviewed a former Taliban commander from Kandahar stating that the Taliban justifiably targeted government schools because the group perceives them as a symbol of government control.<sup>34</sup> The USIP indicated that in the contested and government areas, [the Taliban] generally viewed schools, in particular during clashes, as a legitimate enemy target, rather than a civilian property.<sup>35</sup>

According to the Washington Post, Taliban also target schools when they are being used as polling stations during the elections.<sup>36</sup>

In 2018, UNAMA documented 92 election-related incidents with impact on education, mainly attributed to the Taliban.<sup>37</sup>

UNAMA indicated that throughout 2019, Taliban carried out numerous attacks that severely affected education institutions, including damages to 28 schools, and education personnel.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>31</sup> Salaam Times, Taliban torch school in Takhar, continue campaign against girls' education, 5 February 2020, [url](#)

<sup>32</sup> AAN, The Layha, calling the Taleban to account, 4 July 2011, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>33</sup> Clark K., Online video Interview with EASO, 27 July 2020

<sup>34</sup> RDDC, The role of madrassas, assessing parental choice, financial pipelines and recent developments in religious education in Pakistan & Afghanistan, 31 January 2018, [url](#), p. 105

<sup>35</sup> USIP, Insurgent bureaucracy: how the Taliban make policy, 19 November 2019, [url](#), p. 23

<sup>36</sup> The Washington Post, During Afghan elections, schools double as voting places – and become Taliban target, 14 August 2019, [url](#)

<sup>37</sup> UNAMA, Protection of civilians in armed conflict annual report 2018, 23 February 2019, [url](#), p. 14

<sup>38</sup> UNAMA, Protection of civilians in armed conflict, 2019, 22 February 2020, [url](#), p. 27

In October 2019, Tolonews indicated that the Taliban closed 29 government-sponsored *madrassas* in Logar province claiming that they were not in accordance to the Taliban principles. The closure of the *madrassas* impacted 2 600 students including 900 girls.<sup>39</sup>

During the first quarter of 2020, the Taliban carried out summary execution and deliberate attacks against education personnel in Afghanistan, according to UNAMA.<sup>40</sup>

Recent examples of targeting of education personnel and students by the Taliban include:

- On 9 June 2019, the Taliban reportedly stopped a car in the Qiyaq area of Jaghatu district in Ghazni province and abducted then killed a university student who was on his way to Kabul.<sup>41</sup>
- On 25 June 2019, during an ambush in the Porak area of Pol-e Alam City in Logar province, the Taliban reportedly killed two engineers of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, who were working on the construction of a school in the provincial capital.<sup>42</sup>
- On 11 September 2019, the Taliban killed Mullah Mohammad Agha, the owner of a *madrassa*, in the Bakhto-Tangi village of Shawalikot District of Kandahar province.<sup>43</sup>
- On 17 September 2019, the Taliban killed three brothers in Pasaband district of Ghor province – one was the village manager, another one a teacher, and the last one a student. The AGEs suspected them of having connection with the government.<sup>44</sup>
- On 22 September 2019, a teacher was killed by the Taliban in the village of Barengi in Dulina district of Ghor province. The group had reportedly warned the teachers and other government employees to ‘leave their jobs or be killed’.<sup>45</sup>
- On 2 November 2019, nine [school] children aged between 8 and 11 were killed by a roadside bomb allegedly planted by the Taliban in the area under their control in Darqad district in Takhar province.<sup>46</sup>
- On 6 March 2020, the Taliban abducted then killed seven civilians, including a teacher, in Kushk district of Herat province.<sup>47</sup>
- On 13 March 2020, the Taliban intentionally targeted and killed a teacher in Khogyani district of Nangarhar province.<sup>48</sup>

### 3. Women in education (2018-2020)

According to Afghanistan NSIA, in 2018, there were 64 533 female teachers, and 3.4 million female students in Afghanistan.<sup>49</sup> In September 2019, the United States Agency for International

<sup>39</sup> Tolonews, Taliban close 29 government sponsored *Madrassas* in Logar, 17 October 2019, [url](#)

<sup>40</sup> UNAMA, Protection of civilians in armed conflict, first quarter report: 1 January – 31 March 2020, [url](#), p. 4 - 5

<sup>41</sup> NYT, Afghan War Casualty Report: June 7-13, 13 June 2019, [url](#)

<sup>42</sup> NYT, Afghan War Casualty Report: June 21-27, 27 June 2019, [url](#)

<sup>43</sup> NYT, Afghan War Casualty Report: September 2019, 26 September 2019, [url](#)

