

ACCESS TO SCHOOL PROJECT 2026

Six-Month Retention Report

Reporting Period: November 2025 to May 2026 (follow-up update: March to May 2026) | Submitted to GlobalGiving

94% Six-Month Retention <i>against ≥75% target</i>	100 Girls Enrolled <i>across 5 communities</i>	90% Term One Attendance <i>90 of 100 girls, ≥80% of days</i>
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Awareness artwork for ATLAS Initiative's forthcoming 2026 Access to School enrolment drive, which promotes enrolment for out-of-school children across Lagos and Ogun States. The retention outcomes reported below concern the 2025 cohort of 100 out-of-school girls across five communities in Lagos State.

1. Overview

This report presents the six-month retention outcomes for the 100 out-of-school girls supported by ATLAS Initiative Nigeria to re-enter formal education across five communities in Lagos State (Ikorodu, Yaba, Somolu, Kosofe, and Oshodi). It follows the Term One Retention and Follow-Up Report submitted to GlobalGiving for the period November 2025 to February 2026, and it reports against the two reference points established in that report: the project's six-month retention target of $\geq 75\%$ of enrolled girls remaining in school and attending consistently, and the five forward commitments set out in its concluding section.

By way of recap, Term One closed with strong outcomes. Ninety of the 100 enrolled girls met the attendance threshold of 80% or more of school days across all three checkpoints, achieving the project's $\geq 90\%$ Term One attendance target. Of the ten girls who fell below the threshold at one or more checkpoints, nine had returned to consistent attendance by week twelve, with the single remaining case continuing to receive active follow-up. No girl formally withdrew from school during that period. The central question this report addresses is the one that matters most to donors six months on: of the girls who were re-enrolled, how many remain, and are they still attending?

2. Six-Month Retention Outcomes

The six-month retention assessment was conducted in May 2026, approximately six months after enrolment was formalised across all five communities on 13 November 2025. Retention was assessed as a girl remaining enrolled and attending consistently, applying the same 80% attendance benchmark used throughout Term One, verified against SBMC tracking records and school registers.

Of the 100 girls originally enrolled, **94** remain in school and attending consistently, representing **94%** against the $\geq 75\%$ target, exceeding it by 19 percentage points. Attrition was modest, at six girls, and concentrated in Ikorodu, the largest cohort, where household economic pressure remained the dominant barrier. Two of the six had relocated out of Lagos State with their families, while the remaining four have dropped below the attendance benchmark and are receiving active follow-up to return to consistent attendance.

2.1 Retention by Community

The table below disaggregates the six-month retention outcome by community, against the original enrolment figures.

Community	Enrolled	Retained (attending consistently)	Retention %
Ikorodu	60	55	92%
Yaba	10	10	100%
Somolu	10	9	90%
Kosofe	10	10	100%
Oshodi	10	10	100%
TOTAL	100	94	94%

The uniformity observed across sites in Term One was broadly sustained: no community fell below 90% retention. Yaba, Kosofe, and Oshodi retained their full cohorts, while the single attrition case in Somolu reflects the extended-household pressures surfaced during Term One community dialogue. Ikorodu, carrying the largest cohort at 60 girls, recorded the only meaningful concentration of attrition, consistent with the economic stress and volunteer-capacity pressures documented at that site, though its 92% retention remained comfortably above target.

3. Progress Against Term One Commitments

The Term One report set out five priorities for the period following the first term. Progress against each is reported below. This section is the core accountability link between the two reporting periods.

- **Six-month retention assessment.** Completed in May 2026; full results are reported in Section 2 above.
- **Referral Directory and Response Protocol Handbook.** The draft handbook was produced and circulated for stakeholder review in March 2026, developed jointly with SUBEB and the Lagos State Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Welfare. A pilot is underway across the five communities through the second quarter of 2026, broadly on the timeline set out in Term One; full roll-out is scheduled to coincide with SBMC induction for the 2026 cycle.
- **SBMC train-the-trainer workshop.** Held on 18–19 March 2026, the workshop trained 25 SBMC focal persons drawn from all five communities in standardised verification, attendance tracking, and safeguarding awareness. Five quarterly peer-learning clusters (one per community) were established and held their first sessions during the reporting period.
- **Early fundraising mobilisation for the 2026 A2S cycle.** Mobilisation began in the first quarter of 2026. Two funding proposals were submitted, and an advanced funding discussion of approximately ₦9 million towards the 2026 A2S cycle is underway, with a decision expected before the start of the academic year.
- **Cross-referral with the ELiTE livelihood programme.** A referral pathway with the Irish Aid-funded ELiTE programme was formally established this period. Twenty-two eligible caregivers were referred, of whom fourteen have been enrolled in livelihood support; early indications link these households to steadier attendance.

