

PROMOTING ACCESS TO QUALITY EDUCATION

GCR Paragraphs 68. 69



[Because] they don't have access to education, they don't have a place where they can learn, there are big risks of minor marriages in the community (Female refugee, Fieldwork Consultations, July 2019).

Key Challenge: A mechanism to ensure that AGD, Women and Girls and addressing SGBV are reflected in the Education Co-Sponsorship Group and Pledges

Barriers to education and the impacts of lack of access to education experienced by girls and women which could be addressed by Pledges include:

- Sexual abuse by male teachers and students, including being asked to trade sex for scholastic materials and good grades
- Lack of separate toilet facilities in schools
- Danger of sexual harassment for girls travelling to and from school
- Lack of sanitary materials
- Being forced to work to support the family because of insufficient food and non-food items
- Male preference
- Lack of access to education also contributes to early marriage and a cycle of disadvantage and violence for young wives and their children
- Lack of support for refugees who want to be teachers
- Women's and girls' lower access to education, both as refugees and as women, further entrenches gender inequality and their lack of opportunities to make decisions for their own lives, and in leadership roles in their communities.

Pledges which could be made include:

That access to education for girls be funded as a key protection measure to reduce risks of SGBV and strategy to reduce the incidence of early and forced marriage.

That safe, free childcare be made available to enable young and underage mothers to continue their education.

That policies be amended and specific provisions funded to support refugee girls and women to have access to quality educational opportunities at all levels from pre-school through to university.

That all girls and women of reproductive age receive adequate menstrual hygiene management (MHM) materials and supplies, benefit from supportive infrastructure (e.g. female friendly sanitation facilities) and appropriate MHM information and education (e.g. menstrual health education, including for men and boys).

That specific measures be taken, training provided and monitoring take place to minimise the sexual abuse of female students by teachers and students.

That systems are put in place to ensure safe passage for women and girls when travelling to and from school and educational opportunities.

That any programs targeting the provision of education to women and girls address barriers previously experienced by them.

A detailed Gender audit report of the 2nd Preparatory meeting with further recommendations for Pledges is available at <https://www.unhcr.org/en-au/resources-5cc1a4e94.html>

Progress reports on the field consultations undertaken as part of the Refugee Women and Girls Key to the Global Compact on Refugees Project, led by UNSW, in Bangladesh, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand and Australia will be available from October 2019 at <https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/our-research/research-centres-networks/forced-migration-research-network/projects/refugee-women-and>

Prepared by Adjunct Professor Eileen Pittaway and Dr Linda Bartolomei, Apajok Biar, University of New South Wales (UNSW), Sydney for the Gender Audit Team.

Email: e.pittaway@unsw.edu.au and linda.bartolomei@unsw.edu.au