<sup>44</sup> NYT, Afghan War Casualty Report: September 2019, 26 September 2019, [url](#)

<sup>45</sup> NYT, Afghan War Casualty Report: September 2019, 26 September 2019, [url](#)

<sup>46</sup> Al Jazeera, nine children killed in land mine blast in Afghanistan, 2 November 2019, [url](#)

<sup>47</sup> UNAMA, Protection of civilians in armed conflict, first quarter report: 1 January – 31 March 2020, [url](#), pp. 4 - 5

<sup>48</sup> UNAMA, Protection of civilians in armed conflict, first quarter report: 1 January – 31 March 2020, [url](#), p. 4

<sup>49</sup> Afghanistan, NSIA, Number of Government General Education, Technical & Vocational and Islamic Schools, Students and Teachers by Sex 2002 - 2018, n.d., [url](#); Afghanistan,, NSIA، تعداد مکاتب، شاگردان و استادان مکاتب تعلیمات عمومی، تختنگی مسلکی و دینی [informal translation : 'number of schools, general education students and teachers, 1397 – 1381 - جنس - دولی به تفکیک' ]

Development (USAID) indicated that there were 3.5 million girls (children) enrolled in schools in Afghanistan.<sup>50</sup>

In February 2020, UNAMA indicated that girls [in Afghanistan] were deprived from schools due to violence and insecurity.<sup>51</sup>

In 2019, the New York Times cited Matiullah Wesa, an activist who conducted a study throughout Afghanistan on children's deprivation from education. He stated that in the past 18 years, no female student had been graduated from [school] in almost 150 districts out of 400 districts of Afghanistan.<sup>52</sup> In June 2020, HRW indicated that in some of the districts of Helmand province, mainly under the Taliban control, there were no functioning primary schools for girls.<sup>53</sup>

In a 2020 report, Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) reported that schools remained one of the areas in Afghanistan where violence against women continued to take place.<sup>54</sup>

As of June 2020, there were more schools for boys than for girls in Afghanistan.<sup>55</sup> Attacks on schools dissuaded parents to send their daughters to school<sup>56</sup> and enticed them to give priority to their sons' education.<sup>57</sup> HRW added that in Afghanistan, women and girls with disabilities also faced difficulties to access education.<sup>58</sup>

As stated by the director of education of Logar province in an AAN article, in 2018, 40 000 girls did not have access to education in the province.<sup>59</sup> Amnesty International indicated that in Nangarhar province, women lacked opportunities to access education in particular in remote areas, while in Khost province, girls went to school until grade six before being married or told to stay at home. In Faryab province, girls suffered from illiteracy.<sup>60</sup>

According to the United States Department of States (USDOS), in 2019, Afghan girls faced significant barriers in access to education, among which 'poverty, early and forced marriage, insecurity, a lack of family support, lack of female teachers [in particular in rural areas<sup>61</sup>], and a lack of nearby schools'.<sup>62</sup>

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vocational and state Islamic schools by sex 2002 - 2018], n.d., [url](#); SIGAR, Reintegration of ex-combatants: lessons from the U.S. experience in Afghanistan, 17 September 2019, [url](#), p. 84

<sup>50</sup> USAID, Afghanistan, education, 10 September 2019, [url](#)

<sup>51</sup> UNAMA, Protection of civilians in armed conflict, 2019, 22 February 2020, [url](#), p. 27

<sup>52</sup> NYT, Homes lost and lives trampled, rural Afghans urgently want peace, 5 March 2019, [url](#)

<sup>53</sup> HRW, You have no right to complain, education, social restrictions, and justice in Taliban-held Afghanistan, 30 June 2020, [url](#)

<sup>54</sup> Afghanistan, AIHRC, Summary report on violence against women, 23 March 2020, [url](#)

<sup>55</sup> HRW, School closures hurt even more in Afghanistan, 18 June 2020, [url](#)

<sup>56</sup> UNAMA, Protection of civilians in armed conflict, 2019, 22 February 2020, [url](#), p. 29

<sup>57</sup> The Washington Post, A young Afghan pledged to better his country. Then he was shot dead., 9 September 2019, [url](#)

<sup>58</sup> HRW, 'Disability is not a weakness', discriminations and barriers facing women and girls with disabilities in Afghanistan, 28 April 2020, [url](#)

<sup>59</sup> AAN, A threat a Kabul's Southern gate: a security view of Logar province, 18 July 2020, [url](#)

<sup>60</sup> AI, Meet 16 brave women human rights defenders from Afghanistan, 25 November 2019, [url](#)