4. Safeguarding Update

At the close of Term One, six safeguarding concerns had been identified and formally referred through established SBMC and SUBEB channels, of which four (67%) were resolved and closed within 30 days, against the project's target of ≥90% closure within 30 days, with two cases remaining open. The position as at this report is as follows.

- **Outstanding Term One referrals.** The two cases that remained open at the end of Term One have both been resolved and closed, the later of the two in April 2026. As both closed beyond the 30-day window, the cumulative closure rate within 30 days now stands at 78% (seven of nine cases across both periods), still below the ≥90% target, but improving as newer cases are handled more quickly.
- **New concerns this period.** Three new safeguarding concerns were identified (two relating to attendance-disrupting household conflict and one to a child-protection risk flagged by an SBMC focal person), all referred promptly through the established SBMC and SUBEB channels and resolved and closed within 30 days.
- **Structural response.** The Memorandum of Understanding with the Lagos State Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Welfare has been drafted and is in final review, with designated focal contacts and accountable response timelines agreed in principle. Signature is anticipated next quarter and is expected to lift the cumulative 30-day closure rate towards the target.

The identities and circumstances of all referred cases continue to be held confidentially by ATLAS Initiative and the relevant SBMC focal persons, and are not disclosed in any public-facing document.

5. Community and Caregiver Engagement

Caregiver engagement established during Term One has continued to shape household-level support. The informal peer networks that emerged in two Ikorodu communities, in which mothers of enrolled girls

organised voluntary morning walk-to-school groups, were a notable and unprogrammed development, increasing the visibility of girls' education as a community norm. These groups were sustained throughout the period and replicated in a third Ikorodu community, with ATLAS providing visibility materials and light coordination support; participating mothers now number around forty.

In Somolu, community dialogue sessions during Term One had surfaced persistent pressure on some families from extended household members who viewed girls' schooling as secondary to domestic obligations, prompting targeted, rights-based follow-up anchored in the Universal Basic Education Act 2004 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. That follow-up resolved the majority of the cases raised, with most families re-committing to their daughters' continued schooling; one household, however, accounts for the single Somolu attrition recorded in Section 2 and remains under active engagement. No new community-level resistance was reported this period.

6. Challenges and Adaptations

Consistent with ATLAS Initiative's commitment to honest, adaptive reporting, the principal challenges carried into this period, and the responses to them, are set out below.

- **Variation in SBMC record-keeping capacity.** Documentation consistency improved markedly over the period. The simplified two-page tracking sheet, the December 2025 refresher session, and the WhatsApp coordination group were reinforced by the March 2026 train-the-trainer workshop, after which Ikorodu's reporting gaps narrowed and verification timeliness across all five communities became more uniform.
- **Household financial pressure and market-day absence.** Market-day absence persisted as the most frequently cited attendance barrier, particularly in Ikorodu, but its impact softened where the ELiTE referral route reached caregivers; the fourteen households enrolled in livelihood support showed steadier attendance towards the end of the period.
- **Formalisation of referral pathways.** With the draft handbook in pilot and the MoU in final review (Section 4), the principal residual constraint is timeline rather than design. Until both are fully embedded, the more complex safeguarding cases may still close beyond the 30-day window; this is the main remaining risk to the safeguarding target.

7. Looking Ahead

With the six-month retention milestone reached, ATLAS Initiative's focus turns to consolidating systems gains and preparing the 2026 A2S cycle. The priorities for the period ahead are as follows.

- Finalise and roll out the Referral Directory and Response Protocol Handbook across the five target communities, closing the safeguarding gap identified across the last two reports, and embed it within SBMC induction.
- Sustain the quarterly SBMC peer-learning clusters and consolidate the standardised tracking and safeguarding practices cascaded through the train-the-trainer workshop.
- Secure 2026 A2S funding commitments in advance of the academic year, applying the lesson that early disbursement protects the quality of preparatory activities.
- Scale the ELiTE cross-referral pathway for eligible caregivers, addressing the household economic pressures that underlie persistent attendance risk for a proportion of enrolled girls.
- **Report the next milestone to GlobalGiving.** The next reporting point will be the end-of-year retention review marking twelve months since enrolment, anticipated in November 2026, covering the close of the 2025 cohort and the launch of the 2026 A2S cycle.