



PAKISTAN

National Refugee Youth Consultation

Summary Report

2nd – 5th May 2016



Asia Pacific
Refugee Rights
Network



Rural Empowerment
& Institutional Development

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Global Refugee Youth Consultations

Background

The Global Refugee Youth Consultations (GRYC) were launched in July 2015 at the UNHCR-NGO Consultations in Geneva. A joint initiative of UNHCR and the Women's Refugee Commission, supported by the Youth and Adolescents in Emergencies Advocacy Group (YAE)¹, the GRYC are supported by a Coordinator, Project Officer and Advisory Committee (consisting of national and international NGOs, youth representatives and an independent youth expert).

Refugee youth are often left out of activities and programmes organised by the UN, NGOs and other organisations. Youth have skills, capabilities, aspirations and needs that often go unrecognised and are not understood. There is a need to reach out and hear from them about the challenges they face, their visions and what support they need to shape positive futures. The consultations are providing opportunities for refugee youth to discuss issues that affect them with host country youth and representatives from the United Nations, international NGOs, national NGOs and other organizations working with youth in the country. The process aims to place youth at the centre of decision making processes that affect them and to recognize their potential. The target group for this project are young refugees that fit the United Nations definition of 'Youth' which is all boys and girls, young women and young men between the ages of 15-24 years.

The consultations are taking place between November 2015 and June 2016. They will include national level consultations in Africa, the Americas, Asia-Pacific, the Middle East and North Africa. The 'National Consultations' are led by national NGOs from each country with UNHCR and an international NGO partner. Similar consultations will also be held with refugee youth in North America, Australasia and Europe. Opportunities to participate in smaller consultations and online are also being provided through a designated toolkit and a Facebook platform. The process will culminate in a global consultation in Geneva in June 2016 and participation by young people in the 2016 annual UNHCR-NGO Consultations, the overarching theme of which is Youth.

Objectives and design

Underpinning the design of the national consultations are the four core objectives of the GRYC:

1. To create structured spaces for young refugees to have a voice and engage in participatory dialogue with other youth and relevant stakeholders at local, national, regional and global levels
2. To improve access for young refugees to local, national, regional and global youth alliances and networks
3. To foster and support participation, leadership and empowerment opportunities for young refugees
4. To consolidate and channel the learning from the consultations into the development of guidelines and policy recommendations on youth-inclusive programming, to improve the humanitarian sector's understanding of, and work with, young refugees

¹ The Youth and Adolescents in Emergencies Advocacy Group (YAE Group) includes representatives from more than 15 humanitarian organizations that are committed to achieving better outcomes for young people in humanitarian situations.

A participatory approach is being used throughout. The session plans were developed by the GRYC Coordinator, in consultation with UNHCR and WRC. They were designed through a collaborative and iterative process, including:

- An extensive review of literature and other materials relating to consultations with youth, displaced populations and participatory research methods, in order to learn from previous experience and to adapt relevant pre-existing models.²
- The active input of a group of young refugees and asylum seekers during a two-day residential workshop in Malta, in October 2015, organised in partnership with UNHCR Malta and a Maltese NGO, Organisation for Friendship and Diversity (OFD). The group consisted of males and females representing the full age range of the global consultations (15-24 year olds), and five countries - Libya, Somalia, Mali, Eritrea and Palestine.
- Input into the development of the session plans and the content of the national consultations was also sought from members of the GRYC Advisory Committee - in person with the Regional Leads representing Africa, Asia Pacific and Latin America during a two-day meeting in Geneva, and by email and skype with the full GRYC Advisory Committee.³
- A full pilot national consultation in Uganda that provided an opportunity to learn from the participants and adapt the approach and session plans accordingly.

Pakistan National Consultation

National NGO Partner

The Pakistan Consultation was organised at the national level and run by the Children and Women Trust (CWT) and Rural Empowerment & Institutional Development (REPID), in coordination with staff from the UNHCR Pakistan country office and the Advisory Committee regional lead for Asia Pacific, the Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network (APRRN). This team was supported by the GRYC team, including the GRYC Coordinator and the UNHCR Adolescent and Youth Advisor.

A team consisting of staff from CWT, REPID, UNHCR Pakistan and APRRN, worked together to coordinate the logistics, recruitment of facilitators and interpreters, selection of youth, planning for the stakeholders' meeting, and preparation of materials, as well as engaging in regular Skype meetings with the GRYC team. Multiple staff, including the CEO of CWT and the Interim Executive Director of APRRN, were committed for the full length of the consultation which helped ensure that all consultation roles were covered and increased staff familiarity with the young people for post-consultation activities.

² Some examples of key resources accessed include: *Youth Consultations for a Post-2015 Framework: A Toolkit*. Youth in Action (2013); *A Kit of Tools for Participatory Research and Evaluation with Children, Young People and Adults*. Save the Children Norway (2008); *Listen and Learn: Participatory Assessment with Children and Adolescents*. UNHCR (2012); *Community Consultations Using Extended Dialogue Methodology*. UNHCR (2010-11); *Post 2015 Youth Engagement Event Planning Kit*. World Vision (2012); *Considering Consulting? A Guide to Meaningful Consultation with Young People from Refugee and Migrant Backgrounds*. The Centre for Multicultural Youth Issues (2007).

³ The Advisory Committee Regional Leads include: World Vision (Africa); Save the Children (MENA); RET (Americas) and APRRN (Asia-Pacific).

Facilitators

- The Pakistan national consultation was led by two external facilitators, one Pakistani and one Afghan, both of whom had extensive experience of working with national and refugee youth.
- The lead facilitators were supported by the GRYC Coordinator and UNHCR Adolescent and Youth Advisor.
- 5 small group facilitators were identified from CWT and UNHCR Pakistan, and were engaged during preparation, delivery and debrief, ensuring a good understanding of the whole programme. Extra support for the small groups was provided by staff from REPID and APRRN.



Interpreters

- During the whole group exercises the primary language of facilitation was English with Dari, Urdu and Pashto used predominantly during small group exercises.
- Two interpreters were provided for the participants who spoke Pashto and limited English.

Venue and Accommodation

The venue for the workshop and the accommodation was the Ramada Hotel in Islamabad.

Evening social activities

The CWT and REPID team organised activities each evening, including the screening of a documentary about a young Afghan entrepreneur, a music evening with traditional musicians showcasing Pashto music, and a field trip to a cultural heritage centre in Islamabad.

Dissemination, Application and Selection Process

Selection guidelines were provided to the Pakistan team to ensure that the participants were as representative of their communities as possible, with particular attention paid to the inclusion of persons with disabilities and a diverse range of gender, age, nationality, education, employment background and ability, marital and parental status, geographic locations in Pakistan and a range of experiences of youth and community work. Other core criteria include the following points:

- Age (15-24)
- Willingness and ability to participate in an interactive, participatory 4-day consultation
- Proven experience as participants of an existing youth programme (for refugee youth) or national youth organization (for host country youth)
- Openness to engage on refugee issues

- A statement of motivation, which included details about why the applicant was interested in being involved in the consultation, what they could contribute and what they hoped would be the results of the consultation.

In Pakistan, REPID and CWT translated the application forms into Dari and shared them with UNHCR focal persons in Quetta, Peshawar and Punjab/ICT (Islamabad Capital Territory)⁴ to disseminate through their website and through implementing partners. REPID collected the more than 100 applications received from Baluchistan⁵, Punjab/ICT, KPK⁶ and AJK⁷.

REPID/CWT, together with provincial focal persons of UNHCR, long listed applicants based on the criteria defined in the GRYC guidelines. These application forms were then shared with the selection committee comprising of UNHCR Islamabad office, UNHCR Peshawar office, and UNHCR Quetta office, REPID, CWT and APRRN. The selection committee shortlisted candidates from each province to ensure diversity, each application was then individually assessed by every member of the selection committee and a total of 20 Afghan youth were selected to participate.

The five national youth positions were advertised by REPID and CWT through their websites, networks and the communities they work with. Twelve applications were received. The selection process mirrored that of the refugee youth and five candidates were selected based on the criteria provided.

Youth Participant Profiles

25 young people aged between 15 and 24 years participated in the Pakistan consultation. Demographic data was obtained from the participants' application forms, as part of the application process, which can be summarised as follows:

- 19 refugees/6 nationals⁸
- 13 female/12 male
- 23 aged eighteen and over/2 aged under eighteen
- The refugee youth all came from Afghanistan
- There was broad geographical representation, with refugee and national youth attending from multiple provinces within Pakistan, including Punjab/ICT, KPK, and Baluchistan.
- Of the refugee youth, 14 identified as living in a 'large town or city', 2 as living in a village or a remote area, and 3 as living in a camp
- 16 of the refugee youth identified as having been away from their home country for more than 10 years, and 3 identified as having been away from their home country for 6 months to one year

⁴ Punjab is one of the four provinces in Pakistan. It is the most populous province and its provincial capital and largest city is Lahore. 'ICT' refers to Islamabad Capital Territory, which includes Islamabad and nearby areas. Punjab is adjacent to Islamabad.

⁵ Baluchistan is one of the four provinces of Pakistan, located in the south-western region of the country. It is the largest province geographically, and its provincial capital and largest city is Quetta.

⁶ Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is one of the four provinces of Pakistan, and it is located in the northwestern region of the country. Its provincial capital and largest city is Peshawar.

⁷ Azad Jammu and Kashmir or AJK is a self-governing administrative division of Pakistan.

⁸ Due to a refugee youth pulling out the day before the consultation, the final space was offered to an Islamabad based national youth, who was able to attend at short notice.