<sup>61</sup> ActAlliance, A new threat facing Afghanistan education: Covid-19, 30 April 2020, [url](#)

<sup>62</sup> USDOS, Country report on human rights practices for 2019, Afghanistan, 10 March 2020, [url](#), P. 35



Pajhwok cited the Canadian Embassy in Afghanistan that expressed its concern on gender-based violence in homes, schools and communities in Afghanistan.<sup>63</sup>

AIHRC added that the Islamic State of Khorasan Province (ISKP) and the Taliban continued to carry out attacks against girls' schools.<sup>64</sup> UNAMA indicated that on 3 June 2018, ISKP announced, via a radio communication, its aim to target schools, particularly girls' schools.<sup>65</sup>

In March 2020, Human Rights Watch reported that the Taliban continued violent attacks against girls' schools – and remained profoundly opposed to gender equality.<sup>66</sup> According to USIP and AAN, when the Taliban took control of an area, they prohibited girls over the age of 12 (sixth grade) to go to school. However, in Obe district of Herat province, local elders made an agreement with the Taliban that girls would be permitted to study until high school as long as the teachers were women.<sup>67</sup> HRW cited Taliban officials stating that the guards and cleaners [of schools] should be female personnel. The source also indicated that in Jalrez district of Wardak province, the Taliban imposed *hijab* (veil) on schoolgirls.<sup>68</sup>

According to Spiegel International, there has been contradiction in the behaviour of Taliban towards girls' education (see also section [2. Position of the Taliban towards education](#)). For instance, in Badikhel village of Khost province, some Taliban fighters send their female family members to a private school – while others have threatened the owner and teacher of this very same school.<sup>69</sup> In May 2020, Foreign Policy stated that in western Afghanistan, some Taliban 'cautiously' permitted girls' schools.<sup>70</sup> In June 2020, Human Rights Watch (HRW) indicated that despite the Taliban official statement indicating that they would not oppose girls' education anymore, very few Taliban actually allow girls to attend schools after their puberty, and others do not allow girls' schools at all.<sup>71</sup>

A local university student in Sangin district [Helmand province], quoted by HRW, stated:

'I thought that they [Taliban] would beat me up. They said whoever sends their women to school and education actually do not care about their women's honor and is [an] apostate. They said that schools should be targeted.'<sup>72</sup>

During the reporting period, incidents with impact on female students included:

<sup>63</sup> Pajhwok, Drive launched to end gender-based violence, 25 November 2019, [url](#)

<sup>64</sup> Afghanistan, AIHRC, Statement by Dr. Sima Samar; chairperson of the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC), 19 June 2019, [url](#)

<sup>65</sup> UNAMA, Protection of civilians in armed conflict annual report 2018, 23 February 2019, [url](#), pp. 14 - 15

<sup>66</sup> HRW, A crucial moment for women's rights in Afghanistan, 5 March 2020, [url](#)

<sup>67</sup> USIP, Service delivery in Taliban-influenced areas of Afghanistan, 30 April 2020, [url](#), p. 9; AAN, One Land, Two Rules (11): Delivering public services in insurgency-affected districts – a synthesis report, [url](#)

<sup>68</sup> HRW, You have no right to complain, education, social restrictions, and justice in Taliban-held Afghanistan, 30 June 2020, [url](#)

<sup>69</sup> Spiegel International, A school for girls that even the Taliban accepted 14 July 2020, [url](#)

<sup>70</sup> Foreign Policy, In rural Afghanistan, some Taliban gingerly welcome girls schools, 4 May 2020, [url](#)

<sup>71</sup> HRW, You have no right to complain, education, social restrictions, and justice in Taliban-held Afghanistan, 30 June 2020, [url](#)

<sup>72</sup> HRW, You have no right to complain, education, social restrictions, and justice in Taliban-held Afghanistan, 30 June 2020, [url](#)

- On 2 February 2018, Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR) indicated that female students were reportedly sexually harassed in Nangarhar university.<sup>73</sup>
- On 20 August 2019, Taliban were blamed by the Afghan government for burning a girls' school in Shakar Dara district of Kabul province. The group rejected this claim.<sup>74</sup>
- In December 2019, a ten-year-old female student was reportedly raped in a *madrassa* in Qala-i Naw district of Badghis province.<sup>75</sup> According to the head of women's affairs department in Badghis province, during the previous months, 'another eight incidents of sexual abuse against women have been registered' in the province.<sup>76</sup>
- On 5 February 2020, Salaam Times reported that Taliban burned Bodala girls' middle school, which is located 5 km away from Taloqan, the capital of Takhar province. 292 girls used to attend this school before the incident.<sup>77</sup>
- On 20 July 2020, a school principal was reportedly killed by unknown gunmen in Nehran district of Baghlan province.<sup>78</sup>

