



COUNTRY BRIEFING: PAKISTAN



LNGB

2 projects

40,500 target beneficiaries¹

The Girls' Education Challenge (GEC) has two Leave No Girl Behind (LNGB) projects operating in Sindh and Balochistan.

In the provinces of Sindh and Balochistan, school enrolment rates are low, especially for girls from poor households: in Sindh, 52% of the poorest children (58% girls) are out of school, and in Balochistan, 78% of girls are out of school.²

Both GEC projects are designed to provide learning opportunities to adolescent girls who have never been to school or dropped out before they completed primary education. They offer accelerated learning programmes to help younger girls (10-14 year olds) catch up and transition into formal education where possible, and programmes for older girls (15 years and older) to gain literacy and numeracy skills. Both projects include technical and vocational education and training (TVET) for older girls interested in gaining skills that will help them generate an income.

Project implementation started in early 2020 but paused when the government of Pakistan closed schools in March and introduced restrictions to reduce the impact of COVID-19. Between March and September 2020, the projects focused their efforts on maintaining contact with the communities they were planning to work with, providing information about COVID-19, and setting up safeguarding systems and reporting mechanisms. **ACTED** had enrolled 573 girls before schools closed and they continued to provide support to girls via phone calls and through the distribution of worksheets and assignments. Operations resumed rapidly in September 2020 when restrictions were lifted and schools re-opened, with projects supporting over 7,500 girls through their COVID-19 response activities.

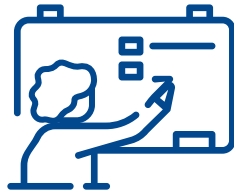
PROJECT NAME	WINDOW	LEAD PARTNER	PROJECT START DATE	PROJECT CLOSE DATE
TEACH	LNGB	International Rescue Committee	1 February 2019	31 January 2022
Closing the Gap	LNGB	ACTED	10 December 2018	30 November 2022



¹ Number subject to adjustment following identification of beneficiaries
² <https://www.unicef.org/pakistan/education>

Project data is based on reporting from May to October 2020

Since beginning implementation in March 2020, projects in Pakistan have reported the following achievements up to November 2020³:



239

teachers trained



668

textbooks distributed

Non-formal education centres established in

318

locations in Sindh and Balochistan provinces with almost

8000

girls enrolled



66,211

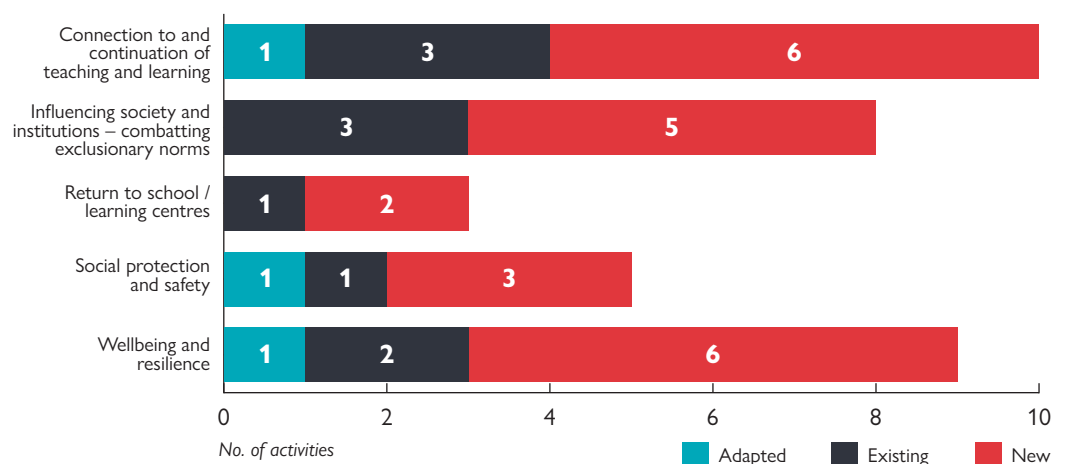
learning packs distributed

Recent highlights and achievements

Projects in Pakistan adapted their activities between March and September 2020 to best meet the needs of the beneficiary girls. *Figure 1* outlines the types of activities projects have implemented and indicates the proportion of these that are existing, adapted from existing activities or completely new.

Both projects have put in place safeguarding protocols and procedures specifically to ensure that their COVID-19 responses are safe for girls, other beneficiaries and staff members. Safety, as well as learning, continues to be a top priority for all GEC projects.*

Figure 1: COVID-19 Response activities in Pakistan⁴



Challenges

Delays to implementation for both projects have reduced the amount of time projects have to reach the targeted number of girls and to improve their learning outcomes. They are now working at pace to catch up, with support from the Fund Manager.

Both projects operate in partnership with local organisations who know the area and communities well, but the operating environment remains challenging. Settlements in Balochistan in particular are often remote and hard to reach, and in both provinces, communities tend to have conservative attitudes towards gender norms, including education for girls and women.

* Please see the safeguarding section on the COVID-19 page of the GEC website for materials and guidance provided to projects: <https://girlseducationchallenge.org/#/article/covid-19-response>. The GEC expects our projects to be compliant with our 14 minimum standards on safeguarding.

³ The first phase of the GEC ran from 2012-2017 and provided quality education for over a million marginalised girls, but was not operational in Pakistan. The GEC is now in its second phase (2017-2025), with up to 41 projects in 17 countries. The second phase is enabling existing GEC beneficiary girls to complete primary school and transition to secondary education, technical vocational training or employment. Within the second phase, a second cohort of girls are also being supported through the Leave No Girl Behind funding window, which consists of interventions for highly marginalised, adolescent girls who are out of school. LNGB projects in Pakistan were not approved until 2019, due to institutional and legal risk related issues.

⁴ Projects began implementing the COVID-19 response activities in March 2020 and will continue or be adapted in accordance with the evolving COVID-19 situation in each context and in agreement with the FM.

Coordination and collaboration

Both projects have worked closely with the Non-Formal Education (NFE) departments in their provinces. Both projects are engaged in a network of Pakistani NGOs who know the context and operating environment well and collaborate with other UK Aid supported partners in Sindh and Punjab. **IRC TEACH** have actively engaged with the Non-formal Basic Education Department (NFBE) to ensure timely procurement of textbooks for learners. **IRC TEACH** is also an active member of the Technical Working Group for Non-formal Education, led by a designated senior official of Government of Balochistan. **ACTED** works closely with the NFE Department in Sindh and with other NFE providers in the province. They have engaged with various government bodies and national technical working groups in the wake of the COVID-19 crisis including the Child Protection group chaired by UNICEF.

Priorities from January 2021

- Both projects will scale up activities to reach more beneficiary girls (20,000 girls to be reached by **IRC**; 2,800 girls to be reached by **ACTED**)
- **IRC TEACH** will produce and broadcast 48 radio programmes designed to help girls in Balochistan develop literacy, numeracy and life skills.
- **ACTED** will complete a pilot of supplementary digital content and, based on the outcome, begin to scale up the use of digital content in all their NFE centres
- Both projects will further strengthen their systems for professional development for teachers to ensure quality learning opportunities for girls.
- **ACTED** are aiming to expand their programme to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province.



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