- In terms of the highest level of education the refugee youth had completed –
 - 16 identified as having completed secondary school
 - 2 identified as having an undergraduate degree
 - 1 identified as having a postgraduate degree
- In terms of current education or employment status of the refugee youth, they identified themselves as follows (multiple choice was possible) –
 - 11 in formal education (e.g. school, university, college)
 - 2 in non-formal education
 - 1 employed full-time
 - 1 employed part-time
 - 1 looking for a job
 - 1 volunteering (e.g. with an NGO or community group)
 - 2 as 'other' (current activity unspecified)
- 19 of the refugee youth identified themselves as living with family
- 16 of that number identified their father as the head of their household, 1 identified their mother, 4 identified their sibling, and 1 identified their spouse
- One of the refugee youth identified themselves as married
- One of the refugee youth identified themselves as a parent with a child aged 3-4 years old, whom they care for themselves
- 5 of the refugee youth identified themselves as caring for a family member on a regular basis, which included younger siblings for 4 of the youth, and an older family member for 1 of the youth
- One of the national youth participants identified as having a disability on the form, but indicated that 'differently abled' was their preferred identification

Participants' motivation for taking part in the national consultation, as outlined in the application forms, include:

- To boost knowledge about refugees and youth, and to meet new people
- To work together with different people to develop solutions
- To be able to share opinions and ideas on issues that affect them and their community
- To gain courage and motivation for the future
- To mobilise resources and build networks to bring change

Participants' expectations from participating in the consultation, as specified in the application forms, include:

- That we are able to find durable solutions by working together with other youth and stakeholders, e.g. *"two minds are better than one"*
- Positive change for refugees, e.g. through capacity building; combating negative perceptions of refugees; and by gaining access to, and engaging with, decision makers
- The development of lasting relationships and networks between refugee and national youth, e.g. *"There will be future networking among refugees and hosts and [we] will share our experiences later in the consultations to become a network"*
- Clear mechanisms in place to share the results of the consultation and to keep the participants informed, e.g. *"We need to make sure there is a clear mechanism for feeding the*

results of [the] consultation into decision making processes and... we will ensure those who participated in the consultation know the results”

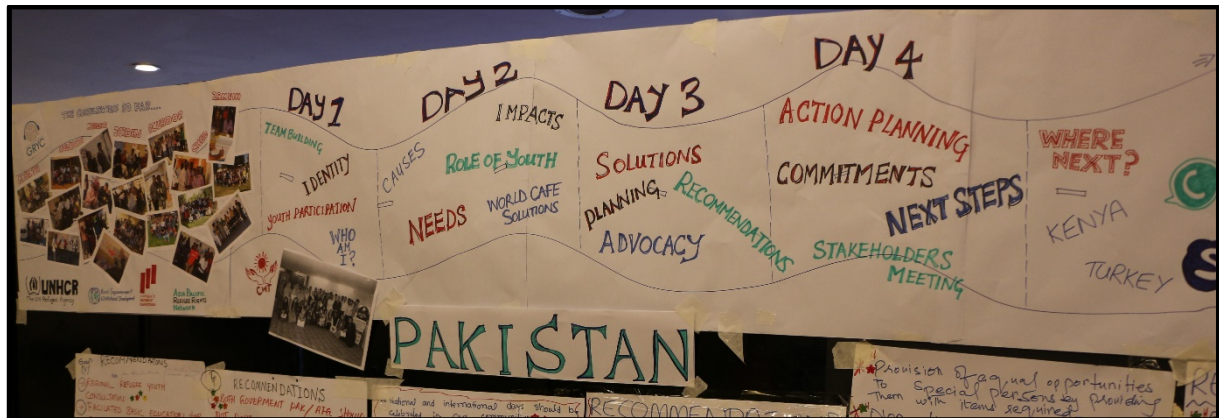
Bringing together host community and refugee youth

One of the objectives of the national consultations was to provide an opportunity for refugee and host country youth to meet, exchange ideas, build friendships and alliances and establish connections. It was hoped that as a result of the consultations, refugee and host country youth would gain a better understanding of the issues they face – as youth – and that there would be opportunities created for refugee youth to work more closely with national youth organisations and vice versa. The application forms highlight the interest of the national youth participants to listen to and understand the experiences of refugee youth. One national youth participant stated that: *“From [this] consultation I [will] learn more knowledge about the refugees and communicate with the participants, and achieve knowledge from different views and ideas and people, and also share my own ideas with them”; “[I] have good relations with these refugees with whom we share the same language. Some of their problems are common as ours. I am interested to be in touch with them, learn from them as they are hard-working people and it helps motivate me. I like sitting and talking to the same age refugee youth to find common solutions to problems”; “[I will] know more about refugees and will be a part of network with refugees”*. In answer to the question, ‘what do you hope the results of this consultation will be?’ – *The response was “Mutual and shared learnings. Initiation of a youth network with local and refugee youth”*

The desire to work together and learn from each other was evident throughout the consultation. Participants learned that, youth share similar issues *“About national youth I was thinking it’s their country and it will be very easy for them, but I was wrong they also face most of the problem it’s not only us whom are facing problem”*, but also between refugees from different locations, as a number of activities and discussions highlighted the very different experiences of camp based and urban refugee youth. Feedback from refugee and national youth during the closing session demonstrated their desire and ideas to stay connected, and to work together on the solutions they had developed.

National Consultation Structure

The National Consultations have two components, with the same structure for all locations. The first component is a three-day consultation with the 25 selected youth (20 refugees and 5 national youth) working together in small groups and plenary to be heard, develop ideas, build alliances and networks, and contribute to improving work with young refugees globally. The second component is a half-day ‘stakeholder dialogue’ where participants share consultation outcomes and recommendations with key local, national and international agencies and organisations and develop next steps for the post-consultation period.



Day One

- Getting to know each other, building trust and teambuilding
- Identity
- Youth Participation

Day Two

- Identifying and prioritising issues
- Analysing issues and identifying causes and impacts
- The role of youth in addressing the issues

Day Three

- Addressing the issues and developing solutions
- Advocacy/Communicating our messages and recommendations
- Stakeholder analysis
- Planning for the stakeholders meeting

Day Four

- Stakeholders meeting
- Group action planning – what next for this group

Additional note on the context in Pakistan:

It must be noted here that documentation was one of the main themes of the consultation and an obvious worry for all young people concerned. At the point when the consultation was undertaken Refugee PoR Cards were only valid until 30th June 2016. Since the Consultation took place PoR cards have been extended until 31 December 2016. Please note this when reading the sections below which refer to the date of expiry as 30th June 2016.

Main themes from Pakistan Consultation

The following is an overview of the key themes and issues that emerged during this consultation:

General themes included:

- **Opportunities for youth advocacy and leadership:** The group was passionate about identifying and creating platforms and opportunities to speak out and engage with others on issues that affect them. This became particularly evident when one of the four small working groups chose the theme of 'limited advocacy opportunities for youth in Pakistan and Afghanistan', to analyse, develop solutions and present ideas to stakeholders. Members of the group considered this was not easy for youth to do. Challenges identified included geographical location, nationality, sex, age, mobility, lack of confidence and family approval. However, coming together as a group and having the opportunity to be heard had a positive

impact on many members of the group, who spoke of their determination to engage in advocacy after the consultation, and to involve other youth in the process.

- **Gender discrimination:** Within the discussions about the need for more opportunities for youth to speak out and advocate for youth and refugees, the discrimination and prejudices faced by young women in particular were identified and discussed by both female and male participants. During the consultation, the inequalities that female youth experience in accessing: education, training opportunities, recreational activities, employment and freedom of speech within the family unit were highlighted as well as being subjected to police harassment, SGBV, and CEFM (child, early and forced marriage). It was noticeable that many of the young male participants were actively engaged in these conversations, and they also consider it be very important that they speak out to address this issue along with their female peers.

Developing networks: The importance of networking was a theme discussed at every national consultation, but was more prevalent in Pakistan than elsewhere. The group discussed their strong desire for cross border collaboration, cooperation and activities between Afghan and Pakistani youth, to feel connected and also to learn from and support each other. The participants' recommendations, discussions in the closing session, and reflections in their final evaluation forms also emphasised the importance of developing sustainable platforms for youth and stakeholders to interact and engage with each other beyond the consultation, and work together in partnership to address the challenges they face.

Sector specific themes and priorities included:

- **Documentation:** Addressing the limitations of refugee documentation, especially identity cards, was a priority at most of the national consultations. In Pakistan the limited scope of the refugee 'Proof of Registration' (PoR) card to provide access to essential services, facilities and opportunities as well as uncertainty about the future of the card was a cause for concern. Despite the extension of the expiry date from December 2015 to June 2016⁹ while a new refugee policy is approved, the lack of clarity about what will happen next for Afghan refugee youth in Pakistan is extremely stressful, and makes their lives feel more uncertain.
- **Education:** The two broad issues highlighted by the participants concerning education were access and quality. With access, the youth highlighted restrictions caused by discrimination and prejudice connected to nationality, ethnicity and sex, a lack of recognition of previous qualification obtained in Afghanistan and equivalency of qualification, language barriers and financial insecurity. Regarding quality, the participants highlighted the challenges they experience with the quality of the teaching, relevance of the current curriculum and the impact that access to books and other resources has on learning.
- **Livelihoods and training:** The group expressed that they felt there were clear barriers to accessing productive and meaningful work, especially in the formal job market, as a result of their refugee status. This was a cause of much frustration. Youth also stated that there is a lack of skills, vocational and technical workshops available to them. One of the youth said

⁹ Since the Consultation took place the PoR cards have been extended to the 31 December 2016, however the short term extension is still going to leave many of the young people very anxious about their futures

that during participatory discussions with UNHCR they highlighted that they need vocational, training and education programme but they never heard back from UNHCR afterwards.

- **Discrimination and stereotyping:** Participants shared numerous experiences of negative perceptions towards Afghan refugees in Pakistan and was a critical issue for the refugee youth. The issue re-appeared many times throughout the consultation within discussions on education, access to employment and security. This frustration could be seen manifest in the recommendations developed by the youth, many of which focused on the need for sensitisation and awareness raising on the rights of, and reality for refugees. The group also identified the need to address the media's role in perpetuating negative stereotypes about refugees and highlighted discrimination towards refugees as a major issue within law enforcement agencies.