#### 4. Treatment of education personnel by AGEs (2018-2020)

In 2019, UNAMA documented 29 incidents in which Anti-Government Elements (AGEs) deliberately attacked schools and education personnel, including burning of schools, abduction of teachers, forced closure of schools and direct attacks against students and education personnel.<sup>79</sup>

Recent security incidents with impact on education personnel include:

- On 1 July 2018, armed men attacked the Malikyar Hotk school in Nangarhar province, burned it and cut the throat of three school employees.<sup>80</sup>
- On 16 August 2018, 34 civilians, including students, were killed after an alleged ISKP suicide bomber detonated explosives in front of an education centre in the Shia residential area of Dasht-e Barchi in Kabul City.<sup>81</sup>
- On 2 June 2019, one child, working as a street vendor, was killed and ten other civilians were wounded when an explosive attached to a student's shuttle bus exploded in Khoshhal Khan area of Kabul City. In two additional bomb explosions that took place in the same area, one civilian was killed, and fourteen others were wounded including two journalists who went to cover the first explosion.<sup>82</sup>

<sup>73</sup> IWPR, Afghan women highlight campus harassment, 2 February 2018, [url](#)

<sup>74</sup> Khaama Press, Taliban blamed for setting the girls school on fire in Kabul, 20 August 2019, [url](#); Kabul Now, unknown men set girls school on fire in Kabul, 20 August 2019, [url](#); 1 TV News, Militants torch girls school in Kabul, 20 August 2019, [url](#)

<sup>75</sup> Tolonews, 10-year-old girl raped in Badghis *madrassa*: local officials, 26 December 2019, [url](#); Pajhwok, Top security officials summoned over Qarabagh insecurity, 28 December 2019, [url](#)

<sup>76</sup> Tolonews, 10-year-old girl raped in Badghis *madrassa*: local officials, 26 December 2019, [url](#)

<sup>77</sup> Salaam Times, Taliban torch school in Takhar, continue campaign against girls' education, 5 February 2020, [url](#)

<sup>78</sup> Pajhwok, School principal found dead at home in Baghlan, 20 July 2020, [url](#)

<sup>79</sup> UNAMA, Protection of civilians in armed conflict, 2019, 22 February 2020, [url](#), p. 27

<sup>80</sup> NRC, Armed men cut the throats of three school employees, 16 August 2018, [url](#)

<sup>81</sup> Al Jazeera, Afghanistan: ISIL suicide bomber targets school in Kabul, 16 August 2018, [url](#)

<sup>82</sup> NYT, Afghan War Casualty Report: May 31-June 6, 6 June 2019, [url](#)



- On 23 June 2019, security guards of Gulran district governor (Herat province) reportedly killed one civilian and wounded two others after that they fired at a group of people protesting against the beating of two madrasa students by the governor's guards.<sup>83</sup>
- On 23 July 2019, a high school teacher was killed, and two other civilians were wounded after a rocket fired from an Afghan helicopter struck a shop in the Joy-e Ganj area of Bala Murghab district in Badghis province.<sup>84</sup>
- On 8 October 2019, 23 students were wounded after a bomb was detonated in the faculty of literature of Ghazni university, located in PD3 of Ghazni City.<sup>85</sup>
- On 18 October 2019, a suicide bomber killed at least 73 civilians including two teachers and the only doctor of Jowdara village in Nangarhar province.<sup>86</sup>
- On 28 October 2019, a blast killed two school employees and wounded five others in front of a newly constructed school in the Metran area of the Kot District of Nangarhar province.<sup>87</sup>
- On 3 November 2019, a head teacher of a school, two of his young sons and one of his relatives were killed by gunmen in the Kilagai area of Doshi District in Baghlan province.<sup>88</sup>
- On 18 June 2020, nine students were killed, and six others were injured after a mortar shell exploded in the yard of a *madrassa* in Shar-e Kohna area of Ishkamish district of Takhar province.<sup>89</sup>

For information on Taliban attacks on education personnel, see section [2. Position of the Taliban towards education.](#)

<sup>83</sup> NYT, Afghan War Casualty Report: June 21-27, 27 June 2019, [url](#)

<sup>84</sup> NYT, Afghan War Casualty Report: July 19-25, 25 July 2019, [url](#)

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<sup>87</sup> Pajhwok, two killed, five injured in Nangarhar explosion, 28 October 2019, [url](#)

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