

# PAKISTAN

## *Peacebuilding, Education and Advocacy in Conflict-Affected Contexts Programme*

This report<sup>1</sup> summarizes findings from an analysis undertaken as part of the UNICEF Peacebuilding, Education and Advocacy Programme (PBEA) funded by the Government of the Netherlands. The purpose of the analysis was three-fold: to identify factors affecting social cohesion in Pakistan; better understand the underlying causes of tensions and how they develop; and their intersection with education in order to identify priority areas for education programming.

### Methodology

Considering the fluid nature of the context in Pakistan, this study aims to provide a 'snapshot' analysis of factors impacting on social cohesion and resilience in the country. In order to analyse the underlying dynamics, this study employed qualitative research methods and included a literature review. Primary data collection was undertaken through: consultative workshops, focus group discussions, and individual in-depth interviews with a wide range of stakeholders, including educators, children (both in and out-of-school), civil society members, political leaders and religious representatives.

Primary data was collected in six regions<sup>2</sup>: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), Gilgit-Baltistan, Balochistan, Punjab and Sindh. Respondents were invited to frame their own understanding of social cohesion and explore dividers and connectors related to social, political, and economic dynamics. The selection of participants was purposive to ensure socio-economic diversity in representation among men,

The PBEA programme, 2012-2016, seeks to build peaceful societies by strengthening the role of education in peacebuilding and integrating it within the education system.



<sup>1</sup> The conflict analysis in Pakistan was conducted by the Centre for Research and Security Studies (CRSS). The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Kingdom of the Government of the Netherlands do not guarantee or warrant its accuracy, reliability, or completeness. The views and opinions expressed here are not necessarily those held by UNICEF or the Government of the Netherlands.

<sup>2</sup> Details on the predominantly transnational conflict in the Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJ&K) region is beyond the scope of this study.

women, boys, and girls across the regions. However, in hard-to-reach and conservative regions such as FATA, the respondents were predominantly male, which is a limitation of the assessment. Data was reviewed and analyzed to ascertain underlying causes and manifestations of social cohesion and conflict. However causes of social tension are not strictly a 'root' or 'proximate' driver, therefore dividers and connectors are recognized as playing a key role in either creating and/or perpetuating a social division.

## Context

Pakistan's estimated population of more than 184 million<sup>3</sup> is presented with significant socio-economic challenges and key opportunities. Pakistan has a unique socio-cultural composition with diverse ethnic groups, two national and tens of regional languages, and more than half a dozen religions practiced alongside the predominance of Islam, spread across five provinces and three administered regions. Fast-changing demographics include: two-thirds of Pakistan's current population is under 30 years of age, with under-24-year-olds expected as the majority by 2030;<sup>4</sup> and a 37 percent urban population estimated to soar to more than 50 per cent by 2020.<sup>5</sup> Additionally, Pakistan hosts the largest protracted refugee population in the world, with 1.5 million registered Afghan refugees and no official figures on the unregistered refugee population.<sup>6</sup>

Pakistan faces economic and social challenges that have been compounded by disasters. Notably, economic growth rose above four per cent in 2013 and 2014, however a sharp decline in 2006 to a low of 1.6 per cent in 2010, coupled with stagnant population growth has put significant strain on social services and resources.<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, ongoing insecurity and violence, particularly in Balochistan, KP and FATA, protracted tensions with neighbouring India, and the conflict in Afghanistan, as well as five massive floods and multiple earthquakes since 2005, have negatively impacted potential development gains. Consequently, instability and natural disasters have contributed to more than half of the population, 49.4 per cent, living in multi-dimensional poverty.<sup>8</sup>

The situation of social services, including the education sector, is evolving as concerning indicators are met by significant efforts to support the sector. Two policy developments in recent years have sought to strengthen the education sector in Pakistan: the devolution of social sector ministries to the provinces, and the enactment of Article 25A of the Constitution for the State to provide free and compulsory education. Education indicators reveal the challenges ahead: at least 6.1 million primary-age children out-of-school (58 per cent girls)<sup>9</sup> and a national literacy rate of 56 per cent, with significant gender and urban/rural disparities.<sup>10</sup> Education is affected by the changing nature of conflict. While data constraints make it difficult to provide a comprehensive representation of education in conflict- and emergency-affected areas, it is

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<sup>3</sup> National Institute of Population Studies, [www.nips.org.pk/Home.htm](http://www.nips.org.pk/Home.htm), accessed December 2015.