Main Findings from Pakistan Consultation

The following section provides a summary of the main points to have arisen in each session during the four-day consultation with refugee youth in Pakistan. The structure of each exercise is described followed by the main findings:

Perceptions and facts about refugees and youth

This exercise provided an opportunity for the participants to discuss, in small groups, facts and perceptions associated with the words 'refugee' and 'youth' with their ideas recorded on flipchart paper and shared with the whole group.

Two of the groups in particular struggled to focus on the task of separating perceptions and facts, wanting instead to immediately begin to identify and discuss issues faced by refugees. During the group discussions about perceptions about refugees, each of the groups highlighted the negative stereotyping experienced by Afghans as refugees. Participants referred to being labelled as 'terrorists', 'Taliban', 'criminals' "*Local people think all refugees are criminals or terrorists*", 'a threat to national and provincial security', 'dirty', 'a burden on the economy' and 'associated with guns, drugs and mafia'. The frustration at being judged in this way was palpable in all groups, as these comments demonstrate: "*Refugees are not criminals – so why do people blame all refugees?*", "*The massacre that happened in Belgium was blamed on all refugees*", and "*After [the] APS attack in Peshawar, refugees are very much discriminated*" (female refugee)¹⁰. One of the young refugee women also briefly highlighted the negative stereotypes that Afghan girls in particular experience, resulting in her choosing to hide her nationality in public: "*I hide my identity most of the time as local people do not give respect to Afghan girls. They think they are cheap and have no values.*"

Stereotyping and discrimination were discussed on many occasions during the consultation including the psychological effects for young refugees of such negative labels. A number of participants also highlighted the negative impact stereotyping has on refugees trying to access education and job opportunities. Most groups felt that these negative stereotypes were perpetuated by the media in Pakistan, especially via social media. One group highlighted that Afghans also sometimes engage in

¹⁰ On 16 December 2014 Taliban gunmen stormed the Army Public School in the northern city of Peshawar. More than 150 people were killed, 132 of them children. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-35103616>

negative stereotyping about Pakistanis, so social media is used for developing negative perceptions on both sides. There was also a reminder of the positive reception that many Afghan refugees have received, with participants in one group acknowledging the open hearted welcome that they have received from the Pakistani people because they feel have been through the same situation and could understand the needs of Afghans well.

During the discussions about 'youth', all groups identified the contradictions between how they view themselves and their peers, and how their elders and society generally views them. Each group was familiar with labels that portray youth in a negative light, and gave examples, such as 'lazy', 'selfish', 'lack of interests', 'very emotional', 'inexperienced', 'disobedient' and 'unintelligent'. They were however, most keen to discuss the facts about youth from their own perspectives with one example, one group explaining that they view themselves as proactive, supportive to their families and communities, and the 'backbone of the nation'. They highlighted that what is critically described as 'inexperience', is natural for their age, and therefore rather than being judged negatively for it, they would appreciate guidance and support, and to learn from their elders' experiences. One participant explained: "*Youth should be helped to make their own decisions – the perception is that they cannot make decisions*". Other inter-generational tensions were highlighted, one group stated that elders think youth 'do not want to preserve cultural norms and values', and held negative perceptions that youth are 'liberal' and therefore 'spread bad habits', and that social media has 'spoiled youth'.

Youth Participation

This exercise was structured around a set of three questions which the young people voted on and then discussed.

Question 1: Should NGOs and UNHCR listen/engage with youth in designing and planning their services and activities for refugee youth?

All 25 participants voted that it is important for NGOs and UNHCR to listen to, and engage with youth in designing and planning services and activities for refugee youth. The question triggered a lot of comments and discussion within the group. When asked why they voted yes, the explanations centred on a number of points.

- Strengthening youth capacity by providing opportunities to develop skills, which will be critical when they take on leadership roles in the future, for example: "*Youth can play a very important role in the development of a country if we involve them for the design phase*";
- Improving the self-confidence of youth who regularly feel excluded, for example: "*Youth have lost self-confidence and need to be involved in decision making for their futures*";
- Because youth are a key stakeholder and they have a vested interest in designing relevant and sustainable services and activities; and
- As one refugee youth explained, there can be serious consequences if you do not involve youth in the decisions that affect them, for example: "*[We] need to employ young people in planning and design because if we don't, they will go illegally abroad through traffickers*".

Question 2: Have you taken any steps to communicate with NGOs and UNHCR to talk about the issues you face?

In response to this question, 12 youth voted 'yes' (7 males and 5 females), 10 voted 'no' (6 males and 4 females) and 3 participants chose not to vote. No comments were collected as discussion time was reserved for the third question.

Question 3: Do you feel it is easy to interact with NGOs and UNHCR to talk about what you face?

In response to this question, the majority of participants answered that it is difficult (16 in total, 7 males and 9 females). Six participants considered it easy (3 males and 3 females), and 3 participants chose not to vote. Although the voting for this question was not separated by interactions with NGOs and interactions with UNHCR, during the discussion that followed when participants were asked to explain their answers, comments focused on UNHCR and implementing partners. A significant amount of frustration was apparent as participants highlighted the following challenges:

- Ineffective or unclear communication channels to UNHCR, either directly or through implementing partners, which limits the access that refugee youth have to UNHCR. One young woman explained: *"They are not answering, there is only one contact number – then when you go in, they say come again tomorrow"*. One young man highlighted the frustration felt by youth at having no mechanism¹¹ to contact UNHCR directly when needed: *"[Whenever] they have problems, they can't contact directly UNHCR, but they have to go through the partner and don't get the issues addressed"*.
- Lack of follow up when contact is attempted. Two refugee youth (male and female) outlined their and their peers' experiences: *"They don't listen, I have emailed and sent letters on behalf of my [youth] organization, but no reply from UNHCR"* and *"They asked UNHCR to create a vocational training and education programme after they were consulted and asked what they want, but they never heard back from UNHCR"*.
- Poor information sharing/engagement with youth by the implementing partners, for example, as one young man explained: *"Their local project on education is closed down and they approach the UNHCR implementing partner about it, but they have no access to UNHCR through the IP"*¹² and another participant agreed, stating: *"[it is] difficult to talk to UNHCR because there is no point of contact"*.

Meanwhile, two of the youth who found interactions with either UNHCR or NGOs to be easy, referred to their experiences of friendly and dedicated staff at UNHCR, and their understanding of the relevant pathways with stakeholders working on protection issues, which enables them to navigate the NGO system effectively. The majority of the group felt that this is an area that could be greatly improved if youth are to feel engaged in the processes and decisions that affect them, especially in terms of clearer communication channels and more-timely follow up.

¹¹ Or perhaps not being aware of the mechanism, which is an issue in itself.

¹² 'IP' – UNHCR Implementing Partner

Youth Visions for

Participation:

In the next stage of the session, the participants worked in small groups to discuss and present ideas and visions of youth participation that would result in positive change for refugee youth, and then presented their ideas visually through posters.

As in the previous exercise, groups again began to focus on issues rather than on participation. Many of the participants found it challenging to consider how they could practically participate in positive change. A number of the participants were unaware of the channels through which youth can engage. One young male refugee explained that in his opinion:



“We do not know where to go to share our problems. We lack the platform”.

When the purpose of the activity was further clarified, the groups generated a range of ideas for how they could be better engaged and heard, which they considered critical to raising the profile of their issues and them being addressed.

Ideas for youth participation generated by the group included:

- Afghan and Pakistan youth joining together to organise sports events and debate competitions, and volunteering together to address issues such as gaps in education and environmental issues;
- The utilisation of social media platforms to raise the voices of refugee youth around important issues;
- Establishing a youth committee to act as a mechanism to connect youth with stakeholders and to ensure youth representation at a policy level;
- Establishing a volunteer management system within youth committees to ensure that youth activities are coordinated and have the most impact;
- Setting up a youth centre as a space for youth to gather and connect with stakeholders, and as a hub for skills sharing between youth;
- Establishing a girls’ movement to help deconstruct stereotypes, e.g. they could organise a cycling group in their community to demonstrate what women are capable of;
- Allocating a ‘Pledge Wall’ in each city where refugees can write their issues where everyone can see them, so that communities can work together to address them.

Identification and Prioritization of Needs and Issues

During the second day of the consultation, the youth participants worked in small groups to identify and discuss challenges and issues of importance to them. While this exercise focused primarily on the needs and issues faced by refugee youth, national youth participants were encouraged to participate and use this exercise as an opportunity to ask questions, learn more about the challenges facing their refugee peers and identify commonalities.



The needs and issues identified by youth focused on a number of broad themes, many of which were interrelated and most of which correlated with those raised during previous national consultations. Themes included education, employment, documentation, basic needs such as shelter and sanitation, physical protection, language barriers, police harassment, gender discrimination, child labour, the psychological effects of displacement and violence, instability and lack of peace, and disability.

The theme which dominated discussions across groups was the 'lack, and limitations of refugee identity documentation (Proof of Registration (PoR) cards) and the consequences this has on the daily lives of young people. PoR cards are important identity documents that provide temporary legal stay and freedom of movement for the 1.55 million registered Afghan refugees in Pakistan¹³. The imminent expiry of the PoR cards was a source of major concern. Whilst the Government had extended PoR cards for six months, to June 2016, while a new policy regarding refugees was approved, it was felt that this change had not been clearly communicated with refugees. As one young female refugee emphasised: *"They [the government] should publish on social media [whether] the card is expired or not"*. For the youth who indicated that they were aware of the extension, the uncertainty of what would happen next, and the resultant inability to plan for the future, was a serious concern. Other concerns regarding the PoR card included its limitations with regards to, accessing bank accounts and mobile telephone SIM cards, obtaining a driving license, and renting property.¹⁴ Each group also highlighted that police and army harassment was an issue for refugee

¹³ 'The PoR cards which have expired at the end of 2015 have been extended until 30 June 2016 by the Prime Minister's Office as an ad-interim provision pending the Cabinet approval of the Government of Pakistan's new policy on the Management and Voluntary Repatriation of Afghans beyond 2015'. (PoR Card Registration Update, UNHCR Pakistan, 2016)

¹⁴ 'In terms of socio-economic conditions and access to already overstretched basic services and facilities, refugee middle classes (shopkeepers, skilled employees, professionals etc.) who are engaged in local businesses and cross-border imports and exports and can access private housing, health and education, but are unable to open bank accounts, register their businesses with the local Chamber of Commerce and benefit from other amenities which would facilitate their lives and contribution to the society of Pakistan. Despite being relatively well off, they also experience discrimination such as

youth, even when in possession of the correct documentation.¹⁵ One group suggested that there should be a complaints mechanism in place for when harassment takes place¹⁶. One male refugee youth acknowledged that he knew of such a mechanism. One of the groups also highlighted that due to the limitations surrounding the PoR card, and with the current uncertainty about what would happen after June 2016, some refugees resort to bribery to secure the documents they need, which for the youth was a sign of the desperation that the situation has created.

