

## 2.5. Educational personnel

### COMMON ANALYSIS

Last update: April 2022

This profile refers to people working in educational facilities, including schools and universities. Students could also be affected by association.

See also the section [2.13.5 Education of children and girls in particular](#).

### COI summary

In the context of the previous conflict with the former Afghan government, the objective of the insurgents was not to close schools, but rather to put pressure and gain control over them. Taliban leadership regularly issued statements proclaiming a ban on attacks on education. On a local level, depending on the local commander and the population, agreements between insurgents and educational facilities were often made. The Taliban reportedly closed government-sponsored madrassas claiming that they were not in accordance with the Taliban principles. Targeting of individuals due to the mere fact that they worked in educational facilities was not common in Afghanistan. Nevertheless, incidents took place. Attacks on schools and killing, injuring, or abduction of educational personnel and students by AGEs have been reported. Violent incidents targeting female teachers and female pupils, including sexual violence and harassment, were also reported [[COI query on education sector](#), 2; [Conflict targeting](#), 1.2.4, 1.5.1, 2.4; [Key socio-economic indicators 2020](#), 2.5].

In 2020, UNAMA documented 62 incidents that affected children's access to education, comprised of attacks on education facilities, targeting of educational personnel, and threats against education facilities and their staff [[Security June 2021](#), 2.1.3].

During the first half of 2021, UNAMA documented a continuation of attacks on health and education facilities and workers, including direct attacks and fighting causing damage to schools, hospitals, and their personnel [[Security September 2021](#), 1.4.4]. The deadliest attack against civilians in Afghanistan in the first half of 2021 was on 8 May 2021, when three non-suicide vehicle-borne IEDs detonated outside a school in a Kabul neighbourhood mainly inhabited by the Hazara community, in which at least 85 civilians were killed and at least 216 other civilians were injured, most of whom were schoolgirls. Reports attribute this attack to ISKP [[Security September 2021](#), 2.1]. Incidents of targeting educational personnel and facilities were also reported in several other provinces in spring and summer 2021, including Ghor, Helmand, Nangarhar, and Takhar [[Security September 2021](#), 2.11, 2.12, 2.23, 2.32].

After the Taliban take-over in August 2021, schools reopened, except for secondary education for girls which remained closed in most parts of the country. In September 2021, the Taliban-run Ministry of Education issued a document concerning the education of female university students, stipulating that female students, teachers, and educational staff must wear a black 'Islamic abaya robe and niqab that covers the hair, body, and most of the face' as well as gloves. The document ordered the classes to be gender segregated, at least by a curtain, and that teaching for girls and women had to be done by women or, in the absence of female teachers, by elderly men who are well-known for being trustworthy. These measures were also to be implemented in private universities. There were reports indicating local divergence in implementing Islamic rule and official policy. The Taliban have also reportedly closed music schools [[Country Focus 2022](#), 1.2, 1.4, 2.3.2, 2.9].

Economic hardship also affected the educational sector, with difficulties to pay salaries to teachers and other staff. It was reported that 50 % of private education centres closed since the Taliban takeover, due to a significant decrease in students as the economic situation of Afghan families deteriorated. Some private universities resumed their activities and held graduation ceremonies, while public universities reportedly remained closed [[Country Focus 2022](#), 1.2, 2.3.2].

## **Risk analysis**

Prior to the Taliban takeover, educational personnel could be exposed to acts that were of such severe nature that they would amount to persecution (e.g. kidnapping, killing). Limited information on targeting of educational personnel following the Taliban takeover is available.

Not all individuals under this profile would face the level of risk required to establish well-founded fear of persecution. The individual assessment of whether there is a reasonable degree of likelihood for the applicant to face persecution should take into account risk-impacting circumstances, such as: gender (i.e. female teachers), areas where ISKP has operational capacity, the individual or the institution not following Taliban directives and/or curriculum, speaking out against the Taliban, etc.

### **Nexus to a reason for persecution**

Available information indicates that persecution of this profile is highly likely to be for reasons of (imputed) political opinion. In some cases, religion could also be seen as a relevant ground, such as in the case of individuals persecuted for using a curriculum perceived as contravening the actor's interpretation of Islam.