<sup>4</sup> Elizabeth Leahy, Robert Engelman, Carolyn Gibb Vogel, Sarah Haddock and Tod Preston (2012). *The Shape of Things to Come: Why Age Structure Matters To a Safer, More Equitable World*. Population Action International. <http://pai.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/SOTC.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> Michael Kuhelman and Robert M. Hathaway (2011). *Reaping the Dividend: Overcoming Pakistan's Demographic Challenges*. Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. [www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/ReapingtheDividendFINAL.pdf](http://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/ReapingtheDividendFINAL.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> UNHCR, *Country Operations Profile – Pakistan*, [www.unhcr.org/pages/49e487016.html](http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49e487016.html), accessed December 2015.

<sup>7</sup> World Bank, *GDP Growth (Annual %)*, <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.KD.ZG/countries/PK?display=default> and *Population Growth (Annual %)*, <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.GROW?page=2>, accessed December 2015.

<sup>8</sup> Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (2013): *Country briefing Pakistan*, accessed December 2015. [www.ophi.org.uk/multidimensional-poverty-index/mpi-2015/mpi-country-briefings/](http://www.ophi.org.uk/multidimensional-poverty-index/mpi-2015/mpi-country-briefings/)

<sup>9</sup> Government of Pakistan (2015), *Annual Progress Report (2013-14) on Implementation of National Plan of Action to Accelerate Education-Related MDGs (2013-16)*, [www.aepam.edu.pk/Files/Publications/NPA\\_Progress\\_2013-14.pdf](http://www.aepam.edu.pk/Files/Publications/NPA_Progress_2013-14.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> UNESCO (2015), *Education for All 2015 National Review Report: Pakistan*. Islamabad: UNESCO <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002297/229718E.pdf>

noted that children from affected families are likely to miss multiple years of education. Furthermore, targeted attacks on teachers and schools – especially girls’ schools – as well as the prevalence of ghost schools and unregistered madrassas, put constraints on access, retention, and quality in education.

### Underlying causes and dynamics of conflict

Despite the multitude of layers and interconnected causes of conflict, as well as greatly varying regional dynamics, this analysis was able to highlight some of the broad patterns in the national context. In addition, regional specificities are highlighted below.

#### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**Poverty and Inequality:** Poverty is a multidimensional phenomenon where families have limited access to multiple basic social services, impacting on their physical and psychological wellbeing and causing tensions between those who have and those who have not. Poverty has been highlighted as a key conflict driver, but is often ignited or fuelled by economic inequality. Social tensions are further exacerbated by the strain on resources caused by man-made and natural disasters, urban migration, and displacement. A gender analysis underlines that women are disproportionately affected by poverty and inequality. Women are subjected to the double burden of housework and reproductive responsibility, often in exploitative conditions, but only account for 28 per cent of the labour force<sup>11</sup>.

#### SOCIAL ISSUES

**Religion:** Religious divides have resulted in conflict and violence throughout the country. Particularly large-scale sectarian attacks have taken place in Balochistan, Gilgit-Baltistan and KP. Religious minorities are also targeted through violence and discrimination, and are often unfairly subjected to blasphemy laws.<sup>12</sup> Religion is often more heavily indoctrinated in the poorest households where access to education is also most limited. Despite religion being identified as a key conflict driver, it was also noted as a promoter of peace, unity, and social cohesion, and a channel for instilling values of tolerance and respect through religious education. Many madrassas are positive forces in their communities but they have also been linked, or seen to be connected to, promoting extremism.

**Cultural communal divisions:** Although there are many areas where there is peaceful co-existence, every province has shown that ethnicity is a conflict driver leading to violent conflict, with language, tribal, and clan alliances, as well as feudalism adding further layers of dividing lines that can lead to conflict within and between communal groups. These divides persist and impede the development of national unity, which is further hindered by ethno-politics within and across regions.