Another important issue to emerge was education. One male national youth emphasised: *“Education is the biggest need of refugees”*. Access to higher education was considered to be very challenging from an admission and cost perspective. One of the young female refugees highlighted: *“Education is our need, but free education or higher education can be an issue”*. Another commented: ‘Admission at universities or public schools is a vital issue for refugee youth’. The need for more scholarships to address the prohibitive cost of higher education was raised. One group also discussed a challenge they experienced around the credibility of their qualifications: *“Higher*



Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan don't sign degrees of Afghan students and Afghan government only sign documents that are signed by HEC”. There were also concerns raised about the quality of education provided at all levels, with several groups referring to the limited capabilities of teachers. One young female refugee explained: *“Some teachers can't teach properly and they can't make the students understand”*. Several female members of one group argued that: *“Quality of education is more important than admission”*. Gender discrimination in education was highlighted in three groups. An example provided was of the lack of English classes for girls in rural areas¹⁷, and more generally the prioritisation of boys over girls in terms of access to education, both from the perspective of school admissions and parental approval/encouragement. The challenge of language barriers in education was raised by some participants, as they struggle to learn without the support of interpreters or the provision of language

difficulties in obtaining rental premises. Without a PoR card, there are not many services available, and it should be noted that even vulnerable Pakistani nationals can hardly benefit from limited services available’. (UNHCR Pakistan, 2016)

¹⁵ ‘It is important for every registered Afghan to carry his/her PoR card and present to the law enforcement agencies, on demand. But the implementation of National Action Plan on Counter-Terrorism (NAP), adopted after the Peshawar army school attack in December 2014 has affected treatment/protection of Afghan refugees and resulted in the increase of number of arrests and detentions reported to UNHCR by registered Afghan refugees’. (UNHCR Pakistan, 2016)

¹⁶ It would seem that this participant/small group is unaware of the system in place for complaints, as in the event of arrest and detention under the 1946 Foreigner's Act, registered Afghan refugee are encouraged to immediately report the incident at UNHCR helpline numbers. UNHCR implements a legal advice and assistance programme (ALAC) through several partners. (UNHCR Pakistan, 2016)

¹⁷ Language barriers were discussed briefly in this activity and informally during the consultation, as many youth felt that there should be increased provision of language classes for new arrivals.

classes.¹⁸

The theme of gender discrimination expanded to discussions of violence against women and girls, with participants identifying that many women and girls are frightened to leave their homes. Other protection concerns discussed included child labour¹⁹, trafficking and child abuse. One group passionately argued that there is a lack of education and awareness raising about child abuse, and that it should be included in school curriculums, both to discourage abuse and to empower children and young people to report abuse. By way of example, in one group it was discussed that they had heard of Afghan children being taken for work and jobs and then being sexually harassed and assaulted by those employers. The group also felt that many of the children that live on the street in Peshawar are at grave risk of sexual exploitation and abuse.

The need for improved infrastructure in camps was identified by several groups. Discussions revolved around the need for more robust shelters, better sanitation (e.g. improved drainage and more regular maintenance of toilets) and access to clean water, improved health facilities with adequate medical supplies, and more consistent access to electricity and gas. One young male refugee explained: *“Unsafe sanitation is more important than renting houses because we face it in camps”*. The psychological impact of conflict in Afghanistan and Pakistan, on youth, was also discussed. One female participant referencing the loss of a family member in a terrorist attack in Pakistan explained: *“It affected a lot over our mind”*. She also emphasised that *“state conflict among governments affects a lot of youth”*. Feelings about lack of peace and stability amongst the participants became very clear during formal and informal discussions during the consultation.

The lack of opportunities for youth to access vocational training and capacity building was a concern for many participants. It was identified as having a major impact on young people’s ability to build a productive future, and to access jobs. In turn, unemployment and lack of job opportunities was highlighted as an issue in all groups. Some participants felt that Pakistanis are prioritised over Afghans in many job application processes. Groups also highlighted discrimination against people with disabilities (including youth), and two of the groups highlighted the lack of tailored services and facilities, which can affect access to education and employment.

At the local level, two of the groups highlighted that the lack of unity and cooperation within the refugee community is also an ongoing challenge. The participants emphasised that there should be a focus on solving issues within their communities as well as focusing on the limitations in provision of external support to refugees.

Finally, an overarching issue, raised by all groups, was the lack of peace and stability that forced the Afghans to leave their country in the first place and which continues to keep them as refugees.

¹⁸ Although the participants only briefly touched on this issue, it was also raised in UNHCR’s Participatory Assessment Report in 2015 in relation to low quality of the education – *“Specifically in Mianwali [Punjab province], language barriers were identified as a concern because the majority of the refugees are ethnic Pashtun while some teachers are not from their community and do not speak Pashto”*. (Participatory Assessment Report 2015: Pakistan, UNHCR, p.8)

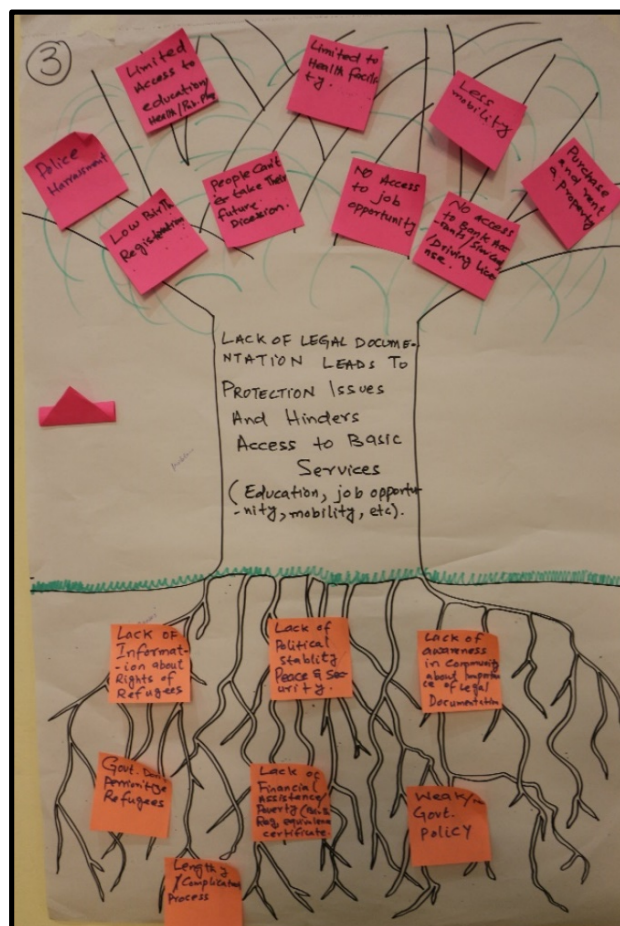
¹⁹ To provide context, some types of child labour in Pakistan are outlined in UNHCR’s Participatory Assessment Report 2015, for example, work reportedly undertaken by under 18 years olds includes: in Karachi, Sindh - cloth sellers, computer repairers, shopkeepers, in medical clinics and in different shops; in Quetta, Baluchistan - boys were mostly engaged in garbage collection or work in the mines; In Peshawar, KP - quite a number of teenagers reported working, including in a laboratory, as mechanics, and in fruit and vegetable shops. (Participatory Assessment Report 2015: Pakistan, UNHCR, p.13)

Several participants felt that the other issues raised were all secondary to the issue of national and regional instability, and that to only focus on addressing those ‘secondary’ issues would not bring about ‘durable solutions’ for Afghans. A number of young people identified that if there was peace, security and safety for all Afghans in Afghanistan, return would be the preferred option, but until that time they would have to remain in Pakistan.

After identifying the main issues and needs facing refugee youth in Pakistan, the participants were asked within their groups to priority rank the top nine issues they faced. A methodology known as “diamond ranking” was used for this. This activity is designed to encourage debate and deeper analysis of the issues and to teach participants about the importance of reaching consensus and compromise. Of the top four issues chosen by the participants, one group chose security, including police harassment; two groups chose to focus on legal documentation and the expiry and extension of the PoR card; and one group chose peace and security in Afghanistan.

Other issues that ranked high and provoked debate included: access to, and quality of, education; gender discrimination; lack of unity amongst the refugee community; discrimination towards refugees; child abuse and child labour; and poor health care for refugees.

Identifying Causes and Impacts of Issues using Problem Trees:



Using the ‘problem tree’ tool, participants selected an issue from the top three in their diamond ranking charts and considered its causes and impacts.