**Youth alienation:** For young Pakistanis, conflict, displacement, and violence are part of everyday life; thus, instability and insecurity become an inescapable part of their adulthood. Accounting for 30 percent of the overall population, Pakistan’s youth bulge can either be an asset or a liability depending on how well they are integrated into society. Despite overwhelming numbers, youth in Pakistan struggle to find employment and lack representation in community associations and political parties. Many are disenfranchised, live in insecure

<sup>11</sup> Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (2013), *State of Human Rights in 2013*, accessed December 2015. [www.hrcp-web.org/hrcpweb/report14/AR2013.pdf](http://www.hrcp-web.org/hrcpweb/report14/AR2013.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> Ibid. 30 of the 41 individuals charged under Pakistan’s blasphemy laws in 2013 were from minority religions, nine were Muslim, and two were unknown.

environments, and experience high levels of exclusion, which makes them vulnerable to militancy and extremist ideology.

## SECURITY AND JUSTICE

**Justice:** Both formal and informal systems of justice face criticism from the population. The formal justice system remains distant, difficult, and expensive for many citizens, which lead to many preferring informal justice mechanisms, such as *jirgas* and *panchayats*. The latter are often more efficient and accessible but are also perceived as corrupt and easily exploited by local elites, promoting violence, and furthering social -especially tribal- divides

**Militancy:** Pakistan continues to confront armed insurgent and terrorist groups that operate primarily in KP and FATA, but whose influence radiates into urban centres as well. Patronage of some of these groups is another factor that complicates the security situation and makes it more volatile. An armed nationalist movement, involving multiple factions and militant and political actors, also operates in Balochistan. The Government of Pakistan has taken concrete steps towards tackling terrorist and militant activities through the development and implementation of the National Plan of Action, which received support across Federal and Provincial Governments.

## POLITICS AND GOVERNANCE

**Political participation and feudalism:** Democratic gains have been made in recent years, as evidenced by a democratic transition of government and high voter turnout in 2013, but challenges remain for inclusive political participation, such as low literacy rates and youth disenfranchisement.<sup>13</sup> Feudalism, kinship politics, and patronage feature in the political landscape, which perpetuate economic and social divisions and unequal access to services

**Governance:** Challenges in fully implementing policy developments, such as the devolution of the social sector by the 18th Amendment, and difficulties in the state responding to multiple crises and disasters are contributing to conflict dynamics. Limited human and financial capacity in public sector institutions, corruption, and heavy investments in defence have been at the expense of investments in social service provision, particularly for the poor.

**Military:** Pakistan has had four periods of military rule since 1947, which has impacted the growth of democratic systems over time. In June 2013, Pakistan completed the first historic transition from one elected government to another. This was an unprecedented break from a past that has seen the military play a much more visible role in politics. However, the military remains a prominent institution, dominating security and political affairs, especially in crisis-hit areas of Balochistan, KP, and FATA.

**Geo-politics:** External, particularly regional politics, also affect internal conflict dynamics. Since its creation in 1947, Pakistan has had a variable relationship with India, primarily driven by the Kashmir dispute. This has been a key factor for Pakistan's security-centric approach to regional dynamics and high military spending. Other geo-political factors such as the Taliban insurgency in Afghanistan and their recruitment of Pakistani militants, continue to contribute to instability, especially in the border regions of FATA and Balochistan.

<sup>13</sup> The Express Tribune, *Pakistan Elections 2013 Total Voter Turnout: 55%*, accessed May 2013. <http://tribune.com.pk/story/552368/pakistan-elections-2013-total-voter-turnout-55/>

## Conflict dynamics at the provincial level

While the conflict drivers described above are common throughout the country, it is equally important to understand variations at the sub-national level for tailored programmatic responses.

### Balochistan

Balochistan is a resource-rich province but continues to have some of the most worrisome social indicators in the country: 52 per cent of households are living in poverty<sup>14</sup> and Balochistan's NER is less than 50 per cent.<sup>15</sup> An ongoing nationalist insurgency, sectarian and ethnic violence, and tribal divisions are exacerbated by inadequate rule of law and a large Afghan refugee population that adds to the burden of social services. Extreme poverty and perceived external political dominance, particularly by *Punjabis*, has fuelled a nationalist movement, impeding the provision of social services. Insecurity is fuelled as the management of justice and the rule of law is highly dependent on tribal lords. Armed violence, disappearances, and kidnappings for ransom are common, and are interrelated to the need to sustain influence and power – whether nationalistic, tribal, ethnic etc. Religio-sectarian terrorism targeting ethnic minorities, particularly the predominantly Shia, Hazara ethnic group, has resulted in increasing social divides, marginalisation, and intolerance. With 33 per cent (nearly 580,000) out-of-school-children (OOSC)<sup>16</sup>, the education sector is affected by all of these conflict factors, resulting in low literacy rates, the closure of schools, attacks on teachers, and corruption.