One group focused on limited access to education; the second group on poor quality of education; the third group focused on lack of legal documentation which ‘leads to protection issues and hinders access to basic services’; and the last group decided on the issue of limited advocacy opportunities for youth in Pakistan and Afghanistan.²⁰

In the group that selected **limited access to education for refugee youth**, the participants identified that as a consequence of poverty, some families cannot afford the cost of education. As one young refugee woman explained “A lot of parents say that we do not have money to send our children to school”. In some cases, families need children to work instead of attending school to supplement the

²⁰ Two groups selected ‘education’ as their issue, so a whole group discussion was held about the need for each group to take a different aspect of the issue to ensure that stakeholders hear as much as possible about the challenges faced by youth in terms of education. The group members understood the need and decided between themselves to split the issue up by ‘access’ and ‘quality’, but also agreed to work together if their ideas were complementary.

family income. Some parents have a lack of understanding of the importance of education, especially for girls. As one of the young refugee women highlighted “Most Afghan parents think getting an education for their daughters is not good”, and therefore either withdraw their children or do not approve their attendance in school. The group highlighted that this is common amongst uneducated parents and also in conservative areas. Girls often face teasing from boys in college, and criticism from other community members, which can make them reluctant to continue their education and insecurity can also be a serious issue as some of the female group members talked about feeling unsafe during their journey to school/college/university. One female refugee participant highlighted that “*We are not safe while going to school*”, another asserted that in her opinion youth would feel safer if they could carry a gun on their journey to school²¹. Afghan youth often experience discrimination in education because as highlighted above they are frequently associated with/blamed for terrorist attacks. One group member gave the example of discrimination experienced by the Hazara community at university, because they are considered to be responsible for insecurity, such as a bomb blast in the University of Quetta²². Furthermore, when it was suggested by one member of the group that Pakistan is preventing their access to education, another participant argued strongly that the root of the access issue is terrorism itself because it fosters negative feelings towards Afghan refugees; “*It is not the Pakistanis that stop us to study, but the terrorists who are doing it*”. A female member of the group added more nuance to this point and explained: “*More than Afghans, it’s the Hazara²³ people who are more pressurized not to study*”, and a male member of the group highlighted that he considers the discrimination to come from their peers rather than the university administration: “*We are not allowed to study not by the administration of the university but by the Quetta youth*”.

The group then identified some of the impacts that they have observed of as a result of limited access to education. These included: depression, drug abuse/self-medicating, frustration leading to destructive thoughts (towards self and/or others), which might include sectarianism, terrorism or crime; and an ‘unhealthy society’ with an increasing number of backward-thinking youth, lacking the key knowledge, skills and qualifications necessary to build productive lives.

The group discussing **poor quality of education** identified that personnel, school infrastructure, and the broader education system in Pakistan were the main causes. On personnel, the group identified weaknesses in the recruitment of teachers, such as the influence of favouritism and nepotism. This coupled with the low pay they felt could create a culture of absenteeism among teachers. It was unclear from the discussion exactly which location was being discussed and whether it was an urban or RV setting. The teachers’ use of corporal punishment, and lack of awareness of the rights of the students, creates an environment that is not conducive to learning. On infrastructure, the classrooms are very overcrowded, which makes it harder to teach and to learn. There is a lack of books because they are not delivered or are delivered very late and the syllabus is felt to be out of

²¹ The rest of the group did not agree that guns are a good idea, but this was an extreme example of how insecure some young Afghan women are feeling.

²² Reference to an explosion at a security check post outside the gate of Baluchistan University in Quetta - <http://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2016/05/10/national/two-policemen-martyred-8-injured-in-blast-outside-university/>

²³ The most recent two decades of war have driven many Hazaras away from their traditional heartland in Afghanistan to live on the fringes of the state in close proximity to Iran and Pakistan. There is also a large cross-border community of Hazaras who make up an influential ethnic group in the Pakistani border city of Quetta’. <http://www.refworld.org/docid/49749d693d.html>

date and irrelevant. The group also felt that the education system is not effectively guided or monitored and there is no accountability on the part of the Government, resulting in poor quality. One of the national youth in this group highlighted that the *“Lack of quality education impacts youth a lot”*, and the group identified several serious impacts, which included a high drop-out rate, for example, because students do not feel that they are learning or using their time well and they choose to leave or parents encourage them to leave and limited learning potential as the students do not understand what is being taught (due to poor teaching, lack of books, overcrowded classrooms, and/or language barriers) or it lacks relevance..

The group discussing **lack of legal documentation (which leads to protection issues and hinders access to basic services)**, identified causes that included lack of financial assistance / poverty, which can prevent people from travelling to register a birth for example, because they cannot afford the registration fee or, the transportation and cannot take time off work.²⁴ It can also be a long and complex process to obtain legal documents, and if people do not understand the process they may decide not to register in the first place. It was also felt that there is a lack of Government will to prioritize refugees, meaning that the scope of the PoR card is very limited when it comes to enabling refugees to access basic services. There also remains a lack of clarity about whether refugees will have a PoR cards after June 2016, and if not, what the alternative will be. These challenges impact all aspects of daily life and can make it very difficult for young people to plan for the future, as it becomes difficult to access job opportunities²⁵, education and health facilities/services, open a bank account, obtain a driving license, and rent or purchase a property. It can also result in low birth registration rates, which leaves children and youth more vulnerable.

The final group focused on **limited advocacy opportunities for youth in Pakistan and Afghanistan** and identified a range of causes. Limited access to the internet in camps and rural areas was a barrier to communication and information via social media. Two members of the group explained that *“Without communication, we can’t do anything”*, and that *“We have a lack of communication and [so] we are quiet”*. Group members felt that there is a lack of opportunities, and a lack of encouragement for young people to engage in advocacy and decision making processes both from within their communities and civil society. As one young female refugee explained *“We don’t have opportunities to raise our voice”*. It was also felt that there is a lack of unity and coordination amongst youth to make advocacy activities possible, as well as a lack of awareness of each other’s needs and opinions which would be necessary to speak with ‘one voice’. There was also perceived to be a lack of support for women to get actively involved in their communities, and limited opportunities for advocacy, coupled with disapproval from family members. Finally, the group identified that some Afghan youth are not aware of their basic rights, which make them less likely to speak out.

The group identified the impacts of youth not engaging in advocacy activities as being a lack of awareness of other’s problems, which can also lead to a lack of tolerance; a lack of awareness about rights and how to advocate about them to others and isolation of youth as they have limited

²⁴ The birth certificate is a crucial document to enroll in school, obtain identity documents and get a job.

²⁵ The Proof of Registration (PoR) card issued by the Government of Pakistan to Afghan refugees does not officially allow them to work, and therefore they are prone to exploitation and abuse including in the informal labour market. (Participatory Assessment Report 2015: Pakistan, UNHCR, p.13)

opportunities to feel connected to other youth in Pakistan and Afghanistan. Without advocacy on issues that affect them, the group felt that there will be no developments or improvements to the challenges that refugee youth are facing and youth could continue to be exploited by others in society as they do not have a platform to learn and speak out about their situation.

Identifying Solutions using Storyboards

On day three, the groups focused on how to tackle the root causes of these issues; They identified solutions, and the role of youth and other stakeholders in realising the solutions along with the impacts these could have on the lives of refugee youth.

The group that focussed on **limited access to education** identified several solutions that were centred on changing mind sets and addressing the financial



burden of education. To address the lack of support for education from parents and community members, the group suggested that an advocacy platform be created to raise awareness of the benefits of education for youth, their families and the wider community. This should target parents and the broader community directly, through Television radio and social media. To address the financial burden of education, and the issues of insecurity, the group proposed that more online courses be developed in cities to reach more youth at a lower/minimal cost, which would also suit those who are unable to travel. This would only be relevant for cities given the limited access to computers and the internet in camps. Finally, the group suggested that more free school places need to be offered for Afghan refugees, to ensure that regardless of the financial status of the family, youth can be educated. They also considered that educated youth could offer to volunteer in these schools where there are gaps in capacity.

The participants identified that young people should set up youth committees and distribute collection boxes for fundraising in specific areas of their community to raise money for items such as stationery and books, and could share their own books and resources with students in need. Youth could also organise meetings and events in camps and communities to raise awareness of the importance of education for boys and girls, and to raise funds for poorer students. They indicated that they would need to engage the support of external actors to help raise funds and awareness, such as UNHCR, UNICEF, UNESCO, NGOs, and the Commissioners for Afghan Refugees (CARs)²⁶. Parents would need to be engaged to speak with and influence other parents in the community, and financial support should be requested from Afghan traders. They felt that the support of the Afghan and Pakistani Governments and academics would also be necessary, to help raise awareness around

²⁶ UNHCR's main governmental counterparts for refugees in Pakistan are the Ministry of States and Frontier Regions (SAFRON), the Chief Commissioner for Afghan Refugees (CCAR) and provincial Commissioners for Afghan Refugees (CARs). (UNHCR Factsheet, April 2016, Pakistan)

the importance of education, to tackle discrimination and insecurity, to support subsidised education. The group concluded that refugee youth, would be more empowered and proactive due to having increased knowledge, skills and qualifications, which in turn would result in more positive development in society and reduced unemployment.

The group discussing **lack of quality education for youth** proposed several solutions. The group felt monitoring would be critical to ensuring, punctuality and attendance of teachers along with consequences for lateness or absenteeism. They also felt that the recruitment of teachers and principals should be a more thorough process; ensuring candidates have adequate experience and skills. Discrimination and corporal punishment should also be addressed through strong policies, to create a safe environment that is more conducive to learning. The group also felt that parents should be encouraged to play a more active role in schools by demanding the creation of parent/teacher committees, to increase staff accountability, and provide staff with more support. The group also identified a need for more extra-curricular activities to motivate and inspire students, including competitions, debates and sports activities. Finally, books should be ordered and received prior to the start of the school year to ensure that students have the resources they need to learn and to reduce confusion.

The group identified several roles for youth in making these solutions possible. These included forming youth committees to meet with and work in partnership with parent/teacher committees, to ensure that the youth voice is heard. These youth committees would also advocate on behalf of youth in their community, for example, by reaching out to the Ministry of Education with key messages, or by utilising social media to raise awareness about the issues affecting education quality. Finally, qualified youth could fill in gaps, or mobilise qualified community members if teachers are absent. The group understood the Government to have a crucial role to play in improving the quality of education through commissioning and providing a new syllabus more relevant to the modern era; by setting higher standards and monitoring the quality of teaching and management, and by providing free books to ensure that students have the resources they need to learn. NGOs and UN agency support was also identified as being needed in the area of extra-curricular activities, such as sports. Young people in this group felt that these solutions would result in increased interest in education and that parents would therefore be less likely to remove their children from school, as a higher quality teaching would result in better school results. More educated and qualified youth would have better opportunities to access to job opportunities, and youth would be able to support themselves, their families and their community. Youth would also be more motivated and have more positivity, self-respect and improved self-esteem, which would make it more likely that they would become role models for other youth.

Several solutions were considered by the group addressing the **lack of legal documentation (which leads to protection issues and hinders access to basic services)**. This group proposed that awareness raising and advocacy would be crucial at several levels – with the Government to increase the rights of refugees with PoR cards (e.g. in relation to employment, health and education), with law enforcement agencies to increase awareness of the rights of refugees, with other stakeholders (e.g. NGOs, UNHCR, business owners) on the challenges of the current situation, and with the community on the importance of legal documentation. To form an evidence base for the advocacy activities, surveys and data collection should be undertaken so the results can be shared with the

Government to inform the development of their new refugee policy. New PoR cards should be issued before the expiry date in June 2016, and the scope of the card should be increased to include for example access to healthcare and to facilitate purchase and rental agreements. Also, if access to work opportunities was improved by expanding the scope of the current PoR card, a website should be created to allow for the collection of CVs of Afghan refugees to help them to connect with suitable employers.

The group identified tasks for youth to tackle in achieving these solutions. The first task would be to create a youth task force to address the issue, which would consist of youth leaders from different communities and would work closely with community elders and leaders to ensure a consistent approach on these issues. The task force would engage in advocacy activities with other stakeholders to encourage the Government to increase the actions and opportunities permitted for refugees through the PoR card, as well as working with the community to raise awareness of the importance of obtaining legal documentation, such as birth registration documents. Youth could also work or volunteer to lead the surveys and data collection to create evidence based for advocacy work. The group also considered that external support would be crucial to the success of these solutions, including from NGOs, INGOs, CAR, UNHCR, SAFRON²⁷, MORR²⁸, academics, media, and community members. One practical example suggested was that UNHCR's implementing partners could support by building the capacity of youth leaders and volunteers in advocacy, conducting surveys and managing data collection. Universities could conduct workshops and seminars on the issues concerning documentation to increase awareness; media outlets could show support by promoting more positive images of refugees, which would influence the attitudes of the public and the Government towards refugees and encourage them to show more support and tolerance; community members and other stakeholders might offer financial support to advocacy campaigns to assist with resources. The group identified the positive impacts of these solutions to be improved relations between refugees and Government, a more positive image of refugees in society, and a decrease in police harassment. If the scope of the PoR card was improved, the standard of living of refugees would be improved, job opportunities would be increased and unemployment rates would be reduced, negative coping mechanisms such as drug abuse and crime rates would be reduced, health in the refugee community would be improved, and literacy rates would improve due to increased access to education. Finally, youth would be more empowered, and their leadership skills would be developed, which could have a very positive impact on community development.

The fourth group focusing on **limited advocacy opportunities for youth in Pakistan and Afghanistan** identified a range of solutions. First, the group proposed raising awareness with families about the importance of having opportunities to connect with other young people, in Pakistan and Afghanistan, to share ideas and discuss important issues. Youth committees, including Afghan and Pakistani youth, should be created to seek out and initiate opportunities, and platforms, to lead youth engagement in advocacy. Young people should also be provided with opportunities to learn more about their rights. The group felt that illiteracy was a barrier to learning and to gaining important information on advocacy opportunities from external sources such as social media, as well as networking opportunities.

²⁷ Ministry of States and Frontier Regions

²⁸ Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation



The participants identified several roles for young people in realizing these solutions. These included creating cross community youth committees to take the lead on advocacy activities and to mobilise other youth, running door to door campaigns to do local advocacy work around issues affecting youth, and organising local meetings for youth to discuss their issues and decide on their

messaging. Youth with existing advocacy skills should be identified and supported to train other youth to create a pool of advocates, the group also felt that social media should be utilised to enable cross border dialogue between Afghan youth and between Afghan youth in Afghanistan and Pakistani youth – to increase understanding and to work together to address challenges. Furthermore, the group identified the need for the Afghan and Pakistani Governments, UNHCR, other political and youth organisations to get involved. The role of these organisations should be to provide platforms for youth engagement and voice raising, to support capacity building opportunities in advocacy and communication skills so they can clearly and professionally express their ideas, and to demonstrate to them the importance of linking up youth in the two countries. The group concluded that through these actions youth would feel more empowered, inspired and positive.

Identifying more solutions to priority issues:

The World Café exercise was used to encourage participants to identify creative solutions to the issues they face. Four issues were selected from the diamond ranking exercise by the facilitators. Although not from the top three issues in each diamond ranking chart, each had been the focus of much debate within the groups. These issues selected were:

1. Gender discrimination
2. Lack of inclusion of youth with disabilities
3. Lack of capacity building opportunities for youth
4. Discrimination and racism towards refugees

After identifying solutions, youth were then asked to consider what role they could play in making these solutions a reality.

Participants identified a range of ways to tackle **gender discrimination**. These included awareness raising within their communities to promote equal opportunities for girls and young women in for

example, employment, sport and in the family unit. Participants felt that girls “*should be motivated to share opinions*” utilising social media, community meetings, theatre and art. They also identified the need for awareness raising sessions within law enforcement agencies regarding gender discrimination, where they felt it is currently a problem. Where sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) is concerned, participants identified the need for referral systems to be in place, and where they already exist, for communities to be better educated on how to report. Public education on SGBV was also emphasised as being particularly important for people with disabilities. Gender discrimination experienced by the LGBTIQ community in Pakistan was also discussed, and the need for awareness raising on respect for identity was mentioned.

Participants identified youth as having a major role to play in awareness raising around gender discrimination, again through the formation of youth committees and the development of an awareness raising strategy. Youth could then utilise different approaches to reach out to communities for example; conduct door to door campaigns, create a work of art in the community to share key messages; meet with religious leaders and government officials to promote equality; create a ‘message wall’ in the community for people to share their opinions; utilise social media platforms to raise awareness and mobilise other youth to get involved, e.g. create a WhatsApp group; engage radio/TV/print media outlets to raise awareness of this issue; organise events at schools and invite parents to discuss the issues; organise theatre performances; and coordinate fundraising activities. The awareness raising would focus on a range of issues including, opportunities and freedoms for girls within families, child marriage, girls’ education, and respect for LGBTIQ individuals.



The group identified a number of possible solutions to the **lack of inclusion of youth with disabilities**. Participants identified the practical assistance that would be needed for youth with disabilities to be better included especially in education, training and employment settings. Ideas included the provision of physical aids and equipment such as

prosthetics and access ramps, specially trained support staff in schools, tailored sports activities for youth with disabilities, adapted facilities for vocational skills training; and centres with dedicated services created for youth with disabilities. The group also identified that a better understanding of disability would need to be developed within communities, and at a government level, advocacy would be needed to seek policy changes that would ensure inclusion. Participants proposed that they could engage their communities, utilising social media and community fora and could engage in fundraising for equipment or support staff. They also identified volunteering as a method of

providing mobility assistance in educational settings, and to organise inclusive sports events as something that youth could support. The need for youth with disabilities to be engaged in youth committees and networks to better represent themselves and develop their confidence was also strongly recommended.

To address the issue of **lack of capacity building opportunities for youth**, the participants suggested a range of solutions, with a strong focus on the inclusion of the most vulnerable young people. Solutions identified included the organisation of skills sharing events, again youth committees could be a vehicle for this, the provision of scholarships and small grants to assist the poorest youth access technical training, and national and international conferences on youth capacity building and skills development. In addition, the group highlighted that future consultations and trainings should be organised for enhancing capacity and knowledge and that all learning environments should be positive spaces that are inclusive of both sexes and all abilities. Online spaces were also suggested as a vehicle for capacity building to reach more youth. Creative methods such as art and drama were also suggested to be used to be inclusive of those who are illiterate. It was also felt that the Government should commit to funding capacity building programmes to their completion as many are cancelled while still in progress due to lack of financial support. More sports and cultural events should be organised and financial incentives should be offered for training to enable youth who work to attend.

Participants considered that youth could have a role in fundraising, including proposal writing, visiting traders, NGOs and Government offices to harness support and skills sharing through workshops on language skills, sports, drawing, singing and writing in their communities. It was felt these activities could be coordinated by youth committees. Activities and events could also be organised solely for female youth, if the presence of males would exclude them from participating.

On the theme of **discrimination and racism towards refugees**, participants considered two main approaches. The youth identified the importance of supporting the development of tolerance and mutual understanding to mitigate against discrimination and racism. In tandem with this they felt that strong responses to instances of discrimination and racism were necessary. Practically, the participants suggested working with the media to portray a more accurate and positive image of Afghan refugees in Pakistan, supporting opportunities for Afghan and Pakistani youth to organise festivals and recreational activities such as sport and art. These events should involve people of all ages and aim to change attitudes towards refugees. Discrimination should also be discussed more openly in schools and at the Government level. It was proposed that tough penalties should also be meted out to those who are found to be discriminating against refugees.

Youth Recommendations

During the 4-day consultation, youth were encouraged to consider the recommendations they would make to a global audience that they thought would improve the lives of young refugees. A graffiti style wall provided the informal space to record their ideas at any point during each day, and a structured activity on the third day helped the youth to review their work during the consultation and to consider new ideas that they might have and hone ideas that they had already shared. The group then shared their ideas and using sticky dots, voted for their top five choices.

This activity resulted in the following recommendations from the Pakistan youth participants, which have been categorised for ease of reference. The numbers throughout the recommendations reflect the number of votes a given recommendation received from the participants.

YOUTH PARTICIPATION AND BUILDING LINKAGES

- Regional refugee youth consultations should be organised to build links and raise awareness (e.g. Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran) (4)
- Cross border (Afghanistan/Pakistan) seminars and conferences should be organised to connect youth and discuss important issues
- Youth committees should connect with stakeholders to access and share information about scholarships, study programmes and awareness raising events (2)
- Youth should be supported to create committees and arrange meetings with stakeholders to become more actively involved in decision making.
- Develop a youth exchange programme between Pakistan and Afghanistan to share new ideas (6)
- Youth networks should be identified to work directly with UNHCR, NGOs and INGOs (2)
- Youth leaders should work with UNHCR and other organisations to establish formal youth committees and youth leaders can work on awareness raising about the rights of refugees and their issues (4)
- Youth leaders should work with UNHCR and other stakeholders to promote youth empowerment, refugee rights and other issues which affect refugee communities
- Youth should engage with the Afghan Embassy to improve the quality and frequency of communication with Afghan refugees (1)
 - Afghan Embassy should have representatives in Afghan settled areas so refugees can more easily access their support
- Youth should work with UNHCR and NGOs to improve communication with people living in the most deprived areas, for example, by identifying youth representatives for their communities
- A similar kind of consultation to GRYC should be repeated (2)
- Visits to refugee camps for national youth should be arranged (2)

SENSITISATION & AWARENESS RAISING

- Youth should work with the Governments of Pakistan and Afghanistan, and the media, to show a positive image of refugees (5) and youth (6)
- Media should work on development of positive image of refugees through dramas and talk shows (1)
- Sensitisation trainings and programmes for police and law enforcement agencies regarding refugee rights, to decrease police harassment (10)
- UNHCR, NGOs, and INGOs should work on awareness raising with police, army, hospitals and universities on rights of refugees

POLITICS

- The Governments of Pakistan and Afghanistan should not politicise issues relating to Afghan refugees, especially those that concern youth (4)²⁹

DOCUMENTATION

- UNHCR, NGOs, and INGOs should work with Government for the timely extension of the PoR card (6)
- Increase of rights associated with the PoR card through advocacy with the Government (4)
 - Increase access to basic services, including and through the PoR card (3)
- Extension of PoR card and increase the rights associated with it (7)
- Donors should support UNHCR and Government financially for renewal of the PoR card
- Government should look into possibility of provision of identity documents to unregistered Afghan refugees (1)
- UNHCR, Government, NGOs, INGOs, Afghan Embassy, CAR (Commissionerate for Afghan Refugees) and MORR (Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation) should work on making all registration and administrative processes easier for refugees and develop a complaints mechanism
- Make the process of obtaining a 'No Objection Certificate' (NOC) easier for NGOs and INGOs to work with refugees³⁰ (6)
- Government should promote longer term policy for refugees to legally stay in Pakistan to address the uncertain future of refugees (1)
- There needs to be increased acceptance of Equivalence Certificate³¹ in Government institutions

EDUCATION

- Funds should be increased by Government, UNHCR and NGOs to support Afghan refugees to access higher education, e.g. through scholarships (5)
- Expand extra-curricular activities for youth in cities and camps
- Continue education beyond 10th grade in camps (1)
- Improve access to basic education for refugee youth (2)

LIVELIHOODS AND TRAINING

- 'Incubation centres' should be established for young Afghan entrepreneurs (2)

²⁹ Examples of the politicisation of the refugee situation include the language around terrorism such as "Both Afghan and Pakistan blame each other for terrorism – it's a political game" and "Evidence for terrorism is that Osama bin Laden was found in Pakistan". One young participant also said that: "Pakistan and Afghanistan are interdependent countries that cannot survive without each other – need to employ young people in planning and design because if we don't, they will go illegally abroad through traffickers".

³⁰ The NOC is a provision that NGOs obtain from the Government through a very lengthy process before they can start work in remote and insecure areas in Pakistan. NOC is also needed for NGOs to work with Afghan refugees. Recently the Government cancelled the NOCs of thousands of NGOs in Pakistan and has only allowed a few organizations to get/renew their NOCs, which has created a significant access issue for NGOs in Pakistan.

³¹ Equivalence means that the studies undertaken in foreign educational institutions or degrees/diplomas obtained are regarded as equal to corresponding degrees/diplomas obtained in local educational institutions. Equivalence certificates are issued by the HEC (Higher Education Commission), which is the sole regulatory body of higher education in Pakistan. <http://www.hec.gov.pk/InsideHEC/Divisions/QALI/DegreeAttestationEquivalence/EquivalenceDegreeIssuance/Pages/Default.aspx>

- A quota should be established for the participation of vulnerable Afghan refugees, especially youth with disabilities and girls, in vocational and skills training centres
- Increase availability of technical courses in cities and camps, e.g. tailoring, sewing and beauty (2)
- Capacity building opportunities for youth need to be increased, e.g. leadership and communication skills, and confidence building (1)
- Support is needed for youth to access job opportunities (4)
- The Government of Pakistan are requested to provide loans to Afghan refugee youth for study and/or starting small businesses³² (6)

HEALTH

- The Government of Pakistan are requested to provide health cards to refugees (4)
- In Government hospitals, there should be non-discriminatory behaviour between Pakistanis and Afghans (1)

PROTECTION

- Youth should work with stakeholders to campaign against child labour
- The need to address uncertainty and increase the scope of the PoR cards to improve refugees' access to basic needs and services.
- NGOs and INGOs should work with detention centres to provide legal aid for detained refugees
-

YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES

- Equal opportunities for youth with disabilities should be promoted by providing them with items required (1)

A number of themes dominated this group's recommendations:

- Recommendations concerning documentation received the most votes (28). These focused on the need to address uncertainty and increase the scope of the PoR cards to improve refugees' access to basic needs and services.
- The second most votes were for a focus on sensitisation and awareness raising about refugee rights, discrimination and stereotyping of refugees and youth. The recommendations placed particular emphasis on the need for change within the media and law enforcement agencies.
- Promoting youth participation, the development of networks and linkages received 21 votes. A strong emphasis was placed on being heard, having a say in decision making, and developing new skills to connect with other youth and stakeholders at the local, national, regional and global levels.
- Recommendations concerning livelihoods, training and education also received a high number of votes (23 combined), and reflected this group's passion for learning and development opportunities.

³² The Government of Pakistan has loan schemes in place for Pakistani citizens, especially young students, to get laptops, and also education loans and loans for starting small businesses, e.g. a day care centre for children, IT training labs, boutique dress designing etc. Such loans are not available for refugees.

Stakeholders Dialogue

The Stakeholders Dialogue component of the consultation took place on the morning of the fourth day, 05th May 2016. The meeting was attended by 27 stakeholders from 16 organisations, including:

Government

- Afghan Refugees Organisation (ARO) Baluchistan
- Commissionerate for Refugees (CAR) Punjab

National NGOs

- National Commission for Human Development (NCHD)
- Inspire Pakistan
- SHARP Pakistan
- Pakistan International Human Rights Organisation (PIHRO)
- Water, Environment & Sanitation Society (WESS)
- Union Aid for Afghan Refugees (UAAR)
- Taraqee Foundation

Multilateral agencies and INGO's

- Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)
- UNICEF
- UNHCR
- World Bank
- PRM
- IRC
- International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC)
- APRRN
- American Refugee Committee (ARC)

Stakeholder dialogue structure

The dialogue ran from 10am-1pm. Four youth participants opened the meeting with a welcome speech outlining the purpose of the consultation and provided an explanation of the previous three days, using the flipcharts and images that had been produced to explain the activities. At the end of the introductions, two youth participants summarized the group's key recommendations for the stakeholders. This was followed by presentations on the



issues that eh groups had worked on a round table discussion between the youth and the stakeholders.

Group presentations

On day three of the consultation, the youth created group presentations to showcase the issues they had been focusing on and explain both the actions they could take to bring about solutions and their recommendations for stakeholders to support and supplement these actions. Each presentation lasted for about 5 minutes. Presentation styles included drama, the screening of a short film, and formal presentations using flipcharts and PowerPoint. The topics selected were access to education, quality of education, lack of legal documentation, and limited opportunities for refugee youth to engage in advocacy activities.

Round table discussions

After the presentations, the stakeholders had the opportunity to engage with the participants in round table discussions which involved participants rotating from one table to another (World Café style). The purpose was to create a space that was more conducive to in depth discussions and building relationships by reducing the feeling of 'them' versus 'us'. Discussion suggestions were placed on each table and then groups were divided to ensure that there was a roughly equal number of youth and stakeholders at each table, along with a facilitator to support the discussion if required.

Open Discussion

Space was then provided for an 'open mic' session, allowing anyone in the room to speak in response to what they had heard or discussed during the morning. Stakeholders and youth were free to speak, and the focus was on concrete suggestions and actions to ensure sustainable outcomes from the meeting.

[Review of the dialogue](#)

The format provided the participants with the opportunities they wanted to present their ideas and to have more focused discussions with stakeholders.

Round Table Discussions

During these round table discussions, youth took the opportunity to ask direct, and often challenging, questions of the stakeholders. The 5 tables were rotated twice during this session. The discussions were lively and engaging and it was clear that the stakeholders were keen to listen to and engage with and learn from the youth.

Themes discussed in the small groups were in line with those that have already been discussed above with documentation, education and recreation, health care, disability, social cohesion and employment coming to the fore. Some concrete suggestions and commitments were made during these discussions, which were shared and discussed during the participants' final action planning session.

Open Discussion

- This section provided the opportunity for youth and stakeholders to speak to the whole group, building on the small group discussions, and was chaired by a facilitator and two youth participants.
- Those who spoke during the open mic section, emphasised how important it was for youth to have opportunities to engage and participate in this way, and praised them for their inputs. The limited number of comments was possibly due to the extensive conversations that had already taken place during the round table discussions.
- Several of the youth participants took the opportunity to highlight the importance of these consultations and the need for stakeholders to support them further, as well as discussing the outcomes of the consultations
- The APRRN Chair and the UNHCR Pakistan Representative both spoke passionately and acknowledged the hard work of the group, as well as encouraging them to continue to build on the momentum of the consultation.

Next Steps/Future Action

The in-country partners – CWT, REPID and UNHCR Pakistan - have committed to sustain the momentum created by the consultation, and to follow up directly with the stakeholders. Examples of ideas for action discussed since the consultation include: sharing the outcomes within the partner organisations to improve their activities with/for youth; sharing relevant capacity building opportunities with the group on a regular basis; utilising the outcomes of the consultation in the development of the new UNHCR youth policy - a development workshop is scheduled to take place this year (the development of this policy will have linkages with the developing national youth strategy to avoid creating a parallel system); organising provincial youth consultations, using the GRYC format, to include more youth, and to consider provincial specificities in more detail; inviting (and fundraising) for some participants to attend the 6th Asia Pacific Consultation on Refugee Rights in Bangkok in September; and inviting youth to join a national network of young refugees – The Pakistan Refugee Youth Network (RYN) - to increase their network.

During the final debrief meeting with youth on day four and in their final written evaluation forms, many of the participants expressed an interest in future engagement, including: setting up youth committees; following up from the meeting with specific stakeholders to pursue suggestions and commitments, such as scholarships for class 10-11, developing sports and cultural facilities for youth, and improving the services for refugees provided by the Afghan



Embassy; planning to meet with senior staff at school to discuss conducting advocacy activities about refugee rights; mobilising more youth to join pre-existing committees and youth groups run by participants, to be more inclusive; writing blogs to share the experience of the GRYC with other national youth; setting up a social media platform to engage youth to share their ideas and channel them to UNHCR; identifying Youth Outreach Volunteers and lobbying UNHCR to create more job placement opportunities for girls, as discussed at the consultation.

Evaluations

Daily Youth Evaluation

A different evaluation tool was used at the end of each day to capture ideas, learning and recommendations from the participants. Targeted questions and interactive exercises facilitated the collection of feedback on what participants liked, didn't like, what they had learned and new skills they had acquired and what they would recommend to the facilitators for the next day or for future consultations. An example of a participant feedback mechanism used is as follows:

At the end of day one, participants were asked to express what they enjoyed, what they did not enjoy, and what they would recommend for the next day by sharing comments anonymously on a prepared flipchart sheet. The results showed that the majority of participants had enjoyed the day in terms of the activities, the participatory and creative approach, the atmosphere, and the energy. The negative comments focused on there not being enough time for everyone to speak and the early start to the day. Meanwhile the constructive recommendations included requests for the agenda to be shared in advance, more equality in the small groups so that everyone can speak, and only one voice to be heard at a time.

Final Participant Evaluation

At the end of day four, participants had the opportunity to share their opinions of the consultation, what they had learned and their suggestions and recommendations for future consultations through a written evaluation form. This was an important tool for participants to provide anonymous, individual feedback at the end of the consultation. Forms were completed in English, but interpreters were present to support non-English speaking youth, or those less confident in English, to feel comfortable and confident to express themselves.

The written evaluation forms also provide targeted feedback on how well the participants felt they had contributed to the core GRYC objectives and outcomes. Participants were given the intended GRYC outcomes and asked to comment accordingly: completely agree; mostly agree; partially agree; do not agree. They were also given space to comment on each outcome. The results from the 24 completed forms were as follows:

Outcome 1: Through my participation in this consultation, I had the opportunity to identify and discuss issues that are important to me and my community, and to develop and suggest solutions.

- Completely agree - 17 participants
- Mostly agree - 7 participants
- Partially agree – 0 participants

“This consultation gave me a golden chance to share and discuss many problems which were related to me and other refugees and also my community, with a great outcome and solutions. I knew the issues which we were facing but I didn’t know the solutions, but after this consultation I learned many things my own role what I can do as youth to solve these problems”

“I came to know about refugee issues as host youth and discussed possible solutions with role of youth and other stake holders”

“Consultation was well enough but unfortunately in group work, participants didn't give full concentration to our ideas”

Outcome 2: Through my participation in this consultation, I have developed and improved my leadership and advocacy skills

- Completely agree – 14 participants
- Mostly agree – 7 participants
- Partially agree – 3 participant

“Before this consultation I was not able to talk to someone or share my opinion or talk to stakeholders tell them about my issues and make them understand, but through this consultation I have developed advocacy and leadership in myself”

“It was amazing to have such a platform where I completely developed the skills for which I was looking”

“Because of shortage of time, all participants didn't get time to express themselves”

Outcome 3: Through my participation in this consultation, I am more aware of organisations that I can engage with at a local and national level

- Completely agree – 16 participants
- Mostly agree – 7 participants
- Partially agree – 1 participant³³

“Locally I can engage as well on a national level. I got much awareness about the active NGOs, INGOs and their activities locally, nationally and internationally”

“Before this consultation I knew just some organisations that help refugees, but through this consultation I know about many organisations taking part in helping, cooperating, [and] solving issues. It’s really good to know that we are not alone, we have someone who can help us... It was really hard to meet with stakeholders and to tell them about our issues as individuals [and] what problem I am facing mostly in my life. GYRC gave me a chance to define all my problems without any fear”

“This type of consultation helps you to identify the function of different organisations”

Outcome 4: Through my participation in this consultation, I have more opportunities to develop relationships with youth groups and organisations locally, nationally and globally.

- Completely agree – 20 participants

³³ None of the comments explained this rating.

- Mostly agree – 4 participants

“I have got many opportunities. Now I am member of [a] global refugee network, and I am searching for other networks too, and through this consultation I got [the] chance to know about the NGOs which are working for youth... It’s [us] who can change the world if youth think like this, then I don't think we will have any problems in our society and through participating in these groups we can exchange our views, and youth will be connected to each other”

“I really developed relation[ships] with youth groups [and] organisations nationally and internationally which was beyond my expectation”

“In this consultation I met with different people from different areas who are participants, consultants and stakeholders. I have more opportunities to develop relationships with youth groups and organisations locally, nationally and internationally”

Outcome 5: Through my participation in this consultation, I understand more about the experiences of other refugee youth and national youth.

- Completely agree - 18 participants
- Mostly agree – 5 participants
- Partially agree – 1 participant

“We got experience with host community and their youth. It was amazing”

“Well as a refugee I know many things about refugees as we all know the main issues were about PoR card and education. But through this consultation I know about the other main things which other refugees are facing in their society [and] maybe we will face them too one day... About national youth I was thinking it’s their country and it will be very easy for them, but I was wrong they also face most of the problem it’s not only us whom are facing problem”

Partially agree – *“Not that much, because this was my first consultation with refugees”*

The other questions in the written evaluation concentrated on a more in depth review of the consultation process and outcomes for youth, and requested recommendations for future consultations and ideas for individual or group action after the event. Some of the comments from participants are captured below:

Do you feel that you have been listened to at this consultation? Please explain your answer:

“My favourite part of this consultation was that everyone listened to each other”

“Yes... the message I brought from Afghan refugee community was the issue of legal documentation – it was listened to”

“Somehow, because other participants were not letting us to share our opinions and ideas”

“Yeah... all the participants were listened to by the stakeholders”

What specific ideas do you have for action based on your involvement in this consultation?

"I will share the outcomes of the Global Consultation with other young people in our community. I will arrange puppet show theatres, Hujra³⁴ based awareness sessions, Mohalla³⁵ based awareness sessions, and will form [a] youth students' society. Through this society, I will arrange awareness sessions regarding [the] global consultation with every college and university in KP and share the reports [from the] global consultation"

"I have decided to write blogs, and do advocacy through social media as well"

"Focus on capacity development of young boy and girls, particularly the most vulnerable and marginalized, strengthening their inherent competences and skills thus providing them with diversified learning opportunities to ensure their integration in social, economic and political life"

What suggestions do you have for future National Consultations?

"My suggestion is that this consultation should not be confined, they should extend and make it progress as we are interested and want to have such opportunity to join such a consultation and be part of it. I have many ideas which I can share it in next national consultations"

"To extend the duration of the consultation. To increase the number of participants"

"I want more consultations and platforms like this to share my opinions and to know the views and perceptions of others, and this will lead us to know more and to be active"

Did this consultation meet your expectations? Please explain your answer:

"It was even better than my expectations. I thought we [will] give our opinions and just talk about the issues, but when we were talking about the solutions it was very happy moment for me that I was giving solutions for our issues and sharing my ideas"

"Yes, at first I have lost my hope, but with this consultation, my hope raised again and I can do better in the future"

"No, because it [met] more than my expectations. I thought it will be a boring session consisting of lectures and speeches, but it was activity based, that's why I have learnt a lot"

What learning are you taking away from this consultation?

"(how to) interact with different cultures"

"I learned lots of things but I will share one. When I was [talking about] solutions for the issues and united we were discussing about it, I learned that united we can solve our problems, even the youth can do lots of things without help of other NGOs"

"I learned many things, first of all we are the youth [and] we cannot put all the burden on stakeholders and wait in our homes that they should come and ask us about our problems they will help us but we can also help ourselves"

³⁴ The term *hujra* is especially prevalent in the predominantly Pashtun areas of Pakistan. Pashtun *hujras* are used mainly to entertain male guests in a household, although sometimes community *hujras* are also maintained by tribal units. (Wikipedia, 2016)

³⁵ 'Mohalla based awareness sessions' refers to meetings in local gatherings at houses and on the streets.

Conclusion

The participants in the Pakistan consultation gathered together with a determination to make the experience count, which in turn created a very dynamic and productive event. On the first day of the consultation, one participant referred to youth as the “*backbone of the nation*”, and the truth of this statement became very evident as the participants, regardless of nationality, worked intensively together to analyse their issues, and to develop solutions and strategies for how to take their ideas forward in their communities. The Pakistan consultation highlighted the importance of providing space and opportunity for youth both national and refugee to share their experiences, voice their opinions and ideas, and to be recognised as active partners. Many new relationships were developed with individuals and organisations through the stakeholder dialogue and there was a great feeling that positive change is possible for young refugees in Pakistan.