### Sindh

Sindh is a culturally, socially, and economically diverse province, negatively associated with urban-rural disparities, unequal wealth, and intense struggles for political power, especially in Karachi, the largest city in Pakistan. The province also has the largest non-Muslim population in the country, particularly Hindus and Christians, many of whom face discrimination and marginalization. Ethnic tensions primarily play out through kinship and patronage, as well as linguistic divides between Pashtuns and Balochis and the Urdu-speaking Mohajirs who migrated from India during partition. These social tensions are further exacerbated by political parties that exploit ethno-political affiliations for their own advantage. Furthermore, various groups, including militant outfits from all over the country, are drawn to the economic opportunities in Karachi and are an ongoing source of conflict; with their political, cultural, religious, and criminal motivations for violence increasingly becoming blurred. Rural areas of Sindh have traditional tribal and feudal systems which often obstruct access to services, especially for girl's education. In recent years, natural disasters in rural Sindh have compounded tensions and resulted in displacement, the loss of livelihoods, and affected the delivery of social services including education.

### KP and the FATA

Although regional differences exist, the two regions carry contextual similarities and burdens. Both areas have been intensely affected by the conflict in Afghanistan and the 'War on Terror' including an influx of Afghan refugees. This added strains on already poor socio-economic conditions and strained social service provision, contribute to further marginalization and inequity. The site of a large terrorist attack on school-children that killed 145 people, KP faces Taliban militancy, tribal conflict, as well as sectarian violence. This violence causes, perpetuates, and gains from the cycle of poverty and limited education, as the recruitment of disillusioned youth and growth of extremist ideologies increases. Socio-cultural factors mean

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<sup>14</sup> Sustainable Development Policy Institute (2012), *Clustered Deprivation: District Profile of Poverty in Pakistan*, [sdpi.org/publications/files/Clustered%20Deprivation-district%20profile%20of%20poverty%20in%20pakistan.pdf](http://sdpi.org/publications/files/Clustered%20Deprivation-district%20profile%20of%20poverty%20in%20pakistan.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> UNESCO (2015), *Education for All 2015 National Review Report: Pakistan*. Islamabad: UNESCO

<sup>16</sup> Alif Ailaan. (2014). *25 Million Broken Promises: The Crisis of Pakistan's Out-of-School Children*. Islamabad: Alif Ailaan [www.alifailaan.pk/broken\\_promises](http://www.alifailaan.pk/broken_promises)

that women and girls suffer from gender-based violence in the form of acid attacks, honour killings, and inadequate access to services. In areas affected by Taliban violence, schools and education personnel – especially girls’ schools – have been attacked. Schools are taken over by militant groups and used for their own purposes. Similarly, during counter-insurgency operations, military forces have also utilized school buildings. As a result of these attacks, parents feel insecure about sending their children to school, especially girls. In addition to the 28 per cent of OOSC, 75 per cent of whom have never attended school, there is also a gender gap among those enrolled (61 per cent for boys and 39 per cent for girls)<sup>17</sup>.

## **Punjab**

Punjab is one of the most industrialized provinces, contributing to more than 60 per cent of the country’s gross domestic product. Poverty and inequality, discrimination of minorities, governance issues, and ethno-linguistic divides are cited as key conflict drivers in Punjab. Feudal and tribal systems, as well as parallel education systems, also perpetuate poverty, inequitable access, and social divides. Strains on economic development and unemployment, often exacerbated by natural disasters, are seen as major causes of social tension in the poorest southern districts; while a growing disconnect and socio-economic inequality between northern and southern Punjab is also being observed. Religious discrimination is prevalent and violence faced by women in Punjab has also recently drawn attention.<sup>18</sup> Furthermore, a lack of action against militant networks and perpetrators of sectarian violence has fuelled insecurity.<sup>19</sup> With regards to education, there is a 60 per cent overall literacy rate, though men and those in urban areas are considerably more likely to be literate. Furthermore, more than half of the country’s out-of-school children live in Punjab; and non-functional, ‘ghost’ schools, and teacher absenteeism<sup>20</sup> are prevalent education issues too.

## **Gilgit-Baltistan (GB)**

The northernmost political entity in Pakistan, GB is culturally diverse with eight major ethnic groups and four major Muslim sects; and notably, the only Shia majority political unit in Pakistan in an otherwise predominantly Sunni Muslim country. Until 2009, the constitutional status of GB was unclear, and the ongoing Kashmir dispute (a border to GB), hindered the development of a political culture. This, combined with perceived federal neglect and lack of political representation in national government, has resulted in social divisions and economic inequalities, which largely manifest in sectarian violence.<sup>21</sup> Although sectarian tensions between Sunnis and Shias have been on the rise since 1973, they did not escalate to armed conflict until May 1988, when a Shia insurgency demanding wider rights for the people broke out<sup>22</sup>. Sectarian tensions also flared after the introduction of school textbooks between 2000 and 2005 that allegedly promoted Sunni practices<sup>23</sup>, and subsequently following the autonomy granted to the region by the 2009 self-governance reforms. Studies indicate that the influence of the Taliban has also contributed significantly to preexisting sectarian schisms, exacerbating the security environment<sup>24</sup>.

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<sup>17</sup> Alif Ailaan (2014). *25 Million Broken Promises: The Crisis of Pakistan’s Out-of-School Children*.

<sup>18</sup> Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, *State of Human Rights in 2014, 2015*, accessed December 2015. [www.hrcp-web.org/hrcpweb/report14/AR2013.pdf](http://www.hrcp-web.org/hrcpweb/report14/AR2013.pdf)

<sup>19</sup> Yamin, S and Malik, S (2014). *Mapping Conflict Trends in Pakistan*. United States Institute of Peace.

<sup>20</sup> Alif Ailaan (2014). *25 Million Broken Promises: The Crisis of Pakistan’s Out-of-School Children*.

<sup>21</sup> Youth Parliament Pakistan (2012). *Committee on Interior Affairs, GB, FATA & AJK: Sectarian Killings in Gilgit Baltistan*. Islamabad: Youth Parliament Pakistan.

<sup>22</sup> Yamin, S and Malik, S (2014). *Mapping Conflict Trends in Pakistan*.

<sup>23</sup> Youth Parliament Pakistan (2012). *Ibid*.

<sup>24</sup> Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency (2011). “*Sectarian Conflict in Gilgit Baltistan*”. Islamabad: PILDAT.

## The role of education in peacebuilding

Education, in and out of the classroom, interlaces society and consequently plays a key role as a social divider and connector. Education can be a powerful vehicle for peacebuilding and social cohesion; and yet, it can also be the channel through which grievances and conflicts are fuelled. Key education challenges were common across regions: a failure to implement the present curriculum with appropriate materials and teaching methodologies; disparate parallel education systems; and inadequate and unequal access to education, especially in conflict-prone areas. In this context, education needs to serve as a transformative institution that has the potential to play a positive role in mitigating conflict and promoting social cohesion and resilience.

**Curriculum and textbooks:** Teaching materials and methods that are relevant, non-discriminatory and representative can promote social cohesion and inclusiveness. The introduction of an education curriculum in 2002 was seen by some as promoting the beliefs of the majority whilst marginalizing minorities, and caused deep resentment, heightening tensions among various groups and regions. The curriculum was suitably revised in 2006 and 2009 but slow implementation due to outdated textbooks and teaching methods, as well as a greatly varied curriculum used in madrassas, continues to perpetuate education with factual errors and discriminatory material and methods, contributing to intolerance and communal divides.<sup>25</sup> Despite concerns of religious extremism, many view the uniting quality of religious education in the curriculum as a potential connector. Involving mosques and religious leaders in peacebuilding and curriculum development is necessary and desirable.

**Parallel education systems:** Disharmony is caused by divides that exist between public and private schools, and madrassas. Inequality and socio-economic divisions are reinforced by different educational institutions, adding to the tensions associated with poverty and resources. Recent studies show that the divide in quality between private and public education is getting wider. This disparity in quality of education and its implications on the future prospects of children is widening inequities and could be contributing to education as a divider.<sup>26</sup> Additionally, distrust among these disparate systems is evident; there is often suspicion surrounding different institutions, such as a view in the promotion of a 'liberal' agenda in one institution or that of religious fundamentalism in madrassas. Regulation of education systems, streamlining what is taught in classrooms, and oversight by relevant authorities is necessary to ensure that these parallel systems come together to play a positive role in society.

**Access:** Inadequate access to education across all economic and social strata fuels discontent and perpetuates a cycle of illiteracy and disillusionment. Constraints to access vary greatly between communities, but include: poverty and opportunity cost; limited infrastructure and human resources including teacher absenteeism; concerns over the quality of education; cultural attitudes; and insecurity. Attacks on education infrastructure, educators and students, occur particularly in KP, FATA, and Balochistan. Access issues, especially security related, disproportionately affect women and girls. The Net Enrollment Rate (NER) for females in the country is 11 percentage points below males; FATA, KP and Balochistan have the greatest gender disparities in NER.<sup>27</sup> National debate around improving access and quality of education is intensifying with a focus on learning. If youth are provided with strategic guidance and quality education, they can help mitigate conflict, mobilize communities and become a crucial source of

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<sup>25</sup> Sustainable Development Policy Institute (2011) *The Relationship between Education and Religious Discrimination in Pakistan- Analysis of Curriculum and Pedagogy in Pakistani Schools*; National Commission for Justice and Peace (2012), *Education or Fanning Hate*.

<sup>26</sup> FHI 360 Education Policy and Data Center (2015). *Does education inequality cause violent conflict?: A Global Analysis*. New York: UNICEF.

<sup>27</sup> Government of Pakistan, *Annual Progress Report (2013-14) on Implementation of National Plan of Action to Accelerate Education-Related MDGs (2013-16)*

social cohesion. This requires both, support to traditional forms of classroom-based education and non-traditional education settings, such as working on inclusion and social cohesion through community structures and youth participation.

## Peacebuilding entry points in education and learning

### Political and policy responses

- **Curriculum and training:** Support implementation of the latest curriculum through local partnerships to review and amend teaching and learning materials.
- **Planning and advocacy:** Mainstream social cohesion and conflict sensitivity in provincial and district education sector plans and implementation frameworks. Advocate for the implementation of the free and compulsory education Act, particularly Article 25-A, at the provincial and district levels, including increase in budget and resource allocation.
- **School system reform and oversight:** Consider increased consistency across school systems to reduce disparities of doctrine and curricula of different educational streams – public, private or madrasa.

### Structural reforms

- **Service provision:** Support the provision of equitable access to quality education opportunities to vulnerable groups in conflict-prone, conflict-affected, and/or deprived areas, including through *alternative learning pathways*.
- **Capacity building:** Increase the capacity of education and child protection institutions to develop, monitor, and deliver programmes that contribute to social cohesion and resilience.
- **Materials:** Support a review of teaching and learning materials to integrate social cohesion related learning outcomes, which include local knowledge and culture. Train teachers on pedagogies that promote tolerance, creativity, and critical thinking.
- **Oversight:** Increase school monitoring to eliminate ‘ghost schools’ by ensuring teachers’ presence, and children are receiving appropriate instruction and quality learning.
- **Community mechanisms:** Expand the role of school councils and community mechanisms in facilitating inclusion and social cohesion, and reducing discrimination at the local level.
- **Youth engagement:** Develop platforms for youth engagement, including their participation in technological innovations.

### Individual and interpersonal changes

- **Co-curricular:** Support inclusive co-curricular activities for the participation of children and adolescents from different backgrounds at the community level, including learning through sports and recreational activities to promote social cohesion and resilience.
- **Peacebuilding dialogue:** create safe spaces for the promotion of plurality of voices and common beliefs across Islam and other religious systems through inclusive outreach platforms and community mobilization. Showcase commonalities and create safe spaces for debate, dialogue and peacebuilding discussions.
- **Combat gender disparities:** Work with communities to increase access to education for girls and women. Promote female education and participation as a peacebuilding